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THE PROBLEM OF REPRESENTATION IN GILLES DELEUZE AND WILFRID SELLARS

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Ray Brassier, PhD, is a Professor of Philosophy at the Department of Philosophy of the American University of Beirut, Lebanon. He was born in 1965 and has earned both his MA (1997) and PhD (2001) in philosophy at Warwick University. He was a Research Fellow at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy at Middlesex University, London, England from 2001, until he joined the Department of Philosophy at AUB in 2008. With his articles, translations, edited volumes, and organized conferences he has contributed to the introduction of Francois Laruelle, Alain Badiou and Quentin Meillassoux into the contemporary Anglophone Continental philosophy. His current research interests include inferentialism, naturalized conceptions of rationality and the link between rationality and discursive practices. The philosophers most relevant to his current research are Plato, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Sellars, Brandom, and Badiou. He is the author of numerous articles and one book lengths study: *Nihil Unbound: Enlightenment and Extinction* (2007).

ABSTRACT

The respective philosophies of Gilles Deleuze and Wilfrid Sellars constitute two contrasting perspectives on the problem of representation. On the one hand, Deleuze's entire philosophical system is founded upon his critique of representation and his quest for an "other knowledge": an intuitive-creative kind of knowledge which gives us an immediate access to things by way of "singular concepts", concepts appropriate to the very thing for which they were created. On the other hand, Sellars' philosophical enterprise has been marked decidedly by his critique of "the myth of the given", a critique of the very possibility of intuitive, immediate knowledge: knowledge can only be representative-normative, for Sellars, for, as he put it, to characterize an episode as *knowledge* is to place it in "the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says." By contrasting Deleuze and Sellars with regards to the problem of representation, this dissertation is intent on highlighting the necessity of reopening the question of the possibility of representation, not only in philosophy and cultural theory, but in arts and literature as well.

SAŽETAK

Uvodni dio najavljuje temu i postavlja je u povijesni kontekst. Drugim riječima, definira se problem reprezentacije kao, općenito govoreći, problem odnosa uma i svijeta, odnosno misli i bitka te pokazuje kako se mijenjao njegov status kroz povijest od Platona do romantizma, te od romantizma do naših dana, da bi se potom ukazalo na nužnost reaktualizacije ovog problemskog sklopa uslijed recentnog obrata k realizmu u filozofiji, teoriji i umjetnosti. Potom se obrazlaže izbor Gillesa Deleuzea i Wilfrida Sellarsa kao ključnih figura projekta te ističe metodološki izazov koji predstavlja pokušaj uspostave komunikacije između ove dvojice filozofa kao pripadnika dviju zasebnih filozofskih tradicija.

Disertacija se sastoji od devet poglavlja podijeljenih u dva dijela. Prvi se dio sastoji od pet poglavlja i posvećen je Deleuzeu, dok se drugi sastoji od tri poglavlja posvećena Sellarsu. Deveto posljednje poglavlja suprotstavlja Deleuzea i Sellarsa s obzirom na problem reprezentacije.

Namjera je prvog dijela disertacije prikazati Deleuzeovu kritiku „svijeta reprezentacije“, kako je ona izložena u njegovoj najznačajnijoj knjizi *Razlika i ponavljanje* (1968.). Kao osnovni interpretativni okvir uz pomoć kojega se pristupa Deleuzeovoj filozofiji uzet je Nietzscheov programatski proglas prema kojemu je obrtanje Platonizma glavni zadatak moderne filozofije. Prvo poglavlje eksplicira ovu važnu tezu putem pomnog čitanja Deleuzeovog teksta „Platon i simulakrum“ (1967.) koji se eksplicitno bavi pitanjem obrtanja Platonizma. Drugo poglavlje potom se fokusira na tekst „Matezis, znanost i filozofija“ (1946.), u kojemu pronalazimo prvu artikulaciju Deleuzeove kritike reprezentacijske prirode znanosti i filozofije. Treće je poglavlje potom posvećeno Deleuzeovoj „Recenziji *Logike i egzistencije* Jeana Hyppolitea“ (1952.), gdje Deleuze ponovno suprotstavlja intuitivno poimanje filozofije definirane kao „ontologije smisla“ reprezentacijskom poimanju filozofije definirane kao „antroplogije“. Nastavljajući se na Hyppoliteovo čitanje Hegela, Deleuze proglašava da filozofija mora biti ontologija, ali da ne može biti ontologija esencije, već samo ontologija smisla. Ovu se tvrdnju eksplicira na pozadini Deleuzeove interpretacije Kantovog transcendentalnog obrata. Na tragu toga, četvrto poglavlje razvija temu Deleuzeove reinterpretacije Kantovog pojma

„transcendentalnog“ kroz analizu Deleuzeovog čitanja Henrija Bergsona. Pokazuje se da Deleuze interpretira Bergsona upravo kao nastavljača Kantovog transcendentalnog projekta, no nastavljača koji taj projekt u bitnome transformira. Ističe se da je Deleuzeovo bavljenje Bergsonom ključno za razumijevanje samog Deleuzeovog projekta kako je ovaj predstavljen u *Razlici i ponavljanju*, kojoj se disertacija okreće u petome poglavlju. Prvi dio poglavlja posvećen je Deleuzeovom prikazu svijeta reprezentacije, kako njegovom ontološkom (Aristotelovo analogijsko poimanje bitka), tako i epistemološkom aspektu („dogmatska slika misli“). Nakon prikaza temeljnih ontoloških i epistemoloških načela svijeta reprezentacije, disertacija nudi prikaz Deleuzeovog pokušaja prevrata ovoga svijeta, odnosno prikaz ontoloških („teza o univoknosti bitka“) i epistemoloških načela („transcendentna upotreba spoznajnih moći“) „svijeta simulakruma“ u kojemu je razlika primarna, a identitet iz nje izveden.

Drugi dio disertacije posvećen je Wilfridu Sellarsu, odnosno onim aspektima njegovog filozofijskog sustava koji se izravno tiču problema reprezentacije definiranog kao problema odnosa uma i svijeta. Šesto poglavlje nudi općeniti pregled Sellarsovog filozofskog sustava u cjelini i to čini čitanjem teksta „Filozofija i znanstvena slika svijeta“ (1962.), koji ne samo što predstavlja Sellarsov najznačajniji metafilozofijski iskaz, već i daje sažet pregled svih temeljnih postulata njegovog filozofijskog opusa. Sedmo poglavlje disertacije potom nudi prikaz jednog od najvažnijih aspekata Sellarsovog filozofijskog sustava, točnije njegove poznate kritike „mita danosti“, koja u biti predstavlja Sellarsovu kritiku tradicionalnog filozofijskog rješenja problema odnosa uma i svijeta. Prema Sellarsu, mit se danosti u svom najosnovnijem obliku sastoji od ideje da se kategorijalna struktura svijeta utiskuje izravno u um, odnosno da postoji izravna uzročna veza između inteligibilne strukture svijeta i uma. Nakon Sellarsove kritike tradicionalnog poimanja problema reprezentacije osmo poglavlje donosi prikaz Sellarsovog naturalističko-normativnog poimanja odnosa uma i svijeta. Prvi dio poglavlja posvećen je prikazu normativne dimenzije Sellarsove koncepcije, točnije Sellarsovoj normativnoj teoriji značenja, referencije i istine. Drugi dio poglavlja potom pokazuje na koji je način takva normativna dimenzija *uzročno* povezana s „prirodnim prostorom uzroka“. Ključnu ulogu u tome ima Sellarsov pojam „slikanja“ (*picturing*).

Posljednje, deveto poglavlje disertacije suprotstavlja Deleuzea i Sellarsa s obzirom na problem reprezentacije. Suprotstavljeni stavovi ove dvojice filozofa o problemu

reprezentacije dovode se u vezu prvo s njihovim različitim poimanjima naturalizma, a potom i s obzirom na njihove oprečne stavove o pitanju važnosti Kantovog kritičkog projekta za suvremenu filozofiju. Ova rasprava ukazuje da Deleuzeova filozofija predstavlja pokušaj reafirmacije metafizičkih ambicija filozofije i otkriva zašto je taj pokušaj sporan iz perspektive Sellarsove reartikulacije Kantovog kritičkog nasljeđa. Također, pokazuje se zašto Deleuzeova kritika reprezentacije nije primjenjiva na Sellarsovo normativno-naturalističko poimanje odnosa uma i svijeta, kao i to da je Deleuzeovo poimanje odnosa misli i bitka itekako podložno Sellarsovoj kritici mita danosti.

Zaključna razmatranja koja zatvaraju disertaciju sintetiziraju rezultate istraživanja i ukazuju na glavne konzekvence suprotstavljanja ove dvojice velikana kontinentalne, odnosno analitičke filozofije u kontekstu suvremene filozofijsko-teorijske scene. Početak 21. stoljeća u kontinentalnoj filozofiji i teoriji najsnažnije je obilježila pojava spekulativnog realizma. S jedne strane, spekulativni realizam može se smatrati nastavkom tzv. „ontološkog obrata“ u kontinentalnoj filozofiji kojega je započeo Deleuze. S druge je pak strane za razvoj spekulativnog realizma itekako presudan bio utjecaj Raya Brassiera, odnosno njegovo okretanje Sellarsovoj filozofiji. Suprotstavljanjem Deleuzea i Sellarsa disertacija razotkriva dvije temeljne mogućnosti daljnjeg razvoja spekulativnog realizma. Oni kojima ne smeta Deleuzeov eksplicitno metafizički način filozofijskog mišljenja, nastavit će razvijati metafizički realizam na Deleuzeovom tragu. S druge pak strane, oni koji i dalje ozbiljno uzimaju Kantov kritički proglas o nemogućnosti metafizičke spoznaje, mogu upravo u Sellarsu pronaći ključnog saveznika za razvoj transcendentalnog realizma. Metafizički ili nemetafizički, trasncendentalni realizam - to je izbor koji ova disertacija suprotstavljanjem Deleuzea i Sellarsa nameće.

Keywords: Gilles Deleuze, Wilfrid Sellars, the problem of representation, the critique of representation, the myth of the given, intuitive-creative conception of thought and knowledge, representative-normative conception of thought and knowledge, the logical space of reasons.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Ever since Plato, the problem of representation has occupied a crucial place in Western philosophy, art theory in general and literary theory in particular. Plato was indeed the first to draw the basic coordinates of this problematic nexus. In the most general terms, the problem of representation can be defined as the problem of the relation between thought and being, or mind and world. But while in philosophy this problem was constituted by Plato's question of the relation between intelligible essences (Ideas, Forms) and sensible appearances (images, copies), for art theory and literary theory the fundamental question was the one regarding the relation between the artwork (the simulacrum or the copy of the copy) and the sensible appearance itself (the copy), a relation that Plato himself marks with the term *mimesis*. Normativity constitutes an essential dimension of the problem of representation: a sensible appearance can either be a good or a bad copy, a true or a false image of an intelligible essence/Idea, and likewise an artwork can either be a good or a bad copy of the copy.

Although it was given many different formulations throughout history, beginning already with Aristotle, the problem of representation retained these basic coordinates and remained a central problem of philosophy, art and literature all the way up to Kant's Copernican Revolution in philosophy, and Romanticism in arts and literature. Kant's transcendental idealism proclaims the question of the conditions of possibility of cognition or experience in general as *the* fundamental problem of philosophy and knowledge of the thing-in-itself as impossible. The consequences of Kant's revolutionary redefinition of the whole philosophical field were indeed fateful for the problem of representation. Already the post-Kantians (S. Maimon, J. G. Fichte, F. W. J. Schelling, G. W. F. Hegel), began to question the numerous dualisms upon which Kant's philosophy was founded, the dualism of appearance and thing-in-itself being the most problematic of course, and proclaimed the demand for the overcoming and abolition of all these dualisms as the fundamental task of philosophy after Kant. Consequently, the problem of representation, founded as it was on these very dualisms, was to be overcome and abolished as well. Parallel to these tendencies in philosophy, Romanticism marks the turn away from the *mimetic* and towards an *expressive* conception of arts and

literature. By the same token, *normativity* as the basic determination of all poetics before Romanticism was replaced with *creativity* as the fundamental principle of art (and literature) after Romanticism. The reciprocal influence of post-Kantian philosophy and the Romantic arts is impossible to overemphasize: never before have philosophy and the arts achieved such a state of symbiosis. To what extent did the philosophers of that era influence the artists and vice versa is virtually impossible to say. But one thing is certain: this symbiosis between art and philosophy essentially defines the whole of Modern age, which starts with Romanticism and ends with Postmodernism. The critique of representation on the one hand, and the upholding of creativity as the fundamental principle not only of artistic creation, but also of philosophical thought on the other, form the basic coordinates of this period in time. With regards to philosophy, if the post-Kantians are to be considered as the inaugurators of this project, and F. Nietzsche and M. Heidegger as its main successors, surely the thinkers of French post-structuralism (G. Deleuze, J. Derrida, M. Foucault, J.F. Lyotard) are deserving of the title of its final executors. In fact, it is precisely for the post-structuralists that the critique of representation becomes the condition of liberation of creativity of philosophical thought from the normative fetters which bound it in the "world of representation". The result of this liberation is a philosophical thinking and writing which tends towards achieving the Romantic ideal of a perfect union of philosophy, arts and the sciences. Some of the most experimental texts of French post-structuralism have really come close to achieving this ideal (cf. *A Thousand Plateaus* by Deleuze and Guattari). Under the influence of these tendencies in philosophy, the critique of representation has spread all across the humanities, so as to become a commonplace of the humanities of the second half of the 20th century.

But at the start of the 21st century the voices that are beginning to question this "anti-representationalist consensus" are becoming increasingly louder. Particularly important in this regard is a group of philosophers gathered under the name of "Speculative Realism" (R. Brassier, Q. Meillassoux, I. H. Grant and G. Harman). Although they never operated as a unified group, a school or a movement, what all these philosophers have in common is a shared desire to reopen a whole host of problems that philosophy after Kant deemed to be closed once and for all. Certainly the most important in this regard is the problem which already Kant considered to be meaningless: the problem of the possibility of knowledge of reality independent of our forms of knowledge. For Ray Brassier, who organised the first conference that gathered this group of philosophers and gave it the name of "speculative

realism" (but was also the first to distance himself from any invocation of speculative realism as a philosophical movement), the precondition of the positive answer to this question lies precisely in the rehabilitation of the problem and concept of representation, and together with it of all those distinctions on which this problem was traditionally founded upon: being – meaning, knowing – feeling, reality – appearance, sensibility – intelligibility, concept – object. Brassier finds a major ally to this project in Wilfrid Sellars, a highly influential yet, outside of the specialist circles, almost completely unknown analytic philosopher of the second half of the 20th century. In Sellars' normative conception of knowledge Brassier discovers a model of representation, which is not subject to the critiques of the post-structuralists, and which is capable of thinking reality as independent of knowledge on the one hand, but also of conceiving knowledge as immanent to reality on the other. In short, according to Sellars, knowledge (or "the normative space of reasons") is *causally reducible*, yet *conceptually irreducible* to reality (or "the natural space of causes").

This dissertation grows out of and continues Brassier's project of the rehabilitation of the problem and concept of representation. A confrontation with some of the most significant critiques of representation that have appeared in the second half of the 20th century certainly represent a necessary precondition of such a project. Without doubt, Gilles Deleuze's philosophical *oeuvre* constitutes one of the most sustained and systematic critical clashes with the "world of representation" as a whole. Add to this that Deleuze's critique of representation arises out of his intuitive-creative conception of philosophical thought, and it becomes clear that Deleuze's philosophy represents the best possible example of the tendency described earlier which starts with Romanticism and ends with Postmodernism. From this follows the intention of this dissertation to confront Deleuze's critique of representation, grounded as it is in his intuitive-creative conception of thought, with Sellars' critique of the "myth of the given", grounded as it is in his normative-representative conception of thought.

With regards to methodology, certainly the greatest challenge lies in establishing the communication between Deleuze and Sellars, who as representatives of two opposed philosophical traditions, Continental and analytic respectively, speak in fundamentally different languages and rely upon fundamentally different methodologies. But despite all their differences, there are few crucial methodological similarities between them. Both Deleuze and Sellars pay equal attention to the history of philosophy on the one hand, and to the

problematic approach to that history on the other. But it is important to emphasize that Deleuze's and Sellars' problematic approach to the history of philosophy is well grounded in careful and detailed textual analyses of the works of philosophers whose concepts and problems they engage. Following their lead, this dissertation will likewise ground its engagement with Deleuze's and Sellars' concepts and problems in a careful and detailed analysis of their works on the one hand, but it will also insist on historically contextualising the concepts and problems that these works articulate on the other.

Let us now provide a brief overview of the main contours of the dissertation as a whole. The dissertation is divided into nine chapters, the first five of which are dedicated to Deleuze, and the latter three to Sellars. After the exposition of their views is complete, the last chapter stages the confrontation between the two of them.

The aim of the first part of the dissertation is to provide an account of Deleuze's critique of the "world of representation" as it is laid out in *Difference and Repetition*. Deleuze's programmatic pronouncement to the effect that the task of modern philosophy is to reverse Platonism is taken as the interpretative framework in terms of which Deleuze's early work as a whole is to be approached. The first chapter explicates this thesis by way of a close reading of "Plato and the Simulacrum" (1967), the text in which Deleuze explicitly addresses the theme of the reversal of Platonism. The second chapter focuses in turn on one of Deleuze's earliest published texts, namely "Mathesis, Science and Philosophy" (1946). Here we find the first articulation of Deleuze's critique of the representational nature of science and philosophy based as they both are on numerous dualisms (subject-object, thought-being) and an affirmation of *mathesis universalis* as an overcoming of all these dualisms in an intuitive knowledge of life. The third chapter is dedicated to Deleuze's "Review of Jean Hyppolite's *Logic and Existence*" (1952), where Deleuze once again contrasts an intuitive conception of philosophy as "ontology of sense" to a representational conception of philosophy as "anthropology". The theme of Deleuze's reinterpretation of Kant's notion of the transcendental is then developed further through an engagement with Deleuze's various writings on Bergson in chapter four. It is shown that Deleuze reads Bergson precisely as continuing and transforming Kant's transcendental project. Once again, the distinction between intuition and representation is revealed as the axis around which Deleuze's reading of Bergson revolves. Chapter five is dedicated to an exploration of *Difference and Repetition.*

The first part of the chapter consists of an exposition of Deleuze's account of the world of representation. This is further divided into two sections: the first section focuses on the ontological account of this world as it is presented in the first chapter of *Difference and Repetition;* the second one to the epistemological account as it is laid out in the "Image of Thought" chapter. After this, the next two sections provide Deleuze's critique of the ontological and epistemological aspects of the world of representation accompanied by an overview, first, of Deleuze's account of the thesis of "the univocity of Being", and then by his account of thought in terms of "the transcendent exercise of the faculties", both of which are constitutive of the world of differences or simulacra.

The second part of the dissertation turns to Wilfrid Sellars and provides an account of those aspects of his philosophical system which can be construed as addressing the problem of representation, that is, the relation between the mind and the world. In order to do this it is first necessary to present an overview of Sellars' philosophical system as a whole which is why chapter six consists of a close engagement with Sellars' programmatic meta-philosophical piece "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man" (1962) which provides the best possible entryway into Sellars' philosophical edifice. Chapter seven then explores one of the most important aspects of Sellars' philosophical system, namely his critique of "the myth of the given" which is nothing other than Sellars' critique of the traditional articulation of representation. As we shall learn there, the myth of the given in its most basic form consists of the idea that the categorial structure of the world imprints itself directly onto the mind. Chapter eight presents an overview of Sellars' normative-naturalist account of representation. The first part of the chapter explores the normative dimension of Sellars' conception, namely his normative theory of meaning, reference and truth; and the second part explores Sellars' notion of *picturing* which is responsible for providing the causal link between the normative and the natural orders, or between the mind and the world.

Chapter nine stages a confrontation between Deleuze and Sellars with regards to the problem of representation by showing how their contrasting perspectives on representation stem from their common commitment to naturalism on the one hand and their opposing views on Kant's critical legacy on the other. This confrontation shows that Deleuze's philosophy constitutes an attempt to reaffirm metaphysical ambitions of philosophy and reveals why such an attempt is problematic from the perspective of Sellars' rearticulation of Kant's critical project. It is

furthermore revealed that Deleuze's critique of representation does not apply to Sellars' normative-naturalist conception of the mind-world relation, while at the same time Deleuze's conception of the thought-being relation is guilty of being an instance of Sellars' myth of the given.

The conclusion will provide a synthesis of the results of the research performed, and indicate the most important consequences of the contrast staged between these two great philosophers for contemporary Continental philosophy and theory. The appearance of speculative realism has marked decidedly the world of Continental philosophy and theory at the beginning of the 21st century. On the one hand, speculative realism can be considered a continuation of the so called "ontological turn" first initiated by Deleuze. On the other hand, it could be argued that Ray Brassier with his turn towards Sellars' philosophy has been just as significant for the development of speculative realism. By contrasting Deleuze and Sellars this dissertation reveals two fundamental possibilities for the future development of speculative realism. Those unconcerned with Deleuze's explicitly metaphysical conception of philosophical thought can follow Deleuze further along his metaphysical path. On the other hand, to those who still find compelling Kant's critical injunction against dogmatic metaphysics, the Sellarsian re-articulation of Kant's critical project might seem like a more promising path to take. By contrasting Deleuze and Sellars this dissertation reveals that the choice facing Continental realism today is stark – either a metaphysical or a non-metaphysical and transcendental realism.

1. DELEUZE'S REVERSAL OF PLATONISM

„The task of modern philosophy has been defined: the reversal (*renversement*) of Platonism" (Deleuze 1994a, 59, tm). Many have attempted to accomplish this formidable task first formulated explicitly by Friedrich Nietzsche.[1] But few, if any, of these attempts have been as sustained and as compelling as the one advanced by Gilles Deleuze. Indeed, it might well be argued that Deleuze's monumental philosophical edifice is nothing but a particularly sustained attempt to reverse Platonism. Having a precise grasp of the nature of Deleuze's complicated relation to Platonism is thus paramount if we are to comprehend Deleuze's philosophical system as a whole. Let us embark on this journey by making our way through a *locus classicus* of Deleuze's *oeuvre* which explicitly addresses the theme of the reversal of Platonism, namely "Plato and the Simulacrum" (1967).

Surely, the first question to ask is the very same question with which Deleuze opens his text:"What does it mean 'to reverse Platonism?'" (Deleuze 1967, 253). Nietzsche himself seems to have believed that the reversal of Platonism implies the abolition of both the world of essences as well as the world of appearances. In "How the 'Real World' at Last Became a myth" Nietzsche famously claims: "We have abolished the real world: what world is left? the apparent world perhaps? . . . But no! *with the real world we have also abolished the apparent world!*" (Nietzsche 1990, 51). But Deleuze warns against such an interpretation: "the dual denunciation of essences and appearances dates back to Hegel or, better yet, to Kant" (ibid.), and thereby cannot be considered peculiar to Nietzsche.

According to Deleuze, if we are to understand the meaning of the reversal of Platonism, we first have to track down and make explicit the motivation behind Plato's theory of Ideas. And for Deleuze, this motive is to be sought in "a will to select and to choose. It is a question of 'making a difference', of distinguishing the 'thing' itself from its images, the original from the copy, the model from the simulacrum" (ibid.). Plato's *method of division* is devised precisely in order to address this problem. Deleuze is quick to point out that Plato's method of

[1] „My philosophy is an *inverted Platonism*: the farther removed from true being, the purer, the finer, the better it is. Living in semblance as goal" (Nietzsche, *Grossoktavausgabe* (Leipzig, 1905 ff.), as cited in Smith 2012, 4).

division is not to be confused with the Aristotelian "division of genus into contrary species in order to subsume the thing investigated under the appropriate species" (ibid., 254). Platonic dialectic is "neither a dialectic of contradiction nor of contrariety, but a dialectic of rivalry *amhisbetesis*)"; consequently, the real purpose of Platonic division is not to divide a genus into contrary species, but "to select lineages: to distinguish pretenders; to distinguish pure from the impure; the authentic from the inauthentic" (ibid.). Finally, its essence is "to screen the claims (*pretensions*) and to distinguish the true pretender from the false one" (ibid.).

Interestingly enough, in order to achieve this aim, Plato's method of division draws upon the power of myth. That is to say, in most of Plato's dialogues which feature the method of division, most notably *Statesman* and *Phaedrus*, the criterion of selection by which true pretenders are distinguished from the false ones is extracted from a myth. Myth and dialectic may very well be two distinct powers within Platonism in general; yet in the method of division this dualism is overcome and dialectical and mythical powers reunited. "Myth, with its always circular structure, is indeed the story of a foundation. It permits the construction of a model according to which the different pretenders can be judged. What needs a foundation, in fact, is always a pretension or a claim. It is the pretender who appeals to the foundation, whose claim may be judged well-founded, ill-founded, or unfounded" (ibid., 255.).

Only this foundation can be said to possess something (a quality) in a primary way. The foundation then allows the claimant to *participate* in this something, that is, the claimant can, at best, be said to possess something in a secondary way and insofar as he has been able to pass the test of the foundation (ibid.). This hierarchy of participation continues with those claimants that can be said to possess something in the third, fourth or fifth way and goes "on to an infinity of degradation culminating in the one who possesses no more than a simulacrum, a mirage – the one who is himself a mirage and simulacrum" (ibid.). Justice alone, for instance, can be said to be just, according to Plato, and all those who can be said to possess the quality of being just, possess this quality only in the second, third, fourth way...

In light of this, Deleuze highlights a distinction he sees as crucial for defining the motivation of Platonism more precisely. Plato, according to Deleuze's reading, distinguishes between two kinds of images-idols: *copies-icons* on the one hand, and *simulacra-phantasms* on the other (ibid., 256). "*Copies* are secondary possessors. They are well-founded pretenders, guaranteed by resemblance; *simulacra* are like false pretenders, built upon a dissimilarity"

(ibid.). Following from this, the true motivation of Platonism, for Deleuze, is not to distinguish the Idea from its image, the original from a copy, or the model from a simulacrum; it has to do instead "with selecting among the pretenders, distinguishing good and bad copies or, rather, copies (always well-founded) and simulacra (always engulfed in dissimilarity). It is a question of assuring the triumph of the copies over simulacra, of repressing simulacra, keeping them completely submerged, preventing them from climbing to the surface, and 'insinuating themselves' everywhere" (ibid., 257).

So, in Deleuze's interpretation, the true motivation of Plato's theory of Ideas is to uphold the distinction between two kinds of images, namely copies and simulacra, and to provide a criterion or principle of selection among them (ibid.). Copies and simulacra are indeed to be distinguished in terms of their respective relations to Ideas. As we have just seen, copies can be said to be well-founded pretenders or good images because they are endowed with *resemblance*. But resemblance in this case is not to be understood as "an external relation" between two different things, but as an "internal relation" between a thing and an Idea. "The copy truly resembles something only to the degree that it resembles the Idea of that thing (...) It is the superior identity of the Idea which founds the good pretension of the copies, as it bases it on an internal or derived resemblance" (ibid.).

Simulacra, on the other hand, are images without resemblance, false images grounded on a dissimilarity. "That to which they pretend (the object, the quality etc.), they pretend to underhandedly, under cover of an aggression, an insinuation, a subversion, 'against the father', and without passing through the Idea. Theirs is an unfounded pretension, concealing a dissimilarity which is an internal imbalance" (ibid.). Yet although simulacra "internalize a dissimilarity" and are "built upon a disparity or upon a difference", they nonetheless produce an 'effect' or an 'impression' of resemblance: "but this is an effect of the whole, completely external and produced by totally different means than those at work within the model (...) an effect obtained by ruse or subversion" (ibid., 258).

Therefore, copies and simulacra can be said to constitute two opposite ways of arriving at resemblance. Two formulas encapsulate this dualism: "only that which resembles differs" and "only differences can resemble each other" (ibid., 261). According to Deleuze, "these are two distinct readings of the world: one invites us to think difference from the standpoint of a previous similitude or identity; whereas the other invites us to think similitude and even

identity as the product of a deep disparity. The first reading precisely defines the world of copies or representation; it posits the world as icon. The second, contrary to the first, defines the world of simulacra; it posits the world itself as phantasm" (ibid., 261-262). The world of copies or representation is a world founded by Platonism. This world, as we have seen, has the Idea or "the Same" as its foundation (that which possesses something in the primary way) and is populated by the copies-icons or "the Similar" (the pretender which possesses something in the secondary way in virtue of its resemblance to the foundation) (ibid., 259). In this world, the simulacra-phantasms, as that which is founded on difference and endowed with dissimilarity, are to be "repressed as deeply as possible", and "shut up in a cavern at the bottom at the Ocean" (ibid.).

Finally we arrive at Deleuze's answer to the question with which we opened our investigation: "So 'to reverse Platonism' means to make the simulacra rise and to affirm their rights among icons and copies. The problem no longer has to do with the distinction Essence-Appearance or Model-Copy. This distinction operates completely within the world of representation. Rather, it has to do with undertaking the subversion of this world – the 'twilight of the idols.' The simulacrum is not a degraded copy. It harbours a positive power which denies *the original and the copy, the model and the reproduction*" (ibid., 262).

Contrary to Platonism for which simulacra are to be defined in negative terms as infinitely degraded copies, for Deleuze, 'the reversal of Platonism' begins precisely with the affirmation of the positive power of the simulacra to deny the very distinction between the original and the copy upon which the world of representation is founded. By denying this distinction the simulacra are able to undertake the subversion of this world, and inaugurate in its stead a world of their own. In the world of simulacra, "resemblance subsists, but it is produced as the external effect of the simulacrum, inasmuch as it is built upon divergent series and makes them resonate. Identity subsists, but it is produced as the law which complicates all the series and makes them all return to each one in the course of the forced movement. In the reversal of Platonism, resemblance is said of internalized difference, and identity of the Different as primary power. The same and the similar no longer have an essence except as *simulated*, that is as expressing the functioning of the simulacrum" (ibid., 262).

Deleuze warns against conflating *simulation* with appearance or illusion: simulation designates the power of the simulacra to produce an *effect*, and therefore it is fully real (ibid.,

263). Yet it would also be a mistake to think of this effect in *causal* terms only: "It is intended rather in the sense of a 'sign' issued from a process of signalization; it is in the sense of a 'costume', or rather a mask, expressing a process of disguising, where behind each mask, there is yet another..." (ibid.). This process of signalization or disguising is clearly infinite in principle and as such points to another important aspect of the simulacrum: "Far from being a new foundation, it (the simulacrum) engulfs all foundations, it assures a universal breakdown (*effondrement*), but as a joyful and positive event, as an un-founding (*effondement*)" (ibid.).

Deleuze invokes Nietzsche's eternal return as crucial for the process of simulation and consequently the reversal of Platonism: "Simulation understood in this way is inseparable from the eternal return, for it is in the eternal return that the reversal of the icons or the subversion of the world of representation is decided" (ibid.). According to Deleuze's admittedly highly controversial interpretation, it is a mistake to read Nietzsche's idea of the eternal return as an expression of a cyclical conception of time or as the eternal return of the *same*.[2] What the thought of the eternal return affirms instead is the exact opposite, i.e. the return of the Different: "Between the eternal return and the simulacrum, there is such a profound link that one cannot be understood except through the other. Only the divergent series, insofar as they are divergent, return: that is, each series insofar as it displaces its difference along with all the others, and all series insofar as they complicate their difference within the chaos which is without beginning or end" (ibid., 264). It is precisely by affirming that only that which differs returns, that the eternal return constitutes the Same and the Similar:

> The simulacrum functions in such a way that a certain resemblance is necessarily thrown back onto its basic series and a certain identity necessarily projected on the forced movement. Thus, the eternal return is, in fact, the Same and the Similar, but only insofar as they are simulated, produced by the simulation, through the functioning of the simulacrum (the will to power). It is in this sense that it reverses representation and destroys the icons. It does not presuppose the Same and the Similar; on the contrary, it constitutes the only Same – the Same of that which differs, and the only resemblance – the resemblance of the unmatched. It is the unique phantasm of all simulacra (the Being of all beings). It is the power to affirm divergence and

[2] For an exegetical account of the series of translation mistakes which resulted in Deleuze's interpretation see D'Iorio (2011).

> decentering and makes this power the object of superior affirmation. It is under the power of the false pretender causing that which *is* to happen again and again. (ibid.)

Finally, Deleuze reveals that the eternal return has the same function in the world of simulacra to the one that the theory of Ideas had in the world of representation, i.e. that it is a principle of selection: "And it does not make *everything* come back. It is still selective, it 'makes a difference', but not at all in the manner of Plato. What is selected are all the procedures opposed to selection; what is excluded, what is *made not to* return, is that which presupposes the Same and the Similar, that which pretends to correct divergence, to recenter the circles or order the chaos, and to provide a model or make a copy" (ibid., 265).

Presented in this highly condensed fashion, Deleuze's ideas cannot but seem rather cryptic at this point. Let us summarise them before we proceed further in explicating them.

The motivation behind Plato's theory of Ideas is to distinguish icons-copies or true images from simulacra-phantasms or false images. The Ideas provide precisely the criterion of selection needed to uphold and decide this distinction. Icon-copies are those images which are endowed with resemblance in relation to Ideas, while the simulacra-phantasms are images built upon a dissimilarity which can only produce an effect or an impression of resemblance. This is why copies-icons can be said to be well founded and simulacra-phantasms unfounded pretenders. Platonism thus defined founds the world of representation or icons. The Idea or the Same is the foundation of this world, the copy or the Similar its rightful inhabitant, and the simulacrum as that which differs is to be repressed or excluded from it. In other words, the world of representation is defined by the primacy of identity over difference: difference is subordinated to and can only be conceived in terms of identity.

'To reverse Platonism' is to release the simulacra from their shackles, make them rise, destroy the icons and subvert the world of representation. In the world of simulacra identity and resemblance subsist but only as simulated, that is, only as the effects of the functioning of the simulacrum. The eternal return affirms the primary power of the simulacrum, that is, it affirms that only that which differs returns. In doing so, in a second, superior affirmation, the eternal return affirms the Same and the Similar of the Different and the Dissimilar, that is, it constitutes identity and resemblance as the effects of difference and dissimilarity. By affirming that only that which differs returns, the eternal return effectuates a selection and

excludes everything which presupposes the Same and the Similar. It is precisely by not presupposing the Same and the Similar, but in constituting them as products of the Different and the Dissimilar that the simulacrum and the eternal return in a joint action destroy the icons and subvert the world of representation.

To put it in the simplest possible terms, 'to reverse Platonism' is to reverse the relation between identity and difference which defines the world of representation. While in the world of representation, difference is to be conceived as subordinated to identity, in the world of simulacra, constituted as it is by the reversal of Platonism, identity is to be thought of as a product of difference which is affirmed as a primary power. If it is true that Deleuze's entire philosophical enterprise is best read as a sustained attempt to reverse Platonism thus defined, there is little doubt that Deleuze's masterpiece *Difference and Repetition* represents the most compelling chapter of this formidable venture. For it is in this book precisely that Deleuze undertakes his most systematic attempt to explicitly think difference and repetition as released from the requirements of representation; that is, to think *difference in itself* (or the simulacrum), i.e., difference not subordinated to identity; and *repetition for itself* (the eternal return of the Different), i.e., repetition not reduced to generality (or the eternal return of the Same).

Difference and Repetition is a book as brilliant as it is difficult. In order to make sure that our engagement with it does not turn into a missed encounter, we shall first mine a few select places in Deleuze's early *oeuvre* for insights which will then guide our confrontation with this daunting book. Before we turn to these early writings of Deleuze, a few preliminary remarks are in order. The early period of Deleuze's work, beginning in 1945 with the publication of the "Description of Woman", consists almost exclusively of writings in which Deleuze engages in exposition and commentary of important figures from the history of philosophy and culminates precisely with the publication of *Difference and Repetition*, the first book in which he tried not merely to commentate on the work of others but to "'do philosophy'" in his own name (Deleuze 1994a, xv). In approaching these early writings, there is always a concern about the danger of attributing to Deleuze claims that should in fact be attributed to the subjects of his studies. In other words, in these early writings it is not always easy to discern Deleuze's own voice from the voices of the figures Deleuze is writing about. On this point more than ever it is important to let Deleuze speak for himself. In a passage from his "Letter

to a Harsh Critic", one of the most famous and often cited passages of his entire *oeuvre*, Deleuze describes his relation to the history of philosophy:

> I belong to a generation, one of the last generations, that was more or less bludgeoned to death with the history of philosophy. The history of philosophy plays a patently repressive role in philosophy, it's philosophy's own version of the Oedipus complex: "You can't seriously consider saying what you yourself think until you've read this and that, and that on this, and this on that." (...) But I suppose the main way I coped with it at the time was to see the history of philosophy as a sort of buggery or (it comes to the same thing) immaculate conception. I saw myself as taking an author from behind and giving him a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous. It was really important for it to be his own child, because the author had to actually say all I had him saying. But the child was bound to be monstrous too, because it resulted from all sorts of shifting, slipping, dislocations, and hidden emissions that I really enjoyed. (Deleuze 1995, 5-6)

His colourful language aside, Deleuze could hardly be any more unequivocal than this. Clearly, Deleuze was committed to grounding his reading of a particular author on the actual writings of the author in question. Yet, given Deleuze's admission that his readings were the result of all sorts of "shifting, slipping, dislocations, and hidden emissions" to which he subjected these writings, there is little doubt as to whose voice we hear in these early commentaries: a single and same voice speaks through all of these many different authors – always and solely Deleuze's own voice. Deleuze's tendency to speak through other figures from the history of philosophy has quite appropriately been dubbed as 'ventriloquism' in the secondary literature and in what follows we will refer to it by this name also.[3] Certainly, doubts may still remain as to our adoption of this interpretative strategy in approaching Deleuze's early writings. The only way to alleviate them is to make sure that our later reading of *Difference and Repetition* confirms as Deleuze's own the claims that we'll attribute to him in the course of our readings of his early works.

[3] See for instance Hughes 2012, 6-9.

2. *MATHESIS UNIVERSALIS* OR THE UNITY OF KNOWLEDGE

Let us now turn to the first of these early writings of Deleuze that will later prove as invaluable for our reading of *Difference and Repetition*, namely "Mathesis, Science and Philosophy".[4] This text was first published as an introduction to a 1946 republication of the French translation of Johann Malfatti de Montereggio's work of esoteric philosophy *Mathesis: or Studies on the Anarchy and Hierarchy of Knowledge*.[5] Deleuze was merely twenty one at the time and it was the second of his articles to ever get published. Interestingly enough, later on in life Deleuze will go on to repudiate this text along with all the others published prior to 1953. Because of this it might seem tempting to follow Deleuze's cue and discard this text as a piece of interesting yet ultimately irrelevant juvenilia. But this would be a grave mistake. For not only, as we shall shortly see, does "Mathesis, Science and Philosophy" contain *in nuce* what will later become some of the central themes of Deleuze's philosophical system, but it also reveals what would otherwise remain an undisclosed (yet potentially highly illuminating) influence on Deleuze, that of esoteric thought in general and Johann Malfatti in particular. With regards to the latter, although the precise nature of Deleuze's relationship to the tradition of esoteric thought and to Malfatti as one of its prominent figures need not concern us here, as some commentators have convincingly shown, that there was in fact such a connection and that it is not to be discarded lightly should by now be a matter of little debate. Christian Kerslake has so far done the most to unearth this admittedly unexpected and somewhat uncomfortable presence in Deleuze's work, most notably in his study *Deleuze and the Unconscious* (2007a). Without any desire whatsoever to delve into the details that a full blown confrontation with the question of the significance of esoteric thought for Deleuze would require, the best we can do on this account is to laconically agree with Kerslake (2007a, 125): Deleuze has indeed looked everywhere for

[4] Gilles Deleuze, "Mathesis, Science and Philosophy", in *Collapse: Philosophical Research and Development*, R. Mackay (tr. and ed.), Urbanomic: Falmouth, 2007.

[5] Johann Malfatti de Montereggio, *Studien über Anarchie und Hierarchie des Wissens: mit besonderer Beziehung auf die Medicin*, Brockhaus: Leipzig, 1845. French tranlsation: Jean Malfatti de Montereggio, *Études sur la mathèse ou anarchie et hiérarchie de la science avec une Application spéciale de la Médicine*, Editions du Giffon d'Or: Paris, 1946.

ideas which could aid him in developing his philosophical system. Few remarks on Malfatti and his work are in order though so as to provide some context for the uninitiated reader.

Johann Malfatti de Montereggio (1775 – 1859) was a Viennese physician of Italian origin, working in the German Romantic tradition and a follower of Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*, most notable in his time for being a personal physician to members of Napoleon Bonaparte's family and to Ludwig van Beethoven.[6] His most important and influential work is the already mentioned *Studien über Anarchie und Hierarchie des Wissens, mit besonderer Beziehung auf die Medicin* (Studies on the Anarchy and Hierarchy of Knowledge, with special reference to Medicine) published in Leipzig in 1845. French translation by Christien Ostrowski followed soon after in 1849 under the title *Études sur la mathèse ou anarchie et hiérarchie de la science avec une Application spéciale de la Médicine* and it was the revised version of this translation that was reissued with Deleuze's introduction added to it in 1946. This French translation of Malfatti's book has had a major influence on the development of occult and esoteric philosophy in the second half of nineteenth century France.

The book consists of five separate yet interrelated studies under the following titles:

1. 'Mathesis as Hieroglyph or Symbolism of the Triple Life of the Universe, or the Mystical Organon of the Ancient Indians' - "a detailed account of the principles of esoteric numerology" (Kerslake 2007b, 1);
2. 'Only in the Process, Not in the Product' – "a development of Schellingian *Naturphilosophie*, with frequent reference to alchemy" (ibid.);
3. 'On the Architectonic of the Human Organism, Or the Triple Life in the Egg and the Triple Egg in Life' – "an application of a nature-philosophical notion of embryogenesis to the whole of human life" (ibid.);
4. 'On Rhythm and Type, Consensus and Antagonism in General, and Particularly in Man' - an analysis of periodicity in physiology" (ibid.);
5. 'On the Double Sex in General and on Human Sex in Particular,' - "an analysis of human sexuality from the perspective of the esoteric notion of the hermaphrodite" (ibid.).

For readers familiar with Deleuze's *oeuvre* even a cursory glance at the titles of these five studies must be uncanny. Virtually all the crucial notions and themes of Malfatti's book

[6] This brief sketch of Malfatti's life and work is completely indebted to Kerslake's account. See Kerslake 2007a, 124-126; 2007b, 1.

appear in one form or another throughout both the early and late periods of Deleuze's work, even though Deleuze will never again, after writing the introduction, mention explicitly neither Malfatti nor his book. Admittedly though, explicit references to Malfatti and his book are rather scarce even in Deleuze's introduction itself. It may therefore be argued that Deleuze's relationship to Malfatti's esotericism is a prime example of aforementioned Deleuze's ventriloquism: Deleuze simply found in Malfatti the resources necessary to articulate his own concerns. This would in turn allow us to absolve Deleuze of subscribing to the more controversial esoteric commitments of Malfatti's work, although the question of Deleuze's relation to esotericism is clearly quite more complicated than this. But as we stated above, it is neither our task nor our intention to resolve it here. Let us turn our attention instead to the actual arguments of Deleuze's text.

Interestingly enough, the title of Malfatti's book has been slightly altered in the French translation so as to include the notion of *mathesis* (*Études sur la mathèse ou anarchie et hiérarchie de la science*) which features in the title of the first of the five studies but is absent from the German title of the book as a whole. Deleuze's introduction entitled "Mathesis, Science and Philosophy" takes precisely the notion of *mathesis* as its main focus and attempts to define it in relation to science on the one hand and philosophy on the other. According to Deleuze's prefatory notes to the text, such a definition inevitably "remains to some extent external to *mathesis* itself; it is simple, provisional, and tends only to show that, beyond any particular historical moment, *mathesis* describes one of the great ever-present attitudes of mind" (Deleuze 2007, 141). This is not to say, Deleuze continues, that *mathesis* can be abstracted from the plane of the Indian civilisation within which it was originally deployed; "but only that at the heart of our Western mentality can be discerned certain fundamental needs which, already, can only be satisfied by *mathesis* – as a sort of introduction a preface to itself" (ibid.). So, in Deleuze's reading, *mathesis* denotes an ever-present attitude of the mind and an answer to a fundamental need at the heart of Western mentality.

Deleuze's exploration of mathesis in terms of its relations to science and philosophy is divided into two parts. While the first part is intent on determining the *object* of mathesis in its contradistinction from science and philosophy, the second one does the same with regard to its *methodology*. Deleuze opens his discussion in the first part of the essay by outlining the dualism between science and philosophy with regard to their respective relations to the object:

"Science installs itself within the object, reconstructing or discovering reality itself at the level of the object of thought, without ever positing to itself the problem of the conditions of possibility. The philosopher, on the contrary, situates the object, as representation, in its relation to the cognising subject. (...) Thus a fundamental dualism poses itself within knowledge, between Science and Philosophy – the principle of an Anarchy. It is basically the Cartesian opposition between extended substance and thinking substance" (ibid., 142).

This fundamental dualism in knowledge between science and philosophy, that is, between the object of thought and the thinking subject, or between the extensive substance and thinking substance, or simply between being and thought needs to be overcome and hierarchy needs to be established where prior there was only anarchy. Interestingly enough, Descartes himself, the very philosopher who codified this dualism, "never renounced the unity of knowledge, the *mathesis universalis*" (ibid.). According to Deleuze's reading, given that the dualism between extension and thought is situated on a *theoretical* plane, Descartes clearly realized that their unity could only be affirmed on a *practical* plane, that is, as "the fact of their practical union" (ibid.). And this practical union of extension and thought is nothing other than the definition of *life* itself:

> Unity does not come about at the level of an abstract God transcending humanity, but in the very name of concrete life. (...) The unity, the hierarchy beyond all anarchic duality, is the unity of life itself, which delineates a third order, irreducible to the other two. Life is the unity of the soul as the idea of the body and of the body as the extension of the soul. Moreover, the two other orders, science and philosophy, physiology and psychology, tend to rediscover their lost unity at the level of living man. Beyond a psychology disincarnated in thought, and a physiology mineralised in matter, *mathesis* will be fulfilled only in a true medicine where life is defined as knowledge of life, and knowledge as life of knowledge. Hence the motto, 'Scientia vitae in vita scientiae'. (ibid., 143)

To achieve the unity of knowledge, the *mathesis universalis* (the universal science or universal knowledge) is, first, to overcome the theoretical dualism of mind and body by affirming *life* as their practical union, and, second, to overcome the dualism of science and philosophy by affirming the unity of knowledge and life: life is defined as knowledge of life, and knowledge as life of knowledge. This unity is achieved and these dualisms overcome at

the level of "living man". Therefore, it would be a mistake, Deleuze warns us, to think of *mathesis* as "a mystical lore, inaccessible and superhuman" (ibid.). For insofar as "*mathesis* deploys itself at the level of life, of living man, it is first and foremost a thinking of incarnation and of individuality. Essentially, *mathesis* would be the exact description of human nature" (ibid.). But how are we to reconcile this conception of *mathesis* as a thinking of incarnation, individuality and human nature with the apparently contrary definition of *mathesis* as "a collective and supreme knowledge, a universal synthesis, 'a living unity incorrectly deemed human'" (ibid.)? In order to resolve this tension, it is necessary to address the question of the relation between the living man and life, or between the singular and the universal. Deleuze introduces a distinction between two opposite models of thinking this relation, the *crew* on the one hand, and the *complicity* on the other.

Deleuze defines the notion of the crew thus: "The crew is the realisation of a common world whose universality cannot be compromised or fragmented, and such that in the process of this realisation the substitution of crewmembers becomes both possible and indifferent. Such is science, on the side of the object of thought; or philosophy, on the side of the thinking subject; in both cases we have a dead crew, theoretical, non-practical and speculative" (ibid., 144). In other words, the crew in Deleuze's parlance denotes the "theoretical, non-practical and speculative" conception of the relation between life and the living beings in terms of the distinction of the general and the particular, characteristic of both science and philosophy: the particulars (crewmembers) realize the general (the common world) in such a manner that the universality of this common world remains indifferent, other and irreducible to its realization by the particular, individual instance. By the same token, each particular realization of this common world is in principle substitutable and interchangeable with any other.

On the other hand, thinking the relation of life and living beings in terms of *complicity* is to think of it in terms of the distinction between the universal and the singular:

> Life, in the first instance, seems to exist only through and within the living being, within the individual organism that puts it in action. Life exists only through these fragmentary and closed assumptions, each of which realises it on its own account and nothing more, in solitude. That is to say that universality, the community of life, denies itself, gives itself to each living being as a simple outside, an exteriority that remains foreign to it, an Other: there is a plurality of men yet, precisely, each one must

> in the same way assume his life for himself, without common measure with others, on his own account; the universal is immediately recuperated. And in this sense life will be defined as complicity, as opposed to a crew. (...) In complicity (...) there is indeed a common world, but one whose community comes into effect, once more, through each member realising it for himself without a common measure with others, on his own account, and with no possibility of substitution. (ibid.)

Insofar as life exists only within and through the individual living beings which realise it, the universality or the community of life (or that which is common to the plurality of living beings through which life is realised) is affirmed at the very same moment that it is denied. Each and every one of the plurality of living beings through which life exists realises life on its own, in solitude, without a common measure and the possibility of substitution. And in affirming its singularity, its difference from all the others, each living being denies the universality of life: life as that which is common to all these living beings remains foreign, exterior or Other to them. But at the very moment that it is denied, the universality of life is immediately recuperated. For in affirming its singularity, each living beings realises and affirms life itself. It is precisely to this relation of life with the living beings "wherein the universal and its proper negation (the singular) are as one" (ibid., 145) that Deleuze gives the name of complicity.

Complicity therefore has two aspects: a negative one in which life is denied and a positive one in which it is affirmed. In order to further determine these two aspects, Deleuze introduces a distinction between the 'natural', 'unconscious', 'latent' or 'ignorant' complicity, by which he refers to the negative aspect, and the 'conscious' complicity "that knows itself" by which he refers to the positive one (ibid.). "The human problem", according to Deleuze, "consists in passing from a state of latent ignorant complicity to a complicity that knows and affirms itself. (...) Beginning with a purely natural and unconscious complicity where each individual only posits himself in opposition to others, and more generally to the universal, it is a question of passage to a complicity that knows itself, where each grasps himself as '*pars totalis*' within a universe that he already constitutes" (ibid.). The task of *mathesis* consists precisely in making possible this passage from a natural and unconscious complicity to the conscious one that knows and affirms itself: "It is at the very moment when the living being persists stubbornly in its individuality that it affirms itself as universal. At the moment when the living

being closed in upon itself, defining the universality of life as an outside, it did not see that it had, in fact, interiorised that universal: realised the universal on its own account, and defined itself as a microcosm. The first goal of *mathesis* is to assure this awareness of the living in relation to life and thus to ground the possibility of a knowledge of individual destiny" (ibid.).

The notion of conscious complicity therefore reveals how the conception of *mathesis* as a thinking of individuality and human nature is to be reconciled with the definition of *mathesis* as 'a living unity incorrectly deemed human':

> Thus we see that unity comes about at the level of concrete man; very far from transcending the human condition, it is its exact description. It must simply be remarked that such a description must position man in relation to the infinite, the universal. Each individual exists only by virtue of denying the universal; but in so far as man's existence refers to plurality, the negation is carried out universally under the exhaustive form of each and every one – so that it is but the human way of affirming what it denies. We have called this mode of affirmation conscious complicity. (ibid., 146)

To this passage from an unconscious to a conscious complicity, from a complicity that denies the universal to the one that consciously affirms it, Deleuze gives the name of *initiation*:

> And initiation is nothing other than this [i.e. conscious complicity]. Initiation does not have a mystical sense: it is the thought of life and the only possible way of thinking life. Initiation is mysterious only in the sense that the knowledge that it represents must be acquired by each person on their own account. The initiate is living man in his relationship with the infinite. And the key notion of *mathesis* – not at all mystical – is that individuality never separates itself from the universal, that between the living and life one finds the same relation as between life as species, and divinity. (ibid.)

Finally, Deleuze concludes the first part of the paper by providing a succinct summary of his discussion thus far:

> Mathesis is therefore neither a science, nor a philosophy. It is something else: a knowledge of life. It is neither the study of being, nor the analysis of thought. Furthermore, the opposition of thought and being, of philosophy and science, have no

> meaning for it, seeming illusory, a false alternative. Mathesis situates itself on a plane where the life of knowledge is identical with the knowledge of life; it is simply awareness of life. Malfatti announces its *cogito* thus: *sum, ergo cogito*; *sum, ergo genero.* (ibid., 147)

To put it in simplest possible terms, mathesis is nothing else than a *knowledge or an awareness of life*, and its object nothing less than *life* itself. "To its object, which is quite particular, must respond a particular method" (ibid.), and it is to devising this particular method of mathesis that the second part of the paper is dedicated to.

Clearly, the method of mathesis is to be defined in contradistinction to the scientific and philosophical methods. Therefore, the first thing for Deleuze to do is to define the respective methods of science and philosophy:

> Scientific method is explanation. To explain is to account for a thing through something other than itself. Heat is movement, water is composed of H2O, but movement as object of thought is only constituted by negating that which it explains – heat qua system of sensible qualities. Equally, when we arrive at H2O, there is water no longer. (...) At the other extreme, philosophical method is description in the widest sense of the word; it is that reflexive analysis whereby the sensible world is described as the representation of the cognising subject – that is to say that, here once again, it receives its status from something other than itself. In the two cases of scientific and philosophical method, we discover a new opposition – that of the thought and the sensible. (ibid.)

What the scientific and the philosophical methods have in common is that they both account for the thing they wish to explain (science) or describe (philosophy) through something other than the thing itself. In both cases the sensible object is reduced to the object of thought, and this is how a new dualism arises – that of the thought and the sensible.

It is precisely this dualism between thought and the sensible, or between the sensible object and the object of thought that the method of mathesis has to overcome. Interestingly enough, in a highly illuminating passage, Deleuze claims that everyday life already overcomes this dualism:

> Everyday life traces its path within the objectivity of the sensible; objects are outside of us, they owe us nothing, they are their own significations. Philosophically speaking, colour may be a secondary quality, a representation of the cognizant mind; scientifically it may be reduced to the object of the thought 'vibration', as the last word of reality. But it is no less certain that it is given in itself to the individual, without reference to anything other than itself. The individual knows very well that things haven't been hanging around waiting for him in order to exist. (ibid., 148)

Deleuze is quick to point out that a perspectival objection could be raised to this everyday conception of the world. According to this familiar point "the object is given to me according to a certain aspect, a certain profile, depending on the point of view it is observed from" (ibid., 148). But, on Deleuze's reading, "this is not a sign of the object's dependency. On the contrary, it is the manifestation of its total objectivity. It is well known that the contemplated object detaches itself from a ground constituted by the set of other objects. Yet, precisely, the object could not sustain any relationship whatsoever with others if this relation remained external to it. For such an object to detach itself as a form upon a ground of other objects, it must first already be its own ground" (ibid.). In order to illustrate his point Deleuze invokes the example of a cube. Although the cube as a geometrical object consists of 6 square faces, only 3 of these can be given at any point in time to the perceiver. Yet, according to Deleuze,

> the 3 faces through which the profile of the cube is always given – 3 faces and no more – are already all 6 faces: the cube must already be its own ground. This phenomenon refers the object to itself and not to he who perceives. But to say that the 3 faces are already 6 faces, is to posit the identity of extension (3) and comprehension (6) in the sensible object. Why this identity? Why are the 6 faces given as 3? It is simply because everyday space is 3-dimensional. In taking a moment to reflect, it will be seen that the 6 faces as such only make sense in reference to a plane. The only way for 6 faces to exist *en bloc* in a space of 3 dimensions is to present 3 of them. The identity of extension and comprehension therefore simply defines space. Which is to say that within this space, the sensible object in general, in the name of such an identity, is none other than the concept: the word 'concept' here no longer signifying 'object of thought'. (ibid., 148-149)

As is well known, comprehension and extension are terms of logic that refer to concepts. While the comprehension of a concept refers to the content of a concept or to all the properties of which a given concept consists, the extension of a concepts denotes all the objects to which a given concept can be applied. The identity of the extension and comprehension of a concept would therefore imply that a given concept can be applied to one and only one thing and that the concept in question contains all the properties of that one thing. In Deleuze's peculiar reading, as we have just seen, "the identity of extension and comprehension simply defines space" and within this space the sensible object *is* the concept. But what could the word 'concept' possibly mean if it no longer signifies an 'object of thought' as Deleuze warns us? To answer this question we have to follow Deleuze's text further.

According to Deleuze, if mathesis is to overcome the dualism between thought and the sensible, it has to perform a reduction contrary to the one executed by science: if science reduces the sensible object to the object of thought, mathesis has to reduce "this object of thought back to the sensible, quantity to quality" (ibid., 150). And as Deleuze goes on to claim, "this is the very reduction performed by the symbol" (ibid.). In fact, the symbol is nothing but "a sensible object as the incarnation of an object of thought, or some piece of knowledge. Further, this sensible object is the very incarnation of knowledge. Earlier, in terms of explanation, the object of thought was the *explanans* which could only be constituted through the annulment of the sensible object it sought to explain. In contrast, in the case of the symbol, the symbolising agent is now the sensible object, and the knowledge which it symbolizes is identified totally with it" (ibid.). Deleuze uses two examples to illustrate his point: first, the flag as the symbol of the homeland; and, second, Mallarme's poem *Fan*. The poem in general is, for Deleuze, "the essential symbolic procedure", and Mallarme's poem in particular an incarnation in a sensible object of the thought of movement (ibid.).

In explaining further the functioning of the symbol Deleuze finally reveals what a *concept* is: "Unlike explanation, the symbol is the identity, the *encounter* of the sensible object and the object of thought. The sensible object is called symbol, and the object of thought, losing all scientific signification, is a hieroglyph or a cipher. In their identity, they form the concept. The symbol is its extension, the hieroglyph its comprehension" (ibid., 151). So, for Deleuze, the concept is the identity of the symbol, defined in turn as the incarnation of an object of

thought in a sensible object, and the hieroglyph or the cipher as the object of thought. In line with the esoteric numerology of the mathesis, the cipher is to be understood as the numerical combination which defines a given object. The symbol is the extension of the concept, or the sensible object to which the concept refers, and the cipher its comprehension, or the object of thought of which the concept consists of. Therefore, for Deleuze, the concept is the identity of the sensible object and the object of thought or the result of the overcoming of the dualism of the sensible and thought achieved by mathesis.

By the same token, by overcoming the dualism between the sensible and thought, mathesis also overcomes the dualism between material and spiritual creation: "If *vocation* defines itself through the creation of a sensible object as the result of a knowledge, then mathesis qua living art of medicine is the vocation *par excellence*, the vocation of vocations, since it transforms knowledge itself into a sensible object. Thus we shall see mathesis insist upon the correspondences between material and spiritual creation" (ibid.). Insofar as mathesis is the art of transforming knowledge into a sensible object, it establishes a correspondence between material and spiritual creation.

Finally, Deleuze concludes his text by drawing all its main themes together into a succinct whole:

> The definition of mathesis was twofold: In its object, in relation to the duality thinking subject/object of thought; and in its method, in relation to that other duality object of thought/sensible object. We reach a point where these two themes incessantly intersect one another, are identified with each other. The first theme led us to lay down a system of correspondences *between the individual (microcosm) and the universal*; the second, *between the corporeal and the spiritual*. Do not seek, then, a philosophical 'explanation' for the union of the soul and the body. Attempt no longer to critique scientifically the correspondences established between the individual and the universe, under the grand themes of fire, of fermentation ... etc. Mathesis evolves in another domain, in the double depth of the symbol: here it finds its accomplishment, as the living art of medicine, ceaselessly establishing a system of ever-closer correspondences, embracing increasingly individual realities. (ibid, 154-155)

Let us summarise Deleuze's discussion of mathesis. For the young Deleuze, mathesis is the name of an ever-present attitude of the mind and a fundamental need at the heart of our Western mentality to overcome all the fundamental dualisms upon which our science and philosophy have been founded. With regards to its object, mathesis is the overcoming of the theoretical duality between the object of thought (science) and the thinking subject (philosophy) in the practical affirmation of the unity of life (the universal) and living beings (the plurality of individuals). In fact, as we have learned, mathesis is nothing other than the knowledge or awareness of life. On the other hand, with regards to its method, mathesis is the overcoming of the duality between sensible object and object of thought in the symbol defined as the very incarnation of the object of thought in a sensible object. Through the deployment of symbol, mathesis is able to create a sensible object as a result of knowledge, identifying thereby spiritual and material creation. This in turn helps us understand the definition of mathesis as a knowledge of life and a life of knowledge: insofar as mathesis is able to transform knowledge into a sensible object, that is, to create a sensible object out of knowledge, mathesis is not only a knowledge *of* life but also the *creation* of life by knowledge.

Finally, Deleuze's last words of warning to all those who would wish to pose a philosophical or scientific challenge to mathesis are worth emphasizing once again:

> Do not seek, then, a philosophical 'explanation' for the union of the soul and the body. Attempt no longer to critique scientifically the correspondences established between the individual and the universe, under the grand themes of fire, of fermentation ... etc. Mathesis evolves in another domain, in the double depth of the symbol: here it finds its accomplishment, as the living art of medicine, ceaselessly establishing a system of ever-closer correspondences, embracing increasingly individual realities.

Clearly, according to Deleuze, mathesis is to be considered as out of bounds of either philosophical or scientific critique, for it belongs to a domain that is *other* to those over which philosophy and science preside. And as we have learned earlier, only the *initiated* have access to this *other* domain over which only mathesis presides. These claims by themselves are not problematic, so long as the one making them is content with remaining within the bounds of mathesis. But what if one were to make claims similar to these while at the same time insisting on doing philosophy instead? It's best to leave this question open at this point, and

return to it later when we have learned more about Deleuze so as to be able to see more clearly whether he was in fact guilty of this.

3. PHILOSOPHY AS ONTOLOGY OF SENSE

Let us follow Deleuze's philosophical development further by focusing on one of his very first published and officially acknowledged texts, namely his "Review of Jean Hyppolite, *Logique et Existence*".[7] A few introductory remarks on Hyppolite are in order. Jean Hyppolite (1907 – 1968) was one of the most influential philosophers in post war France famous primarily for his work on Hegel. He translated Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* into French, and wrote a highly influential commentary on it entitled *Genesis and Structure of "Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit"* (1947). Hyppolite's second book *Logic and Existence* (1953) is dedicated in turn to the problem of the relation of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and *The Science of Logic*. These two books together marked a major turning point in French reception of Hegel insofar as they represented a radical departure from Kojeve's at the time influential humanistic and anthropological reading of Hegel. Besides being the foremost Hegel scholar of his time, Hyppolite was also quite influential as a philosophy professor, first at the Sorbonne, and then at the ENS. And it was precisely in this guise that Deleuze first came in contact with him. Hyppolite was at first Deleuze's teacher at the Louis Le Grand High Schools were Deleuze took two years of preparatory courses (*hypokhâgne* and *khâgne*) for the entrance exams at the ENS. Deleuze later failed his entrance examinations at ENS and enrolled at the Sorbonne instead. And then at the Sorbonne Hyppolite supervised Deleuze's thesis on Hume, upon the publication of which in 1953 under the title *Empiricism and Subjectivity: an Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*,[8] Deleuze dedicated his first book to Hyppolite. This is noteworthy in itself for the simple reason that this is the only dedication ever to appear on any of Deleuze's books.

Hyppolite's influence on Deleuze is most clearly felt precisely in Deleuze's review of *Logic and Existence*. The importance of this short text cannot be overestimated. First, it reveals the extent to which Deleuze's philosophy is indebted to Hyppolite's reading of Hegel. As Michel

[7] Deleuze's review originally appeared in: *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, vol. *CXLN*, no. 7-9, juillet septembre, 1954, p. 457-460. Jean Hyppolite's *Logique et existence* was published in 1953 by PUF. We refer to the English translation of Deleuze's text to be found in the English edition of Hyppolite's book (1997).
[8] Gilles Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité*, PUF: Paris.

Foucault has stated in his eulogy to Hyppolite, "Hyppolite is the one who has established for us all of the problems which are ours."[9] Upon reading Deleuze's review of Hyppolite's book Foucault's claim cannot but ring uncannily true. For what is most astonishing about this text is that it makes perfectly clear how virtually all of the fundamental problems of Deleuze's philosophy are to be traced back to Hyppolite's reading of Hegel. And this must come as quite a surprise to those who have succumbed to Deleuze's own often caricaturistic and cartoonish portrayals of Hegel as his arch-nemesis. What Deleuze's review unequivocally reveals is that this enmity actually stems from an unacknowledged intimacy. Deleuze's philosophy is a response to the very same problems first formulated in the wake of Kant's Critical turn by the post-Kantians in general and Hegel in particular. But while their problems might be the same, their solutions to these problems most certainly are not. And it is precisely because it provides not only an insight into the fundamental problems of Deleuze's philosophy, but also a clear sketch of Deleuze's future solutions of these problems that Deleuze's review of Hyppolite is of such a singular import. In order to determine precisely what are these problems that Deleuze shares with Hegel, and in what respect their solutions diverge it is best to focus our attention to the text of Deleuze's review itself.

Deleuze opens his review of Hyppolite's *Logic and Existence* by highlighting what he takes to be the main theme of the book: "*Philosophy must be ontology, it cannot be anything else; but there is no ontology of essence, there is only an ontology of sense*" (Deleuze 1954, 191). Philosophy must be an ontology of sense. Deleuze's review is nothing but an explication of this intriguing formula. Deleuze begins by addressing the first part of the formulation, the claim that philosophy must be an ontology: "That philosophy must be an ontology means first of all that it is not anthropology" (ibid.). And then defines anthropology thus:

> Anthropology wants to be a discourse *on* man. It assumes, as such, the empirical discourse *of* man, in which the one who speaks and that of which one speaks are separated. Reflection is on one side and being on the other. Knowledge understood in this way is a movement which is not a movement of the thing. It remains outside the object. Knowledge is then a power of abstraction, and reflection is an external and

[9]Foucault presented his eulogy at a commemorative program for Jean Hyppolite, held on 19 January 1969 at the Ecole Normale Superieure, and it was later published in the Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale 2 (1969), 131-36. We have quoted the quote above from the "Translator's Preface" of the English translation of Hyppolite's Logic and Existence. See Hyppolite 1997, vii.

> formal reflection. Thus empiricism refers to a formalism, just as formalism refers to an empiricism. Empirical consciousness is a "consciousness which directs itself towards pre-existing being and relegates reflection to its subjectivity" (p. 76 above). Subjectivity will therefore be treated as a fact, and anthropology will be constituted as the science of this fact. (ibid., 192)

Interestingly enough, Deleuze's definition of anthropology clearly resonates with his definition of philosophy in "Mathesis, Science and Philosophy". Let us recall, Deleuze there defined philosophical method as "that reflexive analysis whereby the sensible world is described as the representation of the cognising subject." So, although in the case of the Mathesis piece Deleuze talks about 'philosophy', and in the Hyppolite review of 'anthropology' (as well as 'empiricism' and 'formalism') he clearly has the same structure in mind: in both cases there is a dualism of subject and object, or thought and being, wherein the relation between the two is external to its terms. That is to say, insofar as the thinking subject is only capable of reflecting and representing the object, the knowledge of the object that the thinking subject attains is bound to remain external to the object, and therefore the subject itself is forever bound to remain outside of and foreign to the object just as the object remains foreign to the subject. In other words, insofar as knowledge is defined in terms of abstraction, reflection and representation, the subject is bound to *reduce* the object to that which it *is able* to apprehend *of* the object. Or to put it in simplest possible terms, the objective is reduced to the subjective. But while before Kant subjectivity was treated as a fact, Kant's Critical turn elevated it to the level of the principle. According to Deleuze,

> That with Kant subjectivity becomes a principle changes nothing essentially. Critical consciousness is a consciousness which "reflects the self of knowledge by relegating being to the thing in itself". Kant indeed raises himself up to the synthetic identity of subject and object, but the object is merely an object relative to the subject: this very identity is the synthesis of imagination; it is not posited in being. Kant goes beyond the psychological and the empirical, but remains within the anthropological. As long as the determination is only subjective, we have not left anthropology. (ibid.)

Clearly, for Deleuze, Kant's famous Copernican turn is hardly a satisfying resolution of the subject-object dualism. By posing the problem of the relation of thought and being in transcendental terms, Kant goes beyond the psychological and empirical determinations of

this problem. But insofar as he conceives the notion of the transcendental in terms of subjectivity, Kant clearly remains trapped within the bounds of anthropology.

Yet, even though Kant himself may have been unable to leave anthropology behind, he is to be credited with uncovering the means to escape it: "Kant really did see that thought posits itself as presupposed: it posits itself because it thinks itself and reflects itself; and it posits itself as presupposed because the totality of objects assumes it as what makes knowledge possible. Thus in Kant, thought and the thing are identical, but what is identical to thought is only a relative thing, not the thing as being, in itself" (ibid.). Hegel takes up this Kantian insight and, in contrast to Kant's relative identity of thought and thing, attempts to "raise himself up to the genuine identity, of the position and the presupposed, that is, up to the Absolute" (ibid.). Hegel's project starts with the *Phenomenology of Spirit* which shows how "the general difference of being and reflection, of the in-itself and the for-itself, of truth and certainty, is developed in the concrete moments of a dialectic whose very movement is to sublate this difference or to preserve it merely as a necessary appearance. In this sense, the *Phenomenology* starts from human reflection in order to show that human reflection and what follows from it lead to the absolute knowledge that they presuppose" (ibid.). So, being and reflection are constituted as two distinct moments of a single dialectical process, the movement of which sublates their difference and at the same time preserves it as a necessary or transcendental illusion. Hegel's *Phenomenology* traces this dialectic which begins with human reflection and ends with absolute knowledge, only to show in the end that absolute knowledge was there from the start, i.e. that it is presupposed by human reflection as well as by all the other moments of the dialectic. Therefore, for Hegel, "The external difference between reflection and being is in another view the internal difference of Being itself, in other words, Being identical to difference, identical to mediation" (ibid.). From the point of view of anthropology the difference between being and thought is bound to appear as external difference and these two terms are bound to remain foreign to each other. But from the point of view of philosophy as ontology, as we have seen in Hegel's case, the difference of being and thought is internal to Being itself, that is, Being is identical to this difference.

Now that we have roughly determined what it means to say that philosophy must be an ontology, it remains to be seen what it is to say that philosophy must be an ontology of *sense*. Deleuze begins his investigation of this question thus:

> Being, according to Hyppolite, is not essence, but sense. To say that this world is sufficient is not only to say that it is sufficient for us, but that it is sufficient unto itself, and that it refers to being not as the essence beyond the appearance, not as a second world which would be the intelligible world, but as the sense of this world Undoubtedly, one finds already in Plato the substitution of sense for essence, when he shows us that the second world itself is the subject of a dialectic which turns it into the sense of this world; it is no longer an other world. Kant, however, is still the one most responsible for the substitution, because the critique replaces- formal possibility with transcendental possibility, the being of the possible with the possibility of being, logical identity with the synthetic identity of recognition, the being of logic with the logicity of being-in short, essence with sense. (ibid.)

So, according to Deleuze, being is not to be understood as essence belonging to an other world, but is to be conceived instead as the sense of this world. Deleuze's remarks on this account are pretty schematic, and if we are to have a better grasp of this substitution of sense for essence, it will be instructive to turn our attention for a moment to a place where Deleuze expands on this idea, namely to the first of the four lectures Deleuze held on Kant at Vincennes in 1978. In this lecture entitled "Synthesis and Time" and held on the 14th March of 1978, Deleuze introduces some of the crucial conceptual innovations of Kant's critical philosophy. Certainly, the most interesting one for our present purposes is Deleuze's discussion of Kant's redefinition of the notion of *phenomenon*.

From Plato onwards, the notion of phenomenon was used in the sense of *appearance*, or the thing as it is given in sensible experience, to be defined in opposition to the notion of noumenon or *essence,* or the thing as it is in itself and can only be thought. This dualism of sensible appearances which belong to this world and intelligible essences which constitute the other world has defined the whole of history of philosophy all the way up to Kant. With Kant, Deleuze states emphatically, "it's like a bolt of lightning, (...) a radically new understanding of the notion of phenomenon emerges" (Deleuze 1978). In Deleuze's reading, Kant no longer defines the phenomenon as appearance but as *apparition*. The difference between the two terms might seem slight, but Deleuze argues that it is in fact enormous "because when I say the word apparition I am no longer saying appearance at all, I am no longer at all opposing it to essence. The apparition is what appears in so far as it appears. Full stop. I don't ask myself

if there is something behind, I don't ask myself if it is false or not false. The apparition is not at all captured in the oppositional couple, in the binary distinction where we find appearance, distinct from essence" (ibid.). What does the term apparition refer to then? While appearance refers to and stands in a *disjunctive* relation with essence ("either it's appearance or it's essence"), the apparition refers to and is in a *conjunctive* relation with *the conditions of what appears*. Again, Deleuze stresses the significance of this seemingly imperceptible shift:

> The conceptual landscape has literally changed completely, the problem is absolutely no longer the same, the problem has become phenomenological. For the disjunctive couple appearance/essence, Kant will substitute the conjunctive couple, what appears/conditions of apparition. (...) To make things a little more modern, I would just as well say: to the disjunctive couple appearance/essence, Kant is the first who substitutes the conjunctive couple apparition/sense, sense of the apparition, signification of the apparition. There is no longer the essence behind the appearance, there is the sense or non-sense of what appears. Grant me at least that even if what I say remains just a matter of words, it's a radically new atmosphere of thought, to the point where I can say that in this respect we are all Kantians. (ibid.)

What this passage clearly reveals is that for Deleuze the notion of 'sense' is to be taken as synonymous to the notion of 'the conditions of appearance'. So, while an appearance can either be true or false in relation to an essence, the notion of apparition is to be thought instead in terms of the sense or non-sense of what appears. In other words, if with regards to appearance we must ask whether an appearance is true or false, with regards to apparition what we need to ask instead is what an apparition means, what it signifies, or what its conditions are? By substituting the conjunctive distinction apparition/sense or condition of apparition for the disjunctive distinction appearance/essence Kant leaves behind the two world ontology: there is no longer a world of intelligible essences behind the world of sensible appearances; there is only one world, the world of sensible apparitions, and if we are to understand this world we have to ask what its sense is or what its conditions are.

Deleuze is ready to concede that the picture of Kant he is painting here is somewhat simplified:

> Kant is at the turning-point of something, so it's more complicated than I'm making it out to be because he keeps something of the old essence-appearance difference, and effectively he will say all the time: do not confuse the phenomenon with the thing in itself, the thing in itself is the pure noumenon, which is to say it is what can only be thought, while the phenomenon is what is given in sensible experience. So he maintains the disjunctive duality phenomenon/thing in itself, noumenon. It's the duality of the couple appearance/essence. (ibid.)

Deleuze here echoes the familiar post-Kantian critiques of Kant's notion of the thing in itself. According to this line of thought, by retaining the notion of the thing in itself in his system, Kant is unable to truly overcome all the dualisms which defined philosophy before him. But, Deleuze argues, by introducing the distinction between *knowledge* and *thought* Kant radically redefines the dualism of phenomenon and noumenon. According to Deleuze, Kant escapes the appearance/essence dualism and "is already in another type of thought for a very simple reason for he says that (...) the thing in itself can be thought, it is thus noumenon, but it cannot be known. So if it can be determined, it is a completely different point of view than that of knowledge; so we don't bother with it or at least we will bother about it in very special conditions" (ibid.). The point of view of knowledge applies only to the conjunctive couple apparition/conditions of appearing: only apparition can be said to be known, and it can be known only under certain conditions. Categories as the forms of pure thought on the one hand, and space and time as the forms of pure intuition on the other, are proclaimed by Kant to be these conditions under which knowledge or experience in general is possible.

Kant's substitution of the conjunctive couple apparition/conditions of appearing for the disjunctive couple appearance/essence was followed by a corresponding redefinition of the notion of the *subject*. As Deleuze notes, the dualism of sensible appearances and intelligible essences

> implies a certain position of the knowing subject, namely: the very notion of appearance refers to a fundamental defect in the subject. A fundamental defect, namely: appearance is in the end the thing such as it appears to me by virtue of my subjective constitution which deforms it. (...) In order to reach the thing in itself the subject must in fact overcome this sort of constitutive infirmity which makes it live amongst appearances. It's Plato's theme: leave appearances to find essences. (ibid.)

On the other hand, in the case of the conjunctive couple apparition/conditions of appearing the subject takes on an entirely different value:

> It's when I say that every apparition refers to the conditions of the appearing of the apparition, in this very statement I am saying that these conditions belong to the being to whom the apparition appears, in other words the subject is constitutive - and understand this well, otherwise it's a radical misinterpretation - the subject is constitutive not of the apparition, it is not constitutive of what appears, but it is constitutive of the conditions under what appears to it appears to it. (ibid.)

So, while in the case of the dualism of appearance and essence there is a constitutive defect in the subject which makes it responsible for the limitations or illusions of the appearance, in the case of the Kantian distinction of apparition and the conditions of apparition, the subject becomes responsible for constituting nothing less than the conditions under which something appears. But, as Deleuze emphasizes, Kant retains this old notion of the subject as subordinated to the illusions of appearance under the guise of his notion of the *empirical subject*. The empirical subject is the particular subject given in space and time to which a particular apparition appears to. Clearly, if the empirical subject is given in space and time, than it cannot be said to constitute them as conditions of appearing. Kant therefore needs another notion by which to denote the subject as constitutive of the conditions of appearing. "It's for this subject that Kant feels the need to forge or to extend a word which only had a very restrained theological use till then, thus the need to invent the notion of the transcendental, the transcendental subject being the instance which the conditions of all apparition are related to, while the apparition itself appears to empirical subjects" (ibid.). So, while an apparition appears to a given *empirical subject*, the conditions under which the apparition appears are constituted by the *transcendental subject*. By the same token, while the empirical subject defined as an apparition that is given in space and time is particular and contingent, the transcendental subject defined as "the unity of all the conditions under which something appears" will be universal and necessary (ibid.). Now that we have a more precise grasp of the substitution of sense for essence that Kant inaugurated, let us resume our reading of Deleuze's review of Hyppolite and see how Hegel develops further this important Kantian insight.

As we have just seen, although he leaves behind the dualism of the intelligible essences and sensible appearances, by retaining the notion of the thing in itself, Kant still holds onto the dualism of the phenomenon and the noumenon. Kant accounts for this dualism by introducing another dualism, namely the one between thought and knowledge: the thing in itself is beyond the reach of our knowledge but it can be thought. For Hegel, on the other hand, the substitution of sense for essence implies precisely the overcoming of the phenomenon/noumenon dualism and the abandonment of the thing in itself. Deleuze emphasizes this very point:

> Thus, that there is no second world is, according to Hyppolite, the major proposition of Hegel's Logic, because it is at the same time the reason for transforming metaphysics into logic, and for the transformation of logic into the logic of sense. That there is no "beyond" means that there is no "beyond" of the world (because Being is only sense), and that in the world there is no "beyond" of thought (because being thinks itself in thought). Finally, it means that in thought itself there is nothing beyond language. (Deleuze 1954, 193)

To say that being is sense is first and foremost to say that there is no other world, no beyond to this world – this world is all there is. This is how Hegel overcomes the Kantian dualism of phenomenon and noumenon. But it is also to say that there is nothing beyond thought on the one hand and nothing beyond language on the other. Everything that is can be thought, and everything that can be thought can be expressed in language. Being thinks itself in thought and expresses itself in language. This is in turn how Hegel overcomes the Kantian dualism of thought and knowledge. And as Deleuze further argues, Hyppolite's book is precisely "a reflection on the conditions of an absolute discourse (...). Because Being is sense, true knowledge is not the knowledge of an Other, nor of something else. In a certain way, absolute knowledge is the closest, the simplest, it is there" (ibid.).

Deleuze emphasizes the difficulty that such a conception of absolute knowledge faces: "If ontology is an ontology of sense and not of essence, if there is no second world, how can absolute knowledge still be distinguished from empirical knowledge? Do we not fall back into the simple anthropology that we had criticized? Absolute knowledge must simultaneously comprehend all empirical knowledge and comprehend nothing else, since there is nothing else to comprehend, and yet comprehend its radical difference from empirical knowledge" (ibid.).

Deleuze begins to explicate Hyppolite's answer to this difficulty by reiterating the differing perspectives that anthropology and ontology of sense take with regards to the problem of the relation of thought and being. While for anthropology, whether in its empiricist or its essentialist guise, the difference between thought and being can only be external, that is to say, thought can merely be said to reflect being from the outside, for ontology of sense, this difference is identical with Being itself, or "internal to the Being which thinks itself"; that is to say, for ontology of sense "in the empirical and in the absolute it is the same being and the same thought" (ibid.). While Hegel's *Phenomenology* traces the dialectic which leads from the empirical to the absolute knowledge, or the passage from anthropology to ontology of sense, the *Science of Logic* in turn explicates the very dialectic of being and thought from the point of view of absolute knowledge:

> In the Logic, there is no longer, therefore, as in the empirical, what I say on the one side and on the other side the sense of what I say – the pursuit of one by the other which is the dialectic of the Phenomenology. On the contrary, my discourse is logical or properly philosophical when I say the sense of what I say, and when in this manner Being says itself. (...) Absolute knowledge is not a human reflection, but a reflection of the Absolute in man. The Absolute is not a second world, and yet, absolute knowledge is actually distinguished from empirical knowledge just as philosophy is distinguished from all anthropology. (ibid., 194)

From the externalist perspective of the anthropology, the sense of a statement is distinct from its enunciation. On the other hand, from the internalist perspective of philosophy defined as ontology of sense, the sense and the enunciation of the statement are supposed to be one and the same. And it is only when we are able to enunciate the sense of our enunciation in this very same enunciation that our discourse can be said to be properly philosophical and that we reach the perspective of absolute knowledge, the point at which Being or the Absolute thinks, reflects and says itself in us. So, the difference between empirical and absolute knowledge once again amounts to the difference between two opposing conceptions of philosophy, as anthropology on the one hand and as ontology of sense on the other.

The concluding section of Deleuze's review reveals precisely in what respect Deleuze's project can be said to be a continuation of Hyppolite's reading of Hegel, but also in what respect Deleuze departs from Hyppolite's Hegelianism.

> Following Hyppolite, we recognize that philosophy, if it has a meaning, can only be an ontology and an ontology of sense. The same being and the same thought are in the empirical and in the absolute. But the difference between thought and being is sublated in the absolute by the positing of the Being identical to difference which, as such, thinks itself and reflects itself in man. This absolute identity of being and difference is called sense. But there is a point in all this where Hyppolite shows himself to be altogether Hegelian: Being can be identical to difference only insofar as difference is carried up to the absolute, that is, up to contradiction. Speculative difference is the Being which contradicts itself. The thing contradicts itself because, in being distinguished from all it is not, it finds its being in this difference itself; it reflects itself only by reflecting itself into the other, since the other is its other. (ibid., 194-195)

What Deleuze clearly accepts from Hyppolite's book is its conception of philosophy: philosophy is to be conceived as an ontology of sense, and sense is to be defined as the identity of Being and difference. What Deleuze discards is Hyppolite's conception of difference: insofar as he conceives of difference in terms of contradiction, Hyppolite remains too Hegelian for Deleuze's taste. The closing passage of the review not only reveals why this conception of difference is problematic for Deleuze but also presents a sketch of what Deleuze proposes in its stead:

> The richness of Hyppolite's book could then let us wonder this: can we not construct an ontology of difference which would not have to go up to contradiction, because contradiction would be less than difference and not more? Is not contradiction itself only the phenomenal and anthropological aspect of difference? Hyppolite says that an ontology of pure difference would return us to a purely external and formal reflection, and would prove in the final analysis to be an ontology of essence. However, the same question could be posed otherwise: is it the same thing to say that Being expresses itself and that it contradicts itself? If it is true that the second and third parts of Hyppolite's book ground a theory of contradiction in Being, where contradiction itself is the absolute of difference, in contrast, in the first part (theory of language) and the allusions throughout the book (to forgetting, to remembering, to lost sense), does not Hyppolite ground a theory of expression where difference is expression itself, and contradiction its merely phenomenal aspect? (ibid., 195)

For Deleuze, to think of difference in terms of contradiction is to remain trapped within the anthropological and phenomenological point of view. Therefore, if philosophy is to escape the bounds of anthropology and raise itself up to the point of view of absolute knowledge and become an ontology of sense it will be necessary to develop an other conception of difference. In Deleuze's reading, it is in the theory of expression which Hyppolite expounds in the first part of his book that we find the means to construct such a conception – a conception of difference not as contradiction but as *expression*.

Let us summarize. Philosophy, for Deleuze, cannot be anything but ontology. But after Kant's substitution of sense for essence, ontology can only be an ontology of sense. That is to say, Being is not to be conceived in terms of essence, but in terms of sense. There is no other world of intelligible essences, beyond the world of sensible appearances. This world is all there is. And to ask the question of the Being of this world is to ask not about its essence but about its sense. If Kant's substitution of sense for essence is to be credited with overcoming the dualism of essences and appearances, Kant himself was not ready to uphold in full the consequences of his insight. By retaining the notion of the thing in itself, Kant still holds onto the dualism of phenomenon and noumenon and consequently to the dualism of Being and thought. Insofar as the thing in itself remains forever beyond our grasp, Being remains forever beyond and irreducible to thought. Completing Kant's Critical project by overcoming the dualism of Being and thought was the primary ambition of Hegel's philosophical venture. Contrary to Kant for whom the difference between Being and thought could only be external, for Hegel this difference is internal to Being itself: Being thinks itself in thought. Furthermore, not only is this difference internal to Being but Being is identical with difference itself. Deleuze follows Hegel in identifying Being with difference. But while Hegel conceives of difference in terms of contradiction, Deleuze believes instead that difference is to be conceived in terms of expression. Consequently, for Deleuze, Being itself is expression. Being expresses itself as sense.

To construct an ontology of sense or difference in contrast to an ontology of essence or identity, and an account of Being as expression in contrast to Being as contradiction. This, in a nutshell, is the philosophical programme proclaimed by Deleuze in his "Review of Jean Hyppolite, *Logique et Existence*". As we shall shortly see, it is in *Difference and Repetition* that Deleuze realizes this programme. But there is one last important stop that we have to

make on our way towards *Difference and Repetition*. As we have just seen, Deleuze credits Kant with inaugurating the substitution of sense for essence. To be more precise, Kant replaces the disjunctive distinction essence/appearance with the conjunctive one apparition/sense or conditions of appearing. If we are to know a particular thing, we are to enquire not about its essence, but about its sense or its conditions of appearing. As is well known, this inquiry into the conditions under which something appears to us forms the basis of Kant's transcendental method. Deleuze clearly continues Kant's transcendental project. As he admits himself in his Kant lectures, with respect to Kant's transcendental turn "we are all Kantians". But Deleuze just as clearly shares the very same concerns held by the post-Kantians with regards to Kant's realization of this project. If the Copernican revolution initiated by Kant is to be completed, Kant's notion of the transcendental has to be redefined so as to allow us to overcome all the dualisms still operative in Kant's system, most importantly the dualism of being and thought. And while Deleuze indeed inherits this problem from the post-Kantians, he will look elsewhere for the means of solving it. It is in the work of Henri Bergson that Deleuze finds the most important resources to redefine Kant's transcendental project. Let us therefore turn to Deleuze's writings on Bergson to see precisely in what way and to what extent Deleuze's redefinition of the transcendental is indebted to Bergson.

4. BERGSONIAN INTUITION AS METHOD

Deleuze published two shorter texts and one book length study explicitly dedicated to Bergson's philosophy. Both shorter pieces appeared in 1956. The first one entitled simply "Bergson, 1859 – 1941" was published as a chapter of a collection edited by Maurice Merleau-Ponty under the title *Famous Philosophers.*[10] As its title suggests, the text is supposed to present a short but comprehensive account of Bergson's philosophy as a whole. Deleuze's second text entitled "Bergson's Conception of Difference" is slightly longer and presents Bergson as a philosopher of difference in itself, difference not reduced to contradiction.[11] Finally, Deleuze's book length study entitled *Bergsonism* published a decade later in 1966, picks up and expands on the ideas of these early articles and constitutes Deleuze's most systematic and complete account of Bergson's philosophy.[12]

In all of these writings Deleuze foregrounds the importance of Bergson's notion of *intuition* for Bergson's philosophy as a whole. In particular, Deleuze argues, the relationship between *duration*, *memory* and *élan vital*, three major conceptual innovations brought forth by Bergson and the axis around which his whole philosophical system revolves, would remain undetermined without "the methodical thread of intuition" (Deleuze 1988, 14). In fact, in Deleuze's reading, intuition is "the method of Bergsonism. Intuition is neither a feeling, an inspiration, nor a disorderly sympathy, but a fully developed method, one of the most fully developed methods in philosophy. It has its strict rules, constituting that which Bergson calls 'precision' in philosophy" (ibid., 13). It is precisely in the context of Deleuze's discussions of intuition as the method of Bergsonism that Deleuze is seen explicitly attributing to Bergson

[10] Gilles Deleuze, "Bergson, 1859 – 1941" in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, ed. *Les Philosophes celebres*, Editions d'Art Lucien Mazenod: Paris 1956. English translation by Christopher Bush in Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts 1953 – 1974*, David Lapoujade (ed.), Michael Taormina (tr.), Semiotext(e): New York, 2004, p. 22 - 31.

[11] Gilles Deleuze, "La Conception de la différence chez Bergson", *Les Etudes bergsoniennes*, vol. IV, 1956, p. 77-112. English translation in Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts 1953 – 1974*, David Lapoujade (ed.), Michael Taormina (tr.), Semiotext(e): New York, 2004, p. 32 - 51.

[12] Gilles Deleuze, *Le Bergsonisme*, PUF: Paris, 1966. English translation: Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (tr.), Zone Books: New York, 1988.

himself the project of redefining the Kantian transcendental. Therefore, in what follows we shall confine ourselves to exploring this aspect of Deleuze's writings on Bergson.

In *Bergsonism*, Deleuze opens his discussion of intuition by acknowledging an apparent tension at the heart of Bergson's understanding of this notion: "How is intuition – which primarily denotes an immediate knowledge (*connaissance*) – capable of forming a method, once it is accepted that the method essentially involves one or several mediations?" (ibid., 14). Yet Deleuze here does not elaborate further on this important point and uses it merely as a prefatory remark to the ensuing discussion of the rules of intuition as a method. Given this, one might be excused for concluding that 'intuition' in Deleuze's (and Bergson's) use is actually not to be understood in its primary meaning as immediate knowledge. That such a conclusion would be overly hasty is best testified by Deleuze's earlier writings on Bergson which not only confirm that conceiving intuition as a method did not preclude Bergson from considering it as immediate knowledge as well, but they also unequivocally reveal the prominence that such a notion of immediate knowledge enjoyed in Bergson's (and consequently Deleuze's) conception of philosophy. Of particular import in this regard is a well known passage situated right at the beginning of Deleuze's text "Bergson, 1859 – 1941" which is worth citing in full:

> The first characteristic of intuition is that in it and through it something is presented, is given in person, instead of being inferred from something else and concluded. Here, already, the general orientation of philosophy comes into question, for it is not enough to say that philosophy is at the origin of the sciences and that it was their mother; rather, now that they are grown up and well established, we must ask why there is still philosophy, in what respect science is not sufficient. Philosophy has only ever responded to such a question in two ways, doubtless because there are only two possible responses. One says that science gives us a knowledge of things, that it is therefore in a certain relation with them, and philosophy can renounce its rivalry with science, can leave things to science and present itself solely in a critical manner, as a reflection on this knowledge of things. On the contrary view, philosophy seeks to establish, or rather restore, *an other* relationship to things, and therefore *an other* knowledge, a knowledge and a relationship that precisely science hides from us, of which it deprives us, because it allows us only to conclude and to infer without ever

> presenting, giving to us the thing in itself. It is this second path that Bergson takes by repudiating critical philosophies when he shows us in science, in technical activity, intelligence, everyday language, social life, practical need and, most importantly, in space—the many forms and relations that separate us from things and from their interiority. (Deleuze 1956a, 23)

Deleuze here clearly affirms intuition as the power to stand in an immediate relation to or have an immediate knowledge of things in themselves. What is truly at stake in this affirmation, for Deleuze, is nothing other than the fate of philosophy itself. Science, Deleuze tells us, stands in an indirect relation to things, and allows only for an inferential/representational knowledge of them: science "allows us only to conclude and to infer without ever presenting, giving to us the thing in itself". Insofar as philosophy with Kant proclaims the impossibility of immediate knowledge (intellectual intuition) of the thing in itself, and confines itself instead to a critical inquiry into the conditions of the possibility of knowledge in general, Deleuze argues, philosophy relinquishes its pre-critical ambition to give us knowledge of the world and hands over this vital task entirely to science, making itself redundant in the process at worst or a servant to science at best. Therefore, Deleuze concludes, if philosophy is to reassert its necessity and become once again a worthy rival to science it has to "establish, or rather restore, *an other* relationship to things, and therefore *an other* knowledge, a knowledge and a relationship that precisely science hides from us, of which it deprives us, because it allows us only to conclude and to infer without ever presenting, giving to us the thing in itself". Clearly, this "other relationship" to and "other knowledge" of things can only be an immediate relationship to and knowledge of things. In a word, intuition.

The importance of this passage for understanding Deleuze's work as a whole cannot be overestimated. This may very well be Deleuze's single most straightforward and explicit statement of his conception of philosophy and of its relation to science. Here more than ever it is crucial to emphasize that, although this passage is found in a text which is a commentary on Bergson, it is indeed Deleuze's voice that we hear speaking here and speaking in his own name. The best way to confirm this is to show the continuity of the ideas expressed here with the ones expressed in Deleuze's earlier and later writings. While we shall have to wait for our discussion of *Difference and repetition* to see that Deleuze was in fact committed to these

very same claims in his later works, let us at this point highlight briefly only the most important similarity between the passage cited above and Deleuze's earlier writings we have encountered before. First and foremost, in "Mathesis, Science and Philosophy" Deleuze's distinction between science and philosophy on the one hand, and *mathesis universalis* on the other is construed in virtually the same terms as the distinction between the "only two possible" conceptions of philosophy we have encountered in the passage above, that is the distinction between a critical-reflexive conception of philosophy and an intuitive one. Let us recall, in "Mathesis, Science and Philosophy", for Deleuze, "scientific method is explanation" and "to explain is to account for a thing through something other than itself." Similarly, philosophical method is defined as "description in the widest sense of the word" or "that reflexive analysis whereby the sensible world is described as the representation of the cognising subject – that is to say that, here once again, it receives its status from something other than itself." Finally, Deleuze defines *mathesis universalis* or "the unity of knowledge" as knowledge or an awareness of life, which "evolves in another domain, in the double depth of the symbol", symbol in turn being defined as "the identity of the sensible object and an object of thought". Clearly, the main contrast here is between the representational forms of knowledge (science and philosophy) and intuitive ones (mathesis). The same structure can also be found in Deleuze's "Review of Jean Hyppolite, *Logic and Existence*", only this time construed in slightly different terms. Here Deleuze, following Hyppolite, gives the name of 'anthropology' to the representational conception of philosophy and 'ontology of sense' to the intuitive one. Let us recall, philosophy conceived as anthropology or "the discourse *on* man" assumes "the empirical discourse *of* man, in which the one who speaks and that of which one speaks are separated. Reflection is on one side and being on the other" (ibid., 192). In other words, for anthropology the difference between being and thought is external, insofar as thought merely reflects being from the outside. In contrast to this Deleuze posits philosophy as ontology of sense for which the difference between being and thought is identical with Being itself, or "internal to the Being which thinks itself" (ibid., 193). The terms may vary but the basic structure in all of these writings remains the same: to the dominant representational conception of philosophy (and knowledge) an intuitive one is to be contrasted. The singular import of the passage from Deleuze's text on Bergson that we have been analyzing here lies precisely in making this structure fully explicit.

Now that we have unequivocally confirmed that intuition for Deleuze and Bergson indeed is to be understood in terms of immediate knowledge, and highlighted the significance that such a notion of immediate knowledge has had for the both of them, let us return to *Bergsonism* in order to follow further Deleuze as he elaborates on his claim that intuition is "one of the most fully developed methods in philosophy" with "strict rules, constituting that which Bergson calls 'precision' in philosophy" (ibid., 13). Deleuze cites three main or general rules and two complementary ones which all together constitute intuition as a method. Let us take them in order.

The first general rule states: "*Apply the test of true and false to problems themselves. Condemn false problems and reconcile truth and creation at the level of problems*" (ibid., 15). There is a prejudice, Deleuze claims, according to which normative notions such as truth and falsity apply only to the solutions and not to the problems themselves. This prejudice is social in nature and originates in the classroom setting wherein the teacher poses the problems and the child's only task is to find the right solution to it. Insofar as we don't have the freedom to pose the problems themselves but merely to solve those that supposedly exist independently of us "we are kept in a kind of slavery" (ibid.). If we are to escape this state of slavery we must deliver ourselves from this prejudice for "true freedom lies in a power to decide, to constitute problems themselves" (ibid.). It is important to emphasize that this "semi-divine" power, as Deleuze dubs it, of constituting problems is not to be understood in terms of uncovering or discovering but in terms of *inventing* instead. "Discovery, or uncovering, has to do with what already exists, actually or virtually; it was therefore certain to happen sooner or later. Invention gives being to what did not exist; it might never have happened" (Bergson quoted in Deleuze 1988, 15). To constitute a problem is to invent or create "the terms in which it will be stated" (ibid.). Once the problem has been created in such a manner, all that remains is to uncover the solution which is contained therein. "For a speculative problem is solved as soon as it is properly stated" (ibid.). It is by creating problems that "humanity makes its own history, and the becoming conscious of that activity is like the conquest of freedom" (Deleuze 1988, 16).[13]

[13] In an important parenthetical remark though Deleuze notes another important meaning that the notion of the problem takes on in Bergson's usage: "It is true that, in Bergson, the very notion of the problem has its roots beyond history, in life itself or in the *elan vital*: Life is essentially determined in the act of avoiding obstacles, stating and solving a problem. The construction of the organism is both the stating of the problem and a

The crucial question to address at this point is: "how can this constitutive power which resides in the problem be reconciled with a norm of the true?" (ibid.). In other words, how is the creativity of problem-posing to be reconciled with the normativity of truth and falsity? Deleuze readily acknowledges the difficulty of this question: "While it is relatively easy to define the true and the false in relation to solutions whose problems have already been stated, it seems much more difficult to say in what the true and the false consist when applied to the process of stating problems" (ibid.). Most of those who addressed it did so in terms of the possibility or impossibility of a problem's being solved – a *true* problem being the one that can be solved and a *false* one the one that cannot. Bergson's "great virtue", on the other hand, lies precisely in having attempted an "intrinsic determination of the false in the expression 'false problem'" (ibid.). It is with regards to this that Deleuze formulates the rule complementary to the general one stated above: "*False problems are of two sorts, 'nonexistent problems', defined as problems whose very terms contain a confusion of the 'more' and the 'less'; and badly stated questions, so defined because their terms represent badly analyzed composites.*" (ibid., 16).

Deleuze cites Bergson's famous analyses of the problems of nonbeing, disorder and the possible as examples of nonexistent problems. In all of these, Bergson shows how there is not *less* but *more* in the concepts of nonbeing, disorder and possible than in their counterpart concepts of being, order and the real or the existent. The concept of nonbeing consists of "the idea of being, plus a logical operation of generalized negation, plus the particular psychological motive for that operation" (ibid.). Similarly, the concept of disorder consists of the idea of order, its negation and the motive for that negation. Finally, the concept of the possible "is only the real with the addition of an act of mind that throws its image back into the past once it has been enacted" (Bergson quoted in Deleuze 1988, 17). By postulating nonbeing, disorder and the possible as preceding being, order and the real we create false problems or, more precisely, problems that actually do not exist. "Being, order or the existent are truth itself; but in the false problem there is a fundamental illusion, a 'retrograde movement of the true,' according to which being, order and the existent are supposed to precede themselves, or to precede the creative act that constitutes them, by projecting an image of themselves back into a possibility, a disorder, a nonbeing which are supposed to be

solution" (ibid., 16). This other meaning is clearly beyond the scope of our present discussion but because of the significance that it will have in our later reading of Deleuze it is necessary to at least highlight it here.

primordial" (Deleuze 1988, 18). Clearly, what is truly at stake in Bergson's denunciation of nonexistent problems is his critique of the negative and negation in general. Truth is to be equated with positivity (Being, order, the existent/real), and falsity with negativity (nonbeing, disorder, the possible). Being, order and the existent are what there is and are therefore to be considered as true, while their negatives are products of a fundamental illusion and are therefore to be considered as false.

"Badly stated" questions constitute the second type of false problems. Deleuze defines these as "badly analyzed composites that arbitrarily group things that *differ in kind* (...) If the terms do not correspond to 'natural articulations' then the problem is false, for it does not affect 'the very nature of things'" (ibid.). This time Deleuze cites Bergson's analyses of the problems of intensity and freedom as examples of such badly analyzed composites. While the concept of intensity groups together "the quality of sensation" with "the quantity of the physical cause that produces it", the problem of freedom confuses "terms juxtaposed in space" with "states which merge together in duration" (ibid., 18-19).

In what follows Deleuze goes on to show how "*the first type of false problems, in the final analysis, rests on the second*" (ibid., 20), that is, that nonexistent problems are actually a consequence of badly analyzed composites. Once again, Deleuze illustrates his point by elaborating on the problems of nonbeing, disorder and the possible:

> The idea of disorder appears when, instead of seeing that there are two or more irreducible orders (for example, that of life and that of mechanism, each present when the other is absent), we retain only a general idea of order that we confine ourselves to opposing to disorder and to thinking in correlation with the idea of disorder. The idea of nonbeing appears when, instead of grasping the different realities that are indefinitely substituted for one another, we muddle them together in the homogeneity of a Being in general, which can only be opposed to nothingness, be related to nothingness. The idea of the possible appears when, instead of grasping each existent in its novelty, the whole of existence is related to a preformed element, from which everything is supposed to emerge by simple "realization." (ibid.)

Deleuze earlier defined nonexistent problems as problems whose terms involve a confusion of the "more" and the "less". Here, in turn, he shows how these arise out of the second type of

false problems whose terms represent badly analyzed composites. Insofar as they are conceived in general terms, the ideas of Being, order and the real/existence themselves constitute instances of badly analyzed composites out of which (or by negation of which) emerge the ideas of nonbeing, disorder and the possible. In light of this, Deleuze concludes, "each time we think in terms of more or less, we have already disregarded the differences in kind between the two orders, or between beings, between existents. (...) And conceiving everything in terms of more and less, seeing nothing but differences in degree or differences in intensity, where more profoundly, there are differences in kind is perhaps the most general error of thought, the error common to science and metaphysics" (ibid.).

Insofar as this error is posited at the level of problems, and not of solutions it is not to be confused with a simple mistake which could easily be corrected. It is to be conceived instead as a *fundamental illusion*, "an illusion that carries us along, or in which we are immersed, inseparable from our condition" (ibid.). While Bergson may have considered Kant's critical project as a whole to be a collection of badly stated problems, his conception of illusion is nonetheless clearly indebted to Kant's notion of a transcendental illusion: "It was Kant who showed that reason deep within itself engenders not mistakes but *inevitable* illusions, only the effects of which could be warded off" (ibid.). Likewise for Bergson, illusion is rooted in "the deepest part of intelligence" and "it is not, strictly speaking, dispelled or dispellable, rather it can only be *repressed*" (ibid., 21). The only way to react against this intellectual tendency is "by bringing to life, again *in* the intelligence, another tendency, which is critical" (ibid.). Intuition is, in turn, the only faculty capable of producing and activating this critical tendency, for "it rediscovers differences in kind beneath the differences in degree, and conveys to the intelligence the criteria that enable it to distinguish between true and false problems" (ibid.). While, for Bergson, "the intelligence is the faculty that states problems in general", and the instinct "a faculty for finding solutions (...) only intuition decides between the true and the false in the problems that are stated, even if this means driving the intelligence to turn back against itself" (ibid.).

From this follows the second general rule of intuition as method: "*Struggle against illusion, rediscover the true differences in kind or articulations of the real*" (ibid.).

According to Bergson, "experience itself offers us nothing but composites" (ibid., 22); or to put the same point in other, slightly different, yet very revealing terms, "things are mixed in

reality", and "this mixture is our experience itself, our representation" (ibid., 26). A composite, an impure mixture or a representation "must always be divided according to its natural articulations, that is, into elements which differ in kind" (ibid., 22). Only tendencies or pure presences can be said to differ in kind, and therefore a composite or a representation "must be divided according to qualitative and qualified tendencies" (ibid.) or "pure presences that do not allow themselves to be represented" (ibid., 26). The task of performing such a division Deleuze attributes to "intuition as a method of division, Platonic in inspiration" (ibid.). Here once again, Deleuze notes the similarities between Bergson's intuition as a method of division and Kant's transcendental method: "If the composite represents the fact, it must be divided into tendencies or into pure presences that only exist in principle (*en droit*). We go beyond experience, toward the conditions of experience (but these are not, in the Kantian manner, the conditions of all possible experience: They are the conditions of real experience)" (ibid., 23). Not only does Deleuze here present Bergson's conception of intuition as a continuation of Kant's transcendental method, but he also reveals in what respect the former supposedly represents an advance over the latter. A few pages later Deleuze reiterates this crucial point: "Intuition leads us to go beyond the state of experience toward the conditions of experience. But these conditions are neither general nor abstract. They are no broader than the conditioned: they are the conditions of real experience" (ibid., 27).

To go beyond experience, for Bergson, is "to seek experience at its source, or rather above that decisive *turn*, where, taking a bias in the direction of our utility, it becomes properly *human* experience" (Bergson quoted in Deleuze 1988, 27). Sometimes this movement is exactly appropriate to experience, while at other times it might consist of a broadening out on one hand or a tightening and narrowing on the other. Whichever the case on a given occasion may be, to go above the turn in experience is always "to open us up to the inhuman and the superhuman (*durations* which are inferior or superior to our own)", that is, "to go beyond the human condition" (Deleuze 1988, 28). And "in so far as our condition condemns us to live among badly analyzed composites, and to be badly analyzed composites ourselves" (ibid.), the task of philosophy is precisely to lead us beyond the human condition.

To further differentiate Bergson's intuition from Kant's transcendental method, Deleuze warns against construing the (Bergsonian) beyond-experience in terms of (Kantian) concepts:

> This broadening out, or even this going beyond does not consist in going beyond experience toward concepts. For concepts only define, in the Kantian manner, the conditions of all possible experience in general. Here, on the other hand, it is a case of real experience in all its peculiarities. And if we must broaden it, or even go beyond it, this is only in order to find the articulations on which these peculiarities depend. So that the conditions of experience are less determined in concepts than in pure percepts. And, while these percepts themselves are united in a concept, it is a concept modelled on the thing itself, which only suits that thing, and which, in this sense, is no broader than what it must account for. (ibid.)

Clearly, the problem with Kantian concepts, for Deleuze, is that they are general and therefore inadequate to capture the real experience which is supposedly singular. Insofar as concepts on Bergson's account are involved in the determination of the conditions of real experience at all, these concepts are supposed to be *singular*, that is, modelled on and suitable only to the thing itself, the thing which they are supposed to be the condition of.

To this capacity of intuition to go beyond real experience towards its concrete conditions Deleuze gives the name of "superior empiricism" (ibid., 30). And while Deleuze is pretty schematic about this term in *Bergsonism* itself, his earlier text on Bergson entitled "Bergson's Conception of Difference" provides a much more elaborate and telling account of "superior empiricism", which, because of its importance, is worth citing at length:

> Thus intuition suggests itself as a method of difference or division: to divide whatever is composite into two tendencies. This method is something other than a spatial analysis, more than a description of experience, and less (so it seems) than a transcendental analysis. It reaches the conditions of the given, but these conditions are tendency-subjects, which are themselves given in a certain way: they are lived. What is more, they are at once the pure and the lived, the living and the lived, the absolute and the lived. What is essential here is that this ground is *experienced*, and we know how much Bergson insisted on the empirical character of the *élan vital*. Thus it is not the conditions of all possible experience that must be reached, but the conditions of real experience. Schelling had already proposed this aim and defined philosophy as a superior empiricism: this formulation also applies to Bergsonism. These conditions can and must be grasped in an intuition precisely because they are the conditions of

> real experience, because they are not broader than what is conditioned, because the concept they form is identical to its object. It will come as no surprise, then, that a kind of principle of sufficient reason, as well as indiscernibles, can be found in Bergson's work. What he rejects is a distribution that locates cause or reason in the genus and the category and abandons the individual to contingency, stranding him in space. Reason must reach all the way to the individual, the genuine concept all the way to the thing, and comprehension all the way to "this." (...) As long as the concept that fits only the object itself has not been found, "the unique concept," we are satisfied with explaining the object by several concepts, general ideas "of which the object is supposed to partake." What escapes then is that the object is *this* object rather than another of the same kind, and that the object in this genus has *these* proportions rather than some other proportions. Only tendency is the unity of the concept and its object, such that the object is no longer contingent, and the concept no longer general. (Deleuze 1956b, 35-36)

While most of the ideas presented here are pretty familiar, what makes this passage remarkable is the clarity with which they are expressed. Without a doubt this passage represents the single most explicit and straightforward expression of Deleuze's interpretation of Bergson's notion of intuition as a method and it is for this reason that we shall return to it often in the rest of this dissertation. In particular, and as we have adumbrated above, this passage is important for it reveals what is at stake in Deleuze's use of the name of "superior empiricism" to refer to Bergson's notion of intuition as method. Insofar as Bergson's intuition goes *beyond* the given or real experience towards its conditions, it is not to be confused with classical empiricism which remains at the level of the given or of objects as they are given to us in experience itself. Hence, the attribute *superior*. On the other hand, insofar as intuition denotes the capacity to *experience* or apprehend immediately these conditions, intuition as method still clearly deserves the name of empiricism. Let us reiterate this crucial point once again together with Deleuze, the conditions of real experience which the intuition reaches "are themselves given in a certain way: they are lived. What is more, they are at once the pure and the lived, the living and the lived, the absolute and the lived. What is essential here is that this ground is *experienced*, and we know how much Bergson insisted on the empirical character of the *élan vital*." Hence, in short, superior *empiricism*. Furthermore, the passage above also reveals in unequivocal terms what is supposed to be the end result of so defined superior

empiricism: the formation/creation/construction of “genuine” or “unique” concepts identical to their objects or appropriate only to the individual objects for which they are custom tailored. One last thing is worth highlighting from the passage above. Interestingly enough, at its beginning Deleuze claims that intuition as a method or superior empiricism is “more than a description of experience” (or empiricism), and “less (so it seems) than a transcendental analysis.” Although this claim might seem to contradict Deleuze’s pronouncements in *Bergsonism* that we’ve encountered before to the effect that Bergsonian intuition represents an advance over Kant’s transcendental method, this initial impression is easily dispelled by reading the above statement in the context of *Difference and Repetition*. To anticipate our imminent discussion of this book, what Deleuze there proposes under the rubric of “transcendental empiricism” is precisely a rewriting of Bergsonian intuition as superior empiricism in transcendental terms. Before we can turn to this, though, we have to return to and follow through to its end Deleuze’s discussion of intuition in *Bergsonism*.

As Deleuze there emphasizes, superior empiricism or going beyond real experience in order to trace its articulations is only the first aspect of the movement of intuition. Deleuze captures the second aspect of intuition in the complementary rule to the second general one: “*The real is not only that which is cut out* (se découpe) *according to natural articulations or differences in kind; it is also that which intersects again* (se récoupe) *along paths converging toward the same ideal and virtual point*” (Deleuze 1988., 29). As Deleuze explains, “After we have followed the lines of divergence beyond the turn, these lines must intersect again, not at the point from which we started, but rather at a virtual point, at a virtual image of the point of departure, which is itself located beyond the turn in experience; and which finally gives us the sufficient reason of the thing, the sufficient reason of the composite, the sufficient reason of the point of departure” (ibid., 28). Insofar as we ourselves are badly analyzed composites living in a world of badly analyzed composites the point of departure of our inquiry can only be the singular thing or the singular composite given to us in real experience. The first task of intuition is to lead us beyond this experience of ours towards its conditions, that is, to divide this composite along its natural articulations or differences in kind. Following these diverging lines we reach a point, a virtual or ideal point (or image), where these diverging lines converge and intersect again, and it is at this point that we discover the sufficient reason of the thing or the composite with which we initially began our investigation.

So, Deleuze concludes, there are two meanings to Bergson' expression "beyond the decisive turn": "First, it denotes the moment when the lines, setting out from an uncertain common point given in experience, diverge increasingly according to the differences in kind. Then, it denotes another moment when these lines converge again to give us this time the virtual image or the distinct reason of the common point. Turn and return. Dualism is therefore only a moment, which must lead to the re-formation of a monism. This is why, after the broadening out, a final narrowing follows, just as integration follows differentiation" (ibid., 29). It is these two distinct moments or these two successive turns in experience that constitute what Bergson calls precision in philosophy.

This brings us to the last general rule of intuition as method: "*State problems and solve them in terms of time rather than of space*" (ibid., 31).

According to Deleuze, the fundamental dualism for Bergson, the dualism which all his other numerous dualisms presuppose, is the one between *duration* and *space*. This dualism is based in Bergson's appropriation and transformation of Bernhard Riemann's distinction between two types of multiplicities, *discrete* and *continuous* multiplicities.[14] In Riemann's usage discrete multiplicities are those that "contain the principle of their own metrics (the measure of one of their parts being given by the number of elements they contain)", while continuous ones are the ones that find "a metrical principle in something else, even if only in phenomena unfolding in them or in the forces acting in them" (ibid.). For Riemann, a mathematician and a physicist, these two types of multiplicities designate two distinct aspects of *space*. Bergson's crucial advance over Riemann consists in the insight that the distinction between discrete and continuous multiplicities is to be applied to space *and* duration, with space being conceived in terms of discrete multiplicities and duration in terms of continuous ones. To be more precise, for Bergson, space is "a multiplicity of exteriority, of simultaneity, of juxtaposition, of order, of quantitative differentiation, of difference in degree; it is a numerical multiplicity, *discontinuous* and *actual*"; and duration is, in turn, "an internal multiplicity of succession, of fusion, of organization, of heterogeneity, of qualitative discrimination, or of difference in kind; it is a *virtual* and *continuous* multiplicity that cannot be reduced to numbers" (ibid., 38).

[14] With regards to the notion of "multiplicity" in Bergson's usage, it is crucial, Deleuze warns us, not to conflate it with the traditional philosophical notion of the Multiple. "In fact, *for Bergson it is not a question of opposing the Multiple and the One but, on the contrary, of distinguishing two types of multiplicities*" (ibid., 39).

As we have learned before, experience always presents us with a composite which is to be divided according to its natural articulations into tendencies which differ in kind. Let us now supplement this by noting that this composite is always composed of space and duration. It might seem to follow that space and duration represent the two tendencies which differ in kind into which the composite is to be divided. But to see that such a conclusion would be overly hasty it will be enough to recall that for Bergson space is a homogenous and a numerical multiplicity or a multiplicity of differences in *degree* while duration is a heterogeneous and a continuous multiplicity or a multiplicity of differences in *kind*. In other words, only duration presents us with differences in kind.

If the task of intuition as method is to divide the composite which is given to us in experience into articulations which differ in kind, and if only duration presents us with differences in kind, then it follows that if intuition is to achieve its task it has to think in terms of duration. And this is precisely the "fundamental meaning" of intuition that the third general rule stated above reveals: "intuition presupposes duration, it consists in thinking in terms of duration" (ibid., 31).

As we have seen before, Deleuze claims that intuition as a method of division is Platonic in inspiration. And now we see in what respect Bergsonian intuition represents an advance over Plato's method of division. While Plato's method was also meant to divide the composite into two halves, it lacked the criteria or the "middle term" by which to adjudicate this division and depended on inspiration instead. Therefore, it could be argued, as Aristotle was the first to do, that Plato's method of division was not a genuine method after all. According to Deleuze, Bergsonian intuition escapes this predicament: "For by dividing the composite according to two tendencies, with only one showing the way in which a thing varies qualitatively in time, Bergson effectively gives himself the means of choosing the 'right side' in each case; that of the essence" (ibid., 32). In other words, insofar as only duration presents us with differences in kind, and insofar as intuition consists in thinking in terms of duration, intuition has by definition the ability to divide the composite into articulations which differ in kind. In this way, Deleuze concludes, "intuition has become method, or rather method has been reconciled with the immediate" (ibid.).

But this is not say that intuition is to be identified with duration. "Intuition is rather the movement by which we emerge from our own duration, by which we make use of our own

duration to affirm and immediately to recognize the existence of other durations, above or below us" (ibid., 33). Or in the words of Bergson himself: "Only the method of which we are speaking allows one to pass beyond idealism as well as realism, to affirm the existence of objects both inferior and superior to us, though nevertheless, in a certain sense, interior to us... One perceives any number of durations, all very different from one another" (Bergson quoted in Deleuze 1988, 33). Furthermore, Deleuze argues, "without intuition as method, duration would remain a simple psychological experience" (ibid., 33).

Initially, Bergson did indeed conceive duration as psychological experience. He describes it in such terms in both *Time and Free Will* and *Creative Evolution*. In both of these instances duration is defined as "a case of a 'transition', of a 'change', a *becoming*, but it is a becoming that endures, a change that is substance itself" (ibid., 37). Here already Bergson identifies *continuity* and *heterogeneity* as two fundamental characteristics of duration. However, as his thought evolved Bergson came to realize that duration itself presents us with an opportunity to go beyond our lived experience (or *our* duration) towards the conditions of experience; or to be more precise, that duration was not merely lived experience, but constituted the conditions of experience.

Deleuze illustrates this point by invoking the same example famously deployed by Bergson in *Creative Evolution*, i.e. the process of the dissolution of sugar in water:

> Take a lump of sugar: It has a spatial configuration. But if we approach it from that angle, all we will ever grasp are differences in degree between that sugar and any other thing. But it also has a duration, a rhythm of duration, a way of being in time that is at least partially revealed in the process of its dissolving, and that shows how this sugar differs in kind not only from other things, but first and foremost from itself. This alteration, which is one with the essence or the substance of a thing, is what we grasp when we conceive of it in terms of Duration. In this respect, Bergson's famous formulation, "I must wait until the sugar dissolves" has a still broader meaning than is given to it by its context. It signifies that my own duration, such as I live it in the impatience of waiting, for example, serves to reveal other durations that beat to other rhythms, that differ in kind from mine. Duration is always the location and the environment of differences in kind; it is even their totality and multiplicity. There are

> no differences in kind except in duration - while space is nothing other than the location, the environment, the totality of differences in degree. (ibid., 31-32)

Conceiving a particular sugar cube in terms of space allows us to grasp it not in itself but only in its relation to and difference from other things. But conceiving the same sugar cube in terms of Duration allows us to grasp its essence or substance, that is, it allows us to grasp the way in which it differs in kind not only from everything else, but also from itself. Insofar as Bergson defines duration as a becoming that endures or as a change that is substance (or essence) itself, the essence of a thing, according to Bergson, is constituted by its duration. Seeing the sugar cube dissolve in water reveals to us its duration (or the way it changes in time while still remaining the same substance) and therefore its essence. On the other hand, our waiting for the sugar to dissolve forces us to go beyond our duration or our experience and acknowledge the duration of that particular sugar cube. For this reason duration cannot be identified with simple psychological experience.

One last question remains to be addressed. Let us recall the second general rule of intuition as method which states: *Struggle against illusion, rediscover the true differences in kind or articulations of the real*. Where does, asks Deleuze, the illusion of false problems come from and in what sense is it inevitable (ibid., 33)? At first, Bergson attributed this illusion solely to *our nature* and traced its origin to a triple source: "the order of needs, of action, and of society that predisposes us to retain only what interests us in things; the order of intelligence, in its natural affinity with space; and the order of general ideas that tends to obscure differences in kind" (ibid.). But, as Deleuze argues, insofar as this collection of reasons remains psychological and inseparable from or our own condition, it clearly cannot be the whole answer.

> For while the idea of a homogeneous space implies a sort of artifice or symbol separating us from reality, it is nevertheless the case that matter and extensity are realities, themselves prefiguring the order of space. Although it is illusion, space is not merely grounded in our nature, but in the nature of things. Matter is effectively the "aspect" by which things tend to present to each other, and to us, only differences in degree. Experience gives us composites. Now the state of the composite does not consist only in uniting elements that differ in kind, but in uniting them in conditions such that these constituent differences in kind *cannot be* grasped in it. In short, there is

> a point of view, or rather a state of things, in which differences in kind can no longer appear. The *retrograde* movement of the true is not merely an illusion *about* the true, but belongs *to* the true itself. (ibid., 34)

As we have seen earlier, experience presents us with composites of space and duration. While duration reveals to us the true differences in kind or articulations of the real, space presents us only with differences in degree and consequently constitutes an illusion. Furthermore, while thinking in terms of duration enables us to pose true problems, thinking in terms of space leads us to pose false ones. But, as we have learned above, space as illusion is not merely a result of our own nature, but is grounded in the nature of things themselves. Insofar as matter and extensity, which prefigure space, are themselves real and constitute the aspect by which things present themselves to each other and to us, space itself is the aspect of being that manifests itself to us.

The evolution of Bergson's conception of space parallels the evolution of his conception of duration and Deleuze concludes his discussion of intuition by showing how these two trajectories of Bergson's thought merge together:

> Duration seemed to him to be less and less reducible to a psychological experience and became instead the variable essence of things, providing the theme of a complex ontology. But, simultaneously, space seemed to him to be less and less reducible to a fiction separating us from this psychological reality, rather, it was itself grounded in being and expressed one of its two slopes, one of its two directions. The absolute, said Bergson, has two sides (aspects): spirit imbued with metaphysics and matter known by science. But the point is that science is not a relative knowledge, a symbolic discipline that commends itself only by its successes or its effectiveness; science is part of ontology, it is one of ontology's two halves. The Absolute is difference, but difference has two facets, differences in degree and differences in kind. It can, therefore, be seen that when we grasp simple differences in degree between things, when science itself invites us to see the world in this way, we are again in an absolute (...). It is, however, an illusion. But it is only an illusion to the extent that we project the real landscape of the first slope onto the other. If the illusion can be repressed it is because of that other slope, that of duration, which gives us differences in kind *corresponding in the final*

> *instance* to differences of proportion as they appear in space, and already in matter and extension. (ibid., 35)

From being conceived as two aspects of psychological experience, space and duration became for Bergson two aspects of being itself or of the Absolute. Furthermore, insofar as Bergson conceives space in terms of differences in degree, and duration in terms of differences in kind, Deleuze identifies being or the Absolute with difference itself. By the same token, insofar as science invites us to think the world in terms of differences in degree, while metaphysics inquires about differences in kind, these two disciplines constitute two halves of ontology as the science of being or the Absolute. And while space or differences in degree do indeed constitute one aspect of being, and science one of the two halves of ontology, it would be an illusion to think that science on its own can provide access to being itself or the Absolute. This illusion can be repressed and access to being secured only by metaphysics, which by way of intuition as its method reveals to us the articulations of the real or true differences in kind.

Deleuze returns to the theme of the relation between science and metaphysics in the afterword to the English translation of *Bergsonism*:

> Thus, from antiquity, just as physics related movement to privileged positions and moments, metaphysics constituted transcendent eternal forms from which these positions derive. But "modern" science begins, on the contrary, when movement is related to "any instant whatever": it demands a new metaphysics which now only takes into account immanent and constantly varying durations. For Bergson, duration becomes the metaphysical correlate of modern science. (...) For Bergson, science is never "reductionist" but, on the contrary, demands a metaphysics - without which it would remain abstract, deprived of meaning or intuition. (ibid., 116)

According to Bergson, science without metaphysics would remain abstract and devoid of meaning. In light of this, the task of modern philosophy is to provide this new metaphysics which the modern science demands.

Let us conclude. We have followed Deleuze’s discussions of intuition throughout his various writings on Bergson in order to reveal the respects in which Deleuze considered Bergson’s intuition as method to be a successor to and a development of Kant’s transcendental method. Clearly, the most significant respect in which Bergson can be said to follow Kant is in

postulating the search for the conditions of experience, the very defining feature of Kant's transcendental method, as the principal task of intuition. By the same token, Bergson's most significant departure from Kant regards the way in which he qualifies this principal task of intuition as the search for the conditions of *real* experience and not of *possible* experience as was the case with Kant's transcendental method. As we have seen earlier, for Bergson, the notion of the possible represents a prime example of a badly analyzed composite wherein we group things together that differ in kind. Therefore, the Kantian search for the conditions of possible experience is just such an instance of a badly stated problem based upon a badly analyzed composite. Consequently, for Bergson, the whole Kantian enterprise is nothing but a collection of badly stated problems.

Badly stated problems or false problems in general, according to Bergson, are not to be conceived in terms of a simple mistake which could easily be corrected but in terms of a fundamental illusion which cannot be dispelled but only repressed. And while, as we just saw, Bergson considered Kant's whole project to be based upon such a fundamental illusion, this very conception of illusion is the second important feature that Bergson inherits from Kant, namely, from his notion of transcendental illusion. But here, once again, Bergson retains only the (general) gist of Kant's notion and transforms it in such a manner that the resulting idea is quite foreign to its Kantian inspiration. For Kant, a transcendental illusion is a result of reason acting in an illegitimate way by applying categories of the understanding to things as they are in themselves. Only by way of a critique *of* reason performed *by* reason itself can this illusion be exposed for what it truly is, i.e. a transcendental illusion. For Bergson, on the other hand, the fundamental illusion is a result of intelligence (Bergson's equivalent of Kantian reason), stating problems in terms of space or differences in degree. In claiming that the only way to repress this illusion is by raising in intelligence another tendency which is critical, Bergson clearly still follows Kant. But insofar as for Bergson intuition is the only faculty capable of activating this critical tendency, he once again departs significantly from Kant. It is by thinking in terms of duration or differences in kind that intuition provides the intelligence with the criteria which enable it to distinguish between true and false problems, thereby allowing us to repress the fundamental illusion. In other words, insofar as it consists in thinking in terms of duration, intuition is capable of dividing the composite which is given to us in experience into its natural articulations or differences in kind or to lead us beyond real

experience towards its conditions. This brings us to the last important point of divergence between Kant and Bergson.

Kant famously proclaims the impossibility of us having intellectual intuition and consequently attaining knowledge of things in themselves. Insofar as we do not posses intellectual but only sensible intuition, we cannot know things as they are in themselves (*noumena*) but only as they appear to us (*phenomena*) in experience. Therefore, we must not inquire about the essences of things but ask instead about the conditions under which they are given to us in experience. These conditions, for Kant, are constituted by space and time as the pure forms of intuition, and by the categories as the pure concepts of the understanding.

Bergson, as we have seen, goes against all of these fundamental Kantian postulates. First and foremost, his intuition as method is nothing but a reaffirmation of intellectual intuition. Just as intellectual intuition would grant us immediate knowledge of the "in-itself", so too Bergson's intuition as method allows us to grasp the Absolute. Or to be more precise, insofar as the Absolute, according to Bergson, has two aspects, duration or differences in kind and space or differences in degree, intuition, which consists in thinking in terms of duration, allows us to immediately apprehend that aspect of the Absolute which pertains to duration. And seeing that, for Bergson, duration constitutes "the variable essence of things", it follows that intuition allows us to grasp nothing less than the essences of things themselves. Furthermore, while for Kant space and time constitute the conditions of *our* experience of things, Bergson in turn conceives space and duration (time) as two aspects of the Absolute or Being itself. In other words, while Kant construes his transcendental method in epistemological terms, Bergson's intuition as method is to be conceived in ontological terms instead.

Clearly, Bergson's intuition as method could hardly be any more distant from Kant's transcendental method. While, for Kant, the transcendental method constituted part and parcel of his critique of dogmatic metaphysics, Bergson conceived intuition instead precisely as the method of his speculative metaphysics. Furthermore, while for Kant the goal of transcendental philosophy was to show how knowledge of the world which the science provides us is possible, Bergson, on the other hand, considered modern science to be abstract and incomplete if it is not complemented with metaphysics based on intuition. And this brings us to what may very well be the only real point of convergence between Kant and Bergson: both of them would certainly agree that science needs philosophy. But with regards to their

respective conceptions of the nature of philosophy, once again, these two could not be further apart. Let us now turn to *Difference and Repetition* in order to see the way in which Deleuze's reading of Bergson that we have been following here shaped Deleuze's philosophical project as a whole.

5. *DIFFERENCE AND REPETITION*

At long last we arrive at *Difference and Repetition.* The journey towards it has been long and arduous but hopefully we shall be rewarded for our efforts with a somewhat easier access to this magnificent philosophical edifice. A word of caution is in order. *Difference and Repetition* indeed is a brilliant book. But its brilliance may well be such that it might not be wise to stare at it directly, lest we don't want to get blinded by it. Therefore, it seems prudent to us to approach this dazzling book on our own terms instead of running the risk of it seducing us and luring us into its labyrinthine structure only to leave us stranded in its abysmal depths without much hope of us ever finding our way back to the surface again to tell the tale of the many riches we have witnessed inside it. Too many have fallen victims to its seductive charms already.

Let us put the same point in less poetic terms. *Difference and Repetition* is an extremely demanding book. Its demanding nature has the potential of either being off-putting or seductive, depending on the tastes of its readers. On the one hand, those who are unaccustomed and unsympathetic to the extravagances of contemporary Continental philosophy in general and French philosophy of the second half of the 20th century in particular, will more likely than not dismiss this book as pure non-sense. On the other hand, those who are guilty of overindulging in these very same extravagances will most likely consider this book a true masterpiece to by learned by heart and this precisely (or only) because of its demanding and extravagant nature. What these two opposing approaches have in common is that they both fail to engage the book itself in any meaningful manner. And while they are both equally problematic, it is with the latter approach that we take particular issue here. For it might be argued that the former, dismissive approach is at least in part the result of the latter, uncritical one.

Unfortunately, the secondary literature on Deleuze in general and *Difference and Repetition* in particular is plagued by these uncritical readings that don't do much besides parroting Deleuze's ideas without truly understanding them. And while the most egregious offenders of this kind could be shrugged off as an unfortunate consequence of poor publishing standards in

contemporary Continental philosophy, once we start noticing that even the most serious and diligent readers of Deleuze often fall victims to these same vices, albeit to a much lesser degree admittedly, suspicion soon arises that the fault may lie with Deleuze's writing itself. In fact, it could be argued that the baroque conceptual architecture and vocabulary of *Difference and Repetition* itself invites just such uncritical readings or that at the very least it makes extremely difficult (or virtually impossible) even the most earnest attempts at translating Deleuze's idiom into another, more generally understandable one. And this is precisely the most troubling aspect of these readings: while most readers exhibit excellent fluency in speaking Deleuze's language among themselves, and do seem to understand each other pretty well, their skills as translators of Deleuze's ideas into other languages are more often than not rather poor. In light of this, one might even wonder whether such a fluency in speaking Deleuze's language actually amounts to a genuine understanding of it at all. An obvious Deleuzian rejoinder to our complaints would be to highlight that the singularity of Deleuze's thought resists every attempt at generalization and therefore translation into other idioms foreign to it. Clearly, insofar as the main thrust of this dissertation is precisely to undercut these kinds of arguments, this response could hardly seem compelling to us.

All of this should by no means be taken to imply that we intend to call into question either the significance of *Difference and Repetition* or the earnestness of those who have tried engaging it thus far. It is precisely because we consider it to be a true philosophical masterpiece worthy of serious engagement that we deem it necessary to unpack its central claims in a more readily understandable language so as to be able better critically to evaluate them. All the caveats above are meant simply as a warning against giving in to the temptation of speaking in an esoteric language which only the initiated supposedly understand. And given the highly demanding nature of *Difference and Repetition* this temptation can indeed be quite strong. For even after years of serious engagement with the book as a whole, there still remain passage after passage (even page after page) of frustratingly impenetrable prose. Admittedly, in these instances the best anyone can do is to follow Deleuze's formulations as closely as possible and try to tease out their meaning by placing them in the context of his system as a whole. Fortunately, these instances of obscurity are counterpoised by passages of admirable (at times even surprising) clarity which manage to throw light on even the most impenetrable places of the book. It is to these instances of clarity that we shall mostly appeal in our reading of *Difference and Repetition*. Complementing these with the insights gleaned from the equally

clear parts of Deleuze's earlier writings that we have encountered thus far, shall hopefully allow us to present Deleuze in a manner understandable even to those uninitiated in his thought.

One last prefatory remark is in order. The demanding nature of *Difference and Repetition* is in large part due to the complexity and intricacy of its conceptual structure. To try and reconstruct in detail its intricate architecture in its entirety would be counterproductive for it would lead us precisely into the kind of considerations that would eventually force us to use Deleuze's idiom to a much larger extent than we are comfortable with. Furthermore, it's pretty safe to assume that this attempt would overtake our entire study, for to reconstruct *Difference and Repetition* in its entirety is certainly a book (or even multiple books?) project on its own. What we shall do instead is to try and reconstruct a general sketch of the book's main arguments and fill this sketch in with enough details so as to make it a compelling representation of the book as a whole. Needless to say, Deleuze's account and critique of representation shall be placed at the forefront of our discussion.

As we have learned at the very beginning of our discussion in chapter one, for Deleuze the reversal of Platonism is the main task of modern philosophy. And as we have also argued there, Deleuze's philosophical project as a whole can be read as nothing but a particularly sustained attempt at reversing Platonism, with *Difference and Repetition* being the most compelling chapter of this formidable endeavour. Let us recall briefly the main lesson learned from our engagement with Deleuze's "Plato and the Simulacrum", to reverse Platonism is to reverse the relation between identity and difference which defines the world of representation. While in the world of representation, difference is to be conceived as subordinated to identity, in the world of simulacra, constituted as it is by the reversal of Platonism, identity is to be thought of as a product of difference which is affirmed as a primary power.

That the reversal of Platonism thus defined is indeed the main objective of *Difference and Repetition* is clear from the very preface to the book where Deleuze announces his intentions in virtually the exact same terms to the ones employed in "Plato and the Simulacrum":

> The primacy of identity, however conceived, defines the world of representation. But modern thought is born of the failure of representation, of the loss of identities, and of the discovery of all the forces that act under the representation of the identical. The

> modern world is one of simulacra. Man did not survive God, nor did the identity of the subject survive that of substance. All identities are only simulated, produced as an optical 'effect' by the more profound game of difference and repetition. We propose to think difference in itself independently of the forms of representation which reduce it to the Same, and the relation of different to different independently of those forms which make them pass through the negative. (Deleuze 1994a, xix)

Here again, the main contrast is the one between the world of representation and the (modern) world of simulacra: while the former is defined by the primacy of identity or the subordination of difference to identity, the latter arises precisely out of the destruction of those identities (God, man, subject, substance) that constituted the world of representation and the consequent discovery of the realm of differences acting behind the identities that were once thought to be primary. Clearly, for Deleuze, the modern world (of simulacra) has by itself already destroyed the classical world of representation. And if philosophy wants to follow along and be able to think the modern world, it is imperative to reverse Platonism, which constituted the world of representation, and learn to think difference in itself or difference as released from the requirements of representation. Surely, if we are to understand Deleuze's account of difference as released from the requirements of representation, we would first have to have a precise grasp as to what these requirements which enslave difference and define the world of representation are. In other words, what we must do at this point is take a closer look at Deleuze's account of the world of representation itself.

5.1. The World of Representation

Once again we begin with Plato. As is well known by now, the world of representation, according to Deleuze, is founded by Platonism. But this should by no means be taken to imply that the world of representation is already fully established with Plato nor for that matter that it is simply to be identified with Platonism. Quite the contrary. It is certainly true that, for Deleuze, Plato was the one to have taken "a philosophical decision of the utmost importance", the decision "of subordinating difference to the supposedly initial powers of the Same and the

Similar," and "of declaring difference unthinkable in itself and sending it, along with the simulacra, back to the bottomless ocean" (ibid., 127). However, Deleuze further argues,

> precisely because Plato did not yet have at his disposition the constituted categories of representation (these appeared with Aristotle), he had to base his decision on a theory of Ideas. What appears then, in its purest state, before the logic of representation could be deployed, is a moral vision of the world. It is in the first instance for these moral reasons that simulacra must be exorcized and difference thereby subordinated to the same and the similar. For this reason, however, because Plato *makes* the decision, and because with him the victory is not assured as it will be in the established world of representation, the rumbling of the enemy can still be heard. Insinuated throughout the Platonic cosmos, difference resists its yoke. Heraclitus and the Sophists make an infernal racket. (ibid.)

Plato's moral decision to subordinate difference to identity is indeed the founding gesture of the world of representation. Yet insofar as this decision was based on Plato's theory of Ideas, the world of representation cannot be said to have been fully established with Plato. For, as Deleuze argues, Plato's Ideas are not to be confused with Aristotelian categories or concepts in general which constitute the fundamental elements of the world of representation: "The Idea is not yet the concept of an object which submits the world to the requirements of representation, but rather a brute presence which can be invoked in the world only in function of that which is not 'representable' in things. The Idea has therefore not yet chosen to relate difference to the identity of a concept in general: it has not given up hope of finding a pure concept of difference in itself" (ibid., 59). This is why, for Deleuze, in Plato's world, difference is not yet fully enslaved but acts like "an animal in the process of being tamed, whose final resistant movements bear witness better than they would in a state of freedom to a nature soon to be lost: the Heraclitan world still growls in Platonism" (ibid.).

Furthermore, according to Deleuze, difference finds its true dialectic in Plato's method of division. For this is a method that operates

> without mediation, without middle term or reason; it acts in the immediate and is inspired by the Ideas rather than by the requirements of a concept in general. It is true that division is a capricious, incoherent procedure which jumps from one singularity to

> another, by contrast with the supposed identity of a concept. Is this not its strength from the point of view of the Idea? Far from being one dialectical procedure among others which must be completed or relayed by others, is not division the one which replaces all the other procedures from the moment it appears, and gathers up all the dialectical power in favour of a genuine philosophy of difference? Is it not simultaneously the measure of both Platonism and the possibility of overturning Platonism? (ibid.)

Clearly, Deleuze's call for the reversal of Platonism is not to be confused with a call for a simple denial or abandonment of Platonism. "That this reversal should conserve many Platonic characteristics is not only inevitable but desirable" (ibid.). And as we have just learned, it is precisely by deploying the very defining features of Platonism, Plato's theory of Ideas and his method of division, that Deleuze intends to perform the reversal of Platonism. But before we could turn to Deleuze's proposed subversion of the world of representation by way of the reversal of Platonism, we have to proceed further with our investigation of Deleuze's account of representation itself.

It is with Aristotle that, according to Deleuze, the world of representation is fully established and difference completely subordinated to identity. For Aristotle, Plato's method of division is a bad and illicit syllogism and this for the very same reason for which Deleuze sees in it a valuable resource: because it lacks the middle term, the mediation or the reason according to which it could decide the selection between false and true claimants. Consequently, from Aristotle's perspective, Platonic division cannot be considered a veritable method at all but, as Deleuze put it, merely "a capricious, incoherent procedure which jumps from one singularity to another" (ibid.). In order to establish a genuine philosophical method, Aristotle supplants Plato's theory of Ideas with his theory of the categories and it is with this gesture that, according to Deleuze, the world of representation is fully constituted. Let us explain.

According to Aristotle, everything there is (Being) can be classified or divided into one of the ten categories: substance, quantity, quality, relation, place, time, situation, condition, action, passion. Aristotle conceives these ten categories as the highest genera (*genos*: kind or family) which can in turn be divided into species (*eidos*, the same term Plato used to refer to his 'Forms'), which can then be further divided into subspecies and so on until we reach the level of the lowest species (*infima species*) and finally individual substances. A genus is divided

into species by the *differentia* (*diaphora*), which are also called "specific differences" because they are defined by Aristotle as the "difference that makes a species" (*eidopoios diaphora*).

Understanding why Aristotle's theory of categories in general and his conception of difference in particular are problematic for Deleuze should not be difficult. First and foremost, Aristotle clearly conceives difference not in itself but in relation to the identity of the concept. Generic, specific and individual differences, for Aristotle, are to be conceived in relation to the identity of the concepts of Being, genus, and species respectively. Or as Deleuze puts it: "Difference in general is distinguished from diversity or otherness. For two terms differ when they are other, not in themselves, but in something else; thus when they also agree in something else: in genus when they are differences in species, in species for differences in number, or even 'in being, according to the analogy' for differences in genus" (ibid., 30). In order for two things to differ they first have to have something in common: they either have to belong to the same genus, or to the same species, or be in an analogical relation to Being.

However, while Aristotle certainly applies the same general conception of difference across all the different levels of analysis, not all of the resulting particular conceptions of difference (generic, specific and individual) enjoy the same status in his system. In fact, as Deleuze highlights, for Aristotle "there is a difference which is at once the greatest and the most perfect, *megiste* and *teleios*" (ibid.). Given Aristotle's general conception of difference, which of the three particular conceptions could correspond to this description of being the greatest and the most perfect? As Deleuze argues, the greatest difference, for Aristotle, is to be conceived in terms of opposition. But then again, of all the different kinds of opposition, which would be the most perfect and the most complete? According to Deleuze, insofar as contradiction qualifies the change in a subject and privation expresses an incapacity on behalf of a subject, "contrariety alone expresses the capacity of a subject to bear opposites while remaining substantially the same (in matter or in genus)" (ibid.). And given that "only a contrariety in the essence or in the form gives us the concept of a difference that is itself essential", Deleuze concludes that only contrariety in the genus or specific difference is, for Aristotle, deserving of the title of "the perfect and maximal difference" (ibid.). Above and below that, Deleuze further agues, "difference tends to become simple otherness and almost to escape the identity of the concept: generic difference is too large, being established between uncombinable objects which do not enter into relations of contrariety; while

individual difference is too small, being between indvisible objects which have no contrariety either" (ibid., 30-31).

There is little doubt, according to Deleuze, that specific difference is indeed the most perfect kind of difference for Aristotle. For, as Deleuze highlights, specific difference "is pure because it is formal, intrinsic because it applies to the essence. It is qualitative (...), a quality of the essence itself. (...) It is mediated, it is itself mediation, the middle term in person. It is productive, since genera are not divided into differences but divided by differences which give rise to corresponding species. That is why it is always a cause, the formal cause (...) That is also why it is a predicate of such a peculiar type, since it is attributed to the species but at the same time attributes the genus to it and constitutes the species to which it is attributed" (ibid., 31).

On the other hand, as Deleuze notes, specific difference can be said to be "the greatest difference" only in relative terms. For, speaking in absolute terms, contradiction is surely greater than contrariety and generic difference greater than the specific one. And indeed, Deleuze argues, it is only in relation to the supposed identity of a concept that the specific difference can be called the greatest. "Furthermore, it is in relation to the form of identity in the generic concept that difference goes as far as opposition, that it is pushed as far as contrariety" (ibid.). Crucially, Deleuze concludes, "specific difference, therefore, in no way represents a universal concept (that is to say, an Idea) encompassing all the singularities and turnings of difference, but rather refers to a particular moment in which difference is merely reconciled with the concept in general" (ibid., 31-32).

At this particular moment, or as Deleuze dubs it earlier in the text, at this "Greek propitious moment" (ibid., 29), at which difference is reconciled with the concept in general, a decisive confusion arises:

> Here we find 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. This is the sleight of hand involved in the propitious moment (and perhaps everything else follows: the subordination of difference to opposition, to

> analogy, and to resemblance, all the aspects of mediation). Difference then can be no more than a predicate in the comprehension of a concept. (ibid., 32)

It is precisely at this propitious moment at which the determination of the concept of difference is confused with the inscription of difference in the identity of an undetermined concept that the world of representation is fully constituted. All the other aspects of this world follow from this disastrous confusion. In order to understand better what these other aspects are we have to get back to the notion of generic difference.

As we have seen earlier, specific difference can be said to be the greatest and the most perfect difference only on condition of the identity of an undetermined concept. But compared to the generic difference or the difference between the categories as ultimate determinable concepts it is actually rather small, possibly even "insignificant" (ibid.). For, as Deleuze argues, the categories are, strictly speaking, not "subject to the condition that they share an identical concept or a common genus" (ibid.). Being is the only term to which the categories are subordinated. And Being, as Aristotle famously proclaims, cannot be a genus.[15] The argument goes as follows: Genus cannot be predicated of its differentia. And insofar as differences *are* (or have being), Being cannot be a genus. From this Deleuze concludes that for Aristotle generic difference is of *another* nature than the specific difference (ibid.).[16] "It is as though there were two 'Logoi', differing in nature but intermingled with one another: the logos of Species, the logos of what we think and say, which rests upon the condition of the identity or univocity of concepts in general taken as genera; and the logos of Genera, the logos of what is thought and said through us, which is free of that condition and operates both in the equivocity of Being and in the diversity of the most general concepts" (ibid., 32-33). In short, while species or concepts in general are univocal, that is, they are said in a single and same sense of everything of which they are said, Being is equivocal, that is, it is said (or it says itself) in many different senses. Categories are nothing but these different senses in which Being can be said.

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[15] See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, III, 3, 998b22–7, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, 723:
„It is not possible that either unity or being should be a single genus of things; for the differentiae of any genus must each of them both have being and be one, but it is not possible for the genus taken apart from its species (any more than for the species of the genus) to be predicated of its proper differentiae; so that if unity or being is a genus, no differentia will either have being or be one."

[16] For an illuminating discussion of this particular aspect of Deleuze's reading of Aristotle see Daniela Voss (2014, 40).

However, while Deleuze does proclaim generic difference to be of *another* nature than the specific one, this should not be taken to imply that he considers the equivocity of Being to fall completely outside of Aristotle's conception of difference.

> The fact is that generic or categorial difference remains a difference in the Aristotelian sense and does not collapse into simple diversity or otherness. An identical or common concept thus still subsists, albeit in a very particular manner. This concept of Being is not collective, like a genus in relation to its species, but only distributive and hierarchical: it has no content in itself, only a content in proportion to the formally different terms of which it is predicated. These terms (categories) need not have an equal relation to being: it is enough that each has an *internal* relation to being. The two characteristics of the concept of being - having no more than a distributive common sense and having a hierarchical primary sense - show clearly that being does not have, in relation to the categories, the role of a genus in relation to univocal species. They also show that the equivocity of being is quite particular: it is a matter of analogy. (ibid., 33)

To say that Being is equivocal is not to say that all these different senses (categories) in which it is said have nothing in common. There is still a respect in which Being can be said to be an identical and common concept in relation to the categories, but not in the same manner in which the categories/genera themselves can be said to be identical and common in relation to their species. In other words, there is a *common sense* to all the different ways in which Being can be said (categories). But this common sense is not collective, that is, it does not have a content in itself which could be applied to all of its subsumed terms in the same manner. It is distributed and hierarchical instead, that is, it has content only in proportion to the categories of which it is predicated. In a note attached to this discussion Deleuze elaborates further on this important point making it thereby more easily understandable. Deleuze there first invokes the scholastic translation of Aristotle's *pros hen* (the term Aristotle uses to describe the nature of the relation of the categories to Being) as 'analogy of proportionality' (ibid., 309). This scholastic analogy, Deleuze argues, "must not be understood in the strict mathematical sense and does not presuppose any *equality* of relation. It is defined by something completely different - by an *interiority* of relation: the relation of each category with being is interior to each category, it is on its own account that each has unity and being, by virtue of its own

nature" (ibid.). The categories stand not in an *equal*, but an *internal* relation to Being: the relation of each category with Being is based only upon its own particular nature. This, according to Deleuze, means that Being has a "distributive character", that is, that "there is indeed a division of being corresponding to the ways in which it is distributed to 'beings'" (ibid.). Categories are nothing but a distribution or division of Being. Furthermore, insofar as Being is unequally distributed according to the nature of each particular category, this division or distribution of Being clearly implies a *hierarchy*. This is why Deleuze claims that besides the distributive common sense, there is also the hierarchical primary sense of Being. In fact, substance is just such a primary sense of Being for Aristotle. And all the other categories have being to a lesser extent and only in virtue of being predicated of a substance. In terms of the scholastic terminology to which Deleuze refers, Being is first to be understood according to 'the analogy of intrinsic proportionality' (the distributed common sense of Being), and then according to 'the analogy of proportion or attribution' (the hierarchical first sense). This is why Deleuze argues that Aristotle's equivocity of Being is to be understood in terms of analogy.

Furthermore, according to Deleuze, *judgement* plays a crucial role in Aristotle's equivocal conception of Being:

> Now, if we ask what is the instance capable of proportioning the concept to the terms or to the subjects of which it is affirmed, it is clear that it is judgement. For judgement has precisely two essential functions, and only two: distribution, which it ensures by the *partition* of concepts; and hierarchization, which it ensures by the *measuring* of subjects. To the former corresponds the faculty of judgement known as common sense; to the latter the faculty known as good sense (or first sense). Both constitute just measure or 'justice' as a value of judgement. (ibid.)

To make a judgement is to predicate a concept of a subject. To do so is first and foremost to select and apply the appropriate concepts to the corresponding subjects. Or in Deleuze's terms, it is to distribute Being or everything there is by partitioning the concepts to the appropriate subjects. This in turn implies a hierarchization, which corresponds to the second function of a judgment: for to distribute Being is to evaluate each subject and apportion it to its rightful place in the 'great chain of being'. The faculty of judgement known as common

sense allows us to apply concepts to the appropriate subjects, which in turns allows the faculty of good sense to evaluate each particular subject.

According to Deleuze, every philosophy of categories from Aristotle all the way through Kant (and even Hegel) takes judgement for its model (ibid.). The problem with this gesture, for Deleuze, is that "the analogy of judgement allows the identity of a concept to subsist" (ibid.). For, as Deleuze further argues, "analogy is itself the analogue of identity within judgement. Analogy is the essence of judgement, but the analogy within judgement is the analogy of the identity of concepts" (ibid.). Finally, Deleuze concludes, this is why we cannot expect "that generic or categorial difference, any more than specific difference, will deliver us a proper concept of difference. Whereas specific difference is content to inscribe difference in the identity of the indeterminate concept in general, generic (distributive and hierarchical) difference is content in turn to inscribe difference in the quasi-identity of the most general determinable concepts; that is, in the analogy within *judgement* itself" (ibid.).

What remains to be seen is the status of the *infima species* (or the smallest species) in Aristotle's system and their relation to the individuals subsumed under them. Unsurprisingly, Deleuze once again notes how the logic of "the Small" reflects the logic of "the Large": while the categories or "the large units (...) are determined according to relations of analogy, which suppose a choice of characters carried out by judgement in the abstract representation, (...) the little genera or species, are determined by a direct perception of *resemblances,* which suppose a continuity of sensible intuition in the concrete representation" (ibid., 34). In other words, while the categories are determined by the relations of analogy between them with regards to Being, the smallest species are determined by the perceptual resemblances between the various individuals subsumed under them. Clearly, once again difference is subordinated to identity: individual differences are to be conceived in terms of the perceived similarity between the individual substances which belong to the same species.

As we have learned at the beginning of this discussion, Plato was the one to have taken the moral decision to subordinate difference to identity and it was upon this decision that the world of representation was founded. To say that this decision was a moral one is to say that it was based upon the impression that difference in itself was evil and because of that it was to be submerged and enslaved deep below the surface of the newly established world of representation (ibid., 29). To Plato's moral decision Aristotle responded by forging the

shackles with which difference in itself was to be enchained. Difference could be redeemed only by being mediated or represented "under the auspices of a reason which renders it liveable and thinkable, and makes it the object of an organic representation" (ibid., 262). According to Deleuze, "there are four principal aspects to 'reason' in so far as it is the medium of representation: identity, in the form of the *undetermined* concept; analogy, in the relation between ultimate *determinable* concepts; opposition, in the relation between *determinations* within concepts; resemblance, in the *determined* object of the concept itself" (ibid., 29). As should be clear from our previous discussion, Aristotle is to be held responsible for these "four heads or four shackles of mediation" (ibid.). Therefore, to mediate or represent difference is to subject it to all "the requirements of representation" established by Aristotle, that is, to "the identity of the concept, the opposition of predicates, the analogy of judgement and the resemblance of perception" (ibid., 34).

We have delineated the main contours of the world of representation. But if our picture is to be complete, we have to complement this primarily ontological account with the corresponding epistemological account. That is to say, now that we have acquainted ourselves with the conception of Being upon which the world of representation was founded, let us do the same with regards to the conception of thought which it presupposes. The central chapter of *Difference and Repetition* entitled "The Image of Thought" is dedicated to this very issue and this is where we have to focus our attention for the time being.

From Plato onwards, to break away with *doxa* or opinion has been one of the primary ambitions of philosophy. And as Deleuze argues, eliminating all pre-philosophical presuppositions from philosophical thought is the main precondition for accomplishing this task. Descartes famously believed to have discovered just such a presupositionless ground of all thought and knowledge with his Cogito. Deleuze certainly concedes that Descartes was successful in purging his Cogito from all the "objective presuppositions", that is, "concepts explicitly presupposed by another concept" (ibid., 129). However, as Deleuze further argues, Descartes remained completely oblivious to "presuppositions of another kind - subjective or implicit presuppositions contained in opinions rather than concepts" (ibid.). These presuppositions usually take the familiar form of 'Everybody knows...'. So, in the case of the Cogito, Descartes simply assumes that everybody knows in a pre-philosophical and pre-conceptual manner what it means to doubt, to think and to be, and therefore, that no one can

deny that to doubt is to think, and to think is to be (ibid., 130). These two well known formula 'Everybody knows' and 'No one can deny', according to Deleuze, constitute nothing less than "the form of representation and the discourse of the representative" (ibid.). In other words, while Descartes is willing to put into question the content of every particular belief, what he leaves unexamined is the very form of his discourse or the form of representation itself.

Descartes was by no means the only one to allow of such unexamined presuppositions in the foundations of his philosophical system. Far from it. In fact, Deleuze takes Descartes' Cogito as a particularly telling example of a conception of thought constitutive of the world of representation in general. Let us elaborate.

According to Deleuze, the form of representation which Descartes leaves unexamined has a

> pure matter or element. This element consists only of the supposition that thought is the natural exercise of a faculty, of the presupposition that there is a natural capacity for thought endowed with a talent for truth or an affinity with the true, under the double aspect of a *good will on the part of the thinker* and an *upright nature on the part of thought.* It is because everybody naturally thinks that everybody is supposed to know implicitly what it means to think. The most general form of representation is thus found in the element of a common sense understood as an upright nature and a good will *(Eudaxus* and orthodoxy). The implicit presupposition of philosophy may be found in the idea of a common sense as *Cogitatio natura universalis.* (ibid., 131)

In light of this Deleuze concludes that "conceptual philosophical thought has as its implicit presupposition a pre-philosophical and natural Image of thought, borrowed from the pure element of common sense. According to this image, thought has an affinity with the true; it formally possesses the true and materially wants the true. It is *in terms of* this image that everybody knows and is presumed to know what it means to think" (ibid.). This image of thought, which Deleuze also calls "a dogmatic, orthodox or moral image (ibid.)., certainly appears in many different varieties. Yet it is imperative to recognize, Deleuze argues, that it is indeed "a single Image in general which constitutes the subjective presupposition of philosophy as a whole" (ibid., 130). In other words, what all the various philosophical conceptions of thought constitutive of the world of representation have in common is that they are all based upon a single pre-philosophical Image of thought. And while the presupposition

that there is a natural capacity for thought endowed with an affinity for the true is indeed a fundamental presupposition of this Image of thought, it is by no means the only one. In fact, for Deleuze this is merely the first of the eight 'postulates'[17] which taken together constitute the image of thought. Before we could turn to our brief survey of the remaining postulates, one last important remark is in order. The image of thought is certainly *pre-philosophical* in nature. However, insofar as it implicitly grounds various *philosophical* conceptions of thought, it is important to recognize that this Image of thought, along with its various postulates, is claimed to hold in *principle* and not merely in *fact*. For instance, despite all the difficulties we might encounter in trying to live up to this ideal, it is nonetheless believed that the upright nature and an affinity with the true constitute the determinations of pure thought, that is, that they belong in principle to thought. Therefore, Deleuze argues, if we are to critically examine the Image of thought, "the discussion must be carried out on the level of principle itself, in order to see whether this image does not betray the very essence of thought as pure thought" (ibid., 133). Most importantly, "to the extent that it holds in principle, this image presupposes a certain distribution of the empirical and the transcendental, and it is this distribution or transcendental model implied by the image that must be judged" (ibid.).

According to Deleuze, *recognition* is just such a transcendental model of the Image of thought and one of its fundamental postulates.

> Recognition may be defined by the harmonious exercise of all the faculties upon a supposed same object: the same object may be seen, touched, remembered, imagined or conceived .... (...) No doubt each faculty - perception, memory, imagination, understanding ... - has its own particular given and its own style, its peculiar ways of acting upon the given. An object is recognised, however, when one faculty locates it as identical to that of another, or rather when all the faculties together relate their given and relate themselves to a form of identity in the object. Recognition thus relies upon a subjective principle of collaboration of the faculties for 'everybody' - in other words, a common sense as a *concordia facultatum;* while simultaneously, for the philosopher, the form of identity in objects relies upon a ground in the unity of a thinking subject, of which all the other faculties must be modalities. (ibid.)

[17] "Postulates in philosophy are not propositions the acceptance of which the philosopher demands; but, on the contrary, propositional themes which remain implicit and are understood in a pre-philosophical manner" (ibid., 131).

The Image of thought postulates the act of recognition as its transcendental model. Recognition itself, insofar as it is defined as a harmonious exercise of all the faculties upon a supposed same object, presupposes in turn both the identity in the form of the object and a unity of a thinking subject. The latter is of a particular import. For first with Descartes, and then later with Kant the identity of the Self in the 'I think' has been granted the status of the ground both of the unity of all the faculties in the subject and of the identity in the form of the object (ibid., 133). But as Deleuze shows, insofar as recognition relies upon the collaboration of the faculties for everybody or on the common sense conceived as *concordia facultatum*, Cogito is nothing but "a philosophical concept for the presupposition of a common sense; it is the common sense become philosophical" (ibid., 133). And it is precisely because of this that Deleuze proclaims common sense to be another fundamental postulate of the Image of thought.

However, as Deleuze further argues, it is important to distinguish between *common sense* and *good sense* as two distinct yet complementary terms: "While common sense is the norm of identity from the point of view of the pure Self and the form of the unspecified object which corresponds to it, good sense is the norm of distribution from the point of view of the empirical selves and the objects qualified as this or that kind of thing (..). Good sense determines the contribution of the faculties in each case, while common sense contributes the form of the Same" (ibid., 134). In other words, common sense and good sense complement each other as two aspects of the same postulate of the Image of thought: common sense denoting the transcendental aspect, and good sense the empirical one.

From all of this follows a further postulate of the Image of thought, the postulate of *representation*. In fact, for Deleuze, the postulate of recognition is nothing but "the first step towards a much more general postulate of representation" (ibid., 138). As we have seen before, Deleuze defines representation in terms of its quadripartite structure: the identity of the concept, the opposition of predicates, the analogy of judgement and the resemblance of perception. What Deleuze shows now is how each of these four elements appeals to one particular faculty:

> The identity of the unspecified concept constitutes the form of the Same with regard to recognition. The determination of the concept implies the comparison between possible predicates and their opposites in a regressive and progressive double series,

> traversed on the one side by remembrance and on the other by an imagination the aim of which is to rediscover or re-create (memorial-imaginative reproduction). Analogy bears either upon the highest determinable concepts or on the relations between determinate concepts and their respective objects. It calls upon the power of distribution present in judgement. As for the object of the concept, in itself or in relation to other objects, it relies upon resemblance as a requirement of perceptual continuity. (ibid., 137-138)

As we have learned before, the ground of the unity of the faculties and thus of the elements of representation is the 'I think' which is why Deleuze proclaims it to be the "the most general principle of representation" (ibid.). To the extent that the 'I think' is the source of these four faculties (I conceive, I judge, I imagine/I remember and I perceive) it is as though these were "the four branches of the Cogito. On precisely these branches, difference is crucified. They form quadripartite fetters under which only that which is identical, similar, analogous or opposed can be considered different: *difference becomes an object of representation always in relation to a conceived identity, a judged analogy, an imagined opposition or a perceived similitude*" (ibid.). It is for this reason that the world of representation is unable to think difference in itself.

From the nature of the first four postulates it follows that *error* is the only 'negative' of thought, and this is indeed Deleuze's fifth postulate of the Image of thought (ibid., 148). If both thought and the thinker are believed to be endowed with an upright nature and an affinity for the true, what could go wrong with thought if not the thinker erroneously taking the false for the true? Or to put the same point in terms of the postulates of common sense and recognition, if all the faculties of thought are supposed to act in collaboration so as to recognise a supposedly same object, what if not an error on part of one of the faculties in apprehending its particular given and a consequent false recognition of the object in question can constitute the breakdown of the cognitive process? Finally, from the point of view of the postulate of representation, what is this false recognition of an object if not a false distribution of the elements of representation, that is, a false evaluation of opposition, analogy, resemblance and identity (ibid.)? Error, Deleuze concludes, "is only the reverse of a rational orthodoxy, still testifying on behalf of that from which it is distanced - in other words, on behalf of an honesty, a good nature and a good will on the part of the one who is said to be

mistaken. Error, therefore, pays homage to the 'truth' to the extent that, lacking a form of its own, it gives the form of the true to the false" (ibid.).

From the postulate of error the next postulate follows in turn, the postulate of designation or proposition (ibid., 153). In order to understand this postulate it is necessary first to acquaint ourselves very briefly with some basic concepts introduced by Gottlob Frege, to which Deleuze obviously albeit implicitly refers here. In his seminal text "On Sense and Reference" (1892) Frege establishes the by now canonical distinction between the *reference* of a sign or "that to which the sign refers" and the *sense* of the sign or its "mode of presentation" of the object to which it refers (Frege in Moore 1993, 24). Furthermore, Frege determines the appropriate phraseology by which to refer to this distinction: "A proper name (word, sign, sign combination, expression) *expresses* its sense, *refers to* or *designates* its referent. By means of a sign we express its sense and designate its referent" (ibid., 27). Finally, with regards to the entire declarative sentence, Frege states that the *thought* which a sentence contains can only be its sense and not its reference (ibid., 28). Deleuze clearly follows Frege when he writes: "Two dimensions may be distinguished in a proposition: *expression*, in which a proposition says or expresses some idea; and *designation*, in which it indicates or designates the objects to which what is said or expressed applies. One of these would then be the dimension of sense, the other the dimension of truth and falsity" (Deleuze 1994a, 153). It is important to emphasize that the former dimension of expression or sense is the condition of the latter dimension of designation or truth and falsity. That is to say, for a proposition to be either true or false it has to have a sense. Or *vice versa*, a nonsensical proposition can be neither true nor false. However, according to Deleuze, precisely to the extent that sense is the condition of both truth and falsity, it remains indifferent to what it conditions. This, in turn, is to say that truth and falsity are to be conceived solely in terms of designation or reference to the object. It is this sense that Deleuze identifies the proposition or designation as the sixth postulate of the Image of thought.

The seventh postulate of the Image of thought follows in turn. This is the postulate of *responses* and *solutions* according to which "truth and falsehood only begin with solutions or only qualify responses" (ibid., 158). Responses to questions and the solutions to problems have the form of propositions. And insofar as truth and falsity are solely the matter of the designation of proposition, it follows that only responses or solutions in the form of

propositions can be considered either true or false. Questions and problems to which these propositions are a response to are relegated to the status of second-order citizens in the world of representation. “We are led to believe that problems are given ready-made, and that they disappear in the responses or the solution. Already, under this double aspect, they can be no more than phantoms. We are led to believe that the activity of thinking, along with truth and falsehood in relation to that activity, begins only with the search for solutions, that both of these concern only solutions” (ibid.).

This brings us to the last of the eight postulates of the Image of thought, the postulate of *knowledge* (ibid.). Insofar as this last postulate, according to Deleuze, “incorporates and recapitulates all the others in a supposedly simple result” (ibid.) let us take this opportunity to in fact recapitulate all the previous postulates of the Image of thought and see in the process how they all result in knowledge. According to the Image of thought, thought is supposedly endowed with an upright nature and an affinity with the true. The activity of thinking in its striving towards truth is modelled upon the activity of recognition. In this sense, thinking presupposes the collaborative exercise of all the faculties in their joint effort to recognize a supposedly same object. To think is to perceive an object, notice its similarity (or the properties it shares) with other objects that we have perceived before, and apply the right concept to it in a judgment. This judgment takes the form of a proposition which can either be true or false depending on whether or not it designates the right object. A true proposition constitutes knowledge and knowledge is indeed the end result towards which the whole process strives. To think is to know, and to know is to recognize and represent. This in a nutshell is the Image of thought presupposed by the world of representation.

5. 2. The World of Simulacra

With the exposition of Deleuze’s account of the world of representation complete, we can now turn to Deleuze’s account of his alternative to this world, namely the world of simulacra. Once again, we begin our discussion of the world of simulacra with an exposition of Deleuze’s account of its ontology.

To Aristotle's analogical conception of Being, Deleuze opposes Duns Scotus' thesis on the univocity of Being:

> There has only ever been one ontological proposition: Being is univocal. There has only ever been one ontology, that of Duns Scotus, which gave being a single voice. We say Duns Scotus because he was the one who elevated univocal being to the highest point of subtlety, albeit at the price of abstraction. However, from Parmenides to Heidegger it is the same voice which is taken up, in an echo which itself forms the whole deployment of the univocal. A single voice raises the clamour of being. (Deleuze 1994a, 35)

As Deleuze further argues, in order to understand that Being, "even if it is absolutely common, is nevertheless not a genus", it is "enough to replace the model of judgement with that of the proposition" (ibid.). Deleuze distinguishes three dimensions of the "proposition understood as a complex entity": "the sense, or what is expressed in the proposition; the designated (what expresses itself in the proposition); the expressors or designators, which are numerical modes - that is to say, differential factors characterising the elements endowed with sense and designation" (ibid.). Clearly, Deleuze is here once again following Frege's canonical conception of proposition that we have introduced before. He further confirms this by invoking Frege's own famous example: "We can conceive that names or propositions do not have the same sense even while they designate exactly the same thing (as in the case of the celebrated examples: morning star - evening star, Israel-Jacob, plan-blanc)" (ibid.). It is important to emphasize that "the distinction between these senses is indeed a real distinction (*distinctio realis*), but there is nothing numerical - much less ontological - about it: it is a formal, qualitative or semiological distinction" (ibid.). This is important for Deleuze for it allows him to "conceive of several formally distinct senses which none the less refer to being as if to a single designated entity, ontologically one" (ibid.). Furthermore, Deleuze adds, "being, this common designated, in so far as it expresses itself, is said in turn *in a single and same sense* of all the numerically distinct designators and expressors. In the ontological proposition, not only is that which is designated ontologically the same for qualitatively distinct senses, but also the sense is ontologically the same for individuating modes, for numerically distinct designators or expressors" (ibid., 35-36). In fact, according to Deleuze, this is the crucial aspect of the thesis of the univocity of Being:

> the essential in univocity is not that Being is said in a single and same sense, but that it is said, in a single and same sense, *of* all its individuating differences or intrinsic modalities. Being is the same for all these modalities, but these modalities are not the same. It is 'equal' for all, but they themselves are not equal. It is said of all in a single sense, but they themselves do not have the same sense. The essence of univocal being is to include individuating differences, while these differences do not have the same essence and do not change the essence of being - just as white includes various intensities, while remaining essentially the same white. There are not two 'paths', as Parmenides' *poem* suggests, but a single 'voice' of Being which includes all its modes, including the most diverse, the most varied, the most differenciated. Being is said in a single and same sense of everything of which it is said, but that of which it is said differs: it is said of difference itself. (ibid., 36)

After thus introducing the crucial aspects of the thesis of the univocity of Being, Deleuze proceeds to sketch his genealogical account of its historical development. According to Deleuze, there are three "principal moments in the history of the philosophical elaboration of the univocity of being" (ibid., 39). The first one of these is represented by the already mentioned Duns Scotus, who was responsible for inaugurating this very notion. In his book the *Opus Oxoniense* – "the greatest book of pure ontology" – "being is understood as univocal, but univocal being is understood as neutral, *neuter*, indifferent to the distinction between the finite and the infinite, the singular and the universal, the created and the uncreated. (...) In order to neutralise the forces of analogy in judgement, he took the offensive and neutralised being itself in an abstract concept" (ibid.). However, as Deleuze emphasizes, that is why Duns Scotus "only *thought* univocal being" (ibid.).

The second moment is represented by Spinoza whose ontological monism as it is explicated in his *Ethics*, according to Deleuze, marked "a considerable progress" in the development of the thesis of the univocity of Being (ibid., 40). Instead of understanding univocal being as neutral or indifferent, as Duns Scotus did, Spinoza "makes it an object of pure affirmation. Univocal being becomes identical with unique, universal and infinite substance: it is proposed as *Deus sive Natura*" (ibid.). Deleuze elaborates on this claim thus:

> The attributes behave like real qualitatively different senses which relate to substance as if to a single and same designated; and substance in turn behaves like an

> ontologically unique sense in relation to the modes which express it, and inhabit it like individuating factors or intrinsic and intense degrees. (...) Being itself is said in a single unique sense of substance and the modes, even though the modes and substance do not have the same sense or do not have that being in the same manner (*in se* and *in alio*). Any hierarchy or pre-eminence is denied in so far as substance is equally designated by all the attributes in accordance with their essence, and equally expressed by all the modes in accordance with their degree of power. With Spinoza, univocal being ceases to be neutralised and becomes expressive; it becomes a truly expressive and affirmative proposition. (ibid.)

However, while Spinoza's expressive and affirmative conception of univocity of Being indeed represents a significant advance over Duns Scotus' initial, neutral conception, univocity is not yet complete with Spinoza. For, according to Deleuze, there still remains "a difference between substance and the modes: Spinoza's substance appears independent of the modes, while the modes are dependent on substance, but as though on something other than themselves" (ibid.). If the univocity of Being is to be complete, "substance must itself be said *of* the modes and only *of* the modes" (ibid.). Such a condition, Deleuze argues, can be satisfied only

> at the price of a more general categorical reversal according to which being is said of becoming, identity of that which is different, the one of the multiple, etc. That identity not be first, that it exist as a principle but as a second principle, as a principle *become;* that it revolve around the Different: such would be the nature of a Copernican revolution which opens up the possibility of difference having its own concept, rather than being maintained under the domination of a concept in general already understood as identical. (ibid., 40-41)

Of course, the general ontological reversal of which Deleuze speaks here is nothing other than the reversal of Platonism. What is thereby revealed is that Deleuze's ambition to reverse Platonism is motivated by his commitment to the univocity of Being. And, according to Deleuze, Nietzsche's doctrine of the eternal return holds the key to accomplishing both of these tasks. This is why, for Deleuze, Nietzsche represents the third and final moment in the development of the univocity of Being. Deleuze begins elaborating on the significance of the

doctrine of the eternal return for the articulation of the univocity of being by highlighting first its role in the reversal of Platonism, i.e. the reversal of the primacy of identity over difference:

> Eternal return cannot mean the return of the Identical because it presupposes a world (that of the will to power) in which all previous identities have been abolished and dissolved. Returning is being, but only the being of becoming. The eternal return does not bring back 'the same', but returning constitutes the only Same of that which becomes. Returning is the becoming-identical of becoming itself. Returning is thus the only identity, but identity as a secondary power; the identity of difference, the identical which belongs to the different, or turns around the different. Such an identity, produced by difference, is determined as 'repetition'. Repetition in the eternal return, therefore, consists in conceiving the same on the basis of the different. (ibid., 41)

Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that, for Deleuze, the eternal return is not to be conceived "merely" as a "theoretical representation", but as a *practical* principle of selection:

> it carries out a practical selection among differences according to their capacity to produce - that is, to return or to pass the test of the eternal return. The selective character of eternal return appears clearly in Nietzsche's idea: it is not the Whole, the Same or the prior identity in general which returns. Nor is it the small or the large, either as parts of the whole or as elements of the same. Only the extreme forms return - those which, large or small, are deployed within the limit and extend to the limit of their power, transforming themselves and changing one into another. Only the extreme, the excessive, returns; that which passes into something else and becomes identical. (ibid.)

What the eternal return thus conceived as a principle of selection expresses is "the common being of all these metamorphoses, the measure and the common being of all that is extreme, of all the realised degrees of power" (ibid.). This finally reveals the significance that Deleuze attributes to Nietszche's doctrine of the eternal return with regards to the development of the thesis of the univocity of Being: "In the eternal return, univocal being is not only thought and even affirmed, but effectively realised. Being is said in a single and same sense, but this sense is that of eternal return as the return or repetition of that of which it is said.

The wheel in the eternal return is at once both production of repetition on the basis of difference and selection of difference on the basis of repetition" (ibid., 41-42).

For Deleuze, eternal return is the sense of Being, the single and same sense in which Being is said (and in which Being says itself). To the extent that eternal return is not to be understood as a theoretical representation, but as a practical principle of selection it can thereby be said that eternal return is not merely a *conception* or an *affirmation* of the univocity of Being, but its *realization*. This is why Deleuze claims that with the eternal return the univocity of Being is neither merely *thought* (Duns Scotus), nor *affirmed* (Spinoza), but *realized* (Nietzsche). Furthermore, to the extent that the selection which the eternal return carries out is the selection of that which *differs* or *becomes*, that *of* which Being is said is difference itself or becoming. This is the other sense in which eternal return can be said to realize the univocity of Being. For to say that neither Duns Scotus nor Spinoza where capable of realizing the thesis of the univocity of Being is to say that neither of them where capable of upholding this thesis in what Deleuze takes to be its completed, realized form: Being is said in a single and same sense but that of which it is said is difference itself. Nietzsche, as we have seen before, manages to do this because his doctrine of the eternal return effectuates the reversal of Platonism. What returns in the eternal return is not the Same or identical, but difference or becoming. Returning itself is the Being, but only Being *of* becoming or the becoming-identical of becoming itself. In other words, identity or the Same is constituted by the very operation of the eternal return of difference. Difference is the primary power, identity its product and the eternal return the principle by way of which the former becomes the latter.

In conclusion, what clearly follows from all of this is that, for Deleuze, the eternal return is the *metaphysical* principle of the realization of Being or the process by which everything that *is* becomes *what* it is. Furthermore, what should be just as obvious is that Deleuze's commitment to the univocity of Being is synonymous with his pronouncement that philosophy must be an *ontology on sense*. We have encountered this idea in our discussion of Deleuze's "Review of Jean Hypplite's *Logic and Existence*" in chapter three. As we have learned there, Deleuze credits Kant's transcendental turn with the substation of sense for essence or, to be more precise, the substation of the distinction apparition/sense or conditions of appearing for the distinction essence/appearance. There we have also concluded that Deleuze sees himself as continuing and completing Kant's transcendental project in the wake

of post-Kantian critiques of Kant. This is to say that just like the post-Kantians before him, Deleuze too believed that Kant's Copernican turn can be completed only on condition that his notion of the transcendental be redefined in such a manner so as to allow us to overcome all the dualisms still operative in Kant's thought. Finally, we have argued that Deleuze finds in Bergson the most significant ally to this reinterpretation of Kant's transcendental. In what follows we shall focus on those aspects of *Difference and Repetition* in which Deleuze effectuates his reinterpretation of Kant's transcendental project through Bergsonian means. This discussion shall in turn allow us to acquaint ourselves with the epistemological aspect of the world of simulacra, that is, with Deleuze's conception of thought which he proposes as an alternative to the dogmatic Image of thought presupposed by the world of representation.

In some of the most important and well known passages from *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze refers to his own philosophical project as "transcendental empiricism". As we have stated in chapter four, "transcendental empiricism" is nothing but Deleuze's term for the rewriting of Bergson's "superior empiricism" in transcendental terms. Let us begin our discussion by highlighting the most important of these passages in which Deleuze explicitly debates this topic.

Deleuze introduces the term "transcendental empiricism" in the context of his few brief discussions of art and aesthetics in the first chapter of the book. In the first of these instances Deleuze makes a rather intriguing claim: "The work of art leaves the domain of representation in order to become 'experience'/'experimentation', transcendental empiricism or science of the sensible" (ibid., 56 tm). What makes this claim intriguing is the fact that 'transcendental empiricism' is here equated not only with 'experience'/'experimentation' and the science of the sensible but also, and more importantly, with the work of art itself. In the very next passage, Deleuze expands on this claim thus:

> It is strange that aesthetics (as the science of the sensible) could be founded on what *can* be represented in the sensible. True, the inverse procedure is not much better, consisting of the attempt to withdraw the pure sensible from representation and to determine it as that which remains once representation is removed (a contradictory flux, for example, or a rhapsody of sensations). Empiricism truly becomes transcendental, and aesthetics an apodictic discipline, only when we apprehend 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. This empiricism teaches us a strange 'reason', that of the multiple, chaos and difference (nomadic distributions, crowned anarchies). It is always differences which resemble one another, which are analogous, opposed or identical: difference is behind everything, but behind difference there is nothing. (ibid., 56-57)

This passage is best read in conjunction with a later one to be found by the end of chapter one:

> We have contrasted representation with a different kind of formation. The elementary concepts of representation are the categories defined as the conditions of possible experience. These, however, are too general or too large for the real. The net is so loose that the largest fish pass through. No wonder, then, that aesthetics should be divided into two irreducible domains: that of the theory of the sensible which captures only the real's conformity with possible experience; and that of the theory of the beautiful, which deals with the reality of the real in so far as it is reflected. Everything changes once we determine the conditions of real experience, which are not larger than the conditioned and which differ in kind from the categories: the two senses of the aesthetic become one, to the point where the being of the sensible reveals itself in the work of art, while at the same time the work of art appears as experience/experimentation. (ibid., 68, tm)

These two passages taken together allow us to paint a pretty accurate picture of what Deleuze means by 'transcendental empiricism'. The first thing to note in this regard is that in both instances the discussion revolves around a notion of aesthetics which while unattributed is easily recognizable as Kant's. As the second quote reveals, Deleuze finds deeply problematic what he perceives to be an inherent dualism in Kant's notion of aesthetics. Deleuze's contention that aesthetics is divided into two irreducible domains clearly refers to two distinct senses in which Kant uses the term 'aesthetics' in his *Critique of Pure Reason* on the one hand and the *Critique of Judgment* on the other. In the context of the transcendental inquiry into the conditions of possibility of experience in general of the first *Critique*, Kant uses the

term ‘transcendental aesthetics’ to refer to the transcendental inquiry into the conditions of sensibility *a priori*. On the other hand, in the context of his third *Critique* Kant uses the term ‘aesthetics’ to refer primarily to ‘aesthetic judgments’ which, along with ‘teleological judgments’, are a species of ‘reflective judgments’. ‘Aesthetics judgments’ are then subdivided into judgments of ‘the agreeable’, ‘the beautiful’, ‘the sublime’, and ‘the good’. Kant conceives reflective judgments (and consequently aesthetic judgments in general and judgments of the beautiful in particular) in opposition to determinative judgments. Kant calls ‘determinative’ the judgments in which the subject has at its disposal the appropriate concept with which to *determine* the intuition of the object given to him in sensibility. ‘Reflective’ judgments, on the other hand, are those in which there is no concept to apply to the intuition of an object and therefore the subject can only *reflect* the object in question.

This distinction between two kinds of judgments reveals what Deleuze finds problematic about Kant’s dualistic notion of aesthetics. The concepts which are to be applied to objects in determinative judgments are by definition general and therefore cannot apprehend the object in its singularity. In other words, the real (experience) is reduced to the possible (experience). On the other hand, to the extent that in the reflective judgments there are no general concepts to apply to objects, they indeed allow the subject to apprehend objects in their singularity. However, by Kant’s standards, this form of apprehension does not constitute knowledge but merely reflection. The real is not known bur merely reflected. Herein lies one of the main aspects of Deleuze’s overall critique of representation: to the extent that categories as the elementary concepts of representation are by definition general they are incapable of grasping the real which is by definition singular. In our discussion of Deleuze’s reading of Bergson we have already encountered Deleuze’s proposed solution to this predicament and in the second passage quoted above he repeats it almost verbatim: if we are to overcome the Kantian dualism of knowing the possible or merely reflecting the real, the transcendental project is to be redefined in such a manner that it constitutes the inquiry into the conditions of *real* and not merely *possible* experience. According to Deleuze, as we have seen, “everything changes once we determine the conditions of real experience, which are not larger than the conditioned and which differ in kind from the categories: the two senses of the aesthetic become one, to the point where the being of the sensible reveals itself in the work of art, while at the same time the work of art appears as experience/experimentation” (ibid.). In order to understand this pronouncement it is necessary to return to the first passage quoted above in which

Deleuze makes a closely related claim: “Empiricism truly becomes transcendental, and aesthetics an apodictic discipline, only when we apprehend 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” (ibid., 56). Deleuze’s ‘conditions of real experience’ are nothing other than “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” (ibid.). According to Deleuze, “modern art tends to realise these conditions: in this sense it becomes a veritable *theatre* of metamorphoses and permutations. A theatre where nothing is fixed, a labyrinth without a thread (Ariadne has hung herself)” (ibid., 56). It is in this sense that we must understand Deleuze’s previously quoted claim that “the work of art leaves the domain of representation in order to become ‘experience’/’experimentation’, transcendental empiricism or science of the sensible” (ibid.). Furthermore, it is precisely because, for Deleuze, the modern work of art realizes the conditions of real experience in such a manner that “the being of the sensible reveals itself in the work of art, while at the same time the work of art appears as experience/experimentation” (ibid., 68). Deleuze invokes Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake* and Mallarme’s *Book* as two prime examples of such modern works of arts which satisfy the conditions of real experience. Interestingly enough, these claims seem to suggest that by overcoming the inherent dualisms of Kant’s system, philosophy also overcomes the very distinction between philosophy and art. However tempting taking this route might have seemed at the time of Deleuze’s writing of these lines, and even for quite some time after, such claims should by no means be left unchallenged at this point in time. But it’s best to leave this discussion for the time being, and return to the topic at hand, i.e. Deleuze’s account of transcendental empiricism and the way it succeeds Bergson’s superior empiricism.

Just like Bergson before him, Deleuze too considers representation to be “a site of transcendental illusion” (ibid., 265), a fundamental or inevitable illusion which has to be dispelled. And the only way to accomplish this is by going *beyond* experience, as it is given to us in representation, towards the conditions of real experience, namely difference or difference of intensity as the being of the sensible or that which can only be sensed. Deleuze directly confirms the relation of his transcendental empiricism with Bergson’s superior empiricism in the first passage quoted above when he writes: “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." In short, the world of representation is a transcendental illusion. We dispel this illusion by going beyond experience towards its conditions where we discover the intense world of differences as the reason behind everything that is given to us in experience.

It is paramount to emphasize that Deleuze construes this act of going beyond experience towards its conditions in terms of a *direct apprehension* of the intense world of differences. In positing the possibility of such a direct apprehension of the conditions of experience Deleuze is clearly following Bergson once again, that is, his affirmation of intuition as the method of philosophy. In order to determine more precisely the nature of the relation between Deleuze and Bergson on this account it will be helpful to recall briefly an important remark made by Deleuze in a passage from "Bergson's Conception of Difference" that we have cited earlier. Deleuze there makes the following claim: intuition as a method is "more than a description of experience, and less (so it seems) than a transcendental analysis" (Deleuze 1956b, 35). It is our contention that Deleuze's account of the "transcendent" or "superior exercise of the faculties" as presented in *Difference and Repetition*'s central chapter "The Image of Thought" is precisely the *transcendental* version of Bergson's intuition as a method that Deleuze invokes in this quote. In order to confirm this claim, let us briefly outline the basic contours of Deleuze's account of the transcendent exercise of the faculties.

Deleuze famously states, "Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*" (Deleuze 1994a, 139). The first characteristic of the object of this encounter is "that it can only be sensed" (ibid.). Following this, Deleuze variously refers to "that which can only be sensed" as "the sign," "the being of the sensible," "that by which the given is given," or the "*sentiendum*" (ibid., 139-140). Furthermore, it is important to highlight that this object of the encounter is "imperceptible (*insensible*) from the point of view of an empirical exercise of the senses in which sensibility grasps only that which could also be grasped by other faculties, and is related within the context of a common sense to an object which also must be apprehended by other faculties" (ibid., 140). Contrary to its empirical exercise thus defined, "sensibility, in the presence of that which can only be sensed (and is at the same time imperceptible) finds itself before its own limit, the sign, and raises itself to the level of a transcendent exercise: to the 'nth' power" (ibid.). Once sensibility has been raised to its transcendent exercise by its encounter with the

sentiendum, it "forces memory to remember the *memorandum*, that which can only be recalled" (ibid., 141), thereby raising memory to a transcendent exercise of its own. Finally, memory in its turn "forces thought to grasp that which can only be thought, the *cogitandum* or *noeteon*, the Essence: not the intelligible, for this is still no more than the mode in which we think that which might be something other than thought, but the being of the intelligible as though this were both the final power of thought and the unthinkable" (ibid.).

According to Deleuze, what is revealed by this "transcendent, disjointed or superior exercise of the faculties" is precisely their "transcendental form" (ibid., 143). For, in order to avoid tracing the transcendental form of the faculties from their empirical exercise, as Kant does, Deleuze claims that "each faculty must be borne to the extreme point of its dissolution, at which it falls prey to triple violence: the violence of that which forces it to be exercised, of that which it is forced to grasp and which it alone is able to grasp, yet also that of the ungraspable (from the point of view of its empirical exercise)" (ibid.). It is at this point that each faculty "discovers its own unique passion" (ibid.), or its transcendental form.

To reiterate once again, thought, for Deleuze, always begins with an encounter with the *sentiendum*. But what is this paradoxical element that can only be sensed yet is imperceptible at the same time? This element which forces sensibility to its transcendent exercise is "intensity, understood as pure difference in itself, as that which is at once both imperceptible for empirical sensibility which grasps intensity only already covered or mediated by the quality to which it gives rise, and at the same time that which can be perceived only from the point of view of a transcendental sensibility which apprehends it immediately in the encounter" (ibid., 144).

Thus, for Deleuze, thought always begins with an immediate apprehension of difference in itself. Deleuze could hardly be any more explicit about his belief in the idea of intuitive knowledge. The notion of the transcendent exercise of the faculties represents nothing less than Deleuze's attempt to give a properly transcendental account of this age-old metaphysical ideal. This brings us to the last important respect in which Deleuze can be said to follow in Bergson's footsteps.

For Bergson and Deleuze alike the affirmation of the power of intuition goes hand in hand with the commitment to rehabilitate metaphysical ambitions of philosophy. As we have seen

in chapter four, Bergson believed that without metaphysics science would remain abstract and devoid of meaning and that the task of modern philosophy was to provide this new metaphysics which the modern science demands. Deleuze is quite unequivocal about following Bergson in this respect: “I feel I am a pure metaphysician”; “I feel that I am Bergsonian – when Bergson says that modern science has not found its metaphysics, the metaphysics it needs. It is that metaphysics that interests me” (Deleuze 1981, 41-42).

6. SELLARS' PHILOSOPHICAL QUEST

"THE aim of philosophy, abstractly formulated, is to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term" (Sellars 1962, 1). With this deceptively simple pronouncement begins "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man", without a doubt Wilfrid Sellars' single most important meta-philosophical statement and arguably one of the most influential pieces of meta-philosophy of the 20th century.[18] That the simplicity of its opening line is indeed deceptive becomes apparent as soon as one ventures further into this text which not only announces Sellars' ambitious philosophical programme but also presents a concise overview of the highly intricate and complex philosophical system which Sellars constructed as his contribution towards its realisation. Insofar as we are here interested in only one aspect of Sellars' philosophical system, namely Sellars' treatment of the problem of representation, we do not need to confront his system as a whole in all its intricacy and complexity. But clearly, if we are to understand this one aspect, we first have to have a firm grasp of at least the main contours of Sellars' philosophical system. And what better way to accomplish this than through a close engagement with "Philosophy and the Scientific image of Man", which, as we have argued, presents just such an overview.

Let us open our discussion of this important text by returning the above quote back in the context to which it belongs:

[18] "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man" was the title of two inaugural lectures given by Sellars at the University of Pittsburgh in 1960, to be published in its present form in 1962. In order to confirm the influence that Sellars has had on the analytic philosophical landscape of the second half of the 20th century it is enough to list the names of some of his most famous students: Hector-Neri Castañeda, Richard Rorty, Bruce Aune, Ruth Millikan, Robert Brandom, Paul and Patricia Churchland, John McDowell, John Lachs, Jay Rosenberg, Johanna Seibt, David Rosenthall, Michael Williams... In short, the list reads like a "Who is who" of the analytic philosophy of the second part of the 20th century. But possibly even more important for our present discussion is the growing interest in Sellars' philosophy exhibited recently by some of the most promising philosophers of the younger generation of contemporary Continental philosophy. This interest was first sparked by Ray Brassier, whose lead was then taken up by the likes of Pete Wolfendale, Fabio Gironi, Daniel Sacilloto, Nick Srnicek, Alex Williams... Even some of those who were at first highly sceptical of Sellars' significance, like for instance Reza Negarestani, soon came to appreciate the resources Sellars' philosophy provided for their own projects.

> THE aim of philosophy, abstractly formulated, is to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term. Under 'things in the broadest possible sense' I include such radically different items as not only 'cabbages and kings', but numbers and duties, possibilities and finger snaps, aesthetic experience and death. To achieve success in philosophy would be, to use a contemporary turn of phrase, to 'know one's way around' with respect to all these things, not in that unreflective way in which the centipede of the story knew its way around before it faced the question, 'how do I walk?', but in that reflective way which means that no intellectual holds are barred. (ibid.)

This passage contains *in nuce* all the crucial features of Sellars' conception of philosophy which will be elaborated fully throughout the rest of the text. Let us unfold them one by one by following Sellars' lead. First and foremost, as Sellars' explains, the expression 'to know one's way around' is to be understood in terms of 'knowledge *how*' as it is usually conceived in opposition to 'knowledge *that*'. That is to say, philosophy, for Sellars, is in the last instance a form of *practical* knowledge or 'knowledge how'. However, to the extent that this philosophical 'knowledge how' is reflective in nature, as we have learned from the quote above, it clearly presupposes a great deal of 'knowledge that' or reflective knowledge of truths (ibid., 2).

This brings us to the second important feature of Sellars' conception of philosophy. The 'knowledge that' which the philosophical 'know-how' presupposes and the truths on which it reflects are the result not of philosophy itself but of the sciences. "What is characteristic of philosophy is not a special subject-matter, but the aim of knowing one's way around with respect to the subject-matters of all the special disciplines" (ibid.). In other words, the task of philosophy is not to produce new knowledge but to reflect on the knowledge produced by the sciences. While the particular sciences themselves are certainly more than capable of reflecting on the knowledge that they produce, what they lack is a grasp of the intellectual landscape as a whole and of their place within it. And it is precisely in this regard that philosophy can be said to complement the sciences. For, as Sellars argues, having an 'eye on the whole' is the very defining feature of the philosophical enterprise (ibid., 3). Clearly, meta-philosophical reflections constitute a crucial aspect of the philosophical enterprise thus defined: "A philosopher could scarcely be said to have his eye on the whole in the relevant

sense, unless he has reflected on the nature of philosophical thinking. It is this reflection on the place of philosophy itself, in the scheme of things which is the distinctive trait of the philosopher as contrasted with the reflective specialist; and in the absence of this critical reflection on the philosophical enterprise, one is at best but a potential philosopher" (ibid.).

In light of this Sellars suggests that analytic philosophy itself, to the extent that it was initially conceived as a form of philosophical *analysis* in contrast with philosophical *synthesis*, can be said to be "ever more myopic, tracing parts within parts, losing each in turn from sight as new parts come into view" (ibid.). To this analytic conception of philosophy as myopia Sellars contrasts "the synoptic vision of true philosophy" (ibid.). Herein lies, according to Sellars, the task of true philosophy or "the philosophical quest", as he dubbed it: to achieve just such a synoptic vision of the intellectual landscape as a whole.

The philosopher who decides to embark upon such a quest faces a challenge at the very beginning of his journey. For he is confronted "not by one complex many-dimensional picture, the unity of which, such as it is, he must come to appreciate; but by *two* pictures of essentially the same order of complexity, each of which purports to be a complete picture of man-in-the-world, and which, after separate scrutiny, he must fuse into one vision" (ibid., 4). This is why Sellars contends that the most appropriate analogy for the philosophical quest would be to achieve a "stereoscopic vision, where two differing perspectives on a landscape are fused into one coherent experience" (ibid.). Sellars famously refers to these two perspectives as the *manifest* and the *scientific* images of man-in-the-world respectively (ibid., 5). While Sellars could not have predicted just how popular these two terms would eventually become, he was well aware of the potential controversies they might evoke and so he made sure to pre-emptively address them. After having witnessed the length and detail to which Sellars went in order to address these possible misunderstandings, it is safe to say that most of the concerns which are still raised about these terms are mostly due to poor reading practices. Given that in light of the recent rise of interest in Sellars in contemporary Continental philosophy the possibilities of such more or less wilful misreadings are compounded, it is particularly important to be as precise as possible in defining these two crucial terms. Surely, the best antidote to such poor reading practices is to follow Sellars himself as closely as possible.

As the first possible point of contention, and sure enough the one most often voiced with regard to these two terms, Sellars highlights and clarifies his use of the term ‘image’: “By calling them images I do not mean to deny to either or both of them the status of ‘reality’. I am, to use Husserl’s term, ‘bracketing’ them, transforming them from ways of experiencing the world into objects of philosophical reflection and evaluation” (ibid., 5). Surely, most possible misunderstandings of Sellars’ use of the term ‘image’ are due to its inherent ambiguity. But as Sellars clearly shows not only is he aware of this, but he uses the term ‘image’ precisely because of it. On the one hand, Sellars argues, to the extent that it “suggests a contrast between an object and a projection of the object on a plane,” an image is “as much an existent as the object imaged, though, of course, it has a dependent status” (ibid.). On the other hand, the term ‘image’ can also be used to designate something *imagined*, and as is well known that which is imagined may or may not exist, even though the act of imagining most certainly does. In case that the imagined thing does not exist the image itself can be said to be merely imaginary or unreal (ibid.). Sellars’ use of the term ‘image’ retains both of these meanings. Therefore, when he says that the philosopher is confronted by two images of man-in-the-world this should be taken to imply that these two images are equally existent in virtue of being projections, but that they may or may not be real in virtue of referring to ‘things imagined’. With regards to the latter, Sellars further clarifies that ‘things imagined’ could also be understood in the sense of ‘things conceived’, for in this case he uses ‘image’ as synonymous with ‘conception’. “The philosopher, then, is confronted by two conceptions, equally public, equally non-arbitrary, of man-in-the-world and he cannot shirk the attempt to see how they fall together in one stereoscopic view” (ibid.). Finally, Sellars remarks, these two conceptions are to be understood as two ‘idealizations’ designed with an intent “to illuminate the inner dynamics of the development of philosophical ideas, as scientific idealizations illuminate the development of physical systems” (ibid.).

Now that we have a precise grasp of Sellars’ use of the term ‘image’, we can explore further his concepts of the manifest and the scientific images of man-in-the-world. We begin, following Sellars, with the former.

6. 1. The Manifest Image of Man-in-the-World

Sellars characterizes the manifest image of man-in-the world in two ways which he considers supplementary to each other. First he construes it as "the framework in terms of which man came to be aware of himself as man-in-the-world. It is the framework in terms of which, to use an existentialist turn of phrase, man first encountered himself—which is, of course, when he came to be man" (ibid., 6). By characterizing the manifest image in these "quasi-historical" terms, Sellars wants to highlight the paradoxical nature of man's encounter with himself, "the paradox consisting of the fact that man couldn't be man until he encountered himself" (ibid.). This paradox rests upon one of the central tenets of Sellars' philosophy, namely "the idea that anything which can properly be called conceptual thinking can occur only within a framework of conceptual thinking in terms of which it can be criticized, supported, refuted, in short, evaluated. To be able to think is to be able to measure one's thoughts by standards of correctness, of relevance, of evidence" (ibid.). To the extent that conceptual thinking is only possible within a pre-existing conceptual framework, Sellars argues that such a framework is "a whole which, however sketchy, is prior to its parts, and cannot be construed as a coming together of parts which are already conceptual in character" (ibid.). From this Sellars concludes that "the transition from pre-conceptual patterns of behaviour to conceptual thinking was a holistic one, a jump to a level of awareness which is irreducibly new, a jump which was the coming into being of man" (ibid.). There is therefore, according to Sellars, a radical difference in level between man and his precursors and the attempt to understand this difference constitutes a crucial aspect of Sellars' project of fusing the two images of man-in-the-world into one stereoscopic vision. For, as Sellars famously states, "this difference in level appears as an irreducible discontinuity in the *manifest* image, but as, in a sense requiring careful analysis, a reducible difference in the *scientific* image" (ibid.).

Sellars is well aware that this quasi-historical way of characterizing the manifest image as the framework in terms of which man first encountered himself might be misleading in that it seems to suggest that the contrast between the manifest and the scientific images of man-in-the-world is to be construed as a contrast between a pre-scientific ("uncritical, naive") and a scientific ("reflected, disciplined, critical") conception. In order to dispel such an erroneous impression Sellars puts forth the second characterization of the manifest image of man-in-the-

world, according to which the manifest image "is a refinement or sophistication of what might be called the 'original' image; a refinement to a degree which makes it relevant to the contemporary intellectual scene" (ibid., 7). On this second characterization, the 'original' image would correspond to Sellars' first quasi-historical characterization as the framework in terms of which man first encountered himself, while the manifest image itself would now be a refined and sophisticated version of the former. It is in this latter sense that the manifest image is still relevant today. Sellars distinguishes between two kinds of refinements of the original image, an *empirical* and a *categorial* one.

According to Sellars, the manifest image can be said to be an empirical refinement of the original one in the sense that, in its attempt to understand the world, the manifest image uses procedures unavailable to the original image, procedures like inductive and statistical reasoning to be applied to the observed correlations under investigation. To the extent that such procedures, which Sellars groups together under the heading of 'correlational induction,' constitute an important aspect of the scientific method, manifest image can be said to be scientific (ibid.). But if the manifest image itself can be said to be scientific in this sense, what distinguishes it from the scientific image of man-in-the-world proper? According to Sellars, there is one aspect of the scientific method which the manifest image does not include, "namely that which involves the postulation of imperceptible entities, and principles pertaining to them, to explain the behaviour of perceptible things" (ibid.). Herein thus lies the crucial difference between the two images: the employment or lack thereof of the postulational methods in their respective attempts to understand the world and the place of man within it. While the manifest image, which can be as disciplined and as critical as the scientific image, relies solely on the correlational methods, the evolution of science has been marked by the dialectical interplay of the correlational *and* postulational methods: "postulational hypotheses presupposing correlations to be explained, and suggesting possible correlations to be investigated" (ibid.). In fact, the importance of the postulational methods for the scientific image-of-man-in-the-world for Sellars is such that he argues it might have been better to call it the 'postulational' or 'theoretical' image (ibid.). And while Sellars in the end clearly opted to use the former term, the latter ones should always be kept in mind when discussing his concept of the scientific image-of-man-in-the-world.

What this discussion of the manifest image as an empirical refinement of the original image clearly reveals is that it would be a mistake to simply identify the manifest image with common sense. However, to the extent that such a move would be appropriate with regard to the original image, it could be argued that the manifest image as a refined (disciplined and critical) version of the former, constitutes a sophisticated common sense. And indeed on several occasions throughout the text Sellars himself refers to the manifest image in those very terms (cf. ibid., 19, 20).

What has contributed the most to the refinement of the original image through time and thus to the constitution of the manifest image is philosophy. As Sellars argues, philosophical reflection has always been drawn towards the manifest image and most of the philosophical systems from Plato's onwards have been built around it. It is important to emphasize that Sellars here includes not only the great classical and medieval philosophical systems, but also most modern and (at his time) contemporary philosophical schools, Continental and analytic alike. According to Sellars, most of these philosophies can "be fruitfully construed as more or less adequate accounts of the manifest image of man-in-the-world, which accounts are then taken to be an adequate and full description in general terms of what man and the world really are" (ibid., 8). In order to elaborate on this point Sellars introduces another construct which he famously dubs "the perennial philosophy of man-in-the-world". "This construct, which is the 'ideal type' around which philosophies in what might be called, in a suitably broad sense, the Platonic tradition cluster, is simply the manifest image endorsed as real, and its outline taken to be the large-scale map of reality to which science brings a needle-point of detail and an elaborate technique of map-reading" (ibid., 8).

In order to see further in what way the perennial philosophy thus defined has contributed to the refinement of the original image, we have to turn our attention toward the second kind of refinement that Sellars introduced earlier, namely the categorial one. If we are to determine the categorial structure of any conceptual framework, Sellars argues, the fundamental question to ask is 'of what sort are its basic objects' (ibid., 9)? To ask such a question is to ask "not for a *list* but a *classification* (...) a classification which is abstract enough to provide a synoptic view of the contents of the framework but which falls short of simply referring to them as objects or entities" (ibid.). In other words, to ask such a question is to ask about the basic *categories* of a given conceptual framework. According to Sellars, the answer to such a

question with regard to the conceptual framework of the manifest image itself "includes persons, animals, lower forms of life and 'merely material' things like rivers and stones" (ibid.). But, as Sellars further argues, there is "an important sense in which the primary objects of the manifest image are *persons*" (ibid.). In order to understand this point it is necessary to return to the original image of man-in-the-world.

According to Sellars, in the conceptual framework of the original image "*all* the 'objects' are persons. From this point of view, the refinement of the 'original' image into the manifest image, is the gradual 'de-personalization' of objects other than persons" (ibid., 10). While the de-personalization of the objective world is quite a familiar notion it is important not to conflate it with the gradual abandonment of superstitious beliefs. For, as Sellars argues, the change in question "was more radical than a change in belief; it was a change in category" (ibid.). In other words, the refinement of the original image brought about by the de-personalization of objects is a case of the categorial refinement or of the refinement of the basic categories of this conceptual framework.

As Sellars further clarifies, to say that in the original image of man-in-the-world all objects are persons means that "the sort of things that are said of objects in this framework are the sort of things that are said of persons" (ibid.). Therefore, in order to understand more precisely the respect in which the manifest image constitutes a refinement or de-personalization of the original image, it is necessary to first remind ourselves of what the category of persons entails. Among the vast range of attributes and activities characteristic of persons Sellars singles out as the most pertinent to his purposes the familiar distinction between habitual and deliberate actions (ibid., 11). A person can be said to act either deliberately with an end in mind or out of habit. To the extent that in the original image everything which can be attributed to persons is to be attributed in the same manner to all the objects, the objects of the original image are likewise capable of acting either deliberately or out of habit. In light of this, Sellars argues, to say that the manifest image is a refinement of the original one is to say that "it is the modification of an image in which *all* the objects are capable of *the full range* of personal activity, the modification consisting of a gradual pruning of the implications of saying with respect to what *we* would call an inanimate object, that it *did* something" (ibid., 12). For instance, to take Sellars' example, in the original image it could be said that the wind either decided to blow down one's house with an end in mind or

that it acted thoughtlessly out of habit or impulse. The first stage of the development of the manifest image would then consist in the modification of this initial conception to the effect that the wind is no longer to be conceived as acting deliberately, but only out of habit or impulse. "Nature became the locus of 'truncated persons'; that which things could be expected to do, its habits; that which exhibits no order, its impulses. Inanimate things no longer 'did' things in the sense in which persons do them—not, however, because a *new* category of impersonal things and impersonal processes has been achieved, but because the category *of person* is now applied to these things in a pruned or truncated form" (ibid., 13). It is in this sense precisely that we are to understand Sellars' claim that persons are the primary objects of the manifest image: while in the original image all the objects are to be identified in every respect with persons, in the manifest image the category of person is still to be applied to all objects only this time in a pruned or truncated form. To the extent that in the manifest image all the objects are truncated persons, persons are to be considered primary objects.

One final remark is in order with regard to categorial refinement. Sellars' claim to the effect that the basic category of the manifest image is not a new category, but a refined version of the old one constitutive of the original image, should not be taken to imply that the manifest image is incapable of arriving at new forms of knowledge:

> Now, the human mind is not limited in its categories to what it has been able to refine out of the world view of primitive man, any more than the limits of what we can conceive are set by what we can imagine. The categories of theoretical physics are not essences distilled from the framework of perceptual experience, yet, if the human mind can conceive of *new* categories, it can also refine the old; and it is just as important not to over-estimate the role of creativity in the development of the framework in terms of which you and I experience the world, as it is not to under-estimate its role in the scientific enterprise. (ibid., 10)

Before we could turn to the scientific image of man there is one last important issue to be addressed with regards to the manifest image. It is important to recognize, Sellars notes, that the manifest image has an objective existence in human thought in general and in philosophical thought in particular. To the extent that by virtue of having an objective existence the manifest image transcends the individual thinker, Sellars argues, "*there is truth and error with respect to it, even though the image itself might have to be rejected, in the last*

analysis, as false" (ibid., 14). In other words, while the world as we encounter it through the manifest image may not be real in the last analysis and consequently the manifest image as a whole may have to be discarded as a false representation of the real world, there still remains, according to Sellars, "a correct and an incorrect way to describe this objective image which we have of the world in which we live, and it is possible to evaluate the correctness or incorrectness of such a description" (ibid.). And to the extent that man conceives of himself precisely in terms of the manifest image, it is paramount to provide an accurate description of this image. For only once the latter has been correctly described and understood it is possible to ask "'to what extent does manifest man survive in the synoptic view which does equal justice to the scientific image which now confronts us (ibid.)?'"

As we have seen earlier, perennial philosophy, according to Sellars, endorses the manifest image as real and provides a more or less adequate description of its structure. It bears repeating that Sellars includes under the banner of perennial philosophy not only the philosophical systems in the Platonic tradition broadly construed, but also some of the most prominent Continental (phenomenology) and analytic ('common sense' and 'ordinary usage') philosophical schools of his time. In particular, according to Sellars, the analytic tradition in philosophy under the influence of the later Wittgenstein "has done increasing justice to the manifest image, and has increasingly succeeded in isolating it in something like its pure form" (ibid., 15).

The question of the origin of the manifest image features prominently in perennial philosophy's attempt to provide its account: how do the individual thinkers acquire the capacity to think in terms of this complex conceptual framework that is the manifest image? Before focusing on the way in which perennial philosophy has traditionally answered this question, Sellars highlights two important features of the account of conceptual thought in the manifest image. "(1) The manifest image does not present conceptual thinking as a complex of items which, considered in themselves and apart from these relations, are not conceptual in character. (The most plausible candidates are images, but all attempts to construe thoughts as complex patterns of images have failed, and, as we know, were bound to fail.) (2) Whatever the ultimate constituents of conceptual thinking, the process itself as it occurs in the individual mind must echo, more or less adequately, the intelligible structure of the world" (ibid.). In other words, while conceptual thought is not to be reduced to anything non-

conceptual, it nonetheless has to be related in some way to the non-conceptual albeit intelligible structure of the world.

The dominant answer of perennial philosophy to the question of the origin of conceptual thought in its relation to non conceptual reality was that "of a direct causal influence of the world as intelligible on the individual mind" (ibid., 16). This conception was first introduced by Plato for whom conceptual thought was the result "of the 'illumination' of the mind by intelligible essences" (ibid., 16). However, Sellars argues, while there is a sense in which the world can indeed be said to be the cause of conceptual thought, this sense has to be carefully qualified and is not to be taken in the manner in which perennial philosophy has traditionally understood it:

> And there is, as we know today, a sound score to the idea that while reality is the 'cause' of the human conceptual thinking which represents it, this causal role cannot be equated with a conditioning of the individual by his environment in a way which could in principle occur without the mediation of the family and the community. The Robinson Crusoe conception of the world as generating conceptual thinking directly in the individual is too simple a model. The perennial tradition long limited itself to accounting for the presence in the individual of the framework of conceptual thinking in terms of a unique kind of action of reality as intelligible on the individual mind. The accounts differed in interesting respects, but the main burden remained the same. (ibid.)

As we shall later see, this 'Robinson Crusoe' conception of the relation of conceptual thought and the world constitutes an important aspect of what Sellars famously refers to by "the myth of the given". In Sellars' reading, what makes this conception "too simple a model" is its complete disregard for the role of the group in the process of the acquisition of conceptual thought on the part of the individual thinker. Hegel was the first to recognize the essential role of the group in this process and to realize that "the immanence and transcendence of conceptual frameworks with respect to the individual thinker is a social phenomenon" (ibid.). According to Sellars, "the essentially social character of conceptual thinking comes clearly to mind when we recognize that there is no thinking apart from common standards of correctness and relevance, which relate what *I do* think to what *anyone ought to* think. The contrast between '*I*' and 'anyone' is essential to rational thought" (ibid., 16-17).

As Sellars further argues, while it is indeed appropriate, as it is often done, to construe conceptual thought and the acquisition of a conceptual framework in terms of playing a game, there are at least two respects in which conceptual thought is a unique game: "*(a)* one cannot learn to play it by being told the rules; *(b)* whatever else conceptual thinking makes possible— and without it there is nothing characteristically human—it does so by virtue of containing a way of representing the world" (ibid., 17).

In light of this, Sellars concludes, the manifest image "must be construed as containing a conception of itself as a group phenomenon, the group mediating between the individual and the intelligible order" (ibid.). However, this mediation cannot be explained within the framework of the manifest image itself. For the manifest image does not contain the resources necessary to provide such an explanation. In this respect even "the Hegelian, like the Platonist of whom he is the heir, was limited to the attempt to understand the relation between intelligible order and individual minds in analogical terms" (ibid.). What the manifest image does provide is the foundation on which scientific theory will build its explanatory framework; and it is important to emphasize that "while conceptual structures of this framework are *built on* the manifest image, they are not definable within it" (ibid.). It is only within the explanatory framework of "the *scientific* image of man in the world that we begin to see the main outlines of the way in which man came to have an image of himself- in-the-world. For we begin to see this as a matter of evolutionary development as a group phenomenon, a process which is illustrated at a simpler level by the evolutionary development which explains the correspondence between the dancing of a worker bee and the location, relative to the sun, of the flower from which he comes" (ibid.).

Sellars concludes the first part of the essay by highlighting the question which motivates the discussion as a whole: "'in what sense, and to what extent, does the manifest image of man-in-the-world survive the attempt to unite this image in one field of intellectual vision with man as conceived in terms of the postulated objects of scientific theory?'" (ibid., 18). What is at stake in the answer to this question is none other than the fate of man himself: "To the extent that the manifest does not survive in the synoptic view, to that extent man himself would not survive" (ibid.). In order to see "whether the adoption of the synoptic view would transform man in bondage into man free, as Spinoza believed, or man free into man in

bondage, as many fear" (ibid.), it is necessary to first explore the scientific image of man-in-the-world and it is to this task that we now turn.

6. 2. The Scientific Image of Man-in-the-World

Let us recall what we have learned thus far about the scientific image-of-man-in-the world. First and foremost, it is important to reiterate that the contrast between the manifest and the scientific image is not to be construed as a contrast between an *unscientific* conception of man-in-the-world and a *scientific* one. Instead, it is to be understood in terms of their respective methodologies, that is, as a contrast between "that conception which limits itself to what correlational techniques can tell us about perceptible and introspectible events and that which postulates imperceptible objects and events for the purpose of explaining correlations among perceptible" (ibid., 19). Furthermore, it should also be remembered that Sellars conceives the manifest and the scientific image as idealizations or ideal constructs: the former being defined as the "the correlational and categorial refinement of the 'original image'," and the latter as "the image derived from the fruits of postulational theory construction" (ibid.).

Sellars opens his discussion of the scientific image of man-in-the-world by elaborating on the sense in which it can be said to be an idealization. He begins by entertaining a possible objection to his conception of the scientific image: "It may be objected at this point that there is no such thing as *the* image of man built from postulated entities and processes, but rather as many images as there are sciences which touch on aspects of human behaviour. And, of course, in a sense this is true. There *are* as many scientific images of man as there are sciences which have something to say about man" (ibid., 20). It is precisely with regards to the multiplicity of sciences that the scientific image as a unitary conception is to be considered an idealization: "Thus the conception of *the* scientific or postulational image is an idealization in the sense that it is a conception of an integration of a manifold of images, each of which is the application to man of a framework of concepts which have a certain autonomy" (ibid.). It is important to recognize, according to Sellars, that each of these different postulational or theoretical images is "a construction on a foundation provided by the manifest image, and *in this methodological sense* pre-supposes the manifest image"

(ibid.). However, it would by a mistake, Sellars argues, to conclude from this that the manifest image is in a *substantive* sense prior to the scientific image (ibid.). For while it is true that the unitary scientific image insofar as it emerges out of the manifold of theoretical images proper to different sciences is *methodologically* dependent on the manifest image, it nonetheless "purports to be a *complete* image, i.e. to define a framework which could be the *whole truth* about that which belongs to the image. Thus although methodologically a development *within* the manifest image, the scientific image presents itself as a *rival* image. From its point of view the manifest image on which it rests is an 'inadequate' but pragmatically useful likeness of a reality which first finds its adequate (in principle) likeness in the scientific image" (ibid.).

To the extent that both the manifest and the scientific images purport to constitute the true and complete account of man-in-the-world, there is a clash between them. How to evaluate their conflicting claims is, according to Sellars, the most pressing question confronting philosophy today. Sellars begins addressing this question by returning to the historical roots of the clash between the two images both in terms of the initial challenge brought forth by the scientific image to the manifest one, and in terms of Descartes' attempt to resolve this contrast, an attempt which defined the main coordinates of every subsequent attempt at integrating the two images.

> The initial challenge of the scientific image was directed at the manifest image of inanimate nature. It proposed to construe physical things, in a manner already adumbrated by Greek atomism, as systems of imperceptible particles, lacking the perceptible qualities of manifest nature. Three lines of thought seemed to be open: (1) Manifest objects are identical with systems of imperceptible particles in that simple sense in which a forest is identical with a number of trees. (2) Manifest objects are what really exist; systems of imperceptible particles being 'abstract' or 'symbolic' ways of representing them. (3) Manifest objects are 'appearances' to human minds of a reality which is constituted by systems of imperceptible particles. (ibid., 26)

While allowing that the second option "merits serious consideration, and has been defended by able philosopher", Sellars' primary concern in this essay will be with the first and especially the third option. Let us focus briefly on the first one. To the extent that systems can have properties which their parts do not have, Sellars argues, "there is nothing immediately paradoxical about the view that an object can be both a perceptible object with perceptible

qualities *and* a system of imperceptible objects, none of which has perceptible qualities" (ibid.). However, the problem of colour poses a serious challenge to this conception. In order to illustrate this point, Sellars invokes his famous example of a pink ice cube. A pink ice cube does not seem to be made up of a system of imperceptible objects with imperceptible qualities. For it "presents itself to us as something which is pink through and through, as a pink continuum, all the regions of which, however small, are pink. It presents itself to us as *ultimately homogeneous;* and an ice cube variegated in colour is, though not homogeneous in its specific colour, 'ultimately homogeneous', in the sense to which I am calling attention, with respect to the generic trait of being coloured" (ibid.).

According to Sellars, reflection on such an example reveals the untenability of the first option under consideration here: "if a physical object is *in a strict sense* a system of imperceptible particles, then it cannot as a whole have the perceptible qualities characteristic of physical objects in the manifest image" (ibid., 27). From this it can be concluded in turn that "the manifest physical objects are 'appearances' *to human perceivers* of systems of imperceptible particles" (ibid.). This is, of course, the third alternative presented above and the one on which Sellars focuses the most.

It is important to recognize that the claim that physical objects do not really have perceptible properties is not to be construed as a claim within the manifest image itself. As Sellars admits, it would be absurd to say within the manifest framework that visible objects have no colour. The denial of perceptible properties to physical objects "is not the denial *of* a belief *within a framework,* but a challenge to the framework. It is the claim that although the framework of perceptible objects, the manifest framework of everyday life, is adequate for the everyday purposes of life, it is ultimately inadequate and should not be accepted as an account of what there is *all things considered*" (ibid.).

Descartes famously responded to this challenge by relegating perceptible qualities, along with all the other features of the manifest world which play no role in mechanical explanation, to the minds of the perceiver. For instance, while in the manifest image colour was conceived as a property of independent physical things, in the newly emerging scientific image it could be said to exist only in sensation or as a state of the perceiver. The question now becomes whether man himself, along with thinking and feeling, can be construed in terms of the scientific image?

> If the human body is a system of particles, the body cannot be the subject of thinking and feeling, *unless thinking and feeling are capable of interpretation as complex interactions of physical particles;* unless, that is to say, the manifest framework of man as *one* being, a *person* capable of doing radically different kinds of things can be replaced without loss of descriptive and explanatory power by a postulational image in which he is a complex of physical particles, and all his activities a matter of the particles changing in state and relationship. (ibid., 29)

Descartes' dualistic conception of man denied such a possibility, that is, it "denied that either sensation or feeling or conceptual thinking could in this sense be construed as complex interactions of physical particles, or man as a complex physical system" (ibid.). However, in his attempt to integrate the two images, Descartes allowed items in the scientific image which would be "the counterparts of the sensations, images, and feelings of the manifest framework. These counterparts would be complex states of the brain which, obeying purely physical laws, would resemble and differ from one another in a way which corresponded to the resemblances and differences between the conscious states with which they were correlated" (ibid.). In line with his dualism, Descartes argued against the identification of these brain states with sensations. For to do so, Descartes believed, would eliminate sensations altogether and thus make it "unintelligible how things could even *appear* to be coloured" (ibid., 30).

With regards to conceptual thinking, on the other hand, Descartes did not even entertain the possibility of there being brain states which would be its cerebral counterparts. However, even if he would have contemplated such an idea, according to Sellars, he would clearly have rejected it "on the ground that we had a 'clear and distinct', well-defined idea of what conceptual thinking is before we even suspected that the brain had anything to do with thinking. Roughly: we know what thinking is without conceiving of it as a complex neurophysiological process, therefore, it cannot *be* a complex physiological process" (ibid.).

Against Descartes' dualistic account of conceptual thought, Sellars invokes the developments in neurophysiology of his time. In light of these developments many philosophers have argued not only that there are good reasons to suppose the existence of neurophysiological counterparts to conceptual thought, but also that the relation of analogy between the two is to be construed in terms of *identity*. In other words, conceptual thought not only can but ought to be identified with neurophysiological processes underlying it. The objection most commonly

voiced against such a proposal, according to Sellars, would argue that "just as the claim that 'physical objects are complexes of imperceptible particles' left us with the problem of accounting for the status of the perceptible qualities of manifest objects, so the claim that 'thoughts, etc., are complex neurophysiological processes' leaves us with the problems of accounting for the status of the *introspectable qualities* of thoughts" (ibid.).

Sellars himself was a staunch proponent of the primacy of the scientific image, that is, he strongly believed that the scientific image and not the manifest one is the measure of what there really is. The commitment to the identity of both conceptual thinking and sensation to neurophysiological processes constitutes a crucial aspect of Sellars' scientific realism and the penultimate section of the essay presents Sellars' prolegomenon to the defence of this important thesis. According to Sellars, the objection to the identification of thought with cerebral processes which we have encountered above arises from "the mistake of supposing that in self-awareness conceptual thinking presents itself to us in a qualitative guise. Sensations and images *do* (...) present themselves to us in a qualitative character, a fact which accounts for the fact that they are stumbling blocks in the attempt to accept the scientific image as real. *But* one scarcely needs to point out these days that however intimately conceptual thinking is related to sensations and images, it cannot be equated with them, nor with complexes consisting of them" (ibid., 32). Therefore, in order to uphold the identity of thought and cerebral processes it is necessary, first, to critique the notion that thought presents itself to us in a qualitative guise, and, second, to provide an alternative account of thought which would take into consideration its difference from sensations and images. Sellars' account of thought fulfils both of these requirements and in the first part of the penultimate section of the essay Sellars sketches its main contours.

First and foremost, for Sellars, thought is to be conceived as analogous to overt discourse. "*Thoughts* in the manifest image are conceived not in terms of their 'quality', but rather as inner 'goings-on' which are analogous to speech, and find their overt expression in speech—though they can go on, of course, in the absence of this overt expression. It is no accident that one learns to think in the very process of learning to speak" (ibid.). The temptation to conceive thought in terms of its supposed quality is the result of the tendency in the Cartesian tradition to construe thought in terms of *introspection*. According to this line of thought, introspection is to be construed as analogous to direct perceptual knowledge: just as the latter

presents us with objects in their qualitative guise so the former presents us with the qualitative aspect of thought. However, as Sellars shows, introspection is a highly misleading term. To the extent that both introspection, defined as the supposedly direct knowledge of what is going on inside us, and perceptual knowledge, defined in turn as the supposedly direct knowledge of what is going on in the world around us, can be said to constitute basic forms of non-inferential knowledge, there is indeed analogy between them. "They differ, however, in that whereas in perceptual observation we know objects as being of a certain quality, in the direct knowledge we have of what we are thinking (e.g. I am thinking that it is cold outside) what we know non-inferentially is that *something analogous to and properly expressed by the sentence, 'It is cold outside', is going on in me*" (ibid., 33). This point is important, according to Sellars, "for if the concept of a thought is the concept of an inner state analogous to speech, this leaves open the possibility that the inner state conceived in terms of this analogy is *in its qualitative character* a neurophysiological process" (ibid.).

To pursue this line of thought further Sellars introduces another analogy in terms of which thought can be conceived, the analogy with the game of chess. In a game of chess the intrinsic qualities of the figures on the board (their shape, size, colour...) are important only insofar as they allow us to identify a particular figure with the role or function it has within the game as a system of rules. By the same token, thought is to be conceived not in qualitative but in *functional* terms, that is, instead of construing thought in terms of qualities supposedly available to us in introspection it is to be construed in terms of roles or functions a particular thought has in a system of rules analogous to the one of overt language. "Thus our concept of 'what thoughts are' might, like our concept of what a castling is in chess, be abstract in the sense that it does not concern itself with the *intrinsic* character of thoughts, *save as items which can occur in patterns of relationships which are analogous to the way in which sentences are related to one another and* to the contexts in which they are used" (ibid., 34).

The importance of such a move for Sellars' project in general and his upholding of the identity thesis in particular is impossible to overemphasize:

> Now if thoughts are items which are conceived in terms of the roles they play, then there is no barrier *in principle* to the identification of conceptual thinking with neurophysiological process. There would be no 'qualitative' remainder to be accounted for. The identification, curiously enough, would be even more

> straightforward than the identification of the physical things in the manifest image with complex systems of physical particles. And in this key, if not decisive, respect, the respect in which both images are concerned with conceptual thinking (which is the distinctive trait of man), *the manifest and scientific images could merge without clash in the synoptic view.* (ibid.)

Now that we have a clear grasp of the way in which Sellars believes it is possible to identify conceptual thought with neurophysiological processes, what remains to be seen is whether a similar case could be made for the identification of sensations (and feelings) with cerebral processes as well. And indeed, according to Sellars, there is an important respect in which sensations can be considered similar to conceptual thought: "just as conceptual thinking is construed in the manifest image by analogy with overt speech, so sensation is construed by analogy with its external cause, sensations being the states of persons which correspond, in their similarities and differences to the similarities and differences of the objects which, in standard conditions, bring them about" (ibid.). However, while it is true that both thoughts and sensations are to be conceived in analogy with publicly observable items, this does not warrant the conclusion that, for this very reason, sensations, just like thoughts, can be identified with neurophysiological processes. For there is a crucial difference between these two cases. As we have seen above, in the case of thoughts the analogy is construed in functionalist terms, that is, in terms of the role or function of thoughts and "hence leaves open the possibility that thoughts are radically different *in their intrinsic character* from the verbal behaviour by analogy with which they are conceived" (ibid., 35). But, as Sellars argues, in the case of sensations, "the analogy concerns the quality itself. Thus a 'blue and triangular sensation' is conceived by analogy with the blue and triangular (facing) surface of a physical object which, when looked at in daylight, is its cause" (ibid.). In light of this, the crucial question becomes: "can we define, in the framework of neurophysiology, states which are sufficiently analogous in their *intrinsic* character to sensations to make identification plausible (ibid.)?"

Sellars does not believe this to be possible. As we have learned earlier from the discussion of the pink ice cube, for Sellars, 'ultimate homogeneity' constitutes a defining feature of the perceptible qualities of things such as colour. Clearly, this feature is completely lacking in the neurophysiological domain. "Putting it crudely, colour expanses in the manifest world consist

of regions which are themselves colour expanses, and these consist in their turn of regions which are colour expanses, and so on; whereas the state of a group of neurons, though it has regions which are also states of groups of neurons, has ultimate regions which are *not* states of groups of neurons but rather states of single neurons" (ibid.). Therefore, it follows that neurophysiological states cannot be analogous in their intrinsic character to sensations, which in turn makes implausible the identification of these two constructs. This is why, as we have seen before, Sellars contends that sensations are a stumbling block "in the attempt to accept the scientific image as real" (ibid., 32). Thus, "how to *reconcile the ultimate homogeneity of the manifest image with the ultimate non-homogeneity of the system of scientific objects*" (ibid., 36) is a fundamental problem for any attempt to uphold the reality of the scientific image.

Without such a reconciliation, the proponent of the primacy of the scientific image is forced to accept the dualism of sensations, conceived as the primary locus of the perceptible qualities of the ultimately homogenous manifest objects, and non-homogenous neurophysiological items, and this can hardly be a satisfying solution. For, as Sellars argues, on the one hand, sensations are "essential to the explanation of how we come to construct the 'appearance' which is the manifest world. They are essential to the explanation of how there even *seem* to be coloured objects" (ibid.). But, on the other hand, "the scientific image presents itself as a closed system of explanation, and *if the scientific image is interpreted as we have interpreted it up to this point the* explanation will be in terms of the constructs of neuro-physiology, which, according to the argument, *do not involve the ultimate homogeneity, the appearance of which in the manifest image is to be explained*" (ibid.).

Sellars believes there is a way out of this dualism and he sketches his solution to this problem thus:

> As long as the ultimate constituents of the scientific image are particles forming ever more complex systems of particles, we are inevitably confronted by the above choice. But the scientific image is not yet complete; we have not yet penetrated all the secrets of nature. And if it should turn out that particles instead of being the primitive entities of the scientific image could be treated as singularities in a space-time continum which could be conceptually 'cut up' without significant loss—*in inorganic contexts, at least*—into interacting particles, then we would not be confronted at the level of

> neurophysiology with the problem of understanding the relation of *sensory consciousness* (with its ultimate homogeneity) to *systems of particles.* Rather, we would have the alternative of saying that although for many purposes the central nervous system can be construed without loss as a complex system of physical particles, *when it comes to an adequate understanding of the relation of sensory consciousness to* neurophysiological process, we must penetrate to the non-particulate foundation of the particulate image, and recognize that in this non-particulate image the qualities of sense are a dimension of natural process which occurs only in connection with those complex physical processes which, when 'cut up' into particles in terms of those features which are the least common denominators of physical process—present in inorganic as well as organic processes; alike—become the complex system of particles which, in the current; scientific image, *is* the central nervous system. (ibid., 37)

Explicating this highly condensed passage is unfortunately beyond the scope of our present discussion. Suffice it to say that Sellars here announces his ontology of absolute processes that he will develop fully later on in his career, particularly in his Carus Lectures published under the title "Foundations for a Metaphysics of Pure Process" (1981). It is by way of such an ontology of absolute processes that Sellars believes it possible to overcome the dualism of ultimately homogenous sensations and non-homogenous neurophysiological items. There is little doubt that this aspect of Sellars' philosophical system constitutes the most speculative and the most controversial proposal put forth by Sellars and as such is best left for another occasion. Let us resume our reading of "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man" instead.

As Sellars further argues in the last section of the essay entitled "Putting Man into the Scientific Image", even if this speculative proposal in its fully elaborated form turned out to be capable of overcoming the dualism of sensations and neurophysiological states, there would still remain one last crucial issue to be resolved if the thesis of the primacy of the scientific image were to be complete. "There would remain the task of showing that categories pertaining to man as a *person* who finds himself confronted by standards (ethical, logical, etc.) which often conflict with his desires and impulses, and to which he may or may not conform, can be reconciled with the idea that man is what science says he is" (ibid., 38).

Sellars begins to address this important issue by arguing against the idea that "the categories of the person might be reconstructed without loss in terms of the fundamental concepts of the scientific image in a way analogous to that in which the concepts of biochemistry are (in principle) reconstructed in terms of sub-atomic physics" (ibid.). According to Sellars, such a reconstruction is impossible not only *in fact* but *in principle* "the impossibility in question being a strictly logical one" (ibid.). In order to understand in what sense the framework of persons is irreducible to the framework of the scientific image it is first necessary to understand in what the scientific practice itself consists. As Sellars' famous *scientia mensura* principle in "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" states: "in the dimension of describing and explaining the world, science is the measure of all things, of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not" (Sellars 1956, 173). In short, science *describes* and *explains* what there is. But, as Sellars argues in "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man", "to say that a certain person desired to do A, thought it his duty to do B but was forced to do C, is not to *describe* him as one might describe a scientific specimen. One does, indeed, describe him, but one does something more. And it is this something more which is the irreducible core of the framework of persons" (Sellars 1962, 39).

Sellars makes two closely related points in order to explain what the irreducibility of the frameworks of persons consists in.

> To think of a featherless biped as a person is to think of it as a being with which one is bound up in a network of rights and duties. From this point of view, the irreducibility of the personal is the irreducibility of the 'ought' to the 'is'. But even more basic than this (though ultimately, as we shall see, the two points coincide), is the fact that to think of a featherless biped as a person is to construe its behaviour in terms of actual or potential membership in an embracing group each member of which thinks of itself as a member of the group. Let us call such a group a 'community'. (...) The most embracing community to which he belongs consists of those with whom he can enter into meaningful discourse. (...) Thus, to recognize a featherless biped or dolphin or Martian as a person is to think of oneself and it as belonging to a community. (ibid.)

To be a person is to be a member of a community, and consequently to be bound up in a network of rights and duties of the community in question. To the extent that science describes what there *is*, it is in principle incapable of providing an account of what there

ought to be, and it is in this sense that the framework of persons is to be considered irreducible to the scientific framework. It is important to emphasize that Sellars construes the category of persons in terms abstract enough so as not to be limited to the human species but to potentially include any being capable of being a member of a community. By that token, a Martian or a dolphin have the exact same potential to be a person as does the featherless biped otherwise known as human. Sellars elaborates further on what the network of rights and duties constitutive of a community entails:

> Now, the fundamental principles of a community, which define what is 'correct' or 'incorrect', 'right' or 'wrong', 'done' or 'not done', are the most general common *intentions* of that community with respect to the behaviour of members of the group. It follows that to recognize a featherless biped or dolphin or Martian as a person requires that one think thoughts of the form, 'We (one) shall do (or abstain from doing) actions of kind A in circumstances of kind C.' To think thoughts of this kind is not to *classify* or *explain*, but to *rehearse an intention.* (ibid., 39-40)

In light of this Sellars defines the conceptual framework of persons as "the framework in which we think of one another as sharing the community intentions which provide the ambience of principles and standards (above all, those which make meaningful discourse and rationality itself possible) within which we live our own individual lives" (ibid., 40). A person is, in turn, to be defined as "a being that has intentions" (ibid.). Finally, in the very last passage of the essay Sellars reveals the manner in which he envisions the possible fusion of the scientific and manifest image of man-in-the-world into one stereoscopic vision.

> Thus the conceptual framework of persons is not something that needs to be *reconciled with* the scientific image, but rather something to *be joined* to it. Thus, to complete the scientific image we need to enrich it *not* with more ways of saying what is the case, but with the language of community and individual intentions, so that by construing the actions we intend to do and the circumstances in which we intend to do them in scientific terms, we *directly* relate the world as conceived by scientific theory to our purposes, and make it *our* world and no longer an alien appendage to the world in which we do our living. We can, of course, as matters now stand, realize this direct incorporation of the scientific image into our way of life only in imagination.

> But to do so is, if only in imagination, to transcend the dualism of the manifest and scientific images of man-of-the-world. (ibid.)

To the extent that the framework of persons is in principle irreducible to the scientific image, the former is not to be reconciled with the latter but is to be joined to it instead. That is to say, instead of trying to reduce the manifest image to the scientific one, the latter ought to be enriched with the language of community and individual intentions. It is only by relating the world as conceived by the sciences directly to our purposes, that it ceases to be an alien world and becomes our world, a world that we can inhabit. At the time of writing these lines Sellars believed that such a synthesis could only be achieved in imagination and as projected into the future. What better testament to the grandeur of Sellars' philosophical vision than the fact that today, fifty years from Sellars' time, we are hardly much closer to realizing this ambitious philosophical quest.

7. SELLARS AGAINST THE MYTH OF THE GIVEN

Having thus presented an outline of Sellars' philosophical system as a whole, we can now turn to one of the most important aspects of this system, namely the famous critique of "the myth of the given". In his seminal text "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" (1956) Sellars prefaces his discussion of this myth by emphasizing its highly protean nature:

> Many things have been said to be "given": sense contents, material objects, universals, propositions, real connections, first principles, even givenness itself. And there is, indeed, a certain way of construing the situations which philosophers analyze in these terms which can be said to be the framework of givenness. This framework has been a common feature of most of the major systems of philosophy, including, to use a Kantian turn of phrase, both "dogmatic rationalism" and "skeptical empiricism". It has, indeed, been so pervasive that few, if any, philosophers have been altogether free of it; certainly not Kant, and, I would argue, not even Hegel, that great foe of "immediacy". Often what is attacked under its name are only specific varieties of "given." Intuited first principles and synthetic necessary connections were the first to come under attack. And many who today attack "the whole idea of givenness" – and they are an increasing number – are really only attacking sense data … If, however, I begin my argument with an attack on sense-datum theories, it is only as a first step in a general critique of the entire framework of givenness. (Sellars 1956, 127)

Sellars clearly realises that the various instances of the given are only different instantiations of the same general framework of givenness. He also realises that if we are to have any success in vanquishing this myth once and for all, it will be necessary to formulate a general critique of this entire framework of givenness. Unfortunately, due to the nature of Sellars's philosophising, heavily oriented as it was towards specific debates with his contemporaries, Sellars himself never presented either a systematic account of the framework of givenness, or the announced general critique of it. What he did leave behind, though, was a whole host of specific attacks on various different varieties of the given. Although all of these various critiques of different forms of the given were presented by way of debates with his analytic

peers, the passage quoted above clearly shows that Sellars's intended target was much wider in scope. In light of this, our later attempt at a Sellarsian critique of the Deleuzian "given" should seem a little less unlikely than it probably appears at first glance. However, if we are to stage this confrontation, it will first be necessary to briefly outline Sellars's account of the myth of the given and his main arguments for rejecting it. And it will be paramount to do so in terms general enough that this confrontation does not turn into a missed encounter. Three texts will be of particular assistance to us with regard to this task: "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind," "The Structure of Knowledge," and "Foundations for a Metaphysics of Pure Process: The Carus Lectures of Wilfrid Sellars."

Let us start with "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" (EPM). Of the various different formulations of the myth of the given, the one found in chapter eight, entitled "Does Empirical Knowledge Have a Foundation," in many ways the central chapter of the book, is definitely the most appropriate for our present purposes:

> The idea that observation "strictly and properly so-called" is constituted by certain self-authenticating nonverbal episodes, the authority of which is transmitted to verbal and quasi-verbal performances when these performances are made "in conformity with the semantical rules of the language," is, of course, the heart of the Myth of the Given. For the *given*, in epistemological tradition, is what is *taken* by these self-authenticating episodes. These "takings" are, so to speak, the unmoved movers of empirical knowledge, "knowings in presence" which are presupposed by all other knowledge, both the knowledge of general truths and the knowledge "in absence" of other particular matters of fact. Such is the framework in which traditional empiricism makes its characteristic claim that the perceptually given is the foundation of empirical knowledge. (ibid., 169-170)

First and foremost, this passage reveals which specific version of the given is under attack, not just in this chapter, but in the book as a whole: it is, of course, the given as conceived by traditional empiricism. Secondly, the passage possibly presents the most concise account provided by Sellars of the empiricist given. To summarise, the empiricist given consists in taking certain self-authenticating nonverbal episodes given in perception as the foundation of empirical knowledge, and by extension as presupposed by all knowledge. Clearly, the key term here is "self-authenticating nonverbal episodes." What Sellars denies is neither that these

"observings are *inner* episodes, nor that *strictly speaking* they are *nonverbal* episodes" (ibid., 170). Contrary to ill-informed popular belief, Sellars is not a reductionist, and especially not with regard to notions like "inner episodes," "impressions," or "immediate experience." In fact, the later parts of EPM are explicitly devoted to devising an account of these very notions. What Sellars does deny, though, is the idea that these episodes are to be taken as *self-authenticating*, that is, that they have *epistemic* authority or the status of *knowledge* solely in virtue of their being perceptually *given*. This is the crucial point of Sellars's critique of the given.

The main reasons for Sellars's denial of the given thus construed is to be found in his famous definition of knowledge:

> The essential point is that in characterizing an episode or a state as that of *knowing*, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says. (ibid., 169)

Add to this Sellars's earlier denial that there is "any awareness of logical space prior to, or independent of, the acquisition of a language" (ibid., 162), and the main contours of his argument slowly begin to emerge. If awareness of the logical space of reasons is impossible without the acquisition of a language, and if to know something is to place it in the logical space of reasons, then it follows that only that which is linguistically structured can lay claim to the status of knowledge.[19] Finally, insofar as what is perceptually given is not linguistically structured, it obviously cannot lay claim to the status of knowledge.

In order to present Sellars's argument in its entirety, though, it will be necessary to return once more to his formulation of the myth of the given. Let us recall: the claim made by traditional empiricism was not only that what is perceptually given is self-authenticating, but also, and just as importantly, that it can serve as a foundation of empirical knowledge, and by extension all knowledge. The first thing to note with regard to this claim, and as Sellars emphasises himself, is that by rejecting it, Sellars does not imply "that empirical knowledge has *no* foundation" (ibid., 170). On the contrary: "There is clearly *some* point to the picture of

[19] Or as Robert Brandom famously put it: "only what is propositionally contentful and conceptually articulated can serve as (and stand in need) of justification, and so ground or constitute knowledge." Robert Brandom, "Study Guide" in Wilfrid Sellars, *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 122.

human knowledge as resting on a level of propositions—observation reports—which do not rest on other propositions in the same way as other propositions rest on them" (ibid.). In other words, by rejecting the myth of the given, Sellars does not reject the idea that *inferential judgments* are grounded in some way on *non-inferential judgments*. His notion of "observation report" is precisely this kind of non-inferential judgment. But, on the other hand, Sellars does insist "that the metaphor of 'foundation' is misleading in that it keeps us from seeing that if there is a logical dimension in which other empirical propositions rest on observation reports, there is another logical dimension in which the latter rest on the former" (ibid.). Without giving a complete account of Sellars's notion of observation reports the following will have to suffice for our present purposes: according to Sellars, even the simplest observation report like "This is green" implies "that one can have the concept of green only by having a whole battery of concepts of which it is one element" (ibid., 148). Moreover, "there is an important sense in which one has *no* concept pertaining to the observable properties of physical objects in Space and Time unless one has them all—and, indeed ... a great deal more besides" (ibid.).

Returning to Sellars's suspicion of the metaphor of "foundation," his beautifully written concluding remarks on this topic will also be the best possible way to conclude this short presentation of his views on the myth of the given as presented in EPM:

> *Above all*, the picture is misleading because of its static character. One seems forced to choose between the picture of an elephant which rests on a tortoise (What supports the tortoise?) and the picture of a great Hegelian serpent of knowledge with its tail in its mouth (Where does it begin?). Neither will do. For empirical knowledge, like its sophisticated extension, science, is rational, not because it has a *foundation* but because it is a self-correcting enterprise which can put *any* claim in jeopardy, though not *all* at once. (ibid., 170)

If making a knowledge claim consists of placing it in the logical space of reasons, then any and every such claim can never be safe from challenge, and therefore cannot serve as the firm ground of knowledge as a whole. But by the same token, if this is the only kind of knowledge available to us, and by refuting the myth of the given Sellars thinks to have sufficiently demonstrated this, then there is no way to challenge this framework as a whole. The only

thing there is *is* a slow, arduous, hazardous, and never-ending process of testing each and every claim put forth. This is the inglorious venture of rational knowledge.

Let us now move on to Sellars's second text under consideration here, "The Structure of Knowledge."[20] Interestingly enough, neither the notion of "the given," nor that of "the myth of the given" are to be found in these lectures; at least not explicitly. But it is precisely because of this terminological peculiarity that this text is of particular interest. For while Sellars may not invoke the given explicitly, it is quite obvious that what he is in fact discussing is precisely another version of the myth of the given. And what makes this particular account of the myth especially interesting for our present purposes is the fact that Sellars here explicitly invokes "intuitive knowledge," thereby unequivocally confirming that the myth of the given indeed refers to this age-old notion.

The third and final lecture of the series, entitled "Epistemic Principles," is crucial in this regard. After briefly conveying the traditional arguments for the necessity of non-inferential judgments, Sellars goes on to state,

> We are clearly in the neighbourhood of what has been called the "self-evident", the "self-certifying", in short, of "intuitive knowledge". It is in this neighbourhood that we find what has come to be called the *foundational* picture of human knowledge. According to this picture, beliefs which have inferential reasonableness ultimately rely for their authority on a stratum of beliefs which are, in some sense, self-certifying. (ibid., lecture 3, section III, paragraph 14.)

By using here almost the exact same terms to refer to intuitive knowledge ("self-evident" and "self-certifying"), as when referring to the given in EPM ("self-authenticating"), this passage clearly demonstrates that "the myth of the given" and "intuitive knowledge" are virtually synonymous for Sellars. Likewise, by being almost identical to the discussions of the myth of the given in EPM, it surely dispels any possible doubts left. But only a few paragraphs later, an even more interesting passage appears:

[20] Wilfrid Sellars, "The Structure of Knowledge," http://www.ditext.com/sellars/sk.html (accessed January 22, 2013). Published in: *Action, Knowledge and Reality: Studies in Honor of Wilfrid Sellars* edited by Hector-Neri Castañeda (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975), 295-347. Originally presented as The Matchette Foundation Lectures for 1971 at the University of Texas.

> Now many philosophers who have endorsed a concept of intuitive knowledge are clearly committed to the position that there is a level of *cognition* more basic than *believing*. This more basic level would consist of a sub-conceptual – where "sub-conceptual" is far from being used as a pejorative term – awareness of certain facts. In terms of the framework sketched in the preceding two lectures, there would be a level of cognition more basic than *thinkings* or tokenings of sentences in Mentalese – more basic, in fact, than symbolic activity, literal *or* analogical. It would be a level of cognition unmediated by concepts; indeed it would be the very *source of* concepts in some such way as described by traditional theories of abstraction. It would be "direct apprehension" of facts; their "direct presence" to the mind. (ibid., 3, V, 21.)

Sellars here clearly presents a somewhat different version of the myth of the given to the one provided in EPM. But there is little doubt that it still is the same mythical creature we have learned to recognise so very well. Here again the claim is that there is some kind of non-conceptual and non-inferential knowledge that has the status of knowledge simply by virtue of being directly present, apprehended, or given to the mind. Given that this kind of knowledge essentially depends on the idea of "direct apprehension," Sellars asks, how is this notion to be understood? To begin to answer this question Sellars notes that "'apprehend', like 'see' is, *in its ordinary sense*, an achievement word" (ibid., 3, V, 23.). This clearly implies that the act of apprehending might not be successful, that is, that it might occur without anything being apprehended. The consequences of this seemingly simple observation are spelled out in the next paragraph:

> Many who use the metaphor "to see" in intellectual contexts overlook the fact that in its literal sense "seeing" is a term for a successful conceptual activity which contrasts with "seeming to see". No piling on of additional metaphors (e.g., "grasping", which implies an object grasped) can blunt this fact. Now the distinction between *seeing* and merely *seeming to see* implies a criterion. To rely on the metaphors of "apprehending" or "presence of the object" is to obscure the need of criteria for distinguishing between knowing" and "seeming to know", which ultimately define what it means to speak of knowledge as a *correct* or well-founded *thinking* that something is the case. (ibid., 3, V, 24.)

To put it in the simplest possible terms, *knowledge* necessarily implies some criteria by which it is to be distinguished from *ostensible knowledge*. Therefore, invocations of direct apprehension, which obviate this simple fact, cannot lay claim to the status of knowledge. Finally, Sellars concludes:

> In short, I suspect that the notion of a non-conceptual "direct apprehension" of a "fact" provides a merely verbal solution to our problem. The regress is stopped by an *ad hoc* regress-stopper. Indeed, the very metaphors which promised the sought-for foundation contain within themselves a dialectical moment which takes us beyond them. (ibid., 3, V, 25.)

The last sentence is worth highlighting. Instead of providing a non-conceptual foundation for conceptual knowledge, as they are supposed to do, metaphors of direct apprehending, grasping, seeing and the like, allow us to arrive at the exact opposite conclusion: if something is to lay claim to the status of knowledge, there has to be an explicit (or implicit) criterion by which this claim is to be adjudicated.

To conclude this chapter, let us briefly address one last account of the myth of the given, the one presented by Sellars in his Carus Lectures.[21] In the first lecture of the series, given under the title "The Lever of Archimedes," Sellars states this:

> If a person is directly aware of an item which has categorial status C, then the person is aware of it *as* having categorial status C.
>
> This principle is, perhaps, the most basic form of what I have castigated as "The Myth of the Given" ... *To reject the Myth of the Given is to reject the idea that the categorial structure of the world—if it has a categorial structure—imposes itself on the mind as a seal imposes an image on melted wax.* (Sellars 1981, 11-12)

Thus, "the most basic form" of the myth of the given consists in the idea that the *categorial structure of the world* is in some way directly available or given to the mind. To understand why this might be problematic for Sellars, we have to take a look at his conception of the categories. In Sellars's functionalist-nominalist Kantian interpretation, categories are defined

[21] Wilfrid Sellars, "Foundations for a Metaphysics of Pure Process: The Carus Lectures of Wilfrid Sellars," *The Monist* (1981), 64:1, 3-90.

as “the most generic functional classifications of the elements of judgments”[22] (Sellars 2002c, 329). This definition of the categories makes it obvious that, for Sellars, the categorial structure of the world is not something that can be simply read off of the world. On the contrary, we can arrive at the categorial structure of the world only as a result of that long, slow, and arduous self-correcting rational enterprise described earlier. This might in fact be one of the most important lessons to be learned from Sellars: knowledge of the world is indeed possible; but it will most certainly not come by some miraculous insight. Hard work is still our best bet.

[22] Wilfrid Sellars, ”Toward a Theory of The Categories” in *Kant’s Transcendental Metaphysics*, edited by Jeffrey F. Sicha (Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview Publishing 2002), 329.

8. SELLARS ON REPRESENTATION

In the previous two chapters we have managed to get a pretty good grasp of Sellars' account and critique of the perennial philosophy's dominant solution to the problem of representation, that is, to the problem of the relation between the mind and the world world. From Plato, through Descartes and all the way up to the leading Continental and analytic schools of Sellars' time, this relation was construed in terms of what Sellars has dubbed "the myth of the given." As we have learned in the previous chapter, in its most basic form the myth of the given consists of the idea that the categorial structure of the world imprints itself directly onto the mind. In other words, the relation between mind and world is to be construed in terms of a direct causal influence which the intelligible world has on the mind. Both conceptual thought and sensations are to be conceived as caused by a direct causal impact of the world on the mind. Throughout our engagement with various Sellars' texts thus far we have also been able to catch a few glimpses of Sellars' own alternative account of representation. In what follows our primary concern shall be to develop these insights in order to get a complete picture of Sellars' views on the relation between the mind and the world. We begin this journey by introducing a distinction Sellars deemed as crucial for understanding this relation, the distinction between *signifying* and *picturing.*

In "Being and Being Known" (1960), Sellars argues that there is "an isomorphism in the real order between the developed intellect and the world, an isomorphism which is a necessary condition of the intellect's intentionality as signifying the real order, but is to be sharply distinguished from the latter" (50). In order to elaborate on this thesis Sellars introduces a distinction between two dimensions of isomorphism between the intellect and the world: 1) "an isomorphism in the real order" for which he uses the verb 'to picture'; and 2) "an isomorphism in the logical order" for which he uses the verb 'to signify' (ibid.). In light of this distinction Sellars further argues that "a confusion between *signifying* and *picturing* is the root of the idea that the intellect as *signifying* the world is the intellect as informed in a unique (or immaterial) way by the natures of things in the real order" (ibid.). If we are to understand this important proposition, it will be necessary to acquaint ourselves further with each of these

two distinct yet related terms. Sellars' last published book *Naturalism and Ontology* (1979) provides the most developed and complete account of Sellars' treatment of these two important notions and it is to this book that we now turn to. We shall first focus on Sellars' theory of signifying or meaning as it is presented in the penultimate chapter of the book under the title "Meaning and Ontology".

8.1. On Meaning

Let us preface our discussion by recalling an important lesson learned about Sellars' conception of thought thus far. As we have seen, for Sellars, thought is to be conceived in analogy with overt discourse. That is to say, thought denotes the inner 'goings-on' which are to be construed as analogous to overt speech. This important point constitutes the premise of Sellars' discussion of meaning in *Naturalism and Onotology*. However, he qualifies it in a significant manner. Sellars here distinguishes a "'coarse grained' explanatory framework which simply *equates* thinking with processes which are 'verbal' (...) in the literal sense, i.e., are sequences of verbal behaviour and propensities pertaining thereto" (ibid.) from a 'fine-grained' psychological explanatory framework according to which 'inner conceptual episodes' are 'verbal' only in an analogical sense (Sellars 1979, 64). The latter is to be construed as a theoretical enrichment of the former.

This distinction is important for it allows Sellars to formulate more precisely the requirements of a non-cartesian or non-dualistic philosophy of mind: "To make a serious contribution to a non-cartesian philosophy of mind, this 'coarse grained' framework must be construed as methodologically autonomous in the sense that it contains categories of sense and reference, meaning and truth which can be fully explicated without any reference to non-verbal 'inner conceptual episodes'" (ibid.). In other words, the first step towards a construction of a non-cartesian, which is to say non-dualistic or naturalistic philosophy of mind is to devise an explanatory framework which would need not rely on 'inner conceptual episodes' as part of its account of the mind, that is, which "could characterize linguistic episodes *directly* in semantical terms, i.e., without overt or covert reference to the 'inner conceptual episodes'" (ibid.). Instead of trying to explain linguistic episodes by reference to or as expression of

‘inner conceptual episodes’, the latter are to be explained in terms of the former. To be more precise, “the explanatory function of ‘inner conceptual episodes’ can be construed as resting upon an autonomous proto-psychological framework in which linguistic activity is described, explained and evaluated without reference to the framework of ‘mental acts’ which it supports” (ibid.). Sellars believes that such a proto-psychological framework can be isolated, and he presents it “in the guise of a claim that thinking at the characteristically human level simply *is* what is described by this framework” (ibid.). Sellars refers to this claim as Verbal Behaviorism (VB) (ibid.). And while Sellars is ready to concede that this is a radically oversimplified account of thought and therefore that it cannot be wholly adequate, he nonetheless believes that “it provides a useful strategy for clarifying certain key issues in the philosophy of language” (ibid.). Let us follow Sellars’ account of VB further in order to see in what does his usefulness consists in for Sellars’ project as a whole.

Sellars begins his account by formulating the most fundamental principle of VB: “thinking ‘that-p’, where this means ‘having the thought occur to one that-p’ has its *primary* sense *saying* ‘p’, and a *secondary* sense in which it stands for a short term proximate propensity to say ‘p’” (ibid., 65). Whether a propensity to say ‘p’ will be actualized or not depends on whether the subject is “in a thinking-out-loud frame of mind” (ibid.). If the person is in fact in such a frame of mind then the thinking-out-loud that ’p’ is to be construed as “a candid utterance” of ‘p’. Sellars further emphasizes an important point: “in any ordinary sense, of course, saying ‘p’ is an action or performance” (ibid.). And while “to characterize an utterance as a ‘saying,’ as the verb ‘to say’ is ordinarily used, permits it to be either a spontaneous thinking-out-loud that-p or a deliberate use of words to achieve a purpose”, in the context of the essay “the verb ‘to say’ is being used in a *contrived* sense in which these options are closed, and the utterance specifically construed as a spontaneous or candid thinking-out-loud” (ibid., 65-66).

With this in mind, Sellars puts forth “an initial or working description” of his thesis on *meaning*. “To say *what* a person says, or, more generally, to say *what* a kind of utterance says, is to give a functional classification of the utterance. This functional classification involves a special (illustrating) use of expressions with which the addressee is presumed to be familiar, i.e., which are, so to speak, in his background language” (ibid., 67). Sellars distinguishes three basic kinds of functions with respect to which utterances can be classified. First, there are

"purely intralinguistic (syntactical)" functions which, "in simple cases, are correlated with formation and transformation rules as described in classical logical syntax" (ibid.). Second are those functions which "concern language as a response to sensory stimulation by environmental objects—thus, candidly saying, or having the short term propensity to say (...) 'This table is red'" (ibid.). And finally, there are functions which "concern the connection of practical thinking with behaviour" (ibid.). It is paramount to emphasize that this conception of meaning as functional classification, along with all these different dimensions of functioning, operates "at the meta-linguistic level in the language in which we respond to verbal behaviour, draw inferences about verbal behaviour and engage in practical thinking about verbal behaviour" (ibid.). In short, meaning, for Sellars, is to be conceived in meta-linguistic terms as a functional classification of utterances. To determine the meaning of a word is to classify this word with regard to the function or role that it has in the language-system as a whole.

Sellars introduces the next important aspect of the Verbal Behaviourism framework by invoking the process of language-acquisition. A child begins to learn a language by "uttering noises which *sound like* words and sentences and ends by uttering noises which are words and sentences" (ibid.). It is only when the child learns how "his utterances function in a language" that the noises he utters can be properly characterized as words and sentences (ibid.). The crucial role in this process belongs to those from whom the child learns the language. They are the ones who have to ensure that the sounds the child utters function properly in the verbal behaviour in question and hence that the child's verbal behaviour exhibits the uniformities characteristic of these proper ways of functioning. Sellars distinguishes two kinds of uniformities involved in meaningful verbal behaviour, namely "*negative* uniformities, i.e., the avoidance of certain combinations," and "*positive* uniformities, i.e., uniformities of concomitance" (ibid.). When one first learns a language, the functioning which gives his utterances their meaning can exist merely at the level of these uniformities. However, the one who trains the language learner by ensuring that his verbal behaviour exemplifies the uniformities characteristic of the proper ways of functioning of a language, "operates not only at the level of the trainee, thinking thoughts about things, but also at that higher level which is thinking thoughts about the functions by virtue of which first level language has the meanings it does" (ibid.). In other words, while "the trainer knows the *rules* which govern the *correct* functioning of the language, the language learner begins by *conforming* to these rules without

grasping them himself" (ibid.). It is only once the language learner becomes able to think "not only about *non-linguistic* items, but also about *linguistic* items" that he becomes a full-fledged member of the linguistic community (ibid.). "He has then developed from being the object of training and criticism by others to the stage at which he can train and criticize other language users and even himself" (ibid.).

Clearly, if we are to understand the process by which a language learner acquires the rules of a language, it is first necessary to have a precise grasp of the concept of the language rule. According to Sellars, the key to understanding this concept is "its complex relation to pattern-governed linguistic behaviour" (ibid.). In general terms, pattern-governed behaviour is any behaviour "which exhibits a pattern, not because it is brought about by the intention that it exhibit this pattern, but because the propensity to emit behaviour of the pattern has been selectively reinforced, and the propensity to emit behaviour which does not conform to this pattern selectively extinguished" (ibid.). Sellars' illustrates this notion by invoking the example of "natural selection which results in the patterns of behaviour which constitutes the so-called language of bees" (ibid.).

From this Sellars concludes that if "pattern-governed behaviour can arise by 'natural' selection, it can also arise by purposive selection on the part of trainers. They can be construed as reasoning:

> Patterned behaviour of such and such a kind *ought to be* exhibited by trainees; hence we, the trainers, *ought to do* this and that, as likely to bring it about that it *is* exhibited. (ibid.).

In light of such reasoning Sellars distinguishes between two kinds of rules, namely the *ought-to-be* and the *ought-to-do* rules. It is because the trainers *obey* the *ought-to-do* rules that the trainees *conform* to the *ought-to-be* rules.

Sellars further introduces a distinction between three types of pattern-governed linguistic behaviour:

1) Language Entry Transitions: The speaker responds, *ceteris paribus*, to objects in perceptual situations, and to certain states of himself, with appropriate linguistic activity.

2) Intralinguistic Transitions: The speaker's linguistic conceptual episodes tend to occur in patterns of valid inference (theoretical and practical) and tend not to occur in patterns which violate logical principles.
3) Language Departure Transitions: The speaker responds, *ceteris paribus*, to such linguistic conceptual episodes as 'I will now raise my hand' with an upward motion of the hand, etc. (ibid., 69)

According to Sellars, these three types of linguistic activities are essential to every language. Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that "not only are the abilities to engage in such thinkings-out-loud *acquired* as pattern-governed activity, they *remain* pattern-governed activity. The linguistic activities which are perceptual takings, inferences and volitions *never* become *obeyings* of *ought to do* rules" (ibid.).

Now that we have a firm grasp of Sellars' account of language in general, we can focus our attention to his theory of meaning in particular. Sellars begins explicating his conception of meaning by way of an analysis of this example:

(1) '*Und*' (in German) means *and*. (ibid., 76)

Sellars' analysis starts with the subject of this sentence, the German word 'und'. According to Sellars, it would be a mistake to construe this word as "the name of a linguistic abstract entity which can (and does) have many instances" (ibid.). Many philosophers have succumbed to this temptation, but "this is a mistake which can (and does) cause irreparable damage" (ibid.). Instead, Sellars argues, the subject of the above sentence is to be interpreted as a 'distributive singular term' (ibid., 77). A distributive singular term is a grammatically singular term which distributes its reference across an entire class (cf. deVries 2005, 28). In order to illustrate this notion Sellars invokes his famous example: "The lion is tawny" (Sellars 1979, 76). This sentence can be considered as roughly equivalent to "All lions are tawny" (ibid.). In other words, 'the lion' from the first sentence is not be construed as referring to a particular lion but to all the instances of the lion-kind or to all the members of the class 'lion'. The notion of a distributive singular term is important for Sellars because it allows him to avoid any reference to linguistic types and to refer instead to linguistic tokens, which in turn allows him to avoid any reference to abstract entities and to refer instead only to concrete instances of a kind or

members of a class. To return to the sentence (1), this is to say, that it could also be considered to be roughly equivalent to (1a) '*Und*'s (in German) means *and*.

If we now turn to the object term of the sentence (1), Sellars notes that the word 'and' is used here in an unusual way for it obviously does not function as a sentential connective (ibid., 77). It might seem tempting therefore to rewrite the sentence by using quotes for the object term as well:

(1b) '*und*' (in German) means '*and*'.

However, as Sellars argues, doing so would change the sense of the sentence (1), for it clearly doesn't "merely tell us that 'und' and 'and' *have the same meaning;*" but "in some sense *gives* the meaning" of 'und' (ibid.). In order to avoid this, Sellars introduces a special technical device, the dot-quotation, and argues that the correct analysis of (1) is this:

(1c) "'*Und*'s (in German) are •and•s

where to be an •and• is to be an item in any language which functions as 'and' does in our language. Roughly, to say what an expression means is to classify it functionally by means of an illustrating sortal" (ibid., 78).

In the object-language, sortals are kind-terms which attribute to the object to which they apply not just simple properties but complex structures. For instance 'lion' is such an object-language, non-illustrating sortal. In the meta-language, on the other hand, a sortal is a kind-term which attributes to the word to which it applies the membership in some linguistic kind, for instance, a noun. Finally, an *illustrating* sortal is a term which is taken as an example of the kind in question. Sellars introduces the dot quotes precisely in order to denote illustrating sortals. Thus in sentence (1c) •and• is to be understood as an example of a linguistic kind to which belong all the words in all the languages which have roughly the same functions as 'and' has in English.

Furthermore, what Sellars' analysis of (1) in terms of (1c) reveals is that "*meaning is not a relation* for the very simple reason that 'means' is a *specialized form of the copula*. Again, the meaning of an expression is its 'use' (in the sense of function) in that to say what an expression means is to classify it by means of an illustrating functional sortal" (ibid.). In other words, in meaning statements such as (1) 'means' is not to be construed as a relation to a non-

linguistic abstract entity, but as a specialized form of the copula 'is' which tells us what *is* the linguistic function of a word in question.

According to Sellars, while the above discussion of 'means' is certainly important, it constitutes merely the initial step towards the resolution of the problem of meaning. There are other ways of making meaning statements than by the use of 'means' and if we are to comprehend the full significance of the 'means' discussion for the theory of meaning, it is necessary to be able to account for these as well in the very terms that we've outlined above. The use of 'stands for' is one such alternative and problematic way of making meaning statements and Sellars begins his analysis of this form by way of another example.

(2) '*Dreieckig*' (in German) *stands for* triangularity. (ibid.)

A traditional analysis of the surface grammar of (2) seems to suggest that 'triangularity' is a name which refers to a non-linguistic entity, and that "*stands for* is a relation which, given the truth of (2), holds between a linguistic and a nonlinguistic entity" (ibid., 78-79). Against such an interpretation, Sellars deploys the resources devised earlier in the analysis of 'means' and argues that 'triangularity' is to be construed as a meta-linguistic distributive singular term, and 'stands for' as "another (and more interesting) specialized copula" (ibid., 79). Accordingly, Sellars believes that the correct analysis of (2) is

(2a) '*Dreieckig*'s (in German) are •triangular•s. (ibid.)

In light of this, Sellars concludes that (2) is simply another way of doing what is done by (1), i.e., giving a functional classification of a word (ibid.). What makes this second way of functionally classifying words particularly important, according to Sellars, is that it relates meaning as functional classification to contexts usually associated with the concept of *truth* (ibid., 80). As Sellars further argues, while there is certainly an intimate connection between meaning and truth, there is also a significant gap between these two dimensions which has to be bridged. For whereas "the *immediate* function of meaning statements requires a surface grammar which highlights the rehearsing *use* of expressions, (...) the *immediate* function of truth statements requires a surface grammar of *reference* and *predication*" (ibid., 83). It is precisely in this regard that 'stands for' statements are crucial for they "serve to link the 'meaning' statements with which they are logically equivalent to the context of truth" (ibid.).

This brings us to the final aspect of Sellars' theory of meaning which needs to be addressed, namely its conception of truth. According to Sellars, to say of something that it is *true* is to say that it is *semantically assertible*, "where 'semantically assertible' means *correctly* tokenable in accordance with the semantical rules of L (the language in question)—as contrasted with the correctnesses of rhetoric and taste" (ibid., 84). The 'semantic rules' of language are the *ought-to-be* rules that, as we have learned before, govern language entry, intralinguistic and language departure transitions. In other words, these are the rules which govern our linguistic activities with regard to perceptual takings, material inferential processes, and volitions, that is, the rules which determine the standards against which every linguistic activity is to be judged as correct or incorrect. In light of this, for a sentence to be true is for it to be correctly tokenable in accordance with the pertinent ought-to-be rules.

Now that we have acquainted ourselves with the basic tenets of Sellars' theory of meaning, it should be easy enough to grasp the main motivation behind it. What we have witnessed repeatedly throughout all of these discussions of various aspects of 'meaning' is Sellars interpreting different meaning statements so as to avoid the need to invoke any abstract entities. What this clearly reveals is that Platonic realism with regard to *abstracta* or universals is indeed the main target of Sellars' critique. Sellars believed that a commitment to naturalism is incompatible with Platonic realism and that it necessitates in its stead a thoroughgoing nominalism. Or as Sellars put it himself by the end of the text we have been discussing here: "I can only hope that enough has been said to strengthen the claim that a naturalistic ontology must be a nominalistic ontology" (ibid., 93).

However, for Sellars, the abandonment of Platonic realism does not necessarily entail the abandonment of abstract entities in general. Sellars ends his text by highlighting this very point:

> 137. I have often been asked, what does one gain by abandoning such standard platonic entities as *triangularity* or *that 2 + 2 = 4* only to countenance such exotic abstract entities as *functions, roles, rules* and *pieces*. The answer is, of course, that the above strategy *abandons nothing but a picture*. Triangularity is not abandoned; rather 'triangularity' is *seen for what it is, a meta-linguistic distributive singular term.*

> 138. And once the general point has been made that abstract singular terms are meta-linguistic distributive singular terms, rather than labels of irreducible eternal objects, there is no reason why one should not use abstract singular terms and categories of abstract singular terms in explicating specific problems about language and meaning. For just as talk about triangularity can be unfolded into talk about •triangular• inscriptions, so talk about any abstract entity can be unfolded into talk about linguistic or conceptual tokens. (ibid., 95-96)

In short, Sellars' account of meaning is devised precisely with the intent to demonstrate that it is indeed possible to reinterpret abstract entities in strictly naturalistic and nominalist terms and that thereby there is a way out of the forced choice between either being committed to their reality on the one hand or abandoning them altogether on the other. As we have seen, against the platonic realist conception of meaning, Sellars argues that meaning is not a relation, that is, that meaning is not to be construed as a relation between linguistic and non-linguistic entities either real or abstract. But if his is to be a truly naturalistic account of meaning Sellars has to show that there is indeed a causal relation between the normative order of language and a natural order of causes. It is precisely with the intent to secure such a causal link between these two domains that Sellars devised his account of *picturing* to which we now turn. Once again, our exposition will be based on *Naturalism and Ontology*, namely on its penultimate chapter entitled "After Meaning" in which Sellars presents his theory of picturing.

8. 2. On Picturing

Language certainly has many different functions. However, according to Sellars, "whatever else language does, its central and essential function, the *sine qua non* of all others, is to enable us to *picture*[23] the world in which we live" (ibid., 117). And indeed, language as a whole, for Sellars, is to be conceived primarily as a *representational system*. Sellars further argues that "the representational features of an empirical language—a language which is 'about the world

[23] 'To picture' in this context is to be understood as synonymous with 'to represent'.

in which it is used'—require the presence in the language of what might be called a schematic world story, a story which is as much in process as the language itself and, of course, the world in which it is embedded" (ibid., 105). This world story, according to Sellars, is to be construed in analogy with the notion of a *map*. As Sellars emphasizes, in developing an account of a representational system, the choice to use the analogy with maps is as dangerous as it is obvious. It is therefore paramount to specify precisely the sense in which this analogy is to be understood. According to Sellars, "the essential feature of the functioning of a map *as*, in a primary sense, a map is its location in the conceptual space of practical reasoning concerning getting around in an environment" (ibid., 109). So, by analogy with maps thus defined, the essential function of world stories is to help us get around in the environment broadly construed. As Sellars further argues, every language permits the formulation of many different stories all of which "compete for the status of being the accepted story of the world" (ibid., 109). However, it needs to be emphasized that "at any one point in this competitive process, the living language involves a *commitment* to *one* world story, however schematic and fragmentary. This commitment, however, is provisional. The story is the ship which is being built (and, of course, re-built) by those who live on it" (ibid., 109-110). In this process of constructing a world story the central role belongs to *picturing*.

Sellars begins his discussion of picturing by stressing the difference between his concept and Wittgenstein's famous picture theory of language, of which Sellars admits his notion is a reinterpretation. "Wittgenstein has been characterizing picturing as a relation between statements *considered as facts* and another set of *facts* which he calls the world. Roughly, he has been conceiving of picturing as a relation between facts about linguistic expressions, on the one hand, and facts about nonlinguistic objects, on the other" (ibid., 115). Sellars finds this conception deeply problematic, and proposes that "instead of construing 'picturing' as a relationship between *facts*," it be construed "as a relationship between linguistic and nonlinguistic *objects*" (ibid.).

Sellars introduces his discussion of this proposal by making two preliminary remarks with regards to the linguistic objects:

> 1. If picturing is to be a relation between objects in the natural order, this means that the linguistic objects in question must belong to the natural order. And this means that we must be considering them in terms of empirical properties and matter-of-factual

relations, though these may, indeed must, be very complex, involving all kinds of constant conjunctions or uniformities pertaining to the language user and his environment. Specifically, although we may, indeed must, know that these linguistic objects are subject to rules and principles—are fraught with 'ought'—we abstract from this knowledge in considering them as objects in the natural order. Let me introduce the term 'natural-linguistic object' to refer to linguistic objects thus considered.

2. We must be careful *not* to follow Wittgenstein's identification of complex objects with facts. (ibid., 115-116).

Sellars formulates this picturing relation between complex natural-linguistic objects and natural objects thus: "[natural-linguistic objects] O (1)', O (2)',...,O (n)' make up a picture of [objects] O (1), O (2),...,O (n) by virtue of such and such facts about O (1)', O (2)',...,O (n)'" (ibid., 118). While Sellars rejects Wittgenstein's conception of picturing as a relation between two kinds of facts, he retains the "Wittgensteinian theme that it is configurations of names that picture configurations of objects" (ibid.). To the extent that the natural-linguistic objects are a configuration of names they are to be considered complex objects. These complex natural-linguistic objects constitute the picture of nonlinguistic objects by virtue of standing in certain matter-of-factual relationships to one another and to these nonlinguistic objects, and it is in this sense that the former are the linguistic counterparts of the latter. Furthermore, Sellars adds, this picture is to be construed as a system of elementary statements *qua* natural-linguistic objects. It is important to emphasize that in Sellars' account "the *manner* in which the 'names' occur in the 'picture' is not a conventional symbol for the *manner* in which the objects occur in the world"; rather "the manner in which the names occur in the picture is a projection, in accordance with a fantastically complex system of rules of projection, of the manner in which the objects occur in the world" (ibid., 118-119).

Sellars proceeds by formulating a principle which will be crucial for his account of picturing:

> Although to say of something that it *ought* to be done (or *ought not* to be done) in a certain kind of circumstance is not to say that *whenever* the circumstance occurs it *is* done (or *is not* done), the statement that a person or group of people think of something as something that ought (or ought not) to be done in a certain kind of

> circumstance entails that *ceteris paribus* they actually *do* (or refrain from doing) the act in question whenever the circumstance occurs. I shall leave the phrase 'ceteris paribus' without unpacking it, and I shall put the principle briefly as follows: Espousal of principles is reflected in uniformities of performance. (...) And let it be emphasized that this uniformity, though not the principle of which it is the manifestation, is describable in matter-of-factual terms. (ibid., 119)

There are two kinds of uniformities that are particularly important for Sellars: 1. *statement-statement* uniformities which "correspond at the overt level to espoused principles of inference" and "involve verbal patterns that conform to the 'formation rules' of the language"; 2. *situation-statement* uniformities which are "illustrated by a person who, in the presence of a green object in standard conditions, thinks, roughly, 'Green here now' and, hence, on our assumption, makes spontaneously the corresponding statement" (ibid., 120).

According to the classical doctrine of representation, the mind knows the world by virtue of containing a 'likeness' of it. Sellars retains this premise and consequently the central problem of his account of picturing is how to construe this notion of 'likeness'. Sellars' main contention with regards to this question is that "the 'likeness' between elementary thoughts and the objects they picture is definable in matter-of-factual terms as a likeness or correspondence or isomorphism between two systems of objects, each of which belongs in the natural order" (ibid., 122). It is with regard to this contention that the significance of Sellars' principle formulated above, according to which "espousal of principles is reflected in uniformities of performance", becomes apparent. For it is precisely these uniformities of performance, "which link natural-linguistic objects with one another and with the objects of which they are the linguistic projections, that constitute picturing as a relation of matter of fact between objects in the natural order" (ibid., 125). Of particular import in this regard are the 'situation-statement' uniformities, that is, the uniformities involved in the connection of language with the environment in the observational situations to which speakers responds with appropriate statements. For example, in the presence of a green object in standard conditions the appropriate response is to utter the statement 'This here now is green'. To picture the world is to construct a world story which is a fantastically complex system of such elementary statements *qua* natural-linguistic objects.

Now that we have a better understanding of Sellars' account's of meaning and picturing, let us return to Sellars' pronouncement from the very beginning of this chapter which states that "a confusion between *signifying* and *picturing* is the root of the idea that the intellect as *signifying* the world is the intellect as informed in a unique (or immaterial) way by the natures of things in the real order." The conflation of signifying with picturing of which Sellars speaks here is nothing but the root of the myth of the given, i.e. of the idea that the intelligible structure of the world causally imprints itself in the mind or that there is a causal relation between the real order or the natural space of causes and the logical order or the normative space of reasons. There is indeed a causal relation between these two domains but in order to understand it it is necessary to introduce the notion of picturing. It is by suspending the normative dimension of certain aspects of our verbal behaviour and construing them instead in exclusively naturalistic-causal terms, that Sellars establishes the causal relation between the normative and the natural order which he calls picturing. And to recall another important lesson from the very opening of this chapter, this picturing relation or isomorphism between the natural-linguistic objects and natural objects constitutes "a necessary condition of the intellect's intentionality as signifying the real order". Picturing and signifying taken together constitute the necessary and sufficient conditions of Sellars' account of representation.

9. SELLARS CONTRA DELEUZE

The time for confrontation has finally come. But before we embark on this last part of our journey, a few introductory remarks are in order. Any attempt to confront two philosophers belonging to one of two completely distinct and in many ways opposed philosophical traditions, namely the Continental and analytic traditions, faces a steep challenge: how to make them communicate with each other with their respective ways of doing philosophy being so different? Having had to labour through our expositions of Gilles Deleuze and Wilfrid Sellars, two philosophers with two utterly different styles of doing philosophy, the reader of this dissertation surely understands fully well the challenges involved in any similar attempt in general and in our case in particular. From the baroque nature of Deleuze's writings to the austere character of Sellars', hardly could there have been two philosophers more distant in matters of *style*. But when it comes to matters of philosophical *substance*, as we shall soon attempt to show, the distance between them is much less than it might initially appear. An important respect in which Deleuze and Sellars are very much alike is that they both place great emphasis in their respective methodologies, albeit to differing degrees, both on philosophical problems and to the historical articulations of these problems. This might seem surprising for, as the proverbial *cliché* goes, Continental philosophers are supposedly more interested in textual exegesis of great names in the history of philosophy than in philosophical problems themselves, while the analytics are supposed to be not only ignorant of but also completely uninterested in the matters of history of philosophy. While Deleuze breaks decidedly with the first prejudice, Sellars does the same with regards to the second one. In light of this, we shall follow their methodological lead and stage our confrontation between Deleuze and Sellars, first, in terms of the shared philosophical problems to which they both respond, and, then, by tracing their differing philosophical positions to their common historical root in Kant's transcendental project. But before we could turn to this task specifically, it will be best to briefly recapitulate the main points of our discussion of Deleuze and Sellars as presented thus far so that the reader could more easily discern the main argumentative strands extending throughout the dissertation as whole.

The aim of the first part of the dissertation was to provide an account of Deleuze's critique of the "world of representation" as it is laid out in *Difference and Repetition*. Deleuze's programmatic pronouncement to the effect that the task of modern philosophy is to reverse Platonism was taken as the interpretative framework in terms of which Deleuze's early work as a whole is to be approached. The first chapter explicated this thesis by way of a close reading of "Plato and the Simulacrum", the text in which Deleuze explicitly addresses the theme of the reversal of Platonism. It was revealed that 'to reverse Platonism' is to reverse the relation between identity and difference which defines the world of representation. While in the world of representation, difference is to be conceived as subordinated to identity, in the world of simulacra, constituted as it is by the reversal of Platonism, identity is to be thought of as the product of difference which is affirmed as a primary power. Deleuze develops this thesis fully in *Difference and Repetition* but in order to be able to understand this difficult book it was argued that it is necessary to acquaint ourselves first with some important writings from Deleuze's early period. The first one of these is also one of Deleuze's first published pieces, namely "Mathesis, Science and Philosophy" and this was the topic of the second chapter. There we have found the first articulation of Deleuze's critique of the representational nature of science and philosophy based as they both are on numerous dualisms (subject-object, thought-being) and an affirmation of *mathesis universalis* as an overcoming of all these dualisms in an intuitive knowledge of life. After this, the third chapter was dedicated to Deleuze's "Review of Jean Hypplite's *Logic and Existence*", where Deleuze once again contrasts an intuitive conception of philosophy as ontology of sense to a representational conception of philosophy as anthropology. Following Hyppolite's reading of Hegel, Deleuze proclaims that philosophy must be an ontology, but that it can only be an ontology of sense, and not of essence. This claim is explicated with reference to Deleuze's interpretation of Kant's transcendental turn, for, as Deleuze argues, Kant's transcendental turn is to be credited with the substitution of sense for essence. The theme of Deleuze's reinterpretation of Kant's notion of the transcendental was then further developed through an engagement with Deleuze's various writings on Bergson in chapter four. It was shown that Deleuze reads Bergson precisely as a continuation and transformation of Kant's transcendental project. It was once again revealed that the distinction between intuition and representation constitutes the axis around which Deleuze's reading of Bergson revolves. To the extent that philosophy is capable of an intuitive knowledge of things themselves,

according to Deleuze, it presents a challenge to the representational forms of knowledge of the sciences. In other words, if philosophy is to once again establish its necessity, it has to reaffirm its metaphysical ambitions.

The fifth chapter then showed how Deleuze develops all of these themes from his earlier writings in *Difference and Repetition* and it provided a presentation both of Deleuze's account and critique of the world of representation on the one hand, and of his alternative ontological and epistemological account of the world of simulacra on the other. The main task of *Difference and Repetition* is to reverse Platonism. However, as Deleuze shows, while Platonism is indeed responsible for founding the world of representation, the ontology of this world is constituted only by Aristotle's analogical conception of being. According to Aristotle, being is said in many different senses (categories) which stand to each other and to being itself in an analogical relation. In the world of representation this analogical conception of being is accompanied by a dogmatic Image of Thought. With this term Deleuze refers to a set of presuppositions or postulates regarding the nature of thought which all philosophies of representation share. According to this set of presuppositions, thought in its striving towards truth is modelled on recognition, which is to say that thought presupposes the collaborative exercise of all the faculties in their joint effort to recognize a supposedly same object. In short, to think is to know, and to know is to recognize and represent. Having thus delineated the main ontological and epistemological contours of the world of representation, we have then done the same with regards to the world of simulacra. In contrast to Aristotle's analogical conception of being Deleuze posits the thesis of the univocity of Being: Being is said in a single and same sense of everything of which it is said, but that of which it is said is difference itself. In Deleuze's proposed genealogy of the historical development of the univocity of Being, Duns Scotus is credited with conceiving this thesis, Spinoza with affirming it and Nietzsche with his doctrine of the eternal return for realizing it. Nietzsche's eternal return is a practical principle of selection according to which only that which differs returns. Returning itself is Being, but only Being *of* becoming or the becoming-identical of becoming itself. In other words, identity or the Same is constituted by the very operation of the eternal return of difference. Difference is the primary power, identity its product and the eternal return the principle by way of which the former becomes the latter. Nietzsche's eternal return as rearticulated by Deleuze effectuates the reversal of Platonism and constitutes the world of simulacra. In order to be able to *know* this world Deleuze develops his method of

"transcendental empiricism" which constitutes Deleuze's Bergsonian reinterpretation of Kant's transcendental project: if we are to escape the world of representation we must go beyond experience towards the conditions of not merely possible but real experience. The intense world of difference constitutes these conditions of real experience and Deleuze posits the transcendent exercise of the faculties as the ability to directly apprehend this intense world of difference. Just like Bergson before him, Deleuze reanimates not just the notion of intuitive knowledge but also the metaphysical ambitions of philosophy.

Having delineated the main contours of Deleuze's treatment of representation, the second part of the dissertation gives an account of those aspects of Sellars' philosophical systems which can be construed as addressing the problem of representation, that is, the relation between the mind and the world. In order to do this it was first necessary to present an overview of Sellars' philosophical system as a whole which is why chapter six consists of a close engagement with Sellars' programmatic meta-philosophical piece "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man" which provides the best possible entryway into Sellars' philosophical edifice. Here we have learned that the task of philosophy, according to Sellars, is to fuse together into one stereoscopic vision two competing images or conceptions of man-in-the-world, the manifest image and the scientific one. The manifest image is the refined version of the original image in terms of which man first encountered himself. Its primary objects are persons and it attains knowledge of the world and of man's place in it by way of correlational methods of inquiry. Perennial philosophy (philosophical tradition from Plato onwards) takes this image as real and describes its categorial structure. The scientific image, on the other hand, is the result of the much more recent development of the natural sciences. While the scientific image grows out of the manifest image, it distinguishes itself from the latter by the employment of the postulational methods of inquiry. In short, it postulates imperceptible entities and principles pertaining to them in order to explain the observed behaviour of the perceptible objects. In light of this, the basic elements of the scientific image are whichever postulated theoretical entities the sciences at a given time agree upon as the ultimate constituents of reality. To the extent that both the manifest image and the scientific image lay claim to be real, that is, to present accurate accounts of the world and of man's place in it, there is a clash between them. The scientific image poses a challenge to the manifest image by reducing the macro physical objects of the latter to the level of the microphysical particles as postulated by the sciences. In line with his naturalism and scientific

realism, Sellars argues that with respect to inanimate objects the manifest image cannot meet this challenge and is therefore to be considered false. But, on the other hand, there is one crucial respect in which the manifest image cannot be reduced to the scientific one, and this, of course, concerns the status of persons. For, as Sellars argues, to be a person is first and foremost to be a member of a community and thus to be bound by a network of rights and duties. From this point of view, Sellars contends, the irreducibility of the personal is the irreducibility of the 'ought' to the 'is'. In other words, the normative realm inhabited by persons is irreducible to the natural realm as described by the sciences. Thus, Sellars concludes, the conceptual framework of persons characteristic of the manifest image should not be reconciled with the scientific image, but rather joined to it. This is the general framework of Sellars' philosophical system which James O'Shea appropriately dubbed "naturalism with a normative turn" (O'Shea, 2007, 3).

Sellars' famous critique of the myth of the given is one of the most important aspects of his philosophical system thus construed and chapter seven explored the reasons for this. As Sellars put it in his Carus lectures, the myth of the given in its most basic form consists of the idea that the categorial structure of the world causally imprints itself directly onto the mind. This idea dates back all the way to Plato and his affirmation of intellectual intuition construed as the faculty to immediately apprehend eternal forms or essences. Throughout history it appeared in many different guises, but it always constituted a crucial aspect of the perennial tradition in philosophy. With Plato it appeared in an explicitly metaphysical form. But as Sellars shows, it is present just as clearly in traditional empiricism along with its many modern descendents whose aim was precisely to critique the metaphysical ambitions of classical rationalism. In empiricism the myth of the given consists in the idea that the apprehension of that which is given to the senses can either *constitute* knowledge independently of any conceptual framework or function as the *foundation* of knowledge. Taken together, these various instantiations of the myth of the given constitute "the framework of givenness". The problem with this framework, for Sellars, is that it posits an ability of the mind to be directly aware of abstract entities. But to do so, Sellars argues, is to make a naturalistic account of the mind and intentionality impossible. It is precisely because he wants to achieve such a naturalistic account of the mind that Sellars takes his normative turn which consists in construing conceptual thought and knowledge in terms of the normative space of reasons. Conceptual thought and knowledge are only possible within a

conceptual framework established within a community. And while, as we have seen above, this normative space of reasons is in a sense irreducible to the natural space of causes, there is another sense, Sellars argues, in which the former can in fact be reduced to the latter. Following Sellars, O'Shea famously argues that the normative space of reasons is *conceptually* or *logically* irreducible, but *causally* reducible to the normative space of causes (cf. O'Shea 2007, 21).

Chapter eight was dedicated precisely to exploring this complicated relationship between the normative and the natural orders. We addressed this issue by highlighting Sellars' distinction between *signifying* and *picturing*, with the former pertaining solely to the normative order and the latter being responsible for securing the causal relation of the normative order with the natural order. Hence, the first part of the chapter provided an account of signifying, that is, of Sellars' conceptions of *meaning* and *truth*. According to Sellars, neither of these two important notions should be construed in terms of a relation to a non-conceptual or non-linguistic reality. Instead they are to be conceived in meta-linguistic terms as pertaining to the functioning of the linguistic or conceptual framework as a whole. From this point of view, meaning is to be construed in terms of the functional classification of the classes of linguistic tokens. In other words, the meaning of a word is determined not by its relation to a non-linguistic object but in terms of its use or role within language as a whole. By the same token, truth is not to be construed in terms of the correspondence of a term to a non-conceptual object but in terms of "semantic assertibility": for a term to be true is for it to be correctly assertible, that is, assertible in accordance with the corresponding semantic rules. Language, for Sellars, is a rule-governed system and all of its aspects are to be understood in these normative terms. Such an account of signifying was then followed in the second part of the chapter with an account of *picturing*. While signifying, as we have just seen, denotes a relation between items in the normative space of reasons, picturing pertains to the isomorphic relation between two types of objects in the natural space of causes – natural-linguistic objects and natural objects. In other words, picturing denotes the isomorphic relation between linguistic tokens or concrete utterances and the objects to which they refer to. To the extent that both of these types of objects belong to the causal order there is clearly a causal relation between them. But, on the other hand, insofar as they are concrete linguistic tokens of abstract linguistic types the natural-linguistic objects belong also in the normative order of reasons. Thus it is precisely with the notion of picturing that Sellars secures the causal link between

the normative and the natural orders, or in other words, provides a naturalistic account of the relation between the mind and the world.

Having thus delineated and hopefully made more perspicuous the main argumentative strands of our discussion thus far, we are finally in a position to stage the announced confrontation between Deleuze and Sellars. It is our contention that Deleuze's and Sellars' contrasting views on the problem of representation stem from their common philosophical commitment to *naturalism* construed in broadest possible terms.

For Deleuze, the commitment to naturalism entails a commitment to the univocity of being and to the immanence of thought to being. To the extent that representation, in Deleuze's reading, constitutes a transcendence of thought to being, representation itself is to be abandoned. In contrast to this representative conception of thought as *transcendent* to being, Deleuze posits an intuitive conception of thought as an *immanent* expression of being. If it is not to be transcendent, thought has to be able to express being in its entirety, that is, both in its universality and singularity. And as Deleuze's account of representation attempts to show, representation is clearly incapable of doing so. This is why Deleuze posits an intuitive-creative account of thought as capable of both immediately apprehending the universal conditions of a concrete thing and creating the concept appropriate to that thing itself in its singularity. Finally, to the extent that Deleuze construes the universal conditions of real experience not in terms of identity but in terms of difference, Deleuze's ontology can truly be said to be a reversed Platonism. That Deleuze's reversal of Platonism is no less metaphysical than Platonism itself is pretty obvious, and Deleuze himself is quite unequivocal about it. In fact, following Bergson, Deleuze explicitly affirms the revival of metaphysical ambitions as the only way in which philosophy can become a worthy rival to the sciences again. Philosophy has to demonstrate that it can produce knowledge of reality itself if it is to be anything more than a reflection on the knowledge produced by the sciences.

For Sellars, on the other hand, the commitment to naturalism implies in turn the commitments to nominalism and scientific realism. To be is to make a difference or to be causally efficacious. And only the natural sciences have the authority to produce legitimate knowledge of the order of being or the natural space of causes. To the extent that language and conceptual thought are causally impotent, they belong to the order of knowledge or the normative space of reasons. Any attempt to establish a direct causal relation between these

two orders constitutes an instance of what Sellars has termed the myth of the given. Thought, language or knowledge can neither produce a causal effect nor be the result of a causal process. From this follows Sellars' denial of a direct awareness of abstract entities. Abstract entities exist only within a conceptual framework and are not to be posited into the order of being. Any similar attempts are metaphysical on Sellars' reading, that is, they illegitimately apply terms pertaining to the normative order to the natural order. But to say that there is no direct causal relation between these two orders should by no means be taken to imply that there is no causal connection at all and that the normative order is simply transcendent to the natural order. The relation between the two orders is indeed a complicated one and Sellars' concept of picturing is forged precisely in order to address this thorny issue. As we have seen, it is because of this concept that Sellars can claim that the normative space of reasons is conceptually irreducible and yet causally reducible to the natural space of causes.

In confronting Deleuze's and Sellars' respective accounts of the relation of thought and being, the first thing to note is that they are similarly critical of the ontological pretensions of the traditional accounts of representation. To the extent that this might be less obvious with regards to Sellars it is worth emphasizing that his critique of the myth of the given is nothing but a critique of the ontological accounts of representation. But while Deleuze and Sellars share not only the concern with the traditional accounts of representation, but also the motivation for such a concern, i.e. their commitment to naturalism, it is safe to say that they part ways in pretty much every other way. Surely, the most significant difference between the two concerns their opposing stances with regard to the necessity of representation. While Deleuze believes that his critique licenses a wholesale philosophical repudiation of representation, Sellars thinks that representation is not only worth saving but that it is paramount to do so. In fact, as we have seen, Sellars presents a non-ontological and non-metaphysical account of representation, which, among other things, has the virtue of escaping Deleuze's critique of representation. In fact, precisely to the extent that Sellars' normative conception of thought is non-ontological, his notion of representation cannot be considered as ontologically transcendent to being. In other words, Sellars' account of representation does not violate the principle of the univocity of being. However, in light of Sellars' critique of the myth of the given, it might be argued that Deleuze himself is guilty of violating this very principle. Insofar as Deleuze identifies being with the eternal return of difference construed as the *selective* principle which decides between that which is to return eternally (difference) and

that which is to disappear (identity), Deleuze clearly posits a normative notion into the heart of being. And as we have learned from Sellars, this constitutes a metaphysical move *par excellence*.

Now it is our final contention that Deleuze's and Sellars' contrasting views on metaphysics in general and representation in particular are to be traced back to a common historical root which, of course, is Kant. To be more precise, we shall argue that Deleuze's and Sellars' respective philosophical projects constitute two distinct and in many respects even opposite ways of continuing Kant's legacy and that their contrasting views on metaphysics and representation are a direct consequence of this. Once again we begin with Deleuze.

Despite the initial tendencies of the early Deleuze scholarship to interpret Deleuze as a pre-Kantian metaphysician, some of the most serious recent commentators (Christian Kerslake, Beth Lord, Daniela Voss and Henry Summers-Hall, to name just the ones most important to our case) agree almost unanimously that Deleuze is best read as a decidedly post-Kantian philosopher. And this, it bears emphasizing, is not to be taken just in that general sense in which we are all post-Kantians, but in the specific sense in which this term refers to the first reactions to Kant's Copernican turn, ranging from Rheinhold and Maimon, through Fichte, the early Romantics (Holderlin, Novalis, Schlegel), Schelling, and ending with Hegel. As Christian Kerslake has stated in his study *Immanence and the Vertigo of Philosophy* "while Deleuze's conceptual proposals and ideas may be very much of the twentieth century, his real *questions* and *problems* emerge from within the post-Kantian tradition of philosophy" (Kerslake 2009, 3). In light of this, it could be argued that Deleuze's philosophical project is a continuation not only of post-Kantianism in general, but of the early Romanticism in particular.

In order to confirm this claim it will be enough to recall some of the central features of Deleuze's thought encountered thus far and relate them to the post-Kantians.

First and foremost, as we have seen, the main tenet of Deleuze's transcendental empiricism states that philosophy ought to inquire into the conditions of real and not merely possible experience. By posing the main problem of his project in Kantian terms as a search for conditions of experience, Deleuze obviously claims his Kantian heritage. But by reformulating the fundamental problem of Kant's critical project not in epistemological but in

metaphysical terms, Deleuze is performing the exact same move performed by the post-Kantians. For all the post-Kantians, from Maimon to Hegel, believed that Kant's Critical project of searching for the conditions of knowledge, cannot be completed without the postulation of something unconditioned, whether it be called "the absolute", "the infinite", or "the in-itself". To put it in Deleuze's terms, the conditions of real experience have to differ in kind from the categories, that is, the conditions must differ in nature from the conditioned. Hence for the post-Kantians, but also for Deleuze, the conditions themselves had to be unconditioned. What will play the role of the unconditioned varied amongst the post-Kantians themselves, and on this account Deleuze certainly parts ways with them. "Subject-object identity" for the post-Kantians, "difference in itself", for Deleuze. But although there is a major difference between them on this account, this difference in no way erases the proximities of their respected projects.

The second feature Deleuze held in common with the post-Kantians is their shared critique of conceptual representation. As we have seen Deleuze argue repeatedly, the categories, which are the elementary concepts of representation, are too general for the real, which, according to Deleuze, is singular by defintion. This is why Deleuze claims that the conditions of real experience should not be larger than the conditioned or that the task of philosophy is to create concepts which would fit perfectly to the objects for which they are tailored. While Deleuze usually attributes this idea primarily to Bergson it is safe to say that Deleuze and Bergson both certainly share with the post-Kantians their mutual distrust in the powers of discursive reason and conceptual representation. Whatever the stated aims may be, be it to think "the absolute", "the unconditioned", "the infinite", "the in-itself", "real experience", or "the individual object", discursive reason and conceptual representation are always found wanting, for they will always be too relative, too conditioned, too finite, too phenomenal, or too general for the task.

This brings us to the third theme Deleuze, Bergson and the post-Kantians have in common. Similar problems led all of them to very similar solutions. If the problem at hand is how to think the unconditioned in its various guises, and conceptual representation is clearly incapable of doing so, the only solution is to search for "an other knowledge", non-conceptual and non-representational knowledge. In their quest for this other knowledge the post-Kantians famously turned to the notion of "intellectual intuition", the very same notion that Kant's first

Critique proclaimed impossible for human cognition. Similarly, Bergson proposed the notion of "intuition as a method" as the best candidate for the job. And finally, Deleuze clearly makes virtually the same move by invoking the notion of "the transcendent exercise of the faculties". Although there are obvious differences between Deleuze's notion and the ones proposed by the post-Kantians and Bergson, they all do function according to the same basic principle. In all three cases the claim is that this particular faculty, or a particular exercise of the faculties in Deleuze's case, provides an immediate or intuitive non-conceptual knowledge of some kind.

And it is precisely this affinity between Deleuze's notion of the transcendent exercise of the faculties with the post-Kantian notion of intellectual intuition that leads us to the final point regarding Deleuze, that is his proximity not only to post-Kantianism in general, but also to early Romanticism in particular. For if there was one thing that distinguished the early Romantics (from Hölderlin, Novalis, and Schlegel, to Schelling) from the rest of their post-Kantian peers, it was their firm belief that art in general and aesthetic experience in particular provide us precisely with a model for intellectual intuition. In order to confirm Deleuze's proximity to the early Romantics in this regard it is best to recall an important statement from *Difference and Repetition*: "once we determine the conditions of real experience, which are not larger than the conditioned and which differ in kind from the categories: the two senses of the aesthetic become one, to the point where the being of the sensible reveals itself in the work of art, while at the same time the work of art appears as experimentation" (Deleuze 1994a, 68). Add to this two further claims made by Deleuze later on in the book regarding the transcendent exercise of the faculties and the picture is complete. First, that thought should "seek its models among stranger and more compromising adventures" (ibid., 135) than the model of recognition. And second, that thought always begins with an encounter with the *sentiendum* or the being of the sensible (that which can only be sensed). These two claims read in conjunction with the first one quoted above confirm that Deleuze considers precisely art to be that "stranger and more compromising adventure" which should serve as a model for true philosophical thought, that is non-conceptual, and non-representational thought.

If Deleuze can be construed as continuing Kant's project in the wake of post-Kantians, Sellars' philosophical system can in turn be construed in broadly neo-Kantian terms. Let us elaborate on this.

First and foremost, it is important to emphasize Sellars' views on the history of philosophy, views quite unusual for the analytic philosophy of his time. Sellars' most telling expression of these views is to be found at the very beginning of his book "*Science and Metaphysics: Variations on Kantian Themes*" where in an attempt to justify his invocation of Kant as a means of exploring contemporary philosophical problems he states the following: "The history of philosophy is the *lingua franca* which makes communication between philosophers, at least of different points of view, possible. Philosophy without the history of philosophy, if not empty or blind, is at least dumb" (Sellars 1967, 1). Forgetting its own history, philosophy is destined to repeat its old mistakes. And it is precisely in this regard that Sellars' lifelong engagement with Kant has to be interpreted. Sellars strongly believed that Kant was basically right in many regards and that some contemporary philosophical problems could be solved by going back to Kant. But in order for him to be relevant for contemporary analytic philosophy, Kant had to be reinscribed in contemporary terms. This is precisely how Sellars conceived his own philosophical project: as a contemporary rewriting of Kant's Critical philosophy.

The most general problem common to both Kant and contemporary analytic philosophy, according to Sellars, is how "to take both man and science seriously" (ibid.). Of course, this is the problem of reconciling two competing images of man-in-the-world, the scientific and the manifest one, which as we have seen is the central problem of Sellars' philosophy. To these two competing images of man in the world correspond two opposing domains over which these two images legislate: the domain of the natural space of causes, on the one hand, and the domain of the normative space of reasons, on the other. If we are to reconcile the competing claims these two images make, it is imperative to determine precisely what kinds of claims each one of them is entitled to. And it is precisely in this regard that we have a lot to learn from Kant. Contrary to the post-Kantians and Deleuze, who considered them to be the root of all evils in Kant's Critical project, Sellars considered the many distinctions that populated Kant's philosophy to be Kant's greatest contribution to philosophy. Especially significant for Sellars where the two distinctions most problematic to the post-Kantians: the distinction between sensibility and understanding, on the one hand, and between appearances and things-in-themselves, on the other. While the Kantian dualism of appearances and things-in-themselves could be reinscribed in Sellarsian terms as the very distinction between the scientific and the manifest image of man-in-the-world, for our present purposes the distinction between sensibility and understanding is much more important.

Sellars' critique of the myth of the given is nothing other than a contemporary reaffirmation of the irreducibility of this basic Kantian duality of sensibility and understanding. The easiest way to translate Sellars' critique of the myth of the given into Kant's own terms is simply to reiterate the well known Kantian dictum: "thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind" (Kant 1998, A 51/B 75). Contrary to this basic Kantian tenet, the given, in its empiricist incarnation, amounts simply to the idea that sensible intuitions (or sensations) by themselves can have a foundational role in the constitution of knowledge. Or to put it in slightly different terms, that sensible intuitions by themselves can have some kind of epistemic or cognitive status, that is, that they provide us with some kind of knowledge. Both Kant and Sellars firmly oppose this view. Although sensations certainly are indispensable for cognition, this does not imply that they themselves amount to cognition of some kind. Knowledge, for both Kant and Sellars, is always conceptual. Let us recall the central tenet of Sellars' conception of knowledge: "in characterizing an episode or a state as that of knowing, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says" (Sellars 1956, 76). And, as Robert Brandom succinctly put it, only that which "is propositionally contentful and conceptually articulated can serve as (and stand in need) of justification, and so ground or constitute knowledge" (Brandom 1997, 122).

But just because Sellars denied sensations any epistemic or cognitive status, this does not mean that he considered them to be altogether philosophically uninteresting or irrelevant. Quite the contrary. Sellars believed that determining the exact nature of sensation is without a doubt one of *the* most pressing philosophical problems confronting us today, because it is precisely this problem that stands at the frontline of the clash of two images. That is, it is precisely by presenting a world evacuated of sensations, that the scientific image posed its greatest challenge to the manifest one. The quite interesting and controversial solutions Sellars proposed shall unfortunately have to be left for another occasion.

Having thus confronted Deleuze and Sellars both with regards to their shared commitment to naturalism and to their respective relations to Kant it should be apparent by now what is at stake in this confrontation. It all boils down to a single question: Is there today, more than 200 years after the publication of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, still place in philosophy for metaphysical speculation? Deleuze clearly believed that there is indeed a place for this kind of

philosophical inquiry and that it is not necessarily incompatible neither with naturalism nor with Kant's Critical turn. What's more, Deleuze in fact argued that the only way to stay true to these philosophical commitments is precisely by rehabilitating metaphysical ambitions of philosophy. Sellars, on the other hand, just as clearly believed that commitments to naturalism and to Kant's Critical turn preclude the possibility of metaphysical speculation. He would certainly agree with Deleuze that philosophy must be an ontology, but metaphysical speculation is to have no part in this. According to Sellars, philosophy most certainly has a role in determining what there *is* but it can only carry on this inquiry in collaboration with the natural sciences. In contrast to this, Deleuze believed that philosophy must reaffirm its necessity and become a worthy rival to the sciences and that it can do so only by demonstrating that it is itself capable of arriving at knowledge of the ultimate nature of reality. Interestingly enough, in a move highly reminiscent of the early Romantics, Deleuze believed that the arts were philosophy's main ally in such an endeavour. In conclusion, to put it in simplest possible terms, the confrontation of Deleuze and Sellars amounts to a single choice, a choice between two contrasting conceptions of ontology: we are either to arrive at the knowledge of reality by way of metaphysical speculation allied with the arts (Deleuze) or by a critical philosophical pursuit in alliance with natural sciences (Sellars). The choice is stark and, depending on the preferences, should not be hard to make.

CONCLUSION

Let us conclude our confrontation beetwen Deleuze and Sellars by placing it in the context of recent developments in contemporary Continental philosophy. As we have argued in the introduction, this dissertation grows out of and continues Ray Brassier's project of rehabilitating representation, which is in turn to be interpreted in the context of the recent turn towards realism (broadly construed) in Continental philosophy. As we have also emphasized, Brassier is furthermore to be credited with organizing the conference under the name of "Speculative Realism" at Goldsmiths College in 2007 which is usually taken to be the inaugural event of this new tendency in contemporary Continental philosophy. The name of this one day conference-workshop soon came to be used to refer to this tendency as a whole and most often than not it was taken to denote a new philosophical *movement*. But as it was obvious from the very programme[24] that first announced the Goldsmiths event, speculative realism was never meant to be a unified philosophical movement, and given major divergences between its four main participants which became even more apparent with time (and turned out to be insurmountable in some cases), it is now clear that it never could have turned into one in the first place. However, while it might not be accurate to use 'speculative realism' as the name of a unified philosophical movement, this is not to say that the tendency itself which it named was not real. In fact, it is our contention that 'speculative realism' is to be understood precisely as merely the *first* name given to the tendency away from idealism and towards realism in contemporary Continental philosophy which became quite apparent at

[24] Due to its importance it is worth quoting in full:

> Contemporary 'continental' philosophy often prides itself on having overcome the age-old metaphysical battles between realism and idealism. Subject-object dualism, whose repudiation has turned into a conditioned reflex of contemporary theory, has supposedly been destroyed by the critique of representation and supplanted by various ways of thinking the fundamental correlation between thought and world.
>
> But perhaps this anti-representational (or 'correlationist') consensus—which exceeds philosophy proper and thrives in many domains of the humanities and the social sciences—hides a deeper and more insidious idealism. Is realism really so 'naïve'? And is the widespread dismissal of representation and objectivity the radical, critical stance it so often claims to be?
>
> This workshop will bring together four philosophers whose work, although shaped by different concerns, questions some of the basic tenets of a 'continental' orthodoxy while eschewing the reactionary prejudices of common-sense. Speculative realism is not a doctrine but the umbrella term for a variety of research programmes committed to upholding the autonomy of reality, whether in the name of transcendental physicalism, object-oriented philosophy, or abstract materialism, against the depredations of anthropocentrism. (Collapse vol. 3, 306)

the beginning of the 21st century. Many other names followed soon after, "the ontological turn" and "the speculative turn"[25] being the most prominent ones. Each of these different names singles out certain aspects of this tendency as a whole.

What initially brought together not only the four participants of the Goldsmiths event but also everybody else that enthusiastically accepted the advent of speculative realism was their shared repudiation of what Quentin Meillassoux famously termed 'correlationism'. Meillassoux defines this notion in his seminal book *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (2008):

> The central notion of modern philosophy since Kant seems to be that of *correlation.* By 'correlation' we mean the idea according to which we only ever have access to the correlation between thinking and being, and never to either term considered apart from the other. We will henceforth call *correlationism* any current of thought which maintains the unsurpassable character of the correlation so defined. Consequently, it becomes possible to say that every philosophy which disavows naive realism has become a variant of correlationism. (5)

Given that Kant was taken to be the founder of correlationism thus defined, many believed that the rejection of correlationism implies a wholesale rejection of Kant's Critical project and its entire legacy. This was in turn then taken as a license for unbridled metaphysical speculation freed from the critical constraints Kant bestowed upon us. The argument could be reconstructed as follows: Kant was the one who proclaimed the impossibility of knowledge of things-in-themselves and critically delimited our knowledge to phenomena or things as they appear to us. In light of this, he posited as the task of philosophy the transcendental inquiry into the conditions under which things appear to us or the conditions of knowledge/experience. Speculative realism breaks with Kant's injunction against the possibility of knowledge of things-in-themselves. Therefore, to the extent that it affirms the possibility of such a knowledge it abolishes us of the obligation to critically inquire into the conditions of knowledge and licenses free speculation on the nature of ultimate reality. In light of such reasoning the term 'speculative turn' seems most appropriate to refer to the tendency that we are describing here. The same point could be put in terms of 'the ontological

[25] "The Ontological Turn in Contemporary Philosophy" was the name of a summer school in philosophy held at the University of Bonn (Germany) in 2012. "The Speculative Turn" is the name of the first edited collection dedicated to speculative realism and published in 2010.

turn' that we have also mentioned before: Given that Kant privileged epistemology at the expense of ontology, a repudiation of Kant implies an abandonment of epistemological concerns and a turn towards ontology.

In the Introduction we have presented Deleuze's critique of representation as a particularly sophisticated instance of the "anti-representational consensus" characteristic of the humanities in general and post-structuralism in particular of the second half of the 20th century. However, while it is certainly true that in this regard Deleuze is indeed a prime representative of the philosophy of his time, there is another respect in which Deleuze is to be considered an important predecessor of the speculative/ontological turn as described above. In fact, it is safe to say that Deleuze (along with Badiou), through the Anglophone reception of his philosophy beginning already in the 1990's, constituted the major impetus towards the said speculative/ontological turn. Utterly disillusioned with the state of Continental philosophy at the end of 20th century and in particular with its post-structuralist textualist-idealist secession of thought from the real, the younger generation of philosophers found precisely in Deleuze their "line of flight" from such a situation. Instead of interminable reflections on the conditions of *impossibility* of knowledge of reality, Deleuze offered this younger generation of philosophers an incredibly rich and audacious ontological account of the ultimate nature of reality, precisely of the kind that every other philosopher of his time claimed to be impossible. Soon enough Deleuze become by far the most significant French philosopher in Anglophone Continental philosophy and his influence has not diminished significantly to this day. This brings us to the main point of our discussion.

There is little doubt that Deleuze's influence was extremely beneficial for Continental philosophy at first for it allowed it to finally reaffirm again its long forsaken ontological pretensions. However, it could be argued that Deleuze's influence has also had some quite pernicious side effects for these newly awakened realist ambitions of contemporary Continental philosophy. As we have seen, Deleuze was quite unequivocal about his intentions to reaffirm the rights of philosophy to metaphysical speculation freed from any critical constraints. Therefore, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that the wholesale repudiation of Kant's legacy outlined above was at least in part due to Deleuze's influence. Now it is our contention that by following Deleuze in this regard contemporary Continental philosophy is in danger of falling into a trap possibly even more insidious than the post-structuralist one it

barely managed to extricate itself from. If post-structuralism could be construed as the apex of Kant's injunction against the possibility of knowledge of things-in-themselves, then various contemporary uncritical reaffirmations of metaphysical speculation mark the other, possibly even much more dangerous extreme. As was suggested above, the initial appeal of speculative realism was in large part due to its promise of doing away with the skepticism and relativism of post-modernism. However, the recent flourishing of various speculative metaphysical programs in contemporary Continental philosophy reads more like a perverse realization of the proverbial postmodernist "anything goes" attitude than a delivery to this initial promise.

The turn towards the philosophy of Wilfrid Sellars, initiated by Ray Brassier and followed by many others, most notably Peter Wolfendale, Daniel Sacilloto, Fabio Gironi and Reza Negarestani, is nothing but a reaction to this unfortunate conjuncture. What Sellars provides in this context is the much needed critical sobriety necessary to curb the speculative exuberances of contemporary Continental metaphysics. Sellars' most important contribution in this regard lies in his call for a return to Kant. Although originally voiced almost fifty years ago in the context of analytic philosophy of the time, Sellars' famous pronouncement on the necessity of philosophy's "slow climb back to Kant" (1968, 29), rings even more true today in the context of contemporary Continental philosophy. In fact, Sellars conceived of his own philosophical project to a large extent as a rewriting in contemporary terms of some of the most important lessons learned from Kant. Among these, surely the most relevant for the present context is Sellars' critique of the myth of the given which is nothing other than a contemporary reaffirmation of Kant's injunction against the possibility of us humans having intellectual intuition. Human intuition can only be sensible and our understanding discursive or conceptual. It is only by combining the two that we arrive at the knowledge of the world. As soon as this critical insight is forgotten, the threat of idealism looms large. However, in contrast to Kant, for Sellars, the injunction against intellectual intuition does not preclude the possibility of us having knowledge of things-in-themselves. While Sellars certainly acknowledges "the gulf between appearances and things-in-themselves" as "a genuine one", he nonetheless believes that this gulf can in principle be bridged by replacing "the static concept of Divine Truth with a Peircean conception of truth as the 'ideal outcome of scientific inquiry'" (ibid., 50). In other words, Sellars reinscribes Kant's distinction between *noumena* and *phenomena* in terms of his distinction between scientific and manifest images-of-man-in-the-world. Science and not philosophy can give us knowledge of the in-itself, albeit the in-

itself is here to be understood in Peircean terms as the 'ideal outcome of scientific inquiry'. Therefore, Continental Sellarsians have found in Sellars not only the critical means necessary to counterbalance the speculative excesses of various contemporary metaphysical programs, but also the resources needed for the construction of a truly transcendental realism and/or naturalism.[26]

One last question remains. If science gives us the knowledge of the in-itself, what role is there left for philosophy? As we have seen, according to Sellars, the aim of philosophy is to understand reflectively "how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term" (Sellars 1962, 1) or to fuse into one stereoscopic vision two competing perspectives on the world, namely, of course, the scientific and the manifest image-of-man in the world. Or as Sellars beautifully put it on another occasion:

> The ideal aim of philosophizing is to become *reflectively* at home in the full complexity of the multi-dimensional conceptual system in terms of which we suffer, think, and act. I say 'reflectively', because there is a sense in which, by the sheer fact of leading an unexamined, but conventionally satisfying life, we are at home in this complexity. It is not until we have eaten the apple with which the serpent philosopher tempts us, that we begin to stumble on the familiar and to feel that haunting sense of alienation which is treasured by each new generation as its unique possession. This alienation, this gap between oneself and one's world, can only be resolved by eating the apple to the core; for after the first bite there is no return to innocence. There are many anodynes, but only one cure. We may philosophize well or ill, but we must philosophize. (Sellars 1971, I, 3)

Let us now recall Deleuze's views on the role of philosophy in relation to the sciences in order to confront them to Sellars' ones expressed above:

> Here, already, the general orientation of philosophy comes into question, for it is not enough to say that philosophy is at the origin of the sciences and that it was their mother; rather, now that they are grown up and well established, we must ask why there is still philosophy, in what respect science is not sufficient. Philosophy has only ever responded to such a question in two ways, doubtless because there are only two

[26] Brassier's text „Concepts and Objects" (2010) can be taken as programmatic in this regard.

> possible responses. One says that science gives us a knowledge of things, that it is therefore in a certain relation with them, and philosophy can renounce its rivalry with science, can leave things to science and present itself solely in a critical manner, as a reflection on this knowledge of things. On the contrary view, philosophy seeks to establish, or rather restore, *an other* relationship to things, and therefore *an other* knowledge, a knowledge and a relationship that precisely science hides from us, of which it deprives us, because it allows us only to conclude and to infer without ever presenting, giving to us the thing in itself. (Deleuze 1956a, 23)

Once again, the contrast between Sellars and Deleuze could not be more pronounced. Clearly, Sellars and Deleuze exhibit respectively the very two opposing positions that Deleuze highlights here with regards to the question of the relation between philosophy and the sciences. Sellars, as we have seen, relegates to the sciences the task of arriving at the knowledge of reality and reserves for philosophy the apparently much more modest task of understanding reflectively how the emerging scientific image hangs together with the manifest image. Deleuze, on the other hand, affirms unequivocally the capacity of philosophy to arrive at a knowledge of reality *other* than the one obtained by the sciences, reaffirming thereby the metaphysical ambitions of philosophy.

The alternative that Deleuze proposes here is as pertinent today in the context of contemporary Continental philosophy as it ever was. And here again one must make a choice. When confronted with such a decision, it might certainly seem tempting to side with Deleuze in defending the inalienable rights of philosophy to metaphysical speculation as an alternative to the sciences. However, this road is as problematic as it is well travelled, and in the course of our discussion we have attempted to show why. Therefore, it seems more prudent to us to try and take the other route, and side with Sellars in the attempt to find a way of doing philosophy *together* with the sciences instead of as *an alternative* to them. Sellars has shown us *a* way of doing so. It is up to us to decide *the* way in which to follow his lead.

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