

Fall 2013: French 7410 / Deleuze and Guattari / John Protevi / [protevi@lsu.edu](mailto:protevi@lsu.edu) / <http://www.protevi.com/john/DG>  
Tuesday 3 September 2013

## LECTURE TWO

### HEGEL

Hardt reads Deleuze as offering a “total critique” vs the “negate with preservation” of the *Aufhebung*.

*The Phenomenology* (spiritual education of natural humanity) is the presupposition of the *Logic* (God’s thought). Thought – exile into nature – purified and recuperated by spirit. Logic – nature – spirit is the overall movement.

*Science of Logic*: Determinations of Reflection: determines difference as contradiction. Logic is thought about thought. We can say that thought ‘thinks through’ each category. 1) ‘thinks through (via)’ a category. 2) considers all the implications of such a thought pattern.

These implications are the ways in which thought breaks down when isolated in any one categorial mode. The science of logic is then the ordering of categories that displays the inability of any one of them to sustain thought in isolation and further displays the way in which the specific failure of each category leads to the following category in a movement of learning. The pattern of failure and learning from failure is called by Hegel ‘determinate negation’ or the *Aufhebung*.

The determinations of reflection follow this order: identity, difference, contradiction (*Identität, Unterschied, Widerspruch*). In other words, thought first tries to think the essence of Being as identity, then as difference, and finally as contradiction. At each point, thought breaks down and moves on to the next.

Absolute difference gives way to a relativized difference: diversity, *Verschiedenheit* (2.47-55/418-24). *Gegensatz*, opposition, is described as ‘opposed diversity’ (*entgegengesetzte Verschiedenheit*; 2.36/409), and as the ‘completion of difference’ (*Im Gegensatze ist die bestimmte Reflexion, der Unterschied vollendet*; 2.55/424).

Hegel writes, ‘Difference as such is already *implicitly* contradiction’ (*Der Unterschied überhaupt ist schon der Widerspruch an sich*; 2.65/431). The ‘already in itself’ in which difference is destined to realize itself in contradiction marks the reining in, the putting to work, of the negative in the service of speculative meaning.

Opposition is not only destroyed in the final movement of contradiction, but ‘withdrawn *into its ground*’ (2.68/434), which thinks the essence as the ‘unity of positive and negative’, as contradiction and resolution of contradiction.

## BERGSON

First thinker for Deleuze in Hardt's book: difference in itself; positive, difference-generating difference. Elan vital as (non-substantial) difference generation (B is thinking Darwin and life: variation). The thought of multiplicity: the multiple as substantive, not as predicate. Outside the dialectic of the One and the Many. Duration as process of actualization of the virtual.

1889: *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (lit. Essay on the immediate givens of consciousness). Distinction of qualitative or continuous – heterogeneous [virtual] multiplicity versus discrete multiplicity. A qualitative / virtual multiplicity actualizes itself along divergent lines. These lines are immanent, but not prefigured; they take shape in the very act of divergent actualization. In other words, passing a threshold divides the system, producing a qualitatively new behavior. By contrast, a discrete multiplicity is subject to indefinite divisibility without qualitative change. IOW, it can be subject to a transcendent metric or measure or principle of division that doesn't qualitatively change the system. In this book, Bergson sees this distinction as between inner psychological time and outer material space. This position changes, as B comes to see duration in matter as well as in inner life.

1896: *Matière et Mémoire* (Matter and Memory). B gives us a "naturalized epistemology": bodily needs provide us habits of thought as evolutionary adaptations. This is fine for practice, B will say, but "fatal for speculation." B sketches an ontology of duration, with matter and memory consisting in varying rhythms of duration. This is really great philosophy: a "plane of immanence" as Deleuze would say: a monism of time. There are connections with 20<sup>th</sup> C physics (M. Cipek, *B and Modern Physics* [1971], and with process philosophy, e.g. Whitehead. Even with David Bohm. The question of panpsychism appears here.

1907: *L'Evolution créatrice* (Creative Evolution). Life itself, in its evolutionary whole, as a qualitative / virtual multiplicity, actualizing itself along divergent lines. Life is an "open system": it brings with it novelty. Distinction between possibility (pre-formed, waiting for existence) and virtuality (forming in the process of actualization).

*From Smith and Protevi, SEP:*

Taking up Maimon's critique of Kant, Deleuze needs to substitute the notion of the condition of the genesis of the real for the notion of conditions of possibility of representational knowledge. The positive name for that genetic condition is the virtual, which Deleuze adopts from the following Bergsonian argument.

Actualization of the virtual is not the realization of the possible.

The notion of the possible, Bergson holds in *Creative Evolution*, is derived from a false problem that confuses the "more" with the "less" and ignores differences in kind; there is

not less but more in the idea of the possible than in the real, just as there is more in the idea of nonbeing than in that of being, or more in the idea of disorder than in that of order. When we think of the possible as somehow "pre-existing" the real, we think of the real, then we add to it the negation of its existence, and then we project the "image" of the possible into the past. We then reverse the procedure and think of the real as something more than possible, that is, as the possible with existence added to it. We then say that the possible has been "realized" in the real. By contrast, Deleuze will reject the notion of the possible in favor of that of the virtual. Rather than awaiting realization, the virtual is fully real; what happens in genesis is that the virtual is actualized.

The virtual cannot resemble the actual; it must be differential

The fundamental characteristic of the virtual, that which means it must be actualized rather than realized, is its differential makeup. Deleuze always held the critical axiom that the ground cannot resemble that which it grounds; he constantly critiques the "tracing" operation by which identities in real experience are said to be conditioned by identities in the transcendental.

The critique of "tracing"

For instance, Deleuze criticizes Kant for copying the transcendental field in the image of the empirical field. That is, empirical experience is personal, identitarian and centrifugal; there is a central focus, the subject, in which all our experiences are tagged as belonging to us. Kant says this empirical identity is only possible if we can posit the Transcendental Unity of Apperception, that is, the possibility of adding "I think" to all our judgments. Instead of this smuggled-in or "traced" identity, Deleuze will want to have the transcendental field be differential.

Deleuze still wants to work back from experience, but since the condition cannot resemble the conditioned, and since the empirical is personal and individuated, the transcendental must be impersonal and pre-individual. The virtual is the condition for real experience, but it has no identity; identities of the subject and the object are products of processes that resolve, integrate, or actualize (the three terms are synonymous for Deleuze) a differential field. The Deleuzian virtual is thus not the condition of possibility of any rational experience, but the condition of genesis of real experience.

The notion of multiplicity

As we have seen, the virtual, as genetic ground of the actual, cannot resemble that which it grounds; thus, if we are confronted with actual identities in experience, then the virtual ground of those identities must be purely differential. Deleuze adopts "multiplicity" from Bergson as the name for such a purely differential field. In this usage, Deleuze later clarifies, "multiplicity" designates the multiple as a substantive, rather than as a predicate. The multiple as predicate generates a set of philosophical problems under the rubric of "the one and the many" (a thing is one *or* multiple, one *and* multiple, and so on). With multiplicity, or the multiple as substantive, the question of the relation between the predicates

one/multiple is replaced by the question of distinguishing types of multiplicities (as with Bergson's distinction of qualitative and quantitative multiplicities in *Time and Free Will*). A typological difference between substantive multiplicities, in short, is substituted for the dialectical opposition of the one and the multiple.

## NIETZSCHE

No need to give much detail here as we'll do Nietzsche in Week 4. The highlights:

Affirmation vs reaction:

Master says "I am good." As an afterthought, he might say "you are bad."  
Slave says: "He is evil. I am not evil, therefore I am good."

Dramatization: the question "who"? is what counts. "Who needs to live like this? Is this a noble or a slavish thought?"

Interpretation and value via the encounter of forces. What something "means" is not read off a realm of propositions; it is a matter of who uses what in an encounter. (Connection here with enaction: sucrose is only food for an organism; w/o the organism it is only chemicals.)

## SPINOZA

Deleuze loves Spinoza; sees him as philosopher of affirmation of life. DG are unbridled in their praise of Spinoza in *What is Philosophy?* calling him the 'prince' (WP 48) and even the 'Christ' of philosophers (WP 60).

This frugal, propertyless life, undermined by illness, this thin, frail body, this brown, oval face with its sparkling black eyes: how does one explain the impression they give of being suffused with Life itself, of having a power identical to Life? In his whole way of living and of thinking, Spinoza projects an image of the positive, affirmative life, which stands in opposition to the semblances that men are content with. Not only are they content with the latter, they feel a hatred of life, they are ashamed of it; a humanity bent on self-destruction, multiplying the cults of death, bringing about the union of the tyrant and the slave, the priest, the judge, and the soldier, always busy running life into the ground, mutilating it, killing it outright or by degrees, overlaying it or suffocating it with laws, properties, duties, empires -- this is what Spinoza diagnoses in the world, this betrayal of the universe and of mankind. (*Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, 12)

God or nature: being as dynamic univocal and immanent field. The key for Deleuze is to subtract the unifying substance and just look at nature as a field of immanence in which modes interact. The *Ethics* is called the 'great book of the BwO' (ATP 153) for posing the

question of the connection of bodies on an immanent plane, while the sections of the 'Becoming-Intense' plateau devoted to affect are entitled 'Memories of a Spinozist' (252-60).

*Smith and Protevi, SEP:*

In sum, then, against the "major" post-Kantian tradition of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, Deleuze in effect posited his own "minor" post-Kantian trio of Maimon, Nietzsche, and Bergson. To these he added a trio of pre-Kantians, Spinoza, Leibniz and Hume, but read through a post-Kantian lens. We have already touched on Deleuze's reading of Hume.

There are many Spinozist inheritances in Deleuze, but one of the most important is certainly the notion of univocity in ontology. Univocity – as opposed to its great rivals, equivocity and analogy – is the key to developing a "philosophy of difference" (Deleuze's term for his project in *Difference and Repetition*), in which difference would no longer be subordinated to identity. The result is a Spinozism minus substance, a purely modal or differential universe.

In univocity, as Deleuze reads Spinoza, the single sense of Being frees a charge of difference throughout all that is. In univocal ontology being is said in a single sense of all of which it is said, but it is said of difference itself.

What is that difference? Difference is difference in degrees of "power"; in interpreting this term we must distinguish the two French words *puissance* and *pouvoir*. In social terms, *puissance* is immanent power, power to act rather than power to dominate another; we could say that *puissance* is *praxis* (in which equals clash or act together) rather than *poiēsis* (in which others are matter to be formed by the command of a superior, a sense transcendent power that matches what *pouvoir* indicates for Deleuze).

In the most general terms Deleuze develops throughout his career, *puissance* is the ability to affect and be affected, to form assemblages or consistencies, that is, to form emergent unities that nonetheless respect the heterogeneity of their components. (Here we see the empiricist theme of the "externality of relations": in an assemblage or consistency, the "becoming" or relation of the terms attains its own independent ontological status. In Deleuze's favorite example, the wasp and orchid create a "becoming" or symbiotic emergent unit.)

Affection and affect:

Affection is the change in a body via an encounter with another body. Affect is the change in the power of being (the "conatus") of a body by means of the affection / encounter.

*Bonta and Protevi, Deleuze and Geophilosophy:*

AFFECT: the ('active') capacities of a body to act and the ('passive') capacities of a body to be affected or to be acted upon; in other words, what a body can do and what it can undergo. As Massumi indirectly notes (xvi), the use of this term derives from Deleuze's reading of Spinoza, in which Deleuze carefully distinguishes 'affect' as the experience of an increase or decrease in the body's power to act, from 'affection' as the composition or mixture of bodies, or more precisely the change produced in the affected body by the action of the affecting body in an encounter (Deleuze 1988b: 49).

In the main discussion of affect in ATP (256-7), DG curiously do not use the word 'affection', although the concept is there. DG distinguish the relations of extensive parts of a body (including the 'modification' of those relations in an affection resulting from an encounter), which they call 'longitude', from the intensities or bodily states that augment or diminish the body's 'power to act [*puissance d'agir*]', which they call 'latitude'. In other words, the 'latitude' of a body comprises the affects or the capacities to act and to be acted upon of which a body is capable at any one time in an assemblage. What are these 'acts' of which a body is capable?

Affects are 'becomings' or capacities to produce emergent effects in entering assemblages. These emergent effects will either mesh productively with the affects of the body, or clash with them. Meshing emergent effects will augment the power of that body to form other connections within or across assemblages, resulting in joyous affects, while clashing emergent effects will diminish the power to act of the body, producing sad affects. Affects as the capacities of an intensive body to act in forming assemblages are equivalent to the intensities passing on a Body without Organs, and are thus the object of ethical evaluation (165).

For DG, knowledge of the affects of a body is all-important: 'We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do [*ce qu'il peut*], in other words, what its affects are' (257). (Note that the 'passive' and 'active' senses of affect are combined in the French verb *pouvoir*. One can say 'je n'en peux plus' for 'I can't take anymore of this' as well as 'je peux le faire' for 'I can do it'.)

Now defining bodies in terms of affects or power to act and to undergo is different from reading them in terms of properties by which they are arranged in species and genera (257). According to affect as the capacity to become, to undergo the stresses inherent in forming a particular assemblage, a racehorse (carries a rider in a race; i.e., enters the racing assemblage) has more in common with a motorcycle than with a plow horse (pulls a tool that gouges the earth; i.e., enters the agricultural assemblage), which has more in common with a tractor. This is not to say that what is usually named in one regime of signs a 'plow horse' or 'tractor' cannot be made to race, just as 'race horses' and 'motorcycles' can be made to pull plows.

These affects as changes in the triggers and patterns of their behavior would, however, constitute another becoming or line of flight counter their usual, statistically normal, or

molar usages; it would constitute their enlistment in assemblages that tap different machinic phyla and diagrams than the ones into which they are usually recruited. Whether or not the bodies involved could withstand the stresses they undergo is a matter of (one would hope careful) experimentation.

