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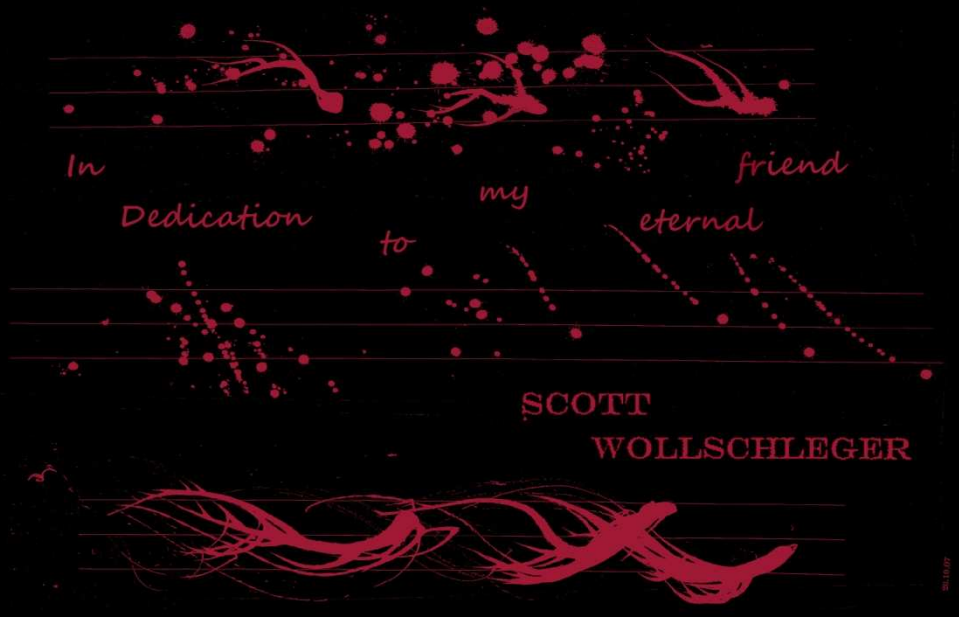
DIFFERENCE AND PHENOMENA

A Deleuzean Phenomenal Analysis of Body, Time, and Selfhood

Promotor: Professor **Roland Breeur**

Dissertation presented to fulfil the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor (Ph.D.) in Philosophy
By: **Corry Shores**

Leuven, 2012


In Dedication to my eternal friend
SCOTT
WOLLSCHLEGER

Difference & Phenomena:

A Deleuzean Phenomenal Analysis of Body, Time, and Selfhood

Roland Breeur
Corry Shores

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements 6

Introduction 7

Part I
Bodily-Given Phenomena

Chapter 1
Spinoza and Phenomenal Affection 10

Chapter 2
Phenomenal Intensity in
Bergson, Kant, and Leibniz. 55

Chapter 3
Merleau-Ponty and
Integrative Phenomenology. 87

Chapter 4
Deleuze’s Phenomenal Mechanics.. 121

Part II
Phenomena of Time and Self

Chapter 5
Self and Time for Merleau-Ponty. 185

Chapter 6

Deleuze’s Syntheses of Time and Self. . . 214

Conclusion. 270

Bibliography. 271

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Introduction

According to Deleuze, phenomenology begins with Kant: "If there is a founder of phenomenology it is Kant. There is phenomenology from the moment that the phenomenon is no longer defined as *appearance* but as *apparition*."[1] The appearance is what is sensibly given to us. And prior to Kant, the phenomenon was merely the appearance. But when Kant wields the term phenomenon, "he loads it with a much more violent meaning."[2] Kant's novel innovation was his treating the apparition of phenomena in terms of "the *conditions* according to which what appears, appears."[3] Thus phenomenology as a rigorous science, Deleuze explains, is the opposite of a "discipline of appearances." Instead, phenomenology must ask, "what can we say about the fact of appearing?"[4]

Yet, Deleuze is often considered an anti-phenomenologist. Nevertheless, our purpose here is not to categorize Deleuze, but rather to make constructive use of his critiques on traditional phenomenology. Deleuze's investigations into phenomena "dig deeper" than the most basic and fundamental levels of phenomenal appearings that phenomenology has so far uncovered.[5] The reason Deleuze can better describe and explain the deepest layer of phenomenal synthesis is because his concept of difference allows him to see synthesis as a disjunction. But, how can things be disjunct and yet also synthesized with one another? Gradually we will elaborate and illuminate the way this is so and how disjunctive synthesis may be regarded as the most basic condition of phenomenal apparition.

The ground for a difference-based phenomenology has already been broken by Miguel de Beistegui in his "Toward a Phenomenology of Difference." Although phenomenal objects for Husserl and Merleau-Ponty are constituted *of* variations, they nonetheless are constituted *by* assimilations and integrations that produce a phenomenon as an invariant self-same thing. Yet, although this reduces differences to identities: "difference is stubborn: push it out the door, it will creep back in through the window; lock it up in the cellar, it will reappear in the attic. This is because difference

[1] Deleuze, Seminar 14/03/1978, emphasis mine.
[2] Deleuze, Seminar 20/05/1980.
[3] Deleuze, Seminar 20/05/1980, emphasis mine.
[4] Deleuze, Seminar 14/03/1978.
[5] Deleuze, Seminar 28/03/1978.





leaks from everywhere."[6] Perhaps Deleuze earned the designation "anti-phenomenologist" on account of the assumption that phenomenology has been sealed into a historical museum of ideas and is no longer under development. But, if a Deleuzean difference-based theory of phenomena advances phenomenological inquiries, what is to say that phenomenology is dead, and thus, on what basis would Deleuze rightfully be called an anti-phenomenologist?

> Has phenomenology not characterized itself throughout precisely as this ability to become and evolve? And is this not the historical lesson of phenomenology: that it is itself a flow, with unpredictable bends and meanderings, which, whatever their intensity, in the end always reinvent phenomenology […]. […] there is no "letter" of phenomenology: no primordial word, no consecrated text, no originary truth that one could betray: only an endless series of heresies, which is, at least in philosophy, the only possible form of fidelity, that is, the fidelity in and through genuine questioning.[7]

What we endeavor here is a double heresy: we will bring phenomenology into Deleuze and Deleuze into phenomenology.

In the first section, on bodily-given phenomena, we examine synthetic disjunction firstly on the basis of Deleuze's application of calculus ideas to Spinoza's affection (Chapter 1), then with regard to Bergson's qualitative sensation, to Kant's sublime experiences, and to Leibniz' microperceptions (Chapter 2). Afterwards, we introduce Merleau-Ponty's integrative model of bodily-given phenomena (Chapter 3), which we follow by contrasting it with Deleuze's differential alternative (Chapter 4). The next section, on the phenomena of time and self, treats synthetic disjunction more in terms of being a logical operation. Again for contrast, we begin with Merleau-Ponty's integrative theory of phenomenal temporality (Chapter 5). After that, we examine Deleuze's three syntheses of time, which parallel Kant's three temporal syntheses (Chapter 6). We then conclude by briefly assessing the possible constructive and critical role of Deleuze's ideas in phenomenological studies.



[6] Beistegui, "Toward a Phenomenology of Difference?," p.61.
[7] Beistegui, "Toward a Phenomenology of Difference?," p.68.

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Part I
Bodily-Given Phenomena

Chapter 1
Spinoza and Phenomenal Affection

Deleuze describes the phenomenon as the flash of difference communicated between the terms of heterogeneous series.[8] Yet, he does not further develop explicitly his phenomenological ideas, and as we noted, he is often considered an anti-phenomenologist. Formulating a Deleuzian phenomenology, then, will involve translating his concepts into a phenomenological lexicon. The first part of this effort is providing an account of our body's direct and immediate affective contact with the world. How might these interactions be based on difference, when for example in Merleau-Ponty, phenomenal contact with the world involves us interweaving with it? Deleuze extracts a differential calculus concept from his interpretation of Spinoza's twelfth letter, the 'letter on the infinite,' and he applies this notion of a difference without terms to Spinoza's theory of bodily affection. This differential calculus sense of affection will ultimately allow us to explicate the concept of the rhythm of sensation's continuously varying waves in Deleuze's more phenomenologically relevant text, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*.

Note that Deleuze has been accused of attributing ideas to Spinoza that are nowhere to be found in Spinoza's texts.[9] Yet really what Deleuze does is uncover something *implicit* in Spinoza, the notion of intensity as pure differential variation. Deleuze will provide the means to examine the way our bodies are affected and de-composed by difference. He will do so by explaining that our bodies are composed by sets of differential relations (simplest bodies), which are altered by the impact of waves of affection, whose continuous variation is made-up of, again, differential relations. This shocking and mutually-affective contact between differential speeds is what Deleuze will here call 'rhythm'.



[8] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, pp.286-287; *Difference and Repetition*, p.222.
[9] Macherey, 'The Encounter with Spinoza'; La rencontre avec Spinoza. Duffy, *The Logic of Expression*, p.3.



1 Diagramming Affection

Now, Spinoza's ideas preceded the invention of differential calculus.[10] Also, Spinoza speaks of extensity but not intensity. This is why we will later attend very closely to Deleuze's analysis of Spinoza's twelfth letter on infinity. It is here that Deleuze finds Spinoza implicitly describing intensity in terms of the infinitely small.[11]

The concept we will obtain after observing this demonstration is that we may think of the infinitely small as being an inextensive quantity that only expresses its value when one of these vanishing quantities is placed into a ratio-relationship with another one. Later we will see that when these inextensive values are differentially related, they produce a 'degree' of magnitude, or what is called an 'intensity'. And as we will see, intensive magnitudes can be regarded as the value that is immediate to the generation of extensive quantities, and also they are what directly produce affections. It will be essential that we later understand sensation in terms of continuous variation. This involves the notion of differential relations, because, as Deleuze explains, "we will be able to define continuity as the act of a difference in so far as it tends to disappear. *Continuity is an evanescent difference*."[12] Just as importantly, Deleuze needs us to conceptualize pure difference itself. In Spinoza's time and shortly after, philosophers were devising a way to conceive pure difference as being a differential relation without terms. There are no terms, because they have vanished from the finite extensive realm and have carried-over into the infinitely small (infinitesimal) domain of non-extending (intensive) values. Hence continuous difference is always pure difference, because on the infinitely small level, a continuous variation is made of differences without terms. To help us grasp this, Deleuze turns to Leibniz' visualization in his letter "Justification of the Infinitesimal Calculus by that of

[10] Duffy, *The Logic of Expression*, p.48.

[11] What we attend to are the philosophical concepts underlying the calculus notions; we do not examine matters of calculus itself, because I have no expertise in mathematics. But also, these details will prove beside the more basic philosophical ideas that Deleuze is expressing through the mathematical notions. For a more precise and thorough treatment of the calculus ideas in Deleuze's Spinozism, see Duffy, *The Logic of Expression* and Duffy, "The Mathematics of Deleuze's Differential Logic and Metaphysics."

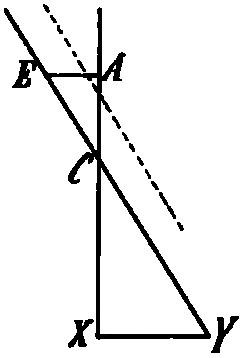
[12] Deleuze, Seminar 22/04/1980.





Ordinary Algebra," which he says will allow us to "understand everything" we need to know regarding differential relations between varnishing terms.[13]

In his letter, Leibniz constructs two conjoined triangles by using crossed lines.



Leibniz' triangle demonstrating the sustaining ratio between vanishing values[14]

We will construct it part-by-part so to better understand its properties. We begin by drawing a straight vertical line, AX.



We then draw a diagonal line *EY* that intersects the vertical line



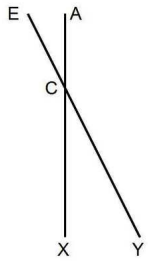


[13] Deleuze, Seminar 22/04/1980. Leibniz, "Justification of the Infinitesimal Calculus by that of Ordinary Algebra;" "Justification du calcul des infinitésimales par celuy de l'algèbre ordinaire."

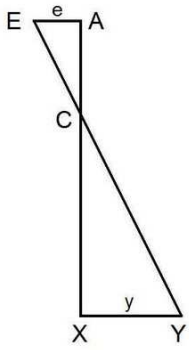
[14] Image from: Leibniz, *Mathematische Schriften, vol. 4*.



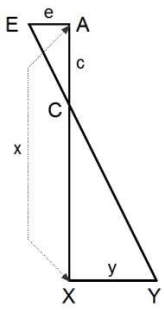
and they meet at point *C*.



Later we will find that EY moves towards the right. This movement causes the top part to vanish while the bottom part takes its place. We then draw straight line *e* between *E* and *A*. It is perpendicular to *AX*. Likewise, we draw line *y* between *X* and *Y*, and it is also perpendicular to *AX*.



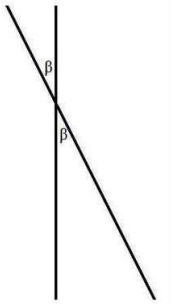
Lines *e* and *y* are parallel, because they are perpendicular to the same line. Line *AC* we call *c*. And all of line *AX* we call *x*.



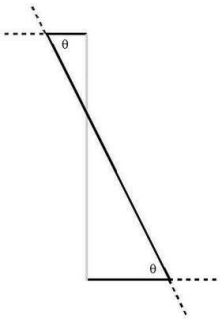




We know by Euclid's Proposition 15 (Book 1) that the triangles' angles at *C* share equal value, because they are opposite or vertical angles.



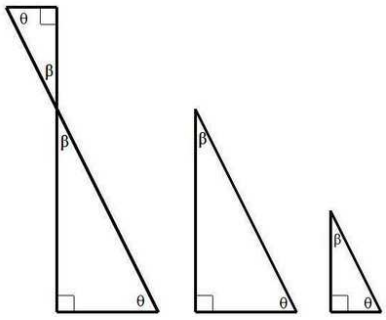
And we know by Proposition 27 (Book 1) that the other angles must be equal as well.



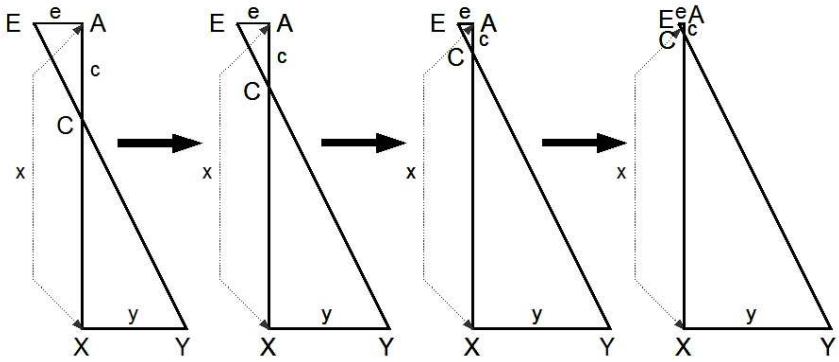
Because all corresponding angles are the same in both triangles, they are similar triangles: their angles and the proportions between their sides are equal, even if the triangles' sizes are different. This is important, because we will later watch one triangle vanish, while still maintaining the proportional relations between its parts. For, these proportions still hold in the larger triangle even after the smaller one vanishes. In the image below, what we see on the left is the two triangles in their mutual formation. Beside that is each triangle by itself, as if we had broken-away the smaller top triangle. We see that even though the two have different sizes, their proportions are the same.



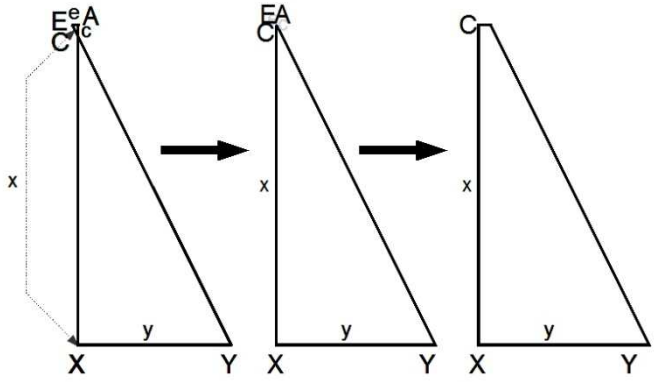




Leibniz then has us move the diagonal line to the right. What we find is that this diminishes the smaller top triangle.



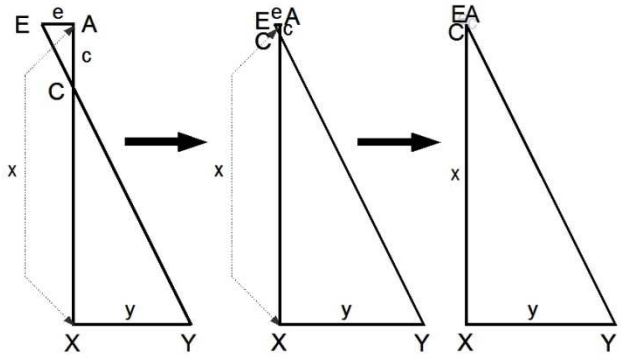
Because the angles remain the same, so too will the proportions between their sides. Hence, we can expect the ratio of small triangle sides *c* to *e* to remain constant, and their ratio also remains the same as the corresponding sides in the augmenting triangle. But, we continue to imagine that line *EY* moves yet more toward *A* and then passes through it.



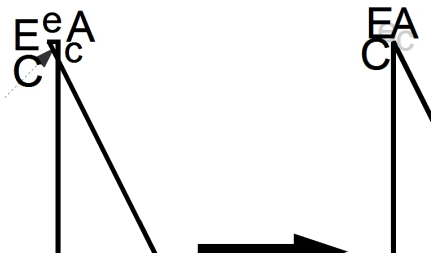
We see that in the process, points *E* and *C* will fall on point *A* as lines *e* and *c* vanish:



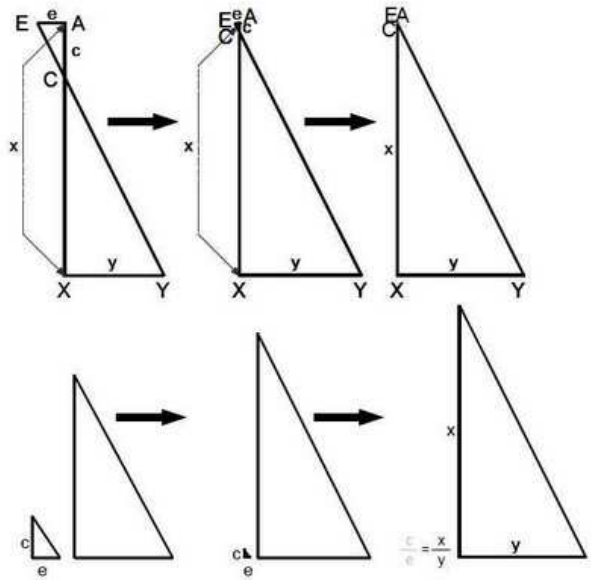




We notice it more easily when we magnify the diagram:



Here is what we are to conceive: the proportions remained the same, even as the lengths of sides *e* and *c* vanished to the infinitely small. What we will find is that even though they vanished to the infinitely small, they still may be thought-of as being in a proportional relation to each other. And, we know what that proportion is, because it remained the same ratio that is still presented in the larger triangle.







Consider what this demonstration shows us. We can have infinitely small values. Yet, each one has no quantifiable value by itself. It only has value when put in relation with another such evanescent value. Then we have a finite quantity, which expresses the differential relation between two values that are not large enough to even be finite themselves. Deleuze explains that these terms are 'nothings' but not absolute nothings, because they conserve the relational difference.[15] The vanished triangle, Deleuze says, is not actually there, but is there "virtually," because the vanishing lines have not merged together yet at the corner.[16] So they are distinct from this right-angled corner of the triangle that they are collapsing-upon, but they also do not extend beyond it. We will later see that this is an important concept in Deleuze's more general idea of contraction, which is his difference-based concept of 'unity': two things can be contracted together so that nothing extends between them yet without there being any homogenizing synthesis reducing their differences. On the one hand, they are absolutely together, but on the other hand, they maintain everything that makes them distinct.

We might express this concept more simply. There is a sort of difference between terms that remains even after they have vanished. All that remains is the pure differential relation that holds between them. The diminished values no longer extend in space. However, when differentially related, they have a finite magnitude.[17] They are not extensive magnitudes, but are instead intensive. The philosophical idea here – difference without terms – is essential to Deleuze's portrayal of Spinoza's affection;

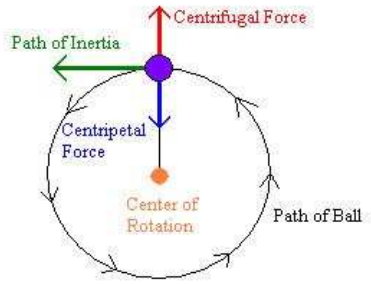
[15] Deleuze, Seminar 22/04/1980.
[16] Deleuze, Seminar 22/04/1980.
[17] In the following quotation, Deleuze explains this idea using more mathematical terminology; but we include it here because he also further explicates the philosophical idea we have in mind. We may consider 'dx', he explains, to be the evanescent quantity of one of the vanishing sides of the small triangle, and 'dy' is the vanishing value for the side being differentially related to it. His meaning in the following is that each infinitely small (and intensive) vanishing value is nothing in comparison to a finite value. However, each of the vanishing values when differentially related with another one does in that way produce a finite value: "Thus I can say that *dy* as a vanishing quantity is strictly equal to zero in relation to *y*. In the same way *dx* is strictly equal to zero in relation to *x*. *dx* is the vanishing quantity of *x*. Thus I can write, and mathematicians do write *dy/dx = 0/0*. This is the differential relation. If I call *y* a quantity of the abscissa and *x* a quantity of the ordinate, I would say that *dy=0* in relation to the abscissa, *dx=0* in relation to the ordinate. Is *dy/dx* equal to zero? Obviously not. *dy* is nothing in relation to *y*, *dx* is nothing in relation to *x*, but *dy* over *dx* does not cancel out. The relation subsists and the differential relation will present itself as the subsistence of the relation when the terms vanish. They have found the mathematical convention that allows them to treat relations independently of their terms," Deleuze, Seminar17/02/1981.



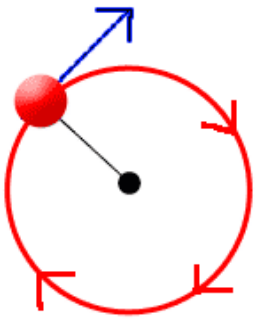


for, affections we will find are continuous variations of intensity. And, a continuous variation (like a curve) is made-up entirely – on the most fundamental (infinitely small) level – of relations of pure difference (differential relations between vanishing terms).

Deleuze employs these differential calculus concepts when describing the series of instantaneous changes involved in Spinoza's affection. He does this in part by applying Leibniz' vanishing values to the notion of instantaneous velocity. The intensities involved in affections are matters of tendencies-toward-change that are expressed in a mere instant.[18] To visualize this in the most ready way possible, we may consider a ball on a chain swung in a circle.



There are competing forces acting on the ball: on the one hand, it wants to fly outward, but on the other hand, its chain pulls it inward. As a result, the ball is always *tending* to go some certain way at each moment in its circular motion. If we were to cut the ball loose, it would not fly-off in a spiral, but instead outward in a straight line.



The tangent on curves is like a tendency in the line's change of direction at that place. What we notice is that this tendency to change is only implied in the

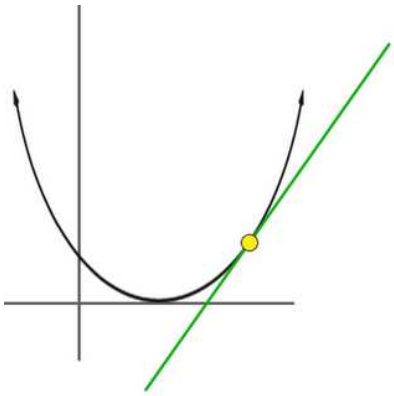


[18] Deleuze, Seminar 20/01/1981.

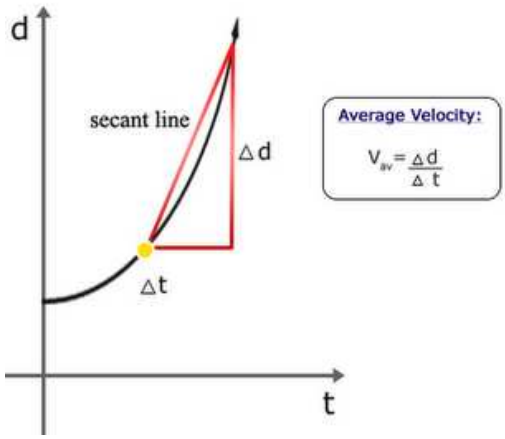


movement. The ball may stay on the chain in a continual circular motion, but at any instant it is tending outward in a straight line. These tendencies are real, but not actualized (until the chain is cut). Just as the vanished triangle is virtual, so too are these tendencies toward change. The ball always tends to travel *virtually* straight outward while *actually* moving continually in a circle.

For a curve moving in a somewhat more irregular path, finding its tendency-toward-change is more complex, and here is where we would use Leibniz' method. First consider a more complex curve. We can almost feel where a certain part might be headed just by judging its pattern of change.



We can also create a little triangle showing how its dimensions extend in a certain region.

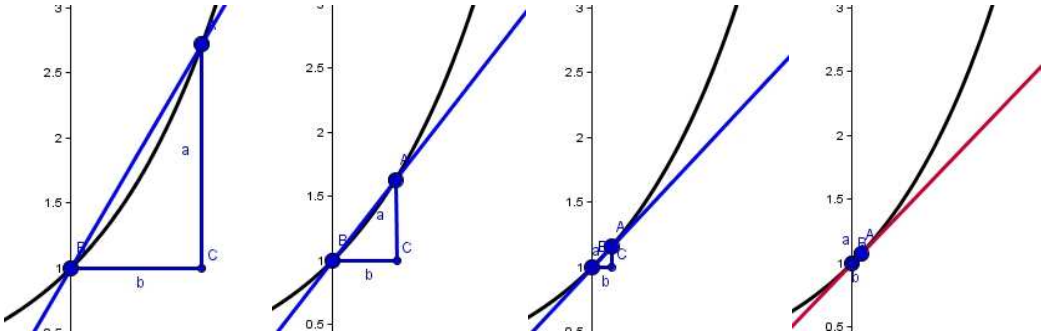


Then like with Leibniz' triangles, we slowly diminish the two sides, and the third diagonal side gives us the tangent, which also tells us





which way the curve is tending at that place (or 'limit'). Let's look at this reduction more closely, because it will give us another way to understand intensive values in a more genetic sense.



The two triangle points here are located along the curve. The line that they express gives us the average ratio for the *x* and *y* values of the general region they cover. As they near one another, the *x* and *y* values of the triangle are diminishing to zero. That also means the third triangle side between the points on the curve shrinks to the infinitely small. It is no longer a line, because it does not extend in space. However, if we did extend it, we would have the tangent to the curve at that point. But in a sense, we may consider that infinitely small region of the curve to still be like a line. Isaac Barrow used the term 'linelets' to refer to these infinitesimal parts of the line.[19] A curve can then be considered as an infinite series of these infinitely small linelets. Nowhere is the curve extending straight. But, it is always *tending* straight-off away somewhere. Each one of these linelets is a non-extending magnitude of tendency; in other words, it is an intensity, a degree of variation. Thus, intensities may be considered as the infinitely small components that generate the extensive properties of a line and that lie immediately at each place of variation.

Now, this concept of intensive variation is important for Deleuze, because it defines Spinozistic affection. And, it will allow us to understand Deleuze's unexplained terminology in the *Logic of Sensation* regarding the continuous variation of waves of intensity. Our effort here is to take Deleuze's Spinozistic ideas regarding affection and apply them to Deleuze's philosophy of sensation. To arrive at this application, we need first to see how Deleuze reads Spinoza as basing his ideas of



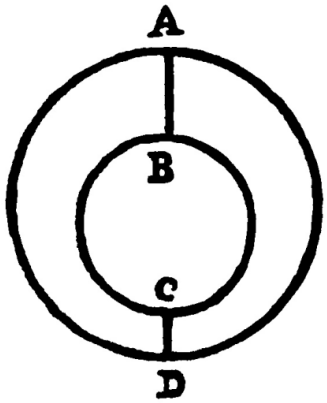
[19] Boyer, *The History of the Calculus and its Conceptual Development*, pp.180-181.



essence, individuality, and affection on the concept of intensity, even though Spinoza makes no explicit use of this notion.

Deleuze finds Spinoza implying this idea of intensity in the twelfth letter. This letter provides a very intriguing puzzle; a series of commentaries, beginning with Hegel and proceeding through Deleuze, have been devised to help explain it. Deleuze's interest in the letter is finding an explanation for Spinoza's continuous variations of affection.

In the letter, Spinoza illustrates his concept of substance's infinity with the following diagram.



Spinoza's nested non-concentric circles from his twelfth letter[20]

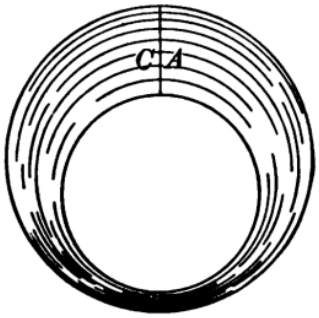
He writes that "all the inequalities of the space lying between the two circles *ABCD* in the diagram exceed any number, as do all the variations of the speed of matter moving through that area."[21] In our examination of the commentaries, we will find that we cannot interpret the excessive number of these inequalities merely as being the infinite quantity of possible subdivisions, as if we were just applying the procedure in Zeno's paradoxes. So this then is the puzzle: what does Spinoza mean by an infinity of differences and variations that are not to be understood merely as an infinite number of divisions? We will see Deleuze's answer is that the infinity of inequalities is a continuous intensive differentiation on the infinitely small level, and that this sort of differential infinity defines affection.

[20] Image from: Spinoza, *Opera: quotquot reperta sunt, vol. 2*, p.233.
[21] Spinoza, *The Letters*, p.105; "omnes inaequalitates spatii duobus circulis A B et C D interpositi, omnesque variationes, quas materia in eo mota pati debeat, omnem numerum superant," *Epistolae* in *Opera, vol. 4*, p.59.



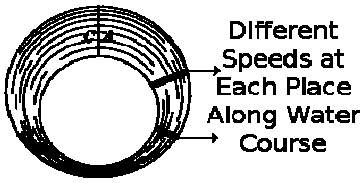


We can better grasp Spinoza's intended purpose for his non-concentric circles by examining similar diagrams in his *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy*. For example, in proposition 9 of Part 2, he has us consider the circulation of water moving through the space between offset circles.[22]

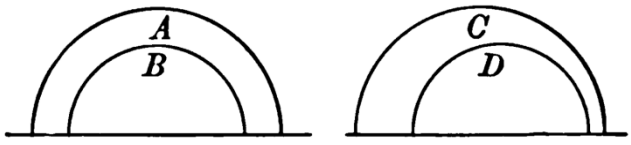


Irregular water-circuit[23]

The gap at the top is four times as wide as it is at the bottom, and thus the water must travel four times faster at the narrower side. And on account of the geometry of the non-concentric circles, every place along the circuit has a different width and hence "the fluid body that moves through the tube ABC receives an *indefinite number* of *degrees* of speed."[24]



Spinoza discusses this continuous variation of space using more geometrical terms in the lemma to proposition 9.



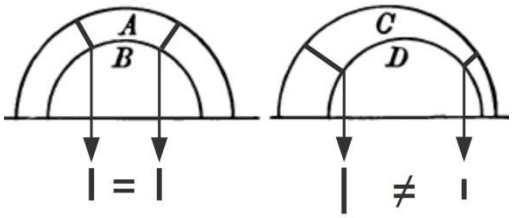
Semicircles with the same and with different centers[25]



[22] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 1*, pp.198-199; *Complete Works*, pp.157-158.
[23] Image from: Spinoza, *The Principles of Descartes' Philosophy*, p.77.
[24] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 1*, p.199; *Complete Works*, p.158, emphasis mine.
Spinoza, *The Principles of Descartes' Philosophy*, p.77.

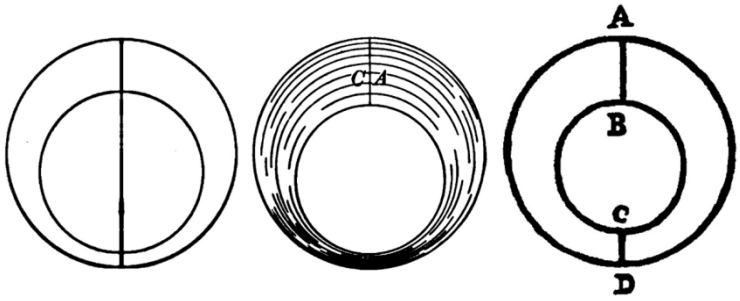


Spinoza writes that in the left diagram, both semi-circles share the same center. The space between their circumferences is everywhere the same, because in a circle, all points on the circumference lie at the same distance from the center. However, Spinoza writes, if the semi-circles do not share the same center, then the "space between their circumferences will be everywhere unequal."[26]



Equalities and inequalities of the distance between the circles

The nested circles diagram in Spinoza's twelfth letter would then seem to be a hybrid of these two other figures.



A reconstruction from two off-centered circle halves,
to the left of the similar diagrams

Recall how he writes in the letter that "all the inequalities of the space lying between the two circles *ABCD* in the diagram exceed any number, as do all the variations of the speed of matter moving through that area."[27] Every line spanning between the circumferences, that is, every space between them, is of a different magnitude; thus, like with the water circuit, matter moving through these spaces would travel a different speed at each variation in the width.

[26] Spinoza, *Opera*, *vol. 1*, p.199; *Complete Works*, p.159.
[27] Spinoza, *Opera*, *vol. 4*, p.59; *The Letters*, p.105.





Yet, Spinoza explains in his 81st letter that the infinity here is not obtained from the fact that there are more parts than can be counted.[28] Also, Deleuze adds that we do not combine the distances as if by linking them all in a straight line to see how far they extend.[29] Instead, the diagram according to Deleuze illustrates a mode's infinite division into differential relations between infinitely small partitions. In fact, it even shows us two sorts of infinite division, intensive and extensive, and we will observe the way Deleuze intimately links these two types of division in his reading of Spinoza's affection.

Deleuze's unique calculus reading of the letter, we noted, builds upon a series of commentaries beginning with Hegel. What we will gain from Hegel's insights is a concept that we return to in the next chapter when we discuss the rhythm of sensation, and in particular, the notion of incommensurability. According to Hegel's interpretation, the reason that the inequalities are infinite is not because there are so very many of them. Those infinities come about because there is an endless process of accumulation. But, these "spurious" progressive infinities would be negatively-conceived infinities. Because there is always something more to add to them, they are always missing something, in a sense. Yet, Spinoza's infinity is not missing anything. And, Hegel notes that the infinities are contained in a finite space.[30] So in other words, Spinoza's infinity, according to Hegel, is a sort of incommensurability.[31] What makes it infinite is not that it is infinitely divisible into some infinite number of parts, but rather that we cannot use numerical digits to specify the value, because the digits would never terminate, like with irrational figures such as the golden ratio or *pi* (Hegel's examples are 2/7 or 1/(1 - a)).[32] Hegel uses this characterization so he may say that really the infinity that Spinoza is after is more like Hegel's own conception. Spinoza's infinity is supposedly full and boundless. Yet as being incommensurable, it obtains its boundlessness by virtue of the fact that no determination can express it. Hegel also offers his interpretation of Spinoza's notion of determination as negation (although later commentators find this to be incorrect). For him, the negation of

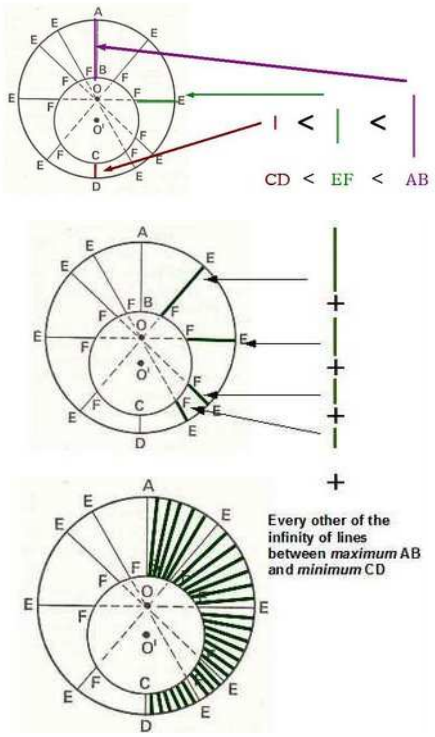
[28] Spinoza, *Opera, vol .4*, p.322; *The Letters*, p.352.
[29] Deleuze, Seminar 20/01/1981.
[30] Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik, Erster Teil*, p.250; *The Science of Logic*, p.250.
[31] Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik, Erster Teil*, p.251; *The Science of Logic*, p.250.
[32] Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik, Erster Teil*, p.251; *The Science of Logic*, p.251.





determination in Spinoza's infinity is a negation of a negation, a less naïve form of infinity.[33]

Martial Guéroult is highly critical of Hegel's interpretation for being based on a mistranslation,[34] although he does not address Hegel's portrayal of Spinoza's infinity as being a matter of incommensurability. First he has us consider the possible interpretation that we are to add-up all the different-sized lines marking every different length between the circles. Each of the different-sized distances is an "inequality of distance," because none equals any of the others.



Guéroult says this would not be the proper interpretation, because the circles would not need to be off-center for there to be an infinite distance derived in this way. Instead, Guéroult proposes that Spinoza must be considering the differential values, summed by integration. We are to think of the space being divided into pie-slivers so small that they are infinitely small (and hence non-extensive). Yet, they are not the same as lines,

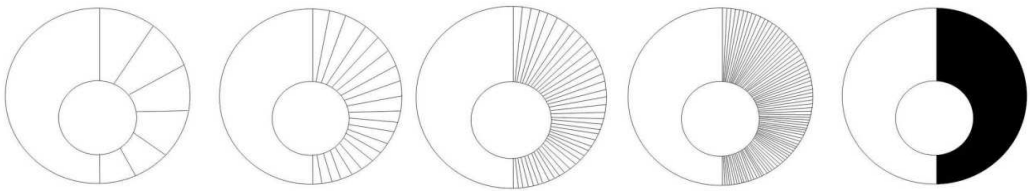
[33] Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie, Band 3*, pp.228-229; *Lectures on the History of Philosophy, vol. 3*, p.262.

[34] Guéroult says that part of Hegel's misinterpretation arises from an incorrect translation. For the passage "*Omnes inaequalitates spatii duobus circulis AB et CD interpositi*," Hegel along with the commentators who followed his translation render "*inaequalitates spatii*," as "*unequal distances*" rather than as "*inequalities of distance*," Guéroult, "La lettre sur l'infini," p.523; "Spinoza's Letter on the Infinite," p.206.





so they have also a 'virtual' area to them. Using integral calculus, we may sum this infinity of infinitely small slivers to obtain the total area between the circles.



Under this interpretation, an infinity can be found within finite limits (but not merely from infinite divisibility), when we regard there to be an infinity of differential values rather an infinity of lines. Deleuze will take-up a very similar approach, but the way he does so allows us to see how his explanation applies to Spinoza's affection. According to Deleuze, the diagram illustrates a mode's infinite division into differential relations between infinitely small partitions. In fact, it even shows us two sorts of infinite division, intensive and extensive, and we will observe the way Deleuze intimately links these two types of division in his reading of Spinoza's affection.

2 Body and Infinity

The attribute of extension is a qualitative expression of substance; yet, when we take into consideration the ways that extension becomes affectively modified, we introduce a quantitative dimension to our understanding of the attribute.[35] By means of our intellect we may realize that substance's attributes are infinite and indivisible. Yet when we use our imagination and senses, we draw arbitrary divisions in our world to mark provisional boundaries between bodies and between their parts.[36] One idea that Deleuze illustrates using Spinoza's circle diagram in the 'letter on the infinite' is the "strictly extensive infinity" contained within limiting bounds.[37] The space extending between the maximal and minimal limits (the top and bottom lines connecting the two circles and delimiting the space between) can be divided into an infinity of

[35] Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, pp.179-180; *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, pp.196-197.
[36] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 4*, p.57; *The Letters*, p.103.
[37] Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, p.184; *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, p.202.





extrinsically related parts.[38] Deleuze notes how in his sixth letter Spinoza discusses the division of extensive bodies to infinity.[39] Deleuze then uses this notion to interpret Spinoza's 'simplest bodies' (*corpora simplicissima*) which are not composed of other parts but nonetheless combine to constitute greater bodies.[40]

In the second book of the *Ethics*, Spinoza explains that simplest bodies are distinguishable from one another only by their differences of speeds and slownesses.[41] And yet, they are not atoms.[42] So by taking into account both that they are infinitely small divisions while also being defined by their speed ratios, Deleuze portrays them as differential relations of the calculus sort.[43] Simplest bodies, Spinoza writes, form compounds when ones moving at the same or at different speeds maintain a fixed relation in their mutual motions[44] and when "the laws or nature of one part adapts itself to the laws or nature of another part in such wise that there is the least possible opposition between them."[45] Simplest bodies, understood as infinitely small divisions of extension, are always found in infinite sets that are already in a differential relation to sets of other bodies moving at their own speeds,[46] and together they are "reciprocally united."[47] These compound bodies are then combined with other bodies, and so on to higher orders until reaching the whole of Nature.[48] Yet, why would Deleuze say that this composition to Nature in its entirety is "an infinitely transformable and deformable structure, universal *rhythm*"?[49]

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[38] Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, pp.184-185; *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, pp.202-203.
[39] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 4*, p.29; *The Letters*, p.79.
[40] Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, pp.191-192; *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, pp.173-174; Seminar 10/03/1981.
[41] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 2*, p.97; *Ethics*, p.126. Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, p.187; *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, p.205; *Spinoza*, p.120; Seminar 10/03/1981; *Spinoza: Philosophie pratique*, p.165; *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p.123; "Spinoza et les trois 'éthiques', " p.176; "Spinoza and the Three 'Ethics'," p.142.
[42] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 1*, p.190; *Complete Works*, p.153. Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, p.187; *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, p.204.
[43] Deleuze, Seminar 10/03/1981.
[44] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 2*, pp.99-100; *Ethics*, p.128.
[45] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 4*, p.170; *The Letters*, p.192.
[46] Deleuze, Seminar 10/03/1981.
[47] Deleuze, *Spinoza*, p.120.
[48] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 2*, p.102; *Ethics*, p.130. Deleuze, *Spinoza*, p.120; "Spinoza et les trois 'éthiques', " p.177; "Spinoza and the Three 'Ethics'," p.142.
[49] Deleuze, "Spinoza et les trois 'éthiques', " p.177; "Spinoza and the Three 'Ethics'," p.142, emphasis mine.





Note first how in his 32nd letter, the 'letter on blood,' Spinoza has his correspondent imagine a tiny worm so small that it can swim through the blood and observe how each particle in the fluid, "on colliding with another, either rebounds or communicates some degree of its motion."[50] What we will find is that simplest bodies are never going the same speeds from one moment to the next, because they are constantly in affective communication with one another, which changes each other's speeds and creates or decomposes relations, depending on how sustainable the combinations are. Deleuze reads Spinoza's description of the blood particles as being examples of Spinoza's simplest bodies:[51]

> chyle is an infinite set of very simple bodies. Lymph is another infinite set of the very simple bodies. What distinguishes the two infinite sets? It is the differential relation! You have this time a dy/dx which is: the infinitely small parts of chyle over the infinitely small parts of lymph, and this differential relation tends towards a limit: the blood, that is to say: chyle and lymph compose blood.[52]

The infinite sets of lymph and chyle simplest bodies each moves at its own speed. When sets collide, they communicate some of their motion to one another. Yet, because they continue communicating the differences of their speeds, they sustain their reciprocal interaction; and thus our blood, for as long as its parts retain their differential relations, maintains the relative integrity of its composition. It would decompose if, for example, the blood's differentially-united simplest bodies came into contact with arsenic. The speeds and slownesses of the poison's simplest bodies, rather than uniting with the lymphs and chyles, will cause the blood particles to take up other differential relations.[53] This is because in a certain way the differential value of the blood particles' speeds according to Deleuze determines the quantity of the compound's power to affect the compositional relations of other bodies and also to sustain its own while in that encounter. The blood has its power, and the blood of course differentially combines with the other tissues in the body, which themselves combine to make organs, and so on to higher orders of combination, all the way up to the whole of our body. Depending on the power values of all the complexly interacting layers of differentially relating parts, our body expresses at any moment some degree



[50] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 4*, p.171; *The Letters*, p.193.
[51] Deleuze, *Spinoza: Philosophie pratique*, p.47; *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p.32.
[52] Deleuze, Seminar 10/03/1981.
[53] Deleuze, Seminar 10/03/1981.



of power to affect and be affected, which as well is its level of 'perfection' and power of action. This value varies according on the one hand to how bodies around us are affecting us at that moment and on the other hand to how the bodies within us are affecting each other's motions. In some cases, like when ingested nutrition enters the blood, the differential relations of speeds and slownesses increase in power. Yet when for example the greater power of arsenic affects the blood and decomposes it by decreasing its power below a certain threshold, this sends a chain reaction of affective shockwaves throughout the body, decomposing all the other higher orders of differentially related parts. If it decreases our whole body's power below a certain threshold, we die. Our body no longer expresses our modal essence, but instead its rearranged parts express the essences of other modes, such as the worms and soil we recompose into.[54]

3 Powers of intensity

Deleuze further explains the continuous variability of affective powers when discussing the ideas we have while undergoing affections. When sets of simplest bodies affectively impact the parts of our own bodies, their shocking collision corresponds with the production of an (inadequate) idea of that object in our imagination. "I look at the sun," says Deleuze, "and the sun little-by-little disappears and I find myself in the dark of night; it is thus a series of successions, of coexistences of ideas, successions of ideas."[55] These ideas also correspond to an increase or decrease in our power of acting, and the variations are continuous. He has us imagine that we encounter on the street our enemy Peter who makes us afraid. Yet, we suddenly turn our glance toward our friend Paul, whose charm reassures us. While moving from the ideas of Peter to Paul, we underwent a continuous increase in our power of action. These variations, Deleuze explains, are ever-altering quantities: "In other words, there is a continuous variation in the form of an increase-diminution-increase-diminution of the power of acting or the force of existing of someone according to the ideas which she has," and "this kind of melodic line of continuous variation will define affect."[56]

[54] Deleuze, *Spinoza*, p.121; Seminar 10/03/1981; *Spinoza: Philosophie pratique*, p.47; *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, pp.32-33.
[55] Deleuze, Seminar 24/01/1978.
[56] Deleuze, Seminar 24/01/1978.





Now, according Spinoza, if somehow the simplest parts of a body were replaced by new ones, it will retain its nature, so long as the new simplest bodies maintain the prior set's same relations and communications of motion.[57] Yet, is it not also possible that as soon as the relations change, the body changes its nature; and thus, would not the extensive mode express a different modal essence each instant, with the result being that modes never remain self-same on account of the continual fluctuations in their relational constitution? To explain the solution to this problem, Deleuze offers a second illustrative use for Spinoza's circle diagram from the 'letter on the infinite,' when analyzing Spinoza's correspondence with Blyenbergh in letters 18 through 24.[58] In this discussion, Deleuze focuses on the problem of how instantaneous affections cause our body to continually express variations in our modal essence's perfection or power, while nonetheless the essence remains somehow eternally self-same.

Blyenbergh becomes confused by Spinoza's notion that we are always as perfect as we can be, because also we are continually affected in such a way that we will have at each moment a different amount of bodily capacity. Yet, we are always fully perfect; for, we cannot be expected to have had any other level of power at some given time. Hence, the blind man is no more deprived of sight than the stone: both have been affected in such a way that seeing is not at that moment one of their powers. They are both as perfect as they can possibly be in that instant. We think otherwise when first we classify things in terms of their genus.[59] So, we expect the blind person to have sight as other people normally have. Yet, when considered as an unclassified individual, he is not lacking in any property, but rather merely expresses all the powers resulting from his given immediate internal and external affections. Deleuze then reformulates Blyenbergh's challenge to Spinoza. To say that we are only as perfect as we are at some moment implies an instantaneity of essence: "there belongs to an essence only the present, instantaneous affection that it experiences insofar as it experiences it."[60] Or as Blyenbergh himself writes, "nothing else pertains to an essence than that which it possesses at the moment it is perceived."[61]

[57] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 1*, p.100; *Complete Works*, p.128.
[58] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 4*, pp.79-157; *The Letters*, pp.129-168.
[59] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 4*, p.91; *The Letters*, p.134.
[60] Deleuze, Seminar 20/01/1981.
[61] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 4*, p.137; *The Letters*, p.160.





Thus, Deleuze reads this to be a reference to the instantaneity of an affective alteration, and he offers another illustration. We are meditating in a dark room, and we are as perfect as we can be given the affections we have. Then without warning, someone enters the room and abruptly turns on the lights, which completely dazzles us and renders us no longer able to maintain mental focus. We pass between two very different states in a "lightning fast" alteration: "Two successive affections, in cuts. The passage is the lived transition from one to the other." Every passage between affections is then "necessarily an increase of power or a decrease of power."[62] So if instead we are looking for our glasses in the complete dark, and then someone turns on a dim light, we appreciate him, because then the light increased our power of action. What we note here especially is that the affection's increase or decrease is seen as instantaneous, which means it *does not extend in time*.[63] It is an inextensive intensity.

Deleuze appeals to this concept of instantaneous affection when distinguishing 'affection' (*affectio*) and 'affect' (*affectus*).[64] Affections are the effect of one body on another in space, and they determine the states of the affected bodies. The particles of light suddenly striking our eyes will change the relations of speeds between the simplest bodies that compose us, and this is the affection. An affect, however, is the effect that the affection has on the way the simplest bodies' relations will alter in the next instant, and it is responsible for the variations of bodies' powers.[65] Deleuze describes both affections and affects as signs. Affections are signs of how the bodies affecting us have altered our composition, either in a beneficial or detrimental way. Affects however are indicators of whether we are changing to more or less power, and they also indicate how forcefully the affecting body influences this change. Deleuze calls the affection 'scalar', because it is merely a simple quantity. Affects are 'vector', because the quantitative value also includes direction, the up or down orientation of the affection's tendency to change, along with the potency of its influence. If we think of affections as the places of variation along a geometrical curve, then affects would be

[62] Deleuze, Seminar 20/01/1981.
[63] Deleuze, Seminar 20/01/1981.
[64] Deleuze, Seminar 24/01/1978.
[65] Deleuze, "Spinoza et les trois 'éthiques', " p.175; "Spinoza and the Three 'Ethics'," p.141.





the tangents at those places, telling us which way and how strongly the variable quantities of that moment want to change.[66]

The affects involved in each affection, then, are degrees or grades of change and are thus intensive variations rather than extensive ones.[67] As we noted, our body's composition of simplest extensive bodies undergoes continual rearrangements of its speed relations, which corresponds to a different degree of power that the body has at some moment. Yet throughout our lifetime, we will at some point undergo affective alterations that give us the most power we will ever have, and then at the end of our life, we will suffer an affection that takes us below a minimum threshold of our power, which is when we die. However, our death is not the death of our modal essence; it is rather our body's parts taking up new arrangements whose power is lower than what can sustain us as an expression of our particular essence. To illustrate, Deleuze again employs Spinoza's circle diagram from the 'letter on the infinite'. The affection that takes us to our peak power is like the inequality of distance closest to the largest line at the top. The affection moving us below our lowest level of power then would lie at the shortest line at the bottom. All the inequalities of distance between those two are the range of affective variations that our body can sustain and yet still express our modal essence.[68] So unlike the prior usage of the diagram where Deleuze divides the space into infinitely small parts in order to illustrate simplest extensive bodies related differentially, in this case we instead consider the degrees of change from one circle distance to its immediate successor – with each one being a differential relation – and we are to regard them as all the intensities of affective variation that our body will undergo while still expressing our essence [see diagrams page 34]. Thus, our essence as a quantitative range of power is something that, as a full spectrum of differential values, does not itself change while our body varies continuously throughout its duration.[69] Each fleeting change of our power is an expression of just one infinitely small part of our eternal essence's entire range of possible intensive variations. Hence, Deleuze uses the diagram in this case to illustrate intensive rather than extensive infinities. The intensive range is infinite not because it is composed of

[66] Deleuze, "Spinoza et les trois 'éthiques'," pp.172-173; "Spinoza and the Three 'Ethics'," p.139.
[67] Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, pp.173-174; *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, p.191.
[68] Deleuze, Seminar 20/01/1981.
[69] Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, p.191; *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, pp.208-209.





an incredibly large number of countable parts. As a continuous variation, it is differences all the way down; so, if we divide it a finite number of times, we will only obtain parts that are divisible still into smaller pieces. This is infinity as pure differential variation and not as an immense pre-given number. Even though its range is constricted within definite limits, no finite numerical value can quantify the extent to which our continuous affective variation is divisible.

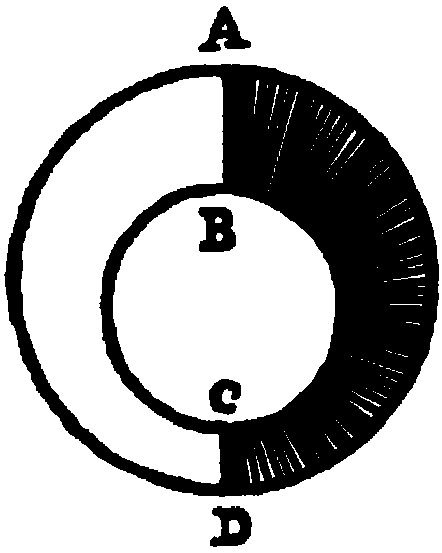
We note in passing how it might seem that there is more to a body's affective capacities then just its level of power, because two very different things could conceivably have just about the same range of power and yet differ profoundly in their capacities. Deleuze explains that bodies are distinguishable not just by their total quantitative range of power but also by the different sorts of affects within that body's capacity, with each such affect-type expressing its own degree of perfection. Consider for example how an ox and a draft horse have similar types of affective powers. They can both sustain themselves when profoundly affected by heavy burdens, although they cannot maintain for long when running at high speeds. A race horse, however, can sustain high speeds, but it does not hold itself together well under great loads. Thus although both the draft and race horse belong to the same species, the draft horse's affective capacities make it more resemble the ox. Yet, what produces the different types of affective abilities are the particular quantitative power arrangements of simplest bodies. The complex layers of motional relations among the race horse's simplest bodies are such that it has greater running powers but lower bearing capacity; hence, these more qualitative differences in affective power still at their basis are matters of differential relations between quantitative values.[70]

So regarding Deleuze's novel interpretation of the infinity diagram, we might on the one hand imagine the finite extent of space between the minimum and maximum extensive limits to be infinitely divided into 'inequalities of distance' or variations in 'degrees of speed', both of which being differential relations. This would be how the diagram depicts the extensive modal infinity.

[70] Deleuze, *Spinoza: Philosophie pratique*, pp.166-167; *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p.124.

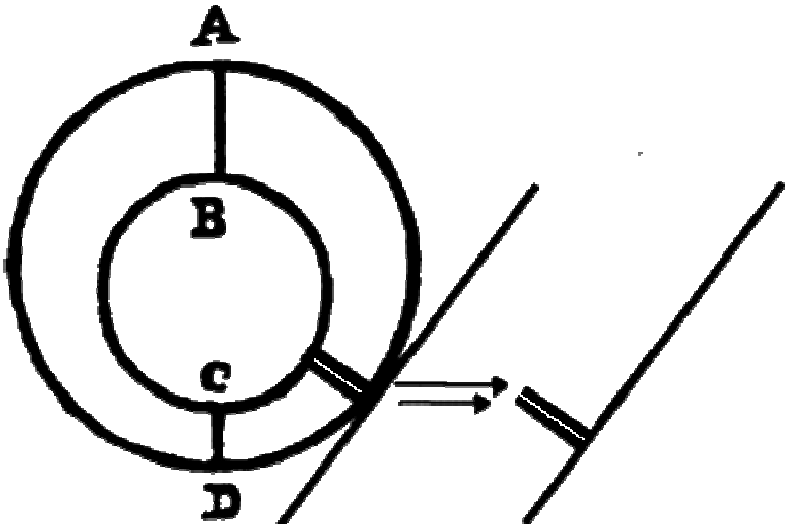






Extensive Modal Infinity:
Space infinitely divided into simplest bodies as differential relations

Or, we might instead conceive each inequality of distance, each differential relation, as one degree of affective transition among an infinity of others within the maximum and minimum bounds of our body's total range of power.



Intensive Modal Infinity:
Each transition from one inequality of distance
to the next is like the passage from one
level of affective power to the next in an instant





Now having examined Deleuze's dual usage of the letter diagram, we can offer a more clarified account of the link between intensive and extensive modal infinities: fundamentally, they both involve differential relations, and affective alterations in the extensive domain of simplest bodies strictly correspond to variations on the intensive level of affective powers.[71] This connection also provides a view of the world as being one where affective shock-waves of continuously varying intensities send decomposing and recomposing forces throughout all the bodies of the extensive world.

To further illustrate the continuous variability of affection, Deleuze employs a medieval illustration: the white wall. Although the wall is white, it is still made-up of continuous variations of its whiteness, however subtle they may be. We cannot make out figures on the wall unless we trace shapes on it. Nonetheless, we can still say that the wall is made-up of individuals, even without resorting to extrinsic relations between extending shapes. Because the wall is made-up entirely of variations, there are individual degrees of change. These degrees then would be intensities. So, the whiteness of the wall in general is a quality. When we determine shapes on the wall, we have magnitudes of extensive length. But, what makes up these extensive qualities is something more intrinsic: the degrees of variation, that is, the quantitative intensities.[72]

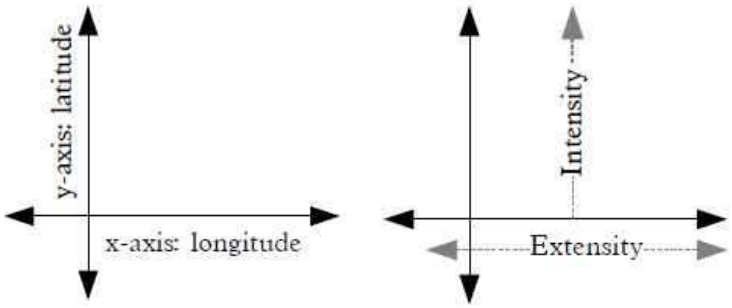
Deleuze further relates the intensities of the white wall to the intensities of Nicole Oresme's 'latitude of forms'.[73] In the 14th Century, there was not yet a precise definition for an instantaneous rate of change, although steps to develop one were prepared in the notion of the latitude of forms, that is, of the variability of qualities. The word 'form' here means: "any quality which admits of variation and which involves the intuitive idea of intensity – that is, to such notions as velocity, acceleration, density."[74] These qualities are then expressed quantitatively by means of latitude (also termed 'altitude'). "The latitude of a form was the degree to which the latter possessed a certain quality, and the discussion centered about the *intensio* and the *remissio* of the form, or the alterations by which this quality is acquired or lost."[75]

[71] Deleuze, 24/03/1981.
[72] Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, p.179; Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, p.196; Seminar 10/03/1981.
[73] Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, pp.173-174; Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, p.191; Seminar 10/03/1981.
[74] Boyer, *The History of the Calculus and its Conceptual Development*, p.73.
[75] Boyer, *The History of the Calculus and its Conceptual Development*, p.73.





They considered many types of change-rates, including distance and quantity of light, heat, and density. We currently represent such rates of change using coordinates along *x* and *y* axes. In Oresme's latitude of forms, we may treat the *x*-axis as the longitudinal dimension, and the *y* as the latitudinal one.[76]



Oresme writes: "every intensity which can be acquired successively ought to be imagined by a straight line perpendicularly erected on some point of the space or subject of the intensible thing, e.g., a quality." An intensity, "according to which something is said to be 'more such and such,' as 'more white' or 'more swift'," is "infinitely divisible in the manner of a continuum in only one way" and is thus best represented by a line.[77]

We represent the linear quality in terms of longitude and latitude by "figuring" them. If there is no alteration in the rate of change across some extension (time in the case of velocity), then there is a uniform rate of change, a *latitudo uniformis.* The points representing the intensity's uniform movement would stay along the horizontal axis and thus would be figured by a rectangle:[78]





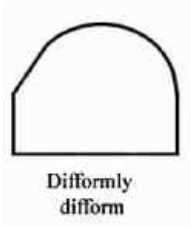
[76] Turetzky, "Pictorial Depth: Intensity and Aesthetic Surface," pp.10-11.
[77] Oresme, "The Configuration of Qualities and Motions, Including a Geometrical Proof of the Mean Speed Theorem," p.245.
[78] Images from: Babb, "Mathematical Concepts and Proofs from Nicole Oresme."



If something's velocity increases, but at a uniform rate of augmentation (constant acceleration), then the depicted form expresses *latitudo difformis*. Because the magnitude of intensity increases, we would figure it with a triangle or an evenly sloping straight line:[79]



All other forms are ones whose non-uniform rate of change itself is not uniform. These are *latitudo difformiter difformis*, as for example an irregularly-paced rate of acceleration, which is always the case in the physical world. Oresme says of the *difformly difform quality* that, "it can be described negatively as a quality which is not equally intense in all parts of the subject nor in which, when any three points of it are taken, the ratio of the excess of the first over the second to the excess of the second over the third is equal to the ratio of their distances." Hence, if the latitudinal line is not smoothly straight, then it is difformly difformed. *Latitudo difformiter difformis* is "imaginable by means of figures otherwise disposed according to *manifold variation*:"[80]



For Deleuze, our bodies are affected in a difformly difform way. This means that the changes are thoroughly irregular and heterogeneous. Hence, we cannot know what our body's power will be. We are affected by continuously varying waves of

[79] Oresme, "The Configuration of Qualities and Motions," p.247.
[80] Oresme, "The Configuration of Qualities and Motions," p.248.





affection, made-up of continuously irregular tendencies for change, that is, by a heterogeneity of intensities.

With all this in mind, we may further explain how intensive magnitudes can be seen as what generates our affections. So we consider Leibniz, for example, who makes use of the concepts of the medieval latitude of forms (namely, intension, extension, and longitudinem) to describe physical motion.[81] For Leibniz, a magnitude is intensive when it is infinitely small and thus non-extensive. But, Leibniz did not just understand intensive magnitudes in this privative way. As well, he will have us think of a vanishing value as a "generative infinitesimal," which was also thought later to be an "'intensive' infinitely small."[82] The physical motion's intensity (*intensio*) is generative in the sense that it is the "embryonic" element of the movement. It is the instantaneous speed that will be *diffused* into an extension of space.[83] What is important to note is that this intensity, which here is the tendency for the object to change its speed, is instantaneous and non-extensive, but also *generative*. So Leibniz' calculus method has us begin with extensive magnitudes and diminish them until they vanish. But, this is a mathematical technique to determine their quantities. As intensive magnitudes, they are what is most immediate in motion and in fact are largely what generates the movement. So let's invert our perspective. Previously we saw intensive magnitudes from the viewpoint of extensive ones; for, the intensive infinitely small was obtained by infinitely shrinking an extensive magnitude. But let's not forget that an affective variation is an event. In its immediacy, it is originally an intensive magnitude, and it is only secondarily diffused into extensions, through the mediation of an extent of time and space. So, from the perspective of immediacy, we begin with the infinitely small intensive magnitude, and only after do we think of it secondarily expanding infinitely outward into finite extensities.

The sort of quantity in these intensive magnitudes, then, is really a matter of 'degree' or 'grade'. There is a certain degree of intensity that contributes to motion in extensity. In his short essay "Studies in Physics and the Nature of Body," Leibniz

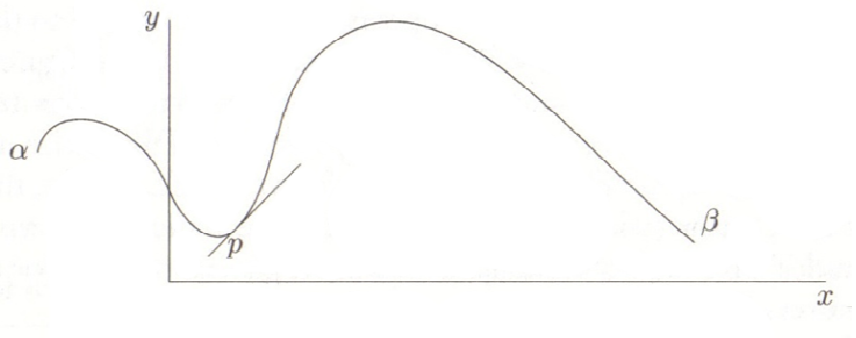
[81] Rey, "The Controversy Between Leibniz and Papin," p.94; p.99.
[82] Boyer, *The History of the Calculus and its Conceptual Development*, p.28.
[83] Leibniz, *Mathematische Schriften, vol. 6*, p.355, "Diffusio actionis in motu vel actionis extensio est quantitas effectus formalis in motu. Intensio ejusdem actionis est quantitas velocitatis, qua factus est effectus seu qua materia per longitudinem translata est." François Duchesneau translates this as: "The diffusion of action in motion or the extensio of action is the quantity of formal effect in motion. The intensio of the same action is the quantity of speed by which the effect is produced or the matter is carried through length," Duchesneau, "Leibniz's Theoretical Shift in the Phoranomus and Dynamica de Potentia," p.103.





explains the intensive magnitudes involved in movement also in a more genetic sense, in terms of *conatus*, or the tendency toward motion. To better understand how Spinoza's affection is a matter of these differential intensities, we will need first to understand Leibniz' *conatus* and put aside for the moment Spinoza's sense of the term. Leibniz borrows this concept from Hobbes. *Conatus* explains both variations in physical motion as well as the phenomena resulting from sense impressions. In English, Hobbes calls it 'endeavor', which is 'point motion', the movement through an indefinitely small space for an indefinitely small amount of time.[84] Because the motion does not extend into time or space, it is better understood as a "tendency toward motion" or as "a striving to move in a particular direction."[85] Instantaneous velocity, which indicates the strength of the tendency, would then be the quantity of *conatus*.[86] This holds not just for bodies in motion, but also for geometrical magnitudes. For Hobbes, a curve for example is the motion of a point whose direction is in continuous variation. So we may regard curves as having their own instantaneous velocities at certain points along their motion. When we regard curves in this way, the moving point then is the *generating factor* in the curve's creation. Douglas Jesseph explains Hobbes' conception, writing:

> For example, take a curve to be traced by the motion of a point, and at any given stage in the generation of the curve, this *generating point* will have a (directed) instantaneous velocity. This, in turn, can be regarded as the ratio between the indefinitely small distance covered in an indefinitely small time; this ratio will be a finite magnitude which can be expressed as the inclination of the tangent to the curve at the point.[87]



[84] Jesseph, "Truth in Fiction," p.217. For our purposes we may regard this indefinitely small magnitude as equivalent to the infinitely small. The indefinite magnitude is less than any givable finite value.
[85] Jesseph, "Truth in Fiction," p.218.
[86] Jesseph, "Truth in Fiction," p.218.
[87] Jesseph, "Truth in Fiction," p.218.





If we examine his diagram, we will find for example an instant at *p* where the point-motion of the *conatus* generates an infinitely small part of the curve. The curve at this place is pulled so-much upward and so-much outward. The ratio of the two can be expressed as a line, which tells us the direction the curve is tending at that infinitely small location in time and space (when we regard the curve dynamically as a point in motion).

One consequence of Spinoza's theory of affection is that inanimate objects in a way can be said to have sense impressions of the bodies impacting them. (This is because affection is a matter of the changes in power caused by the contact of any bodies, whether animate or inanimate.)[88] Hobbes will also explain sensation in terms of this physical sense of *conatus*, but in a way that will avoid Spinoza's strange conclusion. For Hobbes, sense perception results from the pressure and resistance at the points of contact between impacting bodies.[89] There is no extensive motion at this point of impact. But the *conatuses*, the strivings toward motion, pass through each other at that point of contact. And yet, the *conatuses* do not express their magnitudes in a finite extent of time or space. The impact produces an impression at that point, which creates a phantasm, but it only exits in an instant.[90] Rocks, for example, would not really have a sense impression, because none manifest for longer than an instant, which means they have no impressions that exist in time or at any extending region of their inanimate body. Soon we will see how Leibniz considers such beings as 'momentary minds', because their impressions never linger for more than a moment. Sentient beings, however, have nerve systems which propagate the conatus' magnitudes throughout the organism.[91] Sentient beings also then retain sense impressions in their imaginations, although they slowly decay with time as new impressions assert their forces.[92] What we note especially is that sensation and phenomena arise from these intensive magnitudes of tendencies-toward-variation that happen in an instant and that propagate through the bodies of sentient beings.

Leibniz' concept of *conatus* originally builds from Hobbes' conception. Leibniz' version differs in that his understanding will gradually verge-away from Hobbes' pure mechanism and materialism, but this difference will not concern us

[88] Goldenbaum, "Indivisibilia Vera – How Leibniz Came to Love Mathematics," p.65.
[89] Hobbes, *Human Nature and De Corpore Politico*, pp.214-215.
[90] Goldenbaum, "Indivisibilia Vera," p.65.
[91] Hobbes, *Human Nature and De Corpore Politico*, p.214; p.216.
[92] Hobbes, *Human Nature and De Corpore Politico*, pp.213-214; pp.218-219.



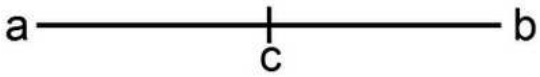


here.[93] Instead we follow Leibniz' elaboration of Hobbes' concept, because we will find that it informs Deleuze's notion of affection as intensity in Spinoza. In the second part of the thesis, we will see that Deleuze draws from Leibniz' notion of momentary minds when explaining what Deleuze calls "the first synthesis of time."

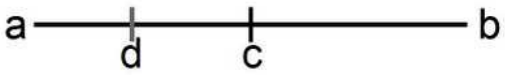
To help us grasp his concept of *conatus*, Leibniz first has us understand how the spatial beginnings of physical things do not extend in space.[94] In short, his explanation is that extended things have extensive parts. But, a beginning does not have parts; therefore, a beginning cannot be an extended thing. To illustrate, he has us first imagine line *ab*.



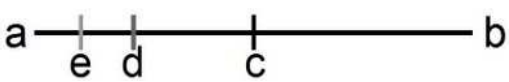
Line *ab* extends. It has a beginning *a* and an end *b*. It must also have a middle then. We will find middle-point *c* half-way between the endpoints.



This creates another extended segment, line *ac*. It too must have a middle-point. So half-way between *a* and *c* we place point *d*.



Now we have extended-line *ad*. So we will place point *e* in the middle.



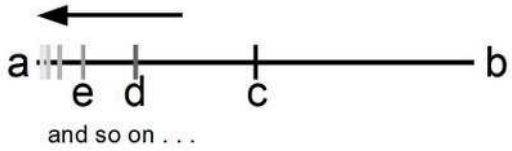
We can imagine placing middle-points repeatedly, moving toward *a*.

[93] Goldenbaum, "Indivisibilia Vera," pp.60-61.

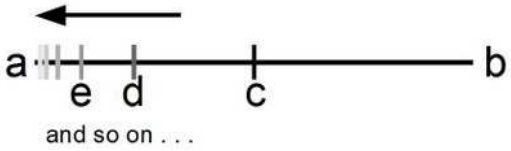
[94] The following material on Leibniz' *conatus* comes from Leibniz, *Die Philosophischen Schriften, vol. 4*, pp.228-232; "The Theory of Abstract Motion: Fundamental Principles," pp.140-142.







Now, if a line has parts, then only one of them can be a beginning. And, the beginning itself cannot have more parts within it. We are taking the left-side of the line to be its beginning. We also see there are many parts on that left side. So, there are many candidates for the beginning. To determine which one is the beginning, we need to see that it is on the left-most side of the line and also that it does not have any more parts within it. For, if it did, then the beginning is to be found in the left-most part within that composite part. The whole composite piece, then, cannot be the beginning, because it has parts, and one of those inner parts itself is exclusively the beginning. So we may use this criteria to devise a test. We (1) examine a candidate; (2) we see if we can remove from it a part on the right-side; (3) if we can remove a part on the right-side, then the beginning is to be found on the left-side part; yet (4) if we try to remove anything from the candidate, but find that any possible removal leaves nothing left, then it must be the beginning. For, it is on the left-most side and it is not made-up of parts. So we will put these criteria into practice on our divided line:



Our first candidate is line *ac*. We can remove from the right-side line *dc*, which leaves line *ad*. So the beginning must lie in *ad*. Now *ad* is our candidate. We remove *ed* from the right, and *ae* remains. So *ae* is our new candidate. We keep repeating this process. As long as our beginning is an extended part of the line, it will be divisible. However, any divisible piece cannot itself be the beginning. Thus, something's beginning cannot be extensive.





> So nothing is a beginning from which something on the right side can be removed. But that from which nothing extended can be removed is *unextended*. Therefore the beginning of body, space, motion or time – namely, a point, *conatus*, or *instant* – is either nothing which is absurd, or *unextended*, which was to be demonstrated.[95]

And thus, because beginnings are indivisible and unextended, there are indivisibles or unextended beings.[96] Points are infinitely small. So on the one hand, they do not extend in space, while on the other hand, their magnitude does not equal zero. We will see that despite being unextended, they are responsible for the generation of motion. Leibniz explains that when something is moving, it does so continuously. In other words, in motion there are never tiny pauses during which the body is at rest. And when something is at rest, it will remain at rest until something else causes it to move. If motion had little moments of rest, then the motion would tend to be at rest until acted-on by something else. Because a point is infinitely small, and not nothing, the ratio of a point to space is one to infinity. As was the case with Hobbes, Leibniz' *conatus* then is motion at a point, or instantaneous velocity. As such, *conatus* is the differential relation. It is the beginning and end of motion, just as the infinitely small magnitude is the beginning and the end of the line.

Now, when something very small hits something much larger than it, the smaller thing seems to stop its motion. But at the moment of contact, the tiny body is still striving to move, even though in the next moment it will not move. Instead, that endeavor to move is transferred to the larger object, which moves ever so slightly, even if infinitely little. So, even if the larger body was not tending in any motion, even the smallest body when contacting it will cause it also to tend somewhere, although that tendency may be too small to change its location. So when bodies make contact, they transfer their tendencies to each other, and also they cause each other to move, even if ever so slightly. As we just noted, *conatus* is the beginning and the end of motion. So in a collision, the end of the motion of the one body is the same as the

[95] Leibniz, *Die Philosophische Schriften, vol. 4*, p.229, "nihil ergo initium est, cui aliquid dextrorsum adimi potest. Cui nihil extensionis adimi potest, inextensum est; initium ergo corporis, spatii, motus, temporis (puntum nimirum, conatus, instans) aut nullum, quod absurdum, aut inextensum est, quod erat demonstrandum;" "The Theory of Abstract Motion: Fundamental Principles," p.140, emphasis mine.

[96] Leibniz, *Die Philosophische Schriften, vol. 4*, p.229; "The Theory of Abstract Motion: Fundamental Principles," p.140.

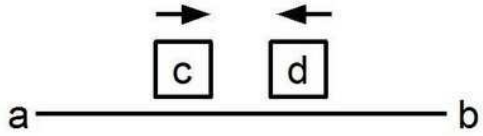




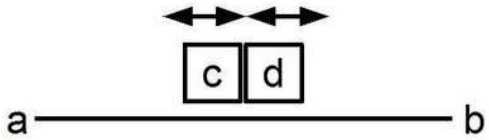
beginning of the motion of the other body. This, again, is motion at a point. Consider if body *c* is moving toward point *b* on line *ab*. And body *d* is moving toward point *a*.



They continue toward each other,

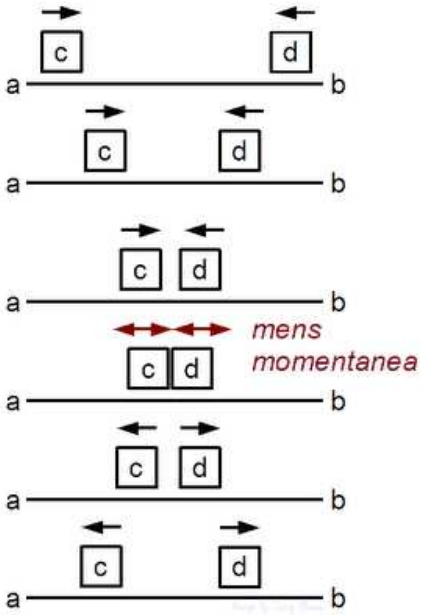


and then collide.



At the moment of collision, the two bodies are 1) still striving forward, 2) transferring their *conatuses*, and thus 3) striving backwards; and this happens in the same moment. Leibniz, like Hobbes, thinks that these transfers of *conatus* do not last in objects without memories. Hence, the impressions that the transferred *conatuses* make are just momentary, and thus inanimate bodies for example are *mens momentanea*, or momentary minds.





Now we will see how the inextensive point, the *conatus*, and intensity are all related. Because *conatus* is an instantaneous motion, there is an infinitely small movement during an infinitely small amount of time. Nonetheless, any point on that body is tending some direction, so in that instantaneity any one point on the body crosses many points in space: "One point of a moving body at the time of *conatus*, or in a time less than any assignable time, is in many places or points of space."[97] So, because the moving body's points are simultaneously in many points in space, the body will fill a space greater than its own size: "the body will fill a part of space greater than itself, or greater than it would fill at rest or if moving more slowly, or if striving in one direction only;" and "whatever moves is never in one place when it moves, nor indeed in one instant or least moment of time, because whatever moves in time strives, or begins and stops moving, in that instant, that is, it changes its place."[98] In fact, on account of the *conatus*, the moving body is intensively tending toward moving outside its spatial or temporal point, but not extending extensively, but rather *endeavoring intensively*. That is to say, it is tending in infinitely small magnitudes that when differentially related can produce an incredible intensive force or *conatus*, which over an extent of time and space translate into motion, as we saw with the generative "embryonic" intensity (*intensio*) in movement.

[97] Leibniz, *Die Philosophische Schriften, vol. 4*, p.229; "The Theory of Abstract Motion: Fundamental Principles," p.140.
[98] Leibniz, *Philosophische Schriften, vol. 4*, pp.229-230; "The Theory of Abstract Motion: Fundamental Principles," p.140.



John Bell further explains the how infinitesimal intensities are immediate to the composition of extensive magnitudes. He notes that 17th century mathematicians regarded curves as being composed of infinitesimal straight lines (like Barrow's linelets). As infinitesimal, these indivisible parts are not conceived as being extensive but rather intensive like temperature and density. And these degrees can be thought to be the immediate generative elements in extensive values created by motion, for example:

> When the continuum is the trace of a motion, the associated infinitesimal/intensive magnitudes have been identified as *potential* magnitudes—entities which, while not possessing true magnitude themselves, possess a *tendency* to generate magnitude through motion, so manifesting "becoming" as opposed to "being."[99]

Tangents, we saw earlier, express the direction that the curve is heading at some limit along the bending line. An infinitesimal tangent would then on the one hand be a constituent part of the curve, while on the other hand would merely be a degree or grade of change in the tendency of direction, and for that reason it is an intensity.[100]

Kant as well regards physical intensities as grades or degrees, and we cover it briefly, because later in the next chapter we will see that this understanding of intensity underlies Kant's theory of phenomena. He explains for example in the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* that speeds are intensities. We can combine two distances to get one twice as long. But, combining two equal speeds does not double the speed. One speed, then, is not made up of smaller speeds, as if "a given velocity consists of smaller velocities and a speed of slownesses in the same way that a space consists of smaller spaces." He continues:

> the parts of the velocity are not external to one another as the parts of the space are; and if the former are to be considered as quantity, then the concept of their quantity, since it is intensive, must be constructed in a way different from that of the extensive quantity of space.[101]



[99] Bell, *The Continuous and the Infinitesimal in Mathematics and Philosophy*, p.16.
[100] Bell, *The Continuous and the Infinitesimal in Mathematics and Philosophy*, p.18.
[101] Kant, *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft*, p.493; *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, p.36.



Later in the text Kant refers again to intensive quantities. He explains that matter fills space only because its parts repel the penetration of impeding bodies. So we might for example consider a balloon. It fills up so much space. It would fill up more if the pressure around it were lower, or greater within it. And if we squeeze it, the balloon will burst and lose its volume. Hence from Kant's view, it is the repelling forces of matter that are responsible for its taking up an extent of space. These forces, which he calls the *forces of extension*, have a certain *grade* or *degree*. This intensive value does not tell us *how much* space is being filled, but rather *how strongly* that space is being filled.[102] In the next chapter, we will see how Kant's physical understanding of intensity correlates with the phenomenal meaning he gives it as well.

What we note then is that even from a mathematical perspective, intensive magnitudes are understood more than just as inextensive quantities. They are degrees of variation whose quantities in part explain the extensive magnitudes that the intensive ones help to bring about. We could loosely consider them as something like forces that are expressed extensively. We will find Deleuze building from this sense of the concept. What we experience most directly are these intensive degrees of variation. They are not durationally temporal, but they are like the infinitely small parts of time that come to constitute larger extents. Yet, it is not so much like little segments making up a line or curve. They are more like little tendencies pushing and pulling the extending line in different directions and to different degrees. Every moment of our experience of the world involves such non-durational variations. And, it is only because one is different from another that they can be added to each other in an expanding way. So regarding the experiences we have over extents of time, we undergo them immediately as a series of variations, the continuous variation of affection. What this means is that the quantifiable extents of homogeneous time we experience are more immediately experienced as a chain of heterogeneous quantities, none of which filling any extent of time themselves. This will later become clearer when we discuss sublime experiences. During these moments, we experience pure quantitative heterogeneity without yet necessarily constituting extensive time and space, as we later see with Deleuze's analysis of Kant's sublime.

[102] Kant, *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft,* p.499; *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science,* p.44.





4 The Rhythm of Affection

Now recall how the *differmly differm* variations we spoke of before result from an unpredictable and patternless procession of alterations in the tendencies in how we are affected. As we saw, affections determine the quantity of power our bodies have, which can swing between a range of values before it no longer expresses our essence. Yet, this suggests our bodies might continue functioning while also ceasing to express our own essence and instead express another. In fact, Spinoza describes real instances when this happens. He writes in his *Ethics* (Part IV, Proposition 39, Scholium):

> I would here remark that I consider that *a body undergoes death, when the proportion of motion and rest which obtained mutually among its several parts is changed*. For I do not venture to deny that a human body, while keeping the circulation of the blood and other properties, wherein the life of a body is thought to consist, *may none the less be changed into another nature totally different from its own*. There is no reason, which compels me to maintain that a body does not die, unless it becomes a corpse; nay, experience would seem to point to the opposite conclusion. It sometimes happens, that *a man undergoes such changes, that I should hardly call him the same*.[103]

Spinoza then offers an example of a man whose body remained functioning while its composition altered enough that it began expressing the essence of another person.

> As I have heard tell of a certain Spanish poet, who had been seized with sickness, and though he recovered therefrom yet remained so oblivious of his past life, that he would not believe the plays and tragedies he had written to be his own: indeed, he might have been taken for a grown-up child, if he had also forgotten his native tongue. If this instance seems incredible, what shall we say of infants? A man of ripe age deems their nature so unlike his own, that he can only be persuaded that he too has been an infant by the analogy of other men.[104]

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[103] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 2*, p.102; *Ethics*, p.256, emphasis mine.

[104] Spinoza, *Opera, vol. 2*, p.102; *Ethics*, pp.256-257. But on what basis do we identify the poet now with who he once was, if they are different people, especially from the Deleuzean perspective of continuous compositional variation. Burms & Breeur provide a similar example. "Suppose that you have been an admirer of novelist X; you have been intrigued by him because you are intrigued by his work. At present, X has become a senile old man, totally incapable of writing or saying anything of great interest.





Recall again how Deleuze reads Spinoza's simple bodies to be differential relations, and hence our whole bodies to be constituted by difference. When the values for our differential relations change beyond the range that defines our essence, then our body expresses some other essence instead, and we die. Yet, Deleuze characterizes the changes in our differential composition to be *deformations*. [105] They are like the *differmly differm* variations, thoroughly heterogeneous quantitatively. So, we may be affected in ways which change our entire bodies from expressing one essence to then expressing another. This is on account of the waves of affective variation which alter the composition of our simplest bodies. We might then say of our bodies that they have the power to express multiple essences, by means of deformative decompositions. Here we find implied in Deleuze's concepts his notion of the body without organs. Our bodies are from the beginning constituted by difference. Differential affections then cause our body's composition to be under continual variation, and thus our disorganized bodies are continuously able to express new essences. So in a way, we might say that Deleuze invites us to reformulate Spinoza's idea that "we don't know what a body can do" to "we don't know who a body without organs is becoming." To further elaborate on Deleuze's Spinozistic body without organs, we address first Deleuze's Spinozistic sense of affective 'rhythm' (and in the next chapter we examine his Kantian 'rhythm' of sensation). This will involve as well addressing Spinoza's first two kinds of knowledge, which in a way are like our body's awareness of its modifications, as a sort of phenomenal "affective-awareness," if you will.

Deleuze describes Spinoza's knowledge of the first kind as being the reception of the signs of affection that tell us whether something increases or decreases our

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However, if by chance you meet X during a reception and have a brief, insignificant conversation with him, you may feel excited. It does not leave you indifferent that this old man is really the great writer X, although you fully realize that at the moment he has none of the qualities in virtue of which you became interested in him in the first place. The X you have met is connected to the X who had great artistic gifts, but the link is merely external: the bodily continuity does not guarantee that something of the relevant features is preserved. But, although X is thus in a sense merely a relic of what he used to be, you are still interested in meeting him" (Breeur & Burms, "Persons and Relics," p.136). Yet from the first person perspective, we do not identify with our old senile future selves who will not remember how we were now, but we know that others regarding us will still identify our variations (p.144).

[105] He writes that they "enjoy a margin, a limit, within which they take form and are deformed;" "jouissaient d'une marge, d'une limite dans laquelle ils se forment et se déforment," Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, p.202; *Expressionism in Philosophy*, p222-223.





power. We obtain this knowledge immediately upon contact with the bodies impacting us. The "shocks" of sun particles striking our skin, for example, tell us whether sun exposure under those circumstances empowers or weakens our body.[106] Yet, there is another kind of knowledge that we also obtain through our interactive contact with affecting bodies. It is the knowledge of the second kind, what Deleuze calls 'know-how' (*savoir faire*). We acquire it while learning how variations in the ways bodies relate cause different sorts of changes in their composition, which enables us to know how we can self-affectively modify our own compositions in order to sustain our power under the influence of initially detrimental affections.

To explain, Deleuze references a line in Dante's *Inferno*:[107] "The rain makes them howl like dogs; with one side they screen the other; they often turn themselves, the impious wretches."[108] The rain-droplet bodies pelting the damned soul's simplest bodies cause his compositional relations to decrease in power. Yet, rather than let the rain destroy him completely, he continually modifies the mutually-affective relations of his own body's parts by twisting around, so that he may co-sustain with the rain's affections. He makes one side of his body at times enter a new relation to the other side, as being a protective cover, and when that side has endured all the rain's impact that it can, he alters the relations of his body's parts yet again by turning over and making the once protected side now the protecting one. Knowing *that* harsh rain is detrimental to his body is knowledge of the first kind. Yet, knowing *how* to alter the relations of his own inner parts so to sustain his differential relation with the affecting rain bodies is knowledge of the second kind. By making changes in the relations of our body's parts, we send waves of affective alteration throughout us on the level of our simplest bodies. These internal self-affective shock-waves are in a continual mutually-responsive dance of sorts with the external waves of affection, and the perpetuated play of their dually responsive interaction is what Deleuze here calls "rhythm."[109] Because it involves the production of self-sustaining relations, the second kind of knowledge thus is an understanding of modal composition.[110] He even illustrates with

[106] Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, p.202; *Expressionism in Philosophy*, p222-223.
[107] Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, p.202; *Expressionism in Philosophy*, p222-223.
[108] Dante, *The Inferno*, p. 61.
[109] Deleuze, Seminar 17/03/1981.
[110] Deleuze, Seminar 24/03/1981.





the example of a dance floor.[111] If we know how to dance, we can alter the speed-relations of our own body's parts to suit whatever dance styles predominate on the dance floor, and in that way we come to rhythmically co-compose with the other dancers. Even not knowing how to dance can be a rhythmic application of knowledge of the second kind, if for example out of spite we intentionally enter the floor knowing how our awkward motions will disrupt the composition of the whole dancing group, like arsenic in the blood. Another example he offers is swimming. While in the water, a wave draws near us. When it strikes, we and the wave affect each other's simplest-body arrangements. We also obtain the sign telling us whether the wave increases or decreases our power (the first species of knowledge). We might also in that very instant be learning how to adjust to the wave's decompositional forces. By self-affectively modifying our own body's composition, we may stay afloat and swim in conjunction with the wave, causing our body and the wave to become a compound, a larger body.[112] Thus by swimming, our body and a water-body relate to one another and can differentially co-compose.[113]

Another illustration better expresses how the rhythm of affection is a matter of differential relations. Deleuze explains that a violin and a piano playing independently do not really produce affective rhythm. However, they may achieve a rhythmic relationship during a joint performance if the violin plays in response to the piano all while simultaneously the piano performs in response to the violin, in such a way that they each affectively modify one another while at the same time they modify themselves so to sustain their dual improvisation.[114] Cézanne also describes this rhythmic interaction when he wrote about "how to compose the canvas-easel relation with the relation of wind, and how to compose the relation of the easel with the sinking sun, and how to end up in such a way that I might paint on the ground, that I might paint lying on the ground."[115] Deleuze, recall, regards each body's continuously varying level of affection as involving a series of intensive variations. When we conceptualize each variation as a term in a series, we may then regard rhythm as the perpetuated communication of difference between two such affective series of quantitatively heterogeneous terms.

[111] Deleuze, Seminar 03/02/1981.
[112] Deleuze, Seminar 17/03/1981.
[113] Deleuze, Seminar 24/03/1981.
[114] Deleuze, Seminar 31/03/1981.
[115] Deleuze, Seminar 24/03/1981.





5 The Rhythm of Sensation

Thus, Deleuze's application of differential calculus notions allows us to conceptualize these heterogeneous series of affective intensities in a way that would otherwise seem self-contradictory: on the one hand, they are made of a series of discrete terms, while on the other hand, they nonetheless never cease being continuous in their variation from one term to the next, like how the continuity of a curve is constituted by its infinite series of distinct infinitesimal 'linelets'. Thus, we may conceive them jointly as discrete series and also as curves or 'waves'. This portrayal of Deleuze's affection will now serve to interpret some difficult terminology in his *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* book. We will also see more specifically the usefulness of the Spinoza calculus material for explaining Deleuze's theory of sensation and the body without organs. Deleuze writes in the *Francis Bacon* text that in simple sensations, rhythm "appears as the *vibration* that flows through the body without organs, it is the vector of the sensation, it is what makes the sensation pass from one level to another."[116] The vector in this case seems like the Spinozistic affect as sign: it is the intensity of the tendency for the variation to change its quantitative value. Hence, we might view the body without organs as the Spinozistic body, being composed of continually altering differential relations of motion between its simplest parts, as it decomposes and recomposes. Under this interpretation, we can account for why Deleuze writes that the body without organs is "an intense and intensive body. It is traversed by a wave that traces levels or thresholds in the body according to the variations of its amplitude. Thus the body does not have organs, but thresholds or levels."[117] As the damned soul in Dante's *Inferno* twists his once protected side toward the pelting rain, waves of affective variation now impact the newly exposed part directly, making that side the site where affective shockwaves from the outside come into contact with the self-affective ones on the inside, and in this way, it serves as a



[116] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: Logique de la sensation*, p.71; *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, p.51.
[117] Deleuze, *Logique de la sensation*, p.47; *The Logic of Sensation*, p.32.



sort of organ of sensation. Yet, this status is temporary, because he continually twists in the rain, making instead other parts of his body the new sites of affective reception.

> When the [internal] wave encounters external forces at a particular level, a sensation appears. An organ will be determined by this encounter, but it is a provisional organ that endures only as long as the passage of the wave and the action of the force, and which will be displaced in order to be posited elsewhere.[118]

In simple sensations where a provisional organ serves as the point of reception for variations, rhythm is the continual varying of the levels of sensation. However, rhythm can also emerge from the coupling of forces whose variations are tending in different directions, as when for example one image in a Francis Bacon painting impresses on us a rising force while another in the same painting imposes a descending force. Rhythm in these cases manifests as the shockwaves resonating from these two intensive waves of variational tendencies wrestling in our bodies and continuously disrupting its composition.[119] And thus we see again that Deleuze's body without organs and its waves of sensational intensity can be viewed in light of his conception of the Spinozistic body and its continuous variations of affection, with the concept of 'rhythm' playing a similar role in both cases. This provides us with a more substantial explanation for one of Deleuze's few attacks on traditional phenomenology, in this case regarding the body without organs in contrast to the phenomenological lived body:

> This ground, this rhythmic unity of the senses, can be discovered only by going beyond the organism. The phenomenological hypothesis is perhaps insufficient because it merely invokes the lived body. But the lived body is still a paltry thing in comparison with a more profound and almost unlivable Power [*Puissance*]. We can seek the unity of rhythm only at the point where rhythm itself plunges into chaos, into the night, at the point where the differences of level are perpetually and violently mixed. Beyond the organism, but also at the limit of the lived body, there lies […] the body without organs.[120]

[118] Deleuze, *Logique de la sensation*, p.49; *The Logic of Sensation*, p.34.
[119] Deleuze, *Logique de la sensation*, pp. 66-67; p.71; pp.75-76 ; *The Logic of Sensation*, pp.47-48; p.51; p.55.
[120] Deleuze, *Logique de la sensation*, p.47; *The Logic of Sensation*, p.32.





We later elaborate further how Deleuze breaks from traditional phenomenology's manner of conceiving the composition of the body as being made of harmoniously integrated parts that work organically with each other and with the world around them during phenomenal experiences. Nothing in its environment would stand out and appear to such a body that is completely accustomed to all the affective influences around it. Yet, might we not view Deleuze's attack as a result of him providing the basis for an alternate phenomenological theory of body and bodily-given phenomena? In other words, could we not regard his critique as an invitation to construct certain parts of a Deleuzian phenomenology?

6 The Rhythm of Phenomena

Recall that the phenomenon is the flash of difference communicated between two heterogeneous series. Deleuze's calculus interpretation of Spinozistic affection-waves portrays them as continuous infinite series of intensive variations. For our body to adjust to mild summer heat, it will need to sustain a complex balance of different varying patterns of internal modifications, and eventually we will no longer notice the temperature. If we then jump into a cold swimming pool, our body's given patterns prove maladaptive under this new variation in the way the external world affects us. Quite suddenly temperature appears to us, and we feel it as the immediate shockwave of new internal modifications our body undergoes in order to adjust to new external variations; the heart pumps harder, the muscles shiver, our breath deepens, our nerve signals accelerate, and so one. Temperature was not a phenomenon until the outer series of affective influences communicated their differences to our series of internal variations, producing an intense flash of phenomenal awareness. However, after our inner patterns adjust and homogenize with the water temperature, we gradually cease noticing it and begin to attend to other differences that catch our attention. We experience bodily-given phenomenal appearances when our bodies undergo variations in their differential relations with the world around us, which as well cause further decomposing and recomposing variations within us. On this basis we may regard these Deleuzian notions as implicit developments in his phenomenological thinking. And, we now will proceed along this line of inquiry with regard to Deleuze's Kantian explanation of sensation.





Chapter 2

Phenomenal Intensity in Bergson, Kant, and Leibniz

In the preceding section, we found that Deleuze reads intensity to underlie Spinoza's notion of affection and our bodily composition. Intensity is not merely the degree to which we are affected. Rather, it is the non-extending tendencies of deformative variations which produce unpredictable changes in our abilities to act and in our body's fundamental composition. An intensity then is a heterogeneous quantity, because it is continually made up of quantitative irregularities. On that basis we might evaluate an experience as being more intense when our bodies undergo the most change in the differential relations of its parts.

We will now look at Bergson's critique of intensity. For Bergson, a sensation cannot be quantified as being more or less intense than another one. Sensations can only differ extensively and qualitatively. We will find that, like with Spinoza, Deleuze reads Bergson to be implicitly using a concept of intensity. Nonetheless, Bergson's notion of the heterogeneity of sensation will prove essential to Deleuze's account of phenomena when we later turn toward Kant's distinction between the intensive and extensive magnitudes of phenomena.

1 Bergson's Critique of the 'Intensity' of Sensation

Bergson counters the belief prevailing in science and everyday life that sensations and mental states have *greater* or *lesser* quantity of intensity. He defines quantity as the degree to which one magnitude contains the other. Yet, (1) he notes that to make such an assessment, one magnitude must be superposed upon the other for comparison, and (2) intensive magnitudes cannot be superposed. Thus, we cannot speak of an intensive magnitude or quantity, because that would be an *inextensive quantity*.[121] Despite this incompatibility, we are inclined to regard intensities as

[121] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.1-3; *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, pp.1-3.





quantitative, because one intensity often *seems* greater than another. We reinforce this misconception by determining extensities that serve to measure intensities; for example, some scientists mistakenly measure intensity by reducing it to the extensity of the mechanical movements of atoms inducing our sensation: they might, for instance, attribute a strong sonic sensation to the vibrating air's molecular movements. Bergson's objection is that sensations which are disproportionate to their causes sometimes result from over-sensitivities to certain stimuli.[122]

Bergson distinguishes and exemplifies two forms of intensities, muscular efforts and psychic states, to illustrate their qualitative nature. For example, it may seem at times that our psychic experience of joy increases in intensity, when instead there is a large series of successive mental states, each one becoming differently "tinged with an indefinable quality." We then designate arbitrary "points of division" between successive forms of joy, which gives us the impression that they are increasing intensities of the same emotion. However, this distinction is really one of a gradual series of different psychic states, a "progressive stepping in of new elements," each one adding a different coloring to the emotion, and not a greater amount of it.[123]

Art provides an excellent example of the qualitative differences making up what *seems* to be an increase of emotional intensity. Art puts to sleep our active or resistant powers so that we may sympathize with its suggested ideas and emotions, as though entering a state of hypnosis. This is most evident in the rhythm of music and poetry, which suspends "the normal flow of our sensations" by causing our attention to sway to-and-fro between "fixed points."[124] Yet, the plastic arts as well bear this hypnotic power of rhythm: sculpture perpetuates a sense of movement that is forever about to begin, which absorbs "our thought and our will in their own eternity;" architecture creates rhythm through the symmetries in its form and the repetitions of its motives, which causes "our faculty of perception to oscillate between the same and the same again."[125] Art seems to hypnotize us in progressive "variations of degree" that are really "differences of state or of nature:" at first we are partly attentive to the art,

[122] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.4-5; *Time and Free Will*, pp.6-7.
[123] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.7-8; *Time and Free Will*, pp.10-11.
[124] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.10-11; *Time and Free Will*, pp.14-15.
[125] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.11-12; *Time and Free Will*, pp.15-16.





but also to peripheral matters. Slowly the rhythm draws us in until nearly all our sensations have become aesthetic ones. Hence, it was not the degree of the aesthetic feeling that increased, but merely that the conglomeration of constituent psychic states came to be colored differently by the artwork, as we progressed through a series of different emotional states.[126]

Regarding the other type of intensity – the one involving muscular efforts – Bergson claims they involve a greater number of qualitatively-different muscle contractions, rather than a greater intensity of one fixed set of muscles.[127] To demonstrate, Bergson has us clench our fist with increasing force, which gives us the impression of a sensation of effort located in our hand and increasing in a scale of magnitudes. This feeling of increase, however, is an illusion. What really happens is a qualitative change of the sensation we feel in the hand, accompanied by qualitative changes in peripheral muscles, all of which change continuously and organically. What results is the false impression that a magnitude of intensity is increasing. Not only does the sensation in the hand alter, so too the sensations change qualitatively in the muscles of our arms and shoulders. In fact, as we squeeze our fist as hard as possible, our other arm stiffens, as do our legs, and our respiration becomes restrained, all as our whole body works merely to clench but one fist. Thus, while it may at first seem that the intensity of the sensation has increased, instead, we have become aware to some degree not only of the original primary sensations, but also of the peripheral ones, and as well of the qualitative changes altering the "colorings" of them all.[128] It is not like a note increasing intensity as it is played louder, but more like a symphony in which instruments join-in one after another to contribute new tones and timbres.[129]

We often judge the intensity of light really by the changes of hue in the objects around us.[130] To demonstrate, we may perform an experiment of laying paper in front of four lit candles, then blowing them out in succession; it seems as though the light intensity decreases, when really a layer of shadow comes to pervade the paper, and

[126] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.12-14; *Time and Free Will*, pp.16-18.
[127] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, p.18; *Time and Free Will*, p.24.
[128] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.18-19; *Time and Free Will*, pp.24-26.
[129] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, p.26; *Time and Free Will*, p.35.
[130] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.38-39; *Time and Free Will*, pp.51-52.





thus the paper takes on a different shade of white. Black, he explains, has no less reality in our consciousness then does white.[131]

Intensity here is not a matter of a homogenous quantity, but is rather heterogeneous quality; that is, it is made up of a complex variety of smaller states, none of which having greater magnitude than another, but instead each being differently 'colored'.

Bergson also argues against Gustav Fechner's scale of intensity, which mathematically homogenizes sensation-changes quantitatively. Yet in Bergson's critique of Fechner, Deleuze sees him tending toward making implicit use of the concept of heterogeneous quantity. Bergson explains that Fechner builds from Ernst Weber's experiments. For illustration, we might consider them in a simplified fashion. A subject begins with some quantity of weight in her hand. We then gradually and slowly increase the mass until she feels a change in the weight. Weber then looked at the ratio between the increase-amount and the original weight value. What he discovered was that no matter what weight we begin with, this ratio will be 1/52. (In all other sensation types, there was also a constant, yet of a different numerical value; for example, for discriminating changes of brightness, 1/62; changes of pitch, 1/333; sound-volume changes, 1/11).[132]

So Weber used experimentation to determine these ratios. We can have someone experience a certain quantity of weight, light, sound, and so forth, and then use mathematics to predict in advance how much more quantity of stimulus we need to add before the subject senses a difference. Fechner was not interested just in how we move from one change to the next. Consider if we start by having the subject hold a fairly heavy weight. Weber's Law only can tell us how much we need to add for the subject to feel one increase in sensation. Fechner however wanted to be able to say that when we give that subject the initial amount of weight, she experiences a certain quantity of sensation, as compared to if she held some different mass-value. He does this by creating a scale based on Weber's findings. This artificial scale would represent what would happen if we start the subject first with no weight, then slowly add weights. Each time the subject feels an increase, we take note of how much weight the person is holding at that time. So when we arrive at a certain amount of weight, the



[131] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.39-40; *Time and Free Will*, pp.53-54.
[132] Colman, "Weber's Law."



subject will have experienced a certain number of increases. Fechner wants to say then that a given amount of weight has a certain quantity of sensation, based on the number of increases someone would need to undergo before sensing that final amount of weight. He devised a formula that allows us to begin with the numerical value for the weight someone might hold in order to calculate the quantity of sensation increments implied in that value. But, we are no longer dealing with the fixed weight values found just at the incremental levels where sensation-changes are perceived. Rather, his formula allows us to begin with any weight whatsoever, which means that the calculated sensation-values will not usually be whole numbers. The sensation quantity for one weight value might be the equivalent of four and half increments, for instance. This means that Fechner homogenized the incremental increases, as if we undergo a continuity of sensation increase as weight increase, even though this is not what the experiment shows. However, Fechner's Law has the advantage of allowing us to assign a determinate quantity of intensity to our sensations. And, because we can make these determinations for all other sorts of sensations, such as brightness and volume, we can even use Fechner's Law to compare the quantity of intensity for one type of sensation with the quantity for another sort, all in advance, using mathematics.[133]

So psychophysicists for example would try to measure the sensation of heat by comparing it with a degree of temperature that we might be feeling. But, the degree of temperature is a standardized convention falling along a continuous scale, while the sensation of heat-changes is incremental in relation to the continuous heat increases. Yet, psychophysicists really just want to know how the sensation of heat varies when you change the temperature. In other words, they want to mathematically determine the functional relation between external changes and internal sensations of change. Consider that when we have a temperature-change sensation, even though we might think it is more or less, it presumably is never more than a sensation of the quality heat. We do not perceive numerical values; we feel heat. But, psychophysicists want to ignore the qualitative aspect, and just look at the quantitative side of our heat sensations. However, Bergson argues that we do not have sensations of numbers or quantities. We just have sensations, which are qualitative in nature.[134]

[133] Masin, Zudini, and Antonelli, "Early Alternative Derivations of Fechner's Law."
[134] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.47-48; *Time and Free Will*, p.64.





For Bergson, then, the change from state *S* to *S*' is not itself numerical, even if we give numerical values to *S* and *S*'. The transition between is one qualitative experience of change. We have already established that we do not experience the continuous change of stimulus values that transpire in the transition. We just feel one single qualitative change. And, because the experience of the change itself cannot be quantified, it is purely qualitative. Yet, Bergson breaks even further with this manner of conceiving sensation. He does not see changes of our states happening in discrete stages like this. Rather, they are a continuous heterogeneity. Deleuze takes note of this when explaining Spinoza's duration and affection (and we return to this material in the second section on time).[135] We can keep looking at smaller and smaller cuts of duration, lying between states *A* to *A*', but we will never arrive at the duration of the sensation, because it exists in between these states, as the "phenomenon of transition" between them. In this way, Deleuze says, Bergson's duration and Spinoza's affection are fundamentally alike. They are both continuous variations that we may characterize as being made-up of infinitely small changes. This is also one of the bases for Deleuze to say that there is an implicit concept of intensity at work even in Bergson's critique of intensity. No matter how small the slice of duration, we only arrive a qualitative differences. Yet, because in Bergson there is a continuous heterogeneity, this implies that on the infinitely small level, there are pure differential relations. Duration is found between the infinitely close states *A* and *A*' and is thus a pure change, a pure difference, a pure intensity. It is intense, because it does not yet express itself as extending in time or space. It is only just the forces of the change, which are more of a quantitative nature than a qualitative one. While we are in this experience of transition, we do not yet know what state we will come upon. We only feel the magnitude of the change we are undergoing, and only afterward do we land in the next qualifiable extent of experience. So, even in Bergson's purely qualitative heterogeneous continuity, Deleuze still uncovers a heterogeneous *quantitative* continuity; it is an infinite series of infinitely small degrees of qualitative variation.



[135] Deleuze, Seminar 20/01/1981.



2 Kant's Extensive Syntheses of Space and Time

For Kant, when our faculties function normally in sensation, the object we encounter is given to us with extensive magnitudes: it extends in time and space. Yet, the phenomenal object is not something that merely bears extensive magnitudes; it itself *is* a magnitude: "we might think of a walking stick as having a magnitude of [one meter] [...] in contrast, Kant thinks of the walking stick as *being* a magnitude."[136] Thus, to be a phenomenal object is to be a magnitude, and we may estimate how great the extent of the magnitude is.[137] When we confront an object, we do not grasp its extensive dimensions all at once; for, no matter how small the object, a passage of time is required to scan its full spatial extent.[138] It is not until we take all the extensive parts together that we comprehend the object, to take it as a whole.

Yet, accomplishing this involves what are called Kant's three syntheses of time (and in the second part we see how Deleuze's own three time syntheses seem parallel to Kant's). Internal and external influences modify our minds from moment to moment. Because both sorts of influences affect our inner sense, they are ordered into temporal relations. There is nothing coherent in any one moment of phenomenal givenness, because as we will see, each moment is instantaneous and is only able to give us variations and not yet synthesized representations. So the first synthesis, apprehension, takes together series of moments. This captures all the variations and renders them into a single representation that gives us a small extent of the object we see and the short expanse of time it took to apprehend that unit.[139] It is in this way that apprehension takes an infinite series of pure intensive heterogeneous variations and, by synthetically assimilating them, renders them into an extensive homogenous object-part that is given in an extending homogenous lapse of time. The instants of modification should not be thought of as being like snapshot pictures, because they are more like pure variations or changes. Apprehension, however, makes snapshot-like

[136] Sutherland, "Kant's Philosophy of Mathematics and the Greek Mathematical Tradition," p.158.
[137] Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, B81, p.333; *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.132; *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A162-163/B203, p.205; *Critique of Pure Reason*, pp.287-288.
[138] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A162-164/B202-204, pp.240-206; *Critique of Pure Reason*, pp.286-288.
[139] *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A98-100, p.162-163; *Critique of Pure Reason*, pp.228-229.





representations that capture and coherently organize the variations by means of a homogenizing synthesis. Because it constitutes a sort of temporality that is not instantaneous while also not extending far into the past or future, we might say that apprehension constitutes a "living present."

Yet, because the apprehensions are present, this means they will immediately fade-away into the past. Thus, apprehension alone is not enough to grasp extensive objects; for, this requires that we put altogether in a series the apprehended representations obtained over the extent of many passing presents. The second time synthesis, the reproduction of the imagination, is what accomplishes this. It retains past representations that have given us small extensive parts so that they may be gathered together into yet a greater manifold that will be synthesized into a complete extending object. Here we might say that the past is being synthesized, because we retain the trailing series of prior representations. This is also a homogenizing process, not just because the heterogeneous differences between the various apprehensions are put aside for the sake of assimilatively unifying some given object, but also because this synthesis operates under the assumption that there are self-consistent regularities that have always persisted throughout the history of our world. For if the reproductive imagination did not assume that there always has been such a constancy in our phenomenal world, it would have no reason to try to assimilate its past fragmented pieces. Hence Kant's famous cinnabar example. He uses it to explain the associative synthesis of apprehensions, but it will as well help us to understand the temporal synthesis involved in reproduction.

> […] representations that have often followed or accompanied one another are finally associated with each other and thereby placed in a connection in accordance with which […] one of these representations brings about a transition of the mind to the other in accordance with a constant rule. This law of reproduction, however, presupposes that the appearances themselves are actually subject to such a rule, and that in the manifold of their representations *an accompaniment or succession takes place according to certain rules* [...]. If cinnabar were now red, now black, now light, now heavy, if a human being were now changed into this animal shape, now into that one, if on the longest day the land were covered now with fruits, now with ice and snow, then my empirical imagination would never even get the opportunity to think of heavy cinnabar on the occasion of the representation of the color red.[140]



[140] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A100-101, pp.163-164; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.229, emphasis mine.



Cinnabar

When our eyes move from one part of the cinnabar to the next, our reproductive imagination exerts the effort needed to continuously reproduce the passed representations, because it presumes there is a constancy throughout the past that is as well consistent with the present. Cinnabar has always been red and still is red. So, as our eyes scan a piece of it, we take all the passed red parts as belonging to one coherent object, one piece of cinnabar. And thus also, if the cinnabar is nested in other crystals, we know to stop gathering and reproducing passed apprehensions when our eyes arrive upon the other mineral's color.



Notice also Kant's reference to the "longest day" in the cinnabar passage. This will later be important when we discuss the circular motion of extensive time. What we note now is that summer solstice marks a designated point of beginning and end for yearly temporal cycles. It allows us to homogenize time by ignoring the seasonal variations that make each new day a qualitative variation on the prior one, because the passing through the heterogeneous phases of the year is like the clock's second-hand gliding in an even motion across the various numbers on the clock-dial. The successive variations throughout the year, each qualitatively different, are rendered into a spatialized homogeneity of extending temporality. So, because our reproductive imagination assumes that the current solstice, along with



all that have preceded it, are days where fruit covers the land, it constitutes an ongoing historical chronicle of a homogenously extending temporal flow.

Then the productive imagination puts the reproduced parts together in such a way that they may be conceptually recognized by the understanding, and this is the third synthesis, the 'recognition in the concept'. Kant offers the example of counting objects. Our apprehension gives us the things to be counted, all while our reproductive imagination retains them even after they have passed; then, our understanding recognizes their synthetic unification using a concept for their quantity. In this third synthesis, Kant remarks, we need the assurance that the passed apprehensions were synthesized by our one same consciousness. If we do not identify all the moments as belonging to the same consciousness, then there would be no basis to unify them as being parts that belong together.[141] As we will later see, the synthesis of recognition requires a sort of self-recognition too that is more basic than the conceptual recognition of particular manifolds. This self-consciousness in a sense is outside time, as an *a priori* transcendental condition for all other syntheses; however, it is what allows us to assume that our next act of consciousness will belong to us too and not to another consciousness with its own unique identity. It is on the basis of this consistent self-consciousness that each new apprehension is taken even from the beginning to be a part of some object or another. Kant calls this the 'thing in general = *X*'. Deleuze illustrates it by saying,

> the any-object-whatever [*l'objet quelconque*], the object = x, only receives a determination as lion, table or lighter by the diversity that I relate to it. When I relate to the object = x a diversity comprising: long hair in the wind, a roar in the air, a heavy step, a run of antelopes, well, I say it's a lion.[142]

So the *thing = x* is there even from the very beginning. Even before the first moment passes, we are already synthesizing this present moment with the yet-fulfilled succeeding moment, because we are assuming that what we apprehend now, and what we apprehend next, could both very well be two parts of the same thing that we are now perceiving. The undetermined *X* that is given now in the present will become



[141] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A103-104, pp.165-166; *Critique of Pure Reason*, pp.230-321.
[142] Deleuze, Seminar 28/03/1978.



determined in the following moment by specific content. So in a way, the third synthesis is what constitutes the future; for, what is to come is already formally synthesized with what is now happening. (We will elaborate this more in the second part of our text.)

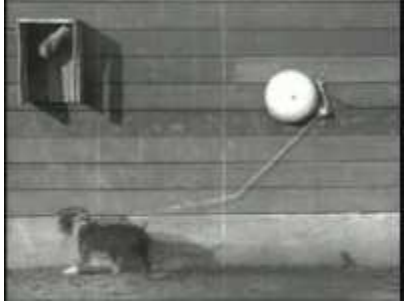
Unlike the magnitudes of these recognized objects whose extensive features we apprehend successively, intensive magnitudes are felt entirely in an instant. Their magnitude is a matter of their degree of influence on our senses, which is also the magnitude of reality being sensed.

> […] the real in appearance always has a magnitude, which is not, however, encountered in apprehension, as this takes place by means of the mere sensation in an instant and not through successive synthesis of many sensations, and thus does not proceed from the parts to the whole; it therefore has a magnitude, but not an extensive one.[143]

In fact, intensity is a matter of affection, Kant says,[144] and we will see later how Deleuze's analysis of the sublime will portray intensities in a manner similar to Spinozistic affects. Kant offers an example to help distinguish extensive and intensive magnitudes: the full moon's diameter appears to extend only a small bit less than the sun's diameter does. However, emanating from this same approximate extent of space is a vast difference of light intensity. We might upon reflection determine that the sun's brightness is "about 200,000 illuminations of the moon," but in that instant of first experiencing the light, we do not feel the intensity as a numerically determined quantity.[145] Instead, what we sense is how much more intense this sensation is when we compare it to a situation where we have no sensation at all, although for Kant this empty intuition is not an experience we can actually have. We always feel ourselves being 'suspended' higher or lower above an empty intuition. This is the negation = 0,[146] or as Deleuze renders it, intensity = 0. Deleuze elaborates on this concept in his *Francis Bacon* book, and later in this text he seems to illustrate it with Bacon works

[143] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A168/B210, p.210; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.291.
[144] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A165/B207, p.208; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.290.
[145] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A178-179/B221, p.218; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.297.
[146] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A167-168/B209-210, pp.209-210; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.291.





displaying figures suspended within a black field, as if they were sculptures supported by an armature, as for example in *Three Studies of the Human Body* (1967).

Bacon. *Three Studies of the Human Body* (1967)



The figures are pinned to a flat, blank, black background. This surrounding abyss gives us the impression that the figures are falling, although their seemingly being propped-up by an armature creates the appearance that they are suspended in their fall. So the magnitude of the intensity is felt like if we were suspended higher or lower above ground; and, the feeling of how much we would fall gives us *in an instant* the intensive magnitude.

Now at first this sort of intensity may not seem like a differential variation of the sort we encountered in Spinoza's affect. Yet, recall the distinction between affection and affect. The affection is like the quantity of the





modification, and the affect is more like the tangent or differential that tells us how much that change in power wants to increase or decrease. We will now see how Deleuze's application of intensive and extensive magnitudes in his analysis of Kant's sublime reveals an intensive magnitude of sensation that is more like affect rather than affection.

3 Rhythm in Kant's Sublime

In the three syntheses of time that Kant presents in his first critique, we get the impression that the first synthesis, apprehension, is the most basic and the closest to the continuous intensive and instantaneous variations of modification. Yet in the third critique, in Kant's analysis of the sublime, he presents an even more basic sort of synthesis: aesthetic estimation.[147] When our eyes move from a man to a tree, we assess the tree as being ten men high. So, we made ten apprehensions of relatively equal extent and each took relatively the same amount of time for our eyes to scan them. Then as our eyes move continuously from the tree to a mountain, we feel a change in scale, and so instead of using man-sized apprehensions for our measure, we use rather tree-sized ones, and we then judge the mountain to be ten trees high. What we need to note is that we *felt* the scale change. So, instant-by-instant, the visual variations change in metrical intensity, as if ascending rapidly up a scale. And in fact, it is here a power of two: a mountain is the same as a hundred men, or ten men to the power of two. So moving from man-apprehension units to tree-apprehension units meant feeling a continuous increase in the power relations of the changing scales. It was not that when looking to the mountain we saw something eleven, twelve, thirteen, and so on men high, but rather we sensed ten men stretching to another ten units of a higher power or order of magnitude than the man-scale. Thus, we are not just feeling the variations pile-up like normal. Rather, we feel the variations accelerate in metric intensity. So there is a sort of primordial synthesis that is sensitive to the variations in the variations, which to say, it is feeling whether variations are happening with greater intensity or you might say with greater speed. By probing into Kant's more profound and primordial phenomenal synthesis, Deleuze is able to dig deeper than traditional phenomenology normally goes, delving further below the most basic passive

[147] Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft,* A81-83/B82-84, pp.334-335; *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, pp.133-135.





assimilative synthesis to yet an even more fundamental one that intimately touches the raw phenomenal data.

Although Kant does not refer to extensive and intensive magnitudes when analyzing the sublime, Deleuze cleverly uncovers their implicit operation. Kant distinguishes two sorts of sublimes: the mathematical and the dynamical. Deleuze considers the mathematical sublime to be the "extensive sublime" and the dynamic is the "intensive sublime." [148] Because the extensive ultimately gives way to the intensive sublime (at least according to Deleuze) we will begin our analysis with the dynamical sublime. It is based on a feeling of being overpowered by nature. We have power if we can overcome obstacles, and if those obstacles offer resistance that we still can surpass, then we have dominion over them. But, when nature in her ferocity proves to be an obstacle whose power dominates our own capacities of resistance, we succumb to a profound feeling of fear, and such are experiences of the dynamical sublime. Kant offers some examples.

> Bold, overhanging, as it were threatening cliffs, thunder clouds towering up into the heavens, bringing with them flashes of lightning and crashes of thunder, volcanoes with their all-destroying violence, hurricanes with the devastation they leave behind, the boundless ocean set into a rage, a lofty waterfall on a mighty river, etc., make our capacity to resist into an insignificant trifle in comparison with their power.[149]

Nature's power is so much greater than our own that it is immeasurable and even seemingly infinite. When under the threat of such calamities, we are not constituting extensive objects, because the chaotic variations are too tremendous and phenomenally dominant that our concern is more for our survival than for grasping the parts and wholes in what we see. We experience an incredible magnitude of pure intensity, and we are frightened by this "infinity of material forces, the intensive infinity of forces which fill space and time."[150]

The mathematical or extensive sublime does not begin with this experience of raw intensity, but it ends that way. And this is because it involves a breakdown in the three primary syntheses of time, leaving the fourth one, aesthetic evaluation, to fend for itself in a mathematical chaos.



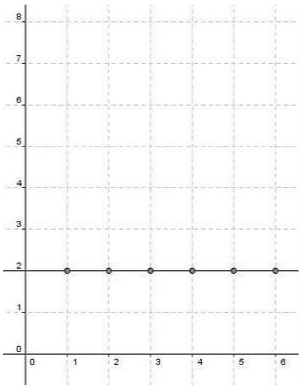
[148] Deleuze, Seminar 28/03/1978.
[149] Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, A102-103/B104, p.349; *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.144.
[150] Deleuze, Seminar 28/03/1978.



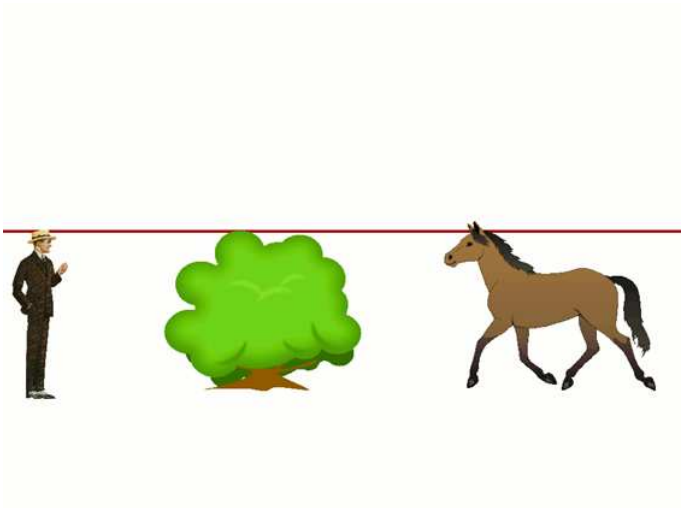
We will now provide visualizations for the sorts of variations that our aesthetic evaluation is sensitive to. Recall first Oresme's latitude of forms. *Latitudo uniformis* is a uniform rate of change.



We might graph it like this.



So let's assume our eyes first see a man, then a large bush, and then a horse. When seeing the man, perhaps our apprehension takes the extent of the man's foot as the basic unit of assessment, and finds the man to be so many feet high. When moving to the bush, this standard of measure is suitable, as it is also for the horse.



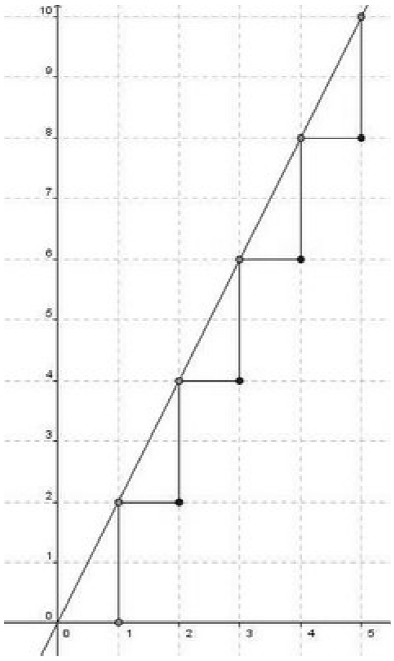




In this instance, our aesthetic imagination senses no change in scale or even size, and so it does not inform our apprehension to change its basic unit of magnitude. Uniformly difformed change, however, involves one dimension varying with respect to another, in this case the size increases with each instant; yet, the rate of increase remains constant.



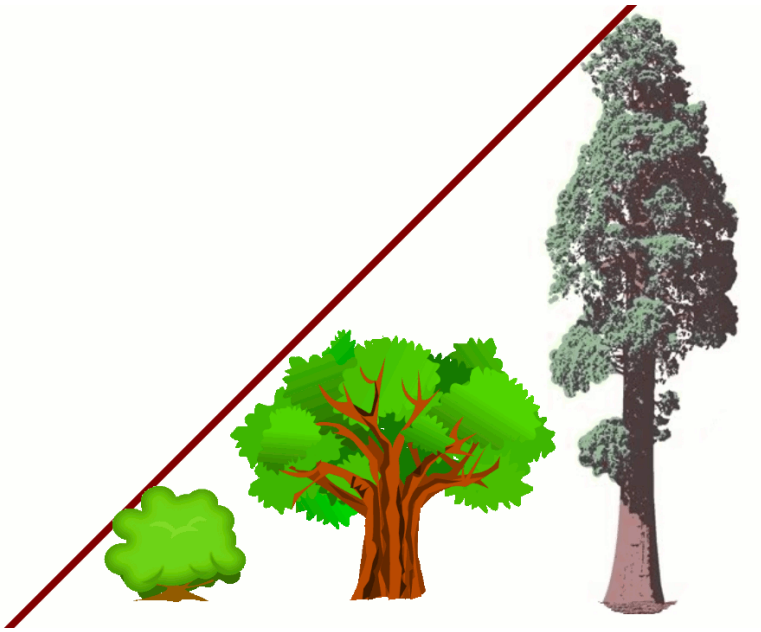
And a graph for it could be:



In this case, we see that for every unit of increase to the right, there are two units of increase upward. So there is change, but the change of the change does not change. Consider then if we see a shrub, then a modest sized tree, and then a relatively taller tree.

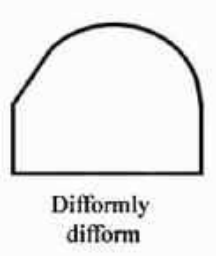






Our aesthetic estimation still senses that our apprehension can use the same units of measure for the bush as for the other trees, so they can all be compared in accordance with the same scale.

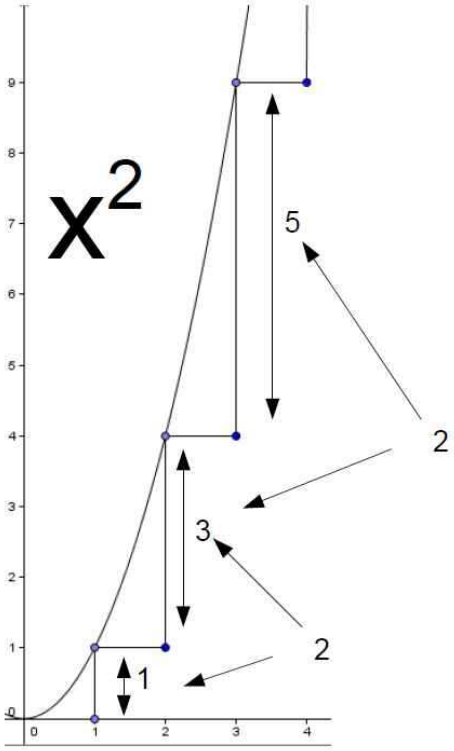
Difformly difformed change, however, involves not just a variation of one variable with respect to another, but also *with respect to itself*. The change itself varies from itself. So this is a change of a change.



We can also express it graphically with the example of $y = x^2$.





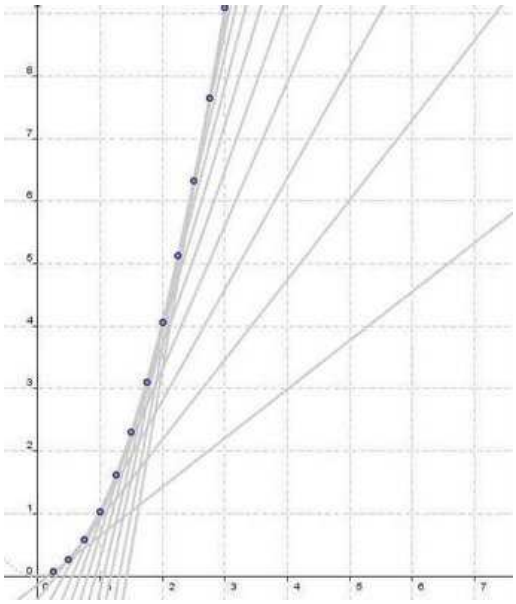


Here we see that there is not a regular change, but the change of the change increases as if it were constantly doubling its power; so with each successive point, one variable varies not just with respect to the other variable but also with respect to its own rate of variation. This sort of a change of a change is what our aesthetic estimation is trying to detect. Deleuze in a Leibniz lecture explains the necessity of the difference in power or exponent (*y* compared against x^2) for differential relations. Think about how accelerating an automobile requires adding more power to the motion. In the graph above, when we move one unit to the right, going from zero to one along the horizontal axis, the upward tendency has the power to increase the variation by one unit within that span; so when $x = 1$, then $y = 1$ as well. As we move one more standard unit to the right, the vertical variable has even more power to vary the line's upward tendency; it is bending the line with greater force or power, you might say. So when $x = 2$, then y will not also equal *2* but instead $y = 4$. Previously we saw how tangents to curves express the value of the differential relation between the variables at the place where the tangent line contacts the curve. This also indicated what direction the curve was tending to go at that location. But, imagine instead drawing the tangent to the straight diagonal in the uniformly difform change. It would be a line atop the given line, because the change is always tending to vary





with the same intensity; so there really is no such tangent. As Deleuze explains, you always need a difference of power for differential relations; one of the variables must be of another order: "you have two powers in which you have incomparable quantities."[151] So consider if we find a series of tangents along this curve.



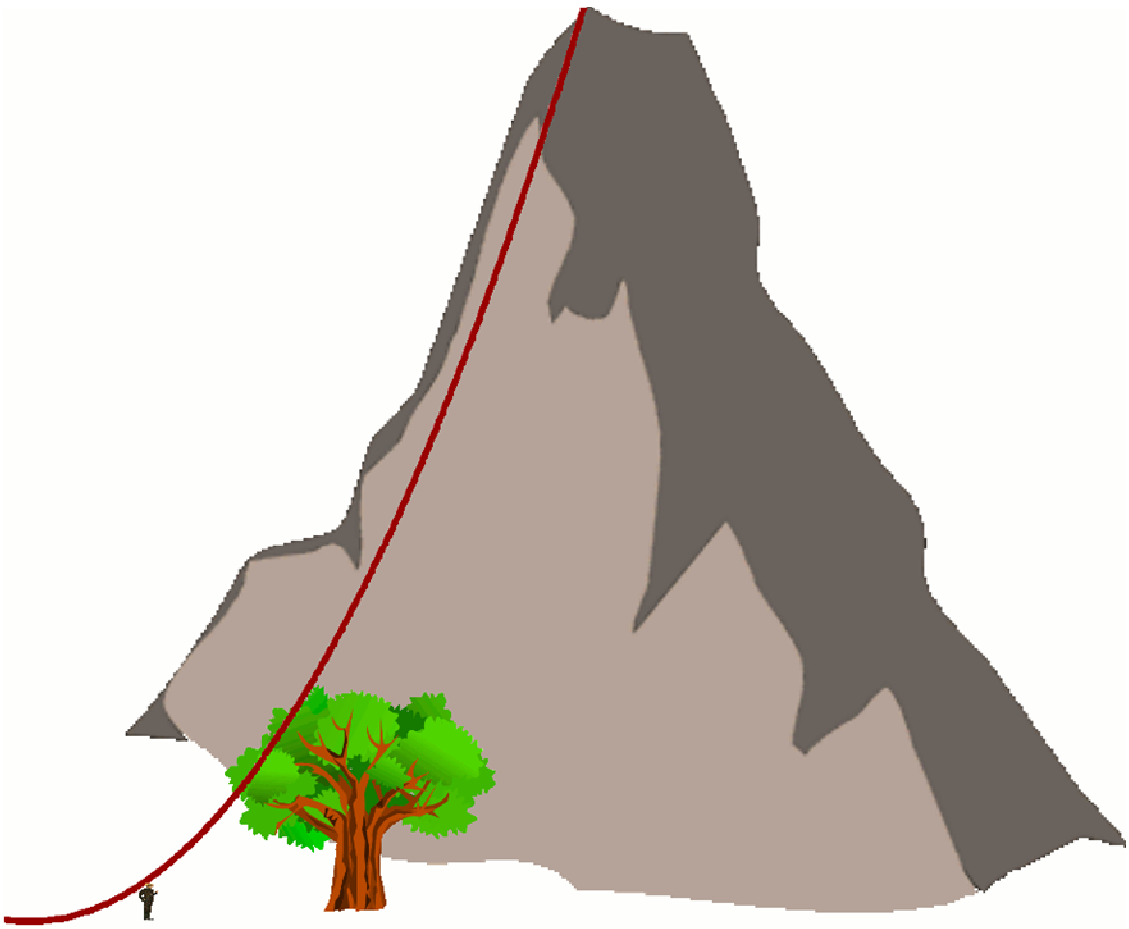
Notice how the lines in the upper right start not very sharply inclined; and thus in a sense the upward variable is relatively weak, but as the tangents move along the curve, their inclination gets sharper: the vertical variable increases in power. As our eyes move up the curve, we might even sense something like an increasing tension pulling upward on the line. This is intensity not merely as a moreness or lessness of some quality, like one point being more white than its immediate neighbor on the white wall; it is also a moreness or lessness in the rate of change of that quality. It is the difference between affection and affect, for example. Deleuze in fact explicitly equates the differential *dx/dy* with Nietzsche's will to power.[152] The vertical variable is striving against not just the horizontal variable, it is also striving against its own self, varying from itself, overcoming itself in a sense.

So let's now consider our eyes moving from man to tree to mountain.

[151] Deleuze, Seminar 22/04/1980.
[152] Deleuze, *Nietzsche et la philosophie*, p.58; *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p.51.







As your eyes move from the smallest to the largest, do you feel something in your stomach, something somewhat dizzying, or a feeling like the ground below you is dropping? This sensation is not us merely feeling the sizes of the man, the tree, and the mountain, because each on their own is not a challenging magnitude to size-up. However, moving from one to the next, we sense the need for our metricized scale to increase. But, note at this point we have not incorporated numbers into our experience. We are not feeling that the scale is increasing by a power of two, for example. Numbers are provided by the understanding; they are not inherent to our raw aesthetic experiences. So, Deleuze does not say we are aesthetically estimating magnitudes; rather, we are feeling ‘rhythms’. For Deleuze, the raw phenomenal givenness is chaotic, and our most intimate synthetic contact with it is sensing not its patterns but the variations in its variations. This is rhythm in the Kantian





sense, which we see is notably different than rhythm in the Spinozistic sense. However, in both cases, it is a matter of being sensitive to the differential intensities of our modifications. Deleuze explains, "The evaluation of a rhythm will allow me to say: yes, I'll take that as a unit of measure in a given case; and the rhythms are always heterogeneous, we plunge into them in a sort of exploration." [153]

Kant discusses this sort of scale-increase with regard to the dynamical sublime.

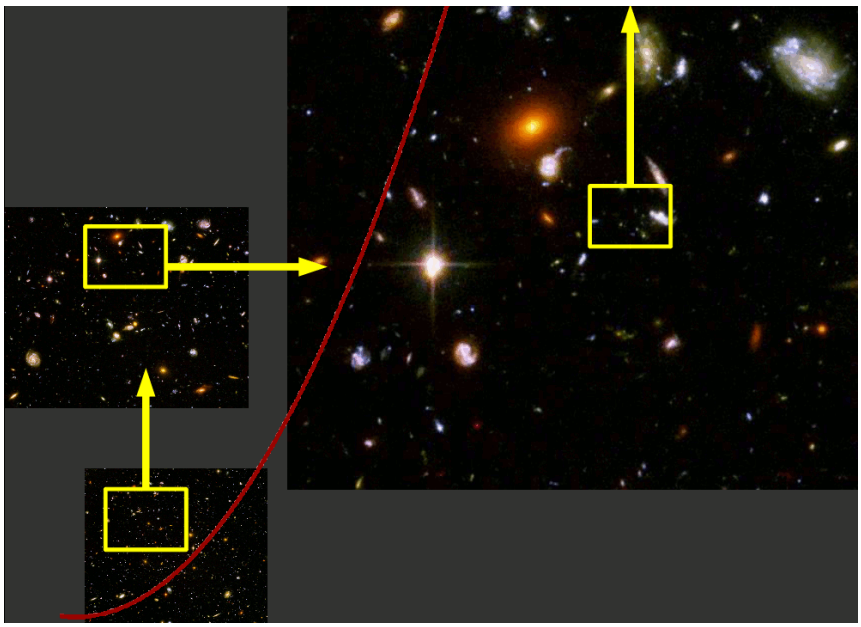
> A tree that we estimate by the height of a man may serve as a standard for a mountain, and, if the latter were, say, a mile high, it could serve as the unit for the number that expresses the diameter of the earth, in order to make the latter intuitable; the diameter of the earth could serve as the unit for the planetary system so far as known to us, this for the Milky Way, and the immeasurable multitude of such Milky Way systems, called nebulae, which presumably constitute such a system among themselves in turn, does not allow us to expect any limits here. Now in the aesthetic judging of such an immeasurable whole, the sublime does not lie as much in the magnitude of the number as in the fact that as we progress we always arrive at ever greater units.[154]

So, consider when we view the starry sky on a clear night. We see an infinity of stars, it seems. For even to concentrate our vision in one area, we come to see even more stars making up that portion of the sky, and no matter how hard we concentrate our vision, or focus our telescope, there always seems like there is more within each extensive part, as if the cosmos surrounding us is infinitely deep with variations within variations. Just as soon as we think we have found the right sized apprehension to gage the rest of the cosmos, we discover that it is still bigger than we previously thought. The cosmos that we perceive in the night sky never seems to cease enlarging.

[153] Deleuze, Seminar 28/03/1978.
[154] Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft,* A94-95/B95-96, pp.343-344; *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.140.







So how do we measure the limitlessly vast cosmos? What is the proper smallest extensive part to measure the rest of it? If we measured it with the size of a mountain, we would still need an infinity of mountains to plumb its depth. So each instant, our aesthetic estimation of the chaotic phenomenal rhythm informs our apprehension to use a larger unit. Thus, there is a breakdown in our apprehension, because it never finds one extent to use as a common measure for estimating the magnitude of the cosmos. Likewise, the reproductive imagination cannot contain the endless flow of increasingly larger apprehensions. So, it loses the oldest ones as new ones stream in, and thus its functioning breaks down. The understanding also malfunctions, because it is never given a completely unified manifold to conceive by means of a numerical concept. Thus although the cosmos looms above us in the night sky, we feel as though our place on earth is suspended in an infinite abyss; we get that feeling in our stomach like if the ground drops out from below while we are suspended in the air. We cannot at all comprehend what we see, and without constituting it extensively, we only are struck by the incredible intensive variations in how the cosmos is being given to us at that moment. This is why Deleuze states that the extensive mathematical sublime gives way to the intensive dynamical sublime.





> I look at something and I tell myself that I'm dizzy […]. In the first place I cannot choose a unit of measure. […] it goes beyond my possible unit of measure. […] Each time I find one it is destroyed. So I am pushed as if by a wind at my back to choose bigger and bigger units of measure, and none is adequate. By the same stroke I cannot carry out my synthesis of apprehension. What I see is incommensurable to any unit of measure. Second catastrophe. In my panic I can perhaps distinguish parts, completely heterogeneous parts, but when I come to the next one everything happens as if I was struck by a dizzy spell: I forget the preceding one; I am pushed into going ever further and losing more and more. I can no longer carry out either my synthesis of apprehension or my synthesis of reproduction. Why? Because what I grasped, what struck my senses, was something which goes beyond any possibility of aesthetic apprehension![155]

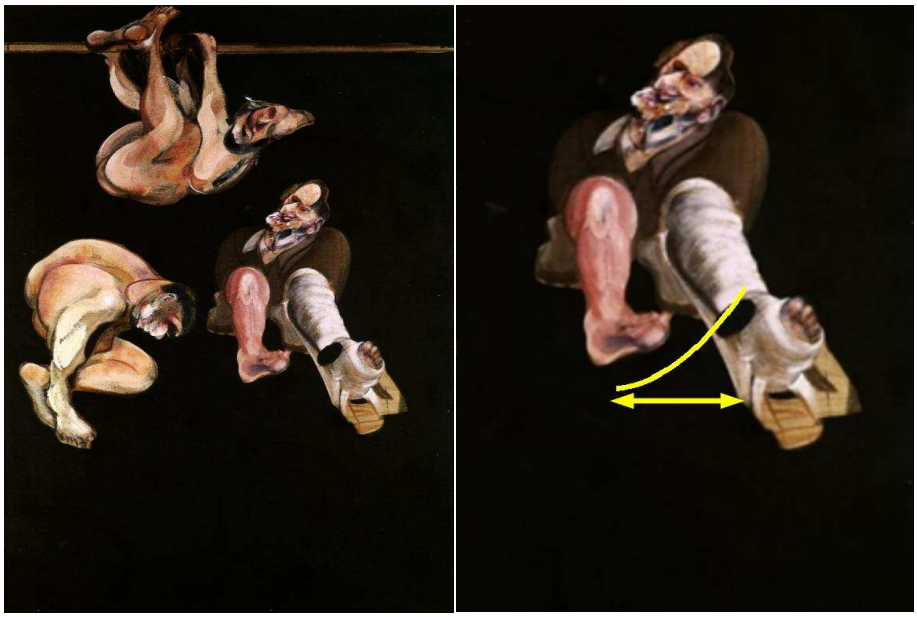
So in a way, we plunge into the chaos of raw phenomenal givenness. But, we do not completely disintegrate; our phenomenal experience persists somehow. Although we get in touch with the chaos of sensation, we do so only because we maintain a more basic synthesis that goes even deeper than apprehension. Here is where Deleuze, by applying Kant's intensive/extensive distinction, finds implicit in Kant's sublime the concept of rhythm, now in this Kantian rather than Spinozistic sense. In a forthcoming chapter when we discuss Cézanne's 'diagram', we return to this idea of a primordial 'rhythmic' order that emerges from sensational chaos.

We also later will describe in more detail Francis Bacon's diagramming technique, but we note for now that it creates deformities in the scales and dimensions of the imagery. So recall one of the men in Bacon's *Three Studies of the Human Body* (1967) Try to notice your aesthetic estimation as your eyes move from one leg to the other. There is a deformity in the proportions and scale, like when moving our eyes from the man to the tree to the mountain.

[155] Deleuze, Seminar 28/03/1978.







**As our eyes move from one leg to the other,
our aesthetic estimation feels a continuous alteration in scale or intensity**

Deleuze analyzes many of the types of rhythms in Bacon's paintings, but we can see that one expression of it is the pre-apprehensive rhythm of aesthetic estimation.

4 Leibniz and *petites perceptions*

To better grasp how phenomenal givenness can be viewed on the most basic level as being made of differential variations, we turn briefly to Deleuze's analysis of Leibniz' microperceptions (*petites perceptions*). This will help account for why Deleuze says that for Leibniz "differential calculus is the psychic mechanism of perception."[156] We are in the first place to distinguish two orders of perception. Our macroperceptions are clear and consciously noticeable, and they are thus sufficient for discerning what we perceive. Yet, macroscopic perceptions are made most fundamentally of an infinity of infinitely small 'microperceptions'. To illustrate, Leibniz provides the example of



[156] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.119; *The Fold*, p.90.



> the roaring noise of the sea that acts on us when we are standing on the shore. To hear this noise as we do, we have to hear its parts, that is the noise of each wave, although each of these little noises makes itself known only when combined confusedly with all the others, and wouldn't be noticed if the wavelet that made it happened all by itself. We must be affected slightly by the motion of this wave, and have some perception of each of these noises, however faint they may be; otherwise there would be no perception of a hundred thousand waves […].[157]

Deleuze emphasizes that even though the wavelets are just smaller waves, they must be "heterogeneous enough to become part of a relation that can allow the perception of a third, one that 'excels' over the others and comes to consciousness."[158] So they are not homogeneous with one another and then blend together assimilatively so to produce an organic whole perception. Leibniz' other example further clarifies the heterogeneous nature of the microperceptions.

> we are not aware that our perceptions are composed of infinitesimally small perceptions of figures and movements. For example, when we thoroughly mix very fine yellow and blue powders, we perceive green; we are not aware that what we in fact perceive is only yellow and blue, very finely mixed, but believe rather that we see some new fictitious entity.[159]

Notice how the parts are not merely 'figures' but are also their movements, perhaps behaving somewhat similarly to Spinoza's simplest bodies as differentials of speed and slowness. For Deleuze, the mixtures of microperceptions, because each one is infinitely small, are differential relations, in keeping with Leibniz' innovation of infinitesimal calculus. When the tiny perceptions enter into differential relations, their combination produces a higher order perception; then perceptions on that higher level come into differential relation, and produce yet an even higher order perception, and so on up to the level of our clearest macroperception. Deleuze renders the calculus-nature of Leibniz' microperceptions more explicit when writing about the differential relation between the "evanescent perceptions" of yellow and blue.[160]

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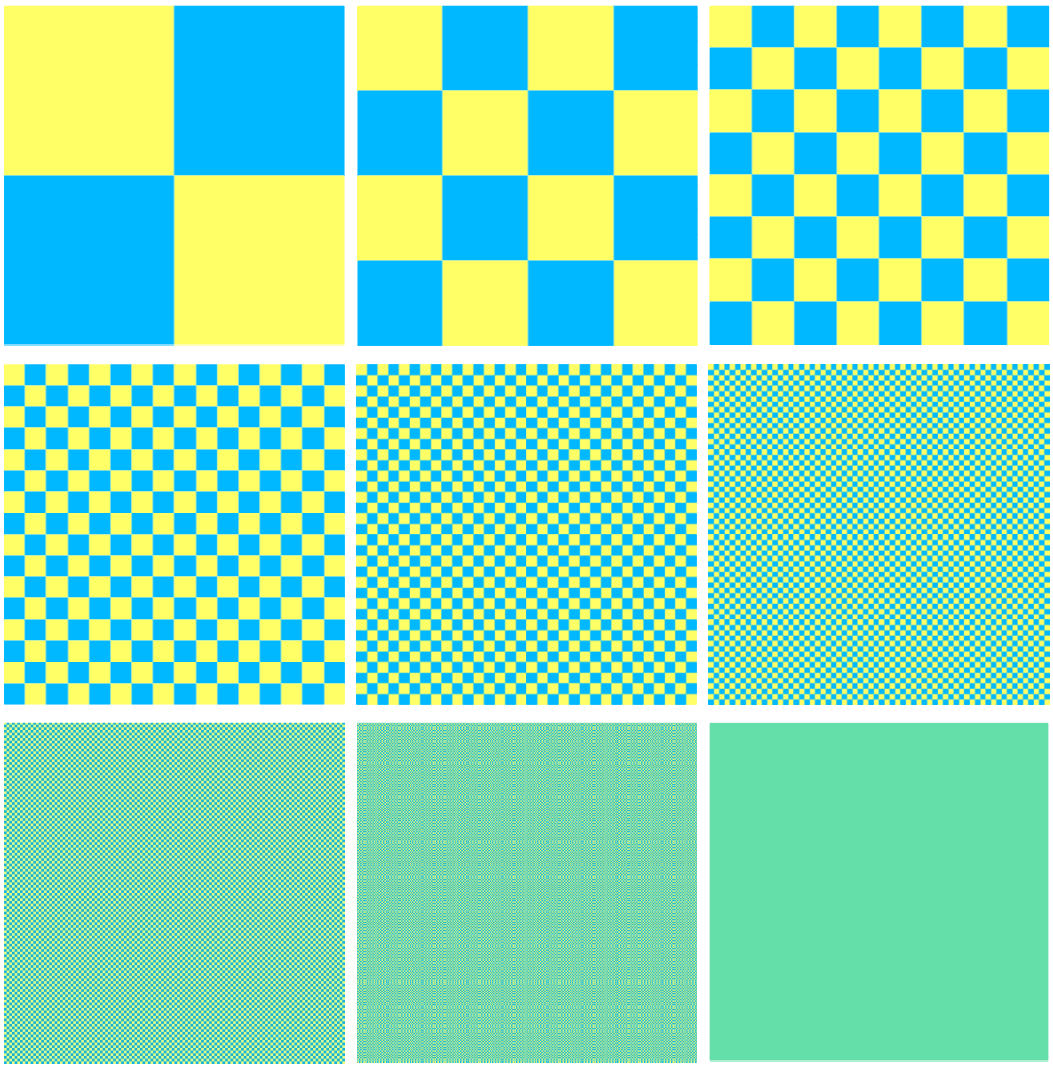
[157] Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften, vol. 5*, p.47; *New Essays on Human Understanding*, p.54.
[158] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.117; *The Fold*, p.88.
[159] Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften, vol. 4*, p.426; *Reflections on Knowledge, Truth, and Ideas*, p.10.
[160] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.119; *The Fold*, p.90.





> […] the color green: yellow and blue can surely be perceived, but if their perception vanishes by dint of progressive diminution, they enter into a differential relation *db/dy* [an infinitely small perception of blue differentially related to an infinitely small perception of yellow] that determines green.[161]

$$\left(\frac{db}{dy}\right)$$



The microperceptions are obscure and confused; we perceive nothing in them, and yet they are like raw phenomenal data that is only secondarily synthesized into constituted perceptions. So, when the infinitely small perceptions of yellow and blue



[161] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.117; *The Fold*, p.88, bracketed insertion is mine.



differentially relate to produce a higher order phenomenon of green, our perception comes more into clarity, because we can better notice the color that we are seeing. As higher and higher orders differentially relate, the perceptions find themselves having greater clarity; thus "clarity emerges from obscurity by way of a genetic process."[162] The differential relating that produces the higher order phenomenon in a sense is like a clarity filter, and there is an infinity of these filters.

The way each filter determines which perceptions will differentially relate so to produce higher order phenomena is on the basis of what is remarkable or notable in that perceptual situation. To use Gregory Bateson's formulation, it is a matter of differences that make a difference.

> Kant argued long ago that this piece of chalk contains a million potential facts (*Tatsachen*) but that only a very few of these become truly facts by affecting the behavior of entities capable of responding to facts. For Kant's *Tatsachen*, I would substitute *differences* and point out that the number of *potential* differences in this chalk is infinite but that very few of them become *effective* differences (i.e., items of information) in the mental process of any larger entity. *Information* consist of differences that make a difference.[163]

Leibniz gives the example of the grinding sound from a watermill that we have become overly accustomed to. Perhaps at first the microperceptions of the sound were remarkable or notable when we initially began living near the mill. The first perceptual filter selects the microperceptions whose differential relations will provide a clearer perception of the sound. Perhaps some of the sounds express the machine's various noises while others express parts of the water's sounds. These various subperceptions are differentially related yet again and filtered to an even clearer perception, until reaching the highest order of clarity, the mill-sound that we notice explicitly. However, because the sound is monotonous, the noise gradually becomes less remarkable, and other differential variations in our field of perception come to instead be selected through differential filtering.[164]

By selecting what is remarkable, the perceptions become distinguished but not yet distinct. A perception obtains distinctness by means of yet another sort of filter that

[162] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.120; *The Fold*, p.90.
[163] Bateson, *Mind and Nature*, p.110.
[164] Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften, vol. 5*, p.47; *New Essays on Human Understanding*, pp.53-54. Deleuze, *Le pli*, pp.116-117; *The Fold*, p.86.





renders what is remarkable into what is regular.[165] This is thus what probably dephenomenalizes the perceptions. So in the case of the mill-sound, at first we distinguish its variations from all the other possible ones that could have differentially related so to come into clarity in our awareness. We hear it as its own perception, but so long as it stands-out to us in its remarkableness, it seems new each moment and still worthy of our attention. But, as we gradually realize that it has for example a certain range of volume that it never strays from, and the sorts of sounds it makes and their patterns stay also within certain ranges of variation, the perception then becomes regular and homogeneous. It becomes distinct, because it is a homogeneously constituted self-same thing with definable properties. But this is an important aspect of a Deleuze-inspired phenomenology. At times, phenomenological analyses of object-constitution examine how 'hyletic' data, the raw and immediate phenomenal givens, associatively assimilate into self-consistent objects that continue to reveal more-and-more about themselves. So from this sort of analysis, it would seem that the phenomenon gains more potency as it is increasingly constituted and made distinct.

A Deleuze-inspired phenomenological analysis, on the contrary, would regard the increasing familiarity created by continued constitution as being what weakens the potency of the phenomenal experience. If we stare blankly at a brown beer bottle or an inkwell, as Husserl apparently had, and – so long as we cease noticing variations as time goes on – the scene we see gradually fades from our vision as our imagination takes over the task of providing phenomenal data for us to be aware-of. As we can see, this is because Deleuze is more concerned with the phenomenon as apparition, that is, in terms of the conditions that make appearances possible. This leads him to dig into a level of phenomenal givenness that goes below the level of passive assimilative synthesis. And yet, there is still a synthesis at work. We later describe it in more detail, but the differential relations involved in perceptions do not assimilate the parts, and nonetheless they unite them. So when yellow and blue make green, this is not because we find what is common to both blue and yellow and notice that similarity rather than their difference. No, to the contrary" green appears only when yellow and blue come into an intense relation where they maintain their insularity even while being combined and synthetically producing a higher order phenomenon. This allows us



[165] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.121; *The Fold*, p.91.



then to characterize the primordial data and the sorts of synthesis directly involved in their most immediate phenomenal processing.

> the variable and relative unity of any given phenomenon or another can be explained: all phenomena are collective, like a herd, an army, or a rainbow. The collection of unconscious perceptions surely has no unity (dizziness), but nonetheless it receives a mental unity from the differential relations that are being exerted, and from a degree of reciprocal determination of these relations. A collection will have as much more unity as there are "relations among the ingredients."[166]

The Husserlian sort of synthesis looks not just for homogeneities given in the now moment of awareness, like the relatively uniform greenness of the apple, but also the homogeneities from moment-to-moment, in this case, the fact that the greenness stayed in its place upon that object as time passed on. For Deleuze, the differential relation between microperceptions does not merely hold just for all the perceptual data given together in one instant, like all the microperceptions of blue and yellow given together when seeing the green of the apple; rather "tiny perceptions are as much the passage from one perception to another as they are components of each perception."[167] This is because the future in a way is sensed now already in the immediate field of microperceptions. Following his waves illustration, Leibniz writes:

> the loudest noise in the world would never waken us if we did not have some perception of its start, which is small, just as the strongest force in the world would never break a rope unless the least force strained it and stretched it slightly, even though that little lengthening which is produced is imperceptible. [168]

Deleuze reads this to mean that what we perceive now gives us tiny indications of what is to come.

> However abruptly I may flog my dog who eats his meal, the animal will have experienced the minute perceptions of my stealthy arrival on tiptoes, my hostile odor, and my lifting of the rod that subtend the conversion of pleasure into pain. How could a feeling of hunger follow one of satisfaction if a thousand tiny, elementary forms of hunger (for

[166] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.126; *The Fold*, p.95.
[167] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.115; *The Fold*, p.87.
[168] Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften, vol. 5*, p.47; *New Essays on Human Understanding*, p.54.





salts, for sugar, butter, etc.) were not released at diverse and indiscernible rhythms?[169]

So like animals, we feel 'pricklings' even though what we will come to perceive is not yet clear to us. These are tiny perceptions that "are not integrated into present perception." In the following moments, more of these tiny prickling prove remarkable and come out as a clear and distinguished perception.[170] These subversive microperceptions "destabilize the preceding macroperception while preparing the following one."[171] This we will find is strikingly similar to Merleau-Ponty's notion that we now are implicitly aware of the content of our forthcoming perceptions. For now we should emphasize that for Deleuze, the basis for the implicit perception is not that future macroperceptions are integrated with present ones, but rather that present ones are heterogeneous multiplicities with anti-integrational parts that overthrow former phenomenal appearings rather than blend them together. It is only on the highest order of synthesis, the regularizing filter that makes perceptions regular and distinct, that such a blending happens. We might also note, then, that extensive spatial properties and extending duration would also only be constituted on this higher order of dephenomenalizing assimilative synthesis.

There is another matter to note for the sake of our contrast with Merleau-Ponty in the forthcoming chapters. We might be tempted to regard the higher orders of differential relating as producing a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. As we can see, the whole is actually much smaller than the sum of its parts in the case of Deleuze's rendition of Leibniz' microperceptions. Green results from a combination of the more various heterogeneous parts, blue and yellow. Green is not so much *made of* its parts as it is *made by* its parts.[172]

So recall how a macroperception is the differential product of subphenomena, which themselves are differentials of yet smaller ones, all the way to the infinitely small. We will turn now to Deleuze's explicit discussions of phenomena in *Difference and Repetition*, and note how Deleuze's modification of the J.-H. Rosny energetics formula corresponds to the analysis of Leibnizian microperceptions:



[169] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.115; *The Fold*, p.87.
[170] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.116; *The Fold*, p.87.
[171] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.115; *The Fold*, p.87.
[172] Deleuze, *Le pli*, p.116; *The Fold*, p.87.



> Every intensity is an *E* - *E′*, where each *E* refers to an *e* - *e′*, and *e* to *ε* - *ε′* etc.: each intensity is already a coupling (in which each element of the couple refers in turn to couples of elements of another order), thereby revealing the qualitative content of quantity. We call this state of infinitely doubled difference which resonates to infinity *disparity*. Disparity – in other words, difference or intensity (difference of intensity) – is the sufficient reason of all phenomena, the condition of that which appears.[173]

Phenomena, Deleuze explains, flash in signal-sign systems, which we will illustrate with the orders of perception. When the system itself has at least two heterogeneous series, "two disparate orders capable of entering into communication," then it is a signal.[174] There is for example the subphenomenal and the macrophenomenal levels.

> The phenomenon that flashes across this system, bringing about the communication between disparate series, is a sign. […] Every phenomenon is composite because not only are the two series which bound it heterogeneous but each is itself composed of heterogeneous terms, subtended by heterogeneous series which form so many sub-phenomena.[175]

The green flashes out as the differential relation between yellow and blue, which themselves are differential relations, and so on to infinity. Green flashed out phenomenally, because it was remarkable in that situation, and perhaps that is why we might call it a sign in Deleuze's sense here for the term. The sound of the mill does not signify anything when it flashes out, but it alerts our awareness to something remarkable in our phenomenal world. We further see in this description from *Difference and Repetition* that the phenomena are intensities as differential relations; for he continues: "The expression 'difference of intensity' is a tautology. Intensity is the form of difference in so far as this is the reason of the sensible. Every intensity is differential, by itself a difference."[176] Is the 'reason of the sensible' similar to the 'conditions for appearing'? For phenomena to present themselves to our awareness, there needs to be differential relations with some being disproportionately more remarkable than others. There must be intensity as differential. Intensity, difference, phenomena– they are all intimately related for Deleuze. But, how would a Deleuze-inspired phenomenal

[173] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p.287; *Difference and Repetition*, p.222.
[174] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p.286; *Difference and Repetition*, p.222.
[175] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p.286; *Difference and Repetition*, p.222.
[176] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p.287; *Difference and Repetition*, p.222.





investigation differ from, for instance, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, especially with regard to the role of the body in phenomenal appearings?





Chapter 3
Merleau-Ponty and Integrative Phenomenology

We will now counter-pose essential elements of Merleau-Ponty's and Deleuze's theories of the body's role in phenomenal appearings. Merleau-Ponty's principles of integration and organicism stand in contrast to Deleuze's phenomenal philosophy of difference and disjunction. In part two, we will apply this basic distinction to their theories of time. But for now we focus on three areas of comparison: (1) the relations between the parts of our body, (2) the relations between the parts of the phenomenal world, and (3) the relation between our body and the world. We will orient these comparisons to their different treatments of Cézanne's process of painting.

1 Painting as Phenomenological Method

We will find that one reason Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty arrive at diverging theories is because they employ different phenomenological methods. For Merleau-Ponty, the phenomenal world and our relation to it is one of a spell-binding myriad of relations. In the everyday mindset that comes naturally to us, we are not aware of these relations interconnecting all the parts of the world, including ourselves as well. Instead, we need to cease taking our interrelations for granted, so that they can stand-out to us. He writes, "It is because we are through and through compounded of relationships with the world that for us the only way to become aware of the fact is to suspend the resultant activity, to refuse it our complicity (to look at it *ohne mitzumachen,* a Husserl often says), or yet again, to put it 'out of play'."[177] We need to cease 'recognizing' these relations, so that they come into view. And given how astounding these relations are when we really notice them, we would find ourselves in a state of 'wonder' when we leave the natural attitude and enter his sort of phenomenological attitude.[178]

[177] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* pp.13-14; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.xiv-xv.
[178] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.14; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.xv.





Merleau-Ponty will proceed with visual demonstrations to help bring these relations out from the horizon of our awareness and into greater focus and clarity.

We will notice the difference in Deleuze's and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological methods in the diverging ways they interpret the same descriptions Cézanne gives for his process of painting. We will find that Deleuze turns our attention to the work of painters, because they are faced with the challenge of painting sensations in their full, pure and direct form. Merleau-Ponty likewise thinks painters have a privileged knowledge of the way things are given to us visually. Painters, Merleau-Ponty thinks, have a 'secret science:' they live purely in our enmeshment with the world, and they express it visually in their works.[179] Cézanne aimed to paint not the immediate impressions, like the impressionists, but he wanted to paint the way our eyes and minds deal with our impressions. We see in his earlier attempts that objects are often misshapen. Cups and saucers, for example, should normally appear elliptical, but Cézanne paints them with swollen ends. Fruit that should appear more spherical are similarly deformed. And in his portrait of Gustave Geffroy, the table defies perspective and extends in an unusual manner into the bottom of the painting.[180]

Cézanne. Still life with apples





[179] Merleau-Ponty, 'L'œil et l'esprit,' p.1593; 'Eye and Mind,' p.161.
[180] Merleau-Ponty, 'Le doute de Cézanne,' p.1310; 'Cézanne's Doubt,' pp.12-13.



Cézanne. Still life, fruit and pitcher on table



Cézanne: Gustave Geoffrey



Our eyes are never steady. They wander among the things in the world all while we change our physical perspective on them. Yet each motion will distort what we see. When an object moves into the background, it loses some of its shape and outline. We never really see a full scene in all its determinate detail. To grasp the finer parts, we need to move our eyes around, sometimes even our bodies. So to capture our process of viewing something in its act, we would not depict everything photo-realistically. Cézanne, Merleau-Ponty says, “did not want to separate the stable things which we see and the shifting way in which they appear. He





wanted to depict matter as it takes on form, the birth of order through spontaneous organization.[181] He remained "faithful to the phenomena" which enabled him to paint "the lived perspective" rather than a geometrical or photographic one. This is why he paints the table as warped. As our eyes run over such a surface, "the images it successively receives are taken from different points of view, and the whole surface is warped." We only come to think of their shape in more geometrical form after all the distorting images 'pile up in perception' and synthetically tend toward their more accurate form.[182] A photo-realistic painting portrays objects as already fully synthesized. But Cézanne's paintings allow us to relive the actual experience of seeing the perceived things. He knows that even though they might look deformed when compared to a realistic rendition, they will appear to us in much the same natural way as they appeared to Cézanne's eyes while he painted them.

2 Integrations within Our Phenomenal World

Later we will return to Cézanne, but for now we build from this notion of immediate and pure impressions. Cézanne encounters a chaos of impressions, but for Merleau-Ponty, this is a chaos of confusion based more on the indeterminacy of interrelations rather than on everything being incoherent. His writings on Gestalt phenomena illustrate this. He explains that we never perceive qualities or other parts of perception purely in themselves but rather only in their integrated relation with other qualities or parts. He has us imagine a white patch on a homogenous background. No matter what we are looking at, there will always be something surrounding it. If in our example we are looking in the middle at a particular point, we thereby sense it belonging together among its neighboring parts, with all these points belonging to the whole patch. Or if we see a part of the patch at the boundary, we also thereby sense it belonging with the neighboring parts of the patch but not with the adjacent points outside it in the background.[183] So already we see there is no such thing as a pure atomic perception. In fact, all the nearby qualities are influencing the way any part of something looks.



[181] Merleau-Ponty, 'Le doute de Cézanne,' p.1311; 'Cézanne's Doubt,' p.13.
[182] Merleau-Ponty, 'Le doute de Cézanne,' pp.1311-1312; 'Cézanne's Doubt,' p.14.
[183] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.26; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.4.



> This red patch which I see on the carpet is red only in virtue of a shadow which lies across it, its quality is apparent only in relation to the play of light upon it, and hence as an element in a spatial configuration. Moreover the colour can be said to be there only if it occupies an area of a certain size, too small an area not being describable in these terms.[184]

We are also misled into thinking that there is a 'point-by-point' constant correspondence between the parts of what we see and the parts of our 'elementary perception,' what Koehler called the 'constancy hypothesis.' Certain optical illusions disprove this thesis.



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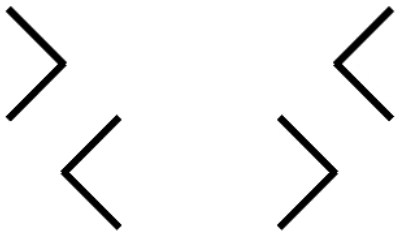
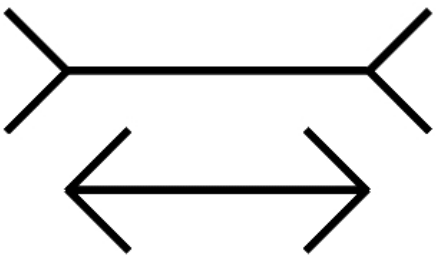
For example, above is one part of the Müller-Lyer optical illusion. We see them as two equal lines. This is another part.



When we put them together, do we then see them combined into two equal lines with inverted arrow-ends?



[184] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.26; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.5.





No, instead the horizontal lines appear with different lengths, on account of their integrated relations with the angled pieces. Hence what we sense is not the immediate effect of parts making one-to-one impressions on us. Merleau-Ponty writes:

> normal functioning must be understood as a process of integration in which the text of the external world is not so much copied as composed. And if we try to seize 'sensation' within the perspective of the bodily phenomena which pave the way to it, we find […] a formation already bound up with a larger whole […]. […] the perceived, by its nature, admits of the ambiguous, the shifting, and is shaped by its context.[185]

The integration of phenomenal parts has for Merleau-Ponty a certain phenomenological structure, namely, the horizonal structure of our intentional awareness. The red of the stain on the carpet has its particular look on account of the other qualities and objects expressing themselves in that appearance, for example, the overlaying shadow that tinges the color. So when we see the red, our minds are also made aware of the blanket of shade covering the area, even if we are not explicitly aware of it. We will not be surprised when we look up and see something blocking the light source. The red's particular shaded look refers our mind to something not explicit in the percept. Our minds have an awareness of it, but it is not in the forefront of our attention. As an implied phenomenon, it hovers at the edges of our awareness, which could literally be the perimeter of our field of vision or just be a vague indeterminate and ambiguous part of our intentional consciousness, residing in the background of what our minds are currently attending to. The red we see, then,

> announces something else which it does not include, that it exercises a cognitive function, and that its parts together make up a whole to which each is related without leaving its place. Henceforth the red is no longer merely there, it represents something for me, and what it represents is not possessed as a 'real part' of my perception, but only aimed at as an 'intentional part'.[186]

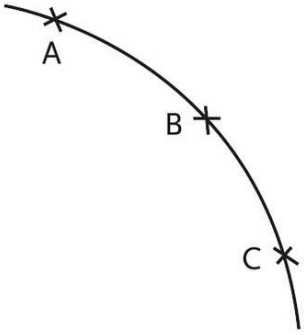


[185] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.32; p.34; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.10-11; p.13.
[186] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.36; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.15-16.



Because each elementary part of our perception "arouses the expectation of more than it contains," it is "therefore already charged with a *meaning*;"[187] it is already indicating or suggesting some other phenomenon.

Merleau-Ponty contrasts this idea with the empiricist theory of associations.



Suppose we only have atomic impressions of *A*, *B*, and *C*. The empiricist would say that we perceive these parts as making-up a circle, because our minds associate them to other circle-parts that resemble these. But for Merleau-Ponty, we would not have known to associate these points to other ones in circles if we did not already sense each of them somehow expressing the circularity of the form they make-up. In a way, we indirectly sense in just one part the circle that contains them all.[188] If point *A* were a part of a square, it would appear to us differently, maybe not in an explicit way, but at least it would hint at a different sort of larger shape that it makes-up. In other words, we perceive the organization of the whole in just one of the parts, because that greater whole conditions how the part appears.

Merleau-Ponty further illustrates with the moon illusion, which will also introduce his conception of motivation. The moon, we know, appears larger when it is near the skyline. But if we then look at it through a paper tube, its size might resume its normal appearance. What caused it to look smaller must have been how it related to

[187] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.26; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.4.
[188] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.38; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.17.





the other things on the skyline.[189] This illusion is sometimes attributed to something called 'the constancy phenomenon'. We can see it demonstrated in these images.



The man appears larger as he moves further back in the hallway. Yet the actual size of the figure remains the same the whole time. This is because the context tells us how to interpret the size of the man; his relations to the other parts of the image *motivate* us to see him as larger or smaller. It has little to do with his actual size. Likewise, the objects on the skyline motivate us to see the moon as larger, perhaps because it changes our sense of how near or far it is to us.

Merleau-Ponty then moves to another illusion resulting from motivation, but it will broaden our sense of motivation and horizon to a more temporal domain. We are to consider a patient whose eyes have just become paralyzed, but now he is staring-out at some scene before him. Normally his eyes would move and explore the scene he sees. But when he tries to move his eyes to the left, the eyeballs remain physically fixed in their place. Nonetheless, the objects in his field of vision appear to move toward the left.[190] In the case of the moon illusion, the moon's relations to the other things near it motivated us to see it as smaller. In this patient's field of vision, something on the horizon catches his eye, so to speak, as usually happens in our vision, and that motivates his eyes to look to the left. It is on account of the forces of this motivation, then, that cause the objects to appear to move to the left even while the eyeball remains still.



[189] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* pp.55-56; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.36.
[190] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.76; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.55.



Consider again the points on the circle. Because the circular relations of all the parts were implied in one point, our eyes were motivated to move in an arcing direction rather than a rectilinear one, which would be the case if we were instead seeing a point on a square. However, at first we are not explicitly aware of the figure's circular shape. There is something about this partial awareness that makes us want to grasp more of it. It is something like a tantalizing force, being just within our reach but not quite there. And we can also implicitly sense that there might be more to it than we can now perceive, more than just it being a circle like any other. So the more ambiguous and intriguing the horizonal intentions are, the more motivated we might be to turn our explicit awareness toward them. Later we will understand this as the world showing us things we find questionable or uncertain, which provokes us to respond with our probing interrogative gaze. Our attention, then, for Merleau-Ponty is "the active constitution of a new object which makes explicit and articulate what was until then presented as no more than an indeterminate horizon."[191] Yet because each new determination brings other indeterminate horizonal intentions closer to our grasp, there is a continuous flow of phenomena and motivation:

> the phenomenological notion of motivation is one of those 'fluid' concepts which have to be formed if we want to get back to phenomena. One phenomenon releases another […] by the meaning which it holds out—there is a *raison d'être* for a thing which guides the flow of phenomena without being explicitly laid down in any one of them.[192]

Thus

> To see an object is either to have it on the fringe of the visual field and be able to concentrate on it, or else respond to this summons by actually concentrating upon it. When I do concentrate my eyes on it, I become anchored in it, but this coming to rest of the gaze is merely a modality of its movement: I continue inside one object the exploration which earlier hovered over them all, and in one movement I close up the landscape and open the object.[193]

[191] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.55; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.35.
[192] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.76; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.57.
[193] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.95; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.78.





In fact, our vision of anything depends on this double structure. If we focus on one thing, we "plunge ourselves into it," and in that very act we in the same motion automatically place the surroundings into "abeyance" and "lose in background what one gains in focal figure."[194] Our vision then is continually an act with two 'facets': one side is turned directly toward the object in focus, and the other side is aimed indirectly at the parts on the horizon of our awareness. It might seem strange that Merleau-Ponty then tells us that when one object comes into focus, the others are thereby 'concealed': He cannot mean that they slip completely from our awareness. They are concealed because all the parts form a system.[195] This means one part can only conceal another if they are already in some proximity or relation with each other. One object conceals another in the sense of casting a shadow on the related object, but still at the same time giving us a sense of what it is that lies behind it.

In fact, this horizonal integration of phenomenal objects is so involved that to see one object from a given perspective is also to have on the horizon of our awareness the way that object looks from the perspectives of every other object facing it. Merleau-Ponty illustrates this effectively with the arm-shadow in Rembrandt's *De Nachtwacht*.[196]



[194] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.96; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.78.
[195] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.96; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.78.
[196] Merleau-Ponty, 'L'œil et l'esprit,' p.1599; 'Eye and Mind,' p.167.



Rembrandt. *De Nachtwacht* (*The Night Watch*)



Notice how the man in the foreground holds-out his arm, which casts a shadow on the man standing next to him.









We do not merely see his arm from just our perspective; we also see it as if we were looking from his right side at the angle of the light source, because the shadow we see from our perspective presents to us the appearance of his arm from the sun's perspective. This illustration will help us grasp the sort of panoptic vision we have even from our glance at one viewpoint. Consider also when we stand between a set of railroad tracks and look down their straight extent into the distance. They seem to converge very far off. But, this tells us they must be still parallel all the way in the distance, because they would instead appear parallel from here only if they continually diverged as they progressed. In a way, seeing the convergence is to indirectly stand far down the tracks and view them being parallel.[197] Yet, this means we are implicitly taking the perspective of horizonally implied objects related to the one in focus; they

> remain abodes open to my gaze, and, being potentially lodged in them, I already perceive from various angles the central object of my present vision. Thus every object is the mirror of all others. When I look at the lamp on my table, I attribute to it not only the qualities visible from where I am, but also those which the chimney, the walls, the table can 'see'; but back of my lamp is nothing but the face which it 'shows' to the chimney. I can therefore see an object in so far as objects form a system or a world, and in so far as each one treats the others round it as spectators of its hidden aspects and as guarantee of the permanence of those aspects. Any seeing of an object by me is instantaneously reiterated among all those objects in the world which are apprehended as co-existent, because each of them is all that the others 'see' of it.[198]

Merleau-Ponty offers another illustration to help us grasp just exactly how horizonally-integrated different phenomena are. He has us consider when we view the tiled floor at the bottom of a pool of water. We might think that we are seeing the geometry of the tiles despite the wavy distortions that the water produces. But really the floor as the appearance that it happens to be is seeable only because it is given to us through the rippling water. We should not assume there is such a thing as an object seen in itself. All things are sensed in their inter-meshment with everything else. Even the air around us 'distorts' what we see at times, as for example in places where the air around



[197] Merleau-Ponty, 'L'œil et l'esprit,' p.1624; 'Eye and Mind,' p.187.
[198] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, pp.96-97; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.79.



something is especially hot. But really, the only reason things around us have their appearance is because the light moves through the air and space before us. And yet even the water we mentioned is not contained only there in the pool. When we raise our eyes to the trees above the water, we see the webbed play of the water's reflections. The tree foliage has its particular appearance only because the water below it "sends out to it its active, living essence."[199]

Yet, because these horizonal objects are indeterminate and ambiguous, we said, we are motivated to turn our attention toward them, which then makes them determinate. To better understand this process, Merleau-Ponty refers us to the way that children acquire the ability to perceive distinct colors. At first, they can only distinguish colored things from non-colored things. Then, they differentiate warm and cool shades of colored regions. Finally, they can discern different colors. The psychologist mistakenly thinks that the child originally perceived the different specific colors in their determinacy, except the child was merely unaware of the colors' identities. So according to this psychological interpretation, children first can see the redness of the red, with its difference to the blueness of blue, but they just have not yet learned the corresponding names and concepts for the color. Merleau-Ponty instead says that the colors were originally seen in an indeterminate form, and only gradually does the child come to constitute them distinctly. In other words, the child sees different colors but not so much the distinctions between them, although these differences hang implicitly on the horizon of their awareness.[200] There are relations, then, between the colors that are seen, but only implicitly. So when children early-on see neighboring things bearing different colors, they have a vague sense that the visual appearances differ in some significant way. After later learning how to detect the differences between the colors, then they see the colors determinately and uniquely. Because the colors began indeterminately, their becoming a determinate appearance was merely on the horizon of the child's awareness. We might here notice another sort of horizon. The determinate forms were there indirectly in the beginning stage. But their arrival to the child's consciousness is pending; in a way, it hangs on a sort of temporal horizon too, at the edge of the grasp of the present intentions.

[199] Merleau-Ponty, 'L'œil et l'esprit,' p.1616; 'Eye and Mind,' p.182.
[200] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.54; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.34.





This temporal horizon lies not just on the pending future, but also in the past as well. Let us imagine that the child will later grow-up to be a painter able to acutely distinguish many varieties of red. But for the moment, we will just take the perspective of the child being in the middle stage when he begins to see just the differences between red and green, for example. The colors in their prior indeterminate appearance have not completely vanished from the child's awareness. His current intentional awareness is also indirectly aware of prior intentions, in the form of retended awareness. These retentions of past intentions hover on the horizon of his current awareness. But as we noted, the child arrived at this middle stage only because his current intentional awareness was implied in the prior first stage. Previously he saw a rainbow as having some kind of internal diversity, but exactly what, he could not determine. Now he can for example select a band of variation in the rainbow, and recognize that it is red and not one of the other six color bands he can discern. Yet in the future, he will not see one band for red, but rather a plurality of reds within that space of variation. So right now, like before, he is already seeing these further distinctions, but only indeterminately. He intends them now, but more in the sense of being prepared for their coming appearance. This sort of anticipation of the future intentions is his current protended awareness of them.

> The present still holds-on to the immediate past without positing it as an object, and since the immediate past similarly holds its immediate predecessor, past time is wholly collected up and grasped in the present. The same is true of the imminent future which will also have its horizon of imminence. But with my immediate past I have also the horizon of futurity which surrounded it, and thus I have my actual present seen as the future of that past. With the imminent future, I have the horizon of past which will surround it, and therefore my actual present as the past of that future. Thus, through the double horizon of retention and protention, my present may cease to be a factual present quickly carried away and abolished by the flow of duration, and become a fixed and identifiable point in objective time.[201]

Merleau-Ponty will then show us that these temporal horizons are integrated in a way analogous to how the visual horizons are intermeshed, and in fact are nearly one and the same instance of integration. Every moment of our awareness has the others somewhere and somehow on its horizon. Moments of consciousness



[201] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.97; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.80.



then are meshed together in the same way and for the same reason that our objects of perception integrate with each other. But as we noted, the horizon of an object we perceive will become an explicit awareness only in a pending moment. So it is on account of us protending a potential future awareness that we may also regard the present object as having its horizons. Now note what Merleau-Ponty says about the constancy and identity of objects. It is only because they remain in our awareness, although in an indirect way, that they may maintain their identity.

> In normal vision, on the other hand, I direct my gaze upon a sector of the landscape, which comes to life and is disclosed, while the other objects recede into the periphery and become dormant, while, however, not ceasing to be there. Now, with them, I have at my disposal their horizons, in which there is implied, as a marginal view, the object on which my eyes at present fall. The horizon, then, is what guarantees the identity of the object throughout the exploration […].[202]

This might also suggest that one moment is connectable to the rest on account of their shared phenomenal content. If in every moment we find ourselves in a totally alien world whose objects were not even vaguely anticipated, then we cannot say that this next moment was protentionally on the horizon of our current one. We previously noted that objects' perceptual horizons depended on temporal horizons as well. But we see also that temporal horizons depend on perceptual ones in the same way, because what we anticipate and what we retend needs to be implied in the perceptual horizons of our current awareness. Otherwise, our temporal horizons would not correspond to our actual perceptions. Thus these two sorts of horizonal integrations are not easily understood apart from one another.

Merleau-Ponty offers another compelling illustration for the integrative relations between temporal horizons. It was a cinematic experiment devised by Pudovkin.

> One day Pudovkin took a close-up of Mosjoukin with a completely impassive expression and projected it after showing: first, a bowl of soup, then, a young woman lying dead in her coffin, and, last, a child playing with a teddy-bear. The first thing noticed was that Mosjoukin seemed to be looking at the bowl, the

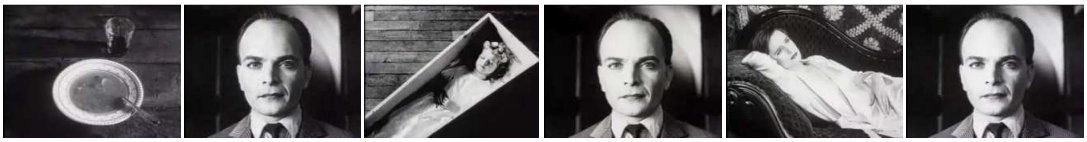


[202] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.96; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.78.



young woman, and the child, and next one noted that he was looking pensively at the dish, that he wore an expression of sorrow when looking at the woman, and that he had a glowing smile for the child. The audience was amazed at his variety of expression although the same shot had actually been used all three times and was, if anything, remarkably inexpressive.[203]

[In a surviving version, the final scene is of reclining woman]



The effect is not apparent when we look at a series of stills. In the film version, each instance of the man's face seems like a reaction shot to the prior image. We see the food, and when his face appears, it is as if he were looking at the food, hungering for it. He then seems to grieve after the image of the child. And he appears to look longingly to the reclining woman. When the film cuts to the face, the prior image stands nearby on the horizon of our awareness. It does not itself appear, but it appears in the way the man's face seems modified. The hunger in his face speaks the food he just saw. Our past intentions might have receded from their state of enactment, yet as a horizon they remain woven throughout the continuous flow of time's passing. This is perhaps why Merleau-Ponty rejects the notion that there can be instantaneous perceptions;[204] for, all current perceptions are already reaching-out to the outer bounds of the present intention.

This integration of temporal horizons will help us understand instances that would seem to contradict Merleau-Ponty's theory: we often are mistaken by what we see; so doesn't that mean the future moment is *not* integrated in the present, and the future determination *not* currently in an indeterminate form on the horizon? Merleau-Ponty says that although our horizonal awareness directs us towards the alternate facets of an object, we are only really positing the one directly in view. When looking at something from our given perspective, we might feel that we can sense all those other objects and qualities implied in it, along with their perspectival view on the focal



[203] Merleau-Ponty, "Le Cinéma et la nouvelle psychologie," p.939; "Film and the New Psychology," p.54.
[204] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.26; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.4.



object, but that does not give us these other objects in their 'plenitude;'[205] they are there only in a vague, implicit, and indirect way. The same holds for our intentions in the present moment. We also indirectly see the past intention in our current one (we see the deliciousness of the soup in the hungry look that appears in the man's impassive face), but that does not mean we see the past intention as it actually was when it happened. We will have modified it somewhat (our prior intention of the soup's appearance will now be modified by our current sense that it sits in front of a hungry man). In the future, we might have a retention of our current awareness that will be mistaken about the way it is actually now happening.[206] Because our protentions and retentions are not always certain, clear, or accurate, he says that

> the synthesis of horizons is no more than a presumptive synthesis, operating with certainty and precision only in the immediate vicinity of the object. The remoter surrounding is no longer within my grasp; it is no longer composed of still discernible objects or memories; it is an anonymous horizon now incapable of bringing any precise testimony, and leaving the object as incomplete and open as it is indeed, in perceptual experience.[207]

We saw how the integration of all object horizons allowed for a coherence from one moment to the next. Yet we might find the horizonal relations rearrange so drastically as to give us the feeling we are in another world. First consider the Rubin's vase illusion.



[205] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.98; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.80.
[206] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.98; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.80.
[207] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.98; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.80.





We will begin by placing our focus on the black region. We see a vase. On the horizon of our visual awareness is the white background around it. There is something about it, as if this region is speaking something else to us, but we do not know what. This motivates us to move our vision in that direction. So we at first are also protentionally aware in an indirect and vague way of something to be found in the background. As our eyes move to that region, what they find are two faces, and the space between the faces ceases being a vase and has now inverted to become a blank figureless background. This means that in the first glance, our horizonal awareness of the background was going to be contradicted by the next intention we will have of it. And it also means that in our second glance we will be retending the black space as a vase, when now we are intending it as a blank background. Visually speaking, our current perception of the faces does not have the vase in its perceptual horizon, even though at the same time we instead have the vase in our temporal horizon.







Merleau-Ponty does not use this example, but he speaks of very similar sorts of experiences. A deliriously sick person might stare at his wall paper long enough to find the figures become the ground while the background emerges as the figures.[208] There is also a puzzle he describes where the image of a rabbit hides so to speak between trees; when we see the space between the trees as the rabbit ears, the background space emerges from the forest in the form of the rabbit while the trees recede into the background.[209] What is remarkable in cases like these is that we are not merely arriving upon new ways to relate the parts of the phenomenal world that was given to us. The changes are so drastic that we instead find ourselves perceiving another world.[210] Yet this might not mean one moment of awareness is completely incoherent with the next. He depicts a scene to illustrate. We walk along a shoreline. Before us is a ship run aground on the beach. Behind it is a forest, and the ship's masts blend-in with the trees, preventing us from initially noticing them as belonging to the ship. But there will come a moment when we feel that the look of some of the trees is on the verge of altering. Before even seeing the masts as distinct from the forest, we felt some sort of tension in their appearance, like how "a storm is imminent in storm clouds."[211] Even when originally mistaken, we still perceived all the distinguishing qualities of the masts, and they told us indirectly they were not trees. So from the beginning we had a 'vague expectation' that there was something more to be understood in the appearance of the forest. Merleau-Ponty writes:

> The unity of the object is based on the foreshadowing of an imminent order which is about to spring upon us a reply to the questions merely latent in the landscape. It solves a problem set only in the form of a vague feeling of uneasiness, it organizes elements which up to that moment did not belong to the same universe and which, for that reason, […] could not be associated.[212]

[208] Merleau-Ponty, "Le Cinéma et la nouvelle psychologie," p.931; "Film and the New Psychology," pp.48-49.
[209] Merleau-Ponty, "Le Cinéma et la nouvelle psychologie," p.931; "Film and the New Psychology," p.49; *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.39; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.18.
[210] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.39; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.18.
[211] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, pp.40-41; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.20.
[212] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, pp.40-41; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.20.





Whenever the world radically changes, it is because we turn our attention to some detail that alters the way we configure the whole. So when we turn to look at the background around the vase, it changes what we see into something leaving no relational room for the vase to remain. But we were motivated to turn our attention in the direction of the other part, just as in the case of the ship and forest when at the edges of our awareness we sensed some details that told us there is something questionable about certain trees. Only afterward did we learn that these details were indications that the trees were ship-masts. So in other words, even though we might have these dramatic experiences where the phenomenal world around us radically rearranges before our eyes, it does not involve a complete incoherence from one moment to the next; the new altered world was somehow still there on the horizon of our awareness, even if only as the suggestion that there is more to be seen. And in fact it is only because it was there on the horizon that we were motivated to discover it. Recall again for example Merleau-Ponty's account of children's acquisition of color sense. Once they learn how to discern different colors from one another, there is "a change of the structure of consciousness, the establishment of a new dimension of experience, the setting forth of an *a priori*."[213] So they lose the ability to see colors in that indeterminate way they appeared in early childhood. It would seem then that they find themselves in a new world that is incoherent with the prior one they now retend, from back when they were only able to see colors indeterminately. But yet when we come to these determinations that change the structures of our awareness, they begin as horizons giving us preformed 'new regions in the total world.'[214] It is true that after their acquisition, the older structures are destroyed. But this process is one of bringing out something already implicit in the previous structures of consciousness. So rather than suggesting an incoherence in the objects and our consciousness, it rather attests to their continuous self-unity. He writes:

> It is precisely by overthrowing data that the act of attention is related to previous acts, and the unity of consciousness is thus built up step by step through a 'transition-synthesis'. The miracle of consciousness consists in its bringing to light, through attention, phenomena which re-



[213] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.54; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.35.
[214] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.54; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.35.



> establish the unity of the object in a new dimension at the very moment when they destroy it.[215]

All objects of our world, then, are like threads woven together through the integrating 'fabric' of our body.[216] It also means that in any part of the world we perceive, we are also weaving into that part all the rest that we do not see. It gives the world a certain density or 'thickness', like how the tissues of our muscles or our skin are intermeshed so to produce the thickness of our flesh. We might think for example that when seeing something red we are viewing some color all on its own. He explains that some perception of red for example

> is what it is only by connecting up from its place with other reds about it, with which it forms a constellation, or with other colors it dominates or that dominate it, that it attracts or that attract it, that it repels or that repel it. In short, it is a certain node in the woof of the simultaneous and the successive.[217]

Now, let's suppose that some national event determined there be a particular shade of red on the country's flag, perhaps to represent spilled blood. Citizens later learning of that event, even without having witnessed it, will view that shade of red in a different way; it will have a slightly different appearance, but according to a relation that is not even within the citizen's lifespan. Yet, because the historical event conditions the way they see shades of red, it is on the horizon of their awareness. We see then really just how thick and organic this flesh is. It puts distant moments of perception between different people into a real sensuous contact.[218] He writes, "between the alleged colors and visibles, we would find anew the tissue that lines them, sustains them, nourishes them, and which for its part is not a thing, but a possibility, a latency, and a flesh of things."[219]

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[215] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* pp.54-55; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.35.
[216] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.282; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.273.
[217] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible,* pp.1757-1758; *The Visible and the Invisible*, p.132.
[218] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible,* p.1758; *The Visible and the Invisible,* p.132.
[219] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible,* p.1758; *The Visible and the Invisible,* pp.132-133.





3 Integration in the Phenomenal Body

Recall how the red spot on the carpet looked red in its particular way partly on account of the shadow overlaying it.[220] He also notes we cannot perceive a color without also sensing other qualities of the substance bearing the color, so when seeing a blue carpet we view it as a 'woolly blue.'[221] The qualities and objects of the world around us are all intertwined. But perception, he also thinks, must always involve an intermixing of all our senses. An object then is "an organism of colours, smells, sounds and tactile appearances which symbolize, modify and accord with each other according to the laws of a real logic."[222] The different sense qualities of the object are organically intertwined, because our body's sense organs from the beginning integrate their functioning to such a degree that we can find no sense data that is not conditioned by the others. It is not merely that one sense helps the others, but rather, the impressions of one sense are found implicitly within the others. And all our impressions are intertwined with our bodily motions. When Merleau-Ponty contracts his foot, for example, he can see this motion in his mind even when wearing his shoes.[223] We also never actually see how our body looks when we walk, but we will recognize our gait visually when we see it filmed or if we watch it in our shadow.[224] So our bodily integration was already there from the beginning: "I do not translate the 'data of touch' 'into the language of seeing' or vice versa—I do not bring together one by one the parts of my body; this translation and this unification are performed once and for all within me: they are my body, itself."[225]

Another way to articulate this sense-integration is that all sense data are synaesthetic. He has us consider patients who lost the ability to visually perceive color qualities. Even without this capacity, they were still able many times to know what color they were seeing, on account of how it was perceived in its mixture with the other senses. They might for example know they see yellow when their body responds

[220] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.26; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.5.
[221] Merleau-Ponty, "Film and the New Psychology," p.51.
[222] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.64; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.45.
[223] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.185; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.172.
[224] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, pp.185-186; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.173.
[225] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.186; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.173.





as if feeling something stinging it; one patient said, "I clenched my teeth, and so I know that it is yellow."[226] Of course even when we do visually perceive color qualities, we also sense them in these other ways as well. It is not that we first see red and then our body responds by enlivening itself. Rather, just as soon as we see red, our body is enlivened at the same time, because seeing red is partly a tactile sensation felt throughout our bodies.[227] "Synaesthetic perception is the rule," he writes, continuing,

> the senses intercommunicate by opening on to the structure of the thing. One sees the hardness and brittleness of glass, and when, with a tinkling sound, it breaks, this sound is conveyed by the visible glass. One sees the springiness of steel, the ductility of red-hot steel, the hardness of a plane blade, the softness of shavings.[228]

He has us think of how, while we have two eyeballs with each one giving us different streams of visual data, we still have a unified view of one phenomenal world. He thinks that the visual quality of sounds and audible properties of colors come about through the same sort of synthesis of sense data. Our visual apparatus is set-up from the beginning to be able to integrate dual visual streams. Because all our senses are pre-integrated in this way, he says that their unity is an 'a priori truth.'[229] Our body is "not a collection of adjacent organs, but a synergetic system;" their functions are all linked together in our actions, leading Merleau-Ponty to quote Herder: "Man is a permanent *sensorium commune*, who is affected now from one quarter, now from another."[230] We can also see how a child's muscle movements and vision are coordinated even from the beginning of their lives. When reaching for an object, children need not watch their arms to help them toward the thing they want; they look instead at the object and their arms know which motions to make in order to get there.[231]

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[226] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.255; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.245.
[227] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.256; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.245.
[228] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.276; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.266-267.
[229] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.266; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.256.
[230] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.283; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.273.
[231] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.185; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.172.





4 Integration between Body and World

What we notice as well in the child's reaching is that she also from the beginning felt herself a part of the world around her, because on that basis she knew that her body could move among the things around her and take them into her grasp. Our integration with the world, then, is evident from the way our senses allow our body to immediately move around and interact with all the other parts of the world.[232] In fact, we even take up the objects around us and make them extensions of our own sensibility. Merleau-Ponty's famous example is the blind man walking with a stick. When first beginning to use it, he might feel the stick making contact with his hand. But after a while, it becomes as though the end of the stick is his new point of contact with the objects around him. He no longer feels the contact between his hand and the stick, but instead between the stick and the ground or other things he is feeling.[233] We see that we are inherently geared to be organically integrated with the objective world around us. The blind person's awareness wants and tries to extend into its surrounding world. We use telephones to extend our voices and ears into distant places. Our gaze, Merleau-Ponty writes, is analogous to the blind man's stick: like his cane, our vision feels-out the world in an interrogative way, ranging over objects and dwelling on them. This is "the organic relationship between subject and world, the active transcendence of consciousness, the momentum which carries it into a thing and into a world by means of its organs and instruments."[234]

[232] Merleau-Ponty, 'L'œil et l'esprit,' p.1594; 'Eye and Mind,' p.162.
[233] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, pp.188-189; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.175-176.
[234] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.189; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.176.





Our motions as well have a sort of rhythmic communication with our surrounding world. First recall how colors are perceived partly by means of bodily motions and sensations. He explains that when we see reds and yellows, our limbs tend to move outwards to the sides (abduction), and often in these cases we are attracted by the world to turn outward toward our stimulus. But when we see greens and blues, our limbs tend back inwardly (adduction), and in this case we turn away from the stimulus and withdraw toward our center.[235] In a sense, when we see reds and yellows, we are breathing-out into the world, while the world receives our motion like an inhalation. But when we see blues and greens, it is like the world exhaling into us and we breathe in the world's expiration. He feels this breathing rhythm when trying to draw himself into sleep: "suddenly it is as if my mouth were connected to some great lung outside myself which alternately calls forth and forces back my breath. A certain rhythm of respiration […]."[236] We might say that our lungs and the world's 'lungs' form one organ. Our lungs become completely receptive to the world's air; they are as sensitive to how to return that air, so that the motion enters into that balanced harmonic rhythm we hear in a sleeping person's breathing. Consider also how when we hear a sound, part of our ear apparatus vibrates at the same frequency, in sympathy with the air's vibration. It is as though there were a place of crossing-over between the world and our body. He writes, "In the same way I give ear, or look, in the expectation of a sensation, and suddenly the sensible takes possession of my ear or my gaze, and I surrender a part of my body, even my whole body, to this particular manner of vibrating and filling space known as blue or red."[237] He has us think of the holy sacrament of communion. The bread is not only something sensible. It is also believed that when ingesting it, it communicates into us the 'real presence of God'.

[235] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, pp. 253-254; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 243.
[236] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.256; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.246.
[237] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.257; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.246.





Sensation is like this too. We are not only given an impression of the world around us, we enter into communion with the world by means of the sympathetic relation of that sensation.[238] When our hands are about to feel something smooth, they take up a certain 'degree,' 'rate' and 'direction of movement' appropriate for feeling that kind of surface, instead of the sorts of motion and readiness needed to feel something rough.[239] The smooth thing called-out to our hands to tell them how it needed to be felt; so even before making physical contact, the smooth thing placed itself upon our hands. So we cannot say that we are the toucher performing the action, and the smooth thing is something passive receiving our action. The smooth object acts on us just as much as we act on it. The thing we sense begins as a 'vague beckoning' whose call to us allows us to 'synchronize' with it.[240] We 'interrogate' the object 'according to its own wishes,' which places us into a 'pre-established harmony' and 'kinship' with it, an *a priori* sort of pre-condition of organic integration with the world, necessary for us being able to sense the things around us.[241] Our hands can 'open upon the tactile world' when we are feeling the world from within them, but this requires also that our hands remain accessible to be touched already by the outside world, which informs them how to go about their touching. In this way, there is a 'crisscrossing' of the touching and the tangible. By opening themselves up in this way, our hands incorporate themselves into the world they feel-out, "the two systems are applied upon one another, as the two halves of an orange."[242] He writes:

> Thus a sensible datum which is on the point of being felt sets a kind of muddled problem for my body to solve. I must find the attitude which will provide it with the means of becoming determinate, of showing up as blue; I must find the reply to a question which is obscurely expressed.[243]

When he gazes into the blue of the sky's expanse, he does not stand away from it as if it loomed extraordinarily far in the distance; instead he says, "I abandon myself to it

[238] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.256; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.246.
[239] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*, p.1759; *The Visible and the Invisible*, p.133.
[240] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.259; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.248.
[241] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*, p.1759; *The Visible and the Invisible*, p.133.
[242] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*, p.1759; *The Visible and the Invisible*, p.133.
[243] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.259; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.248-249.





and plunge into this mystery, it 'thinks itself within me', I am the sky itself as it is drawn together and unified […]; my consciousness is saturated with this limitless blue."[244] Hence to sense an object is to 'inhabit it;' to reside in it as an 'abode' for our gaze or touch.[245]

So we might think of ourselves together with the world we perceive as being of one flesh. There is an intimacy between us "as close as between the sea and the strand,"[246] while yet we are still somehow partly our own selves; we do not dissipate into the flesh just because we are so much a part of it. Objects, he says, do not begin as self-same things which we as seers come to view after we begin opening our attention to them. Instead we and the objects are involved in an intimacy, as if "the gaze itself envelops them, clothes them with its own flesh."[247]

We noted before that, for Merleau-Ponty, there is an *a priori* pre-integration in our senses and also in our body's motion. We will look at another way this is so, in order to see why also he thinks there is an *a priori* integration between our body and the world. Consider how all sensations are the sensations of some or another thing. But such things are always in space; "thus all senses are spatial."[248] So in a way, all our senses converge in a commonly sensed spatial realm. When we use our vision to gauge a distance, the space of that distance is given to us sometimes in one glance, with all the points simultaneous with one another. A blind person would need to follow his hand or cane sequentially through the points before knowing the distance. Yet after the person feels the distance, he has a sense of it all in sum, as if he were able to see the points all simultaneously. So already in his sense of touch there is a sort of vision, even though he has never seen anything his whole life. This suggests that indeed on account of all our senses sharing a common spatial world, they are then *a priori* integrated with one another. Merleau-Ponty then has us consider cases of people whose sight was restored after a life of blindness. When some object is held out before them, they knew how to reach for it. They already have a sense for the visual aspects of touch and their body's motion, because they know already from the beginning for the most part how to

[244] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.259; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.249.
[245] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.96; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.79.
[246] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*, p.1756; *The Visible and the Invisible*, pp.130-131.
[247] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*, p.1757; *The Visible and the Invisible*, p. 131.
[248] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.262; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.254.





navigate through the visual world. He writes: "Sight would never communicate directly with touch, as it in fact does in the normal adult, if the sense of touch, even when artificially isolated, were not so organized as to make coexistences possible."[249] So for this reason, "every visible is cut out in the tangible, every tactile being in some manner promised to visibility."[250]

So we see that on the basis of our senses' convergence in space, we can know there is not only an *a priori* integration between us and the spatial world around us, but also that there is an *a priori* integration of each sense with one another. Merleau-Ponty adds that it is an *a priori* truth that despite our senses being unified, they are also diverse and different from one another. When we listen to a concert with our eyes closed, we might sense the sounds filling a certain kind of space in front of us. When we finally open our eyes, we see a visual space that does not seem able to contain the sounds we just heard, at least not in the same way. In the case of the blind person feeling a distance, it is true that when later obtaining vision he will be able to see that distance and know it is what he once felt while blind. However, that is not to say that these two modalities of space-perception appear in exactly the same way for him. It only means that the appearance of space in one sense is to be found in the horizon of another sense, perceiving that same space. So even though the blind person can correlate his previous tactile space with what he now sees, the visual distances will still strike him as odd and perhaps even as a distortion of space as he understands it. Hence "we conclude that the tactile field has never the fullness of the visual […] and in short that touching is not seeing."[251] But if the blind person only had a tactile sense of space, he would have no sense of the space between distant simultaneous points. And if we could see but not feel anything, would space ever be anything more than abstract geometrical relations? Perhaps, Merleau-Ponty reminds us, "the unity of space can be discovered only in the interplay of the sensory realms."[252] There is then the *a priori* unity between the senses, the *a priori* unity of sense and the external world, and the *a priori* diversity among all the senses.

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[249] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.269; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.259.
[250] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*, p.1759; *The Visible and the Invisible*, p.134.
[251] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.270; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.260.
[252] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.269; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.258.





Merleau-Ponty evokes the notion of the *chiasm* when characterizing the flesh of the world. The structure of the chiasm might further clarify what he had in mind for the organic relations between parts. We would return then to this idea of the sympathy of our sensation, but we will expand more on the bond it involves. So something indeterminate and ambiguous on the horizon of our awareness calls for our attention. We do not yet know exactly how to characterize it, but we know from vague indications in its 'call' how it wants to be probed. It presents something questionable and we interrogate it. But then who is the one in command in this situation, we who do the reaching-out and probing, or the object, which can only be properly sensed if we first submit to its demands? We might say that there is an ambiguity or a 'reversibility' in our relation. We can only have the relation of the seer and the seen, toucher and touched, if this relation is already to be found in reverse. He says that on the one hand, we might think of our body as made-up of two leaves: on one side we are a thing among the other things, but on the other side we are something that sees and touches these other things. The only way our bodies could possibly be able to touch the world would be if they were already integrated within it: the other objects must both be around us while also entering into our 'enclosure;' objects line our body's "looks and its hands inside and outside."[253] Our body uses its sensual being to participate in the sensible being of the world; our body "belongs to the order of the things as the world is universal flesh."[254] Perhaps we should not say there are two leaves, because that juxtaposes things (the sensor and sensed) which coexist in our body. He writes:

> To speak of leaves or of layers is still to flatten and to juxtapose, under the reflective gaze, what coexists in the living and upright body. If one wants metaphors, it would be better to say that the body sensed and the body sentient are as the obverse and the reverse, or again, as two segments of one sole circular course which goes above from left to right and below from right to left, but which is but one sole movement in its two phases.[255]

[253] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible,* p.1763; *The Visible and the Invisible,* p.137.
[254] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible,* p.1763; *The Visible and the Invisible,* p.137.
[255] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible,* p.1763; *The Visible and the Invisible,* p.138.





To explain what he means with this circular relation, we will first find an interpretation of his meaning for our chiasmic relation with the world. He offers an image for this reversible relation where we and the object of our perception are each both seeing and seen. When we hold-up two mirrors to one another, they produce an infinite series of images set one within the next, which produces an entirely new image.



The mirrors then form a coupling that is "more real than either of them."[256] And consider what we said about phenomenal horizons. To see an object is to have all related objects on the horizon of our perception. But as an object among those we see, we ourselves are on the horizon of the object we observe before us. So to view something else, we indirectly intend our own selves as well. This is the "fundamental narcissism of all vision."[257] It is why painters say they feel themselves looked-at by the things they paint. We become able to see ourselves as from the outside, because we exist within the object of our perception, being 'seduced' and 'captivated' by it "so that the seer and the visible reciprocate one another and we no longer know which sees and which is seen." This relation of sensibility, which in a way makes us anonymous, is what Merleau-Ponty calls 'flesh.'[258] It is not just the matter making up us and the world; it is rather the "coiling over of the visible upon the seeing body, of the tangible

[256] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible,* p.1764; *The Visible and the Invisible,* p.139.
[257] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible,* p.1764; *The Visible and the Invisible,* p.139.
[258] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible,* p.1764; *The Visible and the Invisible,* p.139.

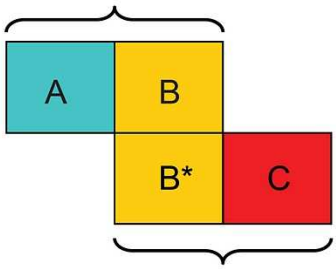




upon the touching body."[259] We lend our body to the things we sense so that they may inscribe themselves upon us so to give us their resemblance. And what about those instances of illusions when we were wrong about what we saw? Even in those cases we think that if we were to look more carefully and enter into a closer bond with what we see, we would have had the true vision of it; "The flesh (of the world or my own)," he writes "is not contingency, chaos, but a texture that returns to itself and conforms to itself."[260]

We find in his working notes on the chiasm more clues as to what he means with this metaphor. The chiasm, he writes, is what allows us all to belong to the same world, to the same body, all while we maintain our opposing relations (the "for-Oneself for-the-Other antithesis"). In the chiasm, there is more than just a 'me-other rivalry' between us and the other things in the world; there is also a 'co-functioning:' "We function as one unique body."[261]

So we note the features of our chiasmic relation with the world in order better to conceptualize Merleau-Ponty's unique meaning for it: (1) there is an overlapping of related parts, yet (2) the parts still maintain their individuality, but (3) there is ultimately an integration of the parts into an interwoven fabric or 'flesh' of the world. We often times see the chiasmic structure characterized as: ABBA. In Merleau-Ponty's case, there is an overlapping at work. To visualize it, let us draw from the diagrams in Barry Dainton's "Time in Experience: Reply to Gallagher." Here he gives helpful illustrations for different forms of temporal continua. For example, consider this sort of continuum resulting from an overlapping of superposed parts.[262]



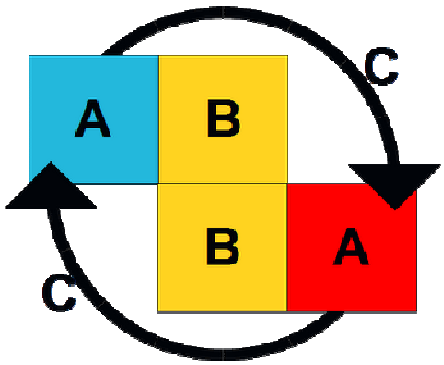
Overlap by Superposition

[259] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*, p.1770; *The Visible and the Invisible*, p.146.
[260] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*, p.1771; *The Visible and the Invisible*, p.146.
[261] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, p.215.
[262] Image from: Dainton, "Time in Experience: Reply to Gallagher."





In one sense, Merleau-Ponty is saying that when we sense the world, we are sharing that part of us which sympathizes with the things we are sensing, as in the case of our hands pre-conforming to the conditions that the object sets for our feeling it. As we said, this contact is like two mirrors facing one another. In Dainton's diagram, the two B's are considered superposed because we think of there being a procession from left to right, with the two B's happening simultaneously. Our use of the diagram will not have this temporal meaning. We could have placed all the blocks in a straight row, like the letters in ABBA. But this other staggered arrangement depicted above better allows us to represent the crisscrossing and coexisting that merges sensing and sensed all while making the differences between their roles ambiguous. This was what makes us reside together in one flesh. Recall also that the two 'reversing' segments are a part of "one sole circular course which goes above from left to right and below from right to left."[263] This circular course could be the bidirectional relation of ambiguity that itself is the flesh we live in.



One difference between our rendition and Dainton's is that we have 'A' on both sides. This is because the dual 'motion' of the sensation interweaves both sides into one flesh, marked with a 'C.' So the two sides are different by being on either pole of the relation. But they are not distinguished insofar as they are both already of the same flesh and also each has the other on its horizon. It is in this way that we might keep the chiasmic structure's representation as ABBA. The A's are the sensor and the sensed, both interwoven into the same flesh. The B's then are the sympathizing places of



[263] Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible,* p.1763; *The Visible and the Invisible,* p.138.



contact where one mirrors the other. And finally, their double motion of sensing and being sensed weaves them together into one flesh, C.

5 Painting and Phenomena

Now with these portrayals of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenal organic integrations in mind, let us return to his writings on painting, so to transition to our parallel comparisons with Deleuze's writings. We said that for Merleau-Ponty, painters have something to teach the phenomenologist, because they are especially aware of the three sorts of integrations we mentioned: between the parts of our body working together to see the world, between the parts of the world we see, and between us and the world. The painter for example would be especially sensitive in the case we mentioned before where the light from the pool reflected on the trees above it.[264] So they are keen to horizonal integrations of objects around us. Merleau-Ponty also notes how painters often make good sculptures, for example.[265] This is because they are aware of how our different senses have one another on their horizons. These integrations are what allow for us to have visibility, but they normally remain invisible to us, looming on the horizon of our awareness. Recall Merleau-Ponty's sort of phenomenological reduction we discussed at the beginning, where our integrative relations stand-out to us rather than be taken for granted. The painter, for Merleau-Ponty, performs such a phenomenological reduction each time he sets-out to paint.

Merleau-Ponty then turns us to Cezanne's descriptions of his painting process for the probing phenomenological insights they offer. We noted one of these at the beginning, namely, the fact that seeing an object is a process which immediately gives to us things in ways that vary according to our changing eye movements and perspectives, so that secondarily we may synthesize the object with a fuller sense of its dimensions. Cézanne, then, shows us how things appear through an 'emerging order' where the object organizes itself 'before our eyes'.[266] And although color differences in a way give us tactile sensations of the shapes and depth of things, it is not that Cézanne understood these senses apart and later combined them with color. Cézanne sensed how all the various sense qualities of something are given together in vision;

[264] Merleau-Ponty, 'L'œil et l'esprit,' p.1616; 'Eye and Mind,' p.182.
[265] Merleau-Ponty, 'L'œil et l'esprit,' pp.1616-1617; 'Eye and Mind,' p.182.
[266] Merleau-Ponty, 'Le doute de Cézanne,' p.1312; 'Cézanne's Doubt,' p.14.





> We see the depth, the smoothness, softness, the hardness of objects; Cezanne even claimed that we see the odor. If the painter is to express the world, the arrangement of his colors must bear within this indivisible whole, or else his painting will only hint at things and will not give them in the imperious unity, the presence, insurpassable plenitude which is for us the definition of the real.[267]

Cézanne's goal was to "make visible how the world touches us."[268] There is an account of a conversation Joachim Gasquet has with Cézanne where the painter explains his primal experience of the world when setting-out to paint a landscape. Deleuze will refer us to exactly the same material, but in order to draw the opposite conclusion. Cézanne studied the geometry of planes and forms and as well geological structures, because he thought this sort of knowledge should influence his painting. Yet, he did not think that painting could be reduced to just these sorts of structures. What guides the movements of his strokes is what he calls his motif, which is "the landscape in its totality and in its absolute fullness."[269] He began by discovering the landscape's geological foundations. But he did not want to paint them as if they were pregiven geometrical structures. Rather, he forgets everything he learned from science and tries to paint the structure as an 'emerging organism' germinating through his vision of it.[270] So we see already his sensitivity to the formation of the world through our phenomenal relationship with it. Cézanne then 'welded together' all his partial views, because "all that the eye's versatility disperses must be reunited; one must, as Gasquet put it, 'join the wandering hands of nature'."[271] This brings him together with the world. "'The landscape thinks itself in me,' he would say, 'and I am its consciousness'."[272]

[267] Merleau-Ponty, 'Le doute de Cézanne,' p.1313; 'Cézanne's Doubt,' p.15.
[268] Merleau-Ponty, 'Le doute de Cézanne,' p.1317; 'Cézanne's Doubt,' p.19.
[269] Merleau-Ponty, 'Le doute de Cézanne,' pp.1314-1315; 'Cézanne's Doubt,' p.17.
[270] Merleau-Ponty, 'Le doute de Cézanne,' p.1315; 'Cézanne's Doubt,' p.17.
[271] Merleau-Ponty, 'Le doute de Cézanne,' p.1315; 'Cézanne's Doubt,' p.17.
[272] Merleau-Ponty, 'Le doute de Cézanne,' p.1315; 'Cézanne's Doubt,' p.17.





Chapter 4
Deleuze's Phenomenal Mechanics

Deleuze reads these same passages by Gasquet, and at first sight, it might seem he reads them much the same way Merleau-Ponty does. We will look first at the Cézanne material and then at the Deleuze commentary which strongly suggests a Merleau-Pontyan reading of it, as if Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty were in agreement that the phenomenal parts of our perception function by means of their integrations. But Deleuze's discussion of the diagrammatic in Cézanne's work will lead us to consider the *mechanics* of phenomenal appearances, which involves understanding phenomenal motivation in terms of a mechanical operation and viewing phenomenal parts as mechanisms in these operations. For this we will use Deleuze's distinction between Surrealism and Dadaism to differentiate Deleuze's phenomenal mechanics from Merleau-Ponty's.

1 Cézanne's Catastophe

One common Cézanne text that Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty discuss is Joachim Gasquet's recreations of conversations he had with Cézanne. For this reason, we do not credit Cézanne directly for these quotations, and we also do not concern ourselves with how accurate they might be or how well they in fact help us understand Cézanne's works. These passages are of particular interest to phenomenological concerns regarding an analysis of the basic components in our experiences of visual perception. So what matters to us is really more how Deleuze's and Merleau-Ponty's commentaries lead us down different avenues for understanding phenomena.

The first thing we will observe is how both Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze take note of the sort of stance or attitude Cézanne begins with when starting to paint. It will prove to be not just a technique for painting but also one for phenomenal analysis. This description involves Cézanne describing how he approaches the task of painting Mont Sainte-Victoire.





> I breathe the virginity of the world [...]. A sharp sense of nuances works on me. I feel myself colored by all the nuances of infinity. At that moment, I am as one with my painting. We are an iridescent chaos. I come before my motif and I lose myself in it.[273]

This reminds us of Merleau-Ponty's discussion of the way the child perceives colors before learning the names for them. For Merleau-Ponty, we noted, the child still sees the colors, but in an indeterminate way, and their distinct differences from one another lie in the horizon of his awareness: on the basis of this implicit awareness of their differences, he will later learn how to explicitly distinguish one from another. But at first, the child knows no way to divide the color bands of a rainbow, for example. All he sees are a continuum of pure color variations. In fact, all the colors around him are not explicitly organized into regions of the same color, but are instead a complete myriad of variations of color. As Cézanne puts it to Gasquet in a letter, these are "the confused sensations which we bring with us when we are born."[274] Deleuze speaks also of filmmaker Stan Brakhage as having explored a "Cézannian world before man, a dawn of ourselves, by filming all the shades of green seen by a baby in the prairie," and refers us to Louis Marcorelles' *Éléments pour un nouveau cinéma*. In this text, Marcorelles quotes a passage from Brakhage's writing:

> Imagine an eye unprejudiced by compositional logic, an eye which does not respond to the name of everything, but which must know each object encountered in life through an adventure of perception. How many colors are there in a field of grass to the crawling baby unaware of "green?" How many rainbows can light create for the untutored eye? Imagine a world alive with incomprehensible objects and shimmering with an endless variety of movement and innumerable gradations of color. Imagine a world before the "beginning was the word." [275]



[273] Gasquet, "What He Told Me . . .," p.114.
[274] Gowing, "Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations," p.195.
[275] Marcorelles, *Éléments*, pp.147-148 ; Marcorelles, *Living Cinema*, pp.142-143. Brakhage, "Encounters."



We will use this characterization of the Cézannian world to distinguish not only Deleuze's and Merleau-Ponty's conceptions of our immediate interaction with the world, but also to differentiate what we might consider their phenomenological methods. For Merleau-Ponty, the mode we should undertake in our analyses of perception was a sort of phenomenological attitude, which for him involved becoming aware of all the interrelations of the phenomenal parts of our world as well as the interrelations within our body and between our body and the world we perceive. So by having such an 'untutored eye,' as Brakhage calls it, perhaps we are able to become aware of how we perceive things in the rawest and most immediate way, before conceptual operations have modified the appearances. This might mean for example seeing the world not as made-up of atomic parts but rather just as relations. The question would be, what is the nature of these relations? Are they integrative or differential? Perhaps from Merleau-Ponty's perspective, the 'untutored eye' does not differentiate the colors it sees, but rather regards them as a pure network of mutual integrations. But from a Deleuzean perspective, all there would be are pure differences, because everything the untutored eye sees is a variation. It would be a difference without there being terms that are differentiated. Deleuze's analysis of Kant's mathematical sublime, then, would also describe a sort of phenomenological methodology: under such conditions, all our phenomenal content are intensive variations. Recall the basic framework. Normally we are given phenomenal apprehensions. The reproductive imagination retains sets of them, and then the productive imagination synthesizes groupings of them in accordance with the concepts we use to recognize the things appearing to us. This synthesis requires there be an extent of time during which the apprehensions are given, and when completed, it produces the appearance of an object extending in space and time. Deleuze explains that we do this on the basis of standards of measure. We understand the extensive limits of a tree, for example, because we see that it is as tall as ten men, and that ten trees can measure a mountain. As long as there is this commensurability, we may continue constituting the phenomenal extensive world.





Yet, our reproductive imagination has a limit to its capacity to reproduce the apprehensions we have. At times, then, we might be perceiving something that would require we reproduce more apprehensions than our imagination is able to do. For this reason, we will not be able to synthesize our apprehensions into an extensive object. This means we would no longer have in our awareness phenomenal content that organizes and endures. We would cease constituting spatial and temporal extensities. Instead, we only perceive pure variations. So in these moments, in fact, it is not the integration of the parts we notice, but rather all we are given are pure differential relations, without any 'things' being differentiated. Such a state might be a Deleuzean version of Brakhage's 'untutored eye' and Cézanne's raw perceptual approach to what he paints. In a Deleuzean phenomenal inquiry, one stance we might take-up in our analysis would be something like an 'intensive mood' where we become more directly aware of the raw givenness of phenomenal differences that we secondarily synthesize into recognizable objects.

By taking up this mode of perception, Cézanne gives us in his paintings something of particular phenomenological interest. But this is not because he paints an infinity of raw color variations. Merleau-Ponty, we saw, explains that Cézanne neither paints his scenes photo-realistically nor does he render just his fleeting impressions, like an impressionist might. His saucers are ovular, but as if in motion. They are undergoing phenomenal formation, being neither completely disorganized nor having their form finalized, as if we catch the phenomenon in its act of presentation as a dynamic ordering out of chaos. On account of our horizonal awareness, there is always something unfinished about whatever we are seeing, so we are ever caught in this middle state of phenomenal formation. As Gasquet continues describing Cézanne's account of his process of painting Mont Sainte-Victoire, we can see how Merleau-Ponty obtains this interpretation, which Deleuze seems at least at first to share. To paint the landscape, he will need to render visible our experience of a geological structure. But for him, the structure is not already given. Using poetic language, he depicts the geological features of the mountain as if it were rising from a primordial chaos, which he can perceive using his 'untutored eye,' so to speak.



In order to paint a landscape correctly, first I have to discover the geographic strata. Imagine that the history of the world dates from



> the day when two atoms met, when two whirlwinds, two chemicals joined together. […] slowly geographical foundations appear, the layers, the major planes form themselves on my canvas. Mentally I compose the rocky skeleton. I can see the outcropping of stones under the water; the sky weighs on me. Everything falls into place. A pale palpitation envelops the linear elements. The red earths rise from an abyss. […] Geometry measures the earth.[276]

Cézanne does not at first see the mountain as a solid piece of rock. What he sees primarily is a visual chaos of some sort that in that initial moment is undergoing basic formation. It is not so much that the geometrical lines that delimit things' boundaries first appear but rather that the material we later come to delimit initially breaks-through into our perception. So he does not first paint the lines that form the boundaries of the mountain. Rather, he organizes his impressions of colors into patches which give first the visual stuff that fills the volume of the thing, with the hopes that this volume as sense-content will then correspond to the geological formations. In other words, he does not paint the abstract geometry of the geology; this is something our minds will discern like when seeing the saucer as circular rather than ovular. Instead, he gives us concrete impressions of the dense matter which we secondarily come to see as filling those geometrical spaces of the geological structures.

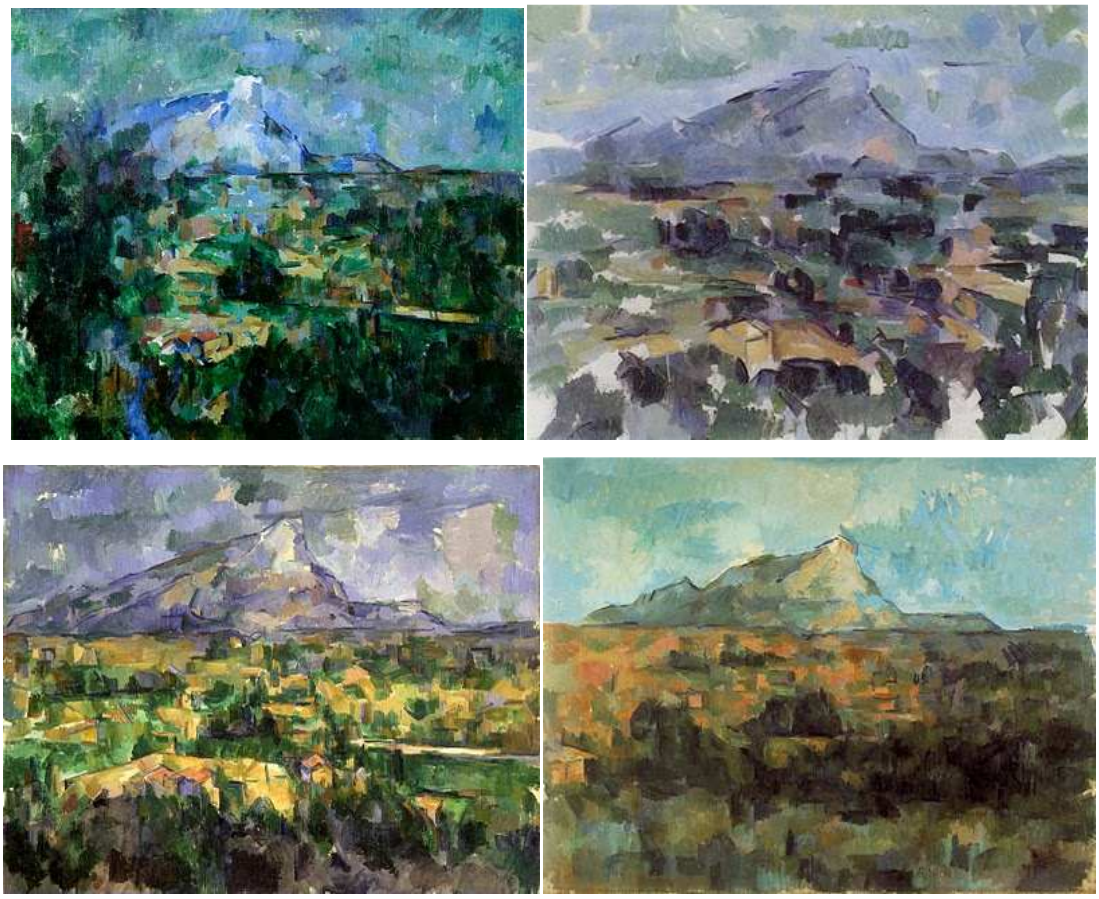
> An airborne, colorful logic quickly replaces the somber, stubborn geography. Everything becomes organized: trees, fields, houses. I see. By patches: the geographical strata, the preparatory work, the world of drawing all cave in, collapse as in a catastrophe. A cataclysm has carried it all away, regenerated it. A new era is born. The true one! The one in which nothing escapes me, where everything is dense and fluid at the same time, natural. All that remains is color, and in color, brightness, clarity, the being who images them, this ascent from the earth toward the sun.[277]

So, he begins with a primordial chaos of visual perception. In this beginning stage the general geometrical forms are given as emergences of geological structures. But he does not continue by painting these formations as they find more determinate boundaries, but rather makes them collapse by submitting them to a catastrophe: he converts them into something completely unlike how they began. He turns geometry into color.

[276] Gasquet, "What He Told Me . . .," p.114.
[277] Gasquet, "What He Told Me . . .," pp.114-115.







Gasquet provides his own description of what he observes while watching Cézanne paint the mountain.

> His chosen image, meditated upon, linear in its logic, and which he must have quickly sketched out in charcoal, as was his habit, began to emerge from the colored patches that encompassed it on all sides. The landscape seemed to be fluttering, because Cézanne had slowly delimited each object, sampling, so to speak, each tone. Day after day he had imperceptibly and with a sure harmony brought together his





> color values. He linked them to one another in a veiled brightness. Volumes emerged, and the great canvas reached its maximum equilibrium and saturation of color […].[278]

According to Gasquet's own way of describing the process, Cézanne first sketched the linear features of the structures roughly in charcoal. But instead of working on making those lines clearer and more definite, he instead worked to use color patches to create volumes encompassing the figure. When arriving at this state of harmony and equilibrium in the color tone and saturation, Cézanne declares:

> CÉZANNE: I have my motif . . . (He clasps his hands together.) A motif, you see, it is this . . .
> [GASQUET]: What?
> CÉZANNE: Oh, yes! (He repeats his gesture, separates his hands, spreading his fingers apart, and brings them slowly, very slowly together again, then joins them, clenches them, intertwining his fingers.) That's what you have to attain.[279]

Cézanne goes-on to explain in another way what we said before about combining the fleeting color sense-content with the abstract geometry of the formation. He selects colors in such a way that we feel the sense-content that fills those spaces which could alternately have been described by drawing linear boundaries. In this way, he makes use of fleeting sense impressions to express what is more lasting and eternal in the scene.

> I guide my entire painting together all the time. I bring together all the scattered elements with the same energy and the same faith. Everything we see is fleeting, isn't it? Nature is always the same, but nothing about her that we see endures. Our art must convey a glimmer of her endurance with the elements, the appearance of all her changes. It must give us the sense of her eternity. What is beneath her? Perhaps nothing. Perhaps everything. Everything, you understand? So, I join her wandering hands . . . I pick her tonalities, her colors, her nuances from the left, from the right, here, there, everywhere. I fix them; I bring them together . . . They form lines. They become objects, rocks, trees, without my thinking about it. They take on volume. They have color values. If these volumes and values correspond on my canvas and in my senses, to my planes and patches, that you also see before you, well, my painting joins its hands together.[280]

[278] Gasquet, "What He Told Me . . .," p.110.
[279] Gasquet, "What He Told Me . . .," p.110.
[280] Gasquet, "What He Told Me . . .," pp.110-111.





Cézanne speaks of his painting joining its hands together and also he as the painter joining nature's wandering hands together. Nature's hands would seem to be the fleeting sense-impressions; he selects some color impressions, combines them with others, and these wandering hands are interlaced and fixed on his canvass and together take us into the experience of perceiving the mountain. The painting's hands seem to be the color-patches' volumes and the objects' forms they fill-up; and these 'hands' are joined when the color-patches adequately give us the structures but by means of raw color sensations rather than by geometrical demarcations. He then suggests another sort of joining, in this case between nature outside us and the nature within us. The painter, he explains, should act to 'translate' external nature so it may be given to our internal nature. The world around us that we perceive is chaotic and illogical, and by organizing it on the canvass, we may translate it into a format that our faculties may grasp.

> CÉZANNE: An artist is only a receptacle for sensations, a brain, a recording device […]. But if it intervenes, wretched thing, if it dares of its own will to intervene in what it should only translate, if its weakness infiltrates the work, the painting will be mediocre. [...] Art is a harmony parallel to nature. [...] In order to fix it on his canvas, to exteriorize it, his craft comes into action. But it must be a respectful craft which, itself also, is ready only to obey, to translate unconsciously so long as it knows its language well, the text it deciphers, these two parallel texts; nature seen and nature felt, the nature which is out there . . . (he indicates the blue and green plain) and the nature which is in here . . . (he taps himself on the forehead) both of which must unite in order to endure, to live a life half human, half divine [...]. The landscape is reflected becomes human, and becomes conscious in me. I objectify it, project it, fix it on my canvas. [...] Both my painting and the landscape are outside of me. One is chaotic, fleeting, confused, and without logical being, external to all logic. The other is permanent, tangible, organized, participating in the modality and drama of ideas . . . and in their individuality.[281]

This would seem, then, to confirm Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. When we perceive the world around us, we do so because its parts integrate harmoniously and according to a coherent organization, which involves us and the world coming together as well, with all these partitions interlacing like intertwined fingers of



[281] Gasquet, "What He Told Me . . .," p.110-11.



clasping hands. In fact, Deleuze's description of these passages would seem to echo this Merleau-Pontyan interpretation. Deleuze, we will see, follows the Cézanne description very closely.

> Few painters have produced the experience of chaos and catastrophe as intensely, while fighting to limit and control it at any price. Chaos and catastrophe imply the collapse of all the figurative givens […]. It is out of chaos that the "stubborn geometry" or "geological lines" first emerge; and this geometry or geology must in turn pass through the catastrophe in order for colors to arise, for the earth to rise toward the sun. [footnote 1, citing Gasquet][282]

Deleuze continues by restating Cézanne's point about rendering the eternal qualities of nature by means of colors that portray our fleeting sense impressions: "It is thus a temporal diagram, with two moments. But the diagram connects two moments indissolubly: the geometry is its 'frame' and color is the sensation, the 'coloring sensation'."[283] But we see Deleuze adding a new concept to what so far is a very close reading of the text, namely, this notion of a diagram. Nonetheless, he uses the term *entrelacement* ('intertwinement' in the translation) to describe the diagram, which suggests his interpretation might fall in line with Merleau-Ponty's reading.

> The diagram is exactly what Cézanne called the motif. In effect, the motif is made up of two things: the sensation and the frame. It is their intertwining A sensation, or a point of view, is not enough to make a motif: the sensation, even a coloring sensation, is ephemeral and confused, lacking duration and clarity (hence the critique of impressionism). But the frame suffices even less: it is abstract. The geometry must be made concrete or felt, and at the same time the sensation must be given duration and clarity. Only then will something emerge from the motif or diagram. Or rather, this operation that relates geometry to the sensible, and sensation to duration and clarity, is already just that: it is the outcome, the result.[284]

Now, let's take note of this last quoted statement. The operation relating geometry to the sensible is the result of the motif or diagram, it is not the diagram or motif itself. Cézanne's motif is something that performs this operation that intertwines the geometrical with the sensible, which as we noted involves a translation of the external

[282] Deleuze, *Logique du la sensation*, p.105; *Logic of Sensation*, p.78.
[283] Deleuze, *Logique du la sensation*, p.105; *Logic of Sensation*, p.78.
[284] Deleuze, *Logique du la sensation*, pp.105-106 ; *Logic of Sensation*, pp.78-79.





to the internal. As something performing this operation, the diagram acts as a mechanism. Before considering it in terms of mechanical operations, let's look more at this translation process, which Cézanne is said to have called 'the logic of organized sensations'.

This as well is the title for Lawrence Gowing's essay on this topic, which Deleuze references at times. The colors Cézanne painted were not the same as what would have shown in a color photograph. So for example, Gowing recounts a description of one of Cézanne's odd color choices: "When one of his visitors was puzzled to find him painting a gray wall green, he explained that a sense of color was developed not only by work but by reasoning."[285] But this 'reasoning' is not at all something that can be made explicit. According to Cézanne, the proper way to present an appearance is by placing it under variations. As Gowing quotes him as saying, "if the painter spreads a single color over his canvas to represent it, he will reproduce it without truth."[286] One way Gowing explains this is that Cézanne noted an important difference between how things appear when bodily before us and when they are given as a flat painted image.

> Cézanne had a maxim to this effect […]: "Bodies seen in space are all convexes." The varying angles of incidence of the lines of sight transmit to the eye light reflected from different sources – light necessarily of different colors.[287]

To provide us with the experience of seeing the actual objects he is painting, he tries to also incorporate the way something's colors would vary on account of its bending surfaces casting-off the light in different ways depending on the conditions of the lighting and the angle of our line-of-sight, which give us flashes of various colors that are not explicitly a part of our general assessment of the thing's color. So instead of painting the generally apparent color of an object's surface, he shifted through a series of different colors, many of which would not show in a photograph. In this way, he modified or 'modulated' the color from one patch to the next. He as well modulated the shapes: "Painting in the grounds of the Jas de Bouffan, for example, he often modulated the farmhouse wall as roundly as the tree trunks."[288]



[285] Gowing, "Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations," p.186.
[286] Gowing, "Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations," p.185.
[287] Gowing, "Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations," p.185.
[288] Gowing, "Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations," p.185.

From Gasquet we learned that Cézanne uses color to convey geometrical properties. Gowing suggests to us that one way he does this is by means of his color modulation, and he has us consider *The Green Pitcher* (1885-87).

Cézanne: *The Green Pitcher*



The place on the pitcher closest to us is given in white. As our eyes move outward from it, we see color patches of blue, green, and then yellow. But this is not the way the pitcher would look if it were photographed. Gowing writes, "No pot ever produced this logical sequence arranged like the blue, green, and yellow bands of the spectrum and spread out on paper in its natural order."[289] What gives us the pitcher's geometrical roundness is not the lightness or darkness of the colors, telling us where the light is more-or-less obscured. If we were looking at the pot's shining part closest to us, the parts nearest to it would show the strongest variations in color. What tells our eyes this pitcher is round is the intensity of the color changes in the patches, which give us impressions of how strong the color variations would be at each different part of the bending surface. So in a sense, we might say that Cézanne was able to give us the experience of seeing a gray wall only because he varied its color to green. What we perceived then are the differences and variations that would make-up the visual experience, and these differences are essential to how things appear to us, even more fundamentally than the overall colors we perceive in spite of their fleeting variations. In other words, Cézanne's motif might in fact involve differential relations. The clasping of the hands and the intertwining of the fingers could instead be differences coming into a tight and intense grip.

[289] Gowing, "Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations," p.187.



2 Diagrams of Sensation

With this sense of the contact and communication of differences in mind, we might return then to Deleuze's explanation of the diagram (or motif). The importance of this investigation is that it will bring us to a more thorough differentiation between the mechanical-like principles and operations involved in Merleau-Ponty's and Deleuze's phenomenologies. Deleuze uses the term 'diagram' for other applications, but in the case of painting, diagrams have a particular meaning. Like conventional diagrams, these are visual, and they are fixed in their place. However, Deleuze's painting-diagrams have force and power. Even as static beings, they might for example serve to influence the ways our eyes move around the painting, and in all they have the effect of pushing-and-pulling around parts of the image. Deleuze says that they are "operative;" they are in force; they are an acting power or influence on the painting. "The diagram is the operative set of traits and color-patches, of lines and zones."[290] Deleuze offers this example: "Van Gogh's diagram, for example, is the set of straight and curved hatch marks that raise and lower the ground, twist the trees, make the sky palpitate."[291] The hatch-marks in Van Gogh's paintings that Deleuze refers to here could be the thick grooved paint strokes cutting through his pieces. Consider this work, for example:

Van Gogh. *The Irises* (1889), with detail



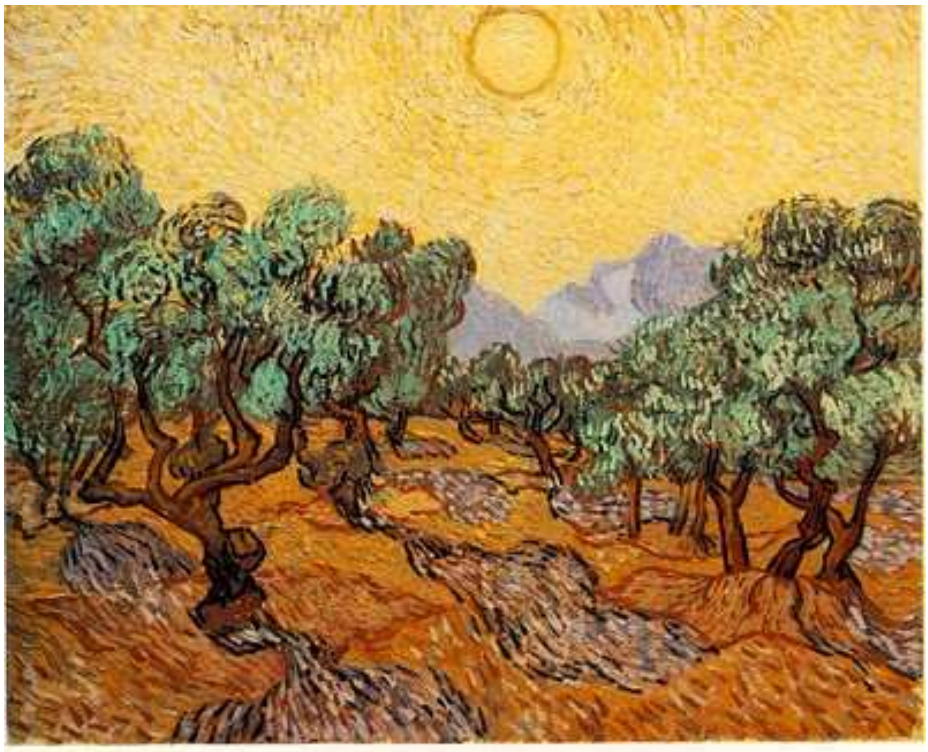


[290] Deleuze, *Logique du la sensation*, p.95; *Logic of Sensation*, p.72.
[291] Deleuze, *Logique du la sensation*, p.95; *Logic of Sensation*, p.72.



Perhaps from the image we can see how these marks “raise and lower the ground.” Or maybe this is more evident in other works.

Van Gogh. An Olive Trees work



In this we see the sky palpitating.

Van Gogh. *Starry Night*, with detail



Here we see a tree being twisted by the hatch marks.





Van Gogh. *Mulberry Tree*, with detail





Notice how the branches seem to waver, with each one having its own independent motion. The hatch-marks twist, pull, and melt together the colors and forms they comprise. And yet they themselves are dried paint. Despite the hatch-marks lying perfectly still on the canvass, they seem to actively move the forms in the image. It is not just a matter of painting an object in motion. It is rather the painting itself being in motion, in the way it actively appears to us and operates on our vision of it.





To further explain, Deleuze refers us also to what he considers to be the diagrams in Francis Bacon's paintings, which Bacon himself called 'graphs'. Bacon's diagramming will serve to elaborate Cézanne's logic of organized sensation, because in both cases, Deleuze finds there to be the collision between two general sides to our perception: a raw feeling part and a more conceptual part. In the case of Bacon, the two sides would be the manual and the optical. But Cézanne himself distinguishes the eye and the mind, with the eye being the source of feeling and the mind being the conceptual/organizational part.

> the eye and the mind; each of them should aid the other. It is necessary to work at their mutual development, in the eye by looking at nature, in the mind by the logic of organized sensations, which provides the means of expression.[292]

For Cézanne, our raw visual sensations are "organized by logic in the mind."[293] Yet from a Deleuzean perspective, we would emphasize that this means that what we perceive is a rearrangement of what we sense. So when something appears to us, both we and the world that we perceive are forced-up against each other, and yet we do not integrate. And the phenomenal world as it is given to us is scrambled in a sense, and also the way we perceive it is scrambled too, but just in another manner. The diagram or motif, in Bacon, Van Gogh as well as Cézanne, is comprised of the parts of the artwork that act mechanically so to incorporate these sorts of incoherence into our experience of the work.

In Deleuze's analysis of Bacon's diagram, what is given to us phenomenally would not be a representation or just a mere analogy but instead something Deleuze calls an 'aesthetic analogy'. It will be important that we explicate what this is, in order to understand the differential mechanisms involved in a Deleuzean phenomenal appearance. To arrive upon this understanding, we need to see briefly how Deleuze applies the terms analog and digital to the sensation/frame dichotomy in Cézanne or in the manual/optical in Bacon.

[292] Gowing, "Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations," p.194.
[293] As Gowing, "Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations," p.195.





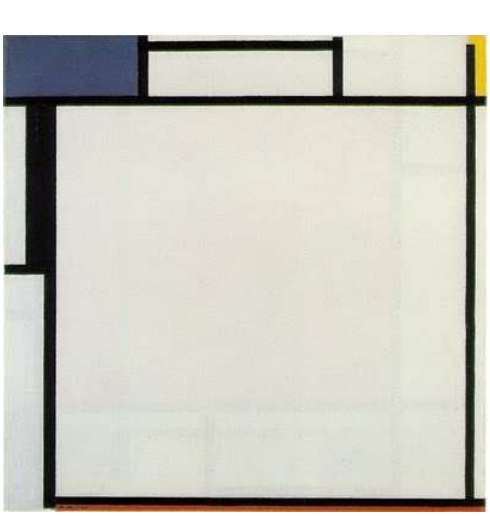
The painter begins with a problem. When a painting is overly representational, our minds see things they already know, and can summarize them into a verbal reduction, which diminishes the aesthetic experience with the work. If we see a painting of a bird landing on field, we recognize the bird, which takes little imagination, and we can sum it up as “it’s a landing bird” and then move on to the next painting. But if instead the painter wanted the viewer to feel some sensations and be held in them, representations that tell stories will not always suffice. Deleuze describes two approaches for avoiding narratively representational figurations: abstract painting and action painting.

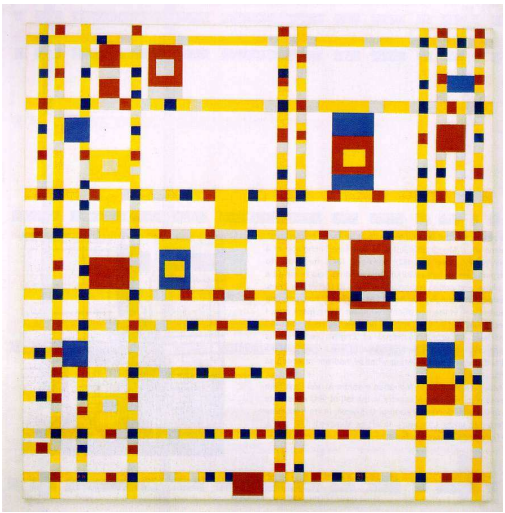
We may think of abstract painting as being ‘digital’. We use the digits of our hands to count discrete units, and the quantity they show does not depend on how far apart we spread our fingers. Either a finger is showing or it is not. The basis of digital quantification, then, are binary relations between discrete variables.

Abstract painting will deal with parts of the painting as being discretely divisible (often into sharply defined geometrical figures), with these parts being set into oppositional relations that carry with them some coded effect. First consider Piet Mondrian.

Mondrian. *Composition with Blue, Yellow, Black, and Red* (1922)

Mondrian. *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (1942-1943)





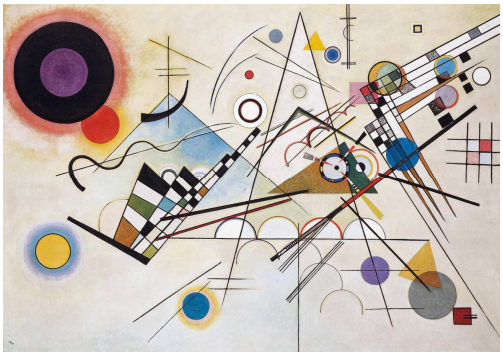


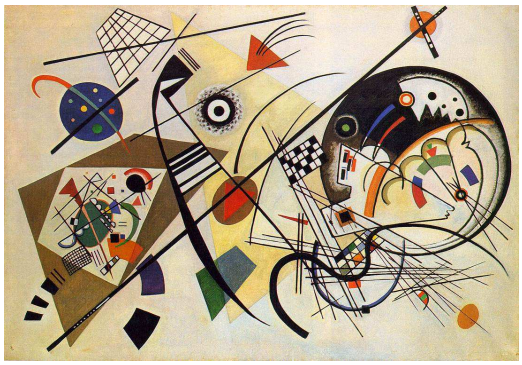


And consider also Wassily Kandinsky.

Kandinsky. *Composition VIII* (1923)

Kandinsky. *Transverse Line* (1923)



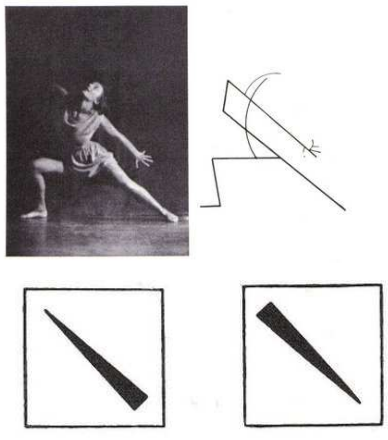


We see then that there are discrete elements set in opposition to one another, rather than blurring or blending together continuously. And even though the images do not seem to represent anything in particular, Deleuze still sees coding in the digital component of such abstract art. It has to do with how the oppositional relations between the parts of the painting affect us. It also involves the values already found in the spatial locations of the canvass (perhaps for example we might think of how images in the center of the canvass have more importance or 'weight' to them.) Some abstract painters formalized and articulated the way their paintings are 'coded' on the basis of the placement and relation of the painting's discrete parts. Deleuze writes that this coding is something like computation; it involves calculating values to produce the desired affect, all without any representations. As Deleuze puts it, abstract art uses the fingers in the sense of the fingers that count. Consider these images from Kandinsky's writings where we see the isolation of discrete parts of this dancer's form and the way the angles of these parts produce a certain feeling in the image when set in binary opposition, which in this case might be 'unharmonic':[294]



[294] Kandinsky, *Complete Writings on Art*, p.655.





Diagonal position
"unharmonic"

Perhaps in Kandinsky's paintings we might see something like the linear version of the dancer, without us seeing a dancer. But what we still might sense is the affect that the relations of its lines have on us. So there is coding without representation, and as well there is calculation. Consider this chart which calculates the distribution of tonal weight (darkness) between distinct parts of the canvass. Different affects will result from different numerical outcomes. So here we see that the painter's hand was not so much touching and putting itself into the paint as much as it was standing back and counting values in the service of the eye.[295]

1. Instance—"dramatization"

above	PP-weight	2	
	form-weight	2	
		4	4 : 8
below	PP-weight	4	
	form-weight	4	
		8	

One thing we should note regarding this digital approach is the way it produces resemblances. The abstract painting's parts are related according to geometrical and computed binary values. They are coded in such a way that they will produce the desired sensation, like "dramatization." But these mathematical entities do not themselves bear any resemblance to dramatic sensations. These affects are produced secondarily by means of the mediation of the binary coding. So the means themselves do not resemble the sensations, but the effects do. For this reason,



[295] Kandinsky, *Complete Writings on Art*, p.641.



resemblance is secondary rather than primary and resemblance is the product rather than the producer.

And so the digital element in painting can be characterized by a subordination of the hand to the eye and as having discretely opposed parts that are coded for some affect. Yet, recall Van Gogh's 'diagram'. It involved what seemed to be a multiplicity of differentially related forces pushing and pulling the various parts of the painting in many different and conflicting directions. Abstract painting, however, does not seem to have diagrammatic elements whose deformative forces act directly on the motion of the painting's parts, or we might say, acting on the motions our eyes make as they move about the painting.

Yet, what if the diagrammatic influence touched every single stroke of the painting? What would result is action painting, also called abstract expressionism and *art informel*. Here we see the direct influence of the hand in its rawest physical motions. It touches every single part of the painting. With the optical geometry of the digital abstract painting, we can see clear outlines that divide the painting's parts, and our eyes can follow those lines without much difficulty. But try to follow the lines in Jackson Pollock's works.

Pollock. *Green and Silver*







In action painting, the lines are what Worringer calls the *northern line* or the *Gothic line*. We first consider the "organically tinged ornament" of *classical lines*.[296]



Classical ornament has organic clearness and moderation, and it seems to spring "without restraint from our sense of vitality." And also, "It has no expression beyond that which we give it."[297] But now consider the northern lines of Gothic ornament.



Northern ornament, he says, appears to take on a life all its own, and in fact seems to act upon us ourselves.

> The expression of northern ornament, on the other hand, is not immediately dependent upon us; here we face, rather, a life that seems to be independent of us, that makes exactions upon us and forces upon us an activity that we submit to only against our will. [298]

We might say that the northern line is produced by the hand's own free self expression. It is not like drawing a line or curve with controlled movements. This we would see in digital abstract art. And such controlled motions are also the product of an organicism in the movements of our hand's parts and in the parts of the smoothly formed line that



[296] Worringer, *Form Problems of the Gothic*, p.47.
[297] Worringer, *Form Problems of the Gothic*, p.48.
[298] Worringer, *Form Problems of the Gothic*, p.48.

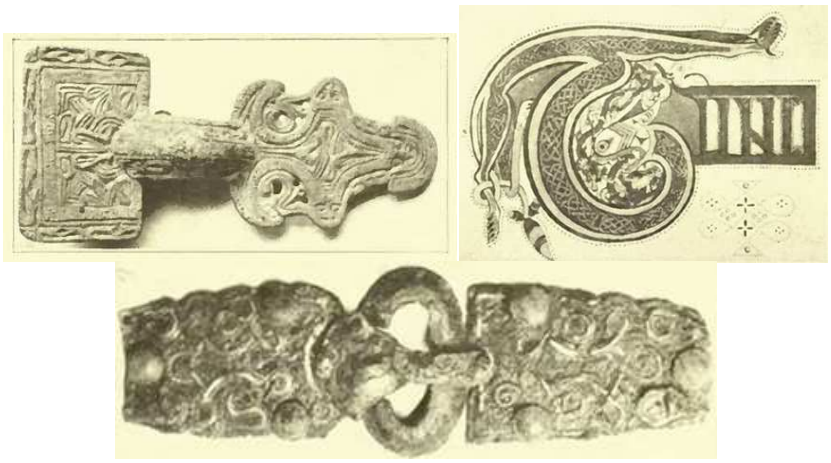


we draw. "The movement we make is of an unobstructed facility; the impulse once given, movement goes on without effort," he writes.[299] This pleasant feeling is a "freedom of creation," and we transfer it

> involuntarily to the line itself, and what we have felt in executing it we ascribe to it as expression. In this case, then, we see in the line the expression of organic beauty just because the execution corresponded with our organic sense.[300]

But consider instead if we drew our line out of nervous agitation. We are constantly in defiance of what we just did in order to be as irregular as possible. This results in "a stiff, angular, repeatedly interrupted, jagged line."[301] This too is not a northern line; it is too influenced by its own over-reactive erratic impulses. The line of Northern cultures, however,

> is labyrinthic. It seems to have no beginning and no end, and especially no center; all those possibilities of orientation for organically adjusted feeling are lacking. We find no point where we can start in, no point where we can pause.[302]



As Deleuze puts it, the Gothic line "does not go from one point to another, but passes *between* points, continually changing direction."[303] We can better see such lines in details from Pollock's paintings.

[299] Worringer, *Form Problems of the Gothic*, p.48.
[300] Worringer, *Form Problems of the Gothic*, pp.48-49.
[301] Worringer, *Form Problems of the Gothic*, p.49.
[302] Worringer, *Form Problems of the Gothic*, p.53.
[303] Deleuze, *Logique du la sensation*, p.105; *Logic of Sensation*, p.74.



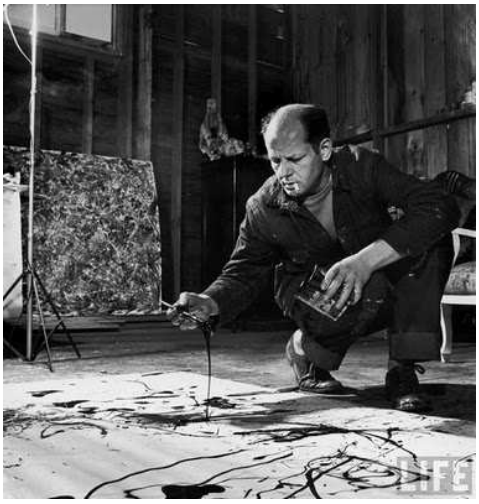


Pollock. Untitled. *Green and Silver,* detail





What we see is not so much his eyes telling his hands what to do. Rather, it is more like his hands doing what they want to do. See how directly his hands are involved in the splattering of paint and how his hands show themselves in the results.





When we see the Pollock painting, we might get an immediate impression of the forces and sensations alive in his body while his hands made these northern lines. Our minds do not need to decode the appearances to obtain the proper affects. They are given to us immediately. Strong forces in his arm-motions might make more violent splatters. So here, the means of conveying the impressions itself resembles the sensations it communicates. Resemblance in analog painting then is primary rather than just secondary as with digital, and it is the producer rather than merely the product.

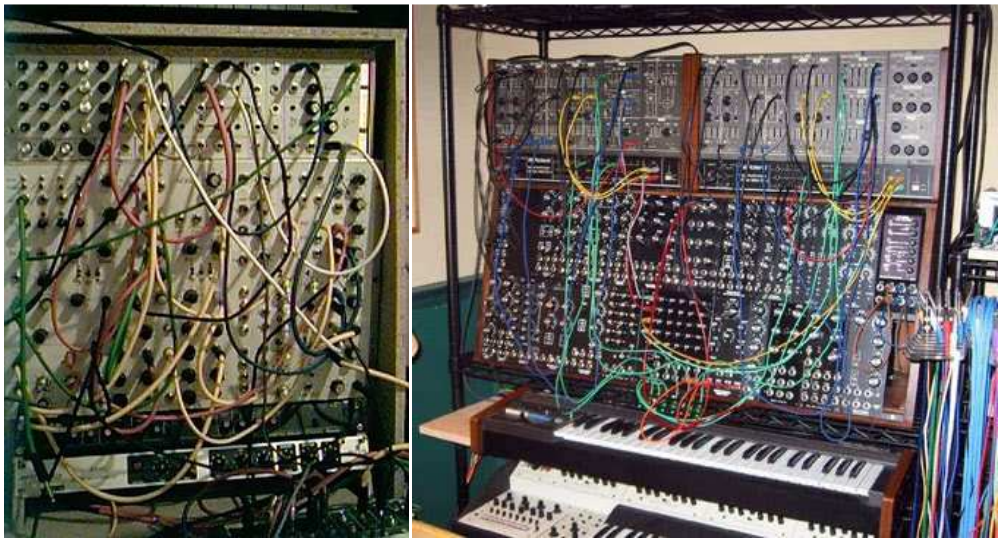




Cézanne's dichotomy was between the sensations of the eye and the organizing operation of the mind, which he mediated by adding color differences (modulations) that allow us to have a sense-experience that is more involved in the infinite variational nuances of the original scene. We do not see a photographic replication, but we have an experience of the differential components that we would undergo had we been there with Cézanne surveying his scene. In a sense, resemblance for Cézanne is not primary like in analog painting. And for Cézanne, there was a logic of organized sensations involved when for example he painted the gray wall green. But does this then make it digital? To answer this, Deleuze discusses the difference between the types of sonic modulation produced by digital and analog synthesizers.

Analog synthesizers have different modules that affect the sound's properties in different ways.

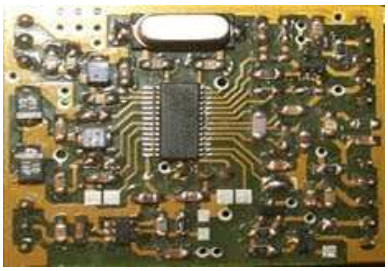
Analog Modular Synthesizers



In a sense, the sound signal is deformed by each module, as its properties are changed from its original form. Digital synthesizers, however, use integrated circuits, and they convert the sound-wave to a homogenized form that is given a numerical code.







Integrated digital circuits do not process the electrical current as an analog of the sound wave, and it does not channel the flow in a connected linear series from one module to another in the circuit. Rather, the wave is treated as a numerical value (in the form of discrete states representable by ones and zeros), and all the circuit's parts work together simultaneous to perform computational alterations to the code, so to produce a new code for a modified wave.

We noted how Cézanne uses color patches, and he 'modulates' the color from one patch to the next, so that we may have a phenomenal experience of the differences between the patches' colors. We can tell by comparing some of his paintings to photographs of the same scene that we perceive geometrical properties in the photos largely on account of the shadows and other variations in lightness and darkness.

Rochers à l'Estaque



Notice especially in this next comparison how the shaded parts in the photograph, indicating the shape of the hills, is instead given color variations in Cézanne's rendition.





Le Lac d'Annecy



There is no green in the lake, nor is there blue or red in the mountains. And also, we do not see a lot of dark shading in Cézanne's painting used to depict depth. Nonetheless, we get a sense of the geometry and the geological structures by means of the color modulations. And as we noted before with *The Green Pitcher*, it is not so much that each color codes for a different geometrical property. Rather it is often that the mere intensity of the transition between colors tells us how drastically certain parts point away from us and for that reason would be more likely to show flashes of color variations from small alterations in the light's changing refractions.

So the modulation in Cézanne's color patches is not digital but is rather analog: it proceeds by varying color from one patch or 'module' to another, and the impressions it leaves are not mediated by a coding but rather through a direct impact of the variation on how we make sense of the parts of the image. Yet Cézanne does not paint northern lines, so would his works be manual like analog? With other painters, the labyrinthine lines served as the diagrammatic mechanisms that introduced variations in how the painting's image appears to us. In Cézanne, the diagrammatic element is the modulation from part-to-part, in the manner of analog synthesizers. So it is a *modulation synthétique continue*, as Deleuze's student Richard Pinhas puts it.[304] In other words, our eyes' movement from color-change to color-change is



[304] Pinhas, *Les larmes de Nietzsche: Deleuze et la musique*.



itself like a northern line of continuous variation. And perhaps it was not always that Cézanne first thought which color to use, and then painted it accordingly, but rather he also might have tried one color experimentally to see if the modulation produces the experience of difference that he wanted to render. So it could be that his hand chose the wandering series of color variations independently to his mind's instruction, thus making it more manually analog like in Pollock. As well, the lack of geometrical binary relations in the structure of his works would also suggest a strong manual influence on the way the patches were rendered.

By means of these modulations, Cézanne produces what Deleuze calls an aesthetic analogy. Like digital, an aesthetic analogy has resemblance secondarily as the product but not primarily as the producer: the geometrical properties of Cézanne's paintings do not resemble the ones we sense there to be. But like analog, there is no mediation through coding but instead a direct and immediate sense impression, in this case of color variations. What is given to us is not what we perceive, and this is on account of the variational operation performed by the diagrammatic elements, which are responsible for making phenomena appear as a sensation. Where normally we might perceive geometrical structures when our minds draw lines around things, we instead receive them from Cézanne paintings as raw color sensations. It is in this way that the wandering hands of nature and of his painting are joined. Our sensations of the modular color patches do not integrate but instead give us a series of differential color impressions. We and the painting do not integrate either, because the painting does not resemble what we sense in it.

It is not so clear if Cézanne's diagram involves synaesthesia or not (an integration of our senses), but it would seem so. This might be why Deleuze turns more to Francis Bacon's diagram, especially when discussing 'the body without organs'. Here it is clearer how the asynaesthesia of our senses and faculties can be responsible for phenomenal experiences. In his *Painting* 1946, for example, the umbrella might suggest to us certain sense impressions, namely smells and images from rainy weather, which are not compatible with the sense impressions suggested by the butchered meat.



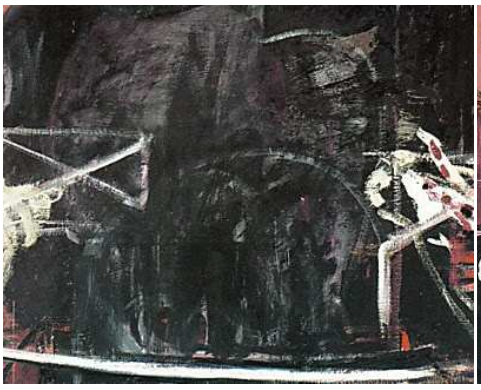
Bacon. *Painting* 1946



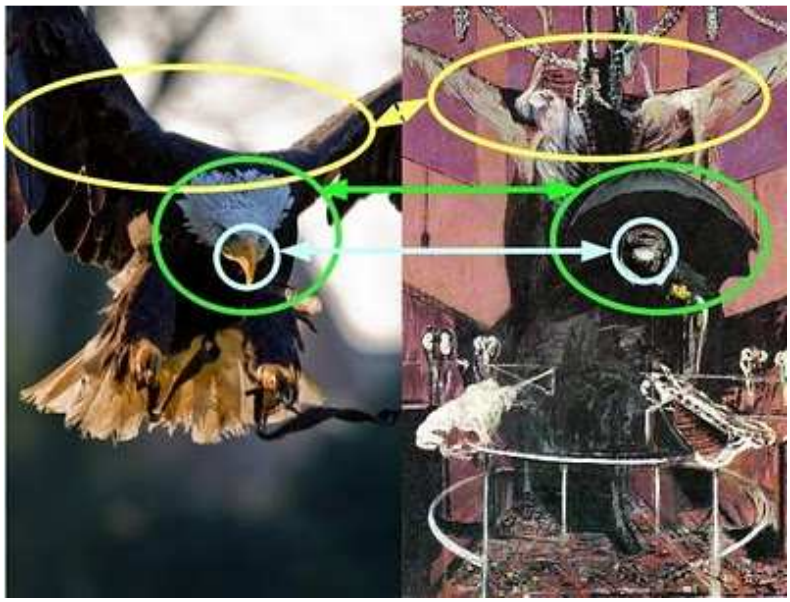
As we will see, the figures in the painting are aesthetically analogous to the parts of a bird landing on a field. The original bird image might still suggest certain sense-impressions to our mind, like the smells, sounds, and imagery of a field with birds, and these will dissociate with the deformed version we explicitly see. These confusions between our senses and faculties is partly responsible for what makes these paintings so sensational. If our senses worked together harmoniously to produce an organic impression, we could reduce what we see to some idea or general picture, and put it aside from our awareness. But the fact that we cannot bring our senses together synaesthetically causes us to sense irreconcilable differences in what we perceive, which makes it continue to provide phenomenal content to our perception of it.

The diagram in this painting is the smeared section, and it spread differential variations throughout the rest of the painting as Bacon continued painting it, producing an aesthetic analogy.









Diagrams are like mechanisms, then, which operate on the formation in the painting so to produce differential variations whose incoherences are partly responsible for the phenomenal content in our experience of the works. But according to Merleau-Ponty, all phenomenal content of our perception is horizonally integrated. Yet, what does an umbrella have to with a carcass? In what way are the parts of the Bacon painting horizonally implied in one another, or how is for example the green of Cézanne's depiction of the wall implied in the wall's actual grayness? The horizonally-associated connections between the parts of our perception motivate us to turn our awareness from one part to the other. But is it not the incoherent difference between the umbrella and the carcass that makes our eyes move from one to the other? To more clearly articulate the difference between these two views on the mechanics of phenomenological motivation and the arrangement of phenomenal parts, we will look at Deleuze and Deleuze & Guattari's writings on Dadaist machinery and Surrealist associationism.





3 Dada and Phenomena

To do so, we will follow the observations in William S. Rubin's *Dada and Surrealist Art* (1978) before moving to Deleuze & Guattari's appendix to *Anti-Oedipus*. Rubin has us consider the differences between a Picasso painting and a Jean Arp work. Picasso, he writes, "is balanced and stabilizes and unfolds with a pictoral logic, though not predictability, which makes its stasis seem classically definitive." Yet Arp "may be turned any way; its contours unwind in a free and meandering manner implying growth and change."[305]

Picasso. *The Guitar Player* (1910) / Jean Arp. *Siamese Leaves* (1949)





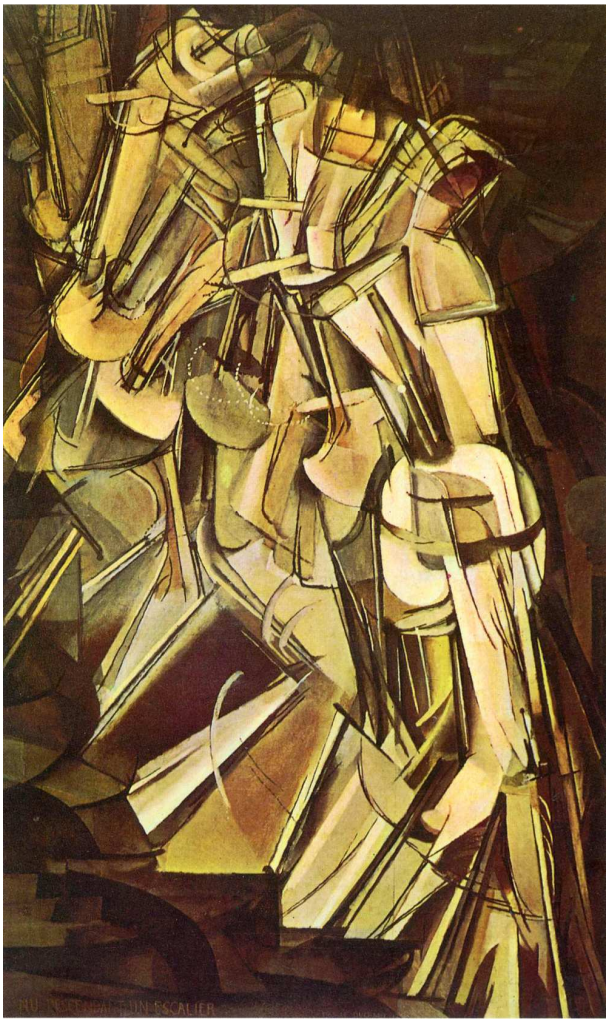
The fact that we can turn the Arp any way we want suggests that although it has parts, they need not be set in any certain arrangement. We will find this sort of freedom of parts also in the mechanical components of Duchamp's works. Consider *Nude Descending a Staircase, Number 2*.



[305] Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.21.



Duchamp. *Nude Descending a Staircase, Number 2.*



About it, Duchamp says, “A form passing through space would traverse a line; and as the form moved, the line traversed would be replaced by another line – and another and another.”[306] And Rubin writes: “Duchamp, like Leonardo, probably wanted to study motion in terms of the body as an unencumbered machine.”[307] Consider also the “mechanism”[308] in another of Duchamp’s paintings.



[306] Duchamp, quoted in Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.24.
[307] Duchamp, quoted in Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.24.
[308] Duchamp, quoted in Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.33.

Duchamp. *Sad Young Man in a Train* (1911)



Duchamp discusses this period when he made these Cubist-like paintings. What he has to say will indicate to us something important about mechanics. It is not that the object or the movement can be broken-down into certain static parts. Rather, the object repeats itself, and each time in a new dimension in a sense. The repetition cannot happen at the same place or the same time, because then they would perfectly overlay. Each time they must be found in a new place and time. He says "Repetition is the opposite of renewal. So it's a form of death."[309] Now, repetitions in new dimensions are mechanical in a sense, because they are recurrences. But they are productively mechanical, because each production is a variation.

> The Cubist method interested me then as repetition rather than deconstruction of the object, as it was later defined. It's the repetition of the same figures that interested me. The same figure repeated many times in one painting.[310]

[309] Duchamp, *Jeu d'échecs avec Marcel Duchamp*.
[310] Duchamp, *Jeu d'échecs avec Marcel Duchamp*.



Duchamp. *Portrait of Dulcinea* (1911)



He explains mechanics in terms of chess, a passion of his. He says of the game

> It's logic and mechanics rather than mathematics. Mechanics in the sense that the pieces move, interact, destroy each other. They're in constant motion and that's what attracts me. Chess figures placed in a passive position have no visual or aesthetic appeal. It's the possible movements that can be played from that position that make it more or less beautiful.[311]



[311] Duchamp, *Jeu d'échecs avec Marcel Duchamp*.



The play of the pieces is mechanical not just because they are in interactive motion, performing operations on one another. Another mechanical aspect are the variations that sprout from every position. Any one set-up can be full of intensity, full of variations of itself, full of ways to change the mechanics of the play. With each move, the mechanics change, because the pieces relate in a new way, with their inter-functioning altering accordingly. The series of piece-arrangements, changing with each play, is like his repetition-paintings. Each move takes us to a new dimension that is functionally divergent from the prior one. But when there is no next move except check-mate, then the game is dead. It is alive only as long as there are possible variations implied in the mechanics. We might even notice this in the workings of time. Another moment will follow this one only because potential variations are implied in this one, like the piece set-ups of the chess game. Difference in a way precedes change and time, as does repetition, or at least we might say proliferation if not repetition comes prior to time's passage. This is part of the mechanics of time. Variations of the current moment are implicitly proliferated immediately right now. They are implicit in the sense that there is room for them to express themselves, but this 'room' for new configurations is all we might be able to sense. We can feel a certain intensity, which is the density or depth of the moment, its varying from itself instantaneously, and it undergoing a multiplicity of variations simultaneously. It is not like chess, where there are a finite number of determinate possible moves, each one pre-viewable, as a computer might do. There is, rather, difference and intensity, an instantaneous explosion of intensive 'space' (depth) for variations to pour into. So, each moment, we are in a new dimension, because each moment is incompossible with the prior one; they both cannot exist together, and yet they do, because these contracted layers of incompatible moments stack like sheets to produce the thickness of time (we clarify this further in the next chapter on Deleuze's read of Bergson's duration). The Duchamp Cubist-like paintings can show us this and the mechanics behind it. Consider for example Duchamp's *The Chess Players*.





Duchamp. *The Chess Players* (1911)



Showing the variations of the same players and their alternate piece movements:



It shows two chess players at a table, in multiple views. The players are shown in different positions, suggesting the passage of time. Duchamp gave Cubism an idiosyncratic twist by introducing duration. The players are weighing their options. One potential outcome results in the capture, by the player on the left, of an opposing piece, held in his hand near the bottom of the painting. A picture of minds engaged





> in the calculus of chess, this is an early exercise in another continuing interest in Duchamp's art: depicting the intangible.[312]

We will now take a look at Duchamp's works that are more physically mechanical. We will see that like the displacements in the paintings, these other works as well are based on a displacement of parts.

> In 1913 he placed a bicycle wheel upside down on a stool; singled out for contemplation in isolation from its normal context and purpose, it seemed strangely enigmatic, especially when the wheel turned pointlessly. What Duchamp had done was subject the wheel to [a] kind of *dépaysement* – dissociation or displacement […].[313]

Duchamp. *Bicycle Wheel*



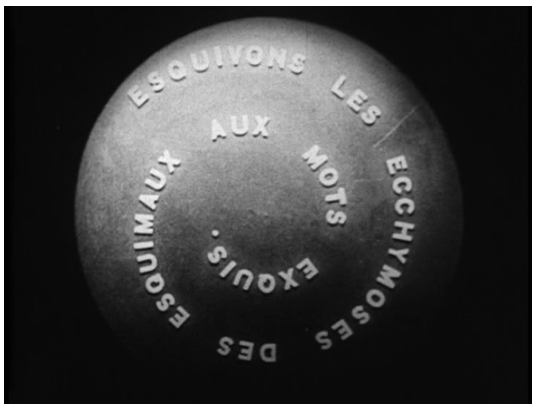
There is a similar sort of mechanical displacement in his cinematic work, *Anémic-Cinéma*. Here he crafts short lines whose words go fine together, but each one also seems to stand-apart in a way. Consider this line, which reads:

[312] Images and text from: Stafford, *Making Sense of Marcel Duchamp*.
[313] Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.36.





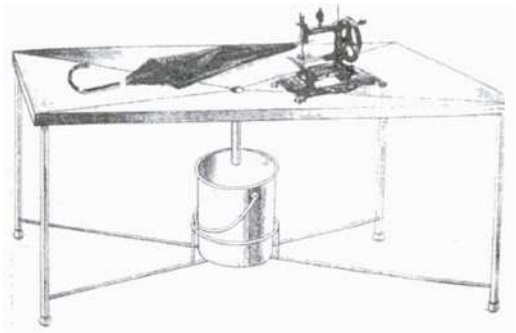
ESQUIVONS LES ECCHYMOSES DES ESQUIMAUX AUX MOTS EXQUIS



Katrina Martin translates it as: "Let us flee from (cleverly and with some disdain) the bruises of the Eskimos who have exquisite words."[314] These words do not make coherent sense. But that does not stop us from reading them over and over. This of course could be a result of the phonetics. But it is more than just sounds, too. All together, the words operate on our thinking. Yet, it is not because our minds make coherent sense of the words. There is a sort of functioning here without an integration of parts.

Let's for a moment shift to Man Ray for another articulation of this sort of relation between parts. He was inspired by a line in Isidore Ducasse's *Les Chants de Maldoror* (written under his pseudonym Comte de Lautréamont): "the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on a dissection table." Man Ray gives a "literal representation of the metaphor:" He "undoubtedly assembled the appropriate objects – dissecting table, umbrella, and sewing machine; he made them 'pose' in order to photograph them."[315]

Man Ray. Reproduction of *L'image d'Isidore Ducasse*





[314] Martin, "Marcel Duchamp's Anémic-Cinéma," p.58.
[315] Hubert, *Surrealism and the Book*, p.193.



We will return to this image later. But for now we notice that the parts do not cohere together. Yet somehow it works on our brain. And it is also not really on account of distantly associated things cohering with each other.

Consider now Duchamp's *Why not Sneeze Rose Sélavy*?



Rubin writes of it that it is:

> a birdcage filled with cubes of sugar, into which a thermometer and cuttlebone had been thrust. The spectator, having gotten over this unexpected juxtaposition, lifts the cage and discovers its great weight that the 'sugar lumps' are really cubes of white marble.[316]

As Duchamp himself explains:

> The cage with sugar is called, *Why not Sneeze Rose Sélavy?* I'm sure you find the title odd, because there's no connection between the pieces of sugar and sneezing. What's more, the sugar isn't made of sugar. It's made of marble. So it's something else. When you lift the cage, you're surprised by its unexpected weight. There's also a thermometer in the corner for measuring the marble's temperature to prove it's not sugar, and so on…[317]

Rubin notes similar disjunctions in Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* (with subtitle Delay; also known as the Large Glass) that

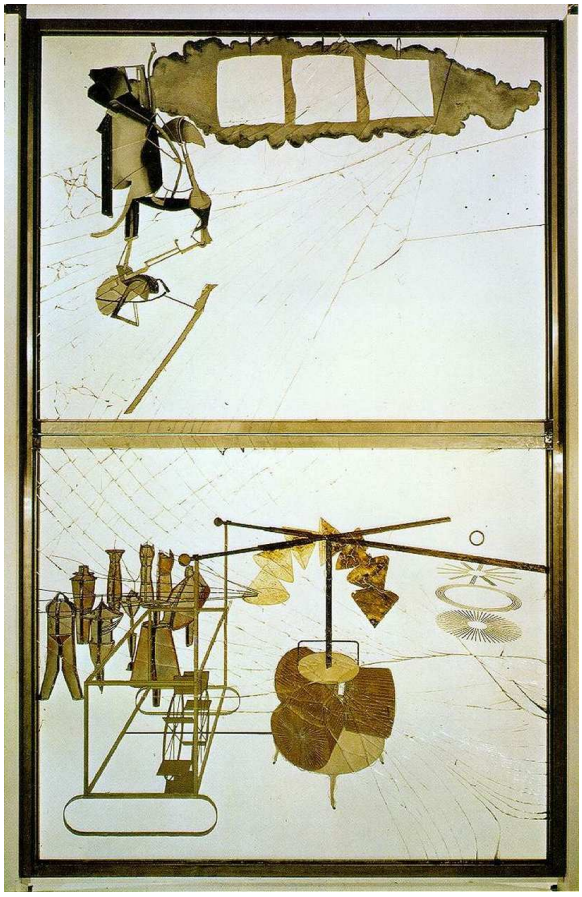
[316] Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.37.
[317] Duchamp, *Jeu d'échecs avec Marcel Duchamp*.





> the parts were connected mechanically, they are non-sequiturs in terms of individual identity. A waterwheel, a chocolate grinder, a cloud, and what appear to be cleaners blocking and pressing forms seem to function together like a very serious and scrupulously tooled counterpart of a Rube Goldberg apparatus.[318]

Duchamp. *Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* (The Large Glass), (1915-1923)

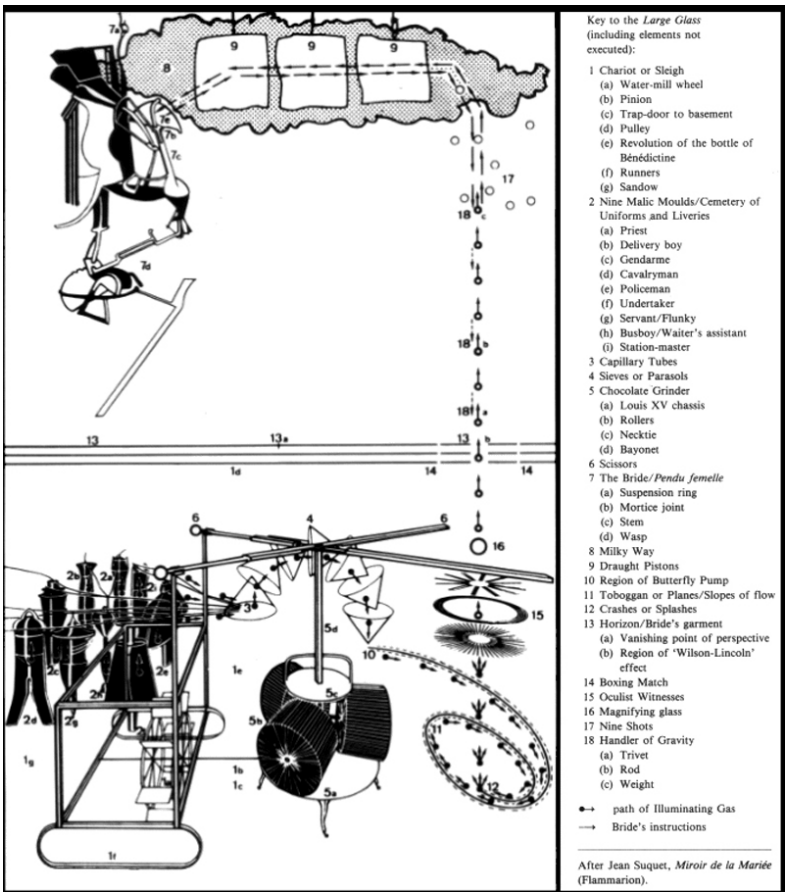






[318] Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.38.





Key to the *Large Glass* (including elements not executed):

1 Chariot or Sleigh
(a) Water-mill wheel
(b) Pinion
(c) Trap-door to basement
(d) Pulley
(e) Revolution of the bottle of Bénédictine
(f) Runners
(g) Sandow
2 Nine Malic Moulds/Cemetery of Uniforms and Liveries
(a) Priest
(b) Delivery boy
(c) Gendarme
(d) Cavalryman
(e) Policeman
(f) Undertaker
(g) Servant/Flunky
(h) Busboy/Waiter's assistant
(i) Station-master
3 Capillary Tubes
4 Sieves or Parasols
5 Chocolate Grinder
(a) Louis XV chassis
(b) Rollers
(c) Necktie
(d) Bayonet
6 Scissors
7 The Bride/*Pendu femelle*
(a) Suspension ring
(b) Mortice joint
(c) Stem
(d) Wasp
8 Milky Way
9 Draught Pistons
10 Region of Butterfly Pump
11 Toboggan or Planes/Slopes of flow
12 Crashes or Splashes
13 Horizon/Bride's garment
(a) Vanishing point of perspective
(b) Region of 'Wilson-Lincoln' effect
14 Boxing Match
15 Oculist Witnesses
16 Magnifying glass
17 Nine Shots
18 Handler of Gravity
(a) Trivet
(b) Rod
(c) Weight

path of Illuminating Gas
Bride's instructions

After Jean Suquet, *Miroir de la Mariée* (Flammarion).

Duchamp stopped adding parts to the Glass' machinery when he finally obtained the sense the work was 'perfectly incompleted.' In his notebooks, Duchamp describes many mechanisms which are implied in the machine's operation but never found their explicit presentation in the work. They are excluded, but they are necessary to explain the bizarre mechanics. And even if all the parts were there, the system can never arrive at a state of balance. The mechanisms seem to be striving for something, but all they really accomplish is the continuation of their motion and of their striving. Perhaps this is why it is subtitled 'a delay in glass.'

We see Dadaist machines also in Picabia.

> *Very Rare Picture on the Earth* presents us with a strange pointless machine made of cylindrical tanks joined by pipes in a system apparently run by little wheels at the bottom.[319]

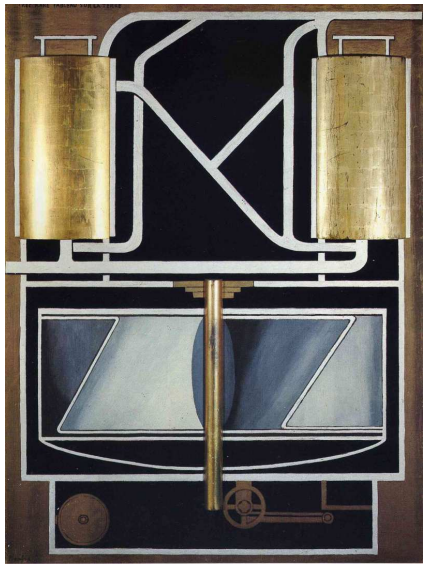
Unlike in the case of Duchamp's machines, where there is a possible iconographic interpretation: "Picabia's machine remains a total enigma."[320]



[319] Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.58.
[320] Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.58.



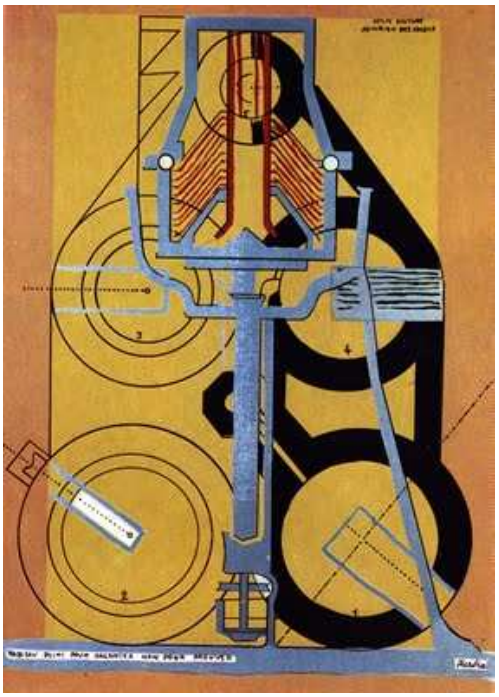
Picabia. *Very Rare Picture on the Earth* (1915)

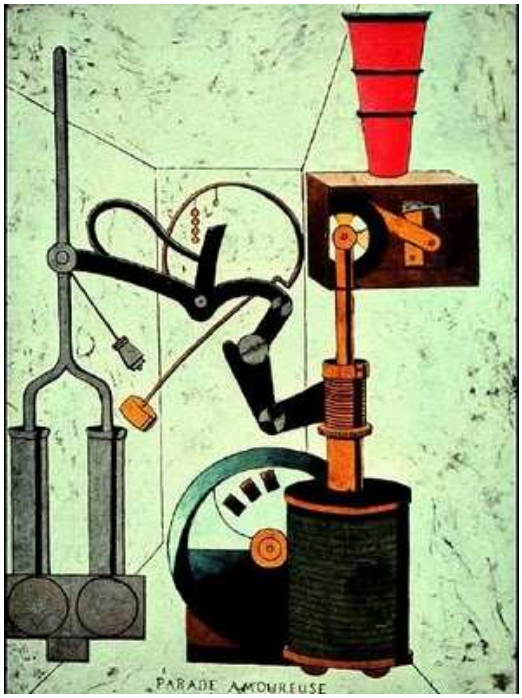


Here are some more of Picabia's machines.

Picabia. *A little solitude amidst the suns (A picture painted to tell not to prove)* (1919)

Picabia. *Amorous Parade* (1917)









In the works of Raoul Hausmann, we will be able to notice more of a machinery-sort of Dadaist organization. When we see the collage works of Dadaists, we might still think in these machinery terms. In the very least we can see parts with heterogeneous relations. The collage, as a multiplicity, functions as an artwork, but there is no coherence to the roles that the parts play, like when there would be a larger logic of the system.

> We called this technique photomontage […]. We regarded ourselves as engineers. We pretended to construct, to assemble our work in the style of a mechanic.[321]

Hausmann. *Spirit of Our Time* (*Mechanical Head*) (1919)

Hausmann. *Tatlin at Home* (1920)





In the collage format, we see broken heterogeneity. The parts are incoherent, but they are still added together, as if by saying "... and ... and ... and ..." to conjoin the disjunctive elements. Consider here Kurt Schwitters' *Das Undbild*.



[321] Hausmann, quoted in Herbst, *German Dada*.



Kurt Schwitters. *Das Undbild* / *The ‘And’ Picture* (1919), with detail



Also consider:

Kurt Schwitters. *Merz Picture with Rainbow* (1939)

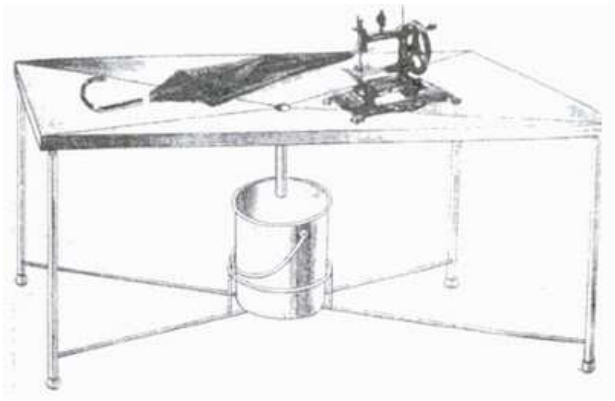
Kurt Schwitters. *Construction for Noble Ladies* (1919)







We will now better clarify Dadaism's relations between parts by comparing it with Surrealism, which developed out of Dadaism, and this will serve to characterize two sorts of arrangements for phenomenal parts. Rubin writes, "While this is an exaggeration, it is unquestionable that surrealist literature and art were, in some measure, an ordering and systematization of the chaotic inventions of Dada."[322] The relations between images in Surrealist art often follow a 'flow of association'[323] and hence are not like the unassociated relations of Dada. And Surrealist images, although made to look somewhat unusual, were still recognizable, like in dreams. "An object might be dreamed of as distorted, its perspective wrenched, but it is always an object familiar to us in our waking life."[324] In Dadaist works, if the parts still cause us to have associations, then even so, for the most part, these associated images found on another level did not themselves associate with one another. In Surrealism, however, we see the opposite. While the different images might seem logically incompatible, their associated images still might weave together and integrate in a way that could possibly make some sort of vague and 'irrational' sense on another level of our consciousness. Dada, however, does not have this other level of coherence; there is not an unconscious logic, so to speak. Rubin has us recall the umbrella, dissection table and sewing machine, which we saw Man Ray depict.[325]



There is no real coherence between the parts of the image. And even the associations each one gives us also seem not to integrate with each other. Now instead, we are to consider a Surrealist work, Giorgio de Chirico's *The Song of Love* (1914).

[322] Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.116.
[323] Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.116.
[324] Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, p.113.
[325] Hubert, *Surrealism and the Book*, p.193.





Giorgio de Chirico. *The Song of Love* (1914).



Rubin says that again, these objects do not associate. But the images associated with the depicted ones ‘cross-fertilize’ each other. So the surgical glove might make us think of Western medicine, coming from the ancient Greeks, like in the Greek statue, and the Greeks appreciated pure forms, like the sphericity of the ball. And the knowledge of these Western-originating sciences led to technological advances seen much later in the steam engine for example. Also, the ball and the glove both call to mind rubber, and the glove makes us think of hands that would sculpt the statue or play with the ball. The coherence of the associations is vague and elusive. But think of the feeling it gives us. We feel as though there is some harmony to it all, even though on the surface none can be explicitly found. So it is not as though there is some story we can make-out from the associations. We cannot give any logical account for why these objects are placed together. But, as Rubin puts it, their associations, although also seemingly unrelated, ‘cross fertilize’ each other; they integrate in some unspecifiable and indirect way.



> As we know, contexts and levels of reality constantly mingle in dreams. […] The juxtaposition, in *The Song of Love*, […] has the telling simplicity, force and directedness of Lautréamont’s classic evocation. As with the latter’s sewing machine, umbrella, and



> dissection table, each of de Chirico's objects calls forth associations that are rationally quite unrelated to the associations of the other objects. But crossfertilized, as they are in this painting, all these associations create a poetry […].[326]

So let's also consider some works by Surrealist René Magritte.

Magritte. *Empire of Light* (1950)



Here the bottom night-scene is incoherent with the top day scene. But what is one of the first things we associate with the word night? Is it not often, day?

Magritte. *The Happy Hand* (1953)





[326] Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, pp.131-132.



These images in the painting above are incoherent, but their associations with elegance at a social event are not incoherent.

Magritte. *Hegel's Holiday*

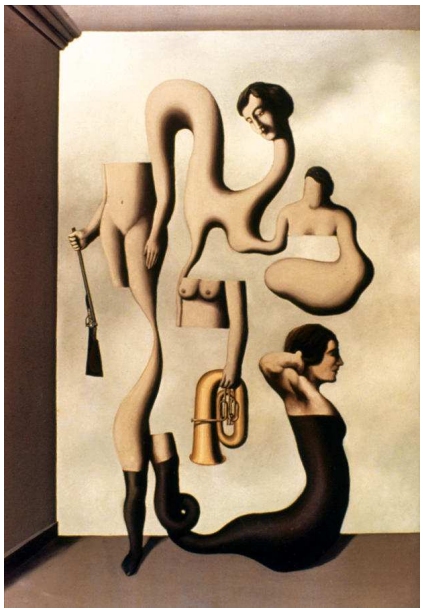


We would never see such a thing, but we pour water into glasses, while umbrellas repel pouring rain. Even when the coherence of the associations becomes less articulatable, we still have the feeling of there being another level of coherence, unlike with the Dada relations between parts.





Magritte. *The Acrobats Ideas* (1928)



Consider a couple works by Joan Miró, where also we feel the hidden coherence.

Joan Miró. *Dutch Interior* (1928)

Joan Miró. *Tilled Field* (1923-1924)



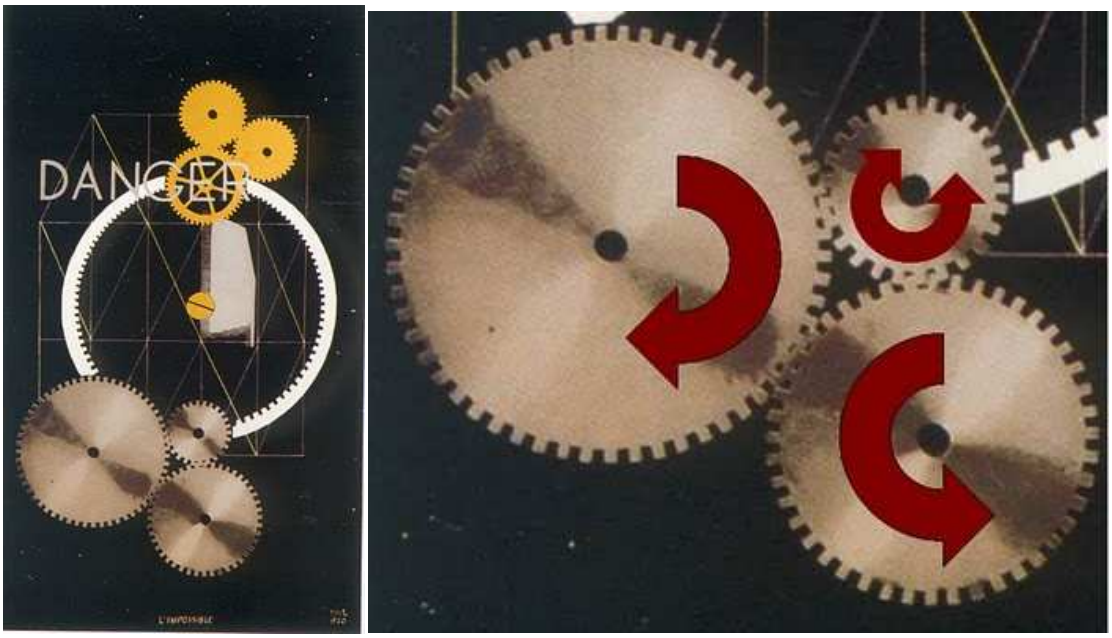






So with all this in mind, we will turn now to Deleuze's and Deleuze & Guattari's ideas about machinery and non-associable relations of a functional assembly, working through their appendix to *L'anti-Oedipe*, "Bilan-programme pour machines désirantes," translated to English in *Chaosophy* as "Balance-Sheet for 'Desiring-Machines'." Our final aim is to examine the Deleuze and Guattari machinic sort of relations between parts and compare them to the organic type we find in Merleau-Ponty. We will take a brief look at some of their descriptions of machines and their workings. Deleuze and Guattari speak of absurd sort of machines in literature and art, which mis-operate "through the physical impossibility of the organization of the working parts, or through the logical impossibility of the mechanism of transmission."[327] They note how for example Man Ray's *Dancer-Danger* is a machine whose constituent mechanisms operate against one another.

Ray. Man Ray. *Dancer / Danger, Impossibility*, with modified detail





[327] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.464; "Balance-sheet," p.91.



Humans are component parts of machines. In the case above, we are to think in the first place that the gears' whirling is to express the twirling of a Spanish dancer. But the impossibility of the machine's workings is to convey the idea that a machine by itself could never perform something as non-mechanical as human dancing. Yet, the machine does express something about the motion. Implied in its entitled workings is the human dancer's motions. Even though she is not shown, her necessity for completing the dance is implicit. This illustrates the need for humans to be a part of 'desiring machines.'[328] For our phenomenological purposes, we are concerned more with the mechanics Deleuze and Guattari are employing here rather than with the issue of desire. They go on to say that humans become components to machines when we communicate our functioning by recurrence to the other parts of the machine, all under the specific conditions of our functioning. They have us consider for example a mounted archer. What do a horse, a man, and a bow and arrow have to do with one another? Their functioning is unrelated, except when on the steppes where war is waged. The recurrence of the horse's trot communicates its functioning to the man, whose recurrent pulling of his arm communicates to the recurrent springing of the bow and arrow. Normally, such recurrent functions would be meaningless to one another. Why should a horse care about a man's arm pulling back and forth? Why should the man care about the horse's feet moving up and down? But when they communicate the differences of their functioning under the conditions of war on the steppes, they together incoherently form a lethal war machine. In machines, "heterogeneous elements are determined to constitute a machine through recurrence and communications."[329]

Deleuze & Guattari distinguish tools from machines. A tool might have parts that make contact and that communicate motion or force, but unlike machines, a tool's parts are not really functionally independent and heterogeneous from one another. And there will be a possibility that a tool is usable in certain situations. But in the operation of machines it is more of a matter of them having a probability that its parts might reconfigure under different functional relations or be used in ways that are unforeseeable. And finally, when we see something as a tool, we think of it in terms of how all its parts integrate and work together for a common purpose ("the functional synthesis of a whole"), while as a machine, we understand it in respect to how its parts

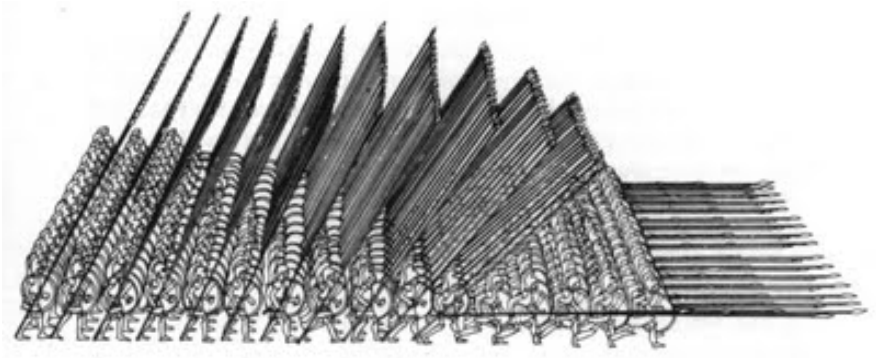
[328] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.464; "Balance-sheet," p.91.
[329] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.464; "Balance-sheet," pp.91-92.





work heterogeneously and incoherently ("real distinctions in an ensemble").[330]

We will use their next example, the Greek phalanx, to better grasp the interworkings of the heterogeneous parts as springing-up out of the conditions of their functioning. Deleuze & Guattari write "Hoplite weapons existed as tools from early antiquity, but they became components of a machine, along with the men who wielded them, under the conditions of the phalanx and the Greek city-state."[331]



The reason the phalanx is machinic is not because it is like a gear in the army machine, or that it itself has gears, like the pike's fulcrum and the marching legs. Rather, one reason it is a machine is because these men and their mechanically-related parts enter formation within the conditions of the heterogeneous machinery of their social and political circumstances. But being a citizen of a Greek city-state has nothing to do with wielding a long pike. They do not associate at all. Yet on the other hand, neither would have been able to sustain itself if both their heterogeneous functions were not combined. These civic conditions and the war machinery supporting them are inseparable. Forces bring these differentially-mechanical functions together. When we later turn to phenomenology, we will see that phenomena that appear to us have parts, yet these parts do not integrate organically, but rather have their heterogeneous motive tendencies forced together.

[330] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.465; "Balance-sheet," pp.92-93.
[331] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.466; "Balance-sheet," p.93.





We normally think of machines and mechanisms as repeating a function, and the overall effectiveness of the machine we often regard as being the result of the mechanical parts maintaining their assigned function. But this is not really a machine, because its production is limited to manufacturing only one thing redundantly. Instead, a more proper machine would have the capacity for new productions, and this would result from it being able to reconfigure itself and also its functional relations with the functional mechanisms around it. So along with its power to connect with things around it and the power of its parts to connect together, it also has the power to form new connections and hence to break those already in function.[332] Thus machines have a

> capacity for an unlimited number of connections, in every sense and in all directions. It is for this very reason that they are machines […]. For the machine possesses two characteristics or powers: the power of the continuum, the machinic phylum in which a given component connects with another, the cylinder and the piston in the steam engine […], but also the rupture in direction, the mutation such that each machine is an absolute break in relation to the one it replaces, as for example, the internal combustion engine in relation to the steam engine. Two powers which are really only one, since the machine in itself is the break-flow process, the break being always adjacent to the continuity of a flow […].[333]

So machines on the one hand connect heterogeneous parts, like a train engineer being connected to his levers and the engine parts they operate, which connects his body to long kilometers of surface on the earth and to the people he interacts with on both ends. But also, on account of the fact that machines operate by the incoherence and heterogeneity of their parts, these connections very easily can break and in fact machines often operate most properly when their connections do break. So the teams of inventers and engineers who worked with mechanical parts to design and produce the internal combustion engine not only made use of the flexibility allowed by the incoherence of mechanical parts to break their connections and produce new arrangements, but also they broke the course of development in engines and set along on a new path, and they broke the train engineer's functional habits and connections to the steam powered parts of his usual engine. Machinery understood in this broader sense tells us of a higher sort of mechanical productivity, one that produces new

[332] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.469; "Balance-sheet," p.96.
[333] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.469; "Balance-sheet," p.96.





mechanical connections, rather than manufacturing the same product over and over without variation. If production is really the function of machines, would not more effective machines be ones without a fixed purpose?

Deleuze and Guattari now turn to machinic painters. Duchamp and Picabia, for example, do not paint a machine as if it were some object to be rendered, like a nude or a still life. Rather,

> the aim is to introduce an element of a machine […]. The induced machine is always other than the one that appears to be represented. It will be seen that the machine proceeds by means of an "uncoupling" of this nature, and ensures the deterritorialization that is characteristic of machines, the inductive, or rather the transductive quality of the machine, which defines recurrence, as opposed to representation-projection: *machine recurrence versus Oedipal projection*.[334]

The recurrences of a real machine are transductive, in the sense of transferring energy to new domains, as when the energy in our surroundings converts to the energy of our nerves' excitement. The recurrences would not be the same for example as when we might think our minds are consistently triggered to associate mental representations with our father or mother. But we will touch more on the anti-Oedipal characterizations of machines a bit later. For now we are looking at how painting-machines are not depicted representations of machines but are instead parts of larger machines that include us as the viewers. Of particular interest is Duchamp's *Tu m'*, which Deleuze & Guattari say has an 'aleatory mechanism.' [335] There is a part projecting out from the painting, which casts a shadow, whose appearance will vary according to the conditions of the lighting and point of view. What makes it an aleatory mechanism is that as our vision finds ways to put together the parts of the painting, this variational mechanism can continually disrupt and alter the way we try to configure the elements. In other words, it is a diagrammatic mechanism.

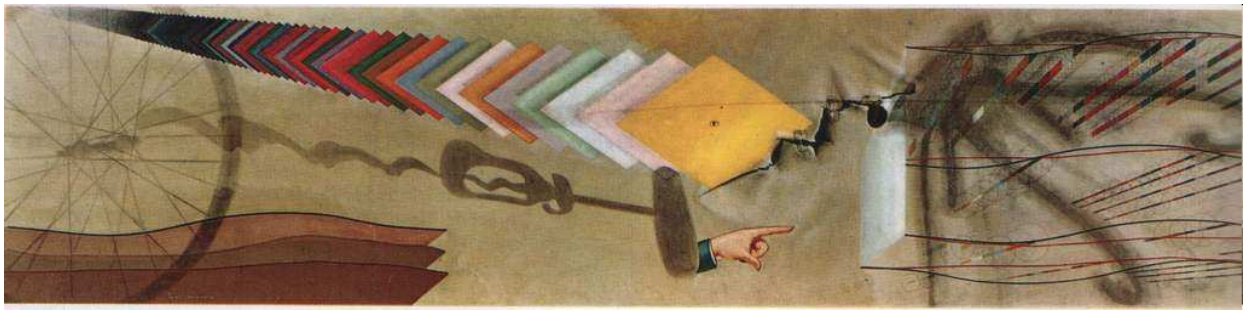


[334] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," pp.469-470; "Balance-sheet," p.97.
[335] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.470; "Balance-sheet," p.97.



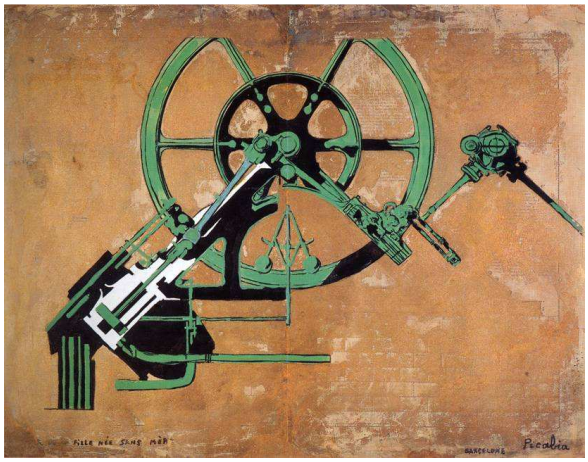
Duchamp. *Tu m'* (1918)





Picabia's works are also machinic, especially since his mechanical parts include the titles themselves. Part of their machinic operating is the disjunctive functioning between the titles and the machine-imagery that bear no resemblance to the title.[336] Consider for example Picabia's *Daughter Born without a Mother / Fille née sans mère* (1916-1917).

Picabia. *Daughter Born without a Mother / Fille née sans mère* (1916-1917)





[336] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.470; "Balance-sheet," p.97.



The National Galleries of Scotland has this to say about the work: "The title alludes to the creation of Eve from Adam's rib and also to the Virgin birth. The gold background may refer to Renaissance paintings of the Virgin and Child."[337] Our first reaction might be that this interpretation of the title could not possibly have anything to do with the painting, and that it seems completely irrelevant to what the painter is trying to achieve. But that illustrates Deleuze and Guattari's point. The machinery here is neither the mechanisms depicted nor the title itself; rather, the machine is the heterogeneous combination of both their functioning, along with us as a combining mechanism, as our minds try to put together two incompatible parts of our experience.

So there is a non-associativity involved in highly productive machinery. Deleuze and Guattari elaborate this by making use of what they consider the 'anti-Oedipal'. They note how free association inevitably leads our thinking to Oedipal representations. It is almost as if there is something Oedipal about associations themselves. Perhaps it is the fact that associations are like mechanisms governing regimented representation. In a way, there is a sort of restrictive power acting on our mental associations. And if we struggle to resist it, we are only entering into a fight with a governing force. Would it really be healthiest, then, to replace our psyche's troubled associations with other ones, when all associations structurally involve an enforced regimentation incapable of new productions? What if instead of manipulating associations, we made use of diagrammatic psychic mechanisms that operate by means of non-associative connections?

> Let us return to the necessity of breaking up associations: dissociation not merely as a characteristic of schizophrenia but as a principle of schizoanalysis. The greatest obstacle to psychoanalysis, the impossibility of establishing associations, is on the contrary, the very condition of schizoanalysis – that is to say, the sign that we have finally reached elements that enter into a functional ensemble of the unconscious as a desiring-machine. It is not surprising that the method called free association invariably brings us back to Oedipus; that such is its function. Far from testifying to a spontaneity, it presupposes an application, a mapping back that forces a preordained ensemble to associate with a final artificial or memorial ensemble, predetermined symbolically as being Oedipal. In reality, we still have not accomplished anything so long as we have not reached elements that are



[337] National Galleries of Scotland, "*Daughter Born without a Mother.*"



> not associable, or so long as we have not grasped the elements in a form in which they are no longer associable. [....][338]

Deleuze & Guattari then quote Serge Leclaire: "What is involved, in brief, is the conception of a system whose elements are bound together precisely by the absence of any tie, and I mean by that, the absence of any natural, logical, or significant tie," "a set of pure singularities." [339] So for example, if we analyze our dreams for associations, these associative mechanisms are not really productive, and they do not constitute a machine. However, Deleuze & Guattari describe a method by Trost which can render dream analysis machinic:

> in order to retrace the dream thought […] it is necessary to break up the associations. To this end, Trost suggest [sic] a kind of à la Burroughs cut-up, which consists in bringing a dream fragment into contact with any passage from a textbook of sexual pathology, an intervention that re-injects life into the dream and intensifies it, instead of interpreting it, that provides the machinic phylum of the dream with new connections. […] the passage selected at random will always combine with the dream fragment to form a machine. And no doubt the associations re-form, close up between the two components, but it will have been necessary to take advantage of the moment, however brief, of dissociation.[340]

Recall the distinction we made between Surrealism and Dadaism. The Surrealist associations integrated (or they at least 'cross-fertilized'), but the Dadaist ones did not. Dadaism is machinic because its parts function together non-associatively, but Surrealism is associative and Oedipal. Real machines contain

> a set of really distinct parts that operate in combination as being really distinct (bound together by the absence of any tie). Such approximations of desiring-machines are not furnished by surrealist objects, theatrical epiphanies, or Oedipal gadgets, which function only by reintroducing associations – in point of fact, Surrealism was a vast enterprise of Oedipalization of the movements that preceded it. But they will be found rather in certain Dadaist machines, in the drawings of Julius Goldberg, or, more recently, in the machines of Tinguely. How does one obtain a functional ensemble, while shattering all the associations? (What is meant by "bound by the absence of any tie"?).[341]

[338] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.475; "Balance-sheet," p.103.
[339] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.475; "Balance-sheet," p.103.
[340] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.474; "Balance-sheet," p.102.
[341] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," pp.475-476; "Balance-sheet," p.104.





In Jean Tinguely's machinic artworks, we also have heterogeneity of parts and functions, all for seemingly a purpose that has got to do with nothing else at all, nothing other than pulling us into it, conjoining us to it so that we together make a bigger machine without a pre-established purpose.

Tinguely. *Méta Harmonie IV – Fatamorgana* (1970)



Tinguely. *Homage to New York* (1960)







Deleuze & Guattari describe the heterogeneity of the mechanical parts' functions, whose incoherence is what opens it up for the greatest machinic productivity.

> In Tinguely, the art of real distinction is obtained by means of a kind of uncoupling used as a method of recurrence. A machine brings into play several simultaneous structures which it pervades. The first structure includes at least one element that is not operational in relation to it, but only in relation to a second structure. It is this interplay, which Tinguely presents as being essentially joyful […]. The grandmother who pedals inside the automobile under the wonderstruck gaze of the child – a non-Oedipal child whose eye is itself a part of the machine – does not cause the car to move forward, but, through her pedaling, activates a second structure, which is sawing wood.[342]

Another important Dadaist machinist is Buster Keaton.

> Picabia called the machine "the daughter born without a mother." Buster Keaton introduced his house-machine, with all its rooms rolled into one, as a house without a mother, and desiring machines determine everything that goes on inside, as in the bachelors' meal.[343]

In Deleuze's first *Cinema* book, he explains that Keaton's machines give him more affinity to Dadaism than Surrealism:

> *The Scarecrow*, where the single-roomed house 'without a mother' muddles each potential room with another, each cogwheel with another, stove and gramophone, bath and couch, bed and organ. These are the house-machines which Keaton, the Dadaist architect par excellence, designs.[344]

[342] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.476; "Balance-sheet," p.104.
[343] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.468; "Balance-sheet," p.95.
[344] Deleuze, *Cinéma 1*, p.240 / *Cinema 1*, p.180.





Keaton. *The Scarecrow*



In *The Scarecrow*, familiar mechanisms take on new mechanical relations. The normal associations between the parts of a house have been crammed together in incoherent yet highly functional ways. Keaton's 'trajectory gag' is machinized like this too. Every segment is functionally compacted upon a prior one, even though each transition is non-associatively related. Altogether, the machinic segments make one larger trajectory machine. Here for example is a trajectory machine from *The Three Ages*, where the "hero leaps from the top of one house to another, but falls, saving himself by grabbing hold of a canopy, tumbles down a pipe which comes loose, projecting him down two storeys into a fire station, where he slides down the pole to jump on to the back of the fire-engine, which is about to set off."[345] [Flip pages 8-160 bottom]

Buster Keaton. *The Three Ages*





[345] Deleuze, *Cinéma 1*, p.239; *Cinema 1*, p.179.



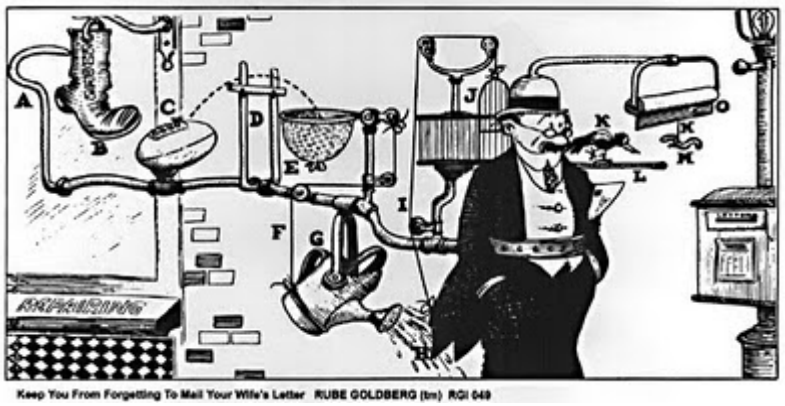


Deleuze compares Keaton's machines with those that 'Dadaist' Rube Goldberg drew. Both Keaton's and Goldberg's machines exhibit "processes of physical causality, which pass through detours, extensions, indirect paths, liaisons between heterogeneous elements, providing the absurd element which is indispensable to the machine." [346] Deleuze at times refers us specifically to this particular Goldberg machine.



[346] Deleuze, *Cinéma 1*, p.241; *Cinema 1*, p.181.



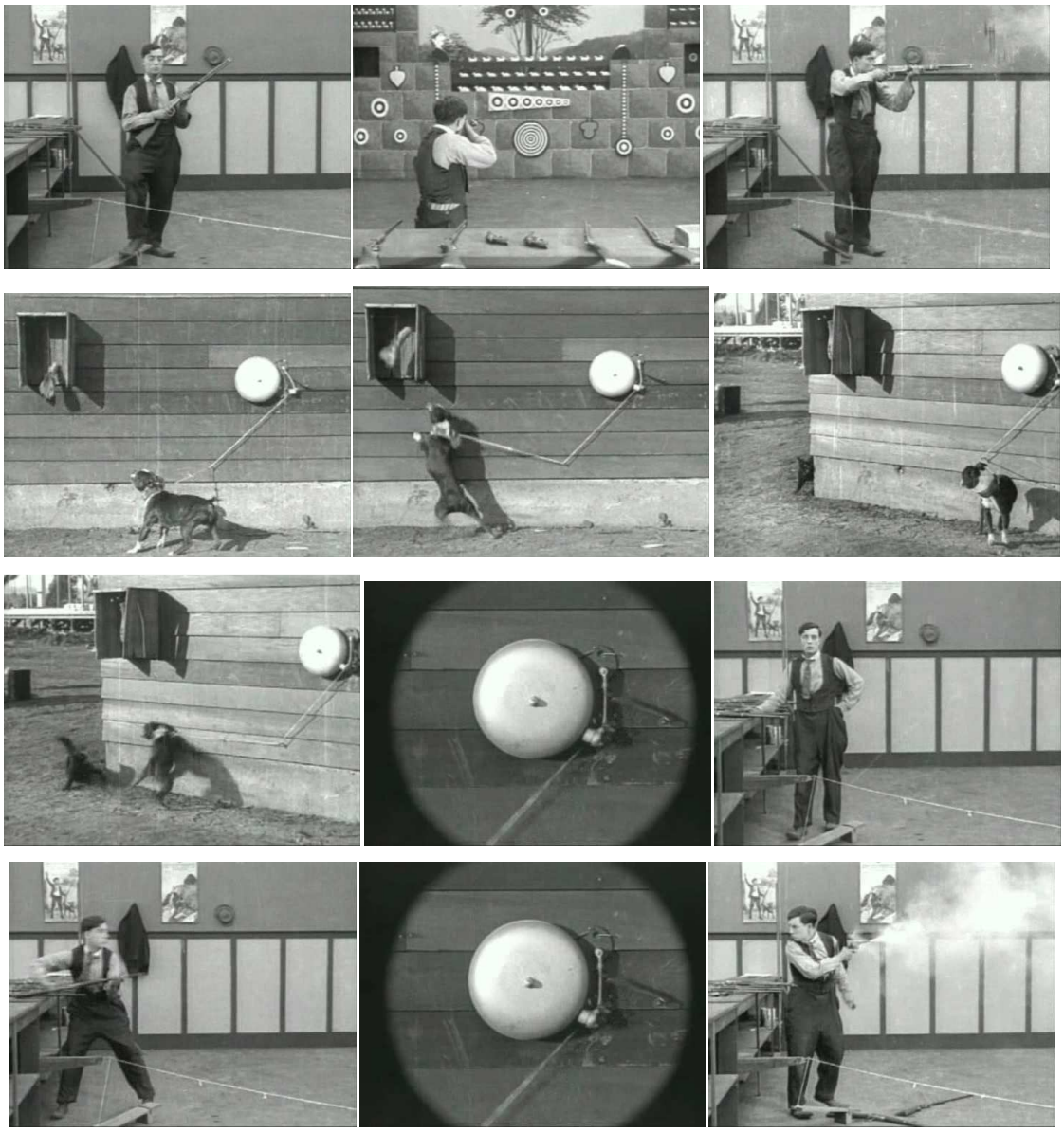


> Each element of the series is such that it has no function, no relationship to the goal, but acquires one in relation to another element which itself has no function or relation. . . . These causalities operate through a series of disconnections.[347]

Notice in particular the bird-worm mechanism. We would anticipate the bird to eat the worm, but this is a matter of probability, which is a characteristic feature of productive machines. What if the bird flies away having earned its freedom, or sees more appealing food and eats that instead? And could there not be a variety of external influences that disruptively enter into the fragilely connected mechanisms and completely change their operations? It seems that in all of Goldberg's many machines, one of the mechanisms is either a human or an animal whose functioning is open to vary into another sort of functioning, which would produce a new machine. Deleuze cites another Keaton example to illustrate. In the *High Sign*, Keaton tries to show himself an expert shooter by rigging a machine. He stomps upon a lever that pulls a rope, which releases a piece of meat outside to a dog. When the dog jumps for it, the bell goes off, giving the impression he hit the target. But then a cat distracts the dog, and causes the bell to ring wildly, thereby throwing "the mechanism out of gear."[348] This makes Keaton need to shoot rapidly and cycle through a series of different guns to keep up with the ringing, providing a superb finale to the show he was putting-on for his boss and other spectators. [Flip pages 8-164 top]



[347] Deleuze, *Cinéma 1*, p.241; *Cinema 1*, p.181.
[348] Deleuze, *Cinéma 1*, p.241; *Cinema 1*, p.181.



Deleuze again emphasizes the probabilistic nature of the mechanical disjunctions.

> […] it is chance relations that ensure this, without, between elements which are really distinct as such, or the unconnective connection of their autonomous structures, following a vector that goes from mechanical disorder towards the less probable, and which we call the "mad vector."[349]

Could not Keaton have just run the rope directly to the bell? Why involve a dog outside under uncontrolled conditions? As a result, the dog links-up with a new mechanism, the cat, which causes Keaton to look either like he is cheating or that he is

[349] Deleuze & Guattari, "Bilan-programme," p.477; "Balance-sheet," p.105.





incredibly expert at shooting. But the cat sent shocks of differentiation throughout the machine, causing it to function differently, to in a sense become another machine altogether. In this way, Keaton incorporates a diagrammatic element, something that opens the probability for differential variation to run wildly through the mechanics of the machinery. Deleuze & Guattari also refer to this as a 'minorization'. It was not the needs of the whole of the machinery in its majority that caused it to become the finale-machine in the end. Rather, it was a minority faction, the dog mechanism, that changed functioning and brought new parts into the workings and broke the connection with the meat. Deleuze refers us also to *The Navigator* for a more apparent example of minorization. The huge cruise liner is geared to serve food for enormous numbers of passengers. But Keaton and his companion end up being the only ones aboard.

> By which system can a little egg be cooked in a huge pot? In Keaton, the machine is not defined by immensity. It implies immensity, but in inventing the 'minoring' function which transforms it, by virtue of an ingenious system which is itself machinic, based on the mass of pulleys, wires and levers.[350]



In Merleau-Ponty's example of the beached boat, we notice something ambiguous about one of the trees. We implicitly have on the horizon of our awareness what we next come to perceive: we notice that the tree in fact is really one of the masts on the boat. From a Deleuzean perspective, there is a minorization in our phenomenal awareness. One part of what we see in a way changes its function to the other parts, which then alters the way we arrange all the rest of the phenomenal pieces. What gave the mast this diagrammatic role was the fact that there came an instant when we sensed implicitly that it was incoherent with the other phenomenal parts. What makes moments like these phenomenal, when our world rearranges, is the incoherence of the



[350] Deleuze, *Cinéma 1*, p.240; *Cinema 1*, p.180.

parts, and not their integration.

With this in mind, we might contrast Deleuze's and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenologies by characterizing their mechanics with Surrealist and Dadaist art. In Surrealist art, whether on the surface of our awareness or somewhere along its 'unconscious' margins, the parts bear associative relations which tie them all together organically into a fabric or flesh. So when we look at the images in Surrealist art, we might think the combinations to be weird, but not altogether incoherent. They have a sort of irrational logic like in dreams. This is much like Merleau-Ponty's horizonal structure of phenomena. Each phenomenal object has the other on its implicit horizon, and our phenomenal motivation takes us from one phenomenon to what is already there implied in the immediate horizon of our awareness. So really there is no heterogeneity in the actual functioning of the mechanics in Merleau-Ponty's motivation. And although the whole of the horizonally integrated machine is never given at once explicitly, all its horizonal integrations are there from the beginning in an inexplicit predetermined arrangement of associating parts. In Dadaist art, however, the parts do not bear any obvious relations, nor do the associations with the images lingering in the margins of our awareness themselves relate coherently. This would characterize the heterogeneous incoherence of phenomena in Deleuze. We also might think of phenomenological motivation in mechanical terms. We could, for example, be motivated to turn our attention to something associated to what we now see, as Merleau-Ponty might have it. But for Deleuze, we would only turn our attention if something were standing-out, which means this other part is not fitting-in with everything else. It is incoherent. Thus the mechanics of Deleuzean phenomenological motivation are dissociative mechanisms. Our attention moves from one thing to another, but not because they are tied together but in fact only because they refuse to interlace with one another in our phenomenal awareness.

And finally, recall the three sorts of integrations in Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the body: (1) between parts of the world, (2) between parts of the body, and (3) between body and the world. So something stands out to our awareness, for Deleuze, not on the basis of the parts of the world integrating, but only because there are differential relations between heterogeneities. Thus (1) the condition for Deleuzean bodily phenomena is the incoherences of parts of the world and not their organic integrations. And also, affections disrupt our bodily





composition and in some cases, like Spinoza's poet example, the affections can cause our body to take-on a composition so different from our own that it expresses the essence of another person. So (2) phenomena for Deleuze appear to a disorganized body and not to Merleau-Ponty's harmoniously operating 'lived body'. Finally, these affective encounters are shocking and based on our differential relations to the things affecting us. Hence (3) it is only on the basis of a disjunction between us and the world that appearances can be given to us. Our 'intertwinement' would only mean that we have become so familiar with our surrounding world that it becomes regular and redundant, and for that reason, nothing stand-out phenomenally.

Yet not all phenomena involve external bodies affecting our own. There are also phenomena originating more from within, for example, time and our own selves. For both Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze, the phenomena of time and self are jointly given and also they both think that time is a matter of self-affection. We will proceed to see if Deleuze's phenomenal principles are better than Merleau-Ponty's in accounting for the phenomenality of the appearance of time and selfhood.



Part II
Phenomena of Time and Self

Chapter 5
Self and Time for Merleau-Ponty

Because we deal with time solely as a *phenomenon*, we will analyze it primarily insofar as it appears to our consciousness by standing-out before our direct awareness. Thus we postpone questions regarding an actual objective time that might be more fundamental than phenomenal time. We will by-pass, then, Deleuze's phenomenologically irrelevant articulations of time, for example, his characterization of time as Aion and Chronos. Instead, our focus on the three syntheses of time will allow us to contrast Deleuze's phenomenal time with Merleau-Ponty's temporality, briefly taking into account the Husserlian concepts of time Merleau-Ponty expressly develops.

Our comparison will deliver two important parallels between Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenal temporality, against which we will draw three essential distinctions. Phenomenal time for both Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty arises from a self-relation, and it is continuous in some way. Deleuzean phenomenal time is continuous in the sense of a differential series. However, for Merleau-Ponty, phenomenal time is a thrust whose continuity arises from it being a 'transition synthesis': it is continually one moment intertwined with the rest, because all moments integrate horizonally. In all, the phenomenon of time for Merleau-Ponty is a matter of the integration of phenomenal variances conducted by a transitionally-continuous and temporally-integrated self. For Deleuze, however, time appears through the irreconcilabilities between moments, and it makes its appearance to an internally inconsistent self. Further stated: Deleuze's phenomenal time appears suddenly, intensively, and discontinuously on the basis of differential relations between moments and within our differential selfhoods.





Time for Merleau-Ponty appears to us as a partly-extending thrust that is continuous on account of horizonal integrations. He articulates this sort of time in the 'Temporality' chapter of his *Phenomenology of Perception*. Merleau-Ponty begins this chapter by casting doubt on a scientific or common sense understanding of an objective sort of time, so that he may make his stronger case for a subjective phenomenal time. Given our value here for a phenomenal time instead of an objective time, we will quickly outline his critique. Afterward, we will carefully and gradually piece together his notions that allow him to articulate phenomenal time as the thrust of a self-affective transition-synthesis.

1 Objective Time

To illustrate why time from an objective perspective does not involve temporal succession, Merleau-Ponty first has us imagine that we are standing before a river. Somewhere in the distance is the icy mountaintop whose melt rushes into the valley where we now stand. Further off in the other direction is the delta where the river empties upon the sea. The water on the mountaintop is water that in the future will rush in front of us. And the water near the sea was water we once saw but is now in the past of our awareness. Yet, an objective perspective would not make these temporal distinctions.



For Merleau-Ponty, as we have noted, phenomena appear to us on account of our integration with the phenomenal world. Because we and all other parts of the phenomenal world are interwoven together, to be aware of one thing is implicitly to be aware indirectly of all other phenomena. So, in one sense, our integration with world places something in its entirety on the horizon of our awareness. However, as one part of this world, we are only expressly aware of one portion of it from a given perspective. Thus, another consequence of our integration is the finite limitation of our explicit awareness. This finite perspective will be vital to Merleau-Ponty's explanation for the motion of time's passage. As integrated parts of the phenomenal world, we never have an explicit view of every part of the world from every possible perspective. We are aware of these other parts only implicitly. So when we see the river's water before us, we say that the water was at the mountaintop yesterday, and tomorrow it will enter the sea. Yet when we do so, we are really positing another finite observer who saw it roll down the mountain, and as well we posit another observer who watches it disperse into the sea. We are not seeing the world as a whole. Consider instead if we could in fact see the whole world objectively all at once. The water that will flow through the river tomorrow does not exist in the future; it exists right now on the top of the mountain. And the water at the mouth near the sea is not in the past but rather exists right now, simultaneous with the water in the valley and along the mountain-side.[351] Objectively speaking, moving things in the world do not appear and disappear from the present. They merely travel to another place. Yet, from the perspective of one person in one location, things come-and-go, appear-and-disappear, moving from the future through the present then into the past. "'Events'," he writes, "are shapes cut out by a finite observer from the spatio-temporal totality of the objective world."[352] There can only be time, then, if there is someone there viewing a limited part of the whole: "time presupposes a view of time."[353] Water moving out-of-view does not go into the past but rather finds itself becoming maintained within the presence of a different observer's now-moment. And water to come is not originally absent from the whole picture; it is just absent from our limited view: "the future is not prepared behind the

[351] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* pp.472-473; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.478.
[352] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.472; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.477.
[353] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.472; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.477.





observer, it is a brooding presence moving to meet him, like a storm on the horizon."[354]

To further our focus on phenomenal time, Merleau-Ponty will explain why we cannot regard temporality objectively with respect to our physiological organism, namely, as something physically imprinted in our nervous tissues. He notes that in *Matter & Memory* Bergson shows how our memory of the past is not like physical markings in our nervous tissues that we turn to when recollecting. Memories in one way are more like modifications to our ongoing bodily behaviors and habits. Consider if for example we held a particular job or played some sport for a while, and it changed the ways our body moved in a general sense, as if it added something to its characteristic style. It is as though the manner of our bodily motions keeps alive all our memories of the past times when we were engaged in those activities. Something in the world around us might make us recall a certain event. Perhaps we become reminded of a particular prior day at work or at practice. Bergson has us view such recollections in this manner: our implicit habit-memories have their 'intentions' or tendencies to become explicit (going from virtual to actual), and as well, external influences have their tendencies to modify our bodily operations in such a way as to allow some specific past event to actualize in explicit recollection. So there is a sort of collusive confluence between the subjective and objective influences when we recollectively recognize something. The status of the memory is not of some past that is now stored in recorded form and forgotten until it is recalled. It is rather continually present in virtual form, implicit in the actual behaviors of our body.[355]

Merleau-Ponty says also that psychologists are wrong to apply the objective view of time to the mistaken conception of the past as a series of nows in the form of memories. He offers the illustration of the markings on his desk. They remind him of the past. Yet, this is not because the actual past is there in the table. Everything there, including the markings, are fully present. The past is a factor only because of the significance he now gives those markings. It is not that we see something now, and then this perception reminds us of a past one. For, we would not know that the present one relates to the past unless we already had the past one in mind to make that relation.

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[354] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.473; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.478. Recall the ship example when he wrote: "a storm is imminent in storm clouds," Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* pp.40-41; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.20.

[355] We explore this Bergson material in greater detail in the following chapters.



Thus, the past has to already be a part of our present perception in order for present acts of awareness to bring past ones to mind: "reproduction presupposes recognition, and cannot be understood as such unless I have in the first place a sort of direct contact with the past in its own domain."[356]

Just as the past must be inherent to our present, so too do we somehow anticipate a future that is already given to us now. We know that the present moves to the past. Thus analogously, the future is something passing into presence; so perhaps we feel it surging to presence with the same sort of force and in the same continuous motion that pushes the present into the past. In a way, regarding our experience of time, we are more immediately aware of time's directed motion itself than we are of the events happening in time. The past and future are on the horizon of the present just as much as the present is on the horizon of the future and past, and these integrated relations are inherent to the character of our mental events, even after they have passed away: "I know that I was in Corsica before the war, because I know that the war was on the horizon of my trip there. […] Time is thought of by us before its parts, and temporal relations make possible the events in time."[357]

It is not that we obtain the parts of time and then arrange them in an order. They already have attained an order of motion by virtue of the temporalizing structure of our consciousness. Past and future are temporal relations that our awareness gives to its intentions, and on this basis "consciousness deploys or constitutes time."[358] This view on temporal awareness regards the past and future as being somehow immediately a part of our present consciousness. Yet, Merleau-Ponty wonders, might there not be a past and future that is truly absent from our awareness? For we seem to deprive the past and future of their temporal significance if we do not distinguish them adequately from the present. Also, might this sort of temporal awareness of the past's and future's temporal immanence deprive us from experiencing a pure present? And is not the motion implied in this sort of temporal awareness still based on an objective series of nows?

[356] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* pp.474-475; *Phenomenology of Perception,* pp.479-480.
[357] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.476; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.481.
[358] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.476; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.481.





> Time as the immanent object of a consciousness is time brought down to one uniform level, in other words it is no longer time at all. There can be time only if it is not completely deployed, only provided that past, present and future do not all three have their being in the same sense.[359]

Time loses its temporal value when our awareness spatializes it by placing the past, present, and future in simultaneous coexistence. Also, this gives time something like a form or structure, thus making it in a way unchanging and distinct from us. Hence Merleau-Ponty concludes: "there must be another true time, in which I learn the nature of flux and transience itself."[360]

2 Integrative Time

Merleau-Ponty also admits that if we only attend to the past, present, or future each solely on its own, we would not then be concerning ourselves with time itself, because time also involves the relations between them. Thus, time also involves their synthesis. However, such a temporality is always ongoing, and hence this sort of time is never fully given or complete. A completed time might be something like time understood in its eternity; yet, for consciousness to be explicitly aware of all moments at once, as if from a temporally universal viewpoint, it could not then also be the finite consciousness we know it to be. Merleau-Ponty, rather, is seeking a way for us to become phenomenally aware of time as it constitutes our living existence and selfhood: "the problem is how to make time explicit as it comes into being and makes itself evident, time at all times underlying the notion of time, not as an object of our knowledge, but as a dimension of our being."[361] We encounter this coursing time within our "field of presence," which has one side of its awareness turned toward the horizon of the day's beginning, and the other side toward its end, all while remaining aware of the present moment in mid-day. It is this dual horizonal orientation of our field of presence that also gives past moments their temporal meaning, as he illustrated with his Corsica example (the memory of going to Corsica has as a part of it the war

[359] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.476; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.481-482.
[360] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.477; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.482.
[361] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.477; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.482-483.



on its own 'future' horizon). Thus, our field of presence is the primary source of our conscious acts' temporal meanings; it is where "time and its dimensions make their appearance unalloyed, with no intervening distance and with absolute self-evidence."[362]

Yet, past and future are not always explicitly a part of our current awareness. Rather, we feel their weight implicitly, and we are aware of them like how we are implicitly aware of the back of the house when only seeing its facade. Our progress into the future is not completely unannounced, because we at least are given already the 'style' of what will be happening: "ahead of what I see and perceive, there is, it is true, nothing more actually visible, but my world is carried forward by lines of intentionality which trace out in advance at least the style of what is to come."[363]

Merleau-Ponty recalls how Husserl explained these temporal horizons in terms of retentions, intentions, and protentions. It is not that we undergo a series of independent nows that we secondarily string together into a line of time. It is somewhat more complex. We will look briefly at two of Husserl's examples that have bearing on Merleau-Ponty's rendering of Husserl's time consciousness, namely, the examples of the melody and the brown beer-bottle. We focus on two primary concepts that Merleau-Ponty adopts from Husserl's model: horizonal integration and the temporal extension of continuous variation. This will also help us underscore the parts of Husserl's time consciousness that Merleau-Ponty gives additional emphasis and development to, in particular, the transitional component of temporal passage ('transition synthesis') and the 'thrust' of time's continuous motion. To further these efforts, we will compare their triangular diagrams of time consciousness.

Husserl has us imagine that we are hearing a melody. He explains that we perceive the melody both as a whole and yet also piecemeal moment-by-moment. This is because while perceiving the note happening during the now-point of our awareness, we are also retaining all our previous perceptions of the melody. All the perceptions together, past and present, unify continuously into one melody.[364] Such objects which

[362] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.478; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.483.
[363] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.478; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.483.
[364] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.38; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.40.





can only be constituted during a flow of time are 'temporal objects.'[365] If we are hearing a melody, then, we are currently perceiving (*intending*) the tone at that given moment of our listening. And, we are also retaining in our indirect awareness (*retending*) the parts of the melody that we just heard. Yet as well, we are vaguely anticipating (*protending*) the melody to unfold in a certain way.[366] All the moments of our awareness of the melody synthesize together continuously, and we will take a moment to examine this passive synthesis of temporally extending objects.

For this purpose we first turn briefly to Husserl's brown beer-bottle. Imagine we are gazing at a brown beer-bottle as night falls. Slowly the brown turns to black. So the brown undergoes continuous variation until becoming another color. Because the alteration is continuous, in each instant there is a different sort of brown, and there would seem then to be an infinity of browns. However, as we will see, this sort of infinite division to pure phenomenal instants is only theoretically possible in Husserl's and Merleau-Ponty's time consciousness, and also, the brown for Husserl is not an infinite multiplicity of different browns but is rather the "one and self-identical something that 'appears' in the continuous and manifold brown-'appearances'."[367] The brown itself is a unified identity, whose perceptual correlate, the stream of brown variations, is as well a unity; it is an unbroken continuum of phenomenal variation.[368] We will later distinguish this sort of continuous linkage with Deleuze's differential series, which is also continuous but instead as a sequence of discrete, pure variations that directly abut one another without overlapping. In Husserl's and Merleau-Ponty's time-flow, there are no discrete instants, because successive moments are too interpenetrated to be taken exclusively of one another. The sort of gradual variation in the brown beer-bottle can also happen for one of the melody's tones.[369] Its tonal quality might fluctuate so much that it takes on a different quality distinct from the first. Yet this "discontinuity presupposes continuity," because the phases of our

[365] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.39; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.41.
[366] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.84; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.89.
[367] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.258; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.266.
[368] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.258; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.266.
[369] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, pp.86-87; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.91.



consciousness "blend into one another without a break" even if parts of their contents at certain times are discontinuous. Also, if there is a variation, there must be some underlying thing that remains self-identical and continuous while one of its properties changes.[370]

> If the quality of the tone remains unchanged and its intensity or timbre changes, we say that the *same* tone varies in timbre or changes with respect to intensity. If nothing remains unchanged in the entire phenomenon, if it changes "in all its determinations," there will still be enough there to produce unity: precisely that absence of differentiation with which neighbouring phases blend into one another, thereby producing the consciousness of unity.[371]

Thus "discontinuity is not possible in every time-point," and in fact, complete discontinuity is impossible at any time-point whatsoever, because underlying any variation is a more fundamental temporal continuity.[372] We will later see that for Deleuze, however, new phenomenal time-points can come about only on the basis of their discontinuity with prior moments, for else they could not be *new* moments: non-discontinuous time-points would really be little more than a lack of progression away from prior moments, if in fact they have not broken-away from their predecessors.

Husserl explains that the very process of the "train of presents" carrying one-into-the-next involves each moment appearing already in intimate linkage with its neighbors. We see how moments are given from the beginning as melded into a stream in cases of graduated series, like the brown beer-bottle variations. A series of gradation proceeds by means of 'graduated terms': the ending part of one moment and the beginning part of the next share the same phenomenal content, and so-on down the unbroken and unified concatenation of variations.[373] It is in this way that temporal relations are "from the very beginning and by essential necessity linked together in being constituted," and the continual coupling of moments is the "primordial phenomenon of succession."[374]

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[370] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, pp 86-87; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, pp.91-92.
[371] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, pp.87-88; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.92.
[372] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.86; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.91.
[373] Husserl, *Analysen zur passive Synthesis*, p.134; *Analyses Concerning Active and Passive Synthesis*, p.180.
[374] Husserl, *Analysen zur passive Synthesis*, p.135; *Analyses Concerning Active and Passive Synthesis*, p.181.





And the 'real consciousness of time' is our awareness of the continual 'shading off' of the present into the 'just-having-been-present'.[375] This is something like what Merleau-Ponty will call the 'transition synthesis.' Recall how for Husserl the now-moment is not a pure instant. It is rather 'a small field'[376] that extends somewhat into the immediate past and future.[377] The phenomenal contents leaving our direct, present awareness exit gradually. This happens on account of the "continuous coinciding of the temporal fields."[378] Their reciprocal interpenetration yields a "unity of an overlapping consciousness of succession."[379] Thus, contents of our phenomenal awareness that are currently passing-out of the present are in a way both partly present and partly absent from our explicit awareness. They are shading-off into retentions that push deeper-and-deeper into our retentional awareness.

Merleau-Ponty illustrates this process with Husserl's famous triangular diagram of time consciousness. In Husserl's text, we see the diagrams in a slightly different form, but just as in Merleau-Ponty's rendition, Husserl's diagrams for the most part illustrate the 'running-off' of immanent objects, which is "a continuity of constant changes."[380] Some of Husserl's diagrams are structured such that a diagonal line depicts the running-off, and others use a vertical line for this motion. Merleau-Ponty's uses the vertical run-off model.

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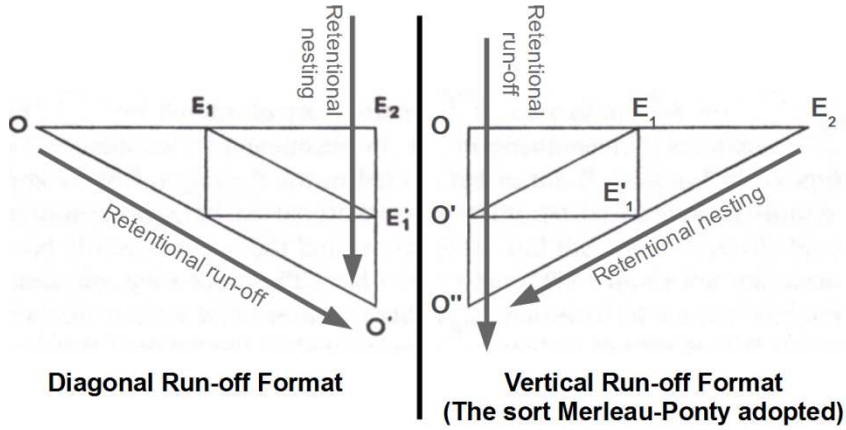
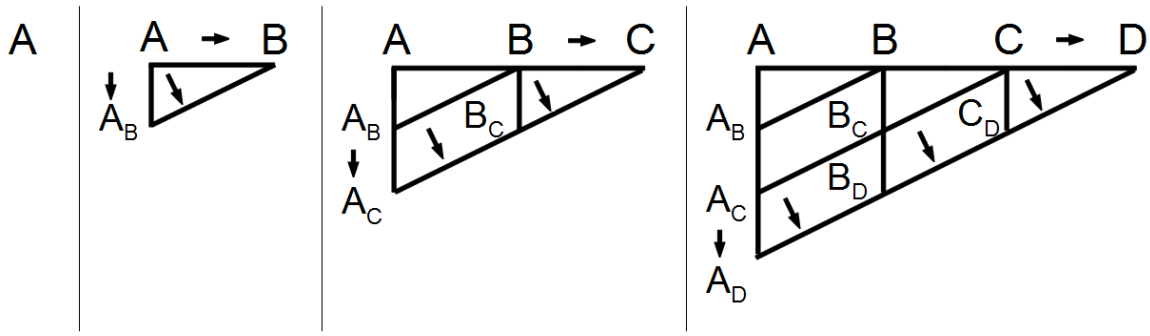
[375] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, pp.209-210; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.216.
[376] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.176; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.181.
[377] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.235; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.242.
[378] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.70; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.73.
[379] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.43; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.45.
[380] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.27; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.29.





The two general formats of Husserl's time diagrams

Husserl explains: "we indicate the sinking back into the past by means of the ordinates [i.e., the vertical lines];" and "each diagonal line contains the temporal gradations of content with respect to the terminal point on the [horizontal] line. All the points on the [diagonal] line are, of course, simultaneous."[381]



The accretive motion of Husserl's time triangle

So we begin with now moment *A* of our phenomenal awareness. As *B* enters the scene, *A* moves from its status as a present intention to its being an immediate retention, A_B. So while we are at moment *B*, we are no longer aware of *A* itself, because it is no longer in our explicit present awareness. Rather, we are aware of *A* in its retended form. The diagonal from *B* to A_B shows this awareness of the retentionally modified *A*. Then as *C* appears, *B* slips into retention. Yet, notice that the line of awareness from *C* does not go to A_B like it did at moment *B.* At this newer moment, we are no longer aware of that past retention. We instead are more immediately aware of

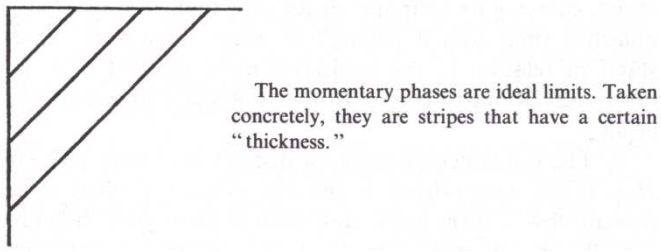
[381] Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p.230; *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p.238.



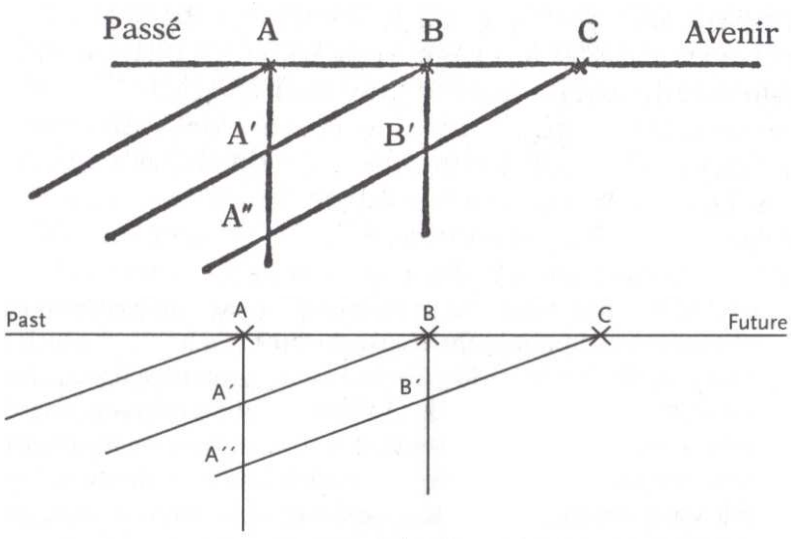


the retended *B*, and by being aware of this just-prior moment of consciousness, we are mediately aware of what we were retending in that prior moment. This makes our *A*-retention doubly modified, now that it is a retention of a retention, rather than just a mere retention. So at moment *C* we are aware of a doubly modified *A*, that is, of A_c.

Yet although we are talking about now-moments, Husserl emphasizes that these are not the same as pure extensionless instants or "ideal limits;" rather, they have a certain 'thickness', which means they swell-out and extend somewhat.



Merleau-Ponty builds from Husserl's model of time consciousness.

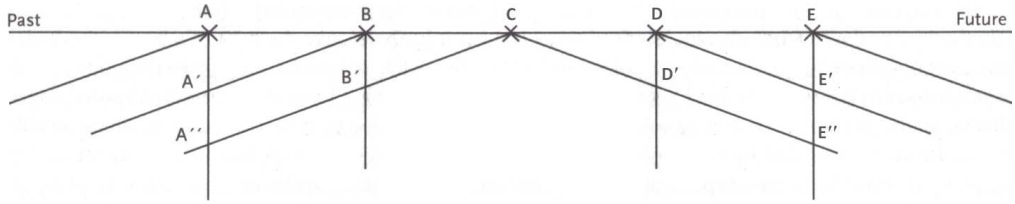


Merleau-Ponty's Husserlian time diagram[382]

Merleau-Ponty suggests a modification: to complete the diagram, we should display the symmetrical arrangements of protentions.

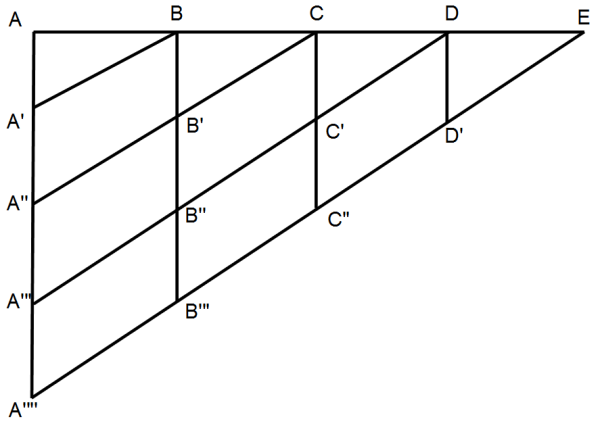


[382] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.479; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.484.



A possible depiction of Merleau-Ponty's suggested symmetrical network of protentions

One of the ways Merleau-Ponty uses this diagram is to further explicate his notion of 'transition synthesis'.



He observes how we consider both *A″* and *A′* to be retentional instances of the same *A* moment of awareness. Yet we can only be aware of *A″* at moment *C*, and *A′* at moment B. That is to say, we can be aware of a past moment of consciousness under its current retentional modification, but we cannot go back in time and also have the prior moment's consciousness of it as well. Our awareness is always in the present. But still, we call both *A″* and *A′* by the same name 'A,' which suggests we might be conducting an 'ideal synthesis' that disregards their temporal difference from one another. If we do not mark such differences, we might lose a sense of the real temporal relations of before and after. Merleau-Ponty's 'transition synthesis' will need on the one hand to be ever originary, while at the same time being self-continuous. So, he will not say that *A*, *A′*, and *A″* synthesize into one *A* through the transition synthesis. Rather, in our retentional awareness, it is really the original *A* moment that is given to us most fundamentally; however, it shows itself only in

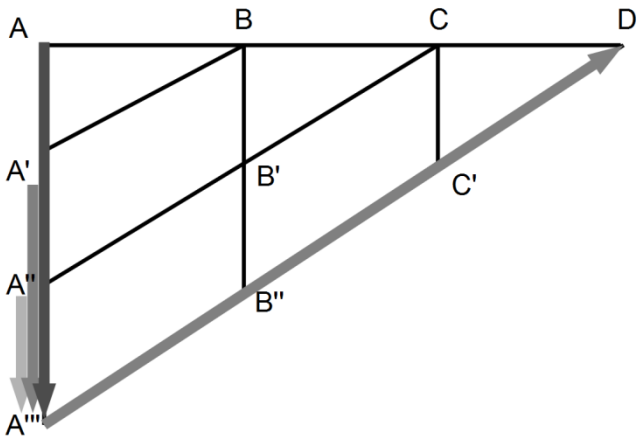




how it is presented through the progressing layers of its retentional modifications.

> What is given to me is not in the first place A′, A″, or A‴, nor do I go back from these 'outlines' to their original A, as one goes back from the sign to its significance. What is given to me is A transparently visible through A′, then the two through A″, and so on, as I see a pebble through the mass of water which moves over it.[383]

So Merleau-Ponty is not saying that we are directly aware of *A*, *A′*, and *A″* during *D*. Rather, *A*, and as well *A′*, and *A″*, each show themselves during *D* through the modificational layers making-up the intervening temporal 'thickness'.



Past now-moment and its retentions show themselves not directly to our present awareness but through the modificational 'lenses' of succeeding retentions

It is in this way that each layer retains its temporal distinctness – its being exclusively before and after other layers – while at the same time, the layers present us with one shared past moment.



[383] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.479; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.485.

We will now look more at how Merleau-Ponty views the temporal contact of the present against its past and future, so that we may better characterize what he calls the 'thrust' of time. He describes a very basic type of intentionality, and it is something like a general awareness of our immediate contact with the past and future. It is as if we have a sort of implicit and fundamental awareness that our acts of consciousness are right up against an absent future that is trying to impose itself on the present and also that our acts of consciousness are right up against an absent past that is in a sense pulling away on the present moment: "my present outruns itself in the direction of an immediate future and an immediate past and impinges upon them where they actually are, namely in the past and in the future themselves."[384] Merleau-Ponty observes how we do not constantly need to recall the past to be assured that it is there.[385] What this means is that all acts of consciousness were already from the beginning temporally linked by these primordial temporal relations. The forces acting on each and forcing one into the place of the other is what gives them their temporality. It is not necessary that we use our minds to string them together in order for them to have these real temporal relations. As we noted for Husserl, passing moments of consciousness are continuously fused on the basis of bridging overlaps that bind one moment with the prior one. So in a way, moments of consciousness are given already as fusions of the present with the absent pasts and futures. Thus all moments are pregiven as continuously united, but their manner of being given was always a relation to a present and to something absent to that present.[386] So it is not firstly that there is an arising present which then causes secondarily the past to pile up, and the future to be anticipated differently. This is because our being-aware of the present is really the awareness of the *movement* of the future into the present and of the present into the past. All three are in motion simultaneously, so we are aware not just of the past, present, and future individually, but more fundamentally we are aware of their *continuous interpenetrative motion.*

> The upsurge of a fresh present does not cause a heaping up of the past and a tremor of the future; the fresh present is the passage of future to

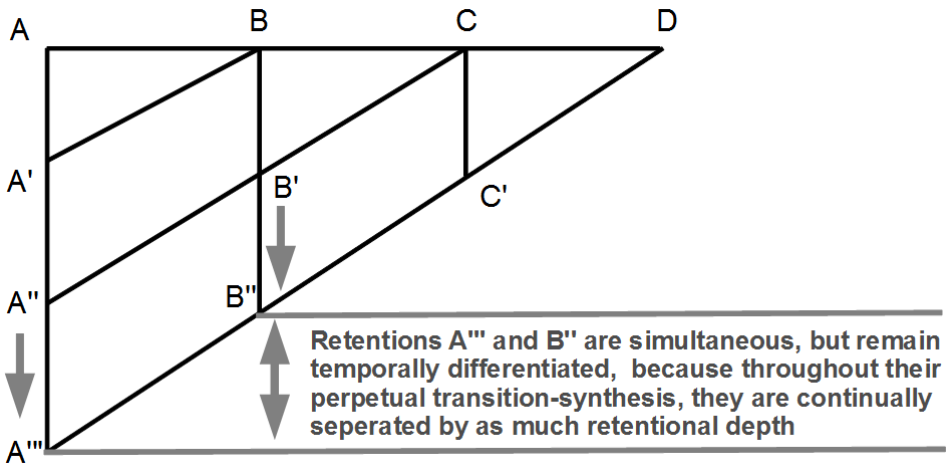
[384] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.480; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.486.
[385] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* pp.480-481; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.486.
[386] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.481; *Phenomenology of Perception,* p.486.





present, and of former present to past, and when time begins to move, it moves throughout its whole length.[387]

The successive now-moments *A*, *B*, and *C* cannot be present in one instant. Insofar as they are simultaneous retentionally, they are given instead as the movement from retentional-diagonal *A′-B* to retentional-diagonal *A″-B′-C*. What makes *A*, *B*, and *C* different in one moment of consciousness is not that they are successive, because within a single moment of retentional consciousness, they are not successive but rather simultaneous; rather, what distinguishes them temporally is the retentional depth that is continuously maintained throughout their duel modifications.



The simultaneous temporal differentiation of nested retentions

The unique temporal characters of *A″*, *B′*, and *C* are not so much the real temporal gaps that once transpired between *A*, *B*, and *C*, because those passages of time have already passed away; rather, the phenomenon of time involved here is the awareness of *A′* becoming *A″* while *B* becomes *B′*, during that transition from *B* to *C*. These are retentions, which means the phenomenon of time is our awareness of prior events being continuously seen through a perpetually thickening lens of the other intervening retentional moments linking to it.

> The ‘instants’ A, B and C are not successively in being, but differentiate themselves from each other, and correspondingly A passes into A′ and thence into A″. In short, the system of retentions collects into itself at each instant what was, an instant earlier, the system of protentions.

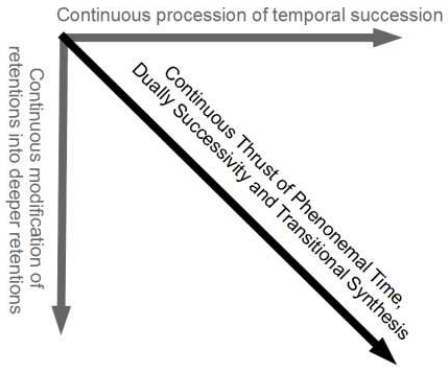


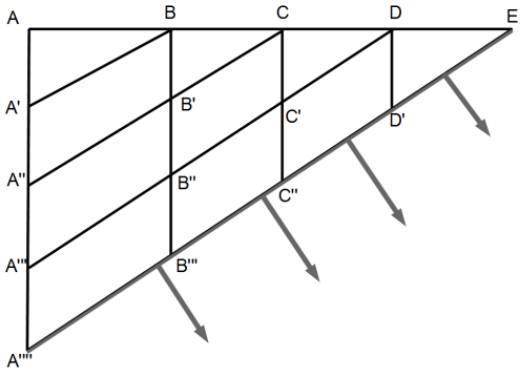
[387] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.480; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.486-487.

> There is, then, not a multiplicity of linked phenomena, but one single phenomenon of running-off. Time is the one single movement appropriate to itself in all its parts, as a gesture includes all the muscular contractions necessary for its execution. When we pass from B to C, there is, as it were, a bursting, or a disintegration of B into B′, of A′ into A″.[388]

So when time itself appears to our attention, what we sense is a sort of outward blooming from the reality that is given to us now. The present moment *A* soon becomes *B*. But also, *A* makes a transition not just to *B*, but also to being something in our retentional awareness, so *A* also becomes *A′*. What links *A* with *A′*, the present intention with its immediately successive retention, is not some synthesis of the two on the basis of their identification with one another. Rather, the *transitional* movement from one state to the next is what binds them together; as we have noted, Merleau-Ponty calls it a 'transition synthesis' (*synthèse de transition*), which is a terminological appropriation of Husserl's *Übergangssynthesis*. So the 'synthesis' here is merely the already-happening cross-linkage from *A′* to *A″* that comes about by means of their continuous motion of transition.

Merleau-Ponty's phenomenon of time, then, is like an awareness of the continuous motion of intentional contents slipping down the retentional diagonal of Husserl's diagram as time moves forward.





> It is nothing but a general flight out of the Itself, the one law governing these centrifugal movements, or again, as Heidegger says, an *ek-stase*. While B becomes C, it becomes also B′; and simultaneously A which, while becoming B, had also become A′, lapses into A″. A, A′ and A″ on the one hand, and B and B′ on the other, are bound together, not by any identifying synthesis, which would fix them at a point in time, but by a

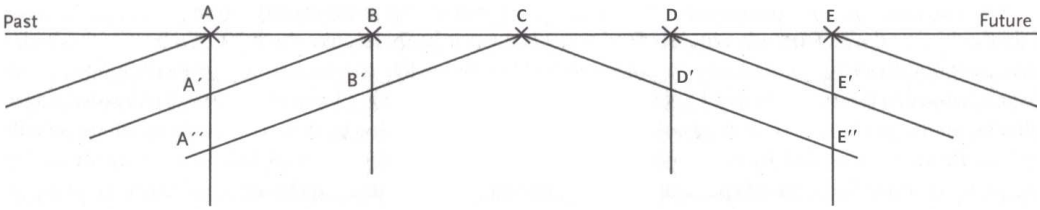
[388] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.481; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.487.





> transition-synthesis (*Übergangssynthesis*), in so far as they issue one from the other, and each of these projections is merely one aspect of the total bursting forth or dehiscence. Hence time, in our primordial experience of it, is not for us a system of objective positions, through which we pass, but a mobile setting which moves away from us, like the landscape seen through a railway carriage window.[389]

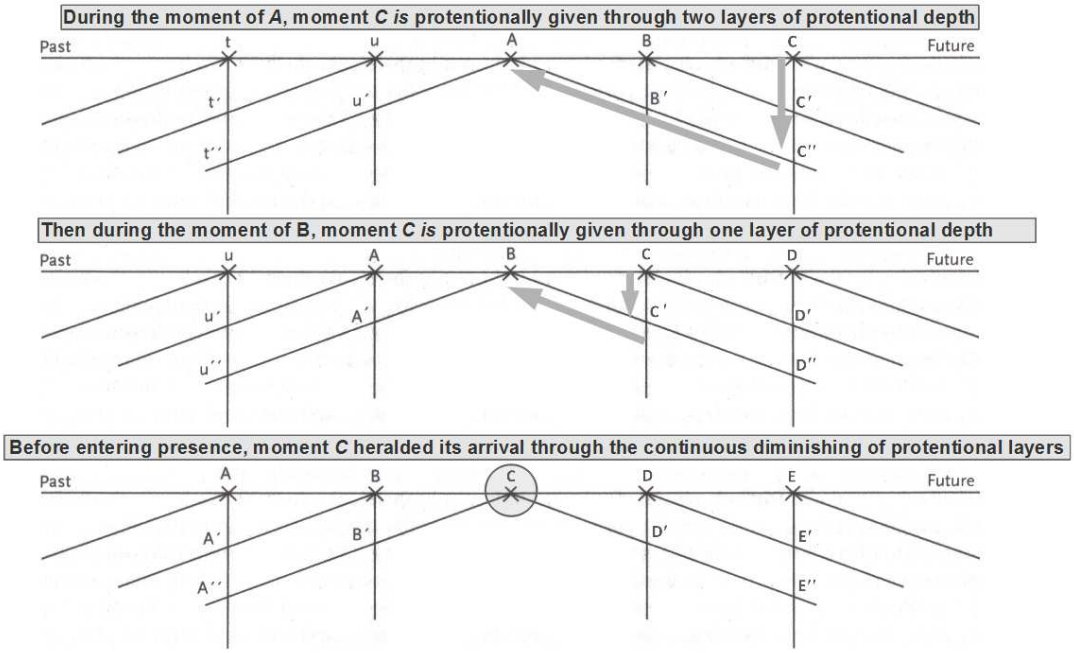
Thus when a new moment arrives, it was in a way germinating somehow within what we were just immediately aware-of previously. Gradually, it comes into bloom, and in this way it in a sense fades-in to full focus in the present. Then reaching its peak, it fades back away into the retentional margins of our awareness. Recall our Merleau-Ponty triangle diagram that we modified by adding a protentional dimension.



At moment *A*, we were protending *C* through a thicker layer of protentional depth than in *B*. So future moments announce themselves through their progressive diminishments of protentional shadings.



[389] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, pp.481-482; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.487.



> C is the culmination of a long concentration which has brought it to maturity; as it was being built up, it made its approach known by progressively fewer *Abschattungen* […]. When it came into the present it brought with it its genesis, of which it was merely the ultimate expression, and the impending presence of what was to come after it. So that, when D comes into being and pushes C into the past, C is not suddenly bereft of its being; its disintegration is forever the inverse or the consequence of its coming to maturity. In short, since in time being and passing are synonymous, by becoming past, the event does not cease to be.[390]

Merleau-Ponty uses the term 'destiny' to explain this sort of phenomenal germination. Because everything comes to be through the overlapping passage of the future to the past through the present, what comes to be was destined previously to arrive now; and as well, as something temporal, it is now destined to pass-out of existence during the next moment.

> The origin of objective time, with its fixed positions lying beneath our gaze, is not to be sought in any eternal synthesis, but in the mutual harmonizing and overlapping of past and future through the present, and in the very passing of time. Time maintains what it has caused to be, at the very time it expels it from being, because the new being was announced by its predecessor as destined to be, and because, for the

[390] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.482; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.488.





latter, to become present was the same thing as being destined to pass away.[391]

Merleau-Ponty notes how for Bergson duration is essentially a continuous flow of newness. Merleau-Ponty says that Bergson should not have reduced the essence of time to just its continuity. The continuous passage of time means that the movement from future to present to past proceeds by gradations so imperceptible that they all blend together. This in a way denies the absolute difference between the presence of the present and the absence of the future and past.

> Bergson was wrong in explaining the unity of time in terms of its continuity, since that amounts to confusing past, present and future on the excuse that we pass from one to the other by imperceptible transitions; in short, it amounts to denying time altogether.[392]

Merleau-Ponty says that Bergson was right however to think of time's successive continuity as an essential temporal phenomenon. Merleau-Ponty proceeds to further analyze what makes-up the phenomenon of time's continuous succession from one now-moment to the next. For him, what is important is not just the horizonal openness that merges moments continuously, because the action of these horizons is just as central to phenomenal temporality. That is to say, the intimate linking of successive now-moments is not merely a matter of their structure but is as much a result of the thrust-action that transits one now-moment to the next. What is continuous in *A* passing to *B* is not just the fact that they are temporally contiguous but more importantly that there is a continuous action of transition that binds them in their flowing succession. So it is not merely the smooth graduation from moment-to-moment that makes phenomenal time continuous; as well, time's continuity derives from the fact that the thrust pushing these moments is ever and already ongoing. And thus, we are not blurring moments *C* and *D* just because they merge upon each other in continuous succession. They have each other on their horizons, which integrates them; yet, since they are on each other's horizonal margins and are not explicitly simultaneous, they do not merge their identities.

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[391] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.482; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.488.
[392] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.482; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.488.



> Instant C and instant D, however near they are together, are not indistinguishable, for if they were there would be no time; what happens is that they run into each other and C becomes D because C has never been anything but the anticipation of D as present, and of its own lapse into the past.[393]

This means that the future and the past are spoken through the present, even if in a completely unobvious way. Thus, the phenomenon of time is not an experience of a series of nows, each with its own view of the past and future, secondarily strung together synthetically. Rather, the phenomenon of time is their unified transitional motion, that is, their continuous transitioning into and through one another and thereby as well their nesting themselves horizonally within each other. Thus there is but one time; it is the motion of coming into current explication by means of a continual transiting from the future to the past, all transpiring throughout the thrusting present. The absence of the past and future is given now as what is announcing itself as coming and as what has already passed away.

> This amounts to saying that each present reasserts the presence of the whole past which it supplants, and anticipates that of all that is to come, and that by definition the present is not shut up within itself, but transcends itself towards a future and a past. What there is, is not a present, then another present which takes its place in being, and not even a present with its vistas of past and future followed by another present in which those vistas are disrupted, so that one and the same spectator is needed to effect the synthesis of successive perspectives: there is one single time which is self-confirmatory, which can bring nothing into existence unless it has already laid that thing's foundations as present and eventual past, and which establishes itself at a stroke.[394]

Thus we see more clearly why the past and future are implied in the movement of the present. They are absent from the present only from the finite perspective of conscious beings like us who can only be explicitly aware of the phenomena given in the present moment.

> The past, therefore, is not past, nor the future future. It exists only when a subjectivity is there to disrupt the plenitude of being in itself, to

[393] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* pp.482-483; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.488.
[394] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.483; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.488-489.





> adumbrate a perspective, and introduce non-being into it. A past and a future spring forth when I reach out towards them.[395]

We are phenomenally alive not merely in a punctual present. Our phenomenal temporal outreach extends us, as it were, equally to morning and night while we pass through midday; each moment is given pre-integrated with the others. In other words, what Merleau-Ponty previously called our 'field of presence' is in a way both our reaching away from the present while at the same time maintaining the continuity of the flow of our lives.

> There is no need for a synthesis externally binding together the tempora into one single time, because each one of the tempora was already inclusive, beyond itself, of the whole open series of other tempora, being in internal communication with them, and because the 'cohesion of a life' is given with its *ek-stase*.[396]

We ourselves are so much a part of this interlacing of time's motion that we should not so much think of time as something that flows past and away from us but rather as the motion that springs-up continually right here from within us in our immediate experience of it, as if our consciousness itself were the jet of a temporal water fountain.

> We say that there is time as we say that there is a fountain: the water changes while the fountain remains because its form is preserved; the form is preserved because each successive wave takes over the functions of its predecessor: from being the thrusting wave in relation to the one in front of it, it becomes, in its turn and in relation to another, the wave that is pushed; and this is attributable to the fact that, from the source to the fountain jet, the waves are not separate; there is only one thrust, and a single air-lock in the flow would be enough to break up the jet. Hence the justification for the metaphor of the river, not in so far as the river flows, but in so far as it is one with itself.[397]

And our present self, along with our current act of consciousness, are seated at the emerging source of this temporal propulsion.

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[395] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.483; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.489.
[396] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.483; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.489.
[397] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.484; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.489-490.



> The passage of one present to the next is not a thing which I conceive, nor do I see it as an onlooker, I effect it; I am already at the impending present as my gesture is already at its goal, I am myself time, a time which 'abides' and does not 'flow' or 'change'.[398]

To more fully illustrate this integrative flux of phenomenal time, Merleau-Ponty examines a literary example. First consider the consciousness of any character in a novel. More complex characters might have phases in their development. Merleau-Ponty has us recall from Proust's *Swann's Way* the character Swann, who falls in love with Odette. Swann experiences both love for her and also jealousy. At first perhaps Odette has love for Swann too. However, she takes other lovers and eventually turns away from Swann, whose unrelenting love causes him to remain attached to her long after her passion for him dies away. Thus his love becomes jealousy. According to Merleau-Ponty, there is an incorrect view that sees his love as coming first and then secondarily it causes his jealousy; this interpretation is faulty, because it only takes into account temporal consciousness as a multiplicity of causally related moments. It does not however give us the synthesizing dynamic which is responsible for all moments to be interrelated so thoroughly that each moment indirectly implies the others. It is not so simple that we may say Swann is first in love and secondly jealous. His initial love was already a jealous love. That coming jealousy tinged his original love; it was on the horizon, implied from the beginning.

> Proust tells us when speaking of another love: it is the feeling of being shut out of the life of the beloved, and of wanting to force one's way in and take complete possession of it. Swann's love does not cause him to feel jealousy. It is jealousy already, and has been from the start. Jealousy does not produce a change in the quality of love: Swann's feeling of pleasure in looking at Odette bore its degeneration within itself, since it was the pleasure of being the only one to do so.[399]

Swann's jealous love is also a part of his behavior in general; in other words, even before he fell in love with Odette, his behavior, his manner of integrating with the world, already implied his tendency for this kind of love. It was always on the horizon. Thus, any one part or moment of our consciousness gives us to ourselves as a 'comprehensive project.' Hence, our consciousness is aware of itself always from a

[398] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.483; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.489.
[399] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.488; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.494.





perspective within itself. We cannot think that the self is somehow outside the flow of time while also being aware of itself as being in the flow of time. So we cannot regard the self like Kant's transcendental ego. Doing so would mean there is a self-same self who is juxtaposed to a stream of self-varying selves given empirically to our senses (and we discuss this Deleuzean 'cracked self' in a forthcoming chapter). By making this division, we cannot say that the transcendental ego is both the unity of the self lying outside the stream while also always being immanently inside, if in fact we are one and not two distinct selves. So, again, Merleau-Ponty rejects this view (that Deleuze will instead take-up). Thus, the subject must be solely within its temporal flow. Merleau-Ponty regards the self as located directly in the thrusting of time which makes one act of consciousness pass to another. Such a self would explain both the unity of the different acts, as being their glue, and also explain their continuous variation, as being the thrust away from itself.

Hence, each phenomenal moment that ever was or ever will be is thoroughly integrated relationally with all other moments, all organized around the nexus of our immediate phenomenal consciousness. So, our subjective phenomenal temporal awareness is at the very basis of the integration of time. Time itself in the way it appears to us phenomenally is virtually indistinguishable from ourselves.

> There is a temporal style of the world, and time remains the same because the past is a former future and a recent present, the present an impending past and a recent future, the future a present and even a past to come; because, that is, each dimension of time is treated or aimed at as something other than itself. […] We are saying that time is someone, or that temporal dimensions, in so far as they perpetually overlap, bear each other out and ever confine themselves to making explicit what was implied in each, being collectively expressive of that one single explosion or thrust which is subjectivity itself. We must understand time as the subject and the subject as time. What is perfectly clear, is that this primordial temporality is not a juxtaposition of external events, since it is the power which holds them together while keeping them apart.[400]

3 Self-Affected Time

We will now elaborate this sort of conscious subjectivity which – somewhat paradoxically – is both aware of the flow but also somehow is the actual flowing itself.



[400] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.484; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.490.

Consider first how each moment of consciousness is a new one in a succession. But, we are speaking of an act of consciousness that is merely aware of its immediate phenomenal contents. The whole sequence itself (including the now moment) is something else to be conscious of. So that means an additional act of consciousness would be needed in order for us to be conscious of the whole sequence of states that includes the present one in its series. However, that creates another state in the sequence that requires yet another overarching awareness, and so on to infinity. So this cannot be so. There must be a pre-reflective subjective time-consciousness. Hence "we are forced to recognize the existence of 'a consciousness having behind it no consciousness to be conscious of it'."[401]

Merleau-Ponty even further elaborates why our consciousness and selfhood are both somehow time itself. We first take into consideration three features of consciousness that will enter into our description. One is that it is a 'comprehensive project'; our awareness throughout the time of our life is something whose parts are thoroughly interrelated and integrated with one another. The second consideration is that consciousness is something that appears to itself ("be apparent to itself" / *s'apparaître*), and as we noted, this is a consciousness that is aware both of the entire flow itself all while being inherently a part within it. The third feature is that right now we are *explicitly* aware of certain things, but we are *implicitly* aware of others. This is the case for example in our field of vision, where we marginally attend to things in the periphery that are also implied in what is in our explicit focus. We also described how protentions and retentions lie in our implicit temporal awareness, while what is present is somewhat more explicit. Yet, in order to grasp the 'self-affective' nature of phenomenal temporality, we stress the fact that protentions do not so much change content as much as they change modalities, that is, they come more explicitly into our awareness as they near the present.

In our effort to clarify this self-affective dimension, briefly recall Merleau-Ponty's account of the way worldly phenomena are given to us. As we noted previously, to be consciously aware means to be integrated in a partialized way with the phenomenal world. By this we mean that not everything in the world around us is phenomenally given explicitly all at once. To see the lamp's front side is also to be implicitly aware of how its backside must look from the perspective of the hearth

[401] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, pp.484-485; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.490-491.





behind it, and in fact, from every other possible vantage-point.[402] Some implicit aspects for one reason or another will call upon us to investigate them, perhaps because something does not collaborate with what we currently gather about the situation. For example, when happening upon the beached boat and at first mistaking its masts for trees, we might have 'subconsciously' noticed that certain neighboring trees were not swaying in the wind like the other trees were.[403] So we were implicitly aware of a few wooden objects as being parts of the ship rather than as being living parts of the forest, although we were not yet explicitly aware of this. The ambiguity in our awareness motivated us to turn our attention more closely to parts of the forest that before were in the margins of our consciousness. Because there is always something implicit within our explicit awareness calling for our phenomenal investigations, we are continually driven to alter our acts of consciousness. There is always a thrust away from our present act of perceptual awareness. The newer perceptions that we thrust-toward were previously anticipated acts that we were previously just protentionally aware of. Our act of awareness of first seeing the masts as trees already had a pull toward the anticipated act of seeing them as masts. Thus, we may more clearly grasp how the temporal thrust expresses itself in our phenomenal relation with the world around us. Consider when we try to hold for as long as we can only one thing within our attention, like staring at a still scene or focusing on one concept or image. We eventually feel a tension, a pull away from the focalized act of consciousness toward an awareness looming in the margins of our consciousness.

We emphasize two points from the foregoing analysis. The first is that the temporal thrust is manifest already in the very structure of our present phenomenal awareness, because any given moment of consciousness is structured in such a way that it is already impelled and moving toward a future conscious act that is currently anticipated protentionally. The second point is that it is our very own consciousness itself that is turning toward its own implicit horizonal contents. By steering through its horizons, it modifies the explicitness of contents that were already a part of it. This action is thus both temporal and self-affective.

[402] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, pp.96-97; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.79.
[403] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.40-41; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.20.



> Time is 'the affecting of self by self'; what exerts the effect is time as a thrust and a passing towards a future: what is affected is time as an unfolded series of presents: the affecting agent and affected recipient are one, because the thrust of time is nothing but the transition from one present to another. This *ek-stase*, this projection of an indivisible power into an outcome which is already present to it, is subjectivity.[404]

This self-modification is also a self-anticipatory movement, because our consciousness knows in advance that it will encounter itself still again as something both continuous with itself yet temporally differential to itself. Our awareness is conscious of both the continuity of itself as a transitional temporal thrust, but as well, it is thereby aware of its self-differential transitional transformations, which are given already in the present not as explicit phenomena but rather as implicit anticipations.

> We must avoid conceiving as real and distinct entities either the indivisible power, or its distinct manifestations; consciousness is neither, it is both; it is the very action of temporalization – of 'flux', as Husserl has it – a self-anticipatory movement, a flow which never leaves itself.[405]

Our common sense understanding of our self-hoods might consider our subjectivity as being a matter of our constant self-identity. Yet, as a transitional-synthetic thrust, we are instead neither self-constant nor self-identical, even if each moment of our self-displacement is transitionally continuous and horizonally integrated with the rest. For, our transitionally-synthetic temporal thrust is a continuous opening-up toward an otherness to our present self. Merleau-Ponty then notes the following observation by Husserl: when we reflect on something in our current awareness, it seems already to be something in the past. Our consciousness, we noted, has a primordial pre-reflective self-awareness. This already-given self-awareness, perhaps, is consciousness' always-already bringing-out into explication the implicit parts within it; it would be like a sort of inherent self-curiosity, a constant directedness of our consciousness to those implicit parts in it that most pressingly call-out for self-discovery. Our own innate self-consciousness, in other words, could be the engine that propels the thrust of phenomenal temporality. For, just as soon as we turn our explicit awareness to an anticipated protention, we have thereby caused that turning action

[404] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.488; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.494-495.
[405] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, p.487; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.493.





itself to become an implicit retention, as if consciousness were pushing itself away from itself all while in another sense turning toward itself. So because we are pre-reflectively self-aware consciousnesses, we have by default a thrusting flux of temporal awareness.

> The fact that even our purest reflection appears to us as retrospective in time, and that our reflection on the flux is actually inserted into the flux, shows that the most precise consciousness of which we are capable is always, as it were, affected by itself or given to itself, and that the word consciousness has no meaning independently of this duality.[406]

This might then cause us to wonder whether the thrust's transition-synthesis is a passive or an active synthesis. On the one hand, Merleau-Ponty explains, it is passive in that we ourselves are this very synthesizing process itself, so we do not need to stand outside the flow of contents to synthesize them. Thus, to be who we are, and to be conscious of time, and for the moments to synthetically integrate, we do not need to perform an additional action: "a spontaneity 'acquired' once and for all, and one which 'perpetuates itself in being in virtue of its being acquired' is precisely time and subjectivity."[407] So it is passive in the sense of being an inherent automation in our pre-given conscious activity. Yet, this does not preclude it from being active, because indeed it is an action we perform, and one that we conduct spontaneously. So we need to view the thrust of time as fully and duly active and passive.[408]

We may finally summarize all the combined features of our consciousness' temporal thrust. *The thrust is our personal subjectivity*, because its continuous transitional action is what makes all our other acts belong integratively with each other and also belong continuously to our current act of immediate awareness. *The thrust is temporal*, because its movement displaces acts of awareness out of present consciousness into implicitly retended awarenesses of past acts, and it brings out from our marginal awareness implicit phenomenal contents that were previously anticipated protentionally as future acts. *The thrust is self-aware*, because it is the ongoing motion of one part of our consciousness, the explicit part, bringing into its awareness another

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[406] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.489; *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp.495-496.
[407] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.490; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.496.
[408] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception,* p.491; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.497.



part of our consciousness, the implicit part. And thus the *thrust is self-affective*, because consciousness is this transitional motion that changes its own parts either from implicit to explicit modifications or from explicit to implicit modifications. Then finally, *the thrust is immediately experiential and phenomenal*, because the implicit and explicit phenomena result from our given interrelation with our entire phenomenal world at some present moment in question.

> The primary flow, says Husserl, does not confine itself to being; it must necessarily provide itself with a 'manifestation of itself' (*Selbsterscheinung*), without our needing to place behind it a second flow which is conscious of it. It 'constitutes itself as a phenomenon within itself'. It is of the essence of time to be not only actual time, or time which flows, but also time which is aware of itself, for the explosion or dehiscence of the present towards a future is the archetype of the relationship of self to self.[409]

So our analysis portrays Merleau-Ponty's phenomenal time as the thrust of continual transition-synthesis unifying temporal parts, as is somewhat similarly the case in Husserl's temporality. In the following chapters, we will see how Deleuze's phenomenal time is a matter of differentiation rather than of integration. The thrust for Deleuze would not be what is most phenomenally primary to our time consciousness; rather, the differential forces and connections grounding the thrust would be even more fundamental. Also, Deleuzean phenomenal time is never a matter of the horizonal integrations of retended, intended, and protended parts; in fact, it is precisely the opposite. Time could appear as the differential shocks between protentions and their subsequent incompatible anti-fulfillments; hence an unexpected event stands-out more phenomenally than a redundant procedure. We will discuss how many years of time can present themselves instantly when we suddenly notice for the first time a sign of age in our appearance. Hence, time also can appear to us as the shock of differences communicated between our present intentions and the incompatible retentions that are simultaneous with them. Finally, contrary to Merleau-Ponty, a Deleuzean phenomenal time is not given through the motion of alteration; rather, it presents itself suddenly and immediately in still form. We proceed now in the following to investigate our hypothesis that Deleuze's intensive differential temporality is a more phenomenologically fruitful concept than Merleau-Ponty's extensive integrative time.

[409] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, pp.488-489; *Phenomenology of Perception*, p.495.





Chapter 6

Deleuze's Syntheses of Time and Self

1 Logic of Intensive Temporality

As we noted, Deleuze's phenomenal temporality is intensive rather than extensive, and motionlessly durational rather than being a flowing synthesis. And yet, it is still a synthesis, and we will focus primarily on the second two syntheses of time. The temptation we avoid is treating synthesis as a process, as for example James Williams does.[410] Williams offers a remarkable account of the integration of the three syntheses as processes. Yet his 'conclusion' chapter is comprised entirely of him defending his decision to exclude from his analysis Deleuze's second cinema book *The Time-Image*. Part of his reasoning is that Deleuze portrays time in more static terms in the cinema texts (as a crystallization of the past and the present in a pure instant), which is incompatible with the process reading of the three syntheses in *Difference and Repetition*. Yet, we might note that the cinema books appear long after *Difference and Repetition*, and it is not evident why and how Deleuze's philosophy of time could have regressed. We instead propose reading the syntheses of time more in static terms, while illustrating them with the referenced scenes in the second cinema book. We do so by basing Deleuze's concept of synthesis on the logic of 'affirmative synthetic disjunction', which is static on account of being primarily a matter of the simultaneity of 'before' and 'after' rather than being their actual succession. Since our aim is a phenomenal analysis, we ask in the following chapters: What does it mean for time itself to appear to our awareness? And is time more phenomenal when we sense it flowing seamlessly from moment-to-moment, or does not time stand-out more to our attention when moments abruptly grind against one another and call for us to be alert for what is really going on?

[410] James Williams gives his process reading of the time syntheses and of Aion and Chronos in his *Gilles Deleuze's Philosophy of Time: A Critical Introduction and Guide*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011.



Now, to explore the logic of Deleuze's static temporal synthesis, we need first to follow Deleuze as he turns to Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* at the very beginning of the *Logic of Sense*.



"Soon her eye fell on a little glass box that was lying under the table: she opened it, and found in it a very small cake, on which the words 'EAT ME' were beautifully marked in currants. 'Well, I'll eat it,' said Alice [….]
So she set to work, and very soon finished off the cake.

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[…] 'now I'm opening out like the largest telescope that ever was! Good-bye, feet!'"

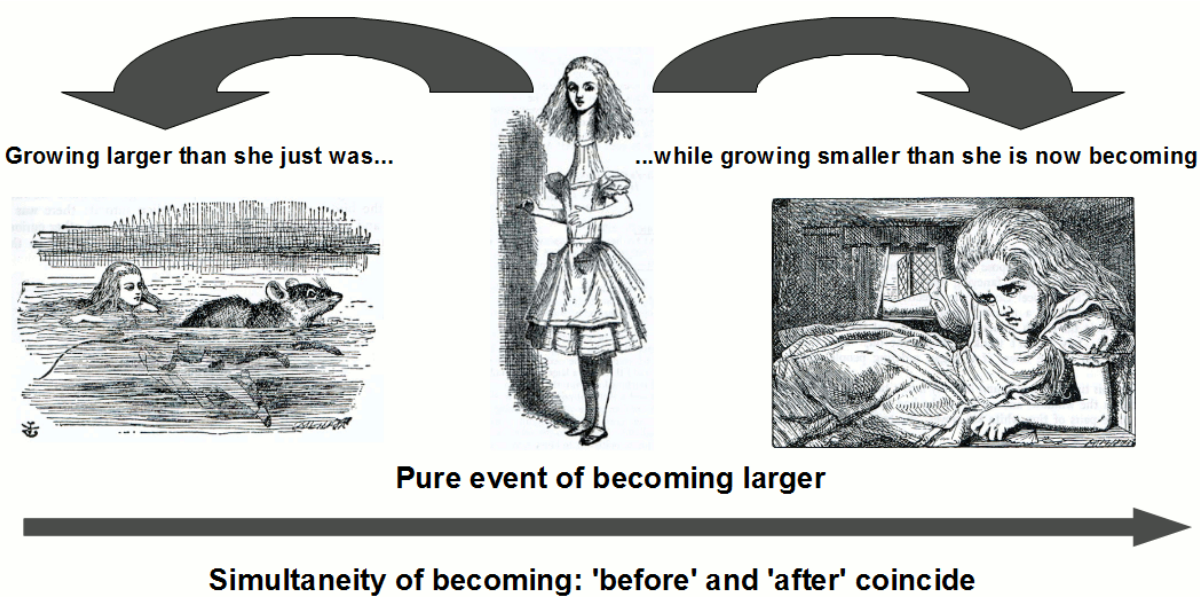
Deleuze uses this scene to illustrate the 'pure event' of becoming. As Alice becomes larger, she of course becomes larger than the size she just was. But in that same stroke, she is as well 'growing' smaller than the size she is now becoming: as she 'moves-toward' a larger size, this motion is a movement into another relation, in this case, a relation with an even larger size. In this way, the pure event of becoming places 'before' and 'after' – past and future – together as two incompatible but coincident states of affairs. 'Before' and 'after,' in this way, become simultaneous.

> When I say "Alice becomes larger," I mean that she becomes larger than she was. By the same token, however, she becomes smaller than she is now. Certainly, she is not bigger and smaller at the same time. She is larger now; she was smaller before. But it is at the same moment that one becomes larger than one was and smaller than one becomes. This is the simultaneity of a becoming whose characteristic is to elude the present. Insofar as it eludes the present, becoming does not tolerate the separation or the distinction of before and after, or of past and future. It pertains to the essence of becoming to move and to pull in both directions at once.[411]

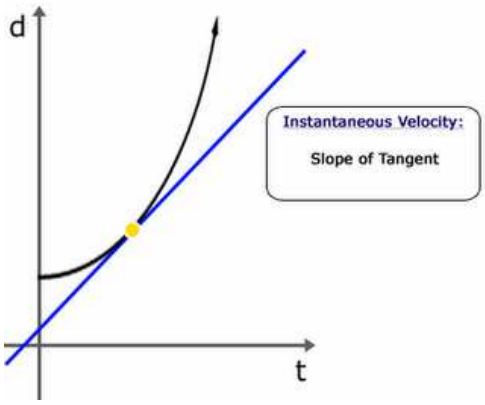
[411] Deleuze, *Logique du sens*, p.9; *Logic of Sense*, p.3.







In a strange way, the pure event occurs between ‘before’ and ‘after’, yet also somehow the two are simultaneous. We will explain this through Deleuze’s distinctions between intensity and extensity and between intensional meaning and extensional meaning. Note that when Deleuze discusses duration and affect, he uses terms similar to the ones in this description of becoming. As we noted in the first section, a bodily affection is a composition-altering physical impact. And Deleuze observes that every affection is instantaneous, and the ‘affect’ is the *tendency* for the body’s power to change in that instant. It is like the tangent to the curving waves of affective variation.

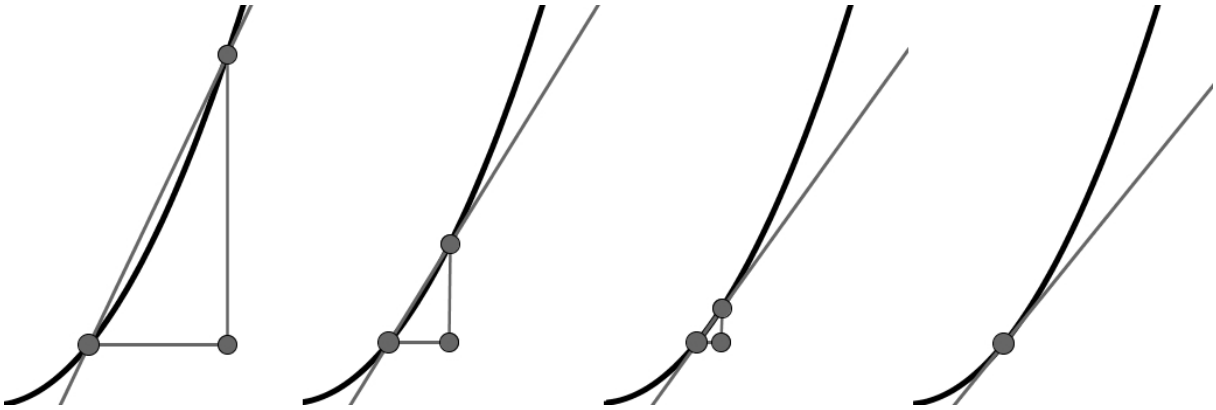




Yet, like in this case where Alice's growth includes both 'before' and 'after,' and larger and smaller, all in the same stroke, Deleuze as well describes a phenomenon of passage from one moment of affection to another as also being found between a 'before' and an 'after' that are made to coincide. Let's return to this text that we briefly examined in the first part:

> duration is always behind our backs, it is at our backs that it happens. It is between two blinks of the eye. If you want an approximation of duration: I look at someone, I look at someone, duration is neither here nor there. Duration is: what has happened between the two? Even if I would have gone as quickly as I would like, duration goes even more quickly, by definition, as if it was affected by a variable coefficient of speed: as quickly as I go, my duration goes more quickly. […] A′, A, A″; A is the instantaneous affection, of the present moment, A′ is that of a little while ago, A″ is what is going to come. Even though I have brought them together as close as possible, there is always something which separates them, namely the phenomenon of passage. This phenomenon of passage, insofar as it is a lived phenomenon, is duration.[412]

It is also in this course lecture that Deleuze goes on to describe affects in terms of calculus differentials implied in the infinity diagram of the 12th letter.

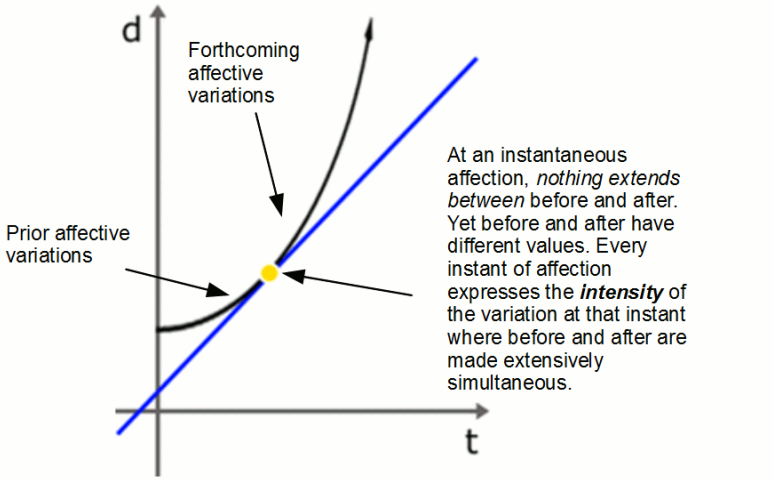


The intensive variation found by drawing successive moments so close that no time extends between

[412] Deleuze, Seminar 20/01/1981.







The phenomenon of passage, what Deleuze calls 'duration' and also 'affect' in the context of Spinozistic affection, is the differential relation between before and after. This intensity of difference is an expression of the variational tension between a past and future absolutely abutting one another with nothing extending between them.

Note that what Deleuze here calls ‘duration’ is actually something that does not extend in time. Duration is a matter of the *extensive simultaneity* of ‘before’ and ‘after,’ whose differential relation implies an *intensive succession*, an ‘intending’ or inner tension from the incompatibilities between ‘before’ and ‘after.’ In other words, there is no amount of time extending between ‘before’ and ‘after’ which might separate the two, and thus extensively speaking, they coincide; however, ‘after’ *intends* or is striving to extend past ‘before’ with a certain degree of *intensity*. As Deleuze elsewhere puts it, there is extension to an event when “one element is stretched over the following ones, such that it is a whole and the following elements are its parts;” while the other component of the event are “intensions, intensities, or degrees.”[413]

In the prior chapter we discussed temporal synthesis as continuous for Husserl and as a ‘transition synthesis’ for Merleau-Ponty. Yet as we see, Deleuze’s temporality does not require an extent of time to pass-by for a time-synthesis to take place. The logic of Husserl’s and Merleau-Ponty’s synthesis was one of associative assimilation and horizonal integration. Past, present, and future are harmoniously woven together into a continuous thrusting flow. Yet, Deleuze’s logic of synthesis will allow for the convergence of ‘before’ and ‘after’ without their assimilation. We call it *logic* here, because it makes use of the logic of exclusive disjunction; however, also involved are what he considers Leibniz’ ‘alogical’ concepts, *compossibility* and *incompossibility*.



[413] Deleuze, *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque*, p.105; *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, p.77.

They are alogical, because they are not matters of identity and contradiction, which apply only to what is possible and impossible. Yet unlike Leibniz, for Deleuze the incompatibility or incompossibility of states of affairs is the condition for events to occur. If at any instant all the states of affairs in the world were compatible or compossible, then there are no conditions in the world calling for resolution, and hence everything might be at rest or in redundant motion. Or as for Leibniz, all events would be precalculated in advance by God on the basis of the compossibility of monads' predicates. Yet as Bergson notes when discussing mathematical predictions of future eclipses, this strips the series of events of their temporal character by placing all forthcoming occurrences together simultaneously in that single calculation.[414] So compossibility does not account for how events unfold through time. But if time and becoming are real, then every instant would need to contain incompossible states of affairs whose incompatibilities on the one hand provide the motive force for bringing about alterations in the succeeding moment while also on the other hand leave indeterminate and un-precalculable these future events.

So recall our prior example: as Alice's size increases, she *becomes* larger and smaller than herself. But it is logically impossible that she *be* larger and smaller than herself. Her largerness and her smallerness can only coincide in the case when she is caught in the act of changing, when her growth is the intensive degree of variation between infinitely close moments. So the combined states of affairs, 'Alice is larger than herself' and 'also she is smaller than herself', is a logical impossibility and can never actually be so. Yet, 'Alice becomes larger than herself' and 'as well she becomes smaller than herself' are not so much impossible when combined as they are incompossible, meaning that throughout her continuous growing, these states of affairs really do coincide, but they cannot stay that way for longer than a fleeting instant. If they remained so for longer than an infinitely short moment, the *becomes* of 'becomes larger and smaller' turns into the *is* of 'is larger and smaller,' which we said was impossible. Thus, for as long as her largerness coincides with her smallerness, there will necessarily be a forthcoming successive moment when either she keeps growing (transforming her given largerness into a smallerness related to a new largerness), or she stops growing (causing her smallerness to cease being smaller than another larger size, because there will be no larger size that she is attaining-to).

[414] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.149-150; *Time* pp.194-197.





For Deleuze, such incompossible states of affairs coinciding evanescently in a pure instant are combinable on account of a synthesis, namely, what he calls "affirmative synthetic disjunction." In an exclusive disjunction, either A or B can be true, but not both. Yet in Deleuze's synthetic disjunction, A and B are not compatible states of affairs, yet both are affirmed and coincident. An example we will return to when discussing the third synthesis is the Oedipus myth. Oedipus had every reason to believe he was not the criminal bringing the curse upon Thebes. Yet, there arrived a moment when it became undeniable that he was the man who killed his father and married his mother. We might apply here what Deleuze has to say about extensional and intensional meaning. The extensional meaning of a term is the members of the set that the term refers to. 'Oedipus' then refers to a set containing one member, Oedipus himself. Likewise, 'husband of Jocasta' and 'son of Jocasta' both extensionally refer to sets with this one same member, Oedipus. Given the circumstances of his life, Oedipus was completely justified in thinking that 'husband of Jocasta' refers to himself, but 'son of Jocasta' does not. Thus, 'Oedipus is the husband of Jocasta' and 'Oedipus is the son of Jocasta' are incompossible states of affairs in his mind. However, there came the transitional moment when he very first realizes that he really is the son of Jocasta. Thus for a instant, he on the one hand had to affirm the combination "I am the husband of Jocasta and I am the son of Jocasta" while on the other hand still holding onto his rightful justification for regarding this as an incompossible union of states of affairs. At that painful moment, this statement is true with regard to extensional meaning; yet, 'husband of Jocasta' and 'son of Jocasta', when combined, intend diverging and incompatible *intensional* meanings. Despite the truth of the combination, in that transition into his realization, there is a differential intensity working at the level of logic and meaning. Oedipus must reconcile two incompossible worlds and two incompossible selves. This is an affirmative synthetic disjunction, and it is also the sort of logic that allows for the coincidence of 'before' and 'after' in pure becoming. We also saw this logic of synthetic disjunction at work in perceptual phenomena in the prior section. Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* can illustrate. The hero believes that his female inspiration is someone who could only exhibit pure goodness. But without his knowing, she is captured by a mad scientist, who then renders her likeness upon a deviant robot. When the hero sees her replica, it conspires with his own



father, a heartless tyrant. The woman whom the hero recognizes is drastically different from the woman he is actually viewing in that same moment, even though he cannot help but equate the two. In this way, two completely incompatible images are presented together simultaneously.



The phenomenon here is neither the woman he recognizes nor the woman he now sees, but is rather the shock he feels from their incompossible combination. Thus, there is synthesis in a Deleuzean phenomenology, just as there is synthesis in Merleau-Ponty and Husserl. Yet it is a disjunctive synthesis, and in the following we proceed to see this synthetic disjunction at work in the phenomena of time and self in Deleuze's syntheses of time.

2 Overview of Deleuze's Three Temporal Synthesis

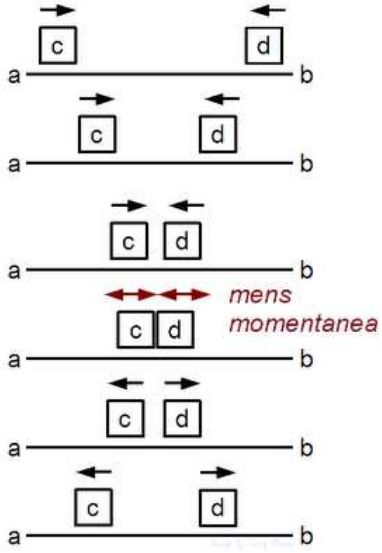
Deleuze's three time syntheses run parallel to Kant's, as we previously suggested. Deleuze's first one, like Kant's apprehension, constitutes the living present by collecting instants; the second synthesis involves memory retaining past moments; the third involves self-recognition, and it constitutes the future. Given our overall aims, we will focus primarily on Deleuze's second and third syntheses. We will not perform a probing analysis of the first synthesis, but to understand why, we must first give a general overview of all three syntheses.

Deleuze begins his exposition of the syntheses with the concept of *mens momentanea*.[415]

[415] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p.96; *Difference and Repetition*, p.70.







Recall how at the moment of collision, bodies *c* and *d* are still striving forward, but are also transferring their motional tendencies to one another, while in the same stroke they are as well tending backwards. When they make contact, the bodies are leaving impressions on one another, but they last only as long as the transfer, and the transfer is instantaneous. So for bodies that are momentary minds, no impression lasts longer than an instant. This means also that for such bodies there is no such thing as time. If all you have is now, then you do not have time, because time requires temporal differentiation. It needs a 'before' and 'after', a temporal ordering, and not merely a now. Yet, this is not the same as saying there is just one now that is suspended forever, because on the contrary, nothing stays exactly the same for more than an instant. So for momentary minds, there is just the now which bears no temporal relations to other nows, because other nows do not exist for things that only exist in the now. This also means that there is no basis for momentary minds to have subjectivity. For, this requires temporal self-differentiation, as we will soon see.

Now, we are beings that recognize ourselves. This does not *yet* mean we are aware of ourselves. The simplest organisms are made out of momentary minds, like such elements as water, nitrogen, carbon, and so on, but the conglomeration acts survivalistically in its current now moment.[416] This means they anticipate being a continuation of themselves after this now moment ceases. They have some kind of an implicit knowledge that they have a past and a future. Deleuze says that the genetic



[416] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p.102; *Difference and Repetition*, p.75.

heritage of cellular organisms is their awareness of the past, and their current needs is their awareness of the future.[417] This is perhaps the most primitive form of self-consciousness possible. In fact, this model of the single-cellular organism will help us grasp the *a priori* synthetic unity of our own self-consciousness. Kant will emphasize that transcendental self-consciousness is not self-cognition. So, we are not saying that the cell is thinking about itself. However, its organism regards itself as a unity existing beyond the current now, despite the fact that nothing actually exists beyond the given now, and this is evidenced by the fact that right now it is seeking sustenance that will allow it to survive beyond the current moment.

We, however, have a far more sophisticated perceptual and cognitive apparatus than mere single-celled organisms have. So for us, this basic self-consciousness can take on a more complex and amplified form. We can appear to ourselves; we can mentally reflect on ourselves with our imagination; we can conceptually understand ourselves as well too. But cognizing ourselves, Kant reminds us, requires not just concepts but also intuitions. So we need to appear to ourselves for self-recognition. However, our self-appearances are never the same, because the one that is given now is just a fleeting presentation of ourselves. We notice, then, that there is a tension already between the trans-temporal unity of self-consciousness and the complete instability of the now in which self-consciousness appears to itself; for, the now remains self-same for no more than a fleeting instant. And, for Deleuze, it is this tension that creates the phenomenon of time. We say *phenomenon*, because under this framework of *mens momentanea*, time does not exist in actuality. Time can only become manifest when it is presented as an appearance given to beings that are able to distinguish 'before' from 'after'. So, there is a self-consciousness now that assumes itself to exist in moments beyond the now, even though nothing actually exists beyond the now. Thus, this self-consciousness assumes itself to manifest in different nows, which means it takes a manifold variety of itself and regards them as all belonging to itself, despite the impossibility of a now moment entering into any sort of actual relationship with the other non-existing nows. This basic principle will help explain Deleuze's three syntheses of time, beginning with the third, which is the most basic.

To help us grasp what it is like for our self-consciousness to recognize itself, Deleuze evokes two ancient Greek mythological figures, Narcissus and Actaeon. We

[417] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p.100; *Difference and Repetition*, p.72.





might at first think that self-consciousness is like Narcissus' fixed gaze on his own image on the pool's surface. But Deleuze explains that Narcissus only illustrates the pleasure we seek in self-recognition. Our experience of self-appearing is in fact more like Actaeon's transformation.[418] After he happened upon goddess Diana bathing naked in the woods, she turned him into a deer. He becomes aware of this when seeing his new animal form reflected in the water.

> This said, the man begun to disappear
> By slow degrees, and ended in a deer.
> A rising horn on either brow he wears,
> And stretches out his neck, and pricks his ears;
> […]
> But as by chance, within a neighb'ring brook,
> He saw his branching horns and alter'd look.
> Wretched Actaeon! in a doleful tone
> He try'd to speak, but only gave a groan.[419]











[418] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p.102; *Difference and Repetition*, p.74-75.
[419] Ovid, *Metamorphoses.*

Actaeon groans because he both recognizes it is himself, for it is his self staring back at him, while at the same time, he must recognize himself as becoming something completely different than who he had been right up until then. In a manner of speaking, to be self-conscious means we must look in the water and see a deer, and yet still identify with that other, as if to say, “that is me, but who am I?” Being a self means being an other to oneself. This is the basic model for Deleuze’s phenomena of conscious temporality and selfhood. So every now involves the destruction of some other now, but self-consciousness allows non-existing nows to somehow coexist incompatibly with existing ones.

Hence, the unity of self-consciousness already implies temporality, but this is not time as a flow of succession, but rather time as a form, as an *a priori* synthesis of incompossible states of affairs. So self-consciousness, as it appears to itself right now, is regarding itself as already formally linked to what it becomes, even though it will be an incompatible variation of itself. Thus we, through our unity of self-consciousness, are already cutting ourself off from ourself. There is a cut between Actaeon the man and Actaeon the stag. But Actaeon, even before actually seeing his reflection, while just first beginning to peer into the water, already regards whatever he is about to see as being an appearance of himself. Our already regarding ourself as united with our forthcoming differential self-appearing is not merely this cutting into two incompatible variations of ourself; it is also the formal production of time, because it creates the phenomenon of temporal difference of before and after, now and next, when otherwise to the momentary minds of the world there is just the now, now, now, now…. As we can see, the phenomena of selfhood and temporality are fundamentally co-given appearances. This is the third synthesis of time. It is the cut that produces the bare order of time by splitting *the now* into *the now and the next*. It brings the next into a differential relation with the now, and thereby makes next and now be given immediately with each other, at least in a formal relation.

Yet, the forthcoming now destroys the current one. So how can the two maintain their relation after one ceases to exist? The now, as it appears, must right now immediately take on a residual form of some kind. It must become a mark for our self-consciousness in order for the next now to interpret it as belonging to itself. But by creating interpretable imprints, the mind is endowing the now with the character of pastness, even though it has not yet been replaced. So the mark of the





now that is made now has both the character of newness and also pastness at the same time. A scar on our body is here now. But because we interpret it as marking a past injury, it also has pastness. And, as we will see, events happening now have a certain memorability to them: they are not yet remembered, but they are already a memory from their inception. Memories are created along with the now. Thus, the temporalized now is not just the disjunctive synthesis of the now with the next; it is also the differential combination of the now with the then. In other words, the past is given to us immediately, as the pure *a priori* form of the pure past in general. It is like an assumption that what is now is already in the past, for otherwise it will disappear with the next instant.

Yet, leaving marks like this requires another synthetic operation, the very collecting and interpreting of now-markings. Our mind is not extensively spatial. So, our mental impressions that serve as markings in a way pile-up upon each other. There is a "sensitive plate" of sorts that serves to record the marks, but as events happen, their mental marks do not take up different 'places' on the plaque, because there is no extension in the mind. [420] This gathering and contracting of nows is the passive synthesis at work in the first synthesis of time. Now, now, now, now… all contract and pile-up immediately to each other, making a confused mess of sorts. The active synthesis of Deleuze's first time synthesis is the representational thinking that discerns qualitative differences among the mashed together marks and that expands them out as if spatially in the mind. Deleuze illustrates with Bergson's example of the tolling bell. While writing his book, he hears a bell toll the hour. But he was so engrossed in his writing that he did not start paying close attention until after several tolls had transpired. Now he wants to learn the time. To do so, he goes back into his memory and recalls the different tolls that have already transpired. But, he did not originally count the tolls while they were ringing. Rather, each one "melted" into the others. Together they made a musical phrase that as a whole has a peculiar quality. Then afterward, he is able to distinguish each toll according to its qualitative differences. A bell that rings first has a certain quality to it, a certain feeling of initiation. So, he places the image of that tolling into a space-like representative location in his mind and counts it as one. On the basis of the unique qualitative feels of all the other tolls, he



[420] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p.96; *Difference and Repetition*, p.70.

places four images into different representative places in his mind, and is then able to count them.[421]

The reason we will not conduct a detailed analysis of the first synthesis is because it is not productive of time as a phenomenon. The passive synthesis piles-up now and now and now and now and now… but they have not yet been temporally distinguished. Moments need to be differentiated as 'before' and 'after' in order for these nows to become temporalized. However, the active synthesis does in fact make such sequential distinctions. But, it does so by spatializing the nows. It turns *now and now and now and now* into *here and here and here and here*, like dots along a time-line diagram. So while it does produce an order of succession out of the piled-up nows, the phenomenon of succession it produces is the phenomenon of spatial simultaneity and not of temporal successivity. With that, we turn now to a closer look into Deleuze's second synthesis of time.

3 The Second Synthesis of Time

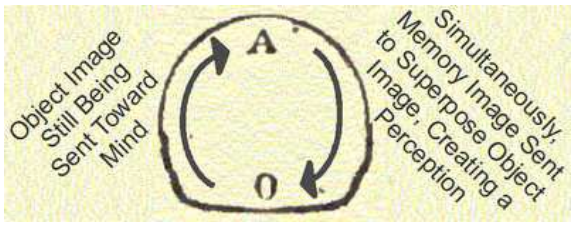
Mementos and souvenirs can cause our minds to 'flash-back' to an earlier time. These moments, which have fallen-away to the past, appear now to our current awareness. And yet we do not mistake them for the present, in fact, we might even be charmed or perhaps shocked by how different things once were. What we notice, then, is not merely the past state of affairs; we are aware as well of the temporal differences that make them so foreign to the present. Thus, flash-backs can serve as a fertile source for the investigation of time as a phenomenon, that is, for when time *its very self* appears to our awareness. We now explore the way Deleuze explains Bergson's pure past through cinematic flashbacks. This will allow us to characterize the second synthesis of time as the 'then' being combined with the 'now;' the intensive temporal difference between them is a phenomenon both of time and of differential selfhood.

[421] Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, pp.96-97; *Time and Free Will*, pp.126-128. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p.99; *Difference and Repetition*, pp.71-72.





Deleuze turns our attention to Bergson's expanding circuits diagrams to help explain the contemporaneity of the past and the present, the 'then' and the 'now,' in flash-back recollections. Bergson first has us consider what he calls an 'after image' (*image consécutive*).[422] It is always a part of our perception. We look at some object, then abruptly avert our gaze to another place. For a split-second, the image of the initial object will carry-into and overlay-upon the new scene we see. The prior object remains in our field of perception, even though it is actually no longer there. Instead, it is virtually there. The virtual past image inserts itself so thoroughly into the new actual image that "we are no longer able to discern what is perception and what is memory."[423] Perhaps this is why fast moving objects leave a blurry trail behind them. For example, as David Hume notes, when we rapidly swing-around a burning coal in the dark, we perceive a full red circle.[424] According to Bergson, just while the perceived image is sent to our brain, the most recent image in our memory has already arrived-upon and overlaid our current perception, with both moving lightning fast in a continuous circuit.[425]



So when we are looking at something, already mixed-into this perception are the remnants from the prior perception. This is the tight *O-A* circuit in Bergson's diagram. Keep in mind how time is ever-passing, so even if what we perceive seemingly remains unchanged, it will still differ from what we just saw. The flow of time leaves its mark on the prior image, giving it the character of having-passed.[426] A new *O-A* circuit always arises each instant of our perception, no matter how noticeable the variations are in what we see. But then, we might wonder, what happens to the even older images as the new ones continue entering our memory? Bergson says they get pushed-out into wider and more encompassing circuits.

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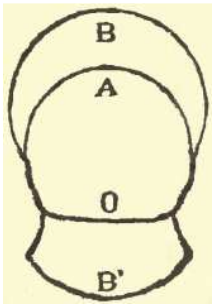
[422] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, p.105; *Matter and Memory*, p.125.
[423] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, p.106; *Matter and Memory*, p.125.
[424] Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, p.28.
[425] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, p.107; *Matter and Memory*, p.127.
[426] Bergson, *L'évolution créatrice*, p.2; *Creative Evolution*, p.2.





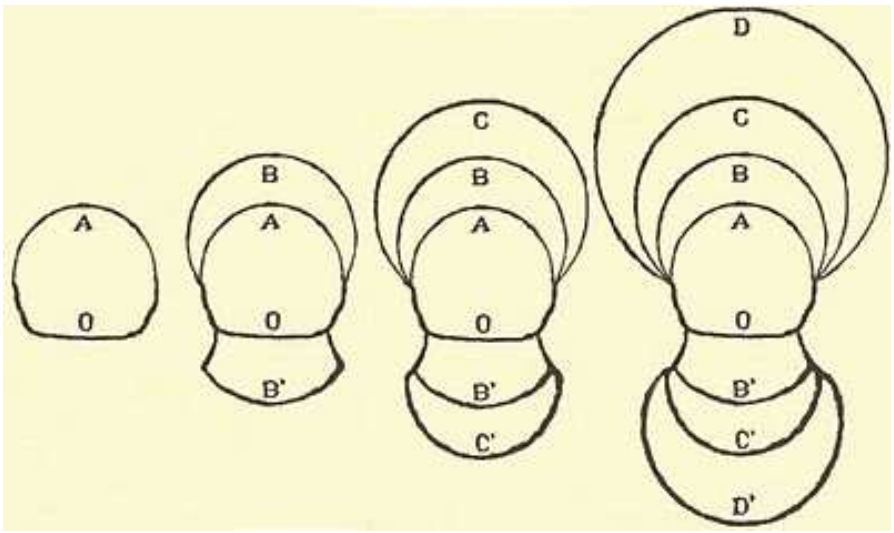
When we turn-away our gaze, what was previously object *O* now becomes what we call past-object *B*'. (Former object *O* is not actually there, but it is a part of the past that is implied in what is actually present.) All the while, memory-image *A* has become what we now call memory-image *B*, which corresponds to the past-object *B*' that it is an image of. This is all because a new object *O* and its new memory *A* have entered our perceptual awareness. But note how in the diagram, the wider *B* circuit channels into the new *O-A* circuit. This is because both the most recent memory-image and the *next* most recent one together overlay upon our field of perception, even though we might not notice the two. In a way, our older memories still keep contracting with the present, but only in an implicit way. So even if the previous after-image is no longer vibrantly apparent to our perception, it still is helping to shape the way we see the current image. This is important for Bergson, because the whole of our past is at least implicitly superposed into our present experience. "In truth," writes Bergson, "every perception is already memory. *Practically we perceive only the past*, the pure present being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future."[427]

With this in mind, we might imagine how the circuits of our perception continue billowing outward as time passes on. The older circuits keep enlarging as our perception alters perpetually.

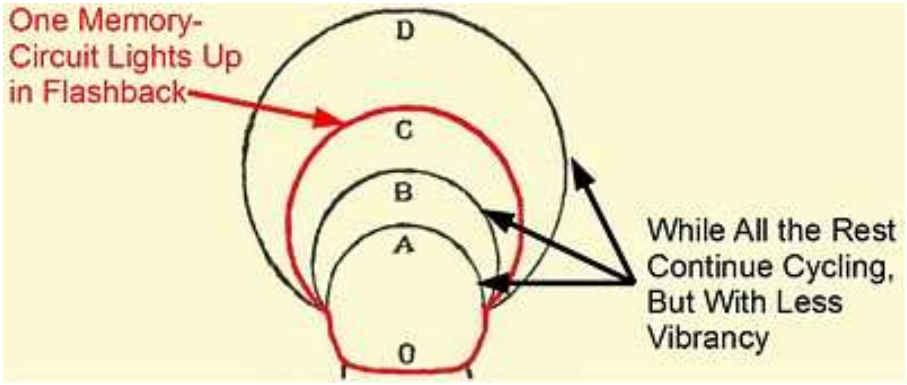
[427] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, p.163; *Matter and Memory*, p. 194.







Yet even though all of our past is always interposed in the present in an implicit way, sometimes what we see causes one recollection to stand-out more explicitly among the rest. Often we observe something in our daily life that causes certain prior memories to flare-out before our 'mind's eye'. And sometimes our flashbacks can be so vivid that they drown out the actual things we see. We then begin to feel as though we are reliving that past experience.



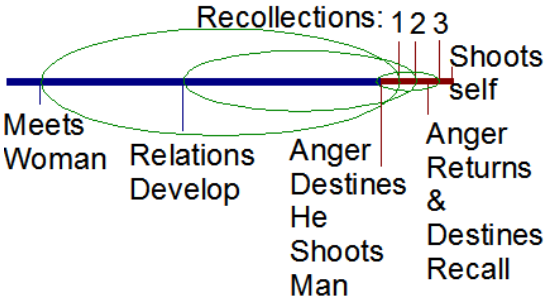


Deleuze illustrates these recollection-circuits with the cinematic flashbacks in Marcel Carné's film *Le jour se lève* (1939).[428] The film follows events happening from sundown to dawn. During this short period, a murderer flashes-back into his past. The movie begins with a man being shot and falling down a flight of stairs in an apartment building. The murderer barricades himself in his room so that the police cannot force their way in. Throughout the night he has three flashbacks, each one triggered by some visual reminder. This first one takes us back to him meeting a young woman he falls in love with. This flashback-loop draws us the deepest into the past, so it would correspond to one of the widest circles in Bergson's circuit diagram. But, whenever we return to the present, we hear a heavy doom-filled bass and drum beat. It gives us the feeling we are moving inevitably toward a fatal end. So during the flashbacks, the past is so vibrant that it completely covers over the actual present things standing before him in his room. As viewers, we only see what he is remembering and not the events still carrying-on in the present while he dreams. But, because upon returning we hear that fatal march toward the end, we are reminded that even while reminiscing, we never escaped the current doomed situation. Throughout our own lives, we are always experiencing the combination of the past and present, no matter how attentive we are to the present or how vibrant the past flashes into our mind. The events of the murderer's next flashback, then, continue after those of the prior one, so it is a smaller circuit closer to the current inner loop. Here we learn more about the rivalry he has with an older man over the young woman. When we return from this flashback, day breaks, and his building is surrounded by police and a crowd of spectators. He rages at them from his window high above, furious that they would treat him like a freak. This outburst triggers him to recall his explosion of anger that led to the murder he just committed last night. In this final flashback, we now see him shoot the love-rival in his room. The man falls down the stairs, just as we saw when the film began. This is the tightest recollection-circuit so far. It brings us to his final act, in the present. He shoots himself in the heart. In a way, this is like all the painful events of his life contracted into his current action.

[428] Deleuze, *Cinéma II*, pp.67-68; *Cinema II*, p.46.

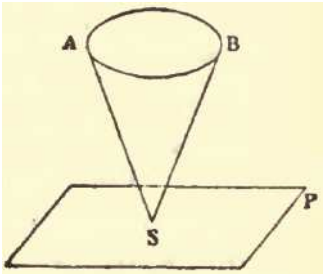






Now, consider if we were to memorize a series of spoken lines for a play. Each time we practice it, we create a new individual memory. When it comes time to perform, we merely begin with the first word, and the rest seem to follow automatically, without our needing to recall any single rehearsal. All the previous times were contracted into that present moment of automatic habitual bodily performance. But after the show, someone might ask us about how we memorized the lines. Then we could relax and daydream about those moments, seeing them in their vivid detail.[429]

Bergson illustrates this with his famous cone diagram. As new things enter our memory, they add to a cone.[430]

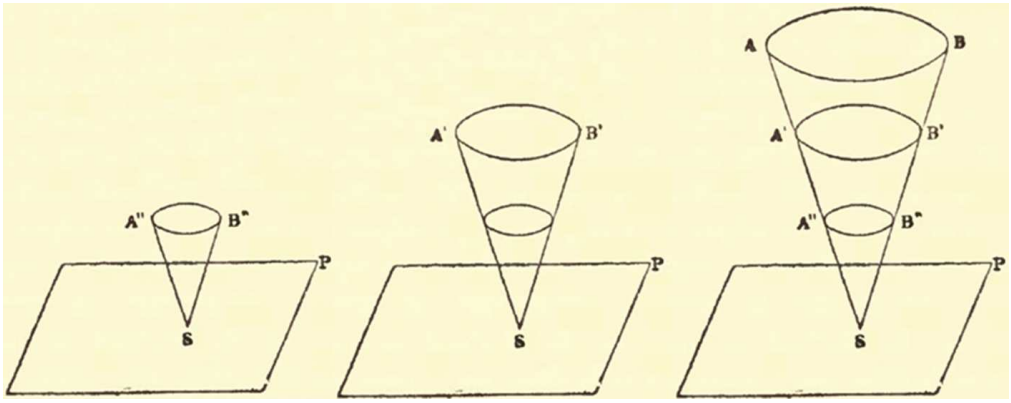


If we are acting automatically, like when performing something we rehearsed, then we are down closer to the *S* point. Being near this tip does not mean our memories have gone away. Rather, they are all contracted into our physical actions, like how a performance expresses physically all our memories of past recitals. When instead we daydream about the past, the images expand-out in our minds, as during a flashback. In these moments, we reside at a higher layer of the cone. Always we are varying



[429] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, pp.75-78; *Matter and Memory*, pp.89-92.
[430] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, pp.162-163; *Matter and Memory*, pp.196-197.

somewhere between automatic action and dreamful reflection, so we might be at any of the many possible layers of expansion or contraction of our memory.[431]



So during flashback scenes, the character's memory leaps-up to a higher level. But during an action scene where she acts automatically, her memory is contracted into the present moment, down at the cone's tip. We are always changing level, varying 'melodically' between our intense physical engagement in the present moment and our drifting somewhere in dream-land.[432] So the larger circuits are more distant memories, and the higher cone levels are increased degrees of expansion on one part of those memories.

The cone levels and the circuits are not equivalent, but we might place them in correspondence by noting that when moving to a distant circuit, we are also expanding our memories. To illustrate this, we first observe one of Deleuze's references: Bazin's explanation of Carné's flash-back techniques. Bazin notes how in literature, action happening in the past can be described by using past tenses of a verb. However, in film there is no easy way to clearly demarcate past and present events, especially ones happening in the same locations, because they will look about the same when projected on the screen. In *Le jour se lève*, for example, the hero has his final flashback while sitting in his room, and it takes him back to the events the day before also happening in that very place. The table – as it is there now – appeared about the same the day prior. So Carné must convince our eyes that the story is moving into the past even though the scene looks nearly identical in both cases. Bazin observes that when a scene shifts from the present to a past event recalled in the mind of the hero, Carné uses an exceptionally long dissolve where the image of the previous scene fades-out little-by-

[431] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, pp.176-178; *Matter and Memory*, pp.210-212.
[432] Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, pp.113-114; *Difference and Repetition*, pp.83-84.

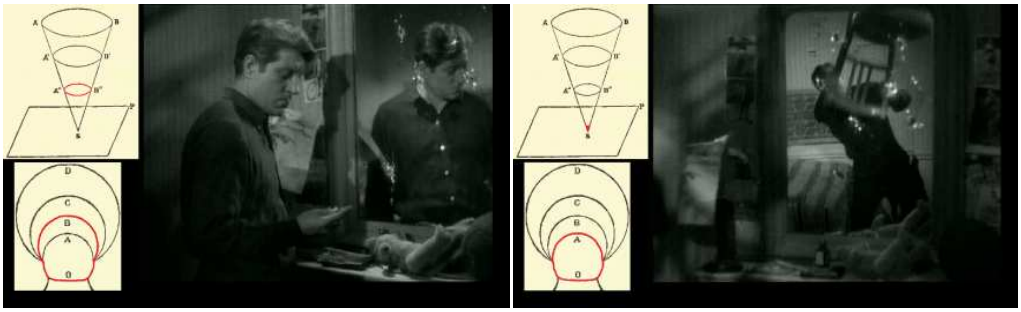


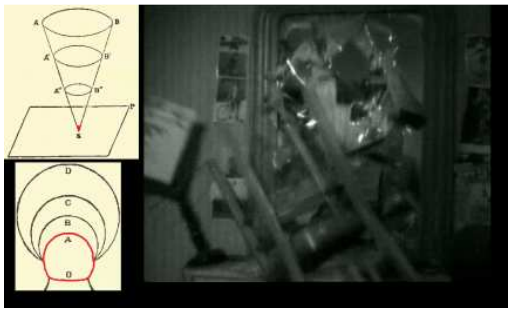


little so to allow the next image to gradually fade into clarity. The dissolve has the effect of recreating the way we physiologically experience a transition to recollective daydream: our eyes become fixed, our pupils enlarge, and the images we see become blurred as our imagination grows more vibrant.[433]

Carné. *Le jour se lève*

[The hero sees a memento on his desk, which reminds him of his loses. His acts of anger here are expressions of him living out the pain of his memories, not in dream form, but in automatic bodily actions.]





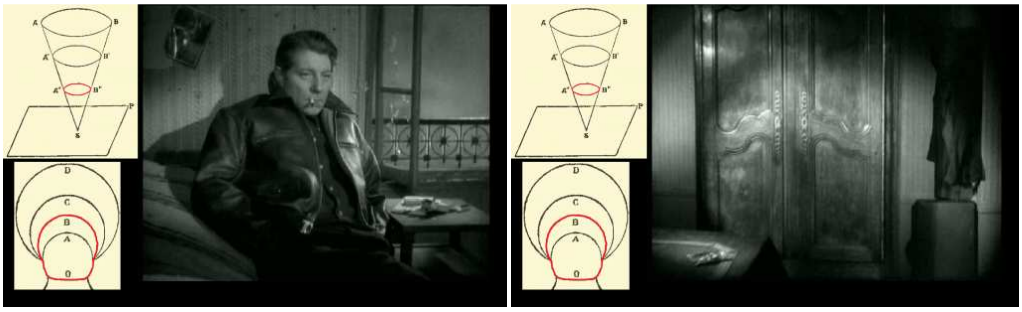
[He angrily yells to the spectators who have been watching his stand-off with the police.]



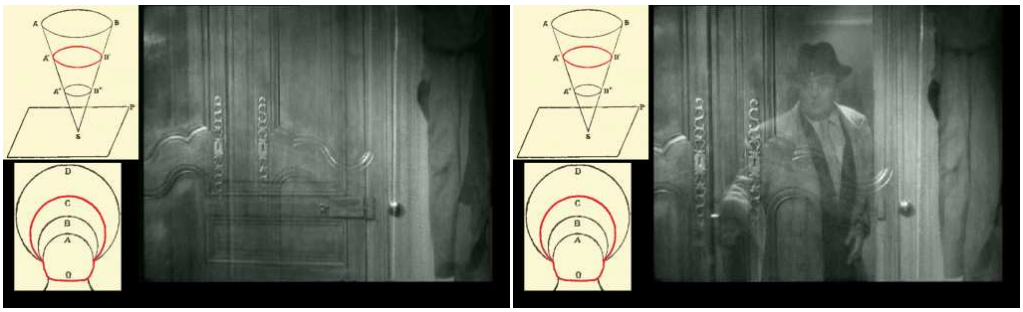


[433] Bazin, *Le cinéma français de la Libération à la Nouvelle Vague*, pp.78-80.

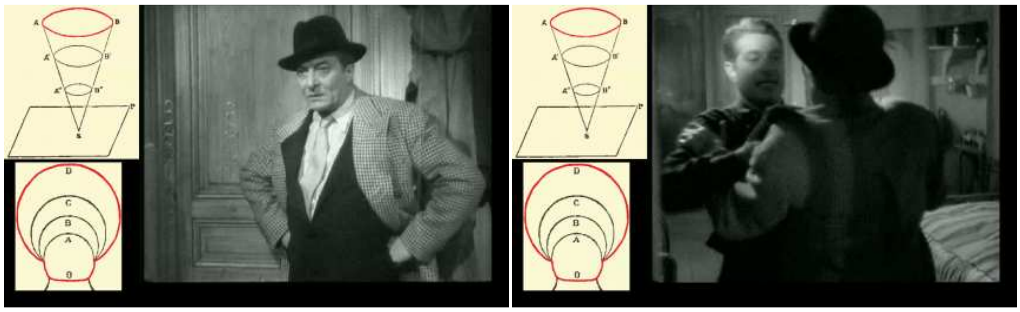
[This anger at the window reminds him of the crime he committed just the day before in that very room of his. He sits to reflect and recollect. This begins his moving into a deeper circuit of memory and a higher layer of the cone.]



[As his mind moves to the past, the memory-images slowly fade-in while what he perceives now fades-out from the focus of his phenomenal awareness.]



[Now his room in its present form is replaced with how it was just the day before. He is no longer anywhere near the tip of his cone or at the most closed circuit. He recounts the violence of the murder.]

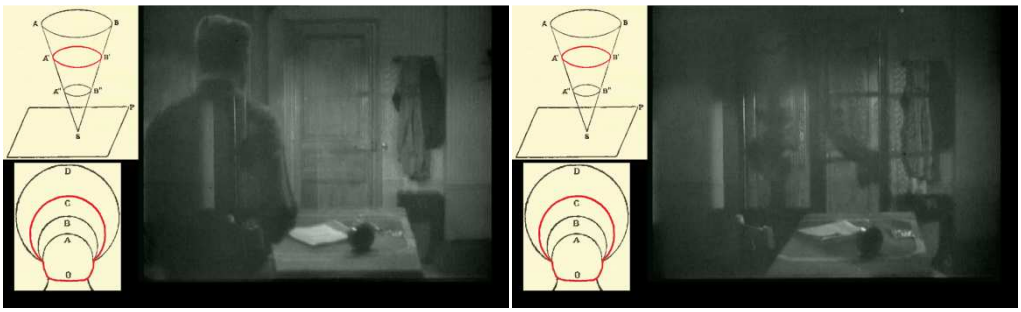




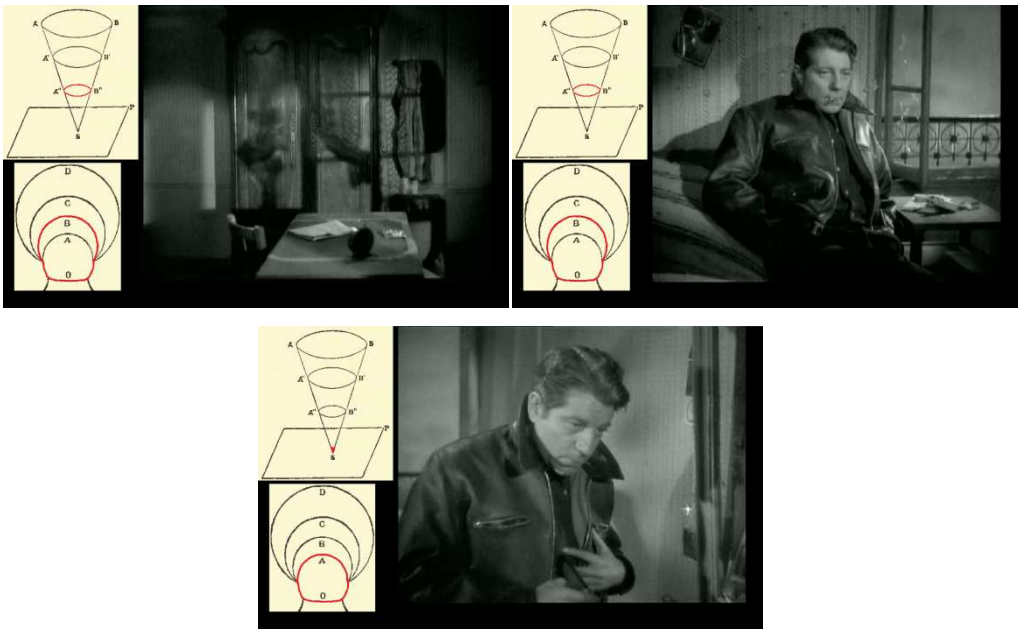




[He then fades back, and ends by killing himself. Notice how the table in both the flashback and in the present moment is basically the same. It is the use of music and fade techniques that make the one past and the other present. Yet in his fading-back, the recalled image and the perceived image of the table are in his awareness simultaneously, making concurrent both the ‘before’ and the ‘after’ of these events.]







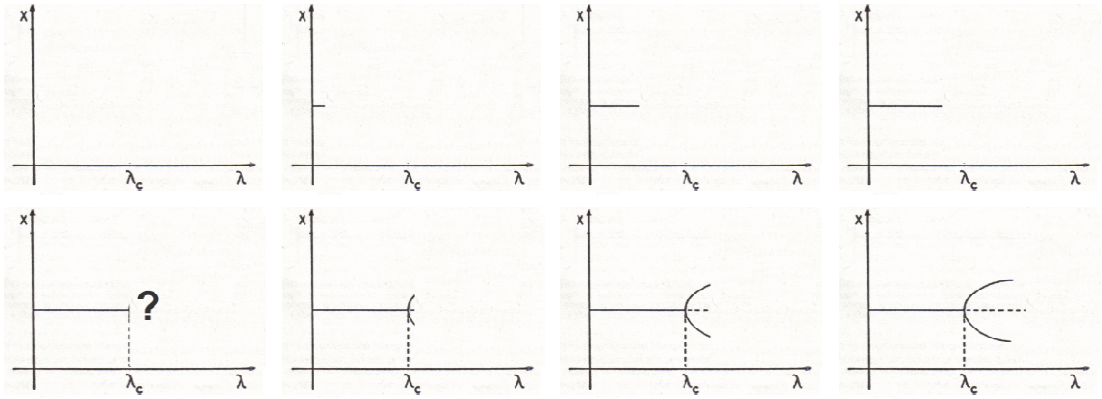
The other sort of flashback Deleuze discusses is Mankiewicz' 'forking' or 'bifurcation.'[434] We noted before how incompossibility for Deleuze is prerequisite for an event to occur. In terms of forking, this means that events take place when they veer-off down an unforeseen path, yet as we will see, this also means that at the moment of divergence, circumstances have multiple virtual tendencies of development that were incompossible with one another. Such forkings for Deleuze also correspond to a sort of flashback that unites past, present, and future into a single instant. Thus, bifurcations not only introduce newness into our lives, they also are partly responsible for the continual coexistence of the 'before' and 'after' in our experiences. When there is an unforeseen forking, this event is momentous; it is memorable even while it is still happening. We can tell already that we will recall it often in the future. So from the beginning it appears to us as a memory for future recollections. But also, these events are momentous for another reason. They cause us to recall another event in the past, lighting-up one of the various 'circuits' in our memory.

[434] Deleuze, *Cinéma II*, p. 68; *Cinema II*, p.47.

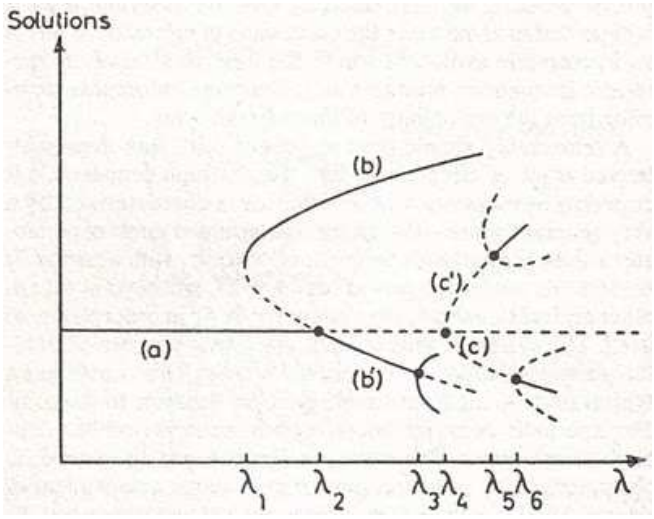




The two senses of bifurcation are tightly bound together. The first sort is the forking as a break in a linear progress, as observed by Prigogine and Stengers. They describe how for certain chemical reactions, changes in one variable can be correlated to the variations of others, but then one variable will reach a point when its path is indeterminable. It could increase or decrease, but this outcome is always left to chance.



The other sort of bifurcation we find in Borges' story "The Garden of Forking Paths." It describes a Chinese monk's unfinished manuscripts for a novel with this same title. It went unpublished because it was incomprehensible. The chapters did not proceed just sequentially. A following chapter would be like an alternate version of the same prior one: "in the third chapter the hero dies, in the fourth he is alive."





> ‘the garden of forking paths’ was the chaotic novel […] forking in time, not in space. In all fictional works, each time a man is confronted with several alternatives, he chooses one and eliminates the others; in the fiction of Ts’ui Pên, he chooses— simultaneously—all of them. He creates, in this way, diverse futures, diverse times which themselves also proliferate and fork.

Thus

> all possible outcomes occur; each one is the point of departure for other forkings. Sometimes, the paths of this labyrinth converge: for example, you arrive at this house, but in one of the possible pasts you are my enemy, in another, my friend. […]

And so it is

> an infinite series of times, […] a growing, dizzying net of divergent, convergent and parallel times. This network of times which approached one another, forked, broke off, or were unaware of one another for centuries, embraces all possibilities of time. We do not exist in the majority of these times; in some you exist, and not I; in others I, and not you; in others, both of us.[435]

[435] Borges, “The Garden of Forking Paths.”





There is one remarkable scene in Mankiewicz' *Barefoot Contessa* that showcases both senses of bifurcation. The soon-to-be Contessa quite abruptly switches companions, taking her down a drastically different path. But this scene was remembered by two different people, each in their own way and with their own slight variations. Below is a sequence of images, showing the two versions of the same scene, each occurring during different parts of the movie, through the flashbacks of different characters. What we will notice is the sudden instant of the slap, that crack in the flow of time, when the next moment is completely undetermined, entirely discontinuous with the present. It is that moment which is truly phenomenal, that pure, intense, dramatic moment outside the flow of time. Yet as well, we will also notice that there are two different recalled versions of this event, because not everything in both scenes corresponds. For example, in one, the slapped man looks longer to his left after the slap, while in the other case, as you will see, he quickly looks to his right. So there are two temporal simultaneities in that dramatic moment: the Contessa's prior course and the new detour converge upon one another at the moment of the slap, bringing 'before' and 'after' together at once; and also, there is a simultaneity of the different perspectival renditions of the same course of action. [Flip top 166-270]















[Slap (below)]









[The slapper looks to his right in one scene but holds much longer to his left in the other. (below) This is bifurcation both in development and in parallel divergences.]





So one thing that gives the moment of the slap its temporal character is the tensions between the various incompatible ‘nexts’ that are combined with the ‘now’ as virtual lines of development. Also note how two characters both recalled this same event, and there were slight variations in each case. But is it not also the case that when we remember the past, we each time fill in missing details that we are unsure about? And so each time we do so, we recall the event with slight variations. If it were exactly the same with each recollection, then would it not be a sort of automatism on account of the boring redundancy? Perhaps these memories have the character of the past not merely because they differ with the present but also because each recollection differs



from the others. That might imply that when a memorable bifurcation occurs, implied in it are many virtual ways to recall it.

We will keep this in mind while examining another of Deleuze's examples of bifurcating time: Mankiewicz' *A Letter to Three Wives* (1949). In this story, there are three married couples. All the husbands share a common female friend, Addie. One day, she writes a letter to all three wives, which they read together. Addie explains she ran-off with one of their husbands. However, she does not specify which man it is. The wives will be unable to find-out until later that night when they see if their husband comes home to them. During that day, each wife reflects on her marriage, looking for what might have gone wrong in the past. So the unpredictable forking of receiving the surprising letter spurs each one to flash-back to a moment in the past where their relationship seemed to take a turn (or fork) for the worse. A forking in the present, then, recalls a different forking in the past. In one case, a wife, new to her social circle, feels out of place. Then at a dinner event, she suddenly happens upon her husband and Addie chatting privately outside in the dark. We can see in the wife's face that she recognizes even back then there is some implicit importance to this event, even though it is not yet evident. [Flip pages 162-258 bottom] So the present forking event of receiving the letter calls her mind back to the previous forking when she discovered her husband chatting outside in the dark with Addie. But then later in the story, she receives a message that seems to confirm her suspicions, although it is still ambiguous, and she makes that same facial expression again, linking all three moments together. So the present bifurcation is not just a flashback; it is also in a way preparing itself for future recollections, by having implicit and indeterminate significances that might later unfold through another duly recollective and precollective forking. Thus we see even further how bifurcational flashbacks render 'befores' simultaneous with 'afters.'







Yet, these cinematic examples show the union of *particular* past memories with actual present ones. The second synthesis of time, however, involves an even more basic simultaneity of 'before' and 'after.' But first we need to observe the danger of seeing time as initially an event happening purely in the present, then secondly moving into the past. The problem is that the past itself has a temporal character that is different from that of the present. Seeing a past event merely as a former present is regarding the past as a modification or as a degree of the present. Yet if the past and present are different in kind, then the past is not just a former presence; it has a temporal character all its own. *Le jour se lève* begins in the present, with the hero having just shot his love rival. At the end of the film, that same initial event is recalled with the moments just leading-up to it. But throughout the movie, we come to see the hero's loving, calm, and patient side. His murder, with all its violent passionate anger, loses its character of actual presence, as moments of calm humanity take its place. It is an act he cannot change, unlike how he is in control of his current actions, as for example his own willing decision to kill himself at the end. Present moments somehow become radically different sorts of moments in time, not as being 'less present' but as being something real that is recalled in the present as a moment



completely different than the present one. The past has something relatively established about it, while the present is more indeterminate.

This poses two problems for explaining memory. One is that the present in a way disappears, in that it ceases to be a part of the influenceable and active present, and yet all the while it still exists in another form, with its own unique temporal character and traits that differ in kind and not in degree from the present. So it is not even a matter of the present fading away, becoming less of a present. The present becomes something it is not, the past. But how can this radical transition be explained if it is not a graduated continuous modification? Yet also, if there is exclusively the present that abruptly becomes past, then we have another similar difficulty in explaining memory. As a present moment goes deeper into the past, if the change is continuous, then it remains tied to the present moment it once was, because in a way, it still is that present, only in a diminished form. But if 'after' succeeds 'before' without any overlap or graduated change between them, then passing moments have no actual connection to the present they once were. The murder at the beginning ceases to be. The viewer and hero are constantly living through a moving present. But, the ending recollection of the murder is presumably tied to a present that we experienced at the film's opening. So how does the passing present maintain its recollective correspondence to the present it once was, if the transition is abrupt and the former present ceases to exist? According to Deleuze, Bergson's solution to these problems is the 'past in general' (*le passé en general*).[436] Bergson himself, however, does not frequently use this specific phrase. In one of the rare instances, Bergson writes:

> Whenever we are trying to recover a recollection […] we detach ourselves from the present in order to replace ourselves, first in the *past in general*, then in a certain region of the past – a work of adjustment, something like the focusing of a camera. But our recollection still remains virtual […]. Little by little it comes into view like a condensing cloud […].[437]

[436] Deleuze, *Le bergsonisme*, pp.51-55; *Bergsonism*, pp.56-59. *Différence et répétition*, pp.110-111; *Difference and Repetition*, pp.81-82.
[437] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, p.148; *Matter and Memory*, p.171, emphasis mine.





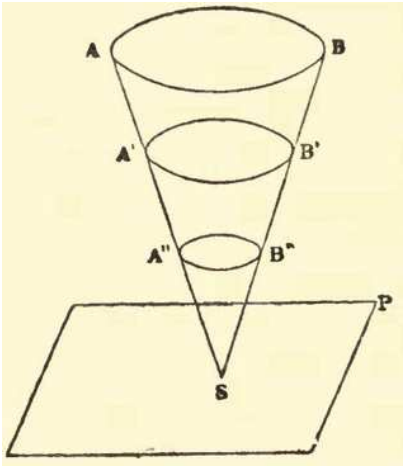
Deleuze and Deleuzean Bergsonists, according to Mathew Kelly, interpret this to mean that there is a general past that is coexistent with the present, as would be suggested by the cone diagram, and that present events have a duel character, being both past and present simultaneously.[438] It is important to broaden the analysis from the particular pasts as in the cinema examples to the 'past in general,' because the second synthesis is not so much a process of actively overlaying past memories synthetically with present events; rather, the simultaneity of past and present is already inherent to the structure of our immediate temporalized consciousness. It is not just that a present moment passes into the past while its virtual memorial content remains in our consciousness. No moment, not even the first in our lives, is able to pass unless it did not already begin in the 'past in general.' So the general past is a prerequisite for the passage of the present:

> How would any present whatsoever pass, if it were not past *at the same time* as present? The past would never be constituted if it *had not been* constituted first of all, at the same time that it was present. […] The past is "contemporaneous" with the present that it *has been*.[439]

Or as Deleuze further puts it, past and present, 'before' and 'after,' are 'crystallized' together. Bergson speaks of crystallization when elaborating on his cone diagram, discussing the general idea, whose essence "is to be unceasingly going backwards and forwards between the plane of action and that of pure memory."[440]

[438] Kelly, "Husserl, Deleuzean Bergsonism and the Sense of the Past in General," p.20.
[439] Deleuze, *Le bergsonisme*, p.54; *Bergsonism*, p.58.
[440] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, p.180; *Matter and Memory*, p.220.





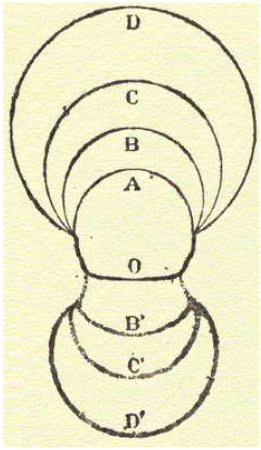
In the cone diagram, the general idea at point *S* "would take the clearly defined form of a bodily attitude or of an uttered word," but at the top layer *AB*, "it would wear the aspect, no less defined, of the thousand individual images into which its fragile unity would break up."[441] Yet the general idea does not remain fixed at either extremity; rather it "consists in the double current which goes from the one to the other, – always ready either to crystallize into uttered words or to evaporate into memories."[442] Here Bergson is not using 'crystallize' in exactly the same sense as Deleuze uses it. For Bergson, it refers to the condensation of memory down into current bodily expression. Yet, note that this crystallization happens at the tip of the cone, at the immediacy of action, where the entirety of our memory makes direct contact with the present instant of our actual bodily activity. It is not that some memories are further up in the cone while others are found lower within it. Each layer has every memory; but in the higher cuts, the memories are more expanded into discrete images. Down at the tip, all memories are still being expressed, just none are regarded in their distinction from the others. This is like how when finally performing a practiced piece, the musician's fingers do not express each prior recital individually; rather, the movements express all past enactments together at once in the present motion. Deleuze's crystallization, then, is not so far off from Bergson's meaning of the term, because for Deleuze it is the intensely tight union of the 'past in general' with the immediate present.

[441] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, p.180; *Matter and Memory*, p.220.
[442] Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, p.180; *Matter and Memory*, p.221.





For Deleuze, the tightest circuit, the one that brings together the most immediate past perception with the present one, is a 'point of indiscernibility' between past and present, because, as we noted, no time extends between one moment and its most immediate neighbor.[443]



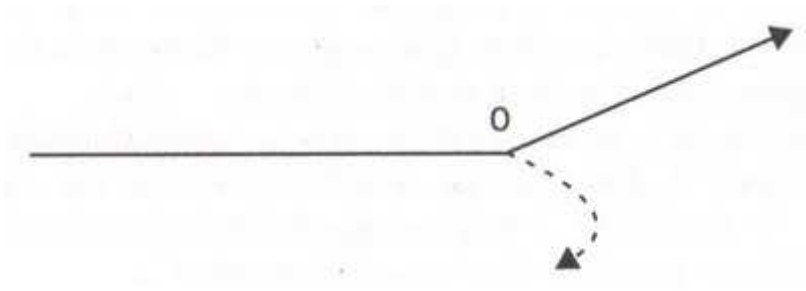
The actual present and the virtual past, at this point of indiscernibility, are all there in with distinct elements, the past and present. The two are crystallized together. However, they are interlocked as two contracted but divergent tendencies, like Bergson's 'double jets' of time. Bergson notes that:

> the formation of memory is never posterior to the formation of perception; it is contemporaneous with it. Step by step, as perception is created, the memory of it is projected beside it, as the shadow falls beside the body.[444]

Memory, then, is "twofold at every moment, its very up-rush being in two jets exactly symmetrical, one of which falls back towards the past whilst the other springs forward towards the future."[445] To illustrate, Deleuze offers this diagram in his *Cinema 2*:



[443] Deleuze, *Cinéma II*, p. 93; *Cinema II*, p.67.
[444] Bergson, *L'énergie spirituelle*, p.138; *Mind-Energy*, p.157.
[445] Bergson, *L'énergie spirituelle*, p.140; *Mind-Energy*, p.160.



Deleuze writes that this fundamental operation of time is what constitutes the crystal-image:

> […] since the past is constituted not after the present that it was but at the same time, time has to split itself in two at each moment as present and past, which differ from each other in nature, or, what amounts to the same thing, it has to split the present in two heterogeneous directions, one of which is launched towards the future while the other falls into the past. Time has to split at the same time as it sets itself out or unrolls itself: it splits in two dissymmetrical jets, one of which makes all the present pass on, while the other preserves all the past. Time consists of this split, and it is this, it is time, that we *see in the crystal*. […] We see in the crystal the perpetual foundation of time, non-chronological time […].[446]

Thus the present moment immediately *self-distinguishes* itself:

> What we see in the crystal is therefore a dividing in two that the crystal itself constantly causes to turn on itself, that it prevents from reaching completion, because it is a perpetual *self-distinguishing*, a distinction in the process of being produced; which always resumes the distinct terms in itself, in order constantly to relaunch them.[447]

[446] Deleuze, *Cinéma II*, pp.108-109; *Cinema II*, p.79.
[447] Deleuze, *Cinéma II*, p.109; *Cinema II*, p.79.





This self-distinguishing will be important later when we discuss temporal selfhood as a matter of our own self-differentiation. For now, we note Bergson's example of 'paramnesia' or *déjà-vu*, the illusion of already having been there. As well in this description we find his other rare usage of 'past in general;' for, he writes that in such a 'false recognition' of paramnesia, "the illusory memory is never localized in a particular point of the past; it dwells in an indeterminate past, the past in general."[448] Deleuze emphasizes here that because *déjà vu* is both a recollection of a presumed past but also a direct perception of the present, "there is *a recollection of the present*, contemporaneous with the present itself."[449] Deleuze then refers us to a number of filmed musicals with dream sequences that resemble *déjà vu*-like recollections. These 'memories' do not recall real events in the past, but rather they merely have the feeling of the past as if given presently, although in a dream-like way. The colors are vibrantly bright yet with a pastel softening; and while the scenes depicted are fantastical, they, like dreams, vaguely and indirectly play out the dramatic tensions going on during that part of the story's progress. This unspecified past in the dream-scenes, then, illustrates the present memorial facet of Bergson's 'past in general'. [Flip 7-89, top, for scenes from Minnelli's *Bandwagon*]









[448] Bergson, *L'énergie spirituelle*, p.119; *Mind-Energy*, p.137.
[449] Deleuze, *Cinéma II*, p.106; *Cinema II*, p.77, emphasis mine.

But, if the present moment is unique from the past, then duration also involves injections of radical difference and newness into present action. To help us conceptualize this, Deleuze refers us to the chaotic forces of variation that reverberate through Jerry Lewis' body and the world around him. These forceful energies produce new phenomenal data that push duration forward by infusing it with waves of original differential content. [Flip bottom pages 7-255 for scenes from *Who's Minding the Store?*]

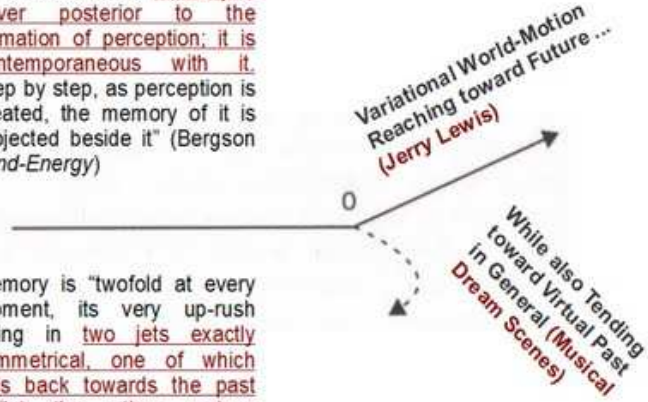






"The formation of memory is never posterior to the formation of perception; it is contemporaneous with it. Step by step, as perception is created, the memory of it is projected beside it" (Bergson *Mind-Energy*)

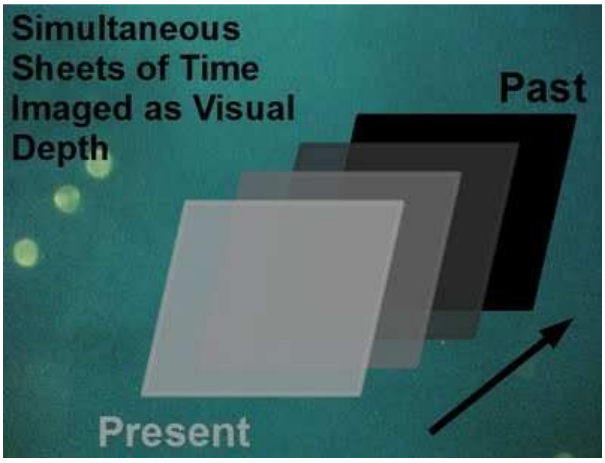
Memory is "twofold at every moment, its very up-rush being in two jets exactly symmetrical, one of which falls back towards the past whilst the other springs forward towards the future" (*Mind-Energy*)







Another way cinema can express the simultaneity of the past and present is in how Orson Welles' depth of field creates layers of coinciding times.



Special lenses allowed Welles to keep many spatial layers all in focus simultaneously, even though they extend very far back into the movie set. So for example, in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, an impression of time is conveyed by placing two generations at different simultaneous layers of spatial depth. And in *Citizen Kane*, there is a scene with Kane walking toward the office of an old friend. They have not spoken for years, so Kane's journey expresses a movement backward through simultaneously imaged layers of time, presented visually as spatial depth.

Orson Welles. *The Magnificent Ambersons* / *Citizen Kane*





Hence, Deleuze's reading of Bergson seems to have given birth to a monstrous variation. For Bergson, simultaneity and space are precisely

the wrong concepts to employ when conceiving of duration. Yet, what Deleuze uncovers in Bergson's *durée* is a more fundamental synthesis that calls for our use of these very ideas. There is a durational passing of the present only because the 'past in general' is simultaneous with the active present. But, the purpose of Deleuze's spatialized renditions of Bergson's temporality is not to depict the metrical homogeneity of an extending dimension of time; rather, the simultaneity of past and present is a matter of *heterogeneous* moments being forced together in the same space-like 'place', if you will, and the intensive tensions between their incompossibilities implies a dept of temporal difference.

Merleau-Ponty's time we also saw gives 'before' and 'after' together with each other, but in a another way. The past and future are horizonally implicit in the present moment of awareness. But past, present, and future coincide for Merleau-Ponty only because they *integrate* horizonally, and the phenomenon of time is the continual thrust of transition away from the present to a new present that was embedded horizonally in the mental act just preceding it. The phenomenon of time in Deleuze's second synthesis, on the contrary, arises from the non-integration of 'before' and 'after.' Phenomenal time for Deleuze does not result from the fact that the horizon of the 'before' lies on the horizon of the 'after;' rather, time appears to us when the tensions between their 'horizons' press upon our awareness. We might look in the mirror and quite suddenly notice some sign of aging. We are instantly shocked, because that is not the person we thought we were. Are we not two years younger than that person facing us in the mirror? Initially we have a moment of non-self-recognition, of non-self-identification even. Yet, because we are staring in a mirror, our consciousness at the same time has our true appearance given immediately to its awareness. We do not feel two years in its extensive, flowing passage from the former present to the current one. Rather, we feel two years in an instant, as an intensive difference between the self we thought we were and the self given to our consciousness through our sense perceptions. We can go our whole day without *who we are* being a matter of our concern. We can even in a hurry or in our daily routines fix our hair or clothes in the mirror without explicitly taking note of our self-identity. Yet, when our past collides incompossibly with our present, *who we are* becomes a matter of explicit concern to our consciousness; and in that same stroke, time itself makes its phenomenal appearance. Time is difference, so we noted. But we are difference too.





For Merleau-Ponty, the self is temporal, because the continuous thrust of the transition synthesis is what unites all our past and future acts of consciousness together with the present moment of our awareness. Yet for Deleuze, in the second synthesis the self is temporal, because *who we are* is the difference between our simultaneously presented yet temporally distinct moments of self-appearing. So we are not the one peering outward and feeling two years younger, nor are we the one in the mirror gazing-back at us and looking two years older; rather, we are the difference between these two, and that difference is intensively temporal. We do not identify with the image in the mirror, because that person looks too old to be us; yet, because we cannot deny that this is our actual reflection, we are no longer in that moment able to identify with the one in us who thinks they are much younger. We in that moment do not firstly identify with either one of ourself, and each is alien to the other. Yet, that does not mean *who we are* has disappeared. What strikes us in these moments is the fact that our past and our present self are fastened together, despite their incompossibility. That differential bonding relation within ourself is what we know to really belong to us, because it is the internal grip that combines together our incompatible self-variations. It is *who we are*, but it is our non-self-identity. As we will further explain in the following section, it is what we might call our *personal non-identity*.

4 The Third Synthesis of Time

We noted that with the second synthesis, what appears to us explicitly is not the incompossible combination of the past in general with the active present; rather, we notice *particular* past events overlapping with the present one, giving us the phenomenon of time as the shocking difference between the two. Likewise, the third synthesis, which is pure temporal ordinality (the bare relation between beforeness and afterness), is not something that itself appears to our awareness, but Deleuze explains how certain phenomena indirectly indicate that it is at work in our time consciousness. We focus our examination of the third synthesis on Deleuze's notions of *time is out of joint* and the split self; for as we shall see, they involve phenomenal experiences of temporality.



From the beginning to the very end of Deleuze's philosophical writing career, he rehearsed his 'time is out of joint' argument at least nine times, in each case with slight nuances of emphasis and elaboration: in *Difference and Repetition*, in the introduction to his Kant book, in an extended version of that introduction published separately, in at least five of his lecture courses from 1978 to 1984, and in his coauthored work, *What is Philosophy?* Given the consistency between the accounts, we will draw from all of them, but we will not name all of them with each citation.[450]

Recall how Deleuze was able to characterize Spinoza's duration as involving immediately abutting instants. Between them is an intensity of change, giving us the "phenomenon of passage." We will apply a similar reading to Kant's description of neighboring instants in the first critique in order to better apply Kant's own extensive/intensive terminological distinction to his theory of time.

An intensive temporality would involve the incompossible combination of 'before' and 'after'. Yet, one of Kant's most basic temporal principles is that opposites cannot be found in the same instant; they can only be found one after another.[451] So when we observe something in a state of alteration, it is in one state in one moment, and then in a contrary state in another. Kant writes regarding a temporalized formulation of the principle of contradiction:

> "A thing = *A*, which is something = *B*, cannot at the same time be *non-B*, although it can easily be both (*B* as well as *non-B*) in succession." E.g., a person who is young cannot be old at the same time, but one and the same person can very well be young at one time and not young, i.e., old, at another.[452]

Likewise for cause and effect, the cause cannot be found in the same instant as the effect. And nonetheless, Kant still claims that the cause and the effect can be simultaneous, and he gives the example of the stove that heats a room. The cause of the heat, the working stove, is simultaneous with its effect, the room's air being heated. The stove cannot heat the air all in one instant, so its heating action persists and

[450] The rehearsed argument can be found in: Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, pp.116-123; *Difference and Repetition*, pp.85-91; *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, pp.vii-ix; *Critique et Clinique* pp.40-45; *Essays Critical and Clinical*, pp.27-31; *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, pp. 34-36; *What Is Philosophy*, pp.31-32; Seminar 24/01/1978; Seminar 21/03/1978; Seminar 12/04/1983; Seminar 13/12/1983; Seminar 17/04/1984.

[451] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A144/B184, p.192; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.275.

[452] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A152/B191-192, p.197; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.280.





becomes contemporaneous with the air's warming. This does not seem to be the sort of simultaneity in the sense of adjacent instants. Yet note that he writes:

> "[…] in the instant in which the effect first arises, it is always simultaneous with the causality of its cause, since if the cause had ceased to be an instant before then the effect would never have arisen. Here one must note that it is the *order of time* and *not its lapse* that is taken account of; *the relation remains even if no time has elapsed*. The time between the causality of the cause and its immediate effect can be *vanishing* (they can therefore be *simultaneous*), but the temporal relation of the one to the other still remains determinable .[453]

So we are not regarding time as having lapsed; rather we are concerned with the order of time, of *before*'s relation with *after*. And the cause can become simultaneous with the effect, with the time between them having vanished. This suggests that the extent of time between cause and effect has diminished to the infinitely small, making the successive moments simultaneous with regard to extensive duration; for, no lapse of time has transpired between them; yet they are successive with regard to intensity, because 'before' is still completely different and contrary to after, even though no time spans between their occurrences. The intensive difference between moments means that they want to break apart with a certain degree of intention or striving, if you will. Kant continues "If I consider a ball that lies on a stuffed pillow and makes a dent in it as a cause, it is simultaneous with its effect. Yet, I still distinguish the two by means of the temporal relation of the dynamical connection."[454] Is the cause here merely the ball, and the effect just the dented pillow? As mere physical objects, of course they can be simultaneous in space. Yet, a ball by itself does not cause a dent unless it is pressing into something. So we might say the laying-down of the ball that just happened is the cause, and the indenting of the pillow is the effect, and somehow these two successive instants are simultaneous in a way. This is reminiscent of how physics applies differential calculus when considering a moment of impact. As soon as a falling object hits the ground, in one sense its motion has stopped, because it has reached the limit of its fall, yet in another sense, the motion is still being expressed, because at that moment it still has an instantaneous velocity; it

[453] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A203/B248, p.236; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.312.
[454] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A203/B248, p.236; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.312.



is moving intensively even though not through spatiotemporal extension.[455] It is in this sense that such contraries found in adjacent instants, namely motion and rest, and cause and effect, can be considered simultaneous despite their incompossibility.

Deleuze's third synthesis of time is not so simple as being just the immediately successive combination of instants such that 'before' and 'after' coincide. It involves also the synthesis of the forces that combine moments with the forces that try to push them apart. And as we will see, the phenomenon of time in the third synthesis is bound up with the phenomenon of the split self. Deleuze's account begins with his careful analysis of Kant's critical revision of Descartes' cogito formulation. Mere consciousness of itself is apperception, and this is the simple representation of the I.[456] The self is split because we have two different and unbridgeable self-consciousnesses, the transcendental and the empirical apperception. Now recall the three time syntheses: apprehension, recollection, and recognition. We apprehend representations given in intuition one instant to the next. The reproductive imagination gathers the passing apprehensions and the productive imagination synthesizes them together in such a way that the understanding may recognize the manifold by means of its concepts. Yet, again note the tension between the temporal flux and the conceptual unification. The moments of apprehension, although temporally exclusive to one another, are taken together simultaneously. There must somehow be a unified consciousness that is the same throughout the moments, for otherwise they would belong to a different consciousness and thus be unavailable for synthesis. This *a priori* unified self-consciousness is the transcendental apperception, the "I think", which accompanies our conceptual acts. The empirical apperception is our self-consciousness as under a stream of alterations.[457] We are phenomenally aware of ourselves as ever inconsistent and disunified. So, empirical apperception is not enough to allow us to apprehend ourselves as enduring persons, because it has no means to make all our variations belong together. Yet, transcendental apperception has no intuitive content, so it cannot apprehend itself or cognize itself. For this it needs to synthesize itself as a series of phenomenal appearings happening at temporally distinct moments. In other words, the

[455] David Jerison of MIT explains this with the example of the school's traditional 'pumpkin drop.' Massachusetts's Institute of Technology, "Single Variable Calculus," Fall 2007. http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/mathematics/18-01-single-variable-calculus-fall-2006/video-lectures/lecture-1-derivatives/

[456] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, *Erster Teil*, B68, p.93; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.189.

[457] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, *Erster Teil*, A107, p.167; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.232.



consciousness of our unified non-temporal subjectivity, in order to become explicitly aware of itself, needs to manifest itself as being disunified through time.

The way transcendental apperception appears phenomenally is by means of self-affection. External objects modify our outer sense, but self-affections modify our inner sense.[458] Kant offers an example of self-affection: our acts of attention. When we focus our attention, we notice a modification of our awareness, its becoming more focused. This resulted not from an external object, but from an internal influence. It gives us a representation of our active subjectivity as a self-affecting subject, but it appears only phenomenally as a passively modified empirical self-consciousness.

With these distinctions we may better examine Deleuze's analysis of Kant's version of "I think, therefore I am." Descartes assumed that the act of self-consciousness was enough to determine oneself as a thinking being; and, by knowing that one is a being of some determinate sort, one would then know oneself to exist. But as we noted, Kant's transcendental apperception, the "I think," cannot cognize itself as a thinking being without manifesting itself to the empirical consciousness. So Kant's "I think" alone cannot determine its existence as a thinking being.

> In the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am conscious of myself not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am. […] Now since for the cognition of ourselves […] a determinate sort of intuition […] is also required, my own existence is not indeed appearance […], but the determination of my existence can only occur in correspondence with the form of inner sense, […] and I therefore have no cognition of myself as I am, but only as I appear to myself. […] I exist as an intelligence that is merely conscious of its faculty for combination.[459]

To clarify the matter, Deleuze draws the following four distinctions from Kant's formulation: the undetermined, the determined, the determination, and the determinable. The *undetermined* here is our existence, the "I am." It is what will undergo the determination. The *determined* (the result of the determination) is that "I am a thing that thinks." The *determination* (what is doing the determining) is the "I think." Yet the "I think" is self-consciousness and is not self-cognizant, and it alone is

[458] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B156, pp.151-152. Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, A107, p.167; *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.232.
[459] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Erster Teil*, B157-158, pp.152-153; *Critique of Pure Reason*, pp.259-260.



not enough to determine its own existence. As we noted, it can only determine itself by synthesizing a manifold of its own appearings, which means it must appear in self-disunity over successive moments of time. So Deleuze says that Kant introduces a fourth element, determinability. The act that will determine our existence, the "I think," can only determine our existence as a being who thinks if we appear in intuition, which means on the basis of the *a priori* pure form of time. Our *determinability*, then, is our synthesis between, on the one hand, our empirically and temporally varied self-appearings with, on the other hand, our atemporal unified intellectual self-consciousness. Pure temporal relationality, then, is our determinability: it is the tension between self-unity and self-disunity, making moments distinct while also forcing them together. It is the fundamental disjunctive synthesis of our self-consciousness' two incompatible tendencies toward temporal disintegration and unified self-identity. So the transcendental apperception is our personal identity in the sense that it is consciousness of itself as self-same. The empirical apperception is our non-personal non-identity, because the different self-appearings do not by themselves belong together to a self-identical consciousness. Yet, our determinability is our *personal non-identity*; it is personal because all our temporally distinct phenomenal variations belong together through the action of the synthesis, but it is our non-self–identification, because our unified self-consciousness is represented in our empirical self-consciousness, but is so transformed by temporality that it cannot be identified with itself anymore.

Hence, Deleuze turns to Rimbaud's formulation "Je est une autre." He uses it in two letters from around the same time:

> I is someone else. It is too bad for the wood which finds itself a violin.
> For *I* is someone else. If brass wakes up a trumpet, it is not its fault.[460]

For Rimbaud, Deleuze explains, these parings are based on concept-object relations, where the concepts *trumpet* and *violin* actively give form to the wood and brass, which are shapeable substrates; and thus Rimbaud thinks he likewise can become molded into a poet. What makes Kant's 'I is an other' different is that the I is not a concept for ourselves but is rather the representation that accompanies all our concepts; and the self is not an object being formed by concepts, but is rather the continuous variation of

[460] Rimbaud, *Complete Works, Selected Letters*, pp.304-305.



our successive states and the "infinite modulation of its degrees at each instant."[461] The I-Self relation is a modulation and not a mold, because we are not being shaped by forms but are rather continuously breaking out from forms.[462]

Yet, the third synthesis is not just a crack in the self, it is also a 'cut' in time, a *caesura*. To elaborate, Deleuze turns to Hölderlin's analysis of Sophocles' Oedipus trilogy. But, first we need to examine cosmic cycles and the 'cardinal' measuring of time by means of circular returns of motion. The stars of course rise and fall like the sun does, each day making one return. Yet, each day the earth's position around the sun changes, and this causes the stars to make still other circulations, pivoting (in the northern hemisphere) around the north star and returning after a year. All the stars make concentric circular circuits around that center-point in the sky.





Now, the sun's return to a designated starting point marks a day. It gives us one unit of time against which to measure other times. And so the yearly circling of the stars around the north star is measured as being about 365 daily sun circuits, just as the day is measured as being around $1/365^{th}$ of a yearly star cycle. Likewise, the circulation of the hour hand in a clock returns to its starting position 24 times a day, the minute hand 60 times per every hour-hand rotation, and so on. Thus regular cycles of circular motion provide the standard units for measuring time. This might surprise us, because time measured as being divisible into parts that are external to one another – like the individual hours of a day – is extensive time, which we normally characterize as a line, as for example when we draw out a time-line of events. Deleuze,

[461] Deleuze, *Critique et Clinique*, p.44; *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p.30.
[462] Deleuze, *Critique et Clinique*, p.44; *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p.30.

however, is claiming that extensive time moves in a circle, while instead intensive time shoots-off in a straight line.

Now, consider how the planets are not fixed points of light out in the distant cosmos like the stars are; rather, they obit the sun like the earth. So in the sky, they do not follow the stars' same yearly circular paths around the north star, but instead make their own motions that go against the grain of the stellar yearly circulations. In fact they might at times change direction and move backwards when in retrograde motion in the earth's sky.



Yet still, their circulations in our night sky bring them back to some starting point. When discussing the temporality of Greek tragedy, Deleuze has us regard the stars regular circles to be like the standards or limitations the gods place on men. Mortals should stay in line with divine laws. Yet in tragic stories, characters will break some law or limitation, transgressing that limit. So, we are to think of the planets moving against the stars' circular paths as being like a tragic character having committed some injustice, taking him or her on a deviant path in defiance of divine law. Yet, after a long while, the planets do return to the given starting point. In a way, this is like justice eventually being reinstated. However, in these ancient tragedies, the wrong-doings are normally rectified through vengeance; some other character murders the current guilty one, and that new character now restarts the same tragic cycle, only for it to be continually repeated over and over again.

We notice this in Aeschylus' dramas. Clytemnestra, for example, plots with her lover, Aegisthus, to murder her husband Agamemnon. Clytemnestra wants justice for Agamemnon having killed their daughter when he needed to appease the gods. Agamemnon reluctantly did this in order to obtain the winds needed to carry the Greek fleets home. And, Aegisthus wants to avenge a crime that Agamemnon's father



committed against Aegisthus' father. So, Agamemnon transgressed the limits with his murder of their daughter. When Clytemnestra kills Agamemnon in return, that brings justice, but is itself a new transgression. In the next part of the *Oresteia*, Orestes, son of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon, returns after some years in order to murder his mother to avenge his father. Thus, this sort of temporality in a way has fixed points that serve to orient the phases of the movement, something like how the cardinal directions designate unique points of reference. And, just like how the planets rotate around the sun, the circular motion of this time seems to turn round and round as if on a hinge (*Cardo*).

Deleuze then turns to Hölderlin's analysis of Sophocles' Oedipus trilogy to introduce the notion of the temporal cut or caesura. Recall the story of *Oedipus Rex*. Thebes is cursed with a plague. This is because its king Oedipus has committed the crimes of killing his father and marrying his mother. Yet despite prophesies foretelling this, Oedipus and his mother Jocasta are unaware. Long in the past, Oedipus' father Laius heard the prophecy that his son would kill him. So he arranged for his newborn son Oedipus to be left on a mountain to die. Instead, the child was saved and adopted as the prince of Corinth. Oedipus later wanted to know who his true parents were. The oracle told him of his curse, that he would kill his father and marry his mother. While traveling to Thebes, he fights and kills a man who was really Laius, his father, but he did not know it then. After solving the sphinx's riddle, Thebes makes Oedipus king, and he marries Jocasta, who is his mother, but not yet to their knowledge. Creon, Jocasta's brother, was sent to Delphi to find out how to lift the plague over Thebes. He learns that they must cast-out Laius' killer. Tiresias the seer says it is Oedipus. Clues slowly emerge that reveal this to be true, and Oedipus finally recognizes his crimes. Jocasta realizes too, and she hangs herself. Oedipus we know blinds himself by gouging-out his own eyes. He entrusts his daughters Antigone and Ismene to Creon, and he is exiled from Thebes.

The Sophoclean tragedies, Hölderlin explains, have an onrush of change, culminating at a highest point. To counter-balance the disproportion in the pace of the drama, what is needed at that highest point is a "counter-rhythmic rupture," which he calls the *caesura*.[463] So in the rhythmic sequence of a tragic play, there will be two main parts that are divided by the caesura. Both portions will relate to each other in a way that makes them feel as though they have common weight, even though they

[463] Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke, vol. 5*, p.196; *Essays and Letters on Theory*, 102.

move at different speeds.[464] When the initial part of the tragedy has more 'pressure', the counter-rhythmic caesura will be placed more toward the beginning. When instead the ending part has more pressure, the caesura will be placed toward the end. This is because the more rapid parts seem to weigh more.[465] *Oedipus Rex*'s caesura is found toward the beginning when Tiresias tells Oedipus he is Laius' killer. Because this fact is spoken by a prophet, it has the weight of the truth, despite Oedipus already being completely justified in concluding it must be false. So at the moment of the prophesy, Oedipus on the one hand still has reason to affirm the state of affairs "I am not my father's killer" while now having other reason to affirm "I am my father's killer." At the point of rhythmic rupture at the caesura, he must accept, that is, disjunctively synthesize, both states of affairs, even though they are incompossible.

So recall the split self with regard to Kantian self-consciousness. There is a self-consciousness that is *a priori* unified, and on the basis of it, it may synthesize its empirical appearings despite them being temporally incompatible. However, that means we do not cognize ourselves as we are in our self-same identity, but rather insofar as we appear through a manifold of self-variation in time. In the case of Oedipus, he in one moment affirms "I am not Jocasta's son" while just after that must affirm "I am Jocasta's son." In both cases it is the same I, but the predications push against each other, just as we saw with the intentional meanings pushing apart the designations in "The son of Jocasta is the husband of Jocasta." So on the one hand, Oedipus feels one moment with its affirmed state of affairs pushing away from its immediate incompossible neighboring instant. His empirical self-consciousness does not identify the Oedipus in one moment with the Oedipus in the next moment, because they are temporally exclusive to one another; yet his unified *a priori* self-consciousness forces the "I" in both cases to identify and thereby disjunctively synthesize his incompossible moments of empirical self-consciousness. This reminds us of Actaeon looking in the water and seeing a deer. So in the first place, *who he is* becomes something that appears to Oedipus phenomenally in that moment of passage when he must ask, *who am I*? And in that same stroke, he feels the temporal tensions between simultaneous instants that are forced together by a synthesizing action.

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[464] Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke*, *vol. 5*, p.196; *Essays and Letters on Theory*, 102.
[465] Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke*, *vol. 5*, p.196; *Essays and Letters on Theory*, 102.



Now, the caesura is a cut for Hölderlin not just in the sense of dividing the play's rhythmic pace; it also cuts into its 'melody' so to speak. We would expect Oedipus as a tragic character to die in the end, being murdered by someone who starts a new tragic cycle. Instead, Oedipus' life is spared, and he is left to aimlessly wander blind, his death indefinitely delayed. The Aeschylus plays, however, 'rhyme', because the cycles repeat, and the patterns continue the same way with each rotation. Oedipus' tale does not rhyme, because it begins like a tragic cycle, but ends without the cyclical resolution. And, in the moment of transition between incompossible moments of self-understanding, his life as he felt it to be progressing now takes a sudden turn, a deviating bifurcation. So, while he does not know what is to come, he does know it is completely off the course he anticipated. Before and after that caesura, his life does not rhyme. Yet, what he experiences then is not so much his indeterminacy, because he is being determined in that moment. It is alarming to realize that we can find ourselves to immediately right here and now be determined as someone we cannot self-identify with. Deleuze's becoming might at first seem to be primarily a matter of indeterminacy, but rather on this account it is more a matter of determinability, our being both before and after ourselves, with the determinations of each moment being incompatible with each other. In the Oedipus example, the second synthesis' phenomenon of the self would be us feeling ourselves being neither who we are one instant nor who we were in a prior instant, but rather we consider ourselves as the difference between. This as well gives us the phenomenon of the intensive temporality between present and past. Regarding the third synthesis, while we are also perhaps aware of our temporal inconsistencies, we are as well made aware of the internal crack responsible for the synthetic disjunction, that is, we sense how we have two self-consciousnesses, an active and a passive one, neither of which we can completely identify with.

The story of Hamlet is similar to the Oedipus tale in that regard. Hamlet is a thoughtful and contemplative prince; he is certainly not one to spontaneously seize action and murder someone. Yet Hamlet's father, the former king, appears to him as a ghost and tells Hamlet to avenge his death. The former king's brother, Claudius, killed him and married his wife the queen, which prevented the crown from being passed-on to Hamlet. After this conversation with the ghost, Hamlet says "the time is out of joint." This could be because he now sees that the lawful cycles of kings living their full lives and bequeathing the throne to their first born son has been disrupted by the

brother's murderous act. Yet, time is out of joint for Hamlet also because he now must make a passage between incompatible appearings of himself, at one moment a gentle thinker, at another a violent assassin. So before and after the caesura (the ghost's kings request), the time in Hamlet's life does not rhyme. As with Oedipus, it is as if a planet has been loosed from its orbit around the sun, now instead flying-off in a straight line like the tangent to a curve. This, it now seems, is why Deleuze says that in the third synthesis, time unravels and becomes a line. It is a line as an intensity. Without its center-point of rotation, its "cardo" or joint, it cannot be said to express a homogenous and measurable temporal progress. So it would not be countable or divisible like cardinal numerals are, and it would not have a point of return, like a cardinal point of directional orientation (North, South, etc.) for determining unitary values. More concretely, if we have such phenomenal experiences when we and time split-off from regular and measurable motion, we no longer feel the homogeneity of time, its constant steady flow, its extensity. We rather feel its heterogeneity, its continually being under intense variation. Yet, this is not because 'before' and 'after' split apart, in fact, it is because they are so forcefully placed together despite their tensions that the phenomenon of time appears. So, rather than the cardinality of time, we notice its ordinality, the pure intensive relation between 'before' and 'after'.

Now, a bit before committing himself to murdering his father, Hamlet ponders:

> To be, or not to be–that is the question:
> Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
> The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
> Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
> And by opposing end them.

Hamlet can either keep himself living throughout a life of misfortune, or take his life and spare himself from that suffering. Now consider how our first time jumping into deep water might have filled us with intense trepidation. We are not yet a person who can swim, therefore the person we are when first making the leap is risking self-inflicted death. Yet we will survive, if when hitting the water we cease being a frightened non-swimmer and instead become a swimmer. In that moment of the leap, we know we are not swimmers, because we have not yet made contact with the water and begun swimming; however, by committing to the jump, we determine and affirm



ourselves as swimmers at the same time, for otherwise we would not have a sane motivation for taking the lethal risk. In that passage between states, we embrace our determinability, the pure order of time that makes us always before and after ourselves. The 'To be or not to be' of our indecisiveness turns into 'to be *and* not to be' at the moment of incompossible self-determination: to be a swimmer *and* not to be a swimmer, to be Hamlet *and* not to be Hamlet, to be you *and* not to be you.

Thus, when these disjunctions are synthesized, time comes out of joint. Deleuze writes: "Time no doubt tends to free itself when the movement it measures itself becomes increasingly aberrant or derived [dérivé], […] but this is a downward tendency that still depends on the adventures of movement."[466] In the footnote to this passage, Deleuze refers us to Eric Alliez' analysis of circular monetary movements that become aberrant and free themselves from their hinges. Alliez draws from Aristotle and Marx when explaining this. Aristotle's chrematistics is a sort of pursuit of wealth rather than merely seeking the use-values of goods.[467] In mere bartering, we exchange one commodity for another (perhaps we might symbolize this as C-C) and normally the use-value of both exchanged goods is relatively the same. Yet currency allows goods to be exchanged in more complex and sophisticated ways. For Marx, Commodity-Money-Commodity exchanges (C-M-C) are based on exchanging one good for another one with relatively the same value, by means of currency that mediates those values symbolically. But merchants who buy goods not for use-value but for resale-value – aiming to earn a profit in that resale – are making Money-Commodity-Money exchanges (M-C-M'), which is like Aristotle's chrematistics. The extra prime symbol in M' indicates the original monetary value plus the increase (or decrease) made in profit (or loss) through the exchange.[468]

In bartering, the use-value of the obtained good is attained immediately. But C-M-C is really more like C-M/M-C, because there are two mediating steps: 1) the commodity-owner sells her labor/goods for money, and then 2) she uses that money to buy some other commodity or service. Likewise we might make this distinction for merchants who treat their merchandise as having monetary value. They do not use the commodity, but rather it represents potential resale profit from a forthcoming sale.

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[466] Deleuze, *Critique et Clinique*, p.40; *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p.27.
[467] Alliez, *Les Temps Capitaux*, p.33; *Capital Times*, p.5.
[468] Alliez, *Les Temps Capitaux*, pp.35-36; *Capital Times*, pp.6-7.

This we might represent as M-C/C-M': 1) a merchant buys the resellable commodity at one monetary value, and 2) the merchant resells that commodity to someone else at a profit. So there is a succession implied in the temporally mediating power of money in C-M-C and in the mediation of monetary resell value in M-C-M'; money is time in the sense that it creates an advantageous delay between transactions. And, we can hold onto money knowing that it will satisfy our needs for some period of time. Thus, money in this way mediates a certain sort of temporality. Note also how in C-C bartering and also in C-M-C exchanges, the use-value of the goods given will probably for the most part equal those of goods received. This is like a circular time where values and wealth always return rather than skyrocket. But in M-C-M', or better in just pure interest investment M-M', values do shoot-off exponentially. Interest investments create a monied time that is not circular in its movement but rather more like an exponential curve. Hence the investment made now is like the tangent to that curve; it is the intended rate of increase, and it is a straight line rather than a circular return to an original value. Chrematistics, Alliez writes,

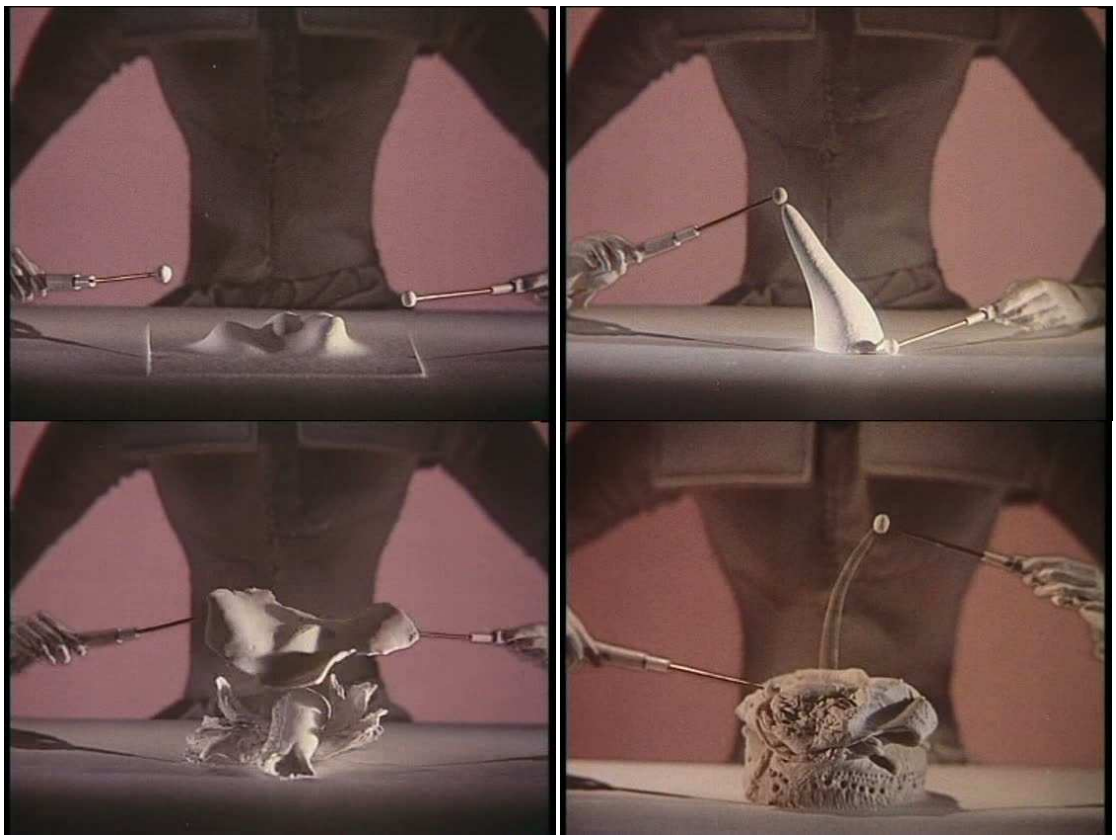
> designates finally that depoliticizing (de-realizing) *anticipation* that can derive profit from exchange because it is inscribed above and before the monetary equivalence it develops, on the *tangent* of the space of comparison and on the curve of appropriation that it keeps inextricably enveloped. […] Money is [....] Nothing but the all-powerfulness of *exponentiality*.[469]

The current interest investment drains the present of its money (and thus of the temporal value of that money), while introducing into the present the anticipated forthcoming return that implies a greater temporal value. So chrematistics in a way creates an empty form of time, where there is no actual (temporal) value present now, but instead there is the coincidence of 'before' and 'after.' Also, the rate of increase will be different after gaining more returns over time, so the speeds of increase do not match before and after the investment. They do not 'rhyme' in a sense. In the present moment of investment, with its tangential shooting-off course, there is thus also a rupture, break, or caesura in the curve of value-increase.

[469] Alliez, *Les Temps Capitaux*, pp.44-45; *Capital Times*, p.13, emphasis mine.



We end by examining some of Deleuze's cinematic examples which provide us an image of the temporality of the third synthesis of time. This first is Deleuze's analysis of the creation of temporality in a Polish animated film: "In […] *Chronopolis*, Kamler fashioned time out of two elements, small balls manipulated with pointed instruments, and supple sheets covering the balls. The two elements formed moments."[470] Notice he speaks here of forming moments, and not a flow of time, and also not an extending passage of time. When the two elements make contact, some new variation results in the clay. The figure, with each contact, becomes something different. But it does so by changing what it already was. What it was, and what it is becoming – its before and its after – coincide with each moment of contact, because the figures always seem to be in the middle of different and unique formations. [Flip pages 107-109, top]



The portrayal of time in this scene is not the extending passage of duration through which the changes happen, like how each frame of the movie-film blurs together to create the illusion of continuous motion. Rather, synthesis is found completely in each

[470] Deleuze, *Cinéma 2*, pp.137-138; *Cinema 2*, pp.101-102.

single frame alone, where the 'before' is being synthesized simultaneously with its 'after.'

Deleuze offers as a depiction of pure and empty time Ozu's still-lifes:

> The vase in *Late Spring* is interposed between the daughter's half smile and the beginning of her tears. There is becoming, change, passage. But the form of what changes does not itself change, does not pass on. This is time, time itself, 'a little time in its pure state' […] everything that changes is in time, but time does not itself change […] Ozu's still lifes endure, have a duration, over ten seconds of the vase: this duration of the vase is precisely the representation of that which endures, through the succession of changing states.[471]



The daughter has been reluctant to marry, because this would leave her widowed father all alone, creating too much drastic change in both his and her lives. Yet in this scene, she consents to her father's wishes, and decides in fact that she will marry. However at that moment of her decision, Ozu shows the still-life scene of the vase. This grand climactic moment of the film's narrative is substituted by a pure visual stillness. We feel a dramatic change while perceiving a motionless image. The actual events coming before and after are not present in the still-life, but they are both implied in the same still image, because this transition point in the story marks the most drastically different 'before' and 'after'. We feel in this moment the coincidence of an empty before and an empty after, that is, of the pure form of time.

[471] Deleuze, *Cinéma 2*, pp.27-28 ; *Cinema 2*, p.16.



Conclusion

Merleau-Ponty's phenomenon of time was the thrust of transition synthesis. This synthesis is also what constitutes our selfhood, because by means of it all our temporally different moments of consciousness are made to belong together continuously with our present act of awareness. From the Deleuzean phenomenal perspective, there is a temporal synthesis prior to durational passage, and there is a self that does not pass continuously from moment to moment; rather it is always slipped between the cracks of time. As the Oedipus, Hamlet, and swimming examples might suggest, this sort of intensive time and differential selfhood make their appearance in profoundly phenomenal experiences. How noticeable is the continuous thrust of time and the continuity of our selfhood throughout it? Is not Deleuze's disjunctive synthesis more interesting for phenomenological inquiries?

Let's suppose we take as the basis of phenomenal appearings Deleuze's disjunctive synthesis of the chaotic pure variations of phenomenal givenness. This basis does not necessarily undermine the work already done in phenomenology. Deleuze does not deny that objects with homogeneous and extensive features come to be constituted. So the associative, assimilative, and integrative syntheses of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, for example, still give an account of a process at work in phenomenal appearings. However, the Deleuzean differential basis for apparition inverts the phenomenological value of these studies in phenomenal constitution. For, the more a phenomenon becomes homogeneous, integrated with its surroundings, and internally assimilated, the more unnoticeable and boring it becomes, and the more we process it automatically like a machine. Such analyses into constitution are, from the Deleuzean perspective, investigations into *dephenomenalization*, which renders what is phenomenally remarkable into something regular and ordinary. That is not to say there is no role for such analyses in phenomenology, of course there is. But why not dig deeper like Deleuze does?

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