# Deleuze's concept of the virtual and the critique of the possible.

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In this paper, I would simply like to sketch out what I take to be the component elements of Deleuze's concept of the virtual. (1) My thesis is this: Deleuze's philosophy can accurately be described as a transcendental philosophy--a transcendental empiricism, as he himself puts it--although Deleuze defines the transcendental field in a completely different manner than does Kant, who invented the term. Kant's genius, according to Deleuze, was to have conceived of a purely immanent critique of reason, a critique that did not seek, within reason, "errors" produced by external causes, but rather "illusions" that arise internally and inevitably from within reason itself by the illegitimate (that is, transcendent) uses of the syntheses. (2) Insofar as Deleuze conceives of philosophy as the construction of a plane of immanence, he aligns himself squarely with Kant's critical philosophy. (3) But he also criticizes Kant for having failed to fulfill the immanent ambitions of his critique, for reasons that we shall see in a moment. The difference does not lie simply in the fact that Deleuze purges the transcendental of any reference to consciousness or to a transcendental subject. The more important difference lies precisely in the distinction he makes between the possible and the virtual. For Deleuze, the transcendental does not serve to define the "conditions of possible experience" for a subject; on the contrary, it is a virtual field that serves as the genetic or productive condition of real experience, and that exists prior to the constitution of the subject.

In what follows, I would like to draw out this difference between the possible and the virtual (as two conceptions of the transcendental) from the point of view of the history of philosophy: first, by examining two figures who seem to have influenced Deleuze most in this regard--Henri Bergson and Salomon Maimon; second, by examining the reading of Kant that Deleuze provides in Difference and Repetition; and finally, by briefly examining, as examples, Deleuze's analysis of three virtual structures, namely those of language, society, and the body.

1. Bergson's Problematization of the Possible. I turn first to Bergson. Deleuze derives the concept of the virtual directly from Bergson, and in a number of early articles (1956) he argues that Bergson forged the concept of the virtual by problematizing the notion of the possible. More precisely, the virtual is by nature problematizing; it expresses a problematic. What does he mean by this? The activity of thought is frequently conceived of as the search for solutions to problems, a prejudice whose roots, Deleuze suggests, are both social and pedagogical. In the classroom, it

is the school teacher who poses ready-made problems, the pupil's task being to discover the correct solution, and what the notions of "true" and "false" serve to qualify are precisely these responses or solutions. Yet everyone recognizes that problems are never given ready-made but must themselves be constructed or constituted--hence the scandal when a "false" or badly-formulated problem is set in an examination. This is not to imply that solutions are unimportant; on the contrary, it is the solution that counts, but, as Deleuze says at several points through his work, a problem always has the solution it merits in terms of the way in which it is stated, and the means and terms we have at our disposal for stating it, i.e., in terms of the conditions under which it is determined as a problem. To "problematize" a concept thus does not only mean that one places it in question; it means that one seeks to determine the nature of the problem to which it serves as a solution. This is why the process of problematization is so complex. "While it is relatively easy to define the true and the false in relation to solutions whose problems are already stated," writes Deleuze, "it is much more difficult to say what the true and false consist of when they are applied directly to problems themselves." (4)

One of Bergson's great virtues, at least in Deleuze's reading, is precisely to have attempted an intrinsic determination of the true and the false at the level of problems. The concept of the possible, Bergson argues, is derived from a false problem that confuses the "more" with the "less" and ignores differences in kind. Bergson's analyses on these points are famous, and consist in showing that there is not less but more in the idea of the possible than in the real, just as there is more in the idea of nonbeing than in being, or more in the idea of disorder than in order:

> In the idea of nonbeing, there is in fact the idea of being, plus a logical operation of generalized negation, plus the particular psychological motive for the operation (such as when a being does not correspond to our expectation and we grasp it purely as the lack, the absence of what interests us). In the idea of disorder, there is already the idea of order, plus its negation, plus the motive for that negation (when we encounter an order which is not the one we expected). And there is more in the idea of the possible than there is in the idea of the real: "For the possible is only the real with the addition of an act of the mind that throws its image back into the past once it has been exacted," and the motive of that act. When we ask "Why is there something rather than nothing?" or "Why is there order rather than disorder?" or "Why is there this rather than that (when that was equally possible)?" we fall into the same error: we mistake the more for the less, we behave as though nonbeing existed before being, disorder before order, and the possible before existence. As though being came to fill in a void, order to organize a preceding disorder, the real to realize a primary possibility. Being, order, and the existant are truth itself; but in the false problem there is a fundamental illusion, a 'retrograde movement of the true,' in which being, order, and the existent project themselves back into a possibility, a disorder, a nonbeing which are supposed to be primordial. (5)

This theme is a central one in Deleuze's philosophy. It sums up his critique of the negative and of negation, in all its forms, as sources of false problems. (6)

Bergson, in short, challenges the notion of the possible in favor of the virtual precisely because

the possible is a false notion, the source of false problems. When we think of the possible as somehow "pre-existing" the real, we think of the real as something more than possible, i.e., as the possible with existence added to it. We then say that the possible has been "realized" in the real. This process of realization, Deleuze suggests, is subject to two rules, one of resemblance and one of limitation. On the one hand, the real is supposed to resemble or to be "in the image of" the possible that it realizes: the concept of the thing is already given as "possible," and simply has existence or reality added to it when it is "realized." (7) On the other hand, since not every possible is realized, the process of realization involves a limitation by which some possibles are supposed to be repulsed or thwarted, while others "pass" into the real. But this is where the slight hand becomes obvious: if the real is supposed to resemble the possible, is it not because we have retrospectively or retroactively "projected" a fictitious image of the real back into the possible? In fact, it is not the real that resembles the possible, it is the possible that resembles the real. (8) Deleuze later writes in the Logic of Sense, "the error of all determinations of the transcendental as consciousness is to conceive of the transcendental in the image and resemblance of what it is supposed to found." (9)

2. Salomon Maimon's Critique of Kant. Now it is not difficult to see how Deleuze could extend this Bergsonian critique of the possible to a more specific critique of Kant's definition of transcendental philosophy as a search for the "conditions of the possible." Deleuze here appeals to the second figure I would like to consider, the now-forgotten Salomon Maimon. In his Essay on Transcendental Philosophy, which was published in 1790, one year before the appearance of Kant's third Critique, Maimon laid down the basic objections against Kant that would come to preoccupy the post-Kantian philosophies of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. (10) Maimon's basic objection was this: Kant had ignored the demands of a genetic method. This criticism means two things.

First, Kant relies on "facts," for which he simply searches for conditions. In the Critique of Pure Reason, Kant does more than simply claim that reason implies a priori knowledge; he adds that the so-called "universal" knowledges of pure sciences such as mathematics are the knowledges in which reason necessarily manifests itself, they are a priori "facts" of reason. The second Critique similarly takes as its point of departure the "fact" of the judgment of value and moral action. Kant assumed these "original facts" of knowledge and morality as givens, and sought their "conditions of possibility" in the transcendental, a vicious circle that makes the condition (the possible) refer to the conditioned (the real) while reproducing its image. Maimon, by contrast, argued that Kant's claim to ground the critique uniquely on reason would be valid only if these a priori knowledges had been deduced or engendered from reason alone as the necessary modes of its manifestation.

Second, Maimon argued that even if the concepts of the understanding, for example, are applicable to possible experience or objects in general, the concept itself can never specify which object in particular it applies to in real experience. By confining himself to possible experience, Kant was unable to give the faculty of judgment a rule for determining when a given category was applicable to real experience. The concept of causality may indeed be applicable to certain irreversible temporal sequences, as Kant argues in the Second Analogy (fire causes smoke because fire always precedes smoke in the order of time); but the concept gives us no means of distinguishing, within experience, between necessary and universal connections between events and contingent constant connections. Hume's skepticism remains unanswered, and Kant's famous duality between concept and intuition remains unbridgeable. Maimon, by contrast, was

the first to argue that this duality could only be overcome through the formulation of a principle of difference: whereas identity is the condition of possibility of thought in general, it is difference that constitutes the genetic condition of real thought.

These two exigencies laid down by Maimon--the search for the genetic conditions of real thought, and the positing of a principle of difference--reappear like a leitmotif in almost every one of Deleuze's books up through 1969. The reason for this is not difficult to ascertain. The post-Kantian philosophers all took up Maimon's challenge, but in some fashion each of them still subordinated this principle of difference to the principle of identity. In Fichte, for example, identity is posited as the property of the thinking subject, with difference appearing only as an extrinsic limitation imposed from without (the non-self). Hegel, against Fichte, attempted to give a certain autonomy to the principle of difference by placing difference and identity in dialectical opposition; but even in Hegel, contradiction always resolves itself, and in resolving itself, it resolves difference by relating it to a ground. (11) If Deleuze frequently returns to Maimon, it seems to me that this is in order to take up the one option that was not pursued as such by post-Kantian philosophy (though its closest precursor is perhaps Schelling). In Deleuze, the principle of "differencein-itself" is made to function as the genetic element of real experience, from which the relations of identity, analogy, resemblance, opposition, contradiction, negation, and so forth are derived as secondary effects. (12)

Nowhere is this strategy more evident than in the central chapter of Deleuze's 1962 book Nietzsche and Philosophy, which is entitled, quite simply, "Critique." For Deleuze, Nietzsche's philosophy does not represent a rejection of Kant; on the contrary, it is Nietzsche who was finally able to fulfill the immanent aims of the critical project, precisely because he brought critique to bear, not merely on false claims to knowledge and morality, but on knowledge and morality themselves, on true knowledge and true morality, and indeed, on the values of truth and reason themselves. Nietzsche was not content to discover transcendental principles that would constitute the condition of possibility for the "facts" of reason (knowledge and morality); instead, he was intent on discovering immanent principles (which he thought he had found in the will to power and the eternal return) that were truly genetic and productive, i.e., differential principles that were capable of giving an account of the genesis or origin of knowledge and morality. (13) Deleuze in this way establishes a "secret link" between Maimon and Nietzsche that leaps over the idealist tradition. Maimon's call for a genetic method and a principle of difference, Deleuze argues, found its fulfillment in Nietzsche's method of genealogy.

3. Deleuze's Reading of Kant. Why then--and this is the third point I would like to consider--does Deleuze return to a more or less direct confrontation with Kant in Difference and Repetition (1968)? Michael Hardt has shown, in detail and with remarkable subtlety, how the early works we have been considering also contain a strong anti-Hegelianism that Deleuze, of necessity, always pursued obliquely and indirectly, since to oppose Hegel is a dialectical move already anticipated by Hegel's system. (14) Deleuze's recourse to Maimon is part of that strategy: rather than attacking Hegel directly, he instead returns to the very problematics that generated the post-Kantian tradition to which Hegel belongs, precisely in order to propose a different and divergent solution to those same problematics. But this is why, it seems to me, armed with the critiques of Bergson, Maimon, and Nietzsche, a direct confrontation of Deleuze with Kant was inevitable. Deleuze states the aim of that confrontation in no uncertain terms: "We seek to determine an impersonal and pre-individual transcendental field," he writes, "which does not resemble the

corresponding empirical fields." (15) In Difference and Repetition, Deleuze does not simply dismantle the

Kantian architectonic; instead, he retains many of Kant's notions, but in accordance with his own project, he assigns to them entire new functions and variables, and inserts them into an entirely new field: no longer the universalizing field of the possible, but the multiple and variable field of the virtual. (16)

Deleuze himself has provided a useful map for deciphering this project in a short article entitled, "On Four Poetic Formulas That Might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy." He there describes what he calls four "reversals" brought about by Kant's Copernican revolution, though in fact what these reversals serve to mark out are four "pressure points" or "fault lines," as it were, at which Kant himself hinted at a differential or virtual conception of the transcendental field--without, however, developing its consequences. It is the pressure points of the first and third critiques that are most germane to our purposes here.

The first hint of a virtual field appears in the Transcendental Aesthetic of the first Critique. In Kant, the spontaneity of which I am conscious in the "I think" is no longer understood, as in Descartes, as the attribute of a substantial and active being; rather the activity of thought is applied to a passive being that is affected from without by objects in space, and that itself exists in time, constantly modified, varied, changing. The introduction of time as the form of interiority effectively "fractures" the self, according to Deleuze, splitting the cogito into the active I of the understanding and the passive ego of sensibility, which are now related to each other only under the condition of this fundamental and internalized difference. (17) The "I = I " identity of the "I think" here gives way to Rimbaud's differential formula "I is another." Kant's first error, however, was to have filled in this fissure with a new form of identity, that is, with the active syntheses of the understanding: Kant reserves the power of synthesis exclusively for activity, for the "I think," and assigns to passivity a purely receptive role with no synthetic power. Deleuze, by contrast, revives the Kantian project by proposing a completely different analysis of the passive ego, uncovering an entire realm of passive syntheses that necessarily condition and precede the activity of the understanding. (The Freudian and Nietzschean projects, for instance, are located entirely on the side of the passive ego.) This analysis of the passive ego finds its fullest expression--first sketched out in Difference and Repetition and then developed more fully in The Time-Image-in Deleuze's theory of the pure form of time and the various types of syntheses that it entails, an extremely rich virtual theory of time whose only parallel can be found in some of the recent works of Michel Serres. (18)

The second pressure point--which is the one I would like to develop here- appears in the Critique of Judgment, in the analytics of the beautiful and the sublime. What Kant discovers in the third Critique, Deleuze argues, is a free and indeterminate accord between the faculties--a discordant accord, what Deleuze calls a "disjunctive" relationship between the faculties--that serves as the ground of the harmonious and proportional accords between the faculties that were established in the first two Critiques. But here again, Kant betrays this insight by resolving these discords, by making them converge on the Ideas of Reason as their principle or focal point: the beautiful and the sublime, Kant tells us, are manners through which Ideas of Reason can be presented in sensible nature. And since reason is the faculty that legislates in the practical domain, Kant concludes that "the supra-sensible destination of all our faculties is the predestination of a moral being." (19) For Kant, Ideas are both unifying and totalizing: they systematize the operations of

the understanding, and serve as the focal point or horizon that unites all the faculties in a "common sense," and culminates in a conception of Nature as a system of ends.

Now, what Deleuze does in the fourth chapter of Difference and Repetition is to develop a theory of the Idea that, against Kant, is neither unifying nor totalizing, but rather differential and genetic, and which alone can provide a sufficient reason for the disjunctive relations among the faculties. Deleuze derives his conception of the Idea from the mathematical models of the calculus and topology--hence the importance of Leibniz for Deleuze. Put simply, the symbol of difference for Deleuze is not "not-A" (as in Hegel, for whom difference is negation), but rather the differential "dx." Rather than having the faculties converge on a common project, each faculty is violently compelled to confront the differential limit that is peculiar to it--a limit that is ungraspable from the point of view of its empirical exercise, but which it alone is able to grasp from the point of view of its transcendental exercise: something unimaginable in the imagination, something unrememberable in memory, something unthinkable in thought, and so on. There is indeed a "critical point," a focus or horizon at which thinking, imagining, remembering, speaking, sensing, and so forth are the same thing, but what this "thing" affirms is not the convergence of the faculties in a common sense, but rather a violent divergence of the faculties in their transcendental and disjoint exercise: a para-sense rather than a common sense.

But what is important here is less the disjunctive theory of the faculties than the differential theory of the Idea from which it is derived, for it is here that we reach the virtual field as such for Deleuze. An Idea in any domain--not just the system of the faculties--is a multiplicity of heterogenous and differential elements that are not given as such in experience but are that through which the given is given. Having located his principle of difference in the differential dx, Deleuze derives a number of formal criteria that serve to define a virtual field. Though these elements are undetermined, they are reciprocally determinable in the differential relation. These relations imply the complete determination of singular points or singularities, which form an intensive space that correspond to these elements (in the way that a triangle is defined by three singularities); these singularities are prolonged in multiple series. These series enter into synthetic relations of conjunction, convergence and divergence, and divergence or disjunction becomes a synthetic operation by means of a perpetually displaced aleatory point that relates differences to each other while affirming their positive distance. These criteria, along with the relations of time through which the virtual is progressively actualized, constitute Deleuze's description of the transcendental field. They are not categories that express universals, but concepts--in the Deleuzian sense of this term--that characterize multiplicities whose singular elements are in a state of constant variations. "Only when a world teeming with anonymous and nomadic ... singularities opens up," writes Deleuze, "do we tread at last on the field of the transcendental." (20)

4. Three Examples: Language, Society, Body. To flesh out these rather abstract determinations, I want finally to briefly consider Deleuze's analysis of three virtual domains, in order to see how Deleuze has proposed an analysis of the virtual. (21)

a. First, the domain of language. From the point of view of the faculty of speech, the linguistic Idea is a virtual system of reciprocal relations between "phonemes," phonemes being the smallest linguistic unit capable of differenciating two words with different significations, such as cat and bat. Phonemes are actualized in letters, syllables, and sounds, which bestow on them a certain independence, but in themselves they are inseparable from the virtual relations with

unites them with other phonemes, and through which they are determined reciprocally (c/b). (Saussure's error, Deleuze argues, was to have reduced this differential relation to a relation of opposition; Deleuze derives his understanding of linguistics from Gustave Guillaume.) (22) All these phonematic elements and relations coexist in the linguistic Idea, which is a completely differentiated and variable totality. But this totality is never actualized as such; what is actualized, here and now, are only certain relations, certain values of relations, and a certain distribution of singularities; others are actualized elsewhere and at other times. There is therefore no total language, incarnating all possible phonemes and phonematic relations, which would be a pure chaos. The virtual totality of language is actualized following exclusive directions in diverse languages, each of which incarnates only certain relations and singularities. The linguistic Idea is thus a pure multiplicity that establishes connections between heterogenous elements, and that renders possible both speech as an empirical faculty and the transcendental element of that speech, a "'metalanguage,'" writes Deleuze, "which cannot be spoken in the empirical usage of a given language, but must be spoken and can be spoken only in the poetic usage of speech coextensive with virtuality." Deleuze's interest in writers such as Lewis Carroll, Raymond Roussel, and James Joyce, among many others, is that their works attempted to make visible this virtual domain of language. (23) (Deleuze's notion of "minor" literatures, and making language "stutter," both find their place here as well.)

b. Second example: the virtual Idea of society. The faculty of sociability is rendered possible by a social Idea which, as Althusser and his collaborators showed with regard to Marx, expresses a system of multiple ideal connections between differential elements (labor and capital). These differential relations of production and property are in turn actualized in the real relations of a society (juridical, political, ideological) and the actual terms of those relations (the "capitalist" and the "wage-earner"). Here again, there is no total society, but each society will always incarnate certain elements, relations, and singularities of production--for instance, "capitalism." The social formations analyzed in Captialism and Schizophrenia--the State, the war machine, segmentary societies, capitalism--simply seek to isolate certain abstract diagrams through which this social Idea is actualized, though concretely these formations always coexist in a mixed state. Here again, this social multiplicity determines sociability as a faculty, but also the transcendental element of sociability that cannot be lived within the actual societies in which the multiplicity is incarnated, but can only be approached in the element of social upheaval. (24)

c. Third example: the Idea of the body, which figures prominently in Deleuze's work. It is true that Deleuze gives to the notion of the body an extension that goes well beyond the biological domain. But even in organic terms, molecular biology defines the body in terms of differential elements (nucleic acids and proteins) whose relations constitute the double series of the genetic code, which is in turn is individuated in the intensive space of the egg (which is what Deleuze calls the "body without organs," i.e., a purely intensive body before its differentiation into organs and parts). The actualization of a given organism entails the progressive temporal construction of an internal milieu, starting from the determinations of the transcendental field, and made up of multiple spaces that must be locally integrated and connected, and which are constantly in contact with external movements that preside over its distribution in extensity. There thus is a "lived reality" of the embryo that it alone can experience, and which would tear apart an adult organism: topological movements such as the stretching of cellular layers, invagination by folding, regional displacement of groups, and so on. (The intestinal cavity, in Simondon's example, is exterior to the organism, an external space that has been annexed by the body by

folding.) (25) These are genetic principles of real experience, precisely because they determine any given body in its individuality and difference, and not conditions for the existence of bodies in general.

Whereas the possible was defined in terms of the two processes of resemblance and limitation, the virtual is defined in terms of the two processes of difference and actualization, of divergence and creation. It is difference that is primary in the process of actualization, the difference between the elements of the Idea, and also the difference between the virtual from which we begin and the actuals at which we arrive. "The characteristic of virtuality," writes Deleuze, "is to exist in such a way that it is actualized by being differenciated and is forced to differentiate itself, to create its lines of actualization, in order to be actualized." (26)

5. Components of the Virtual. I want to conclude all this by listing, in summary form, some of the component characteristics that Deleuze assigns to the virtual:

a. In Kant, Ideas are unifying, totalizing, and conditioning; in Deleuze, they are differential, virtual, and genetic. They are neither universals nor constants, but rather multiplicities in constant variation.

b. A virtual Idea is not a condition of possible experience, but the genetic element of real experience, since the "conditions" it establishes are no larger that what they condition, and are perfectly filled in each instance (the conditions are determined along with what they condition.)

c. Though the virtual is not itself actual, it nonetheless possesses a reality that is completely determined by is elements, relations, singularites, and so on.

d. The movement of genesis does not go from one actual term to another, but from the virtual to its actualization.

e. Whereas the possible is realized according to the condition of resemblance, the virtual is actualized by differentiating itself in variable directions. The differential relations are actualized in diverse spatio-temporal relationships, and the elements are incarnated in a variety of actual terms and forms.

f. These spatio-temporal qualities do not resemble the differential relations they incarnate, any more than the singularities resemble the organized extensity that actualizes them. There is an absolute non-resemblance between the condition and what it conditions.

g. Finally, the elements, relations, and singularities of an Idea are never exhausted by their actualization, since they possess a potentiality or metastability that perpetually exceeds their effectuation in a given state of things, and as such serve as the conditions for the creation of the new.

No one more than Deleuze has insisted on the specificity of philosophy in relation to other domains such as art, logic, and science. Yet it would perhaps not be an exaggeration to suggest that Deleuze is something of a 20th-century Kant. If Kant gave philosophical expression to a world regulated by Euclidean geometry, Newtonian physics, and Aristotelian logic, Deleuze's philosophy is an equally ambitious project that gives philosophical expression to a world of fractal

and Reimanian geometries, quantum and chaotic physics, and a logic of pure relations and paradoxes--in short, a world of virtualities that bears little resemblance to that described by Kant.

Notes

(1) This essay was originally presented at the annual meeting of International Association of Philosophy and Literature (IAPL) at Villanova University on 27 May 1995.

(2) Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan Press. 1929), p. 298-299 (A295-296/B352): "We shall entitle the principles whose application is confined entirely within the limits of possible experience, immanent; and those, on the other hand, which profess to pass beyond these limits, transcendent." See also Gilles Deleuze, Negotiations, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 145 (translation modified): "To erect a plane of immanence, to trace a field of immanence--all the authors that interest me have done this (even Kant when he denounces the transcendent use of the syntheses, but he keeps to possible experience and not real experience)."

(3) Anti-Oedipus, for instance, is presented by Deleuze and Guattari from a Kantian point of view: "In what he termed the critical revolution, Kant intended to discover criteria immanent to the understanding so as to distinguish between the legitimate and the illegitimate uses of the syntheses of consciousness. In the name of transcendental philosophy (immanence of criteria), he therefore denounced the transcendent use of syntheses such as appeared in metaphysics. In like fashion, we are compelled to say that psychoanalysis has its metaphysics--its name is Oedipus. And that a revolution--this time materialist--can proceed only by way of a critique of Oedipus, by denouncing the illegitimate use of the syntheses of the unconscious as found in Oedipal psychoanalysis, so as to rediscover a transcendental unconscious defined by the immanence of its criteria, and a corresponding practice that we shall call schizoanalysis." See Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Anti-Oedipus, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (New York: Viking Press, 1977), p. 75.

(4) Gilles Deleuze, Bergsonism, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, Bergsonism (New York: Zone Books, 1991), p. 16-17. Deleuze continues: "This is how many philosophers fall into circular arguments: conscious of the need to take the test of the true and false beyond solutions into problems themselves, they are content to define the truth or falsity of a problem by the possibility or impossibility of its being solved."

(5) Deleuze, Bergsonism, p. 17, quoting from Bergson, The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. Mabelle L. Andison (Totowa, N. J Littlefield, Adams, & Co, 1975), p. 118.

(6) It is true that, in the sense that one calls possible what is not impossible, it stands to reason that this non-impossibility of a thing is the condition of its realization. But in this case, the possible is not understood as something pre-existent; even more, it simply indicates that something is logically possible, not really possible. See Bergson, "The Possible and the Real," in The Creative Mind, p. 102.

(7) Furthermore, the means by which the possible is realized in existence remains unclear; see Gilles Deleuze, Difference and Repetition, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 211: existence always occurs "as a brute eruption, a pure act or leap that always

occurs behind our backs."

(8) Deleuze, Bergsonism, chapter 5.

(9) Gilles Deleuze, Logic of Sense, trans. Mark Lester, with Charles Stivale; ed. Constantin V. Boundas (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), p. 105.

(10) Maimon's now-neglected work lies at the root of much post-Kantian philosophy; as Frederick Beiser notes, to study Fichte, Schelling, or Hegel without having read Maimon is like studying Kant without having read Hume; see The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy From Kant to Fichte (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 286. See also Jules Vuillemin, L'heritage kantien et la revolution copernicienne (Paris: PUF, 1954), p. 55: In the criticism of skepticism, "what corresponds to the Kant-Hume relationship is now the Fichte-Maimon relationship." Kant himself, in his letter to Marcus Herz of 26 May 1789, wrote of the Essay on the Transcendental Philosophy: "But one glance at the work made me realize its excellence and that not only had none of my critics understood me and the main questions as well as Mr. Maimon does but also very few men possess so much acumen for such deep investigations as he." See Immanuel Kant, Philosophical Correspondence, ed. and trans. Arnulf Zweig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 151. In a letter to Reinhold, Fichte wrote: "My respect for Maimon's talent is limitless; I firmly believe, and am willing to prove, that the critical philosophy has been overturned by him" (Fichte, Briefwechsel, III/2, p. 282, as quoted in Beiser, note 2, p. 370).

(11) See Hegel, Science of Logic, trans. A. V. Miller (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd, 1969), Vol. 1, Book 2, Section 1, II, "Determinations of Reflection" (Identity, Difference, Contradiction).

(12) In Maimon himself, the relationship between difference and identity remains highly ambiguous: he described his own transcendental philosophy as a "coalition system" that incorporated elements of Leibniz and Spinoza (and in this sense, he functions as a true precursor to Deleuze).

(13) Deleuze, Nietzsche and Philosophy, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), esp. P. 51-52, which summarizes Maimon's theses without naming him. For Nietzsche's "problematization" of knowledge and morality, see Nietzsche's comments in The Genealogy of Morals: "We need a critique of moral values, the value of these values must first be brought into question." "The will to truth requires a critique--let us thus define our own task--the value of truth must for once be experimentally called into question." in Nietzsche and Philosophy, Deleuze's distinction between the immanent ethical difference between active and reactive modes of existence and the the transcendent moral opposition between Good and Evil.

(14) Michael Hardt, Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

(15) Deleuze, Logic of Sense, p. 102. Much of the terminology of Difference and Repetition disappears in Deleuze's later work: simulacra is replaced by agencement or assemblage; Idea or structure is replaced by rhizome; and so on.

(16) See Deleuze, "Response to a Question on the Subject" (original title: "A Philosophical Concept"), in in WTwo Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995, ed. David

Lapoujade; trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotext(e), 2006), p. 349: "It is never very interesting to criticize a concept: it is better to construct new functions and discover new fields that make it useless of inadequate."

(17) This is what Foucault, in the Order of Things, called the "perpetual relation of the cogito to the unthought": as a finite subject, I am immersed in the "non-me," an unthought that conditions me and which I do not control. Three fundamental sciences develop from this, which correspond to the three fundamental regions of the unthought. Biology responds to the fact that I am always already alive, caught in the chain of the living, which always precedes my consciousness, surrounds me, surpasses me; philology takes on a language that is also given to me and pre-exists me, without my being able to do anything other than discover what is already at work; economics corresponds to the field of work that I will be plunged into, which is already organized, already structured by history.

(18) See Michel Serres, Eclaircissements: Entretiens avec Bruno Latour (Paris: Flammarion, 1992), p. 8895; Le systeme de Leibniz et ses modeles mathematiques (Paris: PUF, 1968), p. 284-286; and Les origines de la geometrie: Tiers livre des fondations (Paris: Flammarion, 1993).

(19) Immanuel Kant, Critique of Judgment, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1952), [section] 42. See also Gilles Deleuze, Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of the Faculties, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 55.

(20) Deleuze, Logic of Sense, p. 103.

(21) This section draws heavily on Deleuze's essay, "A quoi reconnait-on le structuralisme," in Histoire de la philosophie 8, ed. Frangois Chatelet (Paris: Hachette, 1972), p. 299-334.

(22) For Deleuze's critique of Saussure, see Difference and Repetition, p. 203-205, where he invokes Gustave Guillaume's principle of "differential position." Roman Jakobson examines the status of the phoneme in his Essays in General Linguistics

(23) Deleuze, Difference and Repetition, p. 193.

(24) Deleuze, Difference and Repetition, p. 193.

(25) Gilbert Simondon, L'individu et sa genese physico-biologique (Paris: PUF, 1964), p. 260. The notion of the species is a well-founded concept, according to Deleuze, but the determination of species has as its condition the this field of virtual individuation (the "monstrous" appears when this actualization diverges from the norm of the species).

(26) Deleuze, Bergsonism, p. 97.