**Volcanic Lines: Deleuzian Research Group**

**Details and Reports of Events**

**Kant, Deleuze and the 'great outdoors' of speculative realism**

A roundtable discussion to mark the publication of *Thinking between Kant and Deleuze – a strange encounter*, a new collection of essays that engages with the debate between naturalism and transcendental thought.

PARTICIPANTS: Matt Lee (Greenwich) - Michael Olson (Villa Nova, USA) - Edward Willatt (Greenwich)

WEDNESDAY 24TH JUNE

7PM - 9PM

Room KW003

University of Greenwich, Maritime Campus, Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich

The inspiration for this event comes from *After Finitude* where Quentin Meillassoux refers to ‘the great outdoors’ of the pre-critical thinkers before seeking to overcome the allegedly stifling correlationist circle from within on the basis of a principle of factiality. The plan for the roundtable is to discuss the challenge posed by speculative realism to transcendental philosophy. Each participant will make some brief remarks rather than giving a full paper and then there will be a round table discussion and questions from the audience. We hope that this will provide a space for responding to the work done in the *Collapse* journal and the recent speculative realism workshops.

**18th APRIL 2009 - One Day Workshop on Deleuze's 'Foucault'**

The workshop on Deleuze’s Foucault, held on 18th April 2009 at the University of Greenwich, was a very productive day. There were four presentations and very wide ranging discussions. A number of problems and issues were located in the text and developed in relation to the wider context of the philosophies of Deleuze and Foucault.

The notion of the ‘historical a priori’ was discussed at length. Deleuze locates this notion in Foucault’s work as part of an account of different historical eras. The disjunction between statements and visibilities, or between language and light, embodies the a priori specific to a historical period. This reading was contrasted with the version of Foucault favoured in the social sciences. This is based upon his later writings and privileges empirical analysis. On this reading Foucault is concerned with description and presents us with a hyper-empiricism. The philosophical dimension is removed. Such a contrast was seen to show that Foucault is playful and very hard to categorise. This is reflected in David Macey’s The Lives of Michel Foucault where he writes that ‘Alive, [Foucault] would have rejected the advances of any biographer; in death, he still struggles to escape them’ (p. xi).

In contrast to the social science approach, Deleuze locates a philosophical account of experience in Foucault. This account is thoroughly historical without being a form of historicism. It is an account which provides us with historical a priori’s and these are the disjunctions between language and light or statements and visibilities. As part of this reading Deleuze locates ‘a sort of Neo-Kantianism’ in Foucault, something which was explored in the first presentation of the day by Edward Willatt of the University of Greenwich. An a priori account of experience is made historical and is also ‘externalised’ by referring not to faculties but to statements and visibilities that mark out the space and time of different historical eras. Discussion focused upon the structure of change in this account. How do historical a priori’s change?

A further issue for discussion was Foucault’s concern with history and finitude. He seeks to explain how finitude became a problem within history. It is the transcendental-empirical double that arises as a problem within finitude and history. Also discussed was the ‘biopolitics’ that Foucault formulated in the late 1970s. This does not involve any pre-determinate specificity but can impose any form of behaviour on any human multiplicity or society. The problem was raised that this makes the a priori in Foucault formal rather than historical, challenging Deleuze’s reading. Deleuze and Guattari had tried to account for the specificity of capitalism in their Capitalism and Schizophrenia volumes but Foucault’s biopolitics is non-specific. This leaves us wondering if Foucault’s a priori is too abstract.

Foucault’s articulation of the relation between the diagram and the outside was shown to make resistance primary. The ontological primacy of forces is set against ‘capture’ or ‘articulation’ in the diagram. It is the fold that remains in the outside, unlike the diagram. It was noted that instead of drawing upon a notion of ‘force’ or ‘life’ Foucault emphasises techne and technique. His strategic thinking does not need any sort of ontological primacy – such as that which we could attribute to force – because it is cartographic and typological. Thus, it was argued, we do not need to access a more ontologically primary dimension. This was presented as an anti-transcendental account of subjectivation. Foucault is seen to have undermined the ontological discourse that divides the primary and the derivative. We have strategic thought that does not rely upon an ontological dimension of subjecthood. In Foucault’s later work we find a description of different practices or forms of description rather than anything philosophically rich. This reading was set against the ontological Nietzscheanism that Deleuze locates at the base of Foucault’s thought. Deleuze seeks to start with forces and then explain things (as we see in his Nietzsche and Philosophy). This differs from the agnostic stance that Foucault pursues.

The second presentation was given by Alberto Toscano of Goldsmiths College, University of London, and foregrounded cartography and spatial terminology in Deleuze’s Foucault. Forms are composed by relations of forces in Foucault’s work, something that provides an ontological continuity that undermines the discontinuity between historical formations. Deleuze focuses upon the way in which statements and their relations produce different spaces in Foucault’s account. This is an intensive and abstract space, not a physical or dynamic one. This produces a determinate topology, one that is ontological insofar as topology is the type of thinking most adequate to multiplicities. It is the form of the abstract most adequate to multiplicities which are supremely concrete by their very nature. This was situated in opposition to any conception of totality and historical movement, such as we find in Hegel and Marx. Power is topological and strategic rather than implying any totality. Forms and abstractions operate but do not imply totalising or dialectical thought. Thus capitalism is presented as a whole but is located everywhere, as Deleuze and Guattari seek to show in their Capitalism and Schizophrenia volumes.

The danger of solipsism in later Foucault was raised. If the event is an opening to forces, exposing the subject to variation, is it necessary to avoid solipsism? Foucault does allow forces to have this role but how does he define them as they operate in the event? The outside is always ‘within’ and resistance can only take place on the inside. This brings with it the danger of a constant falling back onto death (something which Peter Hallward claims to find in Deleuze’s work, pointing to his reference to Charles Dickens in ‘Immanence: A Life’ [Peter Hallward, Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation, p. 24-5]). The solution is folding, where we go ‘outside inside’. We don’t go outside ourselves but undergo ‘tiny deaths’ inside the subject rather than a ‘big death’ that takes us beyond the subject. A philosophy of death is developed here, one which doesn’t go the outside or ‘deterritorialise’ too fast. This concern with interiority and selfhood was developed as an alternative to leaving the subject behind, a way of re-thinking the subject rather than abandoning it in favour of an outside.

After lunch the place of Deleuze’s Foucault in the history of Foucault scholarship was explored by Rodrigo Nunes of Goldsmith’s College, University of London, in the third presentation of the day. The course of Deleuze and Foucault’s correspondence was also considered. The defractions and points of misunderstanding between these two thinkers were brought out in their exchanges. This presentation suggested that Deleuze’s concern to separate saying and seeing, or light and language, in Foucault was a ‘forcing’. However, it does bring out what is unique about Foucault. Whereas Foucault disliked Deleuze’s conception of desire, associating it with a Freudian and Lacanian notion of lack, Deleuze disliked Foucault’s conception of pleasure, seeing it as an interruption of desire, a reterritorialisation. For Deleuze, in contrast to Foucault, strategy is something associated with systems of power and is secondary to desire and its potential lines of flight. It seems as if Deleuze and Foucault come at the same philosophical problem from different directions: via desire in one case and pleasure in the other.

The presentation also tackled the problem of freedom in Deleuze and Foucault. For Deleuze freedom seems to be a condition of being – it is ‘just there’. Does this mean that there is no need to worry about repression? However, for Deleuze resistance happens but we do need to analyse it, to discover its conditions. You do care about oppression because it happens and you feel it. However, for Foucault metaphysics doesn’t embody an ethics and a politics. It doesn’t matter what it is but it matters what you can do with it. This constitutes Foucault’s positivity – ‘what actions are possible within the dimension made possible by the diagram?’

For Foucault we must be non-philosophers, drawing diagrams rather than being concerned with how a diagram can be drawn as Deleuze is. He doesn’t seek to think the new conditions in which things can be thought, he just goes and does it. It is always a matter of where you are, provoked from where you are, under the strategic conditions of where you are. Where you will be tomorrow doesn’t matter. For Badiou Deleuze’s weakness is that he makes everything continuous, continuity is everywhere. Time is the unchanging and continuous form of all change. For Foucault you think from where you are. There is here a ‘performative contradiction’ because there is no yard stick external to time. One must always refer back to oneself because one is implicated in what one describes. This is Foucault’s radical ‘immanentism’ – immanently producing an immanent philosophy.

The final presentation of the day, given by Matt Lee of the University of Greenwich, defined the ‘statement’ as the transcendental formulation of Foucault’s notion of discourse. Rather than a totalising notion of progressive development there are series of connections distributed around singular points or statements. In his Archaeology of Knowledge statements are connected to monuments. We have explicitness here because there is nothing to be drawn out of the statement, no non-set to be drawn out of the set. There is no latency – its rules are found at the same level as itself. In Deleuze’s Foucault we find an anonymous ‘associationism’, an imaginative and fictionalising process. Archivists catalogue the anonymous murmur from which this arises. At the end of the book we find a call to become master of one’s speed and one’s own molecules. This led to the question: what about animals with no language?

It was argued that while in Foucault we find life, labour and language, only language is involved in Deleuze’s reading of his work. It is language that provokes transcendental reflection and Deleuze is caught in this emphasis on statements. These statements are so abstract that they do not seem to be language at all or to be associated with human activity or communication. Statements are mapped onto singularities. It seems as if Foucault is providing an account or ontology of language. The argument was made that Deleuze is in fact bringing together The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Order of Things when he talk about ‘language’ in his Foucault book. In fact, while the former can be described as a radicalisation of John Searle’s work, taking speech acts further, the latter presents an ontology of language.

Foucault tells us how, and not why, a certain discourse formation emerges. Deleuze, however, has trouble accounting for the continuance of statements and curves without invoking empirical connections of meaning in language. He is trapped because he starts with discourse and risks explaining association via meaning structures.

Deleuze’s move back to the subject in Foucault was shown to involve folding as a process of individuation. This, it was argued, was individual subjectivation rather than the collective subjectivation present in the Capitalism and Schizophrenia volumes that he wrote with Felix Guattari. An account of individuation is to be found in Difference and Repetition but now returns in the form of folding and without a notion of dissolution of the self. The self has a consistency it didn’t have in Difference and Repetition. The conclusion was drawn that Deleuze has to fold in order to avoid being a philosopher of death.

This was related to Deleuze’s move in his essay ‘The Actual and the Virtual’ (to be found in Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet’s Dialogues II). Here a naturalistic move is made with the virtual understood as a cloud surrounding a thing. We even find a pure ‘actualism’ here, something also suggested by Deleuze’s notion that everything is real in Foucault’s notion of the statement and by his reading of Spinoza. Is this the effect of Foucault’s positivism, an ‘actualism’ full of forces and folds which introduce a dimension of virtuality.

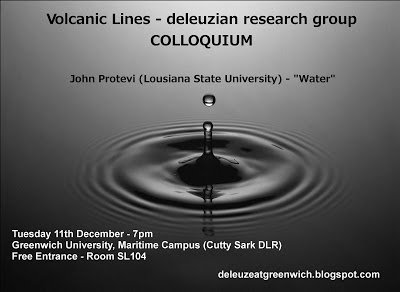
This highly productive workshop left us with a number of questions which go to the heart of Deleuze’s relationship with Foucault. These included…

• Is Deleuze distinguished by his concern to provide a philosophical account while for Foucault it is not the ‘why?’ but the ‘how?’ that matters?

• Is Foucault’s zone or field of strategies more immanent than Deleuze’s neo-Kantian concern to provide a philosophical account of experience? Is practice more immanent than theory? Can we have one without the other?

• Does Foucault avoid assuming the role of force or language while Deleuze tends to make such things ontologically primary without actually accounting for them?

• What is the role of Foucault in Deleuze’s return to the subject in his later work?



**Workshops on Deleuze and Guattari’s Anti-Oedipus, October-December 2007**

Week 1 - chapter 1. The Desiring-Machines

Week 2 - chapter 2. Psychoanalysis and Familialism: The Holy Family, parts 1-5.

Week 3 - chapter 2, parts 6-9

Week 4 - chapter 3. Savages, Barbarians, Civilized Men

Week 5 - chapter 3 continued

Week 6 - chapter 4. Introduction to Schizoanalysis

**Time and Location**

The sessions will be held in King William Court, Maritime Greenwich Campus (see a campus plan and travel directions here). The sessions will take place in Kent Hall on the first floor of King William Court.

**Format**

The sessions will begin with a short presentation on the themes of the weeks text. This will be followed by an open discussion of the text. Notes of the discussion will be posted online at dialogues at greenwich, the research group's forum for further discussion.

**The Context of this Reading Group Workshop series on *Anti-Oedipus***

We find Slavoj Zizek writing in his Organs without Bodies of '...the inner tension of Deleuze's thought between Anti-Oedipus and The Logic of Sense, between the Deleuze who celebrated the productive multitude of Becoming against the reified order of being and the Deleuze of the sterility of the incoroporeal of the Sense-Event.' (p. xi) Zizek favours the latter Deleuze. In Alain Badiou's Deleuze: The Clamour of Being, tackled by this research group last Autumn, we find that the two volumes of Capitalism and Schizophrenia are neglected. With Guattari's role and its value downplayed by such readers of Deleuze the time seems ripe for a re-assessment of, and re-engagement with, the first collaboration of Deleuze and Guattari. Does it provide satisfying answers to the philosophical questions and problems that Zizek and Badiou emphasise? Should it provide such answers? These and other questions will be posed over the six weeks of the Reading Group Workshops.

Reading Group Workshop 1 on Deleuze and Guattari's 'Anti-Oedipus'

**Chapter 1. Desiring-Production**

This week a group of scholars from across London met for the first of a series of six workshops on this text. The session began with a presentation by Dr. Matt Lee (Greenwich) that set out the themes and problems of this chapter.

Pages references below are to the Continuum 2004 edition.

Matt argued that we find Anti-Oedipus beginning with an affect, something that declares itself. This is a literary technique, used by Deleuze and Guattari to start thinking about desire. He drew attention to the repeated use of ‘it is…’ This is a surging forth. Matt also argued that Deleuze and Guattari here ‘state and then explain’, as Deleuze very often does in his writings. He pointed to the proliferation of different names for this surging forth – desire, machines, schizophrenia, flows, production … .

At page 47 desiring-machines are defined. Matt argued that here we find a critique that identifies bad theory and ideology, disputing its understanding of machines. The critique targets idealism, finding it oppressive because it psychologises the mental. At page 48 Naomi Klein is discussed and subject to severe critique over her psychoanalysis of children. Desire is said to operate on the basis of lack in psychoanalysis, psychological projection through fantasy that establishes an ‘inability to be’ in the subject of psychoanalysis. They lack the completeness of the object of desire.

At page 24 Matt drew attention to the equivalence of false materialism with typical forms of idealism in Deleuze and Guattari’s account. He argued that this is a very Marxist moment. Psychoanalysis is also made use of because it discovers drives even if it then buries them beneath the idealism of Oedipus. Deleuze and Guattari affirm Marx’s move beyond Hegel in arguing that ideas are materially produced. They then move beyond Freud in affirming that desire is materially produced.

Matt also argued that readings of Deleuze and Guattari which present their philosophy as the liberation of consumption and the consumer are quite wrong. For them the consumer is produced as an idealist category and as such is subject to critique. There is in reality just a produced consumption situation. At page 29 Deleuze and Guattari argue that the objective being of man must be restored, echoing Marx and opposing idealism.

The presentation then considered the three moments that Deleuze’s work often formulates whether writing with or without Guattari. This is despite their hatred for the three moments of the Oedipal triangulation.

At page 26-27 we find Deleuze and Guattari being critical of Kant. Matt took from their contention that Kant’s critical revolution changed ‘nothing essential’ that for them the debate between idealism and materialism is what is essential. This shows their allegiance to Marx.

The discussion considered the term ‘transversality’ and this was related to the ongoing debate over Deleuze and Guattari’s individual roles in Anti-Oedipus. It was argued that Guattari’s role is down played in the secondary literature because the texts are read in Deleuzian terms alone. For Guattari transversality is about moving in a different way, breaking up normal ways of operating. It is a methodology, the self transportation beyond a territory in group practice. A territory is grasped in order to go beyond it.

The 'body without organs' was discussed at length. It was suggested that it is the unfolding of the subject to an unprecedented degree. It was related to the need to ‘be merely objective’, to build on the level of desiring-production. The body without organs as disorganised matter was compared to the role of larvae in Deleuze’s Difference and Repetition. There is a primary production of affects – something without organisation - and then there is regulation. In psychology, it was argued, regulation is the problem because it implies idealism.

Attention was given to Deleuze and Guattari’s affirmation of Kant’s theory of matter, how me makes matter ‘profoundly schizophrenic.’ Could it be that this relies upon Deleuze’s understand of time in Kant as being ‘time out of joint’ (see ‘On Four Poetic Formulas That Might Summarise the Kantian Philosophy’ in Deleuze’s Essays Critical and Clinical). If time is an a priori form of matter in Kant then matter is made ‘schizophrenic’ by the liberation of time from space, from its ‘joints.’ This is what Deleuze and Guattari develop when they make the three temporal syntheses of desiring-production into the way in which matter into schizophrenia as a process.

Returning to the perplexing ‘body without organs’ we considered Deleuze and Guattari’s notion that it is an egg. This was referred back to Difference and Repetition where the egg is also talked about. It was related to the unliveable life of matter that is schizophrenic as a process. No one can undergo the forces and process that occur in the egg and yet the egg produces the different ways in which matter is organised in liveable forms. Calling the body without organs an egg affirms that it more than makes up for the organisation it lacks (the forms of liveable matter) with its own dynamisms. The egg is the limit of a process of production but does not resemble its products in any way, any more than the egg or embryo resembles the adult which it produces.

The discussion also tackled Deleuze and Guattari’s concern with desire. Is force or drive a better term than desire given that desire is so attached to its subjects and objects? Does not desire become something else thanks to Deleuze and Guattari’s re-thinking of it. It was noted that Deleuze and Guattari give up the term machine after Anti-Oedipus. It was pointed out that Deleuze was concerned that the term machines was too masculine. However, Deleuze did later define his use of desire as equivalent to Foucault’s use of the term pleasure and Foucault characterised pleasure as force. Force then is made the condition of real experience, escaping the attachment of desire to objects and subjects, as well as to interests. Does not force carry less baggage then desire?

It was suggested that the term drive implies a singularity while desire implies a multiplicity. A further idea put forward was that Deleuze and Guattari seek to criticise the term desire by turning it into something else. The strangeness of desire without an object or subject, as desiring-production, is what they seek to present.

Deleuze and Guattari’s comments on Lacan in the first chapter were also discussed. For Lacan the subject is split and then tries to put itself back together without ever achieving this. Lack is fundamental. It was noted that in the recently published Guattari Papers Guattari writes of dreams of Lacan that he has had and then interprets them using psychoanalytic methods.

Lacan’s split subject and mirror stage were set against the residual subject of the machines that emerges in Anti-Oedipus. In Difference and Repetition we get a fractured self and distorting mirror of the groundless ground of individuation. The fracture of the self is not a lack but full of a swarm of Ideas.

A final point was that Guattari’s development of group analysis suggests a ‘group subject’ rather than a ‘subject group’.

Reading Group Workshop 2 on Deleuze and Guattari's 'Anti-Oedipus'

**Chapter 2. Psychoanalysis and Familialism: The Holy Family, Sections 1-5**

The notes below are complicated by the fact that members of the group are using different editions of 'Anti-Oedipus'. The page numbers referred to as 'old edition' are found in the edition published in 1984 by the Athlone Press and then Continuum. Those labelled 'new edition' are from Continuum's new compact edition of 2004. What follows is taken from my notes and is in many ways incomplete. Those who were present are very welcome to add to the notes by commenting on this post or e-mailing additional points to volcaniclines[at]hotmail.com Please also feel free, whether or not you attended this workshop, to question or discuss the points raised by posting a comment.

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This weeks session began with a presentation on the themes of this weeks text by Edward Willatt. The presentation began with the notion that Oedipus is dogma (page 51, old edition). Deleuze and Guattari describe the 'Oedipus structure as [a] system of positions and functions' (page 52, old edition). It has the role of 'distributing in a given domain desire, its object, and the law.' It thus marks out a space of action but for Deleuze and Guattari this is hopeless. The object of desire is inadequate, dogmatic activity is frantic and then runs out of energy. The psychoanalytic cure is endless and becomes banal. The 'frantic Oedipalisation' practiced turns into a loss of energy because the object or limit is not the 'body without organs' but the complete objects and global persons projected by psychoanalysis.

At page 53 Deleuze and Guattari argue for a desire that is not reduced to its products in order to think the marking out of spaces of activity that are not at all hopeless. These spaces must not be marked by a dogmatic subject and object. The structures and persons of psychoanalysis are products while machines are 'the Real in itself.'

At page 54 we see Deleuze and Guattari argue that Freud had discovered a liberated understanding of desire, making it the domain of three syntheses. However, they argue that Freud did not maintain the immanence of syntheses to desire. The terms of desire, the marking out of the field of its activity, were not immanent to desiring-production. It is important to note that the thinker to whom they turn for the criteria of immanent synthesis is Kant. In his Critique of Pure Reason Kant sought to formulate three syntheses to deal with appearances that we are modelled on the 'thing in itself.' His critique of dogmatism was a prelude to his elaboration of three syntheses. For Kant dogmatic metaphysics is a theatre as it is for Deleuze and Guattari, it produces hopeless characters. For Kant we find dogmatists and sceptics, for Deleuze and Guattari neurotics and paranoiacs, to name just two. Just as Oedipus is set up above the flows and break-flows of desiring-production, so the 'thing in itself' is set up above appearances and their immanent syntheses. Kant's concern with appearances rather than the 'thing in itself' seems to connect productively with Deleuze and Guattari's concern with partial objects rather than complete objects.

In the second section of chapter two (entitled 'Three Texts of Freud') Deleuze and Guattari write that psychoanalysis '...measures the unconscious against myth...' (page 57, old edition) Time finds its model and measure in a myth space. This means that the roles and functions time is able to mark out in space become monotonous. Everything is decided in advance by myth and this limits the energy of activity, ensuring that it is always exhausted and never continuous. Deleuze and Guattari again move from Freud to Kant when they seek a non-mythical conception of time. We see this in Deleuze's 'On Four Poetic Formulas Which Might Summarise the Kantian Philosophy' (to be found in 'Essays Critical and Clinical'). Here Deleuze writes of how Oedipus was '...urged on by his wandering as a derived movement.' In contrast 'Hamlet is the first hero who needed time in order to act, ...' He adds that 'The Critique of Pure Reason is the book of Hamlet, the prince of the north.' Now time is not defined by succession. Things are successive in different times but 'simultaneous in the same time, they subsist in an indeterminate time.' (p. 28-29) This means that in time we find the scope of the first synthesis of desiring-production in a 'time out of joint' or time without a mythical space as its model. The whole of time can be drawn upon.

At page 59 Deleuze and Guattari sketch an illegitimate use of the second synthesis (the synthesis of disjunction). Here the marking out of a space of activity is recorded but this use of synthesis can be legitimate or illegitimate. Psychoanalysis is said to make castration the 'common lot' of the two sexes. It is something lacking in both that distributes lack in both series. It means that 'you are girl or boy!' This is an exclusive use of disjunction, any attempt to mark out roles once and for all so that people can only seek to come to terms with these roles.

On page 65 we see Deleuze and Guattari subjecting Freud himself to analysis, diagnosing him as a dogmatist as we see Kant doing to his contemporaries. They see Freud at the end of his life realising that something is wrong with psychoanalysis. 'The cure tends to be more and more interminable!' All energy has gone out of the practice because it is dogmatic, it does not have the object that is the real source of all energy (the body without organs). In seeking to account for the energetics of machinic thought and practice, a continuous energy, Deleuze and Guattari point to '...a type of resistance that is nonlocalizable. It would seem that certain subjects have such a viscous libido, or on the contrary a liquid one, that nothing succeeds in “taking hold.”'

The third section of chapter two ('The Connective Synthesis of Production') puts forward the notion that '...the sole problem is always one of allocation on a scale of intensities that assigns the positions and use of each thing, each being, or each scene...' (p. 68). This is a concern with a matter full of intensities that mark out things, beings and scenes. It is not a theatre modelled in advance by myth but rather a factory of production.

At page 72 the 'body without organs' is presented as a third term that '...reinjects producing into the product, extends the connections of machines, and serves as a surface of recording.' Deleuze and Guattari's concern that there is nothing behind production is developed here. It is this lack of organs that provokes production to be productive. We can see Kant's influence here if we consider his concern with zero degree intensity in the 'Anticipations of Perception' in the 'Critique of Pure Reason'. This mechanism seems to be put to work here in order to think desiring-production, to find in the movement between intensities the continuous production of things, beings and scenes. For Kant it is zero degree intensity that is behind the continuity of different degrees of intensity. It prevents appearances from expressing a 'thing in itself.' Whatever Deleuze and Guattari's distaste for Kant's ends may be their concern with his mechanisms is clear. We see them not asking what Kant's system means but how it works.

The fourth section of chapter two is entitled 'The Disjunctive Synthesis of Recording.' Here Deleuze and Guattari are concerned with how the connections that mark of a space of activity are lived. At page 75-76 (old edition) they write that 'This time it is a matter of the maximum conditions under which persons are differentiated. Hence the importance of the Kantian definition that posits God as the a priori principle of the disjunctive syllogism, so that all things derive from it because of restriction of larger reality...' What is important for Kant is that the Idea of God is not a cognition, a unity of the understanding, but a unity of reason that operates in the advance of cognition. Like the 'body without organs' it does not resemble what is organised but has an ongoing role in how things become organised and disorganised. This 'larger reality', this Idea of what the synthesis of disjunction can do, does not do the work of synthesis. It is an Idea of the widest and continuous use of inclusive disjunction rather than of exclusive disjunctions marked out in advance and waiting to be discovered. The latter conception would for Kant be the 'thing in itself' and for Deleuze and Guattari complete objects and global persons. What things, being and scenes become through disjunctions is left open because this totality is not already synthesised and because the energy contained in this Idea is a divine energy.

At page 78 Deleuze and Guattari explore the exclamation 'I am' – the series of intensive states that makes up the passive self who is subject to the activity of synthesis.

Section five of chapter two, 'The Conjunctive Synthesis of Consumption-Consummation', seeks to account for a residual subject of machines. Deleuze and Guattari develop the nature of the passive self: 'It is a matter of relationships of intensities through which the subject passes on the body without organs, a process that engages him in becomings, rises and falls, migrations and displacements.' (p. 84, old edition) This third synthesis of desiring-production differs from Kant's third synthesis in the Critique of Pure Reason. In the latter the active subject, the transcendental unity of apperception, corresponds to the object=x. For Deleuze and Guattari the active subject and object=x is the 'body without organs'. It is compared to R. D. Laing's voyage of initiation, something described as a transcendental experience. It is an experience of being subject to productive syntheses, being passive in the face of synthesis. Deleuze and Guattari elaborate this as '...a series of emotions and feelings as a consummation and consumption of intensive quantities, that form the material for subsequent hallucinations and deliriums.' (page 84, old edition)

At age 97 Deleuze and Guattari write that 'Structures exist in the immediate impossible real.' This reflects their concern to find the desiring-machines at work in any thing, being or scene. The 'I am...' is the residue or surplus value of the machine.

At page 104 Deleuze and Guattari distinguish between preconscious investment, made according to the interests of opposing classes, and unconscious investments, made according to positions of desire and uses of synthesis. Interests are defined as being those of the subject, the individual or collective who desires. For the unconscious these things that 'I am' are not marked out in advance and so interests are not given in advance. This connects with the contemporary debates over the collectivity that is possible given the apparent decline of class identity. What is collectivity after class? Perhaps Guattari's analysis of the group, discussed later in the session and reported below, can respond to this pressing question.

At page 105 we find desire elaborated as what which 'flows and runs', this is how we know that it is present in immediate reality. It carries us along 'toward lethal destinations.' This raises the question of the value of the activity that desire produces or accounts for. Peter Hallward's reading of Deleuze ('Out of This World', Verso, 2006) questions the value of the activity that he accounts for – it is contemplative (in)activity. Deleuze himself, in the 'Dialogues' chapter 3, cautions that desire must not account only for festival-like activity. This reflects the un-livable nature of desiring-production but also how it is a regulative ideal, in a Kantian sense, that makes constructive activity possible. Deleuze and Guattari seem to focus upon affective encounters so as to keep in play an account of the activity of subjects in relation to objects.

At the end of section five, on page 106 (old edition), Deleuze and Guattari provide a method for reading a text. Searching for what is signified or for a signifier is to be avoided. To read a text is to make productive use of a literary machine which is '...a montage of desiring-machines...' They envisage '...a schizoid exercise that extracts from the text its revolutionary force.' We see here that Derrida is inverted. Rather the world as text we have the world as a continuum of machines and the text as another machine. It does not talk about the world and is not representative of the world. However, its own production must be singular enough to exemplify the world's productive activity or the way the world works (desiring-production as such).

The discussion began by questioning the Kantian reading of Anti-Oedipus that the presentation had put forward. The arguments had been that 'Kant works!' and as a result Deleuze and Guattari hold their noses and overcome all the 'northern fog' so as to make use of Kant's mechanisms. Their reading of Kant is about use rather than meaning. Thus Kant's 'object=x' and zero degree intensity are mechanisms for Deleuze and Guattari's use. To consider what they meant for Kant is to fail to extract the 'revolutionary potential' from his work.

Reference was made to something that separates Kant from Deleuze and Guattari. The compulsion to construct an understanding, a signifier, and the mechanics of signification are important for Kant. Deleuze and Guattari consider how we can avoid trying to understand in order to be able to encounter affects. It was suggested that Kant's concern is to control the metaphysical urge, this desire, rather than to realise it productively. It was argued that this is quite a different approach to Deleuze and Guattari's concern to account for how desire desires its own repression.

Deleuze and Guattari's argument against splitting reality between ideal and material, between signifying and Real levels, was discussed.

The concern with group fantasy at page 62 (new edition) was discussed. It was argued that this shows Guattari's input. For him all subjectivity is collective. He analysed differences within group activity. The critical question was then put: what is the agency behind this group activity? The passive subject and its continuation runs through Guattari's work. Who enunciates in collective assemblages of enunciation? Should we look for agency or an agent? Why does the group ever get out of bed? Is there a collective machine? Who acts? Who selects? Who does? These critical questions are often put to Deleuze. It was noted that group fantasy only has drives as its subject (p. 63 new edition). Agency or selection, it was argued, is here a post-representational image of thought. Choices occur to the passive subject. The group is a zone of clearance protected from symbolic attachments so that choices can occur to this passive subject – the exclamation 'it is' or 'I am' is the occurrence of choice through encounters in a field that is not marked out in advance by the symbolic.

It was also pointed out that Sartre is used by Guattari in his analysis of group fantasy. Reference was made to Deleuze's preface to Guattari's 'Psychoanalysis and Transversality' (translated as 'Three Group-Related Problems' in 'Desert Islands and Other Texts', Semiotext(e), 2004, p. 193-203). It shows Deleuze's engagement with the re-formed subjectivity that runs throughout 'Anti-Oedipus'. It was explained that for Guattari a 'subject-group' folds out into the world while a 'subjugated-group' infolds by internalising resentment. It is always caught in the dynamics of internalisation and externalisation.

Reference was made to Deleuze's earlier notion of larval subjectivity, suggesting that it was a space of clearance while Ideas were a grouping, as we see in the notion of revolutionary Ideas developed in 'Difference and Repetition.' An unconditioned or undetermined zone is created and this is what Ideas are. They are dark precursors.

It was also noted that in 'Difference and Repetition' the term machine is used and we have here contemplative machines and contracting machines. However, Deleuze did not previously have notion of a group that he came to embrace from Guattari's work. Perhaps the shift from machine to assemblage and from simulacra to rhizome also show Guattari's influence.

It was suggested that Deleuze and Guattari are trying to break open a space where things can work differently. They present a strategic polemic, heavily engaged with the intellectual forces in France at the time in which they are writing.

Critical concerns were raised over the value of rejecting Oedipus, a specific concept, unless it is clear that we can avoid all concepts. If a lack of all concepts (schizophrenia as process) is un-livable then why give up the stability of Oedipus?

Is Oedipus not better than the fascism that for Deleuze and Guattari is a normative and natural state? Do Deleuze and Guattari argue in favour of a specific social organisation or of the endless re-organisation of society that nevertheless is stable enough to sustain organised life (a social body with organs drawing upon the 'body without organs')? The value and potential of their critique was called into question.

Reading Group Workshop 5 on Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘Anti-Oedipus’

**Chapter 3. Savages, Barbarians and Civilised Men**

This weeks reading group workshop continued to look at chapter three of ‘Anti-Oedipus.’ The presentation this week was given by Bruce McClure and began by highlighting the role of Louis Hjemslev in ‘Anti-Oedipus’ and indeed in ‘A Thousand Plateaus’. They draw from him a linguistics appropriate to the capitalist axiomatic, one that escapes all transcendence. It becomes a mobile apparatus of content and expression that can be applied to any situation. Marshall McLuhan’s role was also developed as something taken further in ‘A Thousand Plateaus’. Expression becomes the content for another expression using McLuhan’s linguistic theory. They make use of his concern with communication media independently of its context and his slogan: ‘The medium is the message.’

Bruce also considered the change from a surplus value of code to a surplus value of flux in Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding of the move from savage and despotic societies to capitalist ones. The surplus value of flux incorporates both unquantifiable aspects of labour and unquantifiable aspects of knowledge. Everything is flattened out and includes the accumulations of both goods and knowledge. The knowledge producers are rendered impotent because capitalism always creates a new axiom that makes knowledge productive for capital. It is the military-industrial complex and the state that act as the element of anti-production. This animates a double movement of deterritoralisation and reterritorialisation.

The presentation considered production as an abstract universality, an accumulation that goes beyond the human. Here a drive is immediately recuperated or objectified. In section 9, at page 254 in the new edition and 234 in the old edition, Deleuze and Guattari see science and technics as liberating flows of code. It was pointed out that knowledge capital is something that takes us to the work of thinkers like, Negri, Hardt, Balibar and Laclau. Knowledge capital has come to be seen as highly important in capitalism and as freer than previous forms of labour capital.

The discussion considered the negative and positive connotations of capitalism as it is presented in Anti-Oedipus. Is capitalism innovative by nature or is profitability key to whether innovation is interesting? Capitalism doubles desiring-production in the sense that it creates quantifiable flows that can meet just as desiring-production flows and breaks. One reading of Anti-Oedipus is to presents capital as a liberatory dynamic. We discussed why this reading looks viable. It was related to the notion among late 19th century Marxists that capitalism will do the revolution itself. This was the cause of Marx saying that he was not a Marxist. He was against the economic determinism that had come to characterise Marxism.

The next subject of discussion was the surplus value of flux. This is divided between human surplus value and machinic surplus value, with their relation operating as in the equation dy/dx. Machinic surplus value concerns technical machines and what can be said using science. Human surplus value concerns wages and is expended through consumer goods. These are two forms of money and are incommensurable. The selection criterion for technical machine is profitability and a technical machine only works by being profitable. The role of war was introduced as an instance of expenditure, burning off the energy of a society. This is something that can be achieved through advertising, militarism or imperialism.

At page 236 in the old edition, and page 257 in the new, we find Deleuze and Guattari using the example of Gregory Bateson. He leaves the human behind but this process is captured and used by the American military.

At page 235-236 flows of stupidity mirror knowledge as its anti-production, taking forward stupidity as the immanent limit of knowledge is ‘Difference and Repetition’.

At page 264 in the old edition (section 11 of chapter 3) Deleuze and Guattari discuss the notion that the family is outside the social field. This is a simulacra, an image of images that are in fact social. The privatization of the family moves away from immanence as ‘capitalism fills its field of immanence with images.’ Everyone is equal because everyone has a family, in other words, everyone is equally triangulated, equally lacking.

At page 265 in the old edition the notions of an ‘aggregate of departure’ and of an ‘aggregate of arrival’ are developed. The aggregate of arrival means that you always go home to a family but this private realm is only an image of social images. There is no freedom inside or outside and the private simply extends social repression. It was suggested that the Oedipal version of the family is less monstrous than the notion of family we find with mafia and gangster groups. This notion of the family is not contained, just as in savage societies Deleuze and Guattari see alliance as spreading filiation outwards. With Oedipus the family is contained or triangulated.

Turning to the savage society, we see that here surplus value is what allows alliance to occur. Deleuze and Guattari understand the process as beginning with an intensive filiation, something embryonic and unliveable, while this continues to unfold as extensive filiation and extensive alliance. It was suggested that ‘A Thousand Plateaus’ differs from ‘Anti-Oedipus’ in that it presents intensive alliance in the notion of becoming-other. This was related to the problem of a group subject, something that we found to come from Guattari’s work in previous sessions of this workshop. It is the problem of a group subject that can learn and respond in a differential way. Can there be an alliance that can develop and learn? It must not become a family again.

Reference was made to Guattari’s later notion of an auto-poetic group. We find something similar in Negri’s multitude, a unified body of the people. It is modelled upon a swarm. One response to this was that it is anthropocentric. Another was that it neglects the role of organisers in any political group. Anti-capitalist movements involve important people who direct things. Global movements have core networks of people who organise. There is a closed interior that manipulates an exterior, something involved, for example, in Trotsky’s democratic centralism. Retrenchment in a closed cell can provide the closed group behind public social centres. Knowledge is held in this closed group that is not held by those outside, making decisions issuing from this group seem incomprehensible.

We returned to the notion of an intensive alliance and asked what it would like, how would it work? Intensive filiation is described as a germinal influx. Incest must become a taboo so that filiation can spread outwards, become extended. Could intensive alliance have an interior? Becoming-animal involves returning to an intensive alliance, from extensive alliance or difference in extension to difference in intensity. The human-animal relation returns to intensity, refolds itself, in order to unfold itself differently in extension or in what the human and the animal can be or do. In the machine formed by the human and animal, in a case of becoming-other, new resources are drawn upon to realise humanity and animality in extension. These are the resources of the intensive alliance of humanity and animality. Reference was also made to ventilators and nebulisers. This involves a machine-human relationship where a new machine emerges that redefines that the human is or can do.

In the last paragraph of chapter three (p. 270-271 in the old edition) Deleuze and Guattari talk about autocritique. This seems to be the realisation that universal history is contingent or formed through accidents: ‘Universal history is nothing more than a theology if it does not seize control of its contingent, singular existence its irony, and its own critique.’ Is this to realise that things are only accidental? Or is it realising that accident is productive of laws that are necessary in psychoanalysis? Is it just that contingency should be recognised or should this produce something new? On the one hand it concerns the illegitimate use of the syntheses developed in chapters 1 and 2. Yet it also refers us to Deleuze and Guattari’s engagement with Reich and the notion that desire desires its own repression. Are accidents instantiations of this repressive moment that sets off illegitimate uses of the syntheses?

Reference was also made to the distinction between unconscious desires and preconscious interests. This seemed relevant to concerns with what collectivity can be if it is not based on class, something that Alain Badiou has been writing about. Rather than class interest, collectivity would be based on something prior to interests but which still marks out a collective group. For psychoanalysis preconscious interests seem to be what we haven’t noticed but can be brought into consciousness. The unconscious is unrecognisable but you can recognise its traces in the preconscious.

Reading Group Workshop 6 on Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘Anti-Oedipus’

**4. Introduction to Schizoanalysis**

Our discussion of the final chapter of ‘Anti-Oedipus’ began with the two poles that are put in place at the beginning of the chapter. These are the schizorevolutionary pole and the paranoiac fascisizing pole (page 277 in the old edition). They seem to be two ways of relating to matter as such, i.e. the body without organs. In the new edition at page 356 the first positive task is set out and it was suggested that the moment of destruction outlined here is similar to Derrida’s method of setting up and attacking dualisms. Thus a dualism is put forward, destroyed and then pulled back again, as shown here with schizophrenia and paranoia, relating to matter ultimately as either molecular or molar.

In a footnote to page 309 of the old edition and page 340 in the new edition we find partial objects qualified in the French as ‘partiaux’ rather than ‘partiels.’ The translators explain in the footnote that such objects are partial or biased like a biased judged rather than partial in the sense of being incomplete. They link this to the molecular and the sense in which Deleuze and Guattari seek ‘a concept of the partial objects as biased, evaluating intensities that know no lack and are capable of selecting organs.’ The chapter starts with a very strong dynamic of two poles but then seeks to destruct dualism seemingly in order to re-think the two terms as immanent to one another: social production as desiring-production under determinate conditions.

The difference in regime and scale between desiring-machines and social-machines was also discussed. Are these formal distinctions attributed to ultimate dispersion or flux?

Section two of the chapter, on the Molar Unconscious, is where Deleuze and Guattari move away from the rigidity of the distinction between the molar and molecular. It was suggested that whether you are invested in molar and molecular will determine the nature and value of your activity. This will provide the materials and energy of your activity.

Reference was made to Deleuze and Guattari’s use of the libido as the energy of desiring-production. Hence one loves worlds in the one whom one loves. Proust is used in this chapter and this refers us back to the depth of Deleuze’s engagement with him in ‘Proust and Signs’. The second half of this text was written in 1972-73 and reflects ‘Anti-Oedipus’ (published 1972) in being titled ‘The Literary Machine’. Deleuze and Guattari affirm a ‘liquid libido’ and write that ‘sexuality is everywhere’ (old edition p. 293). Thus ‘…our love addresses itself to this libidinal property of our lover, to either close himself off or open up to more spacious worlds, to masses and large aggregates.’ (old edition, p. 294) In Proust we love what emits signs that are drawn from the world of signs of love and which open up more spacious worlds than worldly signs do. At page 318 of the old edition Deleuze and Guattari refer to a ‘schizophrenic breakthrough’ achieved in Proust’s ‘In Search of Lost Time.’ This comes from traversing all the planes, all the worlds of signs set out in Deleuze’s ‘Proust and Signs’ (worldly, amorous, artistic…), until ‘the molecular line of escape is reached.’ They locate this ‘…in the kiss where Albertine’s face jumps from one place of consistency to another, in order to finally come undone in a nebula of molecules.’ Deleuze and Guattari write of the risk of seeking to locate the meaning or explanation of Proust’s work in a particular plane. This would be to stop with a particular world marked out by signs, with the molar, rather than with the molecular production of different worlds and different organisations of these worlds. When the narrator kisses Albertine for the first time this reveals her molecular make up because the matter of her face is revealed as full of molecular life, opening onto a possible world that he cannot grasp and which produces his jealousy. The narrator then descends into a paranoid relation to matter as it is revealed in Albertine, trying to grasp and identify her as a molar entity. He seeks to imprison here in this molar identity. It was pointed out that this links to the concern with faciality in Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘A Thousand Plateaus.’

We discussed the use of Samuel Butler’s ‘The Book of the Machines’ (page 284 in the old edition). We find the pure machinery of living set out and this raised a number of issues. It was suggested that at stake first of all is whether we have a break in the molar where new molecular dynamics coming into play in how the molar is organised, or whether there is no molar because it reducible to the molecular. There is a danger, it was argued, that in the analysis of Butler we have a slippage between mechanism and physicalism. The machinery of living proposed brings in scientific naturalism but there is a danger that this neglects the differences between physicalism and mechanism. Physicalism reduces entities to molecules and neural functions, as we find in the work of thinkers like Paul Churchland. This, it seems, would make the molar an epiphenomena and something unreal. It was pointed out that a non-reductive alternative might be found in the components systems proposed by George Kampis - machines as open ended, where the whole is another part.

Is this a sleight of hand? It was argued that Deleuze and Guattari perhaps use the power of natural science and physicalism without dealing with the problems it introduces. They call it machinism so as to move between the molar and molecular. Yet the power of the machine, and of their argument, comes from physicalism. It was argued, they would rejected physicalism because they want to account for the molar fully. A way of overcoming this problem was suggested in the form of the events of molar identity that Deleuze and Guattari invoke with the exclamations ‘it is’ and ‘I am.’ This seems to refer us also to ‘Difference and Repetition’ and the seminar entitled ‘The Method of Dramatisation’ (to be found in the ‘Desert Islands’ collection) where larval subjects embody an intense emotion, like ‘the jealous man’. This event must unify the molar entity without unifying or totalising its molecular state. It might be compared with the ‘sense events’ found in Deleuze’s ‘The Logic of Sense.’ The concern was raised that this involved ‘a totality to come’ or something like Derrida’s ‘supplement.’ In response it was suggested that it should be called a refrain or theme. In their third synthesis of desiring-production Deleuze and Guattari invoke ‘all the names in history’ as occurring in delirium and hallucination, the most productive point of subjectivity. These intensities are not all realised in the same way in extension but perhaps provide the events that unify the molar without totalising its components.

At page 289 in the old edition the first footnote refers to Jacques Monod and makes use of his physicalism. Deleuze and Guattari emphasise order, rule and necessity. It was argued that necessity is really only metaphorical in their account of machines. In physicalism necessity is absolute - a law and not an explanatory device. It is not mutable. We therefore have a physicalist direction to an absolute core of necessity, to the core of laws. Reference was made to Markov chains where each state is determined by the prior state and determines the next state. Would this formulation of phase states provide Deleuze and Guattari’s with a notion of necessity?

Deleuze and Guattari’s concern with death was explored. They argue that there is both a model and experience of death, and that from this it follows that Freud’s death drive is undermined. For them the body without organs is death because it is the element of anti-production, is ensures that flows break and that social organisation is disrupted.

A further issue raised was the methodology of schizoanalysis. How is this analysis carried out? It was suggested that for Deleuze and Guattari capitalism can undergo manifestations of interest but not manifestations of desire. This might inform the methodology of schizoanalysis.

Another concern was how affects were to be regulated such that a theory of mind can be constructed, enabling us to treat others as having minds. This is to establish inter-subjectivity by moving beyond receptivity to affects or feelings.

At page 380 in the old edition Deleuze and Guattari argue that it is not a matter of what socius will come out of revolution or of schiozanalysis being identical with the revolution itself. It was suggested that this understanding of schizoanalysis borders on making it a form of interpretation because it seeks to provide the ontology behind revolution. It gives the interpretation of the world that revolutionaries must be provided with. It would then be like psychoanalysis when it provides the correct way to Oedipalise. Schizoanalysis sounds here like it knows what it’s all about and can provide you with the means to align yourself with reality. Is it a better ontology than Oedipus? How can it be tested?

A possible response from Deleuze and Guattari might be the circuits they speak of in Samuel Beckett’s work. They exhaust spatial organisation and the investment of desire in social interests. In this way a revolutionary preconscious investment that is in fact a reactionary unconscious investment could be overcome. It was suggested that Deleuze and Guattari envisage subjects who come to identify with machines. This was characterised as an existential problem of how the individual relates to their sense of truth, making the machinic their ideal. This was referred to Deleuze and Guattari’s concern with an impersonal production of the subject, summed up in the poetic formula ‘I is another’ that Deleuze takes from Rimbaud when writing about Kant’s philosophy (see ‘Four Poetic Formulas which might Summarise the Kantian Philosophy’ in ‘Essays Critical and Clinical’).

The notion that desire is without intentionality was discussed. It was linked to Nietzsche’s notion of the will as something that always pushes towards life, even through distortions. It is better to will nothing than not to will because the will continues to push. This naturalism seems to be at the heart of Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding of desire.

On the last page of ‘Anti-Oedipus’ the second to last sentence makes ‘the new earth’ a ‘process that is always and already complete as it proceeds, and as long as it proceeds.’ This seems to resemble Deleuze’s notion of a ‘groundless ground’ in ‘Difference and Repetition.'

**'The Strange Encounter of Kant and Deleuze' International Conference**

Saturday July 7th, Greenwich University, Maritime Campus, Old Royal Naval College, London: 10am - 5pm

'My book on Kant is different, I like it very much, I wrote it as a book on an enemy, in it I was trying to show how he works, what his mechanisms are...'

Gilles Deleuze, Letter to Michele Cressole

'Our age is properly the age of critique, and to critique everything must submit.'

Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason

This conference aims to explore and dramatise the conceptual relations that exist between Gilles Deleuze and Immanuel Kant. Deleuze offers us a 'transcendental empiricism' in direct contrast to Kants' 'transcendental idealism' and the combination of their common ground and their stark oppositions makes this a particularly fertile realm of thought. There has been a growing recognition of the importance of the connections between Deleuze and Kant and this conference aims for the first time to place these relations centre stage. We are strongly encouraging both Deleuzian and Kantian scholars to come together in a constructive encounter that has critical importance for the wider philosophical community.

Timetable

10-10.30

Registration – Room Queen Anne 080 (all the session take place in Queen Anne Court)

10.30-12.00

Parallel Sessions

1. QA38

Joanna Hodge (Manchester Metropolitan)

‘Deleuze, Husserl, Kant: Transcendental Intermediaries ’

2. QA39

Edward Willatt (Greenwich) ‘Reason, Desire and Incompleteness in Deleuze’s Reading of Kant’

12.00-1.00

Lunch (not provided – there are cafes and shops in Greenwich town centre which is close to the campus and the Cutty Sark DLR station).

1.00-2.30

Parallel Sessions

1. QA 38

Matthew Hammond (Exeter) ‘Picking over the Bones of David Hume’

2. QA 39

Filipe P. Ferreira (New School for Social Research)

‘Bergsonism and Critique’

3.00-5.00

Keynote Session – The strange encounter...

QA 080

Daniel W. Smith (Middlesex/Purdue) ‘Deleuze, Kant, and the Post-Kantian Tradition’

Paul Davies (Sussex) ‘Regulating and Inventing Concepts’

Abstracts

1. Joanna Hodge (Manchester Metropolitan): ‘Deleuze, Husserl, Kant: Transcendental Intermediaries’

This paper consists in an exploration of two claims and an emergent problem about how to think the relation between reading texts signed by Deleuze and pursuing the task of inventing concepts. The puzzle about how to think the relation between Difference and Repetition and The Logic of Sense is set out clearly already by Michel Foucault, in his early response to their publication, in 1970, printed under the title “Theatrum Philosophicum”. My first claim is that this relation will continue to be obscure until and unless the full dimensions of Deleuze’s encounter with Husserl are taken into account, and my longer term ambition, not to be fulfilled here, is to follow through the thinking occasioned by such an encounter. I shall, however, adduce some remarks to indicate why this follow through should be undertaken. Its result would be the conversion of this claim from an interpretative hermeneutical claim into claim about the invention of concepts, which itself would take the form of conceptual invention. My second claim is that there is no sense for Deleuze of some cumulative development and improvement in philosophy, asrealising some teleological process. There is thus no place within Deleuzian accounts of invention for a Husserlian notion of a fulfilment or dereliction with respect to a task uniquely assigned to human beings, to realise rationality. This sets out a separationbetween lines of an encounter between Deleuze and Husserl, and opens out of a gap between a Deleuzian Husserl and the figure more usually construed, as committed to a system of 'ideas in the kantian sense'.

2. Edward Willatt (Greenwich): ‘Reason, Desire and Incompleteness in Deleuze’s Reading of Kant’

Deleuze's reading of Kant offers us an account of his system and of the points at which it is most productive. We find such an account in Deleuze's 1963 book 'Kant's Critical Philosophy'. In this paper I will focus upon this text in order to draw out his insights into the relation of the faculties of reason and understanding. I will seek to show that as well as offering an explanatory account of Kant's system in this text Deleuze also seeks to make it productive within his own thought, anticipating his use of Kant in later work. The account of cognition and its advance given in the 'Critique of Pure Reason' involves reason and its desires, along with a host of characters including the dogmatist and the sceptic. I will seek to relate the activity of the faculties in dealing with appearances to Deleuze's notion of the ‘problem-question complex’. I want to suggest that Deleuze finds the unity of cognition to be open and dynamic in Kant when he develops the role of reason's desires in the problems and questions that occupy the faculties and sustain their activity. This is taken further when Deleuze employs the notion of the ‘object=x’ in his reading of structuralism. I aim to conclude that Kant's account of cognition and its advance as a whole engage Deleuze productively in 'Kant’s Critical Philosophy' and beyond.

3. Filipe P. Ferreira (New School for Social Research): ‘Bergsonism and Critique’

We turn to Bergson, asking him for the body without organs. We find that he responds, that the body he thinks in Matter and Memory gives us a trajectory for stating this body as a problem. It is this question, the one which problematizes this body, that sets our investigation. As we continue, we find with Bergson that this body involves as its condition the astounding thesis that perception, as action, antecedes affection. In developing this thesis, we compose Bergson’s sophisticated account of the human body as a body without affection, without consciousness, a body which perceives and acts. In our desire to further problematize this body, we ask Bergson for this condition, for the difference in kind between perception and affection. He responds in the inverse direction, using this body, an accomplishment which seems to me a central contribution to contemporary philosophy, to restate further philosophical problems. That is, he uses this body as a condition for the unfolding of his philosophy. We associate here the statement of this body as a problem with the question of the genesis of Bergsonism. We also ask whether, in problematizing this body as the genesis of Bergsonism, and given its principal evolution, the project of a superior empiricism, we can develop insight, by making it ours the question of the genesis of this body, into this project. But how to proceed with this body, inquire into its genesis? At this point we know one its conditions: that this body is discovered in thinking perception as prior to affection. But how are we to inquire further? It is here that our discussion turns to Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason. Following a hint in Matter and Memory, we find Bergson describing how it is that Kant does not follow in the direction of this body. We find that it is a problem of sensibility, of how Kant, for Bergson, uses his ‘magician’s wand’ to create representations from sensible conditions which he entirely dismisses. We have our second horizon: that which does not allow Kant to follow are these sensible conditions. But how are we to problematize these conditions without simply returning to the statement of the Bergson’s first accomplishment, his theory of pure perception? We then proceed to set up our discussion. We turn to Bergson’s images, and notice that they presuppose an unlimited totality, where the question for this philosopher is one of how, from this totality, perception is limited to our interest. We note that it is because one of these images is privileged, our body. In taking the question of limitation to the Critique of Pure Reason we find it is thought in the ‘Ideal of Pure Reason’, which discusses the ideal of complete determination of reality presupposed by the transcendental ideas. We then ask how Kant limits this total reality; we find that his Critique is directed to this unconditioned totality, that it is the limitation of this ideal of complete determination which will make this ideal beyond, beyond the possibility of experience and that which it presupposes: the determinable as the forms of intuition. Here we find a second condition for this body without organs: that the plane of pure determination be posited as such, where, in thinking the limitation to ideal determination, we think within the ideal, immanently to the ideal: it is the plane of immanence as a further condition for thinking the body without organs.

4. Matthew Hammond (Exeter): ‘Picking over the Bones of David Hume’

Towards the end of the First Critique, Kant praises Hume for ‘possibly’ having come up with a synthetic principle, but then failed to understand how that principle demanded that one move beyond the mere empirical repetition of conjoined presences, to form an idea of the agencies that make that conjoining necessary. Kant goes on to argue, that mere empirical repetition cannot found conjunctions, unless those conjunctions were themselves necessarily grounded in inner sense, and therefore already configured within time’s unity. Kant thereby argues that while one needs to accept Hume’s empirical case, one needs nonetheless to ground it elsewhere, in a unity, and the active synthesis of understanding that fashions that unity. This argument forms one of the essential ‘back-stories’, to the ‘Repetition in itself’ chapter in Difference and Repetition. - Deleuze’s position being complicated by the fact that while on the one hand, he certainly accepts Kant’s most basic criticism of Hume, that he lacks any explanation as to how presences come not only to pass, but also to be conjoined, in time; and yet on the other hand, Deleuze wishes to move Hume’s repetition beyond its empirical setting, so that it can become the very principle for a synthesis that requires no other unity beyond itself. Moreover, in making this move, Deleuze hopes to transfix Kant’s critique of Hume as itself an aspect of Hume’s own account of passive repetition. In Deleuze’s eyes, Kant’s understanding of Hume is his Achilles heel, just as much as it is the foundation of the First Critique. A re-thought Hume will allow one to corrode Kantianism from within, as the critique of Hume that lies at the core Kantianism is made to say something otherwise.

In this paper three distinct parts of this corrosion will be examined. Firstly I will consider the difference in the topography of Kant’s treatment of Hume, and of Deleuze’s. For Kant, the problem in Hume remains that he offers no way to understand how the absolute unity of representation in an instant is grounded in a single experience (A99), beyond that is, their mere repetition. Kant proposes the long detour of time to make good this omission. Deleuze however accepts that there is a problem in Hume’s use of the present, and that one does indeed need to think a time capable of ‘rendering’ the present present, and yet disputes whether this theory needs to save that present. On the contrary, for Deleuze, what is substantive is the repetition itself (and not the presences that repeat). The detour through time is not to re-found the ‘true present’, but to unwind the disruptive power of that which repeats. Secondly, Deleuze argues, if Hume’s conception of the self can be grounded in time, the need to suppose an I think which is capable of creating these empirical selves disappears. He thereby argues one needs to grow Humean selves within Kant’s divided self. Finally, there is the status of Hume’s explicitly passive synthesis of Habit. Kant will argue that passivity demands an active synthesis to explain it. Deleuze will reply that it does not (at this stage), and that Kant’s demand for a global active synthesis was not only founded upon one passive synthesis, but also grounded in another passive synthesis. So that, Kant’s all too eager demand for activity, has the effect of imprisoning him within the Humean passive synthesis and therefore within Humean-time (as Deleuze constitutes it).

5. Paul Davies (Sussex): Regulating and Inventing Concepts

The paper moves towards a reading of those passages in the 3rd Critique where Kant seems to admit of a fundamental discord ("a discordant accord") of the faculties and where Deleuze sees one of Kant's great discoveries, "the final Kantian reversal." Deleuze detects in the very movement of the critical project a gradual relinquishing of the hold of regulation and the regulative. The argument of the paper unfolds in two stages. In the first, it attempts to re-imagine the context of Deleuze's encounter with Kant, freeing it from the twofold clarification of the concept and conceptuality (Fregean / Hegelian or "analytical"/"continental") that continues even today to define the institutional and disciplinary profile of philosophy. In the second it re-examines the relation between "concept" and "rule" in Kant's account of judgement, marking the precise intractability that makes it impossible for Kant, but maybe not only for Kant, to reconfigure concepts as inventions.

6. Daniel W. Smith (Middlesex/Purdue): ‘Deleuze, Kant, and the Post-Kantian Tradition’

The last article Deleuze published before his suicide in November of 1995 begins with the question, "What is a transcendental field?" In a certain sense, this Kantian question, which Deleuze here takes up at the end of his career, is the question that has animated his philosophical work from the start. This paper will examine Deleuze's relation to the Kantian (and post-Kantian) heritage from two points of view. From a historical perspective, we will examine the way in which Deleuze make use of the work of various pre-Kantian (Hume, Spinoza, Bergson) and post-Kantian (Maimon, Bergson, Nietzsche) philosophers in his attempt to rethink the Kant's critical project and the nature of the transcendental field. From a systematic perspective, we will attempt to examine the implications of Deleuze's work in five domains that roughly parallel the architectonic structure of Kant's own work: dialectics, aesthetics, analytics, ethics, and politics.

Conference organisers

Matt Lee and Edward Willatt.

Volcanic Lines - deleuzian research group, an initiative of the Greenwich University Philosophy group.

'The Strange Encounter of Kant and Deleuze' Conference Report

'The Strange Encounter of Kant and Deleuze' Conference took place on Saturday 7th July 2007, a sunny day which a stiff breeze kept from becoming too hot. Delegates and speakers came from across the country and from abroad to Greenwich University's Maritime Campus on the banks of the Thames. Sessions took place in Queen Anne Court (pictured above) and began with two parallel sessions.

Joanna Hodge, Professor of Philosophy at Manchester Metropolitan University, gave a paper entitled 'Deleuze, Husserl, Kant: Transcendental Intermediaries.' She brought into play the as yet undeveloped encounter of Deleuze with Husserl and argued for its importance. This would allow the invention of concepts to be explored in new ways. The outcome of this encounter is an understanding of Deleuze different to that provided by his encounter with Kant's Ideas. This paper was able to reveal new aspects of Deleuze and take these forward, pointing the way for Deleuze scholarship.

Edward Willatt, PhD student at Greenwich, delivered a paper entitled 'Reason, Desire and Incompleteness' in the other parallel session. He sought to show the role of reason's desire at the heart of the advance of cognition in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason using Deleuze's reading of it. This involved relating Kant and Deleuze through the notion of the problematic Idea, providing the unity of the activity of the faculties, and the 'object=x'. The latter notion brought us to Deleuze’s essay 'How do we recognise structuralism?' Here the 'object=x' demands an ideal thinker or hero of structure who is equal to thinking the 'object=x'. This was related to Deleuze's concern to provide the Transcendental Unity of Apperception as the ideal thinker able to affirm his own 'object=x.' Among the questions after the paper was one about the nature of reason. In what sense is it formal and logical? For Kant there is a real sense in which it unifies the activity of faculties, providing its energy. Questions followed that concerned the scope of the comparison made by the paper. Does understanding really rely upon reason or is it the other way around? The paper sought to argue that reason and understanding imply one another but Kant’s veneration for the understanding make this a contentuous claim. Also questioned was whether the ‘object=x’ involved in Deleuze's philosophy of difference could be related very closely to Kant's ‘object=x’ which embodies his transcendental logic of identity and resemblance. Does Kant not seek to account for the move towards complete unity of cognition in contrast with Deleuze’s concern with pure difference? There is perhaps a sense in which Kant sought to give a complete account of cognition but, despite himself, made incompleteness essential to cognition when he kept finding problems that kept his thought open. Thus the problem of the organism in the Critique of Judgement and the problem of matter in the Opus Postumum mean he can never, and should never, write his promised 'metaphysics of nature' (Critique of Pure Reason, Bxliii). A further question concerned the 'dice throw'. Should we, with Deleuze, want to get rid of everything so as to affirm the 'dice throw'? Could it be said that certain structures must remain? It would be a case of taking forward Kant's concern but perhaps establishing something other than the categories as that which must remain.

After lunch another two parallel sessions took place. Filipe Ferreira, of the New School of Social Research in New York, presented a paper entitled 'Bergsonism and Critique.' He sought to show Bergson's role in a radicalisation of transcendental idealism and the critical project. Bergson's Matter and Memory was engaged with so as to elaborate his theory of matter and the notion that the body is pure matter, something taken forward by Deleuze. The nature of problems for Bergson was subject to analysis. Deleuze and Guattari's 'Body without Organs' was developed as the body made into a problem. Latent references to Kant in Matter and Memory were developed. The crux of the matter was located in the notion of limitation, the limitation of the unconditioned totality which is assumed by Bergson. For Kant this total reality is beyond possible experience. The Amphiboly in the first Critique was explored for its four different ways of thinking about nothing. The horizon of the complete determination of reality was developed as 'the pure plane of thought as such.' The problem is how we get from this ideal to what is determinable. Kant seeks to provide such limitation by limiting possibility using sensible conditions. Yet for Bergson, it was argued, the totality or complete reality is assumed when we assume the brain or the smallest part of matter. In this way he united Bergson, Kant and Deleuze through the problem of limitation, emphasising how Kant stands apart from the two later thinkers whilst sharing in this problem. Questions after the paper included one on the role of memory in Bergson's thought. In the paper it was argued that limitation is to be understood in terms of perception and not memory. Deleuze's investment in a plane of thought as such was developed as an indeterminate plane of problems. This meant that the Body with Organs was the ‘object=x’ or pure objectivity. In this sense, the speaker argued, it problematises life. Another question concerned the role of pure subjectivity – was this not to be found in the Body without Organs? Also discussed was whether Bergson offers us an account of the 'encounters' which are a part of the processes of individuation in Deleuze's thought.

In the other parallel session Matthew Hammond of the University of Exeter gave a paper entitled 'Picking over the Bones of David Hume.' The paper began with Kant's views on Hume and how he found him to have approached, but not fully realised, a synthetic principle. Kant's concern with time was emphasised, something taking us beyond mere empirical repetition to the unity provided by the understanding. This was insightfully related to Deleuze's Difference and Repetition. Here it was argued that Deleuze has allegiances to both Kant and Hume, appreciating the Kant's emphasis upon time and the Hume's emphasis upon repetition. The differences between Kant's and Deleuze's treatment of Hume was considered. Kant wants to get beyond repetition to 'a single experience.' For Deleuze repetition is to overcome the present that repeats. In time repetition becomes primary. Hume also offers Deleuze a self in time which he uses to develop Kant's fractured or divided self. Also discussed was the passive synthesis of habit in Hume, to which Kant responds with an active synthesis to account for it. Yet for Deleuze we do not need to have an active synthesis from the start but can begin with passive synthesis, in this way accounting for active synthesis. For Deleuze, it was argued, Kant's notions come to rely on the passive synthesis and understanding of time that he finds in Hume.

After a tea break the conference re-convened for the keynote session. The speakers were Daniel W. Smith of Purdue University, who has this past academic year been a visiting fellow at Middlesex University, and Paul Davies of Sussex University. Dr Smith gave a paper entitled 'Deleuze, Kant, and the Post-Kantian Tradition.' This began with Deleuze's destruction of self, world and God as the three great forms of identity. The role of Solomon Maimon in Deleuze's reading of Kant was developed in depth. Maimon argued that Kant had rejected the demands of a genetic method and like Deleuze he sought to extend critique, with difference operating in the conditions of real experience. It was suggested that Deleuze takes forward Maimon's 'coalition system' because he writes upon the thinkers who were to be united in it. Deleuze's essay on the Critique of Judgement, 'The Ideas of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics', was discussed. Here Ideas are thrown back into sensible nature. This means that anything that is is a multiplicity. The theory of Ideas is then a way of thinking the theory of being. Deleuze's Cinema books were also discussed as the elaboration of Kant's Transcendental Aesthetic, showing a space and time that other arts don't show. This wide ranging linking of Kant and Deleuze continued with the argument that What is Philosophy? at last gives us Deleuze's own Analytic. This is despite Deleuze's commitment to univocity which precludes there being any categories. The Critique of Practical Reason was also located as a theory of desire where desire is defined in causal terms, causing the actuality of its representations as objects.

The second keynote paper, given by Dr Davies, was entitled 'Regulating and Inventing Concepts.' This began with Deleuze’s notion that concepts can be invented. In Kant regulation and the concept are conjoined. Reference was made to Kant's logic lectures and his placing concepts in the context of judgement. It seems that concepts cannot be radically new or invented in the first Critique. Yet, it was argued, in the third Critique this may be challenged by reflective judgement. This relies upon judgement coming before concepts, a unifying operation found in both first and third Critiques. Reference was made to the attempts to improve Kant's concepts by two different traditions – that following Frege made use of the function and that following Hegel used systems. This story of the improvement of Kant's account of concepts and their use was said to make the conceptual 'a site of genuine problems for philosophy.' It was then argued that Deleuze seeks to engage with a Kant who is not yet either continental or analytic. This is how we can understand Deleuze's account of the concept. Can we find in Kant the notion that a concept is accompanied by an event, something that would make an excess over the concept into the material for extending concepts. It was suggested that here Kant and Deleuze do share the same experience, thought or predicament. In the third Critique we still need judgement to go first. Deleuze sees creativity and inventivity here, and argues that it was there in the first Critique as well. He seeks a discordant accord in the third Critique, the hidden disunity and difference between faculties. It involves an inventivity already there in the first Critique, overcoming the impression of the primacy of the regulative. Yet, it was argued, despite Deleuze's efforts the rule clarifies the concept throughout Kant, blocking the inventivity that he seeks to find. The distinction was in this way made between the concept referred to an event and the concept referred to a rule.

We would like to thank our speakers very much indeed for travelling to Greenwich and delivering papers which made this conference very exciting and productive, contributing a great deal to Kant and Deleuze scholarship. Many thanks are also due to delegates for contributing to intense and invigorating discussions. We would also like to thank the philosophy department of the University of Greenwich for their support for the conference and for Volcanic Lines: Deleuzian Research Group over the first year of its activity. Given that the Kant-Deleuze relation is a relatively new area for study we feel that the conference has opened new paths and questions that demand very much attention. Volcanic Lines events will continue in the Autumn term and we will work further on Deleuze's encounters. At some stage we hope to focus some sessions upon Solomon Maimon's work as a much neglected thinker whose importance for the Kant-Deleuze relation demands to be recognised, as Dr Smith’s paper showed.

**7th June Colloquium - Mick Bowles (Greenwich) 'Understanding: Spinoza, Kant, Deleuze'**

On the 7th June 2007 Volcanic Lines: Deleuzian Research Group met for a colloquium delivered by Dr Mick Bowles of the philosophy department here at Greenwich. We are very grateful to Dr Bowles for giving this vital and highly productive paper. The status and value of the understanding must concern us given that it has been maligned by philosophies of difference, including by Deleuze's own critique of the 'image of thought' in Difference and Repetition. The paper raised such questions and revealed to us their very great importance. How do we account for Kant's veneration for the understanding? Mick drew us into the question 'what is unity?' The transcendental logic shows Kant's reverence for the understanding and we were made to see the importance of appreciating this. Spinoza's love for the understanding was introduced in relation to his conception of the will. For Spinoza affirmation is the logic of the understanding.

Mick developed Spinoza's investment in the understanding. He wants to get to 'complete understanding' as soon as possible. Kant does not conjoin reason and understanding, thus in contrast to Spinoza it is not connected to its own genesis. It was emphasised that understanding for Kant 'pulses with activity', even if its origin is not explored. Spinoza's thought was related to Quine's work where the system comes before the part, the whole is 'a space that is already there'. The role of incompleteness was also developed, involving the swarming of possibilities. Thus for Spinoza, Mick argued, we need to engage with the productive understanding. There is a then a 'swarming of the virtual' but for Spinoza the understanding ensures that 'there is no going back.' Death is for Spinoza 'not knowing what to do' and thinking never seeks this, it is rather sustained by conatus or striving. Avoiding death makes understanding productive and energetic.

Deleuze's reading of Spinoza was engaged with, bringing us to the 'third kind of knowledge'. This is manifested in the point of ‘collapse and flow' which is called, amongst other things, the 'object=x.' At this point 'the force of production swarms.' Concepts are constructed because thought is animated by this point. The limits of the relations between Spinoza and Deleuze were also developed. Understanding is for Spinoza different from the intensity of relations, in contrast to what happens in Deleuze’s reading of his thought.

The paper brought out the very deep role of understanding in Spinoza and Kant's thought – showing it to be complex and inescapable. We were brought to appreciate that seeing understanding as simply detachable from their thought is not an option. In this sense Deleuze's readings of both of their systems have certain limitations. Indeed, we must ask whether we cannot read Kant or Spinoza against Deleuze in their encounters with him. Does there need to be understanding if we are to avoid death or to have something that survives the ‘throw of the dice’? All these questions and more were raised by this deeply fascinating paper.

**Integrations#1 - An Introductory Workshop on Deleuze and the Differential Calculus**

SATURDAY 14TH APRIL 10AM-5PM

Greenwich University, Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich

Room: Queen Mary 167

The first in an intermittent series of workshops focused on the key background figures and concepts within the work of Deleuze. This first workshop will offer a basic introduction to the calculus followed by a session exploring the philosophical use of concepts from the calculus within Deleuze's work. We will be looking at the opening sections of the fourth chapter of Difference and Repetition (Ideas and the synthesis of difference) as well as some secondary material. Reading material will be provided.

Each session will last approximately three hours, including a tea-break. The sessions are workshop seminars, NOT lectures - an informal and participatory atmosphere is maintained. They are an experiment in collective learning.

Lunch is NOT provided unfortunately. The workshop is FREE but you must register and provide a land address if you want reading materials sent to you.

AGENDA:

10am - 1pm: an introduction to the calculus

1pm - 2pm: LUNCHBREAK

2pm - 5pm: Difference, differentials and Chapter 4

for further information and to register please email:

volcaniclines@hotmail.com

Volcanic Lines: Deleuzian Research Group

Philosophy Department, University of Greenwich

Workshop Report

The Integrations #1 workshop on Deleuze and the differential calculus took place on Saturday 14th April at Greenwich University's Maritime Greenwich Campus. It was a very productive event indeed. We would like to thank Bat for giving an absolutely invaluable and extremely effective presentation on calculus in the morning session. Our thanks are also due to the participants who took part in the discussions. The afternoon session focused upon Deleuze's use of 'the so-called barbaric or pre-scientific interpretations of the differential calculus' in chapter 4 of Deleuze's Difference and Repetition.

The morning session allowed us to get to grips with this extremely dense chapter and consider how calculus is being used here, its status in Deleuze's thought. What made this discussion particularly relevant was the recent paper by Christian Kerslake at Middlesex University's 'Deleuze and Rationalism' conference. He developed a case for developing Deleuze's reference to the 'esoteric history of differential philosophy' in terms of certain starnds of esoteric thought. The the work of the 'bright stars' differential philosophy Wronski and Maimon certainly involved such traditions. It seems as if these pages have now become a pressing challenge and a problematic for Deleuze scholarship, taking on a life of their own that challenges our assumptions about his work. This does not deny the role of mathematics but may put it in a new light, one that differs fundamentally from Manuel DeLanda's reading of Deleuze's use of maths.

Further reports on the events will follow here and contributions are very welcome indeed (e-mail volcaniclines@hotmail.com with longer contributions or leave a comment to this post).

Here are some useful texts and references provided by those who attended the workshop:

1. Here is a link to a highly relevant transcript of a seminar given by Deleuze (many thanks to Nathan Moore of Birkbeck College for this):

http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=42&groupe=Spinoza&langue=2

2. The following are texts particularly useful for philosophers exploring mathematics (many thanks to Robin Mackay of Middlesex University for this):

KLINE, M. Mathematics in Western Culture. London:Penguin 1990 (originally OUP 1964).

Chapter XV 'Grasping the Fleeting Instant: The Calculus' (pp247-268) gives an easy to follow account of how differentiation works in a simple case.

For those who want to go further, the only good technical book I've found which doesn't simply launch into equations and 'how to do it' instructions is:

EXNER, G. Inside Calculus. New York: Springer, 2000.

**Reading Group Workshops - on the Essays of Gilles Deleuze**

Location: QM167, Queen Mary Building, Greenwich Maritime Campus (see below for how to register)

6. Monday, 26th February

Text: 'Spinoza and the Three "Ethics"', Essays Critical and Clinical.

Presentation by Matthew Astill (Greenwich) on 'Spinoza and the Three "Ethics"'

5. Monday, 19th February

Text: 'The Actual and the Virtual' , Gilles Deleuze & Claire Parnet, Dialogues II, Continuum, London, 2002, pp. 112-5. (N.B. this piece does not appear in the first edition of Dialogues, only in Dialogues II)

Presentation by Nick Midgeley on 'The Actual and the Virtual.'

Monday, 12th February - No Workshop.

4. Monday, 5th February

Text: 'On Four Poetic Formulas That Might Summarise the Kantian Philosophy,' Essays Critical and Clinical and also included in Kant's Critical Philosophy as the preface.

Presentation by Edward Willatt (Greenwich) entitled 'Discordant Accord: Faculties Taken To Their Limits in Four Poetic Formulas'

3. Monday, 29th January

Text: 'Bartleby; or, The Formula', Essays Critical and Clinical.

Presentation by Neil Chapman (Reading) on 'Bartleby; or, The Formula'

2. Monday, 22nd January

Text: 'The Method of Dramatisation', Desert Islands and Other Texts.

Presentation by Matt Lee (Greenwich) on 'The Method of Dramatisation'

1. Monday 15th January

Text: 'The Exhausted', Essays Critical and Clinical.

Presentation by Edward Willatt (Greenwich) '"A fantastic decomposition of the Self" - Deleuze on individuation in The Exhausted.'

Workshop Format, CFP and Registration

These innovative workshops of Deleuze’s essays will explore texts upon which relatively little work has been done but which have a great variety, depth and intensity. The collections from which essays will be selected are

- *Essays Critical and Clinical*

- *Desert Islands and Other Texts: 1953-1974*

- *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*

- *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*

The format will involve a short presentation on one essay each week, in depth discussion and the posting of notes online at dialogues at greenwich.

CFP: An invitation is extended to those who would like to give a presentation on one of Deleuze’s essays. E-mail volcaniclines@hotmail.com to discuss a title and date.

All sessions will be held on the Greenwich Maritime campus. The sessions are FREE and open to all but please REGISTER beforehand if you are not already a member of Greenwich University or the Volcanic Lines deleuzian research group – email volcaniclines@hotmail.com and we will send you an information pack.

Organised by Greenwich University Philosophy Department

**Workshop Reports**

'The Actual and The Virtual' Workshop Discussion

This is a report on the discussion that followed Nick Midgley's presentation on Deleuze's essay 'The Actual and The Virtual' from Dialogues II on 19th February 2007 at the Volcanic Lines Research Group's workshop. The discussion began with the notion of ‘dramatic identity’ – this seems to resonate with Deleuze’s version of the Kantian schemata as developed in ‘The Method of Dramatization.’ He traces dramatic structures like Kant did in his attempts to relate concept and intuition. It was argued that 'The Actual and The Virtual' does have a Kantian flavour since ‘brevity’ means that the manifold is immediately represented. Does the reference to a ‘spatium’, along with the brevity which makes indeterminate, resonate with the intensive spatium that in Difference and Repetition is the dramatisation of Ideas? Reference was made to Bergson for whom perception is characterised by a gap, the centre of indetermination which distinguishes the discontinuity of the actual from the continuity of the virtual. The virtual centre of indetermination draws together the actual discontinuity around it because it draws upon the resources of its continuity to produce a singular and attractive determination. This is described by Deleuze as ‘emission and absorption, creation and destruction’.

At this point Deleuze’s Logic of Sense was related to the discussion. Here states of affairs are distinguished from bodies and events. We have a three-fold synthesis of time as in Difference and Repetition. Deleuze finds in the Stoic conception of the body the non-actual self which corresponds to the contracted self and individual in Difference and Repetition. The action of the body is the body going to the limit of its power of individuation.

The role of memory was also discussed. The ‘Combray moment’ in chapter two of Difference and Repetition allows us to access pure memory. But is the crystal we find in ‘The Actual and The Virtual’ closer to the ‘Eternal Return moment’, the ordinal structure, being a before and after moment of crystallization. It was argued that rather than any leap into the pure past, invoking perhaps an existential subject, we need eros. Deleuze can be said to leave Bergson behind when it comes to accessing the pure past because of his leap into the pure past. The eros moment explains the encounter and we don’t need to jump or leap to the Eternal Return, as if collapsing levels of Deleuze’s system and suggesting that through thought or Ideas there is a privileged access to Being. The argument rests upon keeping open the ways of accessing the past rather than privileging thought and making the subject beholden to a moment of revelation after which nothing else seems to be left. If we leap to the Eternal Return we seem to give up all reference to the actual and yet in this essay we find that virtual encircle the actual like a cloud. If the eros moment explains the encounter this places the encounter in everyday life, it is the affect that allows perception to occur.

Developing this point, the case was made that saving the pure past for ourselves is related closely to notion of apprenticeship for Deleuze. Eros is forced onto you and this invokes ongoing encounters or an infinite learning. The virtual that encircles the actual seems to develop a crystalline individuation and suggest that we must think the past through individuation, the common limit of the past and future. The film ‘Citizen Kane’ was mentioned – at the beginning a crystal ball shatters. Does this take you to pure memory? The event that shatters the actual – a kind of interruption that makes it impossible to say what is real and what is imaginary or a dream. It was argued that rather than a leap into the past we have the crystal as an eruption into a meta-stable situation, bring us closer, it could be argued, to the virtual encircling the actual. The seed seems to always be needed – it is what gets the system going. Temperature changes the types of structure that will form. This resonates with the earlier account of intensities in Deleuze’s work and with Manuel DeLanda’s work on Deleuze.

Can the crystal be regarded as an assemblage? Both are half actual and half virtual. They both seem to be individuating systems. Reference was made to Deleuze’s Nietzsche and Philosophy where there are no objects, only combinations and forces. In Deleuze’s philosophy as a whole, it was argued, there appears to be a big tension between the depth of the individual and the enormity of the virtual. There seems to be a risk that one or the other takes over, leading Deleuze to seek a circuit of the expansive horizon the virtual with the contracting that sustains an individual. ‘The Actual and the Virtual’ seems to draws these themes together. This was related to a possible film scenario where a character looks in the mirror and cannot see who they are. Individuation as a process seems to be crystallization here, individuation as a circuit. The reference at one point to dissolution seems to relate this to the earlier conception of ‘a system of the dissolved self’ as seen in Difference and Repetition chapter 5. In the last paragraph of ‘The Actual and The Virtual’ we find the distinction, upon the plane of immanence, between the actual’s ‘own virtual’ in its circuit of crystallization and its relation to the whole of the virtual (referring ‘to virtuals as to other things in the vast circuits where the virtual is actualised.’) This draws on the notion of contraction already mentioned in the essay and stages an expansion-contraction. It was argued that here we see that the problem of individuation, as a process ‘between’ actual and virtual, recurs. However, this was the subject of some debate. The persistence of individuation as ‘the third thing’ or level (as it appears to have been in Difference and Repetition) was disputed. This developed from the debate over the leap into the past versus the encounter with the past: do we have the individuated subject of encounters ‘between’ actual and virtual or the actual leaping into the virtual? Is the actual embedded in its cloud, it crystalline circuit, as well as relating to the whole of the virtual or is it exposed to this whole in abstraction from its individuation? This fundamental debate will no doubt continue productively.

Is going into memory a counter-actualisation? We need, it was argued, an empirical moment and not merely a leap. We cannot simply posit transcendental conditions as abstract and non-empirical. We have no representative access to the past and need an encounter, something that is non-representative. Bergson’s intuition appears unexplanatory, a ‘cop out’. What is it? How do we show that one intuition is better than another? It needs to be made rigorous, Bergson writes, but how? We need the structure of the encounter and Deleuze gives us this. The specific encounters can be selected by intuition as being true to their encounter. Thus we ask: Has the novelist constituted the affect? At some point you encounter yourself having an intuition – a contraction of the past – bang! Event! Rigor demands a method to say if I am actually doing this or not.

What do you encounter? In Derrida we have the aporetic moment and in Lacan the objet petit a. For Zizek you encounter the moment and then you’ve got the virtual. With Derrida, it was suggested, we get monotonous repetition because anything can be deconstructed. Yet for Deleuze, the virtual problem is of this text and not just any text, it is its own problem (its own virtual thanks to the crystalline circuit of its individuation).

A final point was that images come to sound more like forces because they are always in the process of acting and reacting.

‘On four poetic formulas which might summarise a Kantian philosophy’ Workshop Discussion

Desire in Kant was clarified in terms of its lower and higher use. How do we explain moral acts that don’t happen for reasons of instinct, appetite, interest and other ‘natural’ causes? However, the good life is what must be accounted for and ‘the good is what the laws say’. The kind of person ia key rather than what happens in particular empirical cases. The moral order connects things, through moral Ideas, that otherwise have no connection and a series of actions that cannot be explained. What is the continuity behind the good life? It must be the law which neither imposes or offers any particular commandment or instruction because then it would not have the force of pure or higher desire which lacks nothing. Desire seeking what it lacks in empirical cases of action is transcended by this lack and we lose the immanent production through desire that Deleuze seeks.

The relation with Anti-Oedipus was brought up. It was pointed out that this is a critique of desire as lack. It was questioned whether morality is ‘causal’ – is it not ‘productive’, bringing about something new? The pure and empty form of the law is not particularised and therefore cannot be equated with a chain of particular causes. It was argued that this involves ‘catching yourself in a completely subjective productivity.’ The force at the heart of thought and desire in the Four Poetic Formulas expresses the practical reality of the virtual.

It was suggested that in Deleuze, Lacan and Kant desire is positive and pleasure is negative. Desire is a desire for its own productivity, one that does not exclude different desires through a sum of possibility. Is desire anthropomorphic? If so, maybe ‘force’ is better and ‘cleaner.’

The selective test of desire for the sake of desire, the pure force of our thought, brings us to Nietzsche’s concern with a will that wills itself again and again. It is purely autonomous desire.

The space which Hamlet’s inhabits was then discussed in order to engage with Deleuze’s pronouncement that he is the first hero to need to time to act. Chaos of strange, demonic, maybe Dionysian, events – the breakdown of a space of action that requires clearness and distinctness. Yet these bewildering events come together because the (absurd) logic behind them, that which relates them, is a ‘time out of joint’ which Hamlet discovers and through which he acts. He finds the force of desire not through judgement and calm thought but thought’s own delirious limit. The events are held together by the thread of this time so as to contract a decision or act. We cannot say that Hamlet’s soliloquies lead to or explain his act, they do not reason towards it but do productively and profoundly attain the madness of reason through which acts emerge spontaneously and without a causal trail.

This was related to Kierkegaard’s Fear and Trembling where the time of modern subjectivity prevents him from getting to the faith Abraham had. He had no subjective time but Kierkegaard is stuck in it. With faith we are not paralysed by this time.

In this subjectivity of modernity, also the subjectivity of the world or time of the city (the modernist milieu), stasis comes from everything happening at once, coming from all directions simultaneously. (Perhaps marketing has this effect) However, the existentialist says that I don’t know who I am until I make the decision. It is then best not to think because no subject produces action, it comes from nothing. The subject doesn’t pre-exist the decision. The space is then constructed from a minute and almost forgettable act.

Perhaps, it was suggested, the knowledge-action split in Hamlet can only happen in time. The end of the play comes together through a time ‘out of joint’. Hamlet isn’t just tormented by a decision between options because this would just be a space of possibilities and not the exhausted ‘any-space-whatever’ we encountered in Deleuze’s ‘The Exhausted’ at a previous workshop this term. Also, such a torment has already happened to heroes in plays – Hamlet thinks on a wider plane than that of possibilities. He thinks about individuation and his own being or production. His torment about his fathers ghost shows him split between the familial love of his father and the horror of the undead. The ghost is described in terms that invoke Shakespeare’s’ philosophy of nature, its Dionysian and demonic aspects. Could it be the devil simulating the image and voice of his father? Torn by love of father and sense of evil, something found in the imagery of his experience of a father both terrifying and attracting him (as the groundless ground does for Deleuze). This is to involve for Deleuze how things are produced (split between Apollonian and Dionysian). The ghost could be seen as exteriorizing something that speaks the truth of his own unconscious to him, his own thought or desire as an other. The ghost forces upon him the terror and attraction (‘to be or not to be’) of his own production, his own groundless ground. Hamlet’s subjectivity is exteriorized and referred a dramatisation of Ideas that exceeds his sense of possibility and movement. He is taken beyond possibilities to the production of things.

The role of the ghost was linked to Descartes’ demon who gets rid of the certainty of the law through an argument from illusion.

The Copernican turn in Kant was brought up – does it introduce the thinking of time through concepts of possible movement? With Hamlet, on the contrary, we get to madness and subjectivity made external via the thread or labyrinth in the world, the time of the world or city.

Deleuze’s reference to ordinal and cardinal time in the first Poetic Formula was discussed. With the ordinal there is no measure for knowing how long things will last – this is not rational, things can be all at once and procrastination results. The cardinal is discreteness, deadlines and order. For Kierkegaard the internal movement of passion in the soul is the intensive and ordinal time.

We have ‘succession of determination’ after the act and yet this is not existentialism.

A final point was again on the Copernican turn where everything turns around the subject. Transcendental subjectivity nevertheless avoids talking about objects in order to become the whole world prior to subject and object. We do get to the limitations of possible experience in the end but find before this a line of flight according to Deleuze.

'Bartleby: or, The Formula’ Workshop Discussion

The text for today’s workshop was Deleuze’s ‘Bartleby; or, The Formula’ from Essays Critical and Clinical whose subject is Herman Melville’s short story ‘Bartleby The Scrivener.’ The workshop began with a presentation by Neil Chapman of Reading University which really opened up the exciting and deeply challenging themes of the essay. This very late essay was related to another late work: ‘Immanence: A Life.’ The concern here is with encounter with life itself rather than with a particular life. This was related very productively to Giorgio Agamben’s work ‘Means Without Ends’ where naked life is an abstraction from complex forms of life. Naked life involves the dominant power’s way of understanding people as containers or blanks. For Agamben the proletariat must be imposed on a pure life. Forms of life in Agamben were related to Wittgenstein’s language games. The development of political and ethical themes opened up what is most profound and difficult to grasp in the essay ‘Bartleby; or The Formula.’

The presentation developed Agamben’s notion ‘bare life’. Also explored was the move Deleuze makes in relating Melville’s story to Robert Musil’s ‘Man Without Qualities’. Deleuze’s concern with the Proletariat suggests that here we have the man without qualities versus the sovereign state and in the American Immigrant we have the man without qualities developed in terms of a notion of ‘brotherhood.’ The American Immigrant here was explained in terms of idea that the immigrant can start from nothing (from bare life) and achieve the American dream.

The ‘foreign language produced within language’ was introduced in terms of leading up to the moment proper to ethics. This was related again to ‘bare life’ as the idea of life abstracted from particularities in Agamben which is therefore a vessel that can receive content. Deleuze’s reading of Bartleby seems to put forward an ethical program via a concept of ‘bare life’ because we have a formula – ‘I would prefer not to’ – that also blind to difference. We need then to be at a level prior to the emancipatory iteration of ‘we are the people.’ Does Deleuze suggest this?

The reference at page 72 to ‘the schizophrenic vocation of American literature’ was analysed. Does the notion of ‘vocation’ lay out how literature produces an ethical program? Given that things can happen in language, how do we move to the idea that these things should happen?

Reference was made to Baudelaire’s project of finding the epic in the everyday – like Deleuze he rejects the particular as the mediocre. Bartleby is an ‘original’ according to Deleuze. Jacques Ranciere argues that this original should be linked to the eccentric – there is no mimesis, he does not imitate and cannot be imitated. Bartleby is inexplicable, he is from no where. [This echoes Deleuze appropriation of Samuel Butler’s ‘Erehwon’ as ‘a disguised no-where [and] a rearranged now-here’, Difference and Repetition, p. 356 n. 7.]

Stuttering is a difference we can’t understand and yet this is to be productive. At page 85 Bartleby offers a new humanity and this throws light on things around him. This leads to the federation of brothers found in the American Revolution. At page 84 alliance and blood pact are affirmed.

The discussion began by noting that in ‘A Thousand Plateaus’ the filial is valued over alliance. This was linked to Deleuze’s critique of the familial in ‘A Thousand Plateaus’ where the family is code. Philosophy arises because familial kingship structures break down. It was suggested that a concern with blood pact and brotherhood could refer to Deleuze biological account of individuation, suggesting the doubling of the production of particulars through their embryonic and more open relations (reference us back to ‘Difference and Repetition’, chapter 5). However, this reading didn’t seem to us to work given that the relevance of biological is not established by the text.

The appearance of a really existentialist movement, referencing Kierkegaard and his account of Abraham in ‘Fear and Trembling’, was suggested. Yet the nothingness of the will and nothingness of particulars and generals invoked by Deleuze seems to affirm the fullness of the virtual or ‘the whole of chance’ (as he terms it in the conclusion of ‘Difference and Repetition.’)

The references made to Musil’s ‘Man Without Qualities’ were also discussed. The novel seems to offer a nihilistic, boredom ridden milieu with no real answers. Does this relate to the productive and affirmative milieu we find in Deleuze?

A more positive account of the nothingness Deleuze invokes was sought in the pairing of Bartley’s immobility and silence (the original) with the Attorney’s line of flight (the prophet – but not the prophet of doom). This event seems to be a global event and so in a work of art it is difficult to have two of them. This is then a very productive just as a point of freezing in a physical system where everything is involved and changes. It was suggested that Bartleby inverts Sartre because he chooses not to choose. There is then an anarchy but not a human one. Reference was made to the wasp becoming orchid which in Deleuze models occurs through random choices. Yet it seems that in the human choice structure ‘the original’ (Bartleby’s formula) can randomly cut things up.

The nature of the production which is grasped prior to anything particular was also discussed. At the start of the essay Deleuze writes that ‘Bartleby The Scrivener’ is a literal text. The novel is then on the same level as life itself – it literally activates or presents an operation that is at work in how experience is productive. This was related to Deleuze’s invocation of a primary nature and of the line of flight. The latter is ideal like the ‘white light’ also mentioned (p. 83), traversing particulars but also being found in itself prior to all particulars. The prophet character as a line of flight occurs alongside the primary nature character in Melville who is either demon (Captain Ahab in ‘Moby Dick’) or Angel (Bartleby). This is developed by Deleuze at page 84 where he argues that demons and angels recognise one another – they need to break the law of the Father to do this, returning us to the notion of brotherhood, a community of celibates: avoiding both Father and sex so as to continue Deleuze’s critique of psychoanalysis. We sense that this is not at all a particular community produced ready made by the formula – as if celibacy were to be practiced and families broken up – but rather a concern with how particulars are produced. There is nothing particular about the formula of what occurs in its vicinity – this is rather ‘a zone of indetermination’. Psychoanalysis involves the Father and sex symbolically and so, for Deleuze, projects the products into the production as structural conditions or archetypes. He argues that production must not resemble its production so that celibacy and loss of father are virtual or productive conditions instead of being particulars of some actual polis.

A further point raised was Deleuze’s use of the American Revolution rather than the French revolution. If revolution produces community (through Ideas that do not resemble any particulars) and necessarily involves violence (the demon – Ahab) and refusal ( the angel – Bartleby) why not use the French Revolution? Could not Danton and Robespierre be the angel and demon characters? Is it because Napoleon imposed himself as the father figure on the liberated ‘bare life’? The universalism invoked by the American Revolution seems to appeal to Deleuze insofar as rather than respecting or letting difference be this politics values what difference does. In ‘A Thousand Plateaus’ the war machine is positive and creative. At page 87 taking to the road, being open to all and never trying to save other souls is affirmed. This notion, reminding us of Jack Kerouac, was related to Lyotard’s libidinal economy. Marxists have for a long time been arguing about the need for capitalism first before you can have communism. There is one interconnected whole which make capitalism and communism inextricable. Negri argues that the conditions are right for creating a bifurcation point. Kerouac’s ideal life involved simply moving on if the police Hassle you. This communal living is an alternative to familial structures. Is this permanently just a route out producing communities that are too flexible to solidify themselves?

The notion of a patchwork was explored as involving no pattern but with a formula for the size of the patchwork and how patches are joined. Likewise dry stone walls interest Deleuze because while it is easy to take down and move them they have a certain, necessary structure. This was related to Warhol’s painting where there is variability around a mundane concept because the variation is really around its Idea. Could we say that although the American Revolution failed it is interesting because it is a patchwork. It was suggested that philosophy must fail and so not build a new community but be like Bartleby. It is useful in the end for a philosopher to say that I’d prefer not to say.

'The method of dramatisation' Workshop Discussion

Report from Volcanic Lines reading group, Wednesday 24th January 2007

The essay in question for this session was 'The Method of Dramatization', contained in 'Desert Islands and other texts:1953-1974'; Semiotext 2004:94-116

As a kind of preliminary, I just wanted to note some vague connections to phenomenological concepts, though without any intention to ascribe any value, interpretative or otherwise, to these connections. To begin nwith then the initial move to shift the nature of the question from a 'what' (quid) to a 'how' (quia) form seems in some ways like a development from the phenomenological combination of the quid-quia questions within Husserl's noematic (quid) / noetic (quia) structure. For Husserl, of course, the quid will be 'meaning' or 'essence', whereas for someone like Sartre this seems to develop into a more basic notion of quid as investigating the thing (as an in-itself). The phenomenological shift to the combination of 'meaning' and 'way of meaning' (Husserl) as a method of returning to the things themselves could presumbaly be seen a s a development that adds the 'how' top the 'what' and in this sense Deleuze's emphasis on the 'how' alone strikes me as perhaps an attempt to move forward from this phenomenological method precisely by radically breaking with the very notion of essence (in whatever form, but predominantly the Husserlian meaning-content structure) as part of an attempt to articulate his own methods' originality.

The other possible connection that interested me recently, though this is not directly related to the 'Method' essay, was the concept of a "zone of indetermination" that can be found in Deleuze's book 'What is philosophy?' but which is prefigured in a very peculiar passage in Husserls' 'Ideas'. In Section 27 of Ideas, famous as one of the central places in which the 'natural attitude' is characterised and Husserls' concept of presence ot the world is articulated, there is this strange account of the presence we are within in the natural attitude constituting a presence to infinity, temporally, spatially and ideally. The immediate sensuous presence of the world to hand extends infinitely, although indeterminately. At the greater reaches of this extension the indeterminacy is contingent and these regions are determined as and when attention is paid to them, flickering in and out of determinate presence as they continually fall back into indeterminate presence. The regions constitute what Husserl calls a "clear or dark, distinct or indistinct co-present margin" (Ideas:S27) and this margin forms an "empty mist of dim indeterminacy" which is precisely named as "the zone of indeterminacy" which is characterised, as previously mentioned, as infinite.

Turning back to the 'Method' essay then the first thing to note is that the shift in question structure from what (quid) to how (quia) is argued on what almost appears a pragmatic basis. The 'what' question is situated as the root of the aporetic dialogues of Plato and Deleuze argues that in the practical, substantive Platonic books, such as The Republic, the 'what' question is demoted in favour of a more open question-set. Presumably, then, there is this sense of the 'what' question - which we might tentatively characterise as the 'core Socratic' rather than 'Platonic' moment - being impractical. Reasons' practice, perhaps, is at stake.

The next notable distinction I was interested in was that between the essence and accident and the differentiation between contradiction (from Hegel) and vice-diction (from Leibniz). In particular the phrase "to have the inessential include the essential" (Desert Islands:96). As James Williams points out in his 'Introduction' to 'Difference and Repetition' (DR), this notion can be understood via the arguments about the essential difference made by the inessential, with the example of Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon being that found within Leibniz (Leibniz; Discourse on metaphysics:S13). The example of Caesar is used by Leibniz to argue for his notion of a 'complete concept' being one in which all the predicates are contained within the subject, such that the inessential (predicates) are part of the essential (subject). Deleuze seems to have a form of almost reversed Leibnizianism in mind when he talks of the inessential (predicates) including the essential (subject).

Deleuze goes on to explicitly state the classically sounding philosophical question of 'what is a thing in general' (Desert Islands:ibid) and answers with the twofiold characterisation of a thing as having qualities and extension. (It is worth noting, however, that these qualities and extsnions are "the conditon of the representation of things in general"). The concept of extension is rapidly stretched, however, and ideas such as 'territoriality' (much more prominent in later works such as 'A Thousand Plateaus') are used to push extension beyond the more commonplace 3-dimensionality of an object towards a notion of 'organisation', connecting it to notions such as grid, network and suggesting, perhaps, something like the 'meshwork' concept Manuel de Landa has put forward. The notion of the 'thing in general' (asked, amusingly, in the form of a 'what' question) appears designed to govern our understanding of the process of differentiation. Here another note should be marked, since the concept of 'differentiation' as found in the 'Method' essay is, it appears, prior to the split c/t notion found in DR (ie; Athlone 1994:209). In DR the 't' version refers to the virtual process whilst the 'c' version refers to the actual and the entwinement as a 'c/t' mark refers to the reciprocal nature of the process of determination, reciprocal between the actual individuation and the virtual Idea. Within the 'Method' essay the 't' version appears to be referring to the actualised 'thing in general'.

The crucial notion for Deleuze, however, is that the virtual needs to be posited as the condition of experience of the thing in general and the actual thing in general has qualities and extension or organisation produced by the STD's - the 'spatio-temporal differences' that underlie it. These STD's are both conceptual and natural and 'in this sense', Deleuze suggests, "the whole world is an egg". The STD's presuppose a field of intensity which they are immanent to and this intensity is precisely difference itself, hence pushing the need to develop a concept of difference (as against a merely conceptual difference - this after all being the theme of DR) in order to grasp these STD's as the condition of the world. Differences of intensity, Deleuze suggests, must communicate in order to produce these STD's and the communicative element, that which brings teh differences together is the 'obscure precursor'. (A brief note: another translation one participant had with them used the phrase 'dark precursor, clearly akin to that used in DR, and this 'dark' or 'obscure' difference couldn't be directly checked at the time as no French version of the 'Method' essay is to hand. Clearly the 'obscure' translation seems to connect the notion of the precursor to the concepts of the clear-confused and distinct-obscure more immediately).

With the notion of STD comes the concept of 'larval subjects' and the whole gamut of pre-individual subjectivities that Deleuze will maintain as central to his work. The STD's, however, form the condition for all concepts, representations and things and the crucial part of the essay in many ways is the structural role that is given to the STD's. For Deleuze the STD's are the conditions of experience (not, note, possible experience but, as he will call it in DR, always real experience - the conditions are not limited by the necessary and the impossible as they must be within Kant's structure of possible experience). Just as in Kant, therefore, something like a schema appears needed to connect the conditions and the experience and it is precisely the method of dramatisation that is named as structurally akin to the Kantian schema - "What I am calling a drama particularly resembles the Kantian schema" (Desert Islands:99). 'Drama' refers to the STD's as a collection of "abstract lines coming from the unextended and formless depth" that is "comprised of pure determinations, agitating time and space, directly affecting the soul" (ibid:98). The notion of this 'drama' is explicitly drawn from Artaud's cocnept of a 'Theatre of Cruelty'. For Deleuze the necessity of 'the method of dramatisation' is drawn from the necessity to extend the Kantian schema and its inability to determine the concept and is carried out because, for Deleuze, "poure spatio-temporal dynamisms have the power to dramatise concepts, because first they actualise, incarnate, Ideas" (ibid:99). In reference to this I think a key notion of the dramatisation of the Idea can be found in the example of Lenin that Deleuze uses in DR (Atlone 1994:190) where the 'two faces' of the Idea, love and anger, the search for fragments and the condensation of singularities, are found clearly. It also points us to indicate that STD's dramatise concepts as differentiated incarnate actualities and in order to do so they will need to dramatise the concept as having a certain quality and extension (a species and organisation). This also suggests the need for the STD's themselves to have a double aspect.

Discussion:

(no doubt a very limited account here as my note taking is not as rigorous as other members of the VL seminar series we could mention)

There was some comments on the quia / how question format, with the suggestion that the answers to quia questions are not entities but rather processes (perhaps akin to Whitehead...) and that there are different types of answer to different types of question.

The issue of examples came up, with some suggestion that the examples Deleuze uses might somehow limit his accout of conditions, infecting it with the empirical, specifically his own bourgeois tastes. Comment was made that Derrida has suggested that a focus on exmaples can reveal the implicit presuppositons of philosophers, it being one of the routes through which 'conceptual contraband' can be smuggled in. It is also not just a matter of purifying the examples since there might be nothing but a set of examples.

The role of 'anger' came up, connecting the quote on Lenin in DR to an asnwer Deleuze gives to questions about the 'Method' in which he connects anger to larval subjects, using the idea of an explosion of anger as an example of the larval subject (Desert Islands:107,108).

The role of the dark precursor was questioned (see comment above about 'dark' or 'obscure') and the thought raised there there might be something interesting in Agambens' discussion of the 'dark' and the problems associated with it (I am not familiar with this, so perhaps someone else can comment further?).

A brief discussion touched on the role of the familiar, again in part with reference to examples and the abstact nature of the 'Method' essay. Many artists, it was suggested, are working with Deleuze enthusiastically because they come across something familiar in his thinking about the world and his method of making the familiar unfamiliar - this was connected to Novalis and his concept of the rasing something to its 'highest power', clearly of central concern for Deleuze more widely.

* Matt Lee

'The Exhausted' Workshop Discussion

Linking 'a fantastic decomposition of the self' with its individuation means that the self is disconnected from its established notions of itself in order to connect it with its own production. Deleuze's concern with the production of experience is developed in his engagement with Samuel Beckett in The Exhausted Hereafter 'TE'). He develops the continuity of production behind the discontinuity of what has already been produced. He finds that the latter, as discontinuous and countable, is exhausted or decomposed by the doubling of its own production in Beckett's work. This is effected through an art or science of exhaustion. A ‘fantastic decomposition’ is then a stage in the process of production or individuation that Deleuze is concerned with.

This presentation seeks to follow the stages Deleuze identifies in Beckett's uncovering of the production of real experience and to grasp the nature of this continuity behind the discontinuous. Our concern is with the account of individuation this provides and how this dissolution of produced or composed terms must in fact be presupposed.. In this way we find that for Deleuze composition and decomposition must form a couple that are inseparable.

Exhaustion is first specified as a rigorous purification that grasps the conditions for the production of experience. In order to explain this Deleuze straight away distinguishes it from tiredness. This point is crucial for the whole essay and for the account of individuation we are seeking to locate. The distinction is put succinctly in the following passage: 'The possible is only realised in the derivative, in tiredness, whereas one is exhausted before birth, before realising oneself, or realising anything whatsoever.' [TE, 152] Exhaustion is then a condition of experience's ongoing production, a condition in place before anything is established because it concerns a level that is pre-individual. It is a stage of the production that is always already underway. It is only after 'birth', or after the individuation of the self that is always ongoing, that realisation can be conceived. Realisation is derivative or a feature of what is already individualised because it concerns 'the sum of total possibility.' [TE, 152] Only already produced terms can form a sum because they are discontinuous and countable. Thus the possible is 'realised in the derivative' because it produces a tiredness that comes from our attempts to realise different possibilities concerning already produced objects and meanings, and according to the different preferences and goals we have accumulated. This is the sum of possibility that is tiring but restricts us to the realm of what is possible on the basis of what has already been produced. Exhaustion is much more profound because it invokes the horizon of a continuous production and allows Deleuze to conceive individuation in terms other than the realisation envisaged on the basis of a sum of possibility. Continuous production is also developed by Deleuze in terms of the notion of multiplicities. We find an elaboration of this production through continuity as it is opposed to discontinuity or discreteness that excludes this production through the internal resources of the multiplicity: 'Riemann defined as “multiplicities” those things that could be determined in terms of their dimensions or their independent variables. He distinguished discrete multiplicities and continuous multiplicities. The former contain the principle of their own metrics (the measure of one of their parts being given by the number of elements they contain). The latter found a metrical principle in something else, even if only in phenomena unfolding in them or in the forces acting in them.' [Deleuze, Bergsonism, p. 39].

We also find here an echo of the first page of Difference and Repetition where repetition is distinguished straight away from generality. The latter involves resemblance and equivalence whilst repetition involves irreplaceable singularities. Deleuze argues that ‘To repeat is to behave in a certain manner, but in relation to something unique or singular which has no equal or equivalent.’ [Deleuze, Difference and Repetition (Paul Patton translation, Athlone edition- hereafter 'DR'), p. 1]. We shall see that for Deleuze exhaustion also attains a production of the singular and in this way is to account for activity.

In ‘Difference and Repetition’ Deleuze identified the ideal game of the dice-throw as the horizon of the future which did not operate according to a sum total of all possibility:

'Nothing is exempt from the game: consequences are not subtracted from chance by connecting them with a hypothetical necessity which would tie them to a determinate fragment; on the contrary, they are adequate to the whole of chance, which retains and subdivides all possible consequences.' [DR, p. 283]

The continuity that replaces a sum of possibilities ensures that all the resources of the game are in play and nothing about the result is presupposed: '...a game which would be nothing else but play instead of being fragmented, limited and intercut with the work of men.' [DR, p. 283] In The Exhausted Deleuze develops Beckett's exhaustion in a way that echoes this earlier work strongly. It does not concern countable terms, or the sum of previously accumulated products but new distributions of the singular. In Difference and Repetition we find that between singularities or differences – which are the resources of the dice throw – there is a continuity which makes them distinct-obscure. In other words, their distinction and richness as distinct Ideas is realised through their relations, the obscurity that expresses their continual interactions. Throughout The Exhausted we witness a concern with attaining continuity by dissolving or decomposing forms but this must be the condition of new compositions or individuations. We find an echo of the distinct-obscure and the clear-confused of Difference and Repetition in composition-decomposition. They model the process of production, providing the resources of decomposition (as with obscurity or confusion) behind the singularities involved in an account of composition (as with distinction or clarity). Deleuze finds an account of the singularity in the ‘image’ which we will come to later. It is the horizon of exhaustion that is really productive for Deleuze and is behind the distributions and distinctions that allow us to conceive of a sum of possibility in the first place.

Deleuze finds in Becket an 'art or science of exhaustion.' It is an accumulation of what has been produced constituting a sum which must be exhausted in order to uncover the productive process. Deleuze writes: 'Beckett's characters play with the possible without realising it; they are too involved in a possibility that is ever more restricted in its kind to care about what is still happening.' [TE, p. 153] Exhaustion as an art or science proceeds through 'exhaustive series, that is, exhausting series.' [TE, p. 154] Deleuze writes that for Beckett there is to be an 'inventory' of the decomposition of the self. [TE, p. 155] This art or science of exhaustion sees different arrangements multiply, showing for Deleuze the openness of this horizon because all these permutations, this inventory, attains a level of continuity. The decomposition of the possible, of the sum of possibilities that make up the self and set boundaries to its relations, involves inclusive disjunction as the means of attaining continuity. This is the continuity of a common production shared by all terms but something which is preindividual and requires the ungrounding of compositions such that new compositions may arise.

We find this continuity through exhaustion in Beckett's novel Murphy in the following line: '“Yes or no?” said Murphy. The eternal tautology.' [Beckett, Murphy, p. 27] If we took our bearings from a sum of possibilities we would not find this a tautology because the different and exclusive possibilities, the ‘Yes or no?’ would not have been exhausted. Realisation of possibilities proceeds through preferences and goals as it calculates with a sum that is tiring due to its enormity. Yet this sum is discontinuous and so unable to realise production through continuity that exhausts every term capable of being combined in a sum. It excludes the previous preferences and goals, closing off potentials that may otherwise be encountered and made use of. For Deleuze Beckett seeks to avoid this exercise of 'exclusive disjunctions' [TE, p. 153] by decomposing previous compositions in the continuous production that is common to each one. In Murphy the assortment of biscuits 'would spring to life before him, dancing with the radiant measure of its total permutability,...' [Beckett, Murphy, p. 57] The art or science of exhaustion is a matter of having 'learnt not to prefer any one to any other', making each interchangeable, as with Murphy's biscuits. Elsewhere in the novel Beckett writes: 'Murphy was one of the elect, who require everything to remind them of something else.' [Beckett, Murphy, p. 40] Such continuity, where things are related by their production, rather than being isolated by an essential or fixed composition, establishes the 'fullness' that Murphy cannot partake in until all produced and subsequently established distinctions are exhausted. It is the fullness we find in a production that does not resemble its products, one that cannot be modelled on the accumulations or previous products which are discontinuous or a sum of possibilities. They find this when they cease to be a sum through their interchangeability and place in an exhausting/exhaustive series. They are continuous in a way that undermines distinctions and our use of distinct things in action for certain ends. However, this process must produce new compositions capable of new actions if it is to have a productive relation to individuation.

For Deleuze we must therefore see the potential 'springing to life' of Murphy's biscuits as a stage in the account of individuation. Exhaustion must not be a hopeless surrender to 'the undifferentiated, or into the famous unity of contradictories, nor is one passive: one remains active but for nothing.' [TE, p. 153] The ‘life’ in question is that of production with the horizon of continuity and not the discontinuity that prevents things from relating and having a common production. We don't find this if all differences are cancelled because then everything is related but by being the same and not through difference. On the one hand exhaustion attains a production which does not resemble its products – it is called 'Nothing' – and yet it must be productive through difference and in accounting for the production of the new. What is this Nothing? It is the 'Nothing, of which each thing is a modification.' [TE, p. 153] Nothing is continuity freed from the discontinuity that holds among produced or composed things. Each thing merges with its own production which is precisely 'Nothing' because it does not resemble any 'thing' that has previously been produced. Murphy's learning 'not to prefer any one to any other' means giving up the oppositions between composed terms that stand in the way of total permutability and continuity, a principle of production itself through which all things relate. Combination of cases shows what is between every case, what is behind their composition and qualified extension. Deleuze seeks in Beckett what is continuous behind the continued distributions of discontinuous terms and the activity, involving significations, objects, habits, goals and preferences, that this makes possible. This echoes Bergson's concern with the breakdown of the 'sensory motor schema' which Deleuze develops in Cinema 2 [cf pages 20 and 45]. In Beckett one is no longer able to stir one's limbs but one must not lie down because this is tiredness. To lie down is to be active in a way directed towards the getting rest and having energy for the next day. With exhaustion there is no such goal or preference because these are undermined by the scope of a production where nothing must be presupposed about what can happen next and no calculation made about the future.

How is 'the fantastic decomposition of the self' to involve the milieu in which individuation takes place? Exhaustion must be a process common to every term, one found by combination through inclusive disjunction to include every term and so exhaust their isolation. Deleuze writes: 'The combinatorial exhausts its object, but only because its subject is himself exhausted.' [TE, p. 154]In this way the difference between subject and object is to emerge from the production that exhaustion returns to. Actual activity has come to an end so that terms – subject, object, thing – may find their common production through their shared exhaustion, through their merging with the continuity of Nothing. This is again continuity in 'the formless and unformulated' that must nevertheless be coupled with the formed and formulated. This relates to Deleuze’s critical assault on language at the end of the essay – words are 'so burdened with calculations and significations, with intentions and personal memories, with old habits that cement together that one can scarcely bore into the surface before it closes up again.' [TE, p. 173] This emphasises how all subjective terms must be overcome. The subject is decomposed by the horizon of the future and milieu of individuation where the time of the future is played out again and again in new organisations of space, in new compositions enabled by continual decompositions. We have so far been concerned with the first way of exhausting the possible – 'forming exhaustive series of things' [TE, p. 161] – but we have already found that Deleuze finds further levels in Beckett.

According to Deleuze in Beckett’s work we find a language I that exhausts the possible with words, with exhaustive series, but we need a second language in order to exhaust words themselves as a further stage of exhaustion and decomposition. [TE, p. 156] This is the language of voices, characterised as blendable flows or waves by Deleuze. His notion is that Beckett exhausts words by relating them to Others who emit them. The Other is a possible world. Yet rather than existing as something given or unproduced this Other is itself accounted for by being exhausted. The possible world of the Other is 'Long since exhausted, without our knowing it, without his knowing it.' It is exhausted in its turn such that the Other forms with me 'the same dead foreign language'. [TE, p. 158] The Other and myself are the same character, both exhausted, as with subject and object, as with Murphy's biscuits. Again both 'merge with Nothing' in the sense of escaping all produced terms and their discontinuity. However, we see with the self and Other a structure involved in the production in experience of individuated or composed entities. This echoes Deleuze's notion of the Other-structure in Difference and Repetition which is a stage in the production of experience but takes its bearings from a production that is continuous. At Difference and Repetiton page 282 Deleuze elaborates 'The delineation of object, the transitions as well as the ruptures, the passage from one object to another, and even the fact that one world disappears in favour of another, the fact that there is always something else implicated which remains to be explicated or developed – all this is made possible only by the other-structure and its expressive power in perception. In short, it is the Other- structure that ensures individuation within the perceptual world.' Yet we must also go to '…those regions where the Other-structure no longer functions, far from objects and subject that it conditions, where singularities are free to be deployed or distributed within pure Ideas, and individuating factors to be distributed in pure intensity. In this sense, it is indeed true that the thinker is necessarily solitary and solipsistic.' Deleuze here argues that the Other-structure ensures individuation but he wants to preserve 'regions where the Other-structure no longer functions.' These regions are the continuous production in question but must nevertheless be productively related to the Other-structure. Deeper levels of exhaustion in Beckett concern very positive notions about regions prior to the Other-structure which we shall now move on to investigate.

Deleuze finds a critique of language of language in Beckett’s writings. He finds that words are bound to the particular and general for Beckett and will seek what is universal in the visual and aural. Yet the universality of a continuous production must not detract from its production of the singular, the production of new compositions through decomposition is via a process of exhaustion that brings us to the continuous again and again. Deleuze identifies a third language in Becket through which this stage of exhaustion is dramatised. This language is not concerned with combinable objects or transmitting voices, as were languages I and II respectively. It concerns Images and an 'any-space-whatever' which are respectively the time and space of production rather than of products. These are positive notions that are reached through exhaustion and so they are productive time and spaces that are behind produced times and spaces.

Let's concentrate first on the Image. It is said to 'ascend to the indefinite'. In Beckett's words, in Murphy writing about the character Celia, 'Then it was finished, the days and places and things and people were untwisted and scattered, she was lying down, she had no history.' [Beckett, Murphy, p. 86] The Image is a ritornello and a process, making it independent of both objects and memories. The Image is then not a personal memory, It resounds and it colours, making it a process within experience itself. It cannot be a psychological property of the subject because subject and object have already been exhausted, their difference having been shown to be itself something produced. Now we are concerned with processes of production and not with attributes of an already produced entity. As Deleuze puts it – '...the image is more profound because it frees itself from its object in order to become a process itself, ...' As such it '...no longer needs to be realised in a body or object.' [TE, p. 168] The names, combined exhaustively in language I, and voices of the Other, exhausted at the limit in language II, are then interrupted by the pure Image. The Image attains the indefinite because discontinuous possibilities and the opposition of self and Other have been exhausted. Yet it remains completely determined. Its complete determination must arise through the continuity of the production of which it is part. It must realise its distinction through obscurity. It resounds or colours through the resources of a continuous, obscure-distinct, production. This allows it to operate and occur in the ongoing production of experience, rather than being bound to previous forms or being unproductive in experience. In Beckett's words, describing Murphy: 'He could not get a picture in his mind of any creature he had met, animal or human. Scraps of bodies, of landscapes, hands, eyes, lines and colours evoking nothing, rose and climbed out of sight before him, as thought reeled upward off a spool level with his throat.' [Beckett, Murphy, p. 141] These scraps are completely determined but belong to no body or object, they operate as a process in experience without presupposing the forms and compositions already built up.

Deleuze strongly identifies this re-thinking of the image in Beckett as affirming the production of the new. The Image must be the new and never set up a barrier to the new by conserving a content. With the image 'what counts is not its meagre content but the energy it has harvested.' [TE, p. 160] This shows that exhaustion is wholly positive insofar as it leads us to something other than a content that would accumulate as yet another composition. The image never lasts very long because it is singular, 'inseparable from the movement through which it dissipates itself.' [TE, p. 168] It is continuous with the production of the new and therefore will not accumulate or solidify a content because this would block the new images to come and its role as a process that makes different and opens a new horizon. They merge with 'the dissipation of their condensed energy' such that they are singular and do not prescribe contents but offer a new relation through which content can be composed differently. Rather than following from previous compositions of content according to a linear succession of time the image is an instantaneous production that interrupts this succession: 'There is a time for images, a right moment when they can appear or insinuate themselves, breaking the combination of words and flow of voices.' Yet this break must also exhaust combinations and flows, it must be 'a moment very near the end, an hour close to the last.' [TE, p. 161] This is a clearing of the space of composition through decomposition. This is also developed in Deleuze’s ‘Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation’, see pages 80-84f.

If the Image were to have a different temporality it would have a different horizon and operation. It operates in the instant. We can refer to the problem-solution structure which means that a problem does not establish new form of individuation but establishes a horizon for forms of solution or individuation. In Difference and Repetition Deleuze writes 'The Idea of fire subsumes fire in the form of a single continuous mass capable of increase. The Idea of silver subsumes its object in the form of a liquid continuity of fine metal.' [DR 171] This is a continuousness that does not resemble what it produces, this having been exhausted. For this reason it must interrupt the course and succession of its products, forms of solution or individuation, rather than simply supplying it with ready made forms. We do not then copy the content of the image but realise new connections in the instant thanks to how diverse new images or potentials coexist in the Idea. One form of realising the Idea or image must not dominate because for Deleuze the actualisation of virtual Idea is differenciation rather than being marked by resemblance or generality. For this reason we find that Beckett's notion of falling preserves the necessary temporality of the image. Deleuze quotes the following passage from Beckett: 'The image is a pant, a breath, but it is an expiring breath, on its way to extinction. The image is that which extinguishes itself, consumes itself: a fall. It is a pure intensity, which is defined as such by its height, that is, by its level above zero, which it describes only by falling.' [TE, p. 170] Therefore in The Exhausted the dissipation of energy is shown to be positive – it ensures a singular Image and one occurring in the instant and therefore not being accounted for by the linear succession of time. Deleuze quotes Becket writing of 'the simple games that time plays with space, now with these toys, and now with those.' [Beckett, ‘Texts for Nothing’, p. 74] This captures the intervention of an instantaneous Image in space, the problems set for space to solve which draws upon a time of production. Thus one Image does not follow from another in a linear and actual succession but each occurs in the instant and relates in a non-linear and continuous time. It is what Deleuze elsewhere calls, borrowing the concept from Shakespeare, a 'time out of joint.' ['On Four Poetic Formulas That Might Summarise the Kantian Philosophy' in ‘Essays Critical and Clinical’, also published as the Preface to ‘Kant's Critical Philosophy’.]

The second aspect of the language III, 'any space whatever', does for space what the Image does for time. The 'any space whatever' is populated and well trodden – including by us and yet it is neither here nor there. Deleuze finds that in Beckett a manner of walking is a ritornello just as a Images are. Thus 'Any-character-whatever' 'traverses the square following a given course and direction.' This motor ritornello is a conveyor belt because it is a movement with no object. Here it is a question of exhausting space. Just as linear time is overcome by the instantaneous time of Images and their virtual coexistence, so qualified and extended spaces are overcome by 'any-space-whatever'. It is not organised by established representations, neither by words, objects or memories. Its potential organisation involves the instantaneous time of the image, the injection of problems which it responds to with solutions, precisely individuations or compositions of the self. Here elements are defunctionalised, homogeneous and are thus defined only as parts of a space, ensuring continuity as in the case of images coexisting in Ideas. This clears the ground because it ensures that forms produced in the past and accumulated do not determine how space can function in its encounter with the Image. This is space open the horizon of the future through its capacity to respond to the time of the image.

Developing the Nothing with which everything merges there is a ghostly dimension that further elaborates the continuous production Deleuze seeks in Beckett's work. The latter is ‘Nothing’ from the point of view of the produced, the actualised and with its sensori-motor schema. It is then ghostlike from this perspective, what Deleuze calls 'The ghostly dimension of an indefinite impersonal'. [TE, p. 166] Yet it involves a fullness attained through exhaustion, something Murphy saw as a potential in his biscuits. We reach the indefinite and impersonal through the exhaustion or decomposition of words, memories and objects. Images are played out when the time of Image is staged in the 'any space whatever'. We have 'a woman, a man and a child without any personal coordinates.' They are ghostly because they do not resemble already composed forms. Ghostlike is the life without the forms that define what has been composed and made personal. These Images are processes that trigger new forms, new solutions or individuations, and so must themselves ‘fall’ away rather than becoming established and must not prescribe a content. The impersonal and indefinite can effect any self through its own exhaustion or decomposition, they belong to no-one or thing and so are pre-individual. They do not resemble what they produce. They are the instances of a renewed problem and ghostly because they do not presuppose former solutions and do not resemble them. It is ghostly that the order of succession of what has gone before doesn't count because 'All parts of space plunge into the void, each revealing the emptiness, into which they are plunging.' [TE, p. 165] They reveal emptiness in their lack of reference to the organisation of space and time, abandoning all precedent or basis in a sum of probabilities.

It is in music that a continuity is to be found that avoids the terms Beckett is said to exhaust. It is adequate to the space we have reached so that:

'It is onto this ghostly frame that the music is hurled, connecting voids and silences, following a ridge line like a limit to infinity.' [TE, p. 167]

This is a ‘frame’ without established and personal coordinates. ‘Infinite’ here is the continuous production we have been concerned with. 'Void and silence' are connected by this continuity because they are its interventions in language and experience, they are singular or remarkable images connected by a continuous production. They are connected by a rhythm that orders their occurrence not according to linear succession but according to a non-linear production brought about by the coexistence and interaction of these images in a continuous production. Here difference relates to difference. The instantaneous images can be connected only through the production they are part of and this is expressed by rhythm rather than by given ways of connecting things. Rhythm is the time aspect of music and involves the grouping of units of time into larger and larger groups. All sorts of groupings and connections can emerge through rhythm and this makes a productive movement. This accounts for new distributions of words, subjects and objects in an ‘any space whatever’ because both time and space are free of presuppositions and able to respond with new compositions to the image that occur in the instant. These images must all be continuous but not according to their successive occurrences in a linear or chronological time. They relate through rhythm and its groupings, a ‘time out of joint’.

Deleuze writes that for Beckett: 'Music succeeds in transforming the death of this young girl into a young girl dies; it brings about this extreme determination of the indefinite like a pure intensity that pierces the surface,...' [TE, p. 173] Here 'this' thing which has a place in the succession of products, of words, of objects, becomes instead an Image, a process of death made singular. This is because the images occurs without being tied to any body or object, it is indefinite and impersonal, ghostly because it is preindividual. In this way all definite and personal terms are exhausted and this image emerges from its relation to all other images and relates what it produces in an 'any space whatever' to all other productions. In his Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation Deleuze talks about the difference between 'distributive unity' and 'limitative unity.' [p. 84-85]The former is separation without isolation and expresses the continuity of production which is attained through exhaustion. This rhythmic being and union that separates the selves who are realised and makes them individual in very different and creative ways. Yet it does this by relating their singular production to the whole of production, through the unlimited continuity of this. Deleuze refers to Beckett's television work as using music or vision to loosen the grip of words, separating or even opening them up. This is when they encounter their outside, the continuity that produces them but also demands they make way for the new. This gives them a unity that distributes anew, breaking solidified orders. This means that Images can interrupt words and objects but rhythm ensures new distributions or groupings of images are always occurring and none is established. It means that whole of time is always brought into play. This is for Deleuze to clear the way for the ever new that is only realised through this whole: 'Visual image is carried along by the music, the sonorous image that rushes toward its own abolition. Both of them rush toward the end, all possibility exhausted.' [TE, p. 169]

Deleuze asks whether there is salvation for words in a new style where they open up by themselves. This would be 'A music proper to a poetry read aloud without music.' [TE, p. 173]The succession and the discontinuity we found with the sum of possibility would need to be overcome it the rhythm and an ‘any space whatever’ were to be realised in a style that overcame the solidified and habitual. Deleuze refers to Beckett's practice of boring holes in the surface so that 'what lurks behind' might at last appear: 'to allow for the emergence of the void or the visible in itself, the silence or the audible in itself...' [TE, p. 173] This void is continuous and so refers to the 'in itself' without division into forms or compositions. This echoes Deleuze concern in Difference and Repetition with how 'Ideas occur throughout the faculties and concern them all.' Deleuze suggests we take the social multiplicity or Idea – 'it determines sociability as a faculty, but also the transcendent of sociability which cannot be lived within actual societies in which the multiplicity is incarnated, but must be and can be lived only in the element of social upheaval (in other words, freedom, which is always hidden among the remains of an old order and the first fruits of a new).' [DR, p. 193] The faculties are structures involved in individuation and respond to the transcendent object, the Idea where the variety of 'the social' coexists ‘in itself’ and with the whole of time, suggesting again the distinction of Idea through their obscurity. Deleuze is concerned with the 'in itself' of the visible and the audible also in order to realise in individuation an images produced by the coexistence of all the varieties of the visible or of the audible.

Referring to Beckett's late works Deleuze characterises his style: 'Sometimes short segments are ceaselessly added to the interior of the phrase in an attempt to break open the surface of words completely, ... And sometimes the phrase is riddled with dots and dashes [traits] in order to ceaselessly reduce the surface of words,...' [TE, p. 173-174] This exhaustive process operates between the words to uncover their common production in the linguistic Idea or multiplicity. Deleuze argues that a new style is needed because of the problem of how visions or sounds are to be distinguished. This concerns the problem not simply of minimal distinction between sounds and visions but their differenciation, the production of very different sounds and visions through the audible in itself and the visible in itself. At this point the rhythm of a production that groups images in new ways, realising new connections between these processes, is operating. The surface is broken open or reduced in this new style such that we are closer to the Idea and its production of images by bringing together diverse visions and sounds into the common production that realises the ‘in itself’ in different ways. Finding the Idea in which the variety coexists is to find the point of exhaustion where new images are produced in order to give rise to new compositions or individuations upon an 'any space whatever.'

This conclusion has tried to draw together the ‘art of science of exhaustion’ through the theme of individuation. This theme seems to recur throughout Deleuze work and he seeks to account both for continuity and for the discontinuity that is a condition of action and relations between individuals. The account of the time of image and of the ‘any space whatever’ provides an account of how new singularities can be distributed. The problem of accounting for the non-exhausted or composed through exhaustion and decomposition are great and with in more depth in other of Deleuze’s writings. Indeed it is one of the productive problems animating his thought as a whole. However, it is in the space and time of production uncovered in The Exhausted that we grasp the potential for individuation provided by exhaustion just as we do find in other apparently destructive and negative terms elsewhere in Deleuze, from fractures and cracks to schizophrenia and discord.

The discussion during the workshop was very productive. One issue raised was about the value of exhaustion over a process of fragmentation. Isn’t a fragment more appropriate to Deleuze’s own mechanisms of production? This would suggest that a fragment is injected into the process of production. Another issue was the mention of the sublime at page 170 The Exhausted. If the sublime involves fear, awe and alienation does this equate with exhaustion? The sublime reaches a peak – the zenith of sensation. However, it was argued, for Deleuze exhaustion still involves sensation, it still involves a zenith but one that falls away such that the sublime is never established or fixed.

A connection was made to the move beyond action and the notion of the rhizome where everything is connected to everything else, this is where intensities happen. It cannot be put in an intentional, conscious or logical sequence.

The move beyond the possible to the production of the real led the question to be raised of whether exhaustion is positive in Deleuze but negative in Nietzsche, despite their common ground. Exhaustion in Nietzsche’s critique of morality involves being hypersensitive and involves alcohol, luxury and decadence, bring about reaction rather than action.

Deleuze philosophical notion of energy was related to his critique of entropy. This was referred to Derrida’s notion of dehiscence in the image of the bud of a flower bursting where most of what is released will die but all are of interest. The excess of dehiscence leads to chance driven encounters and avoids a linear and chronological succession or causality.

The example of an animal walking across a desert was suggested as a case where life will push until it drops. Exhaustion will only come with death. It was asked whether exhaustion is moral and humanistic in Deleuze or physiological. This echoes debates about whether the notion of ‘becoming other’ in Deleuze is human centred. This was related to Kantian structures, invoking a human anthropology, and the problem that it is contradictory for the subject to be got rid of in a specifically human way (cf. Keith Ansell Pearson Germinal Life [Routledge, 1999] especially pages 188-189).

Reference was also made to Beckett’s characters and how they keep returning in his work – he calls them all back and they keep moving all the time, reappearing.

Also mentioned was that the collection of stones talked about in ‘Anti-Oedipus’ echoed Beckett’s ‘Molloy’. Here the notion of constructing desiring machines out of a heap of stones is developed.

Is The Exhausted the closest Deleuze ever got to writing about death? Death is not the end because the life or singularity of the image comes from its fall or dissipation. It becomes a ballistic image, it was suggested. This was related in the point in Difference and Repetition where Deleuze talks about personal death and impersonal death. The latter is going on all the time in the life span of an actual entity, singular points composes the body and compose thought in relation to an environment and in relation to thought in the widest sense. Singular images each die or fall, intensity tends towards zero. As exhaustion death is impersonal and seems to go on continually. The life span between birth and death was discussed – we cannot make a whole of this series. Other series are multiplied by the complication of the whole. It was suggested that constituting a series is itself yet another event in a life and that we cannot therefore get to ‘the’ series.

The three languages which Deleuze finds in Beckett (page 156) were discussed and it was argued that the later texts of Beckett strongly emphasise the relevance of this model. Words come no longer to be used. It was suggested that triads come up a lot in Deleuze – yet it was also noted that we can find many four fold structures. Deleuze uses lists all the time, including the eight postulates of The Image of Thought at the end of chapter three of Difference and Repetition. However, it was suggested, we tend to expect lists to be exhaustive. The importance of more than two terms – such as actual and virtual – was brought out in relation to the danger of the actual falling into the virtual unless other terms involve the virtual in the actual, as individuation can be said to do, as can the doubling of spatio-temporal dynamisms in the emergence of an 'elementary consciousness' (something talked about in Difference and Repetition at page 220). Death is for Deleuze to clear the ground for the virtual production that is continually involved in actualisation.

Another area developed was the role of Klossowski given that Deleuze says he got the notion of intensity from him. Deleuze and Guattari saw ‘disjunctive synthesis’ as a way of describing the essential nature of Kossowski’s fictions. Klossowski’s work on Nietzsche’s wrestling with his own physiological states of sickness was developed and this revealed its deep relevance to Deleuze’s engagement with Beckett. It was a question for Nietzsche of whether he should be on the side of his body or his thought – they were in a battle against each other. Nietzsche’s aphoristic style expresses the incoherent forces going on beneath consciousness but without representing them. This develops a pathos of thought. Reference was made to Nietzsche’s The Gay Science where he criticises Spinoza for arguing that we need to understand rather than condemn. Nietzsche sees this as seeking a neutral position of understanding when neutrality can only be a temporary truce of the forces of the unconscious involving the lowest energy and no feeling. Yet in Deleuze exhaustion is correlated with a particular possibility of thought, a new distribution of images or singularities. For Nietzsche things can’t cancel out and Deleuze takes this over. Unconscious forces are all different in kind. The production of an agent, of a sensory motor schema, comes out of this unconscious. Exhaustion then is about getting beyond agency but to have individuation you have to get back to it too.

Deleuze's criticism of European Buddhism was raised because here the right balance, the right level of energy, involves disinterest. Beckett, it was pointed out, is often accused of nihilism. It was suggested that Deleuze’s anti-Kantianism leads him to affirm in Beckett the exhaustion of possible experiences. This again lead to the problem of whether we have the physiology of exhaustion or a specifically human exhaustion. Kant’s work in The Critique of Pure Reason was characterised as involving the exhaustion of the possibilities of cognition via the excessive movement beyond the limits of the rational that defines 'the human' in Kant.

It was argued that in Beckett there is a whole system of at work that keeps things moving.

The theme of the ‘any space whatever’ was related to Deleuze's ‘Bergsonism’ and the notion in Bergson that you can only see the image when you are free of all movement. The image is what sets everything in motion.

Also discussed where passage in Nietzsche’s ‘Thus Spake Zarathustra’ where Zarathustra is forced to lie down and how he is opposed to 'the philosopher of sleep'.

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Friday 12th January 2007 1-3pm

**Colloquium #1**

**Darren Ambrose (Warwick) 'On The Diagram in Deleuze's Work'**

Location: SL007, Stephen Lawrence Building, Greenwich Maritime Campus

Organised by Greenwich University Philosophy Department

The Colloquium given by Darren Ambrose, of Warwick University, was an extremely effective presentation on the diagrammatic and led to a very productive discussion. We are very grateful to our speaker for coming to Greenwich and adding a great deal to Volcanic Lines program. This report on the paper and discussion is taken from my notes. Please let me know if I’ve misrepresented anything.

The paper began by looking at What is Philosophy? and the pedagogical relation of philosophy to science and art that is expounded therein. The three elements presented by philosophy – plane of immanence, conceptual personae and concepts – were related to the diagrammatic, personal and intensive. The plane of immanence or diagrammatic is the pre-philosophical plane. There is a shared notion of creativity in the function in science, the concept in philosophy and the percept and affects in art. The initial diagrammatic function was emphasised by reference to Deleuze‘s engagement with Francis Bacon who shows that both art and philosophy involve taking ‘a witches flight.’

The nature of philosophy as a creative attempt to comprehend through created concepts was emphasised. The real genetic conditions of ontological actuality demand a pragmatic constructivism and a radical self movement within thought. Philosophy is then the creative ontology of the virtual. Bacon’s practice was related to this. He has said in interviews that when he begins a painting he has no idea what he is doing, what is going to emerge. This relates to Deleuze and Guattari’s requirement that we have no readily available conceptual forms when we are forced to think. We don’t know what to do with what we encounter. This means that forces of recognition aren’t governing things – something the speaker related to critique of ‘the image of thought’ in chapter three of Difference and Repetition. Later Deleuze argues that the concept needs an idiot if it is to be realised. This is a new type of idiot who turns the absurd into the highest power of thought and in this way is creative. The idiot is born of exasperation and lack of conceptual resources to deal with the singular event.

Reference was then made to remarks Deleuze and Guattari make in ‘What is Philosophy?’ about Hegel’s efforts at concept creation. For them Hegel doesn’t know where to stop with the concept. He institutes a madness of the concept and extends it to all fields. Deleuze and Guattari argue that we need the non-philosophical to do philosophy. This is a condition of creativity and demands that we refer to art and science in search of the non-philosophical. How can the artwork reveal something to philosophy about the diagrammatic conditions of creating? This was referred to the intrinsic self ordering and creative self positing of the material used in art. This helps lay out the plane of immanence diagrammatically. The matter that is involved is not passive – we have the intrinsically expressive components of matter. These are virtual elements and processes of becoming. Acts of creation amount to the inscription of lines of differentiation. This is then to tap a reservoir, the non-philosophical plane of immanence.

The speaker introduced counter-effectuation at this point as something involved in the philosophical act which is a return upstream to the pre-individual problematic conditions of experience. It was emphasised that this must be a work of creation because there is no pre-existing means of doing so. Insightful reference was made again to Hegel and the presuppositions of thought that enable concept creation for him. This gives a certain direction and image of thought according to Deleuze and Guattari, a criticism also made by Schelling. Deleuze and Guattari seek to rid philosophy of pre-existing images of thought. For them the philosophy is the friend of the concept because of the vital and infinite self movement of undifferentiated thought is the outside realm that forces us to think and is at the basis of a fundamental encounter. This is ‘the being of the sensible’ or that by which the given is given. It is imperceptible and is the limit at which transcendental exercise of the faculties is attained. In this way, it was argued, the dimension of the transcendental or virtual opens itself up through the sensible.

This was explained as making new forces visible and formulating the problems that they pose. This systematic disruption of the faculties was described as the necessary diagrammatic element of philosophy or the plane of immanence. It was argued that the real genetic conditions of experience or the actual that lead to the invention of an entirely new metaphysics. This is the diagrammatic creation of a process of differentiation.

The plane of immanence was defined further as pure, undifferentiated movement. This movement must be radically conceptless. This was characterised as setting out an enabling image of thought that is conceptless. This movement that can be carried to infinity is a non-philosophical concept that mustn’t be encroached upon by the madness of the concept. This was related to the requirement that Deleuze and Guattari make that everything begin with the hatred of philosophy – misosophy. The pre-philosophical field is the internal condition of thought and this plane of immanence must be preserved through an initial act of misosophy. There must be a relation with art and science to do this, an intertwining and co-implication. Philosophy then must erect itself on the ground of the unthinkable and imperceptible exteriority. This was related to Bacon’s implicit catastrophe and hysteria within the act of painting. It was argued that this connects with the intuitive diagrammatic procedure that initiates philosophical practice.

Deleuze’s ‘The Logic of Sensation’ was said to develop Francis Bacon as the modern paradigm concerned with intrinsic expressive sensuality of paint and resistance to cliché by avoiding narrative in favour of the brutality of fact. What can be done with the materiality of paint on its own. Painting conveys a static or potential violence of reaction and expression. Deleuze finds Bacon paintings to be experimental rhythm assemblages of flesh and bone. Flesh and bones, it was explained, are rhythmic limits, each pushing the other to its limit. Deleuze’s Bacon presents the lived reality of the sub-representational domain and the simultaneous elevation of the Figure. The Figure is rhythmic and not narrative and this means elements are interrelated but not as symbols. This connection was made between the pre-figurative act of painting and the pre-philosophical elaboration necessary to concept creation. In the case of Bacon’s painting this was characterised as the avoidance of probabilistic givens and clichés that always already inhabit the canvas. Bacon’s preparatory work was explained as the initial making of random marks, sweeping and brushing motions. This clears out locals or zones on the canvas. It is a practice that presupposes clichés and removes, brushes over or covers them with these acts. It was explained that Bacon calls this a diagram ore graph in interviews conducted with David Sylvester. The setting up of a diagram or graph is random but productive possibilities are produced.

Such physical acts of painting are also found in Pollock’s work but for Deleuze this presents only the diagram. However, it was explained, Bacon productively negotiates with the diagram to produce a figure. The automatic random ground is therefore risky because it threatens to overwhelm the subsequent figuration. In the midst of probabilistic and figurative givens a catastrophe overcomes the painting. Another possible world is introduced into the visual world of figuration. The painters hand intervenes to interrupt the sovereign optical organisation and the diagram operates as suggestive of a new sense. Marks then must be used to make out possibilities of fact.

The diagram was defined in this sense as chaos and the germ of new order of rhythm. It unlocks new orders of sensation. But, it was emphasised, the diagram must not be allowed to eat away at the entire painting. The diagram is a necessary prerequisite of the fact. Sensation must be rendered clear and precise via a new form of figuration.

Such groping experimentation chimes with Deleuze and Guattari’s notion that to think is always to follow a witches flight. Matter carries with it virtual singularities as implicit and so form is something ‘suggested’ out of the material itself. Bacon surrenders to the matter of paint to follow it and follow its virtual singularities.

Bacon’s method was them summarised:

1. We mist begin with inevitable figurative givens because they always already inhabit the canvas.

2. Catastrophic intervention – scrambling.

3. Utilising the catastrophe to allow the materiality of the paint to facilitate the emergence of a new form of resemblance.

The diagram was now defined ‘an inherently fecund prerequisite’ involving ‘the continual injection of a manual diagram into the visual whole’. For Bacon painting will only capture the nature of reality if the painter doesn’t know how to do it. It must then be allowed to breed its different forms but without its chaos destroying the Figurative forms.

This was related again to a ‘systematic disruption of the faculties via a diagrammatic procedure.’ Thus it was concluded that both art and philosophy undertake a witches flight.

Q. The discussion that followed this exhilarating paper began with a question about Deleuze’s borrowing of concepts from many sources and his borrowing of the term ‘diagram’ in particular.

A. It is a term Bacon used in an interview to talk about how he paints. It is a term that appear in the Foucault and Kafka: A Minor Literature books also. This opened an interesting discussion about the different meanings of the term in Deleuze and how it is translated into English. In the Bacon book ‘graph’ is used but translated in English as ‘diagram.’

Q. Another question was about the term ‘fact’ in The Logic of Sensation.

A. Our speaker suggested that ‘fact’ is again adopted from Bacon vocabulary and his concern for a ‘factual expression of reality.’ We can, it wads argued, say that ‘fact’ and ‘event’ are synonymous but must raise the question over whether Deleuze does buy wholesale into Bacon’ notions, his way of talking about his work. Is Bacon adopting Bacon’s language and relating it to philosophy? It was suggested that Deleuze might miss the self mythologizing that Bacon seems to indulge in when talking about his work.

Q. A question was raised concerning the relevance of Merleau-Ponty’s invention of concept through his experience of Cezanne’s painting.

A. In answer the relation between Cezanne’s ordered pictorial logic of sensation was related to Bacon’s disorganised and brutal logic.

Q. A further question made reference to the ‘haptic’ which appears in the last section of A Thousand Plateaus and in The Logic of Sensation.

A. This disruption of the purely optical by creating a tactile object involves the notion of the eye touching the object. This was related also the move away from the striated to the smooth in A Thousand Plateaus. The speaker referred to arts beginning with tactile but this being superseded according to certain art historians. For Deleuze and Guattari, on the contrary, it is not superseded but persists.

Q. The relation of misosophy to Dadaism was also raised, whether the former was an anti-philosophy as the latter is an anti-art.

A. The speaker argued that misosophy is in all creativity while Dadaism was a historically situated and conditioned activity. Philosophy must maintain in itself a non-philosophical element.

Q. Further discussion of Deleuze and Guattari’s borrowing of concepts from many sources followed.

A. Do they create or borrow concepts? Yet, the speaker argued, the use of pre-existing concepts is the creation. This is like the artists who re-vitalised and reenergised paint when many people said painting was dead.

Q. Is Damian Hurst a clichéd take on Bacon?

A. This lead onto the decisional process that come after the initial laying. The speaker emphasised the significance of the decisions and judgements of the artists. For Bacon the painter has developed a sensibility through practice – this is a decisional structure. The philosopher must do the same.

Q. The notion of misosophy was returned to.

A. There is a need for deep love for the concept because in this the counter-effectuating misosophy operates. It was explained that Bacon didn’t see himself as being aggressive to Velasquez in his Popes but one that must dismantle and not repeat the original in order to get back to it. A question on the diagram in music led the speaker to refer to Stockhausen and Cage as counter-effectuating existing compositional techniques. Messiaen is drawn upon by Deleuze and Guattari because he goes back to bird song and uses it as a diagrammatic procedure. He does not just transcribe birdsong into music like Beethoven.

Q. Another questioner suggested that Deleuze and Guattari write in way that is difficult so that they scramble the matrix out of which the new thing comes.

A. The speaker recalled Bacon’s claim, in an interview with Melvyn Bragg, that he has sheer pleasure in playing with colour. Deleuze and Guattari likewise seems to have pleasure in creating the shock to thought.

Q. A questioner mentioned that in his interview with Bragg Bacon also talked of his love of gambling, relating to the manipulation of chance that Deleuze identifies. Only the painter knows how to make chance work, how to manipulate the marks.

A. This was related by the speaker to Deleuze’s work on cinema and the film makers manipulation of chance through a cinema of more open duration. Bacon’s influence on David Lynch was mentioned. Hoe allows accidents that happen on set to be included and so embrace them.

Q. It was suggested that Pollock is better than Bacon and that Deleuze’s taste is sedate and bourgeois. He imposes a specific plane of immanence or transcendental structure and so fall into the weakness he identifies in Kant. Why is the mark not a fact?

A. Our speaker agreed that there was a problem with why we must move to the act of decision and beyond the automatism of just the marks. We need a plane of consistency, a rigor to stop things falling apart. Drug writing fails to communicate the strength of the sensation. The structure or plane of consistency is needed.

Q. Final remarks included the observation that Deleuze and Guattari prefer psychosis over neurosis and perhaps the mark is a neurotic signs. It is a sign system of the unconscious with no object whilst psychosis is closer to disjunctive synthesis.

Q. Also Does Deleuze resolve the haptic and visual sensation?

A. Rhythm finishes The Logic of Sensation rather than a tactile genesis.

Final remarks included the observation that Deleuze’s use of ‘the tree greens’ (from Whitehead) means that colour is experience and we are in it. It was also noted that Cezanne wants something to touch but goes for colour and not clay, making this more ‘paradox of sensation’ that a ‘logic of sensation’.

**NOV-DEC 2006 Workshops on Alain Badiou's 'Deleuze: The Clamour of Being'**

Tuesday 14th November

6-8pm ‘Clamour of Being’ Workshop: intro, chapters 1 & 2.

Tuesday 21st November

6-8pm ‘Clamour of Being’ Workshop: chapters 3 & 4.

Tuesday 28th November

6-8pm ‘Clamour of Being’ Workshop: chapters 5 & 6.

Tuesday 5th December

6-8pm ‘Clamour of Being’ Workshop: chapters 7 & 8.

Location: Queen Anne 139

All sessions will be held on the Greenwich Maritime campus. The sessions are FREE and open to all but please REGISTER beforehand if you are not already a member of Greenwich University – email volcaniclines@hotmail.com and we will send you an information pack.

The workshops on Alain Badiou’s text ‘Deleuze: The Clamour of Being’ (ISBN 0-8166-3140-9) are intended as a focused reading group. Each will begin with a ten minute presentation to provide the focus of the session.

5 DECEMBER 'CLAMOUR OF BEING' WORKSHOP - REPORT AND CONTINUING DISCUSSION

Today the workshop tackled the final two chapters of ‘Deleuze: The Clamour of Being.’ We discussed the oceanic image of the virtual, Deleuze’s relation to politics, experimentation and Badiou’s use of set theory amongst other things.

The presentation began by suggesting that in chapter seven we see the machinery of ‘encounter’ kick into action very strongly. We see what Badiou means by ‘a “collaboration” that [is] … divergent and contrasting’ (page 5). Here we see Badiou outlining what he likes in Deleuze and what he doesn’t, suggesting what he can and can’t make use of and explaining why his philosophy leads him to reject elements of Deleuze.

The Heideggerian concern with thinking, Being and their interlacement/identity is introduced as central to philosophy since Heidegger (echoing Badiou’s claim at the beginning of ‘Being and Event’ that Heidegger is the last universally recognisable philosopher as the first of three assumptions on which to premise ‘the analysis of the current global state of philosophy’ (p. 1)).

We notice on the first page a proposed definition of ‘thought’ for Deleuze. This makes Badiou development of a ‘theory of interlacement’ in Deleuze simplistic – Nick Midgley’s presentation last week opened up the need to keep Deleuze’s different encounters in play. Here Deleuze brings in Leibniz, Cinema and Foucault a lot – he mentions Bergson briefly by comparing Fold and Memory and Nietzsche in order to link force in Foucault and active and reactive forces. However, is this enough to capture what Deleuze means by ‘thought’?

p. 81 If interiority is a result or product it cannot serve to identify the being of thought - interiority is not constitutive. This also avoids establishing relations between subjects and objects that instantiate reflectivity and negativity.

p. 82 Badiou argues that for Deleuze ‘subject’ as operator (instead of difference or ultimately the Eternal Return as operator) places thought in a scientific paradigm (the plane of reference). However, the alternative which Badiou finds developed in Deleuze’s ‘Foucault’ is topology, which is certainly scientific, and we can argue that Deleuze finds in science resources equal to modelling folding. However, for Badiou Deleuze’s use of maths and science is always metaphorical, as we have discussed in previous weeks.

Badiou argues that in Foucault we find the diagnosis of an illusion that structures and the subject are opposed. This illusion is what allows us today to believe that there is a place and status for the subject in places where structuring is not complete. We need to get away from the couple formed by structural objectivity and constitutive subjectivity.

At page 83 Badiou writes that ‘…given that thought is set in motion by disjunctive synthesis, and that it is solicited by beings who are in nonrelation, how can it be in accordance with Being, which is essentially Relation?’ How is the nonrelation a relation?’ (‘Foucault’ page 65). Badiou sees the fold as the response with its linking of thought (disjointed cases) and Being (the eternal return of the Same – where the same can only be said of difference). He draws from this the conclusion, at page 84, that for Deleuze we must find ourselves constrained to follow the One – we sense here that for Badiou Deleuze’s subversion of the One - as we find with other similarly traditional and restrictive terms that carry a lot of baggage (e.g. God, universal, the Same, attribute, Being, Idea, problem) - fails and doesn’t make the One productive and liberating.

We are then able to think nonrelation as relation – in Foucault truth is served by the two with no direct relation (a volcanic line). Badiou refers to Nietzsche and he develops this in a piece translated in ‘Pli’ (as ‘Who is Nietzsche?’ in volume 11 (2002) ‘Nietzsche: Revenge and Praise’).

At page 85 Badiou is enthusiastic about Deleuze’s notion that the closed set or actual object is kept open by a point of opening. But he then asks whether Deleuze doesn’t then introduce ‘a sort of theoretical convenience’? If the attachment of all objects to the rest of the universe is ‘marked’ on the object itself, what is Deleuze’s reason for invoking the exposure of thought to ‘the absoluteness of the disjunction’? Badiou then activates the creative-destructive machinery of encounter by asking: ‘Would it not suffice to be attentive to this “somewhere” where the objects remains open?’ He asks why we should attribute the chance of thought to a discernable division (actual and virtual) of its objects? Yet Deleuze can play a positive role in Badiou own thought when he invokes the ‘dis-sheltering’ of the closed set or actual object, its point of opening. Badiou writes: ‘Yes, indeed!’ – the words leap from the page in an affirmative and light-footed dance. Thinking a situation involves what isn’t sheltered by ‘the general regime of things.’ Badiou fleshes out what his encounter with Deleuze is producing as an evental site without either the virtual or the Whole. On the edge of the void and almost withdrawn from shelter. It isn’t in or out, without interior or exterior.

At page 86 Badiou defines Deleuze’s intuition here as animation by the outside whose element is force – ‘a constrained animation.’ For Badiou spontaneity is inferior to thought – again Badiou seems to ignore or deny Deleuze subversion of terms: spontaneity is surely present as long as it is not the spontaneity of the pre-constituted subject, just as thought and Ideas are productions of an outside and ‘I think’ and ‘I am’ are productions of Ideas and individuation respectively.

Badiou argues at page 88 that in Foucault Deleuze finds that each force reaches its own specific limit and this brings about separation. The specific limit is also the common limit that links forces. We have a topology of space and the One of the topology.

Badiou develops two senses of Being in Deleuze. At page 89 he writes that for Deleuze surface/outside and the limit are these two senses. The fold must be simultaneously the movement of a surface and the tracing of a limit: the fold of a sheet produces a common limit of two subregions but is not a tracing on the sheet. The fold as limit of pure outside is a movement of the sheet itself.

The presentation then turned to page 91 where Badiou argues that the fold makes every thought ‘an immanent trait of the already-there’. Therefore everything new is an ‘enfolded selection of the past.’ This draws upon Badiou reading of the virtual as fullness of the pure element of quantity, of quality, continuity, pure variety, biological ideas, social ideas…

The fold is an ‘epistemological invariant’ of the Eternal Return: for Badiou then the ER requires a theory of knowledge and invariants that allow it to function. This return to Badiou’s dissatisfaction with Deleuze production of the new as a repetition or recommencement under the jurisdiction of the One. He writes that ‘the thought of the new plunges the new’ into the virtual past. This plunging suggests that for Badiou the new is drowned in the fullness of the virtual or pure past. It needs to breath and this calls for the void. This of course refers us to the last sentence of ‘Difference and Repetition’ quoted by Badiou in the title of this book: ‘a single and same Ocean for all the drops, a single clamour of Being for all beings…’ (p. 304) Emphasising such an image has rhetorical effect and is repeated elsewhere in the book. He then argues that Deleuze engages with new ideas in order to test them and show that they were never ‘absolute beginnings.’

Badiou then makes the huge claim that for Deleuze philosophy is fused with art, This is because new ways of folding are discovered (rather than ‘the new’ itself) and thinking is reduced to philosophy or ‘a single configuration of its act’ (philosophy-art). With a full past thinking is reduced to thinking about the past and philosophy-art alone can do this, hence it is thought. This relies upon Badiou’s reading of a limited relation between Deleuze and science. Art and philosophy are ‘indiscernible companions’ because they alone capture the intuition of the One.

Badiou then fires up the machinery of critique by claiming that he can conceptualise ‘absolute beginnings’ and opposes this to the absoluteness of the One in which beginnings are submerged and made monotonous repetitions of the pure past. He argues that we must side with the new to the exclusion of the One (if we are to think ‘a political revolution, an amorous encounter, an invention of the sciences, or a creation of art as distinct infinities’) via a theory of the void and through Cantor’s plurality of types of infinity.

At page 92 Badiou argues that we must locate thought in much more than philosophy-art if different types of infinity are to initiate truth procedures. Distinct infinities mean incommensurable events. He opposes ‘our bleak world’ and its continuity traversed by rare and discontinuous events to Deleuze’s continuous and full virtual denying the discontinuity that would make room for the new, rare and chance-driven. He writes intriguingly in the last sentence of the chapter that ‘it is a question of taste.’ Is he referring to the taste for practice – Deleuze, he argues, goes for philosophy-art but he wants a range of practices to be accounted for (art, science, love, politics)?

The presentation then turned to chapter 8 begins with ‘the figure of communication between a disjointed singularity and the All.’ Start with the narrowest diagram of forces before plunging into ‘the most composite virtualities’ which circulate and interpenetrate one another. Then follow the ‘large circuit’ until ‘a local inflection of philosophy’s entire past’ makes ‘Deleuze appear as a fine point or crystal that is at once translucent and timeless – just like the crystal balls of clairvoyants.’ He is timeless or eternal because he is productive but also translucent or open for learning and encounter. For Badiou, at page 86, a concern is that ‘There does, in fact, exist a cynical Deleuzianism, poles apart from the sobriety and asceticism of the Master.’ He continues to characterise Deleuze at page 97 in terms of his ‘ironic solitude.’ What does this mean? It can’t be solitude from how we are produced but means withdrawing from an Image of Thought, the accumulations of habit. It takes its bearings as ironic from virtual continuity and so flies above actual relations. Deleuze is for Badiou the philosopher least affected by changes in the world (by the actual and its course) because he took his bearings from ‘the rigorous intuitive method that he had laid down once and for all.’

Badiou argues that for Deleuze’s Bergsonism ‘it is always what is that is right’. We cannot then evaluate life itself and nothing is new because everything is constantly new. Everything is a production of the One, its return. This takes away all militancy – everything is new and so nothing can selected as worthy of fidelity, Life is immobilised because for Badiou what animates it – militancy, fidelity and the subjects they constitute – are not accounted for. Badiou opposes this with rare interruptions or supplements which force our lasting fidelity – rather than the continuity of the virtual with its monotony that means nothing is ever worth being faithful to.

The presentation then turned to the charge, at page 99, that in Deleuze intuition is internal to the immanent changes of the One. This continually depreciates any ‘conceptual stability in the order of theory, of formal equilibrium in the order of art, amorous consistency in the existential order, and organisation in the political.’ Concrete analyses provide the temptation ‘to lay down one’s arms before the sweeping tide of actualisation with its progressive dissolution of all objects…’ Badiou refers to the tide and so again suggests the ocean and the drowning of the new, referring again to the image of a single ocean at the end of ‘Difference and Repetition.’ The virtual as full and excluding the void through its continuity is again the subject of Badiou’s critique and is firmly tied in his reading to the negative and hopeless connotations of the ocean. A great deep ending action and life, removing all hope of resistance from an overwhelmed subject. It also aids his critique because it is not a space of action but undermines or unground these, submerges action. It is the limit at which loss of form merges terms in a point of indiscernability so that neither can be defended. The fluid and ideal continuity of the virtual is played upon here. Against it Badiou argues that our age threatens us with ‘powers of decomposition’ – the tide comes in and washes away sand-castles and unstable structures. The need for fidelity to outlast the tides is emphasised against the changes and becoming of the virtual providing its continuity. Badiou talks about building (contrast to Deleuze’s emphasis on ungrounding) ‘an internal barrier’ to enable thought to resist (using resources of logic, maths and abstraction as well as those of ‘organised emancipatory politics’). He locates this in a tradition going back to Descartes and Plato. He has built up to this conclusion by arguing that Deleuze’s use of maths and science is metaphorical.

The presentation then moved to the final pages of the book. At page 100 Deleuze function as ‘a power of reception’ for the return for great conceptual creations and ‘the whole of philosophy is treated as an absolute detemporalised memory.’ Again, ‘detemporalised’ is misleading – eternity is subverted and is not anti-time but time out of joint, time not measurable or linear. The ‘exact eternity’ of philosophers is living only when actualised in living thought. Badiou writes intriguingly that in their correspondence Deleuze tried to pin on him the ‘crushing accusation’ of the epithet ‘neo-Kantian.’

At page 101 Badiou argues that for Deleuze everything is constantly replayed. In this way Platonism will never cease to be overturned because from the beginning it has been overturned (Stoics, Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson, Deleuze…). Badiou opposes to this the overturning of anti-Platonism. At page 102 he finds that Deleuze was most progressive in his approach to Plato but failed to finish with anti-Platonism itself. Deleuze was a pre-Socratic in the sense of being a physicist, one of the ‘thinkers of the All’ for the Greeks. But Plato opposed philosophy as a Great Physics in order for thought to be philosophical independently of ‘any total contemplation of the Universe or any intuition of the virtual.’ This for Badiou is resistance to being swept away by the virtual. Deleuze then as physicist is for Badiou speculatively dreaming, prophetic but without this providing us with any promise (no promise of the militant subject sought by Badiou). Salvation by ‘the All’ promises nothing because it is ‘always already there.’

The discussion began with the link being made between ‘simple traces of [actualisation’s] passage in the sand’ (page 99) and Foucault’s notion that man is nothing but writing on the sand that will be washed away. Badiou picks up on the notion of grace and that in Deleuze everything is grace and thus nothing is grace, the antidote being that it occurs interruptively. This was referred to Deleuze’s ‘Expressionism in Philosophy’ where to be is to be beatified. It was argued that here grace is internal to you and that this the real difference between Deleuze and Badiou. For Badiou grace is external, it happens in the world. He wants the new, a breakthrough and the continual folding of folding. It was argued that this is part of Badiou’s argument that Deleuze does not use his philosophy for politics. It was suggested that Badiou approaches philosophy as purely political.

It was suggested that at page 99 we see signs of a reading of Deleuze as ‘vulnerable to the powers of decomposition that our grandiose and decaying capitalism liberates on a large scale.’ This follows if whatever happens (through difference) is good and there is to be no resentment (which could be taken to mean no resistance). What you build is only s product of capitalism to meet your desire for philosophy. The virtual is not a foundation for resistance to capitalism and can be equated with capitalism’s production of desires itself. New desires produces new philosophies. This was linked to Naomi Klein’s ‘No Logo’ and the notion that here the idea is not about opposition but going as far as you can go as part of a market of ideas. It was argued that Badiou is antoganised by people who use Deleuze to oppose Marxism. This was related to Lyotard and his work on the molecular. Everyone likes being fucked by capital. It was argued that it is crude to lump Deleuze together with this. Badiou requires actual ways of judging, constructing other roots of actualisation and ways oif analysing the truth of events of religion, revolution and so on. Reference was made to Schelling and the criticism that according to his thought in the night all cows are black. There are no distinctions here and likewise in Deleuze you cannot judge capital as a negative thing because if the Eternal Return selects differences this doesn’t exclude the mechanisms of capital. In response reference was made to Deleuze’s statement that life doesn’t need philosophy. People don’t need philosophy and they do politics. Politically relevant writing is in fact propaganda. Does Badiou subsume other truth procedures under politics? It was suggested that the very need for a structure of infinities relies ultimately on politics in Badiou.

A further point of discussion was the notion at page 102 that Deleuze ‘did not support the idea that “the great Pan is dead.”’ It was pointed out that for pagans the whole point is that Pan is everything because Pan is death. Reference was made to ‘A Thousand Plateaus’ where Deleuze and Guattari talk about Pan and sorcery in a very positive sense.

Also of interest to us what Badiou remark at page 91 that ‘it is a matter of taste’ when it comes to his and Deleuze’s dispute over the One. This seemed to us to refer to Nietzsche where taste (as intuition) is before truth. Deleuze makes use of this because to get rid of judgement structures and still make decisions means you rely upon taste/intuition rather than the rational, indifferent mathematical set theory.

We noted that for Badiou the hisyoricity of philosophy found in Deleuze’s vision is not progressive. The Deleuzian history of philosophy is a non-linear time because bringing principles to bear isn’t going to capture the truth of the situation. It was asked whether there is a before and after in Deleuze? Reference was made to the beginning of ‘Difference and Repetition’ where Deleuze writes that thoughts of difference and repetition are in the air. Is this significant or just a colloquial reference to the present philosophical conversations and evidence of Deleuze locating himself as a philosopher. In the latter sense such remarks reflect linear and actual time rather than virtual time. It was pointed out that Deleuze has written of himself that he is a philosopher and it was argued that this is not a philosophical statement – so what is it doing in a work of philosophy?

Also discussed was Badiou development of structure and subject at page 82. At this intersection thought and Being’s interlacement is situation by Deleuze. It was argued that Badiou is locating Deleuze as a poststructuralist because this point in history isn’t important – the move is conceptual. Badiou’s argument that Deleuze’s makes thought a philosophy-art fusion was also discussed in terms of its development from earlier arguments that maths is metaphorical in Deleuze’s thought. It was argued that also behind this move is Badiou’s concern to link Deleuze to Heidegger. Deleuze presupposes Heidegger because he has cleared some ground for him but can we extend this to relating Deleuze’s philosophy of art to Heidegger’s later thought? It was suggested that the present issue of ‘Collapse’ helps us here because in it Badiou says he is essentially talking about discourse in doing his ontology. He is then closer to Heidegger. and also to Derrida, in the sense that everything is the text and there is no outside (no virtual).

Reference was then made to being forced to think for Deleuze, referred to by Badiou at page 86. It was related to making a film by just starting and don’t know where to go. Ho does this relate to the future? How do you put yourself in a situation where forces occur. This was linked to the notion of a bottleneck: being creative without forcing yourself into certain ideas. You need space for improvisation – does this mean forcing something into the world and onto your ontology. It was argued that in chapter 3 of ‘Difference and Repetition’ where being forced to think is developed we find the diagnosis that thought is lazy. Everyone is lazy and thinks in clichés. We need a big thought to get out of it and also stupidity and animality as antidotes to laziness. It is so difficult for thought to do something new. It was also argued that Deleuze is at his most practical and useful in making possibilities, creating bottlenecks – a pure situationist slogan. Making a film lasting a very long time and with a great amount of a certain subject. You stop at a certain time and certain amount short of the aim but have got a lot of material out of it. You have started by making an impossible situation – is this the virtual? It’s going to produce something different to the original idea you had. It is better if the original idea you had was more bizarre. This is experiment and, it was argued, Badiou doesn’t grasp this. He wants deduction that starts from a rare point. However, in maths string theory comes from ‘ramming’ lots of different variables into the explanations – maths does this a lot. Badiou misses the notion of creating a space – creating a space brings other things together. It was suggested that for Badiou we need certainty in order to find the right response to a problem – it forces you to face things you might not want to face. At page 86 Badiou says that there is no spontaneity in Deleuze because this opposes a common reading of Deleuze and Badiou wants to be polemic. However, he misses experiment. Reference was made to Plato’s ‘Meno’ where the slave boy’s recollection is experiment, using tools at hand when they fit into the deduction.

The eleventh Plateau ‘1837: Of the Refrain’ was brought into the discussion with notions of chaos and then the drawing of the boundary, marshalling the forces of chaos. The movement involved are happening always at the same time. There is always a smooth space, always a constant activity. The theme of counter-actualisation was introduced here and related to the dice throw and to experiment. How are you able to do/think/write anything? You assume a certain ontology and then you experiment. You need to assume an ontology (e.g. actual-virtual) and then test it. The need for grounding in the face of pure chaos was related to the idea that with the oceanic and tidal virtual which Badiou finds in Deleuze we get only sandcastles when it comes to actual constructions. But are sandcastles a positive image? The need to ground, to draw boundaries, brings in different levels and conditions: the material, ideas, intensities, individuation… Yet fundamentally, it was argued, thought must go somewhere else – going into another space because something forces it. Reference was made to William Burrows’ ‘do easy’ where the practice of everything you do should continue to be completely natural and you keep doing it until becomes completely easy. It is the process of turning yourself into an automaton. It is one of Burrow’s techniques of space creating for making films. Another point of reference was G. E. Moore writing on civilisation and discusses motivational speakers. He says that in fact civilisation advances because we don’t have to think about what we do – this is a becoming automaton. This was related to computers replacing thought with procedure.

Also discussed was Badiou statement that his multiplicity is Cantorian at page 91. This, it was argued, means that he needs to affirm the continuum hypothesis which is now outside of mathematics because it is a straightforward assumption in maths that is made for the sake of argument. It is not assumed in string theory of black hole theory. Gödel and Cohen were referred to as those trying to show that it makes no difference whether one does or does not accept the continuum hypothesis. The axiom of choice are independent because set theory works with and without them. Set theory using the axiom of choice is in fact a very odd kind of set theory. The axiom of choice gives you an intensive order where one element is bigger than the other. You arbitrarily choose a particular ordering whereas in Deleuze’s actualisation has to come from the virtual, crystallising out of it via a strange precursor. Therefore the axiom of choice is transcendent to set theory and one way of providing intensive order to sets. For Badiou we have choice and for Deleuze realisation.

Finally we discussed our impressions of the book we had now read and discussed over the four weeks of the workshop. It was praised for thinking through the rigor of non-relation, taking the ideas to their limit. Getting rid of badly analysed composites and emphasising the purity of Deleuze’s ideas. It was also argued that in assuming that we can’t extract a politics from Deleuze Badiou is forcing a much needed response. He points out where the problem occurs – this means that you need to go deep into Deleuze to deal with the problems.

28 NOVEMBER 'CLAMOUR OF BEING' WORKSHOP - REPORT AND CONTINUING DISCUSSION

The workshop tackled chapters 5 and 6 today. The subjects focused upon included time and truth, movement, the new, chance, dualism, subject and event.

Today Nick Midgley presented on the text. He first suggested that Badiou seeks univocity in his own way through integral actuality. Hence Deleuze is a dualist because he introduces the virtual and undermines univocity. Nick then turned to Badiou’s focus on the paradox of contingent futures at page 60 of ‘The Clamour of Being’. Time needs to be suppressed in favour of truths and the role of time in Deleuze undermines the role that truth needs to play. Nick critiqued Badiou’s reading which suggests that Deleuze still holds to truth, albeit in a devalued form. Contrary to this it was argued that Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy does not consist in knowing and is not inspired by truth. There is a need to get away from the image of truth so as to get an image of thinking – truth and falsehood involves playing games (triviality) when what we need is the interesting and productive. We must seek the singular, remarkable and interesting rather than asking ‘is it true?’

Badiou deals with Deleuze’s critique of truth by arguing that the version of truth which is the object of critique is a trivial one. It involves good and bad copies of an original. Badiou seeks to locate a deeper notion of truth in Deleuze but it was pointed out that he cannot find a quote to back this up. Badiou argues that in Deleuze everything is simulacrum and therefore simulacra are the truth. Nick argued that this isn’t a Deleuzian kind of move. For Deleuze philosophy isn’t inspired by truth and what matters in philosophy is what motivates it. Deleuze finds in Nietzsche certain diagnoses of thought leading to questions like ‘is thinking resentful?’, ‘who has that thought?’, ‘what drives it?’ And this leads to Deleuze ask ‘are problems productive or not?’ Therefore, it was argued, Badiou makes a very formal move when it is important for Deleuze that we don’t call simulacra truth because with truth we get transcendence. We cannot, according to Deleuze, say that Spinoza is true and Kant is false. We need to emphasise Deleuze’s use of Nietzsche’s ideas which means that what characterises and drives a thought is important rather than the result or product.

The presentation then highlighted Badiou remarks at page 65 of ‘The Clamour of Being’ on Deleuze’s ‘Foucault.’ He describes it as ‘the most appeased’ (or friendly) writing on truth of Deleuze’s works. He highlights the role of games of truth and how here truth is inseparable from a procedure establishing it. Nick pointed out that in ‘Difference and Repetition’ truth is only the empirical result of sense and how solutions don’t have any meaning without the problem they respond to. Therefore the procedure for establishing truth links truth to its genesis. It was argued that in this light for Deleuze in his ‘Foucault’ truth is still trivial. There are truths in a discourse but they are no deeper than that. In this book the dualism of the visible and articulable is elaborated (for example prisons as disciplines and jurisprudence as legal discourse). Two discourses are different domains. This was referred to Bergson’s notion of ‘badly analysed composites’ which Deleuze develops in his ‘Bergsonism’. Nick then explained the different senses given to dualism by Deleuze in his ‘Foucault’:

1. dualism found in Descartes (substances) and Kant (faculties),

2. dualism as provisional stage leading to monism (found in Spinoza and Bergson). For example, in Bergson we get a dualism of duration and space, a provisional dualism because ultimately everything is duration.

3. In Foucault we find a preliminary distribution operating at the heart of a pluralism. A micro-physics of power exposes relations of forces prior to strata (two stratas form a dualism). This forms the outside of strata and to think is to reach the unstratified.

Nick argued that Badiou faces the problem of whether we can say that Deleuze is closer to Foucault or to Bergson and Spinoza. In ‘A Thousand Plateaus’ a micro-physics of power is elaborated and this is closer to Foucault. The Foucault case provides a pluralism and not a monism. Badiou therefore appears to be on weak ground here.

The presentation now turned to the notion of truth in Badiou as the undoing of time just as revolution is the end of an epoch. It is interruption. For Badiou truth is completely other than knowledge, something he finds in mathematics where incompleteness shows that no self-consistent totality is possible. Set theory is a structural condition for us. Badiou argues that truth in Deleuze leads us to ‘the Relation’. Bergson leads Deleuze to focus on time without spatial categories. This is time that isn’t a chronology. However, Badiou reads Deleuze as a Platonist on the basis of this purification of time. At page 60 he argues that in Deleuze time is not temporal. We return to Deleuze’s alleged classicism. Yet his Bergsonism suggests that we move not from time to eternity but to time without spatial categories. It can be argued that this shows him to be more of an empiricist with a better method of seeing what time is.

The presentation then moved to chapter six and its list of misinterpretations of the Eternal Return. Badiou explores the idea of a single throw of the dice at page 74-75. Nick referred to ‘The Logic of Sense’ where the actor is a counter-actualisation because every mortal event is in the single Event so that there is no room for accident or resentment. The point was made that Badiou doesn’t give much argument against the single Event. For him chance is plural. The chapter ends by referring to Deleuze’s own death (how it is ‘somewhat disconcerting’ that he cannot rejoin the discussion) and then in the last Badiou line declares ‘death is not, and can never be, an event.’ (p. 76-77) Is he suggesting that it isn’t through the disconcerting death of Gilles Deleuze that things will happen? More obviously he of course is referring to his own critique of Deleuze notion that the virtual continually recommences its production. Anything actual dies in order to make way for this operation of the One.

The discussion that followed first focused upon Peter Hallward’s reading of Deleuze. The subject as being out of action is expressed in the figure of the soldier dying on the battle field. Withdrawl from action allows contemplation, seeing everything. But, it was argued, Deleuze is concerned with activity, with enacting through counter-actualisation. This was to counter the immobility and eternity located by Badiou as an ideal of doing nothing in any actual sense. As Nick argued in his presentation, Deleuze seeks to get rid of spatial terms, points of reference or points of measurement. However, his ‘static genesis’ is a positive production despite not resembling the actual. The actual needs what does not resemble it to move forward. Therefore Deleuze subverts terms like eternal and static. Do they then lead to actual inactivity? Is taking away actual terms from time to divorce it from the time and space of the actual?

The point was raised that in the contraction of presents (the first of the three syntheses of time presented in ‘Difference and Repetition’ chapter 2) difference is contracted or made internal. The internal difference is then the source of counter-actualisation. However, it was suggested that this is a Hegelian move. We grasp the eternal by engaging with a particular aspect as the internal difference. This is a stage on the way to becoming an absolute Idea. You have the becoming of the absolute Idea. Furthermore, do we have becoming if we have throw after throw of the dice. How are they related? If we have complete interruptions no event leads to the next event. There is no becoming. This was related to dualism which is presented in ‘The Logic of Sense’ as the Stoic distinction of between Chronos and Aion. There are no causal relations between them. Becoming is the virtual actualizing and but there are no relations between actuals, no becoming for the actual. This was referred to Deleuze’s ‘Proust and Signs’ where there is a non-actual continuity or relation between moments where an essence is expressed. Combray as essence was never lived and its actual expressions do not resemble one another, in other ways they have a virtual continuity but not an actual one.

Reference was made to ‘Difference and Repetition’ page 136 where ‘the new’ is not the historically new and so is not something that can go out of date. It is new from the outset, always different and the different is what returns according to Deleuze’s Eternal Return. For Badiou the virtual is always too full for the new to come about or to have chance operate, hence the need for the void (‘Clamour’ p. 76). At page 64 reference is made to Heidegger and the act of remembering. For Heidegger the new is always near but we lose access to its newness. When we study history the truth of that history is made past. We need to think as the Ancient Greeks thought. Yet for Badiou we have to forget time to think truth because for him truths are not in the past (page 60). The past is an ontological notion while truths aren’t. Fidelity to the event is temporal and through it the subject is constituted, but this is added through ontology and not in or between events themselves.

In response to Badiou’s forgetting of time the need to study the past to know what the events mean was suggested. Yet forgetting is to allow the new event to happen, to a avoid any over determination by history and fact. Yet, it was argued, when the French Revolution started is a matter of history. However, for Badiou this is a matter of knowledge and not truth. The subject is constituted through the time of fidelity to the event. The event will have been true on the basis of the practice that constitutes the subject – therefore it is not a matter of what we say is, or is not, an event. If we concentrate on the facts of history we reduce the event of truth to the trivialities of knowledge.

It was asked whether we have pure situationism in Badiou? Historical information has no impact. The empty set isn’t given in the situation but is of the situation. In Badiou it is the ontological that gives continuity and links things. Events aren’t linked. In contrast, for Deleuze continuity is the virtual.

In Badiou set theory isn’t a condition for us in the sense of being a historical fact. Instead it will have been an event through the practice that constitutes the subject. It has been a structure of situations, a condition. It is not a fact but part of practice, or rather practice (which constitutes the subject) is fidelity to the event. The structure of the situation changes after a new revolution and so set theory, it seems, could become no longer the condition of practice. Yet if truth is infinite the new is always new. An event doesn’t go out of date because events don’t relate through time.

The point was also raised that time is the ‘being there’ of the concept in Hegel. However, for Badiou to have things that are always true we need to leave time out. He sees Deleuze’s virtual as too full to provide the new, it doesn’t have the scope to account for the new because a void is needed to allow chance to occur through itself.

Reference was made to Badiou’s ‘Being and Event’ page 233 where the same situation and the same event produce different fidelities. For example, October 1917 produces the fidelity of Stalinists and Trotskyites. The paradoxes discovered by maths in the early twentieth century lead to the fidelity of both axiomatic maths and intuitionism in maths. We wondered whether for Deleuze this involves different events with a common production? Perhaps in Deleuze’s ‘Proust and Signs’ the essence of Combray produces different events. Does fidelity to the event in Badiou determine what the event is? This gives too much weight to the subject who is really constituted as fidelity to the event. The event breaks into the world as the ideal into the material, as the incorporeal event in Deleuze’s ‘Logic of Sense’ seems to do. Is there a doubling of the event as there is for Deleuze in the emergence of an elementary consciousness (‘Difference and Repetition’ p. 221)? Is it a performative doubling? It ‘cuts’ through the course of time. However, for Deleuze this is only from a human and actual point of view because for the virtual there is only fullness and complete determination, the continuity out of which actual ‘cuts’ emerge.

A notion was introduced from astro-physics of black wholes as singularities. Things disappear into a black whole but there is a dense and substantial object in the middle, something defined by the galaxy or fields of forces of which it is the motor.

A number of questions and problems were identified at the end of the session: A further point was the link between affirmation and the difficult notion of counter-actualisation in Deleuze. Furthermore, how does coming to bear the wound in Deleuze relate to fidelity in Deleuze? How is the event prior to fidelity? Is the subject collective? For Badiou individuals and subjects are distinguished so that we cannot assume the individuality of the subject. A link was made to Nietzsche where the lamb and the eagle have different fidelities to the event. Are there lots of subjects/fidelities and therefore lots of truths? Do situations play a role in the actualisation of an event? This brought us back to the difficult notion of ‘feedback’ that was discussed last week and, as was pointed out, has problematic Hegelian connotations.

A further issue concerned Deleuze’s relationship with Kant which Badiou sees as relatively unimportant. In what sense, and at what point, does Kant’s thought move beyond epistemology to a philosophy of production? This could be located in the problems concerning teleology and the organic in ‘The Critique of Judgement’ and in the ether proofs found in ‘Opus Postumum.’ It was suggested that this undermined what Kant achieves in the first Critique. However, can we say that Kant was trying to extend critique by giving the material its own role in the process, freeing it from uncritical notions? However, can critique survive without a subject that operates it? Does Deleuze undermine the mechanism of critique, the means of justifying critical moves? In this way a lot of questions and problems were uncovered in this session establishing further vital and challenging grounds for discussion at next week’s workshop and here online.

21 NOVEMBER 'CLAMOUR OF BEING' WORKSHOP - REPORT AND CONTINUING DISCUSSION

This week chapters 3 and 4 of ‘Deleuze: The Clamour of Being’ were under discussion. We continued our discussion of the mathematics used by Deleuze and Badiou and also explored feedback systems, the possible, the organic versus the abstract (or biology versus thought) and the ‘unequal odd’ virtual and actual halves of the object in Deleuze. References below to Deleuze's 'Difference and Repetition' are to the older format of the Paul Patton translation, not to the new compact edition.

The ten minute presentation was this week given by Edward Willatt and began with Badiou’s focus on Deleuze’s critique of categories. At page 32 he argues that difference must not be imitative for Deleuze, no matter how multiple or flexible, since formal divisions or categories are general and distant from production. This seems to capture Deleuze’s concern that difference be productive and internal to the production mechanism, that it be expressive and not imitative. Also brought up was Badiou’s concern with ‘Deleuze’s philosophical language’ at page 33. He argues that an active-passive duality is commonly identified throughout Deleuze's work, giving rise to an image that Deleuze himself didn’t intend but encouraged through his philosophical language. This seems to demonstrate the corrective value of Badiou’s reading in that he wants to preserve the philosophical rigor of Deleuze’s work. His attack on the active-passive duality as an image of Deleuze's thought seems very relevant if we want to talk about, for example, individuation as a process without this appearing as a passive and actual receptacle of virtual creativity.

Badiou’s focus on Deleuze’s use of structuralism was also dealt with by the presentation. There is a concern that this aspect of his thought overbalances the system in going so far from the actual and determination that we don’t see how we can get back. Can we get back from the ideal operation of the empty square to an account of material individuation? Alberto Toscano in his 'Theatre of Production' poses just this problem when he focuses upon Deleuze’s treatment of the problem of individuation. He writes that in Difference and Repetition the disjunction between the virtual and the actual is a disjunction internal to, and generated by, the processes of ontogenesis themselves. He distinguishes this from the ‘Logic of Sense’ where a quasi-cause is needed. He argues that from the point of view of the problem of individuation we must emphasise Deleuze’s development of internal difference ‘as a process that requires the dramatization of internal multiplicity in intensive systems and spatiotemporal dynamisms.’ (p. 174-175) This analysis seem highly relevant when we note that as part of his reading Badiou argues that in Deleuze structure is simulacrum and as such does not enter into the sense that it fabricates or sustains. The problem with Deleuze’s structuralism seems to be its distance from other aspects of his system. Yet he wants to combine structure and genesis. He seems to want individuation to play a creative role in the process as well as Ideas, to balance the extremes that have opened up dramatically for us through our discussions of Badiou's ‘Deleuze: The Clamour of Being’.

Chapter four begins with Badiou’s argument that in Deleuze the two ‘nominal’ names of Being (actual and virtual) express the deployment of the One or univocal Being. The virtual is the ground of the actual. This was called into question in order to bring into play the actual processes that Deleuze seems to talk about. It was argued that the clear-confused seems to refer to individuation and the distinct-obscure to Ideas. These two extremes in Deleuze’s system – ideal and material – demand our attention. If you start with one extreme, as Badiou does and emphasises this through his focus on Deleuze’s structuralism, isn’t there a need to see if the other extreme fits in? If Deleuze’s system fails it is because he can’t fit in or hold everything together in a meaningful way. The difference between the two extremes is to be internal to the system. Badiou talks about the need for internal difference to operate but then to neglect it when collapsing the actual into the virtual in his reading of Deleuze. We have different parts of Deleuze work, even parts of the same book as we see in ‘Difference and Repetition’, threatening to go off in different directions. How does the empty square relate to the problem of individuation? The presentation used in the figure of the fractured self, as Deleuze develops it, has as three aspects: ‘I think’, ‘I am’ and time. Isn’t this the expression of Ideas and individuation respectively (in 'I think and 'I am' respectively), pure thought thinking itself and the material individuating itself whilst being related by the pure form of time?

Badiou describes Deleuze’s use of musical order as a metaphor at page 44, as he did with his use of maths in chapter 1. This seems to go against the notion that the music we write is pure production expressing itself, as with ‘I think’ and ‘I am’ as they emerge as aspects of the fractured self.

The presentation then took a critical stance towards Badiou’s assessment at page 45 that Deleuze is a classical philosopher – because the multiple needs a rigorous determination of Being as One - and so ‘does not submit to the critical injunctions of Kant.’ While Deleuze is highly critical of Kant for messing up the production mechanism he had discovered, Badiou’s statement needs to be questioned. Kant is seen by Deleuze as projecting products into the production, the empirical into the transcendental. He wants production to be pure, free of the Image of Thought or what is produced and then is taken as fixed and given. Yet Deleuze seems to value critique insofar as it seeks to keep the transcendental pure. This is a highly positive critical injunction if we don’t want the same to return and want to preserve heterogeneity in the production mechanism in order that it not resemble what is produced. Deleuze talks about ‘total critique’ in his ‘Nietzsche and Philosophy’ as a way to complete Kant’s work. Critique then has a role that needs to be explored. What we cannot talk about (theoretically) for Kant still operates in his system – it has practical reality. Deleuze wants to involve production but in a new way and so, like Kant, we must cease one discourse (the theoretical for Kant and the Image of Thought for Deleuze) in order to grasp the transcendental through its own expression (morality in Kant and differenciation in Deleuze).

Last week Matt Lee developed an analysis of Badiou’s reading of Wittgenstein’s ‘Tractatus’ where after critique, which limits what we can talk about, we have mysticism. This purification through critique seems to have similar connotiations to Deleuze's use of Kant. For Deleuze we can talk about ‘the noumena closest to the phenomena’ (‘Difference and Repetition’, page 222). What needs to be engaged with is Kant’s project of purifying the production of experience from theoretical givens and his giving it a practical reality. Some have suggested that ‘Anti-Oedipus’ can be read as Deleuze and Guattari’s re-writing of the Kant’s ‘Critique of Practical Reason’ (Daniel W. Smith made this case during his keynote paper at the Society for European Philosophy 2004 Conference here at Greenwich. He introduced this move by talking about investments of desire, in ‘Anti-Oedipus’, that are beneath the rational. The rational is a particular configuration of desires. He then argued that reading the second Critique is just like reading Anti-Oedipus. Deleuze dislikes the morality but models Anti-Oedipus upon The Critique of Practical Reason. Present in both books is a faculty with a causal relationship to its object. Desire is the cause of the actuality of its representations because desire is production. Deleuze likes this structure but makes it serve immanence instead of transcendence, thus Ideas must be immanent and synthesise desire. Kant’s desire is made immanent through the influence of Nietzsche, suggesting again that Kant’s critique is of value when extended through Nietzsche to a ‘total critique’). In both texts we can find the notion that desire creates its object. The gap between subject and object is overcome by desire or production, as something pre-individual and as the milieu of individuation itself. We must think the creation of objects through the desire or production that is prior to the self in its isolation from an object. Badiou is of course quite right to say that the moral law is invalid for Deleuze but he doesn’t need to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

At page 46 Badiou refers to ‘the act of the one’ which he has emphasised through his reading of Deleuze’s structuralism. He identifies this as transcendence and finds in this a reason for his divergence from Deleuze in a contrasting form of classicism: the forms of the multiple are always actual and the One is sacrificed. Badiou wants ‘integral actuality’ where a multiple is a multiple of multiples.

At page 46 Badiou offers some clarifications of the virtual which Deleuze had offered in their correspondence. The first of these is that the virtual is the ‘there is’ that precedes all thought. This seems to expand the virtual in a way that we find in Deleuze’s very late work ‘Immanence: A Life…’ – here at page 27 he writes: ‘We will say of pure immanence that it is A LIFE, and nothing else. It is not immanence to life, but the immanent that is in nothing is itself a life. A life is the immanence of immanence, absolute immanence: it is complete power, complete bliss.’

At page 49 Badiou writes that ‘Actualisation breaks with resemblance as a process no less than it does with identity as a principle.’ He seems to be arguing that Deleuze’s Image of Thought is a process, just as reactive forces in ‘Nietzsche and Philosophy’ can be seen as a process. He argues that Deleuze breaks with this reactive process in favour of differentiation and divergence and from this draws the conclusion that the existent is a creation rather than a creature when considered in terms of the virtuality that it actualises.

At page 50 he talks about the notion of problems found in Deleuze and gives a very particular reading, extending his emphasis on the virtual. The virtual is ‘the real of the problematic in general’ – it is ‘the universal power of problems and their solutions’. He seems to neglect the problem-solution feedback that introduces two sides or powers of difference in ‘Difference and Repetition’. Whilst the Image of Thought is a reactive accumulation of solutions, there is a sense in which individuations as solutions to problems show the contribution of both problems and solutions to the progress of the system.

At page 51 Badiou deals with the problem of there being virtual and actual parts of the real object – ‘unequal odd halves’ (‘Difference and Repetition’ 209-10). Badiou argues that making parts of the object indiscernible – the object as the point of indiscernability between two distinct images – leads to a disorientated intuition and the indetermination of the actual. This follows from the complete determination of the virtual (page 53). For Badiou then we save the One by making the two unthinkable and thus collapsing the actual into the virtual. The virtual then determines the destiny of everything because the actual is irreal, undetermined and non-objective – it is simulacrum.

The discussion first focused upon the notion of a feedback system. It must create its components and so the actual solutions to virtual problems contribute components of the system rather than simply getting in its way. Problems with this were raised. What about the problem of ‘bootstrapping’ that gets the system going? Could it be a critical mass concept, a bifurcation? The concern was raised that a feedback system sounds Hegelian. The point was made that Deleuze seeks to avoid negation in the internal relations he uses, like that between problems and solutions. Against the notion of a feedback system it was suggested that the virtual is actualising and actual is ‘virtualising.’ Therefore both having a role as two powers of difference relating through their difference but not in the restrictive sense of being a feedback system. Can we talk about systems? Are these too strict for the divergence and differentiation that Deleuze labels ‘production’? This raised the issue of the status of Deleuze’s ‘technical models’ (Difference and Repetition page 220-221). They mustn’t fix the virtual, it eludes such a capture. They must be flexible and diverse as a true expression of production and not limit its expression by embodying an Image of Thought. However, they must capture the selection that takes place when pure virtual production is actualised. If there was no model or system of actualisation it is hard to see how the actual could be different from the virtual. No system can actualise all of the virtual, it is Open and constantly changing, but systems or models must produce actual states of affairs that do not resemble their production. The system enables solutions to arise by relating problems and solutions, it must express the scope of the virtual but in a singular form. We cannot pin down the virtual and yet it must be related to the actual, as problem is to solution.

We discussed how for Badiou one term become more important on the basis of the actual-virtual duality, this term (virtual) is real whilst the duality is formal. It is a ‘purely introductory’ ‘initial formalism’ at work in thought or intuition (‘Clamour’ page 34). At this point the difference between the actual and the individual was raised. It can be argued that for Deleuze the individual is freedom because it is in touch with the pre-individual (problems/Ideas) in its work of solution through its power of clear-confused. The actual perhaps refers to the determined terms that take their bearings from the process individuation through their relation (to the universal prior to all particulars and generalities - cf. ‘Difference and Repetition’ page 171).

Returning to the notion of a feedback system, the idea that actual solutions have the virtual within them and give rise to new problems was raised. This would be to elaborate the particular power of difference at work in individuation. This was made concrete by the intriguing notion that a problem field disappears in the deep sea because light isn’t there and so there is no problem of sight. This is the sense in which Ideas or problematic fields ‘occur here and there in the production of an actual historical world.’ (‘Difference and Repetition’, p. 190) In this sense actualisation has a role. The point was made that this is very compelling when we talk about the organic because here a dynamic relation between problem field and field of solution in each case is convincing. Yet, it was argued, in abstract thought there isn’t this constant resolution of a field but a break or cut, something quite unlike the organic. This was developed in relation to Deleuze ‘Negotiations’ where he talks about not writing for a period of eight years. Is this Hiatus virtual since from it a new book was produced at the end of this period? In response it was suggested that this model sound Freudian. It suggests the return of the repressed in one form or another. It suggests that the subconscious is operating.

A further point concerned Deleuze stated rejection of the notion of simulacrum and his adoption of the notion of rhizome. These are more organic and it was suggested that Deleuze’s thought works better using biology. The simulacrum is more abstract. This opens up an intriguing division in Deleuze that Badiou seems to neglect. The virtual-actual as structure works better as organic and Deleuze develops this, for example, in ‘Difference and Repetition’ chapter 5. The point was also made that the simulacrum, as it is used here, is a notion that Deleuze finds in Klossowski. He combines this with the virtual and this led the questions about whether he can hold such diverse things together, perhaps whether he can hold together what he appropriates from Klossowksi on the one hand and from Bergson on the other.

A further point was that in ‘Anti Oedipus’ Deleuze and Guattari have a notion of machines that only work by breaking down. Is this better than the notion of structure and the empty square? Ideal connections can be made – time is out of joint and we have free connectibility when the empty square affects everything. It was suggested that Deleuze’s structuralism here may be linked to Derrida’s work. Here aporia and aporetic moments are limits of impossibility within possibility. However, it was argued, Deleuze wants to go beyond these transcendental limits that are grounded in the impossible. In ‘Proust and Signs’ Deleuze argues that we mustn’t reduplicate the empirical – or project products into the production mechanism as he argued in his criticism of Kant. For example, a square circle is a limit of geometry and geometry is here mapped out in advance (as possibility). Derrida bases his work on this impossibility structure whereas for Deleuze the virtual is not the possible. He drops the possible-impossible opposition so that the virtual has no conceptual limits.

A further issue was raised around how for Deleuze each philosopher is singular, they create a new problem field. Therefore, how can you compare philosopher’s concepts as we usually do? The philosopher invents his concepts, they are completely his own. How can one philosopher follow on from another? A response raised to this problem was that each plane of consistency is cut out of all the others – it is available to all the others – the worlds of two philosophers are then related by strange nuptials. All are part of the problem field of ‘how to think’- a common, ideal field with a time out of joint that allows for ideal (non-linear) connections beyond those between passing presents.

Also discussed was Badiou’s stand on sets. He sees Deleuze as seeking to talk about things which he thinks cannot be listed in a set. For Badiou it is only the void or empty set cannot be listed, something that, ‘plead as I might’, Deleuze would not except (‘Clamour’ page 47). This is developed at page 48 in a challenge to Deleuze’s multiplicities. These seem rooted in pure variety, such as the pure biological or the pure social. ‘The Idea of fire subsumes fire in the form of a single continuous mass capable of increase. The Idea of silver subsumes its object in the form of a liquid continuity of fine metal. … Continuousness truly belongs to the realm of Ideas only to the extent that an ideal cause of continuity is determined.’ (‘Difference and Repetition’, page 171) This variable spread is behind the extension of forms of the biological, the social … Is this a romantic notion? Certainly Deleuze is resistant to multiples appropriated from set theory because they define things he wants not to define. The fluidity and permeability of Ideas – giving rise to the perplication of Ideas – is behind the extension and of series despite their actual distances and lack of relations.

In discussing Badiou’s multiples a point was made about his use of mathematics. To make the empty set or void productive we need to use a negation structure which is mathematical but not set theoretical. This raises questions about Badiou’s use of maths – can he justify his ontology solely through maths or does he not have to give philosophical reasons for taking set theory and adding to it to make it works the way he wants? In the recent colloquium by Brian Smith of The University of Dundee the move Badiou makes in adding a temporality to set theoretical operations that they don’t have by themselves was brought up.

Also discussed was the criticism beginning at page 51 of Deleuze’s actual and virtual ‘unequal odd halves’ of the real object. Badiou reads the two images involved – actual and virtual – as being simulacra for Deleuze. This makes an image of the virtual, a half of the object, untenable. The point was made that Deleuze is using ‘image’ in the sense in which it is used in Bergson’s ‘Matter and Memory’ and therefore Badiou’s argument is a strange one. He reads ‘image’ in a literal sense when it is in fact grounded in Deleuze’s Bergsonism. This seemed to be a sign of Badiou’s reliance on the simulacrum when it is an image used at one time and later abandoned by Deleuze. It is not his constant term for the actual. Badiou is keen to defend Plato in his own work and his emphasis of Deleuze’s Platonism of the virtual and emphasis of the Platonic term simulacrum seems to be a simplification.

We discussed the univocity Deleuze finds in Spinoza – it ensures there is no hierarchy, with actualisation always dividing and differentiating. Virtual multiplicity can always be divided, it is not to be confused with units. Its total permeability and coexistence is key. It seems as if sets move away from this. Yet a clarification was provided - sets are made up of rules or definitions and not of units. This explains the concern of set theoreticians that we ought not really to talk about sets as collections of things, although this is the easiest way to talk about them for the layman. Thus we get the an ideal rule with enormous depths. Further discussion of set theory revealed that for Badiou maths has shown us that we need to use new rules. It was argued that mathematical reasons are behind his use of set theory. The infinity of multiplicity was too simplistic according to mathematicians and so a more complex notion of infinity was needed. Our notion of infinity needs to be supplemented, according to set theory. Cantor’s continuum hypothesis emerges as a way of dealing with the infinite that set theory opens up.

The point was made that for Deleuze we find a bad infinite in Hegel and a good infinite in Spinoza because of the way they responded differently to calculus. The good response recognises the role of approximation in the sense that you can never get to the limit, invoking the infinitesimal. However – it was suggested – isn’t differential calculus still concerned with counting to infinity and so lacking the complex infinity maths demanded when it found the infinitesimal non-rigorous and wanted to establish its own foundations? Yet – it was argued – with dx/dy we don’t get counting but what Deleuze characterises as the problem of the signification of zeros (DR 171).

Developing the discussion of mathematics, a further defence was mounted of Deleuze’s approach. Maths is concerned with problems and solving them with rules. Without calculus you cannot deal with the world – engineering works in this way, dynamics are worked out to model structures. This is done without knowing what the numbers are, through approximation. It gives access to the virtual and the structure of actualisation for Deleuze. For Badiou the actual is already infinite and so you don’t need the virtual. Maths has its own world and so you don’t need the empiricism of the calculus. For him Being is a void – he asks what is Being (a Heideggerian question) and reads Deleuze as asking this too. Yet – its was argued - Deleuze wants to ask other questions and explicitly rejects the ‘what?’ question. He wants to ask about the remarkable, the interesting and the singular – things that concern practice rather than foundation. Thus in maths it is problems and solutions and not foundations that concern him. What is the relevance to the production of experience of that which isn’t practical, that isn’t a singular or limit point? This returns us to the argument that both Kant and Deleuze seek to overcome a theoretical perspective in order to get to what is significant in practice or the production realised through desire. Foundations aren’t modelled on production, they don’t take their bearings from it.

For Badiou everything is literally capable of being placed in a set of some sort. The point was made that for him set theory is a genuinely historical/revolutionary event of which there are few. They include Jesus, invoking St Paul’s fidelity, (love), the French revolution (politics) and set theory (science - our structural analysis). These are how we are conditioned today.

In this way we arrived at the opposition of the multiples of Deleuze and Badiou. For Badiou Deleuze’s multiplicities are dependent on the One when they try to avoid actual terms and reach for the spread and variability of the virtual. The ideal cause of continuity collapses the actual into the virtual. For Deleuze you cannot get to a virtual multiplicity by concerning yourself with units, you lose touch with the obscurity through which distinction emerges.

14TH NOVEMBER 'CLAMOUR OF BEING' WORKSHOP - REPORT AND CONTINUING DISCUSSION

On the evening of Tuesday 14th November the Volcanic Lines Reading Group tackled the introduction and first two chapters of Alain Badiou's Deleuze: The Clamour of Being. Issues that particularly engaged us, and will no doubt be further dramatised over the next three weeks, included the subject, death, mathematics, politics and monism.

The workshops begin with a ten minute presentation on the main themes of the text under discussion. This week Matt Lee presented and begun by referring to Derrida’s comments at Deleuze’s funeral. As in Badiou’s introduction to ‘The Clamour of Being’ we find the notion of a conversation that never took place but which will nevertheless be completed. Badiou describes it as ‘completing the incompletable: a conflictual friendship that, in a certain sense, had never taken place.’ (‘Clamour’ p 6) Yet the point was made that the tone of friendship and alliance rapidly disappears. The encounter seems to be staged in a very calculated way. The idea of a 'divergent and contrasting' collaboration (as Badiou describes it at page 5) offers a definition of encounter - Badiou contrasts it to the 'convergence and quasi-confusion' in Deleuze and Guattari's friendship. Do we get the internalisation of a more productive difference when Badiou encounters Deleuze?

The presentation also highlighted the figure of the automata in Deleuze which Badiou talks about at page 12. Badiou associates Deleuze’s concept of automaton with his notion of the machinic. Matt pointed out that this avoids themes of destiny and the form of time named Aion in ‘The Logic of Sense’. The Eternal Return is the moment which makes connection with these via the motto ‘amori fati.’ Tying automaton to the machinic seems then to simplify Deleuze’s thinking on the subject. Badiou is concerned to preserve the role of the subject, as militant and as constituted through fidelity to the event, and sees Deleuze as erasing the subject by subsuming it within the machinic. Matt made the point that this is too simple. Deleuze de-emphasises the subject in order to bring forward another process to replace it. This is a different move and not so straightforward as the one Badiou identifies. The subject in Deleuze finds it account in a process that it does not resemble rather than being simply erased by the figure of the automaton.

The themes of life and death in Deleuze loomed large here. If for Deleuze we learn about life through death then this adds to the subject rather than erasing it or failing to account for it. The notion of the death-limit and whether it is positive and productive was a major focus for the session. Matt also questioned Badiou’s equation of Deleuze’s monism with monotony. Spaces are closed down rather than opened, making death the ideal in Deleuze’s philosophy. In this monism, for Badiou, the repetition of different cases implies monotony.

In chapter two of ‘The Clamour of Being’ the reference’s to Wittgenstein’s ‘Tractatus’ were subjected to a highly intriguing analysis by Matt. He raised the prospect that Badiou might have opened the way to our reading him as a ‘modern Tractarian.’ In the ‘Tractatus’ a formal ontology is provided and it is closed and final, with all questions answered. Yet the explosive moment of mysticism occurs. This is the showing of what can only be said according to Wittgenstein’s formal ontology. Matt summed this up as the ramming of the subject into a closed ontology with the openness of the posited subject demanding the mysticism that occurs when everything has been said. If this is valuable for Badiou can we bring him closer to Wittgenstein despite his dislike for the linguistic turn?

Returning to the subject of death, there was discussion about whether it had any meaning for Badiou. For Deleuze it tells us about life because it introduces an impersonal life force. In ‘Difference and Repetition’ Deleuze borrows the two aspects of death described by Blanchot (p. 112-113). They are 1. the personal (concerns the I or ego) ‘which I can confront in a struggle or meet at a limit’ and the impersonal (with no relation to ‘me’) which I don’t meet in the past or present but which is ‘always coming, the source of an incessant multiple adventure in a persistent question.’

The argument was made that Deleuze’s Stoicism involves Aion and destiny at the limit and that this can overcome the sense that death isn’t productive or positive for the actual world it interrupts. Some readings of Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism argue that something is built on the basis of the limit (or in its vicinity) such that determination moves forward in response to the Ideas injected by the limit. This brings in Deleuze’s notion of a problem-solution feedback where going to the limit is productive of solutions. The feedback involves the contribution of both sides, of virtual problems and actual solutions, to the process of production.

At this point a question was raised about the value of this encounter. At what point should we say Badiou has got Deleuze wrong? If anything can come out of an encounter, no matter how different from Deleuze’s work, is this productive? Is it relevant or related to Deleuze?

The charge by Badiou that Deleuze employs mathematics metaphorically in his thought was a major topic of discussion (‘Clamour’, page 1, 10). The issue is made complex by Deleuze statement at page 220-221 of ‘Difference and Repetition’ that maths and biology function as ‘technical models’ to allow the exposition and exploration of the two halves of differences (ideal and aesthetic). Yet he associates differential calculus with ‘the universal and its appearance’ (page 171). Is the differential equation directly involved in material processes of actualisation, as a universal operation? The point was made that for Manuel Delanda abstract machines are real processes of different/ciation in Deleuze (see his ‘Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy’). We seem to lose the materiality of differential calculus and other appropriations of maths by Deleuze if it these are metaphorical. The material and physical context of the discovery of differential calculus was raised. It was a ‘method of fluxions’ for Isaac Newton. Different calculus is still used in practice a great deal. For mathematics the infinitesimal, by its vagueness, lacked the rigor to remain valid. Set theory seems to be a very different creature, having developed from attempts to found mathematics. For Badiou it provides direct ontological description. This problem will no doubt come up again.

The point was made that the three principles of Badiou’s reading of Deleuze, listed at page 17, partly rely upon mathematics being metaphorical for Deleuze. It leaves out the fields of individuation that involve universal operations like that presented in the differential equation. These material processes seem to be left out if Deleuze’s thought is (according to Badiou’s three principles) 1 ‘organised around a metaphysics of the One’ 2. proposes ‘an ethics of thought that requires dispossession and asceticism’ and 3. ‘is systematic and abstract.’ Questions were raised about Deleuze’s ethics. Is his Image of Thought (‘Difference and Repetition’ chapter 3) normative? Can you be anti-individualist without being ascetic? The problem of a potential naturalistic fallacy in Deleuze’s ethics was then raised. From descriptions of the presence of desires, how do we jump to what ‘should’ be done?

A further point about Badiou’s three principles was that Deleuze’s thought is certainly at least in part systematic and abstract. Because this is philosophy this has to have some role but needs to be balanced by other dimensions of the system. Others suggested that Badiou is being provocative in response to Deleuze’s image as an affirmer of free desiring. Do principles 2 and 3 make fun of Deleuze? A related point was raised about Badiou’s failure here to talk about his Lacanian conflict with Guattari. The recent reaction against Guattari’s influence on Deleuze scholarship was brought up. Badiou’s reading is highly selective – we had discussed its neglect of individuation and now came up against its disdain for Deleuze’s collaboration with Guattari.

The reference to critical and phenomenological interpretations of Deleuze at page 20 was discussed. This opened up the trajectories of Deleuze’s scholarship. Those finding a critical philosophy in Deleuze see the limit being reached and then being built upon, something linking him to Kant and his transcendental deductions. For others going to the limit means attaining the immediate intuition of being. Critique now only clears the ground to allow for this intuition to be attained. This links back to Badiou’s reading of automaton – this seems concur with readings that deny Deleuze’s capacity to theorize a politics because going to the limit subsumes the conditions of political action. If being is immediate we become inactive contemplators of the differentiation of difference in its divine self-sufficiency (as Peter Hallward argues in his ‘Out of this World’). It was suggested that Deleuze’s politics can seem to be tacked on, borrowed from the 1960s popular movements rather than being realised through his system. These issues seem to coalesce around the question of whether the limit is productive for the actual, whether it can be built upon.

The assertion that in Deleuze there is ‘an ontological precomprehension of Being as one’ (p. 20) was challenged. The point was made that this seems too strong - no one could recall a place where Deleuze had used the words ‘Being is one.’ It seems that for Badiou Deleuze botches the multiple and ends up with monotony or linear oneness. Univocity means that Being is said in only one sense – at page 304 of ‘Difference and Repetition’ Deleuze writes that ‘Being is said according to forms which do not break its unity of sense; it is said in a single same sense throughout all its forms.’ The interesting point was made that in translating from the same French phrase we can get both ‘being says itself’ and ‘being is said.’ Thus either ‘being distributes itself’ or ‘being is caused to be distributed.’ This complication of Deleuze’s affirmation of univocity was very intreguing.

The notion that in Deleuze the wound is something you become, you embody your wound even before it has happened, was brought up. This, it was argued, comes from Stoicism and isn’t to be confused with asceticism, bringing us instead to amori fati and the Eternal Return.

The discussion then moved to the concerns over Deleuze’s ability to ground the political. Does the space of action become subsumed by the totality of Virtual time, the differenciation of difference. Badiou’s concerns were related again to Peter Hallward’s critique of Deleuze in ‘Out of this World’ where the needs of the actual, of space and the political, are seen to be neglected by the emphasis on virtual time and creation. This issue gives much food for thought and will no doubt occupy us a great deal. If actual terms involved in political action and strategy are accounted for by Deleuze, it can be argued, they have to be built upon the limit. How does the production or life of the actual relate to a virtual production or life that it does not resemble and which ungrounds and dissolves its forms at the limit?

Tuesday 7th November 2006 7-9pm

**Colloquium**

**Brian Smith (Dundee) 'The Limits of the Subject in Badiou's Being and Event'**

Location: Queen Anne 020

The paper given by Brian Smith of The University of Dundee on 'The Limits of the Subject in Badiou's Being and Event' was an excillarating *tour de force* . It brought both mathematics and philosophy into play, making a vital contribution at a time when Badiou studies is in its infancy in this country. The role of mathematics was introduced with its full force, something that philosophy really needs to feel today. Highly important points about how mathematics might respond to Badiou were developed and this took things beyond the philosophical response to Badiou and his use of mathematics.

This is a report of the paper and discussions at the 7th November Volcanic Lines Colloquium, the inaugural event of the Volcanic Lines: Deleuzian Research Group. We would like to thank our speaker for coming to Greenwich and delivering an extremely important and effective paper. The report is taken from my notes and I apologise for any errors or omissions.

The paper began with the birth of the subject and how the use of the axiom of choice brings this about. To explicate this much was made of the distinction between the two numbers systems in Cantor’s work on set theory: extensive or cardinal and intensive or ordinal. In addition the distinction between sets at a finite level and an infinite level was dramatised. Also explained was the nature and role of new infinite cardinal numbers through the distinction of a set’s elements and its subsets. Using the whiteboard set theoretical axioms and proofs were elucidated, including the distinction between belonging and inclusion, allowing for a subset to be included but not belong. The point was made that set theory allows Badiou to talk not in terms of wholes and parts but about inclusion and belonging, establishing yet another fundamental distinction. Returning to the generation of cardinal numbers the move was made to the power set. This was explained as the way in which set theory allows us to get more out of sets by applying certain rules.

The divergence between the two number systems at the infinite level was shown in the variation of the intensive, or that with intrinsic order, whilst the cardinal stays the same. The extensive remains the same while the intensive and structural varies. This for Badiou provides us with the complexity of presentation. The divergence of cardinal and ordinal at the infinite level was explained by the repetition of the operation of 'taking the limit' so as to increase complexity. The question was then raised – is the mathematics of the infinite controllable? The set was clarified as that whose beginning or foundation can be found but which has no end so that where it goes is open. Its beginning is finite but where it is going is not. Cantor’s major problem was elaborated at this point – the undecideable or indeterminate greatness of the power set. For Cantor this must be avoided. To do this he asserts his continuum hypothesis, leading to strict determination and a closed system. The direction Badiou is taking was brought out here because he wants to keep the system open. The move to non-constructible sets concerns what is bigger than what is constructible. This introduces the chance and randomness of unordered sets that inflates infinite levels.

A point that I found particularly striking was that mathematics involves operations that happen all at once or immediately whilst Badiou’s appropriation of mathematics adds a historical structure or temporality. Historical situations (as opposed to natural situations) need a temporal dimension and this calls upon a set whose elements are non-constructible sets. The empty set was then opposed to a foundational set. This, it was emphasised, depended upon Badiou’s situated and temporal appropriation of set theory. Therefore the matheme of the event is not a set we find in mathematics but an inconsistent set. This set belongs to itself and is therefore inconsistent. The continuum hypothesis favoured by Cantor fails in an inconsistent situation and this, according to Badiou, is 'experienced' in this situation. The temporal dimension was developed in terms of the need of the individual to be fully realised as a subject, subject-hood not being given in advance but made a task.

The temporal extension of set theory proceeds via decision or the affirmation of an event. The point was made that this introduced pure chance at the infinite level alongside strict order that can be applied to anything through pure choice (the Axiom of Choice). This combination of freedom and determinism was emphasised. Next the nature of problems in Badiou’s system was developed as creative and novel, requiring a new situation in which to deal with them. Yet, to be more precise, in this move the subject extends the situation but doesn’t create a new one because such a creating would make the subject transcendent to the situation.

Also touched on were things that the speaker found to be haunting Badiou’s system. Deeply interesting and fertile were concluding remarks on the of set theory: ‘There are so many clearly defined bizarre entities within this universe [of set theory] that many of the aspects of philosophy that Badiou wants to reject, especially in recent continental philosophy, can return from the realm of inconsistency, where he banishes them, and associate themselves with some of these more unusual and offbeat products of mathematics.’ The independence of the Axiom of Choice could reintroduce themes of the Other and the sublime. This was explored in the question session in terms of an event which is encountered as something beyond the ‘free rational power to manage’ of the subject. The irrational returns in a ‘self destructive subject’, with fidelity to something beyond reason’s control.

The question session grappled with some fundamental issues brought out by the paper. Badiou’s concern with changing the world, with action, was emphasised. Subjective response to the undecidable event is truth and not knowledge. Set theory shows the immanent extension of the situation so that the problem is affirmed in this new situation. The problem then doesn’t disappear as if it were a lack of knowledge removed by attaining knowledge. This of course resonates with Deleuze’s notion of problems – something the ‘Clamour of Being Reading Group is likely to engage with over the next four weeks at Greenwich and online. The speaker dealt with concerns that Badiou fails to engage with what known by emphasising that truth is distinct from knowledge and that this must be understood through set theory.

A questioner raised the point that chaos in the universe is an important concern for contemporary thought. The speaker linked this to historical temporality with the subject transforming a situation.

The issue of Badiou’s apparent anthropocentricism was raised. Notions of rationality and the potential of a rational individual, distinguished in this way from animals, were discussed. There is no event without a subject and no subject without an event.

The problem of an event that does not come from an evental site was raised in terms of Lacan’s eruption of the Real, a terrifying rupturing of the symbolic network. The speaker emphasised that the event has to be, for Badiou, the starting point of production, something to be taken up by subject. Time then is a succession of events and the truth procedures that carry on from them. The speaker then developed his argument that Badiou’s system or model can involve the event going too far, overwhelming the subject. The axiom of choice means that the subject needs to be able to deal with every event. This, he argued, is the limit of the subject in Badiou’s Being and Event.

The discussion then moved to the simulacrum as it figures in Badiou’s thinking. The speakers critique of Badiou was further explored – showing its depth and challenge. A questioner raised the subject of the Holocaust, asking whether fidelity to this (as if to an event) is a case of evil for Badiou? The speaker raised the problem that a very subjective like structure results from the Holocaust, and he had explained that for Badiou the definition of ethics is ‘to be subjective’. The simulacrum looks like a subject but the event has gone wrong. The speaker argued that this is still a subject according to Badiou’s model, an unintended consequence.

A questioner raised the issue of the religious connotations of the word evil. The speaker considered Badiou’s use of the terms good and evil as deliberately provocative but not religious.

Next a question raised the rarity of the event in Badiou and the notion that we are all rational individuals that inhabit a situation, with freedom in the form of the axiom of choice, but are not all subjects. The speaker puts this in the context of Badiou’s appropriation of set theory which itself gives no reason for the rareness of events. From this he concluded that it is a question of how Badiou applies set theory if we want to find a reason for the rareness of events.

The final question asked about Badiou’s engagement with political conventions like voting. The speaker sketched Badiou’s development from his earlier anti-statist stance to his later concern with the subject involved in the transformation of a state. The questioner was concerned with engagement, with Badiou’s relevance to parliamentary democracy. The point was again made that a concern with knowledge must be contrasted with Badiou’s concern with truth. Concern with maintaining a state would preclude fidelity to an event.

The paper had set out and explained fundamental distinctions in Badiou’s Being and Event and drew out the consequences and difficulties these give rise to. The role of mathematics was brought out in a much needed way. It leaves us a thinking about both the need to engage with the complexity of the system and to consider ‘the limits of the subject.’ We must engage fully and rigorously and in this way arrive at any critical responses we might want to make. In terms of the forthcoming reading group on Badiou’s ‘Deleuze: The Clamour of Being’ we now have an invaluable insight into the specific concerns that animate his reading and critique of Deleuze. It should allow Badiou to play a full role when his encounter with Deleuze is staged, our speaker having given much life to him through a thorough elucidation, appreciation and critical assessment.

**‘THE WORK OF GILLES DELEUZE’**

**A ONE DAY, INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

ORGANISED AND HOSTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY,

UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH,

AT THE MARITIME CAMPUS, OLD ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE

QUEEN ANNE COURT, GROUND FLOOR

SATURDAY, 1st JULY 2006, 10-4.30

TIMETABLE [updated on Wednesday 28 June]

[This is liable to change - PLEASE CHECK REGULARLY]

10-10.30 REGISTRATION [location will be sign posted]

10.30-1.00 PARALLEL SESSIONS

A. QA039

Tristan Moyle (Anglia Ruskin)

Transcendental Empiricism in Deleuze and McDowell

Dror Yinon (University of Paris I: Panthéon-Sorbonne)

Dispensing with the image of thought: Deleuze on the distinction between thought and reason

Patricia Farrell (MMU)

The Story of the Larval Subjects: a Paratactic Narrative in Difference and Repetition

B. QA063

Kostas Koukouzelis (Athens)

Deleuze and Kant on the notion of the ‘transcendental field’

A. Eylem Atakav (Southampton Solent)

Women’s Cinema as “Minor” Cinema

José Carlos Cardoso (Évora University, Portugal)

The Hanging of Ariadne

C. QA065

Cath Ferguson (MMU)

Title tbc

Steven Eastwood (SUNY, Buffalo)

Unknown Bodies: Some Thoughts on Gilles Deleuze and the Moving Image

D. QA075

Matt Lee (Greenwich)

What is the force of counter-actualisation?

Maria Lakka

The caesura of the will: Deleuze’s Nietzschean turn

Michael McGuire (LMU)

Deleuze and the Articulation of Control

1.00-2.00 LUNCH [not provided]

2.00-4.30 PARALLEL SESSIONS

A. QA065

Gulsen Bal (Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design)

……………………………………… modus operandi

a small step towards another ‘intriguing’ proposition…

Ils Huygens (Jan Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht)

Thinking affect: a new perspective for visual studies

B. QA063

John Sellars (KCL)

Deleuze’s Stoicism

Keith Robinson (South Dakota)

An Ontology of the ‘Virtual’ in Whitehead’s Metaphysics

C. QA039

Ed Romein (Erasmus University, Rotterdam) & Sjoerd van Tuinen (Gent)

City without Predicates

Wim Christiaens and Sjoerd van Tuinen (Gent)

Bergsonism and Quantum Theory. Some Notes on a Deleuzian Philosophy of Nature

4.30 CONFERENCE ENDS

Conference Abstracts

Steven Eastwood (SUNY, Buffalo)

unknown bodies

Some thoughts on Gilles Deleuze and the moving image

What is the nature of a thought that is at once brain, screen and world? Gilles Deleuze, progenitor[1] of schizoanalyis, navigator of ideational lines of flight, and author of the film philosophy books Cinema 1: the movement-image and Cinema 2: the time-image, writes of an "unknown body". It is not the corporeal body that seals an inside, or a screen, which is outside, but a body between them, a body that is both thinking and screen. How is it that I can react to moving images as simultaneously like a world, and a world? Deleuze, calls this unknown body a spiritual automaton in the brain made possible by cinema - a new thought in thought. 1895: along comes the moving image as an eruption for cognition, an anomaly for the brain, offering a gap in sensory-motor perceptual regulation, interrupting the habitual thinking of the brain, providing a fissure in thought, what Deleuze calls a nooshock that forces thought to think itself by perceiving thought-like events other than its own, out there in the outside, on the screen. This is quickly suppressed by story, by impossible continuity, by propaganda, prompting Deleuze to lump together Hitler and Hollywood. Throughout Deleuze's philosophy he refers to a "plane of immanence," upon which emergent beings become, in their own temporality. Developing ideas from both Nietzsche and Bergson, Deleuze suggests that habitual sensory motor mental behaviour has lead to static, teleologically rooted identities whose thoughts and experiences (and films) transpire in the form of cliché, over-determined by what has come before. "Becoming", for Deleuze, is the human identity as various flight lines, and the plane of immanence is the site for this cartographic invention. This is an emergent space, an open-whole, consisting of intervals in thought between stimulus and response. The cinema philosophy of Deleuze re-discovers every image as potential "time-image", as a durational space that can be divorced from narrative or representational habituation, in order to enable temporal, ideational and corporeal otherness. The spiritual automaton finds new networks and connectivities, as unknown body, as mind in flight. The cinema becomes a peculiar prosthesis, a situatedness for the other thinker in thought, the situation of time in time, of space in space, where the body finds extensivity and new virtualities. In Deleuze we discover a siren call to engage with film and video as lovers, as fools, as intercessors with our heads spinning into the unspeakable, as cartographers endlessly writing over existing maps, as filmmakers whose films are our own. Somebody once rang me and in broken English spoke of a "Three-year long film" she wanted to show me. At the 1999 total eclipse of the sun my video camera picked up someone commenting that, "It's like the lights going down in the cinema." Digital video editors experience a phenomenon referred to as "interfacing," where, exhausted, they, for example, find themselves attempting to slow and reverse traffic on their journey home in an oneiric configuration between film/video temporality and their own. This paper follows emergent trajectories of cinematic unknown bodies. There will be elements of free-indirect discourse between reasoned and sourced ideas (including Deleuze, Irigaray, Badiou, Sobchack, Merleau Ponty, Grosz), accidental ideas, anecdotes, and contingent activity. The presentation will most likely emerge in the form of a video/film essay, or a live performance, willfully slipping into gaps.

A. Eylem Atakav (Southampton Solent)

Women’s Cinema as “Minor” Cinema

“How many people today live in language that is not their own? Or no longer, or not yet, even know their own and know poorly the major language that they are forced to use?”

(Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari)

When feminist theories of women's cinema first appeared in the 1970s, there were so few films by women whereas today, although women's filmmaking is still very much a minority activity, there is enough work in a wide range of styles and from a variety of cultures. The plurality of forms, concerns and constituencies in contemporary women's cinema now exceeds even the most flexible definition of counter cinema. Women's cinema thus seems 'minor' rather than oppositional.

The idea of the minor comes from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s concept of minor literature. A minor literature is not like a literary genre or period, nor is classification as minor an artistic evaluation. A minor literature of a minority or marginalised group, written, not in a minor language, but in a major one, just as Kafka, a Czech Jew, wrote in German.

Inspired deeply by Alison Butler's 'Women's Cinema: the Contested Screen', this paper intends to examine women's filmmaking whilst questioning the possibility and -in Deleuze's terms- the impossibility of women's filmmaking in a patriarchal society.

As Meaghan Morris points out “this question is echoed obliquely in the concerns of early feminist film criticism and Claire Johnston’s work on women’s films made within the system of Hollywood’s social and cinematic codes. A minor literature is not ‘marginal’; it is what a minority constructs in a ‘major language’, and so it is a model of action from a colonised position within a given society.”

It is, then, apposite to ask here one other question: are women filmmakers not living in a language of their own?

Butler argues that the notion of minor cinema is functional to the debate that the existence of women’s cinema needs not to be premised on an essentialist understanding the category of ‘women’. The communities imagined by women’s cinema are as many and varied as the films it comprises, and each is involved in its own historical moment. Thinking of (some) women’s cultural production as ‘minor’ (in some ways) does not depend on a belief in women’s absolute alienation from language and culture.

Here, again, Deleuze’s understanding of the effects of the experience of marginalisation is useful: “Sometimes the minority filmmaker finds himself in the impasse described in Kafka: the impossibility of writing differently and behind it, a ‘double impossibility’, that of forming a group and that of not forming a group.”

Therefore, as Butler points outs the distinctiveness of women’s filmmaking is not based on an essentialist understanding of gendered subjectivity, but on the position –or positions- of women in contemporary culture in Kafka’s impasse: neither included within nor excluded from cultural tradition.

To sum up, to call women’s cinema a minor cinema is to free it from the binarisms (popular/elitist, avant-garde/ mainstream, positive/ negative) which result from it as an oppositional cinema.

Ed Romein (Erasmus University, Rotterdam) & Sjoerd van Tuinen (Gent)

City without Predicates

By the end of the twentieth century we saw the demise of the city as a concept for describing the contemporary urban condition. The proliferation of prefixes like post, ex, sub and dis to the ‘urbs’ of contemporary life signal an increasing difficulty of conceptualizing the ongoing processes that shape, reshape, fragment and reconfigure it. Our impression is that this unbridled proliferation of prefixes attests to the deep inadequacy of a nineteenth century conception of urbanity and to the end of the nineteenth century conception of the city. This observation is paralleled by the recent discourse about ‘the end of the social’. In our view these debates evolve around a social ontology which is based on, what we will call, a dogmatic image of sociological thought, i.e. on transcendent objects and metaphysical essentialism, and which is directly responsible for the theoretical incapacity to understand the current urban condition. To get out of this cul-de-sac we propose to turn towards a Deleuzian ‘flat’ or processual social ontology. By developing a contemporary conception of the ‘urbs’, using the Deleuzian ontology of the virtual-actual – especially in its Leibniz-Tarde lineage – we hope to contribute to a sociological theory of cities. We will call this concept a city without predicates, which we derive from Leibniz’ monadological transformation of Plotinus’ and Augustine’s notion of the ‘city of God’ into a logical and metaphysical understanding of the Baroque city as a virtuality that can no longer be the subject of any series of predicates or essential properties, but which rather subsists as the transversal of these differentiated series. This concept can be operationalized by using the work of the recently rediscovered sociologist Gabriel Tarde, who held the reductionist starting point that “every thing is a society”. In Tarde this singularity is played out in society through the concepts of invention and imitation. Through such a conceptualisation of the urban condition in terms of singularities we hope to light up a different side of urban phenomena as diverse as terrorism, counter-terrorism measures, surveillance, insurance and architecture.

Wim Christiaens and Sjoerd van Tuinen (Gent)

Bergsonism and Quantum Theory. Some Notes on a Deleuzian Philosophy of Nature

Gilles Deleuze wanted a philosophy of nature in a pre-kantian, almost archaic sense. A central concept in his philosophy is ‘multiplicity’ which he adopted from Bergson. Although the concept is philosophical through and through, it has roots in mathematics and physics. Deleuze was attracted to this term because he believed it indicated a break with the dogmatic image of thought (which constrains itself into producing representations of reality conceived as particular things with strict borders, behaving and interacting according to invariant laws covering all possible states). We believe that the discussion concerning the ontological status of quantum phase space induces a similar break with both the ‘naive’ realism and empiricism that is upheld by many analytical philosophers and with the transcendental idealism of continental philosophy. Even though it is true that a transcendentalist understanding of phase space representation of a physical entity is not a typical materialist picture of reality, it derives from a normal Euclidean representation, and can in principle be reduced to it.

There are two fundamental characteristics that indicate that one could interpret the state vector with the concept of disjunctive unity and the bergsonian correlation actuality-virtuality: 1. The state vector of a quantum system comes very close to a multiplicity: the variables that describe it are incompatible (for example position and momentum) without transcending the unity of the state space. 2. Although there is always a variable for the entity it describes that is actual in the classical sense (we are sure to obtain a determinate value upon measurement), for the main part its variables are indeterminate. This indeterminacy is at the same time less and more than a classical possibility.

In conclusion we want to show how bringing together certain interpretations of quantum mechanics and Deleuze’s bergsonian ontology would contribute to a renewed philosophy of nature. Although the interpretation of quantum mechanics is an industrious subdiscipline in philosophy of science, regular science still marginalizes its importance. Wee see the lack of success of that marginalization - the mathematical structure and its algorithms never really suffice, and seem unable to leave the philosophical-ideological context behind in which it arose, contrary to antecedent successful physical theories - as a positive phenomenon. Contrary to previous physical theories, the Outside/unthought destabilizes marginalization and fuels interpretation in its constructivist sense. The relation between QM and its interpretations is a fine and significant example for a contemporary metaphysics, which follows Deleuze’s motto: “Science is never ‘reductionist’ but, on the contrary, demands a metaphysics - without which it would remain abstract, deprived of meaning or intuition” (Gilles Deleuze in Bergsonism). Ultimately, Deleuze’s ontology of multiplicities has a capacity to account for the epistemological success of the concept of Hilbert space. It does not dismiss the transcendental critique, but radicalizes it in a ‘transcendental’ or ‘superior empiricism’, i.e. a post-Kantian philosophy of nature.

John Sellars (KCL)

Deleuze’s Stoicism

This paper will examine the Stoicism within the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. It will not be primarily concerned with Deleuze’s explicit comments regarding Stoicism in The Logic of Sense (although these will be touched upon) but rather with a more pervasive Stoicism running throughout his work, both with and without Guattari. The case for the existence of this deeper Stoicism within Deleuze’s philosophy will be advanced on six fronts: 1) the Stoics stand at the beginning of Deleuze’s counter tradition of philosophies of immanence running through Spinoza, Hume, Nietzsche, and Bergson; 2) the Stoics were the first to reverse Platonism, a task that Deleuze presents as the principal task for modern philosophy; 3) Deleuze shares with the Stoics a practical conception of philosophy, notwithstanding the definition of philosophy as the creation of concepts advanced in What is Philosophy?; 4) Deleuze follows the Stoics in proposing the dissolution of the boundaries between the individual and cosmos; 5) Deleuze and Guattari’s nomadology stands within the Stoic cosmopolitan tradition; 6) Deleuze presents Stoicism as an ethics of amor fati and, as such, the only meaningful form of ethics there is.

Keith Robinson (South Dakota)

An Ontology of the ‘Virtual’ in Whitehead’s Metaphysics

A good deal of recent work on Deleuze has focused on his importance as a philosopher of the ‘virtual’ and the intensive processes that emerge from it. That Deleuze finds the ontological and metaphysical expression of these virtual processes in the work of Nietzsche, Spinoza and Bergson is perhaps now well known. The ‘trinity’ of Deleuzian thought –with Spinoza as the ‘Christ’ of philosophers - is now established in the commentaries. Far less appreciated, at least in the Anglo-American reception of Deleuze, is the extent to which he ‘returns’ with a difference to the inestimable -yet abandoned (Deleuze says ‘assassinated’) - work of Alfred North Whitehead in order precisely to experiment with the virtual logic of becoming and difference and to continue the work of creating transformative and transversal relations in between science and philosophy.

In what follows I would like to draw out a more detailed resonance between certain elements of the ‘virtual’ metaphysical framework developed in Whitehead’s later works, especially Process and Reality, and Deleuze’s own virtual philosophy especially in Difference and Repetition. It is hoped that this will not only open up new perspectives on Deleuze’s thought but it will also show the extent to which Whitehead’s work is ready for what one commentator calls ‘rehabilitation’, opening a space in which Whitehead’s philosophy becomes once again a living and creative possibility for thought.

Patricia Farrell (MMU)

The Story of the Larval Subjects: a Paratactic Narrative in Difference and Repetition

“The story of the larval subjects” – that is, the account of individuation – in Deleuze’s Difference and Repetition, is a form of paratactic narrative, implicated in and complicated with another paratactic narrative: Deleuze’s account of the three passive syntheses of time. Using the “larval subjects” – and the reworking of a broken lithographic plate by Odilon Redon – as examples, this paper will consider the idea of an emergent paratactic narrative, how it might be generated and what it does within the experience of reading it.

As a written work, the account of individuation is a form of “potential literature” as practised by the French literary group OULIPO, employing structural constraints to make works which generate multiply diverse ways of being read. Deleuze frames a theory of the production of subjectivity, as a passive synthesis derived from Bergson and Gilbert Simondon, with the dissensual adjacencies of the presentation of time in Bergson and Nietzsche. The result is a mapped space which articulates two co-existent but divergent readings We can read its technical invention in terms of its content leading to a reinforcement of its fictive qualities, binding it into its narrative form: reading it semantically, reading it syntactically to derive from it a recounted history of subjectivation: and we can read it pragmatically, as a series of poetic strategies or as a set of structural principles for a performance: something like a dance-score which maps out a space a performer can distribute their moves across. Such a performer has to learn to be able to read and express congruently. Ideally then, through reading, a process of articulated individuation takes place – and that constantly, never completing its performance so that the function of Deleuze’s story of the larval subjects is increasingly less representational and more physically affective. The crux of the matter is how we learn to read this potential of pure expression and become disposed to its purpose.

The purpose of this pure aesthetic can be seen as the genesis and evolution of a pure ethic – or an ethos as way of living, a move through and beyond the synthesis of empirical habit toward a transcendental habit of thinking. This story requires a progressively more engaged reader and a progressively more dissolved subject: a contemplative reader passively synthesised and set in motion. With Deleuze’s exemption of consciousness from the transcendental realm and, as I argue, the emergence of a paratactic narrative from the congruence of semantic and pragmatic readings, what can we say about that narrative’s emergent history, its emergent personae?

Dror Yinon (University of Paris 1: Panthéon-Sorbonne)

Dispensing with the image of thought: Deleuze on the distinction between thought and reason

In his critique of the “image of thought” (Difference and Repetition Ch. 3), Gilles Deleuze advances the thesis that a sharp distinction should be made between thought and representation. By failing to maintain this distinction, he argues, philosophy has fallen into a certain illusion, that of a dogmatic image of thought, which consists of grasping thought exclusively in terms of representation or recognition. As Deleuze explains, transcendental philosophy generates this illusion by conceiving of the condition in terms of the conditioned, an operation which Deleuze characterizes as a duplication of the empirical onto the transcendental.

How is one to understand this critique? Interpretations (for example, James Williams’ commentary on Difference and Repetition) tend to connect it with Deleuze’s analysis of the structure of recognition based on the functions of subject and object as fixed poles (called by Deleuze “common sense”) and concrete acts of recognition understood as falling under that form (named “good sense”). According to this line of thought, Deleuze’s critique is designed to show that this structure is erroneously conceived of as transcendental, while it is only an illegitimate product of the abovementioned duplication. Instead, Deleuze calls for a radical change in the doctrine of the faculties which consists in studying them in their disjointed state, that is, out of their collaboration with recognition.

I think this interpretation does not offer the required critique of Kant: viewed from a Kantian perspective, the above interpretation of Deleuze’s critique is insufficient; it only stresses the necessity of admitting of a thought which is distinct from the understanding (the faculty of recognition) but does not explain its nature. However, Kant insists that thought cannot be exhausted by recognition, hence his distinction between reason and understanding. Half of the Critique of Pure Reason is dedicated to unfolding the structure and function of reason. Thus, in order to realize Deleuze’s critique of the image of thought, it is necessary that it confronts Kant’s notion of reason, particularly his notion of ‘Idea’.

In this paper I show that Deleuze’s notion of ‘Idea’ in its relation to Kant’s should be taken as the focal point of his critique. That is, Deleuze’s notion of Idea is based on the Kantian demand to distinguish thought from understanding. Deleuze sustains this critique by showing that Kant fails to meet this demand in his analysis of reason, i.e. that Kantian reason is still thought of in terms of representation.

My claim is that the reason why kant duplicates the empirical onto the transcendental is that his notion of reason stays within the limits of object-oriented thought. On the other hand, Deleuze’s notion of Idea, with its problematic nature understood anew, constitutes a thought that is not object oriented. Hence, instead of having regulative reason guide the subject’s cognitive activity (i.e. Kantian reason), the subject is confronted with problems imposed upon him by creative thought (i.e. thought elicits the subject’s experience rather than guides it).

Tristan Moyle (Anglia Ruskin)

Transcendental Empiricism in Deleuze and McDowell

Both Deleuze and McDowell – commonly thought of as very different philosophers engaged in very different projects - call the conception of experience they offer a ‘transcendental empiricism’. This paper asks two questions. First, are there any underlying similarities between Deleuze and McDowell that allows us to name both of them ‘transcendental empiricists’ in a meaningful sense? Second, what differences are there between the transcendental empiricism of McDowell and Deleuze? In relation to the first question I hope to demonstrate that both philosophers seek to avoid Absolute idealism and traditional empiricism by modulating Kant’s transcendental idealism. Specifically this modulation takes the form of a re-working of the Kantian notion of transcendental, a priori sensibility. In relation to the second question I hope to demonstrate that there are in fact two quite distinct models of transcendental empiricism, which I shall call transcendental empiricism I (McDowell) and transcendental empiricism II (Deleuze). I will argue that transcendental empiricism II is a more satisfactory conception of experience because it avoids the threat of idealism that contaminates McDowell’s version of transcendental empiricism. I will argue that Deleuze neutralises the threat of idealism - in a way that echoes themes from later Merleau-Ponty and later Heidegger - by conceiving an immanent relation between transcendental sensibility and the ‘aesthetic form’ of experience.

Ils Huygens (Jan Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht)

Thinking affect: a new perspective for visual studies

In Deleuze and Spinoza’s view the body is not considered as a substance but as a kinetic and dynamic thing that is fundamentally organised by “a capacity for affecting and being affected.” Affect exists only as relation between two bodies and transgresses the borders between self and other, between subject and object. In the cinema, the viewer is confronted with a double inter-affective relation, with the body on the screen, but also with the screen itself which is also a kinetic body in the dynamic worldview of Deleuze/Spinoza.

Since the last few years in film– and mediastudies, the concept of affect has become a central term. Affect, as in psychology, is considered as something that takes place on a bodily, sensational level, not consciously registered unless it is actualized into feeling or emotion. Deleuze scholars like Brian Massumi and Steven Shaviro claim that the effects of affect, even when it is not consciously perceived, are real and need further attention, especially in relation to media like cinema or television that have the capacity to intensify, alter or distort the affective dimensions of an image, sound, voice, face or gesture.

According to Brian Massumi, who has developed Deleuze’s notion of affect quite extensively by connecting it to scientific research and cultural studies in his book The Autonomy of Affect, image-reception is two-sided: there’s the personal, actualized level and there’s the superlinear level of intensity. Whereas the first level is that of socio-linguistical codification and of clear cut cognitive emotions, the superlinear level can break the level of logical expectations and cause a sudden disruption. The superlinear level does not register words or symbolic content but intensity, “the effect of an image’s duration”. What Massumi is talking about is the level of affect: body movement, voice timbre, facial expression all produce real effects in the viewer of which he himself is not yet consciously aware of, surface stimuli that are registered by our skin and visceral senses.

In this essay I will try to expand a little more on the development of an affective approach to images. What might such an approach mean? How can we approach affect in language? And how can we turn it into a productive tool of analysis for the study of images? Which concepts need to be looked at and what connections can be made to other non-philosophical research? Some promising linkages that we believe might help develop an affective approach further lie for instance in empirical psychology (William James), the psychology of emotions (Silvan Tomkins) or neurology (Damasio) which will also be briefly discussed.

Matt Lee (Greenwich)

What is the force of counter-actualisation?

One of the central problems in understanding Deleuze lies in the idea of ‘counter-actualisation’. Deleuze’s shift from Kantian ‘conditions of possible experience’ to the formula of his transcendental empiricism (‘conditions of real experience’) involves a rejection of the priority of the thinking subject. Yet without the thinking subject, who is it that counter-actualises, how is it done and why does it happen?

Deleuze’s answer seems to rest on an ‘encounter’ with force but this encounter is read as fully positive. If this is so, where is the space for a counter-actualisation? How can a counter-actualisation occur without some lack, negation or nothingness forcing it? To give the answer, ‘the intensity of the encounter’, avoids the necessary characterization of a direction to counter-actualisation. The key question becomes one of establishing where we can find the point of actualization turning on itself, countering itself. In effect this is an attempt to establish an account of the materiality of counter-actualisation.

To establish such a materiality of counter-actualisation it is useful to examine the role learning plays within Deleuze’s work. In particular, by examining learning we can begin to encounter key tensions between Deleuze’s work as an account of materiality as against a thinking of materality, in particular locating the radicality of Deleuze’s thought, almost paradoxically, in the way he articulates thinking itself.

José Carlos Cardoso (Évora University, Portugal)

The Hanging of Ariadne

In the intellectual progression of Deleuze we sees two directions, seemingly, absolutely incompatible: the ontological one and the transcendantal.

When we seeks where its two parallel approaches meet - the battle field of the Deleuze’s philosophy - we realizes that that occurs in the development from "the same" idea: the transcendental field (Logique du sens), the plan of immanence (Mille Plateaux ; Qu’est-ce que le philosophie ?).

However, the setting in question of the concept of immanence makes emerge a thought of the experiment; but of an experiment which releases in its concreted reality its own conditions of possibility - here the debate is, clearly with Kant - i.e., a renewal of the matter of transcendental aesthetics. The search for an empirico-transcendantal aesthetics, to speak with the deleuzian way.

It is tried, therefore, in this paper, to try to understand the essential role of the aesthetic laboratory - in particular the book on the painting of Francis Bacon and the two volumes on the Cinema - in this radical setting in question the conditions of the thought itself, therefore of the destruction of the dogmatic image of the thought.

Gulsen Bal (Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design)

……………………………………… modus operandi

a small step towards another ‘intriguing’ proposition…

The focus of attention in this presentation is to explore what practice comes down to transcending its own context with the politics of production towards the ‘processual’ intensities through critical modalities within a philosophy of practice in a critical function of theory. Methodology wise practicing philosophy to some extent is taken into account as if such was “theory is simply a challenge to the real. A challenge to the world to exist.”[2]

The key which opens the “axiomatics” of Deleuzian projects to the paradox, therefore, lies in the extent to which it questions philosophy itself as a “reading machine.”[3]

Through opening this kind of discursive space by means of creating a complex mode of production site, art production therefore can be brought together under the rubric of the creation of new philosophical concepts in its reference to a philosophical encounter. In other words, almost the im-/possibility of the engagement, which opens up the creative process to a dialogical interaction the routes taken per se…

Thus the ‘dialogue’ becomes one of the issue that worth pondering. Let’s start by asking what takes the place of communication, which infused with elements drawn upon attention on a sphere of ‘contact zones,’ where dialogues reside within its latent omnipresence in its manifold modalities.

The direction of this argument leads towards how one can describe the constituency of dialogic art practice and create a cross-border communication through the axes of trans-cultural practices, which open a new space formed, by a space of interruptions and a space of enunciation.

This opens up the question of the political and the mechanism for the critical engagement of artistic production. Therefore a multitude of rhizomically self-transformative pluralistic approaches, what the ‘other’ wants to show us through the parameters of what the ‘other’ is showing is still intriguing.

During this intellectual quest, the issues will cover the differential structures in representational boundaries as well as some complementary ideas, including the border phenomena in trans-local and trans-national location within cultural geography.

Maria Lakka

The caesura of the will: Deleuze’s Nietzschean turn

Deleuze’s philosophical project, as instantiated in Difference and Repetition, is profoundly informed by Bergson’s conception of time – an unceasingly creative reality rather than an abstract form, and such an influence becomes explicitly apparent in the elaboration of the passive syntheses of time. However, Deleuze does not limit himself to the two forms of contraction-memory (corresponding to the first and the second passive syntheses) but he also recalls Nietzsche’s eternal return, which he calls “the empty form of time” as “universal ungrounding”. In this paper, I want to focus on the “disjunctive synthesis” of the eternal return and to explore the reasons for Deleuze’s implementation and how it becomes significant for his idea of ‘becoming’.

The concept of duration appears to emphasize the centripetal force of repetition and memory and although Bergson also mentions a centrifugal force in parallel operation, it is Nietzsche who conceptualized a force of expulsion within eternal recurrence. The Nietzschean notion differs from the ancient conception of the eternal return of the Same, which views repetition in natural and astronomical cycles and remains an empirical doctrine. His doctrine prevents time from being merely qualitative change or variation, as it was also conceived by the scientific law of the conservation of energy. Although the latter sustains the timelessness of being, Nietzsche’s and Deleuze’s concept make it a condition of becoming, which brings a redistribution of the whole.

The doctrine of the eternal return cannot be conceived separately from the will to power and it therefore attains, according to Deleuze a double status: on one hand, as an ethical thought it is the formulation of the “practical synthesis” which moulds the will into action. On the other hand, it is an esoteric doctrine which makes the will not only a power of creation but one which necessarily also entails the risk of self-annihilation. This is the “paradox of passion” as Agamben has called it. Deleuze’s incorporation of Nietzsche’s eternal return diverts him from the Levinasian notion of radical passivity, and emphasizes how it is an energetic will that envelops its own caesura.

Kostas Koukouzelis (Athens)

Deleuze and Kant on the notion of the ‘transcendental field’

Deleuze in one of his last writings, namely ‘Immanence: a Life…’, gives a compressed, yet quite illuminating diagram of his entire philosophical project. It is there that the notion of a ‘transcendental field’ is unveiled to be of crucial importance for the superior (transcendental) empiricism he is claiming to defend. The paper is an exploration of the ambiguous, yet quite important, relation to Kant’s transcendentalism. I am arguing, against recent influential interpretations (Hardt and Negri stress exclusively Deleuze’s Spinozism) that Deleuze has been influenced by Kant in more than one ways. Thus, the argument is as follows. First, I will argue for the necessity, role and nature of the transcendental in both Kant and Deleuze. Second, I will just focus on the notion of the ‘transcendental field’, important for philosophies of reflection, like Kant’s. It is of huge importance for us to locate some common ground on the significance of anti-Cartesian internal difference for both thinkers. Of equal importance is also Deleuze’s own critique and revision of the Kantian project in terms of the introduction of time. The transcendental is not the condition of possible experience, but becomes the genetic account of real experience. It provides determinability instead of rational determination or empirical indetermination. Deleuze wants to replace the synthetic a priori consciousness with an impersonal, pre-individual yet singular field (plane of immanence). Is such a move successful or does it commit what Kant terms the fallacy of ‘amphiboly’?

Cath Ferguson (MMU)

Title tbc

The relation between theoretical discourse and Fine Art practice continues to be problematic. It would be contradictory to suggest that artistic invention has its cause in specific theoretical or philosophical ideas but on the other hand ideas are always involved in making art on some level. The danger is that discourse would reduce the problematic nature of art to a function of a priori criteria of judgment. If the ambition of art is to operate as what Deleuze would term an object of a ‘fundamental encounter’ rather than an object of recognition then ideas should have a liberating role both when it comes to making art and in expanding our perception of it through discourse.

This issue will be explored through a discussion of the paintings of the New York based Spanish artist Juan Usle. A significant aspect of Usle’s work is their close resemblance to his photographs despite the fact that the paintings are ostensibly abstract. This ‘resemblance’ is not a matter of imagery, however, and could be more accurately described, perhaps, in terms of a repetition in painting of relations formed in photography between its subject and the act of capture on film. The difficulty here is that there is at once a sense of association but without identifiable similarities that could be pointed to as ‘evidence’. The challenge of interpretation is to remain close to the material specificity of the paintings (without bracketing the relation as a function of cultural change, for example) and demonstrate the relation as a vital force in the work.

This difficulty will be addressed by approaching the work as evolutionary process drawing on aspects of Deleuze’s biophilosophy and a model of biological evolution developed in the field of biosemiotics. Following this model such a photographic ‘influence’ could be understood as an element in the environment which becomes interpreted by each painting (as a kind of organism). As such the interpretation is a function of the work’s specific ‘genetic code’: the pictorial history or legacy encoded and the materials and processes selected to express it.

In approaching the interrelation of theory and fine art practice from this direction the aim is also to investigate the nature of a ‘transcendental empiricism’ and the challenge the widespread tendency for art discourse to unwittingly (or wittingly) adopt a representational image of art practice.

Michael McGuire (LMU)

Deleuze and the Articulation of Control

The work of Deleuze has begun to find increasing application in the field of Criminology, especially with regard to his briefly sketched idea of a ‘control’ society. The problem of the regulation and control of the social order constitutes an important area of research within the discipline - one with theoretical underpinnings in the work of a range of important criminologists such as Stan Cohen and David Garland as well as in the influential models of disciplinary power developed by Foucault. In this paper I aim to outline how Deleuze’s critique of Foucault – in particular the shift he emphasizes between social relations locked into a ‘logic of enclosure’ towards those rooted in the ‘network’ - has begun to alter the perspectives of criminologists on a range of issues from punishment, regulation, crime and technology and so on. I aim particularly to examine how Deleuze’s notion of a ‘society of control’ can serve to illustrate current trends in criminal justice systems more effectively than the more familiar paradigm of the ‘surveillance society’. In so doing I hope to refine and disambiguate Deleuze’s notion of control itself.

Endnotes

[1] With Guattari.

[2] Jim Fleming and Sylvère Lotringer (Ed.) Forget Baudrillard, An Interview with Baudrillard. New York: Semiotext(e) Foreign Agents series, 1987, p.123

[3] The problem of ‘imposed’ philosophical readings on Deleuzian project can be found in Alain Badiou’s Deleuze: The Clamour of Being where he argues and raises the question of philosophy itself as a “reading machine.”

Conferenc e Report

‘The Work of Gilles Deleuze’ Conference took place on Saturday on a very sunny day amidst the baroque splendour of the Maritime Campus. Greenwich played host to a fruitful meeting of Deleuze scholars and featured a series of fascinating and vital papers at the cutting edge of this field. Three parallel session ran in the morning and three in the afternoon. Scholars attended from across the UK and abroad, some having made long journeys to be here.

In the morning one session featured two papers that used artworks in order to explore and develop aspects of Deleuze’s work. This included Juan Usle’s work in Cath Ferguson’s paper, where it was related to bio-semiotics. A film made by Steven Eastwood, the second speaker of the session, was shown and raised issues about the practice and value of editing. The session also engaged with Deleuze’s critique of representation, his problematisation of sensation and work on the rhizome and body without organs.

A session featuring Matt Lee, Maria Lakka and Michael McGuire was animated by a common thread: the problem of the political for Deleuze. A further session featured Dror Yinon on the relation of Kant and Deleuze, Tristan Moyle on McDowell and Deleuze, and Patricia Farrell on paratactic narrative in Deleuze. These pushed the boundaries of research on Deleuze.

After lunch the grand council chamber was the setting for a papers on Deleuze and Stoicism, by John Sellars, and Deleuze and Whitehead, by Keith Robinson. These stimulated keen discussion and offered new directions for Deleuze scholarship in the further development of these dimensions of his thought.

Across the courtyard of Queen Anne Court another session featured a paper by Ed Romein and Sjoerd van Tuinen on the ‘City Without Predicates’ and one from Wim Christiaens on ‘Bergson and Quantum Theory.’ These papers explored themes at the heart of Deleuze’s work. The role of Leibniz and Deleuze’s interest in the urban were at the fore. The second paper presented classical and quantum systems in order to open up and develop highly productive areas in Difference and Repetition. A further session took place in which Gulsen Bal spoke on art production and the political, while Ils Huygens developed ideas of affect and image.

Given such a great set of sessions I for one wished that I could be in three places at once. This review reflects the fact that its author, of necessity, attended only two sessions and so relied upon reports about the other four. Readers are welcome to e-mail we36[at]greenwich.ac.uk if they would like to add to this report with anything the author missed or neglected.

The speakers and participants deserve great thanks for the papers and discussions that were at all times first rate and of great contribution to Deleuze scholarship.