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A Philosophical Inquiry in Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari”***

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Abstract

In the current dissertation, I analyze the concept of affect as it appears in the philosophies of Baruch Spinoza and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. After putting forward the Spinozian conception of affect as a modification of immanent substance, I explore the repercussions of affect being a variation of intensity in Deleuze and Guattari's work. Intensity, or difference according to Deleuze and Guattari, is a metaphysical element that appears in a triadic scheme along the virtual and the actual. Intensity denotes a power of producing novelty by virtue of disjunctively synthesizing heterogeneities under its characteristic of tending towards a limit. In aesthetics, intensity characterizes the ever-receding shared genetic moment of sensibility and ideality as the limit of both. Following the above, affect denotes a variation of the genetic limit of sensibility and ideality under sensibility's creative function. It is analyzed as being defined in reference to an intensive zero point in which the repetition of habit is conditioned by the novelty of Deleuze's third synthesis of time, Death, where the unity of actual, extended entities appears dissolved into the singularities from which it arises. Affect is thus understood as a primary novelty or difference that conditions the appearance of repetitive, habitual ways of being. The ethical significance of affect is subsequently considered as related to what Deleuze and Guattari name becoming-minor. This correlation follows directly by the metaphysics of intensity as an exposition of the genetic preconditions of actual unified entities and that exposes the dynamism underlying seemingly unified objects and subjects by connecting them to the genetic processes by which they came to be. Finally, I analyze the synthesizing function of affect as combining the in-itself-ness of difference and the Humean principle of the externality of relations. Neither interior nor exterior affect exists at the middle point, where novelty produces new relations and their corresponding terms. The association of affect and emotions is evaluated as relating to their joint de-subjectifying function which is best exemplified in the affirmative functions of pain and defacialization. Passing from its immanent function in Spinoza to its metahuman function in Deleuze and Guattari affect denotes the function of dynamism, novelty and creation.

Abstract in Greek (Περίληψη)

Στην παρούσα διατριβή, μελετώ την έννοια του συναισθήματος-επίδρασης (affect) στις φιλοσοφίες των Baruch Spinoza και των Gilles Deleuze και Félix Guattari. Εκκινώντας από τη Σπινοζική αντίληψη του συναισθήματος ως τροποποίηση της εμμενούς υπόστασης, στη συνέχεια διερευνώ τις συνέπειες της σύλληψης του συναισθήματος ως διακύμανση της έντασης στο έργο των Deleuze και Guattari. Σύμφωνα με αυτούς, η ένταση, ή διαφορά καθαυτή, αποτελεί μέρος ενός τριαδικού μεταφυσικού σχήματος που περιλαμβάνει ακόμα το δυνητικό και το εν ενεργεία (ενεργό, actual). Αποτελεί μια δύναμη παραγωγής καινοτομίας την οποία επιτυγχάνει μέσω της διαζευκτικής σύνθεσης ετεροτήτων υπό το χαρακτηριστικό της τάσης προς ένα όριο. Η ένταση χαρακτηρίζει την κοινή στιγμή γένεσης της αισθητικότητας και της ιδεατότητας και αποτελεί όρο δυνατότητας και των δύο. Ακολουθώντας, το συναίσθημα δηλώνει τη διακύμανση αυτής της γενεσιουργού δύναμης του αισθητού και της ιδεατότητας και τη δημιουργική λειτουργία της αισθητικότητας. Χαρακτηριστικό το συναισθήματος είναι ότι προσδιορίζεται σε σχέση με ένα εντατικό οριακό σημείο μηδέν. Σε αυτό το οριακό σημείο συνυπάρχουν η φαινομενική ακύρωση της έντασης στην επανάληψη της συνήθειας, και η καινοτόμος δημιουργική δύναμη του χρόνου ή αλλιώς Θάνατος κατά Deleuze. Η ενότητα των εμπειρικών, εκτεταμένων οντοτήτων προϋποθέτει και εμπεριέχει τις προ-εμπειρικές μοναδικότητες (singularities) από τις οποίες προκύπτει. Το συναίσθημα νοείται έτσι ως μια πρωταρχική καινοτομία ή διαφορά που αποτελεί όρο δυνατότητας της εμφάνισης επαναλαμβανόμενων, συνηθισμένων τρόπων ύπαρξης. Στη συνέχεια αναλύεται η ηθική σημασία του συναισθήματος σε συμπλοκή με αυτό που οι Deleuze και Guattari ονομάζουν γίγνεσθαι-μειονότητα. Αυτή η συσχέτιση προκύπτει άμεσα από τη μεταφυσική της έντασης ως περάσματος στο γενετικό σημείο μηδέν το οποίο αποκαλύπτει τον δυναμισμό που προϋποτίθεται στα φαινομενικά ενοποιημένα αντικείμενα και από τον οποίον τα τελευταία προκύπτουν. Τέλος, αναλύεται η συνθετική λειτουργία του συναισθήματος ως συνδυασμού της καθαυτού διαφοράς και της Χιουμιανής αρχής της εξωτερικότητας των σχέσεων. Ούτε εσωτερικό, ούτε εξωτερικό, το συναίσθημα αναδύεται στο ενδιάμεσο όριο δημιουργώντας νέες σχέσεις και τους αντίστοιχους όρους τους. Η συσχέτιση του συναισθήματος-επίδρασης με τα κοινώς εννοούμενα συναισθήματα (emotions) αξιολογείται σε σχέση με την απο-υποκειμενοποιητική τους λειτουργία, η οποία αναδεικνύεται στις καταφατικές λειτουργίες του πόνου και της από-προσωποποίησης. Περνώντας από την εμμενή του λειτουργία στον Σπινόζα στη μετα-ανθρώπινη λειτουργία του κατά Ντελέζ και Γκουαταρί, το συναίσθημα δηλώνει μια δημιουργική δύναμη παραγωγής του νέου.

Introduction

1. General Account and Motives of Research: affect as difference
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5. Philosophical innovations and contributions implicated in Deleuzoguattarian affect
6. Methodology
7. Outline of Chapters

1. General Account and Motives of Research: affect as difference

The current research investigates the concept of affect as conceived in the genealogical lineage connecting Baruch Spinoza with Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari and as entangled and elucidated in the latter two by the neighboring concepts of intensity, sensibility, expression, and becoming. After initially outlining the ethical and metaphysical account of affect as a variation of substance in Spinoza, I delineate the Deleuzoguattarian metaphysics to analyze the function and role of intensity as the element that replaces substance in Deleuze's reading of Spinoza and subsequently, affect as an intensive variation of else, a variation of intensity.¹ To do so, I deploy intensity's relation to the virtual and the actual, which Deleuze reformulates from his reading of Bergson in order to reveal reality as pure dynamism. Using Spinoza as a historical and philosophical base, the current research focuses on the metaphysics that makes possible the conceptualization of affect as an event, a becoming-minoritarian, and a compound of thought and creative sensibility. Affect is the pre-human creative process of sensibility itself in its conditioning moment that is difference, the irreducible heterogeneity from which everything arises.

This project was born out of an aspiration to deal in a novel way with philosophical problems that characterize the very constitution of philosophy, such as the problem of the relation between reason and passion, through the scope and lens of novel and currently emerging sensibilities. My initial hypothesis was that the highly popularized humanities concept of affect, incorporating a new sensibility and ethics of how-to-do theory, could offer a revitalizing surge to such philosophical problems. While the battle around passion and reason,

¹ Gilles Deleuze "Spinoza: Affect and Idea" trans. Timothy S. Murphy, trans. review Charles J. Stivale (lecture, University of Paris, Vincennes-St. Denis, Paris, France, January 24, 1978), 5,10.

affect and thinking, is as long as the discipline itself, the question was nevertheless pressing: have we come closer to bridging the gap between these two, long-thought as competing, aspects of the human psyche, these two contesting elements of sociopolitical and collective life and what would such a process look like both in theory and on a practical level encouraging the production of thought? To do so, I would follow the path of three innovative philosophers and the evolution and entanglement of their ideas and analyze the link between the latter and the current interest of the humanities in embodiment, emotions, and sensation. While the two paradigms they represent are separated by a long and significant historical period, and a critical event considered the Copernican revolution of the history of philosophy, namely Kant, their accounts are interconnected through a deep kinship. Their comparative analysis will try to resist a kind of evolutionary analysis following a positivist scheme of knowledge and wisdom accretion. Instead, the current analysis will attempt to bring a double becoming between them to light. For Spinoza, every idea corresponds to a body and vice versa, while for Deleuze, ideas are affects.²

The initial research proposal from which the current thesis ensued included using the concept of affect, as conceived by Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari, as a tool for the entanglement of aesthetics and politics and as a lens for studying the work of the postcolonial painter Marlene Dumas. Specifically, I intended to study Dumas' portraits of minor subjectivities such as women, black men, and children. The proposal was based upon the hypothesis that her works allow viewers to connect with the negative affects of power subordination in ways that challenge the assumptions regarding the internalization of power limitations by subordinated subjects and reveal affectivity as a realm of freedom and resistance. Could revealing minor subjects in ways that challenged the assumptions of the viewer regarding the stereotypical ways one would expect them to feel be, in fact, a political intervention and antagonistic contribution? Could Dumas' works be instantiations of the Deleuzoguattarian concept of becoming-minor, seizing the viewers' affects and transforming them towards a desire of the minor, producing ways of sensing and affects that are immediately political? My analysis of Dumas' works through Spinozian and Deleuzoguattarian affect would work in the context of an expanding and prolific bibliography on the inextricable entanglement of art and aesthetics with the

² Gilles Deleuze, "The Shame and the Glory: T. E. Lawrence" in Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael Greco (London, New York: Verso, 1998), 115-125, 124.

political, proving the dualism between the supposedly harmless and politically irrelevant work of aesthetics and the pressing practical problems of politics as obsolete.

My initial bibliographical research in the philosophical resources of the project revealed that the need to clarify fundamental concepts inextricably linked with Deleuzoguattarian affect, such as Deleuze's concept of intensity in relation to the virtual as well as becoming, would prove significantly more impermeable to a facile interpretation of the sort that might be conveniently applied to such case study. Given, as has been previously noted, that intensity is "one of Deleuze's most complex concepts,"³ the need for an independent study devoted to the concept of affect in Deleuze and Guattari as indeed a variation of intensity revealed itself as pressing. What constitutes the potentially liberating power of affect? How could affect break away from the reproduction of identity to which the long tradition of philosophy was complicit, as Deleuze has made pressingly obvious? How does non-human affect work? What had started as an inquiry into a concept's political and ethical aspects turned out to be an inquiry into metaphysics. While the initial political questions were seemingly abandoned, they work in the background and in the fringes of the metaphysical questions that ended up comprising the main body of the research, such as how conditioning difference becomes consolidated in identity and habit, or how to grasp the conditioning event of the coexistence of impossibles and the paradox of pure becoming?

Embarking upon the process of the philosophical study of the concept of affect was born out of a hope for creating a method and map for personal and collective healing. In line with the old tradition of philosophy as medicine dating back to Stoic philosopher Marcus Aurelius, and in the context of Greek society amid an unprecedented social crisis in which this research project was initiated, the hope accompanying it was one placed in the power of ideas as problems and of concepts as cutting out new paths for being and becoming in this world. More precisely, the concept of affect seems to carry with it the promise of an immanent embrace of the minor in a way that could heal and work counter to the prevalent social mechanization of our capacities to interact, indeed to affect and be affected, in line with capitalist accumulation, appearing as irrefutable and objective. Affect acting as non-denumerable measure and denoting a creative becoming-minor of societies and entities has the potential to counter the capitalist axiomatics of profit imposed as an external measure to reality.

³ Daniel W. Smith, "The Deleuzian Revolution: Ten Innovations in *Difference and Repetition*," *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* 14, no. 1 (February 2020): 34–49, 44.

The problem, of course, is political, showing towards the outside of theory and itself inexhaustible so long as such mechanization is an ongoing process of power subordination. I hope to hone the use of some tools at our disposal in tackling this problem and using philosophy as a political method, in line with scholars that have shown the inextricable relation of the two.⁴

“A philosophy's power is measured by the concepts it creates, [...] that impose a new set of divisions on things and actions. It sometimes happens that those concepts are called forth at a certain time, charged with a collective meaning corresponding to the requirements of a given period, and discovered, created, or recreated by several authors at once”.⁵ Such are the words of Deleuze in the conclusion of his dissertation, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*. Such is a good description of the central concept of Deleuze's metaphysics – the concept of difference, which has been the object of a collective philosophical undertaking to renovate the political and philosophical mindscapes after the problems associated with western systems of thought culminated in the second world war's physical and symbolic destruction. In the second half of the twentieth century, numerous philosophers such as Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas, and Jean-Luc Nancy simultaneously elaborated a notion of difference. In each one, the notion is understood mainly as an ontological, linguistic, or ethical difference,⁶ even if the political connotations of all those diverse elaborations are irrefutable. At the time that the philosophical notion of difference irrupted, an alternative to the self-entitled image of man as the center of the universe was urgently sought in order to establish broader and more accurate metaphysical systems, more imaginative and expansive symbolic systems, and fairer and more sustainable ethical and sociopolitical configurations. Such were the aspirations of the novel elaboration of difference in the spiritual landscape of European thought in the mid-twentieth century, of which Deleuze's philosophy is an integral component. Deleuze's difference in itself denotes not the external difference between two already constituted things but a transcendental heterogeneity that conditions all that exists, reversing in that way the whole metaphysical tradition since antiquity.

Affect, the concept examined by the current dissertation, as it appears in Spinozian and Deleuzoguattarian philosophies, could be elucidated by the above remarks. Affect, like

⁴ Nathan Widder, *Political Theory after Deleuze*, Deleuze Encounters (London: Continuum, 2012).

⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York : Cambridge, Mass: Zone Books ; Distributed by MIT Press, 1990), 321.

⁶ Todd May, “Philosophies of Difference”, in Kelly Becker and Iain D. Thomson, eds., *The Cambridge History of Philosophy, 1945-2015* (Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 427-441.

difference in the second part of the last century, has during the last decades become an increasingly persistent notion in academic research and teaching, primarily in the Anglo-American context but also in German and Scandinavian scholarship in the humanities, and more broadly a privileged realm for the understanding of processes of domination and the forging of resistance.⁷ Affect, as the concept of difference in Deleuze and Guattari's time, is called forth by our time's political and symbolic exigencies, revealing the emerging open processes defining the current social transformations. On the other hand, affect can only be fully understood in light of the late twentieth-century metaphysics of difference within the framework from which it emerged. More specifically, affect has to be understood as difference and as the primacy of encounters over habit. In this, one could summarize the central claim of the current dissertation. Affect is the moment of emergence of difference on the level of human and non-human bodies as a result of encounters with those bodies' environments and as a result of those bodies' internal dynamic structures. This difference is not symptomatic but constitutive of habitual sociopolitical structures, coagulated forms of intimacy and relating, unchanging physical and biological realities. The notion of intensity exemplifies the emergence of such relational and internal difference and complicates the distinction between the two. Affect is the irreducible and un-cancellable constitutive difference that precedes the individual and the collective and which philosophy has as its aim to reveal and intensify. Affect as the embodied sensible expression of such difference can thus allow us to pursue difference as a *practice*.⁸

2. Literature review

Despite the broad expansion of scholarship on affect in the humanities during the last three decades, at the start of this doctoral research in 2017, no book-length study had been conducted on the concept of affect from a purely philosophical perspective, let alone specifically from the perspective of Deleuzoguattarian philosophy. Neighboring Deleuzoguattarian conceptions of intensity, time, becoming, and difference are objects of a growing and prolific bibliography.⁹ Much research on affect has been conducted by

⁷ See, for example, two influential collective volumes which indicate yet do not fully capture the breadth of the scholarship on affect that was produced in the last two to three decades: Patricia Ticineto Clough and Jean O'Malley Halley, eds., *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); and Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, eds., *The Affect Theory Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

⁸ Dorothea Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 10.

⁹ See, for example, the special issue on intensity in the *Deleuze Studies Journal* in 2017. Dale Clisby and Sean Bowden, "Introduction: The Virtual, the Actual and the Intensive: Contentions, Reflections and Interpretations," *Deleuze Studies* 11, no. 2 (May 2017): 153–55.

philosophers who nevertheless analyze affect primarily in its sociopolitical aspect rather than from the perspective of metaphysics.¹⁰ Indeed, affect has, broadly and rightly so, been researched as a phenomenon related to politics and as pertaining, on the one hand, to the point of connection and convergence between structures of domination and sociopolitical organization and, on the other hand, to bodily sites of unconscious compliance and mechanization, but also resistance. The Deleuzian notion of affect has been researched alongside other thinkers and philosophers in certain works.¹¹ Some significant, shorter texts and dictionary entries notwithstanding, affect has been analyzed less often in its purely metaphysical aspect. That is the problem the current dissertation aspires to correct.¹² Additionally, the research will attempt to show further how a metaphysics of affect and intensity as a passage to the limit of intensity's zero point, necessarily results in the ethics of minoritarian becomings that Deleuze elaborates with Guattari. Becoming-minor for Deleuze and Guattari denotes the arrow of desire towards all that has been excluded from the social and psychic economy that privileges the White Man, a desire that is directed towards the imperceptible, the inessential and the cosmic. It is a concept that is at once metaphysical and ethical and implies an immanent affirmation of the transcendental conditions from which the dominant philosophical notion of the subject arises and to which the latter, at the same time, must become oblivious. Becoming-minor thus denotes a reverse philosophical method in reference to the one that established the fiction of the autonomous subject of reason as the primary model of agency. Desire for Deleuze and Guattari is a differentiating power that directly infuses and invests the social field and is irrelevant to the demands of psychoanalytic lack and the pleasure principle that ensues from the latter.

¹⁰ Examples of this are Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*, Post-Contemporary Interventions (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002). John Protevi, *Political Affect: Connecting the Social and the Somatic*, Posthumanities 7 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2009). William E. Connolly, *Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed*, Theory out of Bounds, v. 23 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

¹¹ Eirini Lovari, "The Affective Turn: Jean-François Lyotard, Gilles Deleuze and Julia Kristeva" (PhD, London, King's College London, 2014), <https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/>. Russell J. Duvernoy, *Affect and Attention after Deleuze and Whitehead: Ecological Attunement*, New Perspectives in Ontology (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021).

¹² See for example, Gregory J. Seigworth "From Affection to Soul" in Charles J. Stivale, *Gilles Deleuze: Key Concepts*, Repr (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 159-169. Kasper Kristensen, "What Can Affect Do? Notes on the Spinozist-Deleuzian Account," *LIR:Journal* 7, no. 16 (2016): 12-33. Michael Hardt, "The Power to Be Affected," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 28, no. 3 (September 2015): 215-22. Felicity Coleman "Affect" in Adrian Parr, ed., *The Deleuze Dictionary*, Rev. ed (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 11-13. "Affect" Entry in Arnaud Villani and Robert Sasso, eds., *Le vocabulaire de Gilles Deleuze* (Paris: Vrin, 2004), 30-33.

I interpret the gap in scholarship on the metaphysics of affect as a consequence of a risk that seems inherent to the concept of affect. Focusing on the concept of affect alone seems to expose one to the risk of approaching the empirical in ways that, as Deleuze and Guattari warn in *What is Philosophy?*, might be appropriated by the imperialist domain of communication and thereby fall into common sense Doxa and the exigencies of identity and representation.¹³ Researching affect necessarily involves a tacit reference to the popularized tendency within academic research that conducts empirical research using affect as a novel and experimental methodological tool related to emotions.¹⁴ Research on affect from the point of view of philosophy would thus have to turn to more empirically-oriented disciplines and refer to the blurry limit between philosophy and its neighboring disciplines. Such research could thus indeed lead one to the messy empirical realm of emotions, conflating the philosophical with the non-philosophical and risking unfounded ethical claims. However, given that danger may be a mark of any endeavor of stepping into new territory, its subsistence indicates that such work could be valuable and needed. Nevertheless, the current thesis will not extensively discuss emotions but will refer to the ethical problem of joy and sadness in its concluding chapters. An appreciation of the positive ethical value of pain and some negative emotions will be attempted in contrast to the popular reading of Deleuze and Guattari as philosophers of affirmative joy.

The stakes at hand are how to capture a metaphysics of singularity that affect keeps pushing towards without succumbing to the necessities of the empirical in the sense of, as Deleuze emphasizes, the habitual. While an expressed aim of the methodology of affect in empirical research is indeed to discover the novel in the micro-scale of the everyday, the underlying assumptions of certain normality associated with our ways to interact and what normally goes unnoticed, to thus approach what Deleuze and Guattari conceptualize as the imperceptible, going back to the philosophical roots of the concept might indeed be a way to consolidate the ways one can reinstate the distance of the researching sensibility and thinking from the familiar and the known, in short, the identical.

¹³ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, 10.

¹⁴ For example, see *Capacious Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry* a journal dedicated to research conducted through the methodological tool of affect. Also Britta Timm Knudsen and Carsten Stage, eds., *Affective Methodologies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015). Also Patricia Ticineto Clough, “The New Empiricism: Affect and Sociological Method,” *European Journal of Social Theory* 12, no. 1 (February 2009): 43–61.

It is not only due to his Nietzschean affiliation that Deleuze treats a concept as an assemblage of forces never prefigured in advance. Elaborating an analysis of dynamism also through Bergson and Spinoza, Deleuze holds concepts to be forces. It is only through the exterior forces that take hold of it and that express themselves through it that a concept makes any sense and has any significance; in short, a concept *works*.¹⁵ In this respect, an era's sociopolitical context and theoretical problems create the framework for the life whose emergence and expression may or may not be allowed for and by a concept. In our case, it is less than a novelty to talk about affect theory in current academic production but also of affective discourses that arise in a productive, Foucauldian sense to create the 'populations' of the future. However, the sociopolitical forces of our time give sense to this problem and methodology. In the context of affective discourses created by deeply entrenched existential but also rudimentary problems of humanity, the Deleuzoguattarian concept of affect is summoned in a way that already shapes part of the force that gives it life but by no means defines it in an absolute way. What forces could a metaphysics of affect capture and, in turn, put to work? Which dynamisms function through its transforming promise? These questions inform the motivation for departing upon this dissertation's adventure.

While writing this dissertation, an in-depth study on the notion of affect according to Deleuze was published, entitled *Deleuze and the Problem of Affect* by D. J. S. Cross. Cross's work adds a lot to the missing link between Deleuze's metaphysics and the growing field of affect theory, advancing the study of imperceptible affective registers of various sociological and anthropological fields of study, bordering the empirical, situated between the empirical and its genetic limit. Cross's main argument focuses on the affinity of affect with what he terms a primary power of pure ambivalence. He posits that the latter designates the concept of affect's underlying affective charge and describes Deleuze's general attitude towards sensibility.¹⁶ In his view, sensibility is at once affirmed and disavowed by Deleuze despite his declarations of the opposite and, paradoxically, in line with western philosophy's long ascetic tradition, which is intensified in a simultaneous push-pull movement towards and against it. Cross claims to create a concept of ambivalence distinct from both the common sense and the psychoanalytic notions of the latter, likening affect as a transcendental or genetic condition of the empirical or

¹⁵ Gilles Deleuze, "Nomadic Thought" in Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, Semiotext(e) Foreign Agents Series (Los Angeles, CA : Cambridge, Mass: Semiotext(e) ; Distributed by MIT Press, 2004), 252-261.

¹⁶ D. J. S. Cross, *Deleuze and the Problem of Affect*, Plateaus - New Directions in Deleuze Studies (Edinburgh University Press, 2021).

observable affect with the observable conditioned affect of ambivalence (fraught with its psychoanalytic charge). Despite his best intentions, it seems that stressing Deleuze's own ambivalence towards affect, ensuing from an underlying ambivalence towards the body, Cross' reading disregards the fundamental concern of the affirmation of bodily matters, no less than thought's radical dynamism as a force of change, reviled for centuries by the assumption of the supposedly natural inclination of thought towards identity and of matter towards stasis. Such a reading is condemned to misread the Deleuzian metaphysical concern to establish philosophy as an endeavor of pure ungrounding, whose only constant is the radical transformation that the metaphysical primacy of ungrounded-ness ensures.

It seems that Cross choosing an analytic approach centered around a concept linked to specific affect -no matter how far removed he claims it to be from its empirical counterpart- remains more faithful to the latter non-philosophical accounts and approaches to affect than to the Deleuzoguattarian genealogy of the concept in transcendental empiricism. The latter is a novel method that aspires to reach the genetic conditions of reality in moments that escape common and everyday life sensibility, in revealing intensity in its pure state before it becomes coagulated to some meaning or affective charge. Researching affect sheds light on unseen and unthought aspects of the studied empirical realm, allowing us to trace imperceptible changes and structures of the desiring substratum of the sociopolitical. To this end, detecting specific affective configurations and using the lens of specific emotional structures of interaction is a valuable tool that allows us to analyze the limits of the intelligible and the normative.¹⁷ Nevertheless, that is the limit separating empirical research on affect in the humanities from the transcendently empirical approach adopted here. Empirical research rightly seeks to detect singular affective phenomena in states of affairs and asks what affects it is possible to experience and from what position in a given configuration can the imperceptible sociopolitical presuppositions that define the limits of such states of affairs be detected. It asks what affects there are and what they do. On the other hand, a transcendently empirical approach necessarily goes beyond the affective political configurations of specific states of affairs to engage the underlying realm of events and difference. What difference does or can affect make,

¹⁷ Brilliant work has indeed been done on what kind of sociopolitical relations shame forges, what is the political significance of envy, and the political connotation of certain emotions in specific social contexts. On shame, see "Shame in the Cybernetic Fold: Reading Silvan Tomkins Written with Adam Frank," in *Touching Feeling*, by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (Duke University Press, 2003), 93–121. On envy, Sianne Ngai, *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004). Such emotions expelled to the margins of what it means to be a rational deliberating individuality and thus circumscribing what it is to be a researching subjectivity would otherwise limit what we consider to be a legitimate object of research and thus what are the limits of reality. Researching emotions thus expands our capacities to experience, think, feel, and perceive.

here or there, collectively and individually? The two approaches, far from antagonistic, complement each other on different analytical layers. Contrary to Cross's approach, the current research rejects the need to analyze the concept of affect through a specific affective lens and instead understands affect as pure difference, as pure dynamism, and as futurity. It takes as its starting point Deleuze and Guattari's intention to inject the history of philosophy with a predilection towards dynamism and transformation. The style of their collective writing is only a surface indication of this attempt, with the other being a set of tools to mobilize thought in destabilizing directions. There is no ambivalence of Deleuze and Guattari towards sensibility because sensibility, as affect, is understood as pure creativity and novelty.

Affect, in Deleuzoguattarian philosophy, is primarily a self-differentiating power operating by a passage to a limit. However, if affect is power, following the great aspiration of Deleuzoguattarian philosophy to move from the question "What is?" that is, the question of essence¹⁸ to that of becoming and singularity, we need to ask of affect: "Of whom?" "How much?" "In which cases?"¹⁹ Despite its radical contribution to the history of Western philosophy in initiating a non-anthropomorphic way of thinking, Spinoza's account of an individual body's affective power still retains elements of being thought as a relatively uniform power pertaining to an average person. In what follows, we attempt to distance ourselves from this implicit model of individual human power as a point of departure of our investigation, even if we were only to conceive it as dispersed and transformable subsequently. Our aim is to move even further away from affect as "a power implying an ethical imperative to multiply," and from Spinoza's ethical imperative, according which each entity must seek its own empowerment. The current times of vastly varied distributions of power depending on embodied, cultural and geographical factors make it critical to consider affect in its infinite actualized non-human expressions to forge any ethical questions and provisional answers around it. Going beyond human affectivity is only one way of encompassing the infinite variety of affect that cannot be limited in any "monoaffective imaginary,"²⁰ but it is not the only one. Moreover, the capitalist biopolitical manipulation of the affective capacities of people has indeed complicated the role joyful passions play in relation to the state of contribution to one's

¹⁸ Henry Somers-Hall, Jeffrey A. Bell, and James Williams, eds., *A Thousand Plateaus and Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 3.

¹⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 82.

²⁰ Lauren Berlant, *Affect & the Politics of Austerity* An interview exchange with Lauren Berlant, *Variant* Issue 39/40, Winter 2010.

servitude,²¹ and blurred the distinction between complicity and resistance to political exploitation.

3. Affect today

Affect in current academic discussions is understood sometimes in continuity with and other times in distinction from the notion of emotion. Most commonly, it refers to the space of intersection between political structures on the one hand and bodily and unconscious powers on the other. Following the radical transformations that occurred after the event of May '68, the rise of social movements, and the gradual integration of their claims into the political mainstream, we are still slowly but surely experiencing shifts in the dominant paradigms of subjectivity, relationality, and the symbolic order. Once considered politically radical and exceptional, such transformations are becoming widely disseminated and appropriated while old paradigms are reinforced and resistant. Questions and explorations of intimacy,²² discourses of collective care and self-care, and radical self-acceptance had arisen by the seventies.²³ However, they have been more readily accommodated by the advent of personalized IT algorithms and the practices of the self that they make possible, going along with the expanding commodification of the psychic realm.²⁴ Discourses on self-care and practices like meditation and therapy, mood tracking, counseling, coaching, and enhancement of emotional intelligence have become part of a broad movement of affective mechanics made possible by technology and motivated by both the radical politics that lies at the root of the process, but also at the same time by the capitalistic promise for a better life against and in contradiction to the unfulfilled economic promises of development and prosperity for increasing masses of the global population. The 2008 global economic crisis and the pandemic-related recession have only exasperated such movements.

²¹ Ceciel Meiborg and Sjoerd van Tuinen, eds., *Deleuze and the Passions* (Place of publication not identified: Punctum Books, 2016), 14.

²² On the changes in intimacy as influenced by the feminist-informed transformation of gender roles see for example Anthony Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. (Stanford, Calif: Stanford Univ. Press, 2000).

²³ On the role of self-care as a political act, the work of black lesbian poet Audre Lorde defined the cultural paradigm of her era. Her influential idea, highly popularized in the decades that followed her, is captured in her powerful quote, "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." Audre Lord "A Burst of Light: Living with Cancer" in Audre Lorde, *A Burst of Light: And Other Essays*, Ixia Press edition (Mineola, New York: Ixia Press, 2017).

²⁴ For an example of how mobile apps contribute to mental well-being practices, see Kieran Woodward et al., "Beyond Mobile Apps: A Survey of Technologies for Mental Well-Being," *IEEE Transactions on Affective Computing* 13, no. 3 (July 1, 2022): 1216–35.

Affect-related scholarship has revealed such contradictory movements. On the one hand, there are movements of sociopolitical mechanization aiming at circumscribing collective affect in forms compliant with the dominant order (fear and guilt regarding recession but also the contemporaneous denial and weaponization of vulnerability as related to the global pandemic ‘crisis’). On the other hand, there is the hopeful effort of consciously manipulating the ubiquitous element of affect in a way promising to lead us to the depth of things and to explain and enhance them in a way that we may indeed, and despite or against the sociopolitical context, allow for more conscious, honest and meaningful lives. Affect becomes a crucial marker of personal life and social contexts and the underlying crucial factor of the meaning of texts. The feminist undertone of the revelation of affect in places and disciplines thought to be sealed against it by academic objectivity is apparent. Moreover, the expulsion of much feminist thinking outside of traditionally male academic disciplines, such as political theory and philosophy, has led to the emergence of affective scholarly methodologies in disciplines considered less dominant within the humanities. For example, feminist literary critique offers revelatory insights regarding the previously unseen affective canon of academic writing and its resulting denial of the necessarily suspicious affective substrate of “serious” theory.²⁵ This resonates with the Deleuzian critique of judgment as the imposition of infinite debt and the annulment of “any liberatory process” and Deleuze and Guattari’s idea that “those who criticize without creating [...] are the plague of philosophy”.²⁶ As Smith notes, Deleuze’s critique of judgment is not an abandonment of the capacity to distinguish between good and bad, but instead the recognition that judgment, as a method of application of preexisting criteria, cannot account for novelty. Thus, going beyond judgment means reinstating immanent criteria to account for things.²⁷ The hypothesis implied in the current thesis that Deleuze’s immanent account of reality in which the transcendence of immediate consciousness and the immanence of life are one and the same movement²⁸ can make us make sense of the affective transformations of our times and push them towards the direction of pure difference.

4. Outlining the research, current problems

²⁵ Such is the work of Felski in the field of literary critique. Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015).

²⁶ Gilles Deleuze “To have done with Judgement” in Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael Greco (London, New York: Verso, 1998), 126-35, 128. Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 28.

²⁷ Daniel W. Smith and Gilles Deleuze, *Essays on Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 221.

²⁸ Gilles Deleuze “Pure Immanence : A life” in Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*, trans. Anne Boyman (New York : Cambridge, Mass: Zone Books ; Distributed by the MIT Press, 2001).

One of the main issues arising in the debates around affect and the affective turn concerns two intertwined problems; the first relates to its novelty and the second to the relation between affect and reason. A common criticism addressed to the scholarship on affect is that it merely reiterates the age-old problem of philosophy, which is the problem of the link between emotions and reason. It thus has yet to offer the new methodology its proponents promise. Affect indeed poses a question of its connection with reason in a way that reiterates the old problem concerning philosophy since its birth. Nevertheless, as discussed later, affect is not reducible to emotions exactly, and not solely, because it does not primarily take the human subject as its point of reference.²⁹ Having incorporated the theories of the dissolution of the subject, affect theories attempt to go deeper into the non-dualist tradition of metaphysics. Deleuze's novelty lies in grounding philosophy in a necessity that "is unthinkable within the limits of reason."³⁰ For Deleuze and Guattari, the brain feels in a way that surpasses the workings of any subjective actor.³¹

Another common and persistent line of criticism is that in the attempt to overcome the dualism, affect proponents reiterate it inversely.³² The issue of how to consolidate the knowledge of non-dualist metaphysics runs throughout the current dissertation. I want to show how the link between rationality and non-rationality in the Spinozian-Deleuzoguattarian lineage gets displaced by posing the problems of disjunctive synthesis, difference, and the dissolution of unity. Having overcome the need for reason and bodily processes to present a one-to-one symmetrical correspondence to each other or to be part of the same plane, and having embraced the idea of intensive **disjunction** of the virtual and the actual both transforming each other in the process of their emergence Deleuze and Guattari's non-dualism does not depend on a reductionist scheme of the body to cognitive processes and vice versa nor does it presuppose a fantasized unity of these two aspects in a single individual, separate from processes of individuation. Following Spinoza's famous observation on our ignorance of the limits of bodies' capacities ("no one has yet determined what a body can do"³³), Deleuze points

²⁹ See for example Rei Terada, *Feeling in Theory: Emotion after the "Death of the Subject"* (Cambridge, Mass. London: Harvard University Press, 2003).

³⁰ François Zourabichvili, *Deleuze, a Philosophy of the Event: Together with the Vocabulary of Deleuze*, ed. Gregg Lambert and Daniel W. Smith, trans. Kieran Aarons, Plateaus (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2012), 40.

³¹ Dorothea Olkowski, *Deleuze, Bergson, Merleau-Ponty: The Logic and Pragmatics of Creation, Affective Life, and Perception* (Bloomington (Ind.): Indiana university press, 2021), 136.

³² Marguerite La Caze, Henry Martin Lloyd, "Editors' Introduction: Philosophy and the Affective Turn", *parrhesia*, Special Issue on Affect, vol issue 13, 2011

³³ Benedictus de Spinoza and E. M. Curley, *A Spinoza Reader: The Ethics and Other Works* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), Part 3, Proposition 2, Scholium, 155.

out that no devaluation of thought is implied in what he characterizes as Spinoza's "war cry" but rather a correction to the reduction of thought to consciousness.³⁴ Thought is better understood and reconfigured as unconscious. Moreover, Deleuze and Guattari analyze affect, intensity, time, and difference as unconscious synthetic processes. Thinking and bodily processes meet in liminal, differential unconscious machinic processes that condition them both. The limits of bodily processes activate thought; conversely, the limits of thinking incite material transformations. In terms that resonate with both Spinoza and Deleuze and Guattari, corporeality and incorporeality are aspects of a univocal element, that is, substance in Spinoza and difference for Deleuze and Guattari.

Academic discussions around affect have been marked by the debate around what Deleuzian scholar and translator Brian Massumi in 1996 called the "autonomy of affect," the idea that affect is a pre-linguistic power of transformation.³⁵ This debate, in which feminist philosophers and cultural theorists have participated, criticizes Massumi's account of affect for merely reproducing the duality of mind and body, ideas and matter, which affect theory, and of course, the Spinozian genealogy of affect, has attempted to overcome.³⁶ Feminist theorists have objected that if language is external to how affect works, then the possibility for a radical transformation of language and how it reshapes our bodies' limits or expands them is eschewed. This dissertation deals with the above debate around the relationship between bodily processes, ideas, consciousness, and language by examining the complex problem of the connection between Deleuze's notions of the virtual and the intensive. Positing itself in the context of the competing interpretations of Deleuze's early metaphysics on this topic, this research starts from the thesis of the primacy of intensity of which affect is but a variation as a machinic process of which ideas are necessarily an inextricable component. Moreover, intensity is understood as sense, a realm that, according to Deleuze, is prior to conscious meaning and language these being instead tightly entangled with what he calls representational thought, targeting primarily Kantian metaphysics and the conditioning of reality by a transcendental subject. Unlike the above, Deleuze's sense is a fragile realm transcending the

³⁴ Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 255-7.

³⁵ Massumi underlines the relative autonomy of affect, which he defines as independent bodily energy, and proves his thesis through the observed physical responses on specific images in the time margin between stimulus and conscious response. These observations occurred in an experiment conducted by a team of German researchers. Brian Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect" in Paul Patton, ed., *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, Blackwell Critical Readers (Oxford ; Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1996), 217-239.

³⁶ Ruth Leys, "The turn to affect: a critique" in Ruth Leys, *The Ascent of Affect: Genealogy and Critique* (Chicago ; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2017), 307-350, 329.

subject and anthropological determinations,³⁷ incessantly productive through inclusive disjunctions beyond typical logic and defying the law of the excluded middle. Unlike language, sense does not have a nominal identity but is primarily a differentiator.³⁸ It is not that affect can operate as autonomous from language; instead, it belongs to a realm of sense where language is only one ever-emerging semiotic system among numerous others. Following that, bodily affective transformations are thought of as co-constituting language instead of being overdetermined by it, as is the case in the orthodoxy of psychoanalytic analyses of the symbolic. Instead of succumbing to the long temporalities of possible transformation of the symbolic and language, affective sense affirms the inextricably differentiating function of bodies and language as one case among other factors of that differentiation. Affect is thus indeed “prior to” language, but in the sense that it is contemporaneous with the genetic moment of language; that is, it is concurrent with thought. Thought, in its turn, is, of course, inextricably linked with language, yet it denotes the moment of creation in language, precisely the production of new meanings, the moment when language stutters.³⁹ Of course thinking is also inextricably linked with the body with along with which they constituted the two poles of a disjunctive synthesis. The question is how this innovation production of sense relates to the habitual use of language and is thus entrenched in symbolic and bodily senses. That will be taken up in the last chapters of the dissertation as the relation between the first synthesis of time, that is, habit, and the third, the synthesis of the event.

Concomitant with the above problems is the issue of the relation of affect to structure, form, and anchoring. A problem in affect scholarship and critique, but also a danger to which Deleuze and Guattari themselves repeatedly return to in their work, is the problem of formlessness, the undifferentiated abyss, or death. When stating that an idea is an affect, one seems to propose that in the place of a neutral and stable entity such as the idea of God or freedom an entity ensuring the intelligibility and communication among humans around which they can form coalitions and systems of reference one could substitute an abstract and singular sensation or an unformed force that is mutable and changing and thus dubious. It is to the same threat that Deleuze and Guattari refer when they advise caution as an immanent rule of their

³⁷ Nathan Widder, *Reflections on Time and Politics* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 36.

³⁸ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 122-3.

³⁹ Dorothea Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 225-33.

ethics of intensification.⁴⁰ Affect's function is to open up the solidity of sense to its precondition, which is a non-sense, that is not simply the absence of sense, to open life to its precondition and intensifier, which is death. More precisely, the function of affect is this passage from virtual chaos to sense-making extensive objects and the other way around.⁴¹ The threat of loss of meaning and sense is inextricable from affect. It constitutes its great power, for it is this threat that ensures the possibility of emancipation and radical change. To position the problem more accurately, we need to expand on the chance of developing novel ways of determination and meaning that are ghostly and creative, dynamic and transformative, never entirely there and, for that reason reinvigorating. Pre-individual singularities would play such a role.

Another critical philosophical issue arising in the literature of affect concerning the current thesis is the problem of **relationality and individuality**. Recent affect theories emerged amidst discussions on subjectivity, subjectification, and intersubjectivity, aspiring to disrupt psychoanalytic conceptions of the relation between self and other and of desire as a lack related to the desired other's irreducible externality. These theories tap into the age-old problem of separation of the self's interiority from the exteriority of the social world and the ethical implications that result from it. Apart from the psychoanalytic tradition, contemporary philosophies that elaborate on the ethical problem of the other are most notably Levinasian and Derridean, but also some versions of feminist and postcolonial philosophies. The innovation of Deleuzoguattarian philosophy in that respect is to propose an ethics that moves beyond what they term the transcendence of the other towards an immanent conception of relationality or desire and intensity prior to the individualized terms it connects when explicated.⁴² How can a relation preexist the things it connects? The terms are created through the relation. As Smith puts it, difference is a pure relation⁴³ that does not presuppose the state of individuation of terms but difference in dynamics within a heterogeneous process and from which terms arise through explication. That will constitute one of the main themes running through the current thesis and, more profoundly, the fourth chapter, where the concept of difference in itself will be assessed alongside the Humean principle of the externality of relations. The positioning of

⁴⁰ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 12. print (Minneapolis, Minn.: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2007), 150.

⁴¹ Dorothea Olkowski "Time is Real: Deleuze and Guattari, From Chaos to Complexity" in Robert W. Luzecky and Daniel W. Smith, eds., *Deleuze and Time* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2023), 11-26. As Olkowski points out, the passage from chaotic to organized behavior in physical systems denotes the capacity for self-organization that surpasses the assumption of a deterministic universe, 15-6.

⁴² Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 260-1.

⁴³ Smith, "The Deleuzian Revolution."

the ethical problem in terms of the opposition of self and others presupposes a point of view initiated already in the subject's interiority, circumscribing and delimiting the possible solutions that can be formulated to answer it. If, instead, affect is before affection and prior to individuals, if the latter are degrees of a variable and infinitely differentiating heterogeneous element that is intensity, then a different set of solutions may be imagined and effectuated.

In that respect, one of the primary characteristics of affect is its individuating function.⁴⁴ Instead of presupposing individuals as defined through an extensive sensible lens that considers formal and perceptible characteristics and strict extensive limits, processes of affection are processes of individuation that are themselves incorporeal and involve non-sensible elements such as ideas. We are individuated according to our affects and so too are groups and societies. Arising through our affects, we are nothing but variable degrees of them mingled with all other degrees (what we would otherwise perceive as exterior subjects or individuals) fully determined but porous, like degrees of whiteness arise as individuated differences in a white wall.

Additionally, one of the basic themes dealt with in the following pages is the problem of time. Given that affect and intensity denote processes rather than formed entities, the time problem acquires the utmost importance. When and how is something new created in the pre-individual field of synthesizing time beyond the genius of individualized conscious thinking subjects? What re-conceptualizations of time might philosophy need to do justice to the prospect of intensifying our capacities to transform and create novelty? How the triadic scheme of Deleuze on time resurfaces as the triadic scheme of Deleuze and Guattari on desire will be of primary concern given the primarily processual and dynamic account of affect adopted. In this triadic scheme, time is its self-synthesizing function and is organized in three interrelated ways, the time of habit, memory, and death.⁴⁵ Death will indeed be a primary concern of the way affect and intensity, as the production of unprecedented connections across heterogeneity occur. That account of death linked with affect will amount to another divergence of Deleuze and Guattari from Freudian psychoanalysis and the model of death that it proposes as a natural inclination of the psyche towards the inorganic and the unchanging. Instead, death will be understood as primarily an intensifying mechanism, inscribing difference in habitual ways of interacting with and in the world, traditional assumptions on the stability of the world, as a

⁴⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 46-7.

⁴⁵ Deleuze, 70-128.

necessary conditioning presupposition.⁴⁶ Death becomes a positive principle and non-linear time becomes its corresponding temporality, the time of the events.

Finally, one of the main problems in current literature around affect is its relation to emotions and the concomitant issue of certain emotions' varying ethical and political roles. Prolific literature has thus been produced on the power of negative emotions and acts of dissidence or passive resistance.⁴⁷ Moreover, while some strands of scholarship accepts the use of both terms in continuity and even interchangeably, other scholars point out a clear distinction between the two as denoting completely different domains of the real and involving disparate processes and functions. As mentioned above, Deleuze and Guattari differentiate affect and feeling based on their disparate functions regarding subjectification, consciousness, and the human. While feelings are personal and refer to the interiority of the ostensibly autonomous subject, affects refer to multitudes and processes of collective individuation,⁴⁸ conditioned by prior metastable states of disparity, as Deleuze affirms following Simondon. Nevertheless, the problem of what one would term emotion or feeling in everyday speech does indeed emerge in various cases throughout the vast Deleuzoguattarian oeuvre, one of the main occasions of which is the commentary on the Spinozist ethics given the latter's outstanding significance for the two philosophers. Indeed, the Spinozian ethics of empowerment and joy is referenced at various points in Deleuze and Guattari's texts, raising the question of what joy's role is for them and whether joyous ethics is compatible with their conceptions of minoritarian becomings. In the context of the broader debate in the humanities around affirmation and mourning, the question acquires an augmented significance.⁴⁹ In the current thesis, I will attempt to compose the two supposedly opposed theses on the one side, the affirmative and joyous ethics, and on the other one that emphasizes the significance of pain and mourning, based on the prior question of the metaphysics of transformation and in relation to which the two strands will be assessed.

Indeed, the problem of the separation of affects into joyous and sad ones refers to the problem of the relation between the empirical habitual and the transcendental aspects of affect,

⁴⁶ Fabrice Jambois, *Deleuze et La Mort: Chemins Dans L'Anti-Œdipe*, Ouverture Philosophique (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2016).

⁴⁷ Examples of this include Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Reprinted (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2010).

⁴⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 213, 233, 240.

⁴⁹ See, for example, Rosi Braidotti, "Affirmation versus Vulnerability: On Contemporary Ethical Debates," *Symposium: Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy* 10, no. 1 (Spring / Printemps 2006): 235–54.

time, and event. While seeming oppositions between becomings pertain to states of affairs, the transcendental conditioning genetic and creative realm that concerns Deleuze and Guattari is beyond actions and passions. How are we then to understand and approach such a level of reality? How can we conceptualize affect beyond augmentation and diminution of power like Spinoza proposes? While for Spinoza, desire is one of the three basic affects, for Deleuze and Guattari it constitutes a power of its own accord. The metaphysical and ethical tasks tied to it, approach affect as pure difference and allow the desire for difference to express itself. The result of the dice throw is not pre-given, but its condition is necessarily difference. To affect and be affected means to differ prior to the empirical states of affairs in which affect is habitually organized and distributed among actors and patients. Desire is primarily receptive to its own dynamism.

5. Philosophical innovations and contributions implicated in Deleuzoguattarian affect

After delineating broader issues and debates implied in the problem of affect, I will now outline some more strictly philosophical and technical issues and innovations to which the Deleuzoguattarian conception of affect is inextricably related. The two are complementary and refer to the persistent issue of philosophical dualities such as thought and sensibility, infinity and finitude, and the indivisible and the divisible. The first innovation refers to Deleuze's creative contribution to the study of Spinoza. It concerns the problem of singular modal essences as an invention of a way to bridge modes' finitude with the eternity and indivisibility of substance.⁵⁰ Through that conception, modes' singularity, which in Spinoza remains distinct from the eternal essence that involves all modes in undifferentiated form, infuses the realm of eternal substance with the rumbling differentiation of the actual natural subject to finitude and change. The other concomitant innovation is that of internal difference,⁵¹ which applies both to Spinoza's differentiation of modes as degrees of an intensive quantity and to the Kantian problem of schematism and the application of concepts to sensible manifolds. Regarding Spinoza, the idea of internal difference linked to the singular modal essences has as its consequence the conception of individuated things as degrees of an intensive element in a way that makes the limits between them variable and differentiating. What if we could understand bodies as degrees of power and intensity like we perceive degrees of whiteness on a white wall? Never fully separated by definitive limits but always subject to an ever-receding individuation process. Moreover, while Kant supposes that ideas should be subjected to the

⁵⁰ Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 191-9.

⁵¹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 174.

external text of sensibility, he fails to grasp the two as limits of an internal radical difference of conceptuality and space and time as intensive in origin.

6. Methodology

The current research project deals with the concept of affect in three philosophers and at roughly two different philosophical moments: the early modern times and Spinoza, and the late twentieth century and Deleuze and Guattari. The attention given to these two moments could be more evenly distributed. The first chapter refers to Spinoza's affect alone, while the other four refer to Deleuze and Guattari's affect and how it involves their reconfiguration of Spinoza. The logic behind this decision lies in the hypothesis that Spinoza's innovative, radical, and still relevant account of affects acts as an initiator, as a basis or a diagram upon which a more complex and less clearly understood account of the concept in Deleuze and Guattari can unfold. In this sense, Spinoza's and Deleuze and Guattari's different but complementary approaches to affect will act together, constituting an assemblage characterised by a productive asymmetry or inequality, one of the main characteristics of intensity, according to Deleuze. Furthermore, the second and third chapters of the dissertation constitute the lengthiest ones, as they attempt to clarify the complex Deleuzoguattarian metaphysics with the breadth and depth appropriate for such an endeavour. After producing a clear image of metaphysics, I proceed to the last two shorter chapters. In these, I take up the problem of discerning the metaphysical differences between Deleuze's early work and Deleuze and Guattari's collaboration, address the problem of interiority and exteriority concerning affect, and finally link the metaphysical scheme I have sketched to the ethics of affect as becoming minor and analyse how the latter could be linked to the ethical problem of pain.

In the current thesis, and primarily in the last chapter of the text, I proceed with the hypothesis that the most effective and radical use of Deleuze's philosophy lies neither in the research on his metaphysics nor in the realm of ethics but exactly at the point where it shows the necessary entanglement of the two. The idea behind that hypothesis is two-fold. On the one hand, that given Deleuze's extensive references and his indebtedness to the history of philosophy, commenting on and elaborating on Deleuzian metaphysics risks exaggerating his system's continuity with that history, particularly with Kantian philosophy considered in many ways as the culmination of that history as has been done by a variety of scholars.⁵² Emphasizing

⁵² See Daniel W. Smith, "Deleuze, Kant and the Theory of Immanent Ideas"; in Constantin V. Boundas, ed., *Deleuze and Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006). James Williams, *The Transversal Thought of Gilles Deleuze: Encounters and Influences* (Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2005). Christian Kerslake,

the technical nuances of the distinction between Kantian and Deleuzian time, it is easy to lose focus on the real distinctions the two approaches entail. On the other hand, research on Deleuzian and Deleuzoguattarian ethics in many cases still cannot go as far as needed in exposing the necessity from which the ethics derive, resulting in a false impression found in a large part of the secondary bibliography that Deleuzoguattarian ethics is dogmatic, that is, arbitrary and stemming from some contingent preference or opinion on reality one that would arbitrarily, for example, favour flows over unities and becoming over being. That is then translated into the imperative of an unfounded "must" in multiple scholarly articles.⁵³ On the one side, it is easy to fall to a conformist image of Deleuze as an innovative commentator on the history of philosophy who nevertheless does not manage to produce the radical rift he aspires to have with the philosophical past. On the other hand, it is easy to fall into an unfounded optimism regarding Deleuzogauttarian radical claims on ethics and to treat the latter as some self-evidently effective and legitimate tool in producing intellectual, artistic, and sociopolitical novelty. The most radical and effective analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's system shows the necessary entanglement of their metaphysics and ethics. That entanglement offers a strong footing for their radical ethical claims and guarantees that one can maintain sight of their metaphysics' innovative aspirations and intentions. That is what I will demonstrate in the fourth and last chapter of the current thesis to provide a strong link between the metaphysical notion of intensity and its passage to zero with the ethical notion of becoming minor.

As is well-known, Deleuze describes his method in his long and erudite engagement with the history of philosophy (with thinkers he thought of as constituting an alternative subterranean genealogy such as Hume, Spinoza, and Nietzsche but also those he thought as his opponents such as Kant) as a legitimate misreading. His way is giving to each of the philosophers he read a monstrous child that would nevertheless be irrefutably theirs; it would thus involve a high level of faithfulness to the original text, all the while distorting or

"Deleuze, Kant, and the Question of Metacritique," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 42, no. 4 (December 2004): 481–508. Christian Kerslake,, "The Vertigo of Philosophy", *Radical Philosophy* 113 (2002) 10-28, Diane Beddoes, "Deleuze, Kant, and Indifference", in K. Ansell Pearson (ed.), *Deleuze and Philosophy: the Difference Engineer*, London: Routledge 1997, 25-43. Hughes for example reads Deleuze's philosophy providing a reconfiguration of Kant's. Joe Hughes, *Philosophy after Deleuze*, Deleuze Encounters (New York: Continuum, 2012), 1.

⁵³ The problem is lucidly put by Levi Bryant who points out the problem of failing to prove the necessity of Deleuze and Guattari's radical ethics. See Levi R. Bryant, *Difference and Givenness: Deleuze's Transcendental Empiricism and the Ontology of Immanence*, Topics in Historical Philosophy (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 2008), 4-5.

transforming it.⁵⁴ That methodological proposition will be followed in the current dissertation primarily in reference to the relationship between the intensive and the virtual but also that of the in-itself of difference and the principle of the externality of relations. To fulfill the condition of faithfulness, the texts I primarily engage with are generally considered of foundational significance for Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy. Deleuze's early works *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*, as well as those of eminent significance for the concept of affect, namely *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* and *Spinoza Practical Philosophy* as well as *Bergsonism* constitute primary references to which I am returning to throughout the text. Moreover, Deleuze and Guattari's basic collaborative works, *Anti-Oedipus*, *A Thousand Plateaus*, and *What is Philosophy?* will be combined with the above, mutually illuminating and being illuminated by them.

7. Outline of Chapters

Unlike Deleuze's comments about the complicity of repression and sad affects in the diminution of the power of individuals,⁵⁵ which reflect the political paradigm of his own time, the current dominant mechanisms of subjectivation also profit from the management of positive affects with the caveat of their being circumscribed by the axiomatic of the capital.

In the first chapter of the dissertation, I outline affect in the context of Spinozian metaphysics and the former's ubiquitous role in the latter. For Spinoza, everything that exists is an affection of substance, which creates the problem of explaining and bridging the gap between the two temporalities, on the one side the eternity of substance and on the other the finite temporality of its affections or else modes. There exist two types of affections, the first being the modes or individuated entities, the beings, and objects of sensible reality, and on the other being the affections of these entities, which follow from their interactions or else encounters in Spinozian terms, the chance relations in which they find themselves and which result in either destruction or empowerment depending on whether the constitutive (internal) relations (the relations of motion and rest between their parts or else their structure) of these entities agree or disagree. From this metaphysics, and its emphasis on the common element of all entities being substance or God stems an ethics of common empowerment and a politics of the structures which enhance and ensure that empowerment.

⁵⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972 - 1990* (New York Chichester: Columbia Univ. Press, 1995), 6.

⁵⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, Rev. ed, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 61.

In the second chapter, the lengthiest chapter of the dissertation, I attempt an analysis of Deleuze's metaphysics of intensity. In Deleuze's reading of Spinoza, affect is understood as a variation of intensity or power that is reconfigured as eternally differentiating rather than eternal. Continuing Spinoza's anti-teleological project of radical immanence, this differentiation for Deleuze has no fixed aim. However, intensity is the concept Deleuze famously substitutes for Spinozian substance and positions as the creative power underlying new conceptions of relationality, time, and thus affect. The use of the concept of intensity to introduce time into the Spinozian scheme is informed by Bergson's influence on Deleuze and the importance of virtual duration in animating matter and reconfiguring the supposed finitude of matter in terms of duration as a simply unreachable limit. Moreover, intensity is the crucial concept that differentiates Deleuze's account of dynamism from Bergsonian duration and distances the former from the humanist aspects of the latter. Intensity, as the productive limit of both sensibility and ideas, is the realm of disjunctive synthesis, where the coexistence of impossible states produces novelty. The primary function of intensity is the individuation of virtual problematic structures and ideas into actual extensive entities, which nevertheless never exhaust intensity's dynamism as they explicate it. Intensity is the resonance across heterogeneous series in time, a process that connects difference to difference through a paradoxical object whose main characteristic is to be missing from its place. Affect will thereafter be understood and analyzed as the singular expression of this disjunctive synthetic function.

The third chapter deals with the conception of aesthetics in Deleuze and Guattari and the radical entanglement of aesthetics and metaphysics in light of Deleuze's radical revision of Kantian faculties and their harmonious accord in the recognition and constitution of objects. Following the path Kant himself opened in his critique of the power of judgment, with the exposition of the function of the sublime, Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* and *Kant's Critical Philosophy* conceptualizes a discordant accord of the faculties existing at the limit of every common-sense harmonious accord of them under the interests of either knowledge, ethics or aesthetics. This discordant accord then becomes, for Deleuze, the very precondition of the production of sensation in its continuous function as the creation of the sensible reality around us and the creation of works of art. Ideas are then understood in continuity with sensible reality in their internal difference with the latter, unlike the external difference between the two that Kant conceptualized. Ideas and sensibility are each other's passage to the limit, converging in an ever-receding limit point of intensity. In their collaborative work, *What is Philosophy?*

Deleuze and Guattari expand on this account of sensibility as a creative process proceeding through passages to the limit. Works of art reveal to us the transcendently empirical conditions that create sensibility, or what Deleuze and Guattari name the being of the sensible. Art and sensible reality exist in a continuum as part of the same process of production of nature understood as creative rather than mechanistic. By virtue of this continuity with sensibility, art is a realm of creating non-human affects that reveal human sensibility's genetic conditions and push that sensibility to its limits.

In the fourth chapter, I analyze the relationship of the syntheses of time in Deleuze's early work to the syntheses of desire in the later work with Guattari and consider the variations and differences between the two phases. After having established a solid connection between the two phases of the work and the possibility of using concepts from both periods in combination, I analyze affect as a process occurring in all of these syntheses yet being conditioned by the synthesis of disjunction, the event or becoming, that is pure difference. Subsequently, I attempt to think together the significance of two concepts that concern affect and intensity that at first sight appear to be in tension: on the one hand, the characteristic of pure difference or intensity and hence affect being a thing in itself; and, on the other hand, the Humean principle of the externality of relations that Deleuze and Guattari implement in their metaphysics and ethics of experimentation according to which affect concerns the power of externality of encounters. I argue that the two principles, rather than antithetical depend on each other. Subsequently, I expose affect as the entanglement of the time of the Event and that of habit and how, despite the former becoming necessarily explicated in the latter, it nevertheless always subsists and conditions it. Affect is pure difference before it becomes consolidated in habitual affective patterns.

In the fifth chapter, I finally try to create a solid and necessary connection between intensity understood in the method of transcendental empiricism as a continuous variation in relation to a zero point or limit which conditions it and the concept of becoming minor as the 'rule' of desiring-production, and as itself a passage to a limit of the current unitary universal model of subjectivity. To affect and be affected then, or else to become, is to pass to the preconditions from which one arises to affirm the dynamism that guarantees this emergence. Additionally, I link the ethics of becoming minor with the debate around the ethical value of joy, trying to dismantle the latter and instead arguing for the transformative value of pain to create novelty. Finally, I reinforce the underlying hypothesis of the current dissertation that affect primarily refers to a pre-individual dynamism and clearly distinguish that from a

hypothesis of affect being tied to ambivalence. To do so, I revisit the concept of the impassibility of the event and analyze its productive function and distinguish it from an empirical understanding of impassibility or immobility.

While Spinoza's affect is mainly a relational affect located firstly between eternal substance and its finite expression and between already individuated bodies or modes, Deleuze understands affect as a phenomenon of intensity in itself, that is, a process of dynamism and individuation or novelty, that it is philosophy's task to grasp beyond the appearance of common-sense extensive sensible things. Thanks to the contribution of Guattari, Deleuze is ready to open again that in itself, or else his initially relatively closed system, to understand dynamism as itself a process happening relationally between parts of open systems eternally decentered, reaching only provisional equilibriums conditioned by a radically unfounded moment, disjointed time, intensity, pure difference.

Chapter 1. The concept of affect, according to Baruch Spinoza

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 - b. Attributes of Substance
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1. Introduction

In the following chapter, I analyze the philosophical concept of affect according to Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677). As will become evident, affect is a concept whose metaphysical and ethical significance are disentangled. I will first briefly outline his metaphysics before continuing to the ethics. Exploring some nodal points of debate in the former will allow for a deeper understanding of the latter. Spinoza, along with René Descartes (1596-1650) and Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716), is considered to belong to the tradition of rationalist philosophers roughly united by the idea that reason and intellect constitute solid foundations and tools for revealing the true nature of reality. Nevertheless, Spinoza's philosophy is far more radical and unconventional than the representative of this philosophical current, which was historically predominant, namely, Descartes. Therefore, Spinoza's identification with this category does not exist without some dispute.⁵⁶ At the time of Spinoza's birth, Descartes had already written some

⁵⁶ For example, Curley, emphasizing the underplayed role of experience in Spinoza's philosophy, argues against his classification along with the rationalists. See Edwin Curley, "Experience in Spinoza's Theory of Knowledge," in Marjorie Grene, ed., *Spinoza: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Modern Studies in Philosophy (Notre Dame, Ind: Univ. of Notre Dame Pr, 1979), 26. Moreover, Moreau shows that the significance of experience in Spinoza does not mean a "defeat of Reason." Instead he demonstrates that the geometrical and

of his major works arguing that the human mind could provide a solid ground for disclosing the true nature of reality. Descartes exerted a decisive influence on Spinoza, whose philosophy was formed, to a large extent, by his readings and critique of Descartes' theses.⁵⁷ Indeed, Descartes' theses on substance, God, the relation of body and mind, and the significance of free will in the formation of human decisions were going to be significant points of debate between him and his follower. Specifically, Spinoza opposed the thesis on mind and body as separate substances and the assertion of the power of the former over the latter through the faculty of thought, a faculty that, for Descartes, could ascertain the fundamental nature of human beings, according to his famous thesis "Cogito ergo sum."

2. Spinoza's Metaphysical System

a. Single Substance-God-Nature

The innovation of Spinoza's philosophy and his response to Descartes' dualism was his conception of all that exists as a single infinite and absolute substance and the identification of this substance with God and Nature. This idea, expressed in his seminal monograph, *The Ethics*,⁵⁸ written between 1661 and 1675 and published posthumously, was completely radical - and gave him the reputation of being a subversive thinker for his time - because it meant that God was not the transcendent entity that both Christian and Judaist traditions imagined and believed but instead, an immanent entity coinciding with the world.

The line of argumentation Spinoza used to found his basic thesis consists of a strict logical method⁵⁹ and involves several types of argument for the *reductio ad absurdum*. One of his main arguments was that since there cannot be two different substances that share the same attribute – otherwise, they would not be different –⁶⁰ and since God possesses all possible attributes,⁶¹ as follows from his infinity, there can be no substance other than God.⁶² One could explain in simpler words the above logical argument as follows: God cannot be said to be metaphysically distinct from his creation since this would mean that there is a realm external to God that firstly limits his existence and secondly, opens the possibility of judging God as

empirical method in Spinoza complement each other. Pierre-François Moreau, *Spinoza, l'expérience et l'éternité*, 1. éd, Epiméthée (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1994), V-VI.

⁵⁷ Stuart Hampshire, *Spinoza* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), 54.

⁵⁸ Spinoza and Curley, *A Spinoza Reader*.

⁵⁹ Hampshire, *Spinoza*, 32.

⁶⁰ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 5.

⁶¹ *Ethics*, Part 1, Definition 6.

⁶² *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 14.

successful or not, in his(*sic*) creation.⁶³ However, both of the above claims involve contradictions in terms since God is by definition infinite, therefore not able to be limited by nothing, and perfect, namely, not able to be thought of as successful or unsuccessful.⁶⁴ Otherwise said, there can be nothing outside God because this would mean that God lacks something, which would be absurd given God's perfection. Therefore, God cannot be logically distinct from the world.

Following this rigorous logical argumentation, Spinoza concludes with the idea that there is only one infinite and eternal substance, that coincides with God and Nature, comprising all that there is and that the singular finite beings of sensible reality are modifications of this infinite substance. Substance is the cause of itself and exists necessarily.⁶⁵ This means that that substance cannot but exist. Existence is inherent in its nature. It also means that its existence is not dependent upon anything except itself and that it has properties without being the property of anything else.⁶⁶ Moreover, since they coincide with God, substance and Nature are eternal⁶⁷ and cannot be limited by anything in either space or in time.

The idea of the identification of God with Nature was deeply radical in Spinoza's time and is still counterintuitive today because we have been accustomed to a long religious tradition affirming the notion of God's perfection and the world's imperfection, and therefore the idea of a clear distinction between the two. However, the idea of their identity follows from Spinoza's strict geometrical method.⁶⁸ As Hampshire puts it, it is mere common sense, based on imagination, that makes us imagine God as an anthropomorphic singular being and prevents us from grasping this logical reality.⁶⁹ This basic metaphysical thesis is the reason why Spinoza is considered a philosopher of *immanence*. God is not the transitional or transcendent cause of natural things, creating them and being distinguished by them thereafter, but is the immanent cause of Nature⁷⁰ eternally coexisting with it. God is not an external entity deciding the fate of reality. Creator and Creation cannot be distinguished.⁷¹ These ideas led Spinoza's

⁶³ Hampshire, 33.

⁶⁴ 33-4.

⁶⁵ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 11.

⁶⁶ Michael DellaRocca, *Spinoza* (London: Routledge, 2008), 42.

⁶⁷ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 7 & Proposition 8, Scholium 2.

⁶⁸ This method, according to Hampshire and other scholars, actually leads to the logical conclusions that Descartes own theses would lead him if he were not prevented by his conventional Christian faith from following them to their end, Hampshire, *Spinoza*, 19.

⁶⁹ Hampshire, *Spinoza*, 32.

⁷⁰ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 18.

⁷¹ Hampshire, 34.

contemporaries and scholars, up to now, to be divided between considering him to be either an atheist or a pantheist, and also led to his excommunication from the Jewish community of Amsterdam in 1656.

To better understand the idea of the immanence of God in Nature and the related concept of inherence that we will meet later, it is necessary to consider that Spinoza forcefully debunks the commonsense idea of teleology, namely the belief that things strive towards ends. The most common expression of this belief, supported by theology, is the idea that God created the world intending to serve humans – and, inversely, that the ethical aim of humanity is to move from the imperfection of earthly existence towards God’s perfection. However, according to Spinoza’s philosophy, God does not direct itself towards any aim or end at all,⁷² and exists by the sole necessity of its nature. The same is true of all beings. Stating that “[b]y reality and perfection I understand the same thing,”⁷³ Spinoza shows that the world is perfect as it is and does not aim at deification since God already inheres in the world. Moreover, he shows that things are not -more or less- perfect regarding their effects upon humans but by virtue of their nature and power.⁷⁴ Indeed, as we will explain shortly, for Spinoza, perfection means power. God/Nature is perfect due to its infinite capacity to exist and to produce.

b. Attributes of Substance

Following his thesis on substance monism,⁷⁵ Spinoza states that the one and only substance has infinite properties or infinite ways or aspects through which one can perceive its essence, therefore, infinite *attributes*. Two of these, he contends, are known by humans: Thought and Extension. As he posits in his definition, an attribute is “that which the mind perceives in substance as constituting its essence”⁷⁶ and is “perceived through itself alone.”⁷⁷ This means that substance cannot be perceived, except through its attributes, and cannot be

⁷² If God was directed towards an end it would mean that God wants something that he(sic) lacks, which is absurd by definition. *Ethics*, Part 1, Appendix.

⁷³ *Ethics*, Part 2, Definition 6.

⁷⁴ *Ethics*, Part 1, Appendix.

⁷⁵ Following the idea of one infinite substance, Spinoza’s philosophy is typically considered monistic. See for example Vasilikē Grēgoropoulou, *Gnōsē, pathē kai politikē stē philosophia tou Spinoza* (Athēna: Alexandreia, 1999), 45. I will be using this mainstream category for purposes of convenience. Nevertheless, it is crucial to notice that, according to Pierre Macherey, monism is not an accurate characterization of Spinozist metaphysics since neither one nor any other number pertains to Spinozist substance. Since substance is absolute, it, therefore, exists beyond denumeration. See Pierre Macherey, “The Problem of the Attributes” in Warren Montag and Ted Stolze, eds., *The New Spinoza*, Theory out of Bounds 11 (Minneapolis London: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 64-94, 87.

⁷⁶ *Ethics*, Part 1, Definition 4.

⁷⁷ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 10.

distinguished from them. Therefore, the attributes, like substance, are metaphysically self-sufficient since they do not require anything other than themselves to be conceived, and they are themselves eternal.⁷⁸ Contrary to Descartes' basic thesis, in Spinoza's system, thought and extension, and consequently, ideas and matter, and mind and body (as we will see in greater detail), constitute one and the same substance. Thought and extension are the two different aspects under which the infinite substance and each being come to be perceived.⁷⁹

There are many crucial and interconnected consequences of Spinoza's thesis on thought and extension as two aspects of one substance, some of which we will analyze in the course of this chapter. It will suffice here to mention the main ones briefly. The first consequence is that extended things and immaterial ideas constitute two realms that co-exist on a horizontal level, and neither of them is metaphysically prior nor defines the other one. Extension and matter, on the one hand, and thought and ideas, on the other, are two different but not hierarchically ordered ways through which we perceive substance. Taken to the realm of humans, this means that the mind is not prior to and has no special capacity to order and define the body. Specifically, Spinoza posits that the soul is an idea of the body.⁸⁰ Hence, we encounter the refutation of the basic Cartesian thesis of the cogito as the determining faculty of human beings and its domination over bodily movement. Ideas and body are two equally important aspects of one and the same being.

Following the above, the unity of thought and extension means that "the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things."⁸¹ This has led to the widespread interpretation that assumes that in Spinoza's philosophy, there is a *parallelism* between the order of things and that of ideas. However, the word parallel never appears in his writings. As Sharp has noted, the idea of parallelism misleadingly implies that the realm of extension and matter and that of thought and ideas depend upon one another and, in a way, express one another.⁸² In contrast, according to Spinoza, they both express the same order of causes. Matter and ideas do not express each other. Instead, they both express one and the same thing: that is, substance.

⁷⁸ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 19.

⁷⁹ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 9.

⁸⁰ *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 13 and Proposition 21, Scholium.

⁸¹ *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 7.

⁸² Hasana Sharp, *Spinoza and the Politics of Renaturalization* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 28.

Additionally, monism entails that to everything that exists in extension, there corresponds an immaterial idea that is a modification of the infinite substance understood under the attribute of thought. Hence, any extended thing, such as a stone, has a corresponding idea that is a modification of substance perceived under the attribute of thought or, else, a modification of the infinite intellect of God. The existence of this idea is independent of any mind or consciousness that is supposed to perceive it, foreclosing the affinity of Spinozian metaphysics with that of phenomenology. The idea of a thing is not caused by the extended thing of which it is an idea, but all ideas exist in and have as their cause the infinite intellect of God.⁸³ Hence, there is no gap between a thing and the idea of a thing since they both express the same entity, a specific modification of substance. Consequently, there is no gap between the idea of a thing and the perception of it. To think of a stone is not to represent the essence of the stone as it is in reality but to grasp an idea that partakes of the infinite order of God's intellect, of which the idea of the stone is only a mode or an expression. In short, ideas do not exist in reference to the mind that perceives them, nor by virtue of the object they represent, but independently and *in synchronicity* with their corresponding bodies.

The problem with substance monism is that commonsense beliefs make it difficult to think of God -insofar as he constitutes the only substance- as an extended entity. The main criticism from Spinoza's critics was that if God is extended, then, like matter itself, he (*sic*) would be divisible and, therefore, would be subject to disappearance. However, according to Spinoza, neither God nor matter is divisible⁸⁴ on a logical, metaphysical level but only in a way that pertains to the imagination. The example of water that Spinoza uses explains how the one and only substance is extended without, nevertheless, being divisible in parts, in which case its unity and infinity would be threatened. While water changes nature, it cannot, for that, be said to be constituted of different parts. Perceived through the intellect rather than through imagination, water can be conceived as a unified matter that acquires different forms. The same is true of all matter, namely of the infinite substance as conceived through the attribute of extension. Matter is not divisible, really, but only modally,⁸⁵ as we will see in more detail shortly.

There has been a lengthy discussion regarding the nature of the relation between substance and attributes and what Spinoza means when he talks of the infinite attributes, apart

⁸³ *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 5.

⁸⁴ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 13.

⁸⁵ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 15, Scholium.

from Thought and Extension, that substance consists of.⁸⁶ Whereas examining this discussion in detail exceeds the scope of the current chapter, it is worth referring to it briefly. Doing so will put us in a better position to understand the relation of affect to the substance in the remaining part of the chapter as well as Deleuze's reinterpretation of Spinoza in the following chapters. Attributes as a mediation between substance eternity and modes' finitude play a crucial role in the latter's reading.

Firstly, there are scholars who believe that we perceive only two attributes of reality because there are actually only two,⁸⁷ while others, insisting on a strict reading of Spinoza's proposition, assert that there are indeed infinite attributes.⁸⁸ This latter reading might be opening the way for the supposition that the world inescapably transcends human understanding, leading to the supposition of the existence of the thing in itself, such as that conceived by Kant. Since there are infinite attributes and we perceive only two, we have a limited understanding of the world as it is, and our understanding is strictly subjective. Indeed, some scholars claim that the attributes are subjective ways of perceiving reality based on the definition of the attribute as that which the intellect perceives as the essence of the substance.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, this latter idea seems unlikely, given that Spinoza was interested in the actual connection of causes as it is in reality and not in a phenomenological perception of reality as dictated by human capacities and limitations. Viljanen points out that we perceive attributes as constituting the essence of substance simply because "those attributes really do constitute the essence of a substance."⁹⁰ Similarly, according to Moreau, attributes are not simple "points of view" but are what constitutes the substance really.⁹¹ Finally, as Macherey points out, even if one accepts that attributes are infinite, this need not impose limits to the human knowledge of substance, since the attributes, as ways to perceive the latter, all disclose one-and-the-same

⁸⁶ See for example the article of A. Wolf, "Spinoza's Conception of the Attributes of Substance," in *Studies in Spinoza: Critical and Interpretive Essays*, 1974, 16–27. *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 9 and Proposition 10, Demonstration.

⁸⁷ For example see Jonathan Bennett, "Spinoza's Metaphysics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza*, ed. Don Garrett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 61–88, 65.

⁸⁸ *Ethics*, Part 1, Definition 6. For example Yitzhak Melamed, "'A Substance Consisting of an Infinity of Attributes': Spinoza on the Infinity of Attributes," in *Infinity in Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Ohad Nachtomy and Reed Winegar (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 63–75.

⁸⁹ For example Harry Austryn Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1934), 142–157.

⁹⁰ Valteri Viljanen, "Spinoza's Ontology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza's Ethics*, ed. Olli Koistinen (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 56–78, 65.

⁹¹ Pierre-François Moreau, *Spinoza et le Spinozisme*, 3. ed., 2. tirage, Que sais-je? (Paris: Presses Univ. de France, 2010), 72.

order of causes expressing substance, which is strictly singular.⁹² Therefore, by perceiving the order of causes even through one sole attribute -for example, in the case of extension, the causal order of bodies- we are able to grasp the one and only singular causal order that organizes the whole substance/Nature.⁹³

c. Modes of Substance

To complete the general sketch of Spinoza's metaphysics and pass to the main topic of this chapter, namely the notion of affective influence or affect, we have to turn to the modifications or modes of substance. This notion is crucial for the subject matter of the present chapter since affects not only are *caused* by modifications of substance but *are* themselves modifications of that substance. Spinoza defines a mode as that which does not exist in itself but "is in something other" than itself.⁹⁴ Modes are "in God,"⁹⁵ namely, their existence is not given in their own nature, but depends upon the infinite substance/God/Nature. Substance, which exists necessarily, is the cause of the modes, that is, everything that exists in the world.⁹⁶ Conversely, modes exist because of substance and they *express* substance/God/Nature insofar as it is affected by something.⁹⁷ The infinite substance's *attributes* are *modified* in infinite ways, resulting in the infinity of modes. Spinoza denotes the distinction between the metaphysical status of substance and its modes by making use of the terms *Natura Naturans* and *Natura Naturata*. The first, which coincides with God and substance, is nature insofar as it creates itself, and the second, which is identical to the modes, is nature insofar as it is created.⁹⁸

Natural order and causality

Since substance, God, and Nature are one and the same thing, it follows that God's infinite power coincides with the natural order of things. This means that the laws that define natural order are God's own laws, namely, laws of which God is both the creator and is bound

⁹² Pierre Macherey, "The Problem of the Attributes," in *The New Spinoza*, ed. Warren Montag and Ted Stolze (Minneapolis London: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 64–94, 89.

⁹³ *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 7, Scholium.

⁹⁴ *Ethics*, Part 1, Definition 5.

⁹⁵ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 15.

⁹⁶ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 25.

⁹⁷ This something is of course, always internal to substance, since there is nothing outside or independent from it, it always another mode that depends upon substance, as we will see shortly. Deleuze stresses the idea of expression as the core of the relation of substance to modes in his dissertation on Spinoza. Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1990). That interpretation and the concept of expression will be the topic of the following chapters.

⁹⁸ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 29, Scholium.

by. Consequently, God does not act out of free will,⁹⁹ as anthropomorphic views of him (*sic*) and classic theology have it, and does not have the power to arbitrarily change the natural order of things for any alleged reason.¹⁰⁰ God is *coextensive* with natural laws. Thus modes, deriving from substance/God/Nature, are parts of the causal relations that follow from this order. Consequently, modes are linked to each other through relations of cause and effect, and hence, each mode always results from another mode, which, in turn, is the result of another and so on, to infinity.¹⁰¹ From this ‘fate,’ nothing is excluded. People are modes of substance, just like animals and stones, and they follow natural causality along with every other thing. The above ideas have led to the interpretation of Spinoza as a determinist denying human agency outside natural laws. Nevertheless, this view is not justified by the text, as we will analyze shortly.

Conatus

According to Spinoza, modes obey the fundamental natural law that everything strives to persevere in its existence according to its degree of power.¹⁰² This law is usually referred to as *conatus*, the original Latin word Spinoza uses, which literally means striving. To underline this point, Spinoza posits that nothing in nature can be destroyed except by an external cause.¹⁰³ This is because modes are variations of the infinite power of substance to exist eternally. As variations of substance, they share the substance’s essence, which is the power and the tendency to exist indefinitely. The power with which each mode strives to persevere is the *essence* of this mode.¹⁰⁴ To use the words of Goudeli, “the essence of the modes consists in degrees of intensity of the infinite power of God.”¹⁰⁵ The power to persevere is unique to each mode and is what distinguishes the plurality of modes from each other. Moreover, each mode’s capacity to persevere varies constantly according to its interactions with other modes, its affects, as we will analyze shortly. Spinoza’s individuals – modes - are solely distinguished from one another by a degree of power and by the affective capacity corresponding to such

⁹⁹ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 32, Corollary 1.

¹⁰⁰ Neither praise nor punishment can justify God’s arbitrary intervention in the natural order as is supposed in the theological idea that God becomes either angry or gratified by humans’ behavior and acts upon the world accordingly.

¹⁰¹ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 28.

¹⁰² *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 6.

¹⁰³ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 4.

¹⁰⁴ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 7.

¹⁰⁵ Kakia Goudeli, *Eisagogē Stē Philosophia Tou Spinoza* (Kallipos, 2015), 47.

power.¹⁰⁶ The affective capacity of each mode denotes the maximum and the minimum limit of the degree of power or the essence of this mode.¹⁰⁷

Infinite and finite modes

While substance exists necessarily and eternally, being the cause of itself, modes are derivative of substance. They may be either eternal -like motion- or finite -like a person or a tree. As elemental *infinite modifications* of the attribute of *extension*, Spinoza mentions motion and rest,¹⁰⁸ and as *infinite modification* of the attribute of *thought*, he mentions infinite understanding. *Finite modes of extension* are, for example, bodies, which are always subject to death, and *finite modes of thought* are individual minds, even though minds and their components, that is, ideas, involve an aspect of eternity.¹⁰⁹ According to Spinoza, finite things or modes cannot be the immediate result of God's absolute and eternal nature but are the result of the attributes of God, insofar as they are themselves modified by some other finite mode.¹¹⁰ Likewise, this is the case for infinite modes.¹¹¹ Finite modes result from other finite modes and infinite modes result from other infinite modes, and so on to infinity. Furthermore, for the infinite modes, some derive directly from substance and some indirectly, following from the ones that derive directly.¹¹² However, from the exposition of the ways in which substance is modified, a crucial problem arises: How is the infinite substance (initially) modified by finite things? That is, how does the passage from infinity to finitude happen, and what is the relation between the two? The possible answers to those questions will determine the metaphysical significance of affects.

There are many different views on the problem of the identification of the infinite and eternal substance with finite things/modes and the exact nature of their relation. The difficulty of interpreting Spinoza's idea on this, strictly and unequivocally, lies in the broadness of his definition when he states that "everything is *in* God, nothing can be or be conceived without

¹⁰⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988), 27.

¹⁰⁷ See page 20 of the current chapter.

¹⁰⁸ In the light of contemporary physics, one could understand that pair of terms as energy. See Stuart Hampshire, *Spinoza* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), 54.

¹⁰⁹ *Ethics*, Part 5, Propositions 22, 23. This is explained by the fact that the mind is capable of understanding things in the light of the eternal order of God. *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 44, Corollary 2. Moreover, the mind is all the more eternal the more it is active *Ethics*, Part 5, Proposition 39.

¹¹⁰ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 28, Demonstration.

¹¹¹ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 23, Demonstration.

¹¹² *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 23, Demonstration. The modes that derive directly from the substance are usually referred to in scholarship as immediate infinite modes, and the ones that derive through the mediation of the latter are called mediate infinite modes.

God.”¹¹³ What does “being in” actually mean? The discussion is greatly extended, and since it exceeds the scope of the current chapter, it will suffice to present some basic approaches and assess their plausibility. For example, Spinozian scholar Edwin Curley contends that whereas the eternal substance is causally linked to finite things and natural beings, it is thereafter distinguished and does not coincide with them. Specifically, Curley contends that God coincides with *Natura Naturans* and not *Natura Naturata*; therefore, God coincides with the principles and natural laws governing nature rather than the actual extended things.¹¹⁴ Other scholars, like Della Rocca¹¹⁵ and Nadler, deconstruct this thesis. Nadler shows that this view is not consistent with the idea of immanent causality¹¹⁶ and supports the idea that, in Spinoza’s account, infinite substance *inheres* in all that exists and is, therefore, identical to both *Natura Naturans* and *Natura Naturata*.¹¹⁷ However, how are we to understand the ideas of immanent causality and inherence?

Immanence, as stated previously, is contrary to the commonsense prejudice of teleology and consists of the idea that things are ends in themselves.¹¹⁸ This means that a thing -in our case, a mode- cannot be defined through an external referent, which is the aim to which the former is allegedly directed. Thus, more generally, a thing cannot be defined externally but only through a point of view internal to the defined thing. An immanent cause is one that does not direct itself to an effect outside itself. Reversely, the immanent cause is not external to the result. Since substance is the immanent cause of the modes,¹¹⁹ it follows God/substance coincides with the modes immanently and is part of them. As Montag puts this, an immanent cause is “a cause present only in its effects.”¹²⁰ Modes depend on the substance to exist, yet this dependence does not distinguish the two parts of the relation as external to one other.¹²¹ From immanence follows inherence. To be the immanent cause of something is to exist inside

¹¹³ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 15.

¹¹⁴ E. M. Curley, *Spinoza’s Metaphysics: An Essay in Interpretation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969). See also Alex Guilherme, “Spinoza’s Substance: A Reply to Curley,” *Conatus* 3, no. 2 (2008).

¹¹⁵ Michael DellaRocca, *Spinoza*, repr, Routledge Philosophers (London: Routledge, 2008), 58-69.

¹¹⁶ “God is the immanent, not the transitive cause of all things” *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 18.

¹¹⁷ Steven Nadler, “Whatever Is, Is in God: Substance and Things in Spinoza’s Metaphysics,” in *Interpreting Spinoza: Critical Essays*, ed. Charles Huenemann, n.d., 53–70.

¹¹⁸ When Spinoza mentions that “by perfection, I mean reality,” he shows that perseverance in being is the only “aim” to which Nature and its modes are directed and the only principle that guides their existence. Spinoza refers to teleology as a simple yet persistent prejudice based on the fact that people are aware of their striving toward what is good for them but are unaware of the causes that define them to seek this or that thing. These causes, as already hopefully made clear, are to be found in the infinite natural order, and substance/God is their ultimate “explanation.”

¹¹⁹ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 18.

¹²⁰ Warren Montag “Preface” in Warren Montag and Ted Stolze, eds., *The New Spinoza*, viii-xix, xv, xvi.

¹²¹ Nadler.

or inhere in it. Modes, from human beings to inorganic entities, already involve substance/God/Nature and the latter inheres in them.

Some examples illustrate this relation of the mutual interdependence of substance and modes. As Lord points out, finite modes are like waves that torment the ocean's surface, have a specific duration, and then return to the ocean. Their existence is singular and changeable, but their appearance is due to the ocean that creates them and which is constant.¹²² The two, however, are indistinguishable. Finite modes depend on substance, like waves depend on the ocean. Nevertheless, the reverse is also true. In terms of physics, we could understand the relation of inherence between substance and modes, *Natura Naturans* and *Natura Naturata*, as one between the physical laws that organize reality and the extended-material things that function according to these laws. *Natura Naturans* (infinite substance) cannot exist independently of its actualization in *Natura Naturata* (finite modes, things)¹²³ in the same way that gravity cannot exist independently of planetary material bodies. Finally, as Spinoza points out, the whole of Nature could be likened to an individual whose parts have to be constantly renewed, yet this does not change the nature of the individual.¹²⁴

Modes are caused by substance, but, as Hallett explains, causation, in Spinoza's system, should be understood as an action, an activity of power. Caused by substance, modes, in order to exist, are actualizing the former's infinite power to the degree they can. In other words, finite things cannot exist except by deriving their power from the infinite power of substance, which is absolute and exists necessarily. The power of substance, therefore, is *potency*, while the power of the modes consists in its actualization. If causation is understood as an act, substance, the ultimate cause of everything that exists, is acting. As Hallett puts it: "Substance [...] is not a 'thing' but [...] agency,"¹²⁵ action itself. In this view, infinite agency is actualized/actualizing itself eternally; in finite things, it is enacted in them; it inheres in them but is not entirely and absolutely identified with them. The Deleuzian interpretation offers an additional way of resolving the paradox of the relation between the absolute infinity of the single substance and the finite multiplicity of the modes. By proposing identity as solely a moment of a primary differentiation process, it offers an understanding of modes as singular intensities in which

¹²² Beth Lord, *Spinoza's Ethics: An Edinburgh Philosophical Guide*, Edinburgh Philosophical Guides Series (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 60-61.

¹²³ "[...] *Natura Naturans* [...] necessarily actualizes itself in *Natura Naturata*". H. F. Hallett, "Substance and Its Modes," in *Spinoza: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Marjorie Grene (Notre Dame, Ind: Univ. of Notre Dame Pr, 1979), 131-63, 149.

¹²⁴ *Ethics*, Part 2, Lemma 7, Scholium.

¹²⁵ H. F. Hallett, "Substance and Its Modes", 135.

substance *different/ciates* itself.¹²⁶ By definition, modes depend upon substance, whereas substance depends solely on itself. At the same time, however, the substance is nothing without the modes; it “must only be said of the modes.”¹²⁷ This scheme, Deleuze proposes, affirming and advancing Spinoza’s metaphysics, can only be consistent once we replace being with becoming and identity with difference.¹²⁸ It is through differentiation that the single (substance) can be said to coincide with the multiple (modes) and the eternal and unchanging with the finite and changing. That reversal and its repercussions will be the subject matter of the following chapter of this thesis.

As mentioned, by perceiving everything, including humans, as modes of nature and, therefore, as subject to natural laws, Spinoza might appear to be a hard determinist. One might interpret his philosophy as affirming that the universe follows a predetermined course independent of any agential power of humans or any other entity except natural laws. Indeed, he gives us reasons to believe this since, in his words, “all things have been determined from the necessity of the divine nature [to exist and to produce an effect in a certain way]”¹²⁹ and “things could not have been produced [by God] in any other way [...] than they have been produced.”¹³⁰ However, as we will see shortly, the determinist interpretation of Spinoza is only one option.¹³¹ While Spinoza undoubtedly denies the commonsense idea of free will as an illusion,¹³² he nevertheless conceptualizes the ideas of agency and freedom differently from what we have been accustomed to, binding them to necessity and linking them to the capacities to understand and to affect and be affected. Moreover, if the substance is itself an agency, then the necessity of its laws can be considered the result of an action.

3. Affects and affections

a. Affects and affections as modes of substance

¹²⁶ In Deleuze’s philosophy, difference is a unilateral differentiation. It is the process by which something differentiates itself from something else, while the latter does not differentiate itself. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 28. One could argue that this is the case of substance, that remains constant while modes are differentiating themselves from it.

¹²⁷ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 40.

¹²⁸ Deleuze.

¹²⁹ *Ethics*, Part 1, Appendix and Part 1, Proposition 29.

¹³⁰ *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 33.

¹³¹ Spinoza’s claims on the predetermination of the world have produced an extensive body of texts trying to reconcile determinism with the agency that the philosopher attributes to people and to reason. I will work here on the supposition that there is an internal contradiction in Spinoza’s text that may or may not be resolvable but constitutes a productive dynamic of the text.

¹³² *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 48.

Unlike the philosophers that preceded him and thought of humans as exceptions or deviations of natural laws, and passions as deviations from the true nature of humans, Spinoza conceptualizes affects as parts of the natural order which, as we saw, comprises everything and from which nothing is exempt. Following his idea of immanent causality, according to which existence constitutes an end in itself, Spinoza proposes an ethics of immersion in the existing world - the only world- and debunks any point of view that is superior or external to material reality, such as the point of view of transcendent divinity from the perspective of which affects are judged as petty and as indications of human weakness and imperfection. Spinoza hence is persuaded of the need to overcome people's common propensity to devalue and scorn affects. He underlines the necessity to study them with the same strictness with which we study geometrical "lines, planes and bodies."¹³³ That effort constitutes a large part of the *Ethics*.

As already analyzed, everything that exists in the universe is a transformation, modification or *affection* of the infinite, absolute substance, God - Nature. In addition, *finite* modes of substance exist in a state of constant *transformation* expressed both in the genesis of modes -forms and individuals- and their internal development, and additionally, in the transformations of existing modes through their interaction with other modes. Following his idea of the unity of ideas and extension, mind and body, Spinoza describes these -let us initially call them second-order- finite transformations of substance with the notions of affect and affection. Specifically, an *affect* is defined as the result of the *influence or affection of a body* by either an external or an internal cause or incentive, by which the body's power is augmented or diminished, *along with the idea of that influence*.¹³⁴ *Affection* is the effect of one body upon another. It is the cause of *affects*,¹³⁵ namely the fluctuation of the power of action of an affected body, its passage to a greater or lesser power, that is, to a greater or lesser perfection. As is the case with the ideas of extended things, the idea of an *affection* is a modification of the infinite intellect of God -or the infinite causal network that comprises ideas,-¹³⁶ but it is a composite

¹³³ *Ethics*, Part 3, Preface.

¹³⁴ *Ethics*, Part 3, Definition 3.

¹³⁵ Michael Scriven, "The *Conatus* and the Mutual Relationship between Passive and Active Affects in Spinoza" in Yirmiyahu Yovel and Jerusalem Spinoza Conference, eds., *Desire and Affect: Spinoza as Psychologist ; Papers Presented at the Third Jerusalem Conference (Ethica III), Spinoza by 2000 3* (New York, NY: Little Room Press, 1999), 63-80, 64. Also Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988), 49.

¹³⁶ As is the case with ideas of extended things, the ideas of affections may, but need not, refer to consciousness or exist in a specific mind to exist (and as we will see, does not indeed, in many cases).

idea that involves both the ideas of (the nature of) the affecting and the affected bodies.¹³⁷ *Affect*, by contrast, refers to an affected being and its passage to greater or lesser power -given the transformation that the affecting body may undergo as a consequence of the encounter. As Deleuze puts it, affect is not reducible to affection. Affection is an image, a snapshot that involves at least two bodies, while affect is a feeling, a passage happening to a body due to the meeting with an external body. It is fully transitive, and it involves the difference between two situations.¹³⁸

Consistent with the idea of modes as bound by natural laws and to further disentangle affections from the illusion of free will, Spinoza describes affects and affections as the result of the composition or disintegration between the parts of the involved bodies. Specifically, he defines bodies as abstractly as he can, as compositions of parts between which there are characteristic relations of movement and rest that remain constant, composing or decomposing themselves with other bodies, or compounds of parts, depending on the compatibility of their distinctive relations of movement and rest.¹³⁹ When the encounter between two bodies creates a composition and therefore contributes to the perseverance or enhancement of their power, these bodies are said to agree. When an encounter leads to the disintegration of the parts of the encountered bodies and diminishes their power, bodies are said to disagree.

Metaphysical status of affects

Considering the metaphysical status of affections and affects, one can argue that the latter is the same as that of humans and any other finite substance modification. While Spinoza is attentive to underlining that affects should be strictly identified with *Natura naturata*,¹⁴⁰ he never makes additional metaphysical distinctions between finite modes of substance. The provisional distinction that we made for reasons of intelligibility of affects (modifications of modification) as second-order affections/modes is not based in the original text but only on a conventional understanding of affects and emotions as the accidents that happen to humans from which they are separate and of humans as having a substance distinct from that of other things that surround them. However, as Stilianou notes, Spinoza attacked any form of

¹³⁷ *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 16. Yet the ideas we have of a body who has affected us are more indicative of the nature of our own body (than of the nature of the affecting body). *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 16, Postulate 2.

¹³⁸ Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, 49.

¹³⁹ *Ethics*, Part 2, Lemma 1.

¹⁴⁰ Spinoza clearly states that the actual intellect, like will, desire, love, and the like, must be referred to *Natura naturata*, not to *Natura naturans*. *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 31. Moreover, in this proposition, it is interesting how he shows that thinking and affects are things of the same kind, as we will discuss soon.

anthropocentrism¹⁴¹ that would justify such distinction. Following the basic thesis that “everything that is, is in God, nothing can be perceived without God,”¹⁴² humans and their affects have the same metaphysical status; namely, they are finite modes in which infinite substance/God inheres immanently. Furthermore, given that every finite modification of substance is part of the infinite network of finite modes, it follows that every mode is always already a modification of a modification, a fact that applies both to humans and their affects. That means that humans are not prior to their affections, affects, and the encounters and relations from which these derive. Considering, additionally, that a mind knows itself only through (the ideas of) its (body’s) affections,¹⁴³ one can conclude that strictly speaking (human) *beings* coincide with, or better put, *are their affects*. That thesis has significant consequences for what in contemporary political theory is called trans-individuality, as we will analyze in the course of the chapter.

b. Categorization of affects

Bound by the infinite necessity of causal relations and following their coexistence in space, extended bodies unavoidably influence one another. Bodies can therefore undergo many transformations, which may result in either a diminution or an augmentation of their power, or neither of the two¹⁴⁴ (in the latter case, we have an affection without an affect). Since the essence of every mode is its striving or power to persevere in existence,¹⁴⁵ every transformation or affect is a transformation of an organism’s *power of action (conatus)*.¹⁴⁶ Based on the above criterion, Spinoza classifies all the different types of transformations that may occur between and inside bodies. First, Spinoza distinguishes between actions and passions. Subsequently, he categorizes affects into three primary ones: joy, sadness, and desire. Between the two categorizations, there is a crossover.

Passions/actions

When a body is influenced by another external body, the former is thought to be passive. When a body is itself the cause of an influence, it is thought to act.¹⁴⁷ Hence, an affect is called

¹⁴¹ Aris Stilianou, *Gnōsē kai pathos stē neoterē philosophia* (Athēna: Polis, 2022), 124.

¹⁴² *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition 30, Demonstration.

¹⁴³ *Ethics*, Part 2, Propositions 19, 23, 30 Demonstration.

¹⁴⁴ *Ethics*, Part 3, Definition 3.

¹⁴⁵ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 7.

¹⁴⁶ This transformation does not entail that the essence of the mode changes but that the degree of power to which it corresponds fluctuates between a minimum and a maximum point. Goudeli, *Eisagogē Stē Philosophia Tou Spinoza*, 49.

¹⁴⁷ *Ethics*, Part 3, Definition 2.

a passion when something happens to or derives from an organism, of which the organism is only a partial cause. On the other hand, an affect is called an action when something happens to or derives from¹⁴⁸ an organism, of which this organism is, itself, the sole cause.¹⁴⁹

Joy/sadness

When an affect consists in the augmentation of the power of an affected body-organism, then the affect is felt as and called *joy*, and when it consists in the decrease of its power, it is deemed as and called *sadness*.¹⁵⁰

Crossover

Spinoza, early on in the *Ethics*, posits that a free individual is one “which exists from the necessity of its nature alone, and is determined to act by itself alone.”¹⁵¹ An unrestricted individual/mode is one from whose nature, actions follow, and whose power influences other bodies. Consequently, since *actions* deriving from one’s nature affirm and increase one’s power, those actions deriving from one’s self *are always necessarily joyful*.¹⁵² To the extent that actions augment our power they are always joyful and never sad.

On the other hand, passion is an affect that implicates the body but is caused by another external body, whose power exceeds the power of the first. Therefore, a passion is an affect that does not affirm the body’s power (and, for that reason, does not pertain to the freedom of the initial body). *Passions generally constitute deprivations of modes’ power* and as such could be considered sad. Nevertheless, external bodies can affect us in both empowering and disempowering ways. Passions may be either joyful or sad. Joyful passions are affects that -to the extent that they do not foreclose the body’s power totally- allow or assist the function of

¹⁴⁸ It is interesting to note that since, by definition, an affect is an effect that happens either inside or outside a body, therefore, action is not something always directed from the self - outwards to its external environment. Instead, it can also be an affect produced on the interior of the self. An action can be an internal action.

¹⁴⁹ It is important to note, nevertheless, that the text lends itself to different interpretations of this definition. Later on, towards the end of the chapter on affects, Spinoza implies an identification of affects with passions (and therefore not with actions). See *Ethics*, General Definition of Affects, Exposition. A possible understanding of this discrepancy in the text is that the philosopher tried to compensate and mingle the commonsense meaning of passions (as irrational and unworthy of logical examination) with that of affect, as a neutral term describing an observable influence between two bodies.

¹⁵⁰ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 11, Scholium.

¹⁵¹ *Ethics*, Part 1, Definition 7.

¹⁵² *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 59. Spinoza confronts the case of sad actions as they appear, for example, in the case of suicide, as a deviation from his interpretative system. He does not consider such cases as actions at all, and he contends that they always follow from the influence and domination of external bodies and parameters on the ‘acting’ body. *Ethics*, Part 4, Proposition 18, Scholium.

the *conatus*, the tendency of the power of the mode to act from its own nature. Joyful passions, to the extent that they indicate the action of greater force upon us, are, therefore, relative deprivations of power that, even so, do not foreclose activity and enhance the capacity of the affected mode to augment its force. On the other hand, sad passions tend solely towards the diminution of the power of the modes and involve ‘nothing good.’¹⁵³

From the above, there follows a scale of the basic types of affects regarding the fluctuation of a body’s power. On the high end of the scale, we have actions (that are necessarily joyful and increase the power of the body). There follow joyful passions (that denote a greater power’s action upon the organism but do not deprive it of its power and allow it to seek activity), sad actions (which are not literal actions), and sad passions (that do not contribute in the least to the empowerment and essence of the individual). Since their definition directly denotes specific power fluctuations, joy and sadness are the basis of the above categorization of affects. Joy and sadness constitute two out of three primary affects. All other negative and positive affects are variations and compositions of these two primary ones. For example, envy and anger are variations of sadness, gratitude and empathy are variations of joy, while ambivalence is the composition of joy and sadness. However, joy and sadness stem from a third primary affect.

Desire

The last of the three primary affects, from which all other affects derive, is desire.¹⁵⁴ In Spinoza’s definition, *desire is the effort* by which the body and the mind strive *to persevere in existence*, along with the consciousness of this effort. In other words, desire is appetite along with the consciousness of it,¹⁵⁵ the tendency towards (beneficial, valuable, and necessary) things, along with the idea of this tendency. As the expression of a being’s tendency to persevere, desire expresses the essence of that being. Spinoza puts it this way: “Desire is man’s very essence, insofar as it is conceived to be determined, from any given affection of it, to do something.”¹⁵⁶ Insofar as a being strives to persevere, it has an appetite for the things that allow and favor its striving and growth. In the state of constant influences that modes exist, desire is the drive that pushes them to seek their advantage, and since not everything in the world is

¹⁵³ As Deleuze contends: “Spinoza is not among those who think that a sad passion has something good about it.” Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, 26.

¹⁵⁴ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 11, Demonstration.

¹⁵⁵ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 9, Scholium.

¹⁵⁶ *Ethics*, Part 3, Definitions of Affects, Definition 1, Explanation.

determined to favor one's perseverance subjects them to all the more new interactions and affections that change their power along the way. Inversely, affects, as fluctuations of power caused by external modes, determine the body to act in specific ways and, therefore, orient desire to specific objects or directions.¹⁵⁷ Since the essence of each being, namely, its power/striving/desire, varies, determined by external -sad or joyous- influences, joy and sadness constitute the *essence* of a thing insofar as it fluctuates between a minimum and maximum limit. Therefore, how each individual is affected by joy or sadness constitutes the nature of that person.¹⁵⁸ In other words, the capacity to affect and be affected denotes the essence of each mode.

c. The ethical theory of joyful, active affects

Affects bind the body and mind

In Spinoza's view, the mind and the body are aspects of a unity, while affects refer to both of them at once. Confirming this, Spinoza asserts that a decision of the mind and an appetite of the body are one and the same thing¹⁵⁹ understood through different points of view. The mind never decides anything independent of the body. Instead, it goes along with the propensities of the latter and the influences caused by other bodies that determine the body to (re)act in specific ways. In short, the mind's actions occur along with and are inextricably bound with the body's affects. As Spinoza famously mentions, the body does not strive for what the mind thinks is good. Instead, the mind deems good what the body strives for.¹⁶⁰ Mind and body are affected in one and the same way, either by desire, joy, or sadness, in ways that are partially determined by laws of causality. Thus, thought is bound by laws of causality as much as is the body.¹⁶¹ While we tend to find it obvious that the affections of the body determine it and impose limits on it, we tend to exclude the mind from this fate. The body is bound by its shape and volume, by other bodies around it, and by hunger and gravity. Spinoza urges us to understand that the same is true of minds. Minds are as determined by their affections as are bodies. Specifically, the affects, passions, and actions of the body and the

¹⁵⁷ Goudeli, *Eisagogē Stē Philosophia Tou Spinoza*, 49.

¹⁵⁸ Ethics, Part 3, Proposition 57, Demonstration. From which follows that the joy and sadness and the other affects, vary from person to person and from species to species as much as their natures differ. Ethics, Part 3, Proposition 57, Scholium.

¹⁵⁹ Ethics, Part 3, Proposition 2, Scholium.

¹⁶⁰ Ethics, Part 3, Proposition 9, Scholium.

¹⁶¹ The mind is bound by the (structural) network that surrounds it since the appetites created by the mixture of the tendency of the conatus and the specific, contingent encounters which happen to each one, delimit it.

mind are, by nature, in agreement. They exist together and happen simultaneously. However, it is important to note that this agreement of the order of connection of bodies and the order of connection of ideas does not comply with a simple one-to-one parallelism. As Jaquet has shown, reflecting problems that will be of central significance in the final chapters of the thesis, there is an “expressive equality” of the bodies and ideas “modal diversity.” According to her the “psychophysical union [...] implies both the identity and the difference between mind and body.”¹⁶²

Immanent ethical value of affects

Both negative and positive affects, are natural and unavoidable as they strictly follow the natural order of things. However, they are distinguished through their distinct ethical value, depending on whether they enhance or diminish the body’s capacities. Joyful, active affects are always preferable and ethically superior to sad ones because they augment the power of the body to act and persevere and, therefore, concur with the natural law of the conatus. Moreover, joyful passions are preferable to sad ones that diminish our power because, as we will see in more detail, passions, especially joyful ones, may be transformed into actions with some practice. From the law of conatus, it follows that every being strives, in so far as it can, to have positive empowering affects, which contribute more to its preservation.

The ethical superiority of positive, active affects is not based on transcendent ethical values but on the immanent criterion of power.¹⁶³ Spinoza substitutes the transcendent, universalizing, and unchanging categories of Good and Bad/Evil,¹⁶⁴ which derive from theological tradition, with the localized notions of good and bad, joy and sadness, referring to *every single body*, denoting for each body what enhances or diminishes its capacity to act and hence, what leads it to greater or lesser perfection. As Deleuze puts it, the categories of Good and Bad, external to the immanent power of the individuals, “are turned against life.” On the other hand, Spinoza proposes notions intrinsic and inherent to each distinct organism/body/entity, referring to its unique essence or nature. Hence, the ethical question that Spinoza poses is how to pass from the contingency of encounters with external bodies that might agree or disagree with us and decompose us¹⁶⁵ to the ethically superior condition of

¹⁶² *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 2, Scholium. Chantal Jaquet, *Affects, actions and passions in Spinoza: the unity of body and mind*, trans. Tatiana Reznichenko (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 12, 156.

¹⁶³ The active (wise) person is ethically superior to the ignorant (passive) not because it is better in an abstract sense, but because it is stronger. *Ethics*, Part 5, Proposition 42, Scholium.

¹⁶⁴ Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, 26.

¹⁶⁵ as well as from the arbitrariness and inertia of affective habits as we will analyze right on.

active, empowering affects. That translates into the ethical question of knowing the causes of our affects, which tend to elude our consciousness to a great extent.

4. Knowledge, reason, and the passage from passivity to activity

Consistent with the idea that every influence pertains to both the body and the mind, Spinoza asserts that every passion, namely every affect that affirms another body's greater capacity to influence us, is necessarily accompanied by *inadequate* ideas, namely obscure/confused ideas, whose cause is not the body itself, but another external body or multiple, different bodies, the ideas of which the mind is unable to grasp at once. On the other hand, an affect that enhances a body's capacity to act, namely the state in which the body is active, coincides with the presence of *adequate* ideas in the mind, namely clear ideas, of which the individual is, itself, the cause.¹⁶⁶ Therefore, the passage from disempowering affects to empowering ones coincides with the progression from confused and inadequate or false ideas to clear, adequate and true ideas.¹⁶⁷ Spinoza asserts, "An affect which is a passion ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea of it."¹⁶⁸ Thus, the passage from inadequate to adequate ideas happens when an organism successfully *understands itself and its affects* through the power of its Spirit/mind/thought. "The more an affect is known to us, the more it is in our power."¹⁶⁹ Likewise, the more one understands things as necessary, the more one's affects attenuate, and the more reason takes hold.¹⁷⁰ While body and mind constitute a unity,¹⁷¹ the Spirit/mind, through the infinite modification of substance called knowledge or understanding, has the privileged capacity to guide us to a certain and secure kind of happiness that is not a passion. This active joy involves the knowledge of the self, and the self is its only cause.¹⁷²

Furthermore, given that ideas are modifications of the infinite intellect of God, it follows that the more one's ideas are true, the more one understands things adequately, and the

¹⁶⁶ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 3.

¹⁶⁷ An adequate idea is one that, thought in itself, has all the properties of a true idea. *Ethics*, Part 2, Definition 4.

¹⁶⁸ *Ethics*, Part 5, Proposition 3.

¹⁶⁹ *Ethics*, Part 5, Proposition 3, Corollary.

¹⁷⁰ *Ethics*, Part 5, Proposition 6. That may explain the deterministic scheme of the world as necessary that Spinoza proposes. It is a strategic move aiming to free us from the various passions that the world (conventionally understood as free and contingent) creates in us.

¹⁷¹ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 2, Scholium.

¹⁷² *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 58 and 59.

more one participates in the infinite spirit of God,¹⁷³ where all ideas are adequate. At the same time, the more one understands one's own affects clearly, the more one can reach the highest virtue, the intellectual love of God.¹⁷⁴ Guided by reason, we become connected to the infinite intellect of God and are affected by love towards him(sic). However, the intellectual love of God is an affect that is amplified when shared. Therefore, people affected by it want for others what they want for themselves,¹⁷⁵ so they do not have any reason to disagree with others. It follows that the more one is capable of understanding one's own nature, the more one can simultaneously understand the nature of other bodies and, therefore, the more one can be compatible with other external bodies. Consequently, when an individual is guided by reason, it agrees with the maximal number of external individuals -more than when driven by passions.

Inertia of affects

Affects, as we saw, follow the natural order of things, and thus they do not entirely result from ethical choice. As such, affects pertain to the contingency with which bodies in nature encounter one another and their compatibility and incompatibility, which, at least for large parts of one's life, particularly early life, does not depend upon choice. As Spinoza notes, humans have the capacity to retain impressions, ideas, and traces of what has affected them long after the actual influence of the external body has ceased.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, the mind tends to expect the advent of an affect that it combined with another initial affect in the past.¹⁷⁷ From the above, we can infer the habituality of affects, namely the tendency of humans to retain the affections they have experienced and to anticipate them. Due to this trait, we have the capacity to learn and train our affects but also the tendency to reiterate already existing patterns of affective interaction. Finally, since "everything can be a cause of joy or sadness depending on different circumstances,"¹⁷⁸ it follows that affects are arbitrary and cannot be foreseen entirely, so one's affective capacity cannot be known in advance, separate from its enactment. From the above, the limits of adequately knowing and hence regulating empowering affects securely and predictably become apparent. Our ethical task is to learn our affects and organize our lives to

¹⁷³ "[...] our mind, insofar as it perceives things truly, is part of the infinite intellect of God". *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 43, Scholium. The idea of reason as coextensive with God leads Nietzsche and others to claim that Spinoza betrays his own idea of immanence by reintroducing the transcendental by means of the transcendental faculty of reason. See Yirmiyahu Yovel, *Spinoza and Other Heretics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 108, 117.

¹⁷⁴ *Ethics*, Part 5, Proposition 15 and Proposition 49, Scholium

¹⁷⁵ *Ethics*, Part 5, Proposition 20.

¹⁷⁶ *Ethics*, Part 3, Postulate 2 and *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 17, Scholium.

¹⁷⁷ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 14.

¹⁷⁸ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 15.

minimize negative and maximize positive effects. However, that effort cannot ever eliminate our passivity to them entirely.

Limits of cognitive power

The power of the Spirit cannot be understood under the guise of what we have been accustomed to call free will since the Spirit is only a part of nature and follows the same natural laws as every other thing. The Spirit has no autonomy or power over the body but, on the contrary, forms its judgments in accordance with the affections of the body.¹⁷⁹ Moreover, the mind realizes itself and acquires consciousness of itself only through the affections of the body and the ideas that correspond to these affections.¹⁸⁰ In addition, as already stated, the mind constitutes the idea of the body, yet it never has a clear idea of all the parts that comprise the body.¹⁸¹ Additionally, an affection involves the ideas of both the body and an external body, and the idea of an affection never involves a clear knowledge of either the body itself or of the external body.¹⁸² The mind is formed inside a play of interactions with external bodies; it is created in relation. As such, and since the body is confined to be part of infinite interactions and to undergo passions, the mind is confined to necessarily always have at least some confused ideas. Following Deleuze,¹⁸³ one could say that the body's impossibility to be known in its totality¹⁸⁴ reveals the existence of the unconscious mind, the horizon that determines the limit of the mind's cognitive capacity.

Consequently, and only through great effort can the spirit regulate the passions of the body. According to Spinoza, knowledge of one's self is a long and painful apprenticeship process and not the result of an alleged powerful will of the mind over the body, as in the Cartesian and commonsense idiom. Knowledge entails a long collaboration between the mind and the body and follows the inevitable vicissitudes and insistent temporalities of the affects. Spinoza asserts that diverting the power of an affect is never a matter of imposing the power of truth over falsity. Imposing adequate true ideas onto inadequate and confused ones is not enough to replace the latter with the former. The only thing that can dominate an affect, and

¹⁷⁹ As we mentioned, the intellect judges as good, whatever it is attracted to, and as bad, whatever repels it. *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 9, Scholium.

¹⁸⁰ *Ethics*, Part 2, Propositions 22, 23.

¹⁸¹ *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 24.

¹⁸² *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 25, 27.

¹⁸³ Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, 18-9.

¹⁸⁴ Denoted by the famous phrase of Spinoza "[...]no one has yet determined what the body can do[...]" *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 2, Scholium.

hence an inadequate idea, is not a truth claim but is solely another *affect of superior power*.¹⁸⁵ Spinoza thus implies that the capacity for reasoning and understanding the mind holds must be understood as a *type of affect*. That claim is crucial as it reverses the long-held, primary assumption of rationality that it is opposed to affectivity.

As Yovel points out, knowledge must be understood as “the most powerful affect.”¹⁸⁶ It can be understood as a durationally practiced capacity of agreeing with oneself and as awareness of what external incentives agree and disagree with oneself; in short, as a capacity for positive affections. “The mind is the more capable of perceiving many things adequately as its body has many things in common with other bodies.”¹⁸⁷ So, to know oneself and the world adequately, one has to find out how to be capable of forming *relations* (of agreement) with the world. As such, and as Sharp suggests, Spinoza’s theory of knowledge, prefigures Simondon’s view of knowledge as a relation between relations, not a relation between subject and object.¹⁸⁸ Knowledge, one could argue, is a composite affect consisting of a sedimented practice of agreement of someone with one’s self and one’s environment.

5. The passive-active distinction of affects and their entanglement

There has been a lengthy discussion on the sharp distinction between passivity and activity that Spinoza seems to propose. On first impression, it would seem that the philosopher is substituting one bipolar hierarchical distinction, that of the transcendental Good and Evil with their generalizing and unchanging meaning, with another, the passive-active distinction with its established social connotations. Given his idea that a free individual is one that acts from its nature alone, one could read Spinoza’s philosophy as clearly militating passivity.¹⁸⁹ Nevertheless, many scholars attempted to show that Spinoza’s passive-active distinction is not as strict and straightforward as it might initially appear. They have tried to analyze the intimate entanglement between activity and passivity underlying the philosophical text.

As Sharp contends, “passions are not entirely passive” exactly because passions are the prerequisite of action.¹⁹⁰ As Schrijvers points out, the possibility of affecting and being affected

¹⁸⁵ *Ethics*, Part 4, Proposition 7 “An affect cannot be restrained or taken away except by an affect opposite to, and stronger than, the affect to be restrained” and Proposition 14 “No affect can be restrained by the true knowledge of good and evil insofar as it is true, but only insofar as it is considered as an affect”.

¹⁸⁶ Yovel, *Spinoza and Other Heretics*, 106.

¹⁸⁷ *Ethics*, Part 2, Proposition 39, Corollary.

¹⁸⁸ Sharp, *Spinoza and the Politics of Renaturalization*, 39.

¹⁸⁹ This is for example what Hampshire contends. See Hampshire, *Spinoza: Mia eisagogē ston philosophiko stochasmo tou*, 250.

¹⁹⁰ Sharp, 33.

increases and decreases uniformly for passions and actions so that the more imaginative the field of ideas we inhabit, the more we are able to act according to reason.¹⁹¹ The idea of the entanglement of passivity and activity lies in the argument that a body is always already the result of causes that exist outside of it. The existence of an inescapable nexus of causes in which all modes are implicated has as result that each body is an assemblage of different parts constantly regenerating themselves through the exchange with parts of external bodies.¹⁹² The above applies to both extensive parts (as is evident in the prominent case of nutrition) as well to the ideas (a human cannot be a social being without sharing the ideas of humanity and sociability that pre-exist it) corresponding to each body and which ultimately derive from the infinite nexus of ideas (the infinite intellect of God). We can never succeed in needing nothing from our external world.¹⁹³ A state of constant activity is an impossibility. Bodies constantly need extensive parts but also ideas of which the body can never be the initiator or the sole cause. A body can never strictly be said to be entirely active, and no activity can exist alone and independent of passivity. As Balibar phrases it, an individual's activity always already precludes its connection with other individuals,¹⁹⁴ and hence "the essence of causality is the unity of activity and passivity."¹⁹⁵

As I will analyze in greater detail in the course of the thesis, Deleuze takes the idea of the entanglement of passivity and activity further by reversing the basic Spinozian ethical proposal towards activity. He identifies constraint and, therefore, passivity as the primary force for the genesis of thought and, consequently, of empowerment, underlying the importance of force and violence in spurring thinking. Deleuze identifies thinking with *passion* or an involuntary encounter that may have any affective tonality.¹⁹⁶ It is not necessarily joyous. The Spinozian idea of active affects is substituted with an affective theory of becoming, which in the context of the philosophy of difference, is an affection that pulls towards the minoritarian pole of each interaction,¹⁹⁷ the one that is conventionally thought of as passive. In the fifth chapter of the thesis, I take up these problems of joy, sadness, and becoming in Deleuze.

¹⁹¹ Michael Srijvers, "The *Conatus* and the Mutual Relationship between Passive and Active Affects in Spinoza" in Yovel, 75.

¹⁹² Étienne Balibar, *Spinoza: From Individuality to Transindividuality* (Delft: Eburon, 1997), 18.

¹⁹³ *Ethics*, Part 4, Proposition 18, Scholium.

¹⁹⁴ Balibar., 9.

¹⁹⁵ Balibar., 15.

¹⁹⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 139-40.

¹⁹⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 12. print (Minneapolis, Minn.: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2007), 232-309.

6. Spinoza's affective political theory. The State and the multitude

Referring to Spinoza's central political ideas will help us clarify the practical and tangible consequences of the idea of immanent power and the significance of affects as factors of political life. For Spinoza, the organization of how we affect one another is a central motive in the foundation of organizational systems of interactions, that is, social systems and states. A state, for Spinoza, is assigned to organize the encounters and affections between people so that harmful and destructive encounters and affections are delimited and positive and empowering affections are promoted and enhanced.¹⁹⁸ In other words, the state is charged with organizing and producing positive affects and ensuring the joy of the population through the imposition of rules based that apply to everyone and that direct the affects of the population to the same causes. Only if those rules are based on reason can they produce a common denominator for all. Moreover, people with similar causes of fear or joy will necessarily agree. What is more, if by being together, they can diminish the causes of fear, they can live together well. The state is formed due to the propensity of people to pursue the things that empower them (*conatus*). People form political communities by combining their powers to create a superior one. However, unlike the theories of the social contract that were popular during his era, Spinoza posits that state power consists of the summation of the power of the people who constitute it and does not transcend the latter. The right of the state to rule over the people is based solely on this power, namely in the sum-total of the powers of the people who participate in it and who do not convey but retain their sovereign right inside the state.

For Spinoza, the optimal type of government to produce shared affects and empowerment is democracy precisely because of the space it offers -in its ideal type- to everyone to express themselves and participate in collective action and deliberation, and therefore enhance their power. As Stilianou notes, democracy is not only the optimal form of government, according to Spinoza, but the process that constitutes the horizon in reference to which any form of government can be considered successful or not.¹⁹⁹ Tyranny is the worst form of government because it is based on the sad feelings of the population, disempowerment, repression, and fear of punishment. As many scholars have noted, Spinoza's view of the state is not only democratic but also politically radical in a broader sense.

¹⁹⁸ Baruch, Spinoza. "Political Treatise," in Benedictus de Spinoza, Samuel Shirley, and Michael L. Morgan, *Complete Works* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Pub, 2002), 679-754.

¹⁹⁹ Aris Stilianou, *O Spinoza kai ē dēmokratia* (Athēna: Polis, 2016), 25, 62.

Additionally, as Moreau points out, Spinoza's metaphysical theses on humans as modifications of infinite substance subject to the same laws and causal relations as all other modes, have deeply radical political implications. Far from any metaphysical foundation concerning the difference of beings, Spinoza's theory does not provide a foundation for the hierarchical distribution of political rights and political power to any group of humans over any other.²⁰⁰ Moreover, Spinoza identifies right with power.²⁰¹ Whether reasonable or not, each being has a sovereign right to do what nature has determined to do: exert and enhance its power. That right is thus unalienable and needs no proof or concession by a sovereign ruler. As Montag points out, the above thesis has, as a consequence, the collapse of the metaphysical priority of the power of the whole over the singular.²⁰² As is the case with the immanent causality of substance in the modes, the whole, in this case, the political society, or what Spinoza calls the state, is nothing different than the parts constituting it. Specifically, Spinoza offers the radical definition of the state as the right that is defined by the power of a multitude. He continues, "This power is all the bigger, the more the multitude is guided by common ideas and reason."²⁰³ Negri reads Spinoza's above thesis to claim that the former's political philosophy is the first one that asserts the power of the masses in the constitution of society.²⁰⁴

7. Subjectivity and trans-individuality

As many scholars have pointed out, Spinoza creates a philosophy in which the modern political notion of the individual subject does not find its metaphysical foundation.²⁰⁵ The metaphysical significance that Spinoza assigns to nature, and the subsumption of human phenomena to natural laws, does not benefit the construction of a robust willing subject similar to that of Descartes - one based on the autonomous capacity of its mind. Spinoza asserts: "Those who believe that [...] they act anything out of free decision of the Spirit, are dreaming with eyes wide open."²⁰⁶ Free will, the idea that we tend towards things because we freely

²⁰⁰ Moreau, *Spinoza et le Spinozisme*, 102.

²⁰¹ Benedictus de Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*, ed. Jonathan Israel, trans. Jonathan Israel and Silverthorne Michael (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 195.

²⁰² Warren Montag, "Preface" in Warren Montag and Ted Stolze, eds., *The New Spinoza*, viii-xix.

²⁰³ Spinoza, "Political Treatise", Chapter 2, Paragraph 17. Spinoza continues to assert that "this power is all the bigger, the more the multitude is guided by common ideas and reason".

²⁰⁴ Antonio Negri, *The Savage Anomaly: The Power of Spinoza's Metaphysics and Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991) cited in Montag, "Preface", *The New Spinoza*, xviii.

²⁰⁵ There have been of course opposite interpretations from the part of the scholars that are closer to the analytical philosophical paradigm. For example, for Lloyd, while Spinoza's use of individuality is indeed paradoxical, he does not for this reason deny individuality as an illusion. See Genevieve Lloyd, *Part of Nature: Self-Knowledge in Spinoza's Ethics* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1994), 10.

²⁰⁶ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 2, Scholium.

decide to, Spinoza believes, is a construction of humans that, as teleology, is explained by their being conscious of the objects of their desires and unaware of the causes by which they are determined to have such desires.²⁰⁷ If the above claim seems cryptic, let us attempt to explain. As already mentioned, the ultimate cause of our desires -as the ultimate cause of everything- is substance/Nature/God and the infinite network of modes organized by a chain of causes that expresses substance. However, the partiality of humans makes them unable to grasp the nexus of infinite natural causes that determines them. The causes of our existence, our affects, and our actions are deemed to always escape our grasp because of our partiality and finitude in ways that parallel the idea that the body can never be fully known.

Consequently, the nexus of infinite modes determined by causal relations is prior to limited individual human existence and explains it. For this reason, many scholars have shown that the *relation* rather than the individual is the definitive metaphysical starting point for the *Ethics*. Sharp, giving her interpretation of what Spinoza means when he talks about the internally defined sequence of ideas and actions, claims that: “To think in terms of affect is necessarily to think in terms of ‘transindividuality.’”²⁰⁸ The first scholar to use the term and associate it with Spinoza’s philosophy was Etienne Balibar, who claims we must rethink the Spinozian conception of activity as existence in relation.²⁰⁹ The more an individual is connected to their environment, the more it is possible for it to understand adequately the causal order that defines the latter and, therefore, the more it can act guided by reason. Additionally, Read proposes to make sense of Spinoza in the light of the Simondonian idea of individuation, namely that an individual is only a phase in the individuation process rather than its starting or ending point.²¹⁰ Trying to break away from the traditional ontological and political dilemma between individualism and communitarianism/holism, both of which imply a fundamental incompatibility between individual freedom and collective sovereignty, the concept of transindividuality, as Balibar proposes, is based on the idea that potentially “the liberation of the individual actually multiplies collective power, just as collective freedom multiplies the individual power.”²¹¹

²⁰⁷ *Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 2, Scholium. Our desires are formed by the necessity of our nature in relation to the external world. Moreover, the ultimate cause of our desires as the ultimate cause of everything is substance/Nature/God.

²⁰⁸ Sharp, *Spinoza and the Politics of Renaturalization*, 24.

²⁰⁹ Étienne Balibar, *Spinoza: From Individuality to Transindividuality* (Delft: Eburon, 1997).

²¹⁰ Jason Read, “‘Desire Is Man’s Very Essence’: Spinoza and Hegel as Philosophers of Transindividuality” in *Between Hegel and Spinoza: A Volume of Critical Essays*, ed. Hasana Sharp and Jason E. Smith (New York: Continuum, 2012), 42–60.

²¹¹ Balibar., 34.

8. Critique of the ‘ethics of joy’

There have been numerous critiques of the Spinozian paradigm of affective influence by scholars working on the intersection of political philosophy, feminism, and psychoanalysis. Spinoza’s affective philosophy, seen through the lenses of contemporary, psychoanalytically-inspired political theories, seems to unreasonably reduce human psychic complexity to the pursuit of joyful activity. The main point of the critiques addressed to this thesis is that the insistence on the empowering affect of joy cannot account for the reality of political subordination, in which grief is a constitutive point of experience and the process of subject-formation, and not an ethical choice.

The prominent place of critique is the strand of the feminist and queer politics of recognition exemplified by the philosopher Judith Butler. Butler asks what kind of subjectivity is implied in the assertion of the natural law of perseverance in existence,²¹² suggesting that immersion in destructive and repressive power dynamics may lead the individual to internalize detrimental tendencies that, after that, cannot accurately be said to come from the individual’s exterior. Following the Hegelian tradition, Butler defines *recognition* as the *sine qua non* but always incomplete prerequisite of social activity and fulfillment. The impossibility of an individual ever fully recognizing another, as well as the impossibility of the state giving full recognition to its citizens, renders the condition of citizenship an always, already melancholic position and is incompatible with the Spinozian proposition of joy as the condition of the formation of the political body.

Sharp’s defense of the Spinozian program against the above argument consists in questioning the theoretical assumptions of the discussion. She asserts that the conception of the individual as a non-exceptional part of nature can logically lead ethical activity towards forming alliances between an actor and its external actors. She asserts that the desire for recognition is ultimately based on the idea of human exceptionalism and the significance of consciousness. According to the Spinozian paradigm, freedom does not consist of intersubjective recognition. Freedom is an enabling relation to one’s environment and is independent of one’s consciousness.²¹³ On the antipodes of Butler’s criticism, as already implied, a significant critique of the ethical proposition of joy comes from the part of

²¹² Judith Butler, “The Desire to Live: Spinoza’s Ethics under Pressure,” in *Politics and the Passions, 1500 - 1850*, ed. Victoria Kahn, Neil Saccamano, and Daniela Coli (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2006), 111–30.

²¹³ Sharp, *Spinoza and the Politics of Renaturalization*, 153-4.

Deleuzoguattarian philosophy and the idea that passion and force are the constitutive points of thought and difference and, therefore, the initiating point for ethics—the analysis of the above passes on to the subject matter of the next chapters.

Chapter 2. Metaphysics of Affect, according to Deleuze and Guattari

1. Introduction

Methodology

2. Metaphysical genealogies

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Two kinds of multiplicities, two kinds of numbers

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Affect as a variation of intensity and as a singularity (virtual)

Bergson's affectivity as freedom

Deleuze and Guattari's affect as inhuman encounter

Ethics of intensification of life

1. Introduction

Methodology

After having analyzed the concept of affect in the philosophy of Spinoza, I will not continue to examine the notion's function in Deleuze and Guattari. *Affect* is a concept that has a far from straightforward definition across the extensive work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. To approach it, I will have to put together pieces of different works of the two thinkers and combine the early metaphysical period of Deleuze's philosophical work, Deleuze and Guattari's collaborative works, and Guattari's writings. Specifically, attempting to focus on the

metaphysical status or the ontology of affect, I will use the framework put forward in Deleuze's seminal work *Difference and Repetition* and, secondarily, *The Logic of Sense* and *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*. Subsequently, I will attempt to make sense of Deleuze's later writings in collaboration with Guattari: *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, where the concept of affect appears to be playing a secondary but pivotal role, and *What is Philosophy?*, in which the concept appears as central in the tripartite system of organizing reality. It is generally admitted that the so-called early and later works of Deleuze, namely his solo works and those he cowrote with Guattari, present vast and possibly irreconcilable differences around the questions of idealism versus materialism and structure versus machinic processes. Nevertheless, those differences notwithstanding, in the current research, the work of the two periods will be used interchangeably and in communication with each other in hopes of producing a disjunctive synthesis between the two and without aspirations of reproducing or constructing a coherent whole between the two. The reasons for this choice lie mainly in the illumination the latter works can offer -focusing on empirical sociopolitical matters-concerning the complex abstract metaphysical concepts of Deleuze's early oeuvre. I will return to the details of the commonalities and differences between the two periods in the fourth chapter of the thesis.

To put the concept of affect in perspective, I need first to expose Deleuze's complex metaphysical system focusing on intensity to see how this could help me make sense of the later formulations around it. Although affect is a word not used in *Difference and Repetition*, the concept of intensity developed there is central to understanding it. Deleuze scholars observe that intensity in other parts of Deleuze's work is more fully autonomous and independent from the virtual and the actual. Specifically, in *The Logic of Sense*, intensity becomes more fully a self-generating force that does not need the virtual singularities to develop but is composed of pre-individual singularities.²¹⁴ Nevertheless, in the current research, the initial exposition given in *Difference and Repetition* will be followed primarily, while the latter will be complementary. This choice is justified by the clarifying notion of the virtual in placing Deleuze's metaphysics in the context of the greater genealogy of dynamic metaphysics. Given the fact that *Difference and Repetition* is a highly complex work of philosophical novelty, to make sense of it, I will expose some basic ideas and arguments upon which it builds and, specifically, core ideas of

²¹⁴ Nathan Widder, "Force Is What Can, Will to Power Is What Wills: On the Relation between the Virtual and the Intensive in Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*" (Society for European Philosophy-Forum for European Philosophy Conference, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2019).

Henri Bergson's philosophy as well as a summary of the Spinozist metaphysics that I have developed in the previous chapter. Subsequently, I will refer to affect as set in the two-volume work *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. More specifically, the second part, *A Thousand Plateaus*, where affect appears in its Spinozist genealogy reformulated in the context of a novel system of metaphysics of ungrounding and difference, will provide an essential component to understand affect, namely the latter's association with the notion of becoming-minor. I will develop that link further in the fifth chapter of the thesis.

2. Metaphysical genealogies

In the place of the long tradition of the dualistic opposition between mind and body, ideas and matter, Deleuze, in his seminal philosophical treatise *Difference and Repetition*, proposes a metaphysics of a tripartite system comprised of the virtual, the actual, and the intensive. The virtual is the realm of ideas that, according to Deleuze, are not neutral eternal entities but *multiplicities* of problematic nature. Ideas are problems. Moreover, the actual is the realm of the given, that is, the realm of extension that we perceive as existing in common sense, everyday experience. Everyday experience and common sense are, of course, valuable. We need to make it through daily experience, and the commonsense conventions are helpful to us in this regard.

Nevertheless, they do not reveal the nature of reality, which, as maintained by Deleuzian philosophy, is intensive or differentiating. According to the Deleuzian metaphysical system, the virtual differentiates itself into the actual through intensity in such a way that the configurations of the actual such as organic species, cosmic constellations, and political systems, constitute only some of the many solutions to the problems posed in the realm of the virtual. Intensity denotes the genesis of both the virtual and the actual. The virtual and the actual are generated together, always and necessarily inextricably bound to each other, yet at the same time, they differ fundamentally. Therefore, for one to pass to the other, there is a need for a medium. That medium is the intensive or else intensive quantity. The intensive is neither an idea nor an extensive thing but a force-producing difference, which constitutes the condition of the existence of the actual and the virtual. It defines which of the virtual elements will be creatively actualized in the actual and how, but also how the virtual will differentiate itself through its encounter with intensity. *Intensity* is the force existing at the limit of actual reality, generating new ideas in the virtual. The crucial point in Deleuzian metaphysics is the search not for sensible reality but for the *conditions* of existence of that reality. In other words,

what interests the philosopher is not what is given but what conditions the given, how something comes to be given, how something is actualized or else generated, how something new comes to be, as well as what are the directions, dynamics and potential limits of the actual given. What brings things into existence is intensity, force, or difference. Similarly, what concerns the philosopher is not what thinking is but what propels thought and causes it to be created and how one can reach the limits of thought. Again, in the latter process, the role of intensity is pivotal.

The search for the genesis of thought and reality defines the scope of Deleuze's philosophical system of transcendental empiricism.²¹⁵ Kant's transcendental idealism makes a claim central to his philosophy, which is that we cannot know the real nature of things because of the way our mind and consciousness are inherently structured, and so are bound to perceive reality in terms of specific categories (such as space, time and causality). To philosophize means determining what we can know given the a priori categories of our thinking and determining the transcendental field conditioning our perception and understanding of reality. Deleuze's transcendental empiricism continues in this tradition that opposes transcendent philosophies such as Plato's, philosophies that claim to be able to know things in themselves.²¹⁶ Nevertheless, his approach distinguishes itself from Kant's in that Deleuze does not consider the transcendental field from which our perception of reality arises or is conditioned to be the rationality of our mind and the categories that seem to arise from it. In his view, those categories suspiciously resemble empirical categories of perception and are not objective ahistorical structures of the mind. The condition, in that case, resembles what it conditions.²¹⁷ On the contrary, the transcendental field for Deleuze is an element of reality. Situated in this field, an intensive realm of singularities constitutes a reservoir of dynamics from which sensible empirical reality is generated and arises in a non-deterministic way as a genuine creation.

The virtual and the actual are two essential aspects of reality and all phenomena brought together through intensity. The passage from one to the other is how the given is given. This passage is a moment of creation during which intensity or an intensive quantity of force

²¹⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*, trans. Anne Boyman (New York : Cambridge, Mass: Zone Books ; Distributed by the MIT Press, 2001).

²¹⁶ Levi R. Bryant, "The transcendent and the transcendental", Larval Subjects Blog (December 2008). Found in <https://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2008/12/07/the-transcendent-and-the-transcendental/> and Daniel Smith and John Protevi, "Gilles Deleuze", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/deleuze/>>

²¹⁷ Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of sense*, trans. Constantin V Boundas, Mark Lester, and Charles J Stivale (London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 128.

determines which elements of the virtual will actualize in what we perceive in common sense experience as well as how the virtual will differentiate, in turn, through intensity. Although Deleuzian studies have seen a significant advance during the last decades, there is still not much consensus around his metaphysical system nor about the crucial notion of the intensive and its role in this system in the secondary literature on Deleuze's oeuvre. Let us briefly expose some general tendencies in the different approaches. On the one hand, some scholars such as Badiou and Ansell-Pearson posit that the virtual has some ontological priority over the actual,²¹⁸ with the former associating Deleuzian philosophy with the Platonist tradition.²¹⁹ Conversely, Smith and others claim in favor of the reciprocal genesis of the virtual and the actual.²²⁰ Moreover, the same lack of consensus appears in the scholarly understanding of the nature of intensity, which seems to be virtual, actual, or to constitute a third ontological realm.²²¹ To give a provisional answer to this question, I need to start by exposing the initial philosophical systems in which the concepts Deleuze works with are initially deployed. Bergson will be the place to start regarding the virtual and the actual.

Bergson's Monism of Quality

The modernist philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941) has a crucial influence on Deleuze's philosophical system. Deleuze takes up the notions of the virtual and the actual from the former and reformulates them, adding new parameters to their relation. To explain how this is done, I need an initial brief exposition of Bergson's philosophical endeavor and aspirations, which were undoubtedly linked to the sociopolitical and scientific advancements of his time, such as the evolution of modern physics and the discovery of the theory of relativity, revealing matter as force and inserting time as an irrefutable factor in any account of material reality. In his seminal work, *Matter and Memory*, Bergson attempts to reframe and undo Western philosophy and science's distinction between the concepts of mind and body, perception and matter.²²² Unlike science and philosophy, Bergson claims, common sense understands the terms of those pairs as entangled. However, this entanglement, he argues, results from an impure mixture or a confused idea. While common sense understands the association of spirit

²¹⁸ Keith Ansell-Pearson, *Philosophy and the Adventure of the Virtual: Bergson and the Time of Life* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 99, 111.

²¹⁹ Alain Badiou, *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being*, Theory out of Bounds, v. 16 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 42.

²²⁰ Daniel W. Smith and Gilles Deleuze, *Essays on Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 253.

²²¹ Dale Clisby and Sean Bowden, "Introduction: The Virtual, the Actual and the Intensive: Contentions, Reflections and Interpretations," *Deleuze Studies* 11, no. 2 (May 2017): 153–55.

²²² Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (New York: Zone Books, 1988).

and matter as a coarse mixture, science and philosophy, up to Bergson's time, distinguish the two as mutually exclusive elements irreducible to each other. For scientific and philosophical analysis, perception is understood as qualitative, indivisible, and continuous, and matter as quantitative and infinitely divisible. As such, perception and matter, mind and body, quality and quantity are understood as differing in nature and, therefore, can never be compared and seen under the same prism. Nevertheless, the common mistake of common sense and philosophical and scientific dualism is to suppose that between the two terms -seen as mutually exclusive or improperly mixed- the ultimate defining category or dimension of reality is space. Both approaches, thus, tend to think in terms of more or less, which, according to him, is a way of thought, ultimately considering reality as spatial.²²³ Following this, even if mind and body differ in nature, as philosophy and science can discern, they are thought as ultimately reducible to their existence in space. The reason for this reduction, Bergson claims, is that our bodies and our common sense are ultimately directed towards action and are, therefore, driven by the demands of necessity and need.²²⁴ For that reason, pressed by the urgency of everyday concerns and their demands for action, we delimit the activity of the spirit that would be able to consider things more complexly. As such, a clear understanding of the true nature of things is not in the interests of everyday conceptions of reality, which ultimately dictate an understanding of perception as spatial, quantitative, and infinitely divisible.

On the one hand, scientific and philosophical dualism and commonsensical spatial understanding of reality, on the other, become the target of Bergson's criticism and are revisited and reformulated through the philosophical method he inaugurates and which he calls intuition. Intuition is the process through which we can access the nature of things and the true problems constituting reality beyond experience. By using philosophical categories to clarify commonsensical elements, we can reach a higher understanding of common sense, one that involves common sense but forces it to its limit or sublimates it through logical understanding. Bergson shows that through a novel conceptualization of movement and duration, we can understand the two supposedly incommensurable realms comprising reality -i.e., spirit and matter- as communicating. To do so, Bergson shows that external reality and matter, as elements characterized by movement and duration, cannot but have a qualitative aspect in order to form and participate in perception. In Bergson's own words: "[...] movements [...] link together the successive moments in time by a thread of variable quality which cannot be

²²³ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism* (New York: Zone Books, 1988), 20.

²²⁴ Bergson, 198.

without some likeness to the continuity of our own consciousness” and “we grasp, in perception, at one and the same time, a *state* of our consciousness and a *reality* independent of ourselves.”²²⁵ If we perceive reality as it is, we are forced to understand duration and movement as ontological elements prior to space and to supposedly inert extension thought as quantitative. The proof of the above is that movement thought in itself cannot be explicated and explained in terms of space since there is nothing in the supposed inertia of space that could spur the initiation of movement. Additionally, movement is not divisible as is extensity, or it is divisible only retrospectively, through the action of the imagination,²²⁶ because it is characterized by elements such as speed, which, once divided, change in nature. A quick or abrupt movement cannot result from the addition of two slower or smoother movements. As a result, we need to start understanding space as a secondary element in relation to movement, deriving from the latter rather than the reverse.

Following the above argumentative line, extended matter is a moment in duration and movement that, abstracted from its continuity with the preceding and subsequent moments, comes to be seen as static, non-moving, and a-temporal. Space is precisely the form that this abstraction from duration takes when we push it to its absolute limit; it is duration slowed down to the extreme point where it appears to be static.²²⁷ Considering space as a moment abstracted from movement, and movement as the primary ontological category, we understand that both matter and thinking are qualitative and indivisible and that between perception (perceiving movement as quality) and matter (what is commonly understood as extended quantity but in reality, is a durational moving element) there is no more a difference in nature but a difference in degree, yet a difference in degree within the realm of quality or duration. Bergson seems to propose that to understand how perception and sensation connect to and grasp reality outside of them, one has to be able to grasp “the immense multiplicity of the movements which it [sensation] executes, so to speak, within itself as a chrysalis.”²²⁸ Perception and sensation must perform in themselves the movements that appear before them in reality if they are to grasp them so that perception and sensation and the movement of reality, become things of the same order. Matter and mind are different degrees of contraction of duration. The mind, with its

²²⁵ Bergson, 202-4.

²²⁶ Bergson, 189.

²²⁷ An additional reason we are prone to this kind of spatialized thinking and common-sense perception is, once again, the exigencies of life and action and the need to distinguish our body from the external bodies around us for survival reasons. External bodies need to be thought of as discontinuous from our own, and thinking of space and matter as infinitely divisible and therefore discontinuous is how such a perception is served. See Bergson, 198, 209.

²²⁸ Bergson, 204.

capacity to act and pass from one image or idea to another, constitutes a contracted or fast-paced duration, and matter, undergoing only slower changes over time, constitutes an infinitely relaxed degree of duration. To illustrate that, one can think how fast ideas or images can pass and change in one's brain in contrast to how slow an object, let us say a table, undergoes any change. To be loyal to Bergson's philosophy would mean considering spirit and ideas but also matter as elements of flows rather than things.²²⁹

Bergson's synthesis of time, memory

In short, as described in *Matter and Memory*, reality for Bergson is durational,²³⁰ which means qualitative. The continuity established between the moments that comprise reality cannot but resemble our consciousness.²³¹ Consequently, reality must be spiritual in a way that is not reducible to mere matter considered divisible and inert. Matter is only a relaxed duration, a difference in degree within durational quality. Matter, as spirit, is durational and therefore constitutes a continuous flow in constant differentiation and change. At the same time, duration-quality, as simultaneously material and spiritual, differs necessarily in nature only from itself as time constantly splits into two directions, one past, and one future. The present is precisely this moment of splitting and, simultaneously, the moment of coexistence of past and present. For duration to exist and be perceived and experienced, a moment that has passed needs to prolong itself in the present so that the two coexist despite their irreducible internal difference. A present moment cannot be thought of without at the same time being thought of as past. Bergson - with his emphasis on duration and, consequently, memory - has shown how the past coexists with the present and how the two are necessarily folded in one another. As with the dualism between matter and spirit being rethought as differing in degree within quality, so too, the present -as an equivalent of matter- and the past -as an equivalent of the mind- differ in degree, with the present being only the most contracted moment of the past.²³² Reality is qualitative, continuous, durational, and spiritual; in a sense, reality is always already past. At the same time, at every moment, this spiritual and qualitative reality transforms into a

²²⁹ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: The Modern Library, 1944), 273, 326. Prelorntzos Giannēs, "Epimetro" in Gilles Deleuze, *O Mperxonismos* (Athēna: Scripta, 2010), 165-181, 180.

²³⁰ For the purposes of the current chapter I will consider solely this aspect of Bergson's metaphysics putting aside earlier more dualistic accounts of his philosophy as presented for example in *Time and Free Will*. This choice is based on the significance this monistic durational account holds in influencing Deleuze's own monistic metaphysics and therefore in explaining and clarifying the latter.

²³¹ Bergson, 203.

²³² Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 82.

contracted version of itself, appearing in what we perceive as the passing present moment or else the abstraction of inert space. All of the past is retained in this contraction; memory is retained in the present but only in a virtual way. Duration, as the continuous flow of moments akin to our consciousness and spirit, coexists with the present *virtually*. Duration is the continuous flow of moments resembling consciousness, as the continuous flow of ideas. Both of them compose the non-numerical multiplicity of the virtual. Unlike space which is defined by the mutual exclusion of elements from their respective positions and which constitutes a numerical multiplicity,²³³ both duration and consciousness are characterized by the coexistence of heterogeneous moments (past and present) or ideas in the same state of mind or time frame. In space, things coexist while excluding each other from their respective positions, while in duration, moments succeed each other while coexisting in the same position for time to pass. The virtual consists of ideas that partake in the movement of passage from past to present, from spirit to matter, and from time to space. The virtual memory or else quality that Bergson understands as the essence of his major metaphysical category of duration is, as Deleuze will make clear, the realm of ideas, which as duration, are incorporeal yet real entities.

Deleuze, answering criticisms addressed to Bergson, interprets the latter's argument on the centrality of memory to claim that memory after Bergson becomes a primary *ontological* category and not a merely psychological category.²³⁴ The unique nature of time attests to that since psychological memory cannot but be as multiple as the psychological beings that are people.²³⁵ Memory virtually coexists with the present at every moment and allows it to pass. The virtual, for Bergson, is a deposit of ideas and memories comprising immaterial, qualitative elements that coexist with actual reality at every moment and from which actual reality is born. The actual, that resembles what we commonly understand as space, namely inert extension in which different entities coexist, is the contracted form of the virtual. Virtual memory (Ideas) and actual matter (extension) are united in the virtual, of which the actual is only a degree of relaxation. The virtuality of the past depends on perception for its actualization.²³⁶ In other words, it is up to present perception, which resembles specific areas of this past that coexist in it, to bring about these areas and reactivate them in memory. While the actual and the virtual are analyzed as differing in nature and subsequently re-united within the durational qualitative

²³³ Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2001), 85-6.

²³⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism* (New York: Zone Books, 1988), 34.

²³⁵ Todd May, *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 47.

²³⁶ Dorothea Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 110.

nature of reality, it is essential to hold that a difference in nature between them remains insofar as the former constitutes the constant internal transformation of the latter. Moreover, this difference is a necessary condition for their reunification, an essential step of the Bergsonian philosophical method of intuition.

Arguing that movement, duration, quality, and memory are primary to or else precede space, extensity, quantity, and matter, Bergson demonstrates the creative character of time, that is, the fact that time constitutes a departure or a constant differentiation from itself and a creation deriving from the dynamics and the potential involved in time as a whole. In such a way, Bergson founds the ontologically open character of the future and the possibility of the new. In common sense understandings of reality, time is mistaken as a fourth dimension of space, so it is assumed that we would be able to foresee the future if only we could perceive reality from a point of view that is external to this fourth dimension, in the same way we perceive two-dimensional space from its third dimension, namely from above.²³⁷ On the contrary, in Bergson's view, time is not a dimension of space, it is *primary* to the latter, and no exterior point of view can be assumed in relation to it. We are immersed in time. There is no point of view external to time from which one could, so to say, see time and, therefore, the future as 'from above.' It follows that the future is, by definition, unknowable and necessarily radically new. Such an endeavor initiates a philosophy of difference that establishes difference as a primary ontological category and proves that the future is not a recycling or repetition of the past but necessarily differs from the latter in nature.²³⁸ The virtual and the actual, past and present, memory and matter are dimensions of reality relevant to time and account for a qualitative, dynamic account of reality as creation.

Deleuze's elaboration of Bergson's metaphysics

Although Bergson succeeds in inserting duration and, therefore, the idea of reality in constant differentiation from itself (internal difference) into the philosophical landscape, he nevertheless fails to grasp the idea of pure difference *in itself*, which Deleuze eventually tries to establish in its full implications as the primal metaphysical category of his philosophy, freed from the constraints of identity and opposition which only constitute false problems. Bergson, proving that matter resembles perception and that between them, there is no longer a difference

²³⁷ Henry Somers-Hall, *Hegel, Deleuze, and the Critique of Representation: Dialectics of Negation and Difference*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 82.

²³⁸ Gilles Deleuze, "Bergson's Conception of Difference," in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974* (Los Angeles, CA : Cambridge, Mass: Semiotext(e) ; Distributed by MIT Press, 2004), 32-51.

in nature but a difference in degree, opens up the space existing between differences of degree (applying to space and quantity according to common sense) and differences of nature (applying to thought and quality according to common sense),²³⁹ complicating the dualism between the two even despite at first sight seemingly reinstalling a contradiction between the two.²⁴⁰ In this sense, Deleuze finds the seeds of his own formulation in Bergson. Specifically, Deleuze claims that in *Matter and Memory*, and his discussion of the relation between different paces of duration, Bergson recognizes that between differences in nature and difference in degree, there are degrees of difference or differences in intensity,²⁴¹ which Deleuze will use as primary. Nevertheless, for Deleuze, it is no longer sufficient to say that ideas and matter differ in degree but qualitatively. Building upon Bergson's argument about duration being prior to space rather than a dimension of it and adding to this argument, he emphasizes the need to restore the irreducible, positive and productive, radical difference between ideas and matter, the virtual and the actual, a difference that cannot fit in a supposed identity of nature (a qualitative nature) in which there are differences of degree (in the contraction or relaxation of duration). While there is a difference in nature between the sequences of duration, there are differences in degree between the simultaneous elements of duration, that is, matter and ideas, present and past, and between the two coexisting orders lie the degrees or else nuances of pure difference.

For Deleuze, it is precisely *in the hiatus of differences in degree and differences in nature* that *lies the true nature of difference*, difference in itself, pure difference, or else intensity.²⁴² The difference between ideas and matter is neither qualitative nor quantitative but *intensive*. Bergson concludes by identifying ideas with contracted duration and matter with relaxed duration but then refuses to see that there is a quantitative aspect between these differences in the intensity of contraction. In *Time and Free Will*, he refuses to accept that intensity can be measured²⁴³ because that would mean that the relation between the two would

²³⁹ In between matter and ideas, there is a difference in degree (slow and fast pace of duration), but at each moment, both differ in nature in relation to themselves. Differences in degree constantly differ in nature from themselves.

²⁴⁰ Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 75, 91.

²⁴¹ Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 93.

²⁴² Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 239.

²⁴³ Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2001), 2. Bergson claims this non-measurability by chance of the intensity of psychic states and sensations. He claims that a sensation or psychic state such as pain cannot be said to increase based on a supposed extended muscle area affected by such state. What we perceive as increased sensation is in fact of successive qualitative changes in sensation so that we can talk for example about a passage from annoyance to pain, anguish and then excruciation.

be once again quantified and spatialized as in commonsensical understandings of the terms. That is because, for Bergson, any account of a greater and a lesser magnitude implies space since ‘lesser’ is necessarily always involved in ‘greater.’²⁴⁴ As a result, he thinks intensity and its variation constitute a false problem, and intensity is a wrongly analyzed, impure mixture,²⁴⁵ ultimately referring to space, as do the impure mixtures of common sense. Deleuze’s critique of Bergson on the problem of intensity is that he ultimately relies on an obsolete account of quantity that Bergson sees as inevitable when, in fact, it is not. Deleuze shows that quantity can be conceived as a non-extensive, non-measurable quantity that answers the question of ‘more or less’ but not of ‘how much.’ Quantity in this account is a relative intrinsic measurement, not an absolute one that would need to refer to an external meter such as space. Deleuze’s view on quantity retains an always already qualitative aspect²⁴⁶ which is precisely *inequality* or a dynamic that spurs the irruption of difference. For Deleuze, intensity is crucially intensive quantity; it is the unequal in-itself. The non-cancellable inequality of intensity signals the characteristic of difference in persevering in itself instead of tending towards identity and stasis, as in the scientific account of it presented in thermodynamics.²⁴⁷ Unlike Bergson, who scorns the mechanistic science of his time for its quantitative accounts of quality, Deleuze criticizes thermodynamics for betraying difference by proving its deterministic tendency towards its cancellation in *equality*.²⁴⁸ It is characteristic of quantity to involve the unequal in itself in such a way that inequality is the quality that belongs to quantity.²⁴⁹

While Bergson recognizes matter and mind as differences of degree within quality-duration, he nevertheless maintains that they retain a radically different nature.²⁵⁰ Given the stages of the philosophical method of intuition, such a distinction between the two terms is a precondition for their reunification, and, therefore, to some degree, the distinction is retained in the latter.²⁵¹ To explain that differently, we need to think in terms of the virtual and the actual

²⁴⁴ Vesselin Petrov, “Bertrand Russell’s Criticism of Bergson’s Views about Continuity and Discreteness,” *Filozofia* 68, no. 10 (2013): 890–904, 894.

²⁴⁵ Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 18.

²⁴⁶ Mary Beth Mader, “Whence Intensity? Deleuze and the Revival of a Concept,” in *Gilles Deleuze and Metaphysics*, ed. Alain Beaulieu, 2014, 225–49.

²⁴⁷ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 228.

²⁴⁸ This critique is specifically addressed to mechanistic science and is not foreclosing the possibility of a new science that would make use of the radical potentials of the calculus which is exactly among the propositions of Bergson.

²⁴⁹ Deleuze, 232.

²⁵⁰ Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 220.

²⁵¹ It seems that Bergson’s refusal to see intensity as measurable is what retains a difference in nature between matter and spirit that we don’t find in Deleuze. That is linked to the distance between the two philosophers concerning the issue of the ego and consciousness. Suppose matter and spirit retain in them an irreducible difference in nature. That reinforces the idea that spiritual beings are of another order in reference to the non-

that Deleuze will incorporate in *Difference and Repetition*. Matter and spirit rethought in terms of duration are reformulated as actual and virtual. These two coexist simultaneously, with the actual being a contraction or degree of the virtual. However, when we say that something changes in time, it means it changes in nature in relation to itself. At the same time, when the virtual crosses the limit, when it stops being past and becomes present, it becomes actual. Therefore, the virtual and the actual differ in nature.²⁵² As a result, Bergson sees matter at the limit as an inert element susceptible to the laws of nature, unlike human affectivity - which is the expression of virtual quality. On the contrary, Deleuze believes that *human affectivity and matter belong to the same plane of immanence*. The plane is subject to the laws of nature that are no longer seen as mechanistic. Furthermore, it is no longer a bloc of space but a bloc of time-space.²⁵³ While Deleuze believes that this conception of the plane of immanence is far from Bergson's original theses, he nevertheless believes that by perceiving matter as a repetition of moments, each deriving directly from the other, he already introduces in it the factor of time planting the seeds for us to reinterpret it as a mobile matter in becoming.²⁵⁴ Another critique by Deleuze of Bergson that is linked to the above is that although he proves time to be creative, the continuity he emphasizes between past and present "safeguards the coherence of the ego, a critique that Deleuze indirectly addresses in his linking of the second synthesis of time, i.e., memory to the formation of the ego, as Widder points out.²⁵⁵ It seems as if Bergson did involve difference in his philosophical system (the present differing itself in nature from the past). However, he did not push his understanding of difference in its extremity to the point where difference is purely ungrounded (note that ground, in terms of time, is memory) difference. There is still some retention of the past-memory in the future that is in the creative function of time in Bergson.

conscious ones and are not governed by the same laws. Difference in nature between matter and ideas is indeed based on a denial to see them as degrees of intensity instead of degrees of quality. Considering quality, spirit, or duration as the ultimate ontological category betrays matter as an element that lacks something in relation to consciousness. This problem is solved in Deleuze by considering intensity as the ultimate ontological category that is indifferent to any hierarchy between matter and spirit. The latter are only degrees of intensity.

²⁵² What Deleuze, therefore, points out is that these two realms at the same time differ in nature and in degree so what better describes their difference is his concept of degrees or nuances of difference.

²⁵³ Dorothea Olkowski, "Deleuze and the Limits of Mathematical Time," *Deleuze Studies* 2, no. 1 (June 2008): 1–17, 19.

²⁵⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema I: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, Paperback edition, Bloomsbury Revelations (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2018), 251.

²⁵⁵ Nathan Widder, *Reflections on Time and Politics* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 90.

Finally, Deleuze metaphysics in *Difference and Repetition* is distant from that of Bergson in that the latter refers to the differences in nature appearing within quality as relying ultimately upon a structure of resemblance.²⁵⁶ For Bergson, if matter and duration-mind communicate and are different degrees of the same thing, it must be because they resemble one another, or to put it differently, things that differ in degree have a supposedly common nature -being qualitative- and that means that they in some way resemble. Specifically, in *Matter and Memory*, Bergson refers to a “likeness” between the quality binding together successive moments of an indivisible movement outside ourselves and our consciousness.²⁵⁷ Nonetheless, for Deleuze, resemblance, identity, analogy, and opposition, are the underpinnings of a representational form of thought. Representation is thinking based upon the illusion of a supposedly self-identical subject whose faculties coordinate upon a supposedly self-identical object to grasp it through perception.²⁵⁸ While this function of thought makes up much of our empirical mental activity, it does not constitute an adequate model to understand *thought*. In contrast with the supposed resemblance of the subject and the object, thinking for Deleuze occurs at the limits of this representational capacity, where faculties can no longer converge to represent a self-identical object because the perceived sensation imposes violence upon the faculties creating discord between them and forcing each one to transmit its constraint upon the others.²⁵⁹ In short, thinking has nothing to do with the resemblance of an object with a quality or a function of our faculties since the imperceptible element that, as we will see, spurs thought throws our faculties, our perception, understanding, and imagination that are summoned to grasp it, into disarray.

The critique of Bergson is that he attributes to the virtual what belongs to intensity.²⁶⁰ For Deleuze, quality and quantity belong to the actual realm of identities and everyday common sense; therefore, quality cannot be the defining category characterizing reality. Matter and memory are not only degrees of duration within quality. They both derive from a higher or deeper instance which is not representable and is graspable through the transcendent use of the faculties, that is, intensity or intensive quantity (quantity here being crucial in ensuring the inequality that belongs to intensity by definition). Intensity or sense is the transcendent field from which empirical reality is conditioned, generated, or given. It is a pre-individual field of

²⁵⁶ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 238.

²⁵⁷ Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 202-3.

²⁵⁸ Deleuze, 134.

²⁵⁹ Deleuze, 141, 146.

²⁶⁰ Deleuze, 229.

singularities that resonate along heterogeneous series through the function of the paradoxical, perpetually displacing, and displaced element at the heart of intensity-sense. The difference between matter and memory cannot be constrained and limited by the false problems of identity (matter and spirit being qualitative) or opposition (matter and spirit retaining a different nature). A radical, positive, and creative difference exists between them, that is an intensive difference.

Their differences notwithstanding, Bergson's durational metaphysics is a necessary pillar of Deleuze's philosophy. When we start understanding the world in terms of spatiotemporality rather than spatiality, to which time is an additional dimension, we must think of the infinite temporalities that coexist in the one and real sensible world. To think of this multiplicity, one has to consider the idea of different perspectives upon this world or the different versions of the duration that constitute the world. Bergson combines a view of one unique time, in reference to which all the other temporalities can relate to each other, with the infinity of temporalities comprising reality, ultimately uniting monism with pluralism, recognizing time as a special type of multiplicity.²⁶¹ On the contrary, Deleuze affirms the multiplicity of temporalities and, therefore, of perspectives in a more radical way that does not need the conception of a unitary time but emphasizes the disjointed form of time which proceeds through ruptures and hiatuses in chronological time, putting in question the hypothesis of any possible single-point-perspective, which he considers as the basis of the form of common sense representational thought.

Deleuzian critique of Spinoza's metaphysics

To begin addressing the issue of intensity, it will be helpful to additionally analyze the evolution of Deleuzoguattarian metaphysics in relation to the Spinozian philosophy of affect exposed in the previous chapter. As shown above, Bergson, like Spinoza, introduces a monistic metaphysics. The former considers movement and time as basic metaphysical categories, unlike the naturalist philosophy of the latter. While Spinoza attempts to reconcile the eternal existence of substance-God with the changing and provisional existence of its modes in a way that leaves the problem open, Bergson works towards proving the evolving and dynamic nature of time as a primary metaphysical category of which space is a derivative rather than the vessel in which time occurs. Deleuze's effort, to some extent, is to combine the two metaphysical systems and to analyze Spinoza in light of the evolution of thought brought about by Bergson's view and the scientific advances on the dynamic nature of matter. Moreover, as Duffy points

²⁶¹ Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 85.

out, the Nietzschean concept of the eternal return is another way Deleuze attempts to insert time into the Spinozian scheme.²⁶² The effort of inserting duration in Spinoza's system and thus complicating the aspect of the eternity of Spinozian substance has both the advantage of aligning Spinoza with the physics of our time but also possibly solving the unresolved Spinozian problem of the tension between eternity and finitude, substance and modes. Moreover, it is, of course, Bergson that would be enriched by the Spinozian concept of the equality of ideas and matter as properties of substance.

As indicated in the title of Deleuze's dissertation on Spinoza, the former's reading of the latter is defined by the concept of expression, which, as will become apparent, allows for a processual understanding of substance and therefore inserts a temporal dimension.²⁶³ Expression is, according to Deleuze, a critical notion that, albeit not used by Spinoza himself in the *Ethics* except once, nevertheless describes accurately and clarifies the way Spinoza conceptualized the relation between God and Nature, substance and its modes, the eternal and the finite, the unchanging and the variable. Expression as a methodological approach has a long tradition in the history of philosophy and was specifically prominent in the middle ages and Renaissance philosophy, yet in Spinoza's case, it is tightly linked with the concepts of immanence and univocity. In Deleuze's view, the latter are dangerous concepts in that in them lurks the interpretation of pantheism. Deleuze starts with the hypothesis that God in Spinoza's metaphysics not only *is* Nature, with the consequences and interpretative difficulties this entails, but more precisely, God *expresses* himself (*sic*) in Nature and, consequently, in human beings. For Spinoza, the terms of an expressive relation are strictly equivalent, and no one is superior to the other. In Deleuze's own words, immanence is a concept that "renders man adequate (commensurate) to God." The terms distinguished as cause and effect have a difference in their respective degrees of perfection but not a difference in nature. In an immanent relation, the least perfect term exists inside the more perfect.²⁶⁴ That does not mean that God and humans are equal in Spinozian philosophy, but that the human involves the essence or else the power of God and expresses it immediately. Expression is so valuable for Deleuze because it is that concept that denotes the simultaneous commonality or identity and

²⁶² Simon Duffy, *The Logic of Expression: Quality, Quantity, and Intensity in Spinoza, Hegel, and Deleuze* (Aldershot, Hants ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub, 2006), 216.

²⁶³ May, *Gilles Deleuze*, 37.

²⁶⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York : Cambridge, Mass: Zone Books ; Distributed by MIT Press, 1990), 331.

heterogeneity²⁶⁵ of terms that are enveloped and implicated in each other, God and nature, the soul and the body, ideas and matter.

Explicating and involving, evolving and implicating, developing and enveloping are critical functions of the expressive relation, in which the more perfect term envelops or implicates the least perfect one. Simultaneously, the latter develops or explicates the former. The One implicates the multiple, while the multiple explicates the One. Each element of the multiple exists in the One as a lesser degree inside an absolute degree. Explication and implication are part of a synthesis resulting in complication, already in the context of the philosophical tradition of the Renaissance and the middle ages. Nevertheless, according to Deleuze, Spinoza renews that tradition by disentangling the idea of expression from the concept of emanation, according to which modes emanate from God in a mediated way so that they end up being distinguished by God as if they were different types of being. We have talked about the expressing and the expressed, but actually, expression in the Spinozian scheme is composed of three elements: the thing that expresses itself, that is, the *substance*, the expression, which is the *attributes* of substance, and the thing that is expressed, that is the *essence* of substance.²⁶⁶ The modes or finite variable things are, in turn, the elements in which the attributes express themselves. Therefore, modes constitute a second-level expression of substance, yet no less important than the first. Modes express substance, but only by virtue of the attributes that envelop the essences of the modes. Therefore, the substance, attribute, and essence triad can be reconfigured as substance, modes, and attributes, with the attributes involving the essence of both substance and the modes and the modes expressing the attributes as well as substance. The modes explicate substance, the attributes implicate the modes, and the substance complicates the modes and the attributes. God-substance complicates or else involves variable things, while things explicate eternal God.²⁶⁷ All terms of the expressive relation are tightly bound together. However, they are simultaneously distinct. The third term in the triadic structure of the expressive relation makes possible the relationship between the other two terms. The expression, or the form of this relation, is how the expressed and the expressing are bound together.

Deleuze attempts to prove the univocity or commonality of being that corresponds to both substance and modes through exactly the expressive form of the relation, the attributes.

²⁶⁵ Deleuze, 327.

²⁶⁶ Deleuze, 27.

²⁶⁷ Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 175.

Spinoza distinguishes substance or else *Natura Naturans*, that is, substance that is thought as primary, creative of itself and conceived in itself, from *Natura Naturata*, that is, substance insofar as it is modified, that is, Nature as created, comprised of infinite, finite modes. Deleuze points out that God or substance generates itself as a being with a formal existence, of which the attributes are the expression. The attributes constitute the formal existence of substance in such a way that they are simultaneously distinctions of substance and ways substance is constituted.²⁶⁸ Simultaneously, the attributes involve in themselves, although indistinctly, the essences of the modes, that is, the part of modes that remains constant and is independent of their existence. The attributes constitute the formal existence or the quality common in both God and modes. It follows that God and the modes are created in the same formal existence, and common qualities, that is, thought (ideas) and matter, define the being of both. To put it differently, the idea of God is as much a product of God as the essences of modes -and in which God expresses himself (*sic*)- are products of God. Being is said in one and the same sense in both cases. Deleuze claims that only by proving univocity, that is, the equality of being between substance and modes, and by revealing God as an immediate internal cause of variability, can the Spinozian idea of immanence reach its conceptual limits.

Despite the proof of univocity, the problematic distinction remains between the essence of God -being absolute and involving in an undifferentiated manner the eternal essences of the modes- and modes' actual existence as sets of characteristic relations. Through that problem, Deleuze attempts to insert differentiation into the eternal idea of God. If the differentiation of the idea of God could be proved, it would follow that substance as it appears under the attribute of thought could be understood as involving the singularity of the finite modes in an internal way and, in a way, be affected by modes immediately. Deleuze attempts to prove God's differentiation by reading in Spinoza the possibility of the existence of singular modal essences independent of modes' actual existence.²⁶⁹ In Spinoza, the essences of modes are eternal, exist independently of the existence of modes, and are involved in the mind of God or else the eternal idea of God in an undifferentiated manner, that is, in such a way that they are not distinguished from it and each other. When modes come to existence, they incarnate their essence eternally inherent in God's infinite spirit. Only then do their essences become distinguished from each other as distinct sets of relations between parts that the modes come to realize. The essences of all non-existing modes together constitute the essence of God and are caused by it, but since

²⁶⁸ Deleuze, 182.

²⁶⁹ Duffy, *The Logic of Expression*, 110.

the essence of God is absolute, the essences of modes that coexist in it all agree with each other. As a result, all essences are involved in producing other essences and are involved in God in a way that cannot be distinguished and have a distinct existence in relation to the latter.²⁷⁰ Deleuze points out that this thesis supposes that distinction is made possible solely at the level of existing modes and that external distinction is the only possible kind of distinction.

Trying to refute the underlying assumption in Spinoza's thesis that every distinction is an external distinction, Deleuze attempts to show that one can discern in Spinoza the essences of the modes as internal differences in the eternal and unchanging idea or essence of God.²⁷¹ He points out a passage in which Spinoza talks about the composite idea resulting from a mode's eternal essence and the idea of an existing mode. He contends that the latter is a new type of idea that one could read as a singular modal essence. Moreover, using the concept of intrinsic distinction as elaborated by the medieval philosopher Duns Scotus, he shows that degrees of intensity are intrinsic distinctions of a quality that remains univocally the same despite the distinctions. Deleuze continues to exhibit that the formal existence of God, that is, the attributes, constitutes infinite *qualities*, each of which -insofar as modes exist- is affected by the infinite *quantity* of the modes. The attributes that, as constitutive of the infinite substance, are indivisible, therefore, become divisible modally.²⁷² According to the above, the essences of the modes are different degrees of intensity of the quality described by each attribute. They can be discerned by the corresponding attribute in the same way that a quality's intensity is discerned by the quality itself.²⁷³ Each attribute or quality of the eternal substance is affected by at least two infinite quantities. Those infinite quantities correspond to the infinity of finite modes perceived under the attribute of thought and extension. Else put, each attribute is affected by two infinite quantities, from one part by an intensive quantity divisible in degrees and from the other by an extensive quantity divisible in modal parts.²⁷⁴ Substance as perceived in itself, that is, in its qualities, is affected by an infinity of different degrees resulting in being distinguished but also composed by different degrees of its power. The different degree to which each mode expresses the quality of an attribute is qualitative but not numerical difference. It is unlike what Spinoza assumes, internal or intensive difference. That means that the finite or the variable aspect of Nature, that is, the modes are distinct from each other neither

²⁷⁰ Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 195.

²⁷¹ Deleuze, 195.

²⁷² Deleuze, 191.

²⁷³ Deleuze, 197.

²⁷⁴ Deleuze, 192.

qualitatively nor externally. Their difference is quantitative and intrinsic intensive. Here it is helpful to resume the critique of Deleuze to Bergson according to which quality -that is, the virtual, the incorporeal, or else duration- is not the defining category of reality, and neither is quantity as understood in the commonsensical idea of inert space. Instead, it is an intensive quantity that defines the vicissitudes of life. Similarly, in Spinoza, the irreparable division between substance in itself thought as qualitative, and the modes as supposedly quantitative is reconciled with the idea of the modes' essences as degrees of intensity of the idea of God,²⁷⁵ and the subsequent differentiation produced by the modes, in the idea of God, in an internal way.

The affiliation of modes and substance is also apparent in the path one has to follow in knowledge to arrive at God's eternal essence. Deleuze underlines the importance of common ideas in that path, or else of the ingredient of what Spinoza terms the second kind of knowledge. Common ideas consist of the perception of what is common in our body and in the bodies that are external to it. Exposed as we are during our existence to the constant and contingent effect of other bodies upon ours, every knowledge that is accessible to us begins with the perception of such impact upon us, from which we learn to distinguish the bodies that affect us in a positive way from those that affect us in negative ways. That knowledge arising from passions is the initial step in reaching common ideas, that is, ideas that denote a synthesis of characteristic relations common in our bodies and those that affect ours in a positive and energizing manner. The knowledge of the characteristic syntheses of bodies is the path to subsequently grasp more universal common ideas -that is of ideas that are common to all bodies and not only those who agree with ours, like, for example, motion and rest, and of which the attributes, ideas, and extension are only some examples. Yet since the attributes constitute the essence of divine substance,²⁷⁶ by understanding them, one can reach their cause in such divine essence. We need to pass from common ideas, that is, the knowledge of relations, in order to arrive at the third kind of knowledge and experience the eternal love of God that leads to beatitude. The initiation of the knowledge of God is rooted in the passions, and the constitution of common ideas inside imagination is just one indication of the intimate relation of passions with God.

Inserting difference or else intensity in the essence of God, that makes us rethink the essences of modes as different degrees of the divine essence, is, in turn, mirrored in the

²⁷⁵ Duffy, *The Logic of Expression*, 113.

²⁷⁶ Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 300.

differentiation of the soul. The soul, like the essence of God, is divided into extensive modal parts linked with the affections of substance,²⁷⁷ that is, the influences to which bodies are subject in extension, and an intensive part, that is, the eternal part of the soul. The first one is modally divisible and consists in the powers of imagination and memory that refer to the impressions left in us from the influences of other bodies-modes. Imagination consists of the impressions of the influences of such external bodies in the present, while memory refers to the retention of the successive impressions of influences in duration. The second, eternal part of the soul is indivisible. The two parts coexist in the soul while the body exists; duration and eternity coexist while the body endures.²⁷⁸ In Spinoza, the difference between these parts remains clear. Duration and eternity retain for him an irreducible difference in nature.²⁷⁹ Nevertheless, duration or the test of existence influences how the eternal part of the soul is predisposed to fulfill its eternal capacity to affect and be affected. The third kind of knowledge, the knowledge of one's essence along with the relation of this essence with the essences of the other things and with the divine essence, allows one to understand one's self as it is IN God and, therefore, as a degree and an intensive part of God's essence. Moreover, the test of existence, ensuring that earthly passions affect one's eternal essence and fulfill its predisposition for eternity or not, is precisely inserting duration and variability into the world of eternal essences.

As shown above, modes are not only explicative of God. On the contrary, Spinoza proves an internal structure of the expressive relation through his geometrical method. According to that, attributes, the infinite properties of substance, of which ideas and extension are the only ones known to us, are internal points of view of substance. Modes are properties deriving from the definition of substance that -thought in the context of substance's absolute nature- constitute "an infinite collective being."²⁸⁰ Furthermore, common ideas lead us to the element of Spinozian metaphysics dealing with substance and its modes as sets of characteristic relations, with each mode corresponding to a particular set of relations peculiar to it. Defining substance as well as each mode of it as a set of relations Spinoza, Deleuze claims, is composing a definition of a thing from the point of view of its internal structure rather than as a set of external characteristics apparent in its form as it presents itself in sensory experience. Being forced to distinguish the elements characterizing a body that agrees with ours, we are led to

²⁷⁷ Deleuze, 311.

²⁷⁸ Deleuze, 314.

²⁷⁹ Deleuze, 313.

²⁸⁰ Deleuze, 22.

think of the internal relations of such a body that are common to that body and to ours and, as already explained, proceed from there to the more universal ideas and the essence of God. The way to acquire knowledge of the external bodies is by becoming conscious of the effect of their internal structure upon us. Unlike Aristotelian categorization of modes based on their formal characteristics, Spinoza is the initiator of an internal functional conceptualization of living beings and, as such, a predecessor of the principle of unity biology,²⁸¹ while at the same defining knowledge as a process internal to cognition and affective rather than sensory experience.

By proving the singularity of the essences of modes, Deleuze inserts differentiation in the eternal and absolute idea of God. This move brings Spinoza closer to the Bergsonian *idea* as connected to virtual differentiation and ideas as singular elements resulting from the contraction of moments brought forward by time. Nevertheless, in the end, ideas, despite being rethought as differentiated, still remain static in Spinoza. For us to rethink Spinozian metaphysics in the light of Deleuze's aspirations, a great reversal must occur: substance needs to be substituted by intensity. The modes, in turn, are to be understood as the degrees of intensity. Intensity, as the primary metaphysical category, is no longer distinguished into an ideal and an extended part but, on the contrary, brings ideas and extension in a productive relation. This argumentative line is the one that will eventually lead Deleuze to invert the Spinozian thesis according to which substance is said of itself, and modes are said of something else, namely of substance. According to Deleuze, substance should only be said of the modes.²⁸² Eternity should be said not of the finite but of the infinitely changing. That is how the full reconciliation of eternity with finitude is accomplished. That is how intensity, initially an expression of the way modes incarnate substance, becomes the main ontological category, uniting substance and modes.

3. Metaphysics of intensity

We are now in a better position to explain Deleuze's metaphysics, his account of intensity, and the latter's relation to the virtual and the actual. For Deleuze, Bergson's philosophy of duration and virtuality and Spinoza's philosophy of substance and modes constitute starting points in his effort to dismantle the prevalent dualisms of Western philosophy as well as the primacy of identity over difference characterizing the dominant

²⁸¹ Deleuze, 278.

²⁸² Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 40.

tradition in Western thought. What is crucial for Deleuze is to create a concept of difference that grasps the real nature of the latter in the process of its differentiation. To do so, he underlines the necessity to grasp a difference that is internal but not conceptual in the ordinary sense of the term. For Deleuze, a concept is a general entity that necessarily oversees the individual differences of the objects that fall under its umbrella, which is why it cannot grasp the constant differentiation²⁸³ that Deleuze's idea of difference seeks to convey. In other words, it is impossible to describe difference adequately through a concept that remains identical to itself, through its bond to language and representation. That is why Deleuze underlines the necessity for a concept that would do justice to the difference by being able to produce difference itself. Intensity will serve as such.

Intensity as coupling

By elaborating on the question of the difference between Bergsonian differences in degree (quantitative and spatial) and differences in nature (qualitative and durational), Deleuze sets out to explore the realm of degrees or else nuances of difference whose multiplicity is non-representable, that is, cannot be grasped by a concept thought as identical to itself.²⁸⁴ Degrees of difference are precisely expressed in infinitely different degrees of intensive quantity. Intensive quantity or intensity is expressed in the coupling of the virtual and the actual, the ideal and the extensive, bringing together these two as non-reducible to one another but inextricably linked as aspects of reality and all phenomena and enabling processes of creation to take place between them. Intensity, while giving rise to both, is autonomous in relation to the virtual and the actual and determines the passage from one to the other. By bringing together elements of the virtual ideas or problems that are determined but not yet actualized in the actual determinate realm of extensity, intensity is individuating; that is, it determines how the solution of a problem will be actualized and in what form.

Ideas, according to Deleuze, are differential structures comprising indistinct differential relations. Intensity gives rise to virtual ideas and actual qualities and extensities by determining the passage between the two through transforming indistinct and undetermined differential

²⁸³ Henry Somers-Hall, "Deleuze's Use of Kant's Argument from Incongruent Counterparts," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 51, no. 3 (September 2013): 345–66.

²⁸⁴ In Bergson differences in degree between ideas and matter exist within one qualitative durational nature of reality which changes nature due to time. One can say that differences in degree exist within differences of nature. Yet one could say that is a hierarchical arrangement between the two kinds of differences which Deleuze seeks to withdraw through the concept of nuances of difference which explores a wider range of heterogeneities whose sole characteristic is continuous variation.

relations involved in ideas into distinct qualities and discrete extensities.²⁸⁵ The different parts of the process of this passage are described by Deleuze by different names. The passage from ideas to qualities and extensities is a process of double *differenciatio* or else actualization. In contrast, the process through which intensity develops in qualities and extensities by creating them -while at the same time seemingly disappearing in these qualities and extensities- is a process of explication. Moreover, intensity is involved in the process of implication in itself. Finally, the essential process of intensity is individuation, that is, the process through which pre-individual singularities existing in the differential relations of ideas become integrated into a coupling which allows these elements to resonate and communicate to produce individuals, that is, perspectives through which solutions to the said problems express themselves. Differenciatio is the process by which extended things, organisms, beings, species, and parts are created through the explication of intensity or force in space. Differenciatio is distinguished by differentiation which is the process by which the virtual ideas and their differentials and singularities evolve by bifurcating themselves, constantly changing along with all reality. Since both are part of one and the same process, Deleuze has created the term *differenciatio*.

At the same time that intensity is explicated and, therefore, seemingly canceled in extensities (actual bodies) and qualities, it always remains implicated in itself. By virtue of its implication in itself, intensity remains independent of both the virtual and the actual and from the process through which it determines the passage between them and therefore remains a primary metaphysical category for Deleuze. As implicated in itself, it is the transcendental principle *by which the given is given* and what we perceive in experience through our senses and intellect. At the same time, intensity, as a transcendental principle, constitutes the genetic condition and the limit of sensibility or what Deleuze calls the *being of the sensible*.²⁸⁶ Intensity differs from Bergsonian quality or else perception and mind. According to Deleuze, perception, like quality, belongs to the actual and indicates how intensity and difference in-itself is canceled while explicated. As the limit of sensibility, intensity spurs the irruption of virtual ideas in the actual, in a way that produces novelty. As Smith and Protevi put it, “the virtual Idea is the transformation matrix for material systems or bodies,”²⁸⁷ but it is only through

²⁸⁵ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 245.

²⁸⁶ Deleuze, 236, 266.

²⁸⁷ Daniel Smith and John Protevi, "Gilles Deleuze", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/deleuze/>>

intensity that virtual ideas can transform the actual since it is through intensity that they can actualize themselves into the actual.

Individuation precedes actualization in principle and explains not only which of the virtual relations of the problematic idea are actualized and in what form but also why that specific thing and a specific quantity of a thing or that extent of a phenomenon is created instead of another. Intensity creates the lines of differentiation along which individuation proceeds because the actual in no way resembles the virtual, and the condition in no way resembles what it conditions. Individuation answers the question “Who?” by determining the constitution of actual bodies while being independent of them.²⁸⁸ That means individuals differ from the extensive species and parts we perceive in common sense experience. As Deleuze puts it, species and parts are “imprisoned in individuals as though in a crystal.”²⁸⁹ In other words, individuals and individuation as kinds of diagrams give rise to actual organisms and things determining their respective power and therefore explaining not only their form but their determinate potential. Actual things would not be able to be created without the individuals that precede them and constitute the power giving the former their determinate forms and magnitude. Inversely all individuals are intensive,²⁹⁰ expressing the differences in intensity or power potentials that constitute them. Establishing a communication or an internal resonance between two different intensities or power potentials is precisely the function of individuation. By virtue of this capacity, it allows to establish a resonance and a passage between the virtual and the actual.

Intensity is the movement of communication among all kinds of disparate orders of difference (such as differences in degree and differences in quality) or else the movement of communication among heterogeneous series comprised of other heterogeneous series and so on to infinity. Its function in ensuring the communication and passage between the virtual and the actual is an example of this broader function of communication between disparities. Series come together through a sign and by emitting a sign. Series along with a sign form a signal system. A signal, conversely, is a system of heterogeneous series brought in communication by a phenomenon according to which a sign flashes due to the sudden and unpredictable coming together of two heterogeneous series.²⁹¹ As an example, Deleuze mentions lightning

²⁸⁸ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 246.

²⁸⁹ Deleuze, 247.

²⁹⁰ Deleuze, 246.

²⁹¹ Deleuze, 222.

as a signal system and the flashing of light as a sign arising when communication happens between earth and cloud, that is, two series or simply two elements with different electrical charges. Moreover, as an example of how intensity in its pure state (implicated not yet explicated state) presents itself to us and becomes apparent and graspable in marginal conditions of experience, Deleuze mentions states such as vertigo and hallucinations. In these states, we experience change or difference in itself in an “axis” different from that of extensity; we experience power and difference in its pure form. The time when such events occur is simply a chance for our senses to grasp the limit of a constant dynamic process creating and subtending reality but whose perception is not available to us in commonsense experience due to the difference between the duration of such process and the pace of our perceptual capacities.

Intensity is the unequal in itself,²⁹² and so always connects two heterogeneous divergent series with nothing equal and nothing in common, which come into communication while emitting a sign. This sign-series system is overall called a signal, and this process system describes how intensity functions or arises. The element that ensures the communication between the heterogeneous disparate series is the dark precursor or the paradoxical element, an element whose identity with itself remains perfectly indeterminate and is only the effect of its function as a connector.²⁹³ This function consists in concealing itself, as well as difference in itself, all while producing the series. The sole identity of the dark precursor as an element of differentiation is that of a thing missing from its place, and it is an identity extrapolated and imputed to it retrospectively only by virtue of its function.²⁹⁴ The function of the precursor is to act as the differentiator of the different series. Inserting itself as an empty element between each series’ elements successively while passing from one series to another, it thus displaces the elements of each series. Thus, it ensures the constant and constantly displaced inequality or difference of dynamic that realizes the heterogeneous series’ communication and resonance. Its only constant is its perpetual differentiation and disguise in what Deleuze calls simulacra,²⁹⁵ that is, images without likeness, images of the different, the unequal, and the false which put in question the whole Platonic idea of things in their true state, that is models and their corresponding copies. This communication that the differentiator brings about is not a serene

²⁹² Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 232.

²⁹³ Deleuze, 119.

²⁹⁴ Deleuze, 119.

²⁹⁵ Deleuze, 126.

neutral process but a violent, exactly intensive phenomenon. As Deleuze puts it, “the dark precursor is not a friend”.²⁹⁶

It is through the dark precursor or paradoxical element, which both is and is-not, that intensity proceeds.²⁹⁷ Furthermore, it is by the logic of this differentiating or paradoxical element that intensity is defined, a logic distinct from that of common-sense rationality governed by the law of non-contradiction, according to which something either is or is not. In the *logic of pure difference* or else intensity, things both are and are not at the same time; that is, things become constantly. The logic of difference, or what Deleuze later calls the logic of sense, is the logic of both is and is not, where the coexistence of these supposed impossibles is affirmed.²⁹⁸ A coexistence of “IS” and “IS NOT,” better it is “IS” OR “IS NOT” is affirmed. At the heart of intensity, there is undecidability or indifference between being and not being.²⁹⁹ Something is and is not means something is changing, or changing constitutes its constant state into eternity. Aion, or else time as virtual intensity, is the time of this coexistence which in Chronos as actuality, dissolves into things that are or are not, but not at the same time - except that tipping point of actualization in which the past and present coexist, the moment when the virtual bursts out/appears into the actual, the moment when we grasp the imperceptible. Intensity is the thing that is and is not beyond the rationality of common sense and good sense that characterize what Deleuze calls the dogmatic image of thought. Virtuality is the coexistence of impossibles. Intensity is the folding together of impossibles in a way that is productive of extensities and qualities of actual bodies; that is the nature of sense. The coexistence of impossibles “is” and “is not” moves into eternity beyond common sense and sequential chronological time. Chaos, from which empirical reality is generated. Affirmation in Deleuze is a logical no less than an ontological concept. It denotes the state where nothing is excluded, where nothing excludes something else because there is no contradiction in the

²⁹⁶ Deleuze, 145.

²⁹⁷ Here I am describing intensity by combining terminology from both Deleuze’s seminal works *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*. It is agreed among scholars and admitted by Deleuze himself that there are different, and even incommensurable theories of intensity in the two works, in the first case presenting it like a phenomenon of depth while in the second, an effect happening on the surface. Smith and Deleuze, *Essays on Deleuze*, 123. Nevertheless, intensity in both cases is a differentiating mechanism going both directions and ramifying or differentiating series to other series to eternity.

²⁹⁸ The terms impossibles, and impossibility come from the philosophy of Leibniz, whose significance in Deleuze’s metaphysics of difference is great, as will be mentioned briefly in the continuation of the text.

²⁹⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Constantin V Boundas, Mark Lester, and Charles J Stivale (London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 104. As we will see later in the text, intensity appears in Deleuze’s second seminal work as sense. However, sense as an a-temporal event is beyond the distinction of negation and affirmation, inside and outside, or any other binarism whatsoever.

coexistence of supposed opposites. This coexistence, on the contrary, is, in fact, a coexistence of disparities that is, in turn, productive and generative.

According to Deleuze, opposition is a structure of representational thinking based on the collaborating between common sense and good sense. Nevertheless, in the non-representational thinking that he inaugurates, there are no opposites but only differences creating dynamic metastable states of reality, putting life in an infinite movement of transformation. That is the logic of difference and the logic of sense. The things considered impossibles do not form contradictions according to the logic of difference but only heterogeneous perspectives virtually belonging to the same world.³⁰⁰ The coexistence of irreducible heterogeneities or disparities, that is, infinitely proliferated differences, is what defines reality as both ideal-problematic and intensive-individuating; all the while, this problematic and intensive nature seems, at first sight, to be canceled into extensity and fully formed individuated actualized beings. Both intensity and virtuality are governed by this logic of difference or sense-event, according to which disparities coexist positively, creating tensions and singularities which push reality forward.³⁰¹ Intensive quantity arises from pre-individual differential relations, actualizes the tensions ensuing from the perpetual, eternal positive coexistence of disparate elements in the formation of recognizable empirical extensive and qualitative entities, all the while existing or else insisting (being implicated) in itself as a force of individuation. *Intensity* is the power that brings together heterogeneities or else pre-individual singularities that coexist at the virtual level, eternally and chaotically.³⁰²

When two things connect “against the odds,” when something becomes apparent, when an idea flashes before us like lightning on a dark night, when two things with no prior connection between them whatsoever suddenly connect, then they emit a signal, that signal is unequal, irreducibly differentiating and heterogeneous and changing each series composed of

³⁰⁰ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 48, 51.

³⁰¹ The idea of disparities and the connections they produce does not appear for the first time with Deleuze. His debt to Simondon on that account is irrefutable. The latter is the one that first describes the process of individuation as a process that solves a problem in a said domain using the tensions and disparities within this domain as principles of the solution. See, for example, Gilbert Simondon, “The Position of the Problem of Ontogenesis,” *Parrhesia*, no. 7 (November 2009): 4–16, 12.

³⁰² The virtual in Deleuze acquires a new role additional to that it had in its Bergsonian temporal conception, that is, it becomes the coexistence of all kinds of non-conceptual singular elements. It becomes a difference extending to all dimensions. Moreover, the virtual in Deleuze goes beyond the dimension of signification since the singularities that the virtual involves are not conceptual, they cannot be described through language, and like differences, they are minuscule, not able to be conceived clearly as they fall below our threshold of consciousness. The virtual and the ideas that comprise it are distinct yet obscure. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 214, 253.

other heterogeneous series and so on, infinitely bifurcating. *Intensity* is a signal produced by the sudden resonance of two divergent, irreducibly unequal alien series. Love is an intensity between two people who are irreducibly different and differentiating, often having divergent power dynamics between them but whose unconscious suddenly communicate, whose needs come together, and who enter a state of affecting each other and forming an individuated entity. The signal is the love or else the force of attraction, the series are the people involved, and the infinite heterogeneous series that comprise them are each one's own histories, past significant scenarios that defined them, "infinite" other relations of affection or more generally encounters, moments, ideas, chemical reactions that make them who they are or better make up their becomings. Love, of course, may be evident and given to the senses, yet not in the sense of the sun rising or the sky being blue. It is an incorporeal connective and transformative differentiating force, so we cannot refer to it with the definite is or is not of actual bodies and qualities. That is the meaning of incorporeal when we speak of intensity. Not self-evident, given to the everyday use of the senses. The function and the value of this incorporeality are not that it denies reality as existing extensive bodily reality but that it is opening this world of corporeality to its (incorporeal) transformation, to the difference arises from the repetitions performed on that level, it redefines corporeality as a force.

To perceive these incorporeal transformations, one has to be attentive and attuned to an intrinsic temporal point of view of reality which allows one to grasp differences not able to be pinned down or reduced to concepts. Incongruent objects, like the opposing yet symmetrical right and left hand, reveal the existence of intensity as the experience of reality from a perspective deeply immersed in it. As Kant points out, incongruent objects are entirely identical in quality and magnitude, yet they cannot replace each other. As a result, they cannot be intelligible and specified through the faculty of understanding of concepts but refer us to sensibility, which is the only faculty that can explain them.³⁰³ For Kant, these objects subsequently reveal that space is not an element of the objects themselves (whose nature in themselves we cannot grasp) but a characteristic of our perception. They reveal that space is what Kant calls intuition, that is, a way to grasp things through sensibility and not through thinking. Nevertheless, Deleuze points out that Kant mistakenly assumes that the relation between enantiomorphic bodies is extensive and space is filled with intensive quantity instead

³⁰³ Immanuel Kant, Gary C. Hatfield, and Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Come Forward as Science: With Selections from the Critique of Pure Reason*, Rev. ed, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), §13.

of space being itself an intensive quantity or intensity.³⁰⁴ Sensibility, in turn, is the only faculty that can grasp intensity. Intensity, manifested through signs, is the imperceptible, yet that which can only be sensed.³⁰⁵ Enantiomorphic bodies testify for the intensive or else difference, as a condition of the given, which is not graspable through concepts but gives us a concept that is only filled provisionally and in relation to an outside of thought,³⁰⁶ that is intensity. Only once we consider the axis of the body and the space as an interiority of sensibility and not as a planar projection outside of us can we explain the existence of incongruent objects.

This interiority is not bodily in the ordinary sense of the term, that is, of a body as an extensive-inert or a subjective entity. Intensity is not corporeal any more than it is ideal. It is both at once, disjunctively bringing together these two aspects of reality.³⁰⁷ It is incorporeal but not ideal. The interiority which concerns us here is not that of subjectivity but the interiority of an intensive duration, that of a reality developing in time, a time that, as we will see in further detail, splits the subject, is out of joint and not chronological. We occur in time and not the reverse and time constitutes subjectivity rather than subjectivity involving time.³⁰⁸ This links to the subchapter on internal difference that we will discuss after exposing the syntheses of time in Deleuze. Intensity consists in spatiotemporal dynamisms that, as Deleuze puts it, “are the actualizing, differentiating agencies.”³⁰⁹ These dynamisms substitute the agency of the body. All the while, they push us to plunge into the latter in order to grasp them.

We mentioned that intensity is the transcendental field by which the given is given. However, the transcendental field that gives sense-intensity is populated by singularities,³¹⁰ which, in *Difference and Repetition*, are referred to as virtual problematic elements. Admittedly the problem of the relation between the virtual and the intensive in Deleuze’s metaphysics is a highly complex one, and the scope of this dissertation does not aspire to offer a definitive answer. The former consists of reciprocal relations between differential ideal and problematic elements, while the latter is made of asymmetrical relations between elements of the sensible. As Deleuze puts it, there is a continuous exchange, continuity, and affinity between the two realms.³¹¹ On the one hand, new ideas and problems are generated by encounters that happen

³⁰⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 231.

³⁰⁵ Deleuze, 230.

³⁰⁶ Somers-Hall, “Deleuze’s Use of Kant’s Argument from Incongruent Counterparts.”

³⁰⁷ Sauvagnargues, 304.

³⁰⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta, Cinema 2 (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 85-6.

³⁰⁹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 214.

³¹⁰ Deleuze, *Logic of sense*, 103-11.

³¹¹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 244.

with or within intensity. On the other hand, actual things are created from ideas with the mediation of the power of intensity, without which they would remain only potential. The two are intimately interconnected, with the one tending towards an ideal nature comprised of indeterminate differential singularities, while the second being an incorporeal, yet determining individuating power performing connections-through-difference of heterogeneous elements. The discussion between Bergson and Deleuze on the different kinds of multiplicities helps clarify the differences between the two realms.

Two kinds of multiplicities - two kinds of numbers

As mentioned in the Bergsonian synthesis of time, if reality is durational, that means it splits continuously between the virtual past and the actual present. Therefore, virtual and actual differ in nature or in kind, which Bergson elaborates on by distinguishing time and space as two different kinds of multiplicities. Deleuze makes a move to additionally describe the difference in kind between the virtual and the actual as corresponding to the two types of mathematical multiplicities found in Riemannian geometry, continuous and discontinuous.³¹² Discontinuous multiplicities concern space understood as abstracted from its dynamic temporal dimension, space as a Newtonian conception that is infinite and inert and whose characteristic is the capacity to divide without changing in nature. Discontinuous multiplicities, unlike continuous ones, cannot tolerate the coexistence of impossibles, since in each present, at limit supposed inert, moment, the existence of one of its elements excludes the presence of another element at the same position, the placement of a chair on a specific corner in my room excludes placing the lamp in the exact same position. Moreover, the elements comprising such multiplicities can be separated from each other as in the way we can separate a piece from a material, say, cut a portion from a chunk of clay. Space is discontinuous because it is homogeneous and can be divided; it consists of things of the same nature: material, and extensive things. Saying that this account of reality is an abstraction amounts to saying that there is not, in fact, a space that indeed can be divided indefinitely without changing in nature because the space is nothing but the intensive or else forceful moving bodies (in the broadest sense of the term involving inorganic bodies) which cannot be cut without changing in nature. Infinite divisibility of space is a mental construct, and so is the idea of a present moment

³¹² Deleuze claims in *Bergsonism* that the distinction between these two types of multiplicities is already found in Bergson. See Deleuze, 40. Whether that is indeed the case is a point of debate that does not follow under the scope of this chapter to clarify. For more on that subject, see Nathan Widder, "The Mathematics of Continuous Multiplicities: The Role of Riemann in Deleuze's Reading of Bergson," *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* 13, no. 3 (August 2019): 331–54.

distinguished from the flow of time. We need to start thinking of discontinuity as arising from continuity.³¹³

The virtual is a continuous multiplicity in that it describes n dimensions of a system or else all the different phases from which a system passes at once. To understand that, we can imagine a graphic depiction of the vectors showing the periodic movements of a pendulum or the phases in the changes of the population of predators and prey in an ecosystem.³¹⁴ All the subsequent stages the system passes through are gathered and represented in one image so that impossible states or different durations coexist in that graphic model. These models incorporate the dimension of space and n dimensions in two-dimensional images allowing us to know how a system operates in its totality and in a concrete yet abstract way. Finally, the overall image of the sum of moves of a system is, like the memory of a person, a heterogeneous multiplicity because it folds and brings together different instances in a unity in which they cannot be distinguished from each other. In the same manner that the past cannot be distinguished and be separated from the present but has to be extended in the latter for the present to appear as such, the durations comprising virtual multiplicities are expanded and contracted with each other, becoming continuous with each other. In the same manner, the virtual idea elaborated by Deleuze consists of the coexistence of various possible incarnations in one structure, as in the example of color. In the idea of color as a set of differential relations, red and blue coexist despite their differences because the conditions of the generation of both are involved in the ideas' differentials. That coexistence is distinguished by the generality of the concept. The idea is differential because it involves an abstract but specific structure that can develop, differentiate and actualize in all colors. But as already explained, Deleuze adds to the idea of virtual multiplicity the concept of measurement. He points out that virtual ideas need the concept of quantity to become more than an empty generality.³¹⁵ Intensity ensues exactly from that need to confer magnitude to virtuality.

Subsequently, Deleuze wishing to distinguish two forms of quantity, intensive and extensive quantity, deploys the distinction between ordinal and cardinal numbers. While cardinal numbers express absolute magnitudes attributed to each number, ordinal numbers express a vectorial, relational magnitude that cannot be divided but only implies the relation between the numbers. Ordinal numbers do not refer to an extensity outside of them; they do

³¹³ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 162.

³¹⁴ Somers-Hall, *Hegel, Deleuze, and the Critique of Representation*, 91-123.

³¹⁵ Deleuze, 182.

not refer to any external element but are only defined reciprocally, given the order between them. Ordinal numbers express a sequence, the different parts of which, i.e., the distances between the numbers, need not be equal or measurable. Unlike that, cardinal numbers refer to a standard measure in reference to which each occupies a different magnitude or percentage of extensity.³¹⁶ Cardinal numbers depend upon or presuppose the sequence of ordinal numbers to which an external measure is added, or else cardinal numbers emerge through a process of explication of ordinal ones.³¹⁷ In the same way cardinal numbers arise from ordinal, so does extensive quantity arise from intensive quantity as described in the explication part of the actualization process.

The virtual and the intensive

While the virtual involves one kind of heterogeneity, the continuous qualitative variation of the moments that cannot be distinguished from each other,³¹⁸ the intensive involves an additional level of variation that is not only qualitative variation but also variation in the degree of intensity.³¹⁹ For example, when increased pressure is exerted on a body by another body, and a hug or caress becomes a squeeze, not only is there a *qualitative* change from pleasure to pain but also a sensation of decrease or increase in *intensity* that denotes the threshold of the passage from one quality to another. This increase, of course, is not measurable through an external measure that relies on reference to an absolute measure and frame of reference (such as that of Newtonian space) but one that is measured internally and provides its own measure for accounting for its increase and decrease. Deleuze attempts to read back into Bergson his own theory of intensive quantity and to add intensity at the heart of virtual duration-variation. That is why he talks of the intensive nature of duration when he distinguishes the two kinds of multiplicities, continuous and discontinuous. He claims that spatiotemporal dynamisms in which intensity is expressed are internal to the ideas.³²⁰ In any case, Deleuze's intensity is not divisible like the actual, nor is it indivisible like the virtual in

³¹⁶ Deleuze, 232-3.

³¹⁷ Deleuze, 233.

³¹⁸ Heterogeneity denotes a continuous variation such as the one we experience in time, qualitative because, according to Bergson, it is of a spiritual, ideal nature; moments in time have the quality of incorporeality and perception.

³¹⁹ See Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation*, 125-6.

³²⁰ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 218.

Bergson's account,³²¹ but divides only by changing in nature.³²² The parts in which it can be divided do not preexist the partition but result from it; they are created in the process. Intensity is, properly speaking, a continuous multiplicity, an intensive magnitude like temperature and speed that does divide but only by changing in nature, but Deleuze attempts to read the virtual in the same way.³²³ Intensity involves an increased axis of heterogeneity; it involves difference that is not reduced to vice-diction but is all the way the difference of impossibles.

The example of the egg offers a clarifying explanation of the difference and the relation between virtual and intensive.³²⁴ One can think of the virtual as the egg yolk or the core of the cell, containing the coded information defining the development of the chicken organism, while intensity can be thought of as the white part, the spatiotemporal dynamisms or else field of individuation in which this information begins to translate or play out and develop in a primary formation in which intense transformations take place before the actual genesis of the organism.³²⁵ Intensity is the field of singularities that, in turn, defines how the information will be formed, based on environmental as well as other non-predictable factors, and how the information stored in the virtual will connect and resonate with the information outside of it. It is exactly by determining the speed of development of the virtual parts of the organism that intensity determines the course of actualization.³²⁶

Virtuality grounds intensity, with “the power of intensity being grounded in the potentiality of the idea,”³²⁷ or as will we see, individuation is grounded in singularities that structure it. Intensity is conditioned by virtuality yet, at the same time, exceeds it, creating, by means of virtuality, something that does not resemble it. As Deleuze points out, grounding is the submission of something to what it is not, as well as a repetition from which difference arises.³²⁸ Virtuality submits intensity to what it is not, giving it its essential function of connecting what is with what is not. According to an interpretation, the intensive might be the

³²¹ Bergson insists that dividing time, or perceiving moments as successive and distinguishable from each other, inserts a spatialized account of duration again. According to him, we cannot cut time or talk about moments in time as intermittent. See Olkowski, “Deleuze and the Limits of Mathematical Time.” 3.

³²² Deleuze, 237.

³²³ According to some scholars, this move provides a still limited account of intensity. Deleuze in *The Logic of Sense* abandons this effort in order to talk about intensity in its own right. See Widder, “The Mathematics of Continuous Multiplicities.”

³²⁴ Deleuze, 214-7, 249-51.

³²⁵ Deleuze, 251.

³²⁶ Henry Somers-Hall, *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: An Edinburgh Philosophical Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 182.

³²⁷ Deleuze, 244.

³²⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *What Is Grounding?*, trans. Kleinherenbrink Arjen (Grand Rapids: Triple Ampersand Publishing, 2015), 175-6.

transcendental field from which actuality arises, but the virtual is the transcendental field³²⁹ from which both intensity and actuality arise. Intensity determines the way the singularities of a virtual idea-problem will connect to others, therefore, actualizing themselves, but virtuality is the differential field that contains all possible trajectories of a system.³³⁰ It seems that *the virtual is the repetition from which intensity as difference arises as a necessary component*. Moreover, the virtual, the intensive, and the actual form a circuit in which individuation is a determinant process that has to be examined in its singularity.³³¹ Intensity ensures the singularity of every process of creation of ideas and extensive parts; that is, every such process is a difference linked to productive repetition. Intensity is *ungrounding*.

Syntheses of time

By reformulating Bergson's account of time through intensity, Deleuze adds a third synthesis of time characterized by the irruption of difference and the new that does not derive from the past and the present and cannot be anticipated by them but is the reason for their existence.

1. According to Deleuze, the first passive synthesis of time is Habit, which consists of a moment contraction. A past and a future moment are contracted together to become only dimensions of the present.³³² It concerns the empirical foundation of time according to which we feel the present as involving the past and the future in the form of recalling and anticipation.³³³ The way habit is organized is through contraction, that is, through a binding or investment of excitations, or what we call the drives, upon past impressions projected to the future as expected outcomes. The contraction occurs between two instants in which the first one builds up an expectation and creates an excitation. The second satisfies that expectation through the advent of a specific outcome and which, in such a way, discharges the excitation building up to it. To exist in the present, we form habits that ensure that the expectation of specific outcomes of our actions will be fulfilled following past outcomes of the same actions. For example, when going for a walk, I expect to feel energized and be able to work effectively

³²⁹ Somers-Hall, *Hegel, Deleuze, and the Critique of Representation*, 120.

³³⁰ Somers-Hall, 121.

³³¹ Gilles Deleuze "The actual and the virtual" in Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 148-152, 152.

³³² Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 77.

³³³ Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 79-84 describes how memory is interlinked with habit. That kind of memory-habit is formed involuntarily by repetition and the work of imagination rather than the intellect. See also Nathan Widder, *Reflections on Time and Politics* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 89.

after, so I acquire the habit of going for walks, and that is how my present or short-term duration becomes organized and structured. Contractions of moments of excitation and discharge are constituted *passively* on every level of an organism, starting from the contraction of the sun in plants that creates in them energy going to the contraction of milk by a baby's stomach surface. Each such contraction constitutes, at the same time, a contemplation of the contracted elements and an auto-satisfaction of such contemplation. Contraction is a passive process but not in the sense of the receptivity of sensibility, since contraction constitutes sensations and refers to a primary sensibility that we are prior to being formed as subject distinct from these sensations. This passivity constitutes the organism in such a way that it is *synthetic*. We are habits before we have habits.³³⁴ We are contractions and passive syntheses before being passive receptors of time. The active synthesis of the ego and of time is necessarily built upon the countless passive syntheses functioning at infinite levels of organic life and constituting infinite contemplative larval selves. All the infinite contemplative selves ultimately resonate with Spinoza's idea of God's infinite intellect, that for every little thing, there is an ideal entity, which might be unknown to human reason, but this is irrelevant. This first synthesis of time responds to the question and problem of the urgency of life and is dictated by need, seen as contraction and fatigue and not as lack. As such, it corresponds to the actual field of Deleuze's metaphysical system. Yet the paradox of this synthesis is that the present, although supposed to be present, is such that it always passes. Therefore, this synthesis depends on a deeper level upon the second synthesis of the past or memory.

2. The second synthesis of time, according to Deleuze, is Memory or Eros and is characterized by the coexistence of the past with the present, the contemporaneity of the past with itself, and the simultaneous, non-sequential series of past and present that we have already explained. The idea here is that without this synthesis, time would be static and would never pass because the present cannot pass unless it is *at the same* time past. The contemporaneity of past and present is the condition for time's passage.³³⁵ To grasp that, one has to consider that it is never possible to conceive of a present moment in its presence since to think of it means that the moment we are trying to grasp has already passed. Therefore, the essence of the present is to be present and past simultaneously. Conversely, the past is contemporaneous with itself as present. The two are contracted with one another in order for time to pass. That means that the past is not formed *after* the present that it was, nor by the present to which it is now past.

³³⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 74.

³³⁵ Deleuze, 81.

The past does not depend upon a present to exist but exists in-itself, simultaneously with the present that it was. That, in turn, means that the past never was since it is not constituted by a former present but always coexisted with it. Put in other words, a former present was past at the same time that it was present. The past, let's repeat it, never *was*. The past *is* as it insists in every passing present. That is precisely the nature of virtuality. If the present always coexists with itself as past, as Bergson concludes, the whole of the past always necessarily coexists with every present. The above testify for Deleuze that time is not sequential but that all former pasts coexist in different degrees of relaxation and contraction. Yet, while the past coexists with every present, at the same time, the past preexists the present and allows it to pass as a transcendental principle that conditions it and makes it possible. The past is what grounds time.³³⁶ While the whole of the past necessarily and inescapably coexists with every present and forms a destiny, freedom on this level consists of our capacity to choose the contraction levels of each eternal coexisting past.³³⁷ In simpler words, freedom is choosing which areas of the past we bring to the fore and make relevant in our present. The second synthesis of time corresponds to the virtual in Deleuze's metaphysical system. Just as the first synthesis points out to the second, so the second points out to a third.³³⁸

3. The third synthesis of time is Thanatos, or the empty form of time, which ensures the discontinuity between future and past so that the former cannot be retrospectively said to have been anticipated by the latter. This synthesis of time subverts the linearity of time or, more accurately, reveals the non-sequential character of time as it exists beyond representation. This synthesis is most apparent in the unconscious³³⁹ and its expression in dreams where different temporalities coexist and succeed each other regardless of their chronological order in actual time. Moreover, it is in what the philosopher calls the Event that this synthesis of time is in function, when the past and present lose their meanings as organized by habit-contraction and memory since the occurring event rips away any similarity with them, changing reality in such a profound way that the continuity between the seemingly sequential moments is construed only retrospectively but cannot be justified from the point of view of non-representational thought. Present and past become only dimensions of the future.³⁴⁰ The future is affirmed as radically different from whatever only seemingly has preceded it. The third synthesis of time

³³⁶ Deleuze, 82.

³³⁷ Deleuze, 83. Bergson, *Matter and Memory*.

³³⁸ Deleuze, 88.

³³⁹ Widder, *Reflections on Time and Politics*, 94.

³⁴⁰ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 93.

corresponds to intensity. In this synthesis, time is out of joint, ceases to be cardinal, and becomes ordinal,³⁴¹ that is, intensive. This synthesis is that of metamorphosis and forced movement. Reality proceeds by virtue of the event; that is, it proceeds through intensity of which the two other syntheses, memory and present, the virtual and the actual, are only epiphenomena. The third synthesis of time is the synthesis that explains the action of force, which by exerting itself, changes everything, leaving no identity and no similarity between before and after intact. It concerns the return of the yet-to-come, that is, pure difference. If the second synthesis of the past grounds time, the third synthesis is a radical ungrounding, a confrontation with emptiness or chaos, a complete loss of continuity, a realm where common sense appears completely irrelevant, ungrounding from which radical novelty arises. This synthesis is linked to the Nietzschean concept of the eternal return. The latter is depicted through a tortuous circle that performs a peculiar kind of repetition, a repetition that selects and makes to return only what is novel and different, a return of the future.

Signs-The imperceptible

In *Proust and Signs*, Deleuze explores the theme of love in relation to signs and intensity by showing how Proust approaches life and learning as an infinite process of discerning signs or else perceiving the imperceptible limit of reality that is intensity. Since reality is not a self-identical object that we need to represent accurately purportedly but is intensive and transforming, to conceive of it means an apprenticeship of signs emitted from intensive individuation, a process or pedagogy of perceiving the imperceptible transcendental field from which reality is generated. Signs cause problems,³⁴² but as explained, problems are ideas. Signs are those passages from intensity to thinking in the process of generation of new ideas that are not knowable in themselves, but at their evolution and transformation. In that sense, knowledge is substituted with *learning* in an effort to underline the processual nature of reality and, therefore, one's perception of it. Learning introduces time³⁴³ in the equation of understanding, and knowledge is, in contrast, revealed as an end result.³⁴⁴ Moreover, learning as a process of discerning signs is necessarily linked with the unconscious.³⁴⁵ That is because

³⁴¹ Deleuze, 88.

³⁴² Deleuze, 164.

³⁴³ Deleuze, 87.

³⁴⁴ Deleuze, 167.

³⁴⁵ Deleuze, 165, 192.

intensity as a genetic phenomenon is perceived only at the limit or below the threshold of conscious perception.

Describing the collective, non-familial, and non-derivative nature of love, Proust shows how a lover folds inside the loved ‘object’ a landscape and a whole world from which s/he learns to gradually discern and individualize it by virtue of the singular differential signs that the loved one emits. The world virtually involved in the lover is individualized in their face. “To love is to try to explicate these unknown worlds that remain enveloped within the beloved.” The beloved himself becomes the sign of an unknown world. We love them by interpreting this sign and unfolding this world.³⁴⁶ In this sense, love is an intensive process of production of connections and signs. On the other hand, given Deleuze’s ethics of intensification that we will return to later on, and according to which “to explicate is to identify,”³⁴⁷ love presents a risk of returning us to extensity, to actual, spatialized and commonsensical accounts of reality. If we perceive the lover as representing a whole or wholly individualized subject, we risk reducing the intensive creative nature of love into a process within the logic of representation. The lover risks reducing the beloved from an intensity to a supposedly predictable whole subject.

The sign is a beneficial notion for Deleuze’s non-dualist metaphysics because it is a notion that resists both a materialist and an idealist ‘nature.’ It is an entity that cannot be identified with either of these qualities. In contrast, it folds both of them together in a way that makes them resonate without ever collapsing onto each other. Signs as emissions of intensity are those which, doing violence to us, spur not only love but thought.³⁴⁸ Signs remain sensible empirical facts but open up the road to the inference of the transcendental conditions of intensity from which they were generated. They allow us to infer the non-sensible or better imperceptible intensities - differences of potential that made them possible. The sign is nothing but the phenomenal appearance of intensity – difference.³⁴⁹ As such, signs are how our empirical selves come in contact with the limit of experience that intensity consists of. They are objects of a paradoxical nature, objects that both exist and do not exist and, as such, are imperceptible. That is the difference between transcendental empiricism and classic

³⁴⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs: The Complete Text*, trans. Richard Howard (London: Athlone Pr, 2000), 7.

³⁴⁷ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 227.

³⁴⁸ Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 16.

³⁴⁹ Anne Sauvagnargues, *Deleuze: L’empirisme Transcendantal*, (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2009), 310.

empiricism, that the object of experience in itself is ungraspable.³⁵⁰ Signs push the transcendent discordant use of the faculties transforming actual individuals and existing perspectives, renewing them constantly through contact with pre-individual singularities and dynamic forces. This opening of the actual to the virtual through signs and intensity is opening constituted bodies and perspectives to chaos and involves a terrifying liminal experience.

Internal difference and the dissolution of the subject - Individuals as perspectives

Internal difference is a central question in Deleuze's metaphysics. This difference is found in the fracture in the "I" that, Deleuze claims, was initially revealed by Kant's insertion of the factor of time as the determinable in Descartes' famous proposition, "I think, therefore I am." Kant is the one who reveals time as linear in contrast to the cyclical and subjective time of antiquity. As a result, time is no more defined by the movements and acts of the soul or the celestial movements but is an independent factor IN which the latter occur.³⁵¹ Since the "I think" and its consequence "I am" happen IN sequential time, an irreparable fracture between the "I am" and the "I think" is produced BY time; the two do not coincide but follow one another. In other words, in place of a supposed correspondence between ideas and the given reality revealed both in the Cartesian maxim and the Spinozian parallelism between bodies and the ideas that correspond to them, Kant performs an interrogatory method that leads him to doubt such correspondence. By contrast, *thought* and its *being* are revealed to be fundamentally separate and distinct. The Deleuzian critique now of this otherwise revolutionary discovery is that Kant considers this separation external.³⁵² Since the "I am" is undetermined (it has to be proved through the function of thinking) and the "I think" is determining, the latter cannot be given determination by the former (the "I am" cannot be specified as a "thinking thing") without the mediation of a determinable. Therefore, by inserting time in the equation, Kant shows the irreparable fracture between determination and what it determines.³⁵³ This is of particular interest to the question of intensity since intensity "is the determinant in the process of actualization,"³⁵⁴ that is, it acts as the determining factor between virtual ideas and actual

³⁵⁰ Levi R. Bryant, *Difference and Givenness: Deleuze's Transcendental Empiricism and the Ontology of Immanence* (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 2008), 93.

³⁵¹ Gilles Deleuze, "On Four Poetic Formulas That Might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy" in Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael Greco (London, New York: Verso, 1998), 27-35, 28-9.

³⁵² Beth Lord, "Deleuze and Kant" in Daniel W. Smith and Henry Somers-Hall, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Deleuze*, Cambridge Companions to Philosophy (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 82-102, 83.

³⁵³ Deleuze, 86.

³⁵⁴ Deleuze, 245, 251.

qualities and extensities. Virtual singularities are characterized by a positive indetermination that does not refute their reality yet guarantees their potentiality.³⁵⁵ Actual bodies have a determined existence. Intensive individuation is the determining factor in the passage between the two. It is primary to actual extensities and qualities dissolving the unity between virtual ideas and actual bodies while bringing them together in an internal difference.

Suppose time is always splitting in two directions, one past and one future, and we are only internal in time. In that case, we, as subjects, are as well constantly split into a past self, coexisting with us virtually, and another self, extending itself towards the future, which differs in nature from the first. Moreover, since the past selves do not succeed one another but coexist with each other and each present self, strictly speaking, there is no constant unity between the different selves that are supposed to follow one another in commonsensical chronological time. For lack of an entity corresponding to the “I am,” thinking cannot but be an action that is external to this fractured imagined entity. The fracture between the “I think” and the “I am” dictates that thought is always the affection of a passive self that experiences but does not initiate it. Neither thought nor the self-consciousness of the subject is initiated by it. It is always an other that is me.³⁵⁶ Deleuze adds to that that it is at this fracture that “ideas swarm.”³⁵⁷ Ideas are generated at the irreparable crack between self and thought, as well as the affections and events that permeate this crack. That is possible precisely because the passive self has, at odds with common sense, the capacity to synthesize. Passive synthesis, the couple contemplation-contraction that we saw in the first and second syntheses, is generative and not merely receptive. To contract is to contemplate. To conceive of thought along with a dissolution of the subject is an intricate endeavor that requires going beyond the mediation between thinking and things that the subject is traditionally considered to represent and finding thought in the midst of things, finding thought “rubbing directly onto things themselves.”³⁵⁸

Moreover, internal difference, as opposed to difference between terms, denotes the philosophical non-commonsensical way to approach difference. Internal difference is not only the way a subject, as we mentioned above, but the world or nature or any entity is cracked by time (constantly differing in nature from itself following the splitting between past and

³⁵⁵ Deleuze, *The Logic of sense*, 117. Ideas as Deleuze posits in the fourth chapter of *Difference and Repetition* consist in the problematic unity between the undetermined, the determinable and determination. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 170. Yet it is their undetermined character that grounds their potentiality.

³⁵⁶ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 86.

³⁵⁷ Deleuze, 169.

³⁵⁸ Sauvagnargues, *Deleuze*, 31. (translation mine)

present), and also the way difference as infinitely proliferating, as the communication of heterogeneous series or terms, is found at the heart of everything and every phenomenon (even beyond its temporal aspect). Difference is at the heart of everything, folding binary terms upon one another and rejecting any possibly conceived opposition, including these of time and space, subject and object, quality and quantity, virtual and actual, man and woman, thought and sensation, substance and modes, matter and ideas. Difference in-itself does not exist between two terms means, not between two terms understood as spatial and immovable, as common sense has it. Difference is not between two terms because difference in-itself already involves two heterogeneous terms inside it, which communicating or folded together constitute its condition of possibility. Those terms are singularities or degrees of the same thing: difference. Difference is not between two terms because it overcomes the duality of every two terms considered as opposed and is in such a way univocally said of both, infinitely differentiating terms, terms that do not exist outside their binding together through their distance, that difference in-itself, pure difference or else intensity brings about.

Furthermore, difference in Deleuze is understood as an infinity of different perspectives, none of which is more valid than the other, proliferating difference in all directions.³⁵⁹ As mentioned by reference to signs, individuals are perspectives, namely expressions of worlds. Reversely worlds do not exist independently of the individuals that fill and express them, partly clearly and partly obscurely.³⁶⁰ A world involves an infinity of singularities and is constituted when series involving these singularities converge. An individual envelops a finite number of singularities that converge. In such a way, an individual expresses the partial actualization of this world while another part of the world subsists in the individual virtually. The world and its singularities form the transcendental field from which the individual arises in a static genesis (of individuals from intensity). When singularities and their corresponding series diverge we have the composition of different impossible worlds. Nonetheless, at the same time, and on another level, all the worlds whose singularities diverge, and, therefore, are thought impossible also belong in a world even if it is a world following a paradoxical logic of both “is” and “is not.”³⁶¹ This paradoxical logic is the irrefutable transcendental condition from which actual empirical reality arises, and as such, it defines what

³⁵⁹ Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation*, 15.

³⁶⁰ Deleuze, *Logic of sense*, 115.

³⁶¹ Deleuze, 119.

is possible to exist. Impossible worlds are possible once we distance ourselves from the doxa of common and good sense.

Individuals are perspectives or points of view, that is, particular temporalizations and spatializations that, in Deleuze, substitute for consciousness.³⁶² In Deleuze's internal difference, time is not the only defining factor. If we consider the world as a whole or to use Spinozian language, as a substance, then the modes, its expressions, or the infinite perspectives that constitute it make up the internal difference of the whole. Against the narrative of a unified self and beyond the pathological view of multiple narratives within a "self" and within a world, Deleuze proposes a multiplicity of narratives as a disjunctive synthesis of series. Series is the sense that arises at the surface of the body between its physical and social ideal existence.³⁶³ As Olkowski shows by using the example of Renaissance painting, the idea of difference in-itself, against the logic of representation, complicates the single-point perspective attesting to the notion of a single world that is identical to itself. Individual perspectives are the infinite perspectives upon reality that can never converge upon a single image - that would only be the correlate of a God, that contra Nietzsche would still have to be alive- but do not mean a relativistic loss of an existing reality that would sabotage any attempt to find any coherent meaning. An infinity of impossible perspectives belong to and compose the same world in its internal difference, since the sense of reality is difference. Intensity is the magnitude of force by which each perspective struggles to persevere. By restoring the multiple-perspective reality, we can do justice to intensity - difference and start thinking in terms of dynamism and understand reality as temporal, dynamic, and multiple. The mixing of these infinite perspectives is what allows us to dismantle identical representational thinking.³⁶⁴ Individuals, as such, are the ways intensities become actualized and seemingly canceled while, at the same time, intensity is constantly preserved in itself and virtual pre-individual singularities. Intensity diffuses both ideas and bodies, problems and solutions being the limit of both and the depth that allows for each of them, in turn, to be just a perspective from which reality can be seen and thought.³⁶⁵ The actual and the virtual are different points of view of reality folded together or disjunctively connected through intensity, producing signs and affects, that is, transformations from which we can infer intensity in everyday empirical life.

³⁶² Olkowski, 9.

³⁶³ Olkowski, 36.

³⁶⁴ Olkowski, 22-5.

³⁶⁵ Sauvagnargues, *Deleuze*, 107.

Reality is multiple, but only if we recognize the existence of the virtual. Reality is virtually many. In such a way, reality is nothing more than a surface effect of sense and intensity, a simulacrum, nothing more than a changing vision that never is, that always both is or is not, always in internal difference with itself. The arbitrariness of sense and the impossibility of pinning it down is a testament to the ungroundedness of reality and time. Sense as intensity is what ungrounds representation. As sense cannot but be in an internal relation with nonsense, always dependent on it and therefore never able to be distinguished and separated from it completely, in the same manner, reality cannot be pinned down to a specific image, to any specific instance abstracted from the infinite multiplicity of the virtual durations composing it nor to a representation of its identity abstracted from its infinite movement and infinite differentiation from itself. In Deleuze's definition of difference in-itself, something strives to distinguish itself from something that in turn refuses to distinguish itself.³⁶⁶ It is in such a way that sense does not cease to attempt to distinguish itself from nonsense while the latter attaches itself to the former. Reality is multiple, composed of virtually coexisting infinite pasts and presents, constituting the pre-individual singularities of reality as a problem. Reality is changing, virtually past, present, and future simultaneously. The conception of persons as individuated perspectives arising from pre-individual singularities instead of substantial unified entities has irrefutable and obvious political consequences to which we will not delve at the moment.

Intensity and sense

Sense is an intensity that arises through the connection and ramification of series of seemingly opposed but, in reality, heterogeneous elements, such as body and language, things and propositions, sense and nonsense. Sense, as well as intensity, are events arising from this connection and this disjunction through the circulation of what we called dark precursor or differentiator or paradoxical element that lacks a fixed identity and exists in constant disequilibrium with itself, allowing the displacement of terms or singularities constituting the series and, therefore, their communication through its perpetual displacement. This empty square that, according to Deleuze, is characteristic of structuralism, presents a danger that Deleuze warns against: to find behind this empty square a master signifier, a God or a subject³⁶⁷ instead of allowing the persistence of a mechanism that is radically ungrounded and perpetually

³⁶⁶ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 30.

³⁶⁷ Gilles Deleuze, "How Do We Recognize Structuralism?" in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, Semiotext(e) (Los Angeles, CA : Cambridge, Mass: Semiotext(e) ; Distributed by MIT Press, 2004), 190.

moving around its internal difference producing novelty and radically different products following the law of the repetition of difference. This law ensures that whatever recurs is defined by the difference it brings about and only by that, and of which identity is only an appearance, an inevitable and fleeting byproduct. Sense, intensity, and difference are produced through machinic assemblages or systems performing disjunctive syntheses or multiplicities of different orientations towards stasis and movement. Sense and intensity are products of the connection along heterogeneity. The danger of the master signifier arising behind the empty square of the paradox is actualized in the example of psychoanalysis and what Deleuze and Guattari, in their collaborative works, term desire as a differentiating connective force that psychoanalysis identifies with lack and the phallus. However, negation for Deleuze is only the shadow of the virtuality or the problem that inheres and insists in its actualizations or solutions.³⁶⁸ Only when we misunderstand the nature of this shadow we think of negation. Lack is not primary in relation to desire. The master signifier only fills up an inescapable paradox that is entirely positive because it full of creative potential.

Non-dualism revisited

Dismantling philosophical dualism is Deleuze's, Bergson's, and Spinoza's noble and worthwhile aim. One of the main advances of this undertaking is the ongoing effort it signals for people to unite ideas with bodies (in the case of Spinoza), to see all things as related to one another as well as to approach reality immanently, that is, try to see reality from within, abandoning established ideas such as the existence of a life beyond the current one. Suppose God is nature and, therefore, is expressed inside each of us. In that case, it would make sense to try to connect with and affect the reality around us to the extent that we can by using the remainder of godliness inside us that, for Spinoza, is reason and affection as the motivation of reason. Deleuze reformulates Spinoza allowing for difference to take the place of substance in such a way that the affections of substance are primary to it. The hierarchy of finite modes depending upon infinite substance is subverted, and the only central characteristic of substance is that it revolves around the infinitely changing multiplicity of modes. Furthermore, in Deleuze, the elements of "divinity" in each actual entity are substituted for the game of difference that conditions it, the novelty that each one is a result of and can be the cause of.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁸ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 55, 64, 78, 106.

³⁶⁹ Deleuze, 282.

Affects primarily function as the incarnation of the third synthesis of time, the time of creation, and the event is no longer dependent upon reason.

Bergson's monism also aims to make us see things from within and connect the seemingly disconnected parts of matter and ideas into one whole. In his case, the immanence he tries to make us see through is *duration* or our history. Seeing ourselves as part of a dynamic evolution, he is pushing to its limit our disposition of affecting this dynamic movement to the direction of freedom. However, he concludes that the method one could use to undertake this noble endeavor is consciousness. This is where Deleuze departs from him, intending to have done with consciousness and move beyond it, linking thought with the unconscious. Deleuze is also interested as his precursors in establishing a non-dualistic, at once monist and pluralist metaphysics pushing our perspective towards an immanent view of the world. In Bergson, consciousness is what unites the supposedly seemingly unconnected realms of matter and ideas. Everything for him ends up being variations or different degrees of contraction of duration and consciousness. For Deleuze, however, that is not satisfying. Preserving Bergson's precious contribution in emphasizing time as the dynamic in which the world unfolds, he wants to give up consciousness as an illusion. The monism that he produces is a monism of differentiating energy. What is common in all things and unites everything as interconnected is energy and the variations of energy. That is what intensity is about. Energy generates ideas and matter, holds them together, and sustains them. The crucial characteristic of this energy is its constant variation and differentiation in relation to itself.

Intensity makes heterogeneous terms communicate in a way that at once preserves their heterogeneity and difference and allows their coexistence and productive exchange. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze describes such communication through heterogeneity by using the term *disjunctive synthesis*, the idea of the two terms of binarism relating to each other through their distance³⁷⁰ in a way that never allows them to oppose or identify with each other. That is precisely the fundamental way that difference in-itself works and the solution Deleuze finds to the opposition of the irreconcilable binarisms of Western thought (matter-idea, subject-object, signifier-signified). In this kind of relation or synthesis, difference relates to difference through a differentiator that is difference in-itself (or else intensity). In short, difference is found in every term of every relation proliferating its power to connect through heterogeneity into infinity. Difference's fundamental function is bringing together terms through their

³⁷⁰ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 178.

heterogeneity, where heterogeneity and inequality are affirmed as irrefutable conditions of relating.

Difference in-itself or intensity knows nothing about contradiction and identity. The virtual is the realm in which all supposed opposites coexist and whose impossibility is irrelevant to their coexistence. Impossibility is no anymore a hindrance to coexistence but becomes “a means of communication”.³⁷¹ Some of the impossibles and not others end up being actualized in the extended world, but that does not mean that the actual is not a realm of pure difference. The actual is also a realm of difference thanks to the virtual and its subsistence in it; the fact that the virtual is never exhausted in its differentiation to the actual but always overflows the latter, as is displayed in the insistence of problems in the solutions that arise for them. In the virtual, there is no contradiction and no opposition. Contradiction and opposition are only misinterpretations of difference. Opposition and identity are only the surface effects of difference.³⁷² Moreover, contradiction and opposition do not exist from the perspective of intensity, which is that element where differences connect to differences, indifferent to exclusion.

While the coexistence of supposedly contradictory terms is primarily evident in the paradoxes of time and in Deleuze’s reformulations of Bergson (the present being necessarily both past and present for it to pass), it nevertheless exceeds Bergson’s conception. It goes all the way to prove the dissolution of a self-identical conscious subject and an ego that endures the supposedly successive states that it goes through. “[...] The dissolution of the self ceases to be a pathological determination to become the mightiest power [...]”³⁷³ The subject does not come out of Deleuze’s third synthesis of time unharmed because difference goes along all dimensions of existence (and does not only affect time). The childhood self and the adult self for Deleuze are not phases of one and the same subject but coexisting series³⁷⁴ which prove that the subject, like everything that exists, is found upon a fundamental, irreconcilable difference, a disjunctive synthesis of heterogeneities that can never identify.

As Widder points out, Deleuze’s metaphysics is centered around the idea of sense, which having both an ideational meaning (the sense of a word) and a material one (the sense

³⁷¹ Deleuze, 179.

³⁷² Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 117, 266.

³⁷³ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 294.

³⁷⁴ Nathan Widder, *Political Theory after Deleuze* (London: Continuum, 2012), 47.

of smell) brings together these irreconcilable realms without ever collapsing their difference.³⁷⁵ As Deleuze puts it, sense represents a frontier whose sides are things and propositions.³⁷⁶ At the same time that sense brings traditionally opposed terms together and relates them through their distance, it goes beyond them being limited by neither of the two nor their supposed opposition. Performing this kind of connection that is disjunctive synthesis, pure difference is the only one that can express the univocity of being in its true sense. Unlike Spinoza's duality between substance and modes and their ontological hierarchy, being in Deleuze revolves around difference and change. Only difference can be said of all that there is in one sense³⁷⁷ and, thus, accomplish Spinozian aspirations for univocity. Difference is always already a displacement of being, a connection of distanced terms through their difference; it involves everything in itself. The reason, therefore, that Deleuze speaks about internal difference and not a difference between extended terms is -additionally to the temporal, non-spatial conception of difference- precisely because difference already involves a duality which it connects without collapsing, it already performs a disjunctive synthesis that organizes life and pushes it forward. Difference in-itself goes beyond the common-sensical and traditional binarisms of empirical life, allowing us to reach true metaphysics.

In Deleuze and Guattari's collaborative work, disjunctive synthesis acquires its concrete incarnation in schizophrenia as a structure of desire. The person with schizophrenia, when in delirium, is either man or woman, yet belongs to both sides, simultaneously affirming the irreducibility of the two terms and negating their contradiction. In this way, the deliriant allows the free flow of desire that has been for so long confined in the straightjacket of Western thought's binary structures.³⁷⁸ In *AntiOedipus*, disjunctive synthesis is the way schizophrenic desire works, as well as the logic of the capital. It is a mad logic which is the basis of it all. Crazy untamed difference and intensity proceed indifferent towards meaning in the commonsensical sense of the term as that which resists contradiction. That is how Deleuze and Guattari oppose "reason" and the empire of rationalism: not by way of affirming emotions and sentimentality but by way of proving that at the base of reason, before it, there is a delirium from which reason emanates, a mad world in which contradictions do not exist, in which impossibles live alongside one another, a virtual world of chaos in which reason, negation,

³⁷⁵ Widder, *Political Theory after Deleuze*, 22-3.

³⁷⁶ Deleuze, *The Logic of sense*, 26.

³⁷⁷ Widder, 26.

³⁷⁸ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 76.

and individuals do not matter but are only choices or possibilities among others, a world of pre-individual singularities in which there is no yes and no, no binarisms, no thought versus matter, no mind versus body, where the supposed opposites fold into each other as different ends of a continuum, and stay connected and related by virtue and through the distance that separates them. Disjunctive synthesis is how things are connected in Deleuzian metaphysics, connected through distance, a mad world at the base of everything, from which identity emerges as a surface effect, a semblance, a secondary phenomenon. The power that binds the world together and is the immanent cause of reality, to use Spinozian terminology, is desire, and it proceeds by way of pure difference and intensity, that is, by way of disjunctive synthesis. The virtual and the actual are folded into one another in the above sense, continuously discerned but at the same time constantly productive of one another. Intensity as the agent of differentiation and the creative passage between the two from which reality arises is the pure difference that folds the two bringing them into communication through their irreducible difference. Problems-ideas continuously fold into their solutions in intensities-qualities and become regenerated by them while persisting in them.

5. Metaphysics and Ethics of Intensity-Affects

Affect brings us back to the problem of the virtual and intensive. Having been described as both in Deleuze's vast oeuvre and given the complex relation of the virtual ideal problematic field and the intensive or being of the sensible, affect has a complex nature. I will expose both aspects of the notion and attempt to synthesize them.

Affect as a variation of intensity and as a singularity (virtual)

In the context of Deleuze's interpretation of Spinozian philosophy, affect is considered a variation of intensity. In this context, intensity corresponds to substance and its conatus or power of persevering in existence that characterizes substance and its changing modes. *Affects* are the changing modes that constitute degrees of the infinite power of substance in the context of Spinozian metaphysics, and degrees of the infinitely differentiating force of intensity for Deleuze. As already explained, Deleuze goes beyond Spinoza in substituting substance's eternal nature and, therefore, identity with a differentiating pure difference, or intensity, whose constant differentiation in modes does not come at odds with its eternal nature but constitutes it as eternally changing, as a permanently differentiated repetition. What is eternal in Deleuze is variation. Affects or Spinozian modes, therefore, for Deleuze, constitute not the secondary expression but the very *nature* of substance and existence itself. Nevertheless, following the

scope of transcendental empiricism to search for the genetic conditions of reality, affects are not empirical variations of power but differentiations in the genetic conditions of actual variation. Affects are intensive and not actual, not yet actual, and that constitutes a significant difference. Affects are revelations of pure intensity and liminal conditions of affection. In other words, when affections or influences of everyday commonsense experience allow us to reach a limit or a tipping point that causes or signals a significant change -as in the event of love or the event of a political crisis or resurrection- then affect constitutes an opening of everyday life to its genetic element, that is pure intensity.

Affect as a variation of intensity means affect, and intensity are strictly synonymous. Yet, affect expresses the fluctuation of intensity and answers the question of more or less posed by intensity and the encounters of forces that initiate it. The question of affect neither refers to quantity nor quality, which are elements of the actual. It refers, instead, to intensive quantity and explains the outcome that results from an encounter between forces or any series of heterogeneous entities that connect and ramify, that is, that results from any communication between heterogeneous series. Any encounter between forces results in an intensity that answers the question of more or less ensuring a perpetuating and inexhaustible inequality and difference. Yet the synthesis of time corresponding to intensity, referred to by Deleuze as Aion like sense, goes in both directions simultaneously.³⁷⁹ It is at once past and future; the event is always in the past yet always to come; it is both more and less. Affect thought as a variation of intensity goes beyond the commonsense distinctions between present, future, and past and goes beyond the oppositions and impossibilities of something that either is or is not but not both simultaneously. Following the logic of difference, affect is or is not simultaneously; that is, it is differentiating. It is a turning point, bringing together the pre-individual and the individuating, deriving the one from the other. It is beyond chronological time, always to come and always already past.

To affect and to be affected is the reality of coexisting singularities on the level of the virtual in which impossibles coexist. Affects are singularities, turning points that define the conditions of a problem and, in such a way, determine the various possible solutions to it.³⁸⁰ As singularities, they are pre-individual (that is, virtual although not able to be disentangled

³⁷⁹ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 79-80.

³⁸⁰ Deleuze, 58.

from the actual), structuring the way things become individuated³⁸¹ through a complex process. They are potentials.³⁸² Affects are singularities, pre-individual turning points like bottlenecks or points of boiling and coagulation which define the conditions of a problem.³⁸³ To understand the notion of singularity better, we have to go back to the idea of the virtual state of a system as being the totality of phases that the system can pass from. Singularities are the culminations and the low points in the virtual graph representing n dimensions of a system.³⁸⁴ The phases from which a system or organism passes and those that it could pass through in the future all coexist in a virtual form showing the dynamism or how the system interacts and transforms in itself. A slope of a mountain is a singularity that, along with the variations of the wind and the DNA of a tree carried in its seed, constitute the conditions of the problem of how a tree will be formed at a specific location and of which the actually grown tree is only one solution among many possible ones. A burst of anger or tears is a singularity that does not initially refer to a person but constitutes the conditions of a problem of which that person is only one among various possible solutions. This singularity determines subsequently how the solution-person will express this turning point in solution-emotions that now become individuated or actualized in a metastable equilibrium from which they are bound to move again, in constant entanglement with the virtual infinity of pre-individual singularities from which other solutions can ensue. In this example, we have successive problem-solutions arising within each other, persons are one kind, and emotions are another. The element defining which of the virtual singularities or affects will end up being actualized and with what force is exactly intensity, foreclosing the possibility of a mechanistic ensuing of emotions from the pre-individual singularities – affects which they resolve through actualization-individuation.

Affects are vital because they are moments of inflection of difference, when new directions are potentially present, and when minor becomings may occur. Affects are pure events, a-temporal and indifferent to worldly actualizations, arising from a-signifying and schizophrenic chaos that is terrifying (passion) and cruel (active).³⁸⁵ Going beyond human subjectivity means going beyond good and evil as actual things and seeing them as

³⁸¹ The word structured here is used following the choice of Smith and Protevi when talking about the determining function of the virtual in the intensive individuating process. See Smith, Daniel and John Protevi, "Gilles Deleuze", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), 9-10, URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/deleuze/>>

³⁸² Deleuze, 106.

³⁸³ Moreover, all of the above singularities constitute durations even if they are slow durations and of whose transformative action we are not readily/easily aware through the empirical use of our faculties

³⁸⁴ Somers-Hall, *Hegel, Deleuze, and the Critique of Representation*, 103.

³⁸⁵ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 92.

perspectives, therefore going beyond the actualized states of affairs and affects as actions and passions or as benevolent and adverse. Affects as actualized in actions and passions constitute sense's or intensity's immanent outside, its cause -from which it differs in nature and therefore distinguishes itself being able to take its meaning from the incorporeal quasi-cause of nonsense. At the same time they constitute its threat, the bodily depth which threatens to engulf it to reduce it to a bodily, mute a-signifying kind of nonsense where it is lost as in a kind of black hole – chiasm-abyss. Actual affects are the causes, yet the immanent limit of sense and intensity. However, as in every outside-inside pair in Deleuze, affects and sense are folded into each other, being in disjunctive relation. Sense is given by surface incorporeal nonsense, yet is threatened to be eliminated by corporeal nonsense-the schizophrenic body.³⁸⁶

The seeming contradiction in the idea of affects without persons is resolved once we understand thought as arising directly out of things, without the mediation of consciousness at the connective limit between extended things and propositions, bodies, and ideas and their difference. Thought arises directly in the midst of things beyond consciousness. It emerges in the form of problems and ideas that are fundamentally unconscious.³⁸⁷ Similarly, affects do not need the mediation of human sensitivity to emerge. Affects occur at the limit of things and sensitivity, at the limit of experience and the being of the sensible that is, intensity. Sensitivity directly arising amid things means that, like thought emerging at the limit of the un-thought, sensibility is created by the existence of difference and the communication of heterogeneous series in the virtual. What is the relation between thought and sensibility, however? Sensibility is the limit of the heterogeneity of the virtual and its appearance in the actual. It is what spurs through in the mind, yet does not have any metaphysical priority over it since thought and sensibility cannot be disentangled. Affects as signs are the flashes of intensity in the world of actual qualities and extensities as well as individuated entities and persons, but as signs which are composites of extension and ideas, bodies and signification, so affects are neither corporeal nor ideal. Thought itself at the limit, being forced through affects and signs is not only ideal and intellectual but is the counterpart of every contraction happening at the level of the states of affairs or else the collision of bodies. Affects are power-qualities, in themselves distinct

³⁸⁶ Deleuze, 93.

³⁸⁷ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 105-8.

from states of affairs, yet simultaneously expressed in the states of affairs by objects as much as by persons.³⁸⁸

Bergson's affectivity as freedom

Following his metaphysics, Bergson's ethics dictates a conception of freedom that consists in the possibility of perception being able to distinguish itself from memory and, therefore, of the present to distinguish itself from the past and differentiate from it. Freedom, in this sense, is to live in a present that is not defined by the repetition of the past, a state which nevertheless is only possible if the entire past, as well as the "whole self," is present when a new present appears.³⁸⁹ In order to avoid repeating the past, one is obliged to be conscious of one's entire memory as a whole in which different pasts coexist in various degrees of contraction or relaxation (that is, various areas of the past are more or less easily accessible to us depending on the connection of the past present with the current, present moment). In other words, to be able to recognize a new perception, one has to be aware of what it is not and distinguish it from all the already perceived perceptions that virtually coexist with it in the form of memory. The moment in which this rupture occurs between the habitual mixing of memory in perception is signaled by the irruption of the power of affectivity in the circular movement that produced the said mixing.³⁹⁰

For Bergson, affectivity is the space of freedom that signals the lag between a received incentive and the actions following it, the interval between stimulus and reaction.³⁹¹ Only when one can refrain from the habitual response that a perceived incentive produces in a mechanic automatic way -that is, the emergence of memory and already performed reaction to the said incentive- is one capable of intervening with consciousness to distinguish the things that differ in nature, that is past and present, memory and perception. Affect then erupts in the interval between perception and action and signals the capacity to retain a said incentive and to allow it to be filtered by the center of indetermination and freedom that the human mind comprises. To use the terminology of contraction that we encountered describing the first synthesis, affect can be thought of as the number of impressions or incentives one can retain in a contraction, i.e., it can be thought of as the capacity for contracting time. If I can include many incentives

³⁸⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema I: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London ; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2018), 108, 119.

³⁸⁹ Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 104-6, 186. Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 165-173.

³⁹⁰ Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 233-5.

³⁹¹ Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation*, 83.

and fold and contract them one upon the other without acting or reacting upon them, then the more options I will have as to which incentives are worthier than others to be retained and which are worthy of being reacted upon. Using Deleuzian terminology, if we can contract many incentives, we can discern which one is singular and which is ordinary to determine how to act in relation to them. However, for Bergson, following the model of the second synthesis of time, the new is still a matter of contraction that occurs in the mind of the whole of the past that is retained while the new appears.³⁹²

Deleuze and Guattari's affect as inhuman encounter

As explored in the previous chapter, Spinoza's ethics deriving from his monistic understanding of substance as, at the same time, ideal and material, considers every entity to be an expression, a mode, or else an affection of this substance as constituted by its affections with and by other modes. Given the affirmative, immanent understanding of substance, the ethics that derives from his metaphysics dictates the effort for every mode to increase their power by coming in contact with other modes which agree with their nature and with which they can form entities whose power consists in the sum of the power of each one separately.

Following the arguments of his predecessors and reformulating them according to his effort of dismantling thinking as based on identity, Deleuze argues that intensity, needs to be freed from the burden of representation of which the structure of the self and other, subject and object are necessary underpinnings. For thought and the new to be engendered, representational forms of thought and doxa, such as analogy, identity, opposition, and similarity, must be overcome. For intensity to enact its violence in thought, setting it in creative motion, one has to be ready to face the coldness and cruelty of the plane of immanence or else chaos that lies at the margin and is the condition of existence of the representational structuring of reality, neatly organized around self-identical objects and subjects. To infer the significance of the above arguments regarding affect would mean proceeding beyond the limits of empirical sensibility, on the one hand, and beyond the limits of the consoling structure of human intersubjectivity, on the other.

Life in Deleuze has been set free from thought, in that thought has permeated all life as contraction.³⁹³ What we once referred to as consciousness becomes contemplation and is no longer the privileged realm of human activity. It appears in every living organism but acquires

³⁹² Deleuze, "Bergson's Conception of Difference."

³⁹³ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 75.

its highest speed in thought that permeates the human mind but is not generated by it. Affection is the initiation of thinking, as the limit of intensity, and sensibility by its encounter with a world devoid of human elements that brings consciousness to its self-dissolution into the discord of the faculties. Both in Bergson and Deleuze, the irruption of novelty is the function of affectivity. Nevertheless, while in Bergson, this function is dictated by the conscious, attentive, and analytical discernment of perception from the memory that interferes with it (through the philosophical method of intuition), in Deleuze, the affectivity, resulting in the irruption of intensity and the break of sequential chronological time, is violent, passive and ahuman. It results from an encounter with chaos, with the intensity upon which ideas and extensities impose a structure.

Ethics of intensification of life

Deleuze's ethics affirms difference and intensity by exceeding any dualistic notion of the subject versus object, and good versus evil. Difference is a purely positive characteristic and, as such, is not posited antagonistically to anything else. While it is violent, it is not violence against since it is immanent to itself and gives account to no external reference. It is creative violence. Unlike normative ethics, which favors the belief in opposites and therefore holds a negative conception of freedom, according to which the freedom of someone being opposed to that of another, the ethics of difference does not need to limit conceptually what it puts forward. As I will expose in the fifth chapter, the above does not entail a utopian conception of a world of beautiful souls. Life is a phenomenon of intensity, and leading a life worth living is not linked to anthropomorphic and negative conceptions. Life has to be freed from the categories that limit it from being lived in its pure state, as pure intensity. Beyond the confines of chronological, linear time-space, life has to discover other dimensions in which breaks can initiate new creations, and death can be the beginning of unforeseen events. Intensifying life means creating motionless voyages of intensity and allowing new experiences to erupt through and against commonsense understandings of reality. Virtuality is real, and reality is virtual. The irruption of the unforeseen possibilities of the virtual is precisely the work of intensity, the process by which intensive quantity augments itself and intensity intensifies. Such is the ethics following from the non-humanist metaphysics of Deleuze. The moment of intensification of life that Deleuze talks about is the moment of a transition that tends to the point of becoming unbearable to the subject because it tears it apart to allow for something new

to be born out of it.³⁹⁴ The production of novelty for Deleuze means precisely the affirmation of difference and the proliferation of differences -as this is being deployed in his collaborative work with Guattari. I return to the ethics of affect and the problem of intensification to analyze them in greater detail in the fifth chapter of the current thesis.

³⁹⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 19.

Chapter 3. Aesthetics of affect, according to Deleuze and Guattari

1. Introduction

2. Aesthetic Genealogy

Kantian aesthetics and the discord of the faculties (sublime)

Deleuzian aesthetics and the being of the sensible. Genesis of sensation as discord of faculties

Ideas as transformative limits

Aesthetics as sensibility and art. Overcoming the wrenching duality

Conditioning of possible experience versus genesis of real experience

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3. Aesthetics of affect

Affect as an intensive singularity

Affect in art

From time to deterritorialization

4. Art as the capture of forces

Painting forces: Bacon

Minor art: Kafka

Signs of art: Proust

Pain: Sacher-Masoch

Sensibility and the body without organs

1. Introduction

After analyzing the metaphysical and some ethical aspects of the concept of affect, I shall continue with the primary function of affect in the last collaborative work of Deleuze and Guattari, that is, aesthetic. In the final book of the two philosophers, the notion appears to participate in a tripartite system, as the object of art practice, along with prospects and concepts, which are the objects of science and philosophy, respectively.³⁹⁵ Art, science, and philosophy appear as the seminal territories of human and natural activity, and each has its corresponding field of aptitude in terms of what it can produce. Art creates affects; science creates functionives, and philosophy concepts. To analyze the aesthetic function of affect, I must first explain

³⁹⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 24.

Deleuze's program combining aesthetics and metaphysics by generalizing and reconfiguring Kant's aesthetic theory of the sublime. Deleuze's reinterpretation of Kant will, thus, occupy the first part of the chapter, allowing us to pass to Deleuze and Guattari's theory of sensibility as *creation*. Subsequently, the role of the limit we encountered in the previous chapter will be taken up again and elaborated as the liminal condition of sensibility, death. Finally, I will be concerned with the collaborative works and Deleuze's solo works in which the philosophers analyze the function of affect in the oeuvre of seminal literary and visual artists, specifically Franz Kafka, Marcel Proust, Sacher Masoch and Francis Bacon, where art appears as a capture of forces beyond the molar realm of human subjectivity, that is beyond human emotions and the corresponding psychoanalytical interpretations usually attached to them. In the following two chapters, I will be studying the political and aesthetic function of affect according to the two philosophers, as this appears in the second volume of their collaborative work *A Thousand Plateaus*,³⁹⁶ as a means to complete the passage from the purely aesthetic function of the concept of affect to its broader philosophical and political significance.

Before starting, let us first summarize the last chapter on Deleuze and Guattari's idea of intensity. As explained in the previous chapter, affect is a variation of intensity, the primary metaphysical category in Deleuze's early work. Intensity, or a differentiating force, produces actual life and radical novelty. At the same time, it reveals life's conditioning in the whole of durational and ideal life held together in the virtual and performs a break from it. Intensity is a force bringing together heterogeneous series or, else, differential dynamics out of a repository of impossible singularities that coexist in a pre-individual, pre-actual level, despite and against common sense and good sense's insistence in the law of non-contradiction. Intensity brings together impossible differences or worlds and carries out the inexhaustible return of difference, which is the condition of existence and creation of life.³⁹⁷ This function of intensity is indifferent to the exceptionality of human consciousness. It proceeds independently of it but presents the characteristic of spurring thinking or else generates ideas in thought in a function that is only "suffered" by subjective consciousness and experienced as passive. What Deleuze calls mad becoming, or else intensity's transformative role, engenders thinking by bringing

³⁹⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2007).

³⁹⁷ It is essential to note that this account of intensity applies primarily to Deleuze's early work and, precisely, *Difference and Repetition*. In the later work with Guattari, where the idea of the virtual is less prominent, intensity becomes independent of its reference to the latter. The Deleuzoguattarian account of intensity will be taken up in the following chapter of the thesis. Intensity will be described as a power fundamentally defined by its relation to an internal point of reference that Deleuze and Guattari call the zero point of intensity, death, or the body without organs.

thought face to face with what it cannot explain, recognize and categorize according to its existing ideas and representations, the unthinkable or non-sense. Intensity is what conditions the sensible as well as its limit. It is what Deleuze himself³⁹⁸ and subsequently, in his collaboration with Guattari, call the being of the sensible or the being of the sensory.³⁹⁹

Now affect, as a variation of intensity, namely as the varying degrees of this differentiating force, is that which brings us in contact with the being of the sensible or else reveals new unforeseen conditions of sensibility that, in turn, engender a transformation in the subjects, and more generally the entities, that experience them. Affect as intensity is entirely indifferent to human subjectivity. For that reason, its corresponding realm of activity, art, is, as shall be shown in greater detail, a function that is not reserved to humans but is related to the territorializing and deterritorializing functions of all kinds of organisms in the face of the earth.⁴⁰⁰ Art is not merely a human practice but a practice of animals and the earth itself. Linked to the function of deterritorialization, affect provides evidence that difference, creation, and transformation is not a human privilege but a metaphysical “law” of all life and existence. Chance is a necessity affecting all of nature. Nature, thus, is self-creation conditioned by chance. Affect reveals the limit-moments of sensibility or else the being of the sensible, namely those culminations of the constant transformation of existence when chaos erupts in life, disrupting its neat organization under the reign of common sense, producing an event that troubles our perception of sequential time and cannot be reversed after having happened. Art generates such events that denote a transformative change in human sensibility that is nothing but a part of the plane of immanence of nature. The plane of immanence, in turn, is the pre-philosophical ground of philosophy. For Deleuze and Guattari, it is revealed when immanence is not immanent in anything other than itself.⁴⁰¹ That plane coincides with intensity as an ungrounded, self-generated force that exists in its constant difference from itself and whose one side is matter and the other is thought.

2. Aesthetic Genealogy

Kantian aesthetics and the discord of the faculties (sublime)

³⁹⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 57.

³⁹⁹ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 203.

⁴⁰⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 183.

⁴⁰¹ Deleuze and Guattari, 59.

Unlike the rationalists (Spinoza, Descartes, and Leibniz) and the empiricists (Hume, Locke) that preceded him, Kant does not take the activity of reason and its validity in representing sensible things for granted. Such a supposition, Kant claims, is, in fact, authoritative. On the contrary, the exact nature of reason and its relation to sensibility must be proved by being the object of critique. The correspondence between the former and the latter has to undergo a test, and reason must critique itself by assessing its limits and examining what it can legitimately claim to know. Therefore, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant embarks on defining the validity of reason's claims regarding the limits of its field of application.⁴⁰² Analyzing the relation of ideas and experience is the crucial question of Kant's philosophical method of transcendental idealism, by which reason can reach its self-reflection, providing and assessing the criteria of its own operation. Thereby it can construct an exact science of metaphysical knowledge. That way, metaphysics can securely resist the observed natural tendency of reason to create contradictory propositions and errors. Reason has to explain that it creates ideas that do not immediately correspond to sensible objects, such as God or freedom, and, therefore, to account for its difference from and its relation to empirical facts. To do so, Kant analyzes the underlying structures of reason that mediate its relation to reality. Kant claims time and space are not merely empirical facts but necessary and universal forms of *all* empirical impressions given to human intuition. Therefore, they are forms of the structure of human cognition. Time and space are the pure intuitions that condition our capacity to perceive sensible beings. Other such structures of human cognition are the categories such as substance and causality.⁴⁰³ Objects of experience are *conditioned* for their appearance by these categories of reason.

Ideas, for Kant, are to be distinguished from objects of experience in that they do not conform to the criterion and objective of determination with which we can assess extensive empirical things in time and space. An idea is, by definition, positively indeterminate. We can never define once and for all the meaning of, for example, freedom, the soul, or God in the way we can describe an apple, a chair, or any object in sensible experience referring to its precise extensive limits. Unlike objects and phenomena that appear in experience with relatively exact limits in space or time, ideas of God and freedom may have subjective and differentiating

⁴⁰² Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 174-84.

⁴⁰³ Like pure intuitions of space and time derive from the foundation of the possibility of mathematics, so categories derive from the foundation of the possibility of physics. Immanuel Kant and Gary C. Hatfield, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Come Forward as Science: With Selections from the Critique of Pure Reason* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 32-56.

meanings in different approaches and are objects of debate. However, the fact that we cannot determine their object does not stop these ideas from bearing “the ideal of a complete and infinite determination,”⁴⁰⁴ allowing us to conceive sensible things as determinable. Ideas’ indetermination is a positive element that has a regulative function. The indeterminacy of the idea “acts as a focus or horizon within perception.”⁴⁰⁵ That is, ideas allow for the organization of experience in a coherent whole by conferring to the categories of reason, which, in turn, condition the appearance of sensible phenomena.⁴⁰⁶ Transcendent ideas, ideas to which no sensible objects correspond, such as, for example, God -as the being which can be conceived as possessing all possible attributes- represent an ideal of complete determination which allows us to form knowledge of objects of experience -despite the ephemeral, incoherent and incomplete form in which the latter appear to us. Other such ideas are the world and the subject.⁴⁰⁷ Thus, ideas regulate sense experience even if they must be strictly distinguished from the latter.

Reason determines existence by submitting itself to the test of empirical reality, which is, in turn, structured by the categories of human cognition imposing unity upon the successive but unrelated impressions of experience through the transcendental form of ideas and the form of the “I think” which accompanies all representations.⁴⁰⁸ Ideas cannot be proved as having an object since such an object cannot be sensed anywhere in empirical reality. Nevertheless, reason by creating ideas can organize concepts that, in turn, organize sensible impressions into objects. In such a way, the idea of a unified subject, a corresponding unified world, and a unified God, allow a corresponding unity of a known object to arise out of initially unrelated or uncoordinated impressions.⁴⁰⁹ On the one hand, we have an array of sensible impressions,

⁴⁰⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 169.

⁴⁰⁵ That regulative function is related for Deleuze with the problematic nature of ideas (or else their positive indetermination). A problem or an idea of reason confers unity upon the local processes of understanding which would otherwise be dealing with this or that object. However, the problem constitutes a “unitary and systematic field which orients [...] researches [...]” Deleuze, 168.

⁴⁰⁶ Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, 250-2.

⁴⁰⁷ Reason presents a tendency to divert from sensible reality and to push categories to an infinity it cannot perceive and whose existence it cannot confirm in sensibility and reaching thus an absolutely unconditioned limit. Conceiving substance and carrying that fact to its logical consequences to the infinite, we infer an idea of an eternal I or subject. Conceiving things as connected by causal relations with one another and pushing that conception into infinity, we deduce an idea of an infinite causal chain we name the world. Finally, carrying out the idea of community among things into infinity, we extrapolate the idea of an infinite all-encompassing being, one within which everything coexists harmoniously, that is, God. Categories of understanding that refer to the possible species of relation pushed to their transcendent limits, give us transcendent ideas. Kant, 400-6. See also Dorothea Olkowski, *The Universal (in the Realm of the Sensible): Beyond Continental Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 85-6.

⁴⁰⁸ Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, 246.

⁴⁰⁹ Noumena or things as they are in themselves (by contrast to how they appear to us, limited as we are by the structures of cognition peculiar to humans) serves in the same way as transcendental ideas (I, world, God),

chaotic and disconnected. On the other hand, we have an understanding organized by concepts grouping together the elements making up sensibility. Since the two fields differ in kind, in order for them to communicate, Kant comes up with the solution of schematism by which we translate concepts into spatiotemporal relations.⁴¹⁰ Understanding grasps sensible beings only on condition that it can impose its a priori categories on the former. Nevertheless, solely imagination -put in the service of understanding- can synthesize sensible impressions into unity and create a manifold upon which the application of categories is possible. In that solution, imagination, pushed by the interests of reason and understanding to know things, connects the concepts and categories of the understanding to sensible things. In that way, it reconfigures the disconnected sensory impressions as the activity and the qualities of unified spatiotemporal beings and objects.

Kant's transcendental subject, its categories, and ideas construct sensible reality. According to Deleuze, the relation between ideas and sensible things in Kant's system ultimately results from a legislative function of reason and understanding upon things.⁴¹¹ That is because the unity of sensory impressions needed to account for our knowledge and its limits accurately is not to be found in experience but imposed on the latter by reason's necessity. In Kant's terminology, the proof of the possibility of synthetic a priori judgments legitimize the application of the categories of reason to sense experience. Sensible experience, or whatever can take the form of space and time, can be securely said to be known, defining the limit of reason's legitimate application. At the same time, space and time are a priori elements of human cognition imposed on sensible experience. This legislative function, as well as the unity of the transcendental idea of the "I," depends upon the coordinating role of the faculties, or mental capacities, upon an object. The unity of the subject is not only conceived by reason but enacted when the subject performs a convergence of its different abilities under the force of a dominant faculty applying itself to an object in its corresponding field of aptitude. Theoretical reason or understanding that has as its respective field of application knowledge and cognition dominates

that is, as unifying principles and as in the case of God, as ideals of complete determination. The idea that we can *conceive* something as entirely determined (even if we, limited by the specific structures of our cognition, cannot know it) is what allows us to suppose that something can be determined, i.e., to have a concept of objects as determinable, a notion which we can then apply to the manifold of unorganized and unrelated sense impressions. The concept of an object itself is not given in our sensory experience. It is an a priori element arising by reason by virtue of the fact that it can conceive of something that has, by definition, a complete determination.

⁴¹⁰ Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, 271-7. See also Beth Lord, *Kant and Spinozism: Transcendental Idealism and Immanence from Jacobi to Deleuze* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 130-4.

⁴¹¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of the Faculties* (London: Athlone Press, 1984), 17 .

over all other faculties, such as sensibility, imagination, and memory, to impose the unity of the subject in the form of a transcendental “I think.” Similarly, in the field of ethics, practical reason unifies the rest of the faculties, and in the field of aesthetics, so does imagination. Kant thus analyzes the process of cognition as a combination of three syntheses that is first, the combination of sensations into a manifold by sensibility, subsequently the synthesis of the manifold into a unity which takes the form of the object by imagination and third, the synthesis of the sensible unified thing with an equally unified concept by the action of understanding. We will later encounter a particular analogy in that scheme with how Deleuze talks about time and how Deleuze and Guattari talk about the unconscious. That theme will be analyzed in the first part of the fourth chapter of the thesis.

In the context of his critical method, Kant established time as an a priori form of intuition, that is, as a universal and “timeless” structure of human sensibility presupposed in every empirical reality, establishes a linear account of time, an autonomy of time in reference to the observed celestial movements and the movements of the soul, as it was defined up to his era. It is due to this radical discovery, Deleuze claims, that Kant is the first philosopher to reveal the crack of the subject, the irreparable distance between the “I” as determination (transcendental subject imposing unity to sensibility) and the self as determined (empirical subject, subjected to the categories of sensibility).⁴¹² The Cartesian formula “I think; therefore I am” undergoes a severe modulation when one considers that thought cannot reach objects immediately but only through the mediation of the categories and that the two instances of the equation are necessarily distinct precisely due to the effect of time. Since reason cannot claim to know itself- or any object- immediately (through the I think) but is bound to validate its claims through the empirical realm (through the I am), that is, by the way, categories of cognition -including time- define the way empirical facts appear to us, the “I think” and the “I am” are necessarily separated. For Deleuze, Kant shows in this way that the determination cannot bear directly upon the determined.⁴¹³ As such, according to Kant, the category of time is how thought determines existence and, consequently, how the self affects itself internally. As Deleuze puts it, time is “the affect of the self by itself.”⁴¹⁴ Despite its unifying function, the subject does not possess an objective reality but is a transcendental principle, a principle that

⁴¹² Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 86.

⁴¹³ Deleuze, 85.

⁴¹⁴ Gilles Deleuze, “On Four Poetic Formulas That Might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy” in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael Greco (London, New York: Verso, 1998), 27-35, 28-9.

is necessary for *conditioning* and organizing perception. Soon after discovering the irreducible crack of the subject in its dual existence as a transcendental principle and as empirical reality, Kant covers over and closes off the crack⁴¹⁵ by emphasizing the unifying function of reason imposing an accord upon the faculties.

Nevertheless, in his later work on aesthetics, in *The Critique of Judgement*, Kant discovered and shed light on a new relation of the “I,” the self and time, in the context of an undetermined, discordant accord of the faculties. In the case of the sublime, a sensible impression revealing the limits of human sensibility, a discord is exposed that is an exception in the usual common sense working of the faculties harmoniously collaborating to identify and recognize an object. Such exception occurs due to the limitation of imagination in corresponding the said objects of experience with concepts of understanding. In the case of the sublime, imagination fails to fully grasp the phenomena of sensibility that create feelings of awe. Sensation and imagination reach their limit, and precisely this constitutive failure and reaching the limit generates a sense of wonder. Such phenomena arouse notions of immensity, transcendence, or infinity in the mind. However, it is only theoretical reason that can properly conceive such ideas in the face of which imagination hesitates or else to which human sensibility, due to its empirical limitation (such as the limits of vision, for example), fails to correspond adequate perceptions. Imagination and sensibility fail to grasp such phenomena fully, that is, to synthesize them in a manifold and to connect them with concepts able to contain such perceptions fully.⁴¹⁶ As the ideas of reason, such as freedom or God, cannot find their correlative objects in experience, the reverse happens in the case of the sublime with sensibility. The feelings of awe aroused in sensibility cannot find a correlate in understanding: we can only imagine the immense but not perceive it because it is in its definition not to be able to be perceived. While the notion of transcendence might be one whose function we can describe and analyze through reason, a feeling of transcendence is a feeling of something necessarily and unavoidably eluding us. It is of the nature of the feeling of transcendence not being able to be contained, and it is the moment in which imagination, sensibility, understanding, and reason necessarily part ways. However, in that departure, imagination is set free, unbound by the usual obligation to be subjected to a concept. The sublime is the only case Kant recognizes and explains the discord of the faculties, and that is precisely the starting point for Deleuze’s theory

⁴¹⁵ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 87.

⁴¹⁶ Immanuel Kant and Nicholas Walker, *Critique of Judgement* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

of sensibility and thinking.⁴¹⁷ Kant's conceptualization of the sublime opens the way from his own method of transcendental idealism to Deleuze's transcendental empiricism.

In the crack of the subject that Kant had already alluded to, in the form of time, a new complexity arises, that of the *faculties* (imagination, understanding, reason, memory, and sensibility) coexisting, not in a neutral unity imposed, as in the case of knowledge, by reason, but, *in a struggle*, where each one is pushing the other to its limit. Opening up this field of agonizing faculties means opening up an unknown realm and, simultaneously, the possibility for a reconceptualization of philosophy. Within this field, the self is not yet determined by the thinking activity through the mediation of time but by a complex, spontaneous, and open interplay of imagination, sensibility, reason, memory, and understanding where the disjointed nature of time (necessarily bringing apart the self and the "I," being and thinking) is intensified indeterminately. As Deleuze puts it, this discordant accord becomes a new "source of time."⁴¹⁸ In the sublime, Kant recognizes and analyzes the discord of the faculties that will become the basis of Deleuze's conceptualization of thinking as thought without an image or thought without an object, upon which the faculties supposedly converge.

Deleuzian aesthetics and the being of the sensible–intensity. Genesis of sensation from the discord of faculties

Both to Kant and Deleuze, what appears to be readily available to the senses involves some preconditions or characteristic structures that define it by transcending it. The given is not all there is.⁴¹⁹ The difference between the two approaches is that in Kant's case, sensible things are always products of a transcendental synthesis that is prior to and independent from them, and it is subjective, whereas, in Deleuze, *the transcendental exists deep inside sensibility*, being the latter's transformative vortex. While in Kant, ideas as elements of the transcendental subject are external to sensibility, for Deleuze, between ideas and sensibility, there is an *internal difference*. Both sensible beings are generated from the matrices of ideas, and ideas are generated as emerging from the causal chains binding bodies. Moreover, both ideas and sensible things meet at a point of asymptotic convergence in intensity or intensive difference.

⁴¹⁷ Daniel W. Smith, "Aesthetics. Deleuze's Theory of Sensation: Overcoming the Kantian Duality," in *Essays on Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 20212), 89–105, 93.

⁴¹⁸ Deleuze, 35.

⁴¹⁹ Henry Somers Hall, "Transcendental illusion and antinomy in Kant and Deleuze", in Edward Willatt and Matt Lee, eds., *Thinking between Deleuze and Kant: A Strange Encounter* (London ; New York: Continuum, 2009), 128-50, 139.

Sensibility and ideality are the transformative limits of each other, disjunctively synthesized in a univocal element that is an *intensive difference*.

According to Deleuze's method of *transcendental empiricism*, as already analyzed in the previous chapter, thinking and sensibility are to be thought in reference to the genetic conditions (pre-individual, unconscious, ideal, distinct, and obscure) that make them possible. Thinking and sensibility do not arise through the recognition of objects by the cooperating faculties. That is the thinking habit that Deleuze terms representation. Instead, they result from a fundamental encounter with intensity or signs that are, in turn, emitted by connections that happen on the pre-individual level of reality. The signs' imperceptibility and allusion to this pre-individual level is precisely what "perplexes the soul," transmitting to it a constraint and *violence* that brings it face to face with a problem that it is thereafter obliged to solve, whence arises thinking. Signs are "bearers of problems."⁴²⁰ That single phrase explains how, for Deleuze, thinking arises from sensibility, since signs can only be sensed, at the same time that they are at their limit imperceptible, tending towards imperceptibility and hence are close to the incorporeality of ideas. Signs bear problems, that is, virtual-ideal differential structures that constitute the differentials or the singularities, the inflections and points of a culmination of thinking. The sign cannot be interpreted accurately, neither as connected to the object that supposedly emits it, nor in reference to the subject that grasps it, at the limit of her sensibility and the subjective associations of ideas that are after that produced in her.

Kant's method of transcendental idealism presents us with the problem of the relation and correspondence between things and ideas that rationalism had taken for granted. In contrast, he starts by supposing a gulf between sensible empirical objects and understanding, a gap that he subsequently attempts to bridge. However, Kant's solution for the correspondence of concepts to sensible things - through schemata translating local intuitions into the categories of spatiotemporality - is inadequate for Deleuze since a conceptual account of spatiotemporality does not substitute for spatiotemporality itself.⁴²¹ Spatiotemporality is not conceptual but intensive and generative.⁴²² Kant's gap between concepts and intuition is

⁴²⁰ Deleuze, 140.

⁴²¹ Lord, *Kant and Spinozism*, 133.

⁴²² As Deleuze attempts to prove, a concept as conceived by his predecessors is an element that is considered characterized by generality and identity. Therefore, difference or intensity as the transcendent condition of reality cannot be adequately described through the structure of a concept. Generality is a core element of the concept in that a concept involves and describes a multiplicity of objects which it unites under a general definition that applies to them all. Conceptual difference, therefore, is only a limited version of difference in itself which is not a being -to which a concept could correspond- but a dynamism. Deleuze, 217, 288. Spatiotemporality, as conditioned by difference, is itself a force that cannot be reduced to its containment in a concept.

precisely what Deleuze's genetic account of sensibility and thinking seeks to overcome. He does so by discovering ideas inside sensibility, or better in the being of the sensible, and by revealing the metaphysical depth or conditions of the existence of sensible empirical phenomena. That depth is spatio-temporality as difference in itself or intensity. The being of the sensible is much more than sensible beings; it is their condition of existence, their transcendental limit. We discover that ideas do not externally apply to objects in the being of the sensible. Instead, they appear in the heart of things as in Spinozism, but in contrast to the later in a process of constant differentiation.⁴²³ Sensible things are bearers of ideas. The latter overflow the former, in the sense that the actual is overflowed by the virtual, both actual and virtual being the two sides of intensity. Ideas are problems, i.e., the genetic and transformative matrices from which extensive objects are created, or extensity arises (static genesis).⁴²⁴ In turn, virtual problems and ideas are generated whenever existing concepts fail to grasp the difference that is inherently and perpetually produced by intensity subtending extensive sensible things (dynamic genesis). The present is the explication of the past, and sensible objects are the explication of ideal problematic structures. At the same time, both arise from the intensive resonance across differences or else disparate series.

Despite the vast difference in their metaphysical systems, Deleuze, nevertheless, finds in Kant the point of departure for his genetic account of thinking from discord and difference. This differential account is thematized by Kant when he analyses the difference between thinking and its being. Then it is revisited in the case of the discord of the faculties in the sublime. Discord of the faculties, for Deleuze, is any free, non-proportional functioning of the faculties that serves no purpose. He shows that Kant's account of the faculties' discord in the sublime provides a genetic model⁴²⁵ for the free accord of the faculties independent of an object upon which the faculties are supposed to converge -and under the dominance of an overarching faculty that imposes and ensures the accord. Imposed accord is always justified by the *interest* of a faculty in grasping its corresponding object (concepts are grasped by understanding in the case of knowledge, laws by reason in the case of ethics, sensible objects by imagination in the case of sensibility). The other faculties play an essential role but in each case this role is

⁴²³ The difference with Spinozism is that ideas do not need the mediation of the infinite intellect or infinite understanding of God (which proves how God also produces things) to appear amid things. Ideas in Deleuze are to be found directly inside things.

⁴²⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 183.

⁴²⁵ Deleuze is following an interpretation on Kant first initiated by the latter's contemporary, Salomon Maimon who, as Deleuze points out calls for a genetic reformulation of transcendental philosophy. Gilles Deleuze, "Lecture Course on Chapter Three of Bergson's Creative Evolution," March 14, 1960, 72. Also, Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 173-4.

determined by the task set by a legislating faculty.⁴²⁶ However, the sense of the beautiful is the only case of a disinterested accord since there is no reasonable gain from the admiration of beautiful objects, artworks, or landscapes. Deleuze contends, this disinterested, non-imposed accord in which all faculties participate freely, in a non-proportional, indeterminate way is *presupposed* in every accord imposed by a predominant faculty⁴²⁷ in its respective field of operation. While the sense of the beauty arising either in nature or in art provokes the free accord of imagination and understanding in a non-proportionate, indeterminate way, it is in the sense of the sublime that we can observe the *genesis* of such a process. That is because, in the case of the sublime, the faculties come into accord without reference to any specific object. Instead, it is a limit point of sensibility, an imperceptible sensation of the immense that pushes the imagination to its limit, pushing it towards reason's respective limit, which is the indeterminate idea such as that of the infinite or the transcendent. In the case of the sublime, both understanding and imagination remain indeterminate in a positive way and allude not to any object but to the point of their convergence in the soul, the point where the two are no longer distinct but stem from a single moment. At this point, all faculties coexist in a free, indeterminate, unconditioned accord.⁴²⁸

The point where imagination reaches its limit and approaches reason is precisely the moment of genesis of all faculties and, therefore, all thinking. In the case of the sublime, imagination reaches its limit point where it is connected with reason by "representing" in the sensible world what is un-representable in the idea by expressing in sensibility what is, by definition, undetermined in the idea. The sublime makes appear the paradoxical moment of the unthought within thought⁴²⁹ and the imperceptible within sensibility. That way imagination makes the supra-sensible, pre-empirical universe of reason appear in the sensible world.⁴³⁰ For Deleuze, such genetic moment is to be found in intensity. Intensity is the imperceptible limit of sensibility, the moment when sensibility is confronted with something outside itself -the new, the imperceptible, and the unthought- which it cannot refer back to any concept of understanding and thus remains indeterminate. At the same time, intensity is the unthinkable limit of thinking, a force that sweeps thought and creates ideas, filling them up and rendering them powerful and transformative. Intensity is the limit between thinking and sensibility, a pre-

⁴²⁶ Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, 10.

⁴²⁷ Gilles Deleuze, "The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics," *Angelaki* 5, no. 3 (December 2000): 57–70.

⁴²⁸ Deleuze, 68.

⁴²⁹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 192.

⁴³⁰ Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, 51.

empirical variable magnitude of difference of which thought and sensibility are degrees. As exemplified in the case of the sublime, in its genetic moment, sensibility wanders free, unbound by a concept that not only is indeterminate itself (like the infinite) but does not yet exist. As Kant shows, since the faculties always work together (albeit in different proportions according to their respective realm), sensibility cannot remain unbound by understanding and reason but forces them to work to create new concepts and ideas (albeit the proportion in which they work is not pre-given). The genetic moment of intensity and sensibility is when faculties encounter each other's limit point, the moment in which they appear entangled and indiscernible. It is the Kantian system itself that points out its own limit by revealing the failure to correspond all intuitions of sensibility with concepts, in the case of the sublime (intuition without corresponding concept), and to correlate ideas with sensible objects in speculative reason (ideas without related intuitions). By indicating its own limitation, Deleuze claims transcendental idealism points out the non-coordination of the faculties in such a way that each one has to be accounted for in its own respect. Thus, reason loses its privileged position, and its function has to be expanded to all faculties.⁴³¹

Ideas as transformative limits

Ideas in Kant are the transcendental elements outside experience that, by presenting and involving the ideal of complete determination, allow for the determinability, through concepts, of the initially undetermined empirical reality. However, according to Deleuze, despite his aspiration to conceive of a pure transcendental unconditioned structure of reason, Kant makes the mistake of imagining ideas as being formed by analogy to objects of experience. While the indetermination of the idea is positive, the model of determinability to which this indetermination alludes is external to itself. Ideas' determinability is reduced to borrowing its model from the determination of objects of experience to which it confers unity, that is, as deriving from universal forms, such as space and time, as neutral and general elements.⁴³² Ideas are thereby defined as general, like the objects of experience conforming for their determination to the form and generality of concepts. On the contrary, for Deleuze, the idea, as an actualizable or a generative, transformative structure, is beyond the general (as Kantian concepts) and the particular (as Kantian intuitions).⁴³³ Moreover, according to Deleuze,

⁴³¹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 193. See also Constantin V Boundas, "Transgressive Theorizing: A Report to Deleuze," *Man and World*, no. 29 (1996): 327–41.

⁴³² Deleuze, 170. See also Henry Somers-Hall, *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: An Edinburgh Philosophical Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 131.

⁴³³ Dorothea Olkowski, *The Universal (in the Realm of the Sensible)*, 81.

conceptuality does not adequately describe ideas' determinability. The latter is better rendered through a procedural model as a process, precisely, a process exemplified in the mathematical model of differential calculus. The symbol best describing the idea is thus the symbol of the calculus, dx .⁴³⁴ Ideas for Deleuze do not externally assist in determining the undetermined object of sensibility, but they are the problematic internal unity of the undetermined, the determinable, and (complete) determination.⁴³⁵ That means that they describe and generate processes of creation. Ideas are internal to empirical reality, not distinguished from the latter, forming with it a differential synthesis. It is through the differential calculus that Deleuze describes ideas' special kind of determination as a process of determinability and as the creative and generative passage from idea to extension, and from the continuity of the qualitative flow of ideas in consciousness, to the discontinuous multiplicity of extensive objects, characterized by the element of divisibility and numerical measurability. The limit defined by the method of calculus denotes the passage from one to the other by constituting itself a cut between changeability and the unchanging⁴³⁶ within a variable process. The model of the calculus shows how discontinuity arises from continuity without the latter simply reproducing the former in its negative form but presenting a genuinely different structure. The dx , like noumena, is not given to intuition. It consists of an infinitely small division of a variable curve that is supposed to both have and lack magnitude. However, unlike Kantian noumena, Deleuzian ideas do not lack determination altogether but are determined through pre-individual singularities. Unlike the empirical determination of extended objects, ideas are determinable through the reciprocal determination of the differentials constituting them. Reversely, objects' determination is a process of genesis stemming from a "non-objectival [...] transcendental realm".⁴³⁷ Ideas and objects corresponding to different types of determination are degrees of difference.

Since ideality is solely a moment in the process of creation or transformation of sensibility, divisibility could not occur exclusively at the level of extensity but already at the level of ideas which, like the differential equations of the calculus -where curves are given through their singular points- are divided up by the singularities which constitute them. However, this divisibility is not to be thought of as modeled through Newtonian space's infinite divisibility. Ideas are on the side of events, affections, and accidents, and the singularities of

⁴³⁴ Deleuze, 171.

⁴³⁵ Deleuze, 169.

⁴³⁶ Deleuze, 171-2.

⁴³⁷ Henry Somers-Hall, "Hegel and Deleuze on the Metaphysical Interpretation of the Calculus," *Continental Philosophy Review* 42, no. 4 (March 2010): 555-72, 571.

an idea are like the crucial points of an event, culminations, points of boiling or precipitation, and moments that signify and cause change. Once you divide up an idea into different singular points, it changes nature. The element of the singularity that makes up the ideal virtual structure allows for the cut of the continuity of the latter so that it differentiates in an extended divisible field.⁴³⁸ For example, in the curve of the calculus depicting the variable changing speeds of a vehicle, the singular points that change the curve's direction denote the moments' when the car accelerates or decelerates. While in the ideal depiction, we perceive the moment of the vehicle as continuity, the inflection points denote cuts in the continuity of the force of the movement.

Moreover, the singularities among ordinary points allow an ideal structure to persist despite changes in the field that actualizes it and yield different solutions to the problem it presents. Using Riemannian geometry, we can consider how an ideal structure (say a triangle) can be measured internally and allow for the determination of its successive changes and generate various solutions to the problem it presents (a triangle on an irregular, fluctuating curved surface insisting despite changes in the surface's curvature). If, for example, we imagine a triangle on a surface drawn on a curved surface, let us say the earth itself, instead of being ideally flat as a paper, how do we retain the shape throughout slight changes in the surface's curvature? The triangle's vertexes allow for an internal measuring of the distance between them so that this can remain constant throughout changes. Likewise, an idea is a structure much like a triangle.⁴³⁹ The singularities make the idea singular, different from other ideas, and determine the conditions of the solution that the idea problem will yield without predestining those solutions. Conditions and solutions are both real, albeit being distinct degrees of difference, the one being virtual and the other actual. Ideas are intensive and generative by virtue of their transformability, and they condition actual extensities without being larger from or prior to what they condition. An organism's genome is an example of an idea in the biological realm. The genome exists simply along the organism and is inextricably linked with the latter. While it contains the conditions determining the organism (genes), it nevertheless does not predetermine or prefigure the organism; it is a realm of potentiality immanent to or coexisting with the organism itself.

If ideas, due to their indetermination, are the creative force of reason, if the indetermination of ideas is what pushes reason to move forward legislating over new 'objects'

⁴³⁸ Anna Longo, "Deleuze and Mathematics," *La Deleuziana - Online Journal of Philosophy*, no. 11 (2020): 19–28, 23–4.

⁴³⁹ Deleuze, 183.

and therefore being creative and inventive, and since reason is not the privileged faculty of thinking, then there must be ideas corresponding to all faculties: ideas of imagination, ideas of memory, ideas of sensibility or else aesthetic ideas. As Deleuze puts it, “Ideas [are] not [...] pure cogitanda but [...] instances which go from sensibility to thought and from thought to sensibility, capable of engendering [...] the limit- or transcendent- object of each faculty.”⁴⁴⁰ Moreover, the revelation of the secondary role of the coordination of the faculties and, therefore, the fractured nature of the subject points to a concomitant dissolution of the object as a self-identical unified, and unchanging entity. What is more, faculties themselves are expanded to involve more capacities than those directly pertaining to an individual subject endowed with the ability of thinking and sensing. Biology, language, and sociability become faculties in Deleuze’s system, while new faculties are yet to be invented. Ideas are points of transformation of such faculties. For example, the idea of the revolution is the transformative, transcendent limit of sociability.⁴⁴¹ As we explained in the previous chapter, reality is a perspectival non-unifiable multiplicity and not an object that can be recognized and accounted for as a totality.⁴⁴² By virtue of the sublime, aesthetics is no anymore an autonomous realm of perception related to the senses as opposed to reason. Instead, it becomes the starting point for ethics and metaphysics of *reality as a creative force*. Not only by thinking, we create something new, but by imagining, remembering, and sensing. Ideas, when they occur, transcend the limits of each faculty, leading them in discord and, in that way, overcoming common sense.⁴⁴³ We reach the transformative limit of creation of reality by having an idea in any faculty. Reversely, thinking is not about recognizing and determining some pre-existent thing but creating something anew. Given the paradoxical diagrammatical function of intensity that we already analyzed, reality is itself a diagrammatical and paradoxical event in the sense that it goes both directions at once, and it is by an act of creation that we pass from the event to its pinning down in actual empirical reality. Reason is only one of the elements of this empirical reality. It is an effect rather than the precondition of ideas, as they attempt to limit competing possibilities of the real⁴⁴⁴ that necessarily coexist in reality’s perspectival multiplicity.

⁴⁴⁰ Deleuze, 146.

⁴⁴¹ Deleuze, 208.

⁴⁴² The idea of an object as a totality is not itself negative, as in the Kantian thing in itself which we cannot account for due to the limitation of our perception and cognition but is itself put in question as a mythical concept rooted in tradition and moral accounts of reality. The ‘loss’ of totality nevertheless does not result to a relativistic view on reality, objects are indeed ‘real’, but so is their positive indetermination. Each object is a machine of virtually infinite meanings functions and affects stored in it even when not actualized.

⁴⁴³ Deleuze, 193.

⁴⁴⁴ Keith Wylie Faulkner, “Deleuze and the Three Syntheses of Time” (University of Warwick, 2004), <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/wrap>, 234.

As will be shown subsequently, ideas do not enjoy a homogenous use across the vast work of Deleuze and his collaborative work with Guattari. While ideas have been associated with the structure in Deleuze's early work, in some ways, Deleuze and Guattari, with their emphasis on the machine, depart from this kind of analysis. The reason for the detailed exposition of ideas and their differential function is due to the methodological decision of the current thesis to approach Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy in a strictly monistic view of difference in the sense that affectivity is not separated by ideality in any way, shape or form. On the contrary, what we have just described as ideas are simultaneously compounds of affects. Affectivity is composed of non-corporeal elements, on the one hand, differential elements of ideality, which combine continuity and discontinuity, and on the other hand, elements of corporeality or best-put intensity that proceed in the same dialectic of continuity and discontinuity. Ideas are parts of affectivity,⁴⁴⁵ and affectivity fills up ideality endowing the latter with the determinability it lacks. We will talk about that dialectic in greater detail. For now, it is essential to note that the link between ideas and affectivity can be evident by the link already elaborated by Deleuze himself of ideas with the unconscious.⁴⁴⁶ It has been noted that since ideas already regulate ethical behavior in Kant, they already point towards discovering the unconscious. Yet, it is not until Deleuze analyzes the unconscious as genetic rather than simply conditioning reality and ethical behavior⁴⁴⁷ that we can fully grasp that they are necessarily inextricable from the whole of existence, and from sensibility as a universal realm beyond humanity.

Aesthetics as sensibility and art, overcoming the wrenching duality

The repercussions of the immanent, genetic account of philosophy constructed by Deleuze and Guattari have far-reaching consequences on aesthetics. As Deleuze famously mentions, aesthetics has always suffered from "a wrenching duality,"⁴⁴⁸ namely from a division into two supposedly distinguished and irreconcilable aspects, on the one hand, a theory of sensibility and what it is that one can sense, and on the other a theory of so-called "good taste" and art. As Deleuze puts it, sensibility is considered the form of *possible* experience, while art is the form of *real* experience. That dualism, separating sensibility -as the "factual" realm of

⁴⁴⁵ Gilles Deleuze, "The Shame and the Glory: T. E. Lawrence" in Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael Greco (London, New York: Verso, 1998), 115-125, 124.

⁴⁴⁶ Deleuze, 192.

⁴⁴⁷ Olkowski, *The Universal*, 66-8.

⁴⁴⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of sense*, trans. Constantin V Boundas, Mark Lester, and Charles J Stivale (London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 269.

the sensible reality- from the subjective realm of art -as a distinguished case of sensibility-ingrained in common sense and responsible for certain infamy of art as a supposedly superficial, unnecessary, or elitist activity, separated from real-life problems. That confusion is due to the misconception of thinking and sensibility as representations. The dualistic distinction between art and sensibility is based on a supposition of thinking as the activity of a unified and consistent subject synthesizing into concepts, equally unified objects. Assuming this separation correlates with the presupposition of sensibility itself, Kant also separates the perception of objects from the inner sensations of pleasure and pain accompanying them.⁴⁴⁹ For transcendental empiricism, with such distinction between sensing subject and sensible object no longer subsisting, aesthetics as the realm of sensibility can no longer be divided into objective sensible things (sensibility) and subjective creations (art). All sensible things are products of the genetic conditions that make them possible beyond and before the supposed unified subjective realm. Subject and object are not presuppositions but results of the intensive power of sensibility. Thus, metaphysical difference does not subsist between those but only between sensibility and its pre-individual conditioning. Artworks and sensible beings are no longer considered elements of different orders or nature, and the two aspects of aesthetics are no longer relevant as distinguished. On the contrary, due to its creative function, art stands closer to the genetic account of all sensibility. It is reconfigured as a field of experimentation with the limits of sensibility before and beyond art, as the “rule” of all sensibility and of all reality. Art, as well as sensibility, reveal the genetic conditions of real experience. Sensibility is reunited with the structure of the work of art as with its own structures.⁴⁵⁰ How the structure, the pre-individual conditions, singularities, or forces of sensibility and art operate will be further elaborated in the final part of this chapter by reference to specific artists.

The distinction between the Kantian account of reality as dictated by the limits of possible experience (what we can possibly legitimately claim to know dictated by that which we can legitimately perceive) and that of Deleuze’s account of the genetic conditions of real experience is ultimately referring to the distinction between *extensity* and *intensity*⁴⁵¹ as we exposed it in the previous chapter. As we have noted based on the Newtonian conception of space, extensity accounts for stasis and, therefore, the seeming cancelation of the differential dynamism of intensity as it unfolds itself into extensity. Sensibility, for Deleuze, is not a matter

⁴⁴⁹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 98. In that sense Bergson’s account of sensibility claiming the entanglement of sensation and affectivity is much closer to Deleuze’s sensibility than Kant’s is.

⁴⁵⁰ Deleuze, *The Logic of sense*, 270.

⁴⁵¹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 231-2.

of grasping objects as they appear or unfold in extensity since sensibility itself consists in the constant process of *genesis* of those objects. The unfolded things are not a presupposition of perception but only its result. These objects presuppose the ideal problems and the corresponding intensities unfolding in them and conditioning them. Sensibility is no longer distinguished from the realm of art because, in the context of transcendental empiricism, they are both reconfigured as creation and as referring to the communication across intensities as yet unfolded in extensity, as moving and transforming. To use the terms of Deleuze and Guattari, sensibility is a *machine*, a process existing in itself like the *dx* of the idea, like a noumenon but one that does not lack determination. Sensation is that “zone of indetermination [...] that point that precedes” the organic differentiation between things, people, animals, all sensible things,⁴⁵² that genetic process of differentiation that precedes the formation of empirical bodies or objects of any kind.

Conditioning of possible experience versus genesis of real experience

Sensibility, defined by the Kantian categories as the conditions of possible experience, is only a generalized account⁴⁵³ of what it is for things to be generated and developed, that is, to become other than themselves. Instead, the conditions of real experience correspond to what they condition without delimiting it to what we believe to be possible. The virtual is real, transformation is real, and sensibility is a self-creative process from which sensible qualities arise. Inferring the legitimacy of ideas from the conditions of possible experience means judging the validity of problems from the possibility of their finding solutions.⁴⁵⁴ On the contrary, problems and ideas for Deleuze have their own objective existence and validity; they are real in themselves and consist of the conditions of *real* experience, conditions coextensive with what they condition. Sensibility itself cannot be conditioned by what can be said to exist “objectively” in extensity. Instead, it is defined by its transcendental limit of what one can feel or sense, which is given only at the limits of sensibility explored primarily in the privileged domain of experimentation with those limits of sensibility that is art.

According to Kant, transcendental logic only can provide a secure tool to approach truth. Possible experience in Kant is posited in a dualist distinction from noumena, things in themselves; it, therefore, denotes a privation of knowledge in relation to a reality that lies

⁴⁵² Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 173.

⁴⁵³ Deleuze, 68.

⁴⁵⁴ Deleuze, 161.

beyond the reach of human understanding and perception. How our minds are logically configured and predisposed to produce judgments defines what it is possible for us to know⁴⁵⁵ without diverting to the realm of imagination and creating illusions. Only what can appear in experience; therefore, only things that can take the form of spatiotemporally can be accounted for by reason and understanding in a secure manner, leading to truth and making philosophy and metaphysics an exact science. Deleuze, as we saw, admires and continues the transcendental logic and the critical project of Kant to a large degree. He wants to know what we can validly claim to grasp and is interested in demystifying the illusions of reason. Yet, to follow Deleuze's claim on Bergsonian methodology,⁴⁵⁶ what is at stake is not to define truth itself as an objective reality, but to define a true *problem*. Illusions of reason for Deleuze do not lie in the realm of illegitimately going beyond the categories but involve the *illusion of consciousness*,⁴⁵⁷ the illusion that thought proceeds in a conscious way as the result of an act of a sovereign unified subject, a supposition that Kant had already proved dubitable when he exposed the distinction of the two parts of the Cartesian cogito, but did not follow through his discovery.

Deleuze substitutes the Kantian search for the transcendental conditions of possible experience for the inquiry into the transcendental conditions of *real* experience.⁴⁵⁸ The concept of real experience, unlike that of possible experience, allows Deleuze to expand what we conceive as experience to involve the ghostly realm of ideality,⁴⁵⁹ not as a *juridical* realm judging experience -based on how it conforms to the pure concepts or categories of understanding- but as a *creative* realm of events overflowing physical causality or order, to provide its transformative conditions and potential. Life's reality or possibility is not conditioned, as Kant believes, by the categories of the understanding through which we perceive it in common sense, but rather by the fact of its constant transformation and the pre-individual factors that affect that transformation, that is, by difference in-itself or intensity. Ideas are a level or an aspect of intensity that allows for the constant change of reality and, thus, experience. In turn, Deleuze's reformulation of the function of ideas as generative

⁴⁵⁵ Immanuel Kant and Gary C. Hatfield, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Come Forward as Science*, 57.

⁴⁵⁶ Gilles Deleuze, "Bergson 1859-1945" in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974* (Los Angeles, CA : Cambridge, Mass: Semiotext(e) ; Distributed by MIT Press, 2004), 22-31.

⁴⁵⁷ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 203.

⁴⁵⁸ For an account of this distinction, see also Daniel W. Smith, "The Conditions of the New," *Deleuze Studies* 1, no. 1 (June 2007): 1-21.

⁴⁵⁹ Steven Shaviro, *Without Criteria: Kant, Whitehead, Deleuze, and Aesthetics* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2009), 37.

conditions transforms the concept of the conditioned and its strict separation from the condition as in Kant's system. The condition (idea) cannot be larger (that is more general) than the conditioned (empirical object), neither can it resemble the latter,⁴⁶⁰ as in Kant. Ideas as generative and transformative matrices of experience are internal to experience, constructing real experience.

Categories, Deleuze observes, although they are elements of understanding, conditioning experience, and distinguishing possible experience as indicating the legitimate limit of reason from the illegitimate surpassing of those limits (therefore indicating the capacity of reason to self-regulate), they nevertheless resemble what they are supposed to condition. Kant states that by claiming that while reason cannot aspire to know ideas as if they were objects, it is nevertheless necessary for ideas to be proven in reference to objects (of experience).⁴⁶¹ Therefore, ideas are judged in terms of objects, and thus the transcendental is assessed in terms given by the empirical. Kantian noumena are not truly transcendental in themselves, claims Deleuze, if their indetermination is conceived of in relation to the determination of empirical objects, namely as a *privation* of that kind of empirical determination. As such, possible experience is an empty concept adding nothing to actual reality, while the latter only retrospectively gives evidence of what was possible. Unlike that, real experience for Deleuze is generated by what conditions it, adding to the condition, which is already real, the level of actuality which the condition alone does not possess. There are processes that condition reality that are very real, yet they cannot be accounted for by the *forms* of space and time. Vortexes of spatio-temporality, intensive processes of transformation, and genesis, like black holes or big bangs in the universe, arise as if from nowhere, creating empirical objects out of a realm of intensity beyond spatio-temporality in its common-sense form. They indicate, instead, the very genesis of spatio-temporality from a matrix of intensive depth.⁴⁶² They construct reality out of thin air. Ideas form part of empirical reality in a way that expands what one perceives as experience to involve a generative limit from which experience is created. Ideas are generative and constructivist, insinuating rather than determining the chain of physical order, yet they are as real as that latter. For this reason, possible experience bound

⁴⁶⁰ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 68, 212, 285.

⁴⁶¹ Kant and Hatfield, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Come Forward as Science*, 87.

⁴⁶² Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 50.

by spatio-temporality is only a very limited version of real experience involving processes that we cannot be fully aware of but whose grasp we can reach through approximations and limits.

While Kant holds a point of view of conditioning according to which schemata construct a relation between concepts and intuitions of space-time with empirical impressions, reasserting the externality of the two terms, Deleuze's genetic point of view takes the idea as *interiorizing* the difference between the two,⁴⁶³ which thus remain internal to each other, internally different. Following the critique of Kant already formulated by post-Kantian philosopher Salomon Maimon, Deleuze claims that the determination of sensible things and the indetermination of ideas both refer to each other through a moment of internal reciprocal determination,⁴⁶⁴ what Deleuze will refer to as different/ciation. Ideas and sensibility are different/ciated from each other internally. They constitute the two poles of the complex process of different/ciation. Schemata bring the "spatiotemporal relations into correspondence with the logical relations of the concept"⁴⁶⁵ and, as such, bring differentiation into the concept, which otherwise cannot but remain general. However, the schema cannot "account for the power *with which* it acts."⁴⁶⁶ That is, it cannot explain the force that binds the elements of reality into spatiotemporal beings. On the other hand, for Deleuze, ideas have spatiotemporal dynamisms as their internal elements by virtue of their determinability and their power to actualize.⁴⁶⁷

Kant is culpable for what Deleuze calls the representational mode of thinking, which remains external to thought as a genetic process and instead misunderstands the latter for a process of representing already formed self-identical elements. For Deleuze, representation makes the mistake of proving what is supposed to prove it, and in the case of Kant, that happens with the concept of possible experience.⁴⁶⁸ Deleuze associates explicitly the search for the conditions of possible experience with confinement within the realm of representation and the search for identity (of which similarity and the platonic distinction between model and copies is a correlative and indispensable structure or criterion of assessing reality).⁴⁶⁹ For Deleuze, Kant is culpable of approximating the movement of thought to the principle of identity and the

⁴⁶³ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 178. That move is repeated in the Deleuze's book on Spinoza where ideas as the infinite power of thinking double the two aspects of substance in its infinite power of existing (one side of which is already the attribute of thought). See Chapter 7 of Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*.

⁴⁶⁴ Deleuze, 173-4.

⁴⁶⁵ Deleuze, 218.

⁴⁶⁶ Deleuze.

⁴⁶⁷ Deleuze, 214.

⁴⁶⁸ Deleuze, 274.

⁴⁶⁹ Deleuze, 69.

function of an already-formed consciousness. Thought as the passage from the hypothetical form of possible experience to the categorical judgment of morality exemplifies precisely the workings of consciousness and the moral need for leaving uncertainty in favor of certainty.⁴⁷⁰ The possible already contains “the totality of all that exists”⁴⁷¹ and, in such a way, precludes the openness of the future that Bergson had already proved before Deleuze. Instead, the metaphysics of difference defies this passage towards certainty as closing off the -by definition- open nature of the future and affirms chance as the only rule conditioning the real. Moreover, such a metaphysics recognizes the complicity between the hypothetical and the negative distorting the nature of the problematic as perfectly positive (non)-being.⁴⁷² Instead of a passage from uncertainty to certainty, thinking refers to an irreducible questioning developed within a problematic field.⁴⁷³ Thought, instead of passing from doubt to truth, passes from being to its questioning. In turn, sensibility and aesthetics constitute an open field. We cannot preclude in advance what it is possible for one to experience because sensibility is a process of immanent self-creation.⁴⁷⁴ *Real experience* is itself an open realm conditioned by chance and not limited by the correspondence between sensible things and concepts dictated by common sense. Once the possible experience has been defined, what is to happen has been prescribed and limited to that definition. Thought and sensibility, Deleuze claims, are not accounted for by a passage from the hypothetical to the apodictic, as Kant’s concern for the legitimacy of reason shows, but by a passage from the problematic to the question. Reality is, by definition, indeterminate, there is nothing to prove because there is only constant genesis that ungrounds real experience, conditions that are no larger than the conditioned but that set it in a continual motion of transformation. Reality is a problem in the same way Kant had defined *ideas* as problems, not because reality is ideal or not solely, but because ideas for Deleuze are only the name for the limit conditions of reality in a continuum with it. Reality is problematic because it is dynamic.

As noted, Deleuze’s search for the conditions of real experience follows an age-long philosophical aspiration for thought to penetrate existence itself, unlike concepts that may or may not correspond to existing things but have no internal and necessary relation to reality. One reason for that has been that the principles of classical logic have limited philosophy up

⁴⁷⁰ Deleuze, 196-7, 225-6.

⁴⁷¹ Longo, “Deleuze and Mathematics,” 25.

⁴⁷² Deleuze, 203.

⁴⁷³ Deleuze, 196-7.

⁴⁷⁴ Unlike taking sensibility as creative, Kant takes sensations as given facts, that is as already formed. Deleuze, 98.

to his time, that is, the principles of identity (A is A), non-contradiction (A is not not-A), and the excluded middle (A is either A or not A, between these two there is no third term).⁴⁷⁵ However, the logic of difference that he conceives defies such principles which apply primarily to substances in favor of disjunctive syllogism or synthesis according to which supposed opposites consist alternations⁴⁷⁶ of terms that exist in interplay rather mutual exclusion. The terms of the disjunctive syllogism are affirmed while retaining a distance between them that allows the occurrence of becomings. Existence and thought are different yet not mutually exclusive as one elucidates the other, and their distance allows for creativity to erupt.

Deleuze's search for the preconditions of experience differs from traditional transcendental philosophies separating reality from its ideal source, of which the latter is always superior. In his case, the conditions of experience as genetic aim not to distance one from the current reality in favor of its ideal superior version but to immerse us in existence by allowing us to approach its intensive depth or surface, its source in what generates it. The conditions are not larger than what they condition, meaning they do not precede what they condition, nor do they ground it. The transcendental in Deleuze designates an *ungrounding*.⁴⁷⁷ The conditions should not be considered a ground since, as already exposed in the previous chapter, intensity and the corresponding third synthesis of time, perform a fundamental ungrounding both of thought and sensibility from which arises the creation of both. What conditions the appearance and creation of sensibility is its emergence by the workings of chance out of chaos.

The relation of conditioning and conditioned is, in another way, designated by Deleuze when he talks about the relation between propositions of language and their sense. While propositions can be judged as true and false in reference to the empirical objects that the proposition designates, the truth and falsity stem from a more profound instance of sense, which is the relation of the proposition with the idea that it expresses and which can never be said at the same time as the proposition. The level of sense -and therefore nonsense- describes the transcendental element grounding the proposition (and therefore truth and falsity). When the condition, in that case, is larger than the conditioned -the sense expressed is more general

⁴⁷⁵ Daniel W. Smith, "Logic and Existence: Deleuze on the 'Conditions of the Real,'" *Chiasmi International* 13 (2011): 361–77.

⁴⁷⁶ Corry Shores, *The Logic of Gilles Deleuze*, Bloomsbury Studies in Continental Philosophy (London ; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 81-116.

⁴⁷⁷ Daniela Voss, *Conditions of Thought: Deleuze and the Transcendental Ideas* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 12.

than the objects designated by the proposition- then the grounded does not stem directly from the grounding as an intrinsic genesis but remains extrinsic, tied to conventional forms of thinking. For Deleuze, thought occurs at the level of grounding propositions. Propositions are too tied to empirical objects to convey the transcendental function conditioning experience. Thus, the form of transcendental conditioning in Kant, the “I think,” remaining a simple proposition cannot reach the level of the unconscious sense expression, which is where thought takes place. Moreover, sense is not simply added to the truth/falsity pair as its grounding. Sense necessarily refers to a non-sense, which is when a proposition can neither be true nor false. The grounding relates the grounded to the groundless. Sense puts the notion of the truth in an intrinsic relation to the non-sense from which it arises. Truth in the proposition and its relation to experience (which confirms it or not) become internal to the sense that conditions them. As a result, truth is ‘measured’ primarily in its relation to non-sense rather than to the objects of experience, which are also conditioned by sense and non-sense.⁴⁷⁸ The objects of experience cannot be considered external to the process by which truth arises within sense but can only be considered the limit-ends of that genetic process. Truth, taken as a matter of correspondence of a proposition with experience, remains confined by common sense and cannot reach its transcendental condition that is, sense and non-sense.⁴⁷⁹

Death as Time

Deleuze connects Kant’s revolutionary discovery of the fractured I -which Kant himself did end up concealing- with the third synthesis of time, which he calls the Empty form of time or Death. Deleuze claims time in the third synthesis as empty form loses the joints that connect it and subordinate it to (celestial) movements and provide its measure. In that form of time, time does not lose all capacity to be measured, but only the subordination of its measurability to cardinal points (the points imposed by the external measurement of celestial movements). Time as intensity is measured by an internal immanent measure, by which it becomes a time of events that are not repetitive and foreseeable but signal the advent of radical transformation. Time subordinated to the movement of the stars is problematic because it is measured externally using those planets and their orbits as a frame of reference. The form that time assumes in this synthesis is that of a caesura, an asymmetrical division between a before and an after of an event. Of course, Kant does not follow the path he opens by introducing time

⁴⁷⁸ Deleuze, 154.

⁴⁷⁹ Deleuze, 153-5.

into thought, separating the two unequal parts of thought and its being. Deleuze claims that the root of this deflection of Kant from the path himself discovered is his inability to recognize a passive *synthetic capacity* at the basis of the receptivity that constitutes sensibility.⁴⁸⁰ Deleuze developed that latter in his first synthesis of time, that of habit, according to which the possibility of having a sense of the present is based on the capacity to passively contract moments while extracting a contemplation from each such contraction.⁴⁸¹ The form of time that ensues for Kant is a unitary time that still resembles what it is supposed to condition: empirical circular time. Yet, for Deleuze, the only genuinely unconditioned form of time is given by the form of Death, when there is the distribution of two unequal halves, which it separates while drawing together.⁴⁸²

Deleuze claims that prior to the active synthesis of sensations that Kant assigns to reason, there is a prior synthetic process: the synthesis performed by binding excitations in every sensation. Every sensation is itself an excitation, an increase of intensity upon a surface that is subsequently resolved. The binding together of excitations to an object is performed passively in circles of excitation-resolution that form a habit and that are interpreted as the process of pleasure (excitations bound together actively in such a way as to ensure their systematic resolution). Binding as a passive synthesis in habit results in the formation of organs themselves, as, for example, the eye is itself the result of a process of binding excitations of light.⁴⁸³ Imagination contracts sequences of events retaining impressions and therefore creating expectations. Thus, when one has experienced an AB sequence numerous times, the appearance of A creates an anticipation of the arrival of B. Imagination synthesizes sensations prior to the binding and synthesizing activity of reason.⁴⁸⁴ Imagination is the one that retains the backward impression of an object while we perceive its front side and thus binds the two together in a continuum of impressions, even if this does not yet have the form of an object. Sensation thus cannot be reduced to the opposition of the activity of the subject over the object sensed (the former imposing to the latter the concept or else the form of objectivity) but has to be considered primarily as a continuum of excitations passively bound together on a sensitive plate capable of retention. Such a project of understanding sensibility as passively synthetic could allow Kant's conception of the fracture of time to lead to its extreme consequences of

⁴⁸⁰ Deleuze, 87.

⁴⁸¹ Deleuze, 71-5.

⁴⁸² Deleuze, 89.

⁴⁸³ Deleuze, 96-7.

⁴⁸⁴ Deleuze, 70-1.

appearing as the form of Death. Sensibility is conditioned by the synthesis of time, that is Death. Death is additionally a limit point like the intensive limit we encountered in the previous chapter. It is never experienced but is sensed at the limits of everyday experience.

Moreover, turning to the human form of sensibility that is desire, Deleuze shows that the latter is inextricable from death, from discontinuities in the seamless repetition of the neurotic's symptoms that transform the psychic system beyond the oedipal familial impasses. Discontinuity, the break of the continuity of the idea by way of its singularities, as well as the implication of the sensible in the idea, implying a gap between thinking and its being by way of time and dynamism, both attest to reality being "essentially" ungrounded.⁴⁸⁵ There is no way to prove the continuity of time, sensibility, or the neurotic symptom other than common sense empirical observation, which, as Hume has proved, cannot lead to establishing stable and secure theoretical principles. Empirical observation needs to collaborate with reason, as Kant has shown. For Deleuze, empirical observation finds its genetic limit in the ideas of each faculty. Experience is "seen more clearly" from its limit points, that is, the limits of sensibility (the being of the sensible) in those moments where things are and are not at the same time, at the point where things transform, where structural mechanisms become formed by way of problems. Sensibility is a problem. Experience is not given; there is not a thing out there already given. Instead, perception is born constantly in the process of two intensities meeting (light intensity, eye intensity) in between. Sensibility is a connection across heterogeneous series (eye-light) that constitute a new power of an in-between, a disjunctive synthesis, the being of the sensible, a power that creates both the light and the eye.⁴⁸⁶ Singularities are these points in which the problematic structure of sensibility when intensity neutralizes to acquire new directions transforming sensibility. Death is such a singularity in the continuity of life, a neutralization of energy ensuring its transformation. Life is disjunctively synthesized with death and is divided by the inescapable break of death that surpasses it. Death intensifies life, as in the example of the dying one's augmented libido and attachment to objects of desire.⁴⁸⁷ In *the Logic of Sense*, Deleuze describes the passage through a kind of leap from the physical surface of the libido and the body to the metaphysical surface of a desexualized energy or

⁴⁸⁵ Deleuze, 194.

⁴⁸⁶ Deleuze, 96.

⁴⁸⁷ Fabrice Jambois, *Deleuze et La Mort: Chemins Dans L'Anti-Œdipe*, Ouverture Philosophique (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2016).

death, where things transform and where the body is no longer taken as a unity but as an open system. Thought and death are there identified for Deleuze.⁴⁸⁸

On the other hand, another distinction arises in the Deleuzian universe: between the being of the sensible as the condition of real experience and real experience as ossified in the forms of identity that common sense sensibility holds dear. Given the free accord of the faculties we encounter in the sublime grounds the accord produced under the predominance of other faculties, Deleuze claims that aesthetic common sense is the ground or the condition of every other common sense.⁴⁸⁹ There is a difference in kind between the being of the sensible, or what in his book on Bacon Deleuze will call the Figure, and figuration, or else things as they appear in sensibility. What is crucial here and will become essential in Deleuzoguattarian ethics is that sensation enacts violence or is violence, however not in the same sense that we speak of violence between already constituted empirical bodies. The violence of the being of the sensible upon formed and established forms of sensibility and the violence of thought (“every true thought is an aggression”)⁴⁹⁰ is not by any means an apology of cruelty but instead the condition of the emergence of novelty in sensibility and thought, the condition of everything new that arises in real experience. As a condition, the being of the sensible does not resemble what it conditions but differs from it; it is the transformative limit of what appears empirically given to the senses. The being of the sensible is the imperceptible forces that exert violence and cause a violent reaction but are distinct from the empirical state before which the reaction happens. It is expressed in signs.

Similarly, death is not an empirical fact since, by definition, we cannot experience death since we are not present when it comes. Nevertheless, it conditions real experience positively and creatively, as is denoted in the third synthesis of time as transformation as well as the subject’s crack up as the condition of the emergence of thought.⁴⁹¹ The Death principle takes in Deleuze a whole new meaning in relation to Freud. It acquires a positivity that cannot be confused with an empirical affirmation of empirical death or the death drive in life. It is not to be confused with the experiences of cruelty and exploitation, the necrosis or stagnation of people’s affective and cognitive capacities. “Every event is like death”⁴⁹² means that death, like time, is the pure and empty form of transformation of everything that changes. Death or

⁴⁸⁸ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 215, 251.

⁴⁸⁹ Deleuze, “The Idea of Genesis in Kant’s Aesthetics,” 62.

⁴⁹⁰ Deleuze, *The Logic of sense*, 308.

⁴⁹¹ Deleuze, 165, 328-39.

⁴⁹² Deleuze, 156.

time are transcendental principles that ensure the eruption of difference. Death, having no specific content, is a *form* of transformation that is unforeseeable. Death is the event per se; all events are of the form of death, meaning that they consist in a radical transformation, an absolute change in the nature of the thing changed, to such an extent that we can no longer talk of the same thing. Such is the third synthesis of time that conditions the passing of time (and not Eros - Mnemosyne as in the case of Bergson). Death is not reduced to negation or limitation; it is not the limitation of inanimate matter upon finite living force, as Freud supposes. It is instead problematic, “the source of problems and questions.”⁴⁹³

While Kant inserted the form of time causing a revolutionary advance of philosophy, he failed to associate his finding with its final consequence, that, according to Deleuze, was the event of the death of God,⁴⁹⁴ and more broadly, the insertion of death as the metonymy for every transformative event as the condition of existence of time itself. Death is the form of all events. In turn, the event as a caesura in time signifies the form of time -unlike the assumption of representation that the past of reminiscence constitutes the form of time, and the present provides its content.⁴⁹⁵ Death is the unconditioned form of time, the unchanging form of change, the constant element of transformation being the condition of possibility of reality, the ungrounding grounding sensibility, and the nonsense conditioning sense. Time as the empty form of Death establishes a radical inequality between a before and an after, between the time when an ego appears as not yet capable of the event and an after when the ego has become worthy or equal to the event and at the same time has dissolved itself in the process. This radical inequality or caesura of the moments divided by the event condition, any simulated continuity of time belonging to representation.

Art’s highest function is to repeat and to contract together two forms of repetition, one bare, material and empirical, the apparent repetition of the same, and the other clothed repetition of depth to extract the difference between them as well as pure difference as the condition and the cause of them both. That is how art fulfills its function in attaining liberty: by synthesizing the different syntheses of time or the different kinds of repetition to reveal the third one as the primary cause of them all, as the highest and liberating power of them all. The third synthesis of time, or the repetition corresponding to the empty form of time, is the highest, deeper, or primary form of repetition. It is art’s revolutionary function to lead us from the

⁴⁹³ Deleuze, 112.

⁴⁹⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 87.

⁴⁹⁵ Deleuze, 91.

empirical habitual repetitions to the repetitions of memory, and, finally, to the repetition of death “in which our freedom is played out”.⁴⁹⁶ While this account of art is based on the given by Deleuze in his early metaphysical period, there are specific differences in the function of art given in the collaborative works of Deleuze and Guattari where the notion of synthesis transforms. Specifically, as Guattari emphasizes the limitations of Deleuze’s alternative “structural” approach, Deleuze and Guattari’s work highlights the machinic syntheses of desire and the way creativity arises through a more fundamental break of desire that the machine performs beyond the structure that Guattari associates with retention of the ego.⁴⁹⁷ That the unconscious is machinic means that it is not reducible but differs in its function from the subject’s structure which is still relevant in the Deleuzian third synthesis of time. This is the case, Guattari claims because the paradoxical element ensuring the connection across heterogeneous series is conceived by Deleuze as internal to the structure. On the contrary, Guattari claims that the paradoxical element that acts as a differentiator arises as external to the structure. Change always arises from an intrusion of an external factor.⁴⁹⁸ As it pertains to the issue of aesthetics, this break that Guattari’s approach with Deleuzian metaphysics signals a difference in the role of ideas and their entanglement with sensibility.

While it rests beyond the scope of the current thesis to clarify in detail the issue of the continuities and discontinuities between Deleuze’s early works and Deleuze and Guattari’s collaborative work, it is worth acknowledging the problem while taking some space to clarify the stance that this thesis takes regarding that. I take up the issue again in further detail at the beginning of the following chapter in the comparative account of the three “syntheses” in the two periods. As already analyzed, in Deleuze’s *Difference and Repetition*, ideas are problematic elements internal to sensibility that account for the genetic conditions from which sensibility arises. In the third transformational synthesis of time, when a radical break is effectuated between past and future, ideality is that element that retains a sense of structure even if the latter is quite differentiated from the classic structuralist conception of the latter in that it contains a paradoxical agent effectuating differentiation. This agent is internal to the system itself. To prove the radical transformability of a structure, even if that is an internally differentiating one, Guattari claims for an externality that is nevertheless not transcendent,

⁴⁹⁶ Deleuze, 293.

⁴⁹⁷ Félix Guattari, “Machine and Structure” in *Psychoanalysis and Transversality: Texts and Interviews 1955-1971* (South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2015), 318-329.

⁴⁹⁸ Edward Thornton, “On Lines of Flight: A Study of Deleuze and Guattari’s Concept” (Royal Holloway, University of London, 2018), 109.

assuming a dualism of exterior and interior of the structure, that would return us to duality, but a dialectics of structure with what he terms the *machine*. Unlike the structure, the machine directly references what Marx had termed the base of society, and it is not caught in the yoke of symbolism but enjoys a fast pacing change, unlike “the inertia of political and legal structures.”⁴⁹⁹ In the dualism of base and superstructure, Guattari wants to move to the former, while Deleuze’s differential ideas remain caught up in the latter. Political stagnation occurs when the changing forms of production of the former do not correspond to available ways of subjectivation, resulting in a gap between them. The task of a revolutionary analysis and philosophy would be to create connections across the tension between the two. In Guattari’s view, that is effectuated if the latter is understood in terms of the former. Machinic syntheses of desire and the discontinuities that they produce substitute thus for the syntheses of time and the discontinuities that they induce, always in reference to a Kantian subjectivity exemplified in the notion of the idea.

3. Aesthetics of affect

Affect as an intensive singularity

By affirming the power of the differential calculus to present the passage from ideal continuity to extensive divisibility, Deleuze affirms a kind of determinability and reality different from that of empirical objects, which escapes what he terms the representational mode of thinking. Such determinability defies the polarity between generality and particularity⁵⁰⁰ (that Kant attested to distinguishing universal ideas and particular intuitions) and infinity and finitude.⁵⁰¹ The point of thought is not to represent objects but to reach this kind of determinability that grasps things in their genetic moment as neither general nor particular but singular. In a way, that is the power of the concept of affect in that it relates sensibility to an irreducible singularity. Affect ensures the singularity of the concept. Following the Spinozian account of affect as a variation of intensity and taking the problem to its extreme consequences, as already exposed, Deleuze substituted substance and its symbolic correlation with God for intensity as an inhuman force of differentiation occurring in all levels of reality and thinking, matter and ideas, all processes and creatures, ensuring the eruption of chance and the undecidability of their becoming, which, by definition, can never be foreseen, guaranteeing the

⁴⁹⁹ Thornton, 118.

⁵⁰⁰ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 171-2.

⁵⁰¹ Deleuze, 178.

irreducibility of the openness of the future. Every entity is difference in reference to a concept that would aspire to involve it according to traditional philosophies of representation. Everything is a singularity because everything is different; singularity is a protrusion point among ordinary sequences. Every concept is singular.⁵⁰² But how does it become singular? Because incorporeal events like the sensible beings are not aspiring to represent sensible reality but only to create.

Affects ensure the singularity of both concepts and bodies since Spinoza declared that Good and Bad do not correspond to absolute meanings related to a unified reality imposed by the ideality of God but localized components of the experience. Good is good ‘for me,’ and Bad is bad ‘for me,’ and nothing more. It denotes a state of compatibility and convergence of a bodily and ideal entity with another entity of the same kind. Just like God is dispersed in the molecules of nature, spiritualizing all of reality, ideas, and concepts -involved in his(sic) intellect- are dispersed in all entities denoting something about them. I do not need to aspire to being Good in an absolute, overly demanding, crushing sense, bound to create resentment and bad conscience. Instead, I need to act through reason to distinguish what is good and bad for me so that I can contribute in the best way I can to the order of nature, tending towards freedom. Singularity is disentangled from immanent measures and ethics.

On the other hand, the limitation that follows the surpassing the demand for universality may present the disadvantage of preventing a broader view of the world and the infinite possibilities for living, the infinite worlds within the world that the infinite perspectives of others present. It also faces the obstacle of habit. One’s affects and ways of interacting with the world are not only tended towards a possibility of being organized by reason or difference to produce the new and allow one to reach the limit of one’s best potential. Affect is bound by habit, unreasonable emotional structures that are adequately defined in the psychoanalytic theory of neuroses. In that respect, ideas function as a repository of potential, matrices of transformation through which a limited affective pattern can liberate itself to reach its greatest limit. It is precisely in this limit between the universality of categories and the particularity of the here and now implying a forged and sedentary identity, that the compound of affects and ideas, as a synthesis of internal difference, situates us.⁵⁰³

⁵⁰² Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 7.

⁵⁰³ Deleuze, 285.

Sensibility and thought. affects and ideas are the transformative limit of each other, different durations or paces in the machinic process of expressivity. In the passage from one to the other, absolute speed is ultimately attained.⁵⁰⁴ It is precisely this coming together of terms that exist by definition in distance from each other, a resonance across heterogeneity, a simultaneous affirmation of two edges of a discontinuity that results in the state of absolute speed of thought situated at the whole of space and the attainment of intensification of experience at the limit of empirical reality. At the coming together of concepts as universal and singular, at the affirmation of the irreducible difference between affectivity and ideality, it is that transformation or intensification, genesis or pure difference takes place, enacts a crack in time.

Affect in art

As we have analyzed, Deleuze is substituting the Kantian transcendental as the function of conscious subjective judgment (distributing relations among phenomena according to propositional logical categories) for an immanent transcendental field populated by generative processes of both sensibility and ideas that follow the arrow of time in a discontinuous manner. These processes transcend the reality of logical consciousness and proceed from the problematic nature of reality in its virtual intensive ideal aspect to the construction of solutions in the realm of extensive bodies and formed objects. This problematic nature of reality in its immanently transcendental level from which empirical reality is generated is also largely unconscious, as are ideas themselves. The determinability of the unconscious as a field of infinite differentiation substitutes the indeterminability of the Kantian transcendent *things in themselves*, which in psychoanalytical terms are characterized by lack. While things in themselves condition empirical reality, their characteristic is that nothing can be said of them except that they are not objects of knowledge. On the contrary, unknowability is not characterized by lack in the Deleuzian transcendental field. There is differentiation in the immanently transcendental field of the Deleuzoguattarian problematic unconscious which further differentiates into empirical reality. The Deleuzoguattarian transcendental is the *unconscious* as an element of sensibility itself in its discontinuous continuity, in its disjunctive synthesis with ideality. What we can sense or think is conditioned by the differential unconscious of thought and sensibility itself, where thinking as consciousness plays no role;

⁵⁰⁴ Gilles Deleuze, "Spinoza and the Three Ethics" in Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 138-151, 150-1.

only functions, problems, and solutions subsist. In that sense, the unconscious is not interested in propositions and meaning but has the same role as non-sense: the ungrounding of sense and sensibility.

Kantian transcendence relies upon a unity of the faculties effected by the presence of a disembodied subjectivity characterized by the constant capacity to reason found in the form of the “I think,” a characteristic entirely in line with the moral claim of humans’ accountability both to each other as well as God. Yet in the Deleuzoguattarian immanently transcendental unconscious, unity is only a function among a multiplicity of affective processes that do not guarantee a morality’s foundation. The transcendental is the plane of immanence of pure thought on the other side of unity and continuity, where thought is a side of sensibility, and art allows for the exploration of unbridled capacities to sense and create sensation.⁵⁰⁵ The problem with reason and its imposing unity is, as it has been noted, temporal. It mistakes the discontinuity of dynamically connected disjointed moments of non-chronological time-in-becoming for a discontinuity of static moments in being.⁵⁰⁶ Reason’s unity misjudges the nature of time as a disjointed process that connects heterogeneous unrelated moments and thus cannot capture creativity which we can instead better understand through what is traditionally called the realm of aesthetics via Deleuze reconfigured as the realm of all sensation.

In this immanently transcendental problematic unconscious affect is formed, and connectivity across heterogeneity happens. Moreover, the transcendental unconscious of Deleuze and Guattari, as they make clear in *Anti-Oedipus*, is not populated by the triangulations of the psychoanalytic Oedipus complex but by the coincidence of “nature and man (*sic*).”⁵⁰⁷ As such, the unconscious is populated not primarily by familial figures but by historical and geographical names as much as cosmic and animal names and elements. In this sense, by exposing the transcendent conditions that unground empirical reality, we encounter non-human elements and processes of connectivity among humans with all kinds of natural entities. Art in Deleuze and Guattari has the function of exposing the transcendent conditions of empirical reality. Through it, all sorts of non-human becomings emerge as the unconscious conditioning of human experience, as the emergence of sensibility out of chaos and ungrounding, human

⁵⁰⁵ Olkowski, *The Universal (in the Realm of the Sensible)*, 65-77.

⁵⁰⁶ Samantha Bankston, “To Have Done with Judgement of ‘Reason’: Deleuze’s Aesthetic Ontology” in Ceciel Meiborg and Sjoerd van Tuinen, eds., *Deleuze and the Passions* (Place of publication not identified: Punctum Books, 2016), 41-58, 41.

⁵⁰⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 108.

sensibility out of death and sense out of nonsense. As such, human emotions and states of influence are only the empirical outcomes of unconscious workings of affectivity among human sensibility and natural sensibility, human ideas, and the unconscious of thought in nature. I hope to expose the process of unconscious affectivity as different types of connection and distance in the following chapter.

Affect is a degree of intensity whose highest power or degree is that of death or destruction as the condition of the production of the purely new and of the appearance of radical difference. As it appears in Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?*, affect is the product of art; along with percept, it constitutes a bloc of sensations independent of subjects and objects. Far from being identified with actual feelings and perceptions linked with states of affairs, affects and percepts are "a-subjective conditions of experience."⁵⁰⁸ As such, affect is a stand-alone entity expressed and preserved in the matter of artworks and in the qualities that bring them to life. Colors, textures, and tones are where the non-material entity of composition, the essence of art, is preserved. Far from merely an actual extensive element, or a static element in Bergsonian terms, an affect, the essence of art, is a non-ideal immaterial entity in constant becoming, a machine preserved in matter but exceeding the latter.

From time to deterritorialization

As many have noted, the passage from the early solitary works of Deleuze to his collaborative works with Guattari is marked by a relative shift of emphasis from denouncing space -as a category of stability underpinning a metaphysics of identity- to a proliferation of spatial concepts⁵⁰⁹ seeking to convey the play of identity and difference in new ways. Some have noted that this shift denotes a passage from an idealist to a materialist phase of Deleuze's extensive work, but a closer look may suggest otherwise. In the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Deleuze and Guattari create a constellation of concepts relating to space and correlate distinct ethical and political stances to different disjunctively synthesized spatial relations. They create a critical distinction between the different views of treating space, either nomadically occupying or capturing it. These, in turn, refer to the problem of measurement or numbering, which as we elaborated in the previous chapter, is a central problem with regard to the concept of intensity elaborated by Deleuze primarily in *Difference and Repetition* but also

⁵⁰⁸ Samantha Bankston, *Deleuze and Becoming* (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 179.

⁵⁰⁹ Ian Buchanan and Gregg Lambert, eds., *Deleuze and Space* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2008), 5.

in the *Logic of Sense*. The different ways of relating to space, either through occupation in nomadic terms or through capture and striation as by the mechanism of the State apparatus,⁵¹⁰ are primarily distinguished by the possibility and practice of measuring and dividing space in such a way that space is either considered a dynamic, intensive entity or, by contrast, a Newtonian neutral vessel supposedly distinguished by the forces that arise in it, an inert space subject to measurement through a recurrence to an external system of measure. In short, the two conceptions of space that Deleuze and Guattari contrast, while admitting their synthesis as different degrees of a disparateness, are a dynamic and intensive space of emergence of difference, a space non-distinguishable to time, in contrast to an inert measurable and infinitely divisible space of identity.⁵¹¹

Following the above, it would be more accurate to claim that the collaborative works of Deleuze and Guattari add or exemplify and do not contradict the focus of Deleuze's early works on time and dynamics. The collaborative works add that the intensity in itself conditioning the emergence or better genesis of actual empirical reality is accounted for in new manners that emphasize the collective nature of such intensity arising in assemblages (which can be considered individual in the broadest sense of the term). An affect occurs not only in an individualized entity comprised of singularities. Individualized entities are also indistinguishable from a zone of proximity, a relation with their outside in the sense that there is always an implied environment contributing to the variation of intensities that constitute the world. Affects are powers binding together assemblages which can be not only the countless perspectives constituting the world but, more specifically, groups, herds, and swarms characterized by specific capacities to act and be acted upon, to affect and be affected. In packs-multiplicities, the separate parts constitute their singularities.⁵¹²

Following the continuum of art and sensibility, corresponding to that of humans and nature, art is not the privileged activity of humans. On the contrary, it arises in the domains of nature that exceed the human. In nature, a bloc of sensations, that is, art, is produced in reference to territoriality, and it starts with the deterritorializing and reterritorializing functions that an animal performs.⁵¹³ Territorializing is creating some organization, no matter how

⁵¹⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 387-94.

⁵¹¹ On Deleuze's positive conception of space as genetic unfolding and as power accounting for relations see Claire Colebrook, "The Sense of Space: On the Specificity of Affect in Deleuze and Guattari," *Postmodern Culture* 15, no. 1 (2004).

⁵¹² Deleuze and Guattari, 33-2.

⁵¹³ Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 183-5.

elemental, over the chaos of the universe or in terms of transcendental conditions of the real, over the black hole, the death or nothingness which conditions all life. It is simple as an animal building its house. A territory is then a minimum domain of identity which allows for the development of life and has a function that is correlative to the second synthesis of time that we already analyzed as grounding that enables the passage of time, a coexistence of all past and present that allows the present to subsist and go forward. Yet this organizational element of territoriality is only essential for Deleuze and Guattari to the extent that it allows correlative processes of deterritorialization from which it is indistinguishable. Deleuzoguattarian deterritorialization thus corresponds to the Deleuzian function of ungrounding that is performed by the third synthesis of time, Thanatos (death) -or Aion according to *the Logic of Sense*- guarantying the advent of unprecedented novelty, and the irruption of the event amid historical sequential time. As already analyzed, intensity is bound to be canceled in the extension of actuality or actual states of affairs of the world as consisting of already formed and unified objects and subjects: that is the function of territorialization. Yet as the actual is indispensable for our possibility of capturing the intensive transcendental conditions from which it emerges, territoriality is necessary for processes of deterritorialization and, therefore, for the revelation of the being of the sensible, or the genesis of experience, revealed through art, to occur.

Art is a continuous process of territorialization and deterritorialization whose radical potential lies in the latter part of returning identity, explication, or space as inertia to its dynamic transformation into irreducible intensive force. Art stops being a self-referential or useless domain, acquiring its value from its independence from functionality to become a function of deterritorialization and of rendering visible the invisible, of revealing affects by extracting them from affections.⁵¹⁴ Territoriality is a necessary stage in this process, a provisional arrest of the dynamic movement of transformation from which and only from which we can have knowledgeable and sensible access to dynamism. Similarly, in common sense experience and states of affairs, feelings as provisional transformations of force-intensity are preconditions for the revelation of intensive affects. They are necessary correlates of the latter, explications of affects from which we can infer their affective preconditions. What distinguishes the process above from dialectical synthesis is the open character of transformation, the impossibility of any territory being formed without its correlative

⁵¹⁴ Simon O'Sullivan, "The Aesthetics of Affect: Thinking Art beyond Representation," *Angelaki* 6, no. 3 (December 2001): 125–35, 129–30.

detritorialization. Affect is an arrow, a differentiating force that is not directionless and neutral. Yet, its direction is nothing but its eternal relation with the emergence of chance, ungrounding, death, or chaos as positive indeterminations conditioning reality.

4. Art as the capture of forces

In what follows, I will present four of the numerous examples of Deleuzian and Deleuzoguattarian philosophical uses of artworks of different domains to exemplify and develop their project in positioning art as a domain leading metaphysical research by disclosing the genetic conditions of sensibility and thought and by revealing intensity and affectivity. The Deleuzoguattarian analysis of Kafka and Deleuzian analyses of Bacon, Proust, and Sacher-Masoch will serve here as exemplary cases of how different art forms, such as literature and painting, help to reveal the genetic conditions of various domains of sensibility. As noted, the common problem of distinct art forms is precisely the problem of capturing forces,⁵¹⁵ that is, forces that unfold in and make sensibility possible. Moreover, the Deleuzian analysis of the literature of Masoch will reveal the subversive power of imagination in the forging of a thought differentiating from the law of reason's transcendence towards the transcendence of the genesis of reality. In all of the above cases, the artist develops an idea in the sense that Deleuze understands the latter, that is, as a limit, transforming sensibility, what it is possible to sense, an idea that is not limited to the art form in the context of which it is developed, but useful as a new reconfiguration of reality itself. In Bacon, this idea is the Figure, in Proust the Sign, in Kafka minor language, in Masoch, the "law of the mother/imagination."

What is captured by the artistic work in each case is a form of an in-itself of difference as the affection of a thing by itself in time. In short, what is captured is a pure power of transformation that subsists beyond empirical sensibility. It is the capacity of sensibility (understood in its irreducible ideality and materiality that is a disjunctive synthesis of heterogeneity) to transform, developing a dynamic towards its nth power or else its ultimate limit yielding outcomes that, surpassing the thresholds of possibility, are not foreseeable or anticipated. Unlike the Kantian thing in itself or noumenon, the in-itself of change is related to sensibility; it is sensibility's variable and singular ultimate limit. It is the power of an open system or machine to reach its highest potential by differentiating from the pre-individual elements that condition it, yet not being able to be anticipated by them since the noumenon of

⁵¹⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (London: Continuum, 2010), 56. See also, Anne Sauvagnargues, *Deleuze and Art*, trans. Samantha Bankston (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 133.

transformation or pure affect is a genuine *creation*. Only art can capture and maintain that in-itself of affectivity as pure sensibility pushed to its limit, a limit that is temporal but pertaining to the time of the event, of the pre-individual singularities from which it arises. A movable dynamic in itself of becoming that is pure affectivity. It is the nature of intensity to hold itself in itself, and that is precisely what allows for desire to preserve itself and its explosive power beyond the variable restrictive social mechanisms in which it is always necessarily assembled in Deleuze and Guattari's terminology or, in Deleuze's own, explicated. Desire, as affectivity, the power of anything to unfold in time and transform in genuinely novel manners, is always assembled.⁵¹⁶ Yet, it is also always preserved in itself as an irreducible internal externality of the any entity or force to its own difference and transformation. Affect denotes the transformation process effectuated in time in any open system. In the context of what is referred to in secondary scholarship as Deleuze's aesthetics ontology, affect is the primary metaphysical element. It is the process of the necessarily contingent transformation of entities in time. Ideas in early Deleuzian work are only one side of the variable power of affect.

Painting Forces: Bacon

Bacon provides Deleuze with a field to develop his theory of forces. Deleuze initially places Bacon in line with a long tradition of painting that, by the chance of the theological themes imposed by the social context of their times, resist a strictly representational function of their works. The attempt to capture the divine nature in imagery has initiated what Deleuze describes as the primary function of painting: the capture of forces, of which Bacon is the example par excellence. Explaining the technique by which the painter makes this capture of forces possible, Deleuze points out that the whole process consists of a revealing. In order to allow forces to appear and exert themselves on the canvas, the primary task of the painter is to create a diagram. This diagram functions in such a way as to disturb or obstruct the emergence of already constituted representations, or what Deleuze terms clichés, on the canvas. The canvas is populated with such clichés, already-formed static depictions projected by the initial persistence of common sense in the artist's mind and imagination, and only through a counter process can one prevent them from appearing.⁵¹⁷ In turn, Bacon aims to grasp figures in liminal states, such as under the influence of power beyond their control, the flattening power of sleep, the rough energy of matting, the distorting power of a fleeting burst of anger, the raw

⁵¹⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 228, 531.

⁵¹⁷ Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, (London: Continuum, 2010), 70-7.

substratum of flesh underlining the human figure that returns the human to the sheer animality from which it arises. Bacon's images are not simply depictions of forces but an attempt to grasp the conditions that make them possible, turning the artwork into a kind of diagram producing such forces instead of representing them, a machine producing difference, capturing and releasing intensity and therefore affects. There are no feelings in Bacon, only affects.⁵¹⁸

Deleuze's analysis of Bacon exemplifies the difference between condition and conditioned, sensation as an empirical exercise of the faculties and the being of the sensible that conditions the former. For Deleuze, Bacon makes apparent that all sensation is a *fall* that affirms the irreducible inequality of intensity. This does not resemble the empirical state of falling and its moral connotation and associations with decline, misery, and suffering.⁵¹⁹ Similarly, the forces that produce the scream must not be confused with the empirically given situation in the perception of which one screams.⁵²⁰ The painter elucidates the fall as the active element of forming all sensation as the radical affirmation of intensity's inequality. To paint for Bacon is to apply disjunctive, catastrophic forces that, as in the case of the sublime, open bare and explode the supposed unity of the faculties upon an object.⁵²¹ We will return to the fall as an element of sensation in the following chapters of this thesis.

Minor Language: Kafka

Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of the work of Kafka emphasizes the transformative use of language that his novel performs by reversing the common-sense sequence between content and expression, according to which expression presupposes a content as an agent expressing itself. Instead, content or else form comes only after the fact of the expressive event of the creative force of the literary machine.⁵²² That kind of expression dissolves form, including the form of language, to open up new paths toward the limits of signification. What makes Deleuze and Guattari's work exemptional for the point of view of the current research is the revelation of language as a system of signification, among others. Ultimately, they propose the dissolution of language, as a dominant signifying regime, in favor of that of intensive sense and signs and thus affect, where an agent is only a retrospective after-effect and

⁵¹⁸ Gilles Deleuze, 28-9.

⁵¹⁹ Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 58.

⁵²⁰ Deleuze, 42-3.

⁵²¹ Dorothea Olkowski, "Deleuze's Aesthetics of Sensation," in Daniel W. Smith and Henry Somers-Hall, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Deleuze* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012) 265-86, 282.

⁵²² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature: The Components of Expression," *New Literary History* 16, no. 3 (Spring 1985): 591-608.

expression expresses nothing but itself. Sense as the fragile surface between the abyss of bodily depths and logical propositions, far from depending upon language, is the condition of its existence, a transformative structure of language, revealing language's affective components and presuppositions.

Moreover, Deleuze and Guattari find in Kafka so many of the effects they will trace on a purely theoretical level in *What is Philosophy?*. They analyze Kafka as effectuating in his stories becoming-animal, as the attempt to find an escape route, a map of intensities for escaping. In that sense, and connecting that to Deleuze's concerns when reformulating and criticizing Kant, becoming-animal retains nothing of the duality tied to subjectivity but is "a procedure which replaces subjectivity."⁵²³ Moreover, the culmination of Kafka's work as a machine of expression happens with the eventual transformation of animal becomings to machinic processes involving emotional investment in sociopolitical organizations. The famous revelation in Kafka's novels of libido's capture into the bureaucratic organization discloses the machinic becoming of human desire, a political intervention of literature in life overcoming the distinction between the two.⁵²⁴ Literature and life are no more separate fields the writer mediates. Literature is an experimentation on life and, in Kafka's case, an experimentation with a comic take on the bureaucratic organization of desire in modern society, a revelation of the problem lying behind modern Western societies as Kafka experienced it, a grasp of the forces of machinic bureaucracy capturing the energy of Eros in a way that crushes it opening it to the radical transformation of the empty form of time. The solution to that problem is an affective process of becoming decentralizing humanity and affirming its genetic presuppositions in animality.

Signs of Art: Proust

Literature, precisely that of Proust, played a pivotal role in Deleuze's idea of a new image of thought whose primary function is creation.⁵²⁵ The sign, that fundamental element of Deleuzian metaphysics that allows thought to leave behind the self-evident power of identity in sensible objects (and therefore sentient subjects), finds its exemplary development in Proustian literature. *The Search of Lost Time*, Deleuze claims, exposes a veritable treasure and abundance of signs of different kinds, of which the philosopher distinguishes worldly signs,

⁵²³ Deleuze and Guattari, 599.

⁵²⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, 605.

⁵²⁵ Anne Sauvagnargues, *Deleuze: L'empirisme Transcendantal* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2009), 11.

sings of love, and sensuous signs,⁵²⁶ and which attest to the gradual, developmental effort of thought to grasp reality's genetic force, that is, the reciprocal genesis of thought and the asymmetrical genesis of the sensible. The sign indicates that Proust's work contributes to his version of the reconfiguration of the real in terms of pre-individual forces. Life as a life-long attempt to discern signs attests to both the practice of Proust's idealist narrator searching for a kind of time that transcends frivolous and fleeting chronological time towards a time of eternity and the metaphysical search for the transcendental conditions immanent in sensibility. In the signs of art, all the other kinds of signs find their principle of transformation into this latter kind of time.

Proust, for Deleuze, discovers and reveals the transcendental limit of faculties other than reason. Precisely, Proust displays the transcendental exercise of memory as the immemorable, as something independent of the present and the past as it was present. Combray, the place of the narrator's childhood summer vacations in the *Search of the Lost Time*, appears in the narrator's involuntary memory (activated by the taste of the madeleine), not as it was in the past, not as a past that was, but as pure past, that is a past that never was actual, a past that exists and subsists in itself, as pure virtuality.⁵²⁷ The transcendental function of the memory, memory's push to its internal limit, is to remember a thing not as it was but to involuntarily remember the thing in itself, in its essence, as it arises out of nowhere, detached from any actual event or state of affairs, as pure difference from all the repeated versions of it in the narrators' experience, Combray pushed to the nth power of what it could be for the narrator. The transcendent condition of that appearance is internal to the faculty itself, as the internal exterior, as that which could never be remembered, as it has never actually been. As such, the transcendent use of memory does not depend on the narrator and his subjective capacities nor from the empirical facts and objects comprising Combray but is conditioned by sense, difference, intensity, power and necessarily brought into contact, arising from the pure ungrounded, non-sense, chaos, the unthinkable and the immemorable.

As it has been noted, Deleuze finds in Proust an example of what it means to think beyond the representational model, to think encountered by the existence as a pure difference from thought,⁵²⁸ hit by force the way the jealous lover is hit by the problem of finding the truth

⁵²⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs: The Complete Text*, trans. Richard Howard (London: Athlone Pr, 2000), 5-13.

⁵²⁷ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 85.

⁵²⁸ Daniel W. Smith, "Logic and Existence: Deleuze on the 'Conditions of the Real,'" 374.

about the doubted loved one. Memory is an affect in the simple sense that it is a retention whose depth reflects the intensity of an experience. Memory is primarily affective, so the immemorable at the heart of memory, which differs from all empirical versions of the actual content of our memory, is affect itself, the immanent force that conditions all appearances of such content, not actual memory but pure affectivity as the noumenal intensity of the empirical thing that is supposedly remembered. Affect is, in fact, the form of difference itself to the extent that it denotes a change in both the thought that thinks it and the sensibility that senses it. It is the asymptotic limit of sensibility and thought in its differentiating process. What differentiates such difference in-itself from what philosophy has long called the essence of a thing? What matters here is not the “essence” of Combray in itself as experienced by an imaginary disembodied universal observer but the “essence” of the singular relation of the narrator with Combray and the lover, a singular noumenon of the empirical emotional images of Combray and the lover. The pure becoming between the two. That is what Deleuze calls the idea of Combray or the lover, which is inextricable from an affectivity.

Pain: Sacher-Masoch

Although appearing at the end of the current exposition of Deleuze’s conceptual personae in respect to the experimentation on the conditions of the real that is art, Masoch holds in many ways a particular position throughout Deleuze’s oeuvre. The reasons for this lie in the fact that Masoch’s novel *Venus in Furs* not only presents a story locally revealing conditions of real experience in a differential and transformative way with respect to common sense but lends itself to a whole constellation of drives, naming a perversity that enacts a radical reconfiguration of psychoanalytic principles with which Deleuze and certainly Deleuze along with Guattari attempt to refute throughout their entire oeuvre. Masochism, as a constellation of symptoms and desire, arises through the exemplification of a state of desire presented in Masoch’s novel. However, this constellation is not only a contingent sum of psychic peculiarities concerning one kind of sexuality. On the contrary, as Deleuze will argue in *Coldness and Cruelty*, it creates a decisive refutation of fundamental psychoanalytic notions such as the law of the father and the subsequent binding together of the function of the pleasure principle with the law of lack.⁵²⁹ The masochist in the novel creates a psychic landscape in which imagination reigns rather than reason, creating an imaginary phallic mother endowed

⁵²⁹ Gilles Deleuze and Leopold Sacher-Masoch, *Masochism* (New York: Cambridge, Mass: Zone Books; Distributed by the MIT Press, 1989), 31-2, 68, 114, 127.

with an imaginary impotence that mocks the sadistic paternal superego and the prohibition of the latter as the precondition of pleasure.⁵³⁰ In turn, the imaginary maternal law allows the ego to laugh at paternal prohibition and subsist free of it. Far beyond a supposed dialectical complementarity of the sadist and the masochist, Deleuze affirms the autonomy of the masochist and, consequently, of imagination with respect to reason in a world of sensibility unbound by the obligation to obey the domination and the reign of reason and instead allows for reason to arise as just another aspect of sensibility existing in a free state of self-generation. The masochist's awaiting of pain makes possible the revelation that the binding of pleasure with the law of the father derives from a prior moment of the contractual relation with an imaginary authoritative mother. Beyond the cruel realm of symbolism, a prior cold affectivity binds pleasure and pain.

Sensibility and the body without organs

As already noted, Deleuze appears to express an ambiguous disposition towards the body due to the entrenched association of bodily substance with a united structure and space, as the abstraction of stasis from dynamism. Having overcome as a mere transcendental illusion the need to talk about unified objects, which thought is supposed to account for, Deleuze instead is interested in an evolutionary and dynamic account of the body as a force. In that account, invisible, imperceptible, but crucial forces convey bodies' genesis and eruption or emergence. The body without organs is the state of the body beyond its commonsense subjugation to the transcendental principle of unity which renders it an organism. That principle of unity imposed on the body by the soul is what dualistically distinguishes form and matter, underpinning the Aristotelian hylomorphic scheme according to which form is imposed upon an initially formless matter. Instead, Deleuze and Guattari, following Simondon, take form to be already embedded in matter and matter to be formative of itself due to the singularities of which it is always inevitably composed.⁵³¹ What transcends and conditions the body is not a principle of unity but a non-unifiable multiplicity of pre-individual elements. These elements subsequently appear as being formed in united, formed, individuated bodies. We say subsequently, while it is not a question of time sequence, it is only a matter of metaphysical priority since intensive pre-individual elements, strictly speaking, coexist with actual bodies while being their limit points, the thresholds through which the latter pass when the conditions

⁵³⁰ Deleuze and Sacher-Masoch, *Masochism*, 126-9.

⁵³¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 369-70. See also Sauvagnargues, *Deleuze and Art*, 55-71.

of their transformation are fulfilled. The body without organs signifies a set of experimentation practices through which one pushes towards the limit of the body's unity and thus at the limit of common sense.⁵³² Like Deleuze's differential ideas, the body without organs does not defy unity to an absolute degree. Instead, it invokes a problematic unity of the undetermined, determinability, and determination: a unity of an open process. At this state of experimentation, the usual hierarchical unified account of the body, according to which the brain holds the superior function of control of the rest of the organs, is subverted in favor of a horizontal plane of the immanence of desire, in which the body as force and as desire is immanent to itself. On this plane, the body tends to its pre-individual constituents, tending towards pure transformation.

This conception of the body is, in turn, informed by the different syntheses of time or types of dynamism. As exposed in the previous chapter, the third synthesis of time accounts for the eruption of difference and intensity in the supposed static realm of extension, overcoming the model of space as a vacuum occupied by objects and subjects. The third synthesis of time, or else what Deleuze calls the empty form of time, is, in turn, associated with the Freudian death instinct in its reverse, that is, positive sense as the ultimate differentiating and intensifying force. It is only at the zero degree of intensity that things can turn around and be close to any outcome of an event that is not pre-determined but acquires its meaning and full effect in the making. The body without organs serves exactly as this point of zero intensity in which the body can be reformulated as a dynamic, malleable, and transformable open machinic structure rather than an extensive, essentially unchanging, substantial unity. Essence here following Deleuze's interpretation of Spinoza is a sum of a variable spectrum of capacities for affections, a sum of an optimal and minimal limit of a degree of power, a set of relations in extension (affections), and variations of intensive force (affects), the condition for the appearance of which is a passage from a zero degree of intensity.⁵³³ While the body, as preconceived by common sense, is fraught with the assumption of carrying an intensity that always tends towards equilibrium, the body without organs brings to the fore the precondition of this commonsense assumption, a far from equilibrium dynamism whose own precondition, in turn, is the passage from points or moments of no energy defined by the empty form of time, moments when a change of trajectory, an inflection, and a transformation can occur.

⁵³² Deleuze and Guattari, 150.

⁵³³ Deleuze and Guattari, 164.

Chapter 4. Synthesizing affect: the problematic of interiority and exteriority

1. Introduction: goals of the current chapter

2. Affect's Syntheses

Syntheses and logic

Affect and the unconscious / Becoming

Syntheses in *The Logic of Sense*

Syntheses of desire in *Anti-Oedipus*: connection, disjunction, conjunction

Part-objects versus lack

Discontinuity and the family

Synthesizing the syntheses

3. Interiority and exteriority of affect

The in-itself and the externality of relations principle

Affect and affection, latitude, and longitude

Affect as Event and as habit

1. Introduction: goals of the current chapter

In what follows, I will test the hypothesis that taken together the triadic structure of metaphysics and time and the triadic typology of desiring syntheses constitute an open system and have something to reveal for each other and the function of affect as transformation in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical approach. Specifically, the three types of syntheses will be analyzed as three respective, interrelated ways affect occurs, producing different effects. Exploring the different versions of this triadic scheme will allow me to securely create a line of argumentation cutting across the early and later work and support the interchangeable use of essential features of both periods in the research's current, penultimate, and ultimate chapters. In the present chapter, I will compare the syntheses of time and desire and explore their relation to logic. Subsequently, I will assess the characteristic of the pure difference of being a thing in itself, along with the idea of the principle of the externality of relations that Deleuze and Guattari re-appropriate from Hume. After having analyzed the connection between the syntheses, I will proceed with exposing that affect taken in its transcendental, conditioning aspect, is the form of an event (or else a synthesis of disjunction) while organized in the everyday empirical realm of life it appears as a habit (or else a synthesis of connection). Yet as will be shown, the two are inextricable. In the following ultimate chapter, I will study

the ethical implications of affect as it connects to the concept of becoming-minor and its repercussions for the problem of pain. Finally, I continue analyzing the triadic scheme as it applies to the idea of expression and consider the consequences of the latter to the role of language and meaning. Finally, faciality will be used as an example of the expressive function of affect as larger than language.

As discussed in the second chapter of the current dissertation, when explaining Deleuze's metaphysics through the lens of intensity, Deleuze's system is triadic. The metaphysical elements of the virtual, the actual, and intensity, as well as their correspondence to the three syntheses of time, attest to that. Moreover, a triadic scheme continues to unfold yet elsewhere in the vast extension of the Deleuzian oeuvre, as in the triadic form of expression in the philosopher's interpretation of Spinozian ethical metaphysics, but also in the three types of series that explain the creation of sense in the *Logic of Sense*, as well as in the three kinds of syntheses of desire, which describe the world of the unconscious in the first collaborative work of Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*. In *Anti-Oedipus*, the two thinkers propose ways in which the unconscious, and thus affect, as the power in which unconscious desire becomes developed, works. The relation between the syntheses of time and the syntheses or series of connection, conjunction, and disjunction has been observed already. While some scholars emphasize their continuity, others analyze their differences.⁵³⁴ The relation of the syntheses of time and desire opens up the question of the relation between the early solo work of Deleuze and the later collaborative work with Guattari, which I have already commented on in passing in the previous chapters. As it has been noted, while there is continuity on the themes of intensity and representation between the two parts of the work, there is a difference regarding the openness of the philosophical system produced and a further and more radical distancing from the question "What is?" to questions regarding singularity, that is, "Who?", "When?" and "How much?" in the later work.⁵³⁵ I will be returning to the question of the differentiations between the two parts of the work in greater detail.

⁵³⁴ François Zourabichvili, *Deleuze, a Philosophy of the Event: Together with the Vocabulary of Deleuze*, ed. Gregg Lambert and Daniel W. Smith, trans. Kieran Aarons, Plateaus (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2012), 35. Arjen Kleinherenbrink, *Against Continuity: Gilles Deleuze's Speculative Realism*, Speculative Realism (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 40. Zourabichvili and Kleinherenbrink underlie the aspect of continuity between the early Deleuzian and later Deleuzoguattarian syntheses.

⁵³⁵ Henry Somers-Hall, Jeffrey A. Bell and James Williams "Introduction" in Henry Somers-Hall, Jeffrey A. Bell, and James Williams, eds., *A Thousand Plateaus and Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018).

To test the above hypothesis of a triadic scheme operating across the early solo work of Deleuze and the latter collaborative oeuvre of Deleuze and Guattari and ensure the legitimacy of a method using elements of both, I need to first establish some connections across them. In the context of secondary scholarship emphasizing the continuities between them, the concept of becoming is thought to exist in a continuum with the early idea of difference.⁵³⁶ As mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, it is claimed that one point of distinction between Deleuze's first works and the approach forged with Guattari is the element of the externality of difference in reference to the virtual problematic ideal structure. Specifically, Guattari posits that the paradoxical element that catalyzes the process of individuation across virtuality and actuality is external to the process and constitutes a machine rather than -as the process itself- a structure.⁵³⁷ In what follows, I will accept that analysis and use it for the abovementioned purposes. Moreover, I will attempt to make sense of that transition by showing how the principle of the externality of relations combines with the emphasis on the in-itself-ness of difference. That synthesizing work of the two principles will finally be extended to Deleuze's distinction of the Spinozian notions of affect and affection, creating a bridge into the next chapter that will continue the analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's appropriation of Spinozian schemes. After establishing such a resonance across the two parts of Deleuzoguattarian work, in the next chapter, I will attempt to read affect's ethical expression in the concept of becoming-minor as directly and necessarily related to the metaphysics of intensity and difference in Deleuze's early work. That moment of the irruption of difference out of repetition is best exemplified by the third synthesis of time, where a gap without extension is cut across two unrelated discontinuous moments. Becoming is the moment of zero duration that cuts across seemingly irrational or better-unanticipated outcomes, absolute novelty.

2. Affect's Syntheses

Syntheses and logic

To render the role of the syntheses intelligible, it is helpful to reconnect them with the entirety of Deleuze's metaphysical system and also to their references to the history of philosophy and logic. It has been noted that the three syntheses, connection, conjunction, and disjunction, correspond to the Kantian judgments of possible relations, that is, relations that

⁵³⁶ Bankston, *Deleuze and Becoming*.

⁵³⁷ Edwardap, "The Rise of the Machines: Deleuze's Flight from Structuralism," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 55, no. 4 (December 2017): 454–74, 461.

can be either categorical, hypothetical, or disjunctive. These further correspond to the three mathematical rules of association, commutation, and distribution and their equivalents in logic.⁵³⁸ Association corresponds to categorical relations (of the type $S=P$). Commutation corresponds to a hypothetical causal relation (if S , then P). The hypothetical or causal relation implies a unilateral dependence of a term on another appearing before it. It is also a relation of coexistence since the cause exists in its effect. If an effect always implies a cause, then the cause, even if prior temporally, coexists with the effect as its condition. That is the case in the Deleuzian second synthesis of time where the past conditions the present, yet at the same time, past and present always coexist, resulting in a *simultaneity of succession*. Distribution corresponds to disjunctive relation (of the type if S then not- P). Moreover, as Deleuze points out, these different types of relations correspond to the different sources of representations. A relation of connection or association, that is, one of accordance between subject and predicate, takes us to the realm of knowledge (epistemology poses the question of what predicates one can legitimately attribute to a subject). A relation of cause and effect directs us to the realm of ethics (ethics poses the question of what we should be the cause of, “what should one desire?”). Finally, a relation of disjunction takes us to the realm of aesthetics (aesthetics poses the question of which objects or situations can produce pleasure as opposed to pain).⁵³⁹ Deleuze, unlike Kant, who attributes these categories or types of relation to the logical functions of the transcendental subject -who subsequently defines the structure of phenomena- claims that these rules govern reality itself, and thus time, without the mediation of consciousness.

Moreover, as formulated in Kant, a relation of disjunction is understood as exclusive, in which two terms mutually exclude each other (if S then not- P). That relation necessarily refers to a whole external to the terms in which the terms that are related by disjunction can coexist or thought together in their reciprocal determination of mutual exclusion.⁵⁴⁰ That whole is the transcendental idea of God. On the contrary, Deleuze and Guattari reconceptualize the relation of disjunction as inclusive. A thing A and one that is not- A both exclude each other AND can coexist without a reference to an external whole. Impossibles can coexist, and thus the law of the excluded middle (if $A=B$, then A cannot be not- B) is refuted. Instead of reality being understood through the laws of typical logic prioritizing identity, it is recast

⁵³⁸ Dorothea Olkowski, “The Interesting, the Remarkable, the Unusual: Deleuze’s Grand Style,” *Deleuze Studies* 5, no. 1 (March 2011): 118–39, 123.

⁵³⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Kant’s Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of the Faculties* (London: Athlone Press, 1984), 3.

⁵⁴⁰ Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), B112, 215-6, A74, 209.

through a logic of change where the coexistence of impossibles is exactly the *condition* of productivity and transformability of things. At the moment when A changes, the states of being A and not-A become disjunctively synthesized and thus coexist, even if not on the same level. Moreover, in the realm of the non-chronological temporality of the event, A and not-A coexist eternally. Yet to say that impossibles coexist in the same world means that the world cannot be whole but perspectival or fractured.⁵⁴¹ Moreover, following an argumentative line that leads to the same conclusion, Olkowski notes that the rules of association, commutation, and distribution in mathematics, corresponding to the three different types of synthesis, remain commutative, that is, the binary terms that they relate can change order without any change in their truth value. That means there is reversibility and coexistence of all types of relations or all syntheses. Suppose the rules of connection, conjunction, and disjunction govern reality. In that case, these different types of relation, affection, or temporality coexist in a non-totalizable whole and non-predictable combinations.

Disjunction having been rethought in its inclusive function affirms the disjointed nature of time and the impossibility of a whole all-encompassing being, as God or the conscious self and, in that way, affirms the reversibility of past and future, of the synthesis of conjunction or the hypothetical, causal relation, and the synthesis of disjunction or the distributive relation.⁵⁴² However, when the past is affirmed at the same time as the future, it is affirmed as a disjunctive productive effect, in its pure form, not as it *was*, but as it *becomes* through the ethical choice of Amor Fati. Disjunctive synthesis implies an ethics of the difference of the past as open to the future. In the following, I will account for the differences between the early and later work regarding these coexisting syntheses.

Affect and the unconscious

As already exposed passingly in the previous chapter on sensibility, affect is a realm of processes within the unconscious, an immanently transcendental realm of sensibility and thinking far exceeding empirical human sensibility and thought understood as human consciousness. On such a natural unconscious level, connections and disconnections happen beyond logic and judgment, transcend empirical commonsense reality and surpass typical logic (as exemplified by the law of the excluded middle). It is through these unconscious workings

⁵⁴¹ Nathan Widder, “Intensities Belong on the Surface: On Deleuze’s Rejection of the Depths in *The Logic of Sense* and Beyond”, 6.

⁵⁴² Constantin V Boundas, “Transgressive Theorizing: A Report to Deleuze,” *Man and World*, no. 29 (1996): 327–41, 331.

that humans subsequently come to form conscious propositions. The unconscious is not interested in meaning because it is the ungrounding from which sense arises; it is only interested in functions, problems, and solutions (solutions are precisely the level upon which conscious propositions lie).⁵⁴³ Ideas are problems, as Kant revealed. Nevertheless, they are so, Deleuze shows, as exposed in the third chapter of this thesis, as elements of a greater problematic sensibility or intensity. Intensity, conditioning reality, is problematic, and the unconscious is precisely this process of problem formation of intensity, the solution formation to which we come to name consciousness and conscious propositions.⁵⁴⁴ In the same vein, the types of connectivity that happen in that problematic unconscious sensibility condition, ground and unground what we experience as emotions in conscious and subconscious sensibility and thought.

I will approach affect from now on as unconscious synthetic processes. In their first collaborative work, the *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari claim that there are three types of connections or syntheses on this unconscious plane of immanence, each of which has two poles. These syntheses offer ways of understanding affectivity beyond the subjective and “inter-subjective” realm where, so to say, the “damage is already done” or else one has already entered the realm of representation, and stasis appears to be primary to dynamism. The intersubjective presupposes the subjective, but the latter has already covered over the bodies as open systems or processes between pre-individual singularities, connecting with other open systems or processes, like parts of provisionally-sense-making puzzles. The question is not how to connect already formed subjects but what processes exist beyond and before these subjects. Some problems that will guide the analysis of the current and the following chapter will be how the various syntheses that Deleuze and Guattari describe proceed by way of unconscious problem solving rather than by “principles,” that is, how do minor becomings (becoming-animal, etc.) solve problems, how is subjectivity problematic, how to disengage the problem from negativity and, in the same vein, how to reconceptualize the problem of sadness and pain as disengaged from negativity and instead as related to transformation.

Before departing on analyzing the syntheses in the *Logic of Sense* and *Anti-Oedipus*, it is helpful to briefly recap Deleuze’s metaphysical triadic scheme as laid out in *Difference and*

⁵⁴³ “[...] the unconscious is differential and iterative by nature; it is serial problematic and questioning [...]” Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 108.

⁵⁴⁴ Unlike solutions, problems and questions are not speculative. Deleuze, 106. The problematic does not refer to a subjective state, it is “a state of the world”. Deleuze, 280.

Repetition and as analyzed in the second chapter of the current dissertation. This basic scheme comprises the virtual problematic ideal structure, the intensive individuating spatiotemporal dynamisms, and actual extended individuated bodies. The virtual and the actual constitute different aspects of reality corresponding to different types of determination. The virtual comprises differential relations and their corresponding singularities. It is a continuous type of multiplicity in that the passage from one element to another happens seamlessly. For example, a triangle is a differential relation between three lines, and the points constitute its singularities. The passage from an idea of a triangle to that of a circle does not involve some stoppage of the thinking process or a cut between each other. The actual is the realm of extensive matter where there is a discontinuity between the respective limits of bodies and where the relation between elements involves a dialectic of exterior and interior. Intensity is the realm of individuation that describes the passages between these two realms of reality and these two different types of determination. When ideas become actualized, new relations of bodies and states of affairs may ensue, and when new sensibilities emerge, new ideas may be created. Intensity thus denotes the process of novelty and creativity in which the two other realms become involved. As we saw, the actual corresponds to the connective synthesis and the first synthesis of time, the present-habit. The virtual corresponds to the conjunctive synthesis, and the second synthesis of time, the past-Eros-Memory. Finally, intensity corresponds to disjunctive synthesis and the third synthesis of time, the future-death-empty form of time.

Syntheses in *The Logic of Sense*

In *The Logic of Sense*, resonating with his work with Guattari in the *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze defines *connection* as the synthesis peculiar to the production of a physical, sexual surface where part-objects connect to produce intermittent continuities of desire which are often followed by actual intermittent flows of bodily fluids (milk, sexual fluids, etc.). A *conjunction* is a resonance between two series of connected part-objects by way of a paradoxical object = x, which makes the series converge. This object that organizes convergent physical surfaces of different temporalities is for Deleuze the phallus, which makes the connections in the series of pregenital sexuality resonate with the series of post-pubescent sexuality's connectivity in a homogeneous series. The two, in themselves homogenous series, are heterogenous in relation to each other. Yet, they are made to resonate and come in a

conjunctive synthesis by way of the phallic object.⁵⁴⁵ Additionally it is also by way of this object, and the resonance that it creates, that a forced movement is forged, which sweeps away the heterogeneous series of physical surfaces to create a metaphysical surface of sense-events that attain relative independence from the physical surfaces from which it was initiated. We are now in the realm of the *disjunctive synthesis* bringing in contact while separating the physical surface of sexuality (which was already separated from what Deleuze terms the devouring and destructive drives of bodily depth that are prior to seriality and any organization of connective syntheses) and a thus created desexualized metaphysical surface of thought. We are now in the realm of the Event, a noumenal realm of relative freedom from the determinability of the actual chronological states of affairs, in a realm of impassivity beyond the passive/active dichotomy, which Deleuze reconceptualizes as the disjunction between eating and thinking. To eat/ to think are disjunctively synthesized in the verb to speak. Speaking: that is the realm of sense-Event.

Syntheses of Desire in *Anti-Oedipus*: connection, disjunction, conjunction

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari first describe the *connective synthesis* of part-objects and flows constituting chains of desire. The mouth-breast example famously describes this type of synthesis. An energy machine (the breast) produces a flow to which an organ machine or else part-object (the mouth) is plugged, cutting the flow. Desire is primarily constituted by flows of bodily liquids interrupted by part-objects. Breast, milk, mouth, and excrement form chains of such connections and cuts.⁵⁴⁶ Intensity arises from local connections of heterogeneous elements and parts that produce something, some flow, and its cuts before the constitution of unified subjects and objects. This connectivity is neither naturalized nor mechanical since whichever connection produces something is part of what the philosophers, on this level, term desiring-production, a realm in which desire is constructed.⁵⁴⁷ During the schizophrenic delirium, such desiring machines are produced between the human body and natural elements such as the sun, the mountains, and the snow. The example Deleuze and Guattari bring here is the case of Judge Schreber - a schizophrenic famously analyzed by Freud. The judge's delirium is about emitting sun rays from his anus. Natural elements for the person

⁵⁴⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Constantin V Boundas, Mark Lester, and Charles J Stivale (London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 234.

⁵⁴⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 8.

⁵⁴⁷ Desiring machines attest to a surpassing of the false problem of vitalism against mechanism, constituting open systems in which chance emerges. Deleuze and Guattari, 284-5.

in delirium produce real material affects. Such deviations from the norm of human conduct are moments that allow us to perceive the entire spectrum of desiring-production and reveal nature as an immense desiring-machine of production, where the distinction between producer and product, nature and human, loses its meaning.⁵⁴⁸ In this realm, there are only connections of disparate elements, flows, and part-objects that cut flows.⁵⁴⁹

This desiring-production opposes an anti-productive element of impassibility that the philosophers term the body without organs, which was described passingly at the end of the third chapter of this thesis as the limit of sensibility. The body without organs repels part-objects and their connections. The desiring connective machines record their function on the taut surface of the body without organs. The former repels the latter as unwanted organizing attempts. *Disjunctive synthesis* is this combination of the attraction of desiring-production with the repulsion of the body without organs on which desiring-machines attach while being repelled. This unproductive element, in turn, appropriates the production of the desiring-machines and subsequently appears as their quasi-cause or presupposition. This element has always accompanied all types of desiring-production in the different historical forms of society, and its parallel at the level of social production, or its molar equivalent, that Deleuze and Guattari call the *socius*, examples of which are the capital, the body of the despot, or the earth.⁵⁵⁰ A state of zero intensity characterizes this element since it repels all activity and passivity; it is an essentially unchanging inscriptive surface. Deleuze and Guattari also name it the *numen* attesting to its absolute nature deriving from the old concept of the divine. In the same way that God is the correlate of disjunctive syllogism in Kant, as the only entity capable of achieving an idea of the total of all reality and thus constituting the community of all the things that mutually exclude one another, so the body without organs as the constitutive element of disjunctive synthesis is the element beyond actions and passions on which the latter are inscribed and taken a meaning.⁵⁵¹

The opposition of attraction of the desiring machines with the repulsion of the body without organs results in its resolution into a new machine, the celibate, auto-productive

⁵⁴⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, 9.

⁵⁴⁹ In contrast to the *Anti-Oedipus* translators' choice to translate Deleuze and Guattari's French term "objets partiels" into "partial-objects," I have chosen instead to use the term "part-objects" following the original terminology of Melanie Klein in English to which Deleuze and Guattari refer. See Deleuze and Guattari, 309 on the *Anti-Oedipus* translators' choice.

⁵⁵⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, 10-1.

⁵⁵¹ Immanuel Kant and Gary C. Hatfield, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Come Forward as Science: With Selections from the Critique of Pure Reason* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 82.

machine of conjunctive synthesis. *Conjunction* occurs when the opposition is preserved between the connected parts despite their repulsion or disjunction. Conjunction constructs a subject that, unlike the Kantian or the Freudian subject, is nomadic; that is, it is an open system operating in an equally open system for what we usually refer to as world or society.⁵⁵² In such a theorization, the subject is not limited to a model of desire offered by the psychoanalytical Oedipal complex. On the contrary, it is the result of the development of an intensive plane of desire in which no unities subsist but only regions of intensity populated by the names of history, with races and clans of all the civilizations of the earth. As Deleuze and Guattari explain in *Anti-Oedipus*, conjunction is the residual realm of every encounter, intensive state, and machinic process. The celibate machine of consumption produces intensive quantities in their pure state, the unbearable limit of sensibility and ideality, an “*I feel*” that is primary to all perception and all thinking.⁵⁵³ Intensive states fill the body without organs, creating gradients thresholds, latitudes, and longitudes. A subject is nothing other but a bundle of such intensities. Far from being an individuated whole, unifying the intensive states from which it passes, it is a parasite of the desiring machines, a spare part among the parts that connect in the first synthesis.⁵⁵⁴ The same theme on the construction of the self not as a unified entity but as itself a part among parts appears in Deleuze’s early work where he affirms that “The self does not undergo modifications, it is itself a modification”.⁵⁵⁵

Part-objects versus lack

Exposing the *connective* synthesis of the unconscious, Deleuze and Guattari show how psychoanalysis insists on introducing complete objects into the unconscious. Complete objects are detached from the desiring series, where there are only detachable part-objects, thus introducing lack as the law of desire.⁵⁵⁶ The phallus, understood as the correlate or attribute of a subject position or what they call a complete or global person, examples of which are the father and the mother, serves to introduce a complete object in a process where, in reality, there are only parts. In *Difference and Repetition*, the heterogeneous series communicate in individuation-intensity through the dark precursor, or paradoxical element, an element that is both absent and present from its position. That thing differs radically from the missing master signifier in that it can by no means be translated into or correspond to a complete object and

⁵⁵² Deleuze and Guattari, 95.

⁵⁵³ Deleuze and Guattari, 18.

⁵⁵⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, 285, 287.

⁵⁵⁵ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 79.

⁵⁵⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, 70-3.

consequently cannot become the attribute of global persons. Unity -we already analyzed its importance in Kant and the rational transcendental subject- is the element that introduces lack into the detachable part-objects that constitute the process of desire. Part-objects connect with flows, cut flows, and detach. That is how desire produces and is produced. There would only be regulation and differentiation if there were cuts in the flow. The cut is the “rule” of the circulation of energy. We observe here Deleuze’s doctrine of the discontinuity of intensity, which was analyzed in the second chapter and with which Deleuze substituted Bergson’s ideal continuity of time as consciousness. Across this cut, the paradoxical element missing from its place and transposing from one heterogeneous series to another connects the two series, creating resonance and movement between them. The transposing paradoxical element is the necessary condition for movement. Now, psychoanalysis passes from this necessary cut of non-unifiable connective processes, this constitutive fragmentation of desire and the detachability of the part-objects that interrupt flows as the function of this process, to a complete detached object that is introduced into the cut-flow dyad to produce a transcendent version of the synthesis - production, and to arrest the movement in a triangulation. A missing transcendent unity is imposed on the functional connection of the breast and the mouth. Psychoanalysis thus passes from a desiring chain of detachable *part-objects* to a signifying chain of *complete objects* or global persons from which one is detached.⁵⁵⁷ It introduces its absence as a law of the whole chain.

Moreover, Deleuze and Guattari show that psychoanalysis uses the exclusive version of the syntheses, specifically the disjunctive synthesis, by contrasting triangular Oedipal differentiation with an undifferentiated abyss. It thus creates both sides of the disjunction under the reign of Oedipus. It seems as if psychoanalysis says: “Either enter into the differentiation of the familiar triangular scheme or fall into undifferentiated neurotic identification with the parents and thus enter a realm of loss of meaning, an undifferentiated abyss.” Deleuze refers to the constructed threat of the undifferentiated abyss in *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense* in relation to representation.⁵⁵⁸ The Kantian thing-in-itself representing the ideal of absolute determination is not accessible to human sensibility. Deleuze refers to this when he claims that this kind of absolute indetermination takes as its model the determination of sensible extended objects endowed with outer limits in the form of the negative, i.e., what it

⁵⁵⁷ For more on the topic of the role of the Kleinian part-objects for Deleuze see: Nathan Widder, “From Negation to Disjunction in a World of Phantasms and Simulacra: Deleuze and Melanie Klein,” *Deleuze Studies* 3, no. 2 (December 2009): 207–23.

⁵⁵⁸ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 276. Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 108-9, 168.

lacks. Unlike that, Deleuze conceives of a determination that does not take as its model that of sensible objects but instead characterizes virtuality and intensity, a determination that is not dependent on a presupposed unity of formed things but recognizes singularities before and beyond the formation of such objects. Similarly, in *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari criticize psychoanalysis for turning parental images into global persons.⁵⁵⁹ From the detachable part-objects that desire connects and disconnects, psychoanalysis concludes the existence of detached global, complete objects that inscribe upon the chains of desire the law of a missing unity, that is, lack. On the contrary, according to inclusive disjunctions, parental images are nothing but intensive states recorded upon the body without organs. The subject is formed around those intensive states, passing through them, in continuous transpositions to the different poles of the disjunction both contrasted (either/or) and affirmed.⁵⁶⁰ Judge Schreber becomes a woman, man, child, and adult, passing from one pole to another.

Discontinuity and the family

Following Deleuze's analysis of the continuum of sensibility and ideality across disjunction, we find an analysis of the familial narrative in the light of sociopolitical events. Deleuze and Guattari show that psychoanalysis' description of the transgenerational passing down of the Oedipal trauma or complex is never an accurate account of familial stories, as is evident in great literature. Deleuze and Guattari invoke Proust to show how distributions and forms or patterns of desire passed down from generation to generation in certain familial contexts are unmistakably disrupted by major historical and sociopolitical events which redistribute desire in the whole breadth of social structures and, consequently, in these familial environments.⁵⁶¹ That is because desire is formed in larger (which does not mean more general) structures; it is produced in the single immanent unconscious of reality itself, an unconscious which immanently transcends empirical social formations such as the supposedly universal form of the family or particular transgenerational familial structures and of which the latter are epiphenomena. Breakage of continuity is, in the case of psychic reality, the guarantor of the system's openness and ensures its transformability. Going further, Deleuze, in *The Logic of Sense*, asserts that the crack and the cut are passed down instead of interrupting a supposedly preexisting familial continuity.⁵⁶² We discovered the same scheme in the case of Deleuze's

⁵⁵⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 44-6.

⁵⁶⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, 76.

⁵⁶¹ Deleuze and Guattari, 96.

⁵⁶² Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 329.

metaphysics of intensity, where the singularities cutting up the continuity of ideality ensure the passage from problem to solution and guarantee the disjunctive synthesis of sensibility and ideality. Breaks of the differential curve of the calculus are part of reality as a continuum of differences. Intensity's 'divisibility' is the necessary counterpart of ideality's 'continuity.' The two are inextricable and each is the condition of the other. This paradoxical continuum implies the caesura, a problem both in its sensible and ideal form. As attested in the model of the differential calculus connecting the realm of ideality and actuality in one scheme, the cut and the continuum are one phenomenon illuminated in different ways.⁵⁶³

Synthesizing the syntheses

Between the early Deleuzian and the later Deleuzoguattarian works, there is a transposition in the sequence of the syntheses of time and desire and a differentiation regarding the location of the synthesis associated with intensity in the series. In Deleuze's early solo works, intensity, the enveloping synthesizing element, appears as the culminating third synthesis. In contrast, in Deleuze and Guattari's collaborative work, it appears second in the sequence, while conjunction appears third as an aftereffect. Specifically, *Difference and Repetition* describes intensity as the synthesis of time undoing all joints between past and future and places this synthesis last in three syntheses. In *The Logic of Sense* also, intensity is a disjunctive synthesis, appearing third in the syntheses. Nevertheless, in *Anti-Oedipus*, intensity is understood both as disjunctive, and as the conjunctive result of the opposition of attraction and repulsion, the divisibility of the desiring chains, and the indivisibility or continuity of the body without organs.

Thornton has noted that the subject- one could also add its unity and identity more broadly- is the differentiating factor in the early and latter accounts of the syntheses and the reason why the order in which they appear has changed between *The Logic of Sense* and the *Anti-Oedipus*.⁵⁶⁴ While in the early genetic account of Deleuze, the subject -even if ultimately dissolved and aborted- is presupposed -and it corresponds to the second synthesis of time, the synthesis of virtuality and conjunction- in the latter work with Guattari it is deemed a residue of the processes of desire – a mere after-effect. That is why conjunction appears third in the

⁵⁶³ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 179. See also Dorothea Olkowski, *Deleuze, Bergson, Merleau-Ponty: The Logic and Pragmatics of Creation, Affective Life, and Perception* (Bloomington (Ind.): Indiana university press, 2021), 46-8. See also Juliette Simont's "Chapter 2: Intensity, or the encounter" in Jean Khalfa, ed., *Introduction to the Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze* (London: Continuum, 2002), 26-49, 33-4.

⁵⁶⁴ Edward Thornton, "On Lines of Flight: A Study of Deleuze and Guattari's Concept" (Royal Holloway, University of London, 2018), 140.

sequence of syntheses of desire. While in the early work, the subject is thought of as a prerequisite of transformation; it is only an effect of change in the latter work. Unlike *Difference and Repetition*, in *Anti-Oedipus*, individuation, that is, the work of intensity, occurs through open processes that do not presuppose structure (what we find in early Deleuze's second synthesis of virtual memory and ideas) and in which unity arises as a residual result of intensive states. Conjunction in *Anti-Oedipus*, moving location from the second synthesis of time (of the continuity of ideal problematic structures) to becoming the third synthesis of desire associated with intensity, is thus an evolved version of the second conjunctive synthesis in *Difference and Repetition*. Conjunction becomes an open process resulting from disjunction rather than being presupposed by the latter. *Anti-Oedipus* does not presuppose a unity that it needs to destroy, dismantle or open a crack to, but conceives unity as a part among parts, as they put it. Conjunction does not convey the unity of the One but a "stranger unity that applies only to the multiple".⁵⁶⁵

In all cases, the power of intensity is found at the internal limit of seemingly opposing forces or tendencies.⁵⁶⁶ Even more so than in Deleuze's solo work, the radical potential of this synthesis is emphasized in *Anti-Oedipus* in the form of a primary "I feel" that accompanies all intensive states.⁵⁶⁷ The allusion of this choice of Deleuze and Guattari to the Kantian transcendental synthesis of the "I think" has been noted.⁵⁶⁸ Following a series of intensive states which are not necessarily internally connected, a remainder retroactively emerges in a sort of provisional subject of intensities attested by the "I feel." Yet the "I feel," unlike the Kantian transcendental "I think," makes it explicit that the only continuity or unity of an "I" is that of a fracture, since to feel is to become destabilized -to be taken over by a passion- in a way that is more obvious than in the case of a classic conception of thought in which thought is understood as an action or active synthesis.

Moreover, the transposition in the sequence in which the syntheses appear is attested by the correlation between the body without organs -appearing in the second synthesis in the

⁵⁶⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 12. print (Minneapolis, Minn.: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2007), 158.

⁵⁶⁶ It has been noted that the power of intensity in *Difference and Repetition* is primary or given whereas in *The Logic of Sense* it has to be constructed instead. See Nathan Widder, "Intensities belong on the Surface: On Deleuze's Rejection of the depths in *The Logic of Sense* and beyond", paper presented at the Greek Deleuze-Guattari Group Annual Conference "Omilies sto Vouno" 2022, courtesy of the writer, 1-18. It is beyond the scope of the current work to analyze these differences further.

⁵⁶⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 18.

⁵⁶⁸ Brent Adkins, *Death and Desire in Hegel, Heidegger and Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh university press, 2007), 134.

sequence of syntheses in *Anti-Oedipus*- and death -as the element of the third synthesis of time in *Difference and Repetition*.⁵⁶⁹ It has been noted that the correlation between the body without organs and death remains underdeveloped in the secondary bibliography on the matter, and it is not the aim of the current dissertation to resolve that issue.⁵⁷⁰ It will suffice for us to observe commonalities between the role of the body without organs and the synthesis of death as a limit of desire or the complex unfolding of sensibility in intensity. Both the former and the latter exist as points of zero intensity that act as points of transformation “which one does not arrive and does not stop arriving” and which subtend all positive values of intensity existing beneath actual bodies.⁵⁷¹ As Widder notes, contesting previous writings on the continuities between Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari on the terminology of depths and surfaces, the body without organs in *Anti-Oedipus* does not fully depart from the language of surface, but unlike in *The Logic of Sense*, the “spherical body” of the body without organs constitutes a zero point where intensities and events can occur.⁵⁷²

Attempting to connect the Deleuzoguattarian desiring syntheses with the earlier Deleuzian metaphysics, it seems plausible to claim that while desiring machines express the divisibility of the realm of actual extensive bodies, the body without organs that repels them is conceptualized in reference to the continuity of the virtual qualitative realm of ideality that does not tolerate division. The body without organs nevertheless departs from this ideal continuity, referring, instead, to a necessary synthesis of the indivisibility of the absolute, like the synthesis of Spinozian substance with the divisibility of the finite modes in which substance is expressed.⁵⁷³ The body without organs, the unproductive element, averse to the divisibility of the desiring machines of production, appropriates them and appears as their precondition,

⁵⁶⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, 8. While Deleuze had already distanced himself from the Freudian negative and material account of death in his early works, it is possible that under the influence of a more radical approach to psychoanalysis conveyed by Guattari, there were reasons why death was no longer retained as a suitable concept describing the synthesis of transformation, yet death in early Deleuze and the body without organs in Deleuze and Guattari remain correlated. The critique of Freud by the two philosophers is that, by making death an instinct, he mystified and justified social repression and the genesis of anxiety as its result. Deleuze and Guattari, 331-2. See also Eugene W. Holland, “Infinite Subjective Representation and the Perversion of Death,” *Angelaki* 5, no. 2 (August 2000): 85–91.

⁵⁷⁰ Aaron Schuster, *The Trouble with Pleasure: Deleuze and Psychoanalysis*, Short Circuits (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2016), 166.

⁵⁷¹ Bruno Leites, “Deleuze and the Work of Death: A Study from the Impulse-Images,” *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* 14, no. 2 (May 2020): 229–54, 244. The body without organs is designated by zero intensity. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 19.

⁵⁷² Nathan Widder, *Transcripts of upcoming book*, courtesy of the writer, 285.

⁵⁷³ “The body without organs is the immanent substance, in the most Spinozist sense of the word; and the part-objects are like its ultimate attributes, which belong to it precisely insofar as they are really distinct and cannot on this account exclude or oppose one another.” Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 326-7.

the same way God appears as the precondition for disjunctions in Kant.⁵⁷⁴ Yet the body without organs is divine only in the sense of it being swept up by an energy of disjunctions, which, as discussed, are inclusive.⁵⁷⁵ It seems that, in a way, the radical transformation that appears in the empty form of time that Deleuze in his solo work terms Death is no longer associated with the repulsion of divisibility constituting a radical cut, but is in the work with Guattari a synthesis between the cut and the indivisible that envelops them both. That synthesis results to the irreducible positivity of intensity created by the divisibility of desiring machines upon the indivisibility of the ‘absolute’ element, the body without organs, or substance in terms of Spinoza.⁵⁷⁶

The commonality of both accounts is that intensity arises from the disjunctive affirmation of inequality or disparity, a synthesis of apparently impossible elements such as continuity and discontinuity, fragmentation, and the repulsion of fragments.⁵⁷⁷ Guattari intervenes in the early Deleuzian system to stress the necessarily anti-structural nature of repetition,⁵⁷⁸ that is, to show the impossibility of reducing matter to homogeneous quality and the importance and irreducibility of the repetitive processes of intensive individuation in the resonance between virtuality and actuality. The differentiator of difference is not internal to the process. Despite the changed order in which the syntheses appear in their early and later exposition, as various scholars of Deleuze point out, one has to bear in mind the simultaneity of the three syntheses, with each one eliding with the others.⁵⁷⁹ I will return to the topic of the entanglement and simultaneity of the syntheses.

3. Interiority and exteriority of affect

The in-itself and the externality of relations principle

As has been analyzed already, affect in Deleuze and Guattari is the name of a process that takes as many forms as the possible syntheses of time or desire we described above. In

⁵⁷⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 10.

⁵⁷⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, 13.

⁵⁷⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, 327. The repulsion of the body without organs of fragmentation brings to mind the indivisibility of substance and the latter’s insusceptibility to numerical distinction. Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1990), 32.

⁵⁷⁷ On the link of impossibility as the specific relation pertaining to intensity see Widder, “Intensities belong on the Surface”, 6.

⁵⁷⁸ Thornton, “The Rise of the Machines.”

⁵⁷⁹ Dorothea Olkowski, “Is Capitalism Inevitable? Is Revolution Possible? Deleuze and Guattari between Capitalism and Calculus,” *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 45, no. 2 (May 4, 2014): 91–106, 100. Also see James Williams, *The Transversal Thought of Gilles Deleuze: Encounters and Influences* (Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2005), 86.

what follows, I will attempt to elaborate on the relation between these syntheses. What is essential to repeat is that affect as transformation is not the dualistic encounter of a thing with another thing external to the first, but instead, primarily an internal process of desire and time, the activation of one's internal difference or else an encounter of intensity with its own self-difference. Even if we are considering part-objects creating connections, a disjunction between a process and its doubling, or a conjunction between converging tendencies in an open system, all these temporal processes of relative or absolute transformation and becoming evade the transcendence of what Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense* will term the Other-structure, that is the supposition of another person as transcending one's proper sensibility. For him, such "Other" is a structure of perception that ensures that we can perceive the world as a whole.⁵⁸⁰ It, thus, reinforces representational, common-sense thinking and sensation that prioritizes unity over divergence and exclusive over inclusive disjunction. Intersubjective accounts of affect commit the error of presupposing what they would have to explain: the emergence of subjectivity through affective processes.⁵⁸¹ Unlike them, Deleuze is interested in affect as a composite of time as actual-virtual, that is, time in its pure form.⁵⁸² And the pure form of time is transformation. As already exposed adequately in the second chapter of the current thesis, in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze talks about how intensity is implicated in itself before it becomes explicated in actual entities and qualities.⁵⁸³ It is that in-itself that will interest Deleuze until the end, the in-itself of transformation, of time and desire, as disjointed impassive synthesis, that is primary to any stability and identity, affect as the driving *force* or the incentive of any unified system -that arises as a result of capture or stoppage of a process- affect as continuously self-differentiating singular dynamism that is primary to the pretensions of neutrality, universality and eternity of reason. Eternity is only the eternity of the events. And affects are always conditioned by events. In Deleuze and Guattari, that in-itself takes the form of the plane of consistency on which all variations pass and on which the highest power of each entity virtually inheres, along with the genetic presuppositions of such power.

⁵⁸⁰ Deleuze, 281-2.

⁵⁸¹ Such are psychoanalytic (Lacanian) and phenomenological approaches starting with Husserl. Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publ, 1999), 89-150. A strand of Spinozian scholarship focusing on the relational nature of the individual, such as Balibar's reading of Spinoza through the concept of transindividuality distances Spinoza from the idea of intersubjectivity (which it instead claims best explains Leibniz's approach) as the relation between two autonomous, separate entities – subjects. Yet Balibar does not go as far as to refer to relations that forge their terms rather than relations between individuals. Etienne Balibar, *Spinoza, the Transindividual*, trans. Mark G. E. Kelly (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022), 72.

⁵⁸² Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema II: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta, Paperback edition, Cinema 2 (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 84.

⁵⁸³ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 228, 236, 240.

While Spinoza's account of affect presupposes the existence of individuated modes or subjects in reference to which substance is the in-itself, Deleuze and Guattari posit the *in-itself* of a process of *individuation*, of the interconnection of pre-individual singularities, unconscious desires, past experiences, preferences and patterns, sub-atomic molecular chemistry, from which subjects and objects arise only subsequently. Time is a disjointed entity from which subjects and all kinds of unified, actual entities emerge.

How does this perspective of internal difference that we have put forward above, as the function of affect and becoming, sit along the empirical principle of the externality of relations that Deleuze worked on, already in his first monograph on Hume?⁵⁸⁴ The two are dependent on each other, and following, I will attempt to explain why. The principle of externality dictates that *relations are external to their terms*.⁵⁸⁵ Hume arrives at this conclusion after thoroughly analyzing the problem of the self and its defining characteristics. Try as he might avoid the predicament of skepticism, Hume observes that the self consists of nothing other but the set of distinct sensations, perceptions, impressions, and ideas that arise in it. What appears as the association of these impressions, such as causality, Hume claims, is the result of the affective weight that comes along with the repetitive observation of sequences of phenomena and is not internal to or necessarily deriving from the terms it connects. After seeing the sunrise each morning, we believe the sun will rise tomorrow. Having seen B follow A numerous times, we are compelled to think and anticipate B whenever A appears and relate the two as cause and effect. However, this causal relation is not part of the phenomena it links. Neither is it guaranteed by the observing mind, which has no way of testing its hypothesis that the sun will always rise since the content of the term "always" is not involved in the scope of human experience but transcends it and is, thus, unknowable. The causal *relation arises from* the contemplation or the affective force that results from repeating an observation. That relation, therefore, does not inhere in the terms it connects but arises in time, through contemplation, and remains external to the terms. That contemplation of repetitive sequences, and the associated expectation of their repetition in the future, hold the name habit. We find it describing the constitution of Deleuze's first synthesis of time in *Difference and Repetition*, which is the synthesis of the living present and relates to the first synthesis of desire. Not only the expectation of a sequence of phenomena as cause and effect, but even the expectation of

⁵⁸⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, trans. Constantin V. Boundas (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1991).

⁵⁸⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues* (New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1987), 55.

an object repeating itself or showing consistency throughout time is the result of the observer and not the observed thing.⁵⁸⁶ *The self*, for Hume, Deleuze claims, is a habit, “*the habit of saying I.*”⁵⁸⁷ The same applies to any other individuated, unified system arising in time as a repetitive series or sequence of moments.

Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* extends Hume’s theme to describe the constitution of larval subjects at the point of each localized repetitive contraction of moments and even extends it to the level of inorganic life, claiming that every repetitive contraction of elements, such as oxygen and hydrogen forming water, corresponds to contemplation, and forms a habit. We are sub-molecular organic habits prior to the common-sense receptivity because organic contractions precede our capacity to experience sensations.⁵⁸⁸ Such larval subjects, Deleuze claims, are the only patients or passive agents able to support thought as a violent force, a force that no formed subject can sustain.⁵⁸⁹ Since unity and identity is an effect of observing a thing and not an attribute of the thing itself, everything is simply a sequence or a contraction of different moments and elements. There is nothing in the moments themselves that produces a continuity between them. The sensation of continuity is the effect of a contraction outside the contracted moments. A third term is always needed for a relation to arise; conversely, a relation is always a third term. As noted, Deleuze uses Hume’s account only to the extent that he can save it from its characteristic psychologism. To that extent, contemplation is not an element of a human mind or consciousness⁵⁹⁰ but denotes the condition by which consciousness arises.⁵⁹¹ To suppose nature does not form habits is to presume that habits are processes over which we have relative control and are matters of conscious decision and, thus, characteristically human. Nevertheless, habit arises whenever an ant colony

⁵⁸⁶ James Williams, *Gilles Deleuze’s Difference and Repetition: A Critical Introduction and Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 88.

⁵⁸⁷ Gilles Deleuze, “Preface to the English Language Edition” in *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, x.

⁵⁸⁸ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 78.

⁵⁸⁹ Gilles Deleuze, “The method of dramatization” in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974* (Los Angeles, CA : Cambridge, Mass: Semiotext(e) ; Distributed by MIT Press, 2004), 94-116, 98.

⁵⁹⁰ Meillassoux has criticized Deleuze’s idea of contemplation as a necessary doubling of every organic and inorganic contraction as “subjectalism”. See Quentin Meillassoux and Anna Longo, *Time without Becoming*, Philosophy, n. 6 (Milan: Mimesis international, 2014). Meillassoux understands matter as external to thought. It is contingent, natural conditions that account for the emergence of humanity and, thus, thought, which is, in that way, somehow projected retrospectively upon matter. That criticism takes thought to be a projection upon the not real and not as part of it. However, there is another option available. What if instead of discerning a “humanization” when Deleuze claims that the water contemplates the hydrogen and oxygen that it contracts, we reversely understood human thought as the doubling of a natural creative contraction? As Longo puts it in her response to Meillassoux in the above essay, thought is a contingent creation, open to change and subject to the irrational events and becomings of the real.

⁵⁹¹ Robert Luzecky, “The Times of Deleuze: An Analysis of Deleuze’s Concept of Temporality through Reference to Ontology, Aesthetics and Political Philosophy” (West Lafayette, Indiana, Purdue University, 2021), 33.

discovers a new food source and finds its conditions in an ontological, not a human, time. As Somers-Hall puts it, “Deleuze [...] opens up the possibility of seeing time as capable of exhibiting organization in its own right.”⁵⁹² It is time that synthesizes, thus time that forms and organizes itself in habits.

Hume’s thesis on externality is used by Deleuze to counter rationalist philosophies’ denial of the paradox of relations and to counter the Aristotelian and later Hegelian idea that relations are internal and, thus, in a way, are explained by the terms to which they refer.⁵⁹³ Such an approach imposes significant limits on the possible processes in which fixed terms could be said to be intermingled and, thus, the novelty that can arise from such intermingling. On the opposite, the paradox of relations consists in the idea that exteriority is the locus of the relation-formation of linked terms. Following that hypothesis, thinking, as the process of associating terms, is always external to the terms it connects, and conversely, thought is related to what is outside of it.⁵⁹⁴ Relations do not depend on the terms they refer to and are thus not pre-determined by the nature of these terms and any rule that would connect such and such kinds of entities while not others. As a result, anything can be associated with anything, and from this ensues an *ethics of experimentation* and bricolage that both Deleuze alone and Deleuze and Guattari implement.⁵⁹⁵ This ethics involves material and immaterial practices, the latter being evident in their inventiveness of a multiplicity of new philosophical concepts. The externality of relations principle results in an internal difference between a term in-itself and the same term as it appears as part of a relation with other terms.⁵⁹⁶ To the extent that a term cannot be said to express itself alone, but its relations form part of its expression, it is a multiplicity that involves the term itself and the contingent relations that it forms. At the same time, there is a gap or difference between these two, an *internal externality*. It is, of course, evident that individuated systems involve special rules of functioning dictated by their genetic structures -and indeed the problems to which they constitute temporary solutions- but these do not preclude the ways a system will react to another, whether it can form a symbiosis,⁵⁹⁷ to use biological terms or decompose as in what Spinoza calls bad encounters. Considered in its

⁵⁹² Henry Somers-Hall, “Time Out of Joint: Hamlet and the Pure Form of Time,” *Deleuze Studies* 5, no. supplement (December 2011): 56–76, 62.

⁵⁹³ Paul Bains, *The Primacy of Semiosis: An Ontology of Relations* (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 25.

⁵⁹⁴ Gilles Deleuze, “Hume” in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, Semiotext(e) Foreign Agents Series (Los Angeles, CA: Cambridge, Mass: Semiotext(e); Distributed by MIT Press, 2004), 162-9, 163.

⁵⁹⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988), 125. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 251 among many others.

⁵⁹⁶ Kleinherenbrink, *Against Continuity*, 53.

⁵⁹⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 248.

encounters and in the absence of a self-identical unifying principle, an organism is a multiplicity, always eccentric to itself, continuously displaced as it interacts and becomes part of new entities or else relations, to which it is itself external.

The passage from Deleuze's early account of intensity in which unity is presupposed (second synthesis of time, problem, idea, virtual past) to Deleuze and Guattari's later account of intensity as becoming in which unity is understood as an after-effect (third synthesis of conjunction where unity is just a residue of a process, a part among parts) as it was just explained in the last subchapter, plays a role in the augmented significance of the externality of relations principle. When the importance of unity is less emphasized, it seems that the in-itself of difference becomes more directly linked to the externality principle, which in the early work is located in the first synthesis of time yet is still relatively limited (as is the value of habit only forming a synthesis of time as relatively self-identical). A thing changes in-itself only because it is an open "system" composed of part-objects and encounters and because the relations of these parts are external to them. Thus, there is no internal necessity for a system's coherence (which in *Difference and Repetition* is explained by the relative coherence of a problem to which an individuated entity is a temporary solution). In the light of Guattari's machinic or external approach, the Spinozist conception of the body as a characteristic relation between parts acquires an augmented significance. Ultimately, the principle of the externality of relations is presupposed for time to effectuate internal difference. For any individuated entity to self-differentiate in time, its parts must be externally related in a way that contingently holds them together, thus allowing for different relations to be produced and creating differentiation to the supposedly unified system. That the connection between internal parts is external to the parts themselves and thus each entity or system is a provisionally stable organization is a prerequisite for differentiation in time to take place. Like Spinozian substance has to revolve around it modes, any entity has to be understood as a multiplicity of elements, and the constituting power that holds the latter together has to revolve around those elements.⁵⁹⁸

The independence of relations to their terms attests to an anti-foundationalism. If relations are contingent, that is, not pre-given in their terms, then becoming, superficially appearing or explicated as the relation between two moments in time, is not dependent on what it seemingly connects. Namely, it is independent of terms in the state of being; it precedes these

⁵⁹⁸ A similar idea is expressed by Bankston when she analyzes how an infinite absolute becoming of the eternal return enacts finite sensory becomings of singular durations. Bankston, *Deleuze and Becoming*, 15.

terms. Becoming, thus, does not depend upon being. Subsequently, machines, in Deleuzoguattarian terminology, are not stoppages of flows any more than they constitute other flows; with the flows and the cuts being inseparable, cuts are only the limits of flows, internal limits from one perspective, external from another. Cuts are internal limits from the perspective of the individualizing process and the conditions from which individualized extensive systems and bodies arise, and external limitations from that of the already individualized bodies and their relative stability. Relations exist in a field of experimentation guaranteed by their externality to the terms they connect. Moreover, the ideas that arise in tandem with such relations result from belief and affective weight, as Hume discovered. Belief becomes the basis of knowledge, and the associative principles and the relations between terms take their meaning, force, and direction only in reference to the passions or tendencies.⁵⁹⁹ The apparent unity of ideas of reflection and the relations they indicate result from an unfounded affective effect. What the history of philosophy has termed accidents, in opposition to essences, are the source of the latter, and the contingent relations described by the conjunction “and” substitute for the foundation of the verb to be,⁶⁰⁰ pushing philosophy to distort common-sense grammar (instead “the tree is green” we have “tree and green”) and rendering philosophy a practice of making language stutter.⁶⁰¹ The conjunction “and” is crucial for a metaphysics that neither affirms nor negates the objectivity of reality but instead proposes the discernment of the reality as processes arising in between terms and the totalities of which these terms form a part, the in-between of an implicated intensity and explicated actual bodies and terms. That in-between works, to use Deleuze and Guattari’s terminology, as a line of flight, that is, as a creative potential.⁶⁰²

“And” is the conjunction of distinct impressions which, when repeated, acquires the name habit and thus has the effect of unity, stability, and identity. At the same time, “and” is also the conjunction of the different moments in time: the moment when intensive processes of transformation connect pre-individual singularities and, secondly, when these processes engender relatively stable bodies, organisms, and realities. Reversely, the “and” effects the passage from individuated bodies to processes that condition them, relates them to pre-

⁵⁹⁹ Deleuze, “Hume” in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, 166.

⁶⁰⁰ Deleuze, 163.

⁶⁰¹ Gilles Deleuze, “He stuttered” in Constantin V. Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski, eds., *Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

⁶⁰² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2007), 470. The argument of the conjunction and as a line of flight is elaborated in Jeffrey Bell, “Between Realism and Anti-Realism: Deleuze and the Spinozist Tradition in Philosophy,” *Deleuze Studies* 5, no. 1 (March 2011): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.3366/dls.2011.0002>, 13.

individual fluxes, and leads them to change. The conjunction “and” thus describes a limit between transformation and relative stability. Habit is a function of repetition that is the function of the “and” that connects an external flux on the one hand and a provisionally unified system on the other. This repetition is the only content of what we term identity. Nevertheless, considering the anti-foundationalism and contingency of the repetition, we can understand the porosity and temporariness of such identity as an effect. Habit is the limit between the self and the world.⁶⁰³ That is because it describes a temporary system in the process of contracting and, thus, contemplating its variable outside, that organization that connects the becoming with the relative stability that we tend to describe by the notion of the self.

Habit, thus as the living-present, might be said to be the form in which the two other forms of time -the unchanging form of time, time in which the in-itself of time as disjointed radical cut and time as a relative continuity produced by memory- become synthesized and *explicated*. From the point of view of explication or else empiricism, affect appears as an intersubjective or interspecies phenomenon, as a relation between already individuated terms. However, prior to that empirical state, in which intensity is already developed, and from the point of view of its transcendent limit, intensity, and affect are *implicated* in themselves, and they refer to connections, speeds, and rhythms that exist prior to their individualization in distinct bodies, subjects, species, organisms. Interior and exterior denote distinct states in the double movement of the unfolding and enveloping of difference, intensity, and affect. Conjunction is what ultimately synthesizes this double movement in a single process and makes the stable opposition of the two terms redundant.

Intensity as difference is primarily a thing in-itself, in the sense that it is not empirical and extensive to the degree that the empirical denotes habitual ways of perception and understanding and thus favors the illusion of identity (and reality as primarily unchanging, secondarily changing). Affect is a thing in itself, in the sense that is immanent; there is only one plane of consistency upon which everything happens, even if that plane involves inside it the externality of the events occurring on it. Affect is an in-itself since it does not represent anything,⁶⁰⁴ and is not dependent upon the structure of language to occur. It appears in the genetic moment where both itself and language are generated in their disjunctive synthesis.

⁶⁰³ Casey Ford, “The Affective Milieu of Ethical Life in Aristotle and Deleuze” in Casey Ford, Suzanne McCullagh, and Karen Houle, eds., *Minor Ethics: Deleuzian Variations* (Montreal ; Kingston ; London ; Chicago: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2021), 33-60, 49.

⁶⁰⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 259.

Affect is in-itself to the extent that it denotes a realm free from transcendence, from the transcendence of the Other, and of Kantian ideality as external exteriority. Ethical life aims to “intensify,” transform, and affirm difference, freeing it from the need to be subordinated to a transcendent rule of identity. Otherness and ideality are internal to affectivity, one with it in its self-difference. To intensify means to connect to life to the extent that life is primarily intensity and transformation. Transcendental empiricism invites us to reach the limit of what can become of reality and ourselves, our groups, our societies, and our ecosystems as open systems. Affirming the lowest⁶⁰⁵ is the rule of un-cancellable difference to the extent that empirically speaking, we are conditioned to reject the lowest and tend to the norm-setting model of what subjectivity should look like. And on the other hand, from the point of view of transcendental conditions affirming the lowest is the rule of difference to the extent that a connection between unequal powers is the reason for all phenomena. I return to the significance of the “lowest” in the following chapter of the thesis regarding the ethical problem of pain and the minor.

In a sense, it seems like Guattari’s influence in Deleuze’s philosophical course is to radicalize the idea of exteriority and to transform the internal exteriority of sensibility with regard to its own limit in ideas, to an immanent externality or *exterior interiority* of the machine or of desire regarding the flows and forces which it integrates in order to function. This kind of metaphysics of forces, which also has its origins in Deleuze’s Nietzschean inheritance, is one that, as Deleuze puts it, opposes the cult of interiority with all the mystifications and interpretative authorities that it generates.⁶⁰⁶ Exterior is not here, presupposing extensity. On the opposite, the exterior is a provisional porous line, the limit between what we commonly think of as exteriority and interiority, objectivity and subjectivity, self and other. The machine’s interiority is nothing but a desire constituted by regulating external flows. Systems, that is, individuals, organisms, and assemblages, are open systems endowed with more or less provisional stability. That stability arises as the result of the affective weight of their repetition and nothing else. In a sense, one could say that the in-itself-ness of things is only an affective effect. Thus, if systems are constantly open and relations contingent, then relations are always provisional connections, provisionally repeated connections, and in-itself-ness or interiority is only the effect of such repetitions. Affective transformation does not happen between already formed individuals or interiorities because interiorities are only the provisional effects of

⁶⁰⁵ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 234.

⁶⁰⁶ Gilles Deleuze, “Nomad Thought” in David B. Allison, ed., *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation* (New York: Dell Pub. Co, 1977), 142-9, 147.

affective transformation, be it connection, disjunction, or conjunction. Of course, the different kinds of affective transformation have different effects, as we have already noted.

What happens under the influence of Guattari is that provisional unities like organisms, and bodies of any kind -social, political, psychic patterns- are understood as comprised of parts whose relations to one another are exterior to the parts themselves and thus contingent. Such exterior internality makes the resulting unity subject to change at any moment in a way far more radical than the vitalist change conceptualized in early Deleuzian work. Deleuze, in his appropriation of Spinoza, having radicalized the immanent relation between the modes and substance as a relation of degrees of power, can conceive of the contingent and external relations of the modes as internal to the immanent process of desire and understand the latter as differentiating. The internal externality of the system is time and contingency. Under the influence of Guattari, this externality in the form of experimentation takes a more actual and performative function. It gives us concepts that are both more abstract and tactile than Deleuze alone had reached, such as becoming-minor, which I will analyze in the next chapter.

Affect and affection, latitude, and longitude

After having analyzed the problem of interiority and exteriority in relation to affect, I can now revisit the problem of affect and affection and that of longitude and latitude and thus go further and conclude with some final remarks on the way Deleuze and Guattari interpret and transform Spinoza's account of affect additionally to developing their own account. Deleuze expands on Spinoza's distinction between affect and affections in his work *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*. Affection is a change in a mode's power accompanied by the idea of an external mode as its cause.⁶⁰⁷ For example, if I feel my power augmented along with the idea of another person, that is affection and possibly one of love. Nevertheless, as we already know from Spinoza, an idea of an external body or cause that we have indicates more the condition of our own body rather than the nature of the external body.⁶⁰⁸ Thus, the way we are affected denotes the composition of our own bodies (in the above example, it denotes our capacity to love more than the lovability of the person whose idea we associate with affection). On the

⁶⁰⁷ Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, 49. Deleuze comes up with this definition by combining the description of affect (*Ethics*, Part III, Definition 3) -which states that affect is an affection of the body accompanied by the idea of this affection- with the proposition saying that the idea of an affection must involve both the ideas of the affected and the affecting external body (*Ethics*, Part II, Proposition 16). Benedictus de Spinoza and E. M. Curley, *A Spinoza Reader: The Ethics and Other Works* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 154 and 128 correspondingly.

⁶⁰⁸ Benedictus de Spinoza and E. M. Curley, 129 (*Ethics*, Part II, Proposition 16, Corollary 2).

other hand, an affect, according to Spinoza, claims Deleuze, is the condition of transition from one degree of power to another (in the above example of love, a passage from a lesser to a greater degree of power) as considered in the mode under examination. Thus, an affect is not tied to another mode's influence, even if it is associated with this other mode's idea. Instead, it refers to the transition to greater or lesser power or perfection in the mode *itself*. Deleuze argues that while affect involves an idea (as we see in Spinoza's definition), it is "confined to it," instead it is of a different nature to it; it is purely transitional and, as he will claim in his lecture on Spinoza, non-representational. Nevertheless, it is crucial to keep in mind that even if not confined to the idea; affect is a non-representational mode of *thought*.⁶⁰⁹

Affections involving other external bodies' ideas correspond to the *lower* level of our capacity to exist. In contrast, auto-affection, an affect that corresponds to affections of which we are the cause and which express the agreement of our essence to the essence of God, is the *highest* form of our power to exist. On the one hand, affection expresses how we are affected in extension through chance encounters; on the other, affect indicates how we are self-affected intensively. Nevertheless, while in Spinoza's theory of knowledge, affections arising from chance encounters are the lowest source of knowledge and least perfect way of being, ascending to the highest form of knowledge paradoxically, according to Deleuze, brings us back to the realm of the encounter. According to Deleuze, in this most elevated form of knowledge and existence, we encounter *pure intensities*.⁶¹⁰ In Spinoza, with the third kind of knowledge, we reach the world of essences. However, according to Deleuze, expanding on Spinoza's original account, essences are singular to each existing mode and are degrees of absolute power. In the realm of intensities, beyond extensive bodies and the encounters in which they are confined, we are all expressive parts of the highest power of God. In short, it is through essences that we reach the world of pre-individual singularities that is the realm of productive power.

According to Deleuze, we can reach affect only through affection; from affect, we finally arrive at pure intensity or difference. While in *What is Philosophy?* affect is the privileged realm art has to extract from empirical affection; it is crucial to remember how dualities are useful to Deleuze only to depict tendencies of processes in the *middle* of the limits

⁶⁰⁹ Gilles Deleuze, Lecture "Spinoza: Affect and Idea," Seminar at the University of Paris, Vincennes-Saint-Denis, 1980-81, 24 January 1978, trans. Timothy S. Murphy for WebDeleuze, retrieved from <https://www.webdeleuze.com/textes/14>

⁶¹⁰ Deleuze, Lecture "Spinoza: Affect and Idea", 16.

that dualities describe. The immanently transcendental encounter with intensity or difference is tied inextricably to the externality of empirical chance encounters. Empirical contingency implicates the higher power of difference.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari refer to a distinction similar to that of affection and affect: longitude and latitude. Longitude refers to the extensive parts that belong to a mode under a particular relation of motion and rest. It denotes how one can affect and be affected in extension, composed with or decomposed by other bodies with extensive parts endowed with different relations of motion and rest, speed and slowness. Latitude refers to the set of affects one is capable of in oneself intensively.⁶¹¹ The first aspect involves extensity, and the other expresses intensity. The one is not reducible to the other. For example, the height of a basketball player does not define her willpower and force; extension does not preclude power. Nevertheless, let's consider intensity's primary function as individuating. An individuated entity's extensive parts are conditioned by a specific power enveloped in them. Moreover, latitude denotes affects but affect is the effectuation of the power of the pack.⁶¹² Affect cannot be understood as separate from a longitude, a multiplicity existing in space. Individuated entity and individuated group are connected and distinguished through an internal difference as different degrees of intensity. At the same time, each individual consists of a different threshold of transformation of the whole pack. The potential of creativity and the potential of an event's individuation lies in the individual's constitutive internal difference within the individuated group and in the process of reciprocal individuation of both.

As noted, Deleuze's method, and precisely his method with Spinoza, is to start from the middle.⁶¹³ Bypassing the first principle of *Ethics*, which is the one on substance-God-Nature, he starts from God's expression in finite modes. Bypassing the first book of *Ethics* on God, he starts from the third book on affects. Moreover, in the method he proposes in *Expressionism in Philosophy*, which explains the passage from the first to the third kind of knowledge, modes lead us to the acknowledgment that there is a greater infinite power that is their cause. We can then start understanding how this infinite power creates itself and the modes as its expressions.⁶¹⁴ From chance encounters, we enter the realm of novelty and

⁶¹¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 257.

⁶¹² Deleuze and Guattari, 240.

⁶¹³ Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, 122.

⁶¹⁴ Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 14, 161, 164-5, 290-1. See also Daniel W. Smith, "The Deleuzian Revolution: Ten Innovations in *Difference and Repetition*," *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* 14, no. 1 (February 2020): 34-49, 38-9.

creativity through the encounter and connection with intensity. Starting from the middle in terms of longitude and latitude, affection and affect would mean realizing that what happens is at the limit of both, neither in-between two bodies nor inside one body but at the surface where the distinction fades for novelty to emerge. This limit is where the distinction between self and other can be productively overcome since affect concerns neither what happens in direct relation to an external influence nor the emergence of an internal affection. In contrast, it concerns the emergence of difference, an unforeseen novelty or event (even if it is of a minuscule scale, a subtle psychic movement occurring either individually or collectively) where neither self nor other is consolidated through habit.

Affect as Event and as habit

In the last subchapter, I attempted to show the necessary connection between the two seemingly opposing accounts of affect; on the one hand, affect is a difference in itself; on the other, affect is a set of interactions in a field of external relations. I attempted to expose how the former depends on the latter, particularly in light of Guattari's contribution of the machinic externality perspective on problematic structures. In what follows, I consider the persisting problem of identity and habitual affectivity in the transformational account of affect I put forward until now. If affect is primarily intensity and difference, how can we understand the habit of thinking and acting in terms of identity? After having done that, in the next chapter, I will turn to the problem of expression and the relation of affect, language, and meaning and finally arrive through there to the explicit ethical propositions that Deleuze and Guattari associate with affect, namely the proposal towards becoming-minor, trying to show their necessary connection to metaphysics.

It has been noted that Deleuze's account of habit and the principle of externality merely inherits but does not resolve the problem of the constitution of the unity of the self and, consequently, the problem of identity in Hume.⁶¹⁵ The problem that has been observed is the problem of circularity and whether some unity is not presupposed for the phenomenon of the affective weight of habit to appear, a phenomenon that supposedly generates precisely the effect of unity. Moreover, the question is posed, how is the claim that instants in time are separate, founded since our empirical impression of time and various philosophical accounts

⁶¹⁵ Hume's argument of the self as a bundle of perceptions has famously received criticism of circularity. For example, John Immerwahr, "Hume's Self Criticism," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 18, no. 2 (June 1980): 169–76. Such criticism is subsequently addressed to Deleuze's appropriation of Hume's argument. D. J. S. Cross, *Deleuze and the Problem of Affect* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 68.

of time reveal it as continuous? This problem has been taken up by Meillassoux, who points out that Hume presupposes some remnants of identity even when he claims identity is an aftereffect. Hume, Meillassoux claims, presupposes identity specifically in the form of the necessity -and thus stability- of natural laws even when he claims that things are contingently related in the mind, according to the principles or tendencies of human nature.⁶¹⁶ In other words, Hume accepts that there is a difference between impressions and the things that they refer to -a difference one might associate with the conclusion of a perspectival world. Nevertheless, he does not “rule out” the possibility of one and the same world of objects from which impressions derive.⁶¹⁷ The criticism addressed to Deleuze is to similarly presuppose some unity of the self before the connection of impressions that supposedly give rise to the self. Moreover, that criticism claims that Deleuze takes for granted the Humean separation of moments which allows him to talk about the larval subjects yet does not back it up, nor does he preclude the problem of a latent unity of these larval subjects below separateness.⁶¹⁸

This persisting philosophical problem brings us to the problem of the relation of the first and the third synthesis of time and the relation of the discontinuity of intensity as the unequal with the discontinuity of the supposedly separate instants of time. It has been noted that Deleuze presupposes discontinuity and the existence of separate cases and instants in the transcendental level of superior repetition.⁶¹⁹ To formulate an answer, one must remember the primacy of intensity as conditioning actual bodies and habitual stabilities. In fact, Deleuze understands habit as a binding of excitation and excitation as a free difference that precedes

⁶¹⁶ Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (London; New York: Continuum, 2008, 99).

⁶¹⁷ Robyn Ferrell, “Rival Reading: Deleuze on Hume,” *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 73, no. 4 (December 1995): 585–93, 596.

⁶¹⁸ D. J. S. Cross claims that the inexplicable problem of where principles of association of ideas arise is transferred to the paradox of the concept of contemplation. See Cross, *Deleuze and the Problem of Affect*, 82. This approach fails to consider that it is the sole fact of time that remains the same. See Gilles Deleuze, “On four poetic formulas which might summarize the Kantian philosophy” in Gilles Deleuze, *Kant’s Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of the Faculties* (London: Athlone Press, 1984), vii–xiii, viii. Also Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 24. In the unchanging empty form of time, the past is a parallel dimension coexisting with the present so that *the past is retained in the present itself* rather than in an immutable entity through which time passes. Time is primary to the changing entities that appear in it. The appearance of time as a particular duration of a living present remains the same and thus retains the past as a ground on which it appears. The form of enveloping a past and unfolding a future is the sole fact that remains the same. That is why Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* names the third synthesis of time, the synthesis of the Event as static. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 89. As Boundas puts it: “Time was initially introduced by Hume as the structure of the mind; but *the subject*, formed by the habit inside the mind, *is the synthesis of time*.” (emphasis mine) Constantin V. Boundas “Translator’s Introduction: Deleuze, Empiricism and the Struggle for Subjectivity” in Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, 1–19, 16.

⁶¹⁹ Mark Sinclair “Deleuze on Habit and Time; or, How to Get, and How Not to Get, from Hume to Bergson” in Jeremy Dunham and Komarine Romdenh-Romluc, eds., *Habit and the History of Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2022), 166–179.

the binding.⁶²⁰ A passion for repetition of free difference precedes the contraction of that difference and its binding towards its resolution and cancellation in pleasure or the larval ego constituted by habit.⁶²¹ Habit, in that sense, is only an expression of the intensive quantity that establishes time as primarily an event, that is, a cut. While continuity is an effect of intensity as well, one that occurs in the synthesis of the present with the memory that coexists with it, intensive discontinuity or difference becomes explicated into extensive discontinuity. Time as succession -or as a habit- exactly as time as coexistence -or memory- is a simple modality of time whose pure state is the empty form of time out of joint.⁶²² That relation of the first and the third synthesis of time will be revisited shortly in reference to the significance and ethical implications of the zero point of intensity.

Despite their differences, the two syntheses in early Deleuze, the first synthesis of habit and the third synthesis of death, share in common a reference to the diminution of intensity to its limit in a manner that makes the question of the way the two syntheses relate or resonate with one another pressing. The question in both cases is, how is a synthesis formed across a cut or a limit? Does a synthesis imply or presuppose a unity, and if so, how does a unity derive out of a cut between heterogeneous elements? The relation of the first synthesis, based on the prior transcendental discontinuity of intensity, has already been observed in Deleuzian scholarship. What Deleuze talks about when referring to primary impressions constituting sensibility is primarily a transcendental, not an empirical sensibility.⁶²³ As Bankston puts it, it is a “heterogeneous monism that enables Deleuze to connect the differential Moment to the notion of synthesis.” Deleuze, appropriating Nietzsche, understands the moment as, at the same time, “a temporal concept that is not in time” and a “microcosm for the infinity of time.” What appears in Hume and Deleuze as a separate moment is not solely a moment in which intensity is seemingly canceled; simultaneously, it contains the transcendental difference or caesura that conditions it. The Moment is counter-causal; it reverses the empirical linear and rational relation of causes and effects. It is an answer to the question of becoming, thus, constantly referring to this transcendental difference towards which it incessantly tends.⁶²⁴ Moreover, the Event has not to be understood as a momentary change. As Deleuze puts it in his book on

⁶²⁰ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 95.

⁶²¹ Deleuze, 96.

⁶²² Somers-Hall, “Time Out of Joint”, 63-4.

⁶²³ Joe Hughes, *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: A Reader's Guide* (London; New York: Continuum, 2009), 104.

⁶²⁴ Bankston, *Deleuze and Becoming*, 165-7.

Leibniz, following Whitehead, the Great Pyramids must be understood as events.⁶²⁵ Matter can be an event when extracted “from things and beings⁶²⁶” The counter-causal nature of the Event is both eternal and never present.

Following the creative nature of sensibility as a realm of signs, time is not to be understood as itself present. It is a non-present present. What appears as a separate moment in time, a punctual divisible moment, is a ghostly presence of the ever-changing, of creativity and of becoming. The Event denotes an individuation that lacks no determination due to its indefinite impassive nature. Instead, this kind of individuation occurs within collective assemblages that express a determination distinct from that of subjects and forms.⁶²⁷ What conditions the seemingly distinguishable moment is a disjunctive synthesis holding together ever-changing heterogeneous pasts and futures while keeping them apart. The larval self, created through habit, is but a pure difference to the extent that it is conditioned by and always contains such a difference. Affect, as does the Event, evades the present; it has no presence in-itself because it lacks even a provisional identity. It is the process of bifurcation of the past and future that it connects.⁶²⁸ It is a machine that produces meaning interminably by making that bifurcation of incompatible coexisting states of affairs translate into exclusive disjunctions of either-or, which, in turn, produce codes. It is empirically transcendental because this time of events, at the limit of which meaning is produced and of which affect is part, is not sensible with the common-sense meaning of the term, referring to harmonious use of the faculties upon self-identical sensible objects.

Moreover, if intensity is the ‘unity’ of memory and habit, so too must affect be the synthesis of the first and second syntheses. Habit, memory, and death are not consequent and hierarchical but contemporaneous, as already exposed in the analysis of the syntheses early in the current chapter; each is involved in the others. The Event contains both habit and memory, both actual -seemingly stable- bodies available in sensible experience, and virtual ideas and their complicating, transformative problematizing speed. Affect is neither the affect of habit or that of memory nor that of -finally reaching- intensity. Affect -as intensity- is *all at once*. Affect as an Event, as the event of transformation, conditions the habit that leads to it and memory, which connects it to what it comes from. The Event is the opening up to the future, which

⁶²⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (London: The Athlone Press, 1993), 76.

⁶²⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 33.

⁶²⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, 264.

⁶²⁸ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 64.

contains the past it came from and the habit which prepares it and in which it becomes actualized.

Habit cannot be accounted for through reference to an identity that conditions and explains it. Consequently, it cannot be accounted for by a principle and thus that of pleasure. Unlike psychoanalysis which interprets the persistence of symptoms in neurotic habits through the reference to the pleasure principle and its disruption, Deleuze contests that the binding of excitation leads in a deterministic manner to pleasure. Instead, he claims that the pleasure resulting in the resolution of excitation acquires the status of a principle to the extent that some unity of the ego is presupposed as a functional pre-requisite of psychic mechanisms. Pleasure is indeed the result of a resolution of excitation. Nevertheless, there is no proof that excitation necessarily leads to that kind of resolution on a transcendently empirical level, so much so that such resolution could acquire the status of a principle. Pleasure, in short, is not a necessary function of the psychic and organic binding of excitations that we term habit but a contingent result. Moreover, pleasure is the complementary opposite of lack. The one presupposes the other, and they both impose the yoke of an external rule on desire. Lack hollows up desire, while pleasure fills it up.⁶²⁹ In the psychoanalytic reliance on both, the self-sufficiency or immanence of desire, its function in expressing only itself, is falsified and distorted. Such recognition can lead us to confront the passion for binding excitation in a non-deterministic manner, not assuming a unified subject as the prerequisite for conceptualizing psychic mechanisms and therapeutic practices. The passion for repetition is not a psychic mechanism of the subject but a function of life itself. Moreover, this passion does not resolve itself in the predictive manner a principle would imply. On the contrary, it leads to the proliferation of creative differences. The power of repetition is an open structure affirming the singularity of each repeated case, accumulating singularities towards the tipping point of a differential Event. The model of death that Deleuze and Guattari propose, along with the concomitant concept of the body without organs, differs from that of the Freudian (death as an instinct, as well as a desire from within) as well as the Spinozian account of death (death coming from outside) and synthesizes them in the concept of the double implication of intensity once in itself and the other in the extensive and qualitative realm in which it is explicated.⁶³⁰ In this sense, death denotes both the fact of intensity's self-cancellation in empirical reality and the principle of

⁶²⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 154.

⁶³⁰ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 259.

intensification and difference that remains implicated in itself, ‘insulated’ from the explicating process to which it gives rise.⁶³¹

⁶³¹ Deleuze, 241.

Chapter 5. Affect and Becoming

1. Introduction

2. Pain and becoming

Expression, intensification, fall

Becoming-minor

Affect, emotions, and shame

The affirmative function of pain

Dynamism versus ambivalence. The impassibility of the Event

3. Expression and affect

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Affect - Expression versus Meaning – Language

Affect and the face

Faciality as territorialization and deterritorialization

1. Introduction

After examining the metaphysical and aesthetic presuppositions and functions of affect in Deleuzoguattarian philosophy in the second and third chapters of the current dissertation, in the present chapter, I will focus more explicitly and in more detail on the ethical aspects of the latter and attempt to expose the vital link between ethics, metaphysics, and aesthetics in Deleuze and Guattari. Such an open system of linkages can lead to the conceptualization of affect as a becoming-minor that creates a differentiation between the latter and the Spinozian conception of affect - primarily exemplified by the affect of joy. As connected to minoritarian ethics, affect, as conceptualized by Deleuze and Guattari, opens us to pain as a positive prerequisite of transformation and complicates the ethical distinction between sadness and joy and between passivity and activity. Additionally, I will continue elaborating on the tripartite structure of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy and connect it to the concept of expression, by which Deleuze famously analyzed Spinoza and which characterizes a crucial function of his monistic scheme. Through expression, I will pass to the entanglement of affect and meaning and the problem of affect's relation to language that has concerned the affective turn in the humanities. I will finally analyze the example of the face as a privileged location where we can expose and deconstruct the relation between affect and signification.

2. Pain and becoming

Expression, intensification, fall

In *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, Deleuze follows Spinoza's doubling of affect with ideas.⁶³² In this way, he affirms the understanding of affect and ideas as two halves of univocal substance. Nevertheless, when Deleuze does philosophy in his own right in *Difference and Repetition*, he famously claims that substance in Spinoza should be substituted for power or intensity or difference and that only in such a way would Spinoza's system be consistent and truly immanent as his predecessor had wanted. To do so, ideas would have to be an attribute or aspect of intensity -of which affect is a variation- rather than intensity and ideas describing something else, that is, substance. For intensity to substitute substance, Spinoza would have to reverse his basic principle and have substance turn around the modes.⁶³³ Identity, thus, would have to be said of difference. Let us take intensity or difference in-itself as the sole metaphysical element conditioning and generating sensible reality by constituting its limit. Ideas are only one side of this element whose other side is extensity, or the actual. Affect is the variation of that metaphysical element, immanently measuring the variable non-denumerable quantity of that intensity. The question affect poses, and whose answers it delineates the conditions, is not the question of "how much?" but the question of the more or less. In that respect, Deleuze is in line with Spinozian ethics, yet the reversal of the relation of substance as eternity and modes as variation will result in a reversal of the role of that measurement. In this reading, affect would indicate the "metrics" in any immanent measure. It would thus provide the basis, the ungrounded ground of Deleuze and Guattari's non-humanist metaphysics. Affects are degrees of power or difference, and they offer an immanent indication of the power of any open system and the factors influencing such power. "What distinguishes two intensive quantities is the variable distance through which one comprehends [of] their relation to zero intensity."⁶³⁴ We use measurement to relate and compare entities through reference to a transcendent external measure. The question of immanent measurement is to count in order to create.

For Spinoza, the ethical task of each entity follows its natural tendency to preserve and augment its power in line with the augmentation of the power of the collective formation in which it forms part (which, for Spinoza, in the case of humans, is the state). Is one to assume

⁶³² Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 113-28.

⁶³³ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 304.

⁶³⁴ Daniel W. Smith, "The Deleuzian Revolution: Ten Innovations in *Difference and Repetition*," *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* 14, no. 1 (February 2020): 34-49.

that Deleuze's emphasis on the immanent measure of affect also somehow proposes an ethical orientation towards the augmentation of power of each system, only the notion of power is substituted for the idea of intensity? On the one side, the ethics of intensification is present in various locations in Deleuze and Guattari's work, based on which they often advise caution so that in one's encounter with intensities, they proclaim an art of dosages and warn against suicidal overdose.⁶³⁵ The link between the ethics of intensification with accelerationism has been noted.⁶³⁶ However, I argue that the emphasis on minoritarian becomings would defy such a hypothesis of ethics of uncritical augmentation of intensive power. Instead, I claim minoritarian becomings would indicate an ethics of dispersion of a system's power to affirm the constituent pre-individual forces and singularities from which the former arises. Power in Deleuze and Guattari is the power to transform and different/ciate. As exposed in the second chapter, different/ciation is a process of creative incarnation of ideas into actual, extended entities through intensive power and of creation of ideas through unforeseeable encounters with intensity that cannot be accounted for by actual entities. Intensive power is pure difference before it is an identity of an actual entity. How do the two ideas of intensification and becoming minor fit together in the constellation of Deleuzoguattarian concepts? To intensify oneself is, for Deleuze, to connect with the intensity of the genetic pre-conditions of one's power or become a body without organs. Intensity, thus, is by no means the augmented power of an organism but the greater intensity or difference of the pre-individual plane from which the individual arises. To intensify, therefore, means to open up subjectivity's limits and pre-conditions and, in such a way, create a novel force arising while creatively breaking away from those pre-conditions. In short, it is to become 'less' of a subject and 'more' of a pre-subjective power and allow the latter to become creative as such.

In his book on Spinoza, Deleuze describes the philosopher's synthetic method of knowledge of things through their causes by identifying three functions of the method, the reflective, the genetic, and the deductive.⁶³⁷ Through modes, one can pass to their adequate cause (God, substance) and subsequently grasp the modes or effects through their cause. This passage from the modes (effects) to their cause (God) is the genetic moment. That moment is again associated with the genetic moment in Deleuze's early metaphysical work and with the revelation of a virtual ideal problematic structure and intensity as genetic conditions of

⁶³⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 160.

⁶³⁶ Hui Yuk and Morelle Louis, "A Politics of Intensity: Some Aspects of Acceleration in Simondon and Deleuze," *Deleuze Studies* 11, no. 4 (2017): 498–517.

⁶³⁷ Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, 161.

sensibility and vice versa. However, that moment in Spinoza's method leads to a third moment of deduction. Once we identify God as the efficient cause of everything (including God himself-*sic*), we understand everything as a process of continuous production (where self-causality and causality are both understood as causality in one and the same sense). The simultaneous creation of divinity or the intensive aspect of reality and finite modes is the limit moment of intensity in its passage to finitude. Thus, instead of augmentation of actual power, intensification denotes the course from actual power to its intensive genetic moment, which problematizes actual appearances and facts by referring them back to their preconditions.⁶³⁸ According to Deleuze, Spinoza begins with substance as problematic substantive multiplicity, beyond the one and the multiple (before God as one and attributes as multiple).⁶³⁹ Then, starting from these revealed or recovered preconditions, which coexist with things, and departing from them, the deductive moment refers to a process of novelty creation. *To create anew is to intensify the conditions from which something arises*. It is not to make stronger or augment in extension since these notions refer to the state of being actualized or already individualized. To intensify means to open bodies, organisms, and systems to their intensive preconditions, to connect them and refer them back to the processes from which they derive, and in such a way to intensify their transformation, opening them to their difference and thus to their potential, open them to the future, create from them, anew. The potential is independent of the direction of one's becoming or transformation and the augmentation or diminution of power. So long as we connect with the processes that condition us, we relate to dynamism, a force or urge that develops in time and of which we are provisional effects.

Since Deleuze reverses Spinozism and makes 'substance' revolve around the modes, it follows that infinity and finitude are no longer opposite and disentangled. Infinity has to revolve around the passage to finitude; power has to revolve around its limit, and intensity has to revolve around its zero limit, which, nevertheless, never reaches permanently and definitively. It thus makes sense that Deleuze would refer to sensation as a plunge or fall as he does in his book on Bacon, and as I will analyze in greater detail soon, to the extent that the limit defines intensity and to the degree that sensation is always a relation of intensity to its zero limit. That passage is active in that it is not dialectically opposed to the activity of life or the conatus, i.e., the power to persist in one's existence. The activity itself falls; the action and

⁶³⁸ Jeffrey Bell, "Between Realism and Anti-Realism: Deleuze and the Spinozist Tradition in Philosophy," *Deleuze Studies* 5, no. 1 (March 2011): 1–17, 13.

⁶³⁹ Gilles Deleuze, "Gueroult's General Method for Spinoza" in Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, 146-55, 150.

the force of life are always a passage to life's limit. I will return to this point shortly in discussing pain's affirmative power.

To effectuate such a reversal of Spinozism while retaining its crucial presuppositions, Deleuze has to employ the method of the externality of relations and thus put to work the methodological power of the "AND" already analyzed in the previous fourth chapter. Instead of beginning with Spinoza's first principle of God as a unique substance, he starts from the *middle* and the power of the connection of the twofold attributes of substance. Thought AND extension, soul AND body, each is exposed in a field of external relations that the other constitutes and where each one's limits are to be discovered through experimentation.⁶⁴⁰ We do not know what a body can do, and thus we do not know the limits of thought. The two are not parts of a unity (expressed in either the organism's or consciousness's unity) but terms of a continuous encounter. An encounter with the externality that each constitutes in relation to the other. Disjunctively synthesized, intensity and virtuality, bodily substance and thinking present each other's internally external limit. The unity or one-ness of substance is not the starting point but only one of the terms of an original encounter: multiple and one.

Deleuze and Guattari note that speed is the crucial factor determining intensification - and what distinguishes the creative power of thought from opinion. Infinite speed denotes the power of thought.⁶⁴¹ Speed thus determines whether time will be coagulated in a habit or opinion or, on the contrary, will open up a fracture of an event, whether terms will be connected in habit or disjointed in the empty form of the event.⁶⁴² That speed of thought allows the opening up of matter's alleged inertia and the ultimate limits of physics expressed in the limit of the speed of light. Given this assertion, Brassier has noted that Deleuze's notion of intensification reaches its highest potentialization in the human, despite the latter's proclamations against humanism.⁶⁴³ Against that claim, one has to be aware that speed is the ultimate function of nature which separates unities to create novelty and not a privileged function of the subject. As Olkowski notes, "speed is Nature/God."⁶⁴⁴ While speed characterizes thought's function, thought is a non-human force. In what follows, I will try to

⁶⁴⁰ Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 62.

⁶⁴¹ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 21.

⁶⁴² Deleuze and Guattari, 49, 202.

⁶⁴³ Ray Brassier, *Nihil Unbound: Enlightenment and Extinction* (Basingstoke ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 163.

⁶⁴⁴ Dorothea Olkowski "The Limits of Intensity and the Mechanics of Death", Chapter 10 in Constantin V. Boundas, ed., *Deleuze and Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 160-174, 169-70.

show an alternative to what intensification as augmentation of power might mean and, in that way, deconstruct the assumption of Deleuzian ethics of prioritizing a greater power over a lesser power, thus implicitly prioritizing the human.

Becoming-minor

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the minor has been broadly discussed in secondary literature. Nevertheless, a large part of the scholarship focuses on the aspect of the minority that pertains to language and thus pulls from the material provided in *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* and the chapters on linguistics in *A Thousand Plateaus*.⁶⁴⁵ In these readings, minority denotes a marginal use of language capable of transforming language and its function of coagulating symbolic meaning. Nevertheless, the tendency to read the minor as primarily a function of language presents certain limitations in conveying its full affective force. Countering that tendency, in what follows, I will attempt to delve deeper into the connection between the composite concept of "becoming-minor" and that of affect as a function of time, desire, and intensity. By doing that, I will follow and shed light on the intimate and robust connection between affect as intensity and the minor and ultimately clarify both to hopefully make them available to be put to work as theoretical and ethical tools.

"Affects are becomings."⁶⁴⁶ Becoming-minor for Deleuze and Guattari describes a function of desire. Specifically, it denotes a de-subjectifying process that follows a passage through a series of interconnected processes that the two philosophers name becoming-woman, becoming-child, becoming-animal, becoming-molecule, and becoming-imperceptible.⁶⁴⁷ Moreover, these becomings denote the process of the in-between of fixed terms, the in-between of creative processes without origin and end result.⁶⁴⁸ Results, which would only subordinate the process to themselves, are reversely secondary to the process. Becoming is a primary connection across differences. Following its characteristic of arising in the middle, a link between the concept of becoming with the Aristotelian imperative towards the middle as the

⁶⁴⁵ Ford, McCullagh, and Houle, *Minor Ethics* offers a precious contribution to a subject so crucial yet often overlooked in Deleuzoguattarian scholarship, the metaphysical basis of their ethics. Nevertheless, the introduction to the book still focuses on the concept of minority as it relates to language and less on the affective aspect of the minority. For example, Gerald Posselt, "The Task of Becoming Minor: On the Politics of Representation," *Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society – J-RaT* 4, no. 2 (December 21, 2018): 283–305. Also, Chysanthi Nigianni "Writing Difference: Toward a Becoming Minoritarian," chapter 11 in Janae Sholtz and Cheri Lynne Carr, eds., *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Feminism: Alliances and Allies* (London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 193–207.

⁶⁴⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 256.

⁶⁴⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, 279.

⁶⁴⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, 293.

approximation of a form of ethical behavior has been noted.⁶⁴⁹ Nevertheless, while Aristotle subdues the middle to a model that has to be approximated, Deleuze and Guattari free it from the purgatory of reference. Becoming is a process with its own self-sufficiency. The fact that it connects two terms is only the apparent effect of the process as explicated. Becoming-minor denotes the ethical imperative to connect empirical affections to their sufficient reason, namely, to difference, resonance, and communication across differential power dynamics and heterogeneous elements with unequal intensities. Intensities nevertheless do not work as would distinct bodies; they involve a difference of potential among non-unifiable heterogeneous multiplicities.

Becoming is minor in the same way that intensity affirms the lowest.⁶⁵⁰ The latter is true to the extent that we pass from the demands of convenience and action -as Bergson explains, the tendency to analyze things in terms of stasis- to the philosophical endeavor to affirm the genetic pre-supposition of organisms and passing from their empirically observed unfolding and expansion, back to what is enveloped in them, what is implicated, that from which one departs to develop into an actual entity. The animal and the child, from which one departs to become human, are thus affirmed as the genetic pre-supposition of the human and thus as the objects of ethics of difference. Like the ordinal numbers that measure orders of rank internally, woman, animal, child and the imperceptible denote a coagulated social hierarchy affirming the model of the white man⁶⁵¹ and which we need to decompose to discover death as a positive principle in line with life's powers. The imperative to affirm the lowest can be explained as the necessity to affirm the un-cancellable inequality of intensity.⁶⁵² As Lawlor points out by referring to the influence of Bergson on this point, to affirm a certain degree of intensity or reality, one has to affirm all lower degrees necessarily. A degree of reality we can conventionally rate as ten has to affirm all lesser degrees from nine down to zero. Moreover, in order for intensity's internal inequality to be positive -and to not follow the rule of the laws of thermodynamics that supposes the tendency of energy towards identity- it has to be the case that all lower intensities are affirmed as such, and with them also zero which has not to be confused with nothingness.⁶⁵³

⁶⁴⁹ Casey Ford, "The Affective Milieu of Ethical Life in Aristotle and Deleuze" in Ford, McCullagh, and Houle, *Minor Ethics*, 33-60, 52.

⁶⁵⁰ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 234.

⁶⁵¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 291.

⁶⁵² Deleuze, 232.

⁶⁵³ Leonard Lawlor, "The Categorical Imperative and Not Being Unworthy of the Event: Ethics in Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*," *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* 14, no. 1 (February 2020): 109-35, 125.

It is important to remember that the concept of becoming-minor develops in the context of Deleuze's explicit disavowal of his philosophy of difference as "a new version of the beautiful soul" that "sees differences [...] as respectable" and "sees in [...] struggles only [...] misunderstandings."⁶⁵⁴ Deleuze, referring to Hegel's warned-against concept, clarifies that the world of differences is not opposed to negation to invoke a realm of "peaceful coexistence."⁶⁵⁵ Instead, it proposes a Nietzschean perspective in which a beautiful soul is endowed with a sense of destruction and cruelty and tends towards the destructions necessary to affirm the continued recurrence of difference that is the eternal return.⁶⁵⁶ Becoming-minor cannot be seen as either mimesis or a kind of intersubjective empathy from the side of the adult towards the child or the animal but has to be understood as a destruction proper to the adult that allows for the unlocking of difference, the eternal recurrence of the difference in the form of the affirmation of the genetic differences from which the adult emerges. The conflation of affirming genetic differences with a celebratory harmony of empirical diversity is due to the confusion of the empirical effect with its transcendental conditioning.⁶⁵⁷ The difference between the adult and the child is by no means that of peaceful coexistence; there is an incessant struggle for power involved in their differences. To affirm that difference means to allow for the destruction of the pretension of the severe limit between the two that spares us from the messiness of the battle in the in-between, the zone of indiscernibility of the two. The animal and the child are the singularities from which the adult emerges, by returning to which, however, the adult can create novelty, following the genetic and deductive moment Deleuze detects in Spinoza.

In a sense, it is as if becoming-minor expresses the crack or the caesura of the relatively autonomous realm of thought in the realm of sensibility. As Widder points out, Deleuze deals with the problem of the silent fracture that is not only a matter of thinking but also the body while distinguishing this bodily crack from the absolute dissolution of the body and suicide.⁶⁵⁸ Becoming is a crack on the level of sensibility that opens up the body as a virtual and intensive entity to the sensibility that conditions it, that is, a primary sensibility prior to the human, less and more than human from the point of view of unified objects and subjects, sensibility as the

Lawlor points to Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell, (New York: The Modern Library, 1944), 351-3.

⁶⁵⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 52.

⁶⁵⁵ Deleuze, 207.

⁶⁵⁶ Deleuze, 53.

⁶⁵⁷ Russell J. Duvernoy, "Deleuze, Whitehead, and the 'Beautiful Soul,'" *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* 13, no. 2 (May 2019): 163-85, 171.

⁶⁵⁸ Nathan Widder, manuscripts of upcoming book, courtesy of the writer, 284.

power of the flesh creating a zone of indiscernibility of the human and the animal as well as the cosmic.⁶⁵⁹

Following intensity's characteristic of immanent measurement that I analyzed in the second chapter, minor becomings express the non-denumerable aspect of multiplicities that is irreducible to and which always escapes external measurement and thus the capitalist axiomatics of reduction of all values to the denumerable measurement of profit. Minorities are nomadic; they escape the law of extensive Newtonian space calculated by cardinal numbers and instead operate through ordinal numbers, only taking their value in relation to each other rather than an external measure. Immanent measurement in which the number becomes a means of moving rather than measuring.⁶⁶⁰ Instead of distributing even homogenized quantities, the non-denumerable distributes heterogeneities in a dynamic space.⁶⁶¹ Going back to the distinction between two kinds of multiplicities that Deleuze employs to understand the relation between the virtual, the actual, and the intensive, while the axiomatics refers to a transcendent measurement homogenizing everything that it applies to and translating everything in terms of monetary value, minor becomings perform only nomadic, vectorial numbering and refer to a measurement that does not count.⁶⁶² That measurement produces and distributes reciprocally determined singularities and creates a plane of immanence of desire or a body without organs. The numbering number of minoritarian becomings constructs a plane of consistency without reference to a transcendent organizing center, external reference system, or grid. It forms what Deleuze and Guattari call a rhizome, a network of non-hierarchical connections across diverse elements.

Affect, emotions, and shame

In the discussions of what has been termed the affective turn in the humanities, one of the significant points of debate is the question of the relation and distinction between affect and emotions. While some thinkers following the Deleuzoguattarian genealogy of the concept of affect distinguish the latter from emotions, using the two interchangeably or as disentangled is also accepted. Given the prominence of the debate, some words are worth writing on the topic that will allow us to pass to the ethical problem of pain. It is true that Deleuze and Guattari clearly distinguish affect from feelings and emotions on several occasions in *A Thousand*

⁶⁵⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (London; New York: Continuum, 2004), 17.

⁶⁶⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 389.

⁶⁶¹ Deleuze and Guattari, 391.

⁶⁶² Deleuze and Guattari, 389.

Plateaus. They associate affects with what they term the nomadic paradigm, a type of self-organization of things and desire that is understood immanently, without reference to an external measurement, that is, in short, intensive and differential. According to them, while affects are impersonal and a-signifying, on the contrary, feelings are familiar and subjective.⁶⁶³ Moreover, affects correspond to the projectile power of nomadism, a power of “pure exteriority.” In contrast, feelings correspond to the subject’s interiority, as well as the State paradigm with its function of capturing and dominating by dividing up externally and objectively measurable segments.⁶⁶⁴ Feelings are “introceptive.”⁶⁶⁵ Therefore, they would correspond to the cult of interiority and interpretation where everything has to be neatly distributed within pre-existing cumbersome, unchanging symbolic meanings instead of producing, pushing to the unknown, following the internal (temporal) exteriority of intensity.

On the other hand, in *Anti-Oedipus*, the two philosophers refer to a primary “I feel” as an expression of pure intensity that precedes perception and thinking. It expresses a primary emotion at the point of coexistence of the forces of repulsion and attraction from which intensive states ensue. These forces refer to the positive zero point of intensity that subtends them and thus constitute repulsion or attraction in relation to the latter and not to each other. That is why -and that will become crucial for the question of ambivalence we examine soon- their coexistence does not eventually result in their dissolution in a neutral point but creates a series of intensive metastable states, which we subsequently understand as the unity of a subject. The passage from intensive states accompanying the process of becoming is indicated by an “I feel,” as in the example of Judge Schreber: “I feel like I am becoming a woman.”⁶⁶⁶ As they note, this intensive metastable *I feel* should not be understood as “an affective parallel of the *I think*”⁶⁶⁷ The unifying function of the latter could not reflect the productive force of the former. Feelings express transitions and liminal experiences of pure intensities.⁶⁶⁸ They are expressions of the schizophrenic or productive structure of desire that creates novelty through affirming the conjunction “or.” Furthermore, in *What is Philosophy?*, feeling is a mode of thinking.⁶⁶⁹

⁶⁶³ Deleuze and Guattari, 244-6, 233.

⁶⁶⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, 356.

⁶⁶⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, 400.

⁶⁶⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Hurley Robert, Seem Mark, and R. Lane Helen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 18.

⁶⁶⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 19.

⁶⁶⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, 84-6.

⁶⁶⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 25.

The distinction of affect and feeling-emotion seems to thus make sense in the context of Deleuze and Guattari's distaste for the psychoanalytic predilection for the whole united subject understood primarily as interiority and based on a sharp distinction with a transcendent other (autrui). Feelings occurring in the in-between space of two constituted subjectivities are already limited by the rigid boundaries of the self-identical subjects they connect. As explained earlier, intersubjectivity is an aftereffect of pre-individual affective processes. Therefore, the crucial criterion of the distinction between affect and feeling is whether it strengthens or productively dissolves the form of subjective unity. As they put it in *What is Philosophy?*, affect reverses the hierarchy of feeling and felt.⁶⁷⁰ In that case felt is an effect of the subject while feeling escapes it. The aim, thus, is to disentangle the liminal sensation affect seeks to convey from everyday habitual feelings. The current advancements of the research on emotions show the proliferation of discourse and work on emotions as non-subjectifying public phenomena arising from and potentially destabilizing existing power structures.⁶⁷¹ In light of the above, I see no reason to insist on that terminological distinction that worked in the context of Deleuze and Guattari's era but may not anymore in the same ways. The crucial distinction between subjectifying and pre-individual or de-subjectifying feelings is *difference*.

That being said, Deleuze does indeed refer to feelings and emotions in continuity with and address issues arising in the history of philosophy, designate an ethical theory, and comment on pieces of literature. One of the most interesting lines of commentary on Deleuze's engagement with emotions, as related to the practice of philosophy, is the one underlying the significance of *shame*. Deleuze contends that the shame of being a human is the essential motivation for intellectual endeavors.⁶⁷² Moreover, he and Guattari declare it as one of philosophy's most powerful motives.⁶⁷³ As O' Donnell argues, shame is, for Deleuze, the condition for a capacity to perceive the intolerable in the world, in majoritarian ways of thinking-feeling and in humanity and thus to position one's self differently. Thought, freed from being a supposed natural inclination of humans, instead is forced by violence and shame can be understood as such. In the same vein, in what follows, I will try to show how negative feelings, like sadness and pain, that function in the direction of dismantling subjectivity and

⁶⁷⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, 178.

⁶⁷¹ See, for example, Ngai and the research on envy as a political feeling arising from disparities in power dynamics. Sianne Ngai, *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁶⁷² Gilles Deleuze, "Literature and Life" in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael Greco (London, New York: Verso, 1998)1,6, 1.

⁶⁷³ Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 108.

opening it up to the singularities that constitute its transcendental conditions are favored and make sense in the Deleuzoguattarian philosophical universe.⁶⁷⁴

The affirmative function of pain

A lot has been written on Deleuze and Guattari's ethics of affirmation and many misconceptions that have followed their legacy since their first collaborative book's publication. Following their Spinozist genealogy, and the emphasis of the two philosophers on functionality, many scholars have associated the later work with an ethics of joy.⁶⁷⁵ It is true that Deleuze himself, insisting on one of the main concerns of *Difference and Repetition* to counter the reduction of the problematic to the negative, has argued in favor of "a cult of affirmation and joy."⁶⁷⁶ However, according to the current reading, there are clear indications throughout the vast Deleuzoguattarian oeuvre that such "cult of joy" does not exhaust or indicate a complete picture of their ethics. The current subchapter will expose some of the ways Deleuzoguattarian ethics affirms a concept of affect, according to which the affective variations of sadness and pain constitute indications of transformation and the eruption of difference through repetition.⁶⁷⁷

First, following the argument outlined in the two previous chapters, I would like to associate pain's significance in Deleuze and Guattari's work with the importance of the cut as a guarantor of radical novelty in both early Deleuze works and collaborative Deleuze and Guattari works. As already noted, death in Deleuze's work is what ensures the irruption of difference and the measurability of the variation of intensity, i.e., its dynamic divisibility is what ensures the connection and the disjunctive 'monism,' i.e., the immanence of Deleuzian ethics. Moreover, following his work on masochism, Deleuze associates the desire for one's

⁶⁷⁴ Aislinn O'Donnell, "Shame Is Already a Revolution: The Politics of Affect in the Thought of Gilles Deleuze," *Deleuze Studies* 11, no. 1 (February 2017): 1–24. Also Aline Wiame, "'It Had to Be a Philosopher': Deleuze on Heidegger and the Necessity of Shame in Philosophical Creation" (Capacious. Affect Inquiry/Making space, Millersville University's Ware Center, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 2018).

⁶⁷⁵ See for example Moritz Gansen "'Everywhere There are Sad Passions': Gilles Deleuze and the Unhappy Consciousness" in Ceciel Meiborg and Sjoerd van Tuinen, eds., *Deleuze and the Passions* (Place of publication not identified: Punctum Books, 2016), 21–40.

⁶⁷⁶ Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953–1974*, 144.

⁶⁷⁷ On the idea of the positivity of pain and the connection between thinking and grief in Deleuze's philosophy, see the short text of Leonard Lawlor, "Affection and becoming" in Ford, McCullagh, and Houle, *Minor Ethics*, 31–32. Additionally, Rosi Braidotti took up the reconceptualization of pain as affirmation through Deleuzian lenses in Rosi Braidotti, "Affirmation, Pain and Empowerment," *Asian Journal of Women's Studies* 14, no. 3 (January 2008): 7–36. Braidotti claims that to affirm pain as a positive element of transformation, we must de-link it from suffering to escape political conservatism. I argue that such categorical distinction is unfounded and can reinforce the illusion of subjective agency of a feeling subject who faces pain but escapes suffering. While this account might illustrate the psychoanalytic practice and its aim, it proposes pain as a necessary byproduct of transformation. Hence, it does not fully capture the creative aspect of pain as an intensifier.

own pain with constructing an alternative ‘law of the mother,’ defying and ridiculing the psychoanalytic paternal law and the sadistic power of reason over imagination. Finally, through their theory of becomings and the primarily schizophrenic nature of desire, Deleuze and Guattari affirm “deconstructive” accounts of human subjectivity, which one can associate affirmatively with what psychoanalysis calls primal anxiety. The European Pain Federation defines *pain* as “an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with, or resembling that associated with actual or potential tissue damage.”⁶⁷⁸ Pain is primarily an unpleasant sensation acting as, or perceived as acting as, an alarm warning against the infliction of damage and thus informing us of the presence of an internal or external threat. Disentangling it from its biological referent in threat we could describe pain is an excitation. According to Freud, the pleasure principle consists in a deterministic tendency of all tension to its resolution. Conversely, the transcendental principle of difference, the principle of an irresolvable, sustained and foundational tension, could be linked to the empirical sensation of pain.

The exclusionary disjunction of joy and pain is substituted in the work of the two philosophers for a more complex take on the ethical function of affectivity as a process of differentiation independent of actual emotional value. According to Deleuze, following Nietzsche, pain is excluded from the psychic economy and becomes a problem to ward ourselves against only after it becomes interiorized and rendered reactive.⁶⁷⁹ It is the assumption of the positivity of the subject’s unity that makes us understand the pain in the negative light we commonly do, and that assigns pain with its current position in societies, i.e., widely excluded, denied, and foreclosed, reserved for the privacy of the psychoanalytic bed or the psychotherapeutic relation. Capitalist societies rely centrally upon the foreclosure of pain; all the while, they constantly create structural reasons that sustain it. As considered in the previous chapter, in Deleuze and Guattari, what we commonly perceive as the interiority of the subject becomes external to the latter. Therefore, the subject dissolves into a set of contingent constructivist and machinic creative processes having inevitable repercussions for the centrality of sociopolitical structures to affective life. The structural inequalities and exploitative relations embedded in the capitalist axiomatics that seem increasingly inescapable guarantee a broadly distributed experience of pain due to failing to integrate people’s creative potentials and desires positively. When remaining unfelt or foreclosed to use psychoanalytic

⁶⁷⁸ “What is the definition of pain?” European Pain Federation, accessed May 24, 2023, <https://europeanpainfederation.eu/what-is-pain/>

⁶⁷⁹ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 129-30.

terminology, that structural pain ensures its own perpetuation in a kind of melancholic state of sociopolitical affectivity.

The revolutionary potential of pain is evident in the case of masochism, as it appears in early Deleuze's work. Unlike the sadist, who expels the ego onto its victims and identifies with an omnipotent sadistic superego, the masochist invests in the imagination of a maternal phallus that allows for a fantasized autonomous ego capable of experiencing pleasure through pain. The humor of the masochist's imagination laughs away the superego as a condition of pleasure.⁶⁸⁰ The masochist manages to mock the moral law of the forbidden sin by a parodic submission to it and, in such a way enjoying the pleasure the law was supposed to forbid. Humor, Deleuze contends in *Difference and Repetition*, is the art of "descents, of suspensions and falls"⁶⁸¹ and "the art of intensive quantities [...] [that] [...] bears witness to individuals as cases of solution."⁶⁸² Humor attests to a dissolution of the subject or the law to reveal the singularities that appear as captured in them.

We could associate the hypothesis of the positivity of pain with the positivity of violence and shock as the initiator of thought and that Deleuze associates with the aborted political promise of early cinema as well as the cruelty he associates with determination and difference.⁶⁸³ Throughout his works, Deleuze talks about the fundamental inequality that is intensity as the condition of everything that exists. Moreover, in his work on Bacon, written a decade after his collaborative works with Guattari, Deleuze associates a logic of sensation and the problem of intensity, present in various painters, with the affirmation of the primacy of descent. The *fall* becomes the function itself of sensation prior to or precisely during its unfolding in actual things and qualities. Such a function is not to be equated or confused with decadence, degradation, or suffering but is an active force that affirms sensation as a difference in levels.⁶⁸⁴ The fall denotes the affirmation of the difference in level contained in sensation. It

⁶⁸⁰ Gilles Deleuze and Leopold Sacher-Masoch, *Masochism* (New York: Cambridge, Mass: Zone Books; Distributed by the MIT Press, 1989), 126.

⁶⁸¹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 5. Following the transposition of intensity from depths to the surface in *Difference and Repetition* and *Logic of Sense*, respectively, in the latter, Deleuze instead claims humor is "the art of the surfaces, of nomad singularities and of the always displaced aleatory point" Deleuze, *Logic of sense*, 141. Again it goes beyond the scope of the current chapter to account for that distinction. What matters for the current thesis is humor as a path to intensive singularities, which applies in both works.

⁶⁸² Deleuze, 246.

⁶⁸³ Deleuze, 162. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 28. One has to note that Deleuze uses the term cruelty also to describe the sadistic sexualization of pure reason and the inflation of the superego by way of irony. However, irony and humor constitute the world of repetition as transgression and difference - irony as the within-the-law and humor as the beyond-the-law combine in the liberated time of the eternal return. Deleuze, 7.

⁶⁸⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (London; New York: Continuum, 2004), 80-1.

is difficult to be sure of the sense Deleuze gives in such an enigmatic combination of concepts, given that the fall in everyday language is almost always associated with an involuntary action of gravity as well as sin and suffering.

Nevertheless, in Deleuze's reconceptualization of the fall as a positive reality of the sensible, I find some indication or an example of how Deleuze could help us understand pain as a positive principle. The fall is not the diminution of one's distance to the ground but the intensification of one's relation to the ground when the power that one exerts on the other is irresistible. It is the passage of intensity to its limit. As in the example of the enantiomorphic bodies we explained in the second chapter (for example, left and right hand), high and low are not extensive conceptual determinations but intensive.⁶⁸⁵ Every sensibility is the affirmation of heterogeneity and difference in potential. Moreover, in the same subchapter of his book on Bacon, on the triptych, Deleuze stresses the rhythm of variation of Bacon's triptychs among different types of opposing forces (dilation and contraction, descent and ascent, augmentation, and diminution) in which an impassive point, a zero point in intensity acts as a kind of substratum. The zero point of intensity that we analyzed in the case of the third synthesis of death and the body without organs in *Anti-Oedipus*, is a constant in relation to which intensity arises and whose rises and falls are non-axiological. What matters is the point zero, or the intensifier, and some variation of intensity far from zero but in which the intensifier-zero is always implicated and affirmed. Sensation is thus the continuous passage of intensity from the zero point that conditions it. The reality of intensity is its constant fall towards its preconditions, coexisting with the appearance of stability, an active fall of the passage of intensity from its 'referent:' ungrounding.

To fall is to descend to one's genetic preconditions and to affirm the singularities captured in every individuated entity - in reference to which we only ever understand sensation. In contrast, conditioning happens the other way around, from the being of sensation to individuated entities. In the same vein, pain can connect one with the otherwise hidden preconditions of existence, that is, to the liveliness of the flesh when it tries to heal and protect itself in an imagined or actual wound. The ethical task would be to discern imagination from actual reality and allow pain to reveal to us these preconditions which constitute us, the ungrounded nature of life. In what Deleuze and Guattari thematize as transcendental empiricism's conditioning level, *the active is the fall*. Even an empirical rise is also a fall in

⁶⁸⁵ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 231.

sensation understood as intensity. An example of extensive movement might be clarifying. When a dance teacher instructs the training dancers to move their hands upwards with the quality of gravity, the instruction means to incarnate the force of gravity but in another direction than the downward direction it naturally takes. The aim is to acquire the maximum intensity that the instructed quality allows it to. That move of sensation as fall is also exemplified in the ancient concept of the *clinamen*, the constant divergence of atoms from a linear orbit that is the condition of the creation of difference and life. Sensation falls because sensation affirms the maximum force in its passage from the difference in level that constitutes it.

At the same time, the zero point of intensity has another side: the self-cancellation of intensity in its explication in actual bodies and qualities. As Deleuze puts it, intensity *seems* to rush “headlong into suicide” as it transforms into “qualified extended systems.”⁶⁸⁶ This appearance constitutes precisely a transcendental illusion. Intensity thus reaches its zero limit from two points of view. As Deleuze and Guattari note, bare repetition of matter and habitual ways of thinking and sensing threaten intensity on the one side, while chaos, absolute difference, and deterritorialization threaten it on the other. In other terms, and to the extent that habitual ways of organizing sensation and thinking bear the name opinion, intensity reaches its zero point in both opinion and chaos.⁶⁸⁷ One point of view thus would be to understand the self-cancellation of intensity with suspicion as for its philosophical merit, in line with the scientific understanding of intensity as ultimately self-reducing and tending towards identity. Deleuze, nevertheless, does not separate the process of intensity’s self-cancellation from a *contemporaneous* retention of intensity in itself, a self-implication that allows intensity to create new intensities at precisely the same time that it seems to cancel itself in its expression in actual bodies and qualities. What is the relation between implication and actualization, and how does one affect the other? What is the connection between the zero point of intensity in Death and the zero intensity of the actual? To respond to these questions, we must be clear that Death as the zero point of intensity in the Event coexists at every moment with the actual time that it conditions, and thus the significance of this transcendental moment, this transcendental zero limit, necessarily precedes and overpowers in meaning the negative meaning of the actual empirical zero. The actual empirical zero as adherence or tendency to stabilization is preceded and thus determined by zero as a transformative limit. It is the Event that wills amidst states of

⁶⁸⁶ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 224.

⁶⁸⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* 201-3. See also D. J. S. Cross, *Deleuze and the Problem of Affect*, (Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 104-43.

affairs, the passion that precedes repetition, a desire for repetition that is difference itself. The actual zero involves inside it the transcendental transformative zero as its *n*th power and as the condition of the passage from one state to another. The separability of the empirical moment is only due to the fact of time in its primal a priori or noumenal form being Aion, a multiplicity of temporalities coexisting all at once in mad becoming, a coexisting plane with mad loopholes or black holes connecting across eternal pasts and futurities. Tending towards the actual zero point is a bump spurring constant movement in new directions according to the ever-regenerated movement of difference. The actual does not resemble the intensive difference and virtual singularities that condition it, but because the two are one and the same multiplicity, one and the same plane of both/and, one and the same difference.

Pain and sadness, like humor, only show a direction of return towards the pre-requisite for transformation intensity point zero. It is, as in the case of masochism, a way to construct a body without organs that is a plane of consistency of desire in its full positivity.⁶⁸⁸ It is a way to free desire from subjectivity and to transform “extension into pure intensity.”⁶⁸⁹ In this sense, I take the body without organs as a set of rhythms that free desire from submission to the transcendent principle of lack and of which pleasure as a principle is only an expression. Instead of being negative with respect to a power that it loses, it is a return to point zero, which constitutes the prerequisite for transformation. When one’s power is diminished, there is nothing negative about it; this body is only put closer to the point of transformation, that is, the point zero of its power. Pain brings us closer to transformation, as is sometimes held in popular wisdom. And from this point of view, Deleuze and his metaphysics of difference prioritizing transformation over stasis can only be positive. That cannot result in ethics of sadness or bad conscience in Nietzschean terms since the sadness, thereby understood, as proposed by the priest, is an end in itself, a perpetual state of repression, and does not show or direct itself towards something else. Unlike that, pain’s positivity in Deleuze is not neutral but a dynamic state that pushes toward its own transformation. It thus urges towards something else than itself or to itself as difference. Because there is no foundational lack in Deleuze, transformation is the only option possible at the zero point of intensity. Zero intensity is a principle of production.⁶⁹⁰ The diminution of power, or better, the constitutive relation of power to its zero point, is not negative because it does not indicate the lack of something, because there is no

⁶⁸⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 152.

⁶⁸⁹ Branka Arsić, “6. The Rhythm of Pain: Freud, Deleuze, Derrida,” in *Derrida, Deleuze, Psychoanalysis*, ed. Gabriele Schwab (Columbia University Press, 2007), 142–70, 158.

⁶⁹⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, 164.

lack except constructed. Spinoza does not understand the diminution of power as tending towards a lack either—the exclusion of the negative starts precisely with Spinoza’s conception of radical immanence. However, Spinoza does not yet have a concept of transformation and instead prioritizes eternity, an ultimately unchanging substance, thus the decrease of power of substance looks like a perishing that defies his principle of the *conatus*, the striving of every entity to persevere, rather than a metamorphosis of it.

Instead, tending towards the zero point of intensity in the chain of becomings Deleuze and Guattari conceive of in *A Thousand Plateaus* indicates a process of a transformative connection opening up the static, unchanging coagulated structures of subjectivity and humanity to new forces renewing them and thus reinvigorating them giving them new life. Deleuze and Guattari face the problem of domination that, unlike in Spinoza’s time, where it is mainly concentrated around the transcendence of God, in their time, it is primarily located in the enclosed structure of subjectivity, in the coagulated form of a structure operating in an enclosed manner constituting a transcendence in respect to its environment. Unlike that, contemporary science theorists have shown static or reversible conceptions of time depend on enclosed systems.⁶⁹¹ To endorse dynamic time we must overcome the enclosed structure of the subject. The center of power is transposed from God to the human, and as Spinoza opens up God and instates in him the multitude of his (*sic*) creations, in the same way, Deleuze and Guattari open up the human to the pre-individual spectrum of life from which it arises, and which it envelops. The human envelops its surrounding by way of its expanded knowledge of that surrounding as well as its acts of intervening in it and transforming it. At the same time the human itself is enveloped in its environment due to its partiality in the vastness of the cosmic system. Therefore, to open up the human is to affirm its cross-fertilization and its porous limit with this environment. In this context, the concept of the minor and minority is only historically and singularly defined, specific to the actual historical relation of the human to its environment, and the coagulated Western cultural conviction of superiority, or else majority of the human’s power in relation to its environment. It is because the human deems itself superior or more potent than other species that the process of opening up to this environment, of becoming along with that environment, merits the name becoming-minor. Of course, one could claim the minor itself favors a ‘majoritarian’ approach to humanity. This point has indeed been

⁶⁹¹ Dorothea Olkowski, *Postmodern Philosophy and the Scientific Turn* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 59.

made that this concept refers to and thus reinforces the model it seeks to open up.⁶⁹² Nevertheless, going beyond the human is our time's crucial historical and philosophical struggle, as going beyond God and its transcendence was the crucial historical, philosophical 'problem' for Spinoza. Opening up the system in Deleuze and Guattari necessarily affirms diminutions of power as a means of opening up the 'transcendent' enclosed system that humanity constitutes with respect to its environment.

In a way, the ethics of becoming-minor is a chance to consider the disjunctive continuity of what is commonsensically called affirmative, creative, and destructive. As exposed clearly in Deleuze's work on Bacon, artistic creativity consists of a process of dismantling the preconceptions and the clichés that rise to the surface of imagination at the start of the creative process and that attest to the commonsense level of habit expressed by the assumption of a self-identical world. The same applies to philosophy and its duty to destroy doxa.⁶⁹³ "The use of philosophy is to sadden." Its role is to demystify, harm, and denounce baseness.⁶⁹⁴ Creativity and destruction can no longer be opposed in the metaphysics of disjunctive synthesis and the Event, where precisely the act of creation and connection is conditioned by keeping apart, creating a rift in time between the past and the future and connecting the two through a positive distance. Following the terminology of *A Thousand Plateaus*, creation is the opening up of assemblages to the cosmic forces that deterritorialize them and creating consistency among clearly distinguishable elements by refraining from homogenizing them, inter rhythmicity.⁶⁹⁵ One would yet have to go further. Becoming-minor is more than just opening up the coagulated structure of the human or the subject to the constitutive singularities that exceed it; it is a passion directed towards these singularities; it is the practice of affirming that creative desire resides exactly in these singularities which subsequently come to take the form of the law. Before persons and individuals, singularities "possess a mobile immanent principle of auto unification through a nomadic distribution radically different from fixed and sedentary distributions [...] of consciousness." We term minor positions nomadic singularities that transcend "the synthesis of the person"⁶⁵ and are distributed in variable relations to each other without the need for a unifying central point. Desire is what holds these singularities together.

⁶⁹² Cross, *Deleuze and the Problem of Affect*, 127.

⁶⁹³ Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*

⁶⁹⁴ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 106.

⁶⁹⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 329.

Dynamism versus ambivalence. The impassibility of the event

As already mentioned, a significant book-length work explicitly devoted to analyzing Deleuze's concept of affect is that of D. J. S. Cross, whose main argument revolves around the assertion of a fundamental and prior element of philosophical ambivalence prior to all of Deleuze's concepts and to the movement and genesis of intensity and difference that the philosopher attempts to capture. Cross claims that before these and conditioning them, there is an element of philosophical ambivalence distinct from psychoanalytic psychic ambivalence. This ambivalence concerns a simultaneous movement of repulsion and attraction of the philosopher from sensibility.⁶⁹⁶ While there is merit in Cross's work, such an argument seems to involve a fundamental misconception or misinterpretation of Deleuze's metaphysics on the point of affect, which I will attempt to deconstruct.

Deleuze and Guattari indeed describe affect and intensity as a dual movement of disjunctive synthesis between heterogeneous elements: a resonance across disparate series in early Deleuze and a disjunctive synthesis of divisibility and the indivisible in *Anti-Oedipus*.⁶⁹⁷ In other words, the fundamental genetic moment of sensibility, the being of the sensible, consists in a coexistence or an inclusive disjunction of impossibles that defies classic logic and produces novelty and difference through explicating or developing an initial fundamental tension. Beyond and before actual bodies that seem to abide by the laws of logic asserting that something can be either A or not-A, there is a paradoxical world that conditions this actuality. A coexistence of impossibles, the coexistence of A and not-A that conditions all of Deleuzian and Deleuzoguattarian metaphysics, is what Cross comes to interpret as a fundamental ambivalence. There are indeed passages that support this thesis in Deleuze, when the latter talks about a fundamental suspension, a certain retard in the initial process of individuation or effectuation, that is, the synchronic passage from intensity to its explication in actual entities or when he talks about a hesitation of bodies parallel to thought's disjunctive syllogism.⁶⁹⁸ However, interpreting that moment of suspension as essential and distinct from the movement that it necessarily spurs operates on the presupposition of the flattened-out heterogeneity of the coexistence of A and not-A at an imperceptibly small single moment.

⁶⁹⁶ J. S. Cross, *Deleuze and the Problem of Affect*, 8.

⁶⁹⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 17.

⁶⁹⁸ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 292. To this, one can add the positive value Deleuze attributes to suspension in the structure of desire produced in masochism. Deleuze and Sacher-Masoch, *Masochism*, 60, 70-5. The power of waiting and suspension in the case of the masochist suspends the domination of the pleasure principle as a deterministic rule of resolution of tension and explication of difference in stability. It also affirms the power of imagination -through fantasy- over reason and the law.

Cross thus supposes the simultaneous existence of two distinct states as explained by a greater force and impetus that creates this simultaneity and the passage from one to the other.

Following this impetus or willpower of intensity, impossibles coexist and pass from one to the other to create sensibility, novelty, and extended bodies. Impossibles do not coexist in a realm of problematic virtual ideas and their singularities as some Platonic eternal ideal world. On the contrary, they depend on the differentiating power of intensity. Since virtuality is not prior to intensity, since ideas and problems are not prior to the power that effectuates them, the coexistence of impossibles is not conceivable without the power of intensity and the dynamism that gives rise to it. Abstracting power and dynamism from the existence of impossibles is the only way to interpret the coexistence of impossibles as ambivalence and immobility. Nevertheless, such reading overlooks the precondition of differentiating dynamism for anything to arise and supposes a flattened-out action of disparity as opposites that would cancel each other out. Opposites, though, do not explain Deleuzian pre-empirical differences, and pre-individual singularities and immobility cannot justify the irruption of intensive dynamism as the precondition of all reality. Deleuze and Guattari claim that the intensities ensuing from the coexistence of attraction and repulsion in the synthesis of intensive quantities cannot be interpreted as being in an opposition that would eventually dissolve in a neutral point. Intensities ensuing from attraction and repulsion do not oppose each other but are positive in relation to the body without organs or intensity's zero point that both attracts and repels.⁶⁹⁹

To understand the problem in its entire length, one would have to additionally address the significance of the concept of impassibility that Deleuze attributes to the Event and Deleuze and Guattari attribute to the body without organs.⁷⁰⁰ How can this point of indifference regarding the distinction between actions and passions give birth to the latter? How do states of affairs arise from and relate to the Event that gives rise to them? Impassibility is the condition for the transformability and the openness of sense. In the same vein, nonsense is the condition that guarantees that sense is a genuine novel creation. That it arises as if out of nowhere is the condition that sense, intensity, and affect can be a pure Event, it can be radically novel and unforeseen. Impassibility or the unproductive are the effects of a rupture that cuts across two moments in time, two paradigms of history, two realities, the causal chain between which has

⁶⁹⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, 18-9.

⁷⁰⁰ Deleuze, 65, 98, 103.

been fractured. The Event cuts across and keeps apart so that in this crack, new states of affairs and new habitual affects can occur in the same way that ideas swarm in the fracture of the “I.”⁷⁰¹

Moreover, to go deeper into the problem, one would have to analyze the moment of the Event in detail. The Event has a complex relation to time. The paradoxical moment of pure becoming, when two seemingly impossible attributes are affirmed, both evades the present and projects the singularities of the Event at the same time into past and future in a way that past and future are produced together and thus cannot be separated.⁷⁰² There is an irrelevance of the present at that moment, and the instances (past and future) into which the Event divides time are simultaneous. The Event is a disjunctive machine. The moment is divided into past and future which become different simultaneously. The moment of the Event or affect is a moment “constantly decomposed into elongated pasts and futures.”⁷⁰³ Escaping the present could also be understood as undoing it,⁷⁰⁴ dissolving the present into this eternal division and bifurcation. Like the dark precursor of *Difference and Repetition* which connects the heterogeneous series of intensity, and not unlike the zero point of intensity, the paradoxical instant of becoming has the characteristic of missing from its place.⁷⁰⁵ There is a parallel between these three expressions of the transcendently empirical moment of becoming: the zero point of intensity, the body without organs, and the paradoxical moment of the Event. That moment cannot be understood as an infinitely small stretch of sequential time, which would confine the Event to the chronological time of states of affairs or Chronos. The moment of the Event belongs instead to Aeon and has to be understood as a cut in time in which past and future are established vertically, and not sequentially, as apart in one and the same move. What guarantees that the difference between past and future cannot be flattened out in immobile ambivalence or suspension is that past and future coexist but on different levels and across an irreducible positive distance. The moment of their distribution evokes the unchanging form of time; it does establish the possibility that everything constantly changes, yet as the

⁷⁰¹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 169.

⁷⁰² Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 171.

⁷⁰³ Deleuze, 64-5.

⁷⁰⁴ James Williams, *Gilles Deleuze's Philosophy of Time: A Critical Introduction and Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 140.

⁷⁰⁵ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 171.

condition of that possibility, it does not change itself.⁷⁰⁶ The body without organs refers to the death event, or the intensifier is an immobile motor.⁷⁰⁷

The impassibility of that moment has to be understood not as immobility but as the fact of mobility and change itself, much as time is the unchanging form of everything that changes. Thus, Deleuze has no ambivalence towards sensibility, only an explanation of what it is for sensibility to be primarily dynamic before it becomes actual and thus seemingly self-identical. Impassibility and the genetic moment are not in a relation of exclusive disjunction, but instead, they coexist as non-sense and sense in what Deleuze calls the pure unformed, beyond the opposition of form and the formless.⁷⁰⁸ The Event consists of the coexistence of impassibility and the genetic moment as the conjunction of two different causalities: the causality of bodies and the quasi-causality of other events.⁷⁰⁹ That impassibility coexists with the genetic moment as the guarantee of pure difference. It is the guarantee of the possibility of pure novelty. The moment of grasping the impassibility of the Event is when philosophy comes closer to making the unthinkable be thought; the abyss speak, and nonsense generate sense.

3. Expression and affect

Explication, implication, complication

The three syntheses and their early and later configurations correspond to the triadic system of implication, explication, and complication Deleuze develops in his long study of Spinoza *Expressionism in Philosophy*. As already referred to in the second chapter of this thesis, implication, explication, and complication are the three elements of the expressive relation of substance, attributes, and modes in Deleuze's interpretation of Spinozian metaphysics.⁷¹⁰ The eternal and absolute indivisible essence of substance, or else God or else Nature, implicates or envelops (or else involves in a pre-genetic state) the variable finite extensive element of the modes. At the same time, the latter explicates or develops the former. Moreover, substance complicates its essence and modes through its qualities in the attributes. The attributes -of which thought and extension are known to us- are infinite qualities that are affected by the infinite quantities of their corresponding variable modes (the attribute of

⁷⁰⁶ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 24. Gilles Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of the Faculties* (London: Athlone Press, 1984), vii.

⁷⁰⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 327.

⁷⁰⁸ Deleuze, 109.

⁷⁰⁹ Deleuze, 105.

⁷¹⁰ Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, 16.

thought is affected by the infinite ideas of modes, and the attribute of extension by the infinite modes insofar as they are extensive) and thus connect the absolute element of substance with the relative modes. By bringing the initial division of eternal substance and finite modes in Spinoza into a more intimate connection, Deleuze creates a single process consisting of three contemporaneous movements, the three moments of the relation of expression. Explication or the expressing element denotes a process of unfolding. Implication describes involvement or involution. And complication is a process of binding the two together. Much as the conjunctive synthesis of *Anti-Oedipus*, complication or expression connects absoluteness with relativity, the infinite with finitude, repulsion of segmentation, or the body without organs, to the segmentation of the modes. Intensity, power, or difference is that complicating movement bringing together the action of enveloping or implicating the variable, in the continuous and indivisible, and developing or explicating the absolute and indivisible in the variable.

That affect is a variation of intensity means that affect is intensity itself to the extent that intensity is by definition and in its one movement variable. Therefore, affect is a process constituted by that contemporaneous triadic movement of expression in which difference simultaneously envelops-implicates the absolute, develops-explicates the relative, and complicates the two by affirming their relation. As an expression, affect becomes bifurcated in ideas and bodily extension, and it expresses both, while being expressive of itself and only of itself. A triple movement allows us to explore things not as they appear, but as they unfold since unfolding and involving (folding in) its genetic process is the ultimate rule of reality.⁷¹¹ *Affect is nothing but time*, but time going in three directions at once: once to the past, the genetic or enveloping-implicating; once to the present developing-explicating; and once to the future, the creating or the complicating.

In other words, affect, following intensity, involves the contemporaneity of past and future, holding the two together through a caesura or a cut that constitutes the unchanging form of time.⁷¹² In this sense, the affect arising from the Event as a radical transformation that conditions the way reality unfolds, contains in it and organizes together the passive syntheses of habit and memory. In terms of human psychology, one could liken the Event to the psychoanalytic trauma that conditions its repetition in neurotic habit and its foreclosure in

⁷¹¹ Unlike that, Deleuze claims that Hume was never interested in the question of genesis neither of reality, relations, or of the subject. Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, 108.

⁷¹² Joe Hughes, *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: A Reader's Guide* (London; New York: Continuum, 2009), 159.

memory and its consciousness. The difference with psychoanalytic trauma is that the person does not need to seek a missing unity or better wholeness that is fantasized as existing after integrating the disavowed Oedipal desire in the ego to be cured.⁷¹³ The Event is always already the primary occurrence of a differentiation that conditions unity instead of being conditioned by it. The primary form of the Event, that is, death, ensures all living creatures are quanta of intensity in the variable expression of life. The Event is the resonance across proliferating series of differences, bringing all living beings into resonance. Thus, affect is the continuous differentiation across molecular particles and part objects whose one expression is habitual exchanges and interactions and the other is amorous connections with the past.

Affect - Expression versus Meaning - Language

Expression is central in early Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari's collaborative work.⁷¹⁴ It is a concept that allows them to connect the different regimes or types of organization constituting the real. Expression is an element of all reality on all levels of its existence or, better, becoming. It denotes such reality as a multitude of processes of enveloping (implicating) and developing (explicating). As such, expression pertains to the level of molecules as much as that of humans. It denotes a double articulation of codes and territorialities and concomitant decoding, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization processes. Codes and territories are the terms with which Deleuze and Guattari replace the traditionally juxtaposed immaterial ideas or forms on the one hand, and spatial extension, degrees, or substances on the other, to convey interlaced tendencies of a single primal differential element that subtends them both. Expression denotes the passage from the non-denumerable genetic and intensive plane of immanence to the divisible actual realm of bodies and qualities. What is crucial for that process is the degrees of difference between a set and its elements, the

⁷¹³ The psychoanalytic subject is thought to be cured once it reaches the disavowed unconscious Oedipal desire and, in that way, it incorporates it in consciousness and the ego, which ceases to become fractured by unknown and uncontrollable instincts but involves and thus controls them. That incorporation and control convey unity to the ego. See Lyat Friedman "Anti-Oedipus: The Work of Resistance" in Leen De Bolle, ed., *Deleuze and Psychoanalysis: Philosophical Essays on Deleuze's Debate with Psychoanalysis*, Figures of the Unconsciousness 9 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), 83-102, 95. Friedman references Lacan's seminar. Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book I: Freud's Papers on Technique 1953-1954 / Translated with Notes by John Forrester*, trans. John Forrester, (New York London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991), 14.

⁷¹⁴ By their collaborative work we mean specifically their last work *What is Philosophy?* as well as *A Thousand Plateaus*, the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* where they implicate content and expression as variable phenomena of internalization and externalization without fixed function. Unlike that, their first work, *Anti-Oedipus*, refers to expression in quotation marks as an idealist concept separated from a process of production. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 6, 24. This distinction pertains to the broader topic of the varying role of ideas and the symbolic realm in the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* which exceeds the scope of the current dissertation.

connection between the one and the other, the “and.”⁷¹⁵ Expression, i.e., the function of affect is the process of unfolding disjunctive tensions to actual coexisting entities. Heterogeneities are expressions inseparable from their expressing actualities and involving expressed ideas.

Expression is a concept that allows Deleuze and Guattari a way out of the representational model by which words represent things and consciousness represents matter and offers a way towards an immanent understanding of reality as an articulation of independent and reciprocally presupposed elements: content and expression. Expression and content are disjunctively synthesized and exist in different relations in different organizations or realms of reality, such as inorganic life, organic life, and symbolic life. Yet, they always denote a relative transposition in relation to one another that differentiates the arbitrary one-to-one correspondence of the signifier and the signified. Language, with its corresponding signifier-signified dyad, is only one case of a broader phenomenon or process of expression, despite the illusion of primacy or dominance that it creates in relation to other expressive means such as the variety of shapes of organic formations (e.g., crystals) and of the genetic codes that generate them.⁷¹⁶ Expression is tied to content, each continuously doubling the other as a way to proliferate becoming and intensities. As follows from the presupposition of the current thesis that affect is intensity’s variation, I thus take affect as a phenomenon of double articulation that has an expressive power and simultaneously a power to create content and constantly complicate the two. Expression is a defining characteristic or characteristic function of affect. Affect is always expressive. Nevertheless, its expressive function makes the question, “What does affect express?” irrelevant. Content is itself or presents itself as forms of expression in a way that makes content both enveloped in expression and developing expression. Affect is a formation of power and, simultaneously, a sign that can be either signifying or a-signifying.⁷¹⁷ Affect expresses itself as intensity or difference.

The relation between affect and sense has created long debates in the context of the academic discussion around what has been termed the “affective turn” in the humanities. In these discussions, Deleuzian scholar and translator Brian Massumi’s idea that affect holds a relative autonomy from language has spurred intense criticism, particularly by feminist

⁷¹⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, 470.

⁷¹⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, Minn.: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2007), 70.

⁷¹⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, 68.

philosophers and cultural theorists.⁷¹⁸ While there is no space here to recreate the debate in detail, in short, many of these theorists detected in such an argument a romanticized view of the non-discursive that, through its denial or bypassing, merely perpetuates entrenched symbolic meanings of bodies. Such discussions are essential at the cultural critique level and influence which concepts will be used and, thus, which realities theoretical endeavors can detect and create. Nevertheless, it is essential to note that the above discussion takes place at a level presupposing already constituted bodies and words. In contrast, Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of affect directly and explicitly refers to the genetic-intensive limit, the burning center of bodies, and the common tangential horizon of that center with the limit and genetic process of thought and language. Despite its inextricable relation to language, thinking is distinct from the latter and constitutes its genetic limit. Thinking, to put it simply, does not succumb to the laws of exclusive disjunction or non-contradiction found in the classic logic to which language seems by definition confined, as a means of inter-subjective intelligibility that aspires to the ideal of universal translatability. Exclusive disjunction is the effect of language in its functional (not genetic) use to the extent that every code takes form through a fundamental distinction between zeros and ones, mutually excluding each other for representational meaning to occur. As Deleuze puts it, logical contradiction applies to concepts, but events are of a different nature.⁷¹⁹ Nevertheless, concepts are simultaneous with events in their common emergence from ungrounded difference. Concepts emerge from the infinite speed of thought, which in its turn occurs in the unconscious. Moreover, unlike Lacan's famous idea, the unconscious is not structured as a language. Deleuze and Guattari invite us to "tear the unconscious away from significance and interpretation in order to make it a veritable production" even if the danger befalling us when we attempt this demanding task is illusion and psychic collapse, and even if some amount of signification is necessary in order to keep going.⁷²⁰

If affect is prior to language, it is because it exists solely at the point or genetic process in which, as Deleuze puts it, language is made to stutter and tremble, in which language is born in reference to the future.⁷²¹ It is because affect is an Event that eternally differentiates and

⁷¹⁸ See, for example, Linda M. G. Zerilli, "The Turn to Affect and the Problem of Judgment," *New Literary History* 46, no. 2 (2015): 261–86. and Ruth Leys, "The Turn to Affect: A Critique," *Critical Inquiry* 37, no. 3 (March 2011): 434–72.

⁷¹⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Constantin V Boundas, Mark Lester, and Charles J Stivale (London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 176.

⁷²⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 160.

⁷²¹ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 171.

creates meaning. To the extent that there is no reason to separate language from that proper differentiating limit, it is inaccurate to say that affect is prior to language. One would have to clearly denote that affect is prior to language *as confined in the exclusive disjunction* of the separation between yes and no, zero and one, and with which language has been associated in much of the analytic tradition.⁷²² Confining language to that definition would in itself be a theoretical decision with political consequences regarding the transformability of the symbolic realm of everyday meaning and the possibility or impossibility of proliferating the widely still dualistic signification of bodies (either male or female, adult or child, able-bodied or disabled, heterosexual or homosexual, colored or white and so on) and to open up to the multiplicity of bodily and symbolic significations and experiences lying outside the dualism or exclusive disjunction. What affect does in relation to language is precisely what the Event does: it pushes an internal transformation of language in which *verbs* swipe away their dependence from their supposed starting point in names and adjectives to become themselves starting points in order to express the paradox of pure becoming.⁷²³ However, is not that function of language able to conceive of names and identities as mere aftereffects and provisional captures of becoming that the critical theorists above advocating for the inextricability of affect and language envision? Moreover, affect exceeds language to the extent that language is the result of a collective enunciation rather than an act of individual freedom and creativity. The form of the “I” that it is based on is the result of an illusion.⁷²⁴

As already analyzed in the previous chapter, ideas are proper limits of sensibility itself in a way that precludes the possibility of talking about their priority over sensibility. A limit does not appear in linear temporality but coexists in conjunction with the sensible reality in which it is created and which, in turn, it co-creates. Genetic conditions of actual things are not prior to them temporally, nor are they more significant metaphysically. Like Spinoza’s immanent causality, they are not larger than what they condition. They are simply another aspect or perspective of what they condition. Moreover, there is reason to believe that the subtler role of ideas is substituted, in the collaborative work of Deleuze and Guattari, for the

⁷²² David Bourget and David J. Chalmers, “What Do Philosophers Believe?,” *Philosophical Studies* 170, no. 3 (September 2014): 465–500. In a long survey conducted among key professional philosophers of the analytic tradition, Chalmers and Bourget showed that most analytically trained philosophers rely upon classical logic, and thus to the rule of the excluded middle, despite analytic tradition’s supposed progression and engagement with non-classical logics.

⁷²³ Deleuze, 3.

⁷²⁴ Gregg Lambert, “Expression,” Chapter. In Charles J. Stivale (ed.), *Gilles Deleuze: Key Concepts*, (Acumen Publishing, 2011) 33–43.

role and performative function of names as connected to the process of becoming, names that denote the very idea of pre-individual singularities which constitute the idea of the self in *Difference and Repetition*. Names designate not subjects but something of the order of the Event or becoming.⁷²⁵ Names such as woman, child, animal, and molecule similarly constitute the pre-individual singularities or genetic conditions of the implicitly pre-supposed universal subject of philosophy, the White Man. The role of these names in the Deleuzoguattarian work is performative, creating an affective reaction to the reader and incarnating the inextricable entanglement of ideas and pre-individual power, of words and dynamism, in short, incarnating intensity. As Deleuze notes on the role of proper names in Nietzsche, such names are not simply words but refer to an ever-transposable exterior in relation to which they acquire their meaning.⁷²⁶ Unlike the polarized debates around the affective turn in the humanities referred to above, in which intentionality and non-cognitive affectivity, language, and power are contrasted, proper names are examples of conceptualizing what in contemporary theory appears as the compound notion of thinking-feeling, and they more accurately correspond to Deleuze's metaphysical element of intensity.⁷²⁷

Affect is the internal limit of expression and that to which a theory of expression would have to give some account in order to be productive. This scheme brings to mind empirical sensibility being the ultimate criterion of the use of reason in Kant. The difference is that, unlike in Kant – according to whom ideas are external to empirical sensibility and thus an unknowable limit – in Deleuze, they are internally external. Affect and emotions are not external to language and expression but are instead their self-differentiating internal kernel, their perpetually differentiating center. Affect is not of a different kind to thought, nor is it a difference of degree. Instead, it is both of these. What does it mean that thinking is accountable to affect? It means that it needs to be directed by affect's power and necessity, its direction towards differentiation, the direction of liberating life from the yoke of identity, the direction of the most intimate passion as opposed to the supposedly impartial power of common sense and classic logic. Thought has to be liberated from the yoke of eternally self-identical and supposedly benevolent universal reason to become pure force, that is, pure difference.

⁷²⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 264.

⁷²⁶ Gilles Deleuze, "Nomad Thought" in David B. Allison, ed., *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation*, A Delta Original (New York: Dell Pub. Co, 1977), 142-9.

⁷²⁷ See for example Gisli Vogler, "Bridging the Gap between Affect and Reason: On Thinking-Feeling in Politics," *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory* 22, no. 3 (September 2, 2021): 259–76. Moreover William Connolly refers to thinking-feeling in William E. Connolly, *Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed*, Theory out of Bounds, v. 23 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

Force is the ultimate criterion evaluating an idea or a thought. Still, it is always an affective or intensive power, that is, a power of differentiation, of producing novelty, of creating, of ramifying, and not of augmenting a pre-existing power or a set relation of motion and rest among parts, a characteristic relation that assumes more parts under the same ratio of motion and rest, to use Spinozian language. A differentiating power is the power of any entity or system to change its characteristic relation, even if such a change is not perceptible with the common-sense harmonious function of the senses. Such power is the defining characteristic of any sense-making entity or body -in the broadest sense of the term (an idea being a body of thought)- and it is always in relation to an outside that such power is determined. An idea is judged by the external forces that it can mobilize. Following Deleuze's account of nomadic thought in Nietzsche,⁷²⁸ and the relation of nomadism as a non-measurable intensive force that is a force made up of affects, it becomes clear that affect for him is the internally external determining factor of thinking, without being distinct from the latter. Affect determines the internally external power of thinking to produce difference, to cut up time in incommensurable halves, to occupy space without counting it, to divide and transform, transform by dividing and by mobilizing the power of the paradox or coexistence of impossibles at an imperceptibly short moment. Thinking acquires its value from its genetic limit in this paradoxical differentiating power that is affect.

4. Affect and the face

After exposing the inextricable link between affect and language, their common genesis from the ungrounded, and the way the disjunction between content and expression substitutes for the signifier-signified dyad, I will finally proceed to analyze the face as a privileged location of affect's expression and its function for signification and subjectification. It is by dismantling the face that we can reach the transformative power of affect in its pure form, that is, difference. If, as already analyzed, Deleuzian affect concerns primarily a non-human sensibility populating the plane of immanence, why is the face, seemingly a human element par excellence, of relevance in the current thesis? The face as the exemplary locus of the production of subjectivity but also, as will become apparent, signification, is a privileged node in which one can trace and therefore dismantle the empirical common-sensical entanglement of affect and the human, the capture of affective capacities by the notion and what is imagined as the possible experience of humanity. As a locus of the structuring of signification prior to language, the

⁷²⁸ Gilles Deleuze, "Nomad Thought."

face, as analyzed by the two philosophers, opens the horizon of signification to the broader function of expression that concerns the cosmic scale, of which language is only one among other regimes. The function of expression attests instead to the existence of a-signifying signs⁷²⁹ to which philosophy has to turn our attention. Furthermore, prior to its possibility of dismantling human sensibility, the face holds a privileged significance in the problem of self and other, which has concerned ethics since its beginning. Thus, we can dismantle the representational separation of self-versus-transcendent-other, subject versus object by dismantling the face. The questions that will work in the background of the remaining part of this chapter will be “How does a non-human sensibility work?”, “How does the face form and express human sensibility from nonhuman conditions?”, “How can we disentangle the face as expressing, from affect as expressed to reach affect’s inhumanity,” “What does it mean to think of suffering and joy beyond the human?”

The face as territorialization - deterritorialization

Faciality, according to Deleuze and Guattari, holds a significant role in the Western system of thinking and sensibility. Particularly, it constitutes what they call an abstract machine that unites two interrelated functions that, in concert, support the pillars of Western philosophical thought: signification and subjectification. Both functions are performed by the face, which is analyzed by the two philosophers as abstractly as possible as a performance that takes place every time we have a white wall-black hole system, even if that takes place outside of an actual face. The black hole denotes the center of indetermination of human consciousness, while the white wall denotes the surface necessary for every signification to be recorded. The two work together as complementary functions that strengthen each other, while the face is the node on which the two meet and rely for producing the binary upon which they depend and to which the face is prior. The face is a powerful mechanism that precedes and organizes our preceptive, affective, and thinking capacities, extends itself beyond intersubjectivity, and structures the whole of reality. The faciality machine expands itself in such a way that it acquires a correlation in the landscape. Landscape and face act together, the one resonating with the other. A landscape is involved in each familiar face, but also a landscape is defined by the loved or dreamed-of face, a correlation that becomes more apparent in painting and film.⁷³⁰

⁷²⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 68.

⁷³⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, 173.

The face's primary function is binarization; it produces essential subjective distinctions such as man or woman, white or black, adult or child, upon which it then uses as a selective mechanism to choose one's proximity to the prototype of the White Man exemplified in the face of Jesus Christ.⁷³¹ The binarization works incessantly and reproduces itself so that those not falling under the given binary categories are classified in the two sides of the dichotomy as passing or not passing the faciality "test." The binarization produced by the face is then reproduced in language through signification, with the former not resembling but subtending the binarization of language.⁷³² Language, in turn, replaces the polyvocal primitive semiotics in which the head was not yet deterritorialized by the face. Instead of supposing a pre-existent subject, the face is, on the contrary, what is presupposed in it, choosing its subject instead of being chosen by it. The face is a veritable politics⁷³³ measuring the degrees of difference of each face from the White Man and providing a stable root for power mechanisms such as racism. The two elements of the face, the black hole, and the white wall, assume different forms yet retain their power of organizing signification and subjectivation and defining the structure of meaning, justifying the function of the face as a power structure.

However, at the same time, these same elements provide the means of dismantling the face and undoing the power structures of subjectification and meaning beyond which lie a whole new political and affective potential. The black hole denoting the center of indetermination of human subjectivity, the mind of consciousness that lies behind the face, presents at the same time the means for deterritorializing the face, allowing what the two philosophers call lines of flight to pass through the face and lead us beyond it. Art can work towards this direction and has historically done so, exposing the inhumanity that lies in the face from the start. The binary mechanism of the face is dismantled and transforms the binary arborescent structures that it produced to dissolve into rhizomatic emergence of holes beyond walls, a multitude of probe heads substituting for the face of the despot or the subject. Given the monistic metaphysics of Deleuze, one could say that by diagnosing the faciality machine as a binarization mechanism, the two philosophers propose a politics of dismantling the face

⁷³¹ Deleuze and Guattari, 176. Regarding the reason why Deleuze and Guattari deploy the face of Christ as the exemplary face par excellence, see Nathan Widder "Year Zero: Faciality" in Henry Somers-Hall, Jeffrey A. Bell, and James Williams, eds., *A Thousand Plateaus and Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 115-33, 128-9. In this chapter, Widder makes an association of Deleuze and Guattari's use of Christ with the Nietzschean association of the God in the Cross with the kind of repressive desire that is led to desire its own repression and is linked with guilty conscience. The function of the face in constructing subjectivity in reference to a model norm is exactly channeling desire in such paths, transforming it into the guilt associated with one's degree of distance from the model.

⁷³² Deleuze and Guattari, 179.

⁷³³ Deleuze and Guattari, 181.

as a means to free difference from the false problem of the binary identity/opposition and allow for the infinite degrees of difference to rise.

While the Deleuzoguattarian conception of the face denotes an event occurring in sensibility prior to signification and subjectification, its departure from the corresponding Levinasian thesis has been commented upon.⁷³⁴ For Levinas, the face strikes us before the level of sense in a manner that provokes an infinite responsibility towards the radical alterity denoted by the face of the other. By contrast, as Deleuze denotes at the end of the last chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, for him, the other is not a metaphysical or ethical entity but a structure defining perception in a way that delimits and distorts it.⁷³⁵ As already discussed, inspired by Proust's work, the other for Deleuze appears to implicate a world that the loved one needs to explicate to gain their love. However, this implication delimits perception from being confronted with the infinity of the world and its chaotic aspect. Being prevented from encountering chaos, one is prevented from the experiencing the violence of the intensity arising from it and sensing at their limits the genetic conditions of reality from which creativity and thinking are engendered. As we already discussed, thinking is an activity that happens in the subject despite the subject, or else, is experienced by the subject as a passive occurrence upon its fracture. Thinking beyond representation refers to the discord of the faculties when being affected by an intense encounter they push each other to their limit functions. Sensation is forced to sense the imperceptible, memory is forced to remember the immemorable, thought to think the unthinkable, and imagination to imagine the unimaginable. For Deleuze, the face in its conventional function and the subjectivation and intersubjectivity it constructs are opposite to the process by which thinking is engendered. When the face is deterritorialized,

⁷³⁴ Gavin Rae, "The Political Significance of the Face: Deleuze's Critique of Levinas," *Critical Horizons* 17, no. 3–4 (October 14, 2016): 279–303. Gary Gutting, "Chapter 6. The Turn to Ethics: Levinas and Deleuze" in *Thinking the Impossible French Philosophy Since 1960* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). James Williams, "Chapter 3. Deleuze and Levinas: towards an ethics of expression" in *The Transversal Thought of Gilles Deleuze: Encounters and Influences* (Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2005).

⁷³⁵ By Other, here one should understand a human, external individual other, what Deleuze refers to as "autrui" in his essay "Michel Tournier and The World without Others" ("Michel Tournier et le monde sans autrui") in Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 310–28. The Other as "Autrui" is distinguished from the other as an element of the fractured-I when Deleuze asserts that "I is an Other" to which he refers, on the opposite, as "Autre." Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 86. "Autrui" refers to a human other, whereas "Autre" refers to a non-human alterity. On this distinction, see David Ventura, "The Intensive Other: Deleuze and Levinas on the Ethical Status of the Other," *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 58.2 (2020), 327–50, 327. The difference between the internally external other in the I is another and the external other is explained in Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 32. The subject becomes an other within the self. On the role of the Other as non-human alterity in Deleuze, see also Constantin V. Boundas, "Foreclosure of the Other: From Sartre to Deleuze," *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 24, no. 1 (January 1993): 32–43.

when lines of flight are allowed to pass through its black holes leading us beyond, the face has a subversive political significance.

The face is where human affects are expressed. It coincides with the affects it expresses, dismantling the subjectivity associated with it as described above. The face, at the same time, that grounds subjectivity is the locus of its dissolution. In his reading of Spinoza, Deleuze shows that affection is not an affection of subjectivity but a metaphysical affection of what is called being. Better put, being is a moment or an effect of affectivity which in the Deleuzian reading of Spinoza is always an affection of essence. This argument necessarily concludes that God-Nature's being is itself affected in a kind of auto-affection,⁷³⁶ that is, an internal movement of connection of heterogeneity. The two aspects of God-Nature are ideas and matter, or, in Deleuzian terms, ideas, and extension, any heterogeneous series connecting and crossing an irreducible difference between them made possible by the paradoxical element of difference in itself, which we referred to as the dark precursor. These two aspects ensure that all being is the result of a connection through difference of each thing with itself. Such is the relation of a so-called subject with itself, a connection through difference. Affect is precisely the moment of the violent distinction of a self from itself. That moment is visible on the face, which, in addition to its signifying, subjectifying, repressive function, also has the power to deconstruct itself, to lay bare the human subject, to unveil its pure animality as becomes apparent in Deleuze's use of the close-up in his first book on cinema.⁷³⁷

The face is the close-up, and the close-up is pure affect, pure transformation beyond subjectivity. In *Cinema 1, The Movement-Image*, affect appears as a striking image pertaining to cinematic art and a component of every kind of cinematic image: the affection image is closely the close-up and the face. Any entity can be facialized, and the close-up refers to close images of human faces as much as objects containing an intensive affective charge, such as a clock or a knife. Affect is any system consisting of a combination of intensive movements upon an immobilized unity, a surface, or a point.⁷³⁸ Deleuze analyzes Bacon's work as dismantling

⁷³⁶ Adrian Johnston and Catherine Malabou, *Self and Emotional Life: Philosophy, Psychoanalysis, and Neuroscience*, Insurrections (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

⁷³⁷ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema I: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London ; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2018), 117-8.

⁷³⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema I: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, Paperback edition, Bloomsbury Revelations (London ; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2018), 98. Deleuze's exposition of Bergson's definition originates in *Matter and Memory* and on his definition of pain as that which best exemplifies the passage from perception to affection. Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (New York: Zone Books, 1988), 55-6.

the face to reveal the head,⁷³⁹ as much as Bacon aims at dismantling the body to reveal the flesh as the element common to the human and the animal.⁷⁴⁰ The ethical task ensuing, thus, is to de-facialize the head and, consequently, the body and turn the latter into a body without organs. This way, one can make the body coincide with the plane of consistency of desire and free its affections, its sensitivities, and dynamism, and allow its worries and trembles to take on new directions, liberating them from the guise of what in popular language is thought as saving/keeping face, that is, maintaining intensities in the form of acceptable social conduct determined by dominant mechanisms of signification.

⁷³⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (London; New York: Continuum, 2004), 20.

⁷⁴⁰ Deleuze, 22.

Conclusions

Some of the points that the research allowed me to clarify have already been emphasized in secondary scholarship in the form of books, collective volumes, and articles. It is a fortuitous occurrence to observe how the prolific and broad development of high-quality scholarship on Deleuze and Guattari has enabled matters that may have seemed obscure, particularly the questions around intensity, and becoming to become better clarified and disseminated.⁷⁴¹ Nevertheless, while some of these issues are becoming more broadly understood in the philosophical communities, problems connecting such concepts and crucial aspects around them continue to constitute bewilderment and questioning among scholars and less familiar readers. In what concerns us, affect as an aspect of intensity and becoming-minor as a facet of difference still need better elucidation. Hence, their further analysis in this thesis attempts to consolidate fundamental knowledge around Deleuzoguattarian philosophy, metaphysics, aesthetics, and ethics.

As stated at its beginning, the central hypothesis of this research project has been that affect consists of a variation of intensity. Part of its aim was to draw out the repercussions of such a premise. Starting with the genealogy of the concept, I first exposed the role of affect in Spinoza, where it features as a modification of immanent substance. The Spinozian concept of affect as an influence expressing the essence of an infinite being would remain at the basis of the project. Subsequently I analyzed the consequences of substituting substance for the concept of intensity in Deleuze and Guattari. Moreover, having to situate itself in the discussion on the contested issue of the role of intensity in Deleuze and Guattari's oeuvre, the current project begun with the assumption of the primary function of intensity in Deleuze's triadic scheme consisting of the actual, the virtual and the intensive. As shown in the fourth chapter of this thesis, this triadic scheme transforms creatively in Deleuze and Guattari's triadic scheme of desire consisting of connection, conjunction, and disjunction. This choice to assume intensity's metaphysical primacy means situating the work within and alongside the prior work of scholars who consolidated this approach to Deleuze's complex metaphysics and distanced themselves from interpretations of the virtual's metaphysical priority that often led to interpreting Deleuze as a creative continuation of Kant and even Plato.⁷⁴² Instead, asserting intensity's priority supports a view of Deleuze and Guattari's work as creating an innovative new

⁷⁴¹ For example, Samantha Bankston, *Deleuze and Becoming* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2017).

⁷⁴² Alain Badiou, *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000),

paradigm in philosophy that breaks from its predecessors to affirm singularity, difference, and genesis, fully.⁷⁴³ Intensive individuating forces are not instances of universal concepts but singular differential forces that condition all phenomena. As a result, much of the work in this thesis can be viewed as an attempt to clarify what it would mean to conceive of affect as intensive singularity, disjunction, and pure difference. The subsequent and interrelated task was to analyze the relation of that difference to the identity that covers it without ever canceling it. Suppose intensity is groundless dynamism arising out of chaos to return to it. In that case, this necessarily reconfigures the initial Spinozian conception of affect as a variation of power effected by the encounter between self-enclosed modes defined by a characteristic relation of speed and slowness between parts. Affects are encounters with difference within, outside, and at the fringes of open and provisionally individuated entities and forces.

A fundamental point of contention that constitutes a significant node around which affect theory and what has been termed the affective turn in the humanities turn is the body and corporeality. A lot has been written on the body's function and its problematic status in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy.⁷⁴⁴ Interpretations range from a sympathetic materialist reading that, based on the Spinozian genealogy of the two philosophers, claims the existence of an agency or primacy of the body over conscious thought to approaches that associate corporeality with virality and to still others that align Deleuze and Guattari with the ascetic tradition⁷⁴⁵ that plagues the history of philosophy and continues an ultimate rejection of bodily sensation in favor of incorporeal thought. One of the main things that the research on affect in Deleuze and Guattari has taught me is that the problem of the body, succinctly put, concerns the issue of *unity*. The latter is a metaphysical problem that starts before the observation and sensation of physical empirical bodies that we can subsequently theorize about abstractly. The concept of the *body without organs* is precisely the notion that allowed the two philosophers to expand on the problem of unity to which the traditional concept of the body seemed to be tied - the body as a whole, an already individuated entity that subsumes its organs under its constitutive

⁷⁴³ In secondary scholarship, there is a long discussion on how Deleuze's genetic method is already present in Kant. See, for example, Beth Lord, "The Virtual and the Ether: Transcendental Empiricism in Kant's *Opus Postumum*," *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 39, no. 2 (January 2008): 147–66. The above is based on Deleuze's own argument that Kant discovers genesis, yet does not follow the consequences of this method to their full potential. The point of contention is whether or not Deleuze's pushing through the full repercussions of the genetic method results in a new philosophical paradigm. I argue that the former is true.

⁷⁴⁴ Joe Hughes, "Introduction: Pity the Meat?: Deleuze and the Body" in Laura Guillaume and Joe Hughes, eds., *Deleuze and the Body*, Deleuze Connections (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 1-5, 2.

⁷⁴⁵ D. J. S. Cross, *Deleuze and the Problem of Affect* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021).

relation, as parts of a whole. The body in representational thought, in short, has always been understood as an already unified entity independent of its individuation process, as the ultimate indication of human separateness and interiority confined in the limits of a particular relatively fixed extensive magnitude, whose variations are merely accidental and secondary to a specific identity, and which corresponds to and reflects the concomitant unity of a similarly individuated soul or mental entity. The empirical sensation of external bodies and their extensive contours reinforce that misconception and the transcendental illusion from which it arises, according to which the genetic difference creating reality tends to its self-cancellation in identity.⁷⁴⁶ The body is thought to subsume and integrate its organs into a hierarchy, like a soul subsumes its parts and faculties, commands its appetites, and exerts agency over its passions and actions.

To counter that traditional and persistent notion of the body and the concomitant ostensibly self-evident metaphysical irrefutability of unity, Deleuze and Guattari appropriate and transform Artaud's concept of the body without organs to depict and understand the body as an open process primarily understood as a passage to a genetic and transformative limit, that is, as an affective process. The body is in a state of continuous progression to its disorganized, non-hierarchical, intensive state to which one returns in exceptional empirical moments and death or death-like circumstances within life and moments of transformation, to a limit which the body without organs describes. Affect is a concept intimately tied to the body already in its Spinozian conception in the context of the immanent coincidence of sensation and ideality. However, while this connection remains unwavering in Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of the concept, affect's privileged relation to the body in the latter case cannot be adequately analyzed independently of the concept of limit, the body without organs, death and the zero point of intensity which denotes transformation and the function of the event.⁷⁴⁷ The body without organs should then be understood as the proper Deleuzoguattarian Event or affect happening to the body as it is understood in the history of philosophy, as reduced to a metaphysics of unity assuming a hierarchical relation between a whole and its parts. The body without organs and death are inextricable elements of affect's function. Affect is a bodily

⁷⁴⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 266.

⁷⁴⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, (Minneapolis, Minn.: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2007), 153, 164.

process only to the extent that it is an open process characterized by a passage to a positive and intensifying zero limit.

Affect's function as a limit expresses its conditioning role in sensibility. While unified bodies and, consequently, subjects are undoubtedly parts of everyday experience and allow us to make sense of the world, on the contrary, according to the method of transcendental empiricism, the task of philosophy is to reveal the *conditions* from which this experience arises. According to Deleuze, that is the moment of the latter's genesis and is where affect and intensity occur. All things are characterized by a progression to a limit, to their affective and intensive burning center when we choose to interrogate how things come to be and what they can become. That is an immanent condition coextensive to the conditioned, allowing life to unfold. In that limit, difference in the form of singularities, which extensive individual entities integrate into their seemingly unified existence, float freely and make possible the creative reconfiguration of such individuals as attested in evolution, history, and time. Affect's function is that of a differential conditioning limit presupposed and making possible extensive unities, one without which nothing would exist and novelty and creation would not be able to occur. The limit where affect is located denotes intensive transformations that cannot be conceived through classic logic. Refuting the law of the excluded middle that affirms a thing cannot be both itself and not-itself, intensity and, thus, affect is the disjunctive synthesis of heterogeneous elements in becoming.⁷⁴⁸ In the process of becoming before the stable state of body A, the disjunction between A and not-A is affirmed. The "or" in "Something is, or it is not" becomes affirmed in a way that makes the disjunction of the terms inclusive rather than exclusive. That coexistence of the heterogeneous terms across their distance acts as the condition for the empirical passage from one state to another in states of affairs. Becoming and the Event affirm heterogeneous states through, and not despite, their positive irreducible distance.

Affect denotes a passage to the limit of every individuating process, namely every power formation, to the extent that power's characteristic is to exert itself as far as it can. This limit also denotes affect's relation to ideality, conceptuality, and sense. Following Spinoza, in Deleuze's early work, affect is in close proximity to the concept of ideality. Deleuze, unlike his predecessor makes the two inextricable through the function of the limit and the differential calculus. A differential intensity conditions every unified entity, but the former is also always already an idea or ideal problem. Ideas for Deleuze, unlike Kant, are of the kind of affects and

⁷⁴⁸ Deleuze, 234.

events; they are differential problems that are differentiated by the singular way in which they are actualized and are, in turn, created by liminal conditions of sensibility which throw faculties in disarray.⁷⁴⁹ They do not refer primarily to reason but are transformative limits of every faculty and every domain. While the terminology of ideality does not persist in the collaborative work with Guattari and is said by some scholars to be a remnant of Deleuze's Kantian heritage, language, and sense continue to play a significant role as limit conditions of intensity and thus affect. In the reading adopted as a starting point of the research, according to which intensity is the primary generative element in Deleuze's metaphysics, affect generates ideas and forces the exercise of thought under the power of confronting something unrecognizable, unknowable, and problematic. Sense constitutes a fragile surface at the limit of affectivity, allowing us to navigate the world and cover over the conditioning chaos from which everything arises. Affect is, thus, situated between chaos and ideas that give us direction and motivate us. Ideas are always a limit of affectivity since difference and the limit from which affect is indistinguishable are also ideas. Moreover, affect constitutes a test of ideas insofar as the latter acquire their value from an immanent affirmative power or power of differentiation, which they can gather and make emerge, their creative ability. Ideas' immanent measure is the forces that motivate them and that they can reversely motivate. Ideas and affect are irreducibly distinct yet inextricably linked poles of the disjunctive synthesis of degrees of difference. While pure difference in philosophy until Deleuze is connected with the threat of an undifferentiated nothingness, Deleuze proposes a novel metaphysics where nothingness, the zero point of intensity, and death are instead multiplicities. While nothingness is undifferentiated, meaning it does not contain enclosed extended bodies like those of sensible experience, it is, nevertheless, fully differentiated; that is, it contains singularities and degrees of difference from which extensive bodies arise.⁷⁵⁰

The transformation of the concept of the body from an enclosed unified entity to an open system through the ideas of the limit and the body without organs has, in turn, irrefutable and significant consequences for the philosophical problem of subjectivity and intersubjectivity and for our understanding of the locations where affect operates. Unlike Spinoza's modes, characterized by a constitutive relation between their parts, affect in Deleuze and Guattari happens before, within, outside, and at the fringes of what appear as already individuated modes but which are conditioned by continuous, open, individuating processes

⁷⁴⁹ Deleuze, 193-4.

⁷⁵⁰ Deleuze, 279-80.

inextricable from them. Affect is precisely the process of the modes' constant and never fully complete individuation. One of the significant conclusions of the current research, thus, concerns the problem of the self and the other and the supposed *interiority* of subjectivity and *exteriority* of intersubjective relations, a distinction which Deleuzoguattarian affect complicates if not renders completely obsolete. Deleuzoguattarian interiority must be understood as external, which means already cracked, open, incomplete, and unattainable, resulting from an ever-transforming power. The "I" is an other⁷⁵¹ (autre), or else the self is always already cracked, which allows for its productive transformation, vitality, and inventiveness. On the other hand, the Other (Autrui) is a center of envelopment, implicating a possible world that, with its ostensive wholeness, covers over the shock of the encounter with pure difference.⁷⁵² Instead of the intersubjective ethical relation oscillating in an alternation of subject and object, the immanence of affect concerns the resonance among heterogeneities in scales smaller and greater than the individuated bodies.

The primary concern of Deleuze in his early original works is what he calls pure difference or difference in-itself, a transcendently empirical difference, metaphysically prior to the sensible observable differences between already individuated terms. The scope of that concern is an immanent account of reality in-itself from the point of view of its genesis and its opening to the future. Such an idea of the in-itself of difference allows us to consider reality unfolding in the way biological organisms and crystals do, based on a dynamic that creatively actualizes predispositions and codes, and to understand how organisms reproduce by differentiating themselves. Pure difference refers to self-differentiation, and as such, it allows us to conceive of reality and sensibility as an ever-differentiating process of self-creation, conditioned by chance, in continuity with artistic creation. Nevertheless, in their collaborative work, Deleuze and Guattari are concerned with spatialized concepts referring to relations between heterogeneous elements or assemblages and the relations between the terms which are external, contingent, and amenable to change. The two thinkers use the Humean anti-foundationalist principle of the association of ideas, which Deleuze reformulates as the thesis of the externality of relations in reference to their terms, to conceive of an ethics of experimentation. One of the arguments I set forward in the fourth chapter of the thesis is that the two principles, that of the externality of relations and that of the in-itself-ness or purity of

⁷⁵¹ Deleuze, 86.

⁷⁵² Deleuze, 282-3. Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Constantin V Boundas, Mark Lester, and Charles J Stivale (London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 315-28.

difference, must be understood as complementing each other rather than as antithetical. Once an individuated entity is conceived as an open system consisting of non-totalizable parts and expressing itself in chance encounters or as a process in the course of individuation, then the internal difference that characterizes it as a self-differentiating process in time cannot be understood separately from an external contingent relation between the elements of the multiplicity that provisionally comprise it. Coexistence and consistency between components merely indicate the existence of provisional individuating factors or conditions. Those individuating factors solve problems that persist in their solutions but to which other solutions and, thus, other constitutive relations between parts and other parts connected through external relations could be given. From the above does not follow that any organism could reconstitute its constitutive relations differently at any point and randomly, but that despite the sensible appearance of their stability, organisms are comprised of intensive parts held together by dynamisms that are provisional and conditioned by force or difference. Organisms are merely interim results of broader dynamic processes. Moreover, an external relation between what we take as already individuated entities or subjects never occurs in the space between enclosed bodies but between part objects, psychic and bodily. It is a process of infinite transformation of those parts and the systems they comprise. Affect, therefore, as it is often observed, concerns encounters. However, these encounters do not only refer to meetings with external bodies nor to the internal externality of time but denote the variable limit between the two types of encounters.

Connected to the above inexhaustible problems of self and other, interiority and exteriority is the question of the connection or distinction of affect and emotions/feelings. A persistent question in affective bibliography, the above distinction indicates the problem of the eruption of difference and creative potential in any examined milieu. Following varied roles in their vast oeuvre, feelings other times appear as tied with subjectifying modes of desire⁷⁵³ while others with processes of an eruption of difference through the production of pure intensities⁷⁵⁴ or with a mode of thinking.⁷⁵⁵ The above discrepancy is not uncommon in the work of two philosophers that constantly reevaluated their ideas and concepts so as to better grasp difference and produce forces rather than attempting to represent them. The crucial point that

⁷⁵³ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 356, 400.

⁷⁵⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Hurley Robert, Seem Mark, and R. Lane Helen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 84-6.

⁷⁵⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 25.

this wavering distinction attempts to convey is that between habitual affective patterns and intensive modes of sensibility and the concomitant distinction between delimiting subjectifying and impersonal productive affects. Resisting the interpretation of Deleuze and Guattari as philosophers of asceticism and in order to do justice to the full-blown sensibility that they seek to express in their work, albeit seeking to liberate the latter from the yoke of humanism, I argue that feelings can be involved in the quiver of affective terminology of Deleuze and Guattari under the caution of incorporating in the term as an immanent measure the production of singularity. Whatever reading one may choose to adopt, what is crucial for the two philosophers is the extraction of impersonal affects from common-sense habitual affections. That is exactly the function of art that exists in continuity with the self-creative force of sensibility itself.⁷⁵⁶ Art reveals the intensive conditions of extensive actual reality and everyday affections and allows us to reach the being of the sensible where affects acquire an autonomy from subjects and objects to express only themselves.

One of the distinctive functions of affect as a variation of intensity is *individuation*.⁷⁵⁷ The proper way to understand individuation differs from the common-sense use of the term by which an enclosed individual evolves to assume its full development as a separate entity and in collaboration with its environment. Again, as in the case of the body, what is individuated has to be conceived as an open system, an assemblage, a provisional coagulation of an ongoing process, an event. Affect's individuating power ensures resonance across disparate terms, connects multitudes, collectives, and molecules, and thus creates temporary functional assemblages. Being individuated through affection means the conditions of one's individuation necessarily lie outside the firm outlines of extensive corporeality, taking that corporeality to its disjunctive limit in ideality or difference. Affect, as individuation, is creation. The interiority of the individual becomes eccentric to itself due to the forces in which it partakes. A technical way Deleuze uses to support this account of individuality is that of intrinsic mode or degree of difference, which allows us to understand individuation as a degree of a self-differentiating element so that essences of existing modifications can appear in the ostensibly uniform and eternal essence of Spinozian substance and degrees of whiteness can be individuated on a supposedly uniform white wall.⁷⁵⁸ The limits of its power characterize an individuated entity. However, each such individuated power's contiguity and synergy with other powers is defined

⁷⁵⁶ Deleuze and Guattari.

⁷⁵⁷ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 246.

⁷⁵⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1990), 197-8.

from the zones of indiscernibility from which they are indistinguishable. The concept of part-object that Deleuze and Guattari re-appropriate from and against psychoanalytic theory exemplifies the same process of internal difference. Desire constitutes a process of internal difference by occurring across the connection and disjunction between non-totalizable part-objects, between indistinguishable but irreducibly fragmented elements.

Individuation marks one other central element of affect: its characteristic relation to the three syntheses of time and desire. As a process of time and desire, affect unfolds in three interrelated and intermingled ways: present or connection, past or conjunction, and future or disjunction. The three modes of time and desire are inextricable,⁷⁵⁹ yet the future or disjunction is the primary synthesis conditioning the other two. Affect primarily marks the time of the future, Event, or Aion. The latter is characterized by the emergence of unprecedented and unforeseen events or differences that are not accounted for in the causal series of sequential time and, therefore, attest to the existence of *non-sequential time*, a time out of joint, a time of irrational connections and events. That time proceeds by disjunction, or cuts in the continuous flow of sequential time that synthesizes before and after through a positive irreparable intensive distance. Events connect moments in time through distance. I claim that affect is thus primarily an Event. An Event, although it is effectuated in states of affairs and in a given location in time and space, it is characterized by a resonance that cuts across and affects all dimensions of time so that it is *always already past and yet to come*. The event reveals time as primarily an empty form, time as death, as a process of exhaustion and passage to a limit. Affect, moreover, is linked with the past, and that is why Deleuze links the past and memory with Eros because there is always a specific affective charge attached to the past, a particular gravitating attraction towards what has happened and which grounds the passage to the future, being from that from which we have to depart, willingly or less so. Affect finally and significantly becomes organized in the living present of habit and, in such a way, acquires the appearance of identity and repetition. In this inevitable illusion, we understand habit as a relatively unchanging way we interact and vary our power. Spinoza's account of affect is complicit with that assumption to the extent that modes' essence as a relatively invariable capacity to affect and be affected and that one has to fulfill during one's finite existence links affect to a variation of an essentially unchanging substance. I argue that the innovation of Deleuze and Guattari regarding affect is

⁷⁵⁹ François Zourabichvili, *Deleuze, a Philosophy of the Event: Together with the Vocabulary of Deleuze*, ed. Gregg Lambert and Daniel W. Smith, trans. Kieran Aarons, Plateaus (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2012), 35.

the idea that affect is primarily a disjunctive variation and the emergence of an event that only subsequently becomes organized as habit and appears as the effect of an unchanging minimum and maximum threshold of capacity to affect and be affected. Deleuze and Guattari have to add something significant to the discussion of affect in the last decades: to connect affect back to the problem of difference and repetition, events and habit, and how the former appears to become canceled and consolidated in the latter. Affect is primarily a difference.

Deleuze and Guattari understand affect through their concept of *becoming-minor*. One of the tasks of the research was to show how this concept necessarily derives from the metaphysics of intensity and, more precisely, intensity's immanent internal reference to a zero point. Intensity is measured by its irreducible non-decomposable distance from its apparent and illusory self-cancellation or its exhaustion in extensive bodies in which a conditioning intensifying zero point always inheres. It is an immanent measurement by which intensity reaches its limit and full potential. Like death in the case of living beings and humans, the zero point of intensity acts as an intensifier. To the extent that difference is the conditioning prerequisite of reality's emergence, death or the zero point of intensity can never denote a permanent stoppage in intensity's incessant variation but a rebirth, an ever-receding horizon from which intensity arises anew.⁷⁶⁰ Intensity's internal reference to its zero limit constitutes the primary characteristic of its metaphysical and ethical significance. To intensify means to exist in relation to the zero point of intensity, that is, to its death, the tendency towards which reveals the pre-individual singularities from which actual organisms, as forms of explicated intensity, arise. To intensify means to reach that zero point of intensity and, in such a way, allow "the liberation and swarming of little differences in intensity."⁷⁶¹ *Becoming-minor* denotes this passage to the zero point of intensity regarding subjectivity as the alleged starting point of philosophical thinking and universal sensibility. It is a solution to the impasse of subjectivity⁷⁶² and a state of enduring violent movements that no subjectivity can undergo. It marks the opening up of the unified subject and its corresponding unified body to the conditioning pre-individual singularities from which it arises and exists only in the process of intensity and sensation passing to zero. Pre-individual singularities are, thus, in some sense, ideal (since they appear in the moments when sensibility tends towards zero and falls under our perceptual threshold). *Becoming-minor* is a concept that instantiates the philosophical idea

⁷⁶⁰ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 112.

⁷⁶¹ Deleuze, 259.

⁷⁶² Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 258.

of immanence. The latter concerns an in-depth engagement with reality free from idealization, a limitless embracing of all there is. This can only be possible by affirming all that is being excluded and overseen in constructing the ideal of autonomous subjectivity, that is, all the pre-subjective singularities and affects the latter covers over in its monopoly of language and symbolic domination. To embrace existence immanently and entirely is to become-minor.

Affect's characteristic as becoming-minor that finds its ultimate limit in becoming-imperceptible and as a passage to sensibility's limit, furthermore, has consequences concerning the ethical problem of joy and sadness that Spinoza first formulated. Taking as a touchstone of his metaphysics and ethics an eternal, all-encompassing divine substance, Spinoza prioritizes happiness as a means of affirming what he sees as substance's inherent capacity, the ability to sustain and persist in itself and, therefore, internally expand, countering the what he perceives as the external power of death.⁷⁶³ The historical circumstances of religion's dominant role in instilling fear and asceticism seem to have some role to play in Spinoza's ethical prompt of joy. On the opposite side, Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of things through an internal relation to a self-differentiating transformative power that is death necessarily complicates the Spinozian ethical imperative towards joy and by revealing the passive and unconscious experience of transformation (the silent crack in which ideas swarm⁷⁶⁴). I argue that the latter obliges us to reconsider the ethical value of sadness and *pain*. The role of liminal conditions of sensibility in the two philosophers indicates that pain as a liminal point in subjectivity's ostensive agency must be involved in the constellation of positive notions in their complex ethical apparatus. Following the idea of difference as cruelty, as a unilateral distinction of a thing that distinguishes itself from another that "continues to espouse" the first,⁷⁶⁵ to encounter difference, one has to endure the pain of the violent ungrounding of cherished stabilities. One has to face death, the zero point of intensity and nothingness, and bear the torsion between what is becoming and what no longer is, that which, in a sense, is destroyed or dies. That process of encountering difference and the pre-individual singularities from which we arise means confronting death as a prerequisite for reaching creativity. The latter can never be a pain-free process, no matter how much of a positive principle or metaphysical concept we reconceptualize death to be.

⁷⁶³ Benedictus de Spinoza and E. M. Curley, *A Spinoza Reader: The Ethics and Other Works* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 156. *The Ethics*, Part 3, Proposition 4.

⁷⁶⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 169.

⁷⁶⁵ Deleuze, 28.

Future research on affect in the works of Spinoza, and especially Deleuze and Guattari, appears urgent and promising to yield prolific and insightful results. Some fruitful directions such research could take are deepening our understanding of the relation between becoming-minor and the unilateral distinction of difference and sensation as a fall. While in the present study, I attempted to offer some insight into this parallel; there is still much work to be done on elucidating that nodal point in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy further. Sensation as the swelling of a type of vitality is also, at the same time, a process of falling towards its prerequisites and a simultaneous tendency towards an impersonal and never-complete death. That inextricable intermingling of sensation with death as a positive principle merits further study that can enrich not only philosophy itself but also potentially transform the non-philosophical, commonsense, and empirical significance of death and pain as a precondition of creativity and, thus, act in the direction of micro and sociopolitical healing. Secondly, another focus of future research could concern the inexhaustible problem of interiority and exteriority and the question of the other. In that respect, an intriguing idea arose during the present study on the distinction between relation and encounter. Relations in common-sense language refer to relations between already formed explicated entities; however, in Deleuze and Guattari's metaphysics of intensity and genesis, relations are differential and refer to virtual, problematic ideal elements connected in variable yet relatively stable ways. The question, therefore, would be whether substituting the language of relation to refer to already individuated terms, for encounter, referring at once in external intensities and the constituting dynamism from which individuated terms arise, could transform the latent presuppositions of stability present in what we term intersubjectivity and trans-individuality and reveal the differential and contingent affective substratum of the latter. Finally, tracing the consequences of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of intensive quantity, a more detailed investigation of the problem of intensification and the role of augmentation and speed would be worthwhile. Specifically, a detailed analysis of intensity's progression to its conditioning zero point and how augmentation and diminution are to be conceived in reference to the zero point could shed further light and solidify our knowledge on the problem of the entanglement of metaphysics and ethics that this thesis already opened up.

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