

areas as diverse as dance, feminism and geography. These latter might be taken as proof enough of the continuing fecundity of Deleuze's philosophy, but they belie the fact that it is still difficult to situate his work philosophically. Interdisciplinary appropriations too often compound this, turning 'Deleuzianism' into a game of recognition and thus merely succumbing to a new image of thought (*everyone knows* what a rhizome is ...). Although doubtless such works can and do succeed in producing worthwhile and productive syntheses, it is difficult to assess their claim to represent Deleuze's thought without a renewed, properly philosophical effort to examine the latter. But should this even matter, given that Deleuze himself told us simply to use concepts 'like a toolbox'? Such a riposte typifies the most deleterious aspect of the 'success' currently enjoyed by Deleuze; for any precision tool must be mastered before it is 'put to work', and for this one must understand, in turn, its own workings and its interaction with the rest of the conceptual 'equipment' in hand.

The first of our texts by GILLES DELEUZE himself, a short interview from 1981, offers a review of the enduring concerns of his ambitious philosophical project. Despite its brevity, the exchange merits translation because it sees Deleuze, despite his antipathy to being asked 'general questions',² speaking on a general level about his philosophical work, even going so far as to make a distinction – heretical by the lights of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* – between his own concerns and those of Félix Guattari in that work. In this exchange Deleuze recapitulates and reaffirms the major themes of his thought – a renewed

2. *Dialogues II*, 1.

philosophy of nature; the problem of the image of thought; the construction of a science of the problem, and of a new metaphysics; the battle against neurosis and the typology of multiplicities. The other contributors to our volume take up, in various ways, the question of the interconnection of these themes – how do they come to be integrated into a philosophy?

With a style that combines the resources of the conceptual, the poetic, the mythical and the etymological, ARNAUD VILLANI has constantly aspired in his work to do justice to the richness of Deleuze's thought, just as this thought itself, he argues, aims above all to do justice to the 'burl' of the real.³ Gerard Manley Hopkins, who Villani cites here, is indeed an intriguing reference-point for Deleuze, with his language of 'inscapes' and 'instress', 'oftening' or repetition, and 'cleaves or folds' in the 'burl of being'; but it is Villani's aim, without annulling this poetic affinity, to distance Deleuze from any model that would have us rely on God's grace (Hopkins) – and equally, on the grace of the universal (Badiou)⁴ – to take us from one 'cleave of being' to another.

For, as critics who attribute to Deleuze a politically suspect 'aestheticism' point out, it is in the practical sphere that an affirmation of 'life, in all its frightening complexity'⁵ is not enough: this complexity must be negotiated, reduced, decided upon. Against charges that Deleuze falls short of this exigency, Villani emphasizes the importance of the moral and political in his work, arguing that the central

3. A. Villani, present volume, 52.

4. See E. Alliez, 'Badiou: The grace of the universal', *Polygraph*, vol. 17, 2005:267-73.

5. G. Deleuze, 'Questions', present volume, 42.

problem of a Deleuzian metaphysics is that of ‘isolating the conditions of possibility for a complex act’.⁶ Indeed, Villani suggests that philosophy itself begins precisely when we try to think experience without sublimating its infinite riches by investing them in back-worlds. Succeeding in this would mean that action, no longer having a special status to whose strictures the poetic and noetic would have to be submitted, would multiply their infinite riches: like the sensible and thought, it would remain true to the ‘burl of being’ rather than fearfully ceding to a vicarious relation to it. Ethical action would not betray the infinitude of experience but would affirm it in its every work.

Such complexity would not at all preclude action from being ‘pointed’, punctual;⁷ only it would be a matter of an intense, implicated concentration rather than a decisive rupture: singular in the sense of the haecceity, the non-substitutable moment, rather than levelling all moments with a dis-qualified void. Here Villani pinpoints the most troubling consequence of the demand – increasingly made in respect of Deleuze’s (and Guattari’s) work – that a philosophy should prove its political mettle before even being considered as philosophy. This is a question of beginnings: in beginning with the infinitude of lived experience, Deleuze wished to see the ‘drastical’ rise to it; whereas in beginning with the demand for ‘decision’, we decide in advance against a truly philosophical – metaphysical – thought, thus impoverishing action and making political ‘truth’ the locus for an effect closer to the positive feedback of *hype*, drastically

6. Villani, present volume, 56.

7. *Ibid.*, 58.

disengaged from the real, than to a ‘labyrinth of creation’⁸ with a ‘thread’ always connecting it to the outside, keeping it open.⁹

Why would a ‘pure metaphysician’ see a theory of artistic creation as an essential component of his project? Precisely because ‘complex action’ finds at least one of its models in the artist’s attempt to endow the work – through a series of selections or decisions ‘concerning for example the relation of two neighbouring colours’¹⁰ – with the infinite complexity of his experience. This is the process that ÉRIC ALLIEZ & JEAN-CLAUDE BONNE detail in *Matisse-Thought*,¹¹ where they advance a radical new thesis with regard to Matisse’s development – namely, that the ‘Fauve period’ was not a wild anomaly but a period of rigorous experimentation which laid a methodological groundwork for everything that would follow. In the process, they demonstrate the pertinence of a Deleuzian ‘metaphysics’, in the rich sense explored by Villani, to an alternative conception of modern art and, indeed, modernity.

Rethinking Matisse’s painting as a practice of the ‘all-over’, in which the force of local actions is always determined in relation to neighbouring forces within a virtual ‘whole’, Alliez and Bonne recall the importance for Matisse of ‘a complete vision’ of this ‘whole’¹² – not a formal blueprint to be ‘transferred’ to the canvas but ‘an idea which one

8. *Ibid.*, 56.

9. T. Duzer, present volume, 254.

10. Villani, present volume, 56.

11. E. Alliez & J.-C. Bonne, *La Pensée-Matisse: portrait de l'artiste en hyperfaune* (Paris: Le Passage, 2005).

12. Cited in Alliez & Bonne, *Pensée-Matisse*, 75.

does not truly know except in so far as it develops with the growth of the painting'.¹³ Their thesis is that the importance of Fauvism, for Matisse, lay in a 'strict quantitative ordering' by which it governed this processual development.

As 'the empirical exercise of sensibility [...] can grasp intensity only in the order of quality and extensity',¹⁴ so the indissociability of quality and quantity indicates their mutual origin in intensity. The pursuit of the Idea in the processual unfolding of the work is not a quest for a particular contrast between 'a certain red and a certain green',¹⁵ since these qualities mean nothing apart from their quantity; it seeks, rather, an actualisation (one of many cases of solution) in which the 'proportions of tones' (quantities of qualities) will act like a kind of lens, converging sensations in order to repeat or rehearse an Idea (*focus imaginarius*) in itself imperceptible since intensive.¹⁶ The Idea of the whole does indeed come first, but its *expression* is assured only through a painstaking process of experimental *construction*.¹⁷

13. Alliez & Bonne, present volume, 209.

14. *Difference and Repetition*, 240.

15. Alliez & Bonne, present volume, 217-8.

16. *Ibid.*, 217; on the Idea as 'ideal focus' see *Difference and Repetition*, 169.

17. In a recent book, film-maker David Lynch adumbrates the characteristics of this constructivist-expressionist conception of the Idea as infinite heterogeneous multiplicity, and its actualization as intensive unfolding of differences: (1) *All at Once*: The Idea as event or encounter, as a singular moment or haecceity (the Idea is neither foundational or generic, but is always encountered within lived series). Why does touching the roof of a car heated by the sun 'cause' the appearance of 'the Red Room [...] the backwards thing [...] and then some of the dialogue'? (2) *Fragments*: The encountered Idea is already partially unfolded into a set of sensible fragments, only ever encountered in a state of 'degradation', but this degradation is in its very nature in so far as it appears. (3) *Expression*: The 'adventurous character of Ideas' implies a dialogue, a continuing conspiracy ('The Idea tells you to build this Red Room. So you think about it. Wait a minute, you say, the walls are red, but they're

An early experience during Matisse's apprenticeship with Moreau shows how this problematic had exercised Matisse, from the very first attempt to copy a painting in the Louvre, Chardin's *The Pipe*: he was 'baffled' by 'an elusive blue [...] a blue that could look pink one day, green the next.' In a strange, inverted prefiguration of his mature method, Matisse 'even cut up his own preparatory oil sketch and stuck bits on to Chardin's canvas, where each separate section was a perfect match, but when he put them together, there was no longer any correspondence at all. "It is a truly magical painting," he said, adding that this was

not hard walls. Then you think some more [...] they're curtains. And they're not opaque, they're translucent. Then you put these curtains there, but the floor [...] it needs something [...]). This pregnancy of the Idea, in the process of its expression-construction, suggests a new understanding of *anamnesis*: The retention of the singularity and the unpacking of its intensive differences 'incarnates' the Ideal event, so the work becomes the ground for repetition, rehearsal or recollection of what was inactual but was somehow encountered ('[...] you go back to the idea, and there was something on the floor, it was all there. So you do this thing on the floor, and you start to remember the idea more [...]) The successive posing of questions operates an 'enframing' of the Being-Idea-Problem constraining it to bring forth 'cases of solution' (*beings*) to which the former remains irreducible but without which it would remain the object of a sterile and mute contemplation (whether phenomenological or 'Platonic'). In this sense, and *contra* Heidegger, science, when it experiments, is no different from art, their estrangement merely responding to a conventional partition of Problems-Ideas on the basis of the apparent duality of quality and quantity, itself testifying to an 'image of thought' that capitulates to the covering-over of intensity or difference-in-itself. (The theme of *mathesis universalis*) (4) *The whole must be made*: This estrangement is dissolved in a 'superior empiricism': Ideas as experienced intensive states, in pure memory, employed in the assessment of an attempted repetition ('when you veer off, you *know* it [...] this isn't like the idea said it was'), in ensuring a fidelity to the event through its mediate reconstruction (or retro-struction) through the manipulation of quantity and quality in an 'all-over' organisation ('The idea is the whole thing - if you stay true to the idea, it tells you everything you need to know [...] You try some things and you make mistakes, and you rearrange, add other stuff, and then it feels the way the idea felt.') (D. Lynch, *Catching the Big Fish: Meditation, Consciousness, and Creativity* (London: Tarcher/Penguin, 2007).

the only copy he had in the end to abandon.¹⁸ Matisse was to pursue the reverse-engineering of this ‘magic’, the life of the painting, throughout his career – and this, as Alliez and Bonne show, through a meticulous and rigorous thinking of the dynamic relations between the intensive and extensive, quality and quantity.

That Alliez and Bonne see this new conception of painting as implicitly prefiguring a new political formation only makes more urgent the completion of Villani’s ‘typology of complex action’: for does politics, can politics, really proceed in such a fashion (even if ‘the factors of decision and prediction are limited’): ‘by experimentation, groping in the dark, injection, withdrawal, advances, retreats [...]’?¹⁹ In any case, their analyses, like Villani’s, are invaluable in uncovering the connection between what we might have understood as Deleuze’s metaphysics *stricto sensu* (the typology of multiplicities, the necessity of the virtual, difference), his ethics (denunciation of the priestly type, active and reactive forces), and his aesthetics (the notion of *intensity* as infinitely expressive force). Rendering back over to every instant of life what properly belongs to it, rather than sequestering it in an inaccessible site from which it will subject us, requires all of these resources.

As the coruscating conclusion to QUENTIN MEILLASSOUX’s contribution reminds us, it is not a question of ‘full communication’, which on the contrary represents a kind of extinction instinctively repugnant to the philosopher, personified in the conceptual incontinence of the

18. H. Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse: A Life of Henry Matisse*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1998; 2 Vols.) Vol.1, 85-6.

19. *A Thousand Plateaus*, 461.

‘ideas men’.²⁰ Against all ‘anarcho-delirious’ worship of flux, Meillassoux reads Deleuze as a Bergsonian philosopher of *subtraction*.

The symphonic sweep of Meillassoux’s text – from the *scherzo* of the opening conceit, which introduces an ‘unknown Deleuze’ in the guise of an obscure pre-Socratic, to the thunderous challenge with which it closes – is an index of the mercurial tenor of Deleuze’s own work. Meillassoux’s methodological proposal that we approach Deleuze through a mere fragment in order to ‘reconstruct’ his thought is not at all facetious: Better a modest, even reductive, model culled from a Deleuzian fragment, but understood ‘from the inside’ – through (re)construction rather than exegesis,²¹ than an opaque interpretative quagmire where partially-understood terms become precious tokens too profound to be understood – much less rationally reconstructed – by the profane. But in fact, Meillassoux meticulously demonstrates how the quest for immanence, the theme of ‘selection’, the refusal of the reactive, and the logic of matter, are all comprised, concentrated, in the tiny fragment, a prismatic shard in which is revealed a distinct-obscure image of the whole of Deleuze’s thought.

Pursuing Deleuzian immanence through Bergson’s critique of Kant and his theory of pure perception, we meet again with Villani and Alliez and Bonne’s analyses, in so far as the thing-in-itself is also a ‘telephone to the beyond’: a true metaphysics opposes Kantian critique with an affirmation that everything is before us just as it

20. Meillassoux, present volume, 105; See *What is Philosophy?*, 10.

21. See Meillassoux’s own justification of the methodological approach, present volume 69-70.

appears, owing nothing to a synthesizing subject. But this immanence raises new problems: why is the ‘burl of being’ differentiated at all, what kind of interruption of matter is a living being? As Meillassoux demonstrates, pure immanence and individuation can only be reconciled by thinking the body as the locus of a drastic subtraction from the infinitude of matter, a primary selection that provides the terms for the selection of will. This double selection is a key notion in Meillassoux’s thought, and here as elsewhere it informs a logic of the event as non-probabilisable and non-deterministic hazard. Events are the movements of ‘atoms of void’ across lines of flux, but, in line with Deleuze’s upholding of Leibnizian continuism, rather than a cut in the fabric of being, here the void is revealed as a stitch in time, a virtual loop drawn out from the weft of the actual.

HASWELL & HECKER’s performances of work created using composer Iannis Xenakis’s digital UPIC system operate a molecular re-engineering of the body through sound, inducing synaesthesia and an attunement to the microsonic. In their contribution to our volume they present some of the graphisms which are the basis of these transformational events, and their album of UPIC recordings *Blackest Ever Black*. In creating this new work for the UPIC, a computerised system that directly ‘translates’ drawings²² into sound, Haswell and Hecker invite a renewal of Xenakis’s musical thinking. As discussed in our accompanying text, within Xenakis’s own *oeuvre* the UPIC allowed the application to the microphonic texturology of his *concrète*

22. Among the drawings used is one representing the microscopic structure of a new material developed by scientists as an optimally non-reflective black surface – hence the title *Blackest Ever Black*. (See <http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn3356.html>).

works the same analytical resources his orchestral works had brought to bear on macrocompositional problems. But the invention of the UPIC was also inspired by a will to induct a new generation into abstract spaces of sound which went beyond the confines of musical tradition.

Haswell and Hecker’s work demonstrates that it would be wrong to reduce Xenakis’s marshalling of synaesthesia to a wish to get ‘through’ the music, to step ‘outside-time’. Although he will often seem to view the human ear as a lamentable constraint, a symptom of being a “‘Two-faced’ mortal”,²³ Xenakis, like Deleuze, is ultimately a chronicler of our amphibious condition: the ‘outside-time’ structures he seeks are always subject to the vagaries of perception, and although our unconscious may be roamed by packs of molecular sound, sonic events are unavoidably always the product of an integration.²⁴ As in Deleuze, virtual and actual are not the object of a value-laden dualism, but are the inextricable conditions for the emergence of a real: without both of them, no music.

As well as clear Leibnizian-Deleuzian themes (sustained and stable tones as exceptional cases of glissandi; *petites-perceptions*;²⁵ infinities within infinities²⁶), thinking through Xenakis also returns us to a theme that recurs throughout this volume: that of the ‘contraction’ of quantitative material phenomena into qualities. For Bergson,

23. (Parmenides) – Xenakis, *Formalized Music: Thought and Mathematics in Music*, trans. S. Kanach (NY: Pendragon, 1992), 203.

24. See Xenakis, *Formalized Music*, 8.

25. Haswell & Hecker, present volume, 111-2.

26. Xenakis in B. A. Varga, *Conversations with Iannis Xenakis* (London: Faber, 1996), 205-6.

in liminal phenomena (*e.g.* the lower notes of the scale)²⁷ a ‘detension’²⁸ comes into operation whereby we begin to break through the operation of contraction-memory and perceive matter itself, perceive the quantifiable series of intensities that science describes. Xenakis investigated this in the form of ‘acoustic beats’, where the interference patterns of waveforms create rhythmic pulses.²⁹ These phenomena reveal a continuum between tone and rhythm, a continuum suppressed by the stave’s perpendicular separation of infrasonic statistical aggregates (notes) and macrotemporal arrangements (rhythmic placement). In rendering this same stratification transparent,³⁰ the UPIC engineers a ‘transcendental encounter’ with the selection we make from matter.³¹ The time of music is a biological artefact, a two-dimensional sandbox made by ‘folding’ the vibratory continuum along a seam constituted by the limits of our auditory system (‘Our brain does a kind of statistical analysis’, ‘Our ear is nothing but a periodicity-counter’);³² a crease in our relation to the physical vibratory continuum. In mimicking these foldings the UPIC gives us the means to probe them, to ‘take the reverse path’³³ and to reinsert ourselves into the concrete continuum of sound, outside the traditional strictures of music, with its double-selection of preconstituted ‘notes’ and metric combinatorial space.

27. See Meillassoux, present volume, 79-80.

28. *Ibid.*, 80.

29. Xenakis in Varga, *Conversations*, 64.

30. See Haswell & Hecker, present volume, 119.

31. *Ibid.*, 86.

32. Xenakis in Varga, *Conversations*, 78, 91.

33. Meillassoux, present volume, 82.

Contraction is thereby revealed as a property, not of a synthesizing subject, but of the folds of matter – revealing to us the ‘concrete scale of temporalities’³⁴ along with our own temporality or rhythm.

We do not truly know how the twenty-one year old student **GILLES DELEUZE** came to write the introduction to a republication, by a private press specializing in esoteric works, of Johann Malfatti de Montereaggio’s nineteenth-century esoteric work *Mathesis: Or Studies on the Anarchy and Hierarchy of Knowledge*.³⁵ During his early years (1944-8) at the Sorbonne, Deleuze participated in monthly salons organised by the wealthy banker Marcel Moré, a friend of Bataille’s. In the leftist Catholic context of the soirées at Moré’s apartment and the so-called *sessions de la Fortelle* hosted in mediaevalist Marie Madeleine Davy’s grand *château* as ‘cover’ for Resistance activities, discussions of esoteric topics undoubtedly played a part in what must have been a heady atmosphere, mingling extra-academic intellectual exploration with furtive, morally-charged acts of resistance. Young lights of the Parisian intellectual scene including Deleuze and his close friend Michel Tournier were also, no doubt, respectful of mystically-inclined hostess Davy,³⁶ whose work suggested that the truth of mediaeval

34. *Ibid.*, 80.

35. We are indebted to Knox Peden, Thomas Duzer, David Reggio and Christian Kerslake for valuable information and discussion on Deleuze’s text which has informed the following notes.

36. See F. Dosse *Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari: Biographie croisée* (Paris: La Découverte, 2007), 116; and J. Moncelon, *Marie Madeleine Davy ou le désert intérieur* (Paris: Les Cahiers d’Orient et d’Occident, 2006). Deleuze prefaces another of the early essays, ‘From Christ to the Bourgeoisie’ with a dedication to Davy, who also edited a series of books for Griffon d’Or, the publisher of *Mathesis* (see C. Kerslake, ‘The Hermaphrodite and the Somnambulist: Deleuze and Jean Malfatti de Montereaggio and

philosophy was to be discovered in a closely-guarded, esoteric, monastic thought that had remained faithful to the mystery of divine revelation.

But if it was through the patronage of Moré and Davy that Deleuze came to write the piece, this reveals little about his motivation in doing so, nor why he later requested its excision from his official bibliography. In any case, within this essay Deleuze is already operating a characteristic philosophical ventriloquism: To a large extent his reading of Malfatti is an opportunity to articulate his own preoccupations, themes which traverse all of his works of the 1940s. The real question is what Deleuze found in Malfatti that could be affined to his own project.³⁷ It seems that ultimately Deleuze sees in mathesis a kind of ethical

Occultism' in *Culture Machine* (2007), at <http://culturemachine.tees.ac.uk/Cmach/Backissues/j008/InterZone/kerslake.htm>, n. 2).

37. This is not to deny that Deleuze was interested in Malfatti's book, for certain key images present in Malfatti recur throughout later works – see Christian Kerslake's work ('The Hermaphrodite and the Somnambulist – *op.cit.* – and *Deleuze and the Unconscious*, London: Continuum, 2007, particularly Chapter 4), which suggests deeper connections between Deleuze and 'occult' thought, constructing a kind of counter-history to the official account of Deleuze's work by indicating a porous boundary between the canon and 'discredited' occult works. The methodological key to Kerslake's approach might be found in his argument that insisting on the 'obnoxious term "occultism"' itself represents a kind of implacable resistance to the all forms of priestly tradition – even esoteric tradition – in favour of an anti-establishment dedication to all that is obscure and repressed (Kerslake, 'The Hermaphrodite', n. 27). In that case, if it seems immoderate to us to undertake a wholesale reinterpretation of Deleuze's work on this basis, this apparent immoderacy itself answers to the performative exigency of an 'occultist' revolutionary stratagem. Kerslake's renewal of the link between the problem of resistance and the mysteries of the occult is pursued within an irreproachable scholarly framework, which perhaps only augments its seditious potential, even if in the short term it courts the risk of encouraging an interpretation of Deleuze as 'mystic'. What must ultimately be sought is a key to Deleuze's integration of these 'occult' elements, along with the 'official' history and practice of modern European philosophy, into one singular mode of thought. Kerslake's work is invaluable and pioneering in its painstaking recovery of long-forgotten resources that may be necessary for this task, and demonstrates, once again, just how many 'Unknown Deleuzes' there are.

imperative indexed to the refusal of transcendence, and a monism elaborated on the basis of lived experience. As always, then, in the background, it is Spinoza who silently presides over the work in progress.

Deleuze's philosophical voice emerges during a period where the rallying-cry of a philosophy which was to sweep away the severity of interwar *epistemologie* was that of a 'return to the concrete'.³⁸ The moral disquiet aroused by the dark years of Occupation seemed to demand an unmediated examination of the moral and philosophical stakes of lived experience. For Sartre and his contemporaries an appropriation of Heidegger's work offered a powerful and convenient way to recuse the already-palling academic Brunschvicgian credo that the only way to rigorous philosophical questioning was through an apprenticeship in scientific thought: Instead, it opened up a much-needed *immediate* philosophical access to the politically-dramatic problem of freedom.

Nevertheless, Deleuze does not appear to have taken the easy path of simply neglecting or dismissing science on account of the monstrous engines of death it had recently produced. He does identify the need for the return to 'concrete life' as being an exigency posed at root by 'the principle of an anarchy',³⁹ that of the apparent irreconcilability of science and philosophy. But, far from seeking to collapse the entire field onto either of these mutually

38. David Reggio explores this aspect of Deleuze's work in 'Jean Malfatti de Montereaggio: A Brief Introduction', at <http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/history/news-events/malfatti.php>; and 'The Deleuzian Legacy', *History of the Human Sciences* 20:1 (2007), 145-60.

39. Deleuze, 'Mathesis', present volume, 142.

incomprehending discourses, Deleuze describes both as being based upon an uninterrogated ground: that of objectivity (science) and that of the representations of a cognizing subject (philosophy). This dualism, of course, is ‘essentially the Cartesian opposition between extended substance and thinking substance’. However, in his aspiration to a *mathesis universalis*, Descartes himself envisions ‘a third order, irreducible to the other two [...] the unity, the hierarchy beyond all anarchic duality’.⁴⁰ Similarly, runs Deleuze’s argument, Malfatti’s book set out to rediscover this *mathesis universalis* in which (in ancient Indian civilisation) mathematics and metaphysics had enjoyed an original unity, and so to restore us to this unified plane.⁴¹

This notion that the knowledge handed down by our intellectual forefathers was subtended by a mysterious lore was indeed widespread into the nineteenth century, frequently paired with that of a unified science or *mathesis universalis*. In the 1946 edition of *Mathesis*, Ostrowski mentions fellow nineteenth-century thinkers Oken and Ampère as seeking the same ‘universal synthesis’ as Malfatti, and repeats Malfatti’s own claims that this mathesis is descended from Plato and Proclus. Descartes, in outlining (in the *Regulae* and the *Géométrie*) his model for a universal science of discovery, similarly confides that he seeks only to rediscover a hidden science which, going beyond the purely formal and deductive methods available to mathematics in his own day, would explain how the ancients were able to

40. Deleuze, ‘Mathesis’, present volume, 143.

41. ‘Incognitum’ (present volume 156-75) examines the first, numerical or arithmosophical study; For an account of the content of Malfatti’s *Mathesis* in its anatomical, embryological and medicinal aspects, see C. Kerslake, ‘The Hermaphrodite’.

achieve such prodigious feats of discovery.⁴²

Deleuze superposes Malfatti’s vision of *mathesis universalis* onto that of Descartes; but he also ‘twists’ Descartes himself. For Deleuze’s understanding of mathesis as a third type of knowledge misunderstood by both science and philosophy owes less to Descartes’s vision of an *ars inveniendi* than to the ‘three kinds of primitive notions’ invoked in the correspondence with Elizabeth,⁴³ where Descartes’s response, when pressed on the nature of the union of mind and body, is that although following the thread of philosophical meditation leads us ineluctably to conclude the truth of dualism, in our pre-philosophical state, and in the greater part of our lives where philosophical meditation is pushed aside by everyday life, the reality of this union is

42. See M. Otte & M. Panza. *Analysis and Synthesis in Mathematics: History and Philosophy*, *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science* 196 (Boston: Kluwer, 1997). For an account of the importance of *mathesis universalis* in Descartes’ mathematical thought, including a history of the notion itself, see C. Sasaki, *Descartes’s Mathematical Thought*, *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science* 237. (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2003). Importantly, according to Descartes a part of this *mathesis universalis* lies in the determination of the conditions of a problem (See *Regulae* Book II ‘Concerning Problems’) – and here, indeed, for Deleuze too one rediscovers the unity of science and philosophy: ‘It is in this manner, it seems to me, that philosophy might be considered a science: the science of determining the conditions of a problem’ (Deleuze, *Responses*, present volume, 41). However, as Deleuze remarks, Descartes’s achievements here belong to the mathematical *stricto sensu*; he failed to apply his discoveries about the constitution of problems to the philosophical sphere (‘Descartes the geometer goes further than Descartes the philosopher’ – *Difference and Repetition* 323n. 21). Of course, it would be Bergson who would remedy this failure; but all too *philosophically*, so that Deleuze would need to re-inject a differential mathematics into the Bergsonian account of problems, via Riemann, Lautman *et al.*...

43. In particular, Descartes’s letter of 28 June 1643: R. Descartes *Oeuvres Philosophiques*, ed. F. Alquié (Paris: Garnier, 1973, 3 Vols) Vol III. 43-4 (R. Descartes *Philosophical Writings*, trans., ed. E. Anscombe & P.T. Geach, London: Thomas Nelson, 1970, 279).

quite present *to the senses*,⁴⁴ so that the common man perceives no dualism, but a perfect unity. The truth of dualism and the fact of union cannot be present together – we come to appreciate both points of view, suggests Descartes, only in alternating between long periods of unreflective life where union is known experientially ‘by means of ordinary life and conversation’,⁴⁵ and short bursts of meditation. In his 1972 edition of Descartes’s *Oeuvres philosophiques*, Alquié will explicitly link Descartes’s third mode of knowledge to ‘what we call the pre-reflexive’,⁴⁶ rendering pithily Descartes’s contention thus: ‘to be conceived of, the union must be lived’ [*pour concevoir l’union, il faut le vivre*].⁴⁷ From the point of view of a philosophy of the mind and a science of pure extension, the union is contingent. And yet it is ‘proved’ by experience, before philosophical reflection even begins, and again when it ends.⁴⁸

This torsion exerted on Descartes allows Deleuze – at the price of the relation to Malfatti’s text becoming somewhat strained – to connect the problematic of *mathesis universalis* to the existentialist ‘return to the concrete’. Attaining mathesis will not be a question of lost lore and mystical initiation, but of a transformative thinking of one’s own individual existence and its relation to one’s fellows, and to the universal.

Sartre was the foremost contemporary influence on Deleuze’s philosophical thought. But if Deleuze’s

44. *Ibid.*, 44 (279).

45. Descartes, *Oeuvres*, 45 (*Writings*, 280).

46. *Ibid.*, 45n2.

47. *Ibid.*, 45n1.

48. *Ibid.*, 47n1.

contemporaries whispered of him as a ‘new Sartre’⁴⁹ it was more for his startling creative freedom of thought than for his fidelity to the *maître*’s word. In his early works, Deleuze takes up certain Sartrean themes only to critique and transform them, always on the basis of the argument inherited from *The Transcendence of the Ego* – one of Deleuze’s earliest and most abiding philosophical influences – for a field of immanence pre-existing the subject.

In ‘Mathesis’ Deleuze takes up Sartre’s critique, in *Being and Nothingness*, of Heidegger’s notion of the ‘crew’ [*Mannschaft*] as model for thinking others [*l’autrui*].⁵⁰ For Heidegger, the other is no object; rather *Mitsein* is part of the very structure of *Dasein*, as a sort of primary ‘ontological solidarity’. Sartre complains that Heidegger has only *described* the problem of others rather than *solving* it, and that his common existence, the primacy of the ‘us’, tends to level all distinctions, making of each individual a mere case of a generality. But Deleuze in turn felt that Sartre’s model of a ‘reciprocity of consciousnesses’, each using their intentions and desires to paper over the crack in the world which is the other, also evaded the real problem of others: it imagines pure consciousnesses stealing the world from each other, undermining each others’ centralisation, with the world being merely the empty field across which their combat rages. Sartre’s progress over Heidegger lies in the fact that he recognizes the relational aspects of the subject to the other; but his error is to make the other its own *I*, an inverted image of myself.⁵¹

49. Dosse, 116.

50. J.-P. Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. H. E. Barnes (London: Methuen, 1986), 246-52.

51. See A. Beaulieu, *Gilles Deleuze et la phénoménologie* (Paris: Sils Maria, 2004), 61-3.

In another 1946 paper, 'Description of a Woman', Deleuze condemns Sartre's conception of love, which, he argues, seems to be predicated upon a sexless and neutral world of 'pure souls', so that sexuality is conferred upon the beloved only by the lover. In moving toward the definition of an immanent, *a priori* structure of the other – and therefore a conception of desire without lack – Deleuze announces the 'great principle'⁵² of his early work: 'Things haven't been hanging around waiting for me in order to exist'.⁵³ For 'I do not attach my little significations to things. The object does not *have* a signification, it *is* its signification.'⁵⁴ The world is already a world of *concepts*, of things bonded with significations, before the subject even appears.⁵⁵ In concrete, pre-reflexive experience, it is not that 'I am tired', but that there is a 'tired world' in which the road, the sun, are all tired.⁵⁶ Equally, there is not an objective cube and the space which we impose upon it as form of appearance, nor even a fullness hollowed-out 'behind' our adumbrations of it, but the cube as concept.⁵⁷ Into this immanent world comes the other, as possibility of *another* world, and at once I become I, that is, I decompose these concepts,

52. G. Deleuze, 'Description of a Woman', trans. K. W. Faulkner, *Angelaki* 7:3 (2002): 17.

53. Deleuze, 'Mathesis', present volume, 148. Cf. 'Description of a Woman', 17, 20; Not only is Deleuze, therefore, no phenomenologist, he is also no 'correlationist'!

54. G. Deleuze, 'Statements and Profiles', trans. K. W. Faulkner, *Angelaki* 8:3 (2003): 17.

55. Hence 'concepts are the things themselves, but things in their free and wild state, beyond "anthropological predicates"' (*Difference and Repetition* xx-xxi, translation modified).

56. Deleuze, 'Description of a Woman', 17-8.

57. Deleuze, 'Mathesis', present volume, 148-9.

making part of them 'mine' and part the objective world's. Where before there was a world of concepts 'in the flesh', or 'phosphorescent objects',⁵⁸ now there is 'my world', a world that immediately appears 'mediocre'.⁵⁹ Expelled by the 'intimate phosphorescence' of pure immanence, each individual qua individual must face the other-as-possible-world in 'mediocrity', without any common measure, each taking on the problem of life on their own account: how is the universality of life to be thought, regained?⁶⁰

The immediate political stakes of 'Mathesis', where this

58. All of this is developed most beautifully in Michel Tournier's novel *Friday* (trans. N. Denny, NY: Pantheon, 1985), a book that is absolutely crucial for understanding of the early Deleuze – It is clear that in the Sorbonne years, in advance of the 'rhizome Deleuze-Guattari', there was a 'rhizome Deleuze-Tournier'. In Tournier's novel, Robinson is disabused of the conception of the subject in the world as a 'spotlight' passing over various indifferent objects with its attention and intentions, realising that it is modelled upon the thought of *another* as a secondary structure of selection within a world that *must already be constituted* in order for that selection to take place. This first world, one of 'objects phosphorescent in themselves', is ruptured by some singular anomaly or inconsistency, and 'excretes' the subject. In 'Tournier and the World Without Others' (*Logic of Sense*, 341-59), Deleuze will explicitly name this a structuralist theory of the other (the other is a structure which particular others can come to occupy); but the importance of *Friday* lies in its demonstration that the 'structure' is neither ontological nor eternal – in certain circumstances it is liable to decompose, returning the world to its phosphorescent state through a series of intermediate disintegrations – from Robinson on the isle of Speranza to Robinson-Speranza. Tournier-Deleuze participate at once in the structuralist destitution of existentialism and in a virtual flattening of structure into a field of immanence – however knotted, the thread that binds us can always be unravelled and followed back to this virtual field.

59. See Deleuze, 'Statements and Profiles', 86-7: in this 1946 essay the 'crew' represents the possibility of reconciliation with the otherwise threatening and hostile 'alternative possible world' of the other: I 'team up with the other' to realize a world beyond what has now become 'my world' and thus mediocre. Although the threat of rivalry still subsists within 'the spirit of the crew', 'The Crew is the only way to escape from mediocrity'. *i.e.* from the contingency that appears as soon as one 'owns' the world as a subject. Meanwhile the task of philosophy is that of 'remov[ing] any pejorative sense from the word mediocrity'.

60. Deleuze, 'Mathesis', present volume, 144.

convoluted philosophical argumentation rejoins the urgent contemporary affirmation of the concrete, are made plain in Deleuze's citation of Ostrowski's preface.⁶¹ The 'human problem', a practical problem which mathesis aims to solve, is that of the betrayal or affirmation of 'complicity'. Where Nazism, 'a unity founded on a cult of force', assembled its crew on the basis of a subjection to general principles and a biopolitical substitutability, we must find a conscious complicity on the basis of an initiatory experience of the universality of life, guided by the principles of mathesis. The 'human problem'⁶² lies not in creating a crew whose members would be 'equal' and interchangeable, but in 'passing from a state of latent ignorant complicity to an affirmative complicity', affirming that 'the universality of life as an outside' is attested to in each apparently isolated individual, and indeed genetically conditions and constitutes him.⁶³ Far from mathesis being a transcendent mysticism, then, for Deleuze it describes a discourse on the condition of *a life*, relating it to the infinity of Life; a logic of 'the multiplicity of living beings which knows itself as such' and 'refers back to unity' through 'complicity'.

1953's *Empiricism and Subjectivity* seems a valuable 'missing link' between 'Mathesis' and *Difference and Repetition*, in that it marks the first appearance of a quasi-mathematical concept of integration in precisely the same context – the creation of the social in a model that refuses forced sociality in favour of the *positive realisation of complicity* ('The question is no longer about transcendence, but rather about integration');

61. *Ibid.*, 145-6.

62. *Ibid.*

63. *Ibid.*

'The problem of society [...] is not a problem of limitation, but rather a problem of integration [...] to integrate sympathies' writes Deleuze, building on the thesis of the positivity of institutions outlined in 'Instincts and Institutions'.⁶⁴ This in turn may point the way towards Deleuze's ultimate model of *mathesis universalis* in *Difference and Repetition*, that based upon differential calculus. If that work turns to mathematics *simpliciter*, this would seemingly tip the balance of the 'anarchy' in favour of science; but equally there seems to be a reciprocal movement whereby Deleuze 'esotericises' that very mathematics, by approaching it through routes he calls 'barbaric' and even explicitly 'esoteric'.⁶⁵

In the 1946 essay, mathesis is neither mathematical nor mystical. Like Bergson's intuition, it relates to the individual's solitary path, once displaced from 'a world' to 'my world', towards a rediscovery of the immanence of the concrete and immediate – a way to recover from a 'fundamental lapse of memory' on the part of Being itself⁶⁶

64. In *Desert Islands*, 19-21.

65. *Difference and Repetition*, 170. Deleuze's other 'occult' influence, the Polish messianist Hoëne Wronski, was also a mathematician, and defined a quite properly mathematical 'supreme law' which, unifying all mathematical functions and thus all scientific knowledge, was to provide the only possible opening to a true *mathesis universalis*. For a general account see P. d'Arcy, Hoëne-Wronski, une philosophie de la création (Paris, 1970); For a mathematical exposition see C. Philli, 'La loi suprême de Hoëne Wronski: La rencontre de la philosophie et des mathématiques', in E. Ausejo, & M. Hormigón (eds) *Paradigms and Mathematics* (Madrid: Siglo XXI de España Editores, 1996). More important to Deleuze, however, is Wronski's defence of a true (non-finitistic) mathematics of the infinitesimal (See A. Guerraggio & M. Panza, 'Le Réflexions di Carnot e le Contre-Réflexions di Wronski sul calcolo infinitesimale' in *Epistemologia* 8:1, 1985:3-32). For it is on this point that Deleuze will take his stand against the divergence of mathematics from philosophy, in advocating a return to 'barbaric' or 'esoteric' interpretations of the calculus.

66. 'Bergson, 1859-1941', in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, 23.

through an understanding of the meaning of individuation (the ‘natal’⁶⁷ rather than being-towards-death). Mathesis treats of the nature of life anterior to philosophical reflection and scientific objectivity, that is to say before the cleavage between the subject and object of thought: it returns us to ‘things-in-themselves in their wild state’, the world of *concepts fauves*.

In *Le désir de l'éternité*,⁶⁸ Alquié had founded human experience on an essential loss and nostalgia attendant upon our finitude, allowing as true philosophers only those who had the courage *not* to claim vainly to reestablish links with the infinite and the immortal (Spinoza, therefore, the ultimate enemy). Why, then, does Deleuze aver that he learnt the specificity of philosophy from Alquié?⁶⁹ Perhaps because he affirms Alquié’s conception of philosophy as being linked with a fundamental encounter, whilst refusing the proposition that in this initiatory moment we meet the *inadequacy* of our finite thought: for Deleuze, to authentically encounter our ‘mediocrity’ or ‘enfoldedness’ is at the same time to discover the thread that can guide us back to infinite immanence: When we truly encounter that which can only be experienced from the point of view of our individuation, we also encounter a phosphorescent outside that no longer receives its status from elsewhere, and that is our true ‘common measure’.⁷⁰ This, finally, is the meaning of

67. Deleuze, ‘Mathesis’, present volume, 152.

68. Paris: PUF, 1943.

69. ‘The Method of Dramatization’, in *Desert Islands*, 107.

70. Since Deleuze’s Malfatti not only reverses the cogito – (‘sum, ergo cogito’) but also introducing sexuation and reproduction into it (‘sum, ergo genero’) – this text evidently belongs to the period when ‘there was still a specifiable relation between sexuality and metaphysics’ (Deleuze, ‘Questions’, present volume, 40). The notion of the sexual act as the highest point of pre-reflexive existence, when the individual,

mathesis for Deleuze; all that is ‘mystical’ about it is that each must live it on their own account – in Alquié’s words, *pour concevoir l’union, il faut le vivre*. We must initiate ourselves into the immanence of conscious complicity⁷¹ – not, like Descartes, ‘by means of ordinary life and conversation’, but perhaps like Bergson, through a concentrated effort to reach ‘the immediate data’, guided by symbols-concepts.

It is a paradox that a philosopher who spoke out in the strongest terms against the history of philosophy as an oppressive institution⁷² should demand, for a full understanding of their work, a formidable labour, precisely, in the history of philosophy – and not even just in philosophy, since from the start Deleuze drew upon eclectic resources. A difficulty facing the would-be student of Deleuze’s works is that, considering this breadth along with the complicated conceptual modulations to which he subjects his sources, Deleuze seems simultaneously to demand and to repel close scholarly scrutiny. JOHN SELLARS, however, has had the courage to begin this work, specifically in exploring Deleuze’s (and Deleuze/Guattari’s) use of ancient

the species, and nature itself are affirmed at once, is obliquely taken up in 1953’s ‘Instincts and Institutions’ where the question of reflex, ‘at the intersection of a double causality’ leads to the question ‘Useful for whom?’ – See ‘Instincts and Institutions’, in *Desert Islands*, 20-1.

71. Marie Madeleine Davy dedicated much study to the concept of ‘initiation’ (Moncelon, 5). Other echoes of Davy’s doctrine of a ‘pure experience of the presence of the divine which cannot be transmitted’ (Moncelon, 3) can be found in Deleuze’s work. For Davy, ‘The liberatory awakening is achieved in the desert, *i.e.* in the country of thirst, of the reading of signs and of the encounter. The true encounter takes place within, and becomes experience. An inexpressible experience whose essence is unknowable’ (*Ibid.*, 2). For a less apophatic but undoubtedly related understanding of the ‘inner desert’ as initiation in Deleuze, see ‘The Shame and the Glory: T.E.Lawrence’ in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 115-25.

72. See *Dialogues II*, 13.

sources. In thus calling Deleuze's bluff, he makes possible an intriguing glance behind the scenes, of a type that no amount of enthusiastic intra-Deleuzianism could yield.

In order to determine what transformations Deleuze exerts upon the supposedly Stoic theory of time advocated in *Logic of Sense*, Sellars compares Deleuze's exposition against that of the Stoic thinkers themselves. Now, Deleuze certainly never concealed the fact that he approached other philosophers, not with a view to representing them faithfully, but with a view to producing new 'monsters'. Accordingly, whatever cautions it may suggest to us regarding our reading of Deleuze, Sellars's article should not be read as a debunking 'exposé'. Rather, like Meillassoux's demonstration of the 'grafting' of Bergsonian onto Nietzschean selection, it exemplifies a 'stratigraphic' superposition in the 'ideal space' which, according to Deleuze, is characteristic of philosophy.⁷³ Explicitly-held doctrines are traced back into the problematics that spawned them, introducing a depth of field into the linear view of the history of philosophy. If, in the process, positions become attached to the 'wrong' names, it might well be said that this reveals the real, effective, process of doing philosophy: creative moments only arise out of such slippages and misalignments. That said, as a case study in Deleuze's 'ventriloquism' in the history of philosophy, Sellars's is certainly a cautionary tale: in the absence of research such as this, mere recitals or applications of theories such as 'the stoic theory of *Aiôn* and *Chronos*' will conspire against any possible estimation of the extent and nature of Deleuze's philosophical inventiveness.

73. *Dialogues II*, 16.

If Meillassoux proposed that we make the text 'not the *object*, but the *instrument* of the elucidation' of Deleuze's work,⁷⁴ MEHRDAD IRAVANIAN's is an even more radical methodological proposal. Perhaps, in addition to drawing on his architectural practice, recalling the Islamic tradition according to which any 'text' that can be systematically extracted from the Koran belongs equally to the word of God,⁷⁵ Iravanian offers a development of Deleuze's thought in *The Fold* that owes absolutely nothing to external interpretative resources, but seeks an 'unknown Deleuze' through an approach at once graphic and truly 'literal', dealing with 'unread characters'.⁷⁶ This explication of Deleuze's book employs the text both as methodological programme and raw material for a transversal experiment in architectural ontology and impersonal memory.

THOMAS DUZER's text 'In Memoriam' of Deleuze offers a concentrated survey passing through the major themes of our volume, and indeed of Deleuze's *oeuvre*, working backwards from the philosopher's dramatic exit from our world, over a decade ago now. In particular, Duzer sets out vigorously to defend Deleuze against Badiou's *post-mortem* critique, quite correctly refusing to cede to the conception of Deleuze as 'virtuoso phenomenologist'.

We have already mentioned the diversity of sources Deleuze drew upon in assembling his singular philosophy. In particular, the eclectic table of references in *Difference and Repetition* has only just begun to be mined for insights

74. Meillassoux, present volume, 65

75. For instance, using the numerological system of ABJAD: See 'Incognitum's contribution to COLLAPSE Vol I (Sept. 2006), 189-210

76. Iravanian, present volume, 232.

into the development of his thought. J.-H. ROSNY's enchantingly weird SF tale 'Another World' sheds some light on one of the now-obscure authors cited therein.

Rosny discovers two necessary tendencies at work in life and in thought, corresponding to the 'two deaths' unveiled by Meillassoux,⁷⁷ or to *Anti-Oedipus's* two poles of paranoia ('a growing simplification [...] more and more abstract negative concepts [...] pseudo-void')⁷⁸ and schizophrenia ('the mind is lost in the infinity of forms and actions').⁷⁹ We might draw a parallel also between Rosny's faith in scientific thought and the instinct for beauty, and Xenakis's affirmation that universality is achieved 'not through emotions or tradition, but through the sciences,' guided by the artist's intuition.⁸⁰ Duzer characterizes the Deleuzian break from truth-as-master-category as consisting precisely in such *experimentation*,⁸¹ and Rosny, as will be seen in this tale, was the champion, above all, of experimentation.

In trying to identify the philosophical specificity of Deleuze, one name arises most often. It seems as if, in order to give Deleuze the proper philosophical status he deserves, the same must be done for Bergson, who – at least in the Anglo-American philosophical community – languishes on the sidelines, still apparently harbouring 'something that cannot be assimilated' to 'an image of thought called philosophy.'⁸² Along with Deleuze's attempts, already

77. Meillassoux, present volume, 102.

78. Rosny, *Les sciences et le pluralisme* (Paris: Alcan, 1922), 4.

79. *Ibid.*, 4

80. Xenakis in Varga, *Conversations*, 47.

81. Duzer, present volume, 249.

82. *Dialogues II*, 15, 13.

in his early works, to recreate a true ('phosphorescent') Bergsonianism *against* the contemporary heralding of phenomenology as the arrival of a true (that is, corrected) Bergsonianism, we should mark Meillassoux's identification of a *differential* between Bergson and Deleuze: What is important in the relation Bergson-Deleuze is their *divergence*, what Deleuze *selects* from Bergson. And the extent to which, in making his selection, he sets out to become 'more Bergsonian than Bergson'. One could say this also of the other philosophers Deleuze encounters – is he not also 'more Kantian than Kant' in his pursuit of a transcendental philosophy and an immanent critique beyond the inherited philosophical categories which Kant desperately tried to re-erect within them? 'More Sartrean than Sartre' in selecting the pre-reflexive immanence of *The Transcendence of the Ego* as the master's singular moment, and setting out to preserve and prolong it? A supreme 'Leibnizian' in preserving the monadological *mathesis* but affirming the primacy of divergent series ...? Every philosopher is the site of warring endeavours; Deleuze extracts what he considers the most powerful, the most revolutionary lines, and extends them as far as they will go (for example, in his 'selective reading' of *chronos* and *aiôn*). We certainly need, for example, a *critical* examination of Bergson, with an eye to what is irretrievably obsolete in his thought – but, as Meillassoux shows, Deleuze himself already carries out this operation: and in fact the shaping of Deleuze's philosophical assemblage often occurs when lines of argument selected from one influence limit those from another.⁸³

83. We have seen above that the rethinking of *l'autrui* was a founding moment in Deleuze's formation, as the 'possible worlds' of Leibnizian perspectivism cut across Sartre's oppositional model. We would also indicate the important critique

Of course, we should not be afraid to do the same with Deleuze himself; to read him selectively would indeed be an apt task for a post-Deleuzian era. But in order to get to the stage where we can do so, we have to understand – or even better, reconstruct – the various dimensions of Deleuze’s philosophical thought, paying attention to their interrelations and interdependencies. Another ‘differential’ appears to be key to this task: Thomas Duzer’s article confirms that an examination of Deleuze’s work would today be unthinkable without reference to Alain Badiou’s *The Clamor of Being*. And the service Badiou’s remarkable and provocative book has done to Deleuze consists in making it impossible for ‘Deleuzianism’ to remain a comfortable orthodoxy sheltered from all criticism and unprepared to define and defend its key concepts rigorously. There can be no doubt that the controversy – at once ontological, political and aesthetic – between Badiou’s still-evolving work and the legacy of Deleuze’s, will be an enduring one. But what counts is to ensure that it serves to deepen our appreciation of the complexity of the work of both thinkers, rather than betraying it through mutual caricature and partisanship. This means preserving the chances, not of a reconciliation, but of a fruitful confrontation.⁸⁴

of Bergson’s critique of intensity (*Difference and Repetition* 239), on the basis of the Nietzschean requisites for a theory of force (See *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 27 – Bergson’s mistake was precisely to have ‘invoked the rights of quality’, confusing quality with the intensive and attributing to the former what belongs properly to the latter). The relevance to Alliez and Bonne’s reading of Matisse should be obvious.

84. Note that both Villani – a key protagonist in the initial, hostile reaction to Badiou’s book in French Deleuzian circles – and Meillassoux – a former pupil of Badiou’s (although by no means a ‘disciple’, since he has clearly defined an original philosophical project of his own) both end up, along with Badiou (but in very different ways) defining Deleuze’s primary philosophical orientation as *ascetic*, whether (for Meillassoux) ‘subtractive’, or (for Villani) ‘drastical’.

So what indeed, for instance, ‘made [Deleuze] choose the word “life” as Being’s main theme’? This is, as Badiou says, ‘a real question’.⁸⁵ But here as elsewhere, the *bons mots* that have entered into circulation as convenient slogans for ‘summing up’ Deleuze have served his philosophy badly. ‘[N]ever write a single sentence which is not immediately a vitalist affirmation’ – rather than abusing this as a confirmation for whatever tendency we have decided in advance to advocate or denigrate in Deleuze, it must be subjected to the kind of close scrutiny exemplified by the contributions to this volume.

We wager that as this is done, it will become evident that Deleuze’s vitalism, rather than being a simple ‘given’, constitutes a central *problem* in his work. As Duzer hints, even in his death Deleuze morally distanced himself from a vitalism that would uphold the sanctity of life at all costs. The ‘life’ Deleuze speaks of is expressed in stranger, more hidden varieties: it has as much, if not more, in common with the ‘life of music’⁸⁶ whose forms Xenakis dissected; the life of colour as explored in Matisse-thought⁸⁷ (or, indeed, the ‘exemplary life of the soil’ of Dubuffet’s *texturologies*, or ‘one of Pollock’s lines’);⁸⁸ the life of knowledge as evoked in Malfatti’s *Mathesis*,⁸⁹ or the vitalism-structuralism of Rosny’s structures of beauty or his evocation of the ‘life

85. A. Badiou, *Briefings on Existence: A Short Treatise on Transitory Ontology*, trans. N. Madarasz, NY: SUNY Press, 2006, 64.

86. Haswell & Hecker, present volume, 114.

87. Alliez, present volume, 212.

88. *Dialogues II* (Preface to English Edition), viii.

89. *Scientia vitae in vita scientiae* appears on the title page of the Malfatti volume – see present volume, 140, 143.

of science⁹⁰ – and even (affording a glimpse of one of those common inherited problems of Badiou and Deleuze) the ‘life of mathematics’ spoken of by Cavaillès and Lautman,⁹¹ than with a vulgarised Bergsonian *élan vital*. Only once we understand the common thread that runs through these ‘forms of life’ will it be opportune to ask (but perhaps then the question will not seem so simple) whether this ‘vitalism’ can be salvaged from a philosophically fatal analogy with the biological animal. In short, if Deleuze’s thought is a ‘Fauvism’ then it is one which, like Matisse’s, owes nothing to a Romantic conception of expression valorising spontaneity and anarchical liberation.

The contributors to this volume instead describe a life as the outcome of meticulous selections, a barricade against the infinitude of matter which nevertheless maintains a

90. Just as the syntheses, the orientations, the repetitions of the organism, have not resulted in uniformity (the living being is more and more differentiated), so the syntheses, the orientations, the repetitions of science do not have homogeneity as their outcome.’ *Les sciences et le pluralisme*, 7.

91. It is surprising to see such a phrase in the work of such a reputedly ‘severe’ philosopher. For Cavaillès, it seems, this mathematical life was nurtured through a series of ‘gestures’ which transformed previous thoughts into the objects of a new thought, gestures which he set out to describe and classify. (See the 1939 discussion between Lautman and Cavaillès in ‘La pensée mathématique’, *Bulletin de la Société française de philosophie*, 40 (1939), 1-39; reprinted in Jean Cavaillès *Oeuvres Complètes de Philosophie des Sciences* (Paris:Hermann, 1994), 593-630.

Along with Brunschvicg’s ‘Mathematical Philosophy’, French *épistémologie* was also animated, albeit unavowedly, by the Bergsonian theme of the primacy of the problematic (see E. During ‘A History of Problems’: Bergson and the French Epistemological Tradition’, *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, vol. 35 no. 1, January 2005). More fruitful, therefore, than betraying it by making it the object of an exclusive dialectical choice between philosophers of ‘life’ and those of ‘the concept’ (See Badiou, ‘The Adventure of French Philosophy’, *New Left Review* 35, Sept.-Oct. 2005), would be to explore as a singular formation this vigorous philosophical movement founded on the practice of interrogating science in its becoming rather than as stockpile of knowledge (for such an approach, see Frédéric Worms ‘Between Critique and Metaphysics’ in *Angelaki* 10:2 (Aug. 2005):39-57).

thread back to that infinitude. And a subject which – far from preceding and governing what is perceived, ‘belongs wholly to matter’.⁹² Given the equal importance for Deleuze of the problems of the withdrawal from flux, of actualization, and of construction, his metaphysics cannot be reduced to a quasi-religious valorization of the virtual. The virtual, the ‘dream’,⁹³ will always lack reality, which belongs to the ‘inclusive disjunction of the actual and the virtual’⁹⁴ and their mutual interplay.⁹⁵

Yes, Deleuze’s thought unfolds within the element of philosophy, it is a *philosophy*⁹⁶ in the grandest and most speculative sense: a genetic structuralism, a transcendental empiricism, an abstract vitalism, an ethics as ‘knowledge of life and life of knowledge’;⁹⁷ but above all it develops the logic of multiplicities⁹⁸ required to describe – within a pure immanence, infinitely implicated, shaped by problem-ideas or nested series of differences – the constructive-expressive

92. Meillassoux, present volume, 75.

93. Villani, present volume, 50.

94. *Ibid.*, 51.

95. It seems equally mistaken to think the relation as one of irreversible emanation from virtual to actual, or of spiritual ascent from actual to virtual: Deleuze speaks of ‘virtuals’ and ‘the actual particles by which they are both emitted and absorbed’ (‘The Actual and the Virtual’, *Dialogues II*, 112; italics ours; Cf. the important concept of ‘miraculation’ in *Anti-Oedipus*, 12-3.

96. See Duzer, present volume, 250-1.

97. Deleuze, ‘Mathesis’, present volume, 147.

98. Whilst Badiou tells us simply that ‘Deleuze despised logic’ (A. Badiou, *Briefings on Existence: A Short Treatise on Transitory Ontology*, trans. N. Madarasz, NY: SUNY Press, 2006, 122). Deleuze displaces it into an empiricist *mathesis universalis*: ‘logic does not interest us, either everything is logical or nothing is’ (‘Capitalism and Schizophrenia’ in *Desert Islands*, 2004 *XX*) yet ‘empiricism is fundamentally linked to a logic of multiplicities’ (*Dialogues II*, ‘Preface to English Edition’, viii).

COLLAPSE III

actualisation of a singularity through partial, local cut-outs integrated to make a whole, a new, singular and dynamic point of view, a life.

We do not claim to have presented in this volume a definitive and complete account, but instead a series of cut-outs, a kind of collage, or a transversal selection of elements, towards an ‘all-over’ portrait of Gilles Deleuze. As the contributors demonstrate – something that is often missed when theorists seek to make use of one or another of Deleuze’s concepts – Deleuze is a philosopher whose thought is at its most powerful when concentrated, grasped as a whole, even if at those rare moments when we manage to do so – when ‘all parts have found their definitive relations’⁹⁹ – we are all too aware that it will once again escape us. This, after all, is the measure of the complex action of a philosopher’s thought, which must therefore be ‘creatively limited’¹⁰⁰ in order to be prolonged. We intended to make possible some such moments of concentration, some such creative selections.

We would like to end by expressing our sincere gratitude to all of our contributors, who have given freely of their work and of their time, in what has once again been a truly collaborative process. The assembly of this volume has proved the most challenging yet, but, as we hope to have indicated in this brief survey, in the making it has become far more than the sum of its parts.

Robin Mackay

Falmouth, October 2007.

99. Alliez & Bonne, present volume, 218

100. *A Thousand Plateaus* 344-5; See present volume, 116.