

Deleuze on the revival of Bergson's élan vital

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The most recent and popular topic on Deleuze's philosophy is nothing more than the question of "life." It seems to be an unquestionable fact that Deleuze has already developed a sort of philosophy of life in his later period that is well elaborated in his essay of "Immanence: A Life..." In this regard, some commentators try to find out a new insight from Deleuze's writings by exploring a "concept of life" in relation to the idea of vitalism. By following this argument, vitalism has become a sound idea which is widely applied to all kinds of philosophical discussions about Deleuze on the question of life. The concept of life and vitalism are inseparable. On the contrary, the other critics believe that we should be careful of the use of this interpretation of vitalism when it comes to the ethical and political debates of bio-politics or the politics of life nowadays. They thought that it might misconceive the concept of life extracted from Deleuze's philosophy. Is there really such a thing we can figure it out as a philosophy of life or an ontology of life in Deleuze's philosophy? What does Deleuze want to claim about life? Whether we can find any implication here or not?

Above all, these questions would be helpful to us if we move further to clarify the question of life in Deleuze's philosophy. In doing so, I am going to investigate how the question of "life" plays a role in Deleuze's philosophy. In other words, I am going to examine the Deleuze's concern of life coming along with the questions as such we have talked above. For this reason, in a conventional sense, I would briefly divide Deleuze's concern of life into two parts: 1) the interpretations of Nietzsche and Bergson in his early works; 2) the immanence of life and the problem of vitalism in his writings and his collaborations of Guattari, e.g., from *Difference and Repetition* to *A Thousand Plateaus* and also "Immanence: A Life..." In this presentation, I would situate the question of life at the context of Deleuze's study of the Bergsonian concept of élan vital, so to speak, Deleuze's question of life is to work and to rework the Bergsonian concept of life in a new way. In this regard, I would focus on giving an account for his revival of Bergson's élan vital: what is the significance in Deleuze's revival of Bergson's élan vital?

A. The Bergsonian Critical Philosophy

The question of life for both Bergson and Deleuze is attributed to a status of problem that is about finding or stating the problem rather than being confined to the false problem. The false problem is a ready-made problem whether its answer is true or false which is determined by either the possibility or impossibility of giving its solution (B 17). We should not forget that it is the discernment of problem whether it is true or false is a key point to interpret Bergson's philosophy, because the root of problem has been found in the élan vital or in life itself, "Life is essentially determined in the act of avoiding obstacles, stating and solving a problem. The construction of the organism is both the stating of a problem and a solution" (B 16). In fact, to state a problem means that it is capable of solving this problem from itself, like the construction of organism, since its solution comes along with the problem as such. In this regard, Bergson explains that in *Creative Evolution* (1907) the divergent

form of life is conceived of a solution to the problem of the life itself, “so our study of the evolution movement will have to unravel a certain number of divergent directions, and to appreciate the importance of what has happened along each of them – in a word, to determine the nature of the dissociated tendencies and estimate their relative proportion” (CE 101). In accordance with tendencies, for example, both vegetables and animals are defined and distinguished as two divergent forms of life, which are the solutions to the problem of sustaining life (CE 106).

In light of this argument, life as a problem to be stated and to be solved, it is clear that the phenomenon of life has something to do with the knowledge of life. It means that there is a relation between life and reason. Life does not refer to an irrational power or mysterious force while reason is not disconnected from life. As a view of traditional epistemology, the opposition between knowledge and life should no longer be held. Both life and knowledge are not separate but they are connected to each other. On the one hand, for the theory of life, a criticism of knowledge is needed because the understanding or the intellect encloses the facts in pre-existing frames that could never be seen as the ultimate one; since such the frames of intellect are only a kind of symbolism but not a direct vision of its object. On the other hand, for the theory of knowledge, through the way of placing the intellect in the problematic concern of the evolution of life and then we could be told how the frames of knowledge have been constituted and how we can expand or overcome their limitations. In short, it is necessary that both of these theory of knowledge and theory of life should join together and also being critical to each other in order to explore the problem of life (CE xiii).

With the guide of this Bergsonian insight, Deleuze goes on to emphasize the importance of stating problems as the true focus of thought, even as an ethical demand of thought; which is to struggle against illusion that is generated from the spatial mode of thinking of time. In other words, “this illusion is inevitable as soon as we spatialize time,” or that is “the confusion of space and time, the assimilation of time into space, make us think that the whole is given” (B 104). Illusion comes along with false problem. In this regard, thinking would only become a way through which we are led towards asking the ready-made question and giving the pre-given solutions. In order to overcome the illusion, Deleuze calls us for an enlightenment which is to get rid of the infantile state, “According to this infantile prejudice, the master sets a problem, our task is to solve it, and the result is accredited true or false by a powerful authority” (DR 158). The freedom that we have to struggle against infantile state is relying on a sort of capacity to make a distinction between the true and the false problem. What is this capacity? Intuition. Intuition is the method of division. It is thinking in terms of duration (B 31). It is only intuition that states problems and solve them in terms of time but not of space. The method of intuition “decides between the true and the false in the problems that are stated” (B 21). The intuition moves the intelligence to turn over against itself, since we are led by the intelligence to only see “differences in degree where there are differences in kind” (B 21). It is intuition to discern what the real difference in kind is. By contrast, through intuition, we can derive another tendency which is the critical one from the intelligence to react against this intellectual tendency. The intuition is the critical tendency itself. It is also intuition that “can produce and activate [the critical tendency], because it rediscovers differences in kind beneath the differences in degree, and conveys to the intelligence the criteria that enable it to distinguish between true and false problems” (B 21).

B. Bergson on the Élan Vital

Bergson begins his exploration of difference with the background of the integration between dualism and monism. He reactivates the classical problem of dualism and monism in his study of difference. Deleuze explains that dualism for Bergson is “only a moment, which must lead to the re-formation of a monism” (B 29). How does Bergson demonstrate the reformation of monism by the moment of dualism without bringing about any contradictory meaning? As Deleuze says,

“Differences in degree are the lowest degree of Difference; differences in kind (nature) are the highest nature of Difference. There is no longer any dualism between nature and degrees. All the degrees coexist in a single Nature that is expressed, on the one hand, in differences in kind, and on the other, in differences in degree. This is the moment of monism: All the degrees coexist in a single Time, which is nature in itself. There is no contradiction between this monism and dualism, as moments of the method” (B 93).

Deleuze moves further to explain that all the degrees and all the levels coexist and unify in the moment of monism is the virtual. Monism is accomplished by virtue of the virtual. What is the notion of virtual? Why the virtual is so important to the accomplishment of monism? To answer these questions, Deleuze draws out attention to Bergson’s concept of *élan vital*. In fact, we should pay attention that the *élan vital* is an indefinite concept neither being subsumed to the monistic nor dualistic category.

The *élan vital* is considered as a sort of the critique of evolutionism that distinguishes Bergson’s theory of life from other theories of evolution either Darwinian mechanism or Lamarckian finalism. Bergson criticizes these two theories of evolution for stating that everything is given and nothing is created. They only adopt the analytic view of the evolution of life. But it finally tells us that the intellect is inadequate to know anything about life. By contrast, Bergson argues that life is something to be known outside the range of science and intelligence. He suggests developing the new theories of life and knowledge by introducing the method of intuition. In this case, the *élan vital* is to be approached by intuition but it does not refer to an irrational power or a mystical force. According to Bergson, the *élan vital* is characterized as “an original impetus of life”; or the motor of life, the explosive force of life. Put it simply, it is the origin of life in terms of its unity and diversity; its variations in the continual divergence of evolution, its actualizations of virtualities; its encounters and confrontation with matter; its failures and successes of getting over obstacles, and its creative force of the novelty in the multiple form of the living beings.

Actually, the *élan vital*, in Bergson’s word, an impetus, for being “sustained right along the lines of evolution among which it gets divided, is the fundamental cause of variations, at least of those that are regularly passed on, that accumulate and create new species” (CE 57). First, the *élan vital* is the source or profound cause of variations of all living beings. It is this vital impetus of which we are able to explain how the divergence of life takes place in evolution; “when species have begun to diverge from a common stock, they accentuate their divergence as they progress in their evolution” (CE 57). Bergson tries to overcome the “anthropomorphic character” of both mechanism and finalism by going through the proceeding of *élan vital*. He rejects the resemblance of nature to humankind as if “nature has worked like a human

being by bringing parts together” (CE 58). By contrast, “Life does not proceed by the association and addition of elements, but by dissociation and division” (CE 58). The *élan vital* is the cause running towards divergence rather than bringing many parts into the whole. Second, the *élan vital* is a tendency of divergence, an internal explosive force that bears within itself. “For life is tendency, and the essence of a tendency is to develop in the form of a sheaf, creating, by its very growth, divergent directions among which its impetus is divided” (CE 65). Life is “a tendency to act on inert matter. The direction of this action is not pre-determined; hence the unforeseeable variety of forms which life, in evolving, sows along its path.” In this regard, the tendency of life in evolution is not act on a plan according to something already determined. But it is presented with “the character of contingency” which refers to “a rudiment of choice” (CE 62). Third, *élan vital* is an image in connection with matter. Bergson realizes that *élan vital* is only an image which is provided to think creative evolution. He insists that life “must be compared to an impetus, because no image borrowed from the physical world can give more nearly the idea of it. But it is only an image” (CE 257). By using the image of impetus, Bergson can explore the temporal character of life to have a contact with matter. Finally, the *élan vital* is duration. It is duration that becomes the *élan vital* and also of that differentiates itself. The *élan vital* is an impetus that accounts for the time of evolution in its actualization of virtualities. Since our intellect is inadequate to understand life, to think of life by intuition is to think it in duration.

C. Élan Vital and the Virtual

The *élan vital* is a vitality of life, tendency of change instead of a material thing, a reified stuff or any given properties from the mystical power. It is a tendency towards a transformation that creates the novelty at every moment of life. Nevertheless, the *élan vital* is not devoid of the empirical experience. Bergson would argue that the *élan vital* has the empirical character through which it has to reach the conditions of real experience instead of the conditions of possible experience. It is the *élan vital* that defines Bergson’s philosophy as a philosophy of difference. Deleuze proclaims that “Bergsonism is a philosophy of difference, a philosophy of the actualization of difference: in it we meet difference in person, which actualizes itself as the new” (BCD 51). What is the importance, the *élan vital* is exactly the process of difference. According to Deleuze, “Biology shows us the process of differentiation at work. We are looking for a concept of difference that does not allow itself to be reduced to degree or intensity, to alterity or contradiction: such a difference is vital, even if the concept itself is not biological. Life is the process of difference.” (BCD 39). In light of Deleuze’s explication, the difference that *élan vital* proceeds is the vital difference which is against the reduction of itself to other things. Hence, the vital difference is the original difference in itself.

Why should Deleuze emphasize that difference is vital difference? In order to understand the vital difference, we should turn to explore the notion of the virtual. To put it simply, vital is virtual. As Deleuze reminds us, the *élan vital* “is always a case of a virtuality in the process of being actualized, a simplicity in the process of differentiating, a totality in the process of dividing up: Proceeding ‘by dissociation and division,’ by ‘dichotomy,’ is the essence of life” (B 94). For example, life is divided into plant and animal; and then animal is divided into instinct and intelligence;

and also the instinct is divided into different directions to be actualized in different species while the intelligence processes the same division. To some extent, the *élan vital* is a sort of inclusive term consisting of the actual and the virtual altogether. And then both the actual and the virtual also constitute the *élan vital* as the process of differentiation. According to Deleuze, differentiation is the actualization of virtuality insofar as “it presupposes a unity, a virtual primordial totality that is dissociated according to the lines of differentiation, but that still shows its subsisting unity and totality in each line” (B 95).

It seems to be a paradoxical question to us. Does it mean that Deleuze restores the opposition between one and many here? Does he refer to the ideal unity that exists for the production and reproduction of different multiplicities? Deleuze mentions that there is no clear distinction between the virtual and the possible to some biologists while they rely on the notion of organic virtuality or potentiality that can be actualized by the simple limitation of its global capacity. However, the virtual cannot work out itself neither by elimination nor limitation. Rather, for the purpose of being actualized, the virtual “must create its own lines of actualization in positive acts” (B 97). Creation only happens within the real and along with the real but never with the possible. It is disclosed in the notion of the virtual. What is the notion of virtual? According to Deleuze, the virtual is not opposed to the real but it is opposed to the actual as if the possible is opposed to the real. The possible is either realized or not realized in resemblance in such a way that the real is confined to the image of the possible that it realizes, and also in limitation within which realization repulses some possibles but others can pass through into the real. By quoting Proust’s formula, Deleuze defines the nature of the virtual like that it is real without being actual and ideal without being abstract. “The virtual is fully real insofar as it is virtual” (DR 208). The virtual is not made to be realized but to be actualized “by being differentiated and is forced to differentiate itself, to create its lines of differentiation in order to be actualized” (B 97). In this case, the actual is free from the image of the possible because of the creative power of the virtual. Here it is understandable why Deleuze stands for Bergson in such a way that “the possible is a false notion, the source of false problems” (B 98) because the real is defined and made by its resemblance of the possible. Deleuze attempts to release the real from the possible insofar as the real is given the priority than the possible. That means, we are resistant to a kind of real which is “ready-made, preformed, pre-existent to itself, and that will pass into existence according to an order of successive limitations. Everything is already completely given: all of the real in the image, in the pseudo-actuality of the possible” (B 98). The real is the real of ready-made or pre-given. It is only the image of the possible. By contrast, Deleuze insists that “it is not the real that resembles the possible, it is the possible that resembles the real, because it has been abstracted from the real once made” (B 98).

Insofar as the virtual and the actual are real to us, through which we are able to understand the mechanism of difference and the mechanism of creation (B 98). Most importantly, the main focus of the Bergsonian creative evolution could be found in these two mechanisms: difference and creation. Evolution and creation are not irrelevant to one another in an oppositional sense. Evolution is coming up from the virtual to the actual. “Evolution is actualization, actualization is creation” (B 98). There are two misconceptions in theory of biological evolution as Deleuze points out: interpreting biological or living evolution in terms of the “possible” that is “realized”

or interpreting it in terms of pure actuals (B 98). The first misconception can be seen from performism insofar as the real is an image as the resemblance of the possible. The second misconception, as a contrary to preformism, is evolutionism. It is helpful to repeat that life is the production or creation of differences. However, this point exposes the problem of the nature and causes of these differences. In order to counter the view of conceiving the vital differences or variations as purely accidental, Deleuze enumerates three objections to it: 1) if these variations are caused by chance then they would remain external or indifferent to each other; 2) these variations are externality and they could not logically enter into anything but they have relations of associations and addition with one another; 3) their indifference would not allow them even to have the means to enter into these relations of association or addition. All of these arguments turn Deleuze to draw a conclusion that “The mistake of evolutionism is, thus, to conceive of vital variations as so many actual determinations that should then combine on a single line” (B 99).

To some extent, to counter the fault of evolutionism is to distinguish the virtual from the actual but not confuse two of them with the same thing. This is the point from which Deleuze to give three requirements for grounding the Bergsonian philosophy of life (B 99-100): 1) to experience and to thought vital difference as internal difference from which the “tendency to change” would not be misconceived as something accidental; and variations are able to meet their internal cause in the tendency as such; 2) variations are not restricted by the relationships of association and addition but they enter into relationships of dissociation and division; 3) there is a virtuality that is actualized according to the lines of divergence; evolution therefore does not take place from one actual term to another actual term in a homogeneous unilinear series, but it comes up from a virtual term to the heterogeneous terms that actualizes it along with the ramified series (B 99-100). Hence, all these requirements have led towards the concept of difference in terms of divergence and heterogeneity. How do we understand the idea of difference in evolution? The key point is found in the notion of the virtual in its definition of “the virtual as virtual has a reality” (B 100). Difference is produced from the reality of the virtual insofar as the virtuality is actualized, is differentiated, is developed when it actualizes and develops its different parts in accordance with divergent lines. Each of these divergent lines corresponds to a particular degree in the virtual totality (B 100). And then each of these different degrees belong to a single Time, coexist in a Unity, and they are enclosed in a Simplicity and form the potential parts of a Whole. All of them above all are “the reality of this virtual” (B 100). In short, we can conclude that the *élan vital* is not the possible but the virtual. Nothing is given in advance in the virtual. The virtual never means to be the projection or the repetition of the past; otherwise it would never create the novelty. The *élan vital* is the *élan virtuel*.

D. Matter as the Obstacle of Life

Now we can see that the differences in degree from the virtual totality are presented in each line of the actuals while the opposition between the actual and the other actual is established. That refers to the fundamental opposition between plant and animal, between animal and man, in such of these binary pairs that we would have, in each one of them, “the negative of the other, the inversion of the other, or the obstacle that is opposed to the other” (B 101). Bergson gives it a term called

“contrariety”: “Matter is presented as the obstacle of life that the *élan vital* must get around, and materiality, as the inversion of the movement of life” (B 101 -102). It seems that, finally, we only see the deteriorations of life: one is set against or negative to another one. However, the inversion and the obstacle here we have seen that they do not signify any negative meaning of the deteriorating progress. The fault that we always make is to think evolution as the process of negation but not that of creation. Life is not to create itself by the power of negative but through the differentiation of itself following the lines of divergence. Difference is never a negative difference but it must be a positive and creative difference.

How do we understand the inversion and the obstacle of the movement of life without any negative meaning? What is the significance for *élan vital* when the movement of life has to stop by encountering with the obstacle of matter? Deleuze points out that “there is a correlation between life and matter, between expansion and contraction, which shows the coexistence of their respective degrees in the virtual Whole, and their essential relativity in the process of actualization” (B 103). In fact, each line of life is made in relation to a certain kind of matter, which is an external environment, and also implies that the living being produces a body or a form for itself. In other words, the forms of life rely on the matter on which life embodies itself and also whatever it is more or less for the matter to receive or to resist the *élan vital*. In this case, when it comes to the relationship with matter, the living being exists first of all for the stating of a problem and the capacity of solving problem (CE 70). Life would answer the problems that it is a kind of creativity for replying to any unpredictable occasions instead of repeating it (CE 58). For example, the construction of an eye is the solution to the problem of light (B 103). Life would not be signified as a problem without the involvement of matter, since life is a tendency to act on matter, to make use of matter. But life would become a failure when it is related to the movement which invents it. In other words, as Deleuze explains, “Life as movement alienates itself in the material form that it creates; by actualizing itself, by differentiating itself, it loses ‘contact with the rest of itself.’ Every species is thus an arrest of movement; it could be said that the living being turns on itself and closes itself” (B 104). Life takes place within matter but the matter can be the alienation of life. Matter is an expression of life but also an external obstacle that life encounters with on its process. Life is placed in the situation of setting against itself in the material form. When life actualizes itself and differentiates itself in the material form, the other parts of life would be out of the contact with its movement. Although life in the sense of the actual would stop its movement in each species of the living being, and then living being would turn on itself and close itself, as the end, it would not turn out to be a negation of the virtual.

Indeed the virtual would not be negated when life comes to encounter matter. Matter is defined as an expansion or relaxation while life is a contraction as same as the one of duration. “Relaxation and contraction are the degrees of difference itself only because they are opposed, in as much as they are opposed” (BCD 50). In fact, matter and duration are two extremes of one another: matter is the most expanded degree of duration while duration is the most contracted degree of matter. However, matter does not differ from itself while duration differs from itself. In this case, life also differs from itself in its differentiation. Difference in its relation is a differentiation but not determination. “Differentiation certainly comes from the resistance life encounters from matter, but it comes first and foremost from the

explosive internal force which life carries within itself” (BCD 40). It is through the way of life and in the form of a vital that virtuality actualizes itself and differentiates itself. “Virtuality exists in such a way that it actualizes itself as it dissociates itself; it must dissociate itself to actualize itself. Differentiation is the movement of a virtuality actualizing itself. Life differs from itself, so we are confronted by divergent lines of evolution and, on each line, original processes” (BCD 40). Above all, that is why Deleuze affirms that difference is vital (BCD 44).

Difference is vital and virtual. It finally discloses the fact that “this Whole, this One, are pure virtuality” (B 93). Since life cannot be otherwise in the evolution if the Whole is supposed to be only the virtual, it must divide itself by being acted out as the actual. The Whole “cannot assemble its actual parts that remain external to each other: The Whole is never ‘given’” (B 104). If the Whole were given, it would only repeat the mistakes of mechanism and finalism: life would become either a calculation in terms of a state or a determination in terms of a program. In order to get rid of this determination, Deleuze points out that “there is no ‘goal’” given to life, although “there is finality because life does not operate without directions” (B 106). These directions are the actualization of vital differences, since they are “not pre-exist ready-made, and are themselves created ‘along with’ the act that runs through them” (B 106). In light of this argument, life is in principle memory, consciousness and freedom; and “in principle” that is to say: virtually. Bergson answers that it only comes to the achievement of humanity that duration becomes consciousness of self and life engages in memory and freedom of fact. In other words, “it is only on the line of Man that the *élan vital* successfully ‘gets through’; man in this sense is ‘the purpose of the entire process of evolution.’ It could be said that in man, and only in man, the actual becomes adequate to the virtual” (B 106).

E. A Revival of Bergson’s *élan vital*

What does it mean by Deleuze to bring about a revival of Bergson’s *élan vital*? The aim for Deleuze to revive Bergson’s *élan vital* is nothing more than making a return to Bergson in order to disclose the truth of doing philosophy by the concept of difference. The revival is a return, so to speak, “A ‘return to Bergson’ does not only mean a renewed admiration for a great philosopher but a renewal or an extension of his project today, in relation to the transformation of life and society, in parallel with the transformations of science” (B 115). Such a return is a renewal of Bergson’s project in a novel way. It is an adventure of thought to actualize the virtual that no one actualizes it before. Bergsonism for Deleuze is a philosophy of difference through which we define difference as difference in itself and such a difference actualizes itself as novelty. The Deleuze’s revival of Bergson’s *élan vital* as a philosophical creation is an example to demonstrate that the *élan vital* is a creativity of life. His revival is a response to the question: what does *élan vital* want? In Bergson’s words, “The impetus of life [*l’élan de vie*], of which we are speaking, consists in a need of creation [*une exigence de création*]” (CE 251).

In other words, the *élan vital* is the power of creating novelty. Such the power of *élan vital* is configured in the Nietzsche’s Overman. The Nietzsche’s Overman is a persona of Bergson’s *élan vital* in which we are able to understand well how the *élan vital* is actualized in the line of man and the purpose of the evolutionary process. The

élan vital is provided as an image of thought which is resistant to any kind of pre-existent thought or the dogmatic image of thought which presupposes that the whole is a given just like mechanism as the unquestionable ground of our concept of life. In this case, the Nietzsche's Overman somehow actualizes the power of élan vital for the creativity of life as regard to the issue of nihilism. For Nietzsche the aim of critique is the transmutation of values that is accomplished in the way of overcoming nihilism by nihilism itself. The overcoming of nihilism corresponds to the overcoming of man. Man is essentially reactive to devalue the life. He is the reactive being who takes the place of God after God is dead. But the reactive force remains existed. Its existence comes along with the triumph of nihilism. Life still exists but it is a deprecated life sustained by the will to negate or to oppose. To negate or to oppose is the basis of the dialectical thinking. Both of the dialectic and nihilism are derived from the negative. The solution to the negative is dependent on the Overman which is posited outside of the negative and dialectic. By destroying himself by himself, the Overman defeats nihilism by nihilism itself. It is a new way of evaluating, a way of transvaluation, of creation, a reversal from the reactive to the active.

Likewise, the Nietzsche's distinction between the reactive and the active is analogous to the discernment of two tendencies between the spatial and the durational, the possible and the virtual, the difference in degree and the difference in kind. Intuition is the method to make this discernment or separation in order to show that at the ground of all things there is difference from within but not from without or the external factors. The nature of intuition is characterized as thinking in terms of duration which is distinguished from the spatial mode of thinking. In this case, the spatial thinking is like the reactive forces in Nietzsche's thought insofar as we perceive the world as if it were or as it is possible like this way. By contrast, if we think the world in terms of duration, things would come to appear as it is the real in the nature of movement. And the durational thinking is like the active forces that considers transforming power as a status of becoming rather than an unchangeable thing. In light of this Nietzschean reading, the revival of Bergson's élan vital is included of an ethical concern which consists of an ethical imperative against nihilism as the negative power and as the dogmatic image of thought by the production of difference and the transmutation of values. Then the Overman as a configured persona of élan vital comes about the process of evolution, and it turns out to show that "the actual becomes adequate to the virtual" (B 106).

From Bergson to Nietzsche and turn back to Bergson, we can see that Deleuze goes through a round to explore the question of life by giving a new signification of élan vital. In fact, Deleuze is aware of the problem if life is put within a conceptual framework which is through the way of science and intelligence that undoubtedly privilege it. This is also the same argument as Bergson opposes to it. But Deleuze is different from Bergson who is intended to develop a new metaphysics and a philosophy of life. For Deleuze, it is not wisely to give life an ontological meaning or identify life as a metaphysical object. It is controversial and ambiguous to question whether Deleuze would like to define his philosophical works as an ontological project or not. And then it is also arguable that there is such a thing we do accept that is called the philosophy of life in Deleuze's works. However, it can affirm that Deleuze does not consider his problematic concern of life as a type of knowledge that can be acquired by an intellect. Rather, it is through a method of intuition just like an act of faith to address the question of life. In other words, the question of life does not

fit into the intellectual categories because it is the movement of difference in its differentiation. Life is only approached by the method of intuition.

In my view, Deleuze has never developed a philosophy of life or a theory of life like Nietzsche and Bergson do. The ontological framework is not such a thing for Deleuze to think about the life as what it is or what it acts. It is clear to see that Deleuze integrates the concepts of immanence, of duration, of difference, of univocity, and also the idea of transcendental empiricism into the question of life. But life is never considered in this case. The life as a question is not treated as the same as difference or duration that can be isolated only as the object for the formation of a concept. And then Deleuze does not invest his interest in exploring the question of rationality in relation of the history of science or the epistemology of life science as it is the same work for Canguilhem. Moreover, Deleuze would not align himself with the concern that Foucault has worked out in his archeological and genealogical project of biopower. The life for Deleuze could not be conceived as a political object or the object to be fulfilled with a political emancipation that it has to struggle for or to counter it. It would not be understandable if we talk about the politics of life or the action of pro-life particularly in Deleuze's philosophical context. Perhaps the most important concern for Deleuze is not a philosophy of life but it is a biology of life.

Abbreviation

Henri Bergson

CE _____. 1998. *Creative Evolution*. Tr. Arthur Mitchell. New York: Dover.

Gilles Deleuze

B _____. 1991. *Bergsonism*. Tr. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. New York: Zone Books.

DR _____. 1994. *Difference and Repetition*. Tr. Paul Patton. London: The Athlone Press.

BCD _____. 2004. "Bergson's Conception of Difference," in *Desert Islands and Other Texts: 1953-1974*. Ed. David Lapoujade. Tr. Mike Taormina. Los Angeles (Calif.): Semiotext(e), pp.32-51.

LCTB _____. 2007. "Lecture Course on Chapter Three of Bergson's *Creative Evolution*," in *SubStance* #114, Vol. 36, no. 3: 72-90.