



***DELEUZE, GRODAL, AND THE METAPHYSICS OF  
COGNITIVE FILM THEORY***

**Raghu Menon Jayakumar**

A thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Film  
and Media Studies

**Department of Communications, Media and Culture**

**University of Stirling**

**January 2017**

### **Acknowledgements**

I wish to express my gratitude to my primary supervisor, Dr. Sarah Neely, for her constant and unwavering support. I also express my gratitude to Dr. David Rolinson, my secondary supervisor, and the Stirling Horizon Studentship Committee.

## **Table of Contents**

**1. Introduction: Context and Summary**

6

**2. Deleuze and the 'Revelationist' Tradition**

13

**Part 1: Deleuze, Difference and the History of Philosophy**

**3. *Introduction: Plato and Hegel***

20

**4. *Deleuze, Bergson and the Metaphysics of Modern Science***

35

**5. *Repetition and the New***

65

**Part 2: Deleuze and Grodal: The Metaphysics of the Subject**

**6. *Introduction***

80

**7. *A Brief Note on the Concept of Difference***

86

**8. *Kant and the Conditions of Real***

92

**9. *The Passive Syntheses***

100

**10. *Bioculturalism and the PECMA Model.***

121

- 11. *The Transcendental Empiricism of Grodal? An enquiry into an aborted metaphysics of cinema***  
128
  
- 12. *Crystalline Alchemy and Virtual Solaristics: A Deleuzian Reading of The Holy Mountain and Solaris***  
142
  
- 13. A conclusion by way of a response to Turvey**  
159
  
- 14. Bibliography and References**  
171



## 1. Introduction: Context and Summary

This thesis has been constructed as a riposte to the accusations of relativism, revelationism and phoney scientism that has been levelled at the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) by theorists within the cognitive film theory movement. Cognitive film theory, or cognitivism, approaches films, spectatorship and film-philosophy with the rigour and scrutiny that characterise empirical science, and dismisses those theories of cinema that rely on speculation, metaphor and unverifiable evidence<sup>1</sup>. Consequently, conventional schools of thought within film studies, such as the 'grand-theories' of Lacanian psychoanalysis and culturalist theories, have been chastised for their apparent lack of scientific temperament, as well as for their tendency to make grandiose claims about cinema that cannot be backed up by empirical data or justified by logical reasoning. Cognitivism, as the name suggests, was initially influenced by the developments in cognitive psychology, but have subsequently become an interdisciplinary enterprise that engages with fields of knowledge as diverse as evolutionary biology and neuroscience<sup>2</sup>. As Carl Plantinga points out, 'analytic film-theory' would be a more fitting and useful nomenclature for this movement, as it is indebted to the insights

---

<sup>1</sup> The diversity of cognitivist thought is reflected in the anthologies *Psychocinematics: Exploring Cognition at the Movies* (2013), *Cognitive Media Theory* (2014), and the influential *Post Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies* (1996).

<sup>2</sup> Torben Grodal, the principal cognitivist encountered in this thesis, introduces insights from evolutionary biology and neuroscience in his two books on films and genres, *Moving Pictures* (1996) and *Embodied Visions: Evolution, Emotion, Culture and Film* (2009). Tim Smith (2013, 2015, 2016) utilises a highly empirical approach to study ocular movements and other brain responses to cinema. Carl Plantinga (2009) and Greg Smith (2003) have studied the role of emotions in cinematic spectatorship, and the anthology that they edited together, *Passionate Views* (1999) compiles a number of essays that approach cinema from a neuro-emotional perspective. The biannual journal published by the Society for the Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image, *Projections*, aims to represent the gamut of approaches within Cognitivism.

of analytic philosophy much more than that of cognitive psychology (Plantinga, 2002: 15)<sup>3</sup>.

In recent years, the vitriol levelled against the 'grand-theories' has been extended to include works in film theory influenced by continental philosophers such as Deleuze and Heidegger. This work seeks to justify the philosophy of Deleuze in light of such criticism and argue that Deleuze's ideas provide cognitivism with a metaphysics that it severely lacks<sup>4</sup>. In line with Plantinga's suggestion, I have approached cognitive film theory as exemplifying the broader tenets of analytic philosophy. From this perspective, I argue that the philosophy of Deleuze, when considered in light of the Bergsonian enterprise, provides Cognitivism with the corresponding metaphysics that it lacks.

It must be pointed out that, contrary to its title, this thesis does not address the whole gamut of cognitive film theory. Owing to the primacy afforded to Deleuze and his ideas, such an enterprise is beyond the scope of this thesis, and hence, I have chosen the biocultural theory of Torben Grodal as the focal point for my arguments regarding Cognitive Film Theory<sup>5</sup>. However, the choice is not arbitrary, as Grodal's adherence to the findings of evolutionary psychology works as a perfect foil to the philosophy of passive and differential genesis that is found in the works of Deleuze<sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, Grodal's seemingly evasive attitude towards arthouse cinema remains at odds with the

---

<sup>3</sup> Representative ideas of analytic (cognitive) film philosophy have been collected together in *Philosophy of Film and Motion Pictures: An Anthology* (2005), edited by Noel Carroll and Jinhee Choi. A similar anthology on analytic film-philosophy has also been edited by Plantinga and Livingston (2008). Works by Berys Gaut (2010), Gregory Currie (1995) and Noel Carroll (2008) have all theorised on film from the vantage point of analytic philosophy, and with a fundamental disdain of Continental theory.

<sup>4</sup> This is a position that is quite Bergsonian in spirit. See chapter 6.

<sup>5</sup> The bioculturalism of Grodal is part of a burgeoning sub-discipline within Cognitivism known as Ecological Film Theory.

<sup>6</sup> See Chapter 10.

Deleuzian ethics of the time-image<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, Grodal's influence on ecological film theory, as well as the cognitive movement in general, is evident from the publication of *Film Style and Story: A Tribute to Torben Grodal* (2003), an anthology of essays written by leading cognitive film theorists in response to his works<sup>8</sup>. Nevertheless, the metaphysical exposition attempted here contains a general framework that can be adapted to incorporate most works of cognitive film theory<sup>9</sup>. However, that lies within the purview of future research into this topic.

I begin with a brief historical overview of Deleuze's conception of difference. Traditional philosophy and science tend to conceptualise difference as a 'lack' or 'depletion' of an external, ideal form. Consequently, classical discourses in philosophy (like Plato and Hegel) have tended to subordinate difference to the concepts of identity and representation<sup>10</sup>. Difference conceived in this manner fails to explain the morphogenesis of matter as well as the power of difference to create novel forms that endure in time. In his philosophy, Deleuze endeavours to conceive an idea of difference that is 'internal' to matter, and synchronous with the process that produces and sustains it in time. In Bergson, he finds the most systematic exposition of such an idea<sup>11</sup>.

Analytic philosophy and traditional physics tend to ignore the continuity and flux that characterise real experience. The analytic concepts extracted from reality strip concepts and ideas of their mobility and temporality. In fact, the very idea of analysis implies an artificial extrapolation of objects and their separation into immobile and fixed conceptual components. This is unreflective of the nature of the universe as processual, and time as 'durational'. By scrutinising Bergson's ideas on duration, and Deleuze's

---

<sup>7</sup> I explore this further with reference to two quintessential arthouse films of varying temperament, *Solaris* (1972, dir. Andrei Tarkovsky) and *The Holy Mountain* (1973, dir. Alejandro Jodorowsky). See Chapter 12.

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 100 and chapters 10-13 to read more on the influence of Grodal and his suitability to the current enterprise.

<sup>9</sup> Refer the concluding notes on Chapter 13 for a Deleuzian critique of cognitive thought in general (but with a strong reference to Turvey).

<sup>10</sup> See chapter 3.

<sup>11</sup> See chapters 4 and 5.



reading of Bergson, this thesis advocates a 'relativist' position whereby the Bergsonian idea of going beyond the 'human condition' acts as the fracturing point that separates these two schools of thoughts, but without undermining their legitimacy in the respective fields of enquiry. The human condition, or the human turn, can be broadly understood as a consequence of our evolutionary heritage that tends to orient our cognitive processes towards utility. This results in a conceptualisation of real experience that is static, immobile and overtly spatialised, which is nevertheless suitable as a practical tool for empirical research. To break free of this conceptual rigidity, Deleuze reworks the Bergsonian method of intuition in light of Kant's transcendental philosophy to develop a metaphysics that reflects the mobility and flux that characterise reality and our experience of time<sup>12</sup>. By primarily utilising the concepts of transcendental empiricism developed by Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* (1968), it is possible to discover a latent metaphysics underlying Grodal's bioculturalist theory of cinema. Though Grodal does equip passivity with the powers of synthesis (unlike Kant), he assumes the notion of subjectivity as a pre-existing given (like Kant)<sup>13</sup>. The insights of his film theory are shown to be sustained by an underlying ontology of multidimensional and inter-linked processual times which through a 'false-movement' that conceals their passivity, renders the cognitive activities of the subject as conscious representations. The concept of duration as a heterogeneous and continuous multiplicity, when studied alongside the syntheses of time, thus effectively unites two seemingly disparate schools of thought, and provides Grodal's cognitivist theory with a mobile metaphysics without necessarily questioning its legitimacy. As a result, Deleuzian philosophy and bioculturalism can now be understood as occupying two inter-connected sides of a transverse mobile plane separated by 'the human condition'.

---

<sup>12</sup> Besides Kant and Hegel, philosophers like Hume, Leibniz, Nietzsche and Spinoza play a fundamental role in the development of thought. However, as I argue in chapters 6 and 7, the metaphysics of Gilles Deleuze is intentionally monotonous and characterised by an ontology of differential genesis that is serially developed across his works (see also Boundas, 1995: 110-17).

<sup>13</sup> See chapter 10.

Though this thesis is a work on film theory and film-philosophy, its objectives necessitate an extensive navigation of the non-cinematic concepts of Deleuzian philosophy. It must be reminded that, with the *Cinema* books (1986, 1989), Deleuze did not propose yet another theory of cinema, but the unique philosophical problems raised by the medium. Deleuze understood cinema as clarifying and expanding the Bergsonian project in philosophy that emphasises the ontology of time and experience (Deleuze, 1986: 2). Moreover, his philosophical system is distinguished by a transversal mode of reasoning whereby concepts refer back to each other serially across his works (see Boundas, 2005: 110). I argue in this thesis that the *Cinema* books remain a unique expression of his metaphysics, and do not stand in isolation from the rest of his works.

Deleuze's philosophical journey features a number of *conceptual personae*, both renowned and obscure, but he identifies his work as following a counter-history of philosophy that can be traced from Lucretius and Spinoza to Nietzsche and Bergson (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 164). In addition to these thinkers, one can find concepts from figures as varied as Simondon, Castaneda and Riemann scattered across his works. Deleuze follows a flexible approach in his studies of other philosophers, a method that he has famously referred to as a 'buggery'. Despite being works of philosophy, Deleuze's oeuvre displays an inclination to create a 'minor' narrative in the history of philosophy. The figures that I have significantly engaged with in this thesis – Plato, Hegel, Bergson and Kant – were chosen primarily due to their relevance to the topic in discussion. The primary objective of Deleuze's philosophy of difference is to overturn the cult of representation that was built by Plato and strengthened by Hegel. It is impossible to apprehend Deleuze's motives for creating a differential metaphysics without understanding the milieu in which he creates his concepts. The significance of the metaphysics of time that he proposes in *Difference and Repetition* (1994) (not to mention the *Cinema* books) cannot be grasped fully without understanding the Bergsonian legacy that provokes him into thinking time as a process. Finally, Deleuze's philosophy of transcendental empiricism owes its structure and ambitions to Kant's critical philosophy. It is by subverting Kant's Analytic of the Sublime that Deleuze arrives

at his account of the third synthesis of time. Furthermore, as I will demonstrate in chapters 9 and 10, Grodal's theory of cinema displays the same metaphysical flaws that Deleuze identifies in Kant.

It is plausible that the present work could have followed a different logic of argument that traces the evolution of Deleuze's film-philosophy via, let's say, Duns Scotus, Spinoza or Nietzsche, and arrive at a similar conclusion. As I argue in chapter 7, it is characteristic of the Deleuzian method to excavate a metaphysics of differential genesis in its objects of enquiry. This is also the reason why Deleuze can be smoothly adapted to the study of non-philosophical disciplines. Such a rubric entails the possibility of future studies that may follow a Dun-Scotusian critique of Deleuze's film-philosophy or a Simondonian approach to cinematic individuation.

Engagement with Deleuze in film theory was inevitable following the translation of his books on cinema. The most influential interlocutors of Deleuze in this field include Rodowick (1997, 2014, 2015), Shaviro (1993), Kennedy (2000), Pisters (2003), Powell (2005, 2007) and Martin-Jones (2011). However, this thesis does not address their works directly as it is more concerned with the metaphysics of Deleuze than only his cinematic concepts. In attempting a Deleuze-neuroscience juxtaposition, Pisters (2012), Elliott (2011), Gallese (2012) and Murphie (2014) prefigure this work. However, neither do they directly engage cognitive film theory nor is neuroscience the fundamental concern of this thesis. To my knowledge, a significant engagement with evolutionary psychology, Deleuze, and cinema is still lacking in contemporary film studies. Though Sinnerbrink (2011) considers the arguments of Grodal in light of continental film theory, his critique is altogether brief and fleeting. This work is intended as a corrective measure to this gap existing in film studies<sup>14</sup>.

---

<sup>14</sup> Though this is not the first work to study Deleuze's cinematic concepts with reference to the syntheses of time, it is perhaps the first to utilise it in connection to ecological film theory. Pisters (2012) argues that the third synthesis gives rise to a new image known as the neuro-image, while Deamer (2012, 2016) associates the three syntheses with both movement-image and time-image. However, I have

Malcolm Turvey offers the most systematic attack on Deleuze by a cognitivist, and I have considered his views as being representative of the movement<sup>15</sup>. As I explain in chapter 13, once the philosophical history of, and reasons for, Deleuze's philosophy are examined, Turvey's criticisms betray a mere superficial understanding of the philosopher's processual ontology. Turvey is also found to be guilty of analysing Deleuze's statements out of their original context, thus depriving them of their conceptual mobility and connections that are essential to their understanding.

Though it might be possible to examine Deleuze's ideas on affect with reference to cognitive works on emotion and neuroscience, such a prospect has been ignored in this thesis. Moreover, as this work primarily deals with the metaphysics and ontology of Deleuze's ideas on difference and time, with the exception of *Solaris* (1972) and *The Holy Mountain* (1973), engagement with individual works of cinema have been regrettably kept to a minimum.

---

followed Deleuze in considering the three syntheses as corresponding to different orders of the time-image. Rushton's (2008) observations on the three syntheses and the cinematographic cogito are briefly considered in chapter 12.

<sup>15</sup> See chapter 2.

## 2. Deleuze and the ‘Revelationist’ Tradition

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how Deleuze’s thoughts on difference, repetition and the syntheses of time can sustain and provide a metaphysics to the cognitivist enterprise on cinema. It could be argued that Deleuze provides the ontological underpinning that is missing from most philosophical treatments of cinema within Cognitive Film Theory. This is in many ways a ‘forced encounter’, the violence of which should leave traces in all concepts considered. However, Deleuzian thinking necessitates a perspectival displacement that dissociates, albeit partially, from the analytical proclivities of cognitivism.

The analytical worldview is remarkable for the clarity that it produces in the objects of its study. Functional in practice and efficient in scope, analytic philosophy offered a methodological platform from which cognitive theorists such as Gregory Currie and Malcolm Turvey could mount an attack on the ‘grand-theorists’ who, by comparison, appeared prophetic, pedantic and mystical<sup>16</sup>. The analytic philosophers of Cognitive Film Theory sought knowledge about cinema that was in accordance with the falsification method of Karl Popper (Allen and Smith, 1997: 30)<sup>17</sup>. By and large, they have been reluctant to attribute spectacular powers to cinema or construct all-encompassing theories, but instead, have focused on relatively modest excursions into questions

---

<sup>16</sup> Gregory Currie’s *Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy and Cognitive Science* (1995) is an analytic exposition of cinematic ontology with continental philosophy as its target (see Currie, 1995: xviii-xix). Malcolm Turvey’s *Doubting Vision* (2008) is a polemical work directed against the so-called ‘revelationist tradition’.

<sup>17</sup> As opposed to the falsification method of problems, the Deleuze treats problems and solutions as creative processes that play out on an intensive field of varying pressures. In *Difference and Repetition* (1968), he defines a problem as something that does not have a definitive solution. A problem defines a “field of different drives or pressures” that must be transformed by a solution. Each solution intensively alters the problematic field, creating a series of tensions that “must be met with a constructive act” (Williams, 2003: 57).

regarding cinematic specificity and representation<sup>18</sup>. Though Lacan and his interlocutors have experienced the most severe criticism<sup>19</sup>, Deleuze has not been altogether immune from the analytical onslaught. Being a so-called “intellectual imposter”, it is not hard to understand why his theories on cinema have been dismissed overwhelmingly by cognitivists (Sokal and Bricmont, 1998: 154-166).

Malcolm Turvey, in *Doubting Vision* (2003), has produced the most systematic attack on Deleuze by a Cognitivist (Turvey, 2008: 94-99). I have considered Turvey’s views as being representative of the Cognitivist tradition, and will attempt to offer a defence of Deleuze later in the thesis. Here, I will briefly outline the significant criticisms made by Turvey, and will return to them after a survey of Deleuze’s philosophical system. Turvey’s book is a polemic directed against certain film theorists, who are accused of peddling a ‘revelationist’ idea of cinema. This includes classical theorists like Epstein and Kracauer and contemporary philosophers like Deleuze and Cavell (Turvey, 2008: 4). According to Turvey, these theorists ascribed special powers to cinema, powers which had the potential to *reveal* a hidden dimension or an aspect of perception that eludes everyday life. For example, in Epstein’s works, cinema is reified as a medium capable of revealing abstractions such as the fourth dimension of time (4). Turvey claims that writers like Epstein advance their theories using a system of faulty analogies, which once accepted as givens, are then extrapolated to conceive ideas about cinema which are ultimately meaningless, as they are derived from confused and invalidated premises. They compared cinema to a telescope or a microscope and attributed to it similar revelatory powers. To these writers, revelation, in some form, was cinema’s most significant feature (4-6).

---

<sup>18</sup> The collection of essays edited by Richard Allen and Murray Smith in *Film theory and Philosophy* (1997) offers a useful selection of theoretical writings on cinema from an analytic perspective.

<sup>19</sup> *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies* (1996), edited by David Bordwell and Noel Carroll, has Lacanianism and psychoanalysis in general as its significant adversaries (see Bordwell and Carroll, 1996: 1-35).

However, for Turvey, the revelation suggested by these writers exceeded the relatively modest perceptual enhancements enabled by the invention of a telescope. For several film theorists, the revelation was expressed in “near-religious extremes of euphoria” (Turvey, 2008: 6). Turvey argues that the revelationist tradition is a consequence of a concealed scepticism towards the possibilities of human vision. As a result of this “visual scepticism”, these thinkers wished to conceive the possibility of transcending its limitations, “in order to see reality as it really is”, and not as it appears to our eyes. (8). Cinema held powerful symbolic values, unlike any other medium. Being the product of man’s sublime artistic vision forced upon a machine, cinema appeared to these writers as a prophetic invention that suggested a novel synthesis of man and machine. Moreover, as a mass art, cinema had the power to be “an art of mass enlightenment”. According to Turvey, the grand visions engendered by cinema forced these theorists to hold on to the revelationist critique (8).

When we observe the truths that these theorists credit to cinema, Turvey writes, it is possible to notice their difference from the empirical phenomena (“a distant planet, the particulate structure of an object, or microbes”) that are discovered by other visual technologies (Turvey, 2008: 12). Moreover, in a few cases, these phenomena are impossible to be seen with the human eye, with or without the aid of different visual technologies. For example, not seeing sounds is “not an empirical failing on the part of human perception”, because “seeing a sound is logically excluded” by the definitions of the concepts of sight and sound. Hence, it would not make any sense to say, “I couldn’t see that sound – it was too far away” (12). Similarly, the past and the future are not visual concepts that one can ‘see’ with any technological enhancement, as they are not, by logic and definition, visual concepts. They are merely temporal markers, and consequently, Epstein’s claim that cinema visualises the fourth dimension of time holds no credence when considered from an empirical perspective (12). Turvey argues that, in classical theorists, the scepticism of human vision “provided a powerful rationale” to establish cinema as art. He identifies similar flaws in film semioticians, psychoanalysts and philosophers like Cavell and Deleuze (14). He believes that the distrust of vision is

still vibrating at the core of most contemporary theory, and “like their predecessors ..., they advance their arguments about the failings of human vision and the cinema’s revelatory power at the price of misusing perceptual and related concepts”.

According to Turvey, Deleuze has accepted without question Bergson’s thesis that any interaction is a perception (Turvey, 2008: 93). In Bergson, writes Turvey, reality is conceived as ‘an indivisible, continuous whole’ where everything is interacting with everything else across space and time (mobility). Human perception, Bergson argues, is immobile due to practical necessity, and it subtracts the objects of vision from their “spatial and temporal connections to everything else” (93). Deleuze takes this concept of ocular immobility and claims that cinema has the power to overcome it, a claim which Turvey believes to be unsubstantiated. Turvey accuses Deleuze of not explaining how movement in cinema is not artificially constructed. Moreover, he expresses his scepticism towards the concept of ‘cinematographic illusion’ that Bergson attributes to ordinary perception (94).

Turvey accuses Deleuze of following Bergson’s mistake in adopting a broad definition of perception. He says that it is “nonsensical” to assume that “atoms and mirrors perceive”, as they are, by nature, different from perceiving beings like humans (Turvey, 2008: 96). Consequently, Turvey disagrees with Deleuze’s claim that cinema perceives and that it has a consciousness. He also implicates Deleuze as suffering from the same folly that befell Epstein – a conviction that cinema can reveal dimensions of time that remain concealed from everyday life (95). When Deleuze speaks of time-image, he directs attention towards something that is not present ‘in the image’. Instead, according to Turvey, he speaks of “temporal relations between things in the film”. A temporal connection between two objects A and B is not a visual property, and such a relation cannot be ‘seen’ or ‘revealed’ by simply looking at an image (96). Turvey follows Currie in suggesting that temporal relations in films are responses to causal functions (97). If the scene B follows scene A, and scene C follows, the temporal relation between the objects in scene C with respect to scene A is determined by the causal logic surmised



from the order and linkage of these scenes. For Turvey, “no matter how powerful our eyes are”, these relations cannot be perceived from an image or a frame (96). Irrespective of whether shots were shot at different places and times, and in spite of narration’s temporal flow, the perceived image is always in the viewer’s present. To summarise, cinema does not “reveal time which the human eye cannot see”, and the author finds Deleuze guilty of ‘hypostatizing’ a relational property (98).

Turvey is not the only writer from the Cognitive fold to criticise Deleuze. However, in comparison, Turvey’s work provides the most useful analysis of Deleuze from an analytic position. David Bordwell, in his blog *Observations on Film Art*, agrees with the conclusions that Turvey arrives at, and praises his book for being a model of “theoretical clarity and probity” (Bordwell, 2010). Bordwell rarely mentions Deleuze in his works, but when he does, it is to accuse him of soliciting ‘grand theories’. In *On the history of Film Style* (1997), he claims that Deleuze derives his conception of cinema from the historiographic tradition studied by Bordwell. He accuses Deleuze of recycling Bazinian ideas of temporality, albeit with a neo-Hegelian dialectical bent. Bordwell is critical of Deleuze’s naive assumption that “all Soviet Montage directors practised *dialectical editing*” (Bordwell, 1997: 116-117). Deleuze, according to Bordwell, is guilty of extracting a teleology out of orthodox historical schemes. In the *Cinema* books, stylistic development is not studied as a consequence of artistic and technological progress, “but from the mysterious urge to fill in every square of a vast grid of conceptual possibilities” (117). As William Brown notes, Bordwell disagrees with the idea of a ‘grand narrative’ of cinema that emerges in Deleuze’s works (Brown, 2010: 135).

In a similar vein, Gregory Currie has criticised Deleuze for his apparent misuse of scientific and mathematical concepts. He understands Deleuze’s application of Riemannian geometry and atomic physics to explain non-scientific concepts as a symptom of sham scientism (Currie, 1995: xviii-xix)<sup>20</sup>. Richard Allen and Murray Smith

---

<sup>20</sup> The tendency of Continental Philosophers to appropriate scientific terminology was lampooned in Alan Sokal and Jean Bricmont’s *Fashionable Nonsense: Postmodern Intellectuals’ Abuse of Science* (1998). They accuse Deleuze and

view Deleuze as following Baudrillard in approaching cinema as a “simulacrum that defies any distinction between what is real and what is merely a representation of reality” (Allen and Smith, 1997: 21). According to these writers, Deleuze departs from Baudrillard in subscribing to a materialist interpretation of Bergson’s philosophy. Deleuze, they claim, uses Bergson to circumnavigate any questions regarding the illusory nature of the cinematic image by arguing that the “spatial reality together with the image or thought of it are one and the same”, and because of the medium’s ability to construct a complete space-time continuum, cinema “models a Bergsonian universe” (21). By subscribing to an epistemic origin of cinema, and claiming that the medium “produces ‘its own evidence’ of reality”, Deleuze is guilty, according to the authors, of conflating “analogy with example” (22).

These writers, by and large, make some valid points about Deleuze. However, I will argue that they do so from a frame of reference that is in contradiction with Deleuze’s ontology<sup>21</sup>. Deleuze’s works should be considered as consisting of levels or modal expressions, where distinct concepts and words vary in meaning and signification depending on context and use. When isolated from their connections or ‘assemblages’, these concepts escape their intended significations and become prone to misguided attacks. Analytic philosophy places great emphasis upon conceptual clarity as well as a general fixity of concepts. By stripping concepts of ambiguities, and reducing them to a set of essential predicates that offers the possibility of falsification, they construct a philosophy of bare essentials that is empirically fool proof, but conceptually immobile. This is, however, not to be considered as a flaw, but instead, should be understood as a mode of thought that attempts to translate the rigour and subtle simplicity of mathematical logic onto conventional problems in ontology and epistemology. As we

---

Guattari’s use of scientific concepts as being “often meaningless”, and at times, “acceptable but banal and confusing” (Sokal and Bricmont, 1998: 155). They offer significant examples of Deleuze’s confused scientism, but are, presumably, guilty of biased selection. As I argue in the coming pages, a literal and isolated judgement of Deleuze’s works misses the point of his writings.

<sup>21</sup> A summation of these arguments can be found in Chapter 13.

shall see, Deleuze aims to construct a philosophical system that can escape the immobility and rigidity of the analytic framework. I will argue that Deleuzian philosophy, being a philosophy of relations, produces concepts that derive its meaning depending on the connections that they form with other concepts. Like a finger severed from a hand, a dismembered Deleuzian concept only reveals its purpose when it is studied as part of a greater assemblage. Before I counter the criticisms levelled at Deleuze by Turvey and other Cognitivists, it is essential to trace the genesis of the Deleuzian concepts that inspire this thesis. It would be useful to keep these objections in mind as we go on, as once they are considered in the light of Deleuze's philosophical evolution, their frailties are easy to discover.

## Part 1: Deleuze, Difference and the History of Philosophy

### 3. Introduction: Plato and Hegel

The overlapping and interchangeability of concepts, terms and ideas across Deleuze's works have posed significant challenges to the comprehension and appreciation of his philosophical system. Moreover, as pointed out earlier, he has regularly faced accusations of obfuscation, obscurity and phoney scientism (Somers-Hall, 2012: 1). There have been several attempts to demarcate trends and consistencies within his works, but opinions have differed on what constitutes the 'essence' of Deleuze.

On a cursory reading of Deleuze, one might notice certain terms repeating across his oeuvre, but often with varying meanings. In some other cases, it is possible to observe a repetition of concepts, but under the rubric of a constantly changing terminological system. For example, as Hughes observes, the concept of a 'plane of immanence' in *Cinema 1* (1983) is comparable to the 'plane of composition' in *What is Philosophy?* (1991), whereas the concept of 'plane of immanence', in the latter, now takes the function of time-image from *Cinema 2* (1985) (Hughes, 2012: 21). Deleuze, being a philosopher of movement and speed rather than stillness and fixity, chose to construct a philosophical system that actively expressed this mobility. Hence, his concepts are designated with terms that are at times interchangeable and even contradictory, but always fluid and unhinged by the immobility of terminology.

Zourabichvilli has argued that there is no ontology in Deleuze, but only a "theory of relations" (Zourabichvilli, 2012: 97). Deleuze himself has suggested that his metaphysics is a philosophy of becoming and multiplicities, a philosophy of "AND" and not "IS" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 25). When laid bare, unhinged by linguistic tropes, his

concepts are distinguished by the connections that they enter into and the relations that they form with every other concept. By evading the inflexibility of terminological determination, the concepts actively express a 'becoming' of thought free to trace out a network of connections in the brain of the reader. Any attempt to reconfigure this philosophical system in conventional metaphysical language becomes a mere representation, and effectively decimates the mobility that is the quintessence of his thought.

The incessant "reinvention" of philosophical concepts might be considered by some as a failure of Deleuze's philosophical enterprise (Somers-Hall, 2012: 1). However, Deleuze, when studied against the backdrop of the philosophical tradition that he espouses, appears to carry the philosophical enterprise of his predecessors to its extreme limits, and in many ways, its logical conclusion.

The significance of Deleuze and his place in the history of philosophy is, as de Beistegui claims, still far from certain (de Beistegui, 2010: 1). Despite the overwhelming influx of academic literature on Deleuze's thought, both on cinema and philosophy, his legacy and the significations provoked by the name 'Deleuze' are still in its incipient stage.

The first original philosophical works published by Deleuze were *Difference and Repetition* (1968) and *The Logic of Sense* (1969). Prior to the publication of these works, Deleuze was involved in a monumental study of the philosophical tradition that structured the concepts of his later works. His first published work was a monograph on the British empiricist David Hume, titled *Empiricism and Subjectivity* (1953). An eight-year gap followed before his second publication, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962). This heralded the most productive period in Deleuze's career, with subsequent works on Kant, Proust, Sacher-Masoch and Spinoza published in a period of six years<sup>22</sup>. Deleuze

---

<sup>22</sup>*Kant's Critical Philosophy* (1963), *Proust and Signs* (1964), *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty* (1967)

attributed this period of creativity to his “eight-year hole”, saying that, “maybe it’s in these holes that [real] movement takes place” (Deleuze, 1990b: 138).

The period between *Empiricism and Subjectivity* and *Difference and Repetition* was, as Michael Hardt claims, an “apprenticeship in philosophy” for Deleuze (Hardt, 1993: 135). Hardt’s book (1993), along with the collections edited by Boundas (2006), and Jones and Roffe (2009), provide a systematic overview of Deleuze’s thought within the history of philosophy<sup>23</sup>. I will only follow the development of those aspects of his philosophy pertinent to the questions raised by this thesis. However, whenever necessary, I have used footnotes to point the reader towards texts that are peripheral to this study. Unlike other works, I have largely focused on Deleuze’s independent writings, with a particular emphasis on *Difference and Repetition* and his indebtedness to Bergson and Kant. It has to be pointed out that it is possible to trace alternative paths in Deleuze’s philosophical evolution, for instance, from Aristotle to Bergson via Maimon and Klossowski. However, as we will see in chapters six and seven, the essential structure of Deleuzian ontology remains the same across all these works. Therefore, any progression through Deleuze’s philosophy will yield a similar teleology. To echo the likes of Grossberg and Shaviro, this work can neither claim to be a ‘true interpretation’ of Deleuze nor hold any monopoly over the right way to approach his works (Grossberg, 2010: 315, Shaviro, 2009: v). Like Deleuze intended, I have approached his philosophy as a “toolbox” of concepts to be used as one sees fit (Deleuze, 1990b: 207). The fact that Deleuzian ideas and metaphysics have found application in a varied disciplines is proof enough for the elasticity of his system<sup>24</sup>.

---

<sup>23</sup>*Deleuze and Philosophy* (2006), edited by Constantin V. Boundas collects a critical selection of essays that examine Deleuze’s philosophy in relation with individual philosophers and philosophical movements. *Gilles Deleuze’s Philosophical Lineage* (2009), edited by Graham Jones and Jon Roffe, examines the influence of philosophers like Duns Scotus, Lautman, Ruyer and Whitehead on Deleuze, and is, arguably, the finest survey of Deleuze’s philosophical inheritance.

<sup>24</sup> See Marks (2005), Nigianni and Storr (2005) and Marrenko and Brassett (2015) for applications of Deleuze’s thought on science, queer theory and design, respectively.

To succeed in our objective, which is to provide cognitive film theory with its corresponding metaphysics, we must first consider the founding problem that forced Deleuze to conceptualize a new ontology – the subordination of difference to identity and representation. Classical philosophy has, for the most part, failed in creating a concept of difference that does not reduce it to identity. Deleuze’s project is to discover a concept of ‘internal difference’ that can explain the emergence of identity. Such a metaphysics will not start from identity, but from a field of variations – a differential field – out of which identities (subject, object) arise as consequences of differences acting upon one another.

In the rest of part one, I will trace the development of the concept of internal difference from Plato to Deleuze via Hegel, and most significantly, Bergson<sup>25</sup>. In traditional philosophy, difference is often derived from resemblances and is subsumed under the concept of identity. It has been represented as a lack or deviation from an ideal, or as a negation of everything that it is not. Deleuze argues for the construction of a concept of difference as a creative force that is *internal* to a thing, and not derived from any transcendental ideal – difference in-itself. This notion of a creative, internal difference will be considered as being linked to Henri Bergson’s concept of *duree* (or duration) as a heterogeneous and continuous multiplicity. It will be shown that in Deleuze, difference acts as the creative force that brings forth novelty as the *duree* unfolds in time. I will argue that novelty is an ‘emergent’ property of reality, and an engagement with complexity theory can explain the legitimacy of the reasoning evident in Bergson and Deleuze’s process philosophy. Being concerned with the development of a theory of time, I will consider temporality as an emergent and constructed phenomenon that can be explained using the syntheses of time that Deleuze introduces in *Difference and Repetition*.

---

<sup>25</sup> Deleuze, in his works on the history of philosophy, followed a ‘minor tradition’ in philosophy that includes Lucretius, Spinoza, Nietzsche, and Bergson (Smith, 2012: 60)

The history of difference that I traverse passes through Plato, Hegel and Bergson. Deleuze's ideas on difference have been influenced by extensive sources, which include figures such as Maimon, Blanchard and Riemann. However, I have only touched upon the figures that I consider to be indispensable to the study of this concept. Plato offers the first fully realised critique of difference, and his ideas on identity and representation have swayed Western Philosophy for centuries. Along with Kant, Hegel is a towering figure of modern philosophy, and any post-structuralist enterprise must confront his monumental idea of difference as negation if they are to escape the ineluctable clutches of Hegelianism, and philosophise from a fluid terrain free of determination<sup>26</sup>. Plato and Hegel represent the zenith of Western critiques on identity and being, and a discourse on Deleuzian difference bereft of these figures is unjustifiable.

Amongst the trio, Bergson is the most indispensable, as Deleuze's ideas on time, temporality and cinema are most significantly influenced by his works. Moreover, Bergson proves to be the most potent ally in our endeavour to justify and shield Deleuze from analytic criticism. Bergson provides a platform from which we can theorise on the universe as a plurality of processes that demands 'many sciences'. I will argue that the most significant objective of Bergson, and consequently, Deleuze, is to overcome the 'human condition' that due to factors such as our biology and evolutionary heritage is directed towards utility and spatialism. Tracing the development of 'inhuman' or 'overhuman' becomings occupies the cynosure of their respective philosophical projects. Shirking off our spatialist tendencies and speculating the nature of real duration become important goals within such a philosophy of process and experience.

#### **Plato: The Simulacrum and the Copy**

It is possible to assign certain functions to the philosophers entertained by Deleuze in all his works (Beaulieu, 2009: 261). There are the philosopher-friends, transformed into "untimely heroes of thought" (Bergson, Nietzsche, Hume, Spinoza, Leibnitz), the

---

<sup>26</sup> Refer Chapter 6 for a discussion on Deleuze's reappropriation of Kantian critical philosophy.



enemies (Hegel, Plato) and a third ambivalent category (Kant, Husserl) (Smith, 2012: 21, Beaulieu, 2009: 261). Several commentators (Smith, 2005: 89, Flaxman, 2009: 12) have described Deleuze as having continued the Nietzschean project of the “overturning of Platonism”<sup>27</sup> (Nietzsche, 1981: 154).<sup>28</sup> The ramifications of this overcoming and the process by which one must accomplish such a thing are less clear. As Whitehead notes and Smith expands, is not every philosophy subsequent to Plato a reversal of Platonism, and not simply a footnote to Plato? (Whitehead, 1978: 29, Smith, 2012: 361). In Plato, Deleuze finds the kernel of a philosophy of representation that has pervaded Western philosophical thought for centuries, as well as a concept of difference reducible to identity and essence, and not “difference in itself” (Deleuze, 1968: 37). Plato’s thought is characteristically a transcendental ontology, with abstract ideals serving as parameters of identity, difference and fidelity in the material world. However, to call Deleuze’s relationship with Plato as hostile is to reduce a complex engagement with ideas to a series of binary oppositions (Flaxman, 2009: 8).

In Plato’s theory of Forms or Ideas, a transcendental model exists in a state of similitude with the material copies. These Forms or Ideas belong to the intellectual realm and must be discovered by thought and not the senses<sup>29</sup>. Consequently, copies are

---

<sup>27</sup>Deleuze himself alluded to this idea in *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze, 1990: 263). However, James Williams has questioned the translation of ‘renversement’ as overturning. According to him, the significant meaning of this term is ‘reversal’. A reversal of Platonism is less caustic than an overturning and, for Williams, suggestive of Deleuze’s respect for Platonism (Williams, 2003: 79). The exact nature of Deleuze’s relationship with Plato also animated Alan Badiou’s famous critique of Deleuze in *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being* (2000). Badiou criticises Deleuze as being a confused Platonist philosopher of the One and not the Multiple. Žižek (2004) considers this work as a legitimate attack on Deleuze. However, more recently, Clayton Crockett, in *Deleuze beyond Badiou* (2013), has reacted against Badiou’s accusations by defending Deleuze as a radical thinker.

<sup>29</sup> The sensory world is a copy or “likeness” of the world of Forms (Mayell, 2008: 81). As Deleuze notes, the most significant distinction established by Plato “is the one between the model and the copy” (Deleuze, 1990: 266). To the pure identity of the model, “there corresponds an exemplary similitude”; to the “pure resemblance

representations of Ideals whose identity is determined by its verisimilitude or difference from the model. Therefore, difference is generated in reference to the deviation from the model, or in other words, difference is derived from identity. These are differences in degree, not differences in kind.

Prior to the discovery of the Idea, there is a process of selection at play in Plato's philosophy. The world of essences exist only as "a criterion for its selective procedures" (Smith, 2012: 20 ). According to Deleuze, this selection is also a process of division, which separates pure images from impure images and the authentic from the inauthentic. Platonic selection distinguishes between claimants, between true copies and simulacra (Deleuze, 1983: 46). However, within Plato's dismissal of simulacra, Deleuze finds a germinal concept of 'differences in kind'. A simulacrum is commonly described as "a copy of a copy whose relation to the model has become so attenuated" that it ceases to be a copy, and becomes an autonomous entity whose resemblance to the model is simply "external and deceptive" (Massumi, 1987: 91). As in a photorealist painting or Pop Art, the "masked difference" from the model produces the uncanniness that characterises a simulacrum. The concept of a simulacrum does not necessitate an equivalency with the model but instead entails a process of "turning against" the model and its world to create a new network for its own subversive generation. The simulacrum engineers its own difference and is not an implosion, but "a differentiation" (90, 91).

Deleuze's elevation of the simulacrum is the Nietzschean 'reversal' or 'inversion' of Platonism that he seeks.<sup>30</sup> For Deleuze, the reversal of Platonism means "denying the primacy of the original over the copy, of model over image; glorifying the reign of

---

of the copy", the corresponding similitude is "imitative" (259). As Mayell points out, difference is understood here as a relationship between two similitudes (Mayell, 2008: 82). When the resemblance between the copy and the model attenuates with successive copying, a scenario arises where the resemblance to the model is untenable and impure. This is the genesis of the simulacrum.

<sup>30</sup> "My philosophy is an inverted Platonism: the farther removed from true being, the purer, the finer, the better it is" (Nietzsche, 1987: 251)

simulacra and reflections” (Deleuze, 1968: 80)<sup>31</sup>. Mayell notes that the dissolution of the distinction between models and copies can invite allegations of “naïve-realism”, as once this distinction is severed the world loses its transcendental quality and appears as it is (Mayell, 2004: 83). Nevertheless, this is not what Deleuze intends. Although he wants to eliminate this distinction, he does so by retaining the idea of the copy, but without an original referent. A simulacrum is “a copy for which there is no original” (83)<sup>32</sup>.

According to Deleuze, the Platonic copy is “the Similar: the pretender who possesses in a secondary way” (Deleuze, 1990: 268). The simulacrum, on the other hand, is not a “degraded copy”, but something that shelters a “positive power” that rejects any “privileged point of view except that of the object that is common to all points of view”. Bereft of the hierarchy that plagues the copies, resemblance endures in the simulacrum as “an external effect ... built upon divergent series”. Similarly, identity remains as a “law which complicates all the series”. In a ‘reversed’ Platonism, resemblance becomes “internalised difference”, and identity persists as the “Different as primary power” (271). Simulacrum engenders the ‘false’ as the highest power, in a Nietzschean sense, capable of dismantling static hierarchies. It “renders the order of participation [and] the fixity of distribution impossible, and constructs a nomadic space which annihilates all foundations, “but as a joyful and affirmative event, as an un-founding” (272). Deleuze claims that the power of the simulacrum defines modernity, and extracts from it what Nietzsche referred to as the untimely, a potential that is identical in its orientation to its past, present and future (274). By elevating the simulacrum from the Platonic depths,

---

<sup>31</sup> This inversion does not necessitate a preference of the copy over the model. To engage this concept is effectively to “retreat back to the cave” (Mayell, 2008: 82)

<sup>32</sup> Claire Colebrook distinguishes between phenomena and simulacra as follows: “Phenomena are appearances of some world, but simulacra are appearances in themselves, with no origin or foundation ‘behind’ them” (Colebrook, 2002: 6).

Deleuze finds within that philosophy an embryonic concept of an internalised difference that is mobile, temporal and without foundations<sup>33</sup>.

#### **Hegel: Dialectical Difference**

According to Vincent Descombes, the distinguishing trait of Deleuze's generation (Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard) was a deep disregard for Hegel, especially the interpretation of Hegel popularised by Alexandre Kojève<sup>34</sup>. Chatelet considered Hegel to be the Plato of his generation (Chatelet, 1968: 2), a figure that must not be ignored at all costs<sup>35</sup>. Therefore, to advance a new theory of difference, it was essential for Deleuze to undermine the gargantuan edifice of the Hegelian dialectic. As Hardt notes, a distinct anti-Hegelianism is crucial, if not inevitable, in a Post-Hegelian or even a non-Hegelian project. (Hardt, 2003: ix). However, if Hegelianism is the "first problem of post-

---

<sup>33</sup> According to Elizabeth Grosz, difference has been primarily conceived in two ways in Western thought, either as a comparative, external difference between two entities that is measurable in reference to a third extrinsic term, or as a metric difference that relates according to a 'more or less' logic. Egalitarian feminism that situates equality based on an external sameness of 'humanity' is an example of the former. Both these concepts conceive difference "as a relation of two terms ... which entails an implicit or third term". Ultimately, difference, in traditional philosophy, is construed as a struggle of pairs and binary opposites to either equalize the terms or render them "reciprocal and interchangeable in the other" (Grosz, 2001: 4). In Deleuze (as well as Bergson), difference is not a function conceived from "units, entities or terms", but rather "characterizes *fields*, and indeed reality itself". The difference in Deleuze's philosophy is ontological, and not logical, semiological or historical. It is a "relation between fields, strata and chaos", and a "movement beyond dualism" (5).

<sup>34</sup> *Introduction to the reading of Hegel* (1969) published by Kojève was influential for incorporating ideas from Marxism into a Hegelian framework.

<sup>35</sup> According to Chatelet, criticising Hegelianism is fraught with danger as any criticism could be subsumed under the triad of the Hegelian dialectic. Ignoring Hegel is also a folly, as eventually they will have to confront the looming phantasm of Hegelian determination: "They are dealing with the false meaning of absolute beginnings, and, moreover, they deprive themselves of a good point of support. It is better – like Marx and Nietzsche – to begin with Hegel than to end up with him" (Chatelet, 1968:2, discussed in Hardt, 1993: x).

structuralism”, anti-Hegelianism is the second, as a break with Hegel is “almost impossible” as the concept of “breaking-with” is essential to the dialectic (xi). As negation and contradiction are central to the notion of the dialectic, anti-Hegelianism is easily reducible to a term in the Hegelian triad, and can, in turn, be redefined as a subversive Hegelianism<sup>36</sup>.

To circumvent the trap of the dialectic, Deleuze only confronts Hegel indirectly<sup>37</sup>. As Massumi observes, despite featuring the “who’s who of philosophical giants”, Deleuze’s early books rarely mention Hegel, as if he is “too despicable even to merit a mutant offspring” (Massumi, 1992: 3)<sup>38</sup>. In his works, one can sense the spontaneous movement towards a philosophy that is at once anti-Hegelian and embryonic. Deleuze’s philosophical project plays out on an “alternative terrain” far away from the dialectical stomping ground of thinkers spanning from Aristotle to Hegel (Hardt, 2003: xii). What Deleuze is seeking is a concept of non-dialectical negation, and consequently, a non-dialectical difference. Hegelian dialectic carries with it the possibility of a resurrection, but in Deleuze, it is absolute, totalizing and a “moment of extreme nihilism”. It is a “bipartite sequence” bereft of an ultimate, synthetic moment (xii).

---

<sup>36</sup> “Paradoxically, in an effort to establish Hegel as a negative foundation of his thought, Deleuze may appear to be very Hegelian” (Hardt, 2003: xi).

<sup>37</sup>The exact nature of Deleuze’s relationship with Hegel is widely debated. Deleuze himself has written about the “generalized anti-Hegelianism” which informed his works (Deleuze, 1994: xix). Mayell has argued for a more positive appraisal of Hegel within Deleuze’s thought. Henry Somers-Hall, who offers the most nuanced and detailed study of Deleuze and Hegel in *Hegel, Deleuze and the Critique of Representation, Negation and Difference* (2012), has equated Deleuze’s apparent embrace of Hegelian terminology and concepts as a kind of “parody” that is intended to clarify the schism between the two thinkers (Somers-Hall, 2012: 2). This extract from an interview sums up Deleuze’s attitude towards Hegel: “If you don’t admire something, if you don’t love it, you have no reason to write a word about it...Why not Hegel? Well, somebody has to play the role of a traitor...Hegel has inspired every language of betrayal” (Deleuze, 2004: 144)

<sup>38</sup> Contemporary Deleuzians also echo this apparent disdain for Hegel. They have reduced Hegel to a “snide caricature” (Houle and Vernon, 2013: 1).

In Hegel, “anything is always subsumed” in a greater contradiction, a process that goes on till infinity. Therefore, when an identity of an object is arrived at, it will be open to a contradiction (Williams, 2003: 69). Being is determined by this process of negation and synthesis. Whenever we are presented with a state of affairs or order of things, a “contradictory, but also subsuming, entity” reveals the first order to have been temporary and open to “retrospective reassessment” (69). The negative determination of being is central to Deleuze’s attack on Hegelian ontology (Deleuze, 1968: 55). For there to be being, it has to determine itself against nothingness. In Hegel, this pure being is determined by a negation of nothingness. Determinate being “subsumes” this opposition, and as Hardt notes, this is central to the foundation of its real differences and qualities (Hardt, 2003: 3). The mere existence of an entity, the ‘being’, is itself a “negative movement” (4). It is what it is because it is not anything else; its existence determines itself as a negation of all that it is not<sup>39</sup>. In Spinoza’s metaphysics, being does not determine itself negatively against nothingness. Pure being emanates from a “positive, affirmative ontology” that does not require a negation of nothingness (3)<sup>40</sup>. However, for Hegel, this was an unacceptable proposition. If pure being does not negate nothingness, it is, in essence, indistinguishable from nothingness (Hegel, 1812: 112). If Spinoza’s being is not determined by negation, his ontology will, according to Hegel, inevitably vanish into nothingness<sup>41</sup> (Hegel, 1968: 112, see also Hardt, 2003: 1-10).

Deleuze, in his early essay on Bergson, *Bergson’s conception of difference* (1957)<sup>42</sup>, does not seem to contradict the negative movement of pure being, as Hardt points out

---

<sup>39</sup> “According to Hegel, the thing differs from itself because it is different from everything it is not, and thus it goes as far as contradiction” (Deleuze, 2004: 42)

<sup>40</sup> Spinoza’s positive ontology was unacceptable to Hegel.

<sup>41</sup> “Being not determined through negation will remain indifferent and abstract, and finally, since it is not held different from its opposite, it will fade into nothingness” (Hardt, 2003: 4).

<sup>42</sup> The English translation of this essay was published in *Desert Islands and other texts: 1953-1974* (2004)

(Hardt, 2003: 4). According to Deleuze, the distinction between “opposite and contradiction” is insignificant, as “contradiction, like the opposite, is a presentation of the whole”. However, in both instances, “difference has been replaced by the play of determination” (Deleuze, 2004: 41). In other words, the difference generated by the negative movement is a false difference. Deleuze’s rejection of Hegel is a consequence of this “betrayal of difference” – difference made negative (negation, opposition, contradiction) (Baugh, 2003: 137).

In the *Science of Logic* (1991), Hegel identifies the negations animating beneath differences, and attempts to make these negations more internal. So, a being is determined by its difference from everything else. In other words, “not-being another” is the “constitutive moment of its identity as the negation of a negation” (A is not equal to  $\neg A$ , the negation of a negation). As in Plato, difference is once again rendered as external to the object, and the “two terms are indifferent to one another” (Hegel, 1989: 118; Baugh, 2009: 132). In an early review-essay on Jean Hyppolite’s *Logic and Existence* (1952), Deleuze hinted at his distaste towards this concept of difference. Deleuze agreed with Hyppolite’s notion of ‘being as difference’, but the philosopher’s Hegelian leanings constrained him from envisaging an internal difference animating being. (Deleuze, 2004: 17).

To discover this concept of internal difference, Hegel’s negative difference must be exposed for its flaws. As noted earlier, Deleuze’s attack on Hegel was quite indirect. In Bergson, Deleuze found a spiritual ally who could assist him in his philosophical mission. According to Hardt, Deleuze identifies two proximate enemies that lie between Bergson and the Hegelian dialectic. By attacking them and exposing their flaws, Deleuze proceeds to show that these flaws are “carried to the extreme” by Hegel. These proximate enemies are Platonism and Mechanism. Moreover, Hardt notes, this triangulated attack strategy further highlights Deleuze’s aversion towards opposition (Hardt, 2003: 4).

Mechanism proposes causal determination as the constitutive act of being – being must be determined. Deleuze, however, finds a fault with this idea. If being must be determined, it must always be determined by a process that “always remains external” to it, and consequently, “fails to provide it with an essential necessary foundation” (Hardt, 2003: 4). By attempting to explain being by tracing the processes of determination, mechanism renders it with an “accidental quality”, as the external difference of determination “is always reliant on an ‘other’ (a cause, an end or a chance). For Deleuze, being cannot be accidental. There must be a quality internal to it that preserves its constitution. Such a theory must consider being as fundamentally indeterminate, because, if the being can be determined, it will always depend on processes external to it – “determination implies a mere subsistent exteriority, not a substantial interiority” (5). According to Deleuze, if the being of things is “somehow in their differences of nature”, we must look to difference as the means by which the being is sustained (Deleuze, 2004: 32).

As we have seen, Platonism, Deleuze’s second proximate enemy, also treats difference as something external to being. Difference, in Platonism, is based on a finality exemplified by the Ideas (Forms, The Good) (Deleuze, 2004: 37). Being derives its difference through a ‘dialectic of alterity’ determined in relation to a final cause<sup>43</sup>. Like Plato and the Mechanists, Hegel exteriorises difference and takes it to its extreme limits (Hardt, 2003: 7). According to Deleuze, in Bergson, “the thing differs with itself *first*,

---

<sup>43</sup>As Hardt observes, three traditional causes underlie the Mechanist, Platonist, and consequently, Hegelian determinations of being: (1) material – a physical cause that produces an external effect; (2) final cause – teleological in nature, this refers to the ultimate goal or the end that the effect is directed towards (The Ideal forms of Platonism); (3) accidental – a cause “that is completely contingent to its effect” (Hardt, 2003: 5). Hardt borrows these ideas from the works of the Scholastics to explain Deleuze’s elevation of Bergsonism as a philosophy of vitalist difference (125). Since Mechanism explains the determination of being using external causes, being, and consequently, its difference are effects of any of the three causes. Therefore, an external conception of difference leaves the possibility of chance wide open in the determination of being. This is unacceptable to Deleuze, as he is seeking a philosophy of internal difference that sustains being not by chance, but by a process that is specific to the thing itself.



*immediately*”, whereas in Hegel, “the thing differs with itself because it first differs with all that it is not, and thus difference goes as far as contradiction”. Moreover, if Platonism does not go beyond “*difference as still external*”, a dialectic of contradiction does not go “farther than a conception of *difference as only abstract*” (Deleuze, 2004: 41).

According to Hardt, a being sustained by an external cause must be subjected to a Scholastic response. Following the Scholastic line of thought, a concept of being “founded on an external cause” is logically inconsistent as it cannot “sustain the necessity or substantiality of being because a cause external to its effect cannot be necessary”. The external processes that determine the “dialectical being” do not account for a “*causae per se*”, but rather, a “*causae per accidens*” (Hardt, 2003: 7-8). What is required is a “*causasui*” conception of difference – a difference that is its own cause, an internal difference (15). Deleuze finds such a notion of difference in Bergson.

According to Deleuze, the dialectic of Hegel poses a false problem. If “being is difference” and not be confused with the “immovable or the undifferentiated”, contradiction or negation constitutes a “false movement” (Deleuze, 2004: 24). For Bergson, the object of metaphysics “is to recapture in individual existences, and to follow the source from which it emanates, the particular ray that ... reattaches it thereby to the universal light” (Bergson, 1919: 4 cf Deleuze, 2004: 24). The immediate, as Deleuze interprets this, is the identity of the thing and its difference as discovered or ‘recaptured’ by philosophy. Through Bergson, he points out that in science and metaphysics, real difference is allowed to escape. In science, the thing is conceived as a product or a result, while in metaphysics studies being as “something unmoveable that serves as a principle” (24). In science and scientific practices, true difference is not captured as, like the Mechanists, it is determined as an effect of external causes. This is not to deny the legitimacy of science as a practical discipline but merely demarcates its limitations in exposing the differentiating forces that animate a thing as being unique in space and time. Science and metaphysics arrive at being by recomposing it from

“resemblances and ever greater contradictions”. However, these are very often “*practical*, not ontological, categories” (24, original emphasis). To derive difference, according to Bergson, separate things (differences in nature, differences in kind) are grouped under the same word (differences in degree) – “Being ... is on the side of difference ... But what is the nuance, the difference of a thing, what is the difference of a sugar cube?” (Bergson, 1941: 67 cf Deleuze, 2004: 24). If the difference of a sugar cube is determined by its *difference* from every other sugar cube (dialectic of contradiction), such a relation is purely exterior, and eventually reducible to spatial definitions. Real difference, then, must be alteration (a process) rather than Platonic alterity. Therefore, difference, and consequently, being must be redefined in temporal terms to reflect this process or ‘becoming’. This process of alteration is what Bergson famously referred to as ‘duration’ (25)<sup>44</sup>. Deleuze defines duration as “that which differs or that which changes nature, quality, heterogeneity, what differs from itself”. The being of the aforementioned sugar cube is determined by “a duration, by a certain manner of persisting” (Deleuze, 2004: 26).

---

<sup>44</sup> “Being is alteration, alteration is substance” (Bergson, 1917: 107)

#### 4. Deleuze, Bergson and the Metaphysics of Modern Science

Deleuze's assertion that difference can sustain being, or in other words, that difference founds being, is a pivotal aspect of his philosophy, and owes much to Bergson. The philosophy of time formulated by Bergson also helped Deleuze to develop concepts that were unique to cinema. Bergson's philosophy is, in some respects, process oriented and directed towards the movement of being. By nature, the cinematic medium is built upon movement, and is processual. Cinematic narration unfolds as a process in time and its reception involves a complex engagement with its temporal properties. To understand how Deleuze extracts a philosophy of cinematic time from Bergson, we must first consider the essential tenets of 'Bergsonism'<sup>45</sup>.

Deleuze's Bergsonian inflections have compelled critics like Gillian Rose to label his philosophy as "the new Bergsonism" (Rose, 1984: 6). In addition to the *Cinema* books, Deleuze's study of Bergson resulted in three key works: the aforementioned essay *Bergson's conception of difference* (1956), a short piece published in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Les Philosophes Celebres*, titled, *Bergson, 1859-1941* (1956), and a monograph called *Bergsonism* (1966)<sup>46</sup>. In addition to these works, references to Bergson occur frequently in his independent works as well as those co-written with Guattari<sup>47</sup>.

---

<sup>45</sup> There are, possibly, several 'Bergsonisms'. However, on this occasion, I use this term to suggest a Deleuzian Bergsonism, or in other words, Bergsonian concepts, as interpreted or revived by Deleuze.

<sup>46</sup> The English translations of the two essays are included in *Desert Islands* (2004).

<sup>47</sup> Among the other works, *Difference and Repetition* (1968) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980) are of particular significance. The former utilises Bergson to corroborate the second synthesis of time (Deleuze, 1968: 79-85). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari explore Bergson's concept of becoming in a short piece, titled, *Memories of a Bergsonian* (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 237-239).

Deleuze has said that his forays in history of philosophy are attempts to trace a “counter history” of philosophy (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987: 14). This counter-history follows an alternative path that leads from Lucretius to Bergson, with figures such as Duns Scotus, Spinoza, Nietzsche and Simondon assuming prominent roles<sup>48</sup>. The path that Deleuze chooses to follow is at odds with the conventional Analytic approach that inspires the cognitivists. Analytic philosophy, with its appeal to logic, reason and empiricism, is arguably a safe and, in some ways, respectable method to approach philosophical concepts. However, to dismiss Bergson and Deleuze as speculative philosophers of excess is to miss the point<sup>49</sup>. Sokal and Bricmont’s caustic indictment of Bergson as the

---

<sup>48</sup> It is difficult to distinguish the voice of the author when Deleuze calls upon other philosophers. In oft-quoted statement from *Dialogues II* (1987), Deleuze compares his style to “a kind of buggery, or... an immaculate conception”. He described his craft as “getting onto the back of an author, and giving him a child, which would be his and which would at the same time be a monster”, and the work “should be his child, because the author actually had to say everything that I made him say, ... [but it is also a] monster because it was necessary to go through all kinds of decenterings, slips, secret emission...”(Deleuze, 1987: 15). Therefore, when considering Bergson, Spinoza or Nietzsche, it is crucial to understand that their concepts have been filtered through a Deleuzian prism that has synthesised refracted ideas and novel significations to advance Deleuze’s philosophical agenda, which is not necessarily that of the philosophers themselves.

<sup>49</sup> Kant is, perhaps, the focal point in both schools of thought, and the significance of Kant’s thought in Deleuze’s metaphysics is explored further in chapter 6. Much can be gleaned by tracing the vestiges of Kant in the two traditions, and it might be possible to identify and explain areas of conflict by scrutinising their alignment and fidelity to Kantian ideas. John Mullarkey adopted such an approach to survey the ideas of recent continental philosophers such as Deleuze, Badiou and Laruelle in *Post-Continental Philosophy: An Outline* (2006). Deleuze’s relationship with Kant is, like Plato, ambivalent. His monograph on Kant, *Kant’s Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of Faculties* (1963), offers hints of the Kantian influence that is felt in his later works (see Chapter 6). Christian Kerslake’s work *Immanence and the vertigo of philosophy: From Kant to Deleuze* (2009) traces the influence of Kant in Deleuze and Bergson. Peg Raws (2008) traces the impact of Kantian concepts of space and geometry in the counter or ‘minor’ tradition of philosophy espoused by Deleuze. The conflict between the transcendental idealism of Kant and the transcendental empiricism of Deleuze is explored in the collection of essays edited by Willatt and Lee (2009).

bane of respectable philosophy, and their opinion that his “fashionable nonsense” has spread to “Deleuze, after passing through Jankelevitch and Merleau-Ponty”, are symptomatic of a narrow understanding of Bergson’s philosophy (Sokal and Bricmont, 1997: 166). In recent decades, writers such as Milic Capek, Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers have defended the relevance of Bergson’s thought in contemporary philosophy of science<sup>50</sup>. Because Deleuze borrows heavily from Bergson, especially in his *Cinema* books, several criticisms directed at Bergson inevitably affect Deleuze as well. In part

---

The approach that I am suggesting is best reflected in Steven Shaviro’s *Without Criteria: Kant, Whitehead, Deleuze and Aesthetics* (2009). However, the focus is primarily on Kant’s transcendental aesthetic. Moreover, though Whitehead is an analytic philosopher, his works remain within the discipline of process philosophy, of which Bergson and Deleuze are vintage exponents. Nevertheless, Whitehead is the closest link between Deleuze and Analytic philosophy, and is considered elsewhere in the thesis.

<sup>50</sup>Milic Capek’s works have a strong Bergsonian influence. Of particular interest is *Bergson and Modern Physics: A Reinterpretation and Re-evaluation*(1971), which provides the most systematic study of Bergson’s relevance to contemporary science. Nobel Prize winner Ilya Prigogine’s review-essay, *Evolution of Physics: Review of Bergson and the Evolution of Physics*, edited and translated by P.A.Y. Gunter (1971), summarises his ambiguous stance towards Bergson (Prigogine, 1971:159-160). Prigogine has endorsed aspects of Bergson’s philosophy of time in *The Order of Chaos: Man’s New Dialogue with Nature* (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984: 301-302). A sympathetic engagement with Bergson can also be observed in a lecture that he gave at Pescara during a workshop on chaos theory and the universe (Prigogine, 1999).

According to Keith Robinson, Stengers’ philosophy is a “Deleuzian interpretation of Whitehead” (Robinson, 2009: 15). In *Power and Invention: Situating Science* (1997), she alludes to Bergson as having suggested a fuller concept of time, as opposed to Einstein, who, according to Stengers, eliminated time with the greatest force (Stengers, 1997: 40). Stengers, like Prigogine, demonstrates the flaw in Einstein’s thinking by using irreversible thermodynamic systems and quantum mechanics as examples. She claims that modern physicists have “rediscovered the multiplicity of times”, and the persistence of the Aristotelian concept of numerical time in the history of philosophy is “also a history of social and cultural tensions” (40-41). More recently, Jimena Canales’ *The Physicist and The Philosopher: Einstein, Bergson and the debate that changed our understanding of time* (2015) documents the history and consequences of a debate between Einstein and Bergson in Berlin that proved to be the death knell of Bergsonism, until it was resurrected by the likes of Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze.

two, I will assess these arguments in view of Deleuze, and as it pertains to the philosophy of time and its role in the *Cinema* books.

For a brief period in the early twentieth-century, Bergson's fame in Europe was unmatched by any other philosopher or scientist. His concepts pervaded dinner table conversations, intellectual spheres and political forums (Canales, 2015: 26). When the Nobel committee awarded the prize to Einstein in 1922, it was not in honour of his famed theory of relativity, but for his discovery of the law of photoelectric effect. According to the president of the awarding committee, the theory of relativity was undeserving of the prize, as Bergson had challenged the concept and shown that relativity "pertains to epistemology" (Canales, 2015: 3-4). From such reified heights, Bergson's fall was swift and brutal. As Mullarkey notes, very rarely has a philosopher seen "such a level of influence dissipate so quickly" (Mullarkey, 1999: 1). Canales has identified Bergson's debate with Einstein in 1922 as the incident that triggered his downfall (Canales, 2015: 5)<sup>51</sup>. By going against Einstein's conception of time, Bergson was guilty of confronting a figure who was fast becoming a colossus of modern science. With Einstein rapidly growing in stature, and his theory of relativity finding consistent empirical validation, Bergson's philosophy of time appeared obsolete and reminiscent of a distant, mystical past in the history of Western Philosophy. However, as Canales notes, Bergson did not reject Einstein's theory of time. In fact, he praised relativity for its utility and practicality. He accepted Einstein's theory of time dilation albeit with a few caveats (35). According to Lalande, the significant point of divergence between the two thinkers is regarding the "sort of *reality*" that should be ascribed to observers who disagree in their measurement of time. Like several commentators, Bergson accepted the results of relativity, but was hesitant about imputing the same reality to the dilated times that it generates (Lalande, 1917 discussed in Canales, 2015: 41). Bergson wanted to study the circumstances under which certain effects of time dilation could be considered as

---

<sup>51</sup> As a testimony to Bergson and Einstein's fame, Sigmund Freud once remarked that next to the two figures, he had "little claim to be named ... as one of the intellectual sovereigns" (Kaufman, 1959: 326 cf Canales, 2015: 16).

constituting ‘real’ temporal changes. In Einstein, the reality of time does not vary across dilations; the nature of time remains constant throughout. However, thinkers like Bergson were curious about the ontology of these different times and their relation to the common-sense view of time, and hence, refused to accept Einstein’s explanation as definitive (42)<sup>52</sup>.

Bergson is not considered by many as a systematic thinker (Fell, 2012: 7). He abhorred the generality of systems, and thought of them as factories of immobile ‘ready-made concepts’ that could be applied equally everywhere with no consideration of the object (Bergson, 1946: 11, 40). Despite such disdain for systems, commentators have interpreted different concepts as forming the core or ‘method’ of Bergson’s thought. For instance, Elena Fell argues that the Bergsonian method is closer to phenomenological reduction, whereas Mullarkey, in the spirit of process philosophy, treats the Bergsonian method as expressing a multiplicity of ‘philosophies’ (Fell, 2012: 8, Mullarkey, 1999: 2). Despite the conceptual diversity of Bergson’s thought, one could argue that a preoccupation with time dominates his works. In fact, as Kolakowski notes, Bergson’s philosophy can be summed up in three words: “time is real” (Kolakowski, 1985: 2). In a similar vein, Leonard Lawlor has described the concept of *duree* or ‘duration’ as being the backbone of Bergson’s thought, and he defines it as “the memory plus the absolutely new” (Lawlor, 2003: ix). Deleuze is also fundamentally concerned with Bergson’s temporal philosophy, but he considers the concept of ‘intuition’ as the integrative method that binds what he considers as the three stages of Bergson’s thought – duration, memory and *elan vital*. Though Deleuze, like Bergson, is sceptical of ready-made concepts, he succeeds in extracting a mobile Bergsonian system that foregrounds the primacy of intuition, despite the concept being ontologically “second in relation” to duration or memory (Deleuze, 1988: 13).<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> *Duration and Simultaneity* (1922) was written by Bergson as a riposte to Einstein.

<sup>53</sup> It has to be noted, however, that Deleuze simply utilises Bergson to advance his own theory of time. By isolating intuition as the most significant “method”, Deleuze is arguably betraying Bergson’s own desire to be irreducible to any superficial labels

As Fell notes, Bergson's reluctance to commit to static definitions allowed him to speak of duration in a number of ways (Fell, 2012: 9)<sup>54</sup>. According to Mayell, Deleuze is attracted to the concept of 'duration' because, like 'difference', "it eludes definition" (Mayell, 2004: 104). In its barest sense, duration or *duree* refers to the persistence and continuity of time, and its qualitative difference from space. Real time cannot be fragmented as 'instants', like points on a line, without qualitatively changing its temporal properties. Moreover, the deconstruction of duration into metric times constituted by instants reveals a spatial bias that has pervaded intellectual thought for millennia. Bergson's *Time and Free Will* (1910) contains the most significant exposition of *duree* as a psychological phenomenon, but, as Bogue notes, the concept changes in meaning and scope in his later works (Bogue, 2003:12).

In *Time and Free Will*, Bergson argues that the conceptual edifices of science and philosophy have been built with an inherent spatial bias. For instance, the concept of numbers cannot be envisaged without recourse to spatial concepts (Bergson, 1910: 76). According to Bergson, numbers could be defined as a "collection of units" that synthesises "the one and the many" (75). Bergson cites the example of a shepherd who counts his sheep. Although each sheep is different from the others, the shepherd chooses to ignore their individual differences, and "[takes] into account only what they have in common" (76). If we are to assume that the sheep are identical to one another, to form a flock, they would have to differ, at the very least, in their respective positions. Alternatively, if we are to count the identical sheep one after the other in succession, the series would lie in duration rather than space, but we are essentially restricting

---

(Deleuze, 1988: 13). Deleuze's Bergson is yet another offspring of his 'philosophical buggery'. Nevertheless, Deleuze is successful in effectively communicating the relevance of intuition as a legitimate philosophical method, and Bergson acts as the perfect foil for the writer to develop the philosophy of time that runs through the *Cinema* books.

<sup>54</sup> According to Bergson, every summary of his philosophy "will distort their general nature" if it fails to "set out from in the first place, and constantly return to, what I regard as the core of the doctrine: the intuition of duration" (from Lacey, 1989: 26)



ourselves to the same sheep as opposed to the flock. If the number is to increase in proportion in the act of counting, it is necessary to “retain the successive images” and place them alongside “each of the new units”. According to Bergson, such juxtaposition of successive units can only take place in space, and not in pure duration<sup>55</sup> (77). It is impossible to count things unless they are retained together in some *space*. Moreover, it is also impossible to count things unless they are subsumed under a single concept (Lacey, 2008: 18). As Bogue notes, to envisage a quantity is to “treat qualitatively different elements as homogenous and simultaneously present”. In the example of the sheep, for the act of counting to take place, it is necessary to represent them as “interchangeable points on a plane”. The number line is not simply an arbitrary means of representation, but “a basic element of quantification” (Bogue, 2003: 13).

According to Bergson, because the act of counting takes place in time (succession), the common misconception associates the accumulation of number with duration alone. Though a pure temporal perception is possible, a succession is “nothing but a succession”, and the concept of number necessitates a process of addition where successive states are accumulated alongside each other, and this accumulation can only occur if they are conceived in space (Bergson, 1910: 79). Bergson demonstrates later in the book that it is indeed possible to think of succession independently of space, but the process of addition that is required for quantification does not deal with the “moments” themselves, but the “traces which [the units] ... have left in space” (80). Though all numbers are units, they also form a unity, a whole. According to Bergson, all unity is “a simple act of the mind” and entails a multiplicity that the mind binds through intuition (80). The division of the whole into units or instants is only possible by extending it in space through an act of reduction. The idea that a whole can be divided into parts already assumes that it is extended in space. Though the units are discontinuous in the act of counting, space invests them with interchangeability and continuity (82).

---

<sup>55</sup> Bertrand Russell has accused Bergson of confusing mathematical addition with juxtaposition (Russell, 1914: 33). However, as Lacey points out, this flaw does not affect the validity of his central argument - the relation between counting and space (Lacey, 2008: 18).

According to Bergson, our understanding of affective conscious states also reveals a similar bias towards spatialisation. Common-sense dictates that “states of consciousness, sensations, feelings, passions, efforts are capable of growth and diminution” (Bergson, 1910: 1). Sensations are often quantified, generating expressions that specify intensity in numerical terms<sup>56</sup>. This applies equally to emotions such as sadness and joy, and physical sensations such as pain and warmth<sup>57</sup>. Purely internal states and subjective facts (“unextended objects”) are constituted through “differences of quantity” (1-2). As Elena Fell notes, psychic states are not extended as they “do not occupy a certain portion of space”, and can only be represented as varying degrees of intensity<sup>58</sup> (Fell, 2012: 15).

According to Lacey, it is possible to divide magnitudes into two orders, extensive and intensive. Extensive magnitudes are “ordinary magnitudes” that allow “both comparison and measurement”, whereas intensive magnitudes permit comparison, but not measurement (Lacey, 2008: 1). Bergson appears to refute the possibility of intensive magnitudes, as the concept determines a fundamentally qualitative property in terms of quantity. When one considers extensive magnitudes, as in the case of numbers, the thing that is greater can be said to contain the thing that is lesser. With intensive states,

---

<sup>56</sup> “We are even told that a sensation can be said to be twice, thrice, four times as intense as another sensation of the same kind ... even the opponents of psychophysics do not see any harm in speaking of one sensation as being more intense than another, of one effort as being greater than another...” (Bergson, 1910: 1).

<sup>57</sup>Bergson dismisses intensive magnitudes because a magnitude must be measureable. According to Bergson, the act of measuring implies that “we really or ideally superpose two objects one on another a certain number of times” (Bergson, XXXX CE). It is impossible to measure sensations such as pain in this manner. Though temperature can be measured, the sensation of warmth experienced by the subject is a qualitative state (cf Lacey, 2008: 6).

<sup>58</sup>The concept of intensity has been conceived in opposition to the extensity of matter and space. The term ‘degrees’ does not signify magnitude in the conventional sense, and must be understood as a qualitative marker.

it is impossible to incorporate the notion of containment (2). From the framework of Bergsonism, the fundamental problems of most epistemological debates can be gleaned from the spatialisation of pure intensity and its representation as conventional magnitudes (see Fell, 2012: 15).

Changes in psychological states and affects are intensive changes. By ascribing countable magnitudes to these changes, we are extending their character onto space. Bergson attributes the quantification of psychological states to the apparent perception of muscular contractions. In certain instances, consciousness appears to “spread outwards, as if intensity were being developed into extensity” (Bergson, 1910: 20). As muscular effort is directed towards space, it is possible to identify the qualitative changes in sensations with the extended physical contractions.<sup>59</sup> Bergson appears to associate embodiment with extension and consciousness with intensity. However, according to Fell, intensity in Bergson assumes a dual character – it “reflects the idea of extensive magnitudes from without”, on the one hand, while hinting at an “inner multiplicity” on the other. While an extended multiplicity reveals “countable units”, the inner multiplicity presents itself as a “qualitative diversity” (Fell, 2012: 17).

An example of this dichotomy can be observed from the quality of loudness. Though the extensive magnitude of sound can be calculated in relation to the effort or force required to produce it, its perception in consciousness calls for an intensive marker. Similarly, the quality of pain can be quantified by relating it to the effort that produces that sensation, while the feeling itself cannot have any countable parts (cf Lacey, 2008: 10). To quantify a feeling, one has to associate it with the locus of its extension, and subsequently, derive a generic homogenous property from it that permits the act of measurement. Therefore, according to Bergson, “psychic phenomena [are] ... pure quality or quantitative multiplicity, [while] ... their cause situated in space [is] ... quantity”. When the “quality becomes the sign of the quantity”, and we discern the “presence of the latter behind the former, we call it intensity”. Intensity has to be

---

<sup>59</sup>Lacey provides a detailed study of sensations and magnitude in the first chapter of *Bergson* (Lacey, 2008: 13-16).

conceived as the “qualitative sign” of a psychic state (Bergson, 1910: 224)<sup>60</sup>. This points towards two types of multiplicity – countable material objects which can be divided into units through a process of homogenisation, and the multiplicity of consciousness, “which cannot be regarded as numerical without the help of some symbolical representation, in which a necessary element is space” (87).

According to Bergson, the “growing intensity of the state ... is nothing but the deeper and deeper disturbance of the organism” (Bergson, 1910: 29). He associates the qualitative progress of pity as a process that goes from repugnance to fear to sympathy to humility (19). Lacey suggests that this description is flawed as the progress should be from “not pitying someone to pitying them in the proper sense”, and not from “pitying them a little to pitying them a lot”. The writer appears to be advocating the extraction of a generic concept of pity that can change in intensity with varying degrees of freedom. Bergson, on the other hand, attributes mobility and penetrability to this notion by associating it with contrasting feelings of fear and humility. The determination of seemingly disparate states as varying intensities of the same concept is a recurring feature of Bergson’s philosophy, as we shall see. Nevertheless, Lacey is right in pointing out the role of “intuitive resemblances” in differentiating between qualities, and which, consequently, permits their ordering as intensities (Lacey, 2008: 16). But, in Bergson’s philosophy, these resemblances must be conceived with a flexibility that renders the Bergsonian dualisms of space and time, matter and memory, quality and quantity, heterogeneity and homogeneity, etc. as ‘re-formed monisms’, as Deleuze argues in *Bergsonism* (Deleuze, 1988: 11, 29).

As we have seen, Deleuze establishes intuition as the ‘Bergsonian method’. Intuition, according to Bergson, is a simple act, but simplicity does not “exclude a qualitative or virtual multiplicity, various directions in which it comes to be actualized” (Bergson, 1946: 37, Deleuze, 1988: 14). Intuition, thus, consists of a “plurality of meanings and

---

<sup>60</sup>Bergson, according to Fell, believes that feelings are confused with the extended area of the body that focalises it. For example, we spatialise fear by correlating it with the pace of our heartbeat (Fell, 2012: 17).

irreducible multiple aspects” (Deleuze, 1988: 14). Deleuze, following Bergson, determines three acts that determine “the rules of the method”: the stating and creating of problems, discovery of differences in kind, and finally, the apprehension of real time (14).

The first rule, the stating and creating of problems, seeks to overturn the bias afforded to solutions as the premier criterion upon which truth values can be attached. False problems and badly stated problems have contributed more towards invalid philosophical debates than faulty solutions. Philosophy, according to Bergson, is about “finding the problem and consequently of positing it ... for a speculative problem is solved as soon as it is properly stated” (Bergson, 1946: 58 cited from Deleuze, 1988: 15). A well-constructed problem simply requires its solution to be ‘uncovered’<sup>61</sup>. With this method, Bergson devises an effective way to circumvent circular arguments and nonexistent problems in philosophy. Negation and the Hegelian dialectic are nonexistent problems as they mistake “the more for the less”. In these false problems, there is a “retrograde movement of the true”, where concepts such as being and the existent “are supposed to precede themselves” in act where an image of themselves is projected “back into a [primordial] possibility” – a nonbeing, a disorder, a nothingness (Deleuze, 1988: 16-17). These are problems, because, to conceive a notion of the nonbeing, one requires an assumption of being that is ontologically prior to it. Similarly, the concept of disorder contains an idea of order without which it cannot be understood. Therefore, questions like “Why is there something rather than nothing?” or “Why is there order and not disorder?” are false problems as they have been constructed by circular reasoning, and are, by nature, meaningless (17).

---

<sup>61</sup> However, this act of uncovering does not correspond to a transcendental realm from where truths are to be extracted, and, therefore, should not be confused with the Platonic doctrine of ‘discovering’ or ‘remembering’ ideal truths. The construction of problems is an act of invention: “Inventions give being to what did not exist” (Deleuze, 1988: 15). The stating of problems is the creative act; a well-formed problem contains the solution within, and only needs to be ‘discovered’. As Deleuze notes, “the problem always has the solution it deserves, in terms of the way in which it is stated ... and of the means and terms at our disposal for stating it” (16)

In addition to non-existent problems such as these, one can also detect badly stated problems. These are results of “badly analysed composites” that pair together things that “differ in kind” (Deleuze, 1988: 18). Intensity is an example of such a problem. As we discussed earlier, by confusing sensation with the muscular contractions or its physical cause, the concept of intensity “involves an impure mixture between determinations that differ in kind” - the qualitative confused with the quantitative, duration complicated by space (19). Non-existent problems, where the more is mistaken for the less, also neglect the “differences in kind between the two orders, or between beings, between existents” (20). This is the “fundamental illusion” that underlies false problems, to see differences in degree where there are differences in kind, but “only intuition decides between the true and the false in the problems that are stated”. As Deleuze points out, according to Bergson, “intelligence is the faculty that states problems in general” (20-21). Common-sense and analytic thought are often predisposed to neglect differences in kind in favour of differences in degree<sup>62</sup>. Hence, the intuitive method, as a means to distinguish between true and false problems, may have to drive “the intelligence to turn back against itself” (21).

Real experience is constituted out of composites. A composite “must always be divided according to its natural articulations”, or in other words, into “elements that differ in kind”. Intuition, then, becomes “a method of division” that carves out real differences from the composites that constitute an experience (Deleuze, 1988: 22). The misrepresentation of composites is most evident in debates involving the nature of time. Conventional methods in science and philosophy have reduced time into a “representation imbued with space”. Within that representation, it is difficult to isolate the two elements that differ in kind, “the two pure *presences* of duration and extensity<sup>63</sup>”. Deleuze argues that even in common experience, the two properties have

---

<sup>62</sup>Deleuze refers to this division between ‘differences in kind’ and ‘differences in degree’ as the “Bergsonian leitmotif” (Deleuze, 1988: 23).

<sup>63</sup> ‘Pure’ in Bergson refers to an element or a tendency that differs in kind from other elements or tendencies in the composite. As Deleuze notes, “only that which

coalesced to an extent that we can only oppose this “mixture” to a principle that is essentially non-spatial and non-temporal, like eternity or nonbeing. (22). The composite has to be divided “according to qualitative and qualified tendencies”, or based on the way in which “it combines duration and extensity as they are defined as movements, directions of movements” (22-23). Bergson’s fundamental discord with traditional metaphysics lies in its understanding of spatialised time and a primary eternity as constituting differences of degree. From this perspective, time and space become “deteriorations” and “relaxations”, and all beings are determined “on a scale of intensity” that spans from nothingness to perfection. Bergson directs a similar argument towards science. In the scientific method, there is no conception of “mechanism” that does not treat objects as “differences of degree, of position, of dimension, of proportion” (23). Therefore, to uncover these pure tendencies, or differences in kind that constitute reality, the intuitive method is the most precise option.

Intuition is not a “feeling, an inspiration [or] a disorderly sympathy”, it is a precise method that carves out qualitative differences from real composites (Deleuze, 1988: 13). As Deleuze notes, there is an element of transcendentalism in the intuitive method of division, as the composite (fact) must be divided into “tendencies or pure presences that only exist *in principle*”, the elements that “condition reality” (22-23). The representation of experience has to be probed, or intuitively divided, to reveal the pure tendencies. The intuitive method, when faced with a composite, must first determine, “between what two things there may be (or may not be) a difference in kind” (24). Perception and recollection that constitutes the comprehension of reality are often mistaken as differences in degree when they are, in fact, differences in kind. Bergson comprehends the brain as an ‘image’ among other images, as a faculty that ensures certain movements among other movements (Bogue, 2003: 31). The brain, then, does not simply “manufacture representations”, but “establishes an interval” between a

---

differs can be said to be pure, but only tendencies differ in kind” (Deleuze, 1988: 22).

stimulus (received movement, excitation) and a response. This interval is characterised by the processing and manipulation of the received stimulus, where the composites could be divided up or prolonged in a “plurality of possible responses”. Deleuze argues that in this scenario, there are only matter and movements, albeit complicated or prolonged by the interval (Deleuze, 1988: 24). Perception is “impersonal and coincides with the perceived object”; it takes us “at once into matter”, but the cerebral interval renders real perception as an abstraction of the material object. As the brain does not merely ‘represent’ reality, but abstracts or retains useful elements from the perceived object (an act of reduction), there cannot be a difference in kind between “the faculty of the brain and the function at the core”, or in other words, between “perception of matter and matter itself” (25).

The intuitive method has shown that the perception of matter by the brain, and matter itself, are simply intensive differences that vary in degree. To establish this point, and consequently, to abstract useful perception from matter, Deleuze argues that we had to assume that the body “was like a pure mathematical point in space, a pure instant, or a succession of instants in time”. These “fictions” are not merely hypotheses, but are an essential facet of our perceptual mechanism (Deleuze, 1988: 25). The conditioning of experience requires such abstractions to reveal one of its fundamental aspects. What is left, according to Deleuze, is to scrutinise the ‘activities’ that constitute the cerebral interval between stimulus and response, and to determine how they become continuously “embodied” (25).

According to Bergson, a three-fold synthesis is required to achieve this continuity. First, a notion of “affectivity” is required to assume that the body is more than a point in space. Second, a faculty (memory) is required to link these instants and “interpolate the past in present” (recollection). Third, this faculty (memory in another form) has to contract matter to synthesise the experience of it with the quality of continuity (Bergson, 1911: 58 cf Deleuze, 1988: 25-26). Therefore, it is memory that transforms the body from instantaneity, and invests it with continuity and a duration in time. According



to Deleuze, this introduces a new line of subjectivity, in the form of affectivity, contraction-memory and recollection-memory, in the conditioning of experience. These terms “differ in kind from the preceding line [of] ... perception-object-matter” (Deleuze, 1988: 26). Real experience is, thus, “divided into two directions that differ in kind”: perception that “puts us *at once* into matter”, and memory, which “puts us *at once* into mind” (26). Deleuze claims that the question is not whether these two lines mix or coalesce, as this mixture forms the composites of experience itself<sup>64</sup>. The true objective of the intuitive method is to “go beyond experience toward the conditions of experience”, to “rediscover” the differences in kind in the “composites that are given to us and on which we live” (26).

In Bergson’s view, perception and recollection are always interpenetrating each other in a process akin to endosmosis. He believes that the objective of any psychological method should be to “dissociate” this mixture, to “give back to each its natural purity”. The limitation of many psychological theories is to treat this mixture as being “simple” or unworthy of further scrutiny. The result is the study of only a single phenomenon, and an ignorance of the pure tendencies that constitute experience, like pure recollection and pure memory (Bergson, 1911: 67). According to Deleuze, the intuitive method forces us to “go beyond the state of experience toward the conditions of this experience”, before the experience takes what Bergson would call ‘the human turn’ towards utility (Deleuze, 1988: 27). Differences in kind must be sought at the “source” of experience or “above this *decisive* turn”. However, to reach this point, acts of intuition will have to go through a process of “multiplication”. Intuition would require a movement that is commensurate with the experience. This may call for an occasional “broadening out ..., a tightening [or] narrowing” of intuitive movements (27). Once lines

---

<sup>64</sup> In *Bergsonism*, Deleuze often uses the term, ‘representation’, to describe the experience of reality. However, I have attempted to avoid this usage here, as the sense in which he uses the term in *Bergsonism* is conceptually different from the representation that he critiques in *Difference and Repetition*. It signifies neither a negation nor a Platonic deformation from a transcendental ideal. I believe that the term, in the context of Bergson, should be understood as a natural or biological mediation, the immediate given of a real experience.

of dissociation are discerned from a composite according to their natural articulations (differences in kind), they must be pushed beyond the turn in an act of “extraordinary broadening out that forces us to think a pure perception identical to the whole of matter, and a pure memory identical to the totality of past” (Deleuze, 1988: 27). In its extrapolation of internal movements, this philosophical method is comparable to the *modus operandi* of infinitesimal calculus<sup>65</sup>. Bergson, according to Deleuze, is not a philosopher who “ascribes a properly human wisdom and equilibrium” to philosophical debates. With the intuitive method, Bergson intends to push thought towards “the inhuman and the superhuman”, revealing ‘durations’ that are “inferior or superior to our own”<sup>66</sup> (28).

After pushing these tendencies beyond the human turn, it is also essential to determine the points of their intersection, which gives rise to the “thing as we know it” (Deleuze, 1988: 28). Like other famous dualisms of Bergson, this moment also points towards a bipartite division that suggests two lines separated by ‘the turn’. However, Deleuze points out that the intersection of lines must also occur “*beyond* the turn”, but “at a virtual point, at a virtual image of the point of departure” that gives us the “sufficient reason” of the thing and the composite (28-29). The two lines diverge towards pure tendencies from a common point beyond the turn, and converge at a virtual point that

---

<sup>65</sup> According to Bergson, infinitesimal calculus reverses the immobility of conventional mathematics, and substitutes the “ready-made” with a concept in “the process of becoming”. It seizes “movement from within and in its tendency towards change” (Bergson, 1946: 225). However, Bergson is not claiming to apply the procedures of calculus in his intuitive method. That would be a gross misappropriation of scientific concepts; he is merely directing the reader’s attention towards the analogical ‘movements’ that characterize the two methods – i.e., the reconstitution or extrapolation of a movement using infinitely small elements within the object of study. Just as the methods of calculus reconstitute a curve based on the “infinitely small elements that they perceive in the real curve”, intuition reconstitutes or rediscovers pure tendencies by pushing the apparent lines of articulation beyond the ‘human turn’ (Deleuze, 1988: 27).

<sup>66</sup> In *Bergsonism*, Deleuze cautions that this distinction between inferior and superior is prone to misunderstanding, and should be strictly considered as differences in kind.

acts as the constitutive moment of the composite. Dualism is, hence, “only a moment” that must proceed to “the reformation of a monism”<sup>67</sup>. As integration follows differentiation, the “broadening-out” must be followed by a “final narrowing”. These two “successive turns” in experience constitute the “precision” of Bergson’s intuitive method (29). Reality is, therefore, not only a “cutting out (*se dècoupe*)” of differences in kind, it is also an intersection (“*se rècoupe*”) along the “same or ideal point”. Consequently, an explanation of real experience requires the lines of “subjectivity and objectivity ..., of external observation and internal experience” to eventually converge at a virtual point (29-30).

The division of two tendencies into differences in kind is, strictly speaking, superficial, and originates from the ontological difference between space and time (duration). Deleuze argues that all other dualisms either involve or are reducible to this fundamental distinction (Deleuze, 1988: 31). Moreover, the distinction between space and time is not to be conceived as the originary ‘difference in kind’. Duration “tends” to encompass all the differences in kind, as it is “endowed with the power to qualitatively vary with itself”. Space, on the other hand, only manifests differences of degree between its objects (quantitative homogeneity). Therefore, the separation between the two is not a difference in kind, as only one subsumes qualitative differences. Thus, when a composite is divided according to its diverging tendencies, there is, on the one hand, a spatial dimension, “by which the thing can only differ in degree from other things *and from itself* (augmentation, diminution)” , while on the other, there exists the durational

---

<sup>67</sup> Deleuze summarises his argument as follows:

So the expression ‘beyond the decisive turn’ has two meanings: First, it denotes the moment when the lines, setting out from an uncertain common point given in experience, diverge increasingly according to 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.

aspect, “by which the thing differs in kind from all others *and from itself* (alteration)” (31)<sup>68</sup>.

Bergson thought that the widespread presence of ‘false problems’ is a result of our innate tendency to render differences in kind within a system of generality and homogeneity (space). However, this proclivity towards generality is “inseparable from our [psychological] condition” (Deleuze, 1988: 33). Moreover, though our spatialist bias suggests a heavily mediated representation of reality, as Deleuze notes, matter and extensity are properties of reality too. This “illusion” of spatialisation is not only a product of our biological makeup, but also a consequence of our environment and the universe, “the side of being that manifests itself to us in the first place” (34). Deleuze claims that as Bergson’s thought evolved, the concept of duration as a psychological experience reduced in prominence, and instead became one of the two aspects or ‘essences’ of real experience, the other being space. Hence, reality, as conceived by Bergson, has two sides: “spirit imbued with metaphysics and matter known by science” (Bergson, 1946: 41)<sup>69</sup>.

Intuition is, thus, a method that divides composites into tendencies that have spatial (differences in degree) and temporal (differences in kind) aspects. Though intuition is not duration itself, it could be considered as the “the movement by which we emerge from our own duration” and discern the presence of other durational rhythms. Without the intuitive method, duration would “remain a simple psychological experience”.

---

<sup>68</sup> Returning to Bergson’s famous sugar cube, Deleuze notes that if the solid is approached from a spatial perspective, one can only determine how it differs in degree with other things, and with itself. However, the cube also has a duration and a rhythm that are “partially revealed” as it dissolves in water. The act of waiting while the sugar dissolves has a broader meaning than is initially apparent. It reveals the existence of other durations that vibrate in rhythms other than ours: “It signifies that my own duration, such as I live in the impatience of waiting, for example, serves to reveal other durations that beat to other rhythms, that differ in kind from mine” (Deleuze, 1988: 32).

<sup>69</sup> It has to be repeated that, in the context of Bergsonism, the names Bergson and Deleuze are freely interchangeable.

Reciprocally, if intuition didn't "coincide with duration", and is devoid of a durational rhythm, it would be impossible to execute the method that we have just outlined (Deleuze, 1988: 33-34).

Therefore, intuition, as Deleuze conceives it, is a method that performs three core functions – problematising, differentiating and temporalizing (Deleuze, 1988: 35)<sup>70</sup>. To sum up, reality presents itself to us in the form of composite experiences. We use intuition as a method to *differentiate* or carve out reality according to their natural articulations (differences in kind). Bergson and Deleuze have demonstrated that the process of differentiation can, ultimately, be redefined in terms of space and time. As time, or duration, is the only process that has the potential to vary qualitatively with each new moment, differences in kind must be expressed in terms of duration. Space, however, is neither an illusion nor an artificial construct. The cognitive faculties of the brain perceive a reduced or reconfigured reality, with the 'cerebral interval' or 'the human turn' of experience rendering reality in accordance with human 'utility'. The result is an inordinate spatialisation of reality, and the attribution of a spatialist bias in problems that are fundamentally temporal. Although this spatialisation is an illusion, it is not only a consequence of our biology, but also a feature of external reality. Space is homogenous and is, by definition, extended. The division of objects in space is, merely, a differentiation in degrees, as everything is reducible to their positions in space. To study reality and the experience of it, we must push their natural articulations beyond the human turn to arrive at the conditions where they diverge, and the virtual point where they intersect to form a composite that we perceive with a strong spatiality.

The 'human turn' or the 'cerebral interval', which *represents* or mediates our reality, is a product of our evolutionary heritage and is characterized by its inclination towards utility. Studies in evolutionary biology have demonstrated how our cognitive responses

---

<sup>70</sup> Problematising refers to the construction of true problems and the detection of badly stated ones; differentiation refers to the cutting up of real composites into differences in kind; temporalising refers to the reconstruction of problems in terms of time rather than space.

to reality have been shaped by millions of years of evolution, and are characterized by the functions they perform in maintaining our responses to various environmental stimuli<sup>71</sup>. The spatialisation of real experience is, I believe, a consequence of the brain's tendency to impose a causal order upon external stimuli. Our ability to derive a causal chain from sensory events results in a fragmentation of experience into instants that are laid out in space, seemingly all at once, and separated by temporal markers (past, present and future) that are determined by casual relations. From the perspective of Bergsonism, natural laws and the findings of science are the consequences of a human intellect that is buttressed by the 'cerebral interval'. However, Bergsonism does not dispute the *practicality* and *use* of scientific theories. Science and analytic philosophy search for 'truths' below the turn, truths on mediated reality as deduced by an intellect that does not fully escape this mediation. Bergsonism (and Deleuzism) is an attempt to push the mediated reality beyond the turn, and consequently, discover the conditions under which duration diverges and intersects with space. Therefore, the knowledge of reality derived from both sides of the turn performs different functions. One attempts to explain phenomena in terms of reason and logic – both consequences of the reality mediated by the cerebral interval – whereas the other attempts to push these terms beyond their natural localisations to discover the conditions of their geneses. As we have seen, our predisposition towards causality is a consequence of our evolutionary heritage and was key to our survival. The prized tools of scientific and analytic thought, reason and logic, are abstractions derived from our innate inclination towards imposing a causal order upon events. The conventional distinction of temporal events into instants, as well as their separation into discontinuous pasts, presents and futures, is a product of this causal logic. Though useful as a practical concept, time conceived in this way neither considers nor explains the continuity and qualitative multiplicity of 'pure' duration.

As Durie and Mayell note, duration, though Bergson's most significant concept, receives relatively scant attention from Deleuze (Durie, 2000: 154, Mayell, 2004: 106). Moreover,

---

<sup>71</sup> See Chapter 10.

when he does invoke the concept, Deleuze departs from the traditional understanding of the term to emphasise its relation to memory (Mayell, 2004: 106). According to Deleuze, duration is “defined less by succession than by coexistence” (Deleuze, 1988: 60). Succession alone does not constitute duration, and merely denotes a temporal continuity. A thing “endures” because all the moments that constitute its existence are “retained or gathered-up” as a continuous whole. This gathering-up or coexistence is a “function of memory”, and is the reason why Bergson often equates duration with it (Mayell, 2004: 106). Without a memory to retain the past, reality is simply the substitution of one instant for another, with the universe starting anew at each succeeding moment<sup>72</sup>.

Duration, according to Bergson, is the “continuous progress of past which gnaws into the past and swells as it advances” (Bergson, 1911: 7), and ‘coexistence’ implies the existence of a past along with the present in memory (Mayell, 2004: 106). If duration as succession implies temporal continuity, coexistence in memory suggests a discontinuity in the sense that “no previous state of things can ever return”, as the “seamless flow of time” is retained in a coexisting past (Mayell, 2004: 107). Hence, from the perspective of psychological duration, even if the events are identical, consciousness cannot ever repeat the same state twice, or truly return to a previous state of affairs, as the circumstances would find the person at a new juncture in time (Bergson, 1911: 4). Therefore, each moment is essentially a ‘new’ moment and an act of novel creation. This novelty, though initially Bergson as a property of psychological duration, is construed by Bergson as a property that is mirrored by the universe. At a cosmic level, not only is every moment utterly new, but also entails a denial of “simple brute repetition of anything”.

If the universe is to endure, “dead or animate things [must] also exist in a way that ‘gathers up’ their past” (Mayell, 2004: 107). According to Mayell, Bergson’s oft-cited

---

<sup>72</sup> According to Bergson, the experience of duration is not merely “one instant replacing another; if it were, there would never be anything but the present” (Bergson, 1911: 6-7).

meditation on a sugar cube dissolving in water addresses these very concerns<sup>73</sup> (108). Practical science deals with isolated systems, such as the one formed by the sugar, water and the glass, and excludes all peripheral and hypostatic elements that affect neither the efficacy of the calculations nor the utility siphoned from the isolated objects. Most fundamentally, according to Bergson, all objects and operations that science isolates rest on the idea that “time does not bite into them” (Bergson, 1911: 11). Time in an isolated system is abstract and “distinct from durational time”. From this perspective, time “measures whether the event (A) occurs simultaneously with event (B)”, and does not concern itself with the “nature of intervals between the correspondences” (Mayell, 2004: 108 cf Bergson, 1911: 9-10). According to Mayell, science studies isolated systems as if the events occur instantaneously. In the scientific mode of understanding, “nothing of importance would have changed in the characteristics of the system” (Mayell, 2004: 108). As we have seen, time in empirical science is abstract, quantified and rendered in spatial terms. However, from the boredom (passing of time) experienced as the sugar melts into water, psychological duration, at the very least, reveals a property of time that reveals “something about the nature of the universe at large” – the fact that time cannot be sped up or slowed down as I wish (108). Nevertheless, my temporal persistence still contains the melting of the sugar, the passing of a stormy cloud, cinematic time – durations of events, experiences and objects that exist outside myself.

---

<sup>73</sup> Yet, succession is an undeniable fact, even in the material world. Though our reasoning on isolated systems may imply that their history, past, present and future, might be instantaneously unfurled like a fan, this history ... unfolds itself gradually as if it occupied a duration like our own. If I want to mix a glass of sugar and water, I must ... wait until the sugar melts. This little fact is big with meaning ... [as] the time I have to wait is not that mathematical time which could apply equally well to the entire history of the material world, even if that history were spread out, instantaneously, in space. It coincides with my impatience, that is to say, with a certain portion of my duration, which I cannot protract or contract as I like. It is no longer something *thought*, but something *lived*. It is no longer a relation, it is an absolute.

Bergson, 1911:



When the sugar melts, my impatience and boredom disclose a temporal relation that exists between my time and the sugar's time. The events and experiences that constitute my life become entangled with the melting of the sugar and the cooling of the tea. My life "validates as real, the rhythm by which the sugar melts". This rhythm cannot be "thought away", or merely quantified or represented in abstract terms, as if the universe remained perpetual and the melting of the sugar had, instead, "unfolded [instantaneously] like a fan". In reality, the sugar, glass and water cannot form an isolated system, as "I (the one who waits) am part of it (Mayell, 2004: 107-108 cf Bergson, 1911: 11-12).

Idealisation is one of the most common features of scientific study, and is usually inevitable (Cartwright, 1983: 2). The construction of isolated systems, often a given in various forms of scientific (and philosophical) enquiry, is also, by its very nature, an idealisation. Its utility is evident in experimental setups and theoretical explorations, and Bergson's views on this matter shouldn't be construed as questioning either its validity or efficacy<sup>74</sup>. Since Bergson's philosophical project is preoccupied with the discovery of a 'real time' or duration, any isolated system that fails to include this dimension has to be abandoned or altered to permit the possibility of envisaging such a time. Instead of dismissing a system or approach as right or wrong, the emphasis should be on the level of enquiry. The practicality of metric time is evident in its efficacy and utility in the construction of spatial theories and models. However, in a philosophical project that seeks to discover a theory of time free of spatial constructs, its validity is questionable, and any argument with metric time as one of its elemental sources could be discarded in favour of theoretical constructs with alternative, if not contradictory, ontologies. The system of the sugar-water-glass is, thus, a decoupage, the cutting-out of a mobile section from the Whole. However, to be seen as "enduring" in time, it needs to be "reintegrated into the Whole", where its tenuous connection to everything else in the universe is made apparent by "the duration immanent to the whole universe"

---

<sup>74</sup> In fact, Bergson's philosophy does not shy away from idealisations. The concept of pure tendencies, discussed earlier in this work, is an example.

(Bergson, 1911: 13-14)<sup>75</sup>. Thus, as Mayell notes, the “proof of the endurance of things rest not on my psychology, but because we can think of the universe as having a consciousness” (Mayell, 2004: 109). Bergson reacted to the anthropomorphism implied in this idea by arguing that in thinking the impersonal consciousness of duration, we shouldn’t preserve the personal ‘human’ character or memory”, but “pursue the opposite course” (Bergson, 1965: 48)<sup>76</sup>. According to Ansell-Pearson, we can only link consciousness with duration when we can appreciate that “‘perceived’ time is also ‘conceived’ time” (Ansell-Pearson, 1999: 35). Following a tangential line of thought, Mayell asks those averse to anthropomorphism to “understand the human in terms of the universe, not the universe in terms of the human”. Going beyond the human turn or the human condition is once again the impetus for these ideas. Therefore, the relationship between personal and ontological duration must be “understood via a de-personalisation of human duration”, and not by “the personalisation of the universe” (Mayell, 2004: 109).

As Grosz points out, in Bergsonian thought, philosophy has the function of revealing a slice of knowledge than the sciences must necessarily exclude. By shifting their emphasis on closed systems and definable and isolatable terms, science often shirks away from the continuities and connections that these extracted objects constitute. Bergson “articulates what the art expresses directly than the sciences”, but only through an “ungeneralisable singularity” that is capable of discerning the continuity and force of real duration (Grosz, 2005: 4). However, neither art nor science can claim to rein in the “universal force of difference”, as each approaches a facet of difference that is eluded in the other. According to Grosz, philosophy functions as an in-between space in Bergson

---

<sup>75</sup> On the impossibility of absolute isolation, Bergson writes, “the sun radiates heat and light beyond the farthest planet. And, on the other hand, it moves in a certain fixed direction, drawing with it the planets and their satellites. The thread attaching it to the rest of the universe is ... tenuous. Nevertheless it is along this thread that is transmitted down to the smallest particle ... the duration immanent to the whole of the universe” (Bergson, 1911: 13-14, also quoted in Mayell, 2004: 108-109).

<sup>76</sup> This has also been pointed out by Ansell-Pearson and Mayell (Ansell-Pearson, 1999: 35, Mayell, 2004: 109).

that seeks the dual movements of universalisation and particularity, through the force which unites them – the double-becoming of the duration, the “double-generation of the past and the present, the virtual and the actual”, which is also the movement of genuine difference. Using the intuitive method, philosophy can conceive difference as an immersion in, and production by, duration – “duration is difference, the inevitable force of differentiation and elaboration (becoming)” (4-5).

As we have seen before, difference discloses itself to us as differences in nature. Consequently, it is an “object of empirical intuition”. The intuitive method reveals to us certain irreducible differences, or the way “the real divides itself” according to its natural articulations or tendencies. Difference is driven by an internal motor that differs not only from itself, but also from “everything ‘like’ it, everything with which it shares ... a resemblance”. (Grosz, 2001: 7). Becoming, as a process that lets difference emerge within a thing, can only be actualised in duration, which is ‘the field’ that sustains and generates difference. Duration, according to Grosz, fractures and opens up the past and the present “to what is virtual in them, to what in them differs from the actual, to what in them can bring forth the new”. This unbecoming, says Grosz, is the real impetus of becoming, and makes the past and the present a “fundamentally ever-altering” relational virtual. (Grosz, 2001: 4).

Bergson, in *Time and Free Will*, represents duration as a “succession of qualitative changes, which melt into and permeate one another” (Bergson, 1913: 104). However, duration is not merely a qualitative succession; it is also a continuous multiplicity. Continuous multiplicities are opposed to extensive multiplicities and refer to unbroken, intensive processes that change in nature when divided. Temporal flow, being a ceaseless and perpetually varying series, can only be considered as a continuous multiplicity, as its fragmentation will inevitably result in series that vary according to rhythms that are unique to themselves.

Bergson’s view of time as a change, flow or process might appear to be a tautology, but it is not possible to accuse this theory of suffering from the fallacy of infinite regress that

befalls most A-theories of time. In A-theories of time, the temporality of an event is dynamic, and “passing from being future, to being present, to being past” (Mullarkey, 1999: 25). However, if time is a process as well as a movement of the present from past to the future, according to what temporal measures does the present itself move? In other words, this movement of time would itself require a “second-order temporality” or a “super-time” that would require a third-order temporality, and so on and so forth *ad infinitum*. B-theorists of time, sometimes called ‘detensers’, deny the processual nature of time, as well as the reality of the tenses. According to some B-theorists, the flow of time is an “illusion of the mind”, and a consequence of the “timeless relations” that exist between “events of anteriority, posteriority or simultaneity” (24-25). The emergence of novelty that characterises the flow of time is reduced, in B-theories, to a mental representation, or a property of the brain that apprehends the causal relations between events. Time is considered to be an offshoot of non-temporal phenomena such as the “geometry of space, increasing entropy or causality”. A-theorists, on the other hand, are reluctant to discard the subject who perceives time as a flow, as “an objective stance outside this procession” eliminates the dynamic and the novelty that characterises time (25). Real time, according to the B-theorist Hugh Mellor, is to be found in a material substratum, which can also include the brain. There is no flux or dynamic in the temporal world, but merely different states of the world. The temporal direction of these states is the “arrow of causality”. Mellor claims that nothing in the world is caused “merely by the passage of time”, and facts are tenseless and “do not concern changeable properties of things themselves” (Mellor, 1981: 119, Mullarkey, 1999: 26).

The fact that an essentially extended, material and objective universe can give rise to subjective, unextended and immaterial perspectives still remains unexplained and is akin to an “immaculate conception” (Mullarkey, 1999: 195). Similarly, falsehood and misrepresentation is also ontologically anterior to a primal notion of truth and representation. Mullarkey says that if materialism is the true and sole feature of the universe, then there is “no obvious naturalistic basis for misrepresentation” to emerge

in evolutionary creations. If the materialist were to concede such a position, he would “inevitably be led to either a relativist or pluralist position”. Thus, the monistic philosophy of materialism would be “rendered false for the very fact that it is *ex hypothesi* exclusively true” (196). Mullarkey’s solution to this problem is to treat both the mind and the world as processes, which would amount to a type of pluralism. Seemingly erroneous thought, such as temporal flow and the existence of unicorns, is considered to be a part of non-being, as error is a “non-correspondence with reality and a correspondence with nothing” (195-196). Traditional mind-body arguments tend to condemn one term to “error, prejudice or falsity”. However, if the content of thought is itself a process beget by a processual world, and is a part of the world that pertains to continuity, then it is “neither absolutely true nor false”, but merely “one of the many types of worldly processes” (196).

Mullarkey argues that Bergson’s “non-quantitative scales of being” is constituted somewhere between “openness and absolute denial” (Mullarkey, 1999: 198). He finds echoes of ethical negation and exclusivity in the shunting of subjective knowledge (or conversely, the subjugation of materialist knowledge). Instead of an inclusive study of knowledge, the negation manifest in the materialist disdain for subjectivism is tantamount to exclusion or even an “expulsion”<sup>77</sup>. In Bergson’s affirmative pluralism, “the proportionality of truth” is the most significant aspect of philosophical enquiry. (Mullarkey, 1999: 198). The denial of absolute negation, or a positive intuition, thus becomes a feature of Bergsonism.

Thomas Nagel, also arguably an A-theorist, has remarked that the tenses, or the pastness, presentness and the futurity of time, cannot be explained without recourse to their characteristic flow or passage, or in other words, without subjectivism (Nagel, 1979: 16). According to Peacocke, however, one cannot demarcate a separate reality to

---

<sup>77</sup> “A part (the judgement of point of view) pretends to be the whole by exclusion rather than integration, that is, it makes a totalizing judgement against the other” (Mullarkey, 1999: 198).

subjective knowledge, but merely demarcate different ways of conceiving the world. The indexical form of thought that characterises empirical materialism, and the more demonstrative knowledge gleaned from subjectivism, are, hence, different forms of understanding, and modes of describing, the same reality (Mullarkey, 1999: 196). Nevertheless, Mullarkey claims that the latter cannot be fully legitimised unless “some state or object is presented that can only be thought of at a relatively subjective level and no other” (Mullarkey, 1999: 197). In Bergson’s philosophy, the knowledge of duration attained through the intuitive method gains such a status<sup>78</sup>.

The creativity of time, or the absolute novelty that it brings forth, is a distinctive feature of Bergson’s thought. But, for anything to be radically new, it has to be recognised as such. In other words, the appearance of novelty necessitates a familiarity. Hence, the term ‘absolute novelty’ implies a contradiction, as it has “nothing with which to contrast or stand out as new”. Moreover, an absolute or radical novelty also negates the possibility of memory (Mullarkey, 1999: 199).

In his works, Bergson has been fairly reticent about the form and structure of duration that can facilitate its recognition as such. As Mullarkey notes, the conceptual dilemma posed by a radical novelty is similar to those posed by other Bergsonian concepts such as pure heterogeneity (Mullarkey, 1999: 200). As noted earlier in this work, the pure tendencies in Bergson’s philosophy are merely idealised extrapolations of tendencies that are discerned using the intuitive method, and that differ in kind. Moreover, by characterising duration as a ‘continuous multiplicity’ or as a ‘heterogenous continuity’, Bergson identifies the role played by continuity - the retention of previous states in a flow - as well as diversity (heterogeneity) - the appearance of novel forms<sup>79</sup>.

---

<sup>78</sup> Mullarkey points out that the significant issue facing Nagel’s arguments is whether *qualia*, or perceived properties of an object, could qualify as ‘facts’. Nagel’s concepts address not facts, but the ontological status of perspective. Therefore, for Nagel, the true issue is not whether subjective knowledge is real knowledge, but to consider the veracity of the existence of this perspective.

Gaston Bachelard has been critical of the undue importance Bergson affords to continuity in his theory of time. According to Bachelard, a theory of duration must also account for discontinuities, or levels of rhythms and lacunae (Bachelard, 1963: 24). However, Soulez and Mullarkey have pointed out the apparent weakness of Bachelard's criticism, which seems to overlook Bergson's own ideas regarding the various rhythms in the universe (Soulez, 1984: 204, Mullarkey, 1999: 216). Nevertheless, there has been some debate over the characteristic structure of duration, or whether it has any structure at all. It is essential to derive a theory of time and duration that can account for its novelty without sacrificing the continuity that is significant to its constitution. Mullarkey claims that the debates surrounding the structure of *duree* essentially boil down to one issue, which is to determine whether its defining characteristic is heterogeneity or continuity (Mullarkey, 1999: 199-200). Deleuze reformulated this question to equate heterogeneity with difference (as we have seen), and sought its relation to novelty and continuity.

As we have seen, Deleuze's philosophy gives pre-eminence to the different over the same, and to becoming over static being. In Deleuze's thought, difference is the ontological base upon which identity and sameness rests. However, by sameness, Deleuze intends a "productive repetition" that reflects the endurance and 'becoming' of a thing in reality. However, "the being of all repletion" must still be ontologically secondary to the pure difference that generates forms (Mullarkey, 1999: 201). The primacy afforded to difference over repetition also translates to a preference for novelty over continuity<sup>80</sup>. Like 'difference in itself', novelty is also "non-oppositional", as it neither demands a negation nor does it require "an immutable self-same continuity to oppose". Conventional accounts of novelty have explained its creation either as an "absolute *ex nihilo*" or as a rearrangement of "pre-existing entities". If novelty does not

---

<sup>80</sup> Difference in-itself is also a repetition (Repetition of difference) in the sense that difference has to repeat its process over and over to produce the new (O' Sullivan and Zepke, 2009: 1)

arrive *ex nihilo*, it must be explained by a combinatorial logic. In other words, this sort of novelty is explained away as a “quantitative event” that involves a scrambling or shuffling of pre-existing material to produce something new (202).

According to Deleuze, the creation and study of novelty must be one of the aims of philosophy. He favours the new and the singular to traditional philosophy’s emphasis on the eternal and the universal (Deleuze, 1977: vii)<sup>81</sup>. In *Cinema 1*, he praises Bergson for “[transforming] philosophy by posing the question of the ‘new’ instead of that of ‘eternity’” (Deleuze, 1986: 3). However, as Daniel Smith observes, the new is mainly an “operative concept” in Deleuze’s philosophy, and ultimately corresponds to the much greater force of difference (Smith, 2012: 406)<sup>82</sup>. Conditions for the new can only be found in a metaphysics of difference, because if identity is pre-given or is the determining factor of (as in Plato), the production of new would be theoretically impossible as there wouldn’t be any new differences (Smith, 2007:1).

---

<sup>81</sup> “The aim is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced” (Deleuze, 1977: vii).

<sup>82</sup> “The new – in other words – difference calls forth forces in thought that are not the forces of recognition, today or tomorrow, but the powers of a completely other model, from an unrecognized and unrecognizable *terra incognita*” (Deleuze, 1968: 136).



## 5. Repetition and the New

Besides recombination, Smith writes that the problem of the new can be linked to causality and emergence. If one relates causality to novelty, she would be claiming that the effects pre-exist in the causes themselves, and hence, the new that is produced is once again only *quantitatively* new, that is, the new is simply a change in the material circumstances that was predetermined by the cause (Smith, 2007: 2). However, Mario Bunge has criticised this view for following a linear view of causality. In reality, effects can have several causes, and the same cause can produce different effects (Bunge, 2011: 132)<sup>83</sup>. In this line of reasoning, causality has been confused with the more linear concept of *determination*, which can also be probabilistic, structural, teleological or dialectical<sup>84</sup> (Smith, 2007: 2).

The new, as an emergent property, is gaining credence in modern science and biology<sup>85</sup>. Daniel Smith has considered emergence as a feature of high-level complexity. He claims that Deleuze's conception of the new has to be distinguished from emergence, as novelty is a fundamental ontological concept in his philosophy, rather than a property that only appears at higher levels. Being an intimate property of difference, novelty pervades every thought, moment and being (Smith, 2007: 2-3). However, I have followed De Landa, Protevi and Mullarkey in making no such distinction between the new and the emergent (De Landa, 2002: 16). If emergence and emergent properties are tendencies, I believe that they must be considered as virtual potentials that are capable of spontaneously arising at any level. Hence, the formation of thoughts, concepts and

---

<sup>83</sup> Penicillin (cause) can cure or kill a person. Heat can be an effect of multiple causes such as friction and combustion (Smith, 2007: 2).

<sup>84</sup> Smith argues that Deleuze treats all such determinations as being derivable from a metaphysics of difference (Deleuze, 1968: 28, Smith, 2007: 2).

<sup>85</sup> I use the term emergence to imply both physical and supra-physical becomings. Hence, polarising emergents such as consciousness and lines of evolution can all be included under complexity theory.

art must all be considered as truly novel in the sense that they emerge out of the same chaotic *material* that constituted the state that preceded their emergence, but contains a property that makes it *differ or emerge* from the material substrate itself<sup>86</sup>. In fact, the most fundamental idea of emergentism can be summarised as follows: “[that] what emerges is genuinely *novel* relative to the base system [out of which it emerges]” (McDonough, 2002: 283).

Complexity theory, the branch of study that deals with emergent properties in complex or chaotic systems, must not be confused with chaos theory. The latter studies the growth of unpredictable behaviour in simple deterministic non-linear systems, whereas complexity theory studies the “emergence of relatively simple functional structures from complex interchanges of the component parts of a system”<sup>87</sup> (Protevi, 2006: 21). Complexity theory studies the movement from chaos to order, while chaos theory traces the emergence of disorder from stability<sup>88</sup>. The emergent movements in

---

<sup>86</sup> A property C is said to be an emergent “when it is felt that there is an explanatory between C and [the base system] B” (McDonough, 2002: 283).

Silberstein and McGeever define emergent properties as those “properties of a system taken as a whole which exert a causal influence on the parts of the system consistent with, but distinct from, the causal capacities of the parts themselves” (Silberstein and McGeever, 1999: 182)

<sup>87</sup> Using a more technical jargon, Protevi defines emergence as “the (diachronic) construction of functional structures in complex system that achieve a (synchronic) focus of systematic behaviour as they constrain the behaviour of individual components” (Protevi, 2006: 19). From this perspective, the emergence of an ego-centric consciousness out of individual brain cells, or the appearance of a conventional segmented ‘city-like’ structure in unplanned cities like Manchester, is an *evolutionary* (diachronic) process that arises over time from seemingly disordered individual components (neurons, large swathes of people and disparate communities sharing a common land), which creates (synchronic) stable structures and patterns without the presence of a master control.

<sup>88</sup> Though this description offers a rather simplistic view of these theories, it is effective in summarising their primary concerns. The movement from order to chaos, and vice versa, might appear to carry traces of the Hegelian dialectic. However, that would be a mistake, as this movement does not occur through

evolution, previously accepted as the random copying errors at the level of the gene, are now considered as genuinely creative events that are incapable of being explained completely as the effect of one level upon another, or one component upon another. As Mullarkey notes, attention is not paid on the minutiae of isolated systems, but “on phenomena at every level – micro, macro and cosmic”, to discover “large-scale patterns, rules [and] meta-rules”, and consequently, reveal a material reality accommodating “a plurality of independent rules of behaviour” (Mullarkey, 1999: 203). He argues that the ability to form a new thought, emotion or novel perceptions cannot be reduced to the “same physical substratum each time and *in toto*” (204). As Bergson argues, if there is only one science of nature, and if “all objects and phenomena are spread” on the same plane, there can only be one type of causality in the world – a phenomenal causality of rigorous determinism. This is how the mechanistic concepts from Laplace to Einstein determine cosmic events. In relativistic physics, space-time is conceived as being spread out on a unilateral plane like Cartesian coordinates. The determinism implicit in these theories is at odds with the probabilistic indeterminism of quantum mechanics and thermodynamics<sup>89</sup>. Einstein’s dream for a unified field theory remains unfulfilled, and many physicists have opened up to the possibility of different *processes* operating at different levels of the universe. Bergson foresaw this development when he argued for “several *sciences* of nature” and “several scientific *determinisms* of unequal rigour”. Experience, he claimed, is no longer to be studied merely on the surface, but “into the depths”.

The reductive logic that advances physicalist descriptions of phenomena is reminiscent of the surface-level study that Bergson chastises. Emergence, and more specifically, ontological emergence, signifies a failure of the part-whole reductionism as well as

---

negation, but by the potential for novelty and unpredictability that is latent in these systems.

<sup>89</sup> The most common form of emergentism is emergent materialism, where life and mind are considered as having emerged from matter (McDonough, 2002: 284).

mereological supervenience<sup>90</sup>. The physical monism that characterises much of contemporary physics is a product of a mereological reduction of the whole as a consequence of the parts. Some of the most accepted strategies of scientific rationalisation, including the deductive-nomological model, are also driven by a part-whole reductionism (Silberstein and McGeever, 1999: 183). With increasing evidence about ontological emergence in the universe, Silberstein and McGeever believe that “the best interpretation of our best science” reveals a world where the properties of things “may not be fixed absolutely with respect to some unchanging space-time background”. As a result, the self-assumed ontological and epistemological superiority of traditional physics over the “special sciences” must be reconsidered to accept the possibility that “it is perhaps necessary to seek non-reductive explanations ... of some phenomena”. The writers encourage the pursuit of non-reductive accounts of the mind and mental processes that do not reduce them to a “more fundamental physical property”. Even though the primary physical source of the mind is undoubtedly the brain, physicalist descriptions of the mind work through a process of “eliminativism” that seeks to chip away “any distinguishing characteristics of the mental” (198-199). Silberstein and McGeever blame analytic philosophers such as Jaegwon Kim for blanketing the mind-body problem in a logic of material reductionism<sup>91</sup>. Part-whole

---

<sup>90</sup> Michael Silberstein and John McGeever’s *The Search for Ontological Emergence* (1999) outlines a precise distinction between ontological and epistemological emergence. They characterize epistemological emergence as those processes bearing traces of mereological supervenience, whereas in ontological emergence, such a relation between the parts and the whole is attenuated, producing an emergent property, which can be understood as being genuinely new. They find validated instances of ontological emergence in the EPR-Bohm systems in quantum mechanics.

<sup>91</sup> Jaegwon Kim claims that there are “persuasive reasons” to believe that the world is fundamentally material, and everything in the universe is “made up of material particles and their aggregates”. In such a world, the existence of an emergent mind is hard to accommodate (Kim, 1993: 9). Silberstein and McGeever are sceptical of these ‘persuasive reasons’, and blame such views on mereological supervenience (Silberstein and McGeever, 1999: 199).

reductionism, they claim, will only offer “intolerable solutions”, and naturalism “almost demands” the mind, consciousness and cognition to be understood as an ontologically emergent feature of “neurochemical processes and their environments” (199).

Silberstein and McGeever based their arguments on studies in quantum mechanics. It is possible for physicalists to shield macroscopic phenomena from this process, and leave microscopic phenomena within the purview of complexity theory. However, as the writers note, if emergence is a detectable property in the quantum realm, it is likely that it should exist elsewhere. Moreover, if “everything is reducible to fundamental physics” and most quantum phenomena are not, it must ironically follow that “the entire world of classical objects is somehow emergent” (Silberstein and McGeever, 1999: 199). Hence, there is sufficient reason to consider ontological emergence as a real property of the universe.

Ernst Nagel has distinguished between machines, whose “characteristics are the sum of the characteristics of their parts” and other kinds of wholes (like organisms), whose wholes are “greater than the sum of their parts” (Nagel, 1961: 115). In a similar vein, Bergson has characterised the mind as the “faculty of drawing from itself more than it contains” (Bergson, 1920: 30). Given that *duree* is a continuous multiplicity, and that novelty emerges from it at every moment, how is it possible to account for cracks, fissures or discontinuities in time? Moreover, if time is a process, how can we account for a theory that can explain the perception of temporal states such as the past, the present and the future without sacrificing its essential nature as a heterogeneous continuity? This question will be revisited in a chapter to follow<sup>92</sup>.

So far, we have seen that in Bergson’s philosophy, *duree* or duration is characterised as a process that is a continuous, heterogeneous multiplicity. Time, as an expression of duration, creates novel expressions at every moment. This novelty cannot be explained away as mere recombination or as an *ex nihilo* creation. Neither can it be accounted for by mechanistic or physicalist explanations, as Bergson has convincingly argued against

---

<sup>92</sup> See chapter 9.

such reductionism by revealing the limitations of analytic methods in the study of real duration. By treating novel expressions as unforeseen emergent properties of base systems, we have also seen how previously inexplicable (or explained in a manner of materialist reduction) properties and processes such as consciousness and evolution can be studied as genuine acts of creation. In Bergsonian philosophy, cosmic processes unfolding in *duree* are characterised by their ceaseless creative expression. However, it has to be reiterated that this creativity must be approached without the faintest hint of anthropomorphism or deism. When Bergson claims that the cosmos has a mind or a consciousness, he is demanding a perspectival shift that forces a radical displacement of anthropocentrism, and an acceptance of mental or mind-like properties as real properties of the universe to be studied with equal vigour as physical phenomena. Ultimately, Bergsonism is an earnest attempt to escape the human condition, or the evolutionary and biological biases that have fashioned our perception to favour utility and space.

We will return to this theme in part two after navigating Deleuze's philosophy of transcendental empiricism. There, I will argue that, in his philosophical system, an escape from the human condition can only be facilitated through a disclosure of the passive syntheses that underlie all experience<sup>93</sup>.

### **On the *duree* as representation, metaphor and repetition**

'The Bergson Paradox' is the apparent discomfiture between homogenous space and heterogeneous time. We are predisposed to spatialise time at every instance, but ironically, even 'speaking' about time is, ironically, a spatialisation of sorts. How can we then represent the nature of real time in language and thought? Is representation of time itself a way of sacrificing its nature as an unfolding continuity? As Mullarkey notes, "the abolition of time by representation is not simply the representation of time abolished: representation is that abolishment itself" (Mullarkery, 1999: 219).

---

<sup>93</sup> See Chapters 9 and 11.

Even our linguistic evolution has reflected our spatial biases, as it is impossible to truly speak about time as a process without risking its spatialisation. When Bergson talks about “several conscious states ... organized into a whole”, he admits that the use of the world ‘several’ and ‘organised’ already isolate these states and externalize them in relation to one another (Bergson, 1917: 90). B-theory’s vocabulary of “before, simultaneously with, and after”, as well as A-theory’s distinction of “past, present and the future” will always “homogenise time” to some extent as a “linear, contained and calculable entity”. In this homogenising schematism, differences become “differences of some unchanging substance: of the world, of the present, of the past and so on” (Mullarkey, 1999: 221).

Mullarkey argues that Bergson’s scepticism of conceptualisation is a result of his conviction that our logic, reason and metaphysics have been constructed “on the model of solids”. To ‘think’ conceptually of an enduring object is to take “an immobile view of its mobility”. In Bergson’s view, the intellect is incapable of truly thinking mobility (Mullarkey, 1999: 221). From Plato to Kant to Hegel, the immobility reflected in their concepts is almost inevitable due to the tendency of human mind to separate continuity from the objects of its study. Bergson’s best solution to escape our burdensome immobility was to adopt a fluid language that could invigorate his concepts into motion. Bergson wanted his concepts to “stand less for a thing than to become the thing or, at least, to become some sort of reality” (220). This idea of mobile concepts is reflected in the language of Deleuze’s philosophy as well. As previously suggested, a flexible terminology in a philosophical system would create concepts that are not only partially iconic but also form types of ‘images’ that are “almost matter and almost mind” (221). If representation is a perpetual curse that has afflicted human intellect, an ephemeral liberation must be sought at the apotheosis of our representational tendency, our language. Metaphors, for instance, are vehicles for such fluidity. The connections, significations and associations that a metaphor forms with things in reality are indicative

of dynamism and fluidity rather than transcendentalism. Deleuze uses metaphors to invoke assemblages and combinations that destroy the fixedness of the identities of the two terms<sup>94</sup>. It is evident that accusations of conceptual obscurity aimed towards Bergson and Deleuze are often directed from a point-of-view that betrays a lack of understanding of these philosophers' intentions. A philosophical system that studies processes and mobility can never be truly sincere if it does not discard the conventional mode of conceptualizing that seeks to determine concepts as unalterable and static. The falsification method of analytic philosophy is merely a substitution of one ready-made, immobile concept for another. Its utility in practical sciences remains unquestionable, but in the study of processes, it lacks a fluid metaphysics. The metaphorical imagery employed by Bergson and Deleuze can be considered as partly real, according to Mullarkey, as every reality is a kind of "process or style of movement" (Mullarkey, 1999: 222). It is in this sense that Bergson considers even *duree* as a kind of metaphor. If the status of a metaphor produces in the concept of duration a fluidity, it is far preferable to a ready-made concept that asks a question about the universe that can only be answered with a 'yes' or a 'no', leading to a relentless dialectic that reduces the diversity and continuity of the universe as a series of philosophical oppositions such as phenomenon and noumenon, and being and appearance (Bergson, 1917). However, Mullarkey explains that the clarity and distinction (claimed) of scientific realism and the obscurity and vagueness (accused) of the process philosophy of Deleuze and Bergson are "both literally true in their own categories", and are only metaphorical when examined as a misplaced concept in a wrong category. Idealism and materialism are both wrong, as they are equally guilty of subsuming reality in a pervasive totalism. From this perspective, both Deleuze and Bergson are thoroughly classical as they retain a

---

<sup>94</sup> "It is never a matter of metaphor. There are no metaphors, only combinations" (Deleuze, xxx). Some examples of Deleuzian metaphors include "Be the Pink Panther and your loves will be like the wasp and the orchid", and "[N]ever is a plateau inseparable from the cows that populate it, which are also clouds in the sky" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 23). Joe Hughes argues that such metaphors should not be understood at the level of hyper-realism or hyper-literalness. Instead, he views Deleuzian metaphors as a rigorous selective process that forces the reader to choose and exclude predicates (Hughes, 2012: 20-21).



“classical view of truth as correspondence” (Mullarkey, 1999: 224). They are explorers and innovators in this regard, as they championed the necessity of inventing dynamic concepts and a fluid taxonomy to comprehend an essentially mobile and perpetually diversifying reality.

Even art does not manufacture or mimic an abstract idea or the materiality of its object. Instead, it seeks to recreate the vital movement animating its lines. Replication of a movement in another is a creative or productive repetition. It is a repetition of the same, but it is neither a copy nor a representative imitation, it seeks to recreate the original movements that constitute the assemblages that an object gets into, but according to a logic of difference that fashions it as the novel expression of a prior movement. What Bergson and Deleuze advocate is an “understanding of movements which are individuated in by their embodiment in certain actualisations”, but which are “supra-individual ... without being abstract”. The ‘imitable’ is not merely a product of abstraction by association or “bare material repetition”, but a virtual capacity that forms its imitations in a dissociative manner (223). Like the Platonic simulacrum that derives its power from the virtual rather than an ideal, the imitable is the hypostatic potential animating the repetitive movements of its imitations, as opposed to an object from which a replicative movement, identity or representation must be derived.

With the Platonic simulacrum, Deleuze intended to subtract difference from “a state of malediction”, and make it “thinkable in itself” without any external predications or a misidentification of the copy as the original. The overturning of Platonism that we had discussed earlier thus replaces the concepts of generality and equivalence with a concept of repetition understood as the “novel affirmation of singularity” and the “hidden structure of an always ‘differential’ criterion” (Angelucci, 2014: 375). As opposed to resemblance, the series constituted by repetitions consists of singularities that are not interchangeable. Repetition is the act of repeating the original event to the  $n$ th power, but each time with a variation or modification that retains traces of the primary movement. Difference and repetition work together in a manner that induces

the latter to function as the affirmation of pre-individual singularities, which in turn defines the dynamic of difference (375-376)<sup>95</sup>. However, repetition also functions as a dual process that, according to Deleuze, both enslaves and heals us (Deleuze, 1968: 6). Repetition, as the same and the mechanical is neither negated nor ignored, but is rescued by repetition as constant affirmation of the new. The latter is also “a selective act” that stages an ever-shifting element that is rendered different “without there being a prototypical principle or ultimate term of the series” (Angelucci, 2014: 376).

The intuitive method is built upon the principle that change does not require any underlying substance that does not change itself; alteration is itself the substance (Bergson, 1946: 122, Bergson, 1907: 107). The method does not search for an inalterable thing sustaining processes, but proceeds with an intention to think *in* time (duration), accepting its unpredictability and irreversibility. Sholl writes that the intellect is predisposed to think in terms of the past (what-exists), while the intuitive method displaces the emphasis to creation (directed towards the future) (Sholl, 2012: 547). The Laplacian view of the cosmos that still inspires most schools of thought in modern physics and analytic philosophy requires an unchanging substratum that can serve as the frame of reference for the changing world of perceptions. This, as we have seen, will assume the world to function as a static and deterministic clockwork mechanism, or as a series of changes that will vary according to an unchanging set of natural laws. The study of changes and processes calls for the invention of a concept that compels the thinker to go against the natural bent of the intellect (the human condition). It necessitates an aberrant act that studies processes according to a concept that accommodates real movement, as opposed to one where movement is artificially added on to a series of static states. If we accept the mobility and flux of reality, its study demands a concept that can make thought itself move. The concept that Bergson suggests is akin to the process at work when we notice the progression (movement) of a melody in time. Stripped of its movement, it ceases to be a melody. Each note bears the

---

<sup>95</sup> Deleuze’s repetition has close affinities with Nietzsche’s concept of eternal return as the act of “conceiving the same as that of different” (Deleuze, 1968: 41)

weight of the ones that came before it (past), and carries traces of what is to follow (future), with the melody being a qualitatively changing whole (present) with nothing underlying it. It is “pure change, with each note bleeding into the next while remaining qualitatively distinct”. When we divert our attention to a note, and isolate it from the melody, the melody “slips away”, as it is “not a thing, but an urge to movement”. Intuition, though not duration itself, is the method by which we can think in *duree*; it is a “process of cultivating [mobile] thought[s]” (Bergson, 1946: 167-169). Unlike scientific method that creates and builds upon ‘ready-made, immobile concepts’, every act of the intuitive method is creative. It is the cultivation of an idea and a defiance of the human condition, but one that is ultimately transformed into a positive thought and an affirmative act (see Sholl, 2012, 546-549).

However, having thoughts alone is not a condition for thinking, according to Bergson; it has to be provoked by a contact with a movement that creates novelty – “this contact has furnished an impulse, this impulse a movement ... Philosophical intuition is this contact, philosophy is this impetus” (Bergson, 1946: 91, 103). From this perspective, Sholl argues that philosophy has its origin in thought not by reflection or representation, but by a “contingent encounter” that compels us to create a problem characteristic of the affective force which occupies our ‘intuition’. If we are to create a concept that maintains its fidelity to the original movement, intuition must open up thought to a “vital repetition” of defiance that resists our tendency to spatialise and homogenise (Sholl, 2012: 550-551). Bergson understands this repetition (without *telos* or end) as being expressive of a creative *elan vital* (vital force) that reveals itself in the creative and continuous multiplicity of *duree*, the incessant novelty of evolution, and most significantly, in the duration within us. He finds in this perpetual repetitive movement a creative property of the universe that intuition reveals to us by contact (Bergson, 1976: 46-47). Intuition is, therefore, “not thought reacting upon something”, but is a process by which one is brought into contact with a repetition “that does not want to give itself up and demands conceptual precision so as to render that repetition living” (Sholl, 2012: 551). Intuition is a brute repetitive force that reveals reality to us as ‘images’, but is

without an image itself (552). Intuition engenders its expression in the various objects and movements that it comes in contact with, and is without a purpose or an end; it exists only as a blind force that strives for expression in manifold objects confronted through myriad accidental encounters. It reveals to us the presence of a heterogeneous duration that expresses itself through multiple rhythms in objects across the universe, but sensed by a durational movement that exists within us. The movement that characterises intuition and *duree* becomes the crux of Bergsonism, an *elan vital* that expresses itself through life, matter and duration. Evolution of life, in Bergsonism, is a process by which *elan vital*, on confrontation with matter, expresses itself as a diversity of forms that evolve over time. It preserves the memory of these encounters in the new life forms that are created as a result of this contact and the ones that survive. It is a brute force without a plan or a model, and expresses itself through extinction and dead matter as much as it does through life. In Bergson's works, biological evolution is considered as an organic expression of this vital impulse that exists as a characteristic creative force in the universe. *Elan vital*, or productive repetition, is a blind force that acts upon a series engendering variations across the movement. At least, it is in this sense that Deleuze interprets this idea (551-552).

Deleuze considers repetition as being about "differences running through a repeated series". To understand how a member of this series relates to the repetitive movement, one must observe how that member "allows us to pick up on the variation" (Williams, 2003: 57). The members that constitute a series and the variations run through them constitute different orders as each acts as the condition for the other. Deleuze uses a terminology of signs and signals to explain this effect<sup>96</sup>. As Williams explains, the work of the pure differences is perceived in actual things (signs), but it is impossible to identify

---

<sup>96</sup> By 'signal', we mean a system with orders of disparate size, endowed with elements of dissymmetry; by 'sign', we mean what happens within such a system, what flashes across the intervals when a communication takes place between disparate" (Deleuze, 1968: 20)

them except through observable differences (signals) (58)<sup>97</sup>. Pure differences and the internal repetition occupy a virtual realm which actualises itself in the universe through the variations that they express in matter and thought (see also, Deleuze, 1968: 14-18).

However, Sholl and Braidotti wonder whether a life and thought that are characterised purely by the production and repetition of differences could lead to the dissolution of individual identity into a flux (Sholl, 2012: 545, Braidotti, 1994: 117)? In a similar vein, Ansell-Pearson questions whether Deleuze has merely produced a “fetish of repetition” rather than an extended discourse on the nature and character of this chaotic flux (Ansell-Pearson, 1999: 82-83).

To answer the first problem, it is important to understand all things as modes of expression of pure differences that are repeated infinitely. If a differential function (virtual) is repeated across a series of terms, it will express itself (actual/actualise) in these terms as modifications that are at once unique to each individual term, but also ‘symptomatic’ of the function as an efficient cause. Moreover, in a process philosophy, I believe that the individual identities must be considered as part of the flux from which they emerge, and in which they endure. Their existence as a unified identity, or to be more precise, the consciousness of their consolidated individuality, is largely explainable by considering the role that our intellect plays in ‘synthesising’ them. Our intellect, with its natural inclination to spatialise, tends to associate extensity with our bodies as well as external objects. Individuality and unity, here, is determined by the uniformity of

---

<sup>97</sup> Deleuze appears to prefer a Spinozian method of determining causal relations (Deleuze, 1992: 140). He argues in the Spinozian method, the cause of a thing is considered as a more reliable given than the thing itself, whereas, the Cartesian method propounds a contrary view that gives primacy to the thing itself (144-147). The Spinozian method, based on the indeterminate signs left by the cause(s) on the thing, works back to it, so that a “better knowledge about the thing [is gained] through better knowledge of the cause”. Cartesian method, on the other hand, seeks a definite knowledge of the thing, and derives a “necessarily less clear knowledge of the cause” (Williams, 2003: 58). The Spinozian method is thus a ‘symptomology’ that studies the object based on the signs or ‘symptoms’ left by the causal forces (differences, variations) that render it as novel and unique.

extension, as well as by the collective reactions of a unified thing to extensive forces. More specifically, the individuality of a thing, or a person, or our own consciousness, is the contraction of a succession or series of states that unfolds in time. From the perspective of my consciousness, if my existence is a set of events in time, there must be some psychological process by which I associate an identity, an 'I', to this vehicle that experiences the changing states. Similarly, if I am to associate a fixed identity to a tree in my garden that has wilted and shed, and blossomed and flowered, over the course of a year, there must be a process by which these separate states could be contracted as constituting the experiences of a unified object. When I associate the identity of a cricket ball to that rolling lump of round, hard matter on grass, I am effectively associating the series of events that this object 'experienced' over the match to the idea of a unique cricket ball that endures in time, and exists as a unified vehicle of experience. The contraction of events that unfold in flux into a unified concept, including the concept of an 'I', is a characteristic feature of our intellect, and something that is explained by Deleuze in his first synthesis of time<sup>98</sup>.

To answer the second problem of the 'fetishism of repetition', it would be worthwhile to reiterate the nature of repetition as a blind force without telos or a final cause. Deleuze does not provide a 'cause' or 'origin' for this phenomenon except in relation to difference. In fact, Deleuze "refuses to seek an originary point" out of which repetition can conceive itself cyclically (Parr, 2015: 117). If the capacity to vary is a property that is common to all things in the universe, there must be a virtual order of intensive differences that acts upon things repetitively. Unlike the common conception of repetition, which is the appearance of the 'same' object one after the other in succession, there is no object in Deleuze's repetition. What is repeated is not a model, style or an ideal form (as in Plato), "but the full force of difference itself" (118).

---

<sup>98</sup> An account of the syntheses of time is provided in chapter 9.

The concept of *duree* can also be subsumed under Deleuze's description of repetition. If an object that is identical in every way to another appears in succession to the latter (or 'repeated', as we understand it conventionally), it still cannot be understood as the 'same' object, as something must have changed so that the objects could be distinguished as constituting different events. If there is nothing *different* about the two events, the repeated objects should be the one and the same thing. Therefore, for repetition to be possible, something must vary hypostatically so that the events can be distinguished as different. Duration is the fundamental expression of this difference that is repeated across things. Therefore, the intuition of an internal duration is also an awareness of the differential repetition that is internal to all things. In Deleuze's philosophy, repetition is not merely fetishised but is revealed as the vital process that regulates the continuous creation of the new and unseen<sup>99</sup>. To think difference is to "think the conditions that allow a thing to determine its own ideas via its repetition for itself". (Sholl, 2012: 555).

The second part of the thesis will tie these themes together through a careful consideration of Deleuze's reworking of Kantian critical philosophy. By exposing the passivity and repetitions that underlie the given in any experience (through the three passive syntheses of time), we can understand how his philosophy 'thinks' pure differences that are concealed by representational models of experience. Consequently, using Grodal as the example, I will demonstrate how these ideas can act as the metaphysics that is missing in cognitive film theory. Additionally, I will critically analyse Grodal's views on arthouse films to augment a Deleuzian ethics of the time-image with reference to Jodorowsky's *The Holy Mountain* (1973) and Tarkovsky's *Solaris* (1972).

---

<sup>99</sup> See Chapter 9.

## Deleuze, Grodal and the Metaphysics of Cognitive Film Theory

Raghu Menon

University of Stirling

### Part 2: Deleuze and Grodal: The Metaphysics of the Subject

#### 6. Introduction

Deleuze's philosophical system can be roughly summed up as an attempt to trace real experience to a differential genesis. In the first part of the thesis, we observed how his readings of Plato and Bergson yielded similar results. The objective of the second part of the thesis is to survey the emergence of the subject from this differential flux in comparison with the cinematic subject posited by ecological film theory. I have considered Torben Grodal's biocultural film theory to be representative of the ecological movement within cognitivism. Arguments could be made in favour of other theorists, but Grodal's influence, as well as his strong reliance on evolutionary biology, makes him a suitable candidate for a Deleuzian critique<sup>100</sup>. It must be noted that the general system

---

<sup>100</sup> Grodal's influence is attested by the publication of a special anthological volume in honour of his works, *Film Story and Style: A Tribute to Torben Grodal* (2003), that received contributions from many prominent cognitivists, including Bordwell, Branigan and Anderson. Anderson's works (1996, 2005) were the first to popularise ecological approaches in film theory, but his ideas owe more to the ecological psychology pioneered by Joseph Gibson than the evolutionary biology of Grodal. Murray Smith's recent work, *Film, Art and The Third Culture: A Naturalized*



of Deleuzian subjectivity presented here should be sufficient to *complement* most ecological theories of cinematic subjectivity, as his philosophical system seeks the passive presuppositions behind what these theories take as a 'given'. Cognitivism in general begins with a central identity – a subject – whose subjectivity remains unexplained at an ontological level. To borrow from the Deleuzian parlance, these theories study the active syntheses of the subject rather than the passive processes that underlie these activities. Being a movement that disavows abstract metaphysics, cognitivism is likely to dismiss such metaphysical interventions as whimsy. However, at the very least, Deleuze's arguments, especially in *Difference and Repetition*, offer a reasonable critique of the surreptitious and chaotic 'ground' which is overlooked or assumed by most 'empirical' theories of cinema. In *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, Deleuze extols Bergson's desire "to give modern science the metaphysic which corresponds to it, which it lacks as one half lacks the other" (Deleuze, 1986: 17). Though it deals only with ecological film theory, and Grodal in particular, a similar ambition guides the structure of the arguments to follow.

The extended attention afforded to Plato, Hegel, and Bergson in the first part of the thesis was justified taking into account their importance to Deleuze's overall project of constructing a metaphysics of difference that vanquishes the primacy given to 'identity' in traditional theories of representation. In a similar vein, the second part begins with a jaunt through Kant's critical philosophy, and his concepts feature rather frequently in the following pages. The decision to approach Deleuze via Kant can be justified on two grounds: (1) Deleuze's philosophy is, in his own words, an extension of (and a response to) the Kantian project. Deleuze's debt to Kant is particularly evident in the structure of *Difference and Repetition*. Important Kantian concepts such as the Ideas and the three syntheses return in Deleuze, albeit in dramatically altered forms. Nevertheless, by developing his metaphysics in the general style of Kant, it could be argued that Deleuze wears his Kantian influence on his sleeve. (2) As Cutrofello notes,

---

*Aesthetics of Cinema* (2017), provides a syncretic account of ecological arguments in film theory, but without an overt emphasis on evolutionary biology.

analytic and continental approaches to philosophy identify Kantianism as their point of divergence (Cutrofello, 2005: xv). We have seen that the cognitivists, by and large, tend to identify with the former tradition<sup>101</sup>. Despite their scientific competence, the metaphysical problems that Deleuze identifies in Kant reappear in cognitive theories of film, including that of Grodal's. However, in the case of the latter, his adherence to the tenets of evolutionary biology and neurocognitivism alludes to the passive and transcendental conditions underlying conscious activity, but he stops short of extending these arguments towards a creative and virtual ontology of the kind espoused by Deleuze. One could even say that the objective of this chapter is to read Grodal through Deleuze as Deleuze reads Spinoza or Bergson.

It must be reiterated that this work neither refutes nor intends to undermine the insights of empirical science that cognitive theorists like Grodal draw upon. The problem at stake is the fundamental ontology that the cognitive position precludes. With Grodal as the principal point of interest, I intend to demonstrate the philosophical utility of diffusing this theoretical tradition with the process metaphysics of Deleuze. Like Bergson and modern science, if successful, the philosophical system of Deleuze can provide Grodal's insights with their 'corresponding metaphysics'.

*Difference and Repetition* is the primary influence for the metaphysics presented here. Nevertheless, despite varying taxonomies and terminologies across works, the ontology of Deleuze remains relatively the same. Badiou once infamously derided the Deleuzian system as being "monotonous" – the same structure repeated over many books in many styles and contexts (Badiou, 2000: 15). Amongst others, Hughes (2012) and DeLanda (1999) have positively critiqued the presence of a repetitive structure. On the one hand, the presence of an identifiable form, albeit mobile and fluid, saves his philosophy from charges of obscurity and inscrutability. On the other, it is also a testament to its applicability and relevance across varied contexts. Whether it is Spinoza, Kant, Bergson, Nietzsche or Proust, Deleuze ultimately traces the genesis of

---

<sup>101</sup> Refer chapter 2.

their concepts to a presupposed, and often concealed, virtual differential field. Joe Hughes has identified Deleuze's general ontology as follows: 1. Unindividuated matter 2. First passive synthesis 3. Second passive synthesis 4. Third passive synthesis 5. Transcendental Field 6. First active synthesis 7. Second active synthesis 8. Representation/Individuals (Hughes, 2012: 37). Though the terminology that Deleuze attributes to these processes varies from time to time, it is useful to use this general structure as a guide to the discussions that follow. However, like most secondary readings of Deleuze, I have placed more emphasis on the three passive syntheses of *Difference and Repetition* (see Williams, 2003: 67).

In addition to a primary reading of *Difference and Repetition*, I have also followed the commentaries written by Williams (2003), Hughes (2009, 2012) and Somers-Hall (2013). My position is reasonably syncretic, in the sense that I have tried to accommodate a theoretical stance that lies somewhere between the three readings, but without the phenomenological impetus of Hughes. Other significant works on *Difference and Repetition* include those by Bryant (2008) and Rolli (2016). The objective of these two writers is to construct a coherent account of the transcendental empiricism of Deleuze, but with an overt focus on only one of the two terms. While Rolli plays up the empiricist influence on Deleuze, Bryant argues to the contrary, preferring to elevate the transcendental aspects of his philosophy. The commentaries provided by Williams and others are fairly neutral, eclectic and relatively less polemical, making them more pliable to the demands of the current study.

As clarified in the introduction, testing the scientific veracity of Deleuze's arguments is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, overtures toward such an approach can be found in works by Keith Ansell-Pearson (1999, 2002), DeLanda (2002) and Protevi (2013). Of the three, DeLanda's engagement with Deleuzian metaphysics is the most daring and influential. In *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy* (1999), he tests the applicability of Deleuze's metaphysics in empirical science using concepts from complexity theory such as possible spaces and asymmetric time. In *Germinal Life:*

*Difference and Repetition of Gilles Deleuze* (1999), Ansell-Pearson reads Deleuze in mediation with the ideas of the biologist Weismann. In *Bergson and the Adventure of the Virtual* (2002), he extends this project to scrutinize the nature of duration and the new. Protevi's work, on the other hand, tries to demonstrate the relevance of Deleuze's project (to seek the 'conditions of real experience') to the 4EA approach within cognitivism. These works share a common desire to inject science with a Deleuzian metaphysics. Though the scope of this thesis is rather modest in comparison, it is imbued with a similar spirit.

The essential course followed by the second part of the thesis can be summarised as follows: We begin with a discussion of Kant's critical philosophy and the set of claims that it presupposes or ignores. Deleuze identifies these problems as necessitating an ontology of 'real experience' as opposed to one of 'possible experience'. Moreover, though Kant revolutionises philosophy by claiming that the objects must conform to the subject, and not vice versa, he takes for granted the existence of a subject with preformed faculties without explaining how such a subjectivity is possible in the first place. Thus, we have a subject united by a pre-existing set of faculties that conditions and comprehends its experience (thereby regulating all possible experience), but with no clear knowledge of its genetic origin. Again, we are faced with the subordination of difference to identity (subject, faculties) and representation (conditioned experience). According to Deleuze, a solution to this problem is not possible without investing passivity with higher powers of syntheses. In Kant, powers of synthesis lie squarely with the active self, with receptivity the only role accorded to the passive self. An account of emergent subjectivity is only possible if we examine the passively synthesised conditions that are presupposed in any description of active cognition. In Kant's relatively overlooked third critique (*The Analytic of The Sublime*), Deleuze identifies a concealed genetic philosophy that is capable of thinking difference as well as duration (Bergson). After examining how the subject emerges through passive and active syntheses, we compare this account to Grodal's theory of cinematic perception. In the latter sections of part two, we take up Grodal's critique of

arthouse cinema from the perspective of a Deleuzian cinematic 'ethics'. Grodal dismisses most abstract forms of arthouse cinema as producing illusions of 'higher meaning', but for Deleuze, such films are of the highest kind, as in their images, they render visible the transcendental and genetic conditions of time, and stand testament to the creative possibility of the medium to forge differential images that are not bound by *common* sense or a fixed perspective. We consider two quintessential arthouse films, *Solaris* (1972) and *The Holy Mountain* (1973), and read them in accordance with the taxonomy established by the *Cinema* books, but also in conjunction with the metaphysics of *Difference and Repetition*.

## 7. A brief note on the concept of difference

Though Deleuze, in his works on the history of philosophy, appropriated the systems of the likes of Kant, Leibniz, and Spinoza, he famously likened his method to that of a “buggery” or an “immaculate conception” (Deleuze, 1990: 6). As Smith notes, the motivation behind the excursions into the systems of other philosophers is a desire to push these ideas to their differential limits (Smith, 2012: 38). This often involved the radical introduction of foreign concepts and ideas that were rarely engaged by these philosophers in their original works. Thus, Spinoza is read through the medieval Scholastic idea of univocity, Nietzsche through the eyes of Bergson, Leibniz through Maimon, Bergson from the vantage point of Heideggerian difference<sup>102</sup>, and the first two critiques of Kant through the subversive possibilities offered by the less popular third critique<sup>103</sup>. This “topological” method – a terminology that suggests stretching and folding – is necessary to push these philosophical systems to the differential and intensive origin that the likes of Spinoza and Nietzsche hinted at, but never fully conceptualized (Deleuze, 1988: 63). We have already seen how Deleuze accomplished such a feat by reinventing the Platonic simulacrum as an expression of pure difference. The reading of simulacrum as a copy without an original is ingenious not because it strikes a swift blow to Platonism, but because it suggests the nature of difference as relational and exterior to its terms. The importance of Bergson to Deleuze’s philosophy is due to his attempt to think difference in absence of prior transcendent concepts or

---

<sup>102</sup> It has to be noted that Deleuze doesn’t explicitly address the Heideggerian connection to Bergson. Daniel Smith alludes to the Heideggerian influence in one of his many essays on Deleuze (Smith, 2012: 38). The collected volume of his writings, *Essays on Deleuze* (2012), provides a succinct summary of the attempts undertaken by Deleuze to subvert the philosophy of history into a unique genetic account of difference. Michael Hardt’s *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (1993) restricts its attention, albeit extensive, to the triumvirate of Bergson, Spinoza and Nietzsche.

<sup>103</sup> Fiona Hughes considers the essential arguments of Kant’s third critique in *Kant’s Critique of Aesthetic Judgement* (2010).

pre-existing identities<sup>104</sup>. As noted before, Bergson considers real experience as a composite or a mixture (space-time, extensity and duration, perception and memory). The aim of the intuitive method is to distinguish the *pure* tendencies that comprise this mixture, or in other words, the genetic origins and conditions of this experience. All experience is a composite of extensity (space) and duration (time). Our evolutionary inclination towards utility has necessitated a highly spatialised conception of knowledge that tends to overlook the real nature of time. Though modern science has been successful in constructing time as an independent variable, according to Bergson, it nevertheless conceives it as uniform, homogenous, abstract and derived from space. Owing to practical considerations, science, and indeed, any system that measures and quantifies, can only conceive the Whole as a determinable closed set. Real movement, which is what transpires between two instants, cannot be accounted for by this model, and consequently, movement is recomposed as a succession of determinable instants in space whose continuity is maintained by an abstract and homogenous duration (immobile sections + abstract time). For Bergson, movement cannot be separated or abstracted from the thing that moves, and each movement expresses a unique rhythm of duration (the rhythm of Achilles, the rhythm of the tortoise and their intersection that results in the crucial gallop that overtakes the tortoise). Duration is what changes and does not cease changing. Duration divides, subdivides and converges into different rhythms, with each change expressing an “affection of the Whole”. If the Whole is closed and already given (determinable) in the Laplacian model of modern science, the Whole always extends out to the open, towards novelty and creation, in the Bergsonian model (“the Whole= the Open=duration=creation”) (Smith, 2012: 263). If change is equated with a translation of space in science, it is considered as a transformation of the Whole in Bergson, as well as the sufficient reason for the former.

---

<sup>104</sup> The difference between the terms ‘transcendent’ and ‘transcendental’ are crucial for Deleuze. Deleuze uses the term ‘transcendental’ in roughly the same way as Kant, referring to a *grounding* or a set of conditions that are innate to experience. Transcendent refers to something that goes beyond or is external to being and experience (Heaven, Platonic Forms). The concept of transcendence is opposed to the idea of immanence favoured by Spinoza and Deleuze.

Just as with Plato, Deleuze extrapolates a relational notion of difference from Bergson's conception of duration and the open whole (Deleuze, 1994: 222). In an open system, change and movement arise out of a difference in potential or intensity. For example, the intensive differences of pressure and temperature determine the shape and magnitude of the tornado. The differences in potential between the movements of a prowling tiger and a nimble gazelle realise something unforeseen (the gazelle swerves away from the chasing tiger to seek shelter in a narrow gap between the rocks). Though we can recompose these movements retroactively as a determinable succession of instants in space, or as a series of forces acting upon each other, the emergent acts of creativity (the swerving gazelle) demand an explanation that elevates intensive difference as the genetic origin of all experience: "Every change refers to a difference as its sufficient reason. Everything which happens and everything which appears is correlated with orders of difference: differences of level, temperature, pressure, tension potential, *differences of intensity*" (Deleuze, 1994: 222).

From the Bergsonian perspective, if the Whole is open and more than the sum of its parts, the Whole and part do not belong to the same plane. Moreover, if the "parts are always in space, whereas the Whole *is* time, it *is* real time ... it is duration" (Smith, 2012: 264). Deleuze extends this argument in conjunction with the Humean notion of the 'exteriority of relations' to arrive at a concept of difference defined by a logic of relations. According to Hume, the relations between two terms cannot belong to either of them. For example, if I say that A is taller than B, the attribution 'taller than' does not belong to either A or B. Similarly, if I say that A is shorter than C, the attribution 'shorter than' cannot belong to A or C (A cannot be both taller than and shorter than). As Daniel Smith notes, Plato's solution to this problem was to suggest that A participates in an Idea of Small with C and an Idea of Large with B, suggesting that concepts of size are transcendent notions existing independent of objects (265). Deleuze overturns Platonism by wresting transcendence and immobility away from Ideas while still retaining its essential structure. If relations are exterior to their terms, as Hume says, it is equivalent to a *becoming*, as terms cannot change without their relations changing



and vice versa. Furthermore, if relations are exterior to two terms, and if the “terms change when the relations change”, it is possible to add more terms, and ultimately, conceive a limit where “there are no longer any terms but only packets of relations”. What is normally called a thing, object or an event are then only a packet of relations, “a multiplicity or manifold”. Thus, this concept helps Deleuze to conceive the ‘in-between’ of things and their movements “in itself and for itself” (266). The coexistence, independence and exteriority of relations are aspects of what Deleuze calls the virtual, or what is *becoming* or changing in the actual. The differential relations that constitute a thing or a phenomenon are also referred to as Ideas by Deleuze, thereby completing the overturning of Platonism that envisaged these concepts as transcendent and fixed<sup>105</sup>. Thus in Deleuze’s inverted Platonism, Ideas are no longer fixed structures of identity, but genetic differential forces at the heart of all becoming. Deleuze extends Bergson’s arguments on duration in this manner by associating them with a logic of differential relations. As Smith neatly summarises, “the whole is the Open – that is, duration and change – but the domain of becoming itself implies a logic of pure relations” (Smith, 2012: 267). Thus, the Whole or duration is the repetition of pure differences, that is, changing relations external to any terms.

Taking these arguments together, we can say that if the Whole is duration and change, real time is conditioned by a logic of relations. The linear time of common sense conceals different nested dimensions of time/duration that are passive and transcendental to all experience. The Bergsonian method of intuition that analyses composite experience for pure tendencies or differences-in-kind is redeployed in the *Cinema* books as a search for the pure cinematic tendencies, which Deleuze identifies as the movement-image (correlated with space, action, and extensity) and the time-image (correlated with duration). Though films may contain both types of images, most films can be associated with a dominant regime of signs. Generally, films operating in the canonical form find expression through movement-images, often presented as a series of actions in response to changing situations. Deleuze identifies the time-image

---

<sup>105</sup> By calling them Ideas, Deleuze also alludes to Kant.

aesthetic with the cinema of post-War Europe, as many of these films explored the transcendental ground of time and memory through techniques that dispelled with the sensorimotor schema in favour of more experimental approaches. A Deleuzian film analysis will entail the identification of the dominant mode of images and its corresponding order of signs.

As we will see, *Difference and Repetition* was an attempt to conceptualise the passive syntheses of time that act as the hidden ground of subjectivity and cognition. In the *Cinema* books, Deleuze expresses a preference for time-image cinema because these films express the multiplicity of time and its different relational orders (circular, serial, coexistent), whereas movement-image cinema, with its emphasis on action, espouses a linear and commonsensical (rational) form of time. Because the former reveals the transcendental and passive conditions of time, Deleuze argues that these films present a “direct image of time”. Movement-image cinema, on the other hand, owing to its adherence to the sensorimotor schema can only present time indirectly (derived from action and subordinated to movement), a characteristic not all too dissimilar to the consideration of time in Newtonian physics (derived from space) (Deleuze, 1989: 2). Extending Bergson’s critique of modern science to movement-image cinema, we can say that it conceives the Whole as a closed set, a sum of its parts, distinguished by “rational cuts” between shots and a unitary world of actions and reactions (Deleuze, 1989: 181). On the contrary, time-image cinema is constructed by “irrational cuts” and characterised by ruptures (*caesurae*), with each interval between the shots extending out to, and in constant dialogue with, an ever-changing open Whole. Time-image cinema reveals the transcendental and genetic conditions of subjectivity and temporality that operate passively in experience, and consequently, functions as the cinematic expression of Deleuze’s metaphysics.

The concept of the passive syntheses, as well as Deleuze’s general metaphysics, was intended as a corrective measure to Kant’s critical philosophy. A generalised Kantianism is also at play in the film-theory of Grodal, making his philosophy

prerequisite to the arguments that follow. If Plato is the first great bulwark that Deleuze had to break down, and Hegel, the second, Kant assumes a third, perhaps, more conciliatory figure. The method followed by Deleuze in his engagements with Kant is once again symptomatic of the monotony pointed out by Badiou and Hughes. Just as with Plato, Deleuze dissects Kant's arguments to revive the differential philosophy that lies dormant in his system. Irrespective of the object of enquiry, the Deleuzian method is essentially an attempt to conceptualise the genetic and differential conditions that underlie real experience.

## 8. Deleuze, Kant and the Conditions of the Real

Kant's "Copernican revolution" in philosophy was the dissolution of the subject-object relationship in traditional Western thought. Prior to Kant, philosophers looked at objects as the origin of representation. Kant inverted this idea by famously suggesting that the objects conform to the subject that represents them. The "necessary submission" of the traditional subject to the objects of its experience was annulled by Kant in favour of a revolutionary idea, a harmonious accord between the subject and the object – we are not merely legislated by nature, "we are the legislators of nature" (Deleuze, 1984: 14). To be specific, the knowledge and organisation of objects in the external world must correspond to certain pre-existing conditions of the subject, or in other words, the internal constitution of the subject must determine its epistemological boundaries. However, according to Deleuze, the Kantian project was only partially successful as Kant did not push his thesis to its necessary conclusion – the origin of subjectivity itself (Deleuze, 1994: 193). Instead, the Kantian harmony is the pre-existing harmony of the universal subject and its *a priori* categories. Instead of conceptualizing a genetic account of real experience, Kant merely sought the conditions of possible experience<sup>106</sup>.

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze christens his philosophy as a 'transcendental empiricism'. Transcendental philosophy has its obvious origins in the transcendental idealism of Immanuel Kant. By suggesting that objects conform to mind, and not vice versa, Kant transformed Western philosophical thought that had been hitherto crippled by questions of essence and existence. As Cutrofello suggests, all subsequent works of philosophy must be considered in light of the Kantian legacy, and as responses to the problems he raised (Cutrofello, 2005: xv). Kant's philosophy of transcendental idealism was a response to the rationalist-empiricist debate that occupied philosophy in the eighteenth century. According to Kant, for there to be any

---

<sup>106</sup>It is possible to detect Maimon's influence in Deleuze's criticism of Kant (see Lord, 2014:166)

existence at all, that there must exist a set of ideal and universal conditions of the mind (conditions of possible experience). Kant disagreed with the empiricists by stating that human ‘understanding’ consists of certain pure concepts that do not find their origin in experience, while in opposition to the rationalists and dogmatists, he argued that the intellectual representation of objects through understanding (non-sensible) was impossible with concepts alone, and demanded the presence of sensible intuitions (Kant, 1998: 2). Therefore, according to Kant, all human experience must find its origin in *a posteriori* (empirical) sensations, whose intuitions must, in turn, conform to the *a priori* (non-empirical) forms of human understanding (Cutrofello, 2005: 6). In other words, for the cognition of an object, an intuition of the faculty of sensibility must pass through the schemata of imagination as legislated by the pure concepts of the faculty of understanding (Bogue, 1989: 57)<sup>107</sup>. As we will see, this idea is similar in spirit to the contemporary cognitive position that argues that the internal constitution of the evolved brain conditions the recognition and representation of objects in our experience, which is also the idea that shapes Grodal’s theory of cinema in *Embodied Visions* (2009).

The harmonious union of the faculties under the legislative reign of the understanding and the concept aids the recognition of all the sensations as belonging to the same object. The subject emerges from the same phenomenon as an inevitable consequence of the union of the faculties; the intuitions and the concepts that complement each other establish a collective identity – the subject – as the focal point of all experience. It is this “constitutive finitude” of Kant’s philosophy that Deleuze finds revolutionary – the discovery that the cognition of objects must conform to a finite subject (Deleuze, 1984: 13). Deleuze claims that before Kant, classical philosophers began with a concept of infinity that then *limits* itself in finite objects. However, a concept of infinity that then limits itself is inadequate as it suggests an imperfection that goes against the notion of

---

<sup>107</sup> Kant proposes three syntheses: the synthesis of apprehension in intuition, the synthesis of reproduction in imagination and the synthesis of recognition in a concept (1998: 17).

infinity (that which is limitless). However, in Kant, the relation between the finite and the infinite is overturned – “The finite will no longer be a limitation of the infinite; rather, the infinite will be an overcoming [dépassement] of the finite ... the property of the finite to surpass and go beyond itself ... The infinite is no longer separable from an act of overcoming finitude as only finitude can overcome itself” (Deleuze, 1980 cf Hughes, 2012: 29-30). Classical philosophy could not conceive a notion of subjectivity as finite ego as they began with a pre-established order of the external world that the subject must somehow comprehend. In Plato, this concept is presented as an act of recollection (anamnesis) – the intellect must remember the forms of reality (infinite) that it has forgotten (finitude) (Plato, 2005: 160). As Hughes notes, the notion of the constitutive subject is essential for Deleuze, as it is from this idea that Deleuze builds his “Kantian enterprise”. However, unlike Kant, who was reluctant to venture beyond the finite ego, Deleuze would extend the critique to describe the processes by which the subject can “surpass” its finitude.

Though Deleuze once labelled Kant as one of his ‘enemies’, his works, *Difference and Repetition*, in particular, are written in the spirit of critical philosophy (Deleuze, 1995: 6). Like Kant, Deleuze shunned the existence of a transcendent source like a soul or a God that must function as the outside or foundation of thought. As opposed to rationalists like Leibniz, both Kant and Deleuze agreed that the nature of genetic difference ought to be non-conceptual, as is the case in the difference between Kantian concepts (intelligible, logical) and sensible (non-conceptual, aesthetic) intuitions (Descombes, 1980: 152 cf McMahon, 2009: 87). However, this dichotomy between the concepts and intuitions is also the significant point where Deleuze’s critical philosophy diverges from Kant’s and becomes what he calls a “superior empiricism” (Deleuze, 1994: 57).

Kant’s critique insinuates a world whose comprehension must be submitted to a synthesis by reason. Though unshackled from the transcendent traps of divinity or a higher Self, this immanent reason itself escapes a genesis in Kant’s philosophy. According to Kant, we can never know with certainty whether properties such as

causality are indeed true of reality as we are unable to understand experience independent of such a priori concepts. Moreover, “concepts and existence in space and time are irreducible to one another ... and any possible experience ... will necessarily be in space and time”. Thus, experience is but “partial, limited and unconditioned” (McMahon, 2009: 90-91). Those undeterminable and unconditioned components of experience, which Kant refers to as Ideas, include the aforementioned limits such as God or Self, and symbolise the tendency of reason to be deceived by transcendental illusions – the possibility that such unconditioned Ideas can be a true and reliable source of knowledge<sup>108</sup>. Though these Ideas can never be known, they must be thought as they represent the organisational limits around which empirical knowledge of the world can be constructed.

Kant specifies a succession of syntheses that conditions experience in time: the synthesis of apprehension in intuition, the synthesis of reproduction in imagination and the synthesis of recognition in a concept (the synthetic unity of the apperception) (Kant, 1998: 17). Thus, a diversity of representations can be understood as pertaining to a single object, and as a correlation, these experiences can be comprehended as belonging to a unified transcendental subject that endures in time (McMahon, 2009: 90). Consequently, the Kantian account of the faculties postulates a world that can only be understood through representation. Those aspects of the world that escape representation will remain concealed from the subject, and difference emerges in this model never in-itself, but in the form of a recognizable identity (Bogue, 1989: 57). According to Deleuze, what stops the Kantian critique from becoming a transcendental empiricism is its hesitation to provide an account of the genesis of the faculties in real experience. Kant, in the first two critiques, only provides the conditions for those experiences that are made possible by pre-existing faculties. Moreover, the Kantian position alludes to a circular argument as he derives the nature of the faculties that

---

<sup>108</sup> Kant’s allusion to the Platonic ideas is evident in this formulation. By using the same term to distinguish virtual differences, Deleuze extends a rather playful nudge in the direction of Plato and Kant, while clarifying, at the same time, the orientation of his philosophical enterprise.

condition experience from the conditioned experience itself. In other words, the method Kant uses in the two critiques to arrive at the conditions of possible experience depends on an already conditioned experience to serve as the origin. Hence, it is a question of necessity for Deleuze to develop 'conditions' that are not outside what they condition. Instead of tracing out the conditions of possible experience, he would seek to discover the conditions that are constitutive of real experience.

In *Critique of Judgement*, the relatively unpopular third critique, Deleuze identifies Kant's predilection to initiate such an enterprise. By focusing on what is singular in aesthetic experience, the "judgements of the Beautiful ... {and} the Sublime", Kant identifies the power of undeterminable sensations that are not subsumed by intellectual concepts. The judgement of beauty is an involuntary event that is not wholly dependent on the object, but is emergent out of the 'encounter' between the object and the faculties - beauty is not a judgement that we make, but a judgement that happens to us as an event (McMahon, 2009: 92). Aesthetic judgements are events that reveal the limits of our sensation – the inability to subsume the encounter in a concept. The Sublime interrupts the regularity of the schemata of imagination and forces a discordant fraying of the faculties – an act of friction that tears their harmony and unity asunder. Though all the faculties (reason, understanding, memory, imagination, and sensibility) are involved in the aesthetic judgement, they are "engaged only as pure powers or tendencies since they don't determine, and aren't determined by, any particular concept ... [They] are genuinely awakened and enter into a relationship that is not based upon the representation of an identity" (100). In the experience of the Beautiful and the Sublime, Kant locates something that is beyond gratification, which is simply a bodily sensation that Kant refers to as "animal" (Kant, 1998: 36). Aesthetic judgement is characterized by a form of disinterest, and points to a set of elements that are independent of the body and that force it to suspend its "sensual and perceptual interests". Kant called this element the aesthetic 'common sense' - common in the way it unites all the faculties and in the way such a reaction is universal to all humans. The aesthetic common sense is also indicative of an element that is constitutive of



experience, one that appears to beckon “a power which is not part of nature” – a *soul*. Though Kant doesn’t develop this idea further, Deleuze seizes upon this principle as an impetus to force critical philosophy to confront the genetic possibilities of experience<sup>109</sup>. He argues that this movement in aesthetic judgement is the “life giving principle that animates each faculty, engendering both its free exercise and its free agreement with other faculties”. This principle insinuates a “primeval free imagination” that is yet to be legislated by the understanding, a “primeval unlimited understanding” that is yet to conceptualize and a primordial reason “that has not yet developed a taste for commanding”; each faculty “rediscovers” the principle of its genetic origin as they converge upon this supra-sensible “focal point” (Deleuze, 2004: 70). For Deleuze, the *Critique of Judgement* reveals the “ground” that is concealed in the other two critiques, and from which they are derived. Thus, the Kantian ‘soul’ is read by Deleuze as a constitutive principle that is a dynamic supra-sensible unity of all faculties (as opposed to a psychological unity). For Deleuze, this “substrate” must not be a supersensible noumenal realm “above and beyond” phenomenal reality, but one where the two realms are “collapsed into one another”, where the faculties remain merely “larval” than fully formed (Hughes, 2012: 105)<sup>110 111</sup>.

The movement from the intuition to the concept is disrupted in aesthetic responses, and Deleuze pushes this idea to develop a transcendental philosophy that doesn’t depend on the cogito or the synthetic unity of apperception, but as a “topological field ... populated by pre-individual singularities” (Ansell-Pearson, 1999: 85). Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism is what Colebrook calls a “challenge” rather than a “theory” –

---

<sup>109</sup> Deleuze’s essay, *The Idea of Genesis in Kant’s Esthetic*, included in *Desert Islands* (2004), is an effort to address these issues.

<sup>110</sup> Additionally, the substrate must also be identifiable with the ‘animal’, something that Kant had rejected (Hughes, 2012: 108).

<sup>111</sup> Joe Hughes provides an overview of this dimension of Deleuze’s thought in *Philosophy After Deleuze: Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation II* (2012). His earlier books, *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation* and *Deleuze’s Difference and Repetition* (2009) expand upon the Kantian dimension of his thought. Shaviro’s *Without Criteria: Kant, Whitehead, Deleuze and Aesthetics* (2009) contains a discussion on the influence on transcendental aesthetic on Whitehead and Deleuze.

a challenge to think life outside any transcendental foundation such as the 'subject', a life of becoming rather than being, and a "concept of experience ... that has no ground outside itself" (Colebrook, 2002: 69). Deleuze's reading of the Kant's third critique points to an account of the syntheses that are immanent to the sensible, or to real experience itself. Instead of constructing yet another transcendent entity such as the subject, it is necessary to understand how this subjectivity is itself derivative of syntheses that take place at the level of experience. By delineating an 'I', as in 'What can I know?', a differentiation of the subject from the world of experience is already assumed, but not explained. This artificial separation from the world of my experience already prefigures a realm that I can then know and represent as a set of facts in relation to the 'I', or in other words, the subject is already prefigured by the concept (Colebrook, 2002: 74). In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze writes about discovering an "essentially plastic principle that is no wider than what it conditions, that changes itself with what is conditioned and determines itself in each case along with what it determines" (Deleuze, 2006: 50). This principle (or the substrate) is often referred to by Deleuze as the 'plane of immanence', a pure process of "life and perception without any perceivers". It is the "pre-supposed field" upon which distinctions of interiority and exteriority are produced as transcendent effects – from perception, a perceiver, and from experience, a subject and an object (Colebrook, 2002: 74). Thus, transcendence - be it truth, subject, ground or foundation – arises only as a synthesis of immanent experience. Individuation of the subject ought to occur from the plane of immanence as a passive synthesis, prior to which there exists only "larval subjects" – a scattered motley of perceptions and sensations that are yet to be "organized into a self" (74).

In Kant, synthesis is a privilege of the active self, while receptivity is the only power administered to the passive self. However, for Deleuze, as we have seen, receptivity must itself be a result of prior passive syntheses<sup>112</sup>. Kant's philosophy explains the coherence of objects as a consequence of synthesis. For instance, if the principles of

---

<sup>112</sup> Deleuze looks to the first edition of *Critique of Pure Reason* for inspiration, where the imagination passively gathers representations together (Deleuze, 1994: 87).

geometry conform to what is found in the external world, it must imply that space is something that we “impose upon nature” to comprehend the order of co-existence (Somers-Hall, 2013: 56). A similar explanation could also be provided for time and other phenomena such as causality. Moreover, for Kant, whenever we speak of a synthesis, we must also pre-suppose a subject responsible for it. For experiences to be synthesized into a whole, it is necessary to have a subject (I think x, I see x, I feel x) who comprehends the succession of sensibilities in a unified temporal field, and a synthesized object responsible for diverse representations in the mind (representations w, y and z must all emanate from x). As noted earlier, the dichotomy between concepts and intuitions assumes a significant role here. Kant’s notion of incongruent counterparts (such as the difference between right and left hands) is a consequence of such a dichotomy. The fact that a hand’s orientation in absolute space determines handedness suggests that space is non-conceptual and must be an intuition<sup>113</sup>. Similarly, time must also be a mode of sensibility that points to a deeper transcendental synthesis that precedes conscious experience. Somers-Hall attributes Kant’s discovery of the difference in kind between intuitions of space-time and concepts of understanding to be the motivating influence in Deleuze’s account of the passive syntheses (Somers-Hall, 2013: 20).

---

<sup>113</sup> Harper (2013)’s essay in *The Philosophy of Left and Right: Incongruent Counterparts and the Nature of Space* describes this phenomenon in great detail.

## 9. The Passive Syntheses

If understanding organises experience, and the experienced world is, in a way, the “product of our cognitive faculties”, how must we account for those aspects of sensible intuitions that escape conceptual understanding (Somers-Hall, 2013: 58). Furthermore, how do these faculties relate to one other? Kant’s solution was to treat the syntheses as judgements. Anything that escapes judgements cannot be possibly known. The world of experience conforms to our judgements as the world of experience is itself a result of deeper unconscious syntheses. However, these deeper transcendental syntheses, though not conscious, take for granted a pre-existing subjectivity, an identity that then *represents* differences. As we have seen in the first part, this compromises the Deleuzian project of conceiving a notion of difference-in-itself. In chapters four and five, we considered how Bergson and Deleuze overturn conventional ideas of temporality to suggest a theory of time that conceives it as a force of novelty, continuity, and difference. However, our experience of tenses, or the perception of time as an orderable (and somewhat linear) continuity, require a form of synthesis on our part<sup>114</sup>. However, Deleuze, as he advances this theory of syntheses, formulates it in such a way that subjectivity is no longer a pre-requisite for any synthesis, and, instead, these processes are conceived as constituting an essential property of reality.

Passivity can be considered in two senses in Deleuze: as something that eludes consciousness (unconscious) or as something that isn’t bound by any rules (preconceptual). Kant’s critical philosophy (in the first two critiques, especially) isn’t preconceptual as the syntheses are bound by the conditions established by the faculties. Though these syntheses take place in the mind, they aren’t conscious processes either as they are not carried out “by the mind” (Hughes, 2012: 33, Deleuze, 1994: 82). The

---

<sup>114</sup> Though I have focused here on the role of a *brain* in the syntheses of time, James Williams, for instance, has suggested that this process is more akin to a “chemical fusion” that is part of reality, rather than a mere presupposition of a mind, or an occurrence in a mind (Williams, 2003: 63).

synthesis must also be inseparable from what it synthesises, and the subject must remain larval amongst the pre-singular individualities prior to its synthesis. According to Deleuze, the categories of the understanding create “general laws” that regulate possible experience, but they don’t determine *a priori* the contents of receptivity, which are contingent and can only be known empirically (Deleuze, 1984: 62). Deleuze, however, aims to construct “a theory of the particular laws of singular objects” (Ideas). (Hughes, 2012: 34).

Following the discussion on identity and flux that concluded the previous chapter, we understood that if the ego evolves in time, then the Cartesian cogito becomes impossible at a fundamental level. To conceive and speak in the first person (I, the subject), we must synthesise a stable subjectivity even though the ego is itself altering perpetually through time. The subject yields itself as an “infinite modulation” rather than as a “mould”, and it would be impossible to conceive a unique and active subject without considering “a passive ego that represents the activity of thought to itself” (Marks, 1998: 74). Effectively, issues such as consciousness and free will are illusions, from this perspective. As Williams notes, pure differences “happens to us,” they are neither voluntary nor an effect of direct actions. This is the reason why the “forgetting” or unshackling of identity is symbolic of Deleuzian ethics. If repetition (of difference, events of pure variation) is the mechanism underlying all identities, and “things emerge” as a result of this “unconscious” repetition, concepts such as free will can only be treated as ontologically illusory (Williams, 2003: 84). In this context, the primacy afforded to the thinking Cartesian subject is questionable, at least from a purely theoretical level. This inadequacy is also the reason why Deleuze can, at times, be severely critical of highly empirical and psychological practices (Deleuze, 1968: 81-83). Though it is important to consider identities and evidence that are clarified at the more reified and filtered levels of experimental science and traditional analytic disciplines, it is also necessary to scrutinize the underlying processes of *passive* repetitions that condition the actions and behaviour at the empirical or conscious level. Repetition without a consciousness (who repeats, repetition of what), or a cause, a ‘repetition-for-

itself', is structured around "a series of deductions" based on certain passive syntheses of time (Williams, 2003: 85). These syntheses relate to three different types of repetitions that not only relate to each other, but also functions as the continuous and discontinuous aspects of the temporal flow.

Joe Hughes claims that the concept of repetition was supposed to function as an alternative to Hegelian mediation that characterised his theories of determination and dialectic synthesis. He identifies three defining characteristics of this process: 1) Repetition of singularities, or the immediate objects of intuition (constituted by pure differential composites) 2) Repetition is prior to any law or *a priori* judgements 3) Consequently, it is pre-conceptual (Hughes, 2009: 87). This process is, however, different from the Hegelian synthesis where the mediation stipulates the presence of an opposite (symmetry). Deleuzian synthesis, on the contrary, is asymmetrical, in the sense that the syntheses do not require a negating process to achieve determination (difference-in-itself, repetition-for-itself). These syntheses describe how the immediate objects of intuition can be transformed into an Idea, or in our case, constructed as a temporal flow (87).

In Kant, Deleuze distinguishes between two types of determination that every object has to correspond to – spatiotemporal and conceptual. These two determinations are associated with two different faculties in Kantian philosophy, with the former under the jurisdiction of sensibility (space and time), and the latter a product of understanding (categories). To 'know' something, it is necessary for these two determinations to be united. According to Deleuze, this is why Kant's definition of knowledge as a synthetic proposition is useful. Synthetic proposition is contrasted with an analytic proposition, which determines the predicate contained within the concept. Synthetic propositions, on the contrary, add something which is a "determination beyond the concept" (Hughes, 2009: 91). Spatiotemporal and conceptual determinations are understood by Kant as synthetic propositions with one being added to the other in a synthesis that takes them beyond their originary potential. Hughes

claims that the relation between intuition and understanding, and spatiotemporal and conceptual determinations, influenced the concepts created in *Difference and Repetition*. When conceptual determinations are added on to spatiotemporal determinations, it is called a schematism, and when spatiotemporal determinations are added onto a concept, it is called a synthesis. In a synthesis, “spatiotemporal diversity is taken up into the unity of a concept” (92). It is the latter that influenced Deleuze to develop the idea of synthesis further to include a comprehensive theory of time<sup>115</sup>.

In the 1787 edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant appears to elevate original apperception as the domain of all syntheses. The previous edition of the *Critique* hinted at a passive synthesis that took place at the level of the unconscious, whereas the later version opts for an active synthesis at the level of understanding. As the critique evolved, synthesis at the passive level of the senses was overlooked for an active synthesis at the level of conscious cognition<sup>116</sup>. This was the Kantian “betrayal” that Deleuze condemned. The passivity of the subject was reduced to nothing more than receptivity, and any powers of synthesis that it was endowed with was taken away. The spontaneity which remains conscious in the “*I think*” cannot be understood as “the attribute of a substantial and spontaneous being, but only as the affection of a passive self which experiences its own thought ... being exercised in it and upon it but not by it”.

---

<sup>115</sup> Many writers have traced the influence of other philosophers in the development of the passive syntheses. In the case of Joe Hughes, he draws from Husserl to augment his analysis of these concepts in *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation* (2008).

<sup>116</sup> Each synthesis assumes two forms in Kant’s philosophy, the transcendental and the empirical. In the former, the synthesis moves from pure forms of intuition to the form of understanding, concepts and categories. In the latter, the syntheses pass from unorganized appearances that constitute forms of intuition to the unity of an object; it is a “perceptual synthesis”. Synthesis begins with a diversity or a manifold, and affects both empirical appearances as well as the mechanisms of the sensibility itself (Hughes, 2009: 92-93). The first synthesis at an empirical level is a spatiotemporal binding, an apprehension of the object as possessing a certain orientation in space and time. The second is an associative synthesis that reproduces the objects as an extension of prior representations.

The “I” of “I think” and “I am” is a paradox; it must be added with a self, or the passive position; to the determination and undetermined must be added the form of the determinable, namely time” (Deleuze, 1968: 112-113)<sup>117</sup>.

In Kant, for experience to be possible, it is essential “for appearances to belong to the same subject”. The unity of events and appearances in the underlying concept of a subject creates the unity of consciousness<sup>118</sup>. As Somers-Hall notes, this concept of subjectivity is prior to any experience or synthesis. Synthesis is associated with the subject, and hence, any synthesis that is not determined by ‘judgement’ will be eliminated (Somers-Hall, 2013: 61). Deleuze finds this account of synthesis to be a purely psychological account of the appearance and understanding of objects enduring in time. By preferring an active synthesis that privileges “a new form of identity in the I”, and brandishing passivity as “simple receptivity without synthesis”. Deleuze finds Kant to be guilty of backtracking and trying to “save the world of representation” after arriving at the very mechanism by which its edifice could have been obliterated (Deleuze, 1968: 108-109). With the three syntheses of time, Deleuze derives a theory of time and subjectivity that escapes the domain of the active self and finds its origin in the cavernous differential depths of the ‘chaosmos’.

#### **The First Synthesis of Time**

Deleuze’s enquiry into the three syntheses is quite Humean in the sense that he seeks to explain the constitution of what is ‘given’ in experience. This means that even simple receptivity at the level of perceptions and sensation ought to be explained through passive processes. The nature of this enquiry can be roughly summed up as a discussion on three significant elements of the given, each of which requires a synthesis to explain their emergence. The three givens (in experience) that Deleuze isolates are the

---

<sup>117</sup> “The activity of thought applies to a receptive being, to a passive subject which represents that activity to itself, which experiences its effects than initiates it, and which lives it like an Other within itself” (Deleuze, 1968: 112)

<sup>118</sup> Object in general (object=x) is the correlate of ‘I think’, or the unity of consciousness (Smith, 2012: 90).



following: the sense of expectancy in the lived present, the sense of the present passing away into the past and finally, thought (I think) (Deleuze, 1994: 71).

The first synthesis of time deals with the lived present and is influenced by Hume's discussions on expectancy and habit (Deleuze, 1994: 70). Though this synthesis is referred to as habit in *Difference and Repetition*, it reappears in other forms (imagination, perception, vibration) in subsequent works. The lived or living present is an uncontroversial starting point to an enquiry on the given, as it is the most fundamental aspect of any experience. For the present to be experienced as 'living', Deleuze demands the presence of a prior synthesis that contracts the immediate past into a present in anticipation of a future, or in other words, this passive synthesis acts as the 'condition' for the lived present. The experience of a present is impossible without a sense of expectancy. For the present to be experienced as such, it needs an element of the past that points to a future - a sense of passing away (present becoming past) and a sense of opening up (expectancy of the open future). Deleuze cites a Humean example to illustrate this point. To have any real sense of experience, we must consider perception as a conjunction of independent terms (AB). If we take a sequence of repetition of the type AB, AB, AB ..., each case or object is independent of the other terms in the repeated series. Moreover, each term, if they repeat, is no longer the 'same' as the term that precedes or follows, merely based on its nature as something that has been 'repeated'. There should be a quality that renders these objects as *different*, yet *repeated* as separated instances of the same object in time. In other words, the 'repetition' changes nothing, or repetition cannot be a property of the objects themselves. However, in the mind that contemplates this series, the appearance of A suggests the idea of a succeeding B as an expectation (Deleuze, 1994: 71-72).

Though this is how we contract habits, according to Deleuze, this contraction is also a feature of all experience (Deleuze, 1994: 77). The present is not possible without the conjunction of independent terms (Each A or B must itself be a unit of other independent terms. A is thus ABCD, ABCD ...). Naturally, expectancy is an inevitable

feature of the lived presents. The passive synthesis that contracts independent moments of an immediate past into an expectation or anticipation of the future gives time its familiar direction from past to the future. Thus, expectation depends on a contraction that itself depends on a repetition – thus experience is impossible without repetition, or in other words, “a thing is not sensed unless it is sensed as repeated” (Williams, 2003: 88-89). Since no experience is possible without repetition, contraction and expectancy are presupposed in all experience. It is repetition that synthesises any relation with a thing, as the consistency of an object through time depends on that process.

Though Deleuze appears to associate this synthesis with the mind in *Difference and Repetition*, he also suggests an inorganic and non-psychological role to this synthesis: “We are made of contracted water, earth, light and air – not merely prior to the recognition or representation of these, but prior to their being sensed” (Deleuze, 1994: 78). DeLanda picks up on this point to argue that the lived presents of various ‘oscillators’, be they a cell, an organ or a star, are characterized by contractions of varying proportions (DeLanda, 2002: 102)<sup>119</sup>. Thus, the lived present of an electron is different to that of a human. Our lived present is itself built upon a series of nested contractions that proceeds all the way down to the cells, such that each sensation that is felt by a body is a synthesis of many other sensations. Sense, as Williams notes, “is an umbrella thrown over many different sensations”. The sensation of a thing is the result of several passive syntheses of sensations that cut across each other serially in different levels. Each level contains unrepresentable “signs” that communicate with each other over the series through many different syntheses, so that the *sensed* sign is the product of a differential synthesis – something that emerges out of the differential interaction

---

<sup>119</sup> Even inorganic forms must be thought of us having a lived present. As DeLanda notes, this ‘present’ is hardly a psychological construct, but points to a fundamental perception, that is the action of a body upon another that forces a change in its state (DeLanda, 2002: 134). The self-organization of matter into stable forms, as well as their characteristic rhythms, (lifetime of a star, half-life of a radioactive element, the erosion of sand) are consequences of this contraction.

between signs at multiple levels (The circadian rhythm of the human body is a differential 'sign' sustained by the passive syntheses of individual cells and organs, each responding to the sun in a series of contractions). Each repetition across each level must be understood not as the repetition of the same thing, but as "variations of pure difference" (Williams, 2009: 90). What emerges out of an act as the sensed sign is a matter of contingency or pure chance. Intensities 'happen' as encounters with the subject whose emergent identity in relation to these repetitions give experience an element of certainty<sup>120</sup>. The well-defined subject that comprehends the world through representation is a contingent 'sense' that appears at one level as a resolution to the variations of series of signs that engage in transversal communication. In other words, concealed beneath the illusion of the active self is a system of passive selves – larval subjects - that synthesise their own lived presents, and the 'for-itself' in Deleuze's 'repetition for-itself' is thus pure difference (Williams, 2009: 92)<sup>121</sup>.

#### **The Second Synthesis of Time (Past)**

If Hume is the obvious inspiration for the first synthesis, Bergson is the spiritual progenitor of the second. The first passive synthesis could be said to be constitutive of time as it gathers (contracts) together discontinuous intensities in the field of experience, and through repetition and expectancy, sustains this lived present as it passes on to the future (the field of experience assumes many names in Deleuze's philosophy – plane of immanence, intensive field, web of forces, chaosmos). However, this synthesis does not account for the way in which the present appears to 'pass away'. In the first synthesis, only the present exists, and the past and future function merely as dimensions of this present (Deleuze, 1968: 77). This backward-looking tendency of the living present presupposes another synthesis – one of a pure past from whence the present that has now become past can return once again in the future. Deleuze refers to

---

<sup>120</sup> Gilbert Simondon would refer to such a subject as "metastable" (Simondon, 1992: 430). Simondon's influence on Deleuze has been further explored by Toscano (2009) and Combes (2013).

<sup>121</sup> Williams compares this process to "a game with changeable rules against an infinitely adaptive opponent"

this synthesis as 'memory'. The contraction of the immediate past in the first synthesis is insufficient, as these 'perceptions' must be recorded or retained on a *surface* such that they are available for future use. However, there is a discrepancy in what Deleuze suggests, as memory as archiving has active functions, as we can also retrieve memories consciously (Williams, 2003: 93). Furthermore, memories are representations of actual lived presents. However, according to Deleuze, active memory is only possible if we consider a pure 'a priori' past, in relation to which the former present is reproducible. That is, for the present to become past, the past must coexist first with itself in order for the present to be its most contracted element (94).

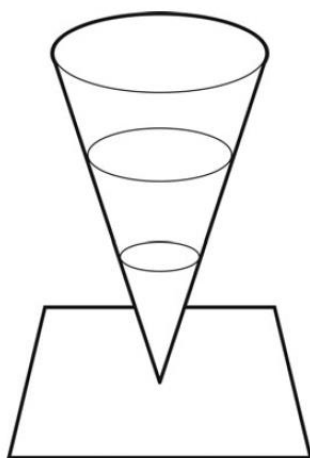
If the living present 'passes away', it must mean that an element of the past exists along with the present. Furthermore, the first synthesis also presupposes two problems of association: 1) What determines the association of different discontinuous moments in a contracted lived present? 2) How is the memory of a previous present triggered in the lived present? In the first synthesis, past and future exist only as habit and expectation, and the present moment must itself become past and be replaced by another present. Without a second 'time' or synthesis, there will merely be a series of contracted presents without continuity. For Kant, it is the 'resemblance' between moments that trigger memories and associates past with the present (Deleuze, 1994: 82). However, Bergson finds this idea to be rather simplistic. According to him, there is a self-relation of the 'images' prior to the active synthesis of consciousness – "we perceive the resemblance before we perceive the individuals that resemble one another" (Bergson, 1988: 165). This means that the active mind must be transcendently dependant on a prior passive synthesis of association (of the past and the present) (cf Somers-Hall, 2013: 67).

Bergson's distinction between habit, recollection, and perception are significant to understanding the second synthesis (see Somers-Hall, 2013: 66-72). Though habit is a representation of past events, it is different from recollection as it suggests a particular orientation towards future in the form of actions. On the other hand, recollections or

reminiscence do not necessarily orient themselves directly towards action. According to Bergson, all perception (and consequently, consciousness) is directed towards action. Bergson, like Deleuze, offers a broad definition of perception to include the action of any 'body' upon another, such that even atoms through their interactions with other atoms 'perceive' at a fundamental level. The present is to be understood in sensory-motor terms as a relation between perception and action. Memory, through habitual impulses or other pertinent representation, triggers a movement towards action. Bergson finds a difference in kind between memory and perception, that is, the past is different in nature to the present. He argues that a life lived in reminiscence and recollection, like the protagonist of Proust, has access to a larger share of past than a life devoted to action, wherein an extremely contracted past orients the present towards the future. If pushed to the extreme, we can conceptualize recollection without action (pure memory) and action without memory (pure perception). However, Bergson considers these cases to be purely theoretical and merely indicative of tendencies. Thus, the nature of the present is to act in orientation to the future, while the nature of the past is to coexist with all lived presents (Bergson, 1991: 150-153).

If memory is triggered by resemblance (with present moments), as Kant believes, it implies a selection, which in turn suggests that memory is composed of detachable components. Such discontinuity between the elements of memory goes against its nature, which is that of a seamless continuum of all *past* presents. The model of the past that Bergson suggests is that of a cone (see Figure 1). In this model, Bergson proposes a model of the past, where all memories coexist virtually in varying states of relaxation and contraction (The virtual). The apex of the cone is where past is at its most contracted and oriented towards action (habitual reflexes, instincts), while the base of the cone is where memory is most relaxed or expanded (pure recollection). Between the base and the apex is the continuum where past exists in varying degrees of contraction and relaxation. At different levels of the cone, past exists in varying relations between its elements, or in other words, their differences and degree of associability vary across the cone. Thus, at any given moment, we have access to the entirety of the past, but its

relative contraction and expansion affect the nature of its manifestation (or ‘actualization’) in the present. The movement from expansion to contraction is characterised by a movement from particularity to generality. Though the whole of past is still accessible even when the memory is at its most contracted, it is “manifested in the form of habit” devoid of its particularity and differences (Bergson, 1988: 151-154 cf Somers-Hall, 2013: 68-69).



**Figure 1: The Cone of Time (reproduced from Somers-Hall, 2013: 69)**

In Bergson’s model of the past, the ‘selection’ of memory is based on utility (the ratio between action and recollection), but at the same time, is not derived from discontinuity (Bergson, 1988: 66). The representational models of memory, like that of Kant, run into a logical problem when explaining the selection and association of memory in relation to the present. In an atomic conception of time, where time is considered to be made up of discrete instants, it is impossible to establish a concept of the past. If the past is dependent on the present, such that the passing away of presents constitutes the past as a series of previous presents, time becomes paradoxical. For the lived present (now) to constitute the past, it must first pass away and be replaced by a new present. That is, the now must itself become past for the past to be constituted in the first place – a paradox. From this idea, and through Bergson, Deleuze reaches three conclusions: 1) The past is prior to the present and different in kind, 2) The past is not an

atomic collection constituted by the representation of passing presents, 3) The present already has an element of the past, and thus, the entirety of the past must co-exist with the present in varying degrees of relation (Deleuze, 1994: 82-4).

Thus, prior to the affinity between the past and present comprehended by the active self, there must exist a passive synthesis of the entirety of the past (memory) that accommodates all its elements in their infinite relations. Thus, the contraction implied by the first synthesis can also be explained as presupposing a different synthesis which contracts all of the past in a specific orientation (one plane in the cone): “each chooses his pitch or his tone, perhaps even his lyrics, but the tune remains the same, and underneath all the lyrics the same tra-la-la, in all possible tones and all pitches” (Deleuze, 1994: 84). Thus, the repetition of contractions (in the first synthesis) is dependent on a second repetition of the entirety of memory in varying degrees of contraction and relaxation (second synthesis).

The first two syntheses operate on two levels, empirical and transcendental. At an empirical level, the first synthesis is the gathering together of a manifold of discontinuous intensities in a lived ‘now’. Transcendentally, it deals with the production of different blocks of space and time in general, or rather, the condition for having an ‘experience’ of here and now (the present), in general. Likewise, at the empirical level, the second synthesis acts as the condition for the association or reproduction of a past impression in the present, thereby modulating the contraction of the first synthesis, while transcendently, the synthesis conditions reproducibility (the bringing back of a former present in the form of a memory) or the past (the ‘have-been-ness’) in general. From the perspective of the first synthesis, the past and the future act as the functions within the present, the past as a sense of the present passing away and the future as a sense of expectancy or anticipation. Without this synthesis, experience would simply be evanescent and discontinuous. From the point of view of the second synthesis, the present and the future are sign functions of a virtual past. The past acts as the ground for the present and conditions the reproduction of all memory (and consequently, the

nature of the contraction) in the present – Deleuze refers to this as “destiny” (Deleuze, 1994: 83). The second synthesis entails a future that exists as an open potential, and whose actualisation can alter the serial relations (of difference and association) between the elements that constitute the virtual past. Thus, the future carries with it the power to significantly alter the connections and combinations between memories. Consequently, the virtual and the actual remain in a state of reciprocal determination, each carrying the power to alter the contents of the other (the past conditions the present and the future, the present and the future alter the past). In the first two syntheses, we can detect the evanescent geneses of representations out of pure differences. The contractions of the first syntheses give a form to the discontinuous intensities in the plane of immanence. The second synthesis gives an account of how the past co-exists with the present in varying relations of difference and association - fluid ‘representations’ of the past in a differential flux that can be radically altered by the future. These representations, as opposed to being determined by static identities, emerge from intensive differences (of sensations and memories). Representation in a concept (object = x) that characterises our commonsensical understanding of the world arises out of a third synthesis.

### **Third Synthesis of Time (Future)**

Despite the account of associability and reproduction give in the second synthesis, as Lampert points out, the conditions for the reproducibility of the past are far from certain: How is the past penetrable? How does it relax and contract? How does “one memory stand out [over] ... another, given that all memories are contemporaneous with all presents”? For the past to be opened up, “something needs to be forgotten”. This calls for a third synthesis that can function as a “search engine” through the coexisting sheets of past, something that acts as a cleaver cutting through the past (Lampert, 2006: 51).

This virtual past is not necessarily a repository of empirical facts pertaining to former presents. Past is, by nature, malleable and innovative. It can creatively alter the



differential relations between its representations to accommodate the open future. If it weren't so, memory would simply be a static container that selects invariable representations. From the perspective of the present, the most recent memory might be the most significant, but from the perspective of the future, "anything can come up" (Lampert, 2006: 55). A memory from childhood can reappear in the future with a renewed 'sense' of relevance, a forgotten sensation can be resurrected with unusual results – future is ungrounded and brings with it an element of chance, while at the same time determining the event in a series of orders. Thus, the third synthesis of time is a pure and "empty form" that orders events in an aleatory manner, privileging no one form of arrangement (Deleuze, 1994: 86). Deleuze invokes Hamlet's famous line, "The time is out of joint", to invoke this "caesura" or the cut that the third synthesis performs on the whole of time (88). By unhinging time from a particular axis or mode of arrangement (linear or mechanistic conceptions, for example), future reorders (cuts) time in circular series (mobile blocks of time carved from the whole) and makes events adaptable, producing associations that bring into play elements that are available, but exist in the past as abstract representations. The caesura renders time unhinged, with each cut "irrational" and "aleatory", like a dice's throw, triggering some memories through resemblance and others, by pure chance (172)<sup>122</sup>. As Lampert writes, "just as the present is all of time in the sense of events in passage, and the past is all of time in the sense of events on record, so the future is all of time in the sense of events in play" (Lampert, 2006: 56).

One can trace the origins of this pure and empty form of time back to Kant once again. The Cartesian cogito – I think, therefore I am (I exist) – is a problematic assertion, according to Kant. The existence of an 'I' - I exist - from the given - I think - is undetermined. How this 'I' exists is still open, and can only be conceived as 'something exists' (Williams, 2003: 99). Though we cannot directly understand how this something

---

<sup>122</sup> While caesura is a notion that Deleuze borrowed from Holderlin, the concept of an irrational cut has its origins in Dedekind. Daniela Voss explores these influences in her essay on the third synthesis (Voss, 2013: 197-206)

exists, we do know that it is determinable only in time, that is, the existence can only be comprehended as a temporal phenomenon. Therefore, according to Kant, there must be a pure form of time that exists as an a priori 'intuition' and determines any concept of existence in its terms. Prior to Kant, Western philosophy conceived time as a "measure of motion", or as the mode in which succession appears to us. However, by assigning it with primacy, Kant 'unhinges' time from "prior representational structures", and conceives the idea of a pure and empty time, and succession (and co-existence) as the mode in which it appears to us (Somers-Hall, 2013: 75). Furthermore, as thought can only occur in time, the apparent certainty of the thought – I that thinks – is itself shown to be passively dependent on temporal syntheses. However, Kant doesn't fully develop this notion into a theory of passive syntheses, as in his philosophy, any synthesis necessarily demands a subject. Though this passivity is sensed at the level of intuitive receptivity, understanding intervenes in the form of rules (categories) that unite these discrepancies (transcendental unity of apperception) through a conscious subject (an 'I think' that accompanies all the experiences, subject=x).

To repeat a point made earlier, the Kantian synthesis proceeds from apprehension to reproduction and ends in active recognition (in the form of a subject that comprehends objects). Hughes notes a similarity between the first two passive syntheses of Deleuze and the first two syntheses of Kant. The passive syntheses of Deleuze begin with an apprehension of the manifold (first synthesis) that depends on a synthesis of reproduction of the past (second synthesis). However, according to Hughes, even though the third passive synthesis attempts to subsume the product of the two syntheses in an act of recognition, it fails - the third synthesis is thus a failed recognition (Hughes, 2012: 52). In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze often refers to this collapse of recognition as the "death-instinct" or "the dark precursor" (Deleuze, 1994: 17, 119). As opposed to Kant, Deleuze takes the apparently well-determined given (I think) and seeks the conditions that make it determinable – the transcendental method that he followed in the first two passive syntheses. By reviewing the conditions constituted by the third

synthesis, Deleuze returns to the given (I think) and reviews its well-determined status. Deleuze's conclusion will undermine the certainty of this given (Williams, 2003: 100).

Like expectation in the first synthesis, one can speak of thought as such, but the 'I' associated with I think is still in the purview of the larval subject. Furthermore, as the third passive synthesis reveals, thought is itself dependent on multiple passive forces. The recognition that is supposed to follow the first two syntheses does not happen as the product of the first two syntheses demands creativity when faced with the contingency that accompanies the future. In Kant's philosophy, recognition is determined by the pre-existing laws of understanding, but for Deleuze, such rules are meaningless without an account of their geneses. His solution is to do away with rules altogether and embrace the randomness of the future.

When faced with the novelty and contingency that future brings, the third synthesis demands an act of recognition. However, this recognition doesn't happen as the content of the first two syntheses is not yet equipped with the faculty to comprehend the novelty brought about by the future. It is at this point that 'thought' emerges as a creative potential. To apprehend the unknown and the unforeseeable, the mind demands a creative power that can make the past malleable. Thought acts as the 'search engine' that scans the past and cuts it at pertinent points creating circular series of time that accommodates the contingency of the actualizing event. This is the point in Deleuze's thought where his reification of the Kantian sublime assumes greater importance. As we have seen, in *The Critique of Judgement*, when imagination is confronted by the sublime, it is unable to comprehend the magnitude of this experience. Reason appears as a solace that seals the chasm, grasping the immensity of the sublime in an undeterminable Idea (Self, God, The Universe, etc.). As Deleuze writes, "at [this] moment we feel for our imagination and suffer with it, since it has become impotent, a new faculty is awakened in us, the faculty of the supersensible" (Deleuze, 1978). However, in the third synthesis, Deleuze inverts Kant's argument. In my view, instead of privileging the sublime, the novelty brought about by every new event proves

to be immense for the third synthesis. When the larval subject contemplates the representations of the first two syntheses in light of the third, it finds itself in a dissonant harmony unable to recognise its 'self' or the contents of the new experience. Thus, thought emerges as a supersensible faculty, endowed with the power of creativity, that cuts across and reassembles the virtual past in circular series. Thus, each event in time brings with it a caesura that cuts time into an order, a whole and a series. The cut orders the time as a before and after of the caesura, while also reassembling time as a whole, where even elements of the very distant past can be suddenly reawakened in the present to accommodate the unexpected that accompanies experience (the madeleine cake of Proust). Thus, contingency and creativity characterise the third synthesis. The contingency at play in experience forces the creative faculty of the mind, thought, to carve open the virtual past and rearrange its contents. As we observed in the previous chapter, the novelty of experience is the repetition of pure differences – the 'eternal return' of Nietzsche as read by Deleuze – and the response of thought is to repeat the creative and rearrangement of the past through a differential alteration of the relations and connections between its elements. The third synthesis thus cuts time in the present (the before and after of the caesura – first synthesis), the virtual past (the caesura as a particular plane of contraction and relaxation in the virtual past - the second synthesis) and opens up the larval subject towards an open and contingent future. In other words, the dice throw of every new experience triggers the creative dimension of the mind (thought) to *overcome* itself and search all possible combinations in the virtual past to accommodate the future through a series of cuts in time (To borrow an example from James Williams, a revolution does not merely change our present and future, it also changes our past: "Nothing will ever be the same again" (Williams, 2003: 102).

Thought, as it overcomes itself, escapes its finitude and extends its creative movements toward the infinite. The elemental self that is fractured as a result of the third synthesis finds itself in a metaphysical field of 'Ideas' that cannot be thought completely. The Deleuzian Ideas, similar to the Kantian concept, cannot be determined completely but

can be 'thought'. These Ideas cannot be represented as a statement or in a form, as the Ideas themselves give form. Unlike the Cartesian *cogito*, which emphasises the primacy of reason, the Deleuzian *cogito* privileges sensation. There can never be any thought without sensation, and as a consequence, Ideas can never truly be grasped in representation, but only sensed (Parr, 2005: 49). As an alternative, Deleuze suggests that these Ideas, which exist virtually, can only be thought of as problems or questions to which an event is a partial solution (The eye is a partial solution to the problem of vision). Individuals, artworks and all events express the 'problem' in a new way. By treating events or encounters as expressions of a problem, they also function as a partial solution, as a solution is always immanent to a well-stated question (Deleuze, 1988: 16). Thus, thought takes up the given in an event, fails to recognise it, and consequently unleashes its creative potential to overcome its finitude and think infinity, thereby sensing the virtual field of pure differences (Ideas) that can only be thought and not directly determined. According to Colebrook, Idea is a "concept pushed beyond any possible experience ... it is an extension to the *n*th or infinite power of an actual possibility" – a pure becoming without an object, a coexistence of differential relations actualisable as diverse things, objects and events (Colebrook, 2002: 52). Thus, the problem (Idea) of perception expresses itself in a differential relation to the problem of vision (Idea), to which the human eye is one amongst many possible partial solutions. Thought thinks Ideas to conceive the virtual field of pure differences, and in that way, it takes the larval subject back to the discontinuous 'plane of immanence' of the first synthesis. Here, thought finds the transcendental conditions of the given, which is the expression of pure differences in the form of intensities.

To reiterate a point that Bergson made, our actions, as a consequence of our evolutionary heritage, are oriented towards utility. To circumvent the complexity of our experience of the world, it is essential to conceive reality as stable, ordered and knowable. The problem (Idea) of stability finds a partial solution in the creation of conceptual representation. This is characterised by an inverse movement of thought, which through an infinite repetition that arrests the intensive movements of its

representations, produces general concepts of the form object=x. While the previous repetition of thought (synthesis of Ideas or Ideal synthesis) was characterised by a movement beyond the actual to the virtual (*n*th or infinite power of an actual possibility), the movement towards conceptual representation is an inverse discharge that applies the Idea of stability through a series of repetitions that dispel the heterogeneity of time from experience, and orders each moment as identical to another. In the same movement, thought provides a unifying structure to these representations by dispelling the passivity of experience and conceiving a general, stable subject of experience (subject=x). As a result of these active syntheses, mind conceals the transcendental conditions of its genesis (passivity) from consciousness and the illusory subject perceives the world as ordered, stable and understandable. This is the 'human condition' that Bergson sought to overcome (see chapter four)

The Bergsonian credo of 'going beyond the human condition' finds a more nuanced solution in Deleuze. To escape the human condition is to think the passive, pre-conceptual and pre-individual singularities that condition everyday experience. Our everyday experience characterised by identity and conceptual stability – the human condition – is also ultimately dependant on an Ideal synthesis that has at its heart the problem of stability and understanding. However, the partial solution to this problem (conceptual understanding) is accompanied by a near-amnesia of its passive genesis, as it cleverly conceals the transcendental conditions of its existence. However, Ideas of the virtual are characterised by clarity and obscurity rather than complete obliteration or disappearance (Williams, 2003: 164). An Idea cannot be determined as such, but it is determinable through its actualisation in an object. Take the evolved human body, for instance. Though one partial solution to the problem of respiration -- gills -- are not found in humans, they exist obscurely in the form of human ears, which evolved from them and formed a new relation with a different Idea, the problem of sound. Applying this notion to the workings of the virtual past, we can say that at each point in the present, the entirety of the past coexists with it, with some contractions and relaxations being less obscure than the other. This is also true of any sensation or feeling; at each

moment, the 'I' is not merely the representation of a particular feeling or sensation, it contains all the sensations and intensities – all Ideas – in varying levels of clarity and obscurity (Williams, 2003: 163). Thus, the virtual (Ideas) accompanies all singularities, not as mere possibilities but as realities and potentials, marked by their relative clarity and obscurity. It is a “difference of potential” that causes identities to emerge as an aleatory ‘metastability’ (Deleuze, 1990: 103)<sup>123</sup>. The conclusion that Deleuze draws from all of these ideas is also his ethics. If the representational world is itself one amongst many worlds (images of thought) engendered passively by the virtual, it is not difficult to manoeuvre thought into thinking different virtual combinations or images of thought that privilege no particular order or model (out of joint). In all of Deleuze’s work, he privileges a form of thought that reveals the contingent, varying *ungrounding* ground that synthesises all experience – the passive, transcendental conditions that underlie any ‘given’. Whether it is Proust, Kafka or Bacon, Deleuze finds in their works a similar predilection to trace out movements of thought that are not limited by any prior structure. Deleuze privileges the time-image in the *Cinema* books, as it is the Idea that cinema aspires to<sup>124</sup>. It is the form of cinema that expresses through affects and perceives the transcendental conditions that sustain all experience. If the movement-

---

<sup>123</sup> There is a clear Maimonian and Leibnizian influence to these arguments. Consider the example of the noise of the sea, for instance: “Two minutely perceived waves must enter into a relation capable of determining a third, which excels over the others and becomes conscious. These unconscious perceptions constitute the ideal genetic elements of perception, or what Maimon called the differentials of consciousness”. (Patton, 1996: 35). Metastability is a concept that Deleuze borrows from Simondon, to suggest a system that is in a state of “partial and relative resolution” and harbouring a “certain incompatibility with itself” (Simondon, 1992: 301). Identities, from this angle, are always emergent metastabilities and not eternal forms.

<sup>124</sup> The use of the word ‘privilege’ can give rise to a number of ambiguities. By privileging the time-image, Deleuze is not privileging a particular structure or perspective. Time-image has to be considered as essentially unstructured. Time-image cinema is characterised by its tendency to disclose the transcendental conditions of experience, rather than a distinct perspective or style. Time-image cinema can appear in many forms and styles, but they all share a tendency to render visible the underlying passivity and contingency of experience.

image cinema characterises an image of thought derived from everyday experience, time-image cinema seeks out the aleatory and the different. Time-image frees cinema from the unified perspective of movement-image (subject=x, object=x) to reveal the *unground* where memories from the virtual past can be resurrected and rearranged through irrational cuts (caesura) without a privileged frame of reference, as in the films of Alain Resnais or Chris Marker. Through the time-image, cinema goes beyond the everyday world of things to perceive “the movement of imaging from which any perceived is possible” (Colebrook, 2002: 53). For Deleuze, an escape from the human condition rests on a rethinking of perspectives and dogmatic images of thought. Cinema facilitates this liberation through the time-image, thus completing his grand Bergsonian project.

To conclude, the Deleuzian *cogito* is thus an aleatory construct of larval subjects conditioned by a series of passive syntheses. Through the inverse movement of an Ideal synthesis characterised by utility and stability, the passive selves are subsumed under the concept of a unified subject that comprehends a world of objects. Deleuzian ethics is characterised by the experimentation with different virtual combinations of Ideas (at the expense of a privileged point of view or dogmatic image of thought) that can disclose the transcendental conditions that underlie the identity of a subject, and consequently, reveal the illusory nature of all subjectivity. This ethics finds expression in the *Cinema* books through the ‘discovery’ of the time-image.

Having scrutinised the essential characteristics of Deleuzian metaphysics, we are now in a position to engage the film theory of Torben Grodal. In the following pages, I will focus on the essential aspects of Grodal’s bioculturalism, with reference to his readings on narrative structure and meaning in arthouse cinema, and argue that his theory fails to truly explore passivity and creative virtuality, and hence, repeats the fundamental flaws that Deleuze found in Kant. My arguments regarding arthouse films will revolve around the analyses of two quintessential films of the genre, *Solaris* (1972, dir. Andrei Tarkovsky) and *The Holy Mountain* (1973, dir. Alejandro Jodorowsky).



## 10. Bioculturalism and the PECMA Flow Model

Torben Grodal's works on film theory and the embodied mind find their influence in the discoveries of evolutionary biology and neuroscience. Opposed to the extreme social constructivism of the so-called 'blank slate' theory of the mind, Grodal carries forward an approach in film theory that aims to outline a comprehensive ecological study of the cinematic experience that constructs the spectator as well as cinematic form as possibilities engendered by our shared evolutionary heritage. Grodal calls his approach bioculturalism, as the cinematic subject in his theory is animated by the dual influence of biology and culture. However, in this conception, the intensive forces exerted by biology (or evolution) are hypostatic to any cultural construct, and creates an inescapable barrier that ties us to our 'human condition'<sup>125</sup>.

Grodal tends to associate the popularity of specific genres, cliches and narrative patterns with corresponding structures discovered in evolutionary studies of the human brain and the embodied mind. For instance, he claims that the near-universal enjoyment of the canonical cinematic narrative owes more to the evolution of the brain rather than cultural transference. He extends this argument by radically stating that any cultural epidemic, be it a film, book, a meme or a joke, can only attain universal relevance if it taps into something primal and embodied. He writes, "films are often made to elicit strong emotional responses and may be based on stories and situations that activate innate emotional dispositions, whether or not these dispositions are appropriate to a modern environment or linked to skills that enhance survival in that environment"

---

<sup>125</sup> *Moving Pictures* (1997) and *Embodied Visions: Evolution, Emotion, Culture and Film* (2009) are the two most significant as well as systematic works written by Grodal, and the most important aspects of his theory find their clearest exposition in these works. While the former finds its primary influence in neuroscience, the latter brings together these findings within an evolutionary biological framework. As *Embodied Visions* constitutes a necessary development (and improvement) of the ideas initially proposed in *Moving Pictures*, the critique of Grodal attempted here draws its arguments in relation to that work.

(Grodal, 2009: 6). A cursory glance at the most popular genres is likely to validate the legitimacy of the biocultural approach. Inconsequential of the socio-historical cultural coding that renders each film and cinematic experience unique, underlying the genres are common patterns, trends and motifs that belie our shared history with the homo-sapiens of the Pleistocene era (7). Despite the overwhelming cultural and historical changes that have occurred over the last 50,000 years, the biological makeup of the human brains has remained more or less the same – this is a view that is shared by most evolutionary biologists. In other words, we navigate urban jungles and sophisticated smartphones with a brain that has evolved to ensure survival in the pre-civilizational environment of the Pleistocene African Savannah. The hunter-gatherer brains of our ancestors evolved to aid survival in an environment where resources were limited, competition was paramount, and predators were aplenty. Even several millennia after these tribes migrated out of East Africa, all humans carry significant anachronistic traces of the shared evolutionary past in their bodies and brains (10).

The “core emotional and cognitive elements that the embodied brains developed in a hunter-gatherer society” are most ostentatious when we examine the types of visual fictions that people prefer. For instance, we still retain a primal fear and repulsion of large animals over cars and bullets, although we are far more likely to be killed by the latter. Many horror films still play with this primal fear of “becoming food for someone else”. Action-adventure films emphasise qualities and attributes such as “physical motion, fighting and aggression”, a search for mating partners and resources (most often, in the form of a treasure or a valuable object), – all expressions of the pivotal intensive drives that would have sustained the lives of the Pleistocene hunter-gatherer (Grodal, 2009: 6). Many action films like *Die Hard* (1988) and *Taken* (2008), for instance, contain a hide and seek format, which first evolved in mammals as a fitness-enhancing chasing game that trained infants to nurture qualities that aided both hunting and fleeing. Crime dramas and detective films stimulate our instinctual tendencies by repeating stories that feature heroes who hunt down criminals by following signs and tracks. An investigation into the classical structures of narrative forms reveals an

anachronism. Though these stories indubitably accentuate contemporary problems, they are produced and appreciated by bodies that evolved in a different environment over 50,000 years ago. Culture manipulates these innate dispositions to invent newer stories that accommodate the varying socio-political concerns of a population – with drug dealers, paedophiles and warlords replacing predators, for instance (11).

The universal production and appreciation of these films further attest to Grodal's argument that cultural possibilities, though seemingly unlimited, are constrained by biology. The production of the new in cinema is thus vaguely reducible to a sort of biological determinism. Despite the flexibility and subjectivity offered by culture and experience, inevitably, the subject is concretely demarcated by its ecology. From a biocultural perspective, any study of culture, thought and ideas, as well as the possibility of novelty that they entail, cannot be studied without ultimately referring back to the biological faculties that sustain as well as limit these products. In many ways, Grodal's theory of cinema is an ecological extension of the Kantian transcendental aesthetic, as the limits of possible knowledge in his theory are determined by the rules constituted by the architecture of the brain.

A neurocognitive process, termed by Grodal as the PECMA flow model, is central to his film theory<sup>126</sup>. PECMA is an acronym for perception, emotion, cognition and motor action. Contrary to the piecemeal or middle-level theorising advocated by the leading figures of the cognitive movement, Grodal constructs a general theory ('grand theory) of cinema around the PECMA model. His intention is to provide a "framework" from which further piecemeal investigations of a specific nature can be carried out (Grodal, 2006: 2). Grodal's central argument is that a theory of cinematic perception need not be divorced from a theory of general perception, as the brain that perceives the real world and the brain that experiences cinema are one and the same. Grodal refers to the

---

<sup>126</sup> In *Moving Pictures* (1997), where he initially develops the idea, he refrains from using the term 'PECMA model' even though he is referring to the same process. In subsequent works before and after (2006, 2017) *Embodied Visions* (2009), he concretely refers to this phenomenon using the newly coined acronym.

PECMA model as a “direct drive” approach, as it accounts for the moment from which the sensory organs encounter light and sound (Perception). Internal systems of the brain, such as the visual cortex, analyse and refine this sensory input before it is transmitted to the associative networks of the brain such as the association cortex (3). As a further step in information analysis, these parts of the brain match the refined input with stored schemas and memories of events. Following the associative stage is cognition – a set of sophisticated analytical operations that “generate hypotheses and simulate consequences before the output” – which is regulated by the biologically recent neo-cortical structures of the brain that have evolved on top of older structures such as the limbic regions (3). These stages of information processing determine the actions of the motor system. Motor impulses are, by nature, oriented towards action, and are dependent on prior schemas and superior analytical operations performed by the cognitive structures. If the subject cannot process the input in accordance with his preferences and the schemas and hypotheses at this disposal, the limbic systems “may modify the body’s internal states to produce crying, goose flesh, shivering and laughing” (4). Between these stages, from perception to motor action, emotions perform a critical role in regulating a continuous and transversal communication between the different levels. Emotions are largely produced by the older limbic regions of the brain, located above the stem of the brain, and are more sophisticated than their usage in everyday language (which often refers to high-order states like love, hate and fear). Grodal claims that emotions interfere with every level of the flow from perception to motor action, subtly regulating the direction in which the brain comprehends incoming information (the *sense* of the experience). Through the release of neurotransmitters and hormones, emotions “initiate autonomic processes which modify the internal states of the body ... [and] motivate appropriate cognitions and actions” (Grodal, 2006: 4).

Contrary to someone like Bordwell, who emphasises discourse over story in narrative forms, Grodal argues that the canonical narrative is the “basic mental structure for understanding actions within the world”. According to him, the discourse elements of cinema are better understood as modifications of the canonical structure that

constructs “different emotional modes”. As opposed to a discourse driven model that relies on “curiosity”, the PECMA model approach to cinema emphasises the emotions brought out by elements of the story (Grodal, 2006: 6). Thus, instead of starting from discourse, Grodal’s film theory looks at how films adhere to or vary from the canonical structure to produce salient emotions. The canonical structure, as we observed earlier, is the most universal narrative form as it engages our natural biological tendency towards action. Mainstream cinema that relies on this pattern engages the flow from perception to motor action on a regular basis through the construction of goals and subgoals (and sub-subgoals) that a character must achieve to resolve the story. Grodal draws from the neurobiological studies on mirror neurons to prove the vicarious nature of cinematic experience. These neurons are not only activated when a person performs an action, but also when she observes someone else performing an action. Although the spectator does not necessarily execute a motor action while watching a film, the motor centres of her brain ‘resonate’ in tandem with the actions experienced on screen (Grodal, 2009: 150). Consequently, it is understandable why Grodal’s theory of spectatorship varies from third-person accounts of cinema popularised by the likes of Branigan (1992) and Carroll (1998). He claims that the primary mode of cinematic experience in this model is first-person and any third-person perspective must “develop on top of first-person perspectives” (Grodal, 2006: 6).

A canonical narrative is a continuous flow from perception to motor resonance (PECMA-PECMA-PECMA ...) that is felt somatically as muscular tensing and relaxation. When the achievement of a goal is complicated by narrative development, our muscles tense, and upon its realisation, they relax. Cinema is therefore played out in the theatre of the body and the brain through a careful orchestration of emotions manipulated through the actions of a narrative agent. Images in a typical film are always directed towards an object such that the incoming audio-visual data “are matched with some images or image schemas stored in adjacent association areas in the temporal and parietal lobes”. Memories, Grodal claims, are always stored with an “emotional marker” that indicates the adequate response to the object (Grodal, 2009: 148). Emotions, thus, display a

tendency to expedite decision making in cerebral activities, and consequently, pose an evolutionary advantage in frenetic situations where there is very little time to think. Images that resemble carnivores, for instance, are stored with a marker that suggests fear (and flight) as the most appropriate response. Mainstream horror films often play with these psychosomatic traits to manipulate the audience into feeling dread. Citing neurologist Jaak Panksepp (2012), Grodal argues that primal emotions such as fear, anger, sexual lust and seeking are located in the oldest part of the human brain, at the topmost tip of the brain stem, and inherited from reptiles (Grodal, 2017: 4). While most action-oriented films stimulate these emotions through their stories, an entire genre (investigative thrillers) has risen around our fundamental desire to seek<sup>127</sup>. Emotions such as care, panic, grief and play are a consequence of the mammalian brain situated on top of the reptilian. Care is a strong emotion that works concomitantly with panic (emotion provoked by the “separation of care-person [or] care-object) and is the driving force of many children’s films and family dramas. Similarly, pair-bonding, an emotion shared with birds, is the cornerstone of the romance genre (4). Grodal extends this premise to account for other genres including pornography and ghost-stories, but it would suffice to say that creative forms of storytelling and narration owe more to our fundamental biological make-up rather than our imagination.

Other forms of narrative are studied by Grodal with reference to the way in which they subvert the PECMA flow. The canonical cinematic experience makes extensive use of stored memories and existing schemas to make sense of the sequence of events presented on screen. If the films “allow for matches but do not support a narrative”, the viewer experiences “lyrical-associative” emotions. On the other hand, if the film supports a narrative, but does not allow for matches with existing schemas or

---

<sup>127</sup> Seeking, Grodal explains, is a “dopamine –supported emotion that motivates the seeking up of resources, like food, shelter and so on but may also serve as an aid for other emotions. Seeking steers attention and action: When hungry, you spot the environment for traces of food, when in sexual lust, you check the environment for clues for a mating partner, and when afraid, you check the environment for clues to an existence of possible dangerous others in the neighbourhood. Seeking is the dominant emotion in [most cinema]” (Grodal, 2017: 4).

memories, the viewer is likely to experience “moodlike” or “saturated” emotions which are unfocused and not directed towards a particular object or goal. According to Grodal, films of the arthouse genre, such as those by Resnais, Lynch and Tarkovsky, make heavy use of these phenomena to create “the feeling of deep, ungraspable meaning that need not correspond to deep, buried meaning in the film” (Grodal, 2009: 149). Thus, by altering the action or goal-oriented flow of PECMA, the viewer can be sent on a labyrinthine quest for elusive meanings that do not necessarily exist. In the following pages, we will consider these arguments on the arthouse genre in light of Deleuze’s metaphysics to bring about the transcendental and passive dimensions of Grodal’s theory.

### **11. The Transcendental Empiricism of Grodal? An enquiry into an aborted metaphysics of cinema**

Grodal's antipathy towards the continental tradition is evident when he dismisses its approaches as quasi-religious, exegetic antipositivism. Though Grodal maintains that his theory of the embodied mind is radically different to that of Deleuze, he doesn't furnish that assessment with any further explanation (Grodal, 2009: 248). Despite the quite obvious disregard towards the likes of Deleuze and Bergson by Grodal and the other cognitivists (see chapter 2), ecological film theory could benefit from a sustained engagement with his philosophy. By privileging action over 'saturation', Grodal legitimises the primacy of canonical cinema over other forms, thereby carving out a closed system of ideas that revolve around, and vary from, a particular mode of experience (the flow from perception to motor action). This repeats the classical philosophical mistake of beginning from a fixed identity or a perspective from which the novelty and difference of experience can be explained as deductions or variations from a norm. Moreover, by explaining all experience in terms of the cerebral architecture ("innate algorithms"), his theory parallels the 'Copernican' attitude of Kant that subordinated all possible experience to the properties of certain pre-existing 'innate' faculties (Grodal, 2006: 9). In Deleuzian terms, Grodal's theory of cinema, like Kant, only explains the conditions of possible experience rather than real experience. Furthermore, the hinted biological determinism of his concepts results in what Peter Hallward might call a theory of "unilateral distinction", where the virtual assumes an insurmountable sovereignty that reduces all its actualizations as essentially predetermined. If the virtual-actual distinction leads to an ontology where one or the other remains fixed, though related to the other, a philosophical theory constructed around a metaphysics of 'becoming or process' is invalid, as becoming is always secondary to being, and is reduced to "identities, essences and predicates" (Hallward, 2006: 152). When biology is insufficient to explain the differences in aesthetic responses, Grodal resorts to a form of cultural determinism to address regional and national variations in cinematic forms and spectatorship. Nonetheless, these cultural



variations are still explained in subordination to the biological machinery that makes these experiences possible in the first place. Grodal's embodied subject is arguably a retroactively constructed locus of neurobiological processes that ultimately comes across as rather mechanistic. As Pierson notes, there is a "troubling superficiality" about Grodal's arguments, which finds "similarities and continuities everywhere" only because he is "looking for them everywhere, with analytical tools that are unable to identify or explain short-term changes" (Pierson, 2010: 97). Nevertheless, Grodal's theory does point to a transcendental empiricism of the kind that Deleuze reconstructs from the critical philosophy of Kant. To explore this, we must consider the PECMA flow and its disruption (in art films) more extensively.

As we have seen, the flow of information begins with the perception of sensory data by brain modules that break down the "millions of pieces" of information into "identifiable forms and figures". Each time, the brain 'identifies' salient forms amidst the scrambled data, it receives a "small reward" from the affective centres of the brain (Grodal, 2006: 4). This is why living organisms are characterised by symmetry, as the perceptual mechanism of the brain is constructed in such a manner as to reward (and thus, encourage) the 'simplification' of complex data into manageable forms. Hence, as Grodal notes, cinema and other visual arts can provide pleasure by merely presenting simplicity (5). The canonical film, for instance, breaks down the complexity of the diegetic world by breaking it down to a focused series of events that revolve around a goal or an objective. The perception of this 'simplicity' is, by very nature, pleasurable, if one goes by Grodal's theory. The next stage, as we know, is characterised by a process of association, that further 'simplifies' the input by matching it with existing memories, each of which is stored with an emotional marker. If the brain identifies the figure of a lion, it is associated with fear, while a cake or a lasagne can trigger emotions associated with hunger and taste. Hence, perception orients the body towards an appropriate response even prior to active cognition.

These two stages of apprehension and recognition mirror the first two passive syntheses of Deleuze to a certain extent. The first 'synthesis' of Grodal gathers together (contracts) a continuity - a 'living present' - from a manifold (discontinuous sensory data) and 'identifies' it in accordance with a habitual memory (significant forms and figures)<sup>128</sup>. This contraction or 'simplification' is itself dependent on a prior synthesis that transcendently conditions the reproducibility of past experiences (memories) in general. In Grodal, elements of this virtual past are triggered in the present through cerebral schemas that set associational relations such as resemblance, and are oriented towards a motor response by emotional markers attached to the forms and figures 'identified' in the first synthesis. Though, like Deleuze, Grodal recognises the passivity underlying all conscious activity, unlike Deleuze and like Kant, he takes subjectivity as a given. Perhaps, as a result of his disinclination towards metaphysical problems, Grodal does not address the emergence of the subject at all, but the nature of his neurocognitive explanations tend to assume the existence of a necessary subject responsible for these syntheses (like Kant). Although terms like 'identifying' and 'forms and figures' tend to suggest a form of passive recognition prior to active cognition, as well as a passive concept of an object prior to its active representation, from a metaphysical point of view, they cannot be considered as such. From the perspective of Deleuze's first passive synthesis, the 'identification' of salient forms and figures are themselves dependent on a contraction of the manifold that is itself contingent upon numerous other contractions<sup>129</sup>. Hence, instead of 'identification', one must speak in terms of 'habits' and 'memories', as Deleuze does in the first two syntheses. Therefore, the simplification of complex sensory input is a series of contractions in the lived

---

<sup>128</sup> The rather straightforward transposition of Deleuzian terminology (syntheses, contractions) in descriptions of Grodal's film theory is, by itself, demonstrative of the feasibility of this theoretical enterprise.

<sup>129</sup> In *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (1993), Deleuze reworks the notion of contractions into a concept of folds. The smallest unit of atom has to be conceived as a fold, and subjectivity is a complex folding of matter that creates an interiority, like a concave curve. Subjectivity is thus not a phenomenon separate from matter, but simply the interior of the outside (Deleuze, 1993: 15).

present that is conditioned by numerous other contractions that extend from the virtual past.

On the one hand, the architecture of the human brain and body is an inheritance of evolution, while on the other hand, as Bergson has argued, evolution favours variations toward utility as they ensure the survival of a species that compete for limited resources. Thus, if emotions such as fear and sexual lust have been inherited from reptiles, they themselves are *habitual* contractions to sensory stimuli that have been contingently preserved, passed on and reproduced over millennia, prior to any concept of an 'I' or a 'subject'. These reptilian emotions evolved upon series of prior contractions, themselves shaped by blind genetic variations, which when emerged and developed as traits of practical use, aided the survival of the species. From a Deleuzian perspective, it is thus logical to speak of all emotions and instincts as *a*-subjective emergent phenomena that precede any notion of identity, and their reproduction in the 'lived present' of experience is contingent upon the entirety of the virtual past, which tends to 'habitually' actualise certain contractions over others as a consequence of evolution's tendency to favour utility. Hence, the contraction of fear is 'habitually' associated with the 'larval' experience of a wolf or a tiger (sexual desire is invoked upon a larval experience of a naked body, a feeling of care is habitually contracted and associated with the larval experience of an infant, and so on). I use the word larval to refer to these experiences, as they precede the active recognition and conceptualisation of these objects (wolf, infant) as coherent representations – Deleuze might speak of a feeling of contracting something 'wolf-like' (as a sensation, not a concept) in the manifold of discontinuous differences. From this account, we must conclude that it is possible to speak of affects prior to a subject. The sensation of wolf-like is accompanied by a becoming of fear that precedes the emergence of an 'I'. Owing to the passive and transcendental nature of these affects, instead of conceptualising affects in terms of an 'I fear' or an 'I lust', we must speak of a becoming – 'becoming-fear or 'becoming-lust' - a sensation experienced as a preindividual and corporeal affect. Thus, the

transcendental condition of any subjective experience involves the synthesis of an affect as passive and preindividual.

It is this seemingly inescapable servitude to evolutionary instincts and dispositions that Bergson refers to as the human condition. It is not inconceivable to consider these dispositions in relation to arguments of clarity and obscurity of the virtual. Evolutionary and genetic contractions clarify certain relations of the virtual (fear, flight) while making others obscure (joy, rest) with respect to a contracted sensation in the lived present (wolf-like). As such, the entirety of the virtual accompanies the actualisation of an experience, but only some aspects remain clearer than others. It is not inconceivable to imagine a scenario where the obscured elements of the virtual become clarified with newer contractions (a gladiator overpowered by a lion, and facing death, feels joy and not fear).

Bergson's account of perception is pertinent to this discussion. According to Bergson, perception is not an act of representation, but akin to an act of framing. From the pure-like perception of atomic interaction to the complex perceptual processes of the human brain, there is a widening delay between perception and action, as matter becomes increasingly complex. This zone of indeterminacy, or the 'cerebral interval', functions as an act of framing that renders the act of perception manageable. Perception, as opposed to representation, is thus a selection, or indeed, a reduction (contraction), of the complex sensory data reflected from the field of experience (see Bogue, 2003: 30-34). In different terms, if we consider the entirety of relations and interactions in the field of experience as constituting the virtual (matter in *duration*), perception is the *actualisation* of a block of that virtual. Bergson considers these virtual interactions of matter as a movement of 'images', and a human constitutes a living image among a universe of matter-images in movement (movement-images) characterised by a zone of indeterminacy<sup>130</sup>. Each living image, for Deleuze, is a "centre of determination" directed towards a motor response (Deleuze, 1986: 65). For perception to be oriented towards

---

<sup>130</sup> If all perception is a selection or a contraction, image must be more than a representation and less than the 'thing-in-itself'.

an action, it has to be considered as an intersection of both sensation (of the field of experience) and affection (the ‘absorption’ of this sensation as an internal and corporeal ‘quality’). Thus, affection not only occupies the interval between perception and action, by registering sensations and intensities contracted from the field of experience as lived qualities in the corporeal field, it marks a distinction between the body and the ‘external’ field of experience<sup>131</sup>.

Bergson, Deleuze and Grodal are in concurrence that affections or emotions orient perception towards a motor action (Deleuze incorporates these concepts in his study of movement-image cinema by identifying three types of images that rely on the sensorimotor schema: the perception-image, the affection-image and the action-image). However, the orientation of an action within this ‘interval’ is swayed by the habitual tendency towards utility and practical action shaped by millennia of evolution. In *Time and Free Will*, Bergson conceives intelligence as an extension of this interval, and analysis, as its most practical consequence. Intelligence cuts up the mobile world of matter into manageable sections (spatial bias), which are deployed in the form of static concepts that “are vital in ensuring survival” and creating habits that “facilitate and preserve” these actions (Bergson, 1988: 241-242). These habits are the tendencies that facilitate fundamental responses and ensure the sustenance of the human condition (As a result of our spatial bias, we are driven to seek and navigate when we find ourselves in a new environment, and as a consequence of genetically acquired evolutionary traits, we flee when we see a tiger and care when in the presence of an abandoned child).

One of the problems that concerned Bergson, and subsequently Deleuze, is the possibility of enforcing a “pure becoming” that enables thought to “think beyond the human condition” (Ansell Pearson, 2017: 2). Such a statement might, however, appear nonsensical if read literally or taken out of context. Writers such as Turvey, Bordwell, Smith, Sokal and Bricmont are guilty of this folly when they selectively read Deleuze as a

---

<sup>131</sup> Grodal himself notes the “intensive modal” quality of emotions (Grodal, 2006: 2).

pseudoscientific thinker<sup>132</sup>. To think beyond the human condition is to break free of fixed identities, perspectives and modes of thinking. These are *habits* that have acquired an aura of permanence, perhaps as a consequence of either biology or culture, as Grodal argues. However, as we have observed, we can think of affections and sensations prior to any notion of identity, or think of affects that break away from its habitual relation to the virtual. The function of a Deleuzian (or Bergsonian) ethics is to trace out or create new habits that reveal a dimension of the virtual that has been hitherto obscured by a dominant image of thought that emphasises identity, subjectivity and representation over difference and passivity. Filmmakers and artists, through the manipulation of “affects and percepts”, are occasionally capable of expressing new images of thought through their works, expressions that can convey the very transcendental ground of experience (Deleuze, 1994: 163). When Deleuze speaks of a time-image cinema that reveals the “pure form of time”, he refers, in fact, to those films that express the transcendental conditions that constitute time (and experience) in the first place (Deleuze, 1989: 24). Be they Resnais, Antonioni, Godard, Tarkovsky or Rivette, an overwhelming number of filmmakers entertained by Deleuze in *Cinema 2: The Time Image* function within the so-called arthouse genre of cinema. The two films considered in the next chapter could also be said to belong to this genre. While Tarkovsky’s *Solaris* is a representative example of art cinema, Jodorowsky’s *The Holy Mountain* is a slightly left-field inclusion. Though the identification of *The Holy Mountain* as an art film is debatable, it displays all the characteristics that Grodal associates with the genre (breakdown of the PECMA flow, tendency towards ‘higher meanings’).

Before we critique Grodal’s description of art cinema, we must return to the final stages of the PECMA flow. The stages of perception and association are accompanied by triggered emotions that orient the body towards a possible action. The next stage of cognition evaluates the emotional significance of the filtered input and directs the body towards an appropriate motor action. Because emotions are action tendencies, affective experiences are also defined by a “muscular tensivity” (Frida, 1986: 7 cf Grodal, 2006: 5).

---

<sup>132</sup> Refer Chapter 2.

Cognition is an *active* process that are *passively* conditioned by the emotions. Grodal illustrates this transition from affect to action with the following example: “First, the puma approaches, then fear is evoked, then the decision to fight or flee is made, then a gun is drawn or a safe place found, and so forth” (Grodal, 2006: 5). The evocation of fear is a passive response to a particular experience (puma) that transcendently conditions active cognition (decision-making) and motor action (fear or flight). This is similar to the third synthesis of Kant (synthesis of recognition), which is accompanied by the emergence of a unified subject that experiences coherent objects in the world (transcendental unity of apperception). According to Kant, this is *a priori* to any possible experience as all experience must belong to a fixed subject that experiences a world of things in space and time.

Though Grodal speaks of a “Copernican shift” in experience, he glosses over the formation of the subject in his study (Grodal, 2006: 7). Unlike Kant, Grodal does grant powers of synthesis to passivity (emotions), but he takes subjectivity for granted at every stage of the PECMA flow. From our reading of Deleuze’s third synthesis, we have observed that the emergence of the subject depends upon the inverse movement of a creative third synthesis. In the first two stages of the PECMA flow (perception and emotion/association), subjectivity exists only larvally. It is the third stage of cognition that establishes these experiences as belonging to a fixed subject. However, for Deleuze, the notion of subjectivity cannot be clearly defined or demarcated as we see in Grodal and Kant. As Boundas notes, in *Empiricism and Subjectivity* (1990), Deleuze conceives subjectivity as “a task to be fulfilled” (Boundas, 1994: 111). As opposed to a certain metaphysics that approaches singularities as “being already encompassed by the form of a self or a person”, Deleuze seeks the “nomadic” pre-individual singularities that can function as the “building blocks of the transcendental field” (112). These singularities

are often referred to as “haecceities”(thisness), and more commonly, as “events” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 261; Deleuze, 1990: 80)<sup>133</sup>.

We have seen that, following Hume, Deleuze arrived at a theory of exteriority of relations. In *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (1993), he develops this thought further to create the idea of a fold. Each relation is a fold and matter is composed of many such folds. The smallest unit of matter is not a point, but a fold – an intensive relation external to its terms (the power to differ) (Deleuze, 1993: 18). Events and haecceities, being virtual intensities of such relations (folds within folds), are prior to things themselves, and allude to a mode of individuation – and “the constitution of a world of things” - that preserves “the contingency of differences in their multiple repetitions” (Boundas, 1994: 113)<sup>134</sup>. Cartesian cogito constructs a subject that is “rectilinear” and separated from the world, when it is, in fact, “curved” and perpetually conjoined with the world of matter. Typical accounts of subjectivity, including those of Kant and Grodal, assume a relatively simple distinction of interiority and exteriority<sup>135</sup>. Subjectivity, or interiority, is thus a specific folding of matter that constructs an interiority that is only the interior of an outside: “The fold is the general topology of thought... ‘inside’ space is topologically in contact with the ‘outside’ space... and brings the two into confrontation at the limit of the living present” (Deleuze, 2000a: 118). In other words, as Catherine Cheng notes, “there is no pre-given subject, but only a *subject* ... as folding, unfolding and refolding” (Cheng, 2007: 88). The significant point raised by this thought is that the subject can never be thought of as pre-existing, constant or distinct from the world of

---

<sup>133</sup> For a discussion of the concept of event in Deleuze’s philosophy, see Adkins (2012: 507-16) and Williams (2009:110-117).

<sup>134</sup> Being prior to things themselves, events are distinguished from states of affairs. While the latter refers to bodies and their affections, which are actual, the former is incorporeal and virtual. The events, Boundas writes, display a “quasi-causal efficiency” towards the bodies that they individuate, such that, it is “never what is happening in the present, but eternally that which has happened and that which is about to happen”. This is the reason Deleuze uses the infinitive to refer to events (to become, to grow, to join). Infinitives “guarantee specificity and determinacy without imposing subjective or objective coordinates” (Boundas, 1994: 113-14).

<sup>135</sup> See O’ Sullivan (2005: 102-03) for a concise account of the concept of the fold.



matter and experience. It is necessarily individuated and altered by virtual events that puts it in touch with the forces of the outside, while also constituting it as a metastable function of the outside. As O’Sullivan notes, even thought is the result of “the forces of the outside that fold the inside”. There are different modalities of folds, from the folding of bodies and material selves to the folding of time, space and memory. Subjectivity is thus “a topology of these different kinds of folds” (O’Sullivan, 2005: 103)<sup>136</sup>.

The fold, O’Sullivan continues, can also be understood as one’s relation to oneself: “To ‘have’ is to fold that which is outside inside” (O’Sullivan, 2005: 103). The rules of matter and subjectivity are thus closer to origami than Lego (see May, 2005: 38)<sup>137</sup>. In the *Cinema* books, Deleuze raises a similar idea in the form of cinema as a spiritual automaton. If cinema has the power to express the “unthought” and the “outside”, it is because we do not own our thoughts, but instead, thoughts possess us (Deleuze, 1989: 263). Thoughts must be considered as existing autonomously, and are “understood by virtue of how well they express themselves [before a thinker] ... The only thoughts we have *come from the outside*” (Rushton, 2012: 10)<sup>138</sup>. The potential of cinema lies in its ability to create experiences that reveal the nature of thinking as something that emerges from the outside. It is, in Deleuze’s words, a “spiritual automaton” capable of

---

<sup>136</sup> Note the resemblance of the concept of the fold with the idea of contractions in the first synthesis of time. We have previously considered the monotony of Deleuze’s philosophical system. Boundas, instead, prefers to see these tangents as constituting different series in communication with each other across Deleuze’s works (the Bergson series, the Leibniz series, etc.) (Boundas, 1994: 109).

<sup>137</sup> Keller (2010) distinguishes between the event and the fold thus: “The event conjures a world of fireworks, the fold explicates an origami universe. The event intensifies novelty in explosion, orgasm, revolution; the fold, precisely translated as prehension, suggests connectivity, drapes, waves, intertwinings” (Keller, 2010: 274).

<sup>138</sup> Here, we can notice the relation between this Spinozian idea and the concepts developed in *Difference and Repetition* and *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. The virtual (ideas, events, differences) is apprehended by how well it is expressed (thoughts, individuals) in the actual.

creating the conditions of thought (Deleuze, 1989: 166)<sup>139</sup>. In the act of watching films, the cinematic spectator is at once created and recreated (enfolded) by the images that he encounters. In other words, the spectator is perpetually involved in an act of folding and unfolding 'that which is outside inside'. Cinematic cogito, in contrast to Grodal, does not exist as an a priori given, but emerges at the intersection of the images and the body (the screen-body assemblage).

#### **Grodal and Art Cinema**

The PECMA flow functions smoothly in the experience of most canonical films. Narration is a fundamental feature of the cognition of everyday experience. The active subject orders events according to a causal logic, and makes decisions and pursue goals in accordance with that system. The experience of canonical cinema is no different, with the exception that the events they narrate are more focused than everyday experience. Due to the functioning of the mirror neurons, film spectatorship is characterised by a vicarious identification with the characters and actions presented on screen. As the spectator is unable to physically influence the action on screen, the PECMA flow culminates in motor resonance (muscles twitching and relaxing) as opposed to direct action. Since the classical cinematic narrative engages the basic neurocognitive drive that informs most of our experience, Grodal argues that "[the] canonical story is the basic mental structure for understanding actions in the world" (Grodal, 2006: 6).

As we know, from a Bergsonian point of view, the analytic comprehension of events as a narrative of causes and effects is a consequence of the evolutionary drive towards utility. From a Deleuzian perspective, the analytic model of comprehension and the linear experience of time are transcendently conditioned by a particular orientation of virtual relations – an image of thought - that obscures all other relations in favour of a causal and representative model. Both Grodal and Deleuze argue that certain films of the arthouse genre succeed in generating modes of expression that break away from

---

<sup>139</sup> One of Deleuze's ambitions in the *Cinema* books is to conceive non-human forms of thought. Cinema as "a machine of thought" can be considered to think independently of the spectator (see Rushton, 2012: 101-04).

this dominant paradigm, creating “blocs of sensation” that clarify virtual relations that were previously obscured (Deleuze, 1994: 163). This results in narratives that create de-centred affects and circular time. They indulge memories, dreams and hallucinations, and distort the goal-seeking agenda of the canonical narrative. For Deleuze, they express the transcendental and passive conditions of our experience, while for Grodal, they disrupt the normal functioning of the PECMA flow and create saturated emotions and an illusory sense of deep meaning (Grodal, 2009: 205).

Grodal claims that canonical films, much like most of our daily experiences, refer to “concrete, present-tense interactions with the world, involving a constant PECMA flow”, and as such, create meanings that are “transient” (Grodal, 2009: 205). On the other hand, ‘permanent’ meanings are created when we associate events with memories from the past, and construct new schemas that produce abstract concepts that go beyond our immediate interaction with the world. Art films disrupt conventional narrative flow to produce “subjective” (in the sense that the meanings are internal to us and not a property of the external world represented in the film) meanings that can be construed by the mind as being deep, eternal or spiritual, as they fail to match the images with memories of any concrete object. In *Moving Pictures*, the process by which events in an external world produce subjective and ‘internal’ meanings is referred to as introjection, and the non-goal oriented narratives are called ‘paratelic’ (where the emphasis is on the “process” and not *telos* – directed towards a goal) (Grodal, 1997: 130). Art films are also often characterised by a sense of “disembodiedness”. While events in the canonical cinema frequently refer to the concrete actions of an agent “for whom mental processes are intimately linked with physical actions aimed at concrete goals”. Style, in the art cinema, can enjoy a degree of autonomy from the narrative, as sequences in these films tend to be unmotivated by *telos* or a clear objective (Grodal, 2009: 208). For instance, in *L’Avventura* (1960, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni), the search for Anna is often abandoned, and the protagonists tend to digress towards paratelic actions that deviate from this goal, thereby creating a de-centred ‘feeling’ of alienation and apathy that pervades the narrative in general. In *Tropical Malady* (2004, dir. Apichatpong

Weerasethakul), the filmmaker abruptly suspends a blooming love story between two men to pursue an allegorical story involving a tiger spirit, forcing a plenitude of affective meaning that escapes any concrete signification.

The saturated emotions and disembodiment associated with art film constitute a Kantian moment of *sublime* for Grodal. Just as reason steps in and brings order to the Sublime in the form of a transcendent Idea (God, Self or The World) in Kant, the hermeneutic machinery of the brain activates 'higher meanings' to make sense of the disrupted PECMA flow in paratelic cinematic experience. Grodal's claims regarding art cinema can be read with the same metaphysical bent that Deleuze extracts from the Kantian sublime. Because these films are capable of disrupting the habitual flow from perception to motor action, they are successful in indirectly expressing the Ideas of the virtual (Ideal synthesis of difference) as they trace out combinations and connections that force a radical shift or a crisis in time. They force a creative movement of thought towards the virtual that alters the ground upon which the twin pillars of identity and representation emerge. The affect that is generated in this movement precedes all signification and is only felt as a de-centred intensity that expresses the abstract genesis of an Idea.

Grodal's bioculturalist theory is more effective in the study of canonical cinema as they rely heavily on the idea of evolution as a determining or limiting factor. Though the evolutionary dispositions that facilitate the production and appreciation of canonical cinema are themselves complex folds, they possess the potential to creatively vary and proliferate in response to the outside. They are thus defined by their creativity and not rigidity. It is the inherent creativity of evolution that is opened up by films that divert from the PECMA model. The feeling of higher meaning that is generated by these images is a result of an encounter with a different logic of thought. Previously, we had seen how the cinematic spectator is the consequence of a flexible form of folding in response to the 'outside' of cinema. While movement-images of canonical cinema rely heavily on habitual forms of action and recognition, time-images of art cinema unfold

the spectator in a manner that liberates her from the hierarchies of everyday existence. By presenting images that break away from tradition and order (the confused protagonist, the unresolved crime, boredom, purposeless strolls), time-image cinema provokes the spectator into considering the very possibility of the limits of thought and subjectivity. By dispensing with common-sense and a dogmatic logic of representation, it facilitates the emergence of unforeseen larval subjectivities that can only think these images in creative and unique ways (saturation, higher meanings). If the meanings that are thus created are abstract and unrepresentable, it necessarily points to the ability of the embodied mind sculptured by the forces of evolution to create, invent, and vary in response to the forces of the outside. Contrary to the deterministic logic of Grodal's thought, Deleuze (through his concept of the time-image) proposes a useful taxonomy of concepts by which these films can be studied and appreciated, but without discounting their potential to engage creative forms of thought. In *L'abecadaire* (1996), a televised interview with Claire Parnet, Deleuze recalls his affection for the baker's transformation in physics, "which involves the stretching and folding of a square on itself" (Rae, 2014: 197, see also Stivale, 2008: 24). When the square is folded several times, points in the square that were initially far apart become proximate and conjoined. Several art films, by stretching and folding narrative space and time, utilise a corresponding mechanism to bring into proximity aspects of experience far removed from one another. In turn, the spectator who is stretched and enfolded in the act of watching the film encounters an overhaul of thought and common sense that propels her into contact with the Ideas of the virtual that were hitherto obscure and alien (to be present, past and future at the same time, to be here and there, to experience life as series). These non-PECMA films instigate new 'virtualisations of the body' – unrepresentable and unforeseen affections (higher, abstract meaning) as responses to uncommon thoughts (folds)<sup>140</sup>

---

<sup>140</sup> The term 'virtualisations of the body' is employed here in contradiction to Mark Hansen's original use of the phrase in *New Philosophy for New Media* (2004: 245-

In the following sections, the Deleuzian response to the problems posed by arthouse cinema is explored with reference to the time-image and its signs, and via readings of *The Holy Mountain* and *Solaris*.

## 12. Crystalline Alchemy and Virtual Solaristics: A Deleuzian reading of *The Holy Mountain* and *Solaris*

*The Holy Mountain* opens with an extended sequence of religious symbolism and surrealist imagery narrated in a paratelic manner. The sequence begins with a scene that features a cowboy-like priest who tonsures the heads of two women accompanied by a hymn-like soundtrack that evokes the rhythms of Oriental religions. With characters placed in fixed positions in a geometrically precise Euclidean space, this scene alludes to the exactitude of a ritual, while at the same time subverting it with an element from the outside – the cowboy-priest. As the priest and the tonsured women form a tableau that resembles a Jungian *mandala*, the camera zooms out and rapidly cuts to an eyeball in a psychedelic painting. The strategy of zooming out followed by a cut (into other eyeballs and circular objects) is followed repetitively as the opening credits roll out in a Devanagari-inspired typography. The calculated perversion of the film's surrealist syncretism is increasingly evident as the camera seeks out *improbable* objects that are rendered conspicuous by their presence in the carefully designed frames (dismembered body parts, eyeballs). The credits end with another zoom-out, but on this occasion, the camera cuts to a long shot (followed by a zoom-in) of the intoxicated and decaying body of a Jesus-like destitute in a Western-like expanse. Like the cowboy priest and the eyeballs, the drunken Jesus in the Wild West is yet another improbable object in the diegesis of *The Holy Mountain*. The montage that follows this shot invokes and irreverently subverts biblical references (locusts, thorns, crucifixion) and is, in its own way, an iconoclastic retelling of the story of Christ.

---

248). Hansen argues that cinema, unlike new media, does not offer the potential to affirm virtualisations of the body. Rushton (2005: 354-58) argues to the contrary.

The structure of the opening sequence disrupts the PECMA flow of classical cinema and does not lend itself to any concrete readings, as Grodal's theory suggests. However, from a Deleuzian perspective, these images can be considered as opsigns and sonsigns, *pure* optical and sonic images that break away from the sensorimotor schema (the crisis of the action-image) and express a perspective that disrupts the dominant image of thought that characterises canonical cinema as well as everyday cognition (Deleuze, 1989: 33). We have seen that a Deleuzian 'cine-ethics' is a search for such mobile images that express the liberation of the virtual from the habitual orientation of the 'human condition' (PECMA flow, utility).

The opsigns and sonsigns of *The Holy Mountain* reach a point of indiscernibility that resembles the profuse reflectivity of a crystal. When the virtual correlates of an actual image are opened up by cinema, they express time in its most crystalline state (a time-crystal) through *hyalosigns* that communicate the inextricability and eminence of the virtual in the actualised present (Deleuze, 1989: 82)<sup>141</sup>. These crystal-images are decentred and circumvent the human tendency to subsume experience in a dominant

---

<sup>141</sup> In the *Cinema* books, Deleuze's reading of the actual and virtual owe a lot to the Bergsonian framework of the second passive synthesis. Deleuze appears to identify the virtual in cinema with the false, the past and the subjective (chaotic states of mind), whereas the actual is considered as the purview of the true, the present and the objective (ordered states of affairs). As Deleuze writes, "the actual is always objective, but the virtual is subjective" (Deleuze, 1989: 83). It is tempting to identify movement-image cinema with the actual and time-image cinema with the virtual. However, as Rushton points out, this is an inaccurate description of Deleuze's cinematic taxonomy, as the differences between the two types of cinema lie in the relations that they establish between the actual and the virtual (Rushton, 89). Even the most daring movement-image cinema ultimately restores the qualitative distinction between the actual and virtual (the flashback revealing the missing past, the protagonist waking up from a dream, the detective restoring order), whereas time-image cinema intentionally distorts such clear demarcations to present a field of indiscernibility, where the actual and virtual are "unattributable" reciprocally determined (Is this a dream, a memory or reality? Am I a reflection in the mirror?) (Deleuze, 1989: 69).

However, it must be noted that this description of the actual-virtual in cinema is rather muted in comparison with Deleuze's more overtly philosophical works (see Williams, 2012: 160-162).

image-of-thought characterised by utility and reason. These images resist a clear demarcation or rational organisation of memories, dreams, hallucinations and reveries (virtual states), and confound any clear distinction between the past and present. Though many films include memory-images (*mnemosigns*) and dream-images (*oneirosigns*), they eventually suggest a structure that clearly separates the actual and virtual. However, in crystal-image cinema, the distinction between actual and virtual are rendered indiscernible, and elements of the virtual *pollute* the actual in ways which disrupt the standard movement from perception to action. When these crystal-images are combined and extended across overarching narratives, they constitute time-images that are characterised by *chronosigns* (Deamer, 2011: 362). When such narrative strategies prevent perception from being effortlessly extended into action, “a new element” emerges that puts the image “in contact with thought” and takes it “beyond movement” (Deleuze, 1989: 1). The function of these time-images is to “get beyond the real” (exteriority of space and the primacy of movement) and point “toward a genesis in mental relations or time” (Rodowick, 1997: 79). The model of time as a crystal, along with its corresponding expression in cinema as a crystal-image, evokes the mutual inextricability of the actual and virtual that characterises mental states (and also its transcendental condition). As Rodowick notes, indiscernibility “relates primarily to description” and remains the “key to understanding the ... crystalline image” (Rodowick, 1997: 91)<sup>142</sup>. Our recognition of the objects of experience is a consequence of the interplay between the virtual (memory) and the actual (perception). The memory of an object (virtual), as it returns, changes each time in an act of creative destruction to the point where we cannot speak of the same object, but different versions or “circuits” of virtual and actual, real and imaginary<sup>143</sup>. Thus a cinema that combines de-centred

---

<sup>142</sup> Descriptively, the actual refers to “the physical and the real”, the world experienced through perception, while the virtual “is subjective ... mental and imaginary [and] sought out in time through memory”. Indiscernibility refers to an image that renders this distinction indistinguishable (Rodowick, 1997: 91).

<sup>143</sup> “How can we say that it is the same object which passes through different circuits, because each time description has obliterated the object, at the same time as the mental image has created a different one?” (Deleuze, 1989: 46).



opsigns and sonsigns to create time-images forces a line of flight away from habitual circuits (such as the PECMA flow) towards new linkages that express the contingency and passivity of the underlying “double movement” that conditions all experience (Deleuze, 1989: 46).

The opening sequence of *The Holy Mountain* is rather Deleuzian in spirit, keeping in mind the ‘buggery’ of his early works. In the opening sequence, Jodorowsky makes Christ makes vulgar and crude to the point where it is indistinguishable from deification – a boorish Christ who redeems cripples, exploding toads and clerical sex workers is as *passionate* and saintly as the biblical Christ (the virtualisation of Jesus). Furthermore, this sequence (as well as a majority of the film) is a Deleuzian exercise in dismantling identity in favour of difference. As a result of the Bible, the identity of Christ has acquired a standard that leaves little room for variation. In the opening sequence, Jodorowsky dismantles this canonical story, preserving only a vague notion of crucifixion and redemption. The protagonist who resembles Christ is known only as The Thief throughout the film. His Bethlehem and Jerusalem are populated by cripples, feral children and lascivious priests, and his first apostle is a handicapped dwarf. Biblical symbolism dominates most of the opening act. However, as noted, these motifs are continuously transformed through a repetition of pure difference. For instance, in one of the early scenes, a parade of crucified dogs is accompanied by a march of immaculately dressed senior citizens, who act out the final walk of Christ on their knees and with their arms spread apart as if tied to a cross. The notion of Christ is mirrored here by many reflective surfaces (The Thief, the dogs, the parade crowd), like the many sides of a crystal, further obscuring the separability of the actual and the virtual.

These crystal-images suggest a movement that is unwilling to deify one image of Christ, and this sequence elevates this to a problem of identities in general. This is visually accomplished by a charade of frequent misrecognition of The Thief: at times as a messiah (by the dwarf and the band of sex workers), other times as a physical

---

embodiment of Jesus (the drunken soldiers), and on occasion, as a Christ to be exploited and deceived (the lecherous priest). These images escape the characteristic movement of the sensori-motor schema and are disconnected to the extent that the habitual rules of identification and association collapse to reveal an insurmountable gap or an “interstice” between them (Deleuze, 1989: 179). In canonical cinema, the interstice is characterised by effective linkage; it exists as a “function of the images”, the point where one image ends and another begins (association). However, the interstice in time-image cinema is a function of differentiation (Bogue, 2003: 171). Images succeed the other through a process of addition, a “method of AND” (this and then that) that produces a “dynamic gap” between the images such that a productive difference is established between them (Deleuze, 1989: 180). In this method, images are joined through a process of “irrational cuts” and the interstices thus produced emerge from a “pure outside” beyond any common-sense conception of the world while simultaneously alluding to an “inside deeper than any internal world” (Deleuze, 1989: 179, Bogue, 2003: 173). If the whole in the canonical cinema is an open whole, the whole in time-image cinema is ‘the outside’ that is also expressed in the interstice: “The outside is the consecutive ‘and’ of things, the consecutive between-two of images” (Deleuze, 1989: 180).

The irrational cuts that link these images are not arbitrary either. Rather, they are a ‘re-enchanting’ or re-linkage of independent images “disenchained from the chains of images held together by the sensori-motor schema” (Bogue, 2003: 173). The suspension of the sensori-motor schema is manifested at the level of the narrative through the inability of The Thief to act. He is, instead, caught in a whirlwind of images that occur outside his volition. Crucified and tortured against his will, he becomes the passive subject of a series of carnivalesque events, unable to fully ascertain his role or identity in that world. He is attacked, abducted and drugged by a group of soldiers who make him the unwilling model for the production of Christ figures. When he regains his consciousness, he finds himself in a warehouse full of statues of Christ in his image. His journey eventually takes him to the tower of The Alchemist, where he is forced to

assume more identities that are imposed from the outside (the Tarot icon, the pilgrim, the disciple). His ultimate destiny is decided by The Alchemist, who urges him to leave the chaotic world of the Interstice to return to the familiar world of action (the 'real world' of the sensorimotor regime, as opposed to the world of 'illusions' that The Alchemist presides over). Forever at the beckoning of others, and unable to exercise authority even over his immediate space (he is tied, stripped, brainwashed), The Thief inhabits a realm that is interior to the pure, empty form of time of the third synthesis – a permanent becoming-other of an aleatory subject in a vortex of movements. His body is malleable and a site of tremendous affective *power*, making him the perfect base for alchemical transformations. He embodies power not actively, but passively, as the potential to be acted upon in a multitude of ways (Del Rio, 2008: 10). As a site of minimum resistance and maximum affectivity, he expresses the contingency that is transcendental to all subjectivity. This is evident in the many 'mirrorings' (hyalosigns) utilised by the filmmaker to posit the subjectivity of the character as a reflective and variant metastability.

The Thief's resemblance to Jesus motivates the soldiers to use him as a model to produce Christ statues, yet Jesus is also expressed in the body of The Thief. This double-becoming (becoming-Thief of Jesus and the becoming-Christ of The Thief) is particularly prominent in the scene where The Thief *eats* the body of Christ after tearing open one of the statues. In another scene, The Thief recreates the Pieta by solemnly cradling the replica of his own body (in a 'crystalline' reversal, an earlier scene shows the priest holding the body of The Thief). The opening sequence frequently employs a reflective mirroring of the virtual and actual to advance its Menippean vision of subjectivity – history and faith reflected and transformed in the present in an indiscernible and perverse manner (re-enactment of the passion of Christ in an obscure and *ahistorical* Latin American village, recreation of the conquest of Mexico through toads and chameleons). The characters inhabit a transcendental pre-subjective space where the past is inextricable from the present, and action never quite predetermined.

According to Deleuze, images such as these must be thought of as constituting a brain in its own right (noosphere), a thought independent of a thinker (Deleuze, 1989: 273). Unable to find a prior order (sensori-motor schema) to organise these images, the cine-brain scans the virtual past for possible frames of reference. The failure to subsume these images in a familiar hierarchy of thought results in a caesura that ruptures the images beyond any rational order of things. The images compensate for this crisis by diffusing its world with two of the most affective and accustomed layers of the past, namely, religion and history. Though both forces could have their origin in factual occurrences, their powers of affection are largely dependent on a matter of faith. Both manifest themselves in memory and action as an ideal, a faith in something permanent and transcendent, a standard by which we make choices and construct a grander narrative for our lives. By imbuing the narrative with these elements, the film appeals to faith to act as the gluing agent that brings meaning and sense to these images. However, their effective function is to act as abstract fillers that create interstices between images through irrational cuts. Though traditionally the agents of grounding, in *The Holy Mountain*, they point to a perpetual ungrounding that tears these images from their habitual linkages and forms of association, leaving us with pure opsigns and sonsigns capable of being combined in many different ways. Religion and history thus liberated from their enslaving 'truths' are let free to chase creative couplings and improvised truths.

The multifaceted time-image of *The Holy Mountain* frays the fabric of space-time to actualise what was only once virtual in faith and facts (a becoming-thief of Christ and a becoming-reptile of the conquistadors). Yet, there is something pre-subjective and chaotic in these images that resist any attempts to invest them with a permanent meaning. Creatively, the film is the novel expression of a thought whose connections to rigid and unyielding habits and memories are severed one by one and permitted to coalesce in a state of perpetual osmosis. Even the most basic acts of perception and recollection are a 'double' - the recognition of an object (actual) with its matching mirror images in memory (virtual). Each recollection is an event of "creation and

erasure”, and the object of perception passes through several circuits of actual and virtual (the cone of memory) before it is actualised as the immediate object of consciousness (Deleuze, 1989: 46). With successive repetitions and impenetrably convoluted circuits, the corresponding images become more crystalline, or in other words, the distinction between the actual and virtual becomes more tenuous. These images traverse through “successive planes and independent circuits”, obliterating some and accentuating others, and producing the original object as an emergent configuration determined by the nature of the circuits (Deleuze, 1989: 46). As we have seen, the indiscernibility of the actual and virtual is particularly prominent at the level of description. As Rodowick notes, cinematic images that express this indiscernibility bridge the distinction between the real and the imaginary and make visible the fracturing and splitting of the non-chronological time (Rodowick, 1999: 91). In *The Holy Mountain*, history, theological or otherwise, intersects ‘longitudinally’ with memory to create a topological space characterised by several lateral “peaks of the present” (Deleuze, 1989: 130). This is accomplished by disconnecting history from its chronology such that the past coexists with the present without distinction or eminence. Whether it is a retelling of the story of Christ or an alchemical exploration of a tarotological pilgrimage, the film supplants these events from their geographical, historical and ideological foundations to revive them in a counterculture milieu that overshadowed the America of the sixties. The result is a psychotropic reconnaissance of theology and mysticism, where a messiah can also be a hippie and a pilgrimage an intense trip. The film explicitly addresses this idea when a character at the Pantheon Bar proclaims LSD to be the only way to reach the summit of The Holy Mountain. Taken as a whole, the film is a *brain* whose ‘hodological’ space consists of narcotic pathways that fork, bifurcate and ultimately spread out in a labyrinthine circuit of coexisting presents whose connections to chronological time and sensorimotor movements are circumvented to reveal the crystalline nature of time as a series of reflections and fractures.

The disruption of the PECMA flow (sensorimotor schema) is ever so prominent in the character of The Thief. A seer and not a doer, he is thrust into a world where the only

constant is his fundamental passivity. In such a situation, events occur to him without entailing an active response. Whether he is a Christ, a disciple or a lover, these roles are transient, involuntary and imposed from the outside. Passive, powerless and bereft of action, such a predicament enables him to become a direct observer to the passage of time. The Thief enables the film to construct noosigns (thought-images) that express a 'direct' disclosure of time and its transcendental condition – time as the repetition of pure difference, the eternal return. By foregoing with continuity, Jodorowsky constructs de-linked spaces grouped by a narcotic logic and irrational intervals. The filmmaker conceives direct time as a psychotropic manifestation, which is particularly evident in the alchemical symbolism that recurs throughout the film. If The Thief is Jesus (in the opening act), the character of The Alchemist is equated with God. The Thief's resurrection is completed when he is lifted up to the *heavens* (the tower) to meet with The Alchemist. From then on, the film entertains an idea of God as an alchemist and a chemist, a veritable peddler of drugs, who manufactures changes in the 'truths' and realities of His subjects. The Alchemist is thus a powerful noosign that chemically alters established regimes of truth. He transforms The Thief from a destitute to a disciple, and finally, to a lover. A Charon of the virtual, he ferries images from one world to another. Possessing the power to actualise and transform what was only virtual, he is a purveyor of simulacra who transports The Thief from one skewed reality to another<sup>144</sup>. The Thief

---

<sup>144</sup> In one crucial segment in the film, he manifests the classical planets of Tarot as caricatured identities, each presented as exaggerated clichés. For instance, Venus is portrayed as a baron of the pleasure industry and Mars is conceived as a dispassionate curator of war. Each planet is characterised by excess (of sex, violence, greed) and in matters of film style, the director uses a hybrid aesthetic that is as much influenced by slapstick as it is by gore or exploitation. By resorting to exaggerated caricatures and parodies, The Alchemist invokes a world rendered intolerable by clichés. A cliché is a customary sensorimotor response to a situation that with habitual use becomes synonymous with a dogmatic image of thought: "a cliché is the sensorimotor image of the thing" (Deleuze, 1999: 20). With each repetition, it further obscures tacit elements of reality, revealing only the worn-out and debilitated truths of the age. With each use of the cliché, time becomes ever more spatialised and linear, revealed only indirectly through movement and action, until a caesura cuts open the torrid flow of pure time in a momentous *event*. By stripping clichés of their customary associations, and by firmly ensconcing them with

becomes the passive recipient of this almighty trip orchestrated by The Alchemist-God who also *ungrounds* the reality upon which he stands. In Jodorowsky's cinema, to know pure time is to become narcotic, and vice versa. Both are necessarily dependent on a *revelation* of the transcendental forces that operate behind the habitual and palatable forms of time and experience. In fact, when Deleuze claims that the time-image is a "direct" presentation of time, this is what he intends (Deleuze, 1989: 2). If the movement-image cinema presupposes a world where events and actions have a stable and fixed order, time-image cinema resists such rigid orders or hierarchies, and reveals the nature of time as the form of change. As Rushton writes, for Deleuze and Bergson, "time is change or it is nothing at all" (Rushton, 2012: 5).

The Alchemist-Thief assemblage is constitutive of a type of crystal that Deleuze refers to as "the seed" (Deleuze, 1989: 70). The seeds are "virtual elements that generate actual diegetic environments" and are indicative of a "genetic dimension to the unfolding of the virtual and actual" (Rodowick, 1997: 92, Bogue, 2003: 123). The Alchemist and The Thief are bound to each other, and their initial encounter in the tower is the most prominent genetic element that crystallises the narrative. The chain of events that leads the disciple (Thief) to the master (Alchemist) hints at a masterly orchestration to which the former is oblivious. Like many allegorical tales, these images imply predestination and a transparent teleology. However, in *The Holy Mountain*, the allegorical form is repeatedly falsified through the use of disconnected heterogenous spaces ("any-space-whatever") and descriptive indiscernibility (Deleuze, 1986: 109). The 'powers of the false' are affirmed by the filmmaker at each level of the narrative. Here, we experience a theology indistinguishable from a pharmacology, hedonism practised with austerity, The Wild West of the Orient and a chymical Buddha who dabbles with "shit". The 'truthful

---

an aura of indiscernibility (of the actual and virtual), Jodorowsky forces such an encounter whereby what was once cinematic (slapstick, porn chic), and thus purely virtual, is made crystalline through a series of incongruous mirrorings (identities as masks, personalities as illusions). The Alchemist reveals these images to The Thief in the form of hallucinatory visions, and then manifests these figures in the immediate world of The Thief only to strip them of their identities.

man' of canonical cinema, the man of action in pursuit of the eternal and guided by the transcendent – the Platonic Good man – gives way to a man in search of phantasms and simulacra: The Thief is forever in the cave, and there is nothing but the cave. Together, the Alchemist and the Thief curate a museum of transient shadows – disembodied and Dionysian – seeds that proliferate and bounce off each other in a probabilistic universe where each throw of the dice shatters and creates the crystal anew.

Deleuze's exploration and reification of the "powers of the false" is the consequence of an evolved "Nietzscheanism" that questions 'systems' of truths and values (Deleuze, 1989: 137). The man in search of truth, Deleuze writes, is a man with "strange motives" who conceals an inclination to judge: "he sees in life an evil, a fault which is to be atoned for: the moral origin of the notion of truth" (137-138). Kris Kelvin, the protagonist of *Solaris*, exemplifies a man who seeks judgement as a form of atonement. Tasked with the duty to determine the legacy and fate of 'Solaristics', the study of the strange exoplanet Solaris, Kelvin initially apprehends the mission as a means to correct the discrepancies of his life - to instil it with order, truth and purpose. Having witnessed a tumultuous marriage that culminated with his wife taking her own life, the opportunity to act as an agent of judgement – the mover of time and fate (of Solaris) – is a chance that he finds hard to resist. Prior to the trip, he actively seeks to erase the corruption of his past by burning photographs of his wife and personal documents that once held value (his thesis, his research). Solaris is the caesura that ruptures and serialises his life. The hubris that comes with the power to decide the fate and truth of a planet renders all 'human' memories and concerns meaningless and insignificant.

Upon reaching the space station orbiting above the ocean planet, Klein realises the futility of his motives. He discovers that one of the scientists aboard the station (Gibarian) has killed himself, while the others (Sartorius and Snaut) appear to inhabit a delirious reality that forces them to retreat increasingly into a world of memories and phantasms. Before his arrival, an old fighter pilot, Burton, had warned Klein about the hallucinatory qualities of the ocean, but he dismisses the theory as an irresponsible



flight of fancy. After a long sleep, he wakes up to find a woman in his room. Initially confused, he soon realises that she is his dead wife, Hari. An uninvited and traumatic vision of his past, he tries to destroy the simulacrum by blasting it out into space in a capsule. However, Hari appears again while Klein is sleeping. He accepts the ocean's power to manifest memories, and spends a tender evening with the phantasm of his wife. When Hari's simulacrum discovers the nature of her past and present existence, she is plunged into an existential despair that compels her to take her life yet again. She manifests once more, but only to bid farewell to Klein. After her departure, Klein reconciles with his past and ponders a return to Earth.

The narrative proceeds through several falsifying repetitions to advance its concerns. Though Klein and the other scientists attempt to resist the powers of Solaris by blasting its surface with nuclear radiations, an attack on the virtual past only aggravates the mobility of its differential elements. The past repeats over and over, each time manifesting a simulacrum that is defined by its ontological difference. Though the phantasm of Hari initially mimics the identity of Klein's dead wife, she soon affirms the difference internal to her and discovers a mode of being that is uniquely hers. In turn, Klein affirms the meaning of his past by entertaining and engaging with the repetitions of his wife and her death (repetition as therapy and cure). The only way Klein can vanquish the phantasms of his past is by repetitively engaging the phantasms not as mere representations, but as embodied and alive forces. He has to take a plunge into the virtual past to alter its serial relations. He must *falsify* his past to create the most meaningful truths.

Like Kelvin, the simulacrum of Hari have no choice but to confront the virtual. To affirm her status as an entity that is not merely a degraded copy of Kelvin's dead wife, she must seek out and vivify the differences that only she is capable of communicating. She affirms her differences from Earth-Hari by repeating aspects of the latter's life. Hari's suicide is the singular event that serrates Kelvin's memories of his wife, family and childhood. A 'becoming-alien' of the past (the becoming-false of the virtual) is necessary

if Kelvin is to redeem his past, and thereby, actualise a new duration for him to inhabit. A 'becoming-human' of the present is inevitable if Solaris-Hari is to affirm her existence as an act of original creation. In a telling scene, the phantasm scrutinises the minutiae of Brugel's *The Hunters in the Snow*, as the camera in slow, patient pans traces the movement of her eyes. Each detail actualises the past of Earth-Hari in the present of Solaris-Hari, but in an irreducible and indiscernible continuum of exchange. The durations of Earth-Hari are not merely transposed to the body of the phantasm, but allowed to coalesce and combine with alien durations to create a rhythm that is singular to the entity aboard the space station. The 'becoming-human' of the phantasm thus proceeds through multiple reflections of the crystal (the phantasm and the painting, Kelvin mirroring Hari in the phantasm, the phantasm mirroring Hari in Kelvin). This is perhaps why Deleuze referred to the ocean planet as a "turning ... liquid crystal" (Deleuze, 1989: 75).

The nature of subjectivity as an event and intersection – an inward folding of the outside – is evident in the thread involving Hari's simulacra. To affirm herself, Hari must fold her experiences in the station with the 'affections of the soul', the memories that are not hers. She is vivified by Kelvin's memories, but lives them as if they were hers<sup>145</sup>. When she recognizes the incorporeality and transience of her existence, she invents new folds. Her love for Kelvin is affirmed by these creative folds, as she is aware that the love she felt initially was merely a representation, a copy. Love as an affect is possible only by forcing an encounter with the outside, by experiencing the outside as a field of creative potential. Hari's alien incarnations manifest the nature of difference as eternally returning. By the time Kelvin departs the station, Hari has died several times in his life, but each repetition of her death actualises the potential of the virtual (*elan-vital*) to invent new times and new durations.

---

<sup>145</sup> The possibility for a feminist reading is ripe from this context. In fact, it can be argued that Tarkovsky's films repetitively feature women who depend on men to actualise their existential possibilities. Examples include the characters of Eugenia and Adelaide in *Nostalghia* (1983) and *The Sacrifice* (1987) respectively.

The techniques utilised by Tarkovsky mirrors the philosophical preoccupations of the film. The director chooses to employ slow pans and static long-takes, interspersed with singular events (a blast, a death, a levitation), to visualise the folding of durations. It is by splicing together shots of unequal “time-pressure” that Tarkovsky realises the intensity or “sloppiness” of duration. Tarkovsky writes, “How does time make itself felt in a shot? It becomes tangible when you sense something significant, truthful, going on beyond the events on the screen; when you realise, quite consciously, that what you see in the frame is not limited to its visual depiction, but is a pointer to something stretching out beyond the frame and to infinity; a pointer to life” (Tarkovsky, 1987: 117). Like the scene involving Hari and Brugel’s painting, *Solaris* frequently features sequences that visually express the exchange and folding of durations, and its constitutive effect on subjectivity. This can be illustrated by considering two important scenes.

The tendency of the time-image to actualise embryonic durations and larval subjectivities is particularly accentuated in the opening scene of *Solaris*. With the temperament of a natural historian, the camera extends its impassioned attention towards the movements of leaves and grass over a quietly flowing brook in a Russian hinterland. Through hypnotic pans, it surveys the landscape for movements of life, finding in each instance, a gentle unequivocal intensity that is distributed across nature in various subtle rhythms. The removed curiosity of the camera prevents it from staying still, but preferring to engage the objects of its enquiry with a fleeting caress, neither does it rush. Like memories, the woods are cloaked in mist, and the images themselves exude the virtual with a ravenous ferocity. The seemingly inescapable flow of the virtual is mirrored by the mist, which is also generative of the crystal that is opened up in this scene. Whether the camera wanders to inspect a rustling bush or the undulations of a company of planktons, the mist diffuses the frames with a scent of the virtual, obscuring whatever clarity or permanence they possessed at the outset. As if by accident, the camera pans to find the hands of Kris Klein, and like other objects that caught its vision, he is only fleetingly entertained. The attention lingers on his body for a momentary glance before returning to the stream and the grasslands. He is just another movement

in a field of movements, and for now, is inseparable from his immediate environment. When the camera finds him again, he doesn't directly engage its gaze. The hushed rhythms that sustain the deceptive simplicity of the landscape confound him, and the bewilderment is etched on his face as he scans the milieu for a recognisable order. Despite the sense of agency implied by his pen and notepad, he mirrors the despondence of a defeated cryptographer. He seeks without direction, but finds merely nested rhythms – the rustling leaves conceal the inquisitive cry of a bird, and the seemingly endless expanse his own insignificant presence. As the camera tracks his stroll through the woods in semi-circular long shots, it stumbles upon a shimmering reflection of a building obscured by mist and the gentle ripples in the stream. A slow pan reveals a house shrouded by a thicket, and for the first time, Kelvin has a distinct object to occupy his gaze.

If the scene reveals anything, it is the potential of the time-image to discover the haecceities that constitute larval subjectivities. The initial frames of the scene are characterised by a reluctance to sequester Kelvin from his immediate surroundings. The camera actively engages non-human durations (the water, the leaves, the bird) and non-human affects (the pensive water, the foreboding forest) to suggest the possibility of an embryonic interiority waiting to be actualised. Amidst this maelstrom of folds, Klein wanders aimlessly searching for a cavern to retreat. To fold inwards, to become cloistered and separate from the dynamic outside, he needs the virtual – his past, his house. With this image, Kelvin now has a compass to comprehend the perturbations that bewildered him before. The world that was once a perplexing coexistence of 'inequal' rhythms of light and sound (opsigns and sonsigns) is now meaningful and divisible; the harsh mist, the content brook and the reclusive bird all actualise the virtual in a manner that makes sense to the protagonist<sup>146</sup>. The scene is a rich illustration of Tarkovsky's skill in portraying the genesis of larval subjectivities of relative metastability.

---

<sup>146</sup> The house (the past) adds a *sense* to the series of virtual differences. Deleuze provides an elaborate account of the concepts of sense and series in *The Logic of Sense* (see Deleuze, 1990: 127).

Let us now consider a second sequence. After Burton leaves Kelvin's home, we have two successive scenes, one that shows Burton's ride back home and another that visualises Kelvin's flight to outer space. The falsifying power of cinema is quite evident in this radically oppositional sequence. The novelty of spaceflight, often a spectacle in science fiction cinema, exudes an everyday tedium that is incongruously contrasted with the hypnagogic delirium of a taxi ride across the Moscow freeway. On the one hand, the scene is rendered indiscernible by the manner through which the actual and the virtual of the two characters cleave into one another. There is also a transversal mirroring between the two that establishes a crisis in the 'truths' of these respective events. In Leibnizian terms, two "impossible" worlds (Kelvin's and Burton's) coexist and communicate in "divergent series ... that continuously pull them outside themselves", or in other words, the monadic subject becomes the nomadic subject (Smith, 2012: 130). Kelvin's earthly concerns loom over the austerity of the space flight, while Burton's demons from the past haunt the taxi ride. An instance of pure cinematic thought, the images express the topology of the memories and affections of the characters and the circuits that they trace. Though Burton is still in Moscow, the eeriness and alienation of the taxi ride allude to his obsession with *Solaris*. In a single image, the past and the future of the characters coexist as variable durations that transform their present. *Solaris* acts as the literal outside that folds and confines their interiority.

The diegetic space of *Solaris* is comparable to the Baroque house described by Deleuze in *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. The Baroque house comprises two storeys and is used by Deleuze to illustrate the folding of subjectivity, as well as the reciprocal determination between the actual and virtual. The upper floor is without windows and "closed in on itself". It alludes to the folds of the soul (the virtual) – its innate ideas. The lower storey has windows (the senses, the actual) that connect the house to the outside. Between the two folds, there exists many folds that determine "one's style in the world" (O' Sullivan, 2009: 103). *Solaris* expresses the folding between the actual and virtual (and consequently, its own style) by featuring spaces that lets in the forces of nature without necessarily pointing to its unequivocal source. In the diegesis of *Solaris*,

it rains indoors without a necessary cause, mist enters the most cloistered room, and objects levitate oblivious to the laws of gravity. This folding between the storeys is best seen in a remarkable scene at the end of the film. Before his departure to Solaris, Kelvin carries with him a bag of soil from Earth. When he inspects the soil prior to his return to Earth, he finds a young sapling growing in it. The earthly soil (the actual) required an alien force (the virtual) to fertilise it. The folds between the two realms created something new - a life form that belongs neither to Solaris nor Earth, but to a unique assemblage that comprises the two planets, a particular orientation of the actual with respect to the virtual (a style).

The Baroque element of *The Holy Mountain* is evident from the metacinematic finale that reveals the Alchemist to be a filmmaker. The spiralling folds suggested by its narrative (Jesus within the Thief, the Thief within the Alchemist, the Alchemist within the disciples, the filmmaker within the Alchemist, so on and so forth) point to a 'style' that wilfully seeks to eliminate the dichotomous separation between couplings such as master and disciple, truth and fiction, and interiority and exteriority. Indiscernibility and coexistence are the principles that sustain the narration in *The Holy Mountain*.

It is perhaps obvious by this point that art-films such as *Solaris* and *The Holy Mountain* create philosophical problems and concepts that cannot be sufficiently studied by following the reductionist framework constructed by Grodal (and other Cognitivists). Deleuze's cinematic concepts and metaphysics provide a useful methodological platform from which non-canonical cinemas can be studied as philosophical artefacts.

### **13. A conclusion by way of a response to Turvey**

The thesis opened with a consideration of Malcolm Turvey's polemic against the 'revelatory' tendencies of Deleuze's film-philosophy. It is only fitting that we return to these comments and re-examine them in light of Deleuze's metaphysics. Turvey's theoretical stance is fairly consistent with the general disposition of Cognitive Film Theory in relation to Deleuze and other continental philosophers<sup>147</sup>. I had suggested that these criticisms against Deleuze arise out of a fundamental misunderstanding of his philosophy and the specific nature of his philosophical concepts. To demonstrate this, it has been necessary to engage Deleuze's cinematic philosophy in conjunction with his broader metaphysics. I was guided by two significant objectives in writing this thesis:

- 1) To demonstrate how Deleuzian philosophy can provide cognitive film theory with its corresponding metaphysics.
- 2) To offer a critique of the cognitive appraisal of Deleuze.

Despite being a work on film theory and film-philosophy, as the objectives clearly demonstrate, the thesis extensively engages with non-cinematic concepts in continental philosophy to address the problems raised by this encounter between Deleuze and Cognitive Film Theory. It is rather a case of means and ends, as well as a testament to the fluid architecture of Deleuze's thought. His philosophical system is characterised by a transversal method of reasoning where metaphysical concepts refer back to each other and find localised expressions in individual works, be they on cinema, literature or art. It is impossible to do justice to these objectives without taking up aspects of Deleuzian metaphysics that lie outside his work on cinema. In fact, it can be argued, as I

---

<sup>147</sup> See Chapter 2.

have in this thesis, that the *Cinema* books are a unique expression of his metaphysics, and do not stand in isolation from the rest of his works<sup>148</sup>.

With respect to the second objective, Turvey remains the only cognitivist to have attempted a systematic rebuttal of Deleuze's philosophy<sup>149</sup>. Though it is hard to deny the charges of 'revelationism' raised by Turvey against Deleuze, it is, however, neither indicative of a fundamental flaw in Deleuze's thinking nor demonstrative of the kind of unsubstantiated mysticism that wards off cognitivists in droves. It is true that Deleuze attributes revelatory powers to cinema, but only in the sense that through time-image cinema, the medium succeeds in breaking away from our habitual orientation towards action and utility to pave way for a new aesthetic that communicates the genetic conditions of real experience.

Through his study of cinema, Deleuze intended to tackle a tradition in Western philosophy, beginning with Plato and Aristotle, that subordinated time to movement. Movement-image cinema is characterised by its emphasis on situational action, and guided by an aesthetic that relies heavily on the sensorimotor schema (PECMA flow, to borrow Grodal's terminology)<sup>150</sup>. As actions and outcomes drive the narrative in this kind of cinema, time is conceived as linear and derivable from movement. According to Bergson, matter, and consequently, experience, is characterised by extensity and duration. Owing to an evolutionary bias that favoured utility, we have developed an overtly spatial disposition that accentuates action and extensity. Though modern physics succeeded in identifying time as an independent variable, it nevertheless repeats this spatial bias by linking it to space and movement (space-time). As Bergson notes, practical constraints of science make it necessary to think time in this manner, as modern physics conceives the Whole as a determinable, closed system<sup>151</sup>. The concept of a linear, chronological time is an inevitable consequence of such an image of thought

---

<sup>148</sup> See Chapter 11.

<sup>149</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>150</sup> See Chapter 10.

<sup>151</sup> See Chapter 4.



that seeks the universal and the permanent<sup>152</sup>. However, in Bergson's philosophy, the Whole is open and distinguished by continuous creation and novelty. Moreover, for Bergson, duration is neither uniform nor homogenous. Even a simple choice involves the division and intersection of durations of varying rhythms, implying a heterogeneity that is suppressed by our everyday understanding of time. This idea influenced Deleuze to arrive at a theory of passive syntheses of time, which conceptualised the nature of the genetic processes that engender a linear understanding of time.

Though Deleuze deploys a vertiginous array of concepts and terminologies across his works, his method is quite uniform and monotonous. Irrespective of the object of his enquiry, Deleuze excavates a network of genetic differential relations that remain passive, virtual and transcendental to real experience. Whether it is cinema, painting, Plato or Kant, Deleuze discovers a metaphysics of difference operating at its heart<sup>153</sup>. In Kant's critical philosophy, the powers of synthesis lie solely with the active subject. In his account of the passive syntheses, Deleuze radically conceives the subject, as well as other *a priori* intuitions such as sensation, space and time, as themselves constituted by passive differential interactions, to the extent that we must begin to think of larval subjects and sensations that are anterior to any fixed identity<sup>154</sup>. Extending Hume's notion of exteriority of relations, Deleuze apprehends all identities as virtual multiplicities, packets of varying relations of difference that can only be thought as metastable *becomings*. Time, too, must be conceptualised in this manner as a

---

<sup>152</sup> The identification of time with the eternal or the unchanging has been a feature of Western philosophy prior to Kant. A concept of invariant and uniform time is essential to any concept of truth, be it monastic or scientific. The idea of a determinable and chronological time is an inevitable consequence of this thought. Daniel Smith explores this idea in relation to Deleuze in his essay, *Temporality and Truth* (2013). Though a uniform conception of time is undoubtedly indispensable to physics, it conceals the expression of various differential genetic processes that remain passive to time. One of the aims of Deleuze's philosophy is to conceptualise these passive syntheses that remain transcendental to our everyday understanding of time.

<sup>153</sup> See chapters 6 and 7.

<sup>154</sup> Deleuze's recapitulation of philosophical systems that subordinated difference to identity was explored in chapters 3-8.

multiplicity of differential relations. Just as Riemann conceived space as an “n-dimensional manifold with no pre-given metric”, Deleuze understands time as an “n-dimensional and non-metrical manifold” constituted by a “formal network of processes ... that are interacting with each other” (passive syntheses). In such a philosophy, it is imperative to “create non-preexisting concepts within time” instead of pursuing “the discovery of pre-existent truths outside time”. Time, for Deleuze, is the ceaseless combination and coalescence of these virtual differences and their varying “speeds” (relations, combinations, “singularities”). (Williams, 2011: 3, Deleuze, 1984: 17 April of Smith, 2013).

For most of history, time was intertwined with an image of the eternal and the unchanging, a common measure of all movements. Thus, a search for truth necessitated a notion of a uniform, homogenous and determinable time. Though Kant discovered the idea of a pure and empty form of time transcendental to all concepts, his philosophy still relies on ‘recognition’ or the harmony of the faculties (common sense) as the pivot that holds his system together<sup>155</sup>. Deleuzian metaphysics is an attempt to apprehend the processes that give rise to this recognition, and he finds these processes to be reliant upon an essential discordant fraying of the faculties (passive syntheses). Thus, Deleuzian philosophy, and correspondingly, his ethics and aesthetics, deal concretely with “a science of the sensible freed from the model of recognition and ... to a use of the faculties freed from the ideal of common sense”. Thus, in contrast to a linear model of time connected to truth and common sense, Deleuze argues for the ‘powers of the false’ innate to time. If false is the conflation of the imaginary (appearance) with the real, then truth is not the real, but the distinction between the real and the imaginary. The false is bereft of any form, as that burden lies with truth. Though truth keeps changing, it retains an essential form, which is that of a correspondence with the real. Thus, the truth is strictly tied to the notions of representation and judgement, while the false is inextricably linked to appearances. However, the form of the truth is conjoined to the form of time (eternal, universal), giving the false the power to modify and alter.

---

<sup>155</sup> See chapter 8.

Unshackled from a pre-existing model of truth, the false takes a power of its own, the power to create and differ. This is a thought that is quite Nietzschean in inspiration (Deleuze, 1989: 137). If one dispenses with the kingdom of truth, there is no longer a domain of the false, but simply, pure creation of new concepts of truth. For Deleuze, the real falsifiers are artists, who by experimenting with different combinations of sensations (affects and percepts), invent new forms of truth that *reveal* the transcendental and virtual nature of time as a network of differential relations (Deleuze, 1989: 120-130 cf Smith, 2013: 385-387).

The notion of time as creation, difference and relation (becoming) informs Deleuze's understanding of the time-image in cinema. If time-image 'reveals' the transcendental nature of time, it is only in the way these images present a form of time freed from a fixed model of truth (common-sense, sensorimotor schema, chronological time). Time-image cinema necessarily engages the virtual and transcendental elements of time (layers of the past, peaks of the present), consistently inventing new modes and combinations (falsification, indiscernibility) that *unground* the foundations upon which the representational, chronological mode of time rests (suspension of the PECMA flow, the weathering of linear causal relations)<sup>156</sup>.

Cognitivism, in general, finds its impetus in a pursuit of empirical universals (*truths*) predicated upon a model of universal cognition and recognition, which, as Deleuze demonstrates, is itself dependent upon a system of genetic syntheses that remains transcendental to its effects. This theoretical disposition is quite evident in the works of prominent cognitivists such as Bordwell (1985), Branigan (1992) and Grodal (1997, 2009), who apprehend experimental modes of cinematic narration, such as the arthouse and avant-garde genres, as modifications and variations of the universal structure of canonical cinema. As John Mullarkey has noted, most assumptions and arguments put forward by Grodal and other cognitivists, are "retrodictive than predictive", symptomatic of a "reverse engineering". He is also critical of the unconvincing manner

---

<sup>156</sup> By dispensing with the sensorimotor schema, time-image cinema invents a form of expression in cinema that no longer subordinates time to movement and action.

in which these writers appear to “conflate levels” (psychological with biological) when confronting problems that are non-representational in nature<sup>157</sup> (Mullarkey, 2009: 56-57).

In the works of Grodal and other cognitivists who have engaged with problems of affect, emotions are also further reduced to questions of representation and information processing by the brain. We had previously examined the similarities between Grodal’s ideas on emotion and Deleuze’s first two passive syntheses. Permitting a Bergsonian reading of Deleuze, we can argue that these biological impulses are tendencies toward an action (habitual contractions) that can be altered to create and express novel forms of thought and perception that elude commonsensical representations of experience. Extending the arguments of the passive syntheses even further, we can claim that these affects themselves are de-centred loci of contiguous relations in a transcendental field that are actualised in experience as a partial resolution to the intensive difference (‘difference of potential’) that exists between the elements of perception. This is why Bergson’s broad definition of perception as a ‘selection’ is useful in this context. Though Turvey strongly criticises this view of perception, it must be noted that the Bergsonian concept of perception is not the same as that of the cognitive psychological view of perception that limits the phenomenon to conscious representation. For Bergson, perception encompasses the entirety of the interactions between the organism and the environment from which it ‘selects’ or ‘frames’ necessary elements that advance its propensity to act. Deleuze reforms this view (but without assuming a pre-existing subject) to define a transcendental field of pure experience (the virtual) that is ‘actualised’ through repetitive contractions of matter, engendering the various elements of experience including space, time and the subject. While the cognitive approach seeks to explain characteristic human instincts and impulses (causal logic, ‘commonsense’, linear time, PECMA flow, canonical cinema) in terms of biology, cognitive psychology or

---

<sup>157</sup> Prominent examples of cognitive engagement with cinematic affect include works by Carl Plantinga (2003) and Greg M. Smith (2003). The anthology of essays edited by Plantinga and Smith (1999) is also representative of the general approach to emotions in Cognitive Film Theory.

evolutionary science, the Bergsonian-Deleuzian method apprehends these habits and tendencies as contractions or selective framings of the field of experience<sup>158</sup>. This is the rationale behind the bold assertion that the universe is a giant “cinema in itself, a metacinema” (Deleuze, 1986: 59)<sup>159</sup>. It is also from this perspective that Deleuze conceives the notion of the time-image. If the human condition identified by Bergson is naturally oriented towards extensity, and therefore, inadequate to the study of real time/duration, we must find ways to go ‘beyond’ this human condition and seek out or create novel ways of thinking (alternate contractions and selections) that express the transcendental and virtual nature of time as constituted by relations of difference. When Deleuze claims that time-image cinema presents a “spiritual automaton” that can think beyond the human (the unthought), this is what he means (Deleuze, 1989: 156).

Nevertheless, the phrase ‘to go beyond the human condition’ does not imply the quasi-mystical transcendence implied by a superficial reading. To go beyond is to explore new images of thought unshackled from any rigid system or perspective. To go beyond is to create, invent and engage with the genuinely new. Time-image cinema, when it is said to reveal “a little time in the pure state”, does not imply a supernatural revelation, but a way of thinking that manages to escape any homogenous and invariant notion of time as mere succession (Deleuze, 1989: xi). Thus, when we are presented with a film like *Last Year At Marienbad* (1961, Dir. Resnais, A.), *Beyond the Black Butterfly* (2017, Dir. Cosmatos, P.) or *The Holy Mountain*, we are confronting a unique experience of time freed from its commonsensical linearity. These films convey the nature of time as

---

<sup>158</sup> Bergson and Grodal are in agreement that most biological traits are enforced by their utility, as evolution tends to favour that trait in the form of survival. However, this does not imply a teleology, as only those mutations that aid the species in navigating its niche environment can positively affect its chance of survival.

<sup>159</sup> If universe is a movement of matter-images, all perceptions involve a framing of some sort. In the view of Bergson, perceptions cannot be considered as representations, but only as selections (Bergson, 1988: 186). Deleuze later adapts this idea in the discussion of the perception-image in *Cinema 1* (Deleuze, 1986: 57). Bergson also extends this concept to suggest that any consciousness is merely a particular kind of movement in the universal flow of movement-images (162). Refer the discussion of the cerebral interval in chapter 4.

processual, a network of forking and coexisting durations that stall or catapult action in utterly unpredictable ways. When Deleuze claims to see ‘relations of time’ in the frame, a naive understanding of these terms denuded of their context can result in a reading like that of Turvey, who appears to understand vision and perception in a radically narrower sense than Deleuze or Bergson. *The Holy Mountain*, as we have seen, engages different modes of temporalities to impart an experience of narcotic time and topology<sup>160</sup>. Such a film depends heavily on irrational linkages of time and image to achieve its intended effect of liberating the spectator from her habitual encounters with the world and the medium. The comprehension of these types of film necessarily involves an awareness of the steadily deforming linearity of the temporal mechanisms that sustain its narration. Furthermore, cinema being a temporal medium, we do not perceive the present image in isolation from its connections to past or future. Films by Resnais, Lynch and Carax, for instance, often complicate this phenomenon by presenting images that deliberately distort temporal markers, thus manufacturing an experience of time as an ever-changing, ceaselessly reconstituting network of reticulating processes<sup>161</sup>.

A commonsensical or purely causal understanding of narrative time in these kinds of films possess serious limitations. As Sinnerbrink has noted, if common sense and rationality are the significant criteria that must guide film theory and criticism, as the cognitivists believe, philosophical theories such as those of Deleuze and Foucault challenge these very notions, as they are themselves constituted by chaotic and contingent processes (Sinnerbrink, 2011: 69). Moreover, he stresses that a reductive account of cinematic experience threatens the very pursuit of an expansive critical and aesthetic engagement with the medium: “Is film just a clever cognitive puzzle to amuse

---

<sup>160</sup> In *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (1993), Deleuze writes that sensory-distortion produced by narcotics or other physiological conditions such as vertigo propel the subject to sense the intensive depth concealed in extensity. Perception already implies “microhallucinations” in its folds (Deleuze, 1993: 91,94 cf Smith, 2012: 97).

<sup>161</sup> *Stravinsky...* (1994, Dir. Resnais, A.), *Inland Empire* (2006, Dir. Lynch, D.), *Holy Motors* (2012, Dir. Carax, L.) are some examples.

a distracted public? Do films respond to our cultural anxieties or ‘existential’ concerns? Can cinema deal with problems such as nihilism and scepticism?”. As evident from our consideration of Grodal’s film-theory, cognitivists appear to arrive at an impasse when confronted with cinematic forms that drift away from the popular canonical model of film narration. Whether it is Grodal, Branigan or Bordwell, experimental genres in cinema are studied only as a remission of some habitual mechanism (PECMA flow, narrative causality), and little else is said about their aesthetic conditions (Bordwell, 1979: 724; Bordwell, 1985: 206, Branigan, 1992: 215)<sup>162</sup>. As we have seen in the case of Grodal, when dealing with non-canonical cinemas that dispense with the PECMA flow, he struggles to provide meaningful aesthetic insights that go beyond vague terms like ‘higher meaning’ and ‘saturation’. In contrast, through his metaphysical understanding of cinema, Deleuze offers a rich conceptual toolkit to study cinema not only as an aesthetic phenomenon, but also as a philosophical discourse.

Deleuze’s notion of subjectivity is also more complex than what the cognitivists appear to suggest. The division between the transcendental and the empirical that vivifies his metaphysics also informs his understanding of cinematic spectatorship. In *Cinema 1: Movement Image*, Deleuze writes that “an empirical subject cannot be born into the world without simultaneously being reflected in a transcendental subject that thinks it and in which it thinks” (Deleuze, 1989: 73). Richard Rushton expands upon this argument to assert that for Deleuze, “spectatorship in cinema is always doubled”. On the one hand, there is an empirical subject that is embodied and interacts with images automatically and physiologically. On the other hand, there is a transcendental subject that searches for the conditions of possibility for any act or bodily reaction (Rushton, 2008: 128). Grodal’s account of the PECMA flow emphasises the former rather than the latter. Subjectivity in cinema is determined by the relations that exist between the shots. Shots, by themselves, cannot be subjective. Instead, it is in their relation to other

---

<sup>162</sup> Though Grodal does occasionally engage in hermeneutic excursions (Grodal, 2009: 290-309), the overall method informing his study of the arthouse genre is consistent with the general analytic-cognitivist paradigm.

elements of the film form that they realise their subjectivity. As Rushton writes, “they are objective images imposed upon a spectator-subject” (129). As in the account of the three syntheses, these transcendental conditions remain passive to the spectator, and the spectator and cinema form an assemblage involved in the continuous creation and destruction of larval subjectivities<sup>163</sup>. These subjectivities “are never *caused* by subjects”, but “happen” to them, and in turn, facilitate the creation of these subjects as “processes” (135)<sup>164</sup>. The constant doubling of subjectivity in cinematic spectatorship attains an ideal point in time-image films, where the communication between the actual (empirical) and the virtual (transcendental) becomes indiscernible at the level of description. The analyses of *The Holy Mountain* and *Solaris* were a hermeneutic examination of these constitutive transcendental conditions.

Due to its broad interests, this thesis is not without significant flaws. The first objective, which was to provide a Deleuzian metaphysics to cognitive film theory, was only explored in conjunction with the ecological film theory of Torben Grodal. This could have been expanded to include arguments from other ecologically oriented theorists like Anderson or Smith. Moreover, theories of other prominent cognitivists such as Bordwell, Branigan or Carroll have been unfairly marginalised. However, my intention was to deal with the general theoretical *stance* of cognitivism, rather than the discipline as a whole, which is beyond the scope of any thesis. The metaphysical arguments stated

---

<sup>163</sup> According to Deleuze, cinematic affection is “a coincidence of subject and object” (Deleuze, 1986: 65 discussed in Rushton, 2008: 136).

<sup>164</sup> As a correlate, Deleuze also appears to suggest that the thoughts that we possess are not ours to own, but come from an *outside*. It is the affection of bodies that gives rise to thought (Deleuze, 1989: 278). See the account of the three passive syntheses.

As Frampton notes, the power of time-image cinema lies in its ability to express a mode of thought that is “alien and outside” to normal thought. Frampton contrasts the spiritual automata of time-image cinema with the psychological automata of movement-image cinema that enacts “normal law-bound (unthinking) thought”. Though both images are automata, movement-image does not depend on the outside and follows an “internal impression which develops solely in visions or rudimentary actions”. However, time-image cinema achieves an autonomy of thought that facilitates modes of thinking that escape ordinary experience (Frampton, 2006: 64-65, see also Deleuze, 1989: 174-179).



here remain valid for most theories of cognitivism, irrespective of their respective inclinations, as Deleuze's philosophy is a response to the questions raised by post-Kantian thought, a legacy that is also shared by most practitioners of cognitive film theory owing to their allegiance to the analytic tradition. Nevertheless, the extended consideration of Grodal's theory is not without its benefits. In stark contrast to the 'piecemeal' approach of theorising that characterises most of cognitive film theory, he proposes a 'grand-theory' of cinema that makes for a more fluid engagement with Deleuze. Furthermore, by presenting a broad engagement with evolutionary theory, Grodal brings into play an element of passivity and variation that can be vastly improved through a comprehensive engagement with Deleuze's philosophy of difference. As previously mentioned, the theoretical demands of the subject entails an extensive engagement with the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and the film-theory of Torben Grodal. As a result, the analyses of individual films have been truncated and regrettably limited to two films.

In spite of these flaws, it can be argued that they offer a glimpse of the copious potential latent in Deleuzian philosophy. A comprehensive ecological study of cinema cannot ignore Deleuze for reasons mentioned in this thesis. One can anticipate tangential lines of enquiry that engage Deleuze with other branches of cognitivism like affect-based (Plantinga, Tan) or narrative-oriented theories (Branigan, Bordwell). Works by Mullarkey (2009), Elliot (2011), Sinnerbrink (2011), Pisters (2012), Elsaesser and Hagener (2015) and others have demonstrated the utility in pursuing a mode of theorising that accommodates Deleuze with arguments drawn from cognitivism. The strength of cognitive film theory has been its willingness to embrace interdisciplinarity, albeit limited to the field of empirical science. Its reluctance to engage Deleuze, an equally interdisciplinary theorist, appears to stem more from a perfunctory indifference and misunderstanding than genuine conceptual impasse. The dichotomous division of film theory into two opposite camps (analytic-cognitivist and continental) alludes to a malaise that can only be surpassed with more proactive dialogue. To the best of my knowledge, this work is the first attempt to construct a preliminary 'metaphysics' for

cognitive film theory. I conclude in the hope that this thesis will pave way for further studies in the coming years.

#### 14. Bibliography and References.

Adkins, B. (2012). Deleuze and Badiou on the Nature of Events. *Philosophy Compass*, 7(5).

Allen, R., & Smith, M. (Eds.). (1999). *Film Theory and Philosophy*. London: Oxford University Press.

Anderson, J. (1996) *The Reality of Illusion: An Ecological Approach to Film Theory*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University.

Anderson, J. and Anderson, B.F. (Eds.) (2005). *Moving Image Theory: Ecological Considerations*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University.

Angelucci, D. (2014). Repetition. *Deleuze Studies*, 8(3)

Ansell-Pearson, K. (1999). *Germinal Life: The Difference and Repetition of Gilles Deleuze*. London: Routledge.

Badiou, A. (2000). *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Baugh, B. (2003). *French Hegel*. London: Routledge.

Beaulieu, J. (2009). Plato. In Jones, G and Roffe, J (Eds.) (2009). *Deleuze's Philosophical Lineage*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Bergson, H. (1917). *Time and Free Will*. New York: Free Press.

Bergson, H. (1920). *Mind-Energy*. USA: Henry Colt and Company.

Bergson, H. (1977). *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Bergson, H. (1988). *Matter and Memory*. New York: Zone Books.

Bogue, R. (1989). *Deleuze and Guattari*

Bogue, R. (2003). *Deleuze on Cinema*.

- Bordwell, D. & Carroll, N. (1996). *Post-theory: Reconstructing Film Studies*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin.
- Bordwell, D. (1985). *Narration in the fiction film* (6th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Bordwell, D. (2010). The Buddy System, Observations on Film Art [Blog Post]. Retrieved from <http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/2010/09/28/the-buddy-system>. Last accessed: December 10, 2017.
- Boundas, C. (2005). Deleuze: Serialisation and Subject Formation. In Boundas, C. and Olkowski, D. (Eds), *Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy*. London: Routledge.
- Boundas, C. (Ed.). (2006). *Deleuze and Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Braidotti, M. (1994). *Nomadic Subjects*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Branigan, E. (1992). *Narrative Comprehension and Film*. London: Routledge.
- Bryant, L. (2008). *Difference and Givenness: Deleuze's Transcendental Empiricism and the Ontology of Immanence*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Bunge, M. (2011). *Causality and Modern Science*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Canales, J. (2015). *The Physicist and The Philosopher: Einstein, Bergson and the debate that changed our understanding of time*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Capek, M. (1971). *Bergson and Modern Physics: A Reinterpretation and Re-evaluation*. Boston: Boston University.
- Carroll, N. (1998). *Interpreting the Moving Image*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chatalet, F. (1968). *Hegel*. Paris: Seuil.
- Cheng, C. (2007). On Subjectivity in Deleuze's The Fold. *NTU Studies in Language and Literature*, 17 (June).
- Colebrook, C. (2002). *Gilles Deleuze*. London and New York: Routledge.

- Colebrook, C. (2006). *Deleuze: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Combes, M. (2013). *Gilbert Simondon and the Philosophy of the Transcendental*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Crockett, C. (2013). *Deleuze Beyond Badiou*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Currie, G. (1995). *Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy and Cognitive Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cutrofello, A. (2005). *Continental Philosophy: A Contemporary Introduction*. London: Routledge
- De Beistegui, M. (2010). *Immanence: Deleuze and Philosophy*. Edinburgh: EUP.
- Deamer, D. (2011). A Deleuzian Semiosis: Cinematic Semiosis and the Syntheses of Time. *Deleuze Studies*, 5(3).
- Deamer, D. (2014). *Deleuze, Japanese Cinema and the Atom Bomb*. London and New York: Bloomsbury.
- Deamer, D. (2016). *Deleuze's Cinema Books: Three Introductions to the Taxonomy of Cinema Books*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- DeLanda, M. (2002). *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Deleuze, G and Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Deleuze, G. and Parnet, C. (1977). *Dialogues II*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Deleuze, G. (1964). *Proust and Signs*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press.
- Deleuze, G. (1967). *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty*. New York: Zone Books.
- Deleuze, G. (1978). *Lectures (Leibniz)*. <https://www.webdeleuze.com/sommaire>. Last Accessed: 27/09/17.
- Deleuze, G. (1984). *Kant's Critical Philosophy*. USA: Athlone Press.

Deleuze, G. (1986). *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, G. (1988). *Bergsonism*. New York: Zone Books.

Deleuze, G. (1989). *Cinema 2: The Time Image*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, G. (1990). *The Logic of Sense*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Deleuze, G. (1990a). *Spinoza: Expressionism in Philosophy*. New York: Zone Books.

Deleuze, G. (1990b). *Negotiations*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Deleuze, G. (1991). *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*. USA: Columbia University Press.

Deleuze, G. (1992). *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*. New York: Zone Books

Deleuze, G. (1993). *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. New York: Continuum

Deleuze, G. (1994). *What is Philosophy?*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Deleuze, G. (1994). *Difference and Repetition*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Deleuze, G. (2000). The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Esthetic. *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 5(3).

Deleuze, G. (2000a). *Foucault*. London: Continuum.

Deleuze, G. (2004). *Desert Islands and Other Texts*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).

Deleuze, G. (2006). *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Descombes, V. (1980). *Modern French Philosophy*. Cambridge: CUP.

Durie, R. (2000). Immanence and Difference: Towards a Relational Ontology. *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 40 (2).

Elliott, P. (2010). Neuroscience and the Process of Cinema Spectatorship. *In-Vision* (June).

- Elliott, P. (2011). *Hitchcock and the Cinema of Sensations*. London: IB Press.
- Elsaesser, T. and Hagener, M. (2015). *Film Theory: An Introduction through the Senses*. London: Routledge.
- Fell, E. (2012). *Duration, Temporality, Self*. London: Peter Lang.
- Flaxman, G. (Ed.) (2000). *The Brain is the Screen*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Frampton, D. (2006). *Filmosophy*. London: Wallflower Press.
- Gallese, V. (2012). Embodying Movies: Embodied Simulation and Film Studies. *Cinema*, 3 (1).
- Grodal, T. (1997). *Moving Pictures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Grodal, T. (2009). *Embodied Visions: Evolution, Emotion, Culture and Cognition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Grodal, T. (2006). The PECMA Flow: A General Model of Visual Aesthetics. *Film Studies*, 8(1).
- Grossberg, L in Gregg, M and Seigworth, G (eds). *The Affect Theory Reader*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Grosz, e. (2001). *Architecture from the Outside*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Grosz, E. (2004). *The Nick of Time*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Hallward, P. (2006). *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation*. London: Verso.
- Hansen, M. (2004). *New Philosophy for New Media*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Hardt, M. (1993). *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Harper, W. (1991). Kant on Incongruent Counterparts. In Van Cleve, J. & Frederick, R. (Eds.), *The Philosophy of Right and Left*. USA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

- Hegel, G. (1991). *The Science of Logic*. USA: Prometheus Books.
- Højberg, L. and Schepelern, P. (Eds.) (2003). *Film Story and Style: A Tribute to Torben Grodal*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press.
- Houle, K. and Vernon J. (Eds.) (2013). *Hegel and Deleuze*. Illinois: Northwestern Press.
- Hughes, F. (2010). *Kant's Critique of Aesthetic Judgement: A Reader's Guide*. London: Continuum.
- Hughes, J. (2008). *Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation.*: New York: Continuum.
- Hughes, J. (2009). *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition*. London: Continuum.
- Hughes, J. (2012). *Philosophy after Deleuze: Deleuze and the Genesis of Representation II*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Jones, G and Roffe, J (Eds.). (2009). *Deleuze's Philosophical Lineage*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Jun, N.J. (2011). *Deleuze and Ethics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Kant, I. (1998). *Critique of Pure Reason*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Keller, C. (2010). Novel Repetitions: The Fold Event in Deleuze and Whitehead. In Faber, R. Krips, H. and Pettus, D. (Eds.), *Event and Decision: Ontology and Politics in Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Kennedy, B. (2000). *Deleuze and Cinema: The Aesthetics of Sensation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kerslake, C. (2009). *Immanence and the Vertigo of Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kim, J. (1994). Explanatory Knowledge and Metaphysical Dependence. *Philosophical Issues*, 5 (1).
- Kojeve, A. (1969). *Introduction to the reading of Hegel*. Cornell: Cornell Press.
- Lacey, A. (1989). *Bergson*. London: Routledge.



- Lampert, J. (2006). *Deleuze and Guattari's Philosophy of History*. London: Continuum.
- Lawlor, L. (2003). *The Challenge of Bergsonism*. New York: Continuum.
- Lord, B. (2014). *Transcendental Idealism and Immanence from Jacobi to Deleuze*. New York: Springer.
- Marenko, B. and Brassett, J. (Eds.) (2015). *Deleuze and Design*. Edinburgh: EUP.
- Marks, J. (1998). *Vitalism and Multiplicity*. London: Pluto Press.
- Marks, J. (2005). *Deleuze and Science*. New York: Paragraph.
- Martin-Jones, D. (2011). *Deleuze and World-Cinemas*. Edinburgh: EUP.
- Massumi, B. (1987). Realer than Real: The Simulacrum According to Deleuze and Guattari. *Copyright*, 1(1).
- Massumi, B. (1992). *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- May, T. (2005). *Gilles Deleuze*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mayell, C. (2008). *A Defence of Deleuze's Philosophy of Multiplicity*. Liverpool: University of Liverpool Thesis.
- McDonough, R. (2002). Emergence and Creativity: Five Degrees of Freedom. In Dartnall, T. (Ed.). *Creativity, Cognition and Knowledge*. Oxford: OUP.
- McMahon, M. (2009). Immanuel Kant. In Jones, G. & Roffe, J. (Eds.), *Deleuze's Philosophical Lineage*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Mullarkey, J. (1999). *Bergson and Philosophy*. Edinburgh: EUP.
- Mullarkey, J. (2006). *Post-continental philosophy*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Mullarkey, J. (2009). *Refractions of Reality*. London: Palgrave.
- Nagel, T. (1979). *Mortal Questions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nanicelli, T. and Taberham, P. (Eds.) (2014). *Cognitive Media Theory*. New York: Routledge.
- Nietzsche, F. (1987). *The Birth of Tragedy*. London: Penguin.

- Nigianni, C. and Storr, A. (Eds.) (2005). *Deleuze and Queer Theory*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- O'Sullivan, S. (2005). The Fold. In Parr, A. (Ed.), *Deleuze Dictionary*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- O' Sullivan, S. and Zepke, S (Eds.) (2008). *Deleuze, Guattari and the Production of the New*. London: Continuum.
- Parr, A. (2005). *The Deleuze Dictionary*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Patton, P. (Ed.) (1996). *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Pierson, R. (2010). Review: Embodied Visions. *Critical Quarterly*, 52 (2).
- Pisters, P. (2003). *The Matrix of Visual Culture: Working with Deleuze in Film-Theory*. Stanford: SUP.
- Pisters, P. (2012). *The Neuro-Image*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Plantinga, C. (2002). Cognitivism: An Insider's Appraisal. *Cinemas*, 12 (2).
- Plantinga, C. (2009). *Moving Viewers: American Film and the Spectator's Experience*. Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley.
- Plantinga, C. and Smith, G.M. (1999) (Eds.). *Passionate Views: Films, Cognition and Emotion*. USA:John Hopkins University Press.
- Plantinga, C. and Livingston, C. (2008) (Eds.). *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Film*. London: Routledge.
- Plato & Waterfield, R. (2005). *Meno and Other Dialogues*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Powell, A. (2005). *Deleuze and Horror Film*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Powell, A. (2007). *Deleuze, Altered States and Film*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Prigogine, I. and Stengers, I. (1984). *Order out of Chaos*. New York: London.
- Protevi, J. (2006). Deleuze, Guattari and Emergence. *Paragraph*, 29 (2).
- Protevi, J. (2013). *Life, Earth, War: Deleuzian Interventions*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press.

- Rae, G. (2014). *Ontology in Heidegger and Deleuze*. London: Palgrave.
- Robinson, K. (2009). *Deleuze, Whitehead, Bergson*. London: Palgrave.
- Rodowick, D. N. (1997). *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Rodowick, D. (Ed.) (2010). *Afterimages of Deleuze's Film Philosophy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Rodowick, D.N. (2015). *Philosophy's Artful Conversation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Rushton, R. (2004). Response to Mark Hansen's "Affect as Medium, or the Digital-Facial Image". *Journal of Visual Culture*, 3 (3).
- Rushton, R. (2008). Passions and Actions: Deleuze's Cinematographic Cogito. *Deleuze Studies*, 2(2).
- Rushton, R. (2012). *Cinema After Deleuze*. London: Routledge.
- Russell, B. (1914). *The Philosophy of Henri Bergson*. Cambridge: Bowes and Bowes.
- Shaviro, S. (1993). *The Cinematic Body*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Shaviro, S. (2009). *Without Criteria: Kant, Whitehead, Deleuze and Aesthetics*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Shimamura, A. (Ed.) (2013). *Psychocinematics*. Oxford: OUP.
- Sholl, J. (2012). Thought and Repetition in Bergson and Deleuze. *Deleuze Studies*, 6 (4).
- Silberstein, M. and McGeever, J. (1999). The Search for Ontological Emergence. *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 49 (195).
- Simondon, G. (1992). The Genesis of the Individual. In Crary, J. and Kwinter, S. (Eds.), *Incorporations*. New York: Zone Books.
- Simondon, G. (1992). Introduction to the Individual and its psycho-biological Individuation. In Crary, J. and Kwinter, S. (Eds.), *Incorporations*. New York: Zone Books.

Sinnerbrink, R. (2011). *New Philosophies of Film: Thinking Images*. London: Bloomsbury.

Smith, D. (2012). *Essays on Deleuze*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Smith, D. (2013). Temporality and Truth. *Deleuze Studies*, 7 (3).

Smith, G.M (2003). *Film Structure and the Emotion System*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, M. (1995). *Engaging Characters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Smith, M. (2017). *Film, Art and The Third Culture: A Naturalized Aesthetics of Cinema*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Smith, T. (2013). Attentional synchrony and the influence of viewing task on gaze behavior in static and dynamic scenes. *Journal of Vision*, 13 (8).

Smith, T. (2015). Read, watch, listen: a commentary on eye tracking and movement images. *Refractory: A Journal of Entertainment Media*, 25(9).

Smith, T. (2016). Match-action: the role of motion and audio in creating global change blindness in film. *Media Psychology*.

Somers-Hall, H. (2013). *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Sokal, A. and Bricmont, J. (1998). *Fashionable Nonsense: Postmodern Intellectuals' Abuse of Science*. New York: Picador.

Stengers, I. (1997). *Power and Invention*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Stivale, C. (2008). *Gilles Deleuze's ABCs: The Folds of Friendship*. USA: The John Hopkins University Press.

Tarkovsky, A. (1987). *Sculpting in Time*.

Turvey, M. (2008). *Doubting Vision: Film and the Revelationist Tradition*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Toscano, A. (2009). Gilbert Simondon. In Jones, G. & Roffe, J. (Eds.), *Deleuze's Philosophical Lineage*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Voss, D. (2013). Deleuze's Third Synthesis of Time. *Deleuze Studies*, 7(2).

Whitehead, A. (1978). *Process and Reality*. New York: Free Press.

Willat, E. and Lee, M. (Eds.) (2011). *Thinking between Deleuze and Kant*. New York: Continuum.

Williams, J. (2003). *Gilles Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: A Critical Introduction and Guide*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

Williams, J. (2007). Objects in manifold times: Deleuze and the speculative philosophy of objects as processes. *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy*, 7(1)

Williams, J. (2009). If Not Here, Then Where? On the Location and Individuation of Events in Badiou and Deleuze. *Deleuze Studies*, 3 (1).

Williams, J. (2011). *Gilles Deleuze's Philosophy of Time: A Critical Introduction and Guide*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Zizek, Z. (2004). *Organs Without Bodies: Deleuze and Consequences*. USA: Psychology Press.

Zourabichvili, F. (2012). *Deleuze, a Philosophy of the Event: Together with the Vocabulary of Deleuze*. Edinburgh: EUP.