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Creative Involution- Overcoming Man: Becoming-woman

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Abstract:

The thesis is written in the pursuit of true difference. Its contention is that true difference has been obscured by a model of difference which is dialectical in nature. Western thought has been largely informed by a metaphysic in which difference has been subordinated to the One and the Identical and which can only ever return as the Same.

In utilising the writings of Foucault, Deleuze, Deleuze-Nietzsche, Deleuze-Bergson and Bergson, this thesis strives to find for a new image of thought, that can go beyond representation through which true difference can be known.

The thesis is framed in the context of the problematic of 'the death of man' as that which Foucault formulates as eternally returning as the Same. Foucault raises the question of Man's disappearance and in doing so also opens up the question of what might come after Man. It will be argued, that what comes after man, that which Nietzsche has named the Overman, is the becoming-woman of man.

The aim is to show that becoming-woman, once freed from the representational system, can be thought of as an active, affirmative death through which difference can be thought in-itself as the continual movement of vital life. The nature of a Becoming-woman is, in turn, framed in the context of Deleuze's search for difference in-itself and, Bergson's philosophy of nature.

It will be argued, in conclusion, that becoming-woman is the rebirth of the eternal return of difference which, in man, reaches into the consciousness of self.

Acknowledgements:

I dedicate this thesis to my daughter Phoebe who has been very patient with me as I have been writing this thesis throughout these first twentythree months of her life. I love you very dearly. More time to play now.

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Introduction

The Eternal Return of the Same

This thesis proposes that: **‘Man is that which differs in degree from himself’, whilst ‘becoming woman is that which differs in kind in-itself. Man’s overcoming is the becoming-woman of man’.** (This proposal will not be cited in full throughout the thesis, but is abbreviated thus: ‘Man differs in degree from himself; becoming woman differs in kind in-itself’.)

The contention of this thesis is that the condition of true difference is such that it gets subordinated to a negative model of difference, whereby it is forced outside of thought. For this reason it lies beyond Man’s knowledge and can no longer adequately thought of in-itself. In demonstrating the proposal made by this thesis, it will be shown how true difference has come to be depreciated, but further, it will be argued that, in pursuing a ‘new image of thought’, it is possible to know difference in-itself outside the system of representation that has prevailed in Western thought.

To strive to think true difference, therefore, is actually to attempt to break out of this system of representation (of the Same) which has prevailed in much of Western metaphysics. Often referred to as Platonism, it is a system which is hierarchical and operates by establishing a general norm which sets the standard from which all other things are considered to deviate. This norm is implicit in the concept of the Identical (the concept in general) and all that deviates from its centre pivot is considered to differ by degree from that original, One, Identity. Fundamental to the representational system of the norm and its derivatives is the dialectical dualism, such as; Same-different, Self-other, Majority-minority, One-multiple, Man-woman etc. A dualism is hierarchical coupling that contains within it the assumption that one of its terms is the standard that the other term fails to equal. The motivation of this thesis,

is the recognition that, so long as a metaphysics of the Identical prevails, minority or marginalized groups (and things) will only ever be able to establish their own identities in relation to that norm. Minorities are so-called only in that they are considered to deviate from the norm. That is how representation operates. difference

is always subordinated to and mediated through the concept of 'the Same'. "Difference in this model is opposed to the concept - The Same or the essence of the idea - it is therefore proposed to save difference by representing it, and to represent it in relation to the concept it differs from". (Deleuze: 1994: 112) However, representation, far from being the saviour of difference instead eradicates it, reducing difference to mere appearance. This system of thought is implicit in all areas of cultural, social, political, and language interaction. Therefore, to think difference beyond Platonism, to embark on that which Dorothea Olkowski refers to as the "ruin of representation"¹, has a political imperative, the aim of which is to subvert the insidious regime of the Same.

The concern with difference, from the point of view of this thesis, does have a political undertone beyond a purely philosophical engagement. This is to challenge the hierarchy of 'othering' which has been central to Identity politics, and its postmodern inversion the politics of difference and, 'go beyond' the metaphysics of Being and Identity. What is clear therefore, in terms of the more broadly political question which motivates this thesis, is that any project which seeks to engage with difference differently, can no longer take refuge in, or return to, a Metaphysical politics of Identity, nor its 'other' the postmodern inversion, that veils difference behind binary oppositions.

Difference and Deconstruction

For this reason, it is necessary here to distinguish between the two different kinds of difference operational in this thesis; true difference, which this thesis is in pursuit of, is that as theorized in the work of Deleuze, and 'textual' difference that is the subject of Derridian deconstruction. It is beyond the remit of thesis ^{to engage with Derridian deconstruction} at length, but is important to understand that, although both Deleuze's concern with difference and Derridian deconstruction appear to share much common ground, their purpose and method are radically at odds. Whilst both claim to overthrow Platonic representation and to

¹Olkowski borrowed this term, as acknowledged in *Gilles Deleuze* (1999) p.10, from Michele Montrelay.

decentre the ego, the latter merely perpetuates the representational model of difference as dialectical and, therefore, it is conceived as negative. In recent years, the frenetic and sustained interest in deconstruction and textualism, by feminists and 'others', has merely served to extend the problem of representation, not overthrow it. The fragmenting of difference through various deconstructions or postmodernisms is but a continuation and explosive burgeoning of idealism, absolutely reliant, as it is however, on the similar and the Same that it seeks to undermine. This is an illusion of difference dependent on metaphysical dualism and works at the level of representation through which difference collapses into indifference. (Deleuze: 1994: 117)

Unlike Derrida, Deleuze's conception of difference is not based in textual difference founded on Saussurian linguistics. Deleuze's model of difference, is not to be conceived as Derridian deconstruction which only goes as far as decentring linguistic structure and which, at its most extreme considers that 'there is nothing outside the text'. Instead Deleuze, believing that there was indeed something outside the text, and beyond Platonism, embarks upon a radical problematization of a mathematical model of structure which he formulated in '*Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1996)' and then in '*Difference and Repetition* (1994)' but runs throughout his work. Though Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* has been widely read and commented on, this thesis, because they are lesser known and because they are dedicated almost entirely to Bergson, draws mainly upon Deleuze's lesser known 1956 essay on difference "*La conception de la difference chez Bergson*" (translated in 1997 by Mellisa McMahan), and also his 1966 (rep.1988) text '*Bergsonism*'.

Deleuze's concern to overcome Platonism, leads him to posit a model of difference (informed by his reading of Nietzsche) that not based on the arbitrary relationship of signs but is generated through the action of physical forces based on a theory of forces, a physics. (Bogue: 1996) Forces and bodies in Deleuze's work are not

reducible to language or a linguistic model. Deleuze conceives a philosophy of difference which overthrows the philosophy of appearance, replacing it with ‘a stuttering practice of an ontology of becoming’ (Olkowski: 1999: 14). Thus whilst Deleuze and Guattari share the aim of toppling Platonism with Derrida and other deconstructionists, such as Irigaray, when considered in terms other than those of representation the outcome is profoundly different. Deleuze, in proposing a theory of true difference, which it will be shown, is founded on a philosophy of ‘multiplicity’, discovers a difference that does not collapse into thesis, anti-thesis nor synthesis, moves us beyond the subject of poststructuralism.

There is another important point to be made here regarding the ‘ruin’ of representation, that ‘going beyond’ is not simply a matter of *overturning* the system of representation so as to establish another norm, or ideal. The project of ‘going beyond’ is to dissolve the very idea of the concept of difference ‘in general’, thereby freeing difference in and for itself. To strive to break out of the system of representation is to seek difference beyond the equivocal and external, and to discover a difference that is univocal, that has internal difference.

The question then is how to think difference beyond equivocal being, or how to know true difference? If this is to be a serious endeavour, then care must be taken so as to avoid slippage into the dualism that the process of ‘going beyond’ is at pains escape. Any attempt to summon, or collapse, difference back into the representational system must be dealt with skepticism. The task, therefore, is to “replace the philosophy of identity and representation with a philosophy of difference”, (Bogue: 1996: 56) by striving to think difference independent of the law of equivocal being, the “regime of the One, the self-same, the imaginary play of mirrors and doubles, the structure of binary pairs in which what is different can be understood only as a variation or negation of identity.” (Grosz in Olkowski: 1999: 55) A philosophy of difference would not submit to hierarchical representation of the Aristotelian framework

founded on the four part judgment that conceives of difference in terms of being and identity, or degrees of being predicated on the identity of the concept, the opposition of predicates, the analogy of judgment, and the resemblance of perception. (see p.s 17 - 23) To the extent that representation is mediated through reason, to go beyond representation is also to decentre cogito. So long as difference is subjected to reason it is mediated to the extent that it is subjugated to (this) fourfold root". (Deleuze: 1994: 29)

“Difference can only become an object of representation ‘*in relation to a conceived identity, a judged analogy, an imagined opposition, a perceived similitude, never in itself*’” (Deleuze: 1994: 180)

In a dualism, the subordinated term can only become only ‘equivalent to’ through resemblance, similitude, analogy or indeed it may merely come to oppose the general concept. These subjugated terms are contained in the term ‘difference’ as a concept in general. Because difference is conceived, in this system, as difference *from* the general concept then it fails to have difference *in-itself*. “The question whether it was ‘always’ subject to these requirements, and for what reasons, must be closely examined”, (Deleuze: 1994: 262) if true difference is to be freed.

Life

Whilst this thesis is concerned with the nature of true difference, there is an equally important task to which it is dedicated. That task is the reconception of *life*, indeed it is this that is the motivation behind the pursuit of difference in-itself. What will become clear throughout ~~this thesis is the~~ ^{the} pursuit of true difference and the task to reconceive life are one and the same thing. It is not necessary to dwell in detail here on this matter as it is the stuff of the thesis, but merely want to highlight early in this thesis the idea of overthrowing the insidious regime of representation and discovery true difference, is a question of knowing life *differently*. That is to say, when the

question of existence became subjected to representational thought, life came to express, and be expressed in, terms of dialectical contradiction. This, it will be shown, is the same as a ‘death’ of life through which beings become hierarchized according to an appearance of difference based on resemblance. Instead, it will be argued, what should be pursued is a ‘logic’ of difference that no longer evaluates people or things in terms of filiation, genealogy, descent and kinship, nor genus or species as in Darwinian evolutionism, nor structure or series the sum or value of differences.

Knowledge

It will become apparent also, that another crucial and core theme with which this thesis is concerned with is *knowledge*. Key to the whole problem of representation, and how to ‘go beyond’ representation, is an engagement with the question of the formation of knowledge indeed, the task of this thesis is not only to problematize what constitutes knowledge, but what constitutes thought itself. It will be argued that, so long as knowledge is subjected to, and subject of dialectical negation, it can only ever pose false problems that then demand and get false solutions. Such is the case, it will be argued, in the categories of Man, life and death. It will become clear that, only when knowledge be thought of outside of the constraints of representation, can true difference in-itself be returned.

In order to think ‘true difference’ which is the motivation of this thesis, it is first necessary to demonstrate what is not ‘true difference’. For this reason, this thesis is divided into two sections: Part One is concerned with the idea of the Eternal Return of the Same, whilst Part Two is dedicated to what might constitute the Eternal Return of Difference. Indeed, to understand the proposal of this thesis that: Man differs in degree from himself, becoming-woman differs in kind in-itself is to understand the distinction between what constitutes the eternal return of the Same and the eternal

return of difference, which, in turn, is to understand the different natures of dialectical difference and pure difference.

Part One of this thesis seeks to demonstrate, by way of three moves, that difference, as it is and expressed in the concept of the Eternal Return of the Same, is not a true difference, for it does not have internal difference. Difference, when it is founded on the Same, is a negative, dialectical form of difference, that is, because it is dialectical it always differs *from* something else. But “(h)ow”, asks Ansell-Pearson, “do we identify a difference and, moreover, a difference that makes a difference to the order of things?” (Ansell-Pearson: 1999: 18)

And indeed, to begin to answer this, it is to Foucault’s *The Order of Things* (1992) that this thesis turns in order to situate the above problematics in the context of ‘the death of Man’. It may seem ironic, given that the main motivation for this thesis is a reconception of life, that it should begin by situating the question of difference in the context of Man’s death. If the ‘death’ of Man is so construed that it returns, perpetually, the Same, then how is it possible to think a ‘death’ of Man which does not collapse into the Same? Here we encounter a strange paradox, for, in attempting to find a solution to the problem of Man’s ‘death’ (disappearance), we find we must first pose the question of ‘life’? However, as will be argued, the whole problem of representation is a matter of death, whilst true difference is a matter of life (but a very particular kind of life).

The ‘death’ of Man’ then, is the proper place to situate a project concerned with overthrowing representation for, as it will become apparent in Foucault’s formulation, Man is that which eternally returns as the Same. To go beyond representation is to overthrow the regime of the Identical for which Man has come to be the figure head.

The problem that this raises is what might follow Man which, it will become apparent, is the same as reposing the question of life, beyond the Same. This is the concern of Part Two of the thesis, and indeed, Chapter Six is an exposition of Bergson's philosophy of life which, this thesis will argue, is the return of vital life as difference in-itself.

Methodological Issues

I wish to make clear some points regarding my intentions in this thesis.

'We' as Multiplicity

What I do *not* intend to do is to *write* a science, neither is it my intention to write an ontology of life, nor is it my intention to provide a new methodological approach to the material, such as Bergson's philosophy of nature. Whilst these are important areas in themselves, these concerns are not central to the theoretical stance of this thesis. For example, I am aware, clearly, that the use of language used in the execution of the following ideas exhibits a tension in attempting to think actively between the line of degree, of the dialectical dualism, and the line of kind, of the pure dualism. This is the very problem that the physicist Bohm explores in his idea of the 'rheomode'. He states that, "(t)he subject-verb-object structure of language, along with its world view, tends to impose itself very strongly in our speech, even in those cases in which some attention would reveal its evident inappropriateness." (Bohm: 1980: 29) Structurally, our language is embedded in spatialized, abstract modality, which is precisely that which this thesis acts against. Therefore, in the exposition and discussion of the various theoretical positions taken up and discussed throughout this thesis, I have deliberately retained both Deleuze and Bergson's use of the pronoun *we* as an operator. As Deleuze and Guattari insist, the struggle is how "(t)o reach, not the point where one no longer says I, but the point where it is no longer of any importance whether one says I. We are no longer ourselves. Each will know his own. We have aided, inspired, multiplied." (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 3)

It would be of little use here to give short synopses as to the concern of each of the Chapters, for the pursuit of pure difference is the unfolding of new concepts which need to be elaborated at length in order to do justice to the nuances of the material. It is more important to dwell here on the different natures of the Two Parts of the thesis for they raise, in their combination, a certain methodological tension effected by the epistemological and ontological approaches taken, respectively, to the material.

The first Part of the thesis is concerned with epistemology, that is, the questions of Man, life and death, are utilized as *epistemological* categories. (Each of these constitutes one move towards demonstrating the main tenet of this thesis). In Part Two, however, the categories Man, life and death used in ways that are *ontological*, in that Bergson's Creative Evolution does posit a 'science' of life. Actually Bergson's work is both epistemological and ontological in that, on one level his work is concerned with the the nature of knowledge, but only to the extent that he wants to demonstrate that reason, in Man, was an evolutionary necessity. On another level entirely, Bergson demonstrates, in developing a new philosophy of life, that reason is but one way of knowing the world. Beyond representation, man can know the life through a very different 'image of thought'. In proposing a new knowledge of life, it may appear that Bergson is merely adding to epistemology, but on the contrary, unlike the argument that knowledge produces categories, such as life, in Bergson's theory, life is the possibility of knowledge, therefore, life is knowledge.

Bergson's philosophy does not then, merely overturn representation, or offer another epistemology, it discovers a new metaphysics of the outside. For Bergson, the key to Man's existence then, lay not then in the 'order of things', as an effect of particular formations of knowledge, but in the very workings of the consciousness. To know his existence, man must to 'violence to thought', and embark on a journey that is the pursuit of thinking differently.

Quoting Foucault, Deleuze stated, “Why bother with a thinking which concerns itself with ‘legitimizing what one already knows’, when it could consist of an attempt to know how and to what extent it is possible to think differently”. (Foucault: 1986) Or, in the words of Haraway, why settle for “a mirror image of sameness that only pretends to difference”. (Haraway: 1994: 297) By thinking differently, “(i)n the Western sense”, she chirps, “the end of man is a stake”. (Haraway: 1991: 160)

With the intent to reach beyond representation, this thesis takes as its starting point the question that Foucault tentatively poses in the final pages of ‘The Order of Things’. He asks, in all the ‘profound histories of the same’, might not ‘man’, ‘a recent invention’, soon ‘disappear’, returning to a ‘serene non-existence’, “erased like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea?” (Foucault: 1992: 387)

PART ONE

The Eternal Return of the Same

MAN: *the Eternal Return of the Same*

When Foucault declares, Man is that which ‘repeatedly returns as the Same’, what does he mean? How does Foucault conceive of ‘the Same’? How does Foucault conceive of Man? These questions shall be addressed below when it will be argued that Man is the product of a particular formation of knowledge that effects an unresolvable dialectical impasse, and which results in ‘his’ endlessly returning as the Same. Furthermore, it is the intention of this chapter to illustrate throughout that the eternal return of the Same is that which constitutes the ‘death of Man’.

The stance taken in this thesis is that Man is a product of dialectical thought. Man is therefore, ^{the} stating of a false problem. In order to break free of the eternal cycle of the Same, Man, as a false problem must be ‘overcome’. It may seem that the whole idea that Man is that which return as the Same in ‘death’ is entirely in contariety to a thesis interested in thinking ‘difference’ and ‘life’. But, it will become clear that, it is in unpacking the idea of Man’s death and his endless cycle of the Same, and this is crucial, that it is possible to make the first move towards thinking true difference. For if Man is the problem, the solution to which is that which repeatedly returns as the Same, which precludes true difference, then in order to think difference, Man must be overcome². Man’s overcoming is effectively the overcoming of the dialectical problem of Man. The implications of this for this thesis is that, to overcome Man and to return true difference, is to create new concepts based on an entirely different principle than the dialectic which returns difference as a negation of the Same. This implies an entirely different way of ‘knowing’ things. Once the problem of Man is properly stated, then it is possible to formualte a conception of ‘man’ which does not return the Same. In restating the problem of Man outside the framework of the eternal return of the Same allows a possibility to think true difference *in-itself*.

² I have borrowed the term ‘Man’s overcoming’ Nietzsche and I shall discuss this in more detail in Chapter Three when considering the idea of the death of Man.

Further, in posing the question of the Man's 'death', beyond the dialectic, what becomes possible is a means to think what might come after Man. For it is here is discovered a true solution to the problem of true difference which we shall find is a 'positive death' and a 'vital life'(discussed in Part Two). The idea of Man's 'death' will be discussed more fully in Chapter Three, when a differentiation is made between a 'negative' death which returns as the Same and a 'positive' death through which true difference is returned. This will make possible a true solution to the problem of Man which will be returned to in Chapter Six after having considered in detail the problem of the false problem. In addressing the above questions is to make our first move towards demonstrating the main tenet of this thesis, that Man is that which differs in degree from himself. In making this move, we also take our first step towards being able differs in-itself as 'becoming-woman'.

To address these problem regarding Man's existence and 'death', we shall now turn to the Foucault's work, *The Order of Things*. In the final pages of this, Foucault asks whether 'man', 'a recent invention' might not soon 'disappear', returning to a 'serene non-existence', "erased like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea"? (Foucault: 1992: 387) To understand, for Foucault, what Man is, is to ask what effected 'Man's appearance? How does Foucault come to assert that 'Man' is a 'recent invention'? What does Foucault mean in claiming that Man will soon disappear? We will return to and raise the question of 'Man's' disappearance, in conclusion to this Chapter, where it be used to frame the question of 'life', biology and the Biological Sciences, which is the subject of Chapter Two.

What then effected Man's appearance? This can be answered by showing how Foucault construes man's existence. For Foucault, Man's existence is a relatively new phenomenon. He "is quite a recent creature, which the demiurge of knowledge fabricated with his own hands less than two hundred years ago..." for. "(b)efore the

eighteenth century *man* did not exist...”.(Foucault: 1992: 308) How is it that Foucault can assert that before the eighteenth century man did not exist, and yet go on to claim that, Man not only exists, but faces the impending fate to disappear as he appeared? This raises the question, as to how, in less than two hundred years has Man created himself and what is this creation that Foucault calls ‘Man’? Our clue to this problem is to be found Foucault’s (1992) statement that Man is ‘the demiurge of knowledge’.

Knowledge

To understand how Foucault (1992) construes Man’s existence, is to discover that ‘Man’ is the result of a tension effected by the collision of two epistemological forms occupying a particular moment in the space opened up in the field of Western knowledge. That is, ‘Man’ is ^{the} effect of two different forms of knowledge which became juxtaposed at a particular time. This transition from, what Foucault defined as, the ‘Classical’ to the ‘Modern’ ages, produced a way of knowing the world quite unthinkable before the nineteenth century. “The order on the basis of which we think today does not have the same mode of being as that of the Classical thinkers” (Foucault: 1992: xxii). This collision, which resulted in the Human Sciences of the Modern Age, produced the category ‘Man’ as the solution to a problem which arose as a result of this combination. It will demonstrated that before the emergence of these arrangements of knowledge in their Modern form, the entity ‘Man’ could not be thought. It is the very special configuration of these forms in the Modern episteme that makes it possible for ‘Man’ to appear. Man is a very specific type of epistemological construct because, as it will be demonstrated below, ‘he’ is caught up in the intersection between two fundamentally different formations of knowledge. Man was only made possible, due to the ‘dual’ nature of Modern thought for, although the figure of Man emerged in the space opened up by a very specific configuration of knowledge in the Modern episteme, this would not have been

possible without the discontinuity between Classical knowledge and Modern knowledge (it shall be elaborated presently).

The particular forms of knowledge with which Foucault is concerned in *'The Order of Things'* are Life, Labour and Language. Foucault's work demonstrates what 'ways of knowing' were made possible by an episteme, and also what limitations are placed by epistemes on thought, for an episteme enables and limits the production of particular forms of knowledge and sciences; all political and intellectual production. Foucault's interest is not so much with the knowledge itself, but with how this knowledge was constituted in each episteme (the order of things), that is, he wanted to demonstrate that what it was possible to know and to think in one episteme could be quite different in another. An episteme governs each separate epoch: it conditions particular knowledges; how words exist, what kind of things are possible. (Payne: 1997: 45) In short an episteme both makes possible and at the same time delimits what an epoch is able to think. Critically, an episteme defines the way in which life, labour and language could be thought. The Modern understanding of this 'ordering of things' is profoundly different from any previous arrangements of Western knowledge. In their Modern form life, labour and language, became reconfigured as *biology, economics and linguistics*, and became the basis of the Modern Human Sciences³. What is important to consider here is the way in which, in this transition from the Classical Age to the Modern Age, life, labour and language - 'the triple root of finitude' - become imbued with the 'potent', the 'fecund' and the 'historical'. It is the way then, in which life, labour and language come to be conceived in the Modern episteme, which is critical in understanding the emergence of 'Man' as a category (the significance of which will be illustrated in depth in Chapter Two when

³ The three epochs with which Foucault is concerned he defines as: the Renaissance (the sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth century), the Classical Age (the mid-seventeenth to the end of the eighteenth century) and the Modern Age (the end of the eighteenth century to roughly the middle of the twentieth century). Of each of the three epochs, Foucault is interested in what comprises 'the knowledge of living beings, the knowledge of the laws of language, and the knowledge of economic facts'. (In this Chapter we have only concern ourselves with the latter two epistemes). (Payne: 1997. 45)

it will be shown how ‘life’ became considered ‘potent’ and the implications of this in understanding the category Man). Importantly, before their Modern configuration, ‘...man did not exist’, “any more than the *potency* of life, the *fecundity* of labour, or the *historical* destiny of language”. (Foucault: 1992: 308)

In the ‘*Order of Things*’, Foucault explains that, as an effect of these new forms of knowledge, the category ‘Man’ made its appearance at the start of the nineteenth century. ‘Man’, as a Modern epistemological problem, was foreclosed to the Classical Age because their particular arrangements of knowledge did not allow any possibility of knowing Man. To understand what effected Man’s appearance it will firstly be demonstrated how, in Classical thought, it was impossible to conceive of Man, this is to understand what constituted knowledge of the Classical episteme. It will then be shown that Man, the ‘finite’ figure (discussed below), was only made possible by the dual ‘nature’ of the Modern thought.

What we need to consider is the means through which, in each episteme, it was possible to ‘know’ one’s existence. To ‘know’ is a question of how things are ordered, which is the same as saying that ‘to know’ is a problem of representation. That the Classical episteme could not conceive of Man and the Modern could, is due to a fundamental difference in their approach to language, that is, a difference in the human beings relationship to language. It will now be demonstrated that what typifies the Classical age is transparency, order and discourse, whereas, what typifies the Modern age is opacity, duality and the ‘comparative’. What will become apparent that it is the centrality of positivism to Classical thought that forecloses the possibility of conceiving of Man.

The Classical Age

It is critical to understand that what separates the Classical Age from the Modern Age, and what forecloses the possibility of knowing Man, is its emphasis on *rational*

and *empirical* forms of knowledge. Crucially, it is because it affords itself such ‘scientificity’, that the Classical Age could not conceive of Man. Scientific empiricism and Classical rationalism have a mutuality in that they both order knowledge. In the pursuit of positivity, scientificity and reason, one verifies the other with its logical and generalizing approach. Central to Classical methodology are universal mathesis, taxonomia and the table. With its interest in verbal order and the correct arrangement of things according to Identity, differences and their degrees, Classical thought demanded the correct ordering of things in the quest for perfect transparency.⁴ Because its concern was to produce verified knowledges, the object of the Classical Age, Foucault asserts, is *discourse* (the sequence of verbal signs). The project of discourse is to analyse and represent all knowledge properly, and as such, “(d)iscourse is the first representation of thought”. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 27) Discourse is at one and the same time representation and analytic, it fills the gap between words and things. The Classical episteme is epitomized by the union of representation and language and, at the same time that language represents, it is also an analytic. For the Classical episteme the sign is co-extensive with knowledge,

⁴ Classical empiricization comprised of three central concerns: the project of a general science of order: the arrangements of identities and differences into ordered tables and; the production of discourses (analysed knowledges). Classical knowledge demanded the correct organization of representations, and the tabulation of representations (things) in a series of identities and differences, for to establish differences is actually to establish identities. As a means of measuring and ordering, what the Classical Age employed to this end was mathesis, taxonomia and the table. Taxonomies were employed in the classification of representations, identities and differences (see chapter 2 of thesis for discussion of classification in natural history) and hence the importance given, in the Classical episteme, to the *table* as a means of arranging and analysing representations.

“The sciences always carry within themselves the project, however remote it may be, of an exhaustive ordering of the world; they are always directed, too, towards the discovery of simple elements and their progressive combination; and at their centre they form a table.....The centre of knowledge, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is the table”. (Foucault: 1992: 72-75)

But, more importantly, although mathematics and mechanism was employed and relied on by Classical empiricism, for rationalist knowledge, with its emphasis on taxonomia and the table, it is ‘universal mathesis’ that became the fundamental tool of order. Mathesis extended a general method of ordering beyond the mathematical or mechanistic. Rather than emphasizing the importance of these generalities to rationalist knowledge Foucault instead emphasises the centrality of *mathesis* to Classical thought. Mathesis can be defined as a universal science of measurement and order measuring identities and differences”. This is not to be understood as merely mathematics. Foucault explains that, indeed, there are many fields of analysis that are ‘quite untouched’ by concepts of mechanism and which defy mathematization and yet which are absolutely centred upon a conception of order. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 31)

representation and ordering. Signs were not the object of knowledge, but were knowledge. Representations are thus ‘properly analysed’. In discourse, “(t)he limit of knowledge would be the perfect transparency of representations to the signs by which they were ordered”. (Foucault: 1992: 76) To question the nature of the sign is to question the whole field of knowledge. “Language represents the instant totality of a thought in a segmented sequence”. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 27) Discourse of the Classical Age is co-extensive with the *taxinomia universalis*, that is, it is “defined in its most general arrangement in terms of the articulated systems of a *mathesis*, a *taxinomia*, and a *genetic analysis*.” (Foucault: 1992: 74) Discourse is possible because rationalism is founded on two ‘privileged forms of generalization’, firstly mechanism and secondly, the mathematization of empirical knowledge’ (the former Foucault limits mainly to medicine and physiology and the latter to physics and astronomy). (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 30) Sciences are examples of verified, well-made languages that lend themselves to being universalized and ordered correctly.

Classical thought then, had its own way of ordering the world, its own way of conceiving a mode of being of things. (In the same way, the Classical analysis of exchange and wealth is eclipsed by study of production and the analysis of general grammar gives way to the study of language). A coherence existed in the field of representation - ‘that indispensable link between representation and things’ - between the theories of language, the theories of representation, of wealth and value and of the natural orders. Crucially, with its emphasis on discourse and empiricism, Classical ‘rationalism’ could not apprehend Man, for unlike the type of knowledge produced in the Modern episteme, rationalism does not reflect upon itself. As a way of knowing, the world, rationalism ignores the conditions of its own possibility. What rationalism ignores and excludes are the relations of knowledge to the conditions of production of knowledge. Therefore it cannot call into question the possibility of its own being -it ignores the fact of language analysis as a mode of analysis. Discourse, as the first

representation of thought, is non-reflexive and cannot conceive of the dual dichotomy (as we shall see below) that constitutes Modern man.

Although it was able to allot the human being a privileged position in the order of the world, for instance in the Natural Sciences dealing with human existence in terms of species or genus (indeed Foucault points out that the controversy over race is evidence of that), and though economics could analyse man in terms of need and desire and, though there was a general grammar of man yet, for Foucault, there is a distinction to be made between the Classical conception of the human being, and the Modern conception of 'Man'. 'Man' in its Modern epistemological form could not exist. Classical language, the common discourse of representation and things, was not able to conceive of man and absolutely excluded 'anything' that could be considered a 'science of Man' (biology). (Foucault: 1992: 311-318) In Classical thought, "man, as a primary reality with his own destiny, as the difficult object and the sovereign subject of all possible knowledge, has no place." (Foucault: 1992: 310) Man was not yet able to condition the possibility of his own existence. For the Classical episteme it was impossible, according to Foucault, to conceive of Man because his existence was only made possible by the appearance of the Human Sciences. Crucially, in Classical thought, "*there was no epistemological consciousness of man as such*"; no "specific domain proper to man". (Foucault: 1992: 309) That is to say, human existence had not yet been called into question on its own account, 'since it contained the nexus of representation and being'. Man was not yet able to condition the possibility of his own existence.

Foucault (1992) claims that by the end of the eighteenth century, the Classical episteme, epitomized as it was by unity and empiricism and generalized representation, started to break up. In the transition from Classicism to modernity, between pre-history and what we consider contemporary, discourse became detached from representation. Words 'ceased to intersect with representations' and to act as a

transparent illuminative for the knowledge of things. In this transition from the Classical episteme to the Modern, this mode of gaining knowledge of the world became utterly transformed. The relationship between language and representation changes fundamentally. With the emergence of the Modern episteme, language came to be viewed quite differently when, rather than remaining an analytic it becomes itself subject to analysis. It is significant that in the Classical Age, the preoccupation with discourse was at the expense of language analysis. With the nineteenth century, Modern linguistics (philology) emerges as a field of study. Language becomes turned upon itself, taking on its own unique form with its own specific laws. In the Modern episteme, critical thought now must ask questions of representation independently of it; knowledge ceases to be representation, instead knowledge is set outside representation. With the dissolution of discourse, the question of language became, what is the being of language itself? With the emergence of Modernity then there is a discontinuity in 'the mode of knowing' itself. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 40) Importantly, as discourse breaks-up, the common scheme of representation linking general taxonomies according to their identities and differences along a plane of general representation dissolves, and areas of knowledge come to be dealt with as separate entities. Knowing is transformed as are the objects of knowledge and the *relations* between forms of knowledge'. (1984: 46) This new configuration gradually leads to 'a new mode of production of knowledge', incompatible with Classical thinking and irreducible to the taxonomies of the Classical episteme. (1984: 41)

Although biology, economics and philology - the new human sciences - withdraw from the arena of Classical representation, the problem of representation does not disappear (Foucault: 1992: 313). For although the Classical understanding of language and knowledge is quite different from the Modern episteme, it has implications for it. Though we may have the impression of an uninterrupted development from the Classical Age to the Modern, from one system of order to another, actually what Foucault perceives is a radical disjuncture between the two

epistememes.⁵ The Modern Age, with its emphasis on the comparative, though becoming increasingly reflexive and profound, is unable to shrug off completely rationalism and empiricism. The result being that these translate directly to the mechanistic methodologies of the Physical and Chemical sciences, but, more critically, in the Human Sciences, they remain as a residue with a startling result.

Out of this residue that the Classical age leaves on the Modern age arises the problem of epistemology in which knowledge comes to question the condition of its own possibility. Modern epistemology implies and infers a dialectical problem, for it encompasses both positivism and relativism, both empirical and comparative approaches to problems and solutions. Clearly the dilemma of Modern knowledge is that whilst it strives to find empirical solutions to problems posed, yet it is aware that any solution produced is not static. Thus Modern knowledge is riddled with contradiction, and is dialectical. ~~Therefore~~, in the transition to the Modern Age; in this threshold where discourse disappears and where language appears there arises a conflict between the positive and the transcendental. Classical empiricism, in this way becomes caught up in an eternal tension the effect of which is the constitution of an entity that Foucault names 'Man', a category that in turn conditions the existence of that tension. As a result, as will be demonstrated below, Modern epistemology is caught up in an endless cycle of posing questions of questions (the endless cycle of the Same).

“(A)s things become increasingly reflexive, seeking the principle of their intelligibility only in their development, and abandoning the space of representation, man enters in his turn, and for the first time, the field of Western knowledge”.

⁵ For instance, the natural history of the Classical Age, the taxonomic classifications of Tournefort, Linnaeus and Buffon cannot be related in any way to present day biology with its emphasis on the organism, or to Cuvier's comparative anatomy, nor to Darwin's evolutionary theory. (See Chapter 2 for in depth discussion)

(Foucault: 1992: xxiii) The problem of representation, freed from the general domain of representation of the Classical episteme, returns in Modern thought in the figure of Man, emerging at the point of ‘intersection’ between the new forms of knowledge. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 60) With the transformation into the Modern Age, ‘Man’ appears at the intersection between the newly emerged social or human sciences; biology, economics and philology; life, labour and language.’ Man became the ‘individual who lived, spoke and worked’ in accordance with those laws. (Foucault: 1992: 310) ‘*Man*’, does not refer to a given object and should not be understood in the context of philosophical anthropology. When the knowledges of life, labour and language no longer coincide in the same ‘generalized field’ of representation and are no longer amenable to a single elaboration through the category of representation (through taxonomic classification), their concepts become internal to their distinct domains. That is to say, representation becomes discontinuous, each mode subject to its own history, causality and origins’. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 48-49) What becomes important now is not an interior law of things that appear manifest in representation through their ordering on the table according to identities and differences. The emphasis is transferred to the *external relation* that things establish with the human being. Knowledge becomes relational and the figure of man appears in the space between these forms. “‘Man’ is a term which stands for a complex conceptual figure through which certain problems and types of argument are deployed as human or social sciences. Man is a space of knowledge, a set of relations between knowledges”. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 49) In this process positivist empirical knowledge leaves the field of representation. What takes the place of this in the Modern Age is ‘a profound historicity’ and reflexivity. (Foucault: 1992 xxii-xxiii) To think Modern Man requires a duplicated approach to representation. Representation traverses Man, he is both subject of it and to it. Through this dual approach there develops a profound reflexivity through which Man is produced as a false problem, the root of which is the tension between empirical and transcendental forms of knowledge which lay at the core of the Human

Sciences. This produces a fundamental instability in the domain of Modern knowledge.

In the Modern Age, everywhere ‘it is the fold (the forces of finitude) which dominates’. The forces within man enter into a relationship with the forces from the outside - the triple root of finitude. (Deleuze: 1988a: 126) What is effected in the process of this folding-in is a new way of ordering knowledge. At the close of the Classical age, empiricism did not exit the arena altogether, but transmuted into its Modern form, the ‘comparative’: ‘comparative linguistics’, ‘comparative economics’ and ‘comparative anatomy’. “Everywhere comparisons replace the general fact that was so dear to the seventeenth century: comparative anatomy, comparative philology, comparative economy. Everywhere it is the Fold which dominates now...”(1988a: 128) As language folded-in on itself becoming increasingly self-reflexive and ‘relational’, language now asked questions of language itself; questions were posed of questions, with the effect that empirical positivity could no longer be relied on to attest to certainty. From the nineteenth century on, empirical findings were interrogated as to the conditions and possibility of their claims. “The forces within man fall or fold back on this new dimension of in-depth finitude, which then becomes the finitude of man himself”. (Deleuze: 1988a: 128)

The Instability of Modern Thought

There was now a fundamental tension at the core of the Human Sciences; between the residue of Classical empiricism and rationalism and the new comparative forms of knowledge; between the positive and the transcendental. Whereas Classical thought was typified by clear, transparent ordering and the stability of positivism and rationality, Modern thought becomes typified by its inherent instability. As a result of its new relational status, knowledge can no longer be deemed to have any stable foundation but is, instead, relational. This dual problem of Man’s condition is the reason why Foucault states that the defining character of the Human Sciences is its

instability. This arises because, though the concern of the Social Sciences is to attempt a general knowledge of ‘Man’, yet it is prevented in succeeding in its task as ‘Man’s’ existence ever eludes him. This paradox is such that it dictates that theoretical ‘assertions’ requires empirical verification. That is, empirical questions as to the contents of knowledge are always linked to transcendental questions of the conditions of that knowledge (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 61). “Two different lines of investigation immediately suggest themselves in establishing how a knowledge of Man’s knowledge will at the same time reveal the conditions of Man”. (1984: 51) These two lines can be explained as two levels of representation; ‘representation-as-effect’ and ‘representation-as-knowledge’. (1984: 60-61) Foucault calls these respectively the *nature* and the *history* of human knowledge (Foucault: 1992: 319).

Foucault (1992) illustrates this dichotomy: In the first, of ‘effect’, or of ‘nature’, Man’s knowledge is located as having its conditions in the physical body, as regards their physiological and neurological conditions of existence. The second, that of history, or of ‘knowledge’ refers to the analysis of knowledge and is “approached from the recognition that human knowledge has a multiplicity of conditions which can be classified as social or economic, and that content of such knowledge will vary with such conditions. (Foucault: 1992: 319 and Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 51-52). Because the Human Sciences are “(a)t one and the same time a domain of representation of effects and of representation as knowledge”; this results in its own fundamental and permanent instability. (1984: 62)

This effects/knowledge system, results in a problem with representation. Rather than being able to simply deal empirically with a problem, representation becomes fragmented and consigned to matters of epistemology, theories of causation, and to concepts of mechanism. The effects/knowledge system demands approaches which are psychical or social rather than a simply discursively analytic. That is because any

interpretation of the problem of representation must necessarily deal with the problem of unconscious processes (as in accounts of ideology, linguistics, anthropology) which elude representation (consciousness) and yet, which operate on, and determine, 'Man' (we shall return to the problem of the 'unconscious' presently). The result is that any general or empirical approach utilized stumbles eventually on the issue of the transcendental, forcing oscillation between the poles of positivism and the dialectic (1984: 52). And, whilst these appear to be different approaches and appear self-sufficient, neither can be, for once epistemological questions are asked then necessarily epistemological vindication is demanded. Human knowledge always requires this dual approach (Foucault: 1992: 318). So, although it is often held that these two epistemological positions inhabit opposite poles and that these seemingly irreconcilable doctrines can only be caught up in an open-ended, perpetual struggle, actually they are mutually reliant. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 52)⁶

So, in the transition to the Modern episteme, knowledge is recast and thrown into a 'permanently unstable space', constituted by an unsolvable tension which produces conflicting knowledges, which is epitomized by the positivist and transcendental, or the empirical and the dialectical. (1984: 42-43) Thus, for Foucault (1992), Man inhabits a space of unresolvable tension.

Furthermore the approaches to the determination of man are an oscillation between positivism and relativism, or between reductionism and the dialectic, between the "poles of positive questions about the determination of Man and knowledge of those determinations." (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: p.51) Modern epistemology is the consequence of a disjuncture which becomes the modern problematic: questions and answers become caught up in an eternal double bind: questions become posed of questions themselves - or in other words the question is the answer. There arises out

⁶ (see also Foucault: 1992: 319-32)

of disjuncture a situation where empirical questions beg transcendental solutions. Man is the effect of this tension in the Human Sciences between the positive and the dialectic, and because of this, Foucault calls the figure of Man an *'empirico-transcendental doublet'* (1984: 52).

Man: The Badly Stated Problem

This tension, the problem for the Human Sciences of analysing representations, is manifest in the posing and solving of problems. Man then, because of his dialectical condition, is the positing of a false problem which demands, in turn, a false solution. When posing the problem of Man we can see that we are caught up in an unresolvable tension because any problem demands either empirical or transcendental solutions depending from which pole it is posed. This shall be demonstrated more sustainedly in Chapter Two when the episteme of the biological sciences is investigated in addressing the problem of 'life'. In answer then to the question, what, for Foucault, is Man? Man is an empirical problem which must be solved through transcendental solutions (which then demand empirical questions which demand transcendental solutions). As such, Man is an epistemological problem that is irresolvable and therefore is a false problem. In Chapter Four it will be demonstrated how, in stating a problem properly, it solves itself. Man (it will become clear in Chapter Four) is a non-existent question which has no real solution. Because of his empirical-transcendental status, the Man-form comes to be that which repeatedly returns as the Same. (In this way true difference is sacrificed to a negative form of difference premised on the 'Same' - we shall return to this presently). It will now be shown how the issue of time is fundamental in understanding how it is that Man's condition is that which 'returns as the Same'.

Time as a Badly Stated Problem

In the transmutation from the Classical to the Modern epistemes which 'effected', by default, the formation of the entity Man, time too became subjected to an

empirico-transcendental fate, and became itself a false problem. Indeed, for the 'Man form' to exist, it was a condition that time be reconceived. Whereas, for the Classical age, time had been conceived to be spread out on an infinite continuum of 'general' representation founded on identity and degrees of difference, for the Modern age, time became conceived as finite and discontinuous. We shall now discuss the implications of this transformation, and the effect this had on the way Modern knowledge became ordered.

The Classical Age, with its emphasis on naming all things on an infinite continuum, eradicated the concept of time. Time is what is extracted in order that what is made possible is a process of ordering, measuring and naming by extension the infinitely small to the infinitely grand. Only once objects underwent a process of meticulous examination in which they were purified and neutralized, in which things became emptied of *time*: of history, of legend or fable, could time become separated from living beings, from nature (Foucault: 1992: 131). Only when time had been eradicated was it possible to conceive of a world of infinite representation for this required a generalized principle of continuity of time and space. It shall be demonstrated in Chapter Two how Classical 'evolutionism' necessitated the erasure of time (this eradication of time is perhaps ironic given its emphasis on the 'great chain of Being' (see Chapter Four). Whether conceived as a matter of progressive hierarchization in which all beings form an uninterrupted expanse, or as "the infiniteness of the progress of beings towards perfection to their infinite multiplicity" effected by a constant and total force exerted by an already established hierarchy' (as plan or purpose), in Classical evolutionism beings are subjected to an exterior time. Far from having interiority, time is conceived externally, imposing change from the outside 'impending and foreseen'.(Foucault: 1992: 152) Time then, for the Classical age, rather than driving evolution, for the 'principle of taxinomia', is merely one factor. And in order for Modern evolution to be conceived, time had to be released

from the realm of infinity and to become conceived of as a finite phenomena. For time to be internalized required the arrival of Man.

As language is considered to be a linear sequence, and with its emphasis on universal mathesis, the Classical age orders 'thought' in terms of time and space, and all representations share the same conceptual frame; the infinitely small to the infinitely large (this is discussed at length in Chapter Two in relation to the taxonomies employed in the work of Natural Historians of the 17th/18th centuries). To order merely required classification, through the domain of taxonomy, by presenting things in a series of succession from the infinitely small to the infinitely grand. All things were measurable according to their differences and degrees.

“As long as these empirical contents were situated within the space of representation, a metaphysics of the infinite was not only possible but necessary.....” (Foucault: 1992: 317) Within infinite Classical space, the manifest human was finite yet existed in the idea of infinity. The finitude of the human condition - the negative form which had a body, language, needs and a limited knowledge of them was positively determined on the basis of the infinite. Indeed, “it was necessary, in fact, that they should be the manifest forms of the human finitude, and yet that they should be able to have their locus and their truth within representation; the idea of infinity, and the idea of its determination in finitude, made one another possible”. (Foucault: 1992: 317)

In conceiving of the world as an infinite procession of all things, the Classical world according to Deleuze-Foucault, is a world 'of infinite representation'. Classical thought, Deleuze asserts, “continually loses itself in infinity”; “in different orders of infinity: the infinity of grandeur and the infinity of smallness in Pascal; the infinite in itself, the infinite in its cause and the infinite between limits in Spinoza; all the infinities in Leibniz, and so on.” (Deleuze: 1988a: 125) Classical thought, then

attempts to establish order or limitation on all those infinities. Limitation (as limitation of understanding of that which waits to be known) presses down on the forces of infinity which could potentially be raised to the 'infinitely perfect'. Human understanding is thought merely a limitation placed on an infinite potential to conceive.

With the mutation from the Classical to the Modern Age, there is a fundamental disjuncture in the ordering of knowledge and mode of being of things, and also a shift from the idea of infinite time to the understanding of time as finite. Whereas the Classical Age conceived of time as continuous and external, the Modern Age conceives of it as discontinuous and internalized. Further, as time becomes to be conceived as finite, so too does history become fundamental in conceiving of Man's existence. That is to say, Modern time requires historicity.

Finitude

It will be elucidated how, for Foucault (1992), Man has become a historical entity. This requires showing that, in Man, time becomes internalized. How does this happen and what are the implications of this for the Man? This is to discover that time begins when empiricity becomes traversed by history.

For the Classical age, within the field of generalized representation, there is no distinction to be made between the human and other living things. The human is but a point in the ceaseless infinite fabric in which all things shared the same one history and purpose. In a sense the Classical Age is ahistorical, for historical development is not thinkable until the nineteenth century when the unity of time becomes fragmented. Time is merely inscribed as another factor for consideration a part of a 'generalized classification'. In ripping asunder the human from this 'generalized schema' where time, (history) has simply been added to afford continuity, the categories of Man and History became mutually dependent. Only now is it possible

for the figure of Man to appear, that entity that has the power at once to represent himself, but at the same time be the limit of that knowledge. For Man, as we shall see, is both ‘the object and condition’ of knowledge. ‘Man’, is the field of representation of those specific determinations yet, at the same time, he is that entity determining the forms and possibility of knowledge of such representations. Time as a finite concept had to await the arrival of the figure of ‘Man’, the organic being at the centre of life.

From the nineteenth century, when the chronological continuity of natural science is broken up, “the order of time is beginning”. (Foucault: 1992: 293) For time is the key to evolution. With the arrival of ‘Man’, there is no longer a general concept of time or of history, but there are now biology, economics and philology, each with their own disengaged times, with their own events particular to them. Man is caught up, subjected to the times of evolution, the times of production and language. Time is no longer conceived of as an infinite continuum. Instead it becomes ‘a long period’. (Deleuze: 1988a: 108-119) Indeed, it becomes not one, but limitless, long periods. Therefore, time arrives with the discontinuity of things. In fact what actually transpires is not time, but times. What for the Classical Age had been one vast narrative of man and nature, by the nineteenth century breaks down into ‘real’ histories when, “(m)an was actually dispossessed of any uniform history as such”. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 66). Consequently, time can no longer to be understood as homogenous but as heterogeneous. Because it is heterogeneous, man becomes subjected to its histories and yet, at the same time, it is through the figure of man, that histories are synthesized. Man, as it were, “lends a unity to the modalities of living, labouring and speaking”. (1984: 67) Within Man and through Man are stretched the different modalities and history scattered in different series of time. Man’s history lay in his biological, economic and linguistic evolution. But man is both subject of and subjected to these histories. Man is the medium through which the modalities of living, labouring and speaking are unified. Representation ‘traverses’ Man but, and

importantly, at the same time it escapes his consciousness (the profound significance of this is discussed in more detail below). Man becomes bound up in a finitude which cannot contemplate itself, for at the same time that life, labour and language attempt to provide positive knowledges of Man, yet they 'ceaselessly insist on the historical mutability of things' (1984: 68). To give Man 'meaning' one must utilize history yet history is unified through Man. Yet the closer they pull together, the more they diffuse one another. Once more the problem of Man produces, as a solution, an unresolvable tension which begs a dual approach. Here again, where the positive crosses the transcendental, we encounter Man as an empirical-transcendental tension. Within the new dimension of the self-reflexive, knowledge becomes imbued with the 'relational': in biology, comparative anatomy; in language, comparative philology' and in labour, comparative economics.

From the nineteenth century, then, with the emergence of the new field of comparative knowledge, living things increasingly become 'folded' in on themselves. As time becomes folded in, the histories of life, labour and language become internalized in Man and Man, as we shall see, becomes conceived as a finite being. Time then becomes subjected to an empirico-transcendental status and as such becomes a badly stated problem. In the same way Man's histories become false problems. (This shall be elaborated further in Chapter two in a discussion of Man's biological 'history'. It will become apparent in the second part of this thesis that, for the 'Man-form' to be 'overcome', in order to return true difference, the problem of Man needs to be re-stated. In order to do this, Man must be freed from the constraints of both the idea of infinite and finite times

The Analytic of Finitude

'Man', therefore, is designated in the space hollowed out by living things, objects of exchange and words. Yet this position is ambiguous: double edged. On the one hand, Man is ruled by the laws by life, labour and language: in the sense that it is

possible only to discover Man through his organism, his words, the objects he makes - as if it were they alone that contained the truth of him in the first instance: for it is through these that Man finds his 'concrete existence. 'Man' is determined by these knowledges. They operate on him. 'Man' is the 'general medium', a register through which those 'specific determinations' are represented. And as soon as he thinks, he merely reveals himself 'to his own eyes' as a being who is already destined to be the living organism, the instrument of production, the vehicle for words, and all these which existed before him. The things that his knowledge unveils to him as if exterior to himself, are actually older than his own birth, they are expectant of him, 'overhang him' with their concreteness. Knowledge 'traverses him', "as though he were merely an object of nature, a face doomed to be erased in the course of history". (Foucault: 1992: 313) In this sense Man is limited by the laws through which he is produced. Foucault (1992) names this the '*finitude of Man*'. His finitude was forewarned - and 'menacingly so' - in the positivity of knowledge but affirmed by the 'folding in' of time. Man appears and is as finite as 'the anatomy of the brain, the mechanics of production, or the system of the Indo-European conjugation'.(Foucault: 1992: 313)

However, conversely, "Man is the measure as well as the locus of his own finitude". That is to say, "the finite character of Man as given by external determinations, and the problem of characterising the knowledge of that finitude". (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 50)

Man: The Eternal Return of the Same

It is clear how Foucault (1992) comes to argue that Man returns as the Same, *for* he is both produced, and at the same time limited, by his own finite thought. Man is enfolded in finitude which endlessly answers itself. How is it though that this is an *eternal* return? How is it that this Same comes to be *repeated* endlessly? What creates this relentless cycle? Man's finitude, it will become apparent below, is not at all finite, but is, in fact, ceaselessly opened. It cannot be argued therefore.

that the nature of Man's finitude is at all final. Actually, Man's finitude is endless in that it can be constantly reopened, measured and changed (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 50). This is because, in their Modern form, the problems posed of life, labour and language are caught up in the irresolvable tension of the dialectic of an empirico-transcendental nature. As a result, they find solutions which are open-ended: the evolution of the species is yet incomplete, man may one day be released from the alienation of his toil due to developing forms of production and labour and, man may yet discover a symbolically pure language. This open-ended cycle is due also to another factor which emerges alongside the category Man.

The Unthought

Foucault (1992) refers to the above as the '*unthought*'. This is an important dimension to consider when thinking through the problem of Man's relationship to the 'outside'. In the Modern age, Man's unlimited finitude is effected by his very particular place in relation to thought. The unthought should not be confused with the unconscious for it encompasses a far broader terrain than the human psyche. The unconscious is but one facet of the unthought.

Throughout '*The Order of Things*', Foucault questions the status of rational thought, he asks, of each episteme, 'what it is possible *to think*?' With the transition from the Classical to the Modern episteme, there is a shift from the centrality of the rational individual to the idea of the finite subject. In The Classical age, the 'therefore' at the centre of 'I think', 'I am'; that certainty contained in the conjugation of thinking and being of the seventeenth century, was still the essence of language. Brought together in this are representation and being and, in the movement of the one to the other, accomplished through discourse, was the assuredness that what one represents to oneself is what one is. The status of 'I am' had yet to be challenged. "... (A)s long as classical discourse lasted, no interrogation as to the mode of being implied by the *cogito* could be articulated". (Foucault: 1992: 312) The era of the great empiricities,

could not conceive of the unthought. However, with the Modern Age, when time became folded in and histories became internalized, there emerged at the same time a new dimension, integral to the concept of Man; that of the unconscious. Whereas, conscious thought (*cogito*) in Classical rationalism, was privileged over other thought - illusion and dream served as a marker against them - in Modern thought, it comes to be considered quite differently. Thought becomes to be conceived as that which 'traverses the subject' as opposed to a previous, more extended, idea of reason. At the same time thought is no longer required to be conscious. Thought no longer inhabits simply the mode of representations but also 'the mode of experience'. "The old privilege awarded to the sovereign self-reflecting cogito within the Classical episteme vanishes with the emergence of Man". (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 55) For Foucault, Man's relation to the unthought is paradoxical, how can that thing which has a consciousness, and a privileged place as regards it, have so integral a relation to the unconscious; "What is man's being, and how can it be that that being, which could so easily be characterized by the fact that 'it has thoughts' and is possibly alone in having them, has an ineradicable and fundamental relation to the unthought". (Foucault: 1992: 325) Because Man appears in the space opened up in knowledge out of which the unconscious too seeps, in Modern thought, the 'I am' of its couple 'I think' can no longer be a guarantee of anything; of the truth in knowledge or of existence. 'Man', the subject of subjectivation is now forever alienated in an empirico-transcendental inside of thought, or as Foucault has termed it, 'the Other'. With the emergence of the unconscious as the condition opened up in knowledge by the appearance of the category Man, it is no longer a matter of investigating thought but instead of investigating what in 'thought' escapes thought, that is, thought is directed at the unthought. For Foucault, the particular problem of the unconscious is posed in terms of life, labour and language. "Like a watermark running through all these solid, positive, and full forms, we perceive the finitude and limits they impose. we sense, as though on their blank reverse sides, all that they make impossible" (Foucault: 1992: 314)

The study of the unconscious are evidenced in the methodologies of the Human Sciences; in anthropology, psychology and sociology. In these representation encompasses 'Man', 'representing 'him', but at the same time it eludes his consciousness'. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 69) So when Man appears, so does the unconscious or as Foucault terms it, the unthought. The use of the term 'unthought', in preference to the unconscious, is deliberate on the part of Foucault, for it implies not only those unconscious processes that are the study of the Human Sciences, but it further infers all other unthought processes 'outside' the jurisdiction of these.

The Inside and Outside of Thought

Indeed, it is within this context, Deleuze contests, that Foucault, in '*The Order of Things*', develops this theme of the *outside* (this theme is taken up by Deleuze in his appendix in '*Foucault*'). Construing man's finitude in terms of foldings, he aligns the Classical and the Modern ages, respectively, with the inside and outside of thought. The outside of thought is not merely the unconscious. The outside is farther away than any external (infinite) world, and nearer than any internal (finite) world. "The Classical age had already stated that there was an inside of thought, the unthought, when it invoked the infinite, the different orders of infinity", 'the forces within man enter into a relation with those forces that raise things to infinity'. From the nineteenth century on, however, it is more the dimensions of finitude which fold the outside and constitute a 'depth', a 'density withdrawn into itself', an inside to life, labour and language, in which man is embedded, if only to sleep, but conversely which is also itself embedded in man 'as a living being, a working individual or the speaking subject'. Importantly, for Foucault, the unthought lies at the very heart of thought, it is not external to it, "every inside-space is topologically in contact with the outside-space" (Deleuze: 1988a: 97). "Thinking always comes from the outside". In the transition from the Classical to the Modern age, Man entered into a new relation with forces from the outside. (1988a: 97) Hence, in and through the vehicle 'Man', we encounter a "tension with no end". (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 51) So, Man's

finitude then, is unable to contemplate itself for Man's existence is always a question which remains open-ended. Instability is again a feature of the epistemology of the Human Sciences; Man's finitude once uncovered proves not to be a stable one. "Heralded in positivity, man's finitude is outlined in the paradoxical form of the endless; rather than the rigour of a limitation, it indicates the monotony of a journey which, though it probably has no end, is nevertheless perhaps not without hope" (Foucault: 1992: 314). *This does, however,* seem a hopeless 'hope' that is manifest in a finitude that promises an infinity that it at the same time refuses. In the threshold between the Classical Age and the Modern Age, Man has become his own 'enslaved sovereign.' (Foucault: 1992: 312)

(W)hen "empirical contents were detached from representation and contained the principle of their existence within themselves, then the metaphysics of infinity became useless: from that point on finitude never ceases to refer back to itself". (1992: 317)

From within the ('quasi'-)positivities life, labour, language, man learns that his finitude is not a determination imposed from the outside but of his own existence. In this constant process of the folding in of finitude (replis), Man discovers that he is 'the same and yet other'. (Deleuze: 1988a: 97) Hence we can now understand how Man is that which eternally returns as the Same. But, we can go further still. Because Man 'is the same yet other', we now understand why, any difference which is premised on the Same, merely perpetuates the eternal return of the Identical. And further still. Because, paradoxically, finitude places a limit on thought which is yet open-ended, and because the unconscious ever eludes Man's consciousness, we can see why, for Foucault, the perpetual cycle in which Man returns as the Same is effectively the same thing as the 'death of Man'. In the repetition of the positive within the fundamental - the analytic of finitude central to Modern thought - we witness the "succession of the transcendental repeat the empirical, the cognito repeat the unthought, the return of the origin repeat its retreat". (Foucault: 1992: 316)

Modern reflexivity by-passes Classical representation and its order of the table (the ordering of difference) “and moves towards a certain thought of the Same - in which Difference is the same thing as Identity.” (1992: 315) Man dies at each moment only to be reborn again in the next in the figure of the Same. ‘Man’s ‘death-wish’ is an eternal tension, that of the eternal return⁷ of the Same, and in returning the Same or the Identical, man’s finitude becomes the condition of his birth;^{this} otherwise conceived is a death in life which constitutes the ‘Death of Man’.

This Chapter sought to demonstrate that, for Foucault, the category Man repeatedly returned as the Same. It was shown that the category ‘Man’ emerged as a result of a very specific arrangement of knowledge in the Modern episteme. The forces which had entered into a relationship with Man and had raised things to infinity in the Classical episteme now mutated, forcing the Man-form to enter a new relationship with the forces from the outside - the forces of finitude. Thus the space of Western knowledge was transformed with the dislodgement of the great empiricities of the Classical episteme with its onus on taxinomia and universal mathesis. These were replaced by a modern manner of knowing the empiricities, or new ‘quasi-transcendentals’, defined by Deleuze as the ‘triple root of finitude’; the forces of life, labour and language. ‘Man’ became rendered finite due to his transcendental-empirical existence in which his destiny was to be perpetually returned as the Same. The quantitative positivites so crucial in the Classical ordering of nature were replaced by the new qualitative concepts of measurement. Labour, the organic structure and grammatical rules could no longer be analysed as representations in tabulated space. Instead, what takes precedence over taxinomic ordering is *comparative* knowledge which, because of its dialectical nature, produces a fundamental instability in the ‘order of things’ through which Man both limits and is limited by his own finitude. Man, it was argued, is the posing of a false problem.

⁷ This Nietzschean term discussed more fully in Chapter Three.

Let us return again the problems we raised at the start of this Chapter. This Chapter has raised the fundamental question, what, for Foucault, is Man? It has been demonstrated that Man is a recent invention, the effect of a clash of two fundamentally different formations of knowledge which effected an empirical-transcendental tension which resides at the core of the Modern Human Sciences. The question was raised as to how Foucault conceives of Man as being that which repeatedly returns as the Same. What was found was that the figure of Man was the effect of a tension produced by the comparative nature of Modern knowledge. With the emergence of the Modern age, the cogito would endlessly chase the unthought, the origin beat its retreat, the transcendental ceaselessly pursue the empirical and, man would perpetually return as the Same.

Finally, this Chapter tentatively explored the meaning of Foucault's (1992) assertion that Man might soon disappear. It was shown that, according to Foucault, if those arrangements of knowledge particular to the Modern age, biology, philology and economics, were to disappear as they appeared, then what had returned in the figure of the Same and the Identical, Man, would be eroded. Amongst all the episodes of the 'profound history of the Same', concludes Foucault in *The Order of Things*, amid all the mutations that have played on the knowledge of words, characters, identities, equivalences and differences - only one particular formation, which began one and a half centuries ago, made it possible for the form of man to appear. Man is nearing his end, for as those fundamental arrangement disappear as they appeared, perhaps we ought to give up thinking of man, but what might follow man. Foucault, however, rather than mourning the death of man, takes comfort from the source of profound relief in thinking that man, but two centuries old, "a new wrinkle in our knowledge", "a rift in the order of things", will disappear again as soon as a new formation of knowledge is discovered. (Foucault: 1992 : xxiii)

To return to the question that still needs to be addressed, what might come after Man? When this question is considered in the context of Man's destiny to return as the Same, then as a false problem it finds for it the solution it deserves. It can be answered thus: What comes after man is the Same and so it will be, ad-infinitum.

The task of this thesis, however, is the pursuit of true difference, which it was indicated in the introduction, is the pursuit of a life, vital in nature. We shall discover that this involves an engagement which an altogether different kind of knowledge than the dialectical kind. To understand what kind of knowledge this is we need firstly to make two more moves towards addressing the main proposal of this thesis. The first of these moves, which constitutes move two of the main thesis, is to address the question, what, for Foucault, is life? It will be argued that life, like Man, in being subjugated to the status of the empirio-transcendental, is a false problem. When it has been demonstrated that life, like Man, is the result of a badly stated problem, the task then will be to discover a means to pose the problems of man and life correctly. When this has been achieved, the question of what might follow Man may find a different answer.

Chapter Two

The Life Fold: Organic Life
The evolution of evolution-
from Natural to life Sciences

The Life Fold: Organic Life

The evolution of evolution: from 'natural' to 'life' sciences

What is Life?

It is necessary to explain the importance of this question for the purposes of this thesis. Life, like Man, is the stating of a false problem which, in turn, demands false solutions. Indeed, as this chapter will demonstrate, life is a problem which has no solution, in that any attempt to answer the question of life inevitably falls back into the empirico-transcendental bind. In the case of the particular field of knowledge that this chapter is concerned, biological science, it shall be shown that, when attempting to explain life, scientists resort to either mechanistic and vitalistic explanations of life, and indeed more often cross between the two whenever the search for a solution reaches the impasse of the imponderable.

All this would be adequate so long as we except that life, because it is posed as a false problem, begs ^{the} false solutions it deserves, and ^{that} the solutions that are produced to explain it are as true as they need be. But our task in this thesis is to move beyond the false problems of man life and death, and to discover a vital life through which true difference can be known. If it can be demonstrated that life is a false problem created by dialectical thinking we can then dismiss it as that which returns only the Same. If the 'death' of Man is so construed that it returns, perpetually, the Same, then how is it possible to think a 'death' of Man which does not repeat this cycle? Here, in a strange paradox, we find that in attempting to find a solution to the problem of Man's 'death', we must first pose the question of 'life'? In returning to the question of Man's death at the end of this Chapter, it will become clearer that to repose the question of Man's death beyond the dialectic, it is actually necessary to reconceive of life. What this requires is the creation of new concepts through which to conceive of what might come after Man. For the purposes of this thesis, we will then find it possible to pose the question of life correctly. Once reconceived, life and its solutions

can be thought beyond the framework of Modern knowledge through which they came to exist. We need to, therefore, unravel the false problem of life for, as it will become clear, it is in overcoming this finite conception of life, that man can free himself of his eternal condition to return as the Same. It will then become possible to think the return of true difference. The second move of this thesis is to argue that life, as it has come to be configured through Modern knowledge, is the stating of a false problem. In posing the question of life, and ergo the question of death (which we shall return to in Chapter Three) we are one step closer to thinking true difference and demonstrating the main theme of this thesis, that: Man differs in degree from himself and becoming-woman differs in kind in-itself.

To ask the question, ‘what is life’?, in the context of Foucault’s (1992) archaeology of the Human Sciences, is to ask, ‘how, through the organizing category of Modern biological science, did the category ‘life’ come to be construed’? To answer this is to understand how the fold (the forces of finitude) becomes the fundamental principle of the newly formed biological sciences. (Deleuze: 1988a: 128) This returns us to the question of knowledge. This Chapter will demonstrate, through a discussion of the emergence of the Biological Sciences, how ‘life’ became caught up in an empirico-transcendental struggle that produced, not life, but ‘death’. This is ironic given that the whole onus of the Modern Age was on explaining life as ‘vital’ and ‘potent’. However, *this is*, as was demonstrated in Chapter One, because there remains a residue of Classical empiricism working alongside the Modern comparative methodologies which thus produces an irresolvable dialectical problem. “Ideas do not die”. Nor do they survive simply as archaisms. At a given moment they may reach a scientific stage, and then lose that status or emigrate to other sciences. “Ideas are always reusable”. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 235) Such is true in the case of classical taxonomia. The twofold idea of ‘series-structure’ has become bound up in the Modern dialectic with the result that the objective facets of classification are drawn upon to explain and to justify the subjective relations between things. (1992:

235) Classical empiricism constantly troubles Modern vitalism, with the result that empirical problems demand transcendental solutions. The result is a perpetual struggle between the two approaches. This shall be illustrated at the end of the chapter in a discussion of modern genetic engineering. Foucault is not concerned, however, with the “series of controversies which pits vitalism against mechanism, science against theology”. Indeed, for Foucault, it is an error on the part of historians of science to attempt to reconstruct a ‘past of pre-eighteenth century biological science’ which simply opposes vitalism to mechanism and then concludes vitalism a winner.⁸ He is concerned with what ‘makes these controversies possible’. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 34) It is not a matter of revealing whether either of these methodologies are more accurate, rather, Foucault is concerned to show what conditions made ^{these} possible. What, for instance, in the case of ‘life’ made it possible to think vitalistically or mechanistically, and how it was that vitalism become predominant mode of explanation of living beings in the nineteenth century as opposed to mechanism. Foucault insists, these approaches, though seemingly opposed, are entirely dependent on one another and restrictive of each other. (Foucault: 1992)

What will become apparent is that after, the nineteenth century, the categories of the organism, evolution, the animate and the inanimate appear when vitalism takes precedence over mechanism. That is not to say that the Modern Age entirely abandoned mechanistic interpretations. In the transition from the Classical to the Modern Ages, the legacy of empiricism and rationalism were not entirely shaken off,

⁸ Though mechanism was the dominant methodological order of the day, it did not have the final say. Indeed by the eighteenth century various forms of vitalism were fashionable as a way of approaching and understanding living beings (in this Foucault cites Barthez, Blumenbach, Diderot and Bichat). Subjected to these differing theoretical approaches the problems posed of living beings however remained the same though they produced different solutions (Linnaeus, for instance, was intent on the painstaking taxonomization of living things whilst Buffon contended that nature was too complex - a generative process too rich and varied - to be in any way subjected to rigid taxonomies). And although, argues Foucault, Buffon was a ‘constant adversary’ of Linnaeus there is structure in his work too, the same grid, sharing the same field of visibility (see discussion below). For common to both, Linnaeus’s mechanism and Buffon’s vitalism (See, Foucault 1992: P.126-127) was the imperative to classify living things by ordering them by means of taxonomia and mathesis, tabulating in terms of similarities, differences and there degrees (Foucault: 1992: 130).

but remained in residue producing the false dichotomy necessary to produce the Modern category of life. Indeed, the category life, as we know it today, could not have appeared were it not that a residue of empiricism remained in Biological Science *through which* life be produced as an epistemological tension. For that reason, both vitalist and mechanistic approaches to evolution are evident in the methodology of Modern Biological Science.

‘Life’, like Man, though ‘heralded in positivism, could only emerge as category with the arrival of the Modern age, when ^{the} discursive scientific method gives way to a new ‘philosophy of life’ in which life becomes a domain of knowledge separated from general representation. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 42) According to Foucault, in *The Order of Things*, in the Classical Age, Biological Science did not yet exist. This is what any historian of science who attempts to construct a pre-history of biology fails to recognize. To try to reveal a progressive pre-history of biological science is an erroneous task, for any attempt to create a linear trajectory for biological science belies an retrospective intensionalism. There is no linear progression from Classical positivism and to Modern comparative knowledge, for there is a fundamental difference between them. In the Classical Age, knowledge had not yet conditioned by the fold and, crucially, time had not yet been internalized. What needs to be examined is how, in the process of the ‘folding in’ of finite time, life, in all its peculiarity and ‘potency’, became the most profound mystery of Man. To understand how Foucault formulates the emergence of ‘life’ as a category, necessarily entails a discussion of how the ‘nature’ of time becomes reconceived in the mutation from the ‘Natural Sciences’ of the Classical Age to the ‘Life Sciences’ of the Modern Age. For this shift in the conception of the nature of time had important implications for being able to conceive of the categories of evolution and the organism as they came to be known through Modern Biology. Whereas (as was illustrated in Chapter One) the Classical Age conceived of time as an infinite continuum, the Modern age came to think of time as finite and discontinuous. Time, in the Modern Age, becomes

subjected to Man's histories, which lay in his various evolutions, whether biological, economic or linguistic. For this reason, a science of *life* was unknown to the Classical Age, and would have to wait for those particular patterns of knowledge with which we are familiar today; those specific comparative formations which would 'allow' life to appear⁹. For in the same way that the Modern order of language, with its emphasis on the 'comparative', was fundamental in producing the figure of Man, so too was it destined to produce the category 'life' in all its 'potency'. (Foucault: 1992)

Foucault explains that, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, '(t)here is no life, nor any science of life;....(b)ut there is natural history...'. (Foucault: 1992: 166) Classical Natural History cannot be construed as an early biological science for it required no concept of 'life' as is understood in the Modern era, on which 'biology' could be founded. Classical positivism, with its emphasis on discourse and mathesis, could not conceive of life. To conceive of life required moving away from perceiving living beings mechanistically to a conception of life as vital, or 'potent' in principle. For vitalism to emerge required, not only a comparative knowledge of the structure and function of a species, but also a discourse of the relationship between living beings and their environment. In this way Modern Biological Science produced subjective and relational correspondances between species and things. For the Classical Age, so long its imperative was to classify, and its onus was on the observation and tabulation of living things, it was impossible that it could comprehend the category life. Until the arrival of the 'comparative knowledge', the Classical Age would have to content itself with the realm of 'natural history'.

We will now look in detail at how Foucault, in *The Order of Things*, suggests that life was the effect of the rift between the two forms of knowledge: the Classical

⁹ Foucault's resistance to treating the history of science as continuous and progressive and instead in terms of discontinuity is indebted to the work of Canguilhem and Bachelard, the former concerned with 'transformations' and 'displacements' in the history of science, and the latter, similarly, with epistemological 'acts' and 'thresholds'

empiricism of Natural History, and the new Modern comparative form, biology. We will now follow, in more detail, Foucault's description of the empirical status of Classical knowledge. What is particularly important to consider here is the role that the Classical conception of infinite time had on the ordering of things in Natural History, the implication of which is that, for the Classical Age, evolution as we know it today was impossible to conceive of.

Classical Natural History

Foucault explains: With its emphasis on empiricism, Classical mechanism entailed a descriptive ordering of things. In its quest to represent the continuity of nature by taxonomic classification, the Classical episteme went to work tabulating, recording and naming living things. By means of observation, living things were identified by their visible characteristics and set out on a perfectly transparent plane. Through mathesis, living things were classified according to structure and series that linked them. They were thus reduced to a system of identities and differences that united them to, and distinguished them from, all the others. (Foucault: 1992: 138) In this way, visual characteristics were translated into representations which were thus rendered suitable to 'the linear unwinding of language', and ergo brought into discourse. (Foucault: 1992: 134) In the 'silent gap' between words and things, natural history found its 'locus'.¹⁰

Classical Natural History, the 'new science of living things' turned its mechanistic interest to naming by extension, '(a) knowledge of each species being acquired easily upon the basis of this general characterization', (Foucault: 1992: 142) with the result

¹⁰ "But because it was possible to know and to say only within a taxonomic area of visibility, the knowledge of plants was bound to prove more extensive than that of animals". Botanical rather than zoological pursuits became the pastime of naturalists, and for that reason the study of anatomy so popular in the Renaissance gave way to classification of plants. A plant was more easily observable because there was less thickness of body to penetrate with the gaze. "The plant and the animal are seen not so much in their organic unity as by the visible patterning of their organs". (Foucault: 1992: 137)

that, what is left for natural historians is the husk of a ‘living being’ which “in its anatomy, its forms, its habits, its birth and death, appears as though stripped naked” (Foucault: 1992: 129)

Infinite Thought

For Classical Natural Scientists then, underlying the nomination of living things was an assumption of the infinite continuity of nature. Through an analysis of structure and represented through taxonomic classification, species could be exhibited in ‘visible gradation’ and ‘continuous series’ on a scale if infinite time. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 36) In creating the idea of infinite progression based on chronological continuity, Natural History emptied things of time. For natural historians, the continuity of nature is posited in terms of various spatial forms in which time has been extracted and then recast as merely an external factor following the continuum of living beings. In Classical natural history, therefore, “time is never conceived as a principle of development for living beings in their internal organization; it is perceived only as the possible bearer of a revolution in the external space in which they live” (Foucault: 1992: 150). Once time had been eradicated, natural history became nothing more than the nomination of the visible.

Quasi-evolutionism

In the eighteenth century, Foucault claims, in *The Order of Things*, there are two approaches to the continuity of nature, neither of which constitutes temporal succession in evolution. Neither are compatible with our understanding of evolution today. In the first, ‘evolution’ is conceived as being a purposeful continual process of ascension leading to infinite perfection. In this Foucault cites the system proposed by Charles Bonnet which imagined that nature as a ‘great chain of being’ expanding linearly from the infinitely simplest form to infinitely complicated through innumerable series. For this ‘uninterrupted simultaneity’ of beings to exist God is required as the point of infinite perfection. Not that the closest beings to God breach

the divide of infinity, for though living things were conceived as “ceaselessly advancing towards a greater perfection”, between God and the least ‘defective’ of his creatures the fathom is unbridgeable; the distance infinite. (Foucault: 1992: 151) ‘Evolutionism’, thus conceived, accorded no question of descent or transition through stages, for it was, according to Foucault (1992), viewed as given in advance by the God-form by way of providential design.

In this ‘uninterrupted fabric’, Foucault continues, beings are subjected to an exterior form of time. Time, in Classical Natural History, is merely inscribed as another factor for consideration as a part of a ‘generalized classification’ in the taxonomic task of ordering. Time, conceived externally, simply caused change from without, producing catastrophic and unpredictable upheaval for living things, “as so many opportunities for the infinite chain of being to continue its progress in the direction of infinite amelioration.....These evolutions were foreseen and inscribed in the germs of animals upon the very first day of creation”. (Foucault: 1992: 152) Time, and living beings, were simply waiting to unfold like a butterfly from larva. In this purposeful ‘preformationism’, time is considered as merely a line of potential for the emergence of pre-established variables in succession and that, “a principle of modification must be defined within the living being, enabling it to take on a new character when a natural revolution occurs”. (Foucault: 1992: 153)

In the second approach, time is conceived inversely, but must still be considered as given *a priori*. Here ‘evolution’ is understood as a ‘universal plan of being’ in which species hold within them the seeds of their own potential, “buried much deeper than history”. (Foucault: 1992: 155) From this perspective, from the simplest form to the most complex form of the human it is possible to observe a chronologically determined continuity in nature which each character is determined by its ‘archaic prototype’.

Time, then, according to Foucault (1992), for the natural historians, was conceived in terms of spatial extension, as a continuous uniform unravelling of space. Foucault explains that the monster and the fossil are the totems which best epitomise these infinite conceptions of time and beings. The image of the monster comes to represent a way of conceiving ‘the genesis of difference’ in the vast linear expanse of time, for it speaks of the innumerable lost paths on the journey to perfection. The fossil, in a similar way recalls the buddings of identity and ensures its memory in the unfolding of a continuum. The fossil in the eighteenth century was a “prefiguration of existing forms and thus an indication of the great continuity of time”. (Foucault: 1992: 270)

For the Classical Age, so long as the emphasis was on naming visible characteristics, evolution as we understand it today was not possible. ‘Evolution’ in this ‘universal plan’, is concerned with the emergence of *character*. This is, we shall see presently, quite unlike Darwinian and Lamarkian interpretations, which both stress the graduation in the *function* of the organism (the spontaneous adaptation of species) in the response to the positive (or negative) action of the environment. Thus the infinite series conceived of by the Classical Age are not evolutionary theories as are conceived in the Modern Age. They are, rather, *quasi* conceptions of evolution, in which, as Deleuze explains;

“(n)ature is conceived as an enormous *mimesis*: either in the form of a chain of beings perpetually imitating one another, progressively and regressively, and tending toward the divine higher term they all imitate by graduated resemblance, as the model for and principle behind the series; or in the form of a mirror imitation with nothing left to imitate because it itself is the model everything else imitates, this time by ordered difference. (This mimetic or mimological vision is what made the idea of, an evolution-production possible at that moment.)” (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 235)

Foucault (1992) explains that, to classify nature as a visible continuum by means of structure, and then to filter it through a grid of representation and into language is to distribute living beings within a particular form of visibility, that of extension. This merely distributes living beings according to a spatial configuration. But the world does not lend itself to mere classification through the naming of continuous series on a table of visible graduation progressing to infinite perfection. In neither of the explanations, therefore, did the infinite continuum, conceived by the Classical Natural Historians, constitute a Modern evolutionary theory. A taxonomy of a series is not a description of an evolutionary process as theorized by Darwin or Wallace. Unlike Biology, Natural Science was concerned with the fixity of species, and for that reason was, actually, anti-evolutionary. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 35) Because in the Classical Age, time was considered as one, single, linear continuum, it was not possible to conceive of evolution as we understand it today. The requirement of Modern evolutionary theory was that *time* become thought of a discontinuous and internalized. We shall return to this presently.

Thus in the Classical Age, according to Foucault (1992), the knowledge of living things was judged by a taxonomic system of visibility. The method of knowing, for Classical natural historians, “is to tabulate”, but to tabulate the identities and differences of living things according to their visible characteristics is not conceive of ‘life’. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 36) Classical taxonomia based on classifying by visual characteristics precluded any possibility of a ‘biology’ or evolution as we conceive of it today. Furthermore, as Classical language, the common discourse of representation and things, was not able to conceive of man and absolutely excluded ‘anything’ that could be considered a ‘science of Man’, neither could it conceive of life (conceived on the basis of anatomy and function). (Foucault: 1992: 318 & p.311)

“The certainty that one has represented the character of a being by analysing its structure, by giving it a name, involved the assumption of the continuity of nature.

Now if this continuity of nature were exhibited in a perfect fashion, living beings would be present in a visible graduation, a continuous series. It would be enough to name carefully. The taxonomy would be perfectly presented by nature. But the world is not present in this way. It has been subject to catastrophes, irruptions into the world during the past. These revolutions have destroyed living beings, separated them, and interwoven them. It is catastrophes which make necessary natural history so that the continuity of nature can be adequately represented and thus named. But this cannot be construed as an early evolutionism. The space of 17th century knowledge does not permit time to enter into living beings in this way. The eras of nature do not govern the internal time of animals or plants. Rather they affect it as external shocks.” (Cousin and Hussain: 1984: 36)

The continuity of nature cannot be construed as an early evolutionism nor, indeed, could it develop into evolutionary theory of the Modern era. Foucault claims, in *The Order of Things* that, in order for the category of life to emerge, is to understand that, as an epistemological construction, life is not the ‘effect’ of a gradual accumulation of knowledge, but is, rather, the result of a clash between two ‘discontinuous forms of knowledge, through which it becomes manifest as an empirico-transcendental dichotomy. (Foucault: 1992) Empiricism and vitalism were not of the same nature due to their different conceptions of time. As long as time was considered as extension and was dispersed along a visual continuum of taxonomy, it cannot be called upon to account for life or evolution. In order to conceive of the internal transformation of species and of the organism, as we can today, time needed to be released from its taxonomic imperative. Although in the Classical Age the continuity of nature is the requirement of all natural history, its emphasis on the continuity of nature is conceived in an entirely different way than is ‘the continuity of the species’ of the Modern Age. “It is very different in this respect from later evolutionism, which defined itself in terms of genealogy, kinship, descent and filiation”. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 233-234) Towards the end of the eighteenth century we discover a

shift from the classification of characteristics to an analysis of function much nearer to the preoccupation of Modern biology. It is not, however, until the nineteenth century that the space arises between those particular arrangements of knowledge of biology, economics and philology, through which the idea of life can emerge and nature can be understood as an adaptive continuum of species. With the nineteenth century time, freed from the realm of infinity, would mutate into its finite form.

EVOLUTION

It is to the emergence of the Modern conceptions of life and evolution that this Chapter now turns, in order to demonstrate the Modern dialectical problem through which it is constituted. Evolution, as we understand it in terms of the Dawinian project is, according to Foucault (1992), quite different from the quasi-evolutionism of the eighteenth century.

The Modern Episteme: Biological Science

In the Modern episteme, from the point of view of the ‘Human Sciences’, Foucault (1992) explains, concepts of ‘living beings’ can no longer be approached unproblematically as in the Classical Age where representations moved within the same conceptual field as each other; from within the general domain of the *mathesis universalis*. Nature, for the Classical age, was transparent and could be directly accessed, it simply had to be recorded and represented on a table and translated into discourse. “For Classical thought, man does not occupy a place in nature...(i)f human nature is interwoven with nature, it is by the mechanisms of knowledge and by there functioning.....” (Foucault: 1992: 310) Modern knowledge, however, does not lend itself in this uncomplicated way to the concept of ‘nature’. Nineteenth century biology and its preoccupation with the organism was obscured by the visibilities of natural history. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 35) For, unlike the Classical episteme, where things and representations were co-existent in discourse, Modern comparative knowledge cannot access nature directly for the reason that, any positive approach

necessarily encounters the transcendental and, therefore, because of its profound self-reflexivity, the moment that it speaks of nature it must ask how nature may be known. Man's finitude ensures that questions of nature, and of biology, or of life, cannot be posed straightforwardly as they can in the positive, or physical, sciences. In that the Human Sciences are concerned with human existence, they immediately encounter transcendental problems which may include such issues as beliefs, morals, ideologies, behaviour. Nature in the Classical episteme, explains Foucault, could not be thought of as a 'theme' in-itself, for there was no metaphysical reflection on nature as an 'idea' as there was in nineteenth century. Only then would man become aware of his own finitude which yet would constantly evade him. Modern evolutionary theory would emerge when life and nature fold back into the depths of finitude, driven back by the forces of life, labour and language.

From the nineteenth century, the discourse that epitomised Classical language "began to fold in upon itself, to acquire its own particular density, to deploy a history, an objectivity, and laws of its own. It became an object of knowledge among others..." (Foucault: 1992: 296) Representation, once removed from the profoundly nominalist positivity of eighteenth century investigation, has the following implication: for the Modern episteme knowledge is subject to, at one and the same time, 'transcendental reflection and empirical givens'. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 42) Thus questions of 'nature' or of 'life', though elucidated by conscious representation, always elude Man's consciousness. For the Modern episteme, Foucault (1992) explains, life was no longer considered from within an 'infinite system of representation', and classified by a taxonomia of identities and differences. It became construed as a structure with its own history, causality and origin and subject to psychological, anthropological and sociological enquiry. Problems concerned with of 'nature' and 'life' fall back into the 'analytic of finitude' which returns in the figure of Man as a transcendental-empirico doublet. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 60-61)

The implication of the empirico-transcendental status of Modern knowledge for conceiving of 'life' are that it becomes the stating of a false problem which, in turn, demands a plethora of false solutions. These false solutions are manifest, it shall be demonstrated, in the concepts through which Man attempts to explain life to himself; those concepts of evolution, the organism, species, cells, genes etc., and importantly, in the distinction made between the animate and the inanimate which has become pivotal in Man's creation of himself and his own finitude.

Cuvier's 'comparative anatomy'¹¹

From the nineteenth century then, Foucault claims in *The Order of Things* that, the specification of characters of living beings was finally freed from the taxonomic imperative. The 'last empirical domain, natural history, is reorganised and can be said to emerge as biology' in the comparative anatomy of Cuvier. What was crucial about Cuvier's work was that, rather than defining living beings in terms of their successive differences on a continuum, it gave functional units predominance over independent organs, thus emphasising what is *common* to animals instead of classifying them on a series according to their differences.

“(W)ith Cuvier: living beings; because they are alive, can no longer form a tissue of progression and graduated differences; they must group themselves around nuclei of coherence which are totally distinct from one another, and which are like so many different plans for the maintenance of life”. (Foucault: 1992: 272-273)

Beginning with Cuvier, classification, rather than being determined by identity, difference and its degrees through the observation of 'single isolated structures', instead gives way to the identification of species based on the determination of the identities and differences of 'great organic unities' and their functions. Cuvier's

¹¹ See Foucault: 1992, pages 263-279

‘comparative anatomy’ defined the four great functional unities as; respiration, circulation, locomotion and digestion. Visual characteristics, Foucault explains, now became related to organic structure which in turn is linked to function.

“When Cuvier outlines four great branches he does not define any generality larger than genre or class, but on the contrary concentrates on fractures that prevent any continuum of species from grouping in increasingly general terms.” (Deleuze: 1988a: 128).

The major consequence of this, Foucault (1992) explains is the emergence of the importance bequeathed to ‘*organs*’ as the site of investigation and comparison. With Cuvier, ‘comparative anatomy’ supercedes classification based on visual character as a central technique. Its purpose is in revealing the great unities underlying surface diversity, not by looking more closely or microscopically but, crucially, by establishing *relationships between superficial surface elements and what is concealed in the depths of the body*. Whereas, for Natural History, external characteristics were central in ordering and representing the transformation of the species, with the mutation of epistemological forms, from Cuvier onwards, being alive is classifiable on the basis of what is concealed; hidden in the depths of life. The transformation of the species, therefore, became based on an internal principle, alien to the domain of the visible.

Organic Life

Importantly, Foucault explains, the result of this onus on an internal principle, was a new emphasis on organic structure as a basis for taxinomia. Character was no longer reliant on purely visible structure but enters the realm of invisibility with emphasis on function. Species, rather than being arranged through juxtaposition based on visible criteria, were instead categorised into broad groupings, plants and animals, which are

no longer reducible to visible structure.¹² Now, “(c)haracter is ...nothing in itself but the visible point of a complex and hierarchized organic structure in which function plays an essential governing and determining role”. (Foucault: 1992: 228)

Life in General

For each species, what is important are the fundamental requisites which are essential (beyond what is purely visible) for its group as a living being. Once reduced to their ‘primary’ characteristics, other characteristics may appear against these in their particular detail.¹³ Visible characteristics then become merely a surface sign of a living beings functional interiority.¹⁴ Neither is importance determined by the frequency of such visible characteristics but by their functional importance. Function, not character then, plays an ‘essential’ determining and governing purpose. In the nineteenth century, the non-perceptible takes precedence over the visible. “The visible order, with its permanent grid of distinctions, is now only a superficial glitter above the abyss”. (Foucault: 1992: 251) For example, respiration is discovered in the animal species but, in this discovery, it becomes abstracted, made un-real, intangible. That is, it is non-existent in so much that it is absent from the *merely describable* - for this reason it becomes merely approached as ‘respiration in general’, and is the ‘hidden foundation’ of life which requires the ‘functional homogeneity of the whole system’ - and in being so abstracted it has entered the realm of the transcendental. (Foucault: 1992)

Comparative Knowledge: Nomenclature versus Classification

¹²These *general* groupings are in plants, the Gramineae, the Compositae, the Cruciferae and the Leguminosae and in the animals, worms, fishes, birds and quadrupeds. It is true that these general groupings do carry frequent characteristics evident at first glance, but other characteristics are not so constant and indeed in others there appear semi-uniform characteristics which are at times constant and at other times variable. (Foucault: 1992: 227-228)

¹³Thus for instance, the embryo becomes the most important part of the plant and in the animal as reproduction takes on the fundamental role. (Foucault: 1992: 227) Thus, in the plant there is made possible the division of the vegetable kingdom into classes: acotyledons, monocotyledons and dicotyledons (cotyledons are a specialised seed leaf).

¹⁴In the plant for instance, if the number of cotyledons is important that is because they are a sign of the particularity of its reproductive system and therefore linked to its entire complex internal organic structure.

With this emphasis on functional interiority it is understandable, continues Foucault (1992), how the 'notion of life' becomes central to placing order on natural beings. Crucially, by the end of the eighteenth century, organic structure in all its invisibility, becomes the foundation for the ordering of nature. Although life emerges as a category with the emergence of Modern Biology, at the same time, paradoxically, it defies explanation.

The reason for this can be found, Foucault explains, in the two different methodological approaches taken to living phenomena for, in the transition from the Classical to the Modern age, there arises a rift between nomenclature and classification. Whereas the former could continue its work, naming visible surface characteristics (which now act as signs of interiority) with assured precision in the measurement of each square in which will be positioned each genus and species, the latter must now penetrate the hidden depths of the body in its quest to reveal the secret of internal function in its invisibility. Instead of being 'exactly superimposable', nomination retained its horizontal function (linear taxonomia of the visible) whilst classification was set 'perpendicular to it', on a vertical axis.¹⁵ Knowledge could thus no longer be verified in discourse. In order to be able to penetrate and to describe the invisible depths of the organism; to explain the essence of life, the Modern biology must resort to the use of resemblance and analogy, or comparative study. Now, importantly, resemblances can be detected where no identity is visible. Resemblance is no longer a question of transparency, but relates to the invisible function of the living. It is now a matter of looking for correspondances between the

¹⁵ This dissolution of similitude between classification and denomination Foucault attributes to Lamarck - situating it in his *Preliminary Discourse to La Flore Francaise* in which Lamarck divides botany into two different enquiries: the first, the determination in which the name of the individual is to be found using two-handed tables; and the second in the discovery of resemblance which examines the organistic structure of a species in its unity, with the result that, "(n)ames and genera, designation and classification, language and nature, cease to be automatically interlocked", and that the "order of words and the order of beings no longer intersect except along an artificially defined line" (Foucault: 1992: 230) Lamarck, in drawing this distinction heralded the closure of the predominance of natural history and foregrounded what would become biology (and according to Foucault, in a much more certain way than he did twenty years later with his 'well known' theme of 'the progressive transformation of a single species'.

interior and ^{the} exterior of a living being - its essence. Thus there emerges, in conjunction with a concern with organic function, the category of 'life' which, in all its 'mystery', becomes the object of the new science of Biology. As life emerges as the thing to study, so too does it produce new objects of study. For a notion of life is required in apprehending the 'depths of the body', of linking superficial organs to those 'hidden', invisible essential functions, for instance, of locomotion, of means of sustenance and ergo to the organs involved in digestion. (In this Foucault cites the work of Storr and Lamarck). Classification then no longer is a sole concern of the visible but rather is a means of relating "the visible to the invisible, to its deeper cause,....then to rise upwards once more from that hidden architecture towards the more obvious signs displayed on the surfaces of bodies" (Foucault: 1992: 229)

Discontinuity and History: Finite Time

Whereas the quasi-evolutionism of Classical natural history had been concerned with the visible linear continuity of nature; an ontology of extension, for the nineteenth century continuity is established in two forms. The first; the continuity of function in either increasing or decreasing complexity - a table of presences and absences from Man to zoophyte and, the second; the development of the organs to greater or lesser perfection, though in different species the organs do not in each case reach the same level of perfection in one species as another, they vary. And importantly there is no continuum between, for instance, vertebrates and invertebrates; they became 'absolutely isolated'. We are now in the realm of 'sub-kingdoms' which defies categorization on a continuum of identities and differences but now enter a "space without essential continuity". (Foucault: 1992: 272) What is critical to understand here is that, with the Modern Age, *discontinuity* takes precedence over continuity.

In the Classical Age the experience of difference connected all species together - comprising the tightest grid. The role of difference is to link entities together forming an infinite continuum. From Cuvier onwards, with the onus on the four great

functional units, difference becomes dispersed throughout the organism. Difference is what isolates one organism from another no longer connecting one to another on a thread of intervals. Life, in so far as it is alive, is discontinuous, spiralling deeper within itself in order to ‘define in *isolation*’ the great unities of ‘compatibility’. Thus, living things, argues Foucault, have no true history in themselves, although in their ‘internal composition’ they have the possibility of historicity. What is crucial to understand in order to grasp the comparative ‘nature’ of Modern biology is that it is in the ‘*relation between their functions and their conditions of existence*’ that a real history becomes possible. Thus life, the animate, becomes subject to finite time and finite history. That is, life becomes subject of, and subjected to, finitude.

“(Thus) European culture is inventing for itself depth in which what matters is no longer identities, distinctive characters, permanent tables...but great hidden forces developed on the basis of their primitive and inaccessible nucleus, origin, causality and history.. (Now) ..things will be represented only from the depths of this density withdrawn into itself...” (Foucault: 1992: 251)

With the Modern Age, life emerges as the object of knowledge and, at the same time, it is a norm which governs a beings structure and function. With Cuvier then, biology is able to escape as an autonomous science, and at the same time, provide metaphysical reflection with a problem’; how to theorize the evolution of the species. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 45-46) There thus emerges a new relation between the ‘knowing subject and the object of knowledge’. The more life evades Man’s grasp:

...“the deeper must one penetrate into the organisms inner darkness, towards the less and less visible, into that dimension that eludes perception; the more one wishes to isolate the individuality of the organism, the further must one go towards the surface.

and allow the perceptible forms to shine in all their visibility; for multiplicity is apparent and unity is hidden". (Foucault: 1992: 268)

The most that the methodologies of vitalism and mechanism could aspire to, was an investigation of 'life in all its generality'. This is to say little about real life which is the subject of Chapter Six of this thesis.

Up until the end of the eighteenth century then, Foucault (1992) has demonstrated, life does not exist, because the emphasis up until then had been instead on 'living beings'; and the infinite description of these through universal taxonomia. From the nineteenth century, representation of characteristics based on visible structure gives way to representation of organic structure by which, in turn, it becomes possible to conceive of life. "When the table of natural history was dissociated, the living beings within it were not dispersed, but, on the contrary, regrouped around the central enigma life..." (Foucault: 1992: 304) The Classical system of ordering could not account for any functional importance or organic structure that was made possible by the Modern episteme, nor could Natural History conceive of the 'internalization' through which the 'living' would become plummeted into the unfathomable and invisible depths of the organism and the 'evolution' of life. ^{with the Modern age} the 'evolution' of evolution as we conceive it today becomes possible.

The Discourse of the Environment

To finally become Modern Biology, ^{however,} Cuvier's comparative anatomy had to become more fully immersed in a relational discourse with the environment. This had had to wait the emergence of the category of the organism.

With the arrival of the organism, there emerges a history and discourse of the environment and of the conditions of the external world acting on living beings.

Such a history would describe not “an anatomy of possible changes, one that expresses not the real coexistence of organs, or their mutual exclusion, but the direction in which mutations will or will not be able to occur”. (Foucault: 1992: 293) Because the existence of living beings, in this way, become relational to the environment, they become cut off in any direct way from what they represent; representation is removed from the object and instead becomes self-analysing. This has the result, for biological science that, “in one sense the history of life is exterior to the historicity of living beings; this is why evolutionism is a biological theory, of which the condition of possibility was a biology without evolution - that of Cuvier”. (Foucault: 1992: 294) From Cuvier, living creatures, things and words become *folded back* in their inner depth as a new dimension, or *fall back* on the forces of finitude. For it is no longer merely a matter of organization in life; but also of also spatio-temporal programmes of that organization “which are irreducible in themselves, and on the basis of which living beings are disseminated” (Deleuze: 1988a: 128)

Life and Death

Crucially, Foucault (1992) explains, by the nineteenth century, vitalism succeeds mechanism as a means of attempting to define life in its particularity. This mutation has another important consequence that has a profound effects on what would become biological science, With the emphasis on organic life and its relationship to the environment, the dividing line between the organic and the non-organic becomes radicalized. A living entity is no longer differentiated through general distinction from the realm of the merely mechanical as it is in natural history. That is, the opposition between the living and the non-living becomes fundamental. With the arrival of biology, “(t)he traditional problems of ontology, of being, must now be inflected by the problem of life and indeed death”. (Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 45-46) What emerges out of this dichotomy are unsolvable false anthropological and androcentric questions regarding existence; of human existence, of the existence of

other animals, and of death. There comes to be considered ..“only two kingdoms in nature”, “one enjoys life and the other is deprived of it” (wrote Vicq d’Azyr in 1786, quoted in Foucault: 1992: 232). The transcendental, therefore, according to Foucault, is simply an effect of an archaeological mutation from one episteme to its successor.

“In natural history the usual history charts a success scored by vitalism over mechanism. This was in fact a surface effect of a deeper change. What occurred was that while the general principles of taxonomy were retained, the category of visible structure was gradually changed to organic structure. This led in turn to a concern with function which moved away from the scheme of representation which was above all concerned with visible structure. Gradually this produced an increasing importance to the distinction between organic and inorganic. Obviously a distinction had already been drawn between what lived and what did not as a condition of natural history. But the distinction was not now the ‘condition’ of natural history but became, as it were, the ‘object’ of knowledge, organic life as such”.

(Cousins and Hussain: 1984: 41)

In the transition from nomenclature based in taxonomia to a generalization of the species based on the classification of function, a profound depth is attributed to living beings, and there emerges the possibility of biology in which life and death become opposed conditions. With this shift, the organic becomes understood as that which reproduces, grows and produces; that which lives, and the inorganic ‘neither develops nor reproduces’. The inorganic lies at the boundary of life, ‘the inert and the unfruitful’ - the dead. Now there are two forces within life always working at odds with one another, continually undoing the effects that the other had striven to bring about. Death, “although intermingled with life, it is so as that element within it that destroys and kills it”. (Foucault: 1992: 232)

If the Classical Age, in its pursuit to represent order in being, gave precedence to the plant, marking it through visible characteristics its stamp of order, for the Modern age it was the animal that became the object of study. With the *death* of God, and the demise of infinite time, man, as a finite being, has joined the animals. In the animal, Man attempted to trace the vanishing-point of life buried deep within its hidden structures and buried organs. From the nineteenth century, death not only besieges life on all sides, furthermore it threatens life from within, “for only the organism can die, and it is from the depth of their lives that death overtakes living beings”. (Foucault: 1992: 277) The animal carries within it its own death and yet at the same time it is that which kills, “...the animal appears as the bearer of that death to which it is, at the same time, subjected; it contains a perpetual devouring of life by life”. (Foucault: 1992: 277)

Evolution, as it is configured by Modern Biological Science, is interested, not with ascribing on a visual continuum the ‘calm image of characters’ through which living things are viewed as either progressing or regressing along an infinite series, but instead, with pursuing the “incessant transition from the inorganic to the organic by means of respiration or digestion, and the inverse transformation brought about by death, of the great functional structures into lifeless dust” (Foucault: 1992: 277)

Life: The Death of Man

From Cuvier onwards, then, living beings become thought of as autonomous of the non-living world. The relationship that emerges is that of the organism and that which supports life - two natures in continual circulation from the outside to the inside and vice versa. This ‘double-space’, where dead substances are introduced into living bodies and living bodies return to dead substance, becomes the condition of *life*: “(life) kills because it lives”. (Foucault: 1992: 277) To be old is to have used life up. To die is to kill it. Life becomes the root of all existence whilst the non-living becomes its inverse, ‘spent life’. After Cuvier, the living being becomes

wrapped in its own existence in that, (Foucault: 1992: 274) “life isolates forms that are bound in upon themselves...(it) withdraws into the enigma of a force inaccessible in its essence”.. (Foucault: 1992: 273)

From the nineteenth century, life becomes the locus of being and non-being, it is the force that moves animals to death. Life bears within it a form which is ‘secretly sapping them in order to destroy them’. “And so, for knowledge, the being of things is an illusion, a veil that must be torn aside in order to reveal the mute and invisible violence that is devouring them in the darkness. The ontology of the annihilation of beings assumes therefore validity as a critique of knowledge.” (Foucault: 1992: 278)

A knowledge of life becomes a knowledge of the annihilation of beings which is actually a knowledge of death and the dying. Further, in that knowledge produces life, albeit a life that is a death, knowledge *is* life. Thus, knowledge and life become separated from that which cannot be thought, the unthought.

A good example of the imponderable status of life status can be found in Shostak’s (1998) discussion of molecular biology in which he argues that scientists engaged in genetic research who claim to be searching for the essence of life, are actually more concerned with killing it off. That is, whilst claiming to reveal the essence of life’s vitality, molecular engineers reduce life to dead segments. This is due to the empirico-transcendental status of life as it is posed by Modern Biological Science; for instance, on the one hand genes are bequeathed a vitality, described, for example, as having a purpose, i.e. to pass on information; on the other hand, in the search for life’s essence, genes are isolated, dissected into tiny segments, and then transferred to test-tubes and are thus effectively rendered lifeless. How can it be said that a lifeless fragment has a ‘purpose’?

This paradox is result of the clash of two different kinds of knowing, of teleology and mechanism; the former is concerned with explaining life as vital in principle, whilst

the latter is concerned with reducing life to its minutes of components. Teleology is merely an inversion of reductionism. As Shostak explains, “(t)eleologies are intentional statements that place ‘the cart before the horse’, suggesting that change occurs ‘in order to’ rather than ‘because of’: for example, ^{that} adaptation is the goal of evolution, survival is the ‘purpose’ of escape, reproduction is the function of the germ line, the promotion of variability is the goal of meiosis and fertilization”. (Shostak: 1998: 54-55) Teleology then merely inverts mechanistic causality (‘because of’). Therefore, in engaging with teleological explanations of life, we encounter the transcendental. Yet knowledge and life are caught up in a perpetual struggle to know what they cannot know; for the problems they pose and the solutions they arrive at repeatedly return death as they throw themselves against the wall of the imponderable. When approached through Modern comparative knowledge, life is concept that evades description. “What, then, is knowledge? If life is a concept, does recognizing that fact give the intelligence access to life? What, then, is knowledge? If life is meaning and concept, how do we conceive of the activity of knowing?” (Canguilhem in Delaporte: 1994: 318-319)

Life as a False Problem

This Chapter sought to demonstrate that life was a badly stated problem. In that knowledge is life, life is an empirico-transcendental problem which as such is irresolvable. When life came to be posed as a problem in the Modern episteme it became subjected to, and subject of, the dialectic. For instance, when mechanism and vitalism investigate the question of existence, they pose badly stated problems with pre-existing solutions. Chapter Four deals at length with the nature of the false problem. Modern knowledge, which is conditioned by, and is the condition of, Man’s finitude ensures that life too is destined to return as the Same. Any examination of the ‘evolution’ of the Biological Sciences, according to Foucault in *The Order of Things*, will show how ‘the death of Man’s own historical existence’ is the same as the death which threatens away Man’s empirically given (natural)

existence, and also how, in that process how ‘finitude answers itself’ in the journey from one pole of experience to the other’.

Knowledge and the Unthought

Foucault showed us that life emerged as a category when two forms of knowledge collided, a residue of one however, remained in the other creating an empirico-transcendental tension. Life, like man, is not a real thing, nor is it merely a concept, it comprises of the forces of finitude which entered into a relation with man. When the forces in man enter a new relation with the forces of the outside, then the category of life produced through man’s finite knowledge too will transmutate.

However, Shostak warns us, “(t)he transition from biology to a study of life will not be easy”, for “life is richer than biologists have yet pondered” (Shostak: 1998: 200) What is required is a study of life that does not merely study death. Rather, we should strive to create a science of life that goes beyond man’s dialectical knowledge which merely ensures that life returns as death. This thesis, in the pursuit of true difference, argues for a science of the unthought. Foucault, though he acknowledges that there is an unthought, does not theorize what that might be nor how we can attain it. This thesis will, however, go on to show how a science of the unthought can take us to a ‘time’ beyond man and the organism, and indeed, beyond his theories of evolution. All in due course: Firstly we must learn to think differently.

“Biologists who never learned history and philosophy will suffer the pain of being weaned from deeply embedded and dearly held concepts and principles they did not even know they had. The last part of the pain is that of conceiving and giving birth to new ideas”. (Shostak: 1998: 202)

Death and the Return of True Difference

In the next chapter, in the third move towards demonstrating the proposal of this thesis, we must ask, what death must man undergo that he might not return as the Same? We will find that this is essentially the same as asking, how is it possible to know the unthought? This now requires an elaboration of the idea that death too is a false problem which must be overcome. To understand this, is to ask how we can think Man's death outside the eternal return of the Same. We must now turn to Nietzsche's 'gay science' and repose the problem of death.

It seems that the question that is becoming critical as we make our moves towards discovering true difference, is, 'what might come after Man'? This is to ask, how must Man be overcome? Man must free himself from finite thought though not by reverting to an infinity in which time is eradicated. What comes after Man is the Overman or the Superman. We shall find that, "(t)he superman has never meant anything but that: it is in man himself that must liberate life, since man himself is a form of imprisonment for man". (Deleuze: 1988a: 92) It is only through an engagement with the outside, yet an outside we shall find that is within Man - though not 'interior' - that Man can be set free. Nietzsche argues, "that man has imprisoned life" and therefore we must wait for superman, for "the superman is what frees *life* within itself" (Deleuze:1988a:130)

A Word of Caution Regarding the Man-form

Deleuze argues, that the death of man has led to much misinterpretation of Foucault and Nietzsche. Either man, it has been objected, stands not for 'real men' but instead 'a concept of man', or that real men would become superman through sublimation or transcendence. These conceptions are erroneous. When Foucault or Nietzsche speak of the 'death of man' they do not intend any 'human compound' either conceptual or real. They are concerned with the *forces* that make up man - how they combine and what 'compound emerges'. In the Classical Age the outside forces combine to make God not man. For forces were raised to infinity - "referred back to a force of

representation". Infinity both predates finity and follows it. The Man-form exists only in the finite space between infinities. For 'man' to appear as a particular compound, the forces that create him must enter into relation with new forces that escape the world of infinite representation. This transformation occurs only when forces enter new relations with forces from the outside, the composing forces. Mutation does not take place at the level of composed forms; the historical, the stratified or the archaeological. The outside forces which enter a new relation with the forces of man and create the man-form are explained as life, labour and language - forces that evade representation. New forces are not predisposed to become human, "these dark forces of finitude are not initially human", they combine with the 'forces of man' and become bound up in his finitude, giving him his history which he then assumes as his own. Composing forces continually enter new relations, they are forever in flux, creating new compositions. 'Man' will then be decomposed as he has appeared when the forces of man combine with new combinations of forces from the outside. "Man is a face drawn in sand between two tides", the Classical past that never knew him and a future in which he will not exist. (Deleuze: 1988a: 87-89)

Chapter Three

**Beyond the Organism:
Death and Difference - The Overman**

Beyond the Organism, *Death and Difference*: The Overman

'There's life..., but not as we know it..' ('Star Trek')

The eternal return of the Same - the eternal return of Difference

It is important here to clarify how the concept of 'the eternal return' is being utilized in this and the following Chapters. Foucault, as has been shown, refers to Man as that which 'eternal returns as *the Same*' and this, it was argued, was because Man was a finite epistemological entity. As Deleuze explains, Nietzsche does not, however, conceive of the return of the Same in this way. For Nietzsche, the eternal return of the Same is not a finite concept but is instead infinite: All things must eventually return ad-infinitum. Deleuze extends this idea and for good purpose. In Nietzsche's formulation the return of the Same is infinite in scope and, because of this it lays itself open to criticism. That is because both infinite and finite concepts of time are mutually reliant, therefore the return of the Same is exactly that, the return of the Same premised on the Identical and its negation of difference. This cannot lead to an 'outside' of thought, or to an 'overman', for in this way we are still constrained by a spatialization of time (as representation and discussed at length in Chapter Six of this thesis). Recognizing this, Deleuze asks what happens to 'true difference' in this model. If difference is premised on the Same then, again (and again...), it is premised on dialectical negation.

“(W)e fail to understand the eternal return if we make it a consequence or an application of identity. We fail to understand the eternal return if we do not oppose it to identity in a particular way. The eternal return is not the permanence of the same, the equilibrium state or the resting place of the identical. It is not the 'same' or the 'one' which comes back in the eternal return but return is itself the one which ought to belong to diversity and to that which differs.” (Deleuze: 1996: 46)

Rather, Deleuze takes the eternal return as the eternal return of difference, as that which returns, not as the Same, but as difference *in-itself*. The eternal return is the becoming of the return, or the becoming-returning, and not what has ‘returned’.

“It does not presuppose the One, the Same, the Equal or equilibrium. It is not a return of the All. It is not a return of the Same, nor a return to the Same. It thus has nothing in common with the so-called ancient thought, with the thought of a cycle which makes All come again, which passes through a state of equilibrium, which leads the All back to the One, and which comes back to the Same”. (Nietzsche quoted in Bogue: 1996: 28)

Or, in another way, it is the becoming-*active* as opposed to the becoming-reactive (discussed below). This required that Deleuze find an altogether different model of time, which will be the subject of Part Two of this thesis. For the purposes of this Chapter, it is enough to be aware that there is a distinction to be made between the ‘eternal return of the Same’ and the ‘eternal return of *difference*’.

In this thesis, the question of difference has been situated in the context of man’s ‘death’. However, in framing the problem of difference within a ‘death of Man’ which is premised on the eternal return of the Same, ensures that death too, like ‘life’ and Man, is a false problem which is the product of dialectical thought. To think a death of Man through which to return true difference, requires that we now show that death too, when it is opposed to a finite conception of life, is a false problem and a false solution. Hence, the third move of this thesis is to show that death, when premised on dialectical negation, is a badly stated problem that demands false solutions. Only when ‘death’ is reconceived beyond the negative, does it become possible to think a ‘death of man’ that does not collapse ^{into} dialectical negation; and only then is it possible to speak of the eternal return of [^] difference. Before we move

through this problem, which is the concern of this chapter, let us sketch out as a reminder, and by way of contextualization, moves one and two.

The first move of this thesis was to show that Man was the result of stating a false problem which begged and begot false solutions. This was argued by demonstrating what, for Foucault, constituted man's disappearance which firstly required that we asked what effected man's appearance. We found that Man emerged from within the finite space of life, labour and language, as that which eternally returns as the Same, and to which difference is always subordinated and always already caught up in a negative dialectical relationship with Identity. Our second move was to demonstrate how, in the folding in of the outside and an internalization of an inside of thought, man's condition, became a 'death in life'. The 'analytic of finitude' (Foucault: 1992) therefore is an analytic of *death* founded on a dialectic of thought, which is the impasse at the limit of finite knowledge. Within this analytic, if 'man' is the problem that returns difference as negation, then, if there is a solution to man's death that would return true difference, the answer cannot be found in the finite concepts of life, the organism and evolution for these are false problems and solutions.

On the question of man's disappearance, both Foucault and Deleuze owe a debt to Nietzsche. For this reason, the following discussion is heavily reliant on Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche in '*Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1996)'. This is because Deleuze's main preoccupation in his reading of Nietzsche is the pursuit of true difference. What Deleuze discovers in Nietzsche is an 'outside' comprised of 'special forces', and it is in bringing these into thought, that he generates a way to think beyond the limitations of finitude - to think a 'new form' beyond man. It is in asking what these special forces are, and what new relations they might enter into, that we may glimpse the proper place for the 'end of man'. "Man has not always existed, and will not exist forever. For Man-form to appear to be delineated, the forces within man must enter into a relation with certain very special forces from the outside."

(Deleuze: 1988a: 124) In order to comprehend what, for Nietzsche, comprise these ‘special forces’, is to engage then with the question of the ‘death of man’. Indeed, we shall find, that the whole question of discovering true difference is directly dependent on conceiving of a death of Man beyond dialectical negation. This Nietzsche refers to as a *positive* death of man. Only with the discovery of a positive death, death in its ‘pure form’, can difference be freed from the constraints of the negative and return ‘in-itself’. ‘What kind of death’ is the ‘positive’ death that does not merely return the Same. It shall be shown that for Deleuze, this entails the discovery of ‘*differentiation*’ in death. Once the problem of death has been re-positated outside of negation, it is possible to pursue a solution to the problem of true difference, which it will become apparent, is a question of reconceiving time and also, ^{of} reconceiving life. What we will discover is that, to attain a positive death is to conceive of a ‘life’ outside’ and to bring into thought a new relation of ‘special forces’. On the outside, beyond man, and this is where this thesis is leading, ‘there is life, but not as we know it’. And it is from this, *and only* from this, very specific context - the question of special forces from the outside - that Nietzsche refers to the *positive* death of Man. It is here also that can be discovered the answer to the problem that is becoming increasingly pressing; what might come after man? To think what might follow Man, that does not return the Same ad-infinitum, actually depends on a formulation of true difference beyond the dialectic. In Nietzsche, Deleuze discovers of a death of man which is not premised on the denial of difference and depreciation of life. In order to think beyond man, to the ‘overman’, we are led through Nietzsche’s philosophic writings on nature and life to a will-to-power and an active thought beyond all negation. In doing this Nietzsche brings us into contact with the outside.

‘With the death of Man’, asks Deleuze in response to Foucault’s question; with the dissolution of identity which had repeatedly returned in the Same, “what new form will emerge that is neither God or Man?” (Deleuze: 1988a: 130).

This, ‘new form’ beyond man, we shall see, is the correct place for that problem that Nietzsche named ‘Superman’, or the ‘Overman’. However cautions Deleuze, “(the Superman) is a problem where we have to content ourselves with very tentative indications if we are not to descend to the level of cartoons”. (1988a: 130) This form should not to be confused in any way with man, for, as we shall see, it is something other than the human type. (Deleuze 1996: 163) There is life on the outside, but not as we know it. The life of the outside is not at all the same thing as the ‘life’ of man.

We shall see in Part Two of this thesis that, in order to think a ‘pure form of death’, and to think true difference, we must return death as a death of the outside which resists life. And it is here too, on the outside where death resists life, that we encounter too what Deleuze refers to as, ‘something like the *Superfold*’, an ‘unlimited finity’ (1988a: 13), or that which Nietzsche had already named the ‘eternal return’. This is the eternal return, not of the Same, but of difference-in-itself.

What then are these ‘special forces’ of the eternal return of difference? How do Deleuze and Nietzsche conceive of a positive death of Man? What is this death through which it is possible to conceive of life as the outside? The answer to these is to be found in Nietzsche’s concept of the ‘overman’. To reach this place requires that man relinquish his place as avatar of the Same, and ‘prepare to die’ an active, ‘affirmative’ death. This, it will be shown, requires that Man engage in an active affirmative thinking about life.

Knowledge

Crucially, for both Foucault and Nietzsche, the problem of, and solution to, ‘man’s death’ (whether conceived as negative or positive) rests with their approach to knowledge, in their respective theories of the relationship of knowledge to life. For Foucault it was shown that ‘knowledge is life’, and as such, the outside was unattainable. Although Foucault showed that there was an outside of thought when

he formulated his idea of the unthought (this was in Chapters One and Two to be more encompassing than the psychic unconscious), he does not take us to this place. It is enough that he has posed the problem. To attain the outside is to understand how Nietzsche conceives of life and therefore this Chapter will now explain, in Deleuze's reading, what Nietzsche intends by the concept 'knowledge', and more particularly, how he conceives of the relationship between knowledge and the forces of the outside. Importantly if, for Foucault, it is enough to raise the question of the outside in his notion of the unthought, in Nietzsche we are given a possible means to go beyond the limitation of finite thought.

Knowledge and Thought

Crucially, for Nietzsche, it is in the distinction he makes between 'reactive knowledge' and 'active thought' that there is discovered the possibility of thinking the 'outside'. Further, in comprehending how Nietzsche configures this distinction between 'knowledge' and 'thought', is to understand how he conceives of life. For Nietzsche, it will be shown, the outside is not only that which escapes knowledge but, the outside *is* thought, and further, the outside is *life*. (Deleuze: 1996: 100-101)

Nietzsche, in distinguishing between thought and knowledge makes a distinction between active and reactive modes of thinking. 'Thought' which he advocates as 'active' (and which will be discussed presently), and 'knowledge', which he deems as reactive. These are critical distinctions, for whilst one is the possibility of thinking the special forces of 'the outside', the other inhibits and restricts such thought.

In Nietzsche's explanation, thought and knowledge became separated in the evolutionary descent of instinct and consciousness. Consciousness, argues Nietzsche, was the last development of the organic which emerged when man's former instincts became subsidiary to him. (Schacht: 1992: 277) Consciousness, he asserts, was the result of primal instincts turning inward on themselves in which knowledge came to

collide with basic primieval drives (Schacht: 1992: 278) and these unconscious instincts became subordinated to consciousness. This breakdown of our former instinct-structure marked the onset of, what Nietzsche terms, 'man's sickness'. The first grumblings of man's sickness occurred when, according to Nietzsche, sea animals became land animals, whenceforth man was left bereft of his original strength and was rendered weak and fallible.¹⁶ From then on, all instincts that could not be discharged outwardly became negative and self-destructive, a sickness Nietzsche refers to as *bad conscience*.

Reactive Knowledge - the depression of difference

Through *bad conscience* man has become a 'sick animal', harbouring a 'spirit of revenge' through which he approaches his world. Man, argues Nietzsche, has been seized by reactive, destructive forces, (which are not at all the same thing as the 'special forces of the outside) 'Man's becoming-reactive', is brought about by a double process, of bad conscience and, what Nietzsche terms 'ressentiment'. To examine how knowledge becomes reactive is to show how true difference has become subordinated to a concept of difference based on negation. And importantly, for the concerns of this thesis, it will be shown how, for Nietzsche, in the becoming-reactive of knowledge, life too has come to be conceived reactively.

Ressentiment as Double Negation of Difference

To illustrate how ressentiment is 'the triumph of reactive forces', Deleuze explains that, Nietzsche developed the idea that reactive knowledge is a double negation founded on two configurations of difference: one negative and the other positive. At

¹⁶ "I regard the bad conscience as the serious illness that man was bound to contract under the stress of the most fundamental change he ever experienced - that change which occurred when he found himself finally enclosed within the walls of society and of peace. The situation that faced sea animals when they were compelled to become land animals or perish was the same as that which faced these semi-animals, well adapted to their wilderness, to war, to prowling, to adventure: suddenly their instincts were disvalued and 'suspended.' From now on they had to walk on their feet and 'bear themselves' whereas hitherto they had been borne by the water: a dreadful heaviness lay upon them". (GM II: 16 in Schacht: 1992: 275 & GM 1969: 84 in Patton: 1996: 73).

the same time Nietzsche distinguishes between two types of forces, a reactive (negative) force, through which man becomes reactive, and an active (affirmative) force, which is suppressed through resentment by reactive forces. Thus, resentment is the process by which reactive force negates the active force and becomes reactive knowledge. To demonstrate this principle of double negation, Nietzsche utilizes the analogy of the Master and the Slave. In this formulation, the Master, in a positive affirmation of his own Identity, affirms his difference from the Slave and, in doing so, is thereby conceived as an active, affirmative force; I am good, You are base. In contrast, Nietzsche conceives of the Slave as a negative force. The Slave too confirms his difference from his Master; however, the affirmation of the Slave is produced through negativity. He derives his own identity by opposing it to the Identity of his Master. His own identity is therefore premised on the identity of his Master and is therefore a negation of his own difference. (Deleuze: 1996: 111-145) (Bogue: 1996: 16-19)

“The man of *ressentiment* needs to conceive of a non-ego (the evil master), then to oppose himself to this non-ego in order to finally posit himself as self. This is the strange syllogism of the slave: he needs two negations in order to produce an appearance of affirmation”. (Deleuze: 1996: 121)

What then appears to be an affirmation of difference in this case is actually a double negation; he is not-good, therefore I am not not-good; they are evil therefore we are not. In this way, the Slave has become enslaved to dialectical negation. Through resentment then, difference is founded on a negation of the Same. “We already sense the form in which the syllogism of the slave has been so successful in philosophy: *the dialectic*. The dialectic as the ideology of *ressentiment*.” (Deleuze: 1996: 121) Difference is subordinated by reactive knowledge to the status of the dialectic. Through resentment, the power of the slave, contests Nietzsche, is merely a *reaction*, a negation of negation, but which has the appearance of affirmation.

(Bogue: 1996: 16 from Deleuze: 1996: 121) Only the 'reactive' require a confirmation of difference which is premised on the Same and the Identical. Nietzsche famously describes, using the example of moral and religious values, how the dialectic dualism is a product of reactive thought. 'Good' and 'evil' are reactive values of ressentiment based on a denial and a hatred for affirmative life. Nietzsche attacks these as un-creative, divine, transcendent, superior to life, inseparable from this hatred and revenge. In this dualism the Master is conceived as 'good' and the slave as 'evil'. (Deleuze: 1996: 122) (Bogue: 1996: 16-19)

Yet, although on the surface it may appear that the affirmative difference of the Master might escape the dialectic, this is not so because, through an inversion of ressentiment, both negative and positive forms of difference collapse back into dialectical negation. In an infolding of the outside, an active affirmative force can also become interiorised, and in turning in on itself a reactive force is then *projected*, becoming truly reactive. The Master then projects this reactive force setting himself above the slave through the negative aspect of pity; *I am above you morally, and so I must accuse you in order that you be saved for your sins*, 'I therefore accuse you, for your own good'. Further, through bad conscience, active forces become interiorised and are *introjected*, whereby the Master comes to pity himself; "It is disgraceful that I am so fortunate, there is so much misery". Bad conscience serves to extend ressentiment and reactive forces triumph. In this way, the Master too falls pray to the ressentiment of reactive forces. Through 'pity', the master too becomes the slave. Because ressentiment founds difference on negation it is a hatred for all that is active and affirmative in life. This denial of true difference is what Nietzsche found most despicable in man, and is that which he referred to as man's 'skin disease'. As a result, of Man's ressentiment and bad conscience, Man's knowledge becomes reactive and, it will be shown, life too becomes 'pitiful'. (Deleuze: 1996: 111-145) (Bogue: 1996: 16-19)

The Ascetic Ideal

Nietzsche names this complex, in which resentment and bad conscience reinforce one another, *the ascetic ideal*. When man ‘took to land’, and life’s instinct to protect itself (to fight for its survival and to sustain itself), became degenerated, in its place in the consciousness of man, the ascetic ideal became perfected as ‘an artifice for the preservation of life’. The ascetic ideal makes the ‘sickness of resentment livable’. (Deleuze: 1996: 144) Through resentment, bad-conscience and the ascetic ideal, man builds defenses which he places in the service of his own self-annihilation. The very ‘wound’ of his own ‘self-destruction’ compels man to live. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1994: 333) The forms of expression this ‘spirit of revenge’ takes, according to Nietzsche, is biological, psychological, historical and metaphysical.

Science, Knowledge and the Ascetic Ideal

For this reason, Nietzsche warns us against assuming that science offers man any possibility of redemption from his resentment. Indeed, Modern science finds itself duty-bound to the ascetic idea. We learn, through Nietzsche’s teachings, that science unconsciously belittles man, harbouring as it does his resentment and discontent, unconsciously reaping its revenge. Man’s science is the ‘triumph of reactive forces’. All science has served to reduce man to an enslaved version of a previous fullness of being, a time before instinct became devalued by consciousness. When unconscious instinctual drives gave way to consciousness, man became servant to *bad conscience*. “All science.....has at present the object of dissuading man from his former respect for himself, as if this had been nothing but a piece of bizarre conceit” (GM III: p.25 in Patton: 1996: 110) Henceforth Man would only comprehend the world by the limiting means of reckoning, reasoning and deduction. Knowledge, from then on, would be created by a consciousness which is utilitarian and which forces man to perceive of the world in constricting ways, either mechanistically or transcendently.

“In this new world (men) no longer possessed their former guides, their regulating, unconscious and infallible drives: they were reduced to thinking, inferring, reckoning, co-ordinating cause and effect, these unfortunate creatures; they were reduced to their ‘consciousness,’ their weakest and most fallible organ!” (Nietzsche, F. *On the Genealogy of Morals* :II: 16 in Schacht: 1992: 275 & Nietzsche, F. *On the Genealogy of Morals*: 1969: 84 in Patton: 1996: 73)

Because he is reliant on his reason, Man’s knowledge has become scientific, employing measurement and number, so that phenomena are described in terms of ‘utility’, ‘adaptation’, ‘conservation’. Reason requires that the world be conceived through the concepts of finality, identity and causality, thus forcing man to think mechanistically about the world. The reactive knowledge that science ‘discovers’ is a world subject to laws, reducing phenomena to equality, balance and logical identity. Mechanistic interpretation deals only in measuring quantities which is why ‘mechanistic interpretation’ can merely *describe* processes and cannot *explain* them. (Deleuze: 1996: 43) For mechanists the world is readily ‘calculable’, because it is perceived in terms of motion and atom. Atomism is error, as it is the logic of perspectivism of consciousness, it is manifest because of our need to ‘comprehend the world’. (Schacht: 1992: 171) We need unities in order to be able to reckon: but, contests Nietzsche, *that does not mean that such unities (things) exist*. For Nietzsche there are no ‘things’: and therefore ‘things’ cannot be treated as if by rules/laws: they are fictions. If things are ‘numerical’, ‘calculable’, these are purely phenomenal, they merely have a degree of constancy of *sameness*. In this way, all phenomena that are encountered are reduced to the undifferentiated. In science, explains Nietzsche, the undifferentiated takes three forms; logical identity, mathematical equality and physical equilibrium (entropy).¹⁷ In our experience what we encounter (at most) are

¹⁷ As we have seen, for Nietzsche, physical ideas like weight, heat or matter are ‘agents of equalization of quantities. Science always equalizes quantities, seeks balances, “to make up for inequalities.” (Deleuze: 1996: 45) This is evidenced in the ‘utilitarianism and egalitarianism’ of ‘scientific mania’ which Nietzsche argues works at three levels defined as: ‘logical identity, mathematical equality and physical equilibrium. Nietzsche’s whole critique

similarities and the ‘apparent fact of things as the same’. But there are no durable units, no monads, no atoms (Schacht: 1992: 197) Teleology, the dialectic of mechanical means and final ends, is merely the only tool our reason has at its disposal through which to explain the conditions of life, and to describe the functions and tasks of conservation, adaptation and utility’. (Deleuze: 1996: 40) Because we are subject to these, we fail to acknowledge ‘true difference’: indeed we simply treat the ‘similar’ as the same. Through his ‘reasoned’ pursuit, Man’s knowledge, has slipped into the unchanging and, Man in becoming-reactive, has slipped into the abyss of the undifferentiated.

Life, biology and the organism

Man’s reasoned pursuit produces *reactive* knowledge which belies a ‘veiled hatred of life’ and fear of the outside. Yet it is through his conscious activity, and namely through his biological science, that man strives to explain life. “Science today is taking the exploration of nature and man further than ever in a particular direction, but it is also taking submission to the ideal (ascetic) and the established order even further”. (Deleuze: 1996: 73- my brackets)

Through his biological science, man attempts to apply these methods to the problem of life. ‘General’ science is a reactive science through which life is reduced to teleology, either a plan or a purpose. In Nietzsche’s view, for this reason biology, like physics, is to be understood in terms of reactive forces. Reactive thought ensures that the knowledge that biologists produce, the problems they set themselves, and the solutions they find, sets limits on conceiving of life. What is produced through reactive thought is a very particular kind of life, a *reactive* life. Indeed, for Nietzsche,

is levelled against these ‘*three forms of the undifferentiated*’. But not because Nietzsche contrasts the differences between quantity and quality, as according to Deleuze, in his critique of science Nietzsche never simply appeals to the ‘rights of quality against quantity’ Instead he “invokes the rights of difference in quantity against equality, of inequality against equalisation of quantities”. (Deleuze: 1996: 45) Science for Nietzsche, continues Deleuze, always aims to equalise quantities.

the whole problem of conceiving of life is a false problem effected by the *becoming reactive* of man. Reactive knowledge moulds life, reducing it to ‘the framework of a scientifically observable reaction’, defining it by laws. As consciousness is essentially reactive it attempts to explain all phenomena mechanistically or teleologically. “This is why we oppose mechanical means to final ends in the theory of life; but these two interpretations are only valid for reactive forces themselves”. (Deleuze: 1996: 41) Because man’s reactive science submits to the (ascetic) ideal, it denies and negates life and in doing so denies and negates difference. The knowledge that is sought is reactive and limits thought and because of this, Nietzsche argues, man cannot conceive of life.

“Biologists might favor, e.g., the idea that life is ultimately a mechanistic affair to be conceived in terms of physiochemical processes; but this, to his way of thinking, would only make them bed fellows of the physical scientists he discusses, whose favored mode of interpretation he considers both superficial and highly problematical”. (Schacht: 1992: 251)

By the same means too, through his biological science, man approaches the problem of the organism. Reason, however, pronounces life’s ‘action only in terms of its utility’. (Deleuze: 1996: 73) Because consciousness is ‘essentially reactive’, we do not therefore really ‘know what a body can do, nor can we know what activity it is capable of’. (Deleuze: 1996: 41) That is why for Deleuze-following-Nietzsche-following-Spinoza, ‘we do not know what a body *can do*’. “We know little about force and the body because we generally form our knowledge on the evidence of consciousness, and *consciousness is itself only a symptom of the presence of reactive forces.*” (Bogue: 1996: 20 - my italics) We thereby reduce and restrict the body according to the laws of motion and equilibrium. “We always think that we have done enough when we understand an organism in terms of reactive forces. The nature of reactive forces and their quivering fascinates us” (Deleuze: 1996: 41). But the

whole problem, for Nietzsche, is not an issue between mechanism and vitalism. Vitalism simply inverts mechanism in that it claims to discover the ‘specificity of life in the same reactive forces that mechanism interprets in another way’. (Deleuze: 1996: 42) That is what happens when science follows the paths of consciousness, both relying entirely on reactive forces. It becomes inevitable that consciousness approaches the organism from the point of view of reactive forces. The organism is always seen from the petty side, from the side of reactions. Knowledge, argues Nietzsche, separates life from what it can do, forbidding it to ‘act’. That is, life is prevented from being truly active, as it has been limited by knowledge that is merely turned towards utility. So reactive biology and approaches of consciousness to life and the organism (positivism and the dialectic) are actions of resentment which return merely the same and the unchanging. ‘Reactive biology is a biology of resentment and bad-conscience’ and through the reactive knowledge science produces man and life are depreciated. Life becomes reduced to no more than a ‘death in life’. (Deleuze: 1996: 45)

In this way, knowledge, depreciates life, making life pitiful, responsible and blameworthy. Once blamed, man then strives to correct it, to suppress it, to deny it. Man’s knowledge measures and judges life, and sees itself as an end. (Deleuze: 1996: 100) This is a cyclical process where rational thought limits life and at the same time ‘reactive life’ limits thought which becomes subject to life. “Life is subject to knowledge and at the same time thought is subject to life”. (Deleuze: 1996: 101) Reactive knowledge, then, expresses a life that contradicts life; positing “life against life”. (Nietzsche, F. On Genealogy of Morals III: 13 in Deleuze: 1996: 96) The ascetic ideal then, contests Nietzsche, *opposes reactive knowledge to life*.

Nihilism - will-to-nothingness - man’s becoming reactive

The resentment and bad conscience that denies life, opposing life to life, and depreciates existence through reactive negation, Nietzsche calls ‘nihilism’. The

nihilistic world is the world of Man and slaves in which difference is denied, and the outside is banished. Nihilism has two forms and two stages (negative and reactive) through which life initially comes to have nil value and then finally to lose all value. In the first stage, *negative nihilism*, a whole other ‘super-sensible’ world becomes ‘superior’ to life. This superior life is inseparable from the effects of ‘depreciating life and negating the world’. Superior values annihilate life as reactive forces seize life and deny it. Life comes to signify a nil value in as much as it is depreciated and devalued. The forms this super-sensible world assumes, and which results in a ‘natural’ Platonism, are God, essence, the good, and truth. In this way, through negative nihilism, life becomes unreal, becoming merely a ‘fiction’, and in taking on nil value it becomes ‘represented as merely an appearance’. (Deleuze: 1996: 147) Nietzsche refers to this motivation to deny life, as the ‘*will-to-nothingness*’. What is signified in the term nihilism is the value of nil bestowed on life by higher values and the subsequent will to nothingness. The nihilistic world is the domain of a reactive man who wills nothing; “(t)he one who repudiates life is also the one who wants a diminished life, the conservation of *his* type and moreover its power and triumph, the triumph and contagion of reactive forces. At this point reactive forces discover the disturbing ally that leads them to victory: nihilism, the will to nothingness” (GM III 13). The will to nothingness can only bear life in its reactive form. It uses reactive forces to ensure that life *must* contradict, deny and annihilate itself. From the beginning, it inspires all the values that are called “superior” to life. But, in fact, “it is not the will which is denied in superior values, it is the superior values that are related to a will to deny, annihilate life.” (Deleuze: 1996: 96-97) In this way reactive forces are turned on life, producing only a reactive life with the value of zero.

In the second condition of nihilism, ‘reactive’ nihilism, the will-to-nothingness is no longer the will to produce a depreciated life but a reaction in which life becomes unreal. In its second stage nihilism, having depreciated life, becomes a reaction against the ‘higher’ values and the supersensible world. Now higher values

themselves come to be devalued, thus denying God, the good, essence and truth. Not only is life stripped of all value, but depreciated life now proceeds in a world without value, 'slipping further towards nothingness'. Whereas previously, supersensible life was opposed to the sensible (essence) turning it into appearance, now everything is appearance. For Nietzsche, this nihilistic world of appearance, as 'light, bright and good' is not the cause of celebration as it is in the Platonic conception but, instead, it is a dark world of slaves. "Man inhabits only the dark side of the Earth, of which he only understands the becoming-reactive which permeates and constitutes it". (Deleuze: 1996: 198) Nihilism signifies the nil value, or the nullity of higher value, that life assumes. The nil value is the will-to-nothingness through which reactive forces triumph. And further, nihilism is the *a priori* of man and his 'universal history', for ressentiment is not an effect of humanity but is constitutive of it. Which is why the history of man is that of nihilism, negation and reaction. Man's existence has been attributed the value of nil: 'a state of life close to zero'. (Deleuze: 1996: 149) In becoming reactive, life remains only as appearance as essence is denied. (Deleuze: 1996: 148)

"Man's essence too is the becoming reactive of forces....(t)he essence of man and of the world occupied by man is the becoming reactive of all forces, nihilism and nothing but nihilism. Man and his generic activity - these are the two skin-diseases of the Earth". (Deleuze: 1996: 169)

The nihilistic world is both will, that wants nothingness, and representation that is appearance. Although, it appears to be denied altogether, essence is nevertheless still inherent in the 'appearance'. The world becomes conceived, through both negative and reactive nihilism, as both sensible and super-sensible. Thus, by way of this illusion, there are created two worlds - of essence and appearance. In opposing both we are establishing a contradiction, "as essence it wills the appearance in which it is reflected". (Deleuze: 1996: 83) Thus, man has become doubly slave to his

dialectical condition. In Nietzsche's nihilistic world, as in Foucault's finite world, life has become reactive and unreal. In this way, Nietzsche's will-to-nothingness parallels Foucault's assertion that Man is an empirico-transcendental doublet caught up in a finite existence which returns the Same. This is not the eternal return of the Superman, but the eternal return of the small, mean man. 'Man then, is essentially reactive, as is the knowledge he produces. Man's history is a becoming reactive, the universal becoming-reactive of force.' (Bogue: 1996: 27) Man's becoming-reactive is nothing more than a will-to-nothingness sought by utilitarian conscious forces. (Deleuze: 1996: 65).

Death and Nihilism

The 'nihilistic thought' in science, which is part of the '*nihilism*' of modern thought, considers phenomena in terms of reactive forces which it then, in turn, interprets from this perspective. The 'pettiness' of perception with which we approach life, which is the "instrument of nihilistic thought", ensures the "triumph of reactive forces. (Deleuze: 1996: 45) Because reactive thought reduces all phenomena to the undifferentiated, Man's nihilistic biological science, with its particular onus on distinguishing between the organic and the inorganic, places "death within the organism" (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 82-83). When empirico-transcendental solutions are applied to the problem of life, it appears that the aim of all life is death. In this way, "(l)ife is condemned from the start" (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 73). Indeed, when conceived through reactive knowledge, death would appear to be the goal of all organic life.

Freud's nihilism : Entropic death drive - negative death

Freud's formulation of the 'death drive' amounts to nothing more than the nihilistic will-to-nothingness. Freud's entire thesis in '*Beyond the Pleasure Principle*' is to be understood in terms of biological evolutionism, an entropic model in which the aim of all life is death. The desire for death becomes understood to be the overarching

biological and psychic aim of life - “the endogenous motor of life”. (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 64) Freud asserts that the drive to burgeoning variation is merely a detour in life’s ultimate aim of attaining entropic death.¹⁸ Freud conceived of the death drive as a qualitative and quantitative return of the living to non-organic matter; life returning to an inanimate state. In Freud’s hypothesis, death is reduced to a desire to ‘turn life against life’, situating death in the ‘human, all too human’ restricted ‘economy of life’. (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 71) Thus Freud restricts death to the determination of matter in which what is repeated too easily follows lines of undifferentiation; life races towards equilibrium. This is too *real*, in that, because reactive thought strives to comprehend the world as calculable unities, Freud’s formulation depends *a priori* on an organic state of things. That life, for Freud, desires to return to an ‘earlier state of things’ assumes that that death is driven by an urge inherent in all organic life to return to the inorganic. Death in this way is not conceived as self-overcoming (this shall be discussed presently) but a life sentenced to death from the start, already ‘dead matter’. In privileging the organism, Freud returns death as death, that is, as a return of the same.¹⁹ Life is “a fatal return which wants its final end right at the beginning”. (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 73) In suggesting psychic tensions can be reduced by returning to a state of equilibrium - a ‘beyond’ conceived as working at the level of biology - Freud establishes a paradox. In turning to biology to lend ‘scientific support’ to his support to his theoretical assertions

¹⁸ Depending on the stance it takes, science either affirms or denies the eternal return of the Same. As Deleuze explains, mechanism affirms the eternal return and thermodynamics negates it: thermodynamic negation of the eternal return is claimed because the “conservation of energy which is (always) interpreted so that quantities of energy not only have a constant sum but also cancel out their differences” (i.e. the energy in the open/closed system is constant). “In both cases we pass from a principle of finitude (the constancy of a sum) to a ‘nihilistic’ principle (the cancelling out of differences in quantities, the sum of which is constant). The mechanist idea affirms the eternal return but only by assuming that differences in quantity balance or cancel each other out between the initial and final states of a reversible system. The final state is identical to the initial state which is itself assumed to be undifferentiated in relation to intermediate states.” For more see Deleuze: 1996: p.46 and Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 62) Becoming can only end in the undifferentiated of being or nothingness, being or non-being, are equally undifferentiated. Becoming in this way is construed as having a final state for, ‘(m)echanism and thermodynamics both pass by the eternal return and fall into the undifferentiated, fall back into the identical’. (Deleuze: 1996: 46)

¹⁹ Though in this Chapter we raise the idea that we must pursue a death which resists life - which is a life that resists the death of man - we shall return to this idea in Part Two of this thesis when we look at how Bergson conceives of life in his ‘*Creative Evolution*’.

ultimately Freud's speculations on the death-drive collapse into metaphysical considerations as to the aim of life. When he mobilizes a particular notion of evolution, infected as it is by its empirico-transcendental status, Freud conjures both mechanistic and finalistic explanations to account for a metaphysical desire. His theory oscillates between real and ideal explanations. In thinking mechanistically and entropically about life and death, Freud perpetuates a reactive metaphysics that depresses difference. Here again, life becomes locked-in an empirico-transcendental bind, the dialectical will-to-nothingness in which true difference is subjugated to the undifferentiated.

“The attempt to deny difference is a part of the more general enterprise of denying life, depreciating existence and promising it a death (“heat” or otherwise) where the universe sinks into the undifferentiated”. (Deleuze: 1996: 45)

Problems which are created through reactive knowledge, are false problems that demand false solutions that uncover only stasis and the unchanging. Thus, in posing life and death as false problems what are found are false solutions; as in the ideas of evolution and the organism, the ‘death drive’ too sinks into the undifferentiated. Thus the problems that man poses, and the solutions he uncovers are inevitable and predictable. That is man finds, in his problems, solutions he already knows. “Ultimately, man finds in things nothing but what he himself has imported into them.” (Nietzsche: 1968: 327) Thus man's knowledge repeatedly returns the Same. In order to escape this reactive cycle man must recover from his skin disease and become ‘healthy’. To break the cycle through which he endlessly produces reactive knowledge and ‘go beyond’ nihilism is to become involved in a struggle against metaphysics: for “there is no *metaphysics* which does not judge and depreciate life in the name of a *supra-sensible* world”. (Deleuze: 1996: 34) This would be to go beyond an end of history which is conceived as a history of man. To go beyond Man's history is to undermine the metaphysics of representation that has informed

much of Western philosophy, with its very special accord given over by it to the Eternal Return of the Same and the Identical. For Nietzsche this involves a struggle to eliminate, the 'whole of the negative'.

Active Thought

According to Deleuze, Nietzsche, it was argued above, distinguishes between knowledge and thought. This Chapter has so far dealt with how Nietzsche configures 'knowledge' as reactive. In order to think man's overcoming, what now needs to be considered is how Nietzsche conceives of 'thought' as active. It was argued above that the rift between knowledge and thought arose when instinct became subordinated to consciousness. Nevertheless, although he has befallen the fate of consciousness, a residue of instinct still remains in man. Evidence of this primal instinct, argues Nietzsche, can to be found when distinguishing between reactive knowledge and active thought. Whereas knowledge is the product of Man's consciousness, instinct is the active unconscious motivation to know. That is, instinct *is* thought, in that, 'thought' is the active and unconscious 'instinct to produce knowledge'. Knowledge as that which dissuades and forbids us from crossing certain limits (Deleuze: 1996: 101) is merely thought that has become subject to reason and which, in doing so, has become reactive (Deleuze: 1996: 101). Further, reason produces knowledge that in turn constrains thought. Reason, however, though it constrains thought to produce knowledge, can never contain it. To explain this requires an elaboration of Nietzsche's approach to knowledge, life and the outside. Whereas, in Foucault's formulation, knowledge is life, in contrast, for Nietzsche, knowledge *is opposed to life*. Knowledge is life; but it is a reactive knowledge that produces a reactive life. Through bad conscience, knowledge has trained active thought to become 'a servant of life'. Importantly, where for Foucault, due to the limiting constraints of finite thought, the outside is unattainable, for Nietzsche, there is thought beyond knowledge through which it is possible to think the outside. In that knowledge restricts thought, and ergo life, this has implications for our conceiving of an outside. Crucially,

‘thought’ is the instinct to produce knowledge which then becomes subject to reason, and, therefore, it must exist beyond knowledge and reason. The importance of this is that the outside is no longer unattainable. The outside, for Nietzsche, is only unattainable so long as thought is subject to reason. Because thought is beyond knowledge then it is ‘outside’ reason. In thus distinguishing between knowledge and thought, Nietzsche allows us the possibility of glimpsing the outside. Indeed, for Nietzsche, thought is the ‘outside’. Further, life too, like thought, lies beyond knowledge so therefore, life too *is* the outside. Life and active thought are the outside. In order to think life is to think actively. This is why Nietzsche can state that *knowledge is opposed to life*. (Deleuze: 1996: 100) What is required in order to be able to think the outside then, to think life, is to think thought in an entirely different manner than reactive thought, so to engage in active thinking. To think actively, is to affirm the outside which, ‘from the point of view’ of this thesis, is to go beyond man and to think true difference and vital life. This affords the possibility of demonstrating the main proposal of this thesis, that ‘man is that which differs in degree from himself, becoming-woman is that which differs in kind in-itself’.

Will-to-power

Though Nietzsche does not contest that Man’s world has been seized by reactive forces, he also believes in a purely qualitative abstract determination of forces, for forces have quantity but they also have quality. Forces are both ‘active’ and ‘reactive’. To demonstrate both the limitations of thinking reactively and the potential of thinking actively about life, he takes as an example the case of evolution and evolutionary theory.

Arguing that evolution restricts the will to life, and evolutionary theory is a becoming reactive of thought, Nietzsche asks, if evolution (as a reactive conception of life) were the purpose of life then “why do species exist as failed?” (Deleuze: 1996: 169) Why does it appear that the activity of species, ‘its aim and its product’, is abortive? In

their struggle to survive, species rush towards extinction. For Nietzsche the answer is that because of his own reactive thought, Darwin misunderstood struggle. In confusing struggle and selection, Darwin ...“failed to see that the result of struggle was opposite of what he thought; that it does select, but it selects only the weak and assures their triumph”. (Deleuze: 1996: 82) Struggle is not the survival of the fittest; indeed, the evolution of the species, when conceived reactively is the long march to become undifferentiated.

“Struggle is not the principle or the motor of hierarchy but the means by which the slave reverses hierarchy. Struggle is never an active expression of forces, nor the manifestation of a will to power that affirms - any more than its result expresses the triumph of the master or the strong”(Deleuze: 1996: 82).

‘Struggle, actually, is the means by which the weak prevail over the strong, because they are in greater number’ (Deleuze: 1996: 82). Simple life forms are the most durable, the most complex perish more easily. The motivation of life then cannot be self-preservation, as evolutionary theory would have us believe, contenders aim at surpassing, not preserving, themselves. To an active thought, teleological principles such as, ‘the instinct to self-preservation’ are ‘superfluous’, merely side effects of a greater power.(Schacht: 1992: 239-241) A living thing wants, above anything else, to discharge its force. (Not, as we have seen, as Freud contended in his formulation of the ‘death drive’).

If life were conditioned by external environmental factors, the drive would surely be towards homogeneity: standardization, integration and stable equilibrium for species tend towards increasing complexity, not simplicity. But life is not that which perpetually slips into the undifferentiated and the unchanging. Equilibrium and stasis are only momentary equiposing of ‘forces in tension’. *Change* is the main feature of life. The organism, selection, adaptation and reproduction are later additions to life.

produced through reactive forces. They are merely blockages, when active forces become dominated temporarily by reactive forces. Life is more than a drive to 'nourishment', 'procreation' and conservation, which are merely secondary functions, and derivative to the will to power (Schacht: 1992: 244). Life is the active force behind thought, conceived as will-to-power, of which the organism and thinking, feeling and willing are but an off-shoot of this active force (Schacht: 1992: 238). Though scientists attempt to explain these phenomena mechanistically and for spiritually they cannot be contained in these views. When approached through science, the organism becomes 'petty' as it is understood through reactive forces. For, whilst we understand the organism in terms of reactive forces, we fail to appreciate the 'essential priority' of the 'highest functionaries' within the organism itself, which we deny; those 'form-giving forces' which are followed only later by 'adaptation' which is reactive. (Schacht: 1992: 244-245) Life then, when conceived as self-preservation as adaptation to external factors is a reactive force, a will to evolution. However, for Nietzsche, the active affirmative life force is life that surpasses itself. He calls this force *will to power*. Will is not a conscious agent or a desire for power - for consciousness is a reactive force. Will-to-power is an active, affirmative *unconscious* force, and a science founded on a philosophy of nature - as will-to-power - is concerned with all that is active.

Active Science

In a movement towards an active thinking of this 'will', Deleuze asks, "What would an active science be like?" To answer this, Deleuze turns to Nietzsche's *Gay Science*. For Nietzsche, the task is to discover a new way of thinking about life that would bring about a transformation in the sciences that would give to thought another sense that would affirm life. To think actively is to think a life that would break free of the limits imposed on it by knowledge and go beyond the restraints that reactive life cuts out for it. An active science would bring into thought the 'special forces' of the outside that could give thought a 'new lease of life'? This new science of life, would

generate an *active thinking* that “would affirm life instead of a knowledge that is opposed to life”. (Deleuze: 1996: 101) An active science would not pursue the conscious utilitarian lines of reasoning, would instead be concerned to engage with unconscious activity for, “(t)he great activity is unconscious” (Deleuze: 1996: 41)

“The only true science is that of activity, but the science of activity is also the science of what is necessarily unconscious. The idea that science must follow in the steps of consciousness, in the same direction, is absurd.....In fact there can only be science where there is no consciousness, where there can be no consciousness”. (Deleuze: 1996: 42)

Furthermore, an active science is concerned with life as an unconscious *will-to-power*. Rather than being driven by a ‘will-to-nothingness’ that reduces life to teleological principles, an active science, as will-to-power, pursues a life that strives to surpass itself, a will to life through which every living thing strives to become more.

An active science would be concerned, not merely with appearances, equivalencies and resemblances, but with real activity. Real activity fails to be exhibited empirically for in the world - the ‘in-itself’ - there is no rule of law and no respect for laws. As a result of its mania for seeking balance, general science necessarily ‘falls short of a “true theory of force”’, (Deleuze: 1996: 45)

“Only an active science is capable of discovering active forces and also of recognising reactive forces for what they are - forces. Only the active science is capable of interpreting real activities and real relations between forces.” (Deleuze: 1996: 75)

active affirming nihilism

Nietzsche's active science would be a 'philosophy of nature' (which Deleuze interprets as a 'philosophy of difference') driven by an active, affirming force. Through this, Man could strive to articulate a way 'beyond' the ascetic ideal of 'general' science to attain a glimpse of the future in which man has overcome himself. A becoming-active is a flight from the organism. In surpassing itself life would free death from the organism and the organism's fate to become undifferentiated. Indeed, it is the requirement of active science that the demise in the stature of the organism is brought about. This would bring about the active destruction of man; a becoming active through an affirmative nihilism through which negation is overcome and life surpasses itself.

This would entail what Nietzsche refers to as a '*transvaluation*', or *transmutation* (Deleuze: 1996: 163) in which negative and reactive nihilism are transformed into the power of affirmation. The dual system of negative and reactive nihilism is actually an 'incomplete nihilism' which, because it remains unfinished is reactive. Were it completed thought could be freed from its reactive constraints. It is only by way of 'transmutation' (Deleuze: 1996: 173) that nihilism can return completed. (Deleuze: 1996: 172-175 & 68-69) At the point of transmutation the negative force becomes active and turns upon reactive forces. The negative 'changes quality' and passes into 'the service of affirmation'. It is here, for Nietzsche, we discover the anti-dialectic affirming active nihilism. (Deleuze: 1996: 198) It is in approaching the problem of death through active, affirming thought that death is freed from a negative destructive nihilism. An active science would free thought from negative or reactive nihilism. Instead what is willed for is an active affirming nihilism. By overcoming negation and defeating itself nihilism can return as active. An active affirming nihilism is to will the active destruction of man. (Deleuze: 1996: 172-175 & 68-69) To think an active destruction of man is to pose death as a true problem. To think of death in this way is to think death as the active nihilism of the outside is to conceive of a pure

death. (Deleuze: 1996: 36) And for the purposes of this thesis, in its pure form, a death that resists (reactive) life is the possibility of attaining the outside and returning true difference. An active science because it is interested in returning an active destruction of man, has as its motivation therefore, death as the source of all questions and problems. (Deleuze: 1996: 59) With this in mind, Deleuze asks, how can we speak of positive ‘death of man’? To undergo a positive death is to discover a death which is ‘life’ as the outside? This, it will become apparent, entails “*discovering, inventing, new possibilities of life*”. (Deleuze: 1996: 101)

Man’s disappearance: positive death:

In order to escape the ‘biological lock-ins’ (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 61) of life, evolution, the organism, death and matter then, ‘man’ must prepare to die. “Is it possible”, asks Ansell Pearson, “to formulate death as a question and a problem before it becomes marked as a limitation and a negation?”, that is, before it becomes enshrined in finitude? (Deleuze: 1997: 59) Indeed this is Deleuze’s concern and motivation for his critique of Freud’s interpretation of the death-drive in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. For Deleuze, death must be freed from its constraints from the point of view of the ego. This image of death as negative refers to the death of the ‘I’. This constitutes a death of ‘man’ that can only ever be regarded entropically: to die is to return to an undifferentiated equilibrium. (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 58) To conceive of death as a propulsion to repeat a ‘purely physical or material repetition’, Deleuze refers to as merely ‘brute repetition’. (Ansell-Pearson: 1999: 99) Because death is conceived as a negative opposition between Eros and Thanatos, in the Freudian model, it is impossible to ‘access the more profound death’, the positive death of the eternal return. What becomes apparent through Deleuze’s reading of the death-drive is that Freud’s approach to the problem of death is not the same as Nietzsche’s formulation of an active nihilism. Nietzsche’s engagement with thermodynamics is an attack on its reactive metaphysical underpinning. Whereas for Freud, death is

conceived as a limitation imposed on the biological, for Nietzsche, death is conceived as an open-ended becoming of forces.

In the context of a critique of Freud's formulation of the death-drive, Deleuze produces a positive conception of death. Using Nietzsche's model of forces, Deleuze reconfigures death 'beyond' Freud's entropic model, referring to it as a 'state of free differences', as that which is the condition of possibility of difference (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 58 & 61-63) In utilizing Nietzsche's theory of forces, Deleuze introduces differentiation into death where there was in Freud's formulation of the death-drive only the undifferentiated. To free the becoming of a positive, dynamical death (the profound 'death' of the eternal return) is to free death from the anthropomorphic constraints of mechanism and thermodynamics.(Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 62) "There cannot be either a mechanist or a finalist (entropic) model of death since death is 'what never ceases and never finishes happening in every becoming. Death happens, but only in terms of a 'becoming'". (Deleuze and Guattari: 1994: 330 and Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 82-83)

How does Deleuze configure a death beyond the organism, beyond evolution conceived in terms of filiation and descent? How can death be read other than through the rubric of identity, analogy, resemblance and opposition? The pure form of death that Deleuze advocates, is not reducible to matter or dialectical concepts.

"Death does not appear in the objective model of an indifferent inanimate matter to which the living would 'return'; it is present in the living in the form of a subjective and differentiated experience endowed with its prototype. It is not a material state; on the contrary, having renounced all matter, it corresponds to a pure form - the empty form of time....It is neither the limitation imposed by matter upon mortal life, nor the opposition between matter and immortal life, which furnishes death with its prototype. Death is, rather, the last form of the problematic, the source of problems and

questions, the sign of their persistence over and above every response, the ‘Where?’, and ‘When?’ which designate this (non)-being where every affirmation is nourished”.

(Deleuze: 1994: 112)

In order then, to attain the active ‘thought’ that would free true difference from the suffocation of organic life, Deleuze invites organic life to ‘open itself up to the system of the outside’. (Ansell-Pearson: 1999: 114) For Deleuze, the deeply held ideas of organic life and organic dissipation, run contrary to an active positive death. A positive death is not an analogy or a metaphor for something that transcends life, it is not based on the idea of an original identity, and it is not found in resemblances or balances. For Deleuze, death is read as non-organic is a sign of ‘*vital life*’ that is not containable in the idea of the organic or hierarchical aspiration of species. In conceiving of death as vital life, Deleuze generates a means to conceive of death, not as in opposition to life, nor as a negation of difference or an end state, but an openended becoming. For Deleuze, a positive death *is* an active life that *is* difference in-itself as an affirmation of a univocal Being which disperses, once and for all, any founding contradiction.

Death through entropy and involution

The problem of death can be approached in two ways, reactively or actively. To return a reactive death is to return death to the slavery of its dialectical form through which it comes to be posed as a problem badly stated, and which, in turn, demands false solutions, such as, evolution and the organism (failed becomings) through which things merely ‘die’. In this way, the process of death, and life, is the persistent posing of false problems.

Only when death is restated properly as an active pure form of becoming, is it the possibility of discovering true difference as vital in nature. Active death frees internal difference from the ‘I’ of the Self-same in which life as become imprisoned. Vital

life is a death which knows the ‘right time’, ‘the consummating death’ that contains ‘a promise of life and death in life’. (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 58) “Death is an invented state” (Artaud in Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 82) and further, “The human body dies, Artaud says, only because we have forgotten how to transform and change it.” (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 83) To free difference is to discover that life, far from being that which is restrained by evolutionary principles, is “the liberation of those little differences which swarm through an intensive involution.”²⁰ (Ansell-Pearson: 1999: 97) “According to Nietzsche the eternal return is..... a thought of the absolutely different which calls for a new principle outside science.” (Deleuze: 1996: 46) This new principle is vital life as involution. Only a death which ‘involves’ can free difference in itself. A death that ‘involves’ is the possibility of the *eternal return of difference*.

The overman: the eternal return of difference:

‘How shall man be *overcome*?’ (Zarathustra in Deleuze: 1996: 163)

Not all relations between the ‘same’ and the ‘other’ necessarily take the form of the dialectic. The overman overcomes the negative difference of the dialectic, for when forces enter into relations with other forces, “(l)ife struggles with *another kind* of life.” (Deleuze: 1996: 8) The concept of the ‘overman’ is an anti-dialectical conception of man and its objects affirmation and enjoyment replaces negation, opposition and contradiction. (Deleuze: 1996: 9) In freeing thought from nihilism and engaging in affirmative thought, “a new way of thinking” that affirms difference; ‘affirms life, and the will to life’. (Deleuze: 1996: 34) is the place of the overman.

“The overman has nothing in common with the species of being of the dialecticians, with man as species or with ego.....he differs in nature from man, from the ego. The

²⁰ ‘Involution’ in this sense should not be confused with the Freudian conception which speaks of psychic regression.

overman is defined by a new way of feeling....(a) new way of thinking....(a) new way of evaluating” (Deleuze: 1996: 163)

The Overman is the ‘going beyond’ the ‘human-all-too-human’ existence of resentment. Man has imprisoned himself in the folds of finitude yet, it is ‘within man’ that vital new forces are forging new combinations and creating new forms. It is man himself that can and must liberate life. This is the meaning of ‘the superman’. We must endeavour to combine with forces which resist the ‘death of man’. Find in man a force of life that resists ‘death’. He must strive to become a ‘living being’ that is a force of resistance freed from the man-form.

“Deleuze brings Foucault into contact with Spinoza and Nietzsche on the issue of the ‘death of man’ in which the task becomes one of locating in the human a set of forces that ‘resist’ this death. It is not, therefore, Deleuze suggests, a question addressed of the ‘human compound’ but rather of the ‘dark forces of finitude’ that are not initially human but which, through historical formation, have entered into relation with the forces that make up the human.” (Ansell-Pearson: 1999: 221)

When Ansell Pearson asks, “(w)hat kind of death belongs to the eternal return?” (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 57), let us be clear, it is not the death of the eternal return of the Same. (Bogue: 1996: 28) It is the kind of non-organistic death through which man can escape the forces of finitude and attain the ‘outside’. Here, is to discover a passage to an ‘over-death’ which would constitute a ‘going beyond’ to a becoming overman. The eternal return speaks of not only of death, but of **rebirth**, for it is the returning again of a vital life as difference in-itself.

The start of this Chapter raised the issue of what might follow man. Part One concludes that, what follows man, is the overman. The overman is the eternal return of difference which, otherwise stated, the rebirth of vital life. Furthermore, and this

will be argued in conclusion to this thesis, beyond man, the overman is the becoming-woman of man.

Chapter Four

Immediate Datum:
Knowing the Difference-‘beyond the decisive turn’

Immediate Datum: Knowing the Difference -

'beyond the decisive turn'

In Part One of this thesis the problem of difference, which it was argued is a problem of life and death, was situated in the question of the eternal return of the Same. The question that was addressed was, what kind of death and life are the death and life of the eternal return of the Same? The answer was a reactive form of death which denied difference and, as part of a more general project of depreciating existence, promised life a death where it sinks into the undifferentiated. (Deleuze: 1996: 45) For this reason, it was shown, death and life were the result of badly stated problems. The problem remains as to how to state problems correctly and move beyond the eternal return of the Same and return true difference.

This problem was approached tentatively in Chapter Three when it was argued that, to return true difference, would be to conceive of a 'positive' death of Man. By undergoing an active, affirmative death, man could overcome himself and so the return an active, affirmative life. For this reason, it was argued that this positive death of the eternal return of difference would be both a death and a *rebirth*. It will become clear that, this idea that the eternal return of difference is a rebirth as a vital life, is central to understanding the main tenet of this thesis. There can only be a rebirth in the eternal return of difference for the eternal return of the Same can bring only death. Part Two of this thesis now further attends to the problem of how to think an eternal return of difference and move beyond the false problem. What kind of death and life are the death and life of the eternal return of difference? Indeed, what kind of rebirth is the return of difference? What will be argued, in this Chapter is, that this kind of rebirth is a new image of thought through which it is possible to know the eternal return of difference in-itself. What is reborn is a knowledge of how to true problems, 'properly stated'. Once the problems of Man's death and life are properly stated, what is reborn is a new way of thinking which is the possibility of

knowing the outside, thereby freeing thought of the shackles of the Same and its cycle. Indeed, what is at stake in this rebirth is thought itself, or to be more precise, that which Foucault alluded to, and had named, the unthought. In posing the eternal return of difference as a true problem then, this thesis asks, is it possible to ‘know’ the unthought, otherwise termed the ‘outside’, for “...(h)ow can man think what he does not think....How can man be that life whose web, pulsations, and buried energy constantly exceed the experience that he is immediately given of them..?” (Foucault: 1992: 323). It will become apparent that to think the unthought requires a ‘rebirth’ of difference conceived through an entirely different kind of knowledge. This form of knowledge will discover a difference which is much more profound, and which sets itself against, the other theory of difference, the dialectic. True difference must always be differentiated from a dialectic which is founded on alterity, negation and contradiction, and which lacks ‘internal difference (which it shall be demonstrated in Chapter Five is the possibility of ‘difference in-itself)’. The dialectic is an abstract and external conception of difference which is the insidious form of difference that is mediated by representation. In a sense we are following Nietzsche in his pursuit of an ‘instinctual knowledge’, though, in Bergson’s writing,²¹ we discover a more ‘nuanced’ form of ‘instinct’, something akin to instinct but, as it will be demonstrated, it is a knowledge that is at once both ‘broader and narrower’ (elaborated in chapter 5). This rebirth entails a kind of knowledge that knows true difference, or that which Bergson describes as having ‘internal difference’(we shall return to this presently). It will produce a kind of ‘knowing’ that is the possibility of thinking an eternal return of difference as that which differs in-itself and not as a form merely opposed to the Identical or the One.

²¹ Throughout this Chapter, when referring to Bergson, it is with reference to Deleuze: 1988 & 1997; Carr: 1914; Chevalier: 1928.

Beyond Representation

Difference, so long as it is ‘mediated’ by representation²², whether in the Same or in reflections of the Same, can only be conceived of as negation and contradiction. So long as it is mediated through representation, difference is subjected to a hierarchy conceived in terms of degrees of difference from the Same. To know true difference, argue Deleuze, is to pursue a knowledge beyond representation for, whilst ‘it is subject to the requirements of representation’, “(d)ifference cannot be thought in itself” (Deleuze: 1994: 262). All representation is a becoming-reactive of thought and can produce only a negative form of difference and a negative form of power.

“The mania for representing, for being represented, for getting oneself represented; for having representatives and represented: this is the mania that is common to all slaves, the only relation between themselves they can conceive of, the relation that they impose with their triumph. The notion of representation poisons philosophy: it is the direct product of the slave and of the relations between slaves, it constitutes the worst, most mediocre and most base interpretation of power.” (Deleuze: 1996: 81)

Representation ‘poisons’ the eternal return for it introduces into it a contradiction which subordinates difference to a version of itself. As a result, all becoming is a becoming-reactive. What must be pursued is an eternal return of difference which is a becoming-active of thought. For as Deleuze states, “becoming is double: becoming-active and becoming-reactive.....it would be contradictory for the being of becoming to be affirmed of a becoming-reactive, of a becoming that is itself nihilistic.”(Deleuze: 1996: 71-72) Any interpretation of *becoming*, when mediated through representation, is a becoming-reactive, and is therefore, ‘fatally’ flawed. Becoming when posed in terms of the negative difference of resentment can

²² It was argued in the introduction to this thesis that ‘reason’ conceptualizes difference in terms of four principle aspects, four great ‘illusions’ of representation: identity, opposition, analogy, and resemblance’, and is mediated by it in that it is subjugated to this ‘fourfold root’.

produce only failed becomings²³. In order to free himself of the endless cycle of the reactive dialectic - the 'essence' of representational thinking - and on to a place, or rather a *time*, which is rebirth of true difference, civilized man must take the painful journey back through resentment and become the 'sea-animal' who must learn new ways to carry himself (Patton: 1996: 75). This 'painful, return 'journey' is the process of rethinking knowledge and its relationship to the outside. To make this journey, to engage in an active-becoming, would require taking a leap beyond, what Bergson refers to as, '*the decisive turn of experience*'(discussed below at length). To go 'beyond the turn' is to go beyond representation and so to undergo the rebirth of the eternal return of difference; a becoming-active of thought.

Bergsonism: The new image of thought - knowing the difference

In order to think an active becoming which returns 'difference-in-itself', this thesis now turns to Bergson's 'philosophy of nature' and to Deleuze's reading of this in the pursuit of true difference. Deleuze's innovation is to take Bergson's method of philosophical intuition as a means of division to isolate differences in kind from differences in degree and, in thinking through Bergson's 'philosophy of life', with his own innovative twist, Deleuze makes it possible to think difference *in-itself* which carries us away from the equivocal and the Same. Deleuze discovers, in Bergson, a form of knowledge which is the possibility of discovering that difference-in-itself is *univocal* and not equivocal. This idea is crucial in knowing a 'life' on the outside that is not founded on contradiction and negation. That is, in discovering difference which has internal difference in which a thing differs first and foremost in-itself before it differs from anything else, Deleuze extinguishes the opposition and limitation that fuels negative difference. This difference is univocal and not equivocal which would demand that difference differ from something. (This will be returned to in Chapters

²³ For instance, I would interpret Irigaray's idea in her *Marine Lovers of Friedrich Nietzsche* (1991) that the 'eternal return' is the return of repressed femininity - her response to Nietzsche Zarathustra - as a failed becoming, and not at all a true becoming-woman. (In conclusion to this thesis, I discuss false becomings in more detail).

Five and Six in a discussion of vital life as univocal. Between Bergson and Deleuze, their achievement is to produce a ‘new *image* of thought’, and a new perception of reality through which it is possible to know difference as univocal.²⁴ This (it will be shown in Chapter Six) has important implications for a new ‘theory of life’. Equipped with this new perception of reality, new image of thought, (and new theory of life), it is then possible to argue that the rebirth of difference which is a question of ‘knowing’ the outside’, is the proper place, and time, of a Superfold or the ‘overman’, and which will be argued in the conclusion to this thesis, is the ‘becoming-woman’ of man.

To this end, the remainder of this Chapter, together with Chapter Five, are concerned with explaining and demonstrating the ‘method’ through which Bergson reveals the intrinsic nature of false problems. This method, which he names Intuition, gives a means to move beyond all false becomings and dialectical impasses. What Bergson discovers, in applying his method, are pure dualisms which are not contradictory in nature whereby it becomes possible to think true difference.

In ‘*Bergsonism*’ (1988) and ‘*La Conception de la difference chez Bergson*’ (translated, 1997), Deleuze interrogates Bergson’s method of Intuition and investigates the relationships between duration, memory and *elan vital* ‘from the point of view of knowledge’ in order to return difference in-itself by decomposing representation (Deleuze: 1988: 14).

Two Forms of Knowledge

Bergson’s methodology of Intuition, Deleuze explains, is ‘one of the most fully developed methods in philosophy’, and which has, according to Deleuze, precise rules; ‘as precise in *its* field, as capable of being prolonged and transmitted as science

²⁴ The term ‘the new image of thought’ is borrowed from Deleuze’s ‘*Difference and Repetition*’ (1994)

itself is.” (Deleuze: 1988: 14) Yet, argues Deleuze, whilst intuition can describe real experiences it does not provide us with a method of knowing that ‘experience’ with the same ‘kind’ of precision as that of a science, and for good reason, for intuition and science it will become clear differ in kind and not in degree. Whilst science attains knowledge through reasoned pursuit, “Intuition is like the heart, it *knows*”. (Chevalier: 1928: 118). But what does Intuition ‘know’? To answer this, Chevalier (1928) explains it is first important to stress that, for Bergson, there are two profoundly different ways of knowing a thing. Science implies knowledge which is mediated and abstract whereas Intuition implies what is immediately and directly known. The first case is concerned with ‘relative’ knowledge and is the kind of knowledge the intellect produces. It is analytical and discursive, and is subjected to reason. Relative knowledge then can be considered to be ‘external’ and depends on our moving around an object. Science, as an intellectual pursuit, views things from without and sees only the exterior and then declares objectivity.

The second kind of knowledge, with which Bergson is more concerned, is *absolute* knowledge. Knowledge which is absolute is immediate and based in experience. It can be considered as ‘internal’ knowledge in that it requires that we ‘enter into’ the object. This knowledge is like the knowledge we have of ourselves which is distinct from the discursive intellect. It should not, however, be conceived of as off-hand, or merely commonsensical, rather it crowns the intellect and perfects it. Yet, in a sense, there is a way in which absolute knowledge can be considered objective, but not as conceived in the usual scientific sense. If it could be considered at all objective, it is in considering the perception of a thing as a reconstruction, in which the “objectivity of the material thing is immanent in the perception we have of it”. (Chevalier: 1928: 126) We must therefore use the term objectivity with caution. This becomes clearer if it is understood that absolute knowledge is limited knowledge and that limited knowledge and relative knowledge are not the same thing. Limited knowledge is absolute in that it is a limited knowledge, but absolute knowledge, of the Absolute.

Therefore, an absolute, but limited knowledge is not a relative and compromised form of knowledge. The absolute knowledge with which Intuition is concerned does not imply knowledge of a Whole though, at the heart of Bergson's philosophy, there is indeed a Whole (an Absolute Totality), of which the absolute is but a part. Understanding that there is an Absolute (it will be demonstrated in Chapters Five and Six) that Intuition can know, is crucial in undoing the dualistic contradiction of equivocal Being. Yet, absolute knowledge is not a relative knowledge of the Whole, it is a limited knowledge of the Whole.

The 'immediate knowledge' that Intuition grasps is in some way Absolute, yet it is but a part of this Totality. So, in that limited knowledge - immediate knowledge - is a knowledge of the whole, there is a sense in which absolute knowledge can be considered to be subjective; not 'subjective' as is understood through relative knowledge as an abstracted and exterior form. Subjectivity, when read in terms of absolute knowledge, demands a quite different interpretation. (The implications of this will be discussed in depth in Chapter Five) Absolute, limited knowledge is then both subjective and objective, but *not* relative. It implies a real, immediate, but limited, knowledge of reality. (This shall be elaborated presently when Bergson's theory of selective perception will be discussed). All things then can be approached through these two ways of knowing the world (as we saw in Chapter three in the case of the janus face of death), the simple or the compound. Simple knowledge is the absolute knowledge, the immediate knowledge, (*connaissance*) of Intuition. Compound knowledge is the relative knowledge which comprises of impure mixtures of reducible phenomena. (Chevalier: 1928: 85-86) "(T)o know a thing absolutely is to know it from the inside, in itself, and as simple; to know a thing relatively is to know it from the outside, as a function of something else, as compound". (Chevalier: 1928: 92) Compound knowledge always comprises of concepts. Simple knowledge, when applied to compound knowledge is a means of decomposition of these impure

mixtures. Intelligence produces composites comprised of impure mixtures of dualisms, Intuition is a means to decompose these.

Intuition

Intuition, it will now be demonstrated, involves showing how it is that representation comprises of impure composites, and also how representation leads us into the stating of all kinds of erroneous problems that demand (as has been demonstrated) false solutions. Through decomposition there can be discovered an altogether different type of knowledge than the type that science knows. It is not the type that could ever be understood to comprise a ‘formation’ of any order, but, is a type which can never be ‘formulated’ in any analytical sense. It is the kind of knowledge which escapes reason and merges with the outside.

Intuition offers a method of decomposing representation in order to isolate differences in nature and to uncover *pure presences*, or pure concepts which are not dialectical in nature. Crucially, and this will become clearer as we proceed, it is in understanding the nature of pure presences, and the fundamental place they occupy in the ‘new image of thought’, that it becomes possible to conceive of the ‘rebirth’ of the eternal return.

Intuition is thus concerned with knowing the pure presences that differ ‘in nature’ from the abstract, conceptual knowledge that is the concern of science. Whereas relative knowledge is the domain of the intellect, ‘immediate knowledge’ can be known only through Intuition. Intuition, because it grasps immediate knowledge, is able to perceive real objects at a glance. Intuition, though it is not a general science, is capable of forming a method even though, in normal understanding, a method would seem to at least require one or several mediations. Intuition suggests, on the contrary, ‘immediate knowledge’. Intuition does not analyse concepts, it is ahead of intelligence in that it is free, as far as possible, from analytic thought and the play of

abstract concepts. Absolute knowledge does not *conceive* of objects, for conception implies hallucination which is the stuff of representation. The whole trouble with concepts is that, because they are produced through relative, reactive knowledge, they generally go in couples and represent opposites which are antagonistic; thesis and antithesis (synthesis merely conflates these) and which represent the world in terms therefore of contradiction. Concepts are the dialectical couplings of which impure composites are composed. They are comprised of dualisms founded on negation and contradiction and, because the intellect poses problems comprised of concepts, it poses problems that are not solvable. Bergson demonstrates that conceiving of the world dualistically, so that phenomena are merely negative deteriorations, is erroneous. (Chevalier: 1928: 101)

Deleuze, in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1996) discusses Nietzsche's formulation of resentment, the critique of negation, or the negative, is central to Bergson's philosophy. For like Nietzsche's challenge to reactive thinking based on a negation of difference, Bergson's philosophy is a critique of general ideas, the negative of opposition and the negative of limitation. Both of these types of negatives, in Bergson's view, demonstrate the same weakness for both are founded on an initial inadequacy. Both negatives are somehow viewed as mere 'deteriorations' between limits, and sometimes as oppositions are problems of degree. The "common root" of all negation is to think in terms of the 'general' for negation always relies on *concepts* which are to begin with too abstract.

False Problems

Deleuze asks us to consider Bergson's notion of the false problem in asking, why is there something rather than nothing? Contained within this concept is a hierarchy of degree based on opposition and limitation. 'Something' is of a higher degree order than 'nothing', nought being the lowest degree, and in between there are n degrees of difference on a continuum. This was demonstrated in Chapter Two when the idea of

finite 'life' was argued to be founded on a spatial continuum. Opposing, for instance, notions of order and being with the negative 'deteriorations' disorder and nonbeing, merely serves, through the combination of the opposites and their extreme limits to produce all things synthetically. This is due to the habit of our intellects. It injects contradiction into both the object under scrutiny and the methods of enquiry it applies. Further, in a dualism there is always a threat that what has been subjugated may 'return', thereby overturning it and becoming itself predominant. This would merely serve to invert the dualism, changing nothing of the nature of the problem. Thus dualisms are defensive, always suspiciously guarding their domain, hence disliking change in the form of new modes of thinking. Bergson is, however, not interested in simply overturning dualisms, for this would be a futile exercise which would merely serve to perpetuate the false becoming of a reactive dialectic. Bergson finds a way to think where dialectical problems cannot arise in the first instance. (Deleuze: 1988: 17-20)

To begin with, Bergson dismisses the hierarchy of dialectical, conceptual dualisms as false. To illustrate that notions of 'more' or 'less', is a false hierarchy produced through opposition and limitation, Bergson demonstrates that there is actually 'more' in the idea of non-being than, is usually accepted, 'less' as is also the case in disorder and order. He explains this by arguing that contained in the idea of non-being is the idea of being and in addition to that, the 'operation of negation', and also the 'psychological' imperative for that negation. What actually fascinates us then is the absence or 'lack' rather than the presence of being. The same applies in the idea of disorder; the idea, plus negation, plus the imperative to negate. For Bergson, order requires an 'act of mind' which works in retrospect to become 'order', which in fact is only the possible with hindsight, plus the motive for that mental act. Hence we are led to asking non-existent questions such as "why is there something rather than nothing?". "Why is there order rather than disorder?" or, "Why is there this rather than that?" (Deleuze: 1988: 18). These are erroneous for they mistakenly take 'the

more' for 'the less', believing that before order there must have been disorder, that non being, must have pre-existed being. It would seem to appear that what determined truth were the seemingly primordial pre-determinants, disorder and non being. In this way, 'order' and 'being' are somehow seen to precede "the creative act that constitutes them", as a retrograde reflection of themselves, as if a void was filled and that 'truth' was finally and expectedly achieved. However, 'truth' is the "fundamental illusion" of the false problem - 'truth' is a retrograde (backward) action. Both 'more' and 'less' are the result a 'general' view of order that we have insisted on, and by which we limit ourselves in opposing it to disorder (in general) (Deleuze: 1988: 18). For Bergson, questions which are concerned with 'less' and 'more' are fictitious, for there is no such thing as nothing. Nothing depends on the idea of something. In the same way, behind reality there is no non-being, this is a false idea.

The idea of an absolute nothing is impossible. In thinking the absence of something we depend on there being a something to be absent. This is the case in the regime of the Same where difference is dependent on the general concept Identity, even if Identity is absent. That is, difference relies merely on the Idea of an Identity that is differs from. An intuitive theory of knowledge which knows the Absolute must rule out any notion of absolutely nothing. We always think of something when we think of nothing. Hence there arise false views of the world, and the creation ergo of false problems; why is there order rather than disorder? What Intuition reveals to us is that living reality is Absolute, non-existence is unimaginable, for the very idea of it is the result of intellect bent towards utility through which it creates false dualistic ideas about the world. The intellect and science offers us a fictitious way of knowing which produces problems that are unsolvable. So when we ask the question, why is there something rather than nothing?, we are posing a futile problem, for nothing or nought is impossible. "Such questions arise in false ideas, and have no answer because they have no meaning". (Carr: 1914: 72) Thus, Bergson is not interested in

merely overturning a dualism to reverse a hierarchy, but instead wants to demonstrate that when we approach things through knowledge ‘in general’, our reality, indeed our experience, offers us only ‘composites’ which in turn lead us to ‘pose the problem of differences in degree. Thus the intellect, in approaching phenomena, produces and demands an endless cycle of the dialectic. The intellect is ‘naturally’ dialectical, ceaselessly caught up in a finite empirico-transcendentalism. Dialectical contradiction then, is only an illusion of retrospect. This is the case of all dualisms, and of the dualisms discussed in this thesis, of life and death, of positive and relative, of empirical and transcendental, of mechanism and finalism, of Identity and difference, of Same and other, of man and woman, but is not the case, as will be argued in conclusion, of Man and becoming-woman, for this is a dualism of an entirely different nature. False problems then, are the result of the operation of negation. They are what Bergson calls ‘ready-made problems’. They produce badly analysed composites in which difference is perpetually returned in the Identical which force us think to in terms of ready-made problems *in general*. Ready-made problems find their solution in the posing of the problem. To ask ‘why is there something rather than nothing’ is, for Bergson, to pose a non-existent question. That is because contained in it is a ready-formed solution containing the confusion of the ‘more’ and the ‘less’.

Because Man poses false problems which have no solutions, Bergson suggests that he is immersed in an illusion that is lodged in the deepest part of his intelligence, but which is not of his own nature but arises from the ‘world in which he lives’.²⁵ (Deleuze: 1988: 34) This illusion is due to societal pressures and responsibilities

²⁵ through which we have become predisposed to three orders. These Bergson identifies as being:

- (a) the order of *needs, of action, and of society* by which we “retain only what interests us in things”;
- (b) the order of *general ideas* which tend to obscure differences in kind
- (c) the order of *intelligence* which has a natural affinity with space. (Deleuze: 1988: 33)

which man has had to adapt to. In Bergson's opinion, in order to rid himself of this illusion he must learn to pose problems correctly. Bergson's methodology therefore challenges man to rally against illusion, for in doing so, only then can he rediscover 'articulations of the real' - true differences in kind. Bergson then, is concerned with ridding ourselves of the 'general' view of things which leads to the mixing up of relative and absolute knowledges which is at the root of all false problems. Crucially, for Bergson, it is only intuition which can produce and activate the method which can transmit a 'criteria' to discover differences in kind behind differences of degree. Only *intuition* can differentiate between true or false problems. The problem that has just been addressed is that of the non-existent problem; those of non-being and of disorder, that contain within them a 'confusion' of the 'more' and 'less' which are problems of differences of degree. Difference-in-itself necessarily escapes the representation of 'concept' and must be thought of through another means other than representation'. (Bogue: 1996: 57)

To begin with then, Bergson argues, we must go beyond false problems (ready-made problems) and create new ones, by finding ways to test true and false problems. However, then insists Bergson, we must think again about finding solutions. It is erroneous to believe that there can only be true and false solutions and that solutions are our starting point. This error, in Bergson's view, is societal - a set-up. Language ('order - words') transmits 'ready-made' problems, the sort we are then 'forced' to 'solve' and in which we have little freedom to do so. It is, according to Bergson, a kind of slavery which began in the classroom. (Deleuze: 1988: 15) True freedom must lie in the 'power' to create the problems themselves, for problems with pre-given solutions are false. To constitute true problems would entail the eradication of false ones. Philosophy, in Bergson's view, should be a question of finding and then positing a problem rather than solving it. Only once a problem is properly stated can it be solved. A solution exists but is 'covered up'; it must be uncovered, though actually it is not a question simply of uncovering, for uncovering is

‘discovery’ of what exists “actually or virtually” and therefore must eventually happen. Rather, in having stated a problem properly, a solution is invented. Invention brings into being what “didn’t exist” and what “might never have happened”. This is not so argues Deleuze(-Bergson) of mathematics and metaphysics where invention comprises of ‘raising problems’ and “creating the terms in which (they) will be stated”. Ergo the solving and stating of the problem are nearly equivalence. “The truly great problems are set forth only when they are solved”. A true science and a true metaphysics involves the creation of new problems and the invention of solutions. A properly stated problem always has ‘the solution it deserves’, indeed it is the solution that counts. Content to regard the truth (or falsity) of a problem by their ability or inability to reach a solution, many philosophers make the error of transferring ‘true or false’ solutions to the problems themselves. Conscious activity is the achievement of freedom, or free thought, which produces reactive knowledge and, indeed, the history of humanity is the stating, positing and solving of problems. And, ‘of life itself’, this is most true - beyond history - life is an act of avoiding obstacles”. Indeed, the construction of the organism is the stating of a problem and a solution. (Deleuze: 1988: 16-17)

True Problems:

To uncover the source of the false problem involves demonstrating that these are problems of differences of degree and not of kind. We are now in a position to elaborate on Bergson’s notion of the true problem, ‘properly stated’ with which to overcome dualisms of negation and thought ‘in general’. Here, intuition is utilised as a method of knowing how to state problems correctly. Intuition, as it was shown above, is not simply a matter of overturning or reconciling dualisms, it offers a way of thinking in which dialectic problems cannot arise. To illustrate how to pose a problem correctly, outside of a dialectic framework, we turn to Bergson’s famous dualisms. These are:

‘Duration-space, quality-quantity, heterogeneous-homogeneous, continuous-discontinuous, memory-matter, recollection-perception, the two multiplicities, contraction-relaxation (*détente*), instinct-intelligence, the two sources etc. (Deleuze: 1988: 21)

Bergson demonstrates how these impure composites can be broken down to reveal the pure irreducible presences that they contain. The implication of this on knowing true difference will be discussed and also, it will be shown, how these dualisms can be utilized in solving the problem of the false problem. Bergson’s preoccupation with dualisms may seem to contradict his aim to dispense with them were it not the case that Bergson’s project was to demonstrate, and to dismiss, the obsession with more or less as a false problematic. What will become apparent is that the solution to the false problem involves the generation of a very different kind of dualism than the dialectical kind, a difference that does not rely on something external that it differs from, even if that be in the form of an idea. The solution lies with a difference that has internal difference.

The real problem is that *we have lost the ability to distinguish* between two ‘pure presences’, which comprise these composites and which differ in kind. It is in discovering how to state problems properly that we can rediscover these pure presences and think difference-in-itself. Only when representation, that which poisons the eternal return, has been decomposed can it be overcome. To attain the outside then, is to go beyond representation, by discovering the means to state the problem of difference correctly. And in doing so we will also discover how to state any problem correctly. (Deleuze: 1988: 22)

Taking the composite ‘perception-recollection’, or ‘matter and memory’, Bergson demonstrates how, using intuition, it is possible to discover the two pure presences of which it comprised. In doing so, Bergson demonstrates that one of our most

pervasive and instilled dualisms, that of the real and the ideal, is the effect of a badly stated problem. In decomposing the dualism perception-recollection in to its pure components, it can be shown that perception takes on its side all differences of degree whilst recollection takes on all the differences of kind.

What becomes apparent is that there are actually, not one, but two decompositions to be made by taking two ‘decisive turns’ in the ‘overcoming’ of dualisms. Firstly, by taking the first of the two lines, ‘perception’, Bergson illustrates how the mind/body dualism can be restated correctly. In doing so, at the same time he restates correctly another false problem that the dualism has effected, idealism and realism. Indeed, what he demonstrates is that the problem of the mind/body dualism, as with all representation, is that it is the effect of the posing of non-existent problems.

In reworking the mind/body dualism, Bergson develops a theory of perception that constructs a model of the brain in which, he contests, that there is no difference in kind, but only a difference of degree, between the ‘perceptive’ faculty of the brain and the ‘reflexive’ functions of the ‘core’, that is, between the nervous system and the brain. This is to say, the brain does not end at cerebral cortex and the body at the nervous system. There is, for Bergson, no distinction to be made between their functions, or contradiction to be found in their purpose, and therefore there is no dualism involved. In arriving at this conclusion Bergson overcomes the hierarchy of the dialectical dualism which sets mind and body at odds.

Carr (1914), explaining how Bergson arrives at this discovery, reveals how Bergson solves a problem which has been long fought over by Idealists and Realists, and determinists and indeterminists alike, of the distinction between reality and representation. His theory of perception is formulated as follows: The idealist insists on the fact reality is actually a perception in the mind. That somehow the mind is able to project perceptions without and so construct an external world. The realist, on

the other hand, insists that objects are independent things of which the mind has a perception. Yet the realist cannot explain how a perception formed in the brain, or mind, can agree with with an entirely independent object. Both idealism and realism conceive of the brain as a manufactory of perceptions, and that somehow memories are stored in the brain which are then merely reproduced as recollections. (Carr: 1914: 88-99) For Bergson, these conceptions of the function of the brain are false. The brain is neither a manufactory of perceptions nor is it a storehouse of memories whether these be conceived of by idealists or realists. Both of these approaches are erroneous and are the result of a confusion that has arisen because we have lost the ability to distinguish between the two pure presences, the two lines of degree and kind, of perception and recollection. Bergson, rather than conceiving of the world through this dualistic framework, develops a theory of knowledge based on perceiving the world as comprising solely of 'images'. In doing so he thus discovers a way to go beyond the mind/body dichotomy. In Bergson's theory of perception, the entire universe is made up of images. As Olkowski explains, "(i)mage, for Bergson, means something more than what an idealist calls representation and something less than what a realist calls a thing; matter is an aggregate of images, a multiplicity of images." (Olkowski: 1999: 95)

Carr (1914) goes on to explain, that Bergson's thinking, because all things comprise of images which must be processed in order to achieve action, the brain can be likened to a telephone exchange. External images transmit movement to to the 'body'. The body responds by bringing about changes in the surrounding images - and giving back movement to them - selecting in the process. The body is arranged for action - it is a centre of action - and all images which pass through the body are incentives to action, they are already perceptions. The body receives movements which radiate from objects and the brains function is to respond with an appropriate new, and original, action. The function of the brain is then simply to transmit movement, and further, to give choice of movement. The function of the body with

regard to perception is the selection of images. And because perception is a process of selecting and separating, perceptual ‘representation’ is the object minus everything else. An object is created, therefore, through choice and action. Perceptions would be useless if they did not serve action. (Carr: 1914: 87-99)

Interval

A being, because of the *cerebral interval*, can “retain from a material object and the actions issuing from it only those elements that interest him” (Deleuze: 1988: 24) It follows then that a perception is (always) ‘minus something’, not ‘plus something’ - that is, it is minus all that it is not of interest to us - what has not interested us. Hence the brain does not ‘manufacture representations’ (impure mixtures of degree), it does not add to perception its conceptions, but merely ‘complicates the relationship between excitation and response’. What is created between the two (‘received movement and executed movement’) is an ‘interval’ (écart). That recollections may make advantageous this ‘interval’ and ‘interpolate themselves’(Deleuze: 1988: 24) ‘changes nothing’. Perception then, does not correspond to conceptual knowledge of any sort, for conception implies that something is added to a thing, the thing plus the idea of the thing. Perception is always minus something. Whereas conception implies a fictitious world of appearance, a world fabricated of mind, perception implies a limited, but absolute, knowledge of the real.

When considered through Bergson’s theory of perception, Carr (1914) explains that both the perceptive and reflexive aspects are ‘images like other images, both are involved in movement as in other movements. In pure perception we have discovered our first pure presence. The present is movement, and our bodies are the point of a cone which presses into the future. “Our body is the exact actual present point at which our action is taking place”. (Carr: 1914: 96) Pure perception is the actual present contact with the world in which actions are taking place. In perception we penetrate and touch the reality of things. “When we perceive, we do not, as the

idealist supposes, construct things, nor do we, as the realist supposes, discern them; we represent in images eventual actions". (Carr: 1914: 92).

Bergson shows us then that in properly stating a problem a pervasive dialectic, of hierarchical dualism, can be reworked. For it becomes apparent that there is no difference in kind between our perception of matter and matter itself just as there is no difference in kind between the faculty of the brain and the function of its core. (Deleuze: 1988: 25) Matter is not merely a degradation of mind, for mind and body both share the same purpose, they are turned towards action. We misunderstand reality if we think 'in general' and in negation. Indeed, of this representational world Deleuze-Bergson argue; there are so many misconceptions held in the idea that we project purely internal states outside ourselves that lead to so many badly stated questions that give rise to bogus answers. (Deleuze: 1988: 24) In stating the problem of the mind and body, or reality and representation properly, a dualism has been correctly stated. "The point of view at which matter and mind appear to be two realities different in their nature...is simply superseded" (Carr: 1914: 73). Both are on the line of perception which is the line of differences in degree.

The Second 'Decisive Turn'

In showing that there is no difference in kind between brain and the nervous system, and that matter is no longer merely to be considered a deterioration of mind, we have taken the first of two turns in experience through which to rework the mind/body dualism.

We have so far considered the first line, perception. However, representation comprises of two lines that differ in kind, Deleuze explains. The problem of representation arises when we confuse and mix up these two lines. In the case of the composite under scrutiny, perception and recollection, there are two pure presences which become confused, thus creating the illusion that there are only differences of

degree. That is, we can no longer perceive that there are here two lines that differ in kind.

This first line, it has been shown, is the line of matter, of the pure present, that of differences in degree. On this *first* line, there can only be matter and movement, ‘more or less’ complicated or delayed’. This Bergson refers to as the reflexive dualism.

However, there are two lines, two pure presences, the other is that of differences in kind. If perception is all in matter, then what for Bergson is mind? It shall become clear that for Bergson this is a question of memory. This involves the division of the second line, recollection. It is only in revealing both lines that it becomes possible take the condition of experience as a ‘whole’. The *second* line, memory, or the line of the pure past, differs in kind from the first:

1st line: Perception-object-matter;
(or, *perception* which puts us into *matter*)
- expansion

and

2nd line: Affectivity, recollection-memory, contraction-memory.
(or, *memory* which puts us into *mind*)
- contraction

Bergson, Deleuze asserts, does not content himself to believe that there are now only differences in degree between the perception and the recollection. Indeed he gives us a “much more important ontological proposition” (the more wide-ranging implications of which will be elaborated in Chapters Five and Six). (Deleuze: 1988: 74) Bergson identifies two types of division that should not be confused. The first

type of division which we have seen, was that of an impure composite; like that of the perception-recollection mixture. This ‘constitutes the first moment of the method and results from the decomposition of an impure composite. In decomposing the composite into two pure presences we now, Deleuze explains, hit on a problem ‘peculiar to Bergsonism’, for here we encounter a ‘second decisive turn in experience’; the discovery of a second dualism, and this constitutes the ‘final moment’ of the method of intuition. But there is a second type of division which involves an entirely different kind of composite, a pure composite, and it will now be investigated. This is defined as a ‘genetic’ dualism. This involves a very different type of division. It is a division that does not divide but *differentiates* itself, that is, in dividing it changes its nature. In this way, it will be shown, that the solution to the mind/body problem is not a matter of dichotomy, but of differentiation. (Deleuze: 1988: 96)

Once a Problem is Properly Stated it is Possible to Invent a Solution.

The decomposition of a pure composite is “*not* the same state of dualism and *not* the same division” that we identified when we decomposed the reflexive dualism in order to discover differences in kind. The genetic dualism, results from the division of a pure composite; this division is actually more rightly termed a ‘differentiation’ for in dividing it differentiates itself. A genetic dualism then, is a pure composite that differentiates itself in dividing. This dualism involves the differentiation, not of a composite (an impure mixture), but of a unity (pure composite). It is the division of a “simplicity, a virtual totality”. This totality is actualised, it will be shown, according to divergent lines which differ in kind (in this case perception and recollection). It is with the discovery of this pure and simple form of division that the method discovers a new plane, and it is here that Deleuze(-Bergson) brings us into contact with the *virtual* which is central to the new image of thought. (Deleuze: 1988: 96) For

differentiation of the *Simple* not does not proceed at the level of experience. As we follow these lines ‘beyond the turn beyond experience’, we will rediscover the points at which these tendencies intersect once more giving rise to ‘the thing as we know it’, at a *virtual* point. (Deleuze: 1988: 28) The idea of the virtual is key to understanding difference in-itself and will be discussed at length in Chapter Five, for now it is enough to know that the virtual works on a different plane than representation. As such, it cannot be known by the intellect but only by intuition. It is on the plane of the virtual that things differentiate, that is, divide but not through means of dichotomy.

A genetic dualism, in differentiating, is not so much a division of lines that differ in kind, as a bringing together of these lines, though in doing so the lines change their nature. Memory, for example, is actually the bringing together of perception and recollection yet in a way that they are said to expand and contract in one another.

It will now be demonstrated how, in a second decisive turn, perception and recollection can be considered to be an expansion and a contraction on the line of differences in kind, even though it has just been shown that the two lines differ in kind. What is important here to understand, is that, though perception differs in degree and recollection differs in kind, these two lines, of pure past and pure present, or matter and duration, cannot exist apart in isolation. Were these presences absolutely pure, then pure perception would be wholly in the present, and pure memory would be wholly in the past, that is the present were *pure* matter and the past were pure idea. But there is no such thing as pure present and pure past, pure matter or pure idea. It is in the combination of the two that reality can be lived and acted. For though perception and memory differ in kind, yet they always exist together. Pure perception (pure present) and pure memory (pure past) exist but cannot be conceived of in their pure form. Rather they are constantly interpenetrating something of each other, expanding and contracting at once towards matter and then towards mind. The

fundamental point here is to understand that expansion and contraction are relative, but further, have a mutual relativity. What is contracted is expanded and what is expanded (detente)/extended is the contracted. “*This is why there is always extensity in our duration, and always duration in matter*”. Thus, this decisive turn is not the ‘turn’, but a ‘return’. (Deleuze: 1988: 87)

The two differ in kind insofar as one line moves from the living being to perception and to matter while the other moves from affection to memory to mind, thereby reinstating the role of memory in perception. Thus the two line diverge by broadening out but then meet again through a narrowing. It is at this point (the original point) at which the two divergent lines (differences in kind) converge again that the solution is reached. At this point recollection enters into perception: at the virtual point which is the image of, and the reason of, the departure point. Through an extreme narrowing Bergson found that the solution (to the mind/body problem) was a case of aphasia, of memory. (Deleuze: 1988: 30)

This is not however, simply experience itself, for the lines which diverge only to intersect once more beyond the turn do not meet up at their starting point, but at a *virtual point*, that is, at a point which is a virtual image of the starting point. This is found ‘beyond the turn in experience’ and it is that which gives us the sufficient reason of the thing, of its point of departure and also of the composite. Thus, this comprises the second moment of the method. (Deleuze: 1988: 28-29)

If our present is the most contracted degree of the past, through which we place ourselves inside matter, then matter itself will be like an infinitely expanded, or relaxed (detendu) degree of the past, that at each moment disappears as the following appears. Hereby dilation (relaxation) overcomes the oscillation of ‘the unextended and the extended by traversing from one to the other. (Deleuze: 1988: 75) “For perception itself is extensity, sensation is extensive insofar as what contracts is precisely the extended, the expanded”. (Deleuze: 1988: 74)

The recollection of memory connects the instants in time to one another and interpolates the past in the present and finally, memory in a form of contracted matter makes the quality appear. Memory is what makes reality live in conscious beings, it is what makes perception a human affair. Yet the whole of the past exists in our present. The mind is the door-keeper of recollections. It enables us to forget but also to call up into consciousness recollections which serve the purpose of our utility. (Deleuze: 1988: 25-27)

Deleuze elaborates using the example of sensation how, in differentiating itself a pure dualism changes its nature. Consider, a sensation, “What, in fact, is a sensation?” he asks. Does an intensity (of sensation) correspond to the muscular spasm or to a physical cause which effects it? For Bergson, an intensity involves an impure mixture between determinations that differ in kind. All sensation is extensive (“voluminous”) though the intensity of contraction will dictate the degree by which it is extended. “Qualities” are of matter as much as of ourselves. “They belong to matter, they are in matter, by virtue of the vibrations and numbers that punctuate them internally”. Because extensities cannot be separated from these contractions that become expanded in them they are still qualified. And because matter can never be absolutely expanded, it will always contain a minimum of contraction which ensures that it is ever a part of duration, it will never be “pure space”. In the same way duration will never contract enough to be free of the “internal matter” in which it performs and which it contracts. What is the point then of deliberating which a spatial in this and which not? Sensation then, is the operation of contraction trillions of vibrations, or elementary shocks onto a receptive surface; the quantity of which accounts for the resulting felt quality: thus it is through extension, that we contract. At every moment our perception contracts an innumerable multitude of remembered elements and at every moment our present infinitely contracts our past. At every instant then the two terms though apart initially, become cohesive. Asking how much a sensation

increases poses a false problem; it is 'badly stated'. In this manner, by the action of contraction, we move beyond the duality "of homogeneous quantity and heterogeneous quality" by passing from one to the other in a continual movement. (Deleuze: 1988: 86-89)

Perception and recollection are always exchanging and interpenetrating part of their substance by a process of 'endosmosis' (Deleuze: 1988: 26). It is in the mixture of the two that we are given our experience. The problems of metaphysics and of psychology would be largely reduced if care was taken to dissociate the different lines of kind - give them back their natural purity - rather than, as is happens, merely compound the problem by assuming there is a pure perception or a pure recollection (and of unequal proportions). We jumble recollection-perceptions and perception-recollections, and once concocted we are no longer able to follow either back to their pure presences of matter and memory. We now only perceive in that representation (composite) differences in degree. Thus we measure impure mixtures failing to recognise them as composites. In this we are led to believe that perception is 'inextensive' (purely a phenomena of mind) in character' and we are no longer able to distinguish pure presences of kind or badly-stated problems. Bergson's pre-occupation is with re-establishing what is pure in these composites, with restoring the *tendencies* which are the differences in kind. (Deleuze: 1988: 22-23)

By going beyond the 'turn' of experience, we discover that in the composite is the fact, and by dividing it up into tendencies we will produce pure presences that only exist in principle (*en droit*), in the virtual. That is, pure presences are the conditions of experience by which experience is gone beyond: pure presences are the condition of real experience. (Chapter Five will elaborate the implications of this for returning difference in-itself).

In considering the problem of matter and memory then, Bergson demonstrates how, once it has been properly stated, a problem solves itself. Are we not then confronted with the problems and difficulties which have always seemed inseparable from the dualism? “We do not have, as in idealist and realist theories, two realities, the only function of one of which is to know the other”. (Carr: 1914: 96) It is now clear that the answer to this is no, because both perception and memory serve a practical purpose: they prepare us for and direct our actions; they unite the reality of movement that is life”. (Carr: 1914: 95) In taking the problem of memory and correctly posing it, Bergson discovered true lines of fact. As lines of fact are qualitatively distinct, it is a ‘qualitative problem which constitutes a superior empiricism’ that is able to state problems properly, and further, to ‘go beyond experience towards ‘articulations of the real’ to the ‘concrete conditions’. “In their convergence, in the intersection of the real to which they proceed, they now define a superior probablism, are capable of solving problems and of bringing the condition back to the conditioned so that no distance remains between them” . (Deleuze: 1988: 30).

And so we have it, Deleuze explains, the insignia of Bergson’s obsession; *Where people see only differences of degree, there are actually differences in kind*. This forms the basis of his major criticisms and critiques. Whenever we think in terms of the more or the less we are thinking in *degrees* not in *kinds*. We are disregarding differences in kind “between two orders, or between things, between existents” (Deleuze: 1988: 20). This is a false problem - we are, in attempting to think generally and then opposing generalities, thinking in terms of badly analysed composites and non-existent problems containing more order, less order (in degrees of difference and not in differences in kind). Although classically one’s presence is the condition of the other’s absence actually we should grasp them in a continual substitution of different realities. If we think beyond generalities we should not require ourselves to muddle together these different realities and produce a

homogeneity in which Being is then falsely related and opposed to nothingness. To think beyond generality would be to grasp each 'existence in its novelty'; each different reality in its uniqueness. (Deleuze: 1988: 20) "Finally there is only one sort of false problem: problems whose statement does not respect differences of nature." (Deleuze: translated 1997: 5)

Intuition is required as a method of division which can move us beyond differences in degree or the 'state of experience', to grasp the 'immediate datum' with which discover differences in kind (the condition of experience), "to seek experience at its source, or rather above the decisive *turn*, where, taking a bias in the direction of our utility, it becomes a properly *human* experience" (Deleuze: 1988: 27). For Bergson, Deleuze explains, the production of false problems is our most common error, particularly prevalent in science and metaphysics, and is why, "(we) are victims of a fundamental illusion that corresponds to the two aspects of the false problem". (Deleuze: 1988: 20).

How can intuition be a method? We now have the means at our disposal to resolve this most general of methodological questions. We can see now that there are two halves of a composite, the division of degree and kind. Intuition enables us to choose the right side of the composite. In this way it is possible to bypass both idealism and realism and affirm objects both inferior and superior, and interior to ourselves. Duration enables the movement of intuition to implement the programme of determining true problems of kind. Experience as composite does not merely unite elements which differ in kind but in composing this union the constituent differences in kind *cannot be grasped in it*; we can no longer distinguish between pure presences. Experience comprises a state of things in which tendencies are no longer apparent. Depending where we situate ourselves, if on the side of being which manifests itself to us and results in this illusion we will see differences in degree where there are actually differences in kind. We are too quick to reduce these differences in kind, to

a general idea of all general ideas; and into the homogeneity of space which subtends them. This collection of explanations remain of the level of psychology and are inseparable from our own condition. Science is not simply symbolic or relative (representational) but part of an ontology which has two halves, differences in degree and differences in kind. Thus there are two sides (aspects) to the absolute; the metaphysical spirit and matter known by science. When science will have us grasp the world in a certain way, from a certain standpoint - from the wrong half of the absolute - we are grasping differences of degree between things (as in modern physics which increasingly finds numerical difference behind differences of quality). (Deleuze: 1988: 32-35)

To avoid the error of choosing the side of the absolute, Bergson has thus shown how a dualism can be reworked, not be overturning it, that would be futile, but by showing that a dualism is comprised of elements that co-exist on a virtual plane. Representation results from seeing only the line of differences of degree. Perception affirms the reality of matter; memory affirms the reality of spirit. Memory is what makes the body other than instantaneous and affords it temporal duration. Representation then, is not pure, but is comprised of two lines which differ in kind. It is the error through which recollection and perception are taken to be a single phenomenon depending on the predominance of either of the two aspects. As a result of this error, one can find only a difference in degree between them and not in kind. Metaphysics and science have posited false problems, the root of the illusion through which we have become blinkered to true difference of kind. Indeed, Bergson argues, differences in kind between perception and recollection have been so eclipsed as to give rise to all kinds of false problems. All of our false problems, continues Deleuze(-Bergson), are encountered because we do not know how to go beyond experience (the composite) towards the articulations of the real, to differences in kind or the conditions of experience. (Deleuze: 1988: 26-27)

It is not easy to go above the turn to define the point where we can establish differences in kind ²⁶ Bergson's approach, argues Deleuze, is comparable to the 'procedure of infinitesimal calculus'.(Deleuze: 1988: 27) Just as mathematicians take an infinitely small element of a curve and with that 'reconstitute' the curve itself stretching before them in the darkness, so it is with perceiving lines of articulation - 'a little light' points the way beyond experience. (Deleuze: 1988: 27)

Intuition then, is a method that is concerned with decomposing dialectical dualisms and restating them properly. Once correctly stated we find that the real nature of a problem can be solved by isolating the pure presences of which it comprised. In following the two decisive turns we discover a pure and simple dualism which is the possibility of thinking of new concepts; such as images, or expansion and contraction. This principle will be elaborated in Chapter Five when we consider another, the most fundamental of Bergson's dualisms, Space and Duration.

As a precise method, Intuition serves as a critique of false problems and inventor of 'genuine ones'; a process of cutting up and intersecting (*découpe* and *récoupe*); positing problems in terms of duration. More succinctly' intuition is a method of *problematizing*, (posing problems) *differentiating* (decomposing composites) *and temporalizing* (reintroducing the importance of duration). (Deleuze: 1988: 35)

²⁶ Indeed there are so many difficulties in trying to reach this point that intuition must be multiplied - and at times these intuitions may seem contradictory - for in determining a line involves a contradiction of diverse facts. sometimes the movement will be exactly appropriate, sometimes broadening out and at other times tightening and narrowing. For on each line it may be that these diversities are grouped according to their natural affinity, and/but yet again the line may be so pushed that it is forced beyond the turn to a point beyond our experience - a broadening out that "forces us to think a pure perception identical to the whole of matter, a pure memory identical to the totality of the past" (Deleuze: 1988: 27)

What Does Intuition Know?

Quite simply, Intuition knows what representational thought cannot know, how to state problems correctly. In stating problems in terms of pure presences, Intuition knows what differs in-itself. Intuition then, is the possibility of knowing the eternal return of difference which, in turn, is the possibility of ‘knowing’, and further is the possibility of knowing life as the outside. In this way, Bergson has reintroduced knowledge into the outside of thought. For Bergson, there cannot be a theory of knowledge without a theory of life, for *life produces knowledge*. The intuition of life is knowledge of reality. Life is not the thing that has been cut out by our senses, but is directly known to us. A theory of knowledge which is a theory of life must go beyond the boundaries of science and to understand how science arrives at those boundaries. This will be the subject of Chapter Six in looking at Bergson’s theory of vital life as that which differs in-itself as creative evolution.

Bergson’s achievement was to determine the intrinsic status of the ‘false problem’. In doing this he shows a way to replace a logic of identity and its negation with a logic of affirmative difference. In taking the two turns in experience what is reborn is a ‘new image of thought’ through which it becomes possible to know the eternal return of difference. That which difference in-itself is a pure dualism and it is with the nature of this pure and simple dualism that is the concern of Chapter Five.

This requires that we now turn to Bergson’s most fundamental dualism, that of Space and Duration, indeed, duration gives intuition ‘meaning’. “Intuition presupposes duration”. (Deleuze: 1988: 31). This is Bergson’s principal division, ‘that between space and time from which all other divisions and dualisms are ‘derived from or returned to’.

Chapter Five

Duration
virtuality - the Return of Difference In-Itself

‘Duration: *virtuality - the return of difference-in-itself*’

The fifth move towards addressing the proposal made by this thesis is to show that the nature of the pure dualism is a non-numerical virtual multiplicity yet, at the same time, it is univocal. To understand how a dualism can also be a multiplicity and a monism is to understand the virtuality of vital life that is the outside. This returns us to a question of knowledge; it will be argued that knowledge is neither life nor opposed to it, but that life *is* knowledge. The two are mutually indispensable. Indeed a theory of life as univocal is a new knowledge of the outside.

What is the nature of the pure dualism? When an impure composite is decomposed it can be divided into two lines that differ in kind. The first line is that of differences of degree and the second is that of differences in kind. The second line differs in kind from the first. There is a dualism between the two which is referred to as a ‘reflexive dualism’. But there is a further decomposition to be carried out if the target to discover the pure presence of expansion and contraction is to be attained. This entails the decomposition of a pure composite, when the second line, that of the genetic dualism is differentiated. This is a division of the pure and simple and is a division quite unlike the first for it is the moment of the *monism*. Then, the two lines meet up once more, at the ‘virtual’ point - as the second line expands to its limit it sweeps up the first line at the moment of its pure form, only to once more contract pushing itself to the limit of its other pure form where it returns. This moment, when the second line sweeps up the first, the moment when the monism of expansion and contraction cannot be separated from the first line which differs in kind, is the moment of the pure dualism. Although the two lines differ in kind yet they cannot exist apart, and hence the pure dualism and the monism are One. There is, therefore, a ‘harmony’ between the monism of expansion and contraction and the dualism of difference in kind. A pure dualism, it must be stressed, is not a dualism predicated on concepts and, therefore, must not be considered plural in any way. Because it contains within

it all the differences of degree of the first line and the degrees of difference of the second line, it shall be discovered that it is a multiplicity. To answer our question, ‘what is the nature of the pure dualism?’, requires further exposition for it will be revealed that, though it is a multiplicity, it is a very particular type of multiplicity; a *virtual* multiplicity which contains within it the potential for all actualizations, all ‘possibles’ and all ‘realizations’; and the plurality of all ‘generals’. This Chapter then is concerned with discovering what is the nature of the multiplicity of the pure dualism. This, it will become apparent, is the same as asking, what kind of multiplicity is *duration*? In turn, this will aid our understanding of the Univocality of Being to which is the possibility of all dualisms, multiplicities and monisms.

The expression that was attended to in Chapter Four was beyond the decisive turn of experience” which, it was found, actually had not one, but two, meanings. There are importantly, as Deleuze’s reading of Bergson²⁷ demonstrated in following these two turns, qualitative differences; differences in kind: between perception and recollection, between matter and memory, duration and extensity, between past and present etc. To advance metaphysics, and to attain ‘precision’ in philosophy, is to apply the method of Intuition thereby following the lines of fact (of difference/nature), each one indicating a direction of truth to the point where they once more intersect. A precision of philosophy is constituted by taking these two successive turns in experience. In this first moment the lines, having set off from an uncertain point, diverge increasingly according to the differences in kind. In the second moment, the lines having met again give us the distinct reason (and virtual image) of this common point. The real is that which is cut out (*se découpe*) according to these natural articulations, but it is also that which intersects again (*se recoupe*) along paths moving towards the same virtual point. Bergson’s philosophy of

²⁷ Throughout this Chapter, when discussing Bergson’s work (unless otherwise stated) I will be referring to (Deleuze: 1988), (Deleuze: translated 1997), (Carr: 1914) and (Chevalier: 1928)

difference, Deleuze showed us, can be understood, therefore, as involving a turn, but also a *return* (Deleuze: 1988: 29).

Duration and Extensity

It is crucial, at this juncture, to consider the most fundamental and profound, of Bergson's dualisms, that of 'Duration and Extensity'. This is, in a sense still concerned with 'matter and memory' for the 'duration and extensity' composite is the basis of all other composites, for it is to duration that all other dualisms return. Let us follow the process of differentiation again, this time to demonstrate the nature of the pure dualism, space and duration. In the same way are collapsed together perception and recollection, even more fundamentally do we conflate these two 'component pure presences and, in doing so, it becomes possible only to distinguish between them differences in degree. We cannot anymore see that in the composite 'time' (as a representation) there are actually two components, two 'pure presences' which differ in kind - between duration and extensity. They have been muddled together so thoroughly that we can no longer distinguish them and so oppose them (in their mixture) to a principle that is assumed to be nonspatial and nontemporal (Deleuze: 1988: 22). Hence, space and time, like matter and memory, become conceived as merely deteriorations. For Bergson, such a composite must be divided up into pure components. But which direction is pure? Space or Duration? As Bergson has not posed the problem of an ontological origin of space it is, therefore, duration which is considered pure. Duration is taken as the good 'right' side of the composite whereby can be attained 'immediate datum', and space is the 'impurity that denatures it'. As perception and recollection was divided, so too, in utilizing the method of Intuition, must the composite duration and extensity be divided into qualitative and quantified tendencies and, according to each their combination of duration and extensity (Deleuze: 1988: 23).

In the same way that it was shown that matter took all the differences of degree on its side, so too does extensity (thus we turn time into a representation which is imbued with space), whilst, on the other side of the composite, as memory diverged in two directions, pure duration too at each moment divides into two directions; the past and the present. Duration at every instant separates into two movements, one which sinks (descends) towards matter (the present), and the other that rises (ascends) towards duration (the past). On this second line of the genetic dualism, as in the 'matter and memory' composite, we encounter a line of relaxation and contraction. It will become apparent, when we divide duration into its two component presences, that everything is duration, discerned as movements and direction of movements; or otherwise as 'duration-contraction' and 'matter-expansion'. (The importance of this will be discussed presently in the context of virtual and actual multiplicities). Duration and extensity must not then be regarded as mere deteriorations, but as a constant exchange of tension and extension. Not only does the past coexist with itself on various levels of contraction and also with its own present but we must recognise that the present itself is only the most contracted degree of the past (Deleuze: 1988: 74-5). This is the moment of the ontological unity in which there are only differences of contraction and expansion, between 'pure present and pure past', as was discovered in pure perception and pure recollection and pure matter and pure memory. So, as it was demonstrated above, by going beyond the second turn in experience; by decomposing the other side of the composite, and by following the directions which reveal the pure state into which each composite divides, Bergson showed that a dualism is but a moment in the reconstruction of a monism: an integration following differentiation; after a broadening, a narrowing. Further, Bergson demonstrated how it could be that a monism can bring one to an understanding of a pure dualism through which a thing can differ in-itself. For, these two divergent lines correspond closely to each other and, as in the perception-recollection composite, it is in this second type of division that we 'rediscover' differences in kind which are 'identical or analogous' to those which

have been identified in the first type, and this is the ‘virtual’ point. This is the moment of the pure dualism, when, at the moment of differentiation of the pure and simple genetic dualism there is a return, once more, to the first line. These lines then co-exist and cannot be separated (Deleuze: 1988: 95-96).

In order to fully grasp the nuances of Bergson’s philosophy of difference, it is important to interrogate this moment of the pure dualism with acute precision, for it is the possibility of all dualisms, pluralisms and the monism. Equipped with the Deleuze-Bergson’s ‘new image of thought’, the remainder of this Chapter is dedicated to explaining how this pure dualism can be configured without collapsing back into the dialectical form of difference. Crucially, the pure dualism, as that which differs in itself is the essence of a Univocality of Being which is central to Bergson-Deleuze’s philosophy of life. The implications of the notion of a Univocality of Being for thinking the outside and what might follow Man which will be discussed in conclusion to this Chapter. Once contextualized, it is then possible to demonstrate this ‘univocality of Being in action; as vital life (which comprises the main content of Chapter Six) It is also then closer to demonstrating the main tenet of this thesis, that *‘Man differs in degree from himself, becoming-woman differs in kind from itself’*, though the inference of this proposal may already be becoming apparent.

To comprehend the complexity of Deleuze-Bergson’s philosophy of difference and the nature of the pure dualism, it will now be useful to retrace a step to the point where we discovered the reflexive and genetic dualisms. At this point, in the Bergsonian method, there appears to be two main aspects, one monist and the other dualist. It would also appear that by shifting emphasis from differences in kind to those of the levels of expansion and contraction, thereby moving from dualism to monism, there is a danger of repeating all the same false problems that Bergson was at pains to avoid. For, whilst the dualism infers differences in kind, the monism infers degrees of contraction and relaxation, and does not this latter idea merely

promote all the bad habits found in philosophies that confine themselves to differences of degree, of thinking in terms of the general and the negative, which Bergson's method endeavoured to restate? And what of duration, if the present is explained as 'only the most contracted degree of the past' and the 'matter the most relaxed (*detendu*) degree of the present (*mens momentanea*)' are we not instilling in these a graduation which we would then seek to correct by 'reintroducing into duration all the contrariety, all the opposition that Bergson had previously condemned as so many abstract and inadequate conceptions' (Deleuze: 1988: 75). In this scenario the only way in which we could 'escape' from the idea that matter is a mere deterioration of duration is to allow for a concept of matter that is a reversal of duration, but this would reinforce the dualism of negation and opposition. What then, asked Deleuze, happens to the Bergsonian notion of a Difference (in kind) independent of the negative (of 'deterioration' or of opposition)? Had we simply brought back everything into the heart of the system that we had rejected; degrees, intensity, opposition? And so this situation would remain were it not for the method of Intuition. We would remain in the slavery of a 'badly analysed psychological composite', unable to discover the original differences in kind (Deleuze: 1988: 75).

How does Bergson reconcile this proposition, that the past and present differ in kind but that the present is but the most contracted degree (or level) of the past? Our problem no longer remains that of monism whereby we saw that contemporaneous degrees of expansion and contraction practically imply a single reversible time. Expansion and contraction must not be thought of as degrees of intensity on a reversible continuum. To conceive of time in this way is to fall prey to concepts in general. In stating that all is duration is "dissipated in all these differences in degree, intensity, relaxation (*detente*) and contraction that affect it" we must be careful not to revert to false problems which produce badly analysed composites. (Deleuze: 1988: 76). What we must consider further at this juncture is the harmony between the 'dualism of differences in kind' and the monism of degrees of expansion and

contraction; between the two moments of the method or the two beyonds the turn in experience which will bring us to the moment of a rediscovered monism, the moment of a pure dualism (Deleuze: 1988: 77). What we shall discover is that this harmony comprises a very special type of *multiplicity* in which there are *degrees of difference* between contraction and relaxation which go beyond the differences in intensity. The pressing question becomes in what sense duration can be understood as one or many? In stating that duration might be many, however, we must avoid becoming swallowed up by a kind of quantitative pluralism in attempting to overcome dualism. Again, the notion of multiplicity must be approached with precision (Deleuze: 1988: 75).

Duration needs to be conceived as a very particular kind of multiplicity. In posing the question of what kind of multiplicity duration is, the true problem for Bergson, Deleuze insists, must be, '(w)hat is the multiplicity peculiar to time?' (Deleuze: 1988: 80). In being precise as to what kind of multiplicity duration is, is to avoid collapsing back into stating all sort of false problems which beg erroneous solutions. That is, in attempting to conceive of duration as a multiplicity, Bergson stresses that we must not resort the mistake of thinking in concepts (Deleuze: 1988: 77). The movement of broadening out (going beyond) does not take us beyond experience merely in order to reach 'concepts'. Concepts are too broad and vacuous, to attain 'the concrete' we must avoid the imprecision derived of the false movement of the dialectic by 'correcting one generality for another, moving from one abstract concept to another' (Deleuze: 1988: 45). The problem with concepts, as has already been demonstrated in the above discussion of false problems of the 'negative' and the 'general', is that they lead us into asking non-existent questions. Because ordinarily, concepts are comprised of dualisms which presuppose a 'concrete reality formed of two opposing views', it would be futile to try to reconcile the contradictions contained within them, they are irreconcilable. Any attempt to apply the dialectical method to the problem of multiplicity, is to take two opposing views (realities), two antagonistic concepts - thesis and antithesis - and produce a resolution through "ready-made" concepts. It

could be said, for instance, that the Self is one (thesis) and it is multiple (antithesis), then that it is the unity of the multiple (synthesis) (Deleuze: 1988: 44). Or, that the One is already multiple, that Being passes into nonbeing and produces becoming".²⁸ Becoming conceived in this way is merely opposed to a concept, thereby producing a false notion of becoming which, in turn, could then be merely opposed to duration. So too would this be the case were we to analyse duration in this dialectical fashion; 'more' or 'less' extensity, 'more' or 'less' tension. To posit duration in this way is to make difference into contradiction in which it lacks difference in itself (Deleuze: 1988: 39). In asking, 'what unity of the multiple?' and 'what multiple of the One?', and 'how, how many, when and where?', we are obliged to force duration into a *synthesis* of unity and multiplicity and to take two opposing views of *duration in general*. When we think in dialectical terms of the One and the Multiple we fall back into reconstructing the real with 'general ideas' (Deleuze: 1988: 4). This error, for Bergson, is the result of a *dialectical* method which claims to have rediscovered the real by opposing it to a concept which is actually as broad and as general as this abstract real which has been reconstituted, and which is itself too general and too broad. We will never attain "the concrete" (the "singular") by compensating the insufficiency of one concept with the 'inadequacy' its opposite. Opposites 'tell us nothing and everything 'slips through'. This whole problem can be alleviated if we avoid the mistake of thinking of duration in concepts, the root of all false problems. Concepts, states Bergson, like "baggy clothes, are much too big" (Deleuze: 1988: 44). Bergson importantly distinguishes his notion of 'multiplicity' from any theory of the Multiple and One (Deleuze: 1988: 44). Here again, using Intuition as a method of division it will become apparent that multiplicity, for Bergson, actually involves "a plurality of meanings and irreducible multiple aspects" (Deleuze: 1988: 46). In Bergson's formulation, 'multiplicity' does not correspond to the philosophical

²⁸ Although Bergson opposes duration to becoming he nevertheless posits duration as "a becoming that endures". This is because when, considered beyond the One and the Multiple of the dialectic, becoming is a virtual, non-numerical multiplicity. Becoming is a multiplicity. (Deleuze: 1988: 37) - I liken this model of becoming to that which Deleuze mobilizes in *A Thousand Plateaus*, as mobilized in the conclusion to this thesis.

concept of 'the Multiple in general'. Bergson's notion of multiplicity should not therefore be confused with the traditional notion of the word 'multiplicity', "a vague noun", which is simply opposed to 'the one' (the Multiple and the One). Just as *simplicity* (it will become apparent) is not the same as 'the One' for Bergson, neither is multiplicity the same as the multiple. Precisely because duration *is* a multiplicity it is not reducible to the dialectic and the general (Deleuze: 1988: 46). It is not limited to antagonistic opposites in which the One and the Multiple are only 'grasped' at the "extreme point of their generalisation", where they are empty of all "measure" and of all real substance". To count the One and Multiple in terms of differences of degree is to overlook differences in kind (Deleuze: 1988: 47) and, in doing so, what is neglected are the questions of "what" order?, the "what" being? In asking the question, "Is time one or multiple?" we are returned to a false problem. Multiplicity denotes a continuum, though this should not to be conceived as the reversible continuum of a single time. To conceive of time as reversible is to think in terms of linear divisibility, whether that be conceived in terms of a finite or infinite spread. However, it will be revealed that time, as it emerges in Bergson's account, is indeed the existence of a single, universal and impersonal Time (though as it becomes clear in Bergson's philosophy of difference that there is but One Single Time it is explained as indivisible and not reversible). In conceiving of time as the One or the Multiple we neglect the difference in kind between the *two types of multiplicity*. This is the result of 'respatialising time' by confusing spatial multiplicities with temporal multiplicities. Instead of thinking conceptually, Bergson posits what he refers to as the "*nuance*". Nuance is that way of decomposing composites to discover multiplicities that are not reducible to the One and the Multiple. The 'nuance' is explained as "an acute perception of the "what" and the "how many" (or the "potential number). This would bring us to dualism, which would add nothing to a new philosophy of difference, were it not as shall be shown. for the fact that in moving from one 'pole' to another it changes its nature. (This shall be returned to presently.) Importantly it is through the decomposition of these two directions of the

composite Bergson reveals to us the “two figures of multiplicity”; one (represented by) spatial, the *actual* multiplicity, and the other, of duration, the *virtual* multiplicity (Deleuze: 1988: 75).

It will become apparent that it is only through attaining a category of multiplicity of difference in kind between the two types of multiplicity (and this is crucial in understanding the nature of the pure dualism) that it is possible to dispense with the mystification of thought which operates between the One and the Multiple.

Space is the line of differences of degree; a multiplicity which is discrete, ‘discontinuous and actual’, “of exteriority, of simultaneity, of juxtaposition, of order, of quantitative differentiation”. In brief, space is the line of numerical multiplicity. Duration, on the other hand, is the line of ‘differences of kind’. It is described as a ‘virtual and continuous multiplicity’, “of succession, of fusion, of organisation, of heterogeneity, of qualitative discrimination”, that is irreducible to numbers. As we are in search of a pure dualism, the question thus arises, how do we oppose these, a quantitative, discontinuous multiplicity (numerical), and a qualitative and continuous (non numerical) multiplicity (duration)? But, how do we create an opposition which does not produce negation or contradiction. What is critical to understand here is the virtual nature of duration as a multiplicity. It is therefore important to understand more fully the ‘nature’ of this virtual, and it is to this that we now turn (Deleuze: 1988: 37-49).

The Virtual

What does an understanding of the virtual contribute in comprehending the nature of the pure dualism and, indeed, for understanding duration that which differs in-itself. Further, what are the implications of the above for understanding the true nature of life - or the true nature of the outside?

The virtual becomes increasingly central to Bergson's philosophy and, indeed, is that on which he bases his whole philosophy of memory and life, and it requires the highest degree of precision so that it does not remain vague or indeterminate (Deleuze, 1988: 96). This is only possible and realisable if we rediscover a dualism, starting from the monism and thereby account for a new plane. At the same time Bergson introduces us to the virtual, we are asked to distinguish between the possible and the real and the objective and the subjective²⁹, and also to be asked to understand the importance that the 'actual' plays in Bergson's theory, for it is not simply a matter of opposing it to the virtual. There is a real danger of misunderstanding, and misapplying, Bergson's definitions if they are not used with precision. In this, the same method of Intuition with which 'solved' the false problem of the 'more' and the 'less', and 'order' and 'disorder' can be applied here, and again with result of producing a pure dualism which, it is now clear, differs in kind of the dialectical kind.

Bergson posits the virtual as a challenge to the possible. Why is it though that Bergson's philosophy should give so much emphasis to the idea of virtuality at the very time as his critique of possibility? The "virtual" can be distinguished from the 'possible' "from at least" two standpoints. From one position, the 'possible' could be seen as the 'opposite of the real'; for it is placed in opposition to the real, though in an entirely different way as the virtual is opposed to the actual. The possible is the source of a false problem which the real is supposed to resemble. The real in this scenario is 'ready-made, preformed, pre-existent to itself' and is that which 'will pass into existence'. All is entirely given and depends upon "an order of successive limitations": the real appears as the image in the "pseudo-actuality" of the possible, though not all possibles. Again, as demonstrated above, the trick of the non-existent problem becomes clear: if the real resembles the possible, this is because the real was always expected to arrive by 'its own means'; once realized it would then "project

²⁹ As Bergson does in '*Time and Free Will*', precursor to '*Matter and Memory*' (Deleuze, 1988: 39-40).

backwards” a ‘fictitious image of itself’ claiming that its existence was always possible before it was realized. From another position then, it is the ‘possible that resembles the real and not the other way around; the possible is removed from the real “like a sterile double” (Deleuze, 1988: 96-98). “The *retrograde movement* of the true is not merely an illusion about the *true*, but belongs *to* the true itself” (Deleuze, 1988: 34). ‘Possibility’, like nonbeing (and disorder), as a general idea, appears only when the real is conceived as a ‘preformed element’ which must inevitably emerge ‘realised’. This is important terminology which has serious consequences: “The possibility has no reality (although it may have an actuality); Yet, from another position, “the possible is that which is ‘realised’ (or is not realised)” (Deleuze, 1988: 97). There are “two essential rules” that this process of realisation entails, that which has just been described above, of ‘resemblance’, but another of ‘limitation’. Not that every possible is realisable, because ‘realisation entails a “limitation” which “repulses” our “thwarts”, “some possibles” whilst allowing others to “pass into the real”. “For the real is supposed to be in the image of the possible that it realises”. The real is supposed to be the realisation of the possible that has had the idea of “reality” or “existence” attached to it, so that we can say that from the perspective of the concept, ‘there can be no difference between the real and the possible’. The answer the question ‘why does Bergson posit the ‘virtual’ in preference to the ‘possible’, is because the possible is a false notion. “Hence we no longer understand anything either of the mechanism of difference or the mechanism of creation” (Deleuze, 1988: 98), for they explain nothing; they are but sterile projections of phenomena destined to become undifferentiated, and not at all the creative, acute nuanced thought necessary to conceive of vital life. Resemblance and limitation are the the result of spatialized thinking. The above ideas shall be taken up again and elaborated in Chapter Six in a discussion of evolution.

What kind of multiplicity is a numerical multiplicity?

We have raised the issue of the virtual and will return to this presently when we will describe the indivisible nature of its type of multiplicity. We firstly need to describe the nature of a numerical multiplicity, yet it will become clear that there is no opposition to be found here.

Here we are returned to the two forms of knowledge, relative and absolute or, objective and subjective. It was explained in Chapter Four that the term ‘objective’ applies to what is known relatively. It is that which can be constantly increased by any number of new impressions which can be then ‘substituted for what ‘is known’ (the idea of it). “Object” and “objective”, therefore, describe only that which is divided, and is divisible and yet which only divides by differences of degree and not of kind. Thus the object is characterised by the perfect equivalence of the divided and the divisions; a ‘numerical multiplicity’ of ‘number and unit, primarily an ‘arithmetical unit’. An *object*, Bergson specifies, is divisible in an ‘infinity of ways’. Yet, importantly, before they are divided they are already ‘thought possible’. The object is that which divides “without anything changing in the total aspect of the object” (Deleuze, 1988: 41). The object can divide only by changing in differences of degree and in which differences, ‘realised *or not*’ are never virtual but always actual. Units of this type are ‘*provisional*’ sections which have limitless potential for subdivision; fractional summations which can be divided or multiplied, as small or as large as we ‘like to imagine’ (Deleuze, 1988: 42). Infinite divisions, infinite multiplications are the result of the generalizing idea and speak only of differences of degree.

‘Everything is actual’ in a numerical multiplicity, even when not realised’. Between actuals there can only be differences of degree, and it is only between differences in degree that there can be “relationships” and resemblances. Actually, these always imply the monism, for the real, the possible are all but part of an Absolute, but they

are the part, the line of degree, which representation confuses as a whole of the absolute. Differences of degree are then, described as quantitative multiplicities. But, what of the qualitative kind (Deleuze, 1988: 96)?

How then can a numerical multiplicity be opposed to a virtual non-numerical multiplicity without resorting to the dialectic ?

Rather than the ‘possible’, Bergson prefers the idea of the ‘potential’. Potential does not imply ‘the possible’, and it must not in any way be understood as the potential for the realization of concepts. It is the ‘potential’ to select a unity of, what Bergson defines as ‘percepts’. A percept is no broader than that thing (that is, it is not the thing plus the idea of a thing; it is not a composite), and is only appropriate to ‘*a thing itself*’. Though a concept may comprise a unity of percepts yet these are never realised. Percepts, once the consciousness perceives them, are altered. For instance, a complex feeling is comprised of numerous ‘fairly large’ but simple elements. Whilst these remain indistinct, we are not aware of them as they are not ‘completely realised’. However, once consciousness perceives them, the resulting psychic state derived of their synthesis changes “for that reason”. Love and hate, for instance, are a complex when “actualised in consciousness”, but the conditions under which they become conscious necessitates that they must differ in kind from themselves and also their ‘unconscious complex’. Rather, in ‘going beyond’, or broadening experience, we strive to discover the particularity of real experience (not the abstract real nor the possible resembles it); and to the articulations on which these ‘particularities’ rely. *Concepts* only attempt to define ‘the condition of all possible experience’ (Deleuze, 1988: 28).

the subjective, virtual and actual

If the ‘*objective*’ describes that which is known relatively, the ‘*subjective*’, as it was explained in Chapter Four, refers to what is ‘adequately but completely’ known, that is it is the limited but absolute knowledge of the Absolute. The subjective is not

formed of concepts but of percepts which are the irreducible ‘particularities’ which comprise an image. An image can comprise of a unity of percepts which cannot succumb to a numerical division. Yet, unlike the objective which can be divided up without changing the aspect of the thing being divided, the subjective is indivisible but, in dividing, it changes its nature. Crucially, whereas composites can be divided, the subjective, *which is the virtual*, differentiates *itself*, and here again we encounter the pure dualism. This is far from the realisation of the possible in which an object is ‘already given’, as is the case in the dialectical dualism.

In differentiating itself, the virtual becomes actualized, but this is not at all the same as being actual. Deleuze suggests that Proust’s formula best describes the state of virtuality: “real without being actual, ideal without being abstract” (Deleuze, 1988: 96). The virtual is not actual, it does *possesses a reality*, but its reality is a the process of actualization through which it differentiates itself. The reality of the virtual is *change*. Indeed, it will become clear, that *change* is the nature of the pure dualism.

Actualization

The virtual is not that which is realised, it is instead “actualised”. Actualisation is not bound by the same rules of ‘resemblance and limitation’. Rather its rules are of ‘divergence, of difference and of “creation”. This process has, however, nothing to do with an actuality. Certain biologists are labouring under a misapprehension when they summon a notion of organic virtuality or ‘potentiality’ in order to maintain that this potentiality is actualised by simple limitation of its global capacity for, in this, they are mixing up the virtual and the possible (this shall be elaborated in Chapter Six). The virtual ‘in order to be actualised’ must *create* through positive acts, ‘its own lines of actualisation. It cannot advance by eradication (“elimination”) or limitation, and for this reason: Unlike the real which is in the image of the possible which it realises - in the image or likeness - the actual, has no resemblance to the virtuality it embodies, for the virtual has changed, or altered, in the process of

actualization. Virtuality, therefore, is that which *differs in-itself*. Virtuality must exist by differentiating itself and being differentiated to create lines of differentiation in order to be actualised. Difference in-itself - between the actuals (at which we arrive) and the virtuals (from which we began) - is the primary factor in the process of actualisation. Difference in-itself is also *between* the complementary lines in the procedure of actualisation. Alteration, is its characteristic of the actualization of the virtual. As virtual, the pure dualism is not merely a reversal, but is an inversion, it is that which differs in-itself. The nature of a pure dualism then, is *change* (Deleuze, 1988: 96-98).

So, when space and duration is taken apart 'according' to its 'natural articulations' it can be shown that space is the "aspect" of *augmentation* and *diminution* by which a thing can only differ in degree from itself and from other things and, duration is the "aspect" of "*alteration*" whereby a thing can differ in kind in-itself and from all other things (Deleuze, 1988: 31). Whereas space remains a quantitative homogeneity (this compared to that or that), duration can qualitatively vary with itself. In short, duration is what differs, and what differs is no longer what differs from something else, but what differs from itself (Deleuze, 1997: 8). Duration, which it is now clear is the virtual, or the subjective, in differentiating itself differs with itself. In the process of differing in-itself it creates a pure dualism.

Duration is a virtual non-numerical multiplicity

So, although it is true that Bergson does often express duration as indivisible (for convenience), 'in reality 'duration perpetually divides for it is a 'multiplicity'. Its division however ensures that it changes in kind and is why we speak of "indivisible" divisions in relation to 'non-numerical multiplicities': there is other without being several; numbers exist only potentially. Or more specifically, it is a 'virtual multiplicity' insofar as it is actualised, in the course of being actualised, it is inseparable from the movement of its actualisation" (Deleuze: 1988: 43). Deleuze

explains, differences in kind are created through differentiation, through divergence (of lines); that is, actualisation creates through movement. Self-differentiation is the very essence of the simple or the movement of difference. The lines created are no longer spatial but are rather ‘purely temporal’ lines. In this movement from the virtual to its actualisation, the non-numerical multiplicity plunges into another dimension in which it has essentially, the three properties of simplicity, heterogeneity and continuity. Duration then, is not actually indivisible indeed, according to Deleuze, this would be a serious error to make. Duration, though indivisible, is not exactly that which cannot be divided, it is more correct to say that duration, in dividing, is that which changes nature in the division. Yet duration, in dividing is still duration, and therefore, duration differs in itself (Deleuze: 1997; Deleuze: 1988: 42-44).

It is insufficient to merely say that there are differences in kind between two tendencies (directions), i.e. space and duration, for the reason that one of these tendencies “takes all the differences in kind on ‘itself’ whereby all the differences of degree collapse in the “other direction, onto the “other tendency”. Duration encompasses all the qualitative differences to the point where it is found to change in characteristic (alteration) in relation to itself. Space, on the contrary, only ever offers quantitative difference in degree to the point “where it appears as the schema of an indefinite divisibility” (representation) (Deleuze: 1988: 93). There can therefore be no longer any difference in kind between the two tendencies” but only “a difference between the differences in kind” that is, between those of kind that “correspond to one of the tendencies and those of degree that “refer back” to the other tendencies.

The multiplicity of time is univocal.

What then is the multiplicity of time? Let us recap on the ‘characteristics’ which are distinctive of Bergson’s continuous virtual multiplicity . It is divided, on the one hand, into ‘elements that differ in kind’, on the other hand, it is only on the proviso

that the division itself is ‘effectively’ carried out that those ‘elements or these parts actually exist.’ (‘If our consciousness to terminate were the division at any given point “there also terminates the divisibility”). From one position, at the moment where the division is implemented, there are now two multiplicities which differ in kind (Deleuze: 1988: 81). If however we situate ourselves ‘at’ a position where the division has not yet been implemented, in the virtual, “it is obvious that there is only a single time”. Thus duration is a univocality (Deleuze: 1988: ??).

Motion and Movement

To demonstrate duration as indivisible movement, let us now consider further the implications of stating that duration is alteration or *change* by decomposing the composite ‘motion’. “Bergson discovers that beneath the ‘local transfer’ there is always a conveyance of another nature” (Deleuze: 1988: 47). What might appear from the outside a numerical multiplicity (Deleuze: 1988: 48) emerges as an experience from the *inside* as a virtual multiplicity.

When the composite ‘motion’ is divided into its quantitative and qualitative pure presences there can be discovered, the two types of multiplicity, space and time, or motion and movement. Motion is the spatialized, impure, divisible composite, and movement is the pure, indivisible composite of duration which alters in itself. Hence:

Motion: is an ‘indefinitely divisible numerical multiplicity’: the space covered by the moving object - the real or the possible All parts involved are actual and hence only differ in degree; and

Movement: is a ‘virtual qualitative multiplicity or *alteration*’: “pure movement” which, though divisible into ‘steps’, changes qualitatively every time it divides (Deleuze: 1988: ??).

When scientists measure movement, they make it something other than it is. They create an idea of movement that is divisible, subject it to stoppages, breaks and pauses which they have come to privilege over movement itself. By juxtaposing points and pauses, time after time scientists reduce real movement to relative motion. Scientists therefore reduce movement to a representation which is an imperfect reproduction of the real thing. That is because the purpose of scientific intellectual pursuit is analysis which reduces movement to symbols and representations. The spatialisation of time has become fundamental to science as will be demonstrated at length in Chapter Six.

Knowledge is Cinematographical

The intellect is utilitarian: it serves the activity we call life. Because it is turned towards action, the intellect delimits reality, viewing things as solid, inert and changeless. In this way, according to Bergson, the intellect is *cinematographical*. It cuts up reality into segments which it then sutures together like the cells of a film, and thus the intellect produces a reality that is discontinuous, even though we may not perceive it so. Because our intellects are cinematographical, so our view of the world is cinematographical. Therefore, our knowledge too, is cinematographical. The cinematographical method is practical and utilitarian, in which the intellect turns knowledge towards action whilst at the same time expecting action to depend on that knowledge (reactive knowledge focuses on the state, not the change) thus action and knowledge are finite and discontinuous. Rather than engaging with the ‘inner becoming of things’, we place ourselves outside them in a world of abstraction, recomposing them artificially. This is the natural bent of the mind, “the mechanism of our ordinary knowledge is of a cinematographical kind.” (Bergson: 1983: 306). Because our knowledge is cinematographical, so too is our language - adjectives and substantives symbolizing states and verbs describing the movement of these states (Bergson: 1983: 304-313; Carr: 1914: 26-39)³⁰.

³⁰ There are three kinds of movement - qualitative, evolutionary, extensive - and they differ profoundly.
1. Qualitative: that which turns from yellow to orange is not like that which turns from orange to red. In language

Our perception tricks us into producing from these a single representation of becoming in general - a mere abstraction - thus we perceive the world as states (as in ageing as we have seen above) - an infinite multiplicity of states passes before our eyes.

This is the paradox that the Greek philosopher, Zeno of Elea, highlighted when he mistakenly declared that motion was impossible. The line an arrow follows is not the same as its movement. Whereas movement is indivisible, a line is divisible. If the arrow stops at any point on the line then its movement would have stopped. A line is but a representation of movement. Should the arrow begin its flight again this would effect a new movement. The division in the course (the line) are not divisions in the movement. The line of the arrow is measured in terms of space, or spatializing movement. Movement is not divisible and cannot lend itself to spatialized representation. The flight of an arrow is indivisible movement. Motion and immobility are the result of the way we have spatialized time and thus have come to regard the world only in terms of differences of degree (Carr: 1914: 26-39; Bergson: 1983: 306-313).

For instance, in conceiving of life and evolution (as shall be elaborated in the next Chapter), scientists, informed by metaphysics have posed differences in degree between time which has been spatialized (a composite representation) and eternity, which is posited as 'primary'(inferring deterioration of time or 'diminution' of being') (Deleuze: 1988: 23). In this way 'all beings are perceived to fall between the extremes of perfection and nothingness on a scale of intensity', as in evolutionism.

this form of movement corresponds to adjectives.

2. Evolutionary (forms of essences): the movement of the plant from flower to fruit is not like the movement of the embryo to fetus and fetus to child. In language this form corresponds to substantives.

3. Extensive (acts): the action of eating is not like the action of running. In language this form corresponds to verbs (Bergson: 1988: 304).

Bergson criticises ‘mechanism’ as conceiving the world in terms of unilinear evolution in spatialized time in which living things are conceived according to differences of degree; “of position, of dimension, of proportion and in the same way. finalism (evolutionism) considers living things to proceed one from another by “simple intermediaries, transitions and variations of degree” (Deleuze: 1988: 23). Linear time becomes another symbol with which we represent the flow of duration yet will never suffice to contain or describe it fully.

Immobility is Purely an Appearance. Real Movement is Indivisible and Continuous, That is to Say That Change is Indivisible.

True duration is known to us only by direct inner perceiving, an intuition. Intuition, because it deals in absolute knowledge, can perceive the real indivisible movement that is duration. The awareness that we have of the movement of our own bodies is an absolute knowledge of movement, because we perceive it from within. Our individual lives are indivisible movements and we are surrounded by movements that are also indivisible and qualitative. Life is change which is continuous and unceasing. Psychological, or intellectual duration is but one duration among many.

Reality is activity, movement. “Space is the way in which we represent it. Space is a schema which gives the appearance of a continuity which seems to underlie matter. It is the symbol which makes it possible for the mind to represent matter” (Carr: 1914: 97). The illusion of intensity (comprised of impure composites) in the final instance is that of space. And although spatial homogeneity ‘implies’ a ‘sort of artifice or symbol’ (representation) which removes us from reality yet it is true that matter and ‘extensity are realities, that themselves ‘*prefigure*’ space. Space is not an effect of our own nature but is ‘grounded in the nature of things.’ (Carr: 1914: 34). “Matter is effectively the ‘aspect’ by which things tend to present to each other, and to us. only differences in degree” (Carr: 1914: 34).

In explaining the movement of duration as indivisible, Bergson is able to restate properly another pervasive dichotomy and replace it with a pure dualism of alteration; that of death and life. The problem of death and life can now be properly put as a problem of movement, or *speed*.

Dead Matter

It has been shown that the intellect is the province of the material and that matter alone is measurable. In approaching phenomena cinematographically is to reduce movement to space, sensation to the physical stimuli incites it, and vital creation to fixed symbols and dead forms. The intellect, in spatializing time, slices vital creation into the 'discontinuous', the immobile, the repeatable and the dead. In becoming spatialized, life and death have become opposed, and thus they can only return as the Same and the undifferentiated. Thus life and death become inextricably bound in a eternal struggle, in which one strives to overcome the other. However, to conceive of life and death in this way, as a battle of the will-to-nothingness, is a waste of 'time'. For, "life is not made out of death" (Chevalier: 1928: 215). In artificializing phenomena, the intellect cuts life off from duration. The intellect, in hurling itself at phenomena in its attempt to reconstruct reality, stops short at the relative, declaring the absolute Unknowable (Chevalier: 1928: 221). Indeed this is the case as was demonstrated in the case of 'life' as described in Chapters Two and Three where it was argued that 'knowledge is life', but it is a particular reactive kind which blocks the way to thinking an active affirming 'life'. This remains outside, and as such was unthought and unknowable. However, once properly put, the problem of life can solve itself. Rather than being opposed, life and death should be perceived as a having their own different times, or speeds. Life as indivisible movement is not in opposition to inert matter. Inert matter filling space, space that underlies matter as pure immobility, do not exist. Movement exists, immobility does not. Though, in the universe, we seem to distinguish between life and the inert, dead matter yet there is no such thing as lifeless material. What we perceive as dead matter is an appearance.

It is simply caught up in a movement which has a duration of its own, has its own speed (Carr: 1914: 39). Carr expresses this movement of duration beautifully and therefore worth quoting at length:

“What is this inert something which seems to resist the pushing forward-moving life, which seems to fall back, to obstruct the living movement, which, even when it serves life, seems essentially opposed to it? Inert matter, immobility, is purely an appearance; it is composed of two movements. It is the relation of our movement to other movements. When we are in a train the landscape seems to stream past us, the nearer objects at a greater speed than the more distant. When we pass another train going in the same direction but at a slower speed, it seems to us to be moving in the reverse direction. If the speed is the same as ours, it seems not to be moving at all. And if it is travelling in the reverse direction, it seems to be moving at twice the speed that it is really moving at. Imagine, then, life as a vast movement in being; if our particular interest draws us to attend to the direction in which part of the movement is advancing, it may seem to us that the rest of the movement is retarding the advance or even streaming backwards. So we, alive in this great living, borne along as part of this true life, view the movement around us and see it as dead matter opposed to the very movement of which it is itself only an individual view.” (Carr: 1914: 38-39.)

In approaching the dichotomy of life and death and demonstrating that it is actually a question of indivisible movement another dualism has been correctly stated whereby the dichotomy is overcome. In perceiving that life and death is actually a question of expansion and contraction and alteration of a pure dualism, differentiation has been introduced into death. Death is no longer merely about the ‘dead’, the inert, the inanimate but is caught up in the movement of life. This is then the positive death that Deleuze formulated through which Man can overcome himself, in that it provides the basis on which to develop a new theory of life, and indeed, this is the subject of Chapter Six. The differences in kind between the actual space and

movement, and the differences of relaxation or contraction in the virtuality, are not exclusive but, on the contrary (Deleuze: 1988: 83), infer a “single time”. Being, or Time is a multiplicity; not “multiple”, but “one as it conforms with *its* type of multiplicity (Deleuze: 1988: 83). Thus the universe comprises of the “virtual coexistence of all the levels of the past” and “of all levels of tension”. ‘Virtual coexistence (time as One and multiplicity) thus signifies not only our relationship with being but “the relationship of all things with being”.

By infinitely slackening and relaxing duration “places its moments outside one another”. “What these moments lose in “reciprocal penetration they gain by their respective spreading. Or simply, what they have lost in tension they gain again in extension. At every moment there is a spreading out of an instantaneous, indefinitely divisible continuum which must, from moment to moment, pass away (Deleuze: 1988: 87). What has been said above about “virtual coexistence of various degrees of relaxation and contraction and differences in kind between fluxes or actual rhythms” in no way retracts from Bergson’s defence of time’s uniqueness; that duration is but One Single time. “Not only do virtual multiplicities imply a single time, but duration as virtual multiplicity is the single and same Time” (Deleuze: 1988: 82). And neither in can we infer that because Bergson maintains that space and time never overlap or intertwine (only their distinction is real) that there is any ambiguity in integrating something of space into duration in order to reveal a sufficient reason (*raison suffisante*) for extension in duration (Deleuze: 1988: 86).

There is then, no contradiction in Bergson’s formulation of duration as multiplicity. So long as duration is conceived as a *virtual* multiplicity, as indivisible movement which changes ‘something of its nature’ in the process of actualization, it is possible to by-pass the false solutions of the general type. From the outset it is the “whole combination” of space and time ‘in general’ that he condemns because it is a badly

analysed composite in which “space is considered ready made” and time as a result is but an added dimension.

Difference in-itself - In Summary

“Duration, memory (or spirit) is difference in kind in itself and for itself; and space or matter is difference in degree outside itself and for us” (Deleuze: 1988: 93). It therefore follows that there are, between the two “all the *degrees of difference*”, or the “whole nature of difference”. “Duration is only the most contracted degree of matter, matter the most expanded (detendu) degree of duration”. Duration can be likened to a “naturing nature (nature naturante)”, and matter likened to a “natured nature (nature naturee)”. For Bergson the “lowest” degrees of Difference are those of degree, and the “highest nature” of Difference are those of kind. And now we can see that between “nature and degrees” there is “no longer any dualisms”. There is only one single Nature which “expresses” itself in both extremes of differences of degree and of kind”. This is the moment of monism: All the degrees coexist in a single Time, which is nature in itself. Hence there can no longer be said to be any contradiction between monism and dualism “as moments of the method”. For as we have seen there is a dualism between actual tendencies which lead beyond the turn in experience, but we then encounter the monism, at the “second turn”. It must be remembered that when we refer to the coexistence of all degrees (levels) they are nevertheless only virtual. And it is thus very “virtuality” which is the point of “unification”, of the pure dualism which is rediscovered monism. “This Whole has parts, this One has a number - but only potentially” (the virtual whole is never actual) (Deleuze: 1988: 94). Bergson is not then contradicting himself in any way when he asserts that differences of degrees or intensities coexist virtually in a “simple Totality” in “a single Time”. All the degrees of contraction and expansion (detente) coexist in One Time thereby forming a totality though this Whole Single Time is purely (and a pure) virtual (Deleuze: 1988: 93-94).

So there we have it, the nature of the pure dualism is duration, and duration is a dualism, a monism and also univocal. There is no contradiction in Bergson's texts - all is reconcilable; the monism, the generalised pluralism and the limited pluralism. Although there is an infinity of actual times that necessarily participate in this same virtual whole, there is only one duration.

To return to our opening question, 'what is the nature of the pure dualism?' It is a dualism which is a univocality which is a multiplicity that differs in-itself. Its nature is change. In conceiving of duration as the movement of indivisible internal differentiation, it is possible to understand life as alteration, is a virtual multiplicity. It is to this we now turn, armed with a 'new image of thought' achieved through Intuition. Duration is the eternal return of difference in-itself which is, in turn, the becoming active of thought.

We are now five moves on from our starting point. In making these moves, it is now possible to conceive of true difference. In thinking duration as that which differs in-itself we are released from the shackles of dialectical thinking which produced the concept Man as entity which returns as the Same. In thinking difference in itself, Man is overcome, 'life' is stated properly and death is freed from the undifferentiated. We have travelled a a journey which sweeps us up from the line of differences of degree to a line of difference in kind; from the eternal return of the Same to the eternal return of difference in itself.

Duration is No Longer Opposed to Becoming.

Becoming is not a concept, if it were it would only ever produce the failed returns of the Same. But the failed becomings only happen on one plane, that of degree, on the other plane, that of kind (though we now now these co-exist in one single time), becoming is eternally returning as difference in-itself. Duration is the becoming which is the eternal return of difference. It is the being of becoming itself, being

which affirms itself in becoming” (Deleuze: 1996: 24). Duration is at every moment the ‘coming again’ of returning.

How can we conceive of a becoming-active of life?

There is now at our disposal a new image of ‘knowledge’ through which the problem of life can be restated correctly, as vital life. The new theory of knowledge, which is intuition, and a new theory of life are actually mutually indispensable. The theory of life and the theory of knowledge are interlocked (Chevalier: 1928: 223). They should collaborate to produce a new science (Chevalier: 1928: 223), and ‘create’ new combinations which are dependent on this entirely ‘different’ principle. What this requires is the creation of an active science founded on the principle of true difference. It is not merely a question of disrupting the discourses from within, but it is a matter of creating new active ways of thinking about science, life, evolution and death. What will become clear is that, between life and knowledge there is no opposition, knowledge is not life, nor is it opposed to life, on the contrary, life *is* knowledge. The task is to move away from the dialectical conception of life for, it has been shown, that there is no point in overturning a dualism simply to reinstate it, the key is to go beyond dialectical dualism to a notion of life as univocal founded on a pure dualism of the *virtual*.

There are three aspects to Bergson’s theory of knowledge, duration, memory and the *elan vital*. It has been shown that Duration is difference with itself and that memory is the coexistence of degrees of difference. It is now time to discover that the *elan vital* is the differentiation of difference (Deleuze: 1997: 16). To this end, this thesis, in a sixth move, now turns to Bergson’s theory of Creative Evolution and it will finally be possible to fully demonstrate the tenet of this thesis, that: ‘Man differs in degree from itself: Becoming-woman differs in kind in-itself’, and some of its implications

Chapter Six

The Rebirth of Life:
The Eternal Return of Difference-
Bergson's Creative Involution

The Rebirth of Life: The Eternal Return of Difference -

Bergson's Creative Involution

It was indicated in Chapter Four that a new 'image of thought' would have important implications for a renewed understanding of life. That new image of thought is intuition, which it has been argued, is of quite a different nature than the knowledge produced by reason. Its purpose should be to seek new forms of expression appropriate for a philosophy of difference and, above all, create new possibilities of life that do not merely reproduce the Same. Thought directed against reason is still thought. (Bogue: 1996: 32-33) This thesis has shown that, for Foucault, knowledge is life, and for Nietzsche, knowledge is opposed to life. It will now be shown, in a consideration of Bergson's *Creative Evolution* that, for Bergson, life *is* knowledge, for life is the possibility of creating new and fresh concepts. A new theory of life and a new theory of knowledge are inseparable, which is to say, that life is the new image of thought. A new image of thought that *is* life constitutes, I think, the rebirth of a conception of life that *is* the eternal return of difference. Indeed, life is that which differs in-itself. This Chapter, then investigates Bergson's theory of knowledge, and this constitutes the sixth and final move towards demonstrating the proposal of this thesis.

New Concepts

Man, according to Bergson, having been reduced to his reason, has lost the ability to think concepts that are not founded on the dialectic. If a new theory of life is the active thinking of thought, then an active science of life must involve the creation of new concepts. In Bergson's view, the dialectic is not merely the result of finite, reactive knowledge, but, more profoundly, it is the natural inclination of an intellect bent towards the utilitarian. The problem of the dialectic that Foucault, in the *Order of Things*, had framed in terms of an epistemological tension between the empirical and the transcendental, Bergson considers to be a problem of ontology. That is,

Bergson, it will be shown gives an evolutionary explanation for the function of the intellect. This has parallels with Nietzsche who, it will be remembered, argued that man's bad conscience emerged when instinct and intelligence became separated in man and other beings (Schacht: 1992: 274-279. In Bergson view, instinct and intelligence too became separated, though in man there is an instrument that can reunite them once more. That instrument is intuition that knows life beyond spatial representation. The intellect cannot *think* real time for it turns all it touches 'to stone', disliking all that is 'fluid'. An individuated consciousness does not endure, and is only an imitation of internal life, "a static equivalent which will lend itself better to the requirements of logic and language" (Bergson: 1983: 4) Intuition tells us that a moment of concrete reality can never recur as duration changes everything inwardly, "everything is in time". (1983: 46) Conversely, Intuition knows that real duration leaves its mark on things. Though we cannot think real time, states Bergson, we do 'live it', for "*life transcends intellect*". (1983: 46)

It is, in Bergson's view, the arrogant assumption of our own reason that it can take for granted its essential privileged relation to knowledge and truth. Even its ignorance of a 'new' object it merely puts down to the uncertainty of attaching existing categories to it. We are deeply uncomfortable with the notion that we might have to create for a new object a new concept. Philosophy reminds us, Bergson states in *Creative Evolution*, that far from creating new concepts for new objects, we merely slip the real into ready-made ideas; "In what drawer, ready to open, shall be put it? In what garment, already cut out, shall be clothe it?" Always it is couched in the "already known". Instead, in defence, our intellects declare 'proudly' that the absolute is not in its jurisdiction and that it only trades in the *relative*. And this it does, without scruples, habitually and though pronouncing its avoidance of the absolute, proceeds to "make absolute judgements upon everything". In this way, Bergson argues, we are all born Platonists, for it was Plato, he continues, who first elaborated the theory that in order to know the real we must first discover the Idea, thus placing a containing and

pre-existing frame around the real - constricting it in our universal knowledge. But though this is Platonic, it is also natural to us - the bent of our intellect always seeks ready-made clothes. (1983: 48-49)

In *Creative Evolution*, Bergson insists, we must do violence to the mind and, going counter to the natural inclination of our intellect, by engaging with an active science and develop once more the ability to create new concepts. In utilizing Intuition the task is to create pure concepts beyond the dialectic. To understand life as vital is to search for a conception of difference which does not collapse back into the equivocal or Identical. The intellect does not then produce the concepts through which life is produced, for the intellect itself is but a product of life's creation. Indeed, life is the very possibility of the creation of concepts.

“For life creates not only life forms but also the concepts by which means we come to understand it, and if creation is not operating on the level of ideas and concepts as well with respect to life forms, then there is no creation.” (Olkowski: 1999: 104)

The intellect must be trained to think differently about the concepts it produces. With the aim of generating new concepts, in *Creative Evolution*, Bergson moves beyond reductionist and teleological which rely on mechanistic or finalistic explanations of life. In considering life and evolution both approaches, in Bergson's view, are flawed, for both are hinged on a metaphysics of Self, through which is constructed a ontology of the 'Whole and its parts'. They ensure that what are posed are ready-made problems which demand false solutions and result us thinking through concepts 'in general'. We are, therefore, Bergson says, caught up in 'an illusion that carries us along'. Because we are bound in the slavery of this illusion we cannot conceive of life in its vital multifariousness. Whether viewed through the lens of mechanism or teleology, real time becomes eclipsed by a spatialization of time. In this way, both mechanism and finalism are only external views of our conduct, through which 'life'

becomes conceived of as ‘life in general’(Bergson: 1983: 47). As a result of this we then perceive the world and its objects as isolable units and successive states, and approach any problem of explaining living things with the same ascetic mind-set that scientists have when they undertake their research. This accords no real evolution, no real maturing of an internal state for we have become concerned, not with understanding life as returning true difference but instead - through the operation of negation in which we confuse the more with the less and order with disorder - with returning, repeatedly, only death. Only by thinking differently can one think beyond the partial view of the world that is the concern of scientists.

In Bergson’s opinion, mechanism and teleology fail to describe the vitality of life for they fail to account for it as a continual process. For this reason, both Darwinian and Lamarkian theories of evolutionary process are untenable in Bergson’s view. He does not, however, reject them altogether, as shall be shown, but instead argues that it is a question of knowing what to leave out. Bergson’s theory of ‘creative evolution’ does not describe the abstracted events that reactive knowledge produces, but rather, reveals the absolutely real events, absolutely real becomings of duration. In breaking out of the restrictions of radical finalism and radical mechanism, Bergson argues, we can consider life, reality and difference, as an unending creation and innovation. It is active thought that seizes, through immediate knowledge, the becoming of pure presences. Beyond the constrictions of mechanism and teleology, an active science entails a ‘true empiricism’ and a ‘true’ metaphysics that knows life as that which differs from itself. (Deleuze: translated1997: 11-12). The search must be to find a conception of difference that cannot be “reduced to degree nor to intensity, to alterity nor contradiction: such difference is vital, even if its concept is not itself biological”. (Deleuze: translated1997: 11) If Nietzsche’s *Gay Science* has anything to say to us it is that an active science is not fixed or static but a process of neverendingly creating new and fresh concepts. “Study life not death!”, declares Shostak. (Shostak: 1998: 212)

Active Science: a Science of Duration and Memory

I now admit my intent to present Bergson's 'Creative Evolution' as a gay science, that is, as an active affirming science founded upon a concept of difference as, *change* as continual becoming. To accept that Bergson's 'philosophy of nature' as a gay science is to understand the key role that *change* has in his theory of vital life. This is to understand his exposition of the nature of time, in relation to the question of existence. Only in following his intuitive 'logic' is it possible to grasp the full investment that Bergson bequeaths duration and memory as the creation and invention of a vital life.

Through coming to an understanding of the indispensable relationship between the real nature of time and vital life, Bergson shows us that, far from being merely a metaphor or an idea, is pure difference-in-itself, a real moment when the virtual is in the process of being actualized. To this end, to 'know the virtual multiplicity as it exists, in nature - in action - we must turn in detail to the main tenets of Bergson's *Creative Evolution*. In Chapter One of this, Bergson is concerned to demonstrate the limitations of finalistic and mechanistic explanations of life. In a revealing discussion of the limitations of these approaches, Bergson leads us away from thinking of evolutionism as proceeding by adaptation, through association and addition, to an explanation of life as proceeding by dissociation and division. In achieving this, Bergson is able to argue that life is univocal, the implications of which in conceiving true difference will become clear. This chapter of the thesis will deal at length with Bergson's challenge to mechanism and finalism for, these doctrines are so pervasive that any critique must demonstrate the precise nature of the errors made by each respective method.

In Bergson's view, both the errors of radical finalism and radical mechanism is to take what is the 'natural' inclination of our intellects and push it to extreme. Our intellects have developed only to act, and in order to act we must: propose an end;

produce a plan put into action, the mechanisms that will materialise our intentions. In order to do this we must be able to calculate in advance our actions. To this end we work by extracting similar situations from nature which help us to predict the future, and so doing we either consciously or unconsciously draw on the law of causality. Efficient causality, in Bergson's opinion, becomes defined in our minds as *mechanical* causality, and the more rigorously we wish to express this the more mathematical it becomes. We are, according to Bergson, naturally mathematicians and geometers. And over this rigid skeletal of mathematical unconscious is a more pliant conscious habit; that of linking the same causes to the same effects, or directing actions to produce intentions - of reproducing patterns. The human intellect, cut out for action proceeds by 'intention and calculation' "by adopting means to ends and by thinking out mechanisms of more and more geometrical form" (Bergson: 1983: 45). Whether a machine or a plan, nature thus conceived is only the perfection of the bent of our mental processes. These two tendencies of mind are complementary to one other and neither approach is willing to see, in the development of life, "an unforeseeable development of form". (1983: 44-45)

After illustrating their respective flaws, this chapter will then move beyond mechanism and finalism and investigate Bergson's own philosophy of life, which has at its basis that which he has named the *Elan Vital*. In this 'final moment of his method of Intuition', the *elan vital* is discovered to be the 'original vital impetus', the indivisible movement of the pure dualism, through which, in all things, the virtuality becomes actualized. The *elan vital* is the univocality of being, the original thrust of life, which carries through all things and which, most importantly for Bergson, actualizes in the man's consciousness. In man's consciousness, according to Bergson, there is an instrument that explains his very special relationship to the *elan vital*. This is Intuition, and through this, it will be shown, man can know true difference. It is this special relationship that is key to understanding the main tenet of this thesis that:

Man is that which differs in degree from himself: becoming-woman is that which differs in kind in-itself.

The aim of this Chapter then is to explain Bergson's critique of mechanism and teleology, and to show how, for Bergson, life is univocal. For the purposes of this thesis, the importance of this is to discover a difference that differs in-itself, and to posit such a difference as the possibility of man's overcoming.

Existence as a Question of Duration

In order to arrive at a theory of the univocality of life as the unceasing movement of duration, in the first Chapter of *Creative Evolution*, Bergson begins by problematizing the question of existence, when he asks us to consider the meaning of the word 'exist'. The examples that Bergson provides in order to present his theory of duration are psychological existence, inanimate matter as existence, and the animate as existence. What we shall discover is that for, Bergson, life *and* consciousness, unlike material objects, can be said to 'exist' because they change. "(L)ife, like conscious activity, is invention, is unceasing creation" (1983: 23) Indeed, the whole question of existence is a matter of duration.

We can be sure, he says, that the existence of which we are most certain is our own. He continues, that is because the 'perception' of our own existence is of experience internal and profound, whilst our experiences of other things ('objects') can only be thought of as external and superficial. Yet, how exactly does Bergson distinguish between these two experiences of duration? He explains; that one passes from state to state - hot, cold; happy, sad; at work, at rest; that one is attentive to the immediate environment or lost in thought - the continual process of sensations, feelings, volitions, ideas is the key to one's own existence. Existence is incessant change though, Bergson insists, to say this is to say too little, for this ignores the much more radical possible interrogations of change. To speak of 'states', such as feelings,

sensations etc., is to reduce 'states' to 'blocks' (composites) - as if change meant one moves smoothly from block to block. Change when considered in this way is viewed as 'residing' in the "passage of time of one state to the next. If we look carefully at even the most apparently stable of internal states, the visual perception of a motionless external object, it can be said, that change is there in memory. The object perceived may remain constant - viewed from the same side, the same angle, in the same light - nevertheless, something has changed in the vision of it. For Bergson, that change is, the conveyance of the past into the present in the movement of one instant into another. Furthermore, if we pause to reflect on our feelings, ideas, volitions etc., we find that states themselves change continuously at 'every moment'. Of these states, which do not correspond in any simple way to an internal perception of an external unvarying object, the movement of continuous change is even more the case. Each state - as a transient process - has its own duration, which never ceases to passage in time, never ceases 'to flow'. (1983: 1-2)

It is advisable, and probably advantageous, not to dwell on the uninterruptedness of change, but to focus attention on change only when it forces a new attitude on the body - that is when we pay a renewed attention to the 'state' of change. It can be said then that our state has changed though, actually, it has never ceased changing. We can say then that despite appearances otherwise there is essentially no difference in passing from one state to another or maintaining the same state. It is only when the changes become considerable that are we pressed to confront them as if a new state were now following a previous one. We imagine conveniently that each state is unvarying and are only added to 'state by state' endlessly. Nevertheless, these psychological states are not discontinuous, but are in continual motion. It is simply our attention to them which is discontinuous in an otherwise continuous flow of duration. Each state which fixes our attention is only but an illuminated point in a given moment in a 'moving zone'. (1983: 2-3)

However, as our attention has illuminated separate moments we are therefore obliged to reunite them by an artificial bond - to cement them together by artifice. Where there is actually indeterminacy, we imagine a formless ego whose states are indifferent and unchanging, placed together like the beads of a necklace. We imagine our psychic states as if solid, independent entities which mask the fluid substratum on which they are founded. Actually, this substratum has no reality, it is simply a useful symbol with which to bring into consciousness, and contrast with, the artificiality of the independent solid states. Beneath the symbols of solids however, is the 'stuff' life is made of, duration, for nothing is more durable, impenetrable or substantial than duration. If it were not for this continuity underlying the notion of an ego-united composite, there would be no existence. Duration which is fundamental to Bergson's philosophy of life, requires that things must endure, and that things which endure require duration. Things that do not change continuously do not endure. Without duration there would be no evolution, no bringing of the past into the present, there would be no continuous progress, there would only be the present. Duration is the continuous process of accumulating memory, swelling as it advances. Memory, for Bergson, is not the storing away of recollection (by boxing or tabulating) for, in memory, the past is with us at every instant in its entirety. In memory, the past is preserved by itself, automatically. Everything that we have felt, thought and willed since coming into the world (and from our prenatal disposition) presses on the windows of our consciousness. Consciousness, the cerebral mechanism, drives back the past into unconsciousness, allowing in only the tiny part of that whole that might inform or direct our present situation - that which is useful to us in planning and promoting further action. Yet, these remnants should serve to remind us of the unconscious past which we forever carry behind us. Through these remnants, according to Bergson, we feel vaguely that the past is with us, though we may remain distinctly unaware of it. No doubt, Bergson insists, we consciously utilize only the tiniest part of our past, but it is there as a whole, latent in our every desire, will and act. Only the tiniest fragment of the past is there in the form of the 'idea', but the

entirety of the past is felt in the form of tendency; made manifest in impulse. The past is our history, it is our character. (1983: 3-5)

As the past survives in us it must follow, according to Bergson, that a moment of consciousness cannot be repeated. Even though a situation may arise which is identical to a previous one, it will be discovered that the person is not the same person, but a person at a new point in their own history, for each of us accumulates, at every instant, unceasing change. Because in Bergson's formulation real time is the gradual accumulation of memory it is, therefore, irreversible. That is to say that, duration is indivisible movement, to repeat a single moment would be to wipe all recollection of all that had followed. Even if it was possible to erase memory from our intelligence we could not delete it from our will. Though our present state is explainable as being due to past experience, nevertheless, even a 'superhuman intelligence' would not be able to predict what concrete organisation would arise from these purely abstract elements. Our character undergoes continual change, it is in constant process, adding the new and unforeseeable to what has gone before. Just as we cannot return to the past, neither can we predict the future, for past is indivisible and cannot be imagined of a future. What has not yet been perceived is unforeseeable. Nothing can be a product of what has not yet been produced - as an artist cannot "exactly foresee a portrait". Each moment of the present is added to all of the concentration of what has been perceived. "It is an original moment of a no less original history" (1983: 6). Duration as the '*original*', simple form, is therefore indivisible. Thus we have arrived at Bergson's notion of the univocality of life. (1983: 6-7)

Consciousness as Incessant Change

It is impossible to approach Bergson's notion of the 'univocality of life' in *Creative Evolution* without reassessing consciousness. Consciousness, for Bergson, is not to be merely reduced to that restrictive version of reason which is the becoming-reactive

of knowledge. Bergson figures reason in quite another way. Reason, for Bergson is an immediate knowledge of a thing. It does not extend from the domain of geometry, where it is based on premises that are impersonal and can therefore draw only impersonal conclusions. Reason cannot be dealt with in the abstract nor solve others problems. One reason may dictate differently to different persons as to the same person at different moments, whereby canvassing acts ‘profoundly different’, although equally ‘reasonable’. Problems must be solved from *within*, not without. At each moment as we create ourselves we modify our personality but also: “what we do depends on what we are” (and vice versa). Life, and the moments of our lives, is a continual process of creation. We shall return to Bergson’s definition of consciousness presently in a discussion of man’s special relationship to the *elan vital*. Here, however, we must return to address the opening problematic; what precise meaning does Bergson bequeath to the word ‘exist’? Suffice to say, that in a conscious being, to exist is to change, to mature, and to create oneself continuously. Our consciousness, like duration, is continual change, it grows, accumulating memory as it processes, increases and swells like a ‘snowball which is rolled in the snow’.

(1983: 7)

So far this discussion of Bergson’s work has considered the nature of the existence of consciousness. Can the same be said of however, Bergson asks, of existence ‘in general’? We should immediately be alerted here to a false problem. It has already been explained that, for Bergson, there can be no ‘life in general’. To posit ‘life in general’ is to posit a non-existent problem, to be conceive of life ‘in general’ is the result of our intellectual habit of spatialising time which excludes the idea of real time. In the following, it will be explained how, and why, Bergson comes to reject the term ‘life in general’.

Existence 'In General'

Any kind of material object, Bergson reasons, differs from the conscious entities just described, for a material object either remains as it is or, it is influenced to change by a force external to it. To conceive of change in this way is merely to reduce it to an idea of displaced of parts which in themselves do not change. If these parts, so conceived were again to 'change' they would result in parts, and these again, in turn, could be divided, and so on. Yet, the parts *in themselves* do not change. Division may be carried out in this way, splicing and fragmenting until led to corpuscles, molecules and atoms, but finally, this should lead to a state of imponderability. Such a conception of change would push the division to its limits, stopping only before the unchangeable. A composite object may be described as having changed, yet no matter how many times its parts have been displaced, they can always be returned. In principle, there is nothing to prevent this, though it may, of course, involve external causation. Having been in a group state of elements, though change may have been carried out through division, a divisible can always return to that state, repeatedly. For this reason, according to Bergson, the composite group does not age, for "(i)t has no history", and because of this there can be no creation in either form nor matter. (1983: 7-8)

It can be said, therefore, that the unorganized body in its present state is dependent on all previous instants. In the same way, in a system that science, or perception, isolates, the position of material points are dependent on the position of the same points *immediately previous*. Thus when Bergson asks, 'can a state of a living being be fully explained by its immediately previous state'?, his answer is clear; it could, *but only if* we wish to liken living bodies, *a priori*, to other bodies, that is with the 'artificial bodies' with which 'chemists, physicists and astronomers' deal. But in these systems we are dealing with definite meanings, they signify that "certain aspects of the present, important for science, are calculable as functions of the immediate past". When it is concluded that an artificial system depends entirely on the previous

moment it is assumed that this has said something of real duration, but it has not. In the same way, although the whole of the past has endured in the memory of a living being, we proceed in our thinking as if the past were packed into the moment immediately before the present, and this then becomes seen as the sole cause of the present.

To see things in this way, and this a crucial factor in Bergson's theory, ignores the cardinal difference between concrete time and abstract time; that of real systems and that of artificial. It is false, according to Bergson, to say that one instant precedes another, "any more than there could be one mathematical point touching another", for this would then be to speak only of the present, considered along its tendency. In the mathematical prediction of the future state of a system at the end of a time ' t ', the universe could vanish and reappear again, it would not matter to the calculation - all that would matter would be the t -th moment - a mere instant. The systems of science are founded, therefore, not on a notion of real time, but are always instants being constantly renewed. The future in this case is entirely predictable in that, what the composite will become is already present in itself, provided what it is includes all the points of the universe with which it is related. (1983: 20-21) A superhuman intelligence could predict "for any moment of time, the position of any point of the system in space". (1983: 8) Foreseeable futures, such as the belief that scientists invest in the objects and systems that they isolate, can only be thought providing that the idea of real time has been precluded. Indeed that real time gnaws away at no/thing is the central tenet of the science. In real duration all the past always endures into the present. Real time, the continual flow of things 'would and does not count in this equation'. Abstract time comprises of static moments juxtaposed in continual succession.

Yet, in the material world, succession is an undeniable fact. Even when considering isolated systems, the past, present and future (history) may be unfolded, and this unfolding must be understood as gradual, as if it occupied a duration like our own. Bergson illustrates this point using his famous example of a sugar cube in water. He argues, ‘when mixing sugar with water we still need to wait for the sugar to melt’. This might seem the most obvious thing but this has important implications for understanding the univocality of life. A sugar cube has a spatial configuration, but if it is analyzed only from that perspective it will be only understood in terms of differences of degree between itself and anything else. However, the waiting here differs in kind from spatialized abstracted time, for it participates in our own duration. The waiting here cannot be calculated by utilizing a mathematical time-frame for it now coincides with our own time, with our impatience; with a share of our duration over which I cannot extend or narrow at will. (1983: 10) Thus, when Bergson formulates, “I must wait until the sugar cube dissolves”, he is extending duration beyond the temporal rhythms of the sugar cube into our own impatiences with the passing of time hence revealing that elsewhere there are ‘other rhythms that differ in kind from our own’(Deleuze: 1988: 78). In considering the rhythm of duration of the sugar cube - for it also has duration - ‘a way of being in time’, we can begin to understand that the sugar cube differs in kind from other things. This is particularly evident in the process of the sugar cube’s dissolving, for it can be said, in that process, to differ in itself. This change as difference in-itself can only be grasped in terms of duration, and not in terms of space. “There are no differences in kind except in duration - while space is nothing other than the location, the environment, the totality of differences in degree” (1988: 32). ‘Duration is always, in its multiplicity and totality’, the context and location of articulations of the real; space is only ever but the place of the totality of differences in degree (1988: 32). In that objects can enter into the rhythm of the duration of consciousness they can be said to endure. These abstractions (the water, the sugar, the melting) which are cut out from the Whole of our senses are, in the manner of a consciousness (Bergson: 1983: 10).

They share in an experience of time that is no longer a relation, but is an absolute; that is lived and no more merely thought. So, though things outside us are distinguished by entirely different durations, in a certain relative way they do participate in our own duration ‘and in doing so emphasize it’. (Deleuze: 1988: 78) Hence Bergson claims that things mysteriously participate inexpressibly in our own durations.

The Universe Endures

Of course, Bergson argues, science is not altogether ‘artificial’ or subjective. If it were not in some way founded on objectivity it should not be able to explain why it finds opposing results. ‘Matter itself tends to constitute isolable systems which we can then treat mathematically. Indeed we can treat matter as a “tendency”, for though it is *isolable* yet it is never ending and never complete. If science does isolate matter (‘finish it off’), it is for the purposes of study. Science conveniently ignores the external influences to which “so-called” isolated systems are subject, either because it intends to deal with them later or because it considers them negligible. And yet these influences are the threads which bind the system to a second more extensive system and then to a third, by which they are both then encompassed, and so on to “the system most objectively isolated and most independent of all” - the solar system. Yet, even here there is no absolute isolation. Heat and light radiated by the sun extend beyond the solar system. And, continues Bergson, it moves in a fixed direction, pulling with it planets and satellites and, although “(t)he thread attaching it to the rest of the universe is doubtless very tenuous, it is along this thread that is transmitted down to the smallest particle of the world in which we live the duration immanent to the whole of the universe. So it is on this point (in ‘Creative Evolution’), that we encounter the ‘major limitation’ that is necessary to avoid generalization. Things *endure*, less in themselves than ‘in relation to the universe as a whole’, “in which they participate insofar as their distinctions are artificial”. (1983: 10-11) When we are required by the lump of sugar to wait while it dissolves, this is because, “in spite of”

its 'arbitrary carving out', "it opens out onto the universe as a whole". So, we can deduce that each thing 'no longer has its own duration', except things that are similar to us (psychological duration), then other 'living things' which create naturally 'relative closed systems and lastly, the 'whole of the Universe'. (Deleuze: 1988: 77)

Living Bodies: The Individual

So far this exposition of Bergson's theory has considered consciousness as that which endures and also 'life in general' as enduring in relation to consciousness and the whole of the universe. He now turns his attention to the question of living bodies. The question is, do living body endure? If it can be shown that living things, like consciousness and the inanimate, can be said to endure and not to merely expire, then Bergson will have indeed have demonstrated his claim that all things share in a life which is univocal, and can advocate his own philosophy of vital life as univocal. For the purposes of this thesis, once it has been established that vital life is that which differs in-itself, it can then go on to demonstrate its proposal that; *'Man is that which differs in degree from himself; becoming-woman is that which differs in kind in-itself'*.

The task of showing that life is univocal brings Bergson into confrontation with both mechanism and finalism and this conflict will be attended to presently in order to show in what precise ways Bergson's own theory of life differs from those doctrines (and, indeed, in what ways it is similar). However, in order to undertake this task, Bergson firstly considers it necessary to undermine the idea of the *individual* which has played a key role in explaining the existence of the organism. His aim is to demonstrate that the notion of the individual is a false idea.

The reason Bergson wants to problematize the notion of the individual is that it suggests that living entities are somehow separate entities, closed off from the rest of the universe. Clearly, for a theory of the univocality of life, the idea of a perfectly

individuated entity would be untenable. The idea of the individual has played a pivotal role in evolutionary theory, take for instance, the examples of Natural Selection and Social Darwinism where theme of the individual has been a crucial player in the idea that life is a competitive struggle for survival. However, Bergson explains, the problem of what actually constitutes an individual is an insurmountable question (especially in plants), and although it is a problem of any number of degrees, that does not prevent scientists from assuming that individuality is a characteristic property of life. We are, Bergson warns, at times as simplistic in our meaning of life as we are in our understanding of crude matter. This is clearest in our thinking about individuality. Here Bergson cites the examples of the Lumbriculus worm, the hydra, and the sea urchin. Each regenerates from its “stumps, pieces and fragments” many new individuals. What then, constitutes an individual in these cases? Further, in the case of regeneration, the fact that there are now several does not mean that before there was not one. To think of the individual as an isolated entity, is to approach the problem of life as an idea ‘in general’. (Bergson: 1983: 12-13)

If individuals were perfected then no part of the organism could be detached and live separately. Take the case of reproduction: Meiotic sex, that particular manner of reproduction on which animals and plants depend, it too puts the whole notion of the individual into question. Unlike all other beings who do not form embryos - bacteria, protoctists and fungi - animals and plants rely on the ‘almost independent sexual cells’ of the egg and sperm of which fusion and fertilization will begin the process of manufacturing a new member of its species. Reproduction involves the creation of a new organism from the old, and perfect individuation would make this an impossible aspiration. So, even although the tendency to individuate is everywhere, yet this is opposed by another tendency to reproduce. Individuality *allows* that an organism may have the power to divide into fragments which will in turn live. That the organism should present a certain systematization of its parts prior to division that is then reproduced after division again problematizes the idea of perfect individuation.

Furthermore, meiotic sex brings with it the ‘nonnegotiable consequence’ of programmed death. How can death be argued to be beneficial to the individual? “Individuality therefore harbours its enemy at home”(Bergson: 1983: 13).

Meiotic sex however, is certainly not a special case of individuation, as Margulis has shown in her scientific research into symbiogenesis. Symbiotic fusions were around long before meiotic sex.³¹ Sex is far more predictable and less creative in outcome than the symbiotic replications of its bacterial counterparts. Of those life forms that do not rely on the production of embryos, who ‘casually pick-up’ genes, passing them “with abandon as one bacterium donates its genes to another”, still we can say nothing of perfect individuation. There is nothing individual about symbiotic ‘side-communication’. Margulis also cites numerous examples of symbiogenetic fusions between the parents of different species; red algae, cud-chewing cows (cows and their entodiniomorphid rumen ciliates), green hydras and luminous fish, which again challenge the idea of individuality. (Margulis: 1998: 87-90)

Individuality, Bergson insists, is impossible to define even though life is “nevertheless” the manifestation of such a search “as if it strove to constitute systems naturally isolated, naturally closed”. (Bergson: 1983: 15) However, due to the bad habit of our intellects, we approach the question of the individual ‘living body’ as ready-made problem of ‘life in general’. In this way, life becomes cut-out from the Whole and conceived in terms of mathematically isolated units. It is a mistake to compare like with like when comparing life with object, for these differ in kind. Instead, a body should be understood as being infinitely linked by extension to part of the Whole. No doubt this body too is governed by its chemical and physical laws (as is all matter), yet this living body has been “separated and closed off by nature

³¹ In *The Symbiotic Planet*, (1998) Margulis argues that the origin of symbiosis was due to the abortive cannibalistic act of certain protists. This, she argues, led to the evolution of sex and death which were the result of failed symbiotic mergers.

herself". This is not the same thing as the closing off of matter by our perception which is relative, or the closing off of systems by science which too is relative. The living body is comprised of unlike parts which yet complement one another. The diverse functions it performs involves each part. No other object does Bergson consider as having such diversity of parts or function. One can only supply definitions to completed realities, but vital properties are never entirely realised, even in man. They are always in the process of becoming actualized. Again, these should not be thought of as states, but as *tendencies*. Individuation can never then be complete in space as it must perpetuate itself in time. The biologist needs then to account for both tendencies and it is therefore pointless to propose precise definitions.

The Organism Endures

Unorganised bodies 'in general', it was shown, are ruled by a simple law: "the present contains nothing more than the past, and what is found in the effect was already in the cause". (Bergson: 1983: 14) However, of the organized body - the individual - there is nothing surprising in the fact that there were afterwards many where there first appeared to be one, as is found in the case of the organic world. Individuality, therefore, is never a question of perfection, and because of this it is possible to distinguish a living system from those that our perception or science isolates. (1983: 15) It is, therefore, possible to speak of 'states' 'in general', but not of life 'in general'. Rather than comparing life with a determinate material object, according to Bergson, it should instead be compared with the totality of the material universe for, like the universe, the organism endures. This may not be an ideal comparison, for a living organism can be observed directly, whereas the universe must be imagined, but it does at least allow that the principle qualities of organization be understood - all living things, including the universe, endure. "Its past, in its entirety, is prolonged into its present, and abides there, actual and acting". To understand life is to understand that it changes, it ages; that it has a history. Consider, for example, our own bodies, from infancy to old age, little by little, like our

consciousness, they age. Actually, although it is our bodies that age we metaphorically apply 'old age' to the conscious self. This process of aging is true of multicellular organisms like ourselves and of unicellular organisms, e.g. the Infusorian. Even 'simple' cell division cannot be indefinitely prolonged even though the Infusorian can 'put off' the final moment (by adapting its environment) when "rejuvenation by conjugation becomes necessary". Between Man and the Infusorian there are, continues Bergson, undoubtedly many other things in which individuality is less clear in that, although it ages somewhere, it is difficult to exactly pinpoint where or what that ageing is. One could dispute, for instance, that a tree never grows old, for it always renews itself, budding afresh with young new trees. But in a tree - more a "society rather than an individual" - something ages, whether the leaves or trunk, as does each and every cell, evolving in its specific way (1983: 15-16). Again, because we cannot apply a universal biological law defining growing old, we can say only that there are "*directions in which life throws out species in general*", yet, each species "in the very act by which it is constituted, affirms its independence". "*Wherever anything lives, there is, open somewhere, a register in which time is being inscribed*". (1983: 16 my italics)

RADICAL MECHANISM

Intuition strives in vain to prove that the further we move from the systems that science isolates and those of common-sense, the more we 'dig beneath them', the closer we are to a reality in which an "accumulative memory of the past", which in essence changes as a whole, makes it impossible to go back. That is because, Bergson argues, the mechanistic instinct of the mind is stronger than the reason of immediate experience. (1983: 17) Unconsciously, each of us carries inside of us a metaphysician, the intellect - of all living things, this is man's burden (and yet, in a strange twist, this 'attribute' is also the possibility of man's freedom - we shall return to this presently). The intellect denies, through ready-made explanations and irreducible propositions, the fundamentality of duration. Its logic tricks man into

thinking that change must always be reducible to an arrangement or rearrangement of parts; and, if this be the case, then might not the irreversibility of time be due simply to man's ignorance and; therefore, the reason that man cannot turn things back must be due to his own inability to rearrange them so. "Radical mechanism implies a metaphysic in which the totality of the real is postulated complete in eternity, and in which the apparent duration of things expresses merely the infirmity of a mind that cannot know everything at once". (1983: 39) In mechanical explanations then, *all is given*; all is; calculable, certain, mathematically deducible, predictable and knowable, and a superhuman mind would be able to calculate 'at a glance' past, present and future. Time, though it is referred to, has been extracted, it is deprived of efficacy - it is nothing as it does nothing. (1983: 37-39)

Loss and Gain

Time, in this scenario, "is assumed to have just as much reality for a living being as for an hour-glass". (1983: 17) However, this is to be fooled by generalities, though growing old is explained in terms of gain and loss of certain substances, and perhaps both concurrently, biologists actually cannot agree as to what has been gained or lost on the day of death. Whether viewed as; a "continual growth in the volume of protoplasm from the birth of the cell or right on to its death" or; loss of the 'quantity of nutritive substance contained in that 'inner environment' in which the organism is being renewed or again; the 'quantity of unsecreted residual substances' which finally 'crust' the body over, to construe life in this way, as loss and gain, as merely differences of degree, which is the result of spatializing time. Framed in these terms, of loss and gain, the explanation of death (and of life) are given *a priori* (1983: 18). Living tissue has been categorised by two orders, '*anagenesis*' and '*katagenesis*'. The role of the former is to 'construct tissues through a process of assimilating inorganic substances whereas the latter "the actual function of life" - except for 'assimilation, growth and reproduction - the kategenic order is *responsible* for falls in energy, (i.e. with death and not with the living). It is actually with this latter function that

physico-chemistry is concerned. (1983: 34-35) These are the false solutions to a problem badly stated. So, is Man simply ignorant? Might it not be that life could be explained in such terms if “he” could but unravel its complexity? Bergson thinks not, living bodies are not explainable in terms of the ‘immediately previous’, rather they should be conceived in terms of ‘all of the past’ added to each moment, that is, of its entire heredity; its whole history. To consider otherwise, that the living body could be mathematically treated by “some superhuman calculator”, arises of a metaphysic which, though it became more concrete after the discoveries of Galileo, *is natural* to the human mind. We must be on guard against it, as it is so seductive and common-sensical and thus proving the mind’s “innate inclination”. Man, according to Bergson, has evolved to think spatially. Yet, these innate intellectual tendencies, created by life were not meant to furnish us with an explanation of life, insists Bergson, they were intended for something else. They were intended to be turned towards utility, to enable man to act and interact with other living things and objects. (1983: 20-21)

Mechanistic explanations of life, therefore, sought after by the intellect, confuse time and space, mistaking real evolution with a fragment of the evolved (Mullarkey: 1999: 67). To reduce life in this way, is to misunderstand life’s vitality. Science may deal with organic destruction (loss and gain), but life, organic creation, cannot be treated mathematically. Organic destruction and organic creation are different in kind. Attempts to differentiate between the dead and the living, the artificial and the natural runs contrary to life’s creative tendencies. There is, however, no contradiction here between life and death, for once properly stated, it will be shown, these seemingly opposite poles can be understood as caught up in a ceaseless becoming, an indivisible movement, each with their own speeds. They need no longer to be understood of as the divisibles destined for destruction in a world that dies at every instant - “the world which Descartes was thinking of when he spoke of continued evolution”. (Bergson: 1983: 22)

‘How, Asks Bergson, in This Picture of Time, Could Evolution Ever Have Taken Place?’ (1983: 22) The reason for ageing, according to Bergson, must ‘lie deeper’. Rather than considering loss and gain as reversible, the evolution from embryo to whole organism should be thought of as continuous. The same *impetus* which caused the embryo to develop propels the body to continue growing. To attempt to tabulate life’s successive continuum would be to become lost in an infinity. Life, could be viewed a “perpetual change of form which ‘prolongs prenatal evolution’”. Although the organism appears to change at definite times, the changes cannot be said to come from without, it is prepared for gradually at every instant from, or even before, birth. So it is with insect larvae and crustacea, as it is with ourselves. In our case we can see continual change in our own crises of growth, such as puberty or menopause - in which an individual “becomes completely transformed”. All is part and parcel of our ageing. No doubt this ‘process’ involves “phenomena of organic destruction” but it is to those ‘that we should confine mechanistic explanations of ageing’, to descriptions of loss and gain. For, protests Bergson, “under these *visible* effects an inner cause lies hidden” - the relentless recording of duration - the persistence of organic memory, life endures. Life and growing old is an infinitely, graduated, insensible, continuum of change. (1983: 18-19)

Life, argues Bergson, evolves in vain in front of our eyes. That we put our lack of understanding of it simply down to our own ignorance in fact demonstrates our ignorance of duration. Instead, we continue in our belief that, could we but achieve it, life could be divided and sub-divided into a series of successive states. What we then think of as an unforeseeable original state is actually a new arrangement of old elements. We break down the biological aspect of a phenomena into physico-chemical factors, leaping from masses to molecules, molecules to atoms and atoms to corpuscles. In this way, argues Bergson, we reach a kind of molecular solar system which can be dealt with astronomically. Yet, no matter that scientists add,

without end, to the stock of physico-chemical phenomena they will not give us the key to life. Science can only achieve, at best, a totality of partial views which provide a certain times a new scheme of the whole. Living systems, Bergson insists, cannot be reduced to these artificial systems with which science deals, but should they be compared to the natural system of the whole universe. Bergson does concede to the mechanists that life is, a kind of mechanism but asks, are we to think of it as a mechanism of isolated parts within a whole or, rather, a mechanism of the whole, the indivisible real whole? The systems that science cut-out within the Whole are not parts, they are rather, *partial views* (representations) of the whole. To attach these partial views end to end is as futile in reconstructing the real whole as compiling thousands of photographs would be in reconstructing an object. The same can be said of physico-chemical phenomena, the futility of which Bergson illustrates using the example of a curve. A tiny fraction of a curve is very nearly a straight line. At its limit we may refer to it as part of either, “for in each of its points a curve coincides with its tangent”. So it is with ‘vitality’ (life); at every point life as tangent to physical and chemical forces, and further, the points are only partial views which our minds have imagined as stops in the ‘movement of the curve’. “In reality, life is no more made of physico-chemical elements than a curve is composed of straight lines”. (1983: 31-32)

Artificial Life

Not that imitation of the ‘living by the unorganised’ cannot be interesting and useful. Bergson continues. In this, he cites the work of chemists who, at the time he was writing, were reproducing artificially indirect cell division, organic synthesis and protoplasmic circulation. However, Bergson insists, although these biological processes, have been successfully *copied*, they merely “reproduce artificially the *external appearance* of certain facts of organization”. (1983: 33 my italics) Such experiments, he concedes, are interesting, yet scientists cannot agree as to their value - chemists, for instance, have agreed that, even at the level of the organic (let alone

the organized), science has merely reconstructed “waste products of vital activity”, for those “peculiarly active plastic substances obstinately defy synthesis”.(1983: 34) Further, he argues, if we study more deeply histological phenomena we are further warned against reductive physical or chemical explanations. For instance, he continues, quoting Dastre, what E.B. Wilson’s studies into the development of the cell achieved to do was, on the whole, “widen rather than to narrow the enormous gap that separates even the lowest forms of life from the inorganic world”. (1983: 36)³² Even in the humblest forms of life - as in amoebas or Infusoria, there can be discovered traces of ‘psychological activity’ which are not reducible to artificial systems.

More recently the scientific work carried out in the area of Recombinant DNA (gene cloning or genetic engineering)] serves to demonstrate Bergson’s argument. Despite popular claims that gene cloning does involve the creation of life, we are again here fooled by metaphors. Cloning is often couched in terms creationism - ‘scientists playing God’ - and, though articulated through the semantics of mechanism, actually the claims made of it are far too grand for what is predominantly a sophisticated method of cutting and pasting (splicing and gene transfer - transformation/transduction). Briefly, extracted DNA is cut out into tiny sequences by restriction endonucleases (enzymes) that are found in bacteria. These can be joined or spliced into vector (carrier) DNA molecules using the enzyme DNA ligase (the process is called ligation) which creates an artificial DNA molecule. This vector (either a plasmid or a virus) is then introduced into a host cell by means of either transformation or transduction. The successful outcome of this entails the selection, characterization and propagation by the host cell of the recombinant clone. (Smith: 1981: 39-43) Of course, the process is much more complex than described here, and indeed the process itself is not fully understood, but the point being made here is that,

³² Bergson is referring here to the work of histologist E.B. Wilson. (1897) *The Cell in Development and Inheritance*, New York

at no time does a DNA molecule, whether in its 'original' or artificial state, constitute a living being. Once isolated and extracted from a living organism a DNA molecule is dead. How then can DNA be argued to hold the 'key to life'? The answer is that it does not, for parts must be put back into the Whole.³³

"It is the latest in a long series of new scientific objects invented since the end of the nineteenth century. ... Life is now studied as far as possible as though it were nonlife, as devoid as possible of its traditional attributes". (Shostak: 1998: 154)

The Human Genome Project too (the search for a blueprint of life) deals only with partials, and though useful in isolating the molecular cause of certain diseases, can never claim to reveal the secret of life.³⁴ Take also, as an example, the work being carried out by scientists in the area of complexity theory at the 'Santa Fe Institute' by Stuart Kauffman and colleagues. They are developing a programme they have named 'tierra' which will enable the spontaneous creation of an artificial life form. Here again, though an interesting project, 'tierra' can only mimic the processes of real vital life.³⁵

The Evolutionary Debate

Any attempt to explain life's vital processes inevitably falls back onto the 'great evolutionary debate' fought out between the mechanists and the naturalists.³⁶

³³ See Shostak's account of the development of molecular biology in *Death of Life: The Legacy of Molecular Biology* (1998) in which argues that genetic research is actually involved in the pursuit of the essence of death, rather than is normally considered, the pursuit of the essence of life.

³⁴ The Human Genome Project was launched in 1988 by the US Congress: a joint effort between the Department of Energy and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Later the project was expanded and involves an international effort, overseen by the Human Genome Organization (HUGO). It is proposed that the main objective should be to produce a high-resolution genetic map of all the chromosomes which make up an individual by placing markers along the length of the chromosome. These are interspersed at a distance of about 1 centogram (cM) along the chromosome. By observing how often these markers (genes, etc.....) are inherited or separated by a cross-over event, it is possible to construct a genetic map. This may involve as many as 3000 markers.

Source: Cummings, M. R. (1994) *Human Heredity Principles and Issues* West Publishing Company St. Paul NY Chapter 8 p.215 - 218

³⁵ See, for instance, for a discussion of complexity theory and its application: Lewin, R. (1995) *Complexity: Life on the Edge of Chaos*, Phoenix London, and also: Waldrop, M.M. (1994) *Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos* Penguin Books London New York

³⁶ For discussion see: Eldredge, N. (1995) *Reinventing Darwin: The Great Evolutionary Debate* Phoenix London

Mechanists argue that physics, chemistry or genetics can provide the key to life, and are more concerned with the “functional activity” of life. This involves us in a mechanistic approach to physiology and genetics which explains phenomena merely in terms of what is repeated and repeatable (“as a chemical or genetic retort”). In contariety, the naturalists, including histologists and embryogenists, are concerned with the minute structure of living tissues, on their genesis and evolution, that is, they are interested in the retort itself, not only with its content. The latter ‘bodies’ believe far less in the certainty of physico-chemical explanation than do the former. However, it matters little whether in agreement with the mechanists or the naturalists, actually neither theoretical position can claim the authority to experiment whether denying or affirming physico-chemical mechanism for both are ‘unverifiable’; in the case of the former because science has not yet managed to synthesis chemically a living substance, and the second case “because there is no conceivable way of proving experimentally the impossibility of a fact”. (Bergson: 1983: 36). The important point here is that, Bergson sought to demonstrate why, theoretically, a living system, which has been closed off by nature, cannot be likened with that of an artificial system that science has isolated. Admittedly, Bergson concedes, these reasons are not so well applied to the case of the amoeba which hardly evolves at all, but they are when we consider more complex organisms which are transformed with regularity. It is pointless, however, to continue to speak of “*life in general*” as if it were an ‘abstraction’, for life is an impulsion which cannot be reduced to physical and chemical explanation. (1983: 36-37)

“The more duration marks the living being with its imprint, the more obviously the organism differs from a mere mechanism, over which duration glides without penetrating.” (1983: 37)

Bergson was, for instance, sympathetic to Weismann’s theory of “the continuity of germ plasm” that proposed the idea that life passes from germ plasm to protoplasm.

passing on its genetic sexual elements, and which dispersed throughout the organism whilst “concentrating a new something of itself on a certain special point - from which ova or spermatozoa will develop” - providing again the continuation of ‘genetic energy’, the “prerequisite impulsion to embryonic life”. This ‘genetic energy’ is, for Bergson, life, and the organism is but its medium. “(L)ife is like a current passing from germ to germ through the medium of a developed organism. It is as if the organism itself were only an excrescence, a bud caused to sprout by the former germ endeavouring to continue itself in a new germ”. (1983: 27) (1983: 26-27)

Whilst Bergson was in sympathy with the Wiesmann’s theory, it would be very doubtful whether he would extend this sentiment to more recent ultra-Darwinist interpretations of this theory - particularly the use of Wiesmann’s notion of the ‘barrier’ as that which prevents information passing in a reverse direction from the environment - in contemporary genetic theories, such as in Dawkins’ theory of the *Selfish Gene*, this idea has been ascribed to genes which are considered to strive ruthlessly and selfishly to pass on their information to the next generation.³⁷ Rather, the really important idea to take from Wiesmann’s theory is, as Bergson suggests, that life is a *continuous* and invisible progress, followed relentlessly, on which the organism merely hitches a ride during its short time. At a given point in time and space the visible current of life has emerged, passing from one body to another, one generation to another, dividing between species and then dispersing yet without losing any of its force, indeed rather intensifying as it proceeds.

When considering the systems that science isolates artificially or which our perception isolates, Bergson does concede that mechanistic explanations seem to suffice. However those reasons have less force when we consider life as a whole as a

³⁷ Dawkins, R (1976) *The Selfish Gene* Oxford University Press Oxford

single, indivisible history, from humblest to highest forms. Systems which explain life as a whole and those which take after it cannot be explained mechanically ‘*a priori*’ for this would render time useless and unreal. Actually, real duration is not explainable in this way. It is the basis of the world we exist in, the very substance of our being. “It is of no use to hold up before our eyes the dazzling prospect of a universal mathematic” for experience cannot be reducible to such a system. We must therefore, concludes Bergson, reject radical mechanism. We can not actually claim to refute mechanism by any final dismissal or mathematical explanation, but only instead by a refutation in which we consider ‘real time’, duration. Duration is the tide against which we cannot swim. (1983: 39)

RADICAL FINALISM

However, in turning to radical finalism to explain the vital process of life, Bergson finds this to be as equally problematic as mechanism, for both are born of the “same postulate”. However, whilst not quite completely rejecting mechanism, neither does Bergson reject the more evolutionist hypothesis of finalism, though his criticism is that like mechanism, finalism fails to account for real duration. We must be clear, therefore, Bergson warns, what exactly what to ‘partake of it and what to leave out’. In this ‘doctrine of teleology’, ‘things and beings’ are conceived as simply following a previously arranged programme, through which they advance in a harmonious, and purposeful order, attracted by a future which is predestined.³⁸ Actually, therefore, finalism simply inverts mechanism, they differ only in that; whereas mechanism is driven by the motor of the immediate past, finalism guides us with the attraction of the future. In this system, time is again rendered ‘useless’, for ‘all things are given’ allowing no opportunity for ‘creativity or inventiveness’. Real time, explains Bergson, is conflated with perception which is merely relative to the mind “which would vanish, like a rising mist, for a mind seated at the centre of things”. (1983: 40)

³⁸ Bergson refers here to Leibniz’s finalism account of a pre-established harmony.

Because finalism is relative and founded on appearance, it is 'essentially psychological and therefore extremely flexible, and for this reason, unlike mechanism (which quashes spontaneity), finalism allows for many inflections. It can, therefore, never be absolutely refuted for, wherever a form of it is dismissed, it simply transmutes. So encompassing is it, argues Bergson, that one must adopt something of its comprehensiveness immediately one dismisses pure mechanism. For that very reason, Bergson concedes, he too must assume some 'extent of finalism' but, if it is to be accepted, it must be on the condition that it is understood that, though (and if) the world is a whole (and if it follows a plan), it yet cannot be explained empirically or mathematically, as facts testify to the contrary. Furthermore, nor can the organism be explained harmoniously (as shall be explained presently), for nature posits 'living things and discord with each other'. In all things, order and disorder are juxtaposed, as are progress and retrogression. Thus finalism cannot ratify the whole of life or of matter. This has still not, however, prevented finalists from attempting to affirm the finality of separate organisms; "Is there not a wonderful division of labour, a marvellous solidarity among the parts of the organism, perfect order in infinite complexity?"(1983: 41-42) Could not all living beings, considered individually, realise a plan immanent in its substance? Because the proved to be too problematic a claim a finality of the Whole due to life's inherent discordance, instead, finality was broken into parts. Now, no longer the whole, but the pieces can be explained as having finality. In making this move, what is rejected is the "idea of an *external* finality according to which living beings are ordered in consideration to one another: that grass is made for a cow, the lamb for the wolf etc. This radical view, according to Bergson, can no longer be accepted. Instead, it is simply replaced with the idea that there is an *internal* finality; that all parts of a being conspire for the good of that entity and are intelligently arranged that it is so. Such is the 'classic' interpretation of finality that it never encompasses at a time, more than one living being (individual). However, for Bergson, to merely shatter finalism into an infinity of pieces is a wrong

move for, “(b)y making itself smaller”, he teases, “it probably thought it would offer less surface for blows” but, in fact, it lay them open to more (1983: 40-42).

Bergson’s own theory argues that finalism, rather than being conceived as internal, is “external or it is nothing at all”, the implications of which will now be elaborated. Taking as his example the Human Being, Bergson continues, “let us take the most complex and the most harmonious organism”, (in which) all “elements conspire for the greatest good of the whole”(1983: 41). Bear in mind, he continues, that any of these elements may itself be an organism and that its subordination to the ‘greater life’ demands that we accept the ‘principle of an *external* finality’. This in itself destroys the idea that finality is always *internal*. The tissues of an organism lives for itself as do the cells which comprise the tissue. Yet if the category of the organism is to be retained to describe the superiority of the complete individual, to which all smaller elements are subordinated, then these smaller elements cannot themselves be described as organisms. It would, therefore, be possible not only to recognise the individuality of the organism, but also to accept internal finality. Yet it is accepted that the elements *do* possess a true autonomy. The facts of regeneration are enough when taking as evidence, the germinal cells which exist alongside somatic cells. How can, for example, the sexual imperative to programmed death be deemed at all beneficial to the organism? Which say nothing of bacteriophage who’s independence actually drives them to attack the ‘organism that nourishes them. Where is the co-operation here? In the same way that external finality cannot be defended, neither can internal finality be defended. Both cannot account for life’s inherent discordance (1983: 41-42).

“There”, argues Bergson, “lies the stumbling block of the vitalistic theories” which we should not rebuke by simply, as is usual, “replying to the question by the question itself” (1983: 42). Though, the term “vital principle” in itself does not explain much yet it reminds us of our ignorance of duration which mechanism conveniently ignores.

Vitalism too is then difficult to defend in the light that there is neither a 'purely internal finality' nor an 'absolutely distinct individuality'. Whilst the individual may pretend to own the vital principle, yet the very individuality of the elements of which it is comprised claim their own vitality. Further (as was demonstrated above), the individual is not sufficiently independent of other things to claim a 'vital principle' of its own. Again regeneration is evidence of this. The organism even of the higher vertebrates is only the bud of two progenitors, the mother and father, a combination/connecting link which serves to problematise the uniqueness of the individual for, "(w)here, then, does the vital principle of the individual begin or end?" Should it be traced backwards to the "individual's remotest ancestors" and there find him 'solidary' with the root of genealogical life: - with that "little mass of protoplasmic jelly". And as we are "one" with our most primitive ancestor then we must be 'solidary' with all that has diverged in the descent from it. Therefore, insists Bergson, he must be united with "the totality of living beings by indivisible bonds". For that reason finality cannot be reduced to the 'individuality of any living being', but rather must encompass 'the whole world of life' in a "single indivisible embrace" - open on to a total virtuality'. Yet, this indivisible Whole is not so mathematically *one* as to disallow all the 'gaps and incoherences' that ensures all things "become individualised to a certain degree". Yet life, this virtual totality, does form a Whole, and as such we must either decide upon the absolute negation of finality or, develop a hypothesis which accepts the importance, not only the elements of the organism to the organism, but that also allows that the organism, as a living being, is part of the 'collective whole' of all others. For "(f)inality will not go down any easier for being taken as a powder". We must either dismiss its 'immanence to life' in totality, or 'pulverise it' in a very different way. (1983: 43-44)

The idea that life has a purpose to which it aspires, is the point on which finalism, according to Bergson, errs most. In order to understand this, and the nuances of Bergson's philosophy of life, it will now be useful to further dwell on its similarities

and differences to radical finalism which claims, according to Bergson, claims both too much and too little.

Bergson's Finalism

Like finalism, Bergson's own philosophy would represent the organised world as a harmonious whole, although in a 'vaguer form', for the harmony sought here is far from perfect, and is driven by an impulsion and not an aspiration. In this way harmony, or complementarity, is behind us, not in front. And in contariety with finalism, Bergson's philosophy views life as discordant only in as much as each individual and each species expresses its own interest in retaining energy derived from the same universal vital impetus, and also in that each individual retains a certain fragment of this original *common* impetus. In this way it is possible to speak of the *adaptation* of species. Species and individuals are self-interested, thinking entirely of themselves and thus there arises the conflict between life forms. Bergson's formulation of finalism, unlike the classic interpretation, allows that life be at discord with itself and yet, at the same time, allow that species share a common impetus. "Harmony, therefore, does not exist in fact; it exists rather in principle"; that is it is virtual; the original impetus is a *common* impetus for, diverging currents are of the same gust. "(T)he higher we ascend the stream of life the more do diverse tendencies appear complementary to each other".(1983: 51) Harmony can only be revealed in tendencies ("in the mass") and not in states. Complementarity then, Bergson attests, is behind us not before us, indeed, it would be anthropomorphic and pointless to bequeath life 'an end', for this once more requires us to think in terms of, and to utilise, a pre-existing model which must simply be realized. Again, all would be given and the future could be told in the present. It is to assume that whole life only functions as does our intellect, that is, to conceive of life as naturally fragmented and timeless. Life in contrast, as has been described above, *endures* in time. It is possible, of course, to look retrospectively over the direction that has been travelled in the course of time and explain as if (in psychological terms) it had an end, an aim.

This, however, is ‘all too human’ an inclination of mind; “(o)f the road which was going to be traveled, the human mind could have nothing to say, for the road has been created *pari passu* with the act of travelling over it, being nothing but the direction of the act itself”. (1983: 51) Finalism cannot predict the future as it relies on a present view of the past and, as such, finalism claims ‘both too much and too little. its parameters are at once too wide and too narrow’.

In Bergson’s view, finalism falls short when it confines itself to ascribing some intelligence to nature, and overstretches itself in predicting the future based on the present in a form of an idea. These two errors compliment one another in the defect of the first and the excess of the second. Bergson accepts that our intellects, from the point of view of habit, think abstractly of the future, itself being “an abstract view of the cause of its own being” (1983: 53), and indeed, we know that in the finalist theory, life evades any definite explanation. Intellectual explanations of life limit what life can mean, for intellect itself is but part of a larger reality which possesses both relief and depth. In Bergson’s philosophy, that we might truly think the future, “(i)n place of intellect proper must be substituted the more comprehensive reality of which intellect is only the contraction”(1983: 52). The future, once conceived in this way, is no longer a representational end but an expansion of the present. “(O)nce realised, it will explain the present as much as the present explains it, and even more: it must be viewed as an end as much as, and more than, a result” (1983: 52). Finalism misses this vaster reality and should seek to reconstruct it for, it does not simply, as does the intellect, link like with like and so eternally reproduce the Same, it holds within it the potential to *produce effects* by expanding and transcending its own being. These effects are not pre-existent, although, once produced, they can succumb to rational interpretation.

If there is a choice to be made between finalism and mechanism, for Bergson, finalism is the better option; “*provided that it is corrected in two ways*”. Firstly.

though it is correct that a comparison is made between a living being and the whole universe, it is incorrect to express this as a kind of analogy between two closed total systems thus identifying a macrocosm and a microcosm. Living beings have a closure, that is they exist, only in that they are essentially open onto a totality that is itself open. Finality is not internal but external - otherwise it is nothing. Secondly in finality there is an element of 'proof' in that we can find similar actualizations on divergent lines. (Deleuze: 1988: 105)

Suppose for a moment, Bergson reflects, that a mechanistic hypothesis is true; that evolution has occurred successively through a series of accidents, added by selection, to previous 'advantageous' accidents, the sum of which comprises the living being. It would be unlikely that two such series of accidents would arrive at similar results in the construction and particularly of like apparatus, if "there is no trace of this apparatus at the moment of divergence". However, accepting Bergson's hypothesis, even in its most recent form there would still remain something of that primitive impulsion. If this could be demonstrated, Bergson argues, pure mechanism could be refuted and, finalism, to a certain degree, could be proved. If we could demonstrate that mechanism be flawed, we must accept the evolutionist hypothesis but, Bergson insists, we must not simply accept the 'classical conception of finality', rather we must push it further. If indeed it could be shown that life can produce 'like apparatus' through 'unlike means' on 'divergent lines of evolution', *"the strength of the proof would be proportional both to the divergency between the lines of evolution thus chosen and to the complexity of the similar structures found in them"*. (Bergson: 1983: 54-55) For if the postulation, that life is driven by one single impetus is correct, then individuals, even though diverging over milleniums, would surely retain something in common. For, although they diverge and continue in their own independent manner, it is only 'by virtue' of that original common impetus of the totality that the parts continue in their movement. Something of that totality would remain in the fragments, perhaps even evidenced in the identical organs to be found in profoundly

different organisms (as in the the examples given below of sexual reproduction and the construction of the eye in the case of the vertebrates and the pecten) (1983: 52-55).

Adaptation

In order then to prove his own theory, Bergson firstly demonstrates the errors of 'adaptation'. It could be argued, however, that such similarity of structure may be due to the 'general conditions in which life evolved'; that in some way *outer conditions* may have executed force on the direction, despite the diversity of outer conditions and chance inner changes. Bergson was not blind to the theory of *adaptation* or its place the science of his day, and his critiques are just as relevant today as they were then. His attack was on the explanations that biologists give of the negative and positive influences of the environment on the organism. There are those who believe that the outer conditions cause change in an organism in a *direct* way due to physico-chemical changes induced by them. More true to Darwinism, there are others who think that the influence of outer conditions work only *indirectly* by favouring those which are best adapted through birth chance to the environment. In the case of the former outer conditions are thought to have a *positive* influence on variation, making variation possible, whilst in the case of the latter, outer conditions have a *negative* influence, in that its variation is eliminated. In both cases, it is plain that outer conditions are believed to alter the organism in precise ways. Both are mechanical explanations as to how adaptation to outer conditions brings about resemblance of structure. However, Bergson insists, these examples actually serve as the strongest argument against mechanism. It will now be shown why, for Bergson, this theories of adaptation is limited and inadequate.

Darwin's belief in the elimination of the ill-adapted is a straightforward and uncomplicated idea. Yet, because it stresses the negative influence of conditions it cannot adequately explain "the progressive or *rectilinear* development in complex

organisms. And how much greater this inadequacy seems when comparing two similar structures which have evolved in complex ways on entirely dissociated lines. A negative hypothesis of adaptation that would allow a multitude of tiny accidents of physical and chemical causes to culminate in a complex structure would presume such a level of concurrence of infinitesimal causes that recurrence in same or similar structures is extremely unlikely. It seems untenable and Darwinians may simply claim that more tracks than one may lead to the same clearing. However, Bergson stresses, we should be careful here not to be fooled by a metaphor, for the spot arrived at does not explain the form of the road that has led there. An organism may be the result of all the accidents that it has undergone in evolution, but whilst it is evident that identical structures have been formed by a gradual accumulation of effects, it is not at all clear how accidental causes, and the accidental order in which they occur, could repeatedly produce the same result. We should not be surprised, explains Bergson, that two ramblers who commence their prospective hikes from different points and who proceed to wander at random should finally meet on their journey. If they were, however, to describe of their routes “two identical curves exactly superposable”, then we should think this very unlikely. The more complicated each of their routes, the more improbable the sameness of their pattern. If this analogy is applied to the journey undergone in the process of evolution by the thousands of different cells, each being themselves kinds of organisms, each which is arranged in a definite order, it does, insists Bergson, begin to seem implausible. (1983: 55-57)

Take, as an example, the case of the parallel progressions in the direction of sexuality in plant life and animal life, although plants and animals have evolved on independent lines favoured by unlike circumstances and opposed by unlike obstacles. Both involve in the process of replication (reproduction); the union of two nuclei which differ prior, to that union, in their properties and structure, but which become equivalent to one another upon connection; this is then proceeded by the preparation of sexual elements under like conditions in that there is an elimination of a certain quantity of chromatic substance and a reduction of the number of chromosomes. This

resemblance exists despite that these two great series have continuously diverged, and though thousands and thousands of causes have combined to influence their morphological and functional evolution, yet still they have produced the same effect. This, according to Bergson, hardly constitutes the phenomenon of adaptation, and leads him to ask, “where is the adaptation, where is the pressure of external circumstances?” And what is particularly practical about sexual generation? There are around some very diverse explanations of its function indeed, it could be argued, that in plants sexuality is a luxury that nature could easily have dispensed with. (1983: 59-60)

Now consider the second of the two hypothesis, positive adaptation, and to apply it to the same problem. Positive adaptation implies that outer conditions have a positive influence on the organism, this does not simply mean the eradication of the ‘ill’ (or un) adapted, for what has perished is of little concern in considering what has survived the progressive development of complex apparatus. In this case, unlike the first, cause equals effect and it is once more apparently explainable by pure mechanism. Yet, Bergson protests, in taking a closer look it becomes apparent that a mechanistic argument is merely verbal, and once more we are to be fooled by metaphors. The real solution to the problem is to deal with the term ‘adaptation’ in two entirely different senses concurrently. Bergson illustrates his point with an example: when water and wine are poured separately into a glass they soon, though two different liquids, take the same form. The form of the content is dictated by the container. In this case adaptation means that a mechanical adjustment has taken place for, Bergson explains, the matter adapted itself to a ready-made form which dictated its shape. But there is no such pre-existing form, working on the adaptation of the organism. Life is not simply inserted into a mould whose shape it then adopts. To think so would indeed be to be ‘tricked by a metaphor’. The environment cannot be reduced to the idea of some fixed mechanical apparatus in which life is contained. (1983: 57-58)

The Eye as Outcome Produced by Diverse Means

An example that Bergson uses to illustrate his point well, is that of the eye. It appears the eye, and its response to light, serves as a most convincing instance of adaptation. However, Bergson insists, were it possible to demonstrate the inadequacy of adaptation in the case of the eye, then it could indeed be contested most convincingly. The doctrine of finality has ever stressed that nature is a 'clever workman' when discussing the structure of the sense organs. Indeed these are often invoked as very particular cases to demonstrate natural selection, or adaptation, since sensory organs are to be found in rudimentary states (such as in the case of pigment spots in simple organisms), through intermediaries, to the most complex organisms, (for instance, the complex eye of the vertebrate). Thus perfection through natural selection is demonstrated, so it seems. Take for example the eye as it has developed in Mollusks and Vertebrates, it is unlikely that the gradual culmination of accidental variations should add up to the same outcome in divergent species. Nor could something as complex as the eye be explained through the process of punctuated equilibria. That the same actualization should be manifest in such diverse species as a result of sudden chance mutations seems unsustainable. In both explanations, the organ would be incomplete and useless as a visual tool until it was finally perfected. The more divergent the lines of actualization, the more significance this example takes on; the more divergent and unlike the means of developing the organ the more similar it is. After all, what use is half an eye?

For these reason, Bergson warns us, we should be careful in resorting too readily to the term adaptation for; if we speak of outer conditions effecting an organism passively, as in forming a 'relief from a mould', "it will build up nothing that one tries to make it build"; if on the contrary we talk of active causation, of a calculated response to outer conditions, then this is to go too far down the road of finality. But, "the truth is", explains Bergson, "there is a surreptitious passing from one of these two meanings to the other", a haven is found in the first, whenever trapped "in

flagrante delicto”, of the second approach. It is in the second approach, Bergson asserts, under which science practice is usually pursued, but it is under the pretext of the first that the philosophy of that practice is provided. That is, we speak in the *particular* about adaptation, when we require the organism to act like a machine, transforming external conditions to its best advantage. Then, when we speak of adaptation *in general*, we consider that ‘indifferent matter’ is effected passively by of outer conditions. (1983: 58-59)

So, again mechanism and finalism can be refuted, in that there is proof, Bergson claims, in his own theory of external finality to the extent that we can find similar actualisations, identical structures or apparatuses on divergent lines. In this way we can see that actualisation (that which produces resemblances) is actually subordinated to differentiation, difference and divergence (Deleuze: 1988: 106). “While actual forms or products resemble each other, the movements or production do not resemble each other, nor do the products resemble the virtuality that they embody” (1988: 106). The Whole creates divergent lines which are then actualised by the dissimilar means it utilises on each line. Actualisation and differentiation are then modes of genuine creation. Differentiation is explainable as the obstacles duration encounters in matter; the materiality through which it passes; and to the kind of extension that it contracts. Life must create its own form which it must best adapt to its circumstances by neutralising their inconveniences and utilising their advantages and this would require a response to outer actions by way of creating a machine which has no resemblance to them.

For Bergson, what has become apparent is that there is a Whole of duration, and this whole is virtual. We also know that this virtual actualises along divergent lines which yet, do not by themselves form a whole, and yet neither do they resemble that which they actualise. (1988: 106) Life, Bergson insists, is therefore derived from one origin, a continuation of one impetus which has diverged and digressed with evolution.

Continually, creations have been added to creations leading to an incompatibility of tendencies which, when they found themselves unable to grow beyond a certain point, were forced to dissociate. Not that evolution had necessarily to diverge, it could equally have taken place in one dimension, in one single individual, whether by undergoing a series of transformations over millenniums, or a unilinear succession. But, evolution has diverged through millions of individuals “each ending at a crossing from which new paths radiate”, indefinitely. (Bergson: 1983: 53-54)

ELAN VITAL

So we have arrived at Bergson’s own philosophy of life, the *elan vital*: It is, for Bergson, simply put, the essence of life. This is the active science advocated by this thesis through which it is possible to discover true difference. Bergson’s is the active image of thought that can know life as the vital impetus that differs in-itself.

Three Requirements for a Philosophy of Life

There are, importantly three requirements necessary to engage with Bergson’s active science as a philosophy of life, these are to understand that:

(From Deleuze: 1988: 99-100)

- (1) vital difference is internal difference. It is only if it is thought and experienced in this way that tendencies to *change* can be considered non-accidental and therefore due to an internal cause in that tendency.
- (2) these differences enter into relationships of dissociation and division and not, as is commonly misunderstood of adaptation and selection, of association and addition.
- (3) they therefore involve a virtuality that is actualised according to the lines of divergence. Evolution moves from the virtual term to the heterogeneous terms

whereby it is actualised along the branches of series. It in no way moves to the homogeneity that proceeds from one actual term to another, to unilinear series.

Crucially, to engage with an active science is to understand that “(l)ife does not proceed by association and addition of elements, but by dissociation and division”. (Bergson: 1988: 89)

The *elan vital* is the moment of the differentiation of difference, when life is discovered to differ in-itself, at the moment when the totality is divided up or a simplicity is differentiated. *Elan vital* is the process through which life proceeds by dissociation and division, the virtuality in the process of being actualised. Life itself is differentiation, and the very movement of differentiation becomes merged in ramified series; the most familiar to us being into plant and animal; then further, the animal is divided into those which are identified by instinct and those by intelligence; and yet further these are divided into several directions - the former (instinct) becoming actualised in different species - and the latter (intelligence) has its particular modes or actualisations. And within itself duration is also differentiated through an internal explosive force; and it is only by way of branching into the subdivisions of species that it is affirmed and prolonged; it is only in this way that it forwards itself. (Deleuze: 1988: 94-95)

Adaptation then is not so much a matter of repeating, but rather *replying*. This is a very different thing. (Bergson: 1983: 58) “Differentiation is always the actualisation of a virtuality that persists across its actual divergent lines” (Deleuze: 1988: 95). Actualisation is the moment of the pure dualism which carries with it the unity, the virtual primordial totality (the monism) that, during the process of differentiation becomes dissociated according to the divergent lines but yet still subsists in each line. For instance, when plant and animal are divided up, and when, further, animal is

divided into those said to have intelligence and those, instinct, with each division, each series (branching) carries with it, presupposes the unity (the 'Whole'). One could say it is something that remains to us indistinct and formless ("nebulous") and yet testifies to its undivided origin. "A halo of instinct can be detected in intelligence, a nebula of intelligence in instinct, a hint of the animate in plants, and of the vegetable in animals"(Deleuze: 1988: 95). Finality is not a ready-made goal, and though life has directions, these directions are created along with the actualisation and differentiation that runs through them. Though each line of actualisation relates to a different virtual level, yet it must still "invent the figure of this correspondence and create the means for the development of that which was only enveloped in order to distinguish that which was confused" (p.106 Bergsonism).

Life, explains Bergson, proceeds rather like a shell which bursts into tiny fragments, not as in the single ball of a cannon which follows a single course but as an explosive force which scatters again the fragments, "and so long for a time incommensurably long". (Bergson: 1983: 98) Each time the shell explodes it is met by the resistance of inert matter, and thus creates an 'unstable balance' out of which spring individuals and species. To overcome this resistance, life transformed itself temporarily into physical and chemical forces, 'by dint of humility' making itself very small. Life in the simplest forms of life is almost unrecognizable yet it in them they hold all the impulse of that original internal push which would ensure their actualization (1983: 98).

"Of phenomena in the simplest forms of life, it is hard to say whether they are still physical and chemical or whether they are already vital. Life had to enter thus into the habits of inert matter, in order to draw it little by little magnetized, as it were, to another track. The animate forms that first appeared were therefore of extreme simplicity. They were probably tiny masses of scarcely differentiated protoplasm, outwardly resembling the amoeba observable today, but possessed of the tremendous

internal push that was to raise them even to the highest forms of life. That in virtue of this push the first organisms sought to grow as much as possible, seems likely.”

(Bergson: 1983: 99)

It can be seen now, that the One ‘the original identity’ that “has the power to be differentiated” is a question of memory. It has already be shown that “*the virtual as virtual has a reality*”, and that this reality, which comprises of all the simultaneous degrees of expansion and contraction, ‘extends’ to the whole universe which is like a “gigantic memory”, and where everything “coexists with itself, except for the differences of level”. On these levels there are “remarkable points” specific to them and both level and points are themselves virtual. And in this way, because they are virtual they are all “enclosed in a Simplicity”, coexisting in a single Unity and forming the “potential parts of that virtual Whole”. “They are the *reality of this virtual*”. These are the “virtual multiplicities”. It is in the process of ‘actualisation’ that we can say that there no longer exists a Whole, for when a virtuality is actualised it differentiates its parts’; it “develops according to lines that are divergent and yet each line still relates to a “particular degree” in that virtual Unity. There can no longer be said to be a “coexisting whole, instead there are lines of actualisation, “some successive, others simultaneous” yet in each the whole is actualised in any direction, though one direction does not combine with others. These lines, because they each correspond to degrees which coexist in the virtual can be said to actualize points”, separating it from other lines and yet it is “unaware of everything that happens on other levels” (Deleuze: 1988: 101) Evolution is actualisation, actualisation is creation”(Deleuze: 1988: 98). Deleuze suggests that we ‘think of it as follows (quoted at length):

“When duration is divided into matter and life, then life into plant and animal, different levels of contraction, which only coexist insofar as they remain virtual, are actualized. And when the animal instinct is itself divided into various instincts, or when a

particular instinct is itself divided according to species, levels are again separated, or are actually cut out in the region of the animal or of the genus. And however strictly the lines of actualization correspond to the levels or the virtual degrees of expansion (detente) or contraction, it should not be thought that the lines of actualisation confine themselves to tracing the levels or degrees, to reproducing them by simple resemblance. For what coexisted in the virtual ceases to coexist in the actual and is distributed in lines or parts that cannot be summed up, each one refraining in the whole, except from a certain perspective, from a certain point of view: these lines of differentiation are therefore truly creative. They only actualise by inventing, they create in these conditions the physical, vital or psychical representative of the ontological level that they embody.” (Deleuze: 1988: 101)

False Problems

Each divergent line (“line of life”) corresponds to a type of matter that is not only external (or environmental), but from which each living being fabricates a body, a form for itself. It would seem then that everything proceeds as if “living beings themselves also stated false problems for themselves in which they risk losing their way”. That is why, as it corresponds to matter, the living entity is first and foremost the positing of a problem and “the capacity to solve problems”. ...Every solution can only be as good as the problem stated - ie the way in which it was stated, and also those means that the living being had at its service at any time. We should not then search for comparisons between creatures say, with a similar instinct, and conclude that they are somehow more or less complete, more or less perfect but, instead, be led to deduce that they are as perfect as they can be in varying degrees. It is only when focusing on the actuals at the conclusion of each line are we then forced to establish relationships between them - whether those of opposition or progressive succession (“graduation”). We can therefore only see differences of degree between, or we will see them dualistically - where one is always considered to be “negative inversion of the other: an obstacle of opposition. However, it is apparent the each vital solution

cannot be in itself be regarded as being successful. And although each solution is a relative success as it corresponds to the movement through which it was created, depending on the problem stated or the environmental disposition, it must also be considered a relative setback for in establishing outcomes a line alienates itself (as movement) from itself (as material form). However, if we but replace the actual term in any movement by which they are produced we are brought back to the virtuality actualised in them. In this way we can see that far from ever being negation, differentiation is essentially positive and creative. We thus always find again the commonalities, the laws common to these lines of actualisation or differentiation. Between life and matter, between expansion (detente) and contraction, there is a relation which registers the “coexistence of their respective degrees in the virtual Whole, “and also “their essential relativity in the process of actualisation”. (Deleuze: 1988: 103-104) “Life as *movement* alleviates itself in the material *form* that it creates; by actualising itself, by differentiating itself, it loses “contact with the rest of itself” (Deleuze: 1988: 104) A living being can be thought then to turn in on itself; to arrest movement; to close in on itself. “It cannot be otherwise, since the whole is only virtual, dividing itself by being acted out” (Deleuze: 1988: 104) And though closed in on themselves, in the actual a “irreducible pluralism reigns” - ‘as many worlds as living beings’(Deleuze: 1988: 104).

Univocality of Being

At the core of Bergson’s philosophy of life then, we have discovered a monism, ‘a univocality of being’ which could be found by following the differences of kind beyond the decisive turn, beyond finalism and mechanism. Here is the place that Deleuze discovered in Bergson a means to think life as difference-in-itself, as that which did not return equivocal being and its dialectical legacy. Starting from a monism, Deleuze rediscovered a pure dualism in which virtuality is actualized. This moment, that of a rediscovered dualism - the One, Simple totality - is the moment of the *Elan Vital*. We have already seen how the monism, the One simple totality, at

every moment divides into pure past and pure present, or, the *elan vital* at every moment breaks into two movements, relaxation and contraction. For the the universe can be distinguished by these two movements, one descending and the other ascending. The descending movement merely works like the “release of a spring”. “unwinding like a ready prepared roll”. But of the ascending movement we can say that it endures, it ripens and creates, an inner work which “imposes its rhythm on the first, which is inseparable from it”(Bergson: 1983: 11). The former descends into matter and the latter ascends into mind (duration). The final moment of the method reconstructs the starting point, the rediscovered monism, the virtual point. It is at this moment that we discover the *Elan Vital* as the driving thrust of life - movement as differentiation.

Consciousness

Continuous and insensible production is taking place in the constitution of new species and new individuals and, indeed, in any moment of any living form and in every living being, life is creating something, continuously and unforeseeably. (Bergson: 1983: 29). Yet, our intellects ‘revolt’ against the idea of unpredictability and originality. Evolution has shaped our intellect to foresee only events, actions and situations (Bergson: 1983: 28). Life, however, is a continuous and invisible process, relentlessly followed, on which the organism merely ‘hitches a ride’ during its short time (Bergson: 1983: 27) If those systems which are the concern of science can be said to endure that is solely because they are inextricably entwined with the rest of the universe with which they move. Science may isolate existences, even a form of duration such as our own - so long as they are reintegrated into the Whole. This is most true of the objects which are cut out by our perception. Those shapes we see and which give an object its specificity, is really only the planned influence that we may exert over them - our ‘design’ is replayed to us as if through the mirror of our eyes. This is how we see things. Stifle the action of perception and the individuality of the object is “re-absorbed in the universal interaction ... reality itself”(Bergson:

1983: 12). Evolution, for Bergson, implies the persistence of duration, the preservation of the past into the present. Artificial or mathematical systems can, at best, only describe the extremity (Bergson: 1983: 23). It is continuing change - real duration - that living beings share with consciousness.

Man

It is to the consciousness of man that we now turn in order to understand Bergson's claim that man has a very special relationship with the *elan vital*, for in man's consciousness is instrument through which the *elan vital* 'gets through'. It is for this reason, Bergson insists that man is in (a) 'quite special sense' the "term" and the "end" of evolution." (Bergson: 1983: 265) How is it then, that Bergson can claim that Man has come to be hold such a privileged relation to the *Elan Vital*? To answer this question is to firstly consider Man's relationship to consciousness. For Bergson, fathoms Deleuze, the 'whole question' is to understand under what circumstances ('conditions') duration emerges as 'consciousness of self.'

It has been shown that man inhabits two different lines, of degree and kind. On the line of degree, in one sense man, it can be said, is quite literally the end of evolution for, through his own finite knowledge, he reproduces himself, repeatedly, as the Same and the undifferentiated. On the other line however, of differences of kind, it shall now be shown that, for Bergson, man is the possibility of the actualization of the *elan vital* into the consciousness of self. Bergson uses the term consciousness in a very special sense. Consciousness is 'the possibility of any awareness whatever' (Carr 1914). Consciousness is wider than the intellect and broader than instinct. Furthermore, it will now be demonstrated that though consciousness encompasses both instinct and intelligence, it also extends beyond these. What must be considered here is a more extended, and condensed, consciousness'. For instinct and intelligence are but condensations of a wider consciousness that have become specialized to perform action.

Instinct and intelligence differ in kind; in animal life instinct has triumphed over intelligence; in Man instinct is almost completely sacrificed to intelligence. When we consider these at the level of conscious activity we can say that animals function on an unconscious level whereas Man is a conscious being, able to reflect on his action, able to plan. However, because intelligence extends consciousness furthest into matter and farther away from duration, intuition, claims Bergson, has a closer bond to instinct than intelligence; the more intellectualized we become, the more spatialized time becomes. Intellectual explanations have become most obviously insufficient in theorising life. In the journey of evolution of the vertebrates, and most specifically in “man and the intellect”, life has had to leave behind those many elements which have been of no use in its particular organisation. These elements, if this be so, have been consigned to other lines of development. Neither of instinct nor intelligence suffice to explain Man’s special relationship to the *Elan Vital* for, as both instinct and intelligence are turned towards action, they can be said to be equivalent as regards to the *utilitarian* function they serve. Our task must be to rediscover the totality of these elements and re-connect them with the intellect “proper”.

Although we are not aware of it, this ‘intellect proper’, this wider consciousness, surrounds the intellect like a penumbra and enables us to have direct vision of life. (Carr 1914) In this *fringe* of our intellect, residing in its shadowy darkness, we have a feeling of our evolution, of its pure duration. This fringe is Intuition. Whereas finalism and mechanism are preoccupied only with, “the bright nucleus shining in the centre”, what is forgotten is that this centre is a result of the condensation of the Whole. The intellect is actually a contraction of a vaster power. No matter that the fringe, if it does exist, be fragile and indefinable, yet its importance to philosophy should be set above the nuclear that it surrounds, for it affirms that there is a nucleus. This fringe is the nebula of “vague intuition” that haunts the borders of our

intellectuality- *our distinct representation*. It may not have an immediate effect on action as the intellect, and so we must presume that it works below the surface more than on it. For, Bergson asks, is this useless fringe not part of that evolving principle (vital activity) which has resisted condensation into the specificity of our form, but has settled around it, uninvited and unwanted? At the precise moment that reality succumbs to the regard of our intellect, whose sight is always directed backwards, it has emerged as the present only to return immediately into the past. Instead, we must “grasp the *true nature of vital activity*”. To conceptualise whole life demands thinking beyond the beading of simple ideas imparted to us by the succession of evolution. Parts do not comprise a whole just as the content does not match the container; nor does a “by-product of the vital operation (equal) the operation itself”. When we put the parts of the intellect side by side to construct a concept we create the illusion (amongst others) that the evolution of life is a journey from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. We then place ourselves at a pinnacle (which cannot be considered the only pinnacle for there as many as forms) holding on to only “one or two of the concepts by which it expresses itself” and then pronounce that this fragment of a part is representative of the whole, even though the totality of which it pretends to speak “goes beyond the concrete whole”. The concrete whole is only a present moment in the evolutionary movement. The fact is that in order to represent totality the entirety of our intellectuality would prove too little. We would need to add to it all diverse and divergent elements in every other terminal point of evolution. All these, at least in their most elementary forms, should then be considered but extracts which are yet mutually complementary. Even then we should only glean an “inkling” of evolution itself for we can only grapple with what has evolved - the result of evolution - and not with its ‘real nature’ (Bergson: 1983: 50-51).

“From our point of view, life appears in its entirety as an immense wave, starting from the centre, spreads outwards, and which on almost the whole of its circumference is stopped and converted into oscillation: at one single point the obstacle has been

forced, the impulsion has passed freely. It is this freedom that the human form registers. Everywhere but in man, consciousness has come to a stand; in man alone it has kept on its way. **Man**, then, continues the vital movement indefinitely, although he does not carry along with him all that life carries in itself. On other lines of evolution there have traveled other tendencies which life implied, and of which, since everything interpenetrates, man has, doubtless, kept something, but of which he has kept very little. It as if a vague and formless being, whom we may call man or superman, had sought to realize himself, and had succeeded only by abandoning a part of himself on the way". (Bergson: 1983: 266)

In man, intuition is almost completely extinguished. Yet, in man, the trace that remains is the possibility of his attaining a complete and perfect humanity, through which man could know his own vital life. For, in man, there are two lines that differ in kind, that go in two opposite directions; intuition goes in the very direction of life, intellect goes in the inverse direction. The intellect thus finds itself having a natural affinity with the matter (Bergson: 193: 267). How the intellect works, which says very little about real life. One could assert that evolution has ensured that 'the intellect has not been made to think evolution'(Bergson: 1983: 163). The natural bent of our intellect, has the effect that true difference is obscured in a perpetual cycle of repeating and returning the already said and the Same. Which means, Olkowski explains, "that neither dialectics nor instinctual drives have any advantage in Bergson's view". (p.104 Olkowski)

"Consciousness, in man, is pre-eminently intellect. It might have been, it ought, so it seems, to have been also intuition. Intuition and intellect represent two opposite directions of the work of consciousness: intuition goes in the very direction of life, intellect goes in the inverse direction, and thus finds itself naturally in accordance with matter. A complete and perfect humanity would be that in which these two forms of conscious activity should attain their full development. And, between this

humanity and ours, we may conceive any number of possible stages, corresponding to all the degrees imaginable of intelligence and intuition.” (Bergson: 1983: 267)

How then can we seize again the reality that has been distorted by the intellect? By engaging in a philosophy (as an active science) which gets at the very interval of duration”. (Bergson: 1983: 22-23) “If man accedes to the open creative totality, it is therefore by acting, by creating rather than by contemplating”. (Deleuze: 1988: 111 Bergsonism) A complete humanity would be that in which the two forms of conscious activity, intelligence and intuition, should attain their full development.

We have, therefore, our answer then to the question of Man’s privileged relationship to the Elan Vital. In Man, the cerebral interval between the intellect and instinct - between the pressures of society and the resistance of intelligence - is the actualization of the two lines of expansion and contraction. One could say that it is only in man that the “actual becomes adequate to the virtual”. In man we are able to “rediscover” all the “degrees of expansion (detente) and contraction that coexist in the virtual Unity”. Man is capable of bringing about “in himself successively everything that, elsewhere, is only to be embodied in different species. Even in his dreams he rediscovers or prepares matter”. (Deleuze: 1988: 106-107) And to him “durations that are inferior or superior” still remain “internal to him”. “Man therefore creates a differentiation that is valid for the Whole, and he along traces out an open direction that is able to express a whole that is itself open”. (Deleuze: 1988: 107) In Man the elan vital made an instrument that would ‘triumph over mechanism’ - consciousness, through which he can know that life is ‘virtually’ memory, consciousness and freedom. Indeed, it is to the fringe, according to Bergson, that we must cast our thoughts to expand on the intellectual form of thought for, “from there shall we derive the impetus necessary to lift us above ourselves”. In lifting himself above himself, man discovers the image of thought that can know true difference and can engage in a positive death through which he can overcome himself. It is only on

the line of Man that the elan vital gets through and this line, which concludes with man, “*is*” according to Bergson, “the purpose of the entire process of evolution”.

In conclusion to this thesis it will now be argued that the line that ‘gets through’ in man is the becoming-woman of man and is, therefore, also the possibility of man’s overcoming. This is also to say, and this is now possible to demonstrate that: ‘Man is that which differs in degree from himself’, whilst ‘becoming woman is that which differs in kind in-itself. Man’s overcoming is the becoming-woman of Man’.

Conclusion

**Creative Involution:
Overcoming Man: Becoming-woman**

**CREATIVE INVOLUTION - *Overcoming Man: becoming Woman,*
becoming imperceptible...**

....only the involuted evolves.... (Deleuze)

It is now possible, in conclusion, to demonstrate the contention of this thesis that; ‘Man is that which differs in degree from himself’, whilst ‘becoming-woman is that which differs in kind in-itself’. It will be useful here to divide this statement into two. First it will be explained how: ‘Man is that which differs in degree from himself’ and, presently, will be explained how becoming-woman differs in kind in-itself’. Further, it will be shown that although between the two there are all the degrees of difference yet they have a mutuality in that they coexist at the level of the virtual. It is necessary to clarify in what sense the term Man is being used here. The concept Man utilized here is to be understood as the entity that Foucault conceived of as finite and Nietzsche referred to as ‘reactive’. However, it also infers, in part, to the Man that Bergson formulates - though *only* in part - as it will become apparent below.

Man is That Which Differs in Degree From Himself

What does it mean, then, to state then, ‘Man is that which differs in degree from himself’?

To propose that ‘Man is that which differs in degree from himself’, is to suggest that the concept Man is an impure and badly analysed composite. That is to say that the concept Man is the result of that bad habit of our intellect, which conflates time and space, and ‘represents’ phenomena dialectically. It was shown above that impure composites are the result of arbitrarily grouping things that differ in kind, and that this is due to the habit of our intellect to spatialize thought, thereby producing dialectical concepts. Concepts are founded on negation and contradiction and are therefore unsolvable and, for that reason, produce false problems which demand, inevitably,

false solutions. For that reason, it was argued, concepts present to us only that which differs in degree and not that which differs in kind. Thus we are immersed in an illusion which eternally returns only the Same and through which difference is always subordinated to differences of degree. To propose then that 'Man differs in degree from himself' is, therefore, to suggest that, as an impure composite the concept Man is all on the line of differences of degree and as such returns only as the Same. Man is thus the posing of a false problem. Further, contained in the idea that Man is a concept that returns as the Same is the inference that all other impure concepts, because that are badly analysed composites, can only ever return as the Same. This principle was demonstrated, in the case of two dialectical concepts, life and death, which were both argued to be false solutions, or false problems depending on the stance taken. Furthermore, in becoming-reactive, man's conceptual relative knowledge rendered the outside unattainable and excluded true difference from thought. Thus Man inhabits only the line of differences of degree. Therefore, to state that Man differs in degree from himself is to say that Man is that which eternally returns as the Same, which constitutes the 'death of Man'. It was argued, therefore, that Man should overcome himself. What was required in order to overcome Man, it was argued, is an active affirmative death.

Life and Death

As the question of the eternal return of the Same is a problem of Man's life and death, so too, as it was shown, is the question of 'the eternal return of Difference' a matter of life and death. However, the 'death' that is the eternal return of difference is not the same 'death' that Man undergoes whenever he poses a false problem and discovers a false solution. The eternal return of difference is the positive death which undoes the dialectical negation of the Same. To undergo the positive, pure form of death, the death that can return difference in-itself is, therefore, to attain the death which effects the becoming-woman of man. To fully grasp how the death of the eternal return of difference can be understood as the becoming-woman of man, as this

thesis claims, require us to return to the question of concepts, but of concepts of a different kind than those on the line of differences of degree. What will become apparent is that becoming-woman is a different kind of concept than Man or, to be more precise, the concept becoming-woman differs in kind from the concept man.

Becoming-woman is Not a Concept

Does not positing a becoming-woman, as that which is not Man, merely return it to a dialectical relationship through which it is collapsed back into all the dichotomies of differences of degree that this thesis has been at pains to overcome? The answer is that, when approached through the immediate knowledge of intuition, it is clear that there is no dichotomy between man and becoming-woman. There is no contradiction to be found here since Man and becoming-woman only become confused when they are established as a dichotomy in being approached through the relative knowledge that reason requires to create concepts. To approach the concept of becoming-woman in this way is to posit difference merely as a variant degree of the Same. It is to misunderstand becoming-woman to think of it in any way as a concept that can be opposed to the concept man. A concept is a badly analysed composite in which time and space have become confused because our intellects insist on dichotomizing phenomena. If a distinction is made between time as a symbol of space and the real time duration then the problem of dichotomizing them is overcome. They no longer become misunderstood by being forced into badly analysed composites. As a concept, Man is only the line of differences of degree, and for this reason there is no becoming Man. Man's becoming would be a failed becoming for it would be oppositional to the Being that is his own.

Failed Becomings

This is why, when approaching the problem of becoming-woman there are so many failed becomings. For, in approaching it as if it were a concept, becoming-woman can only ever be conceived of as reactive; a becoming-reactive of thought. When

becoming-woman is usurped by representational thought in this way (as in deconstruction for instance), it assumes all the differences of degree that ensure its failed becoming. Thus it becomes subjected to the negation of limitation and contradiction of the dialectic. As a concept it becomes posited as oppositional to the concept man. Becoming-woman thereby becomes subjected to the dichotomy of badly analysed composites, conceived in terms of the more and the less, order and disorder, mind and body and which demand as a result only false solutions. When subject to representation, becoming-woman becomes woman. For instance, becoming-woman, in its conceptual form, in being opposed to the concept Man, returns solutions which resort to spatialised notions of evolution, the organism, genes, hormones, chromosomes and other such reductive and anthropomorphic explanations. Alternatively, when it becomes subject of transcendental solutions, woman becomes conceived as a mystery, her essence concealed within her ever spiralling hidden depths, as is evidenced in the analogy of 'Mother Nature'. Nature in this way too becomes conceived as a mystery, an 'elsewhere', an appearance; spirited away through Man's nihilism. That is why, when approached through representational thought, nature can never be fathomed, though its 'secret' is pursued relentlessly by science.³⁹ Having been captured by representation, becoming-woman it is open to attack from all sides, fighting off death from every conceivable angle. When becoming-woman is approached through the logic of identity then, what is returned actually constitutes only death, whereby its relation to true difference becomes blocked and becoming-woman is cut off 'from what it can do'. Becoming-woman will only ever undergo the death of the Same so long as it is subject to the requirements of representation. Only when approached conceptually does becoming-woman return as the failed becoming that makes women 'disappear'.⁴⁰

³⁹ Donna Haraway writes of nature's *artifactualism* through which nature becomes an inaccessible elsewhere.

⁴⁰ This is a reference to Jardine's attack on Deleuze and Guattari's notion of becoming-woman as that which is the first step in Man's becoming molecular: "A woman who is not a "woman-become" is a Man.....(b)ut to the extent that women must "become woman" *first* (in order for men, in D+G's words, to "follow her example"), might that not mean that she must also be the *first* to disappear?" (Jardine: 1985: 217) This will be returned to presently in response.

What it is important to understand, is that the concept becoming-woman is *not* same kind of concept as those which are the effect of spatialized thinking. If this can be shown, then becoming-woman can be claimed with validity, to differ in kind to Man and, it can further be argued, that becoming-woman is the instrument of the eternal return (of difference) through which the forces in Man enter into a new relationship with special forces from outside so engaging in a new rapport with pure difference and vital life.

Becoming-woman Differs in Kind In-itself

To this end, we now turn to the proposal that, ‘becoming-woman’ is that which differs in kind from man but, further, differs *in-itself*. What is meant then, in proposing that: ‘becoming-woman differs in kind in-itself’?

The idea that becoming-woman is that which differs in kind in-itself requires a review of Bergson’s idea that Man is the end of evolution. What is arrived at in Bergson is an understanding of how Man can overcome himself and free himself of his dialectical condition. Crucially, Bergson’s concept of ‘man’ harbours within in the *potential* to differ in kind from Man as formulated by Foucault. Actually, it is this distinction being made between man, as formulated by Bergson, and Man, as formulated by Foucault, that is key to understanding the becoming-woman of man. It has been argued that Foucault’s ‘Man’ is the product of spatialized thinking in that he is a problem of empirico-transcendental knowledge, and for this reason Man is on the line of differences of degree. In Bergson’s conception of man, though he can be said to differ in degree on one plane, that plane which Foucault’s Man inhabits, there is another plane on which he can be said to differ of kind. Bergson conception of Man can be said, in two senses, to be the end of evolution. In the first sense, we can say

that the line of differences of degree comes to a stop in man the organic compound. Man can be said, therefore, from an anthropomorphic and androcentric perspective to be the 'pinnacle' of evolution (at least in the stories he tells himself). Yet, there is, for Bergson, another 'very special' sense in which man is the end of evolution for, on the line of difference in kind, Man is the possibility of knowing another kind of evolution. This evolution, as this thesis has suggested, is of quite another being, of the overman or Superman. Man is intuitively aware of his overcoming, that life is involution, the propulsion of which is the elan vital. Only in Man, on the line of virtuality, does the elan vital 'get through', that is, in Man the elan vital reaches into consciousness 'of self'. This is the line of differences in kind, the line of the virtual multiplicities, or of duration. In consciousness 'in the broader sense' where instinct and intelligence meet at a virtual point, there is an instrument that can make this creative becoming, which is duration, known. This faculty, that can overcome the utilitarian bent of the intellect; is intuition. Man is the potential to produce the pure concepts through which the outside (duration) can enter consciousness 'of self', but this takes a decisive turn to do violence to the dialectical mind. In creating new concepts, man engages with an active science of life. In Chapter Six it was tentatively suggested that Bergson's theory of Creative Evolution was such an active science, a science that goes beyond the ascetic biologism which explains life in terms of the machinic or the mysterious (and usually both). Bergson's active science was the possibility of discovering an altogether different kind of evolution, grasped by an immediate knowledge that man's intellect cannot know. To pursue an active science of life, is to engage in a becoming which grasps the true nature of vital activity and frees the becoming-woman in man. Or in another way, this is to understand that Man's 'overcoming' is the becoming-woman of man and, which, explains the title of this thesis; 'Creative Involution: Overcoming man - becoming-woman'.

This thesis now proposes, and will now demonstrate that the line of virtuality, on which the elan vital differentiates itself, or through which life can *differ in-itself* (and

this is the crux of the thesis proposal) is the ‘becoming-woman’ of Man, and is the ‘evolution’ by which Man is overcome himself.

Pure Concepts

To think the outside ‘involves’ the positive death of man *as* a becoming-woman. Becoming-woman is the active and affirmative nihilism which enables the engagement with active thought on the outside.

To be thought of in-itself, becoming-woman cannot be approached through the concepts produced (and reproduced) by a spatializing intellect, but through the rubric of memory and duration. If man, on his ‘side’ takes all the differences of degree of space, becoming-woman is all on the ‘side’ of duration. Duration is not opposed to this becoming for becoming-woman is not a concept. Intuition reveals to us that becoming-woman is not a concept but is a virtual multiplicity. Furthermore, there is no opposition between the lines of differences of degree and of kind at the point where they coexist in this virtual unity. In Man, becoming-woman is the rediscovery of all the degrees of expansion and contraction that coexist in the virtual totality. Or in another way, the line of Man (of degree) and the line of becoming-woman (of kind) coexist. If Man is the line of matter and becoming-woman, the line of memory then, they can be said to have a mutual relativity, what is expanded is contracted, and what is contracted is expanded. In the virtual, man (space) and becoming-woman (duration) are constantly interpenetrating something of themselves. At their extremities matter and memory meet up at a virtual point which is the distinct reason for the becoming. It is only on this line of kind, in Man, that the actual become adequate to the virtual. By thinking actively man perceive his own becoming-woman as potential for the line of differences of kind in Man to free of the *elan vital* in consciousness. This line is a pure dualism, through which Man intuitively becomes aware of, and can enter into communication with other durations inferior and superior to his own and which comprise the One Simple Totality which is the Univocity of

Being. Becoming-woman is the returning of the being of becoming; the becoming active of the eternal return of difference.

Deleuze's becoming-woman Involution/Evolution

What is the nature of a becoming-woman conceived as that which differs-in-itself? The answer to this can be found in Deleuze and Guattari's *'A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia'* (1992). Reading this, it becomes apparent just how indebted to Bergson, Deleuze and Guattari's notion of becoming-woman, and Deleuze's philosophy of difference, is. In the following discussion brings together Deleuze and Guattari's notion of becoming-woman and Bergson's idea of the virtual in order to show that becoming-woman is the line in man on which the elan vital gets through in consciousness of self.

It will be argued that, if Man, as that which differs in degree, is on the line of evolution then Becoming-woman, as that which differs in kind, is on the line of *involution*. Or simply speaking, Man evolves, becoming-woman 'involves'.

Importantly, becoming-woman is not an evolution. Evolution, it was argued above, is the result of the bad habits of the intellects which spatialize phenomena, categorizing according to structure and series and in terms of regressing or progressing. Becoming-woman is of an entirely different kind of movement than that movement of evolution conceived through filiation and descent. "The Universe does not function by filiation" (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 242) Filiation produces nothing or, at least, it produces only that which returns to 'nothing'. To become-woman is not to regress or progress according to series or structure. Nor does becoming-woman isolate and divide characteristics according to their resemblances, or order them according to their differences, nor is it founded on correspondances between relations or identifying with something. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 238) neither is it producing, producing a filiation or producing through filiation. Becoming-woman is a verb: it

does not reduce to, or lead back to, “appearing,” “being,” “equaling,” or “producing.” (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 239) Further, becoming-woman is not imitating, and neither does not consist in playing woman. Becoming woman is not imitating woman or even transforming oneself into a woman. In becoming-woman, it is clear that Man does not “really” become a woman any more than a woman “really” becomes something else. Becoming-woman is the creation of a molecular woman, which has nothing to do with real women (in the organic or molar sense). Molecular becomings involve the emission of particles that enter the relation of movement and rest, or zone of proximity. Molecular woman is the production of a microfemininity.

Woman’s Disappearance

One cannot become man. Man must become woman in order to disappear, to become imperceptible; the overman is nothing else but becoming in this way. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 267) There are many becomings of man, as man return repeatedly as the Same, but there is no becoming-man. All becomings are minoritarian, becoming minority, becoming molecular, man can only ever become molar, again and again. “There is no becoming-man because man is the molar entity par excellence, whereas all becomings are molecular” (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 292)

This has led Jardine to ask: “Is it not possible”, asks Jardine, “that the process of “becoming-woman” is but a new variation of an old allegory for the process of woman becoming obsolete?”, “might that not mean that women must be the *first* to disappear?” (Jardine: 1985: 217) However, to think of becoming-woman on the level of woman’s disappearance is to return it to the domain of false problems and so to believe that becoming-woman either imitates or ‘is’. We have already shown that becoming-woman is not a representation. Becoming-woman must first be understood as a ‘function of something else’: it is not to imitate or assume the female or female form.

To say, that in order to attain the outside and know vital life, man must become woman does not mean that a creation of molecular woman is the prerogative of the man. On the contrary (and this is the concern of some feminist theorists) woman, as a molar entity has to become-woman first in order that the man also becomes - or can become-woman. Becoming-woman as the first step in becoming imperceptible. Becoming-woman, more than any other becoming, possesses a special introductory power. “(A)ll becomings begin with and pass through becoming-woman. It is the key to all the other becomings”. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 277)

In order to become, “man must take back the molecular body that that was stolen from him, the “body they *steal* from us in order to fabricate opposable organisms”... (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 276) The anorganism of the body is inseparable from becoming-woman. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the girl’s becoming is stolen first. The girl is robbed of her body first. That does not mean that the girl does not become a woman in the molar or organic sense. But there is a becoming-woman, a becoming-child, that do not resemble the woman or the child as clearly distinct ‘molar entities’ - those forms, endowed with organs and functions and assigned as a subject. Becoming-woman which is the girl herself, is defined not by form, or analogy, nor resemblance, but by a “relation of movement and rest, speed and slowness, by a combination of atoms, an emission of particles”(Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 276). Girls do not belong to an age group, sex, order, or kingdom: they slip in everywhere, between orders, acts, ages, sexes; they produce *n* molecular sexes on the line of flight in relation to the dualism machines they cross right through” (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 276-277).

That, in becoming-woman, women are the first to disappear, should be of little concern to a feminism interested in ‘going beyond’. Man does not go beyond in order to reach concepts. If becoming-woman had the aim to *become* a woman it would take a leap onto a line of its own annihilation, for clutching at concepts has its own

form of death. To take the leap into becoming-woman is to take the other line. In any case, woman is not the first to disappear. Man has already disappeared, from the plane of immanence. He has either gone sky-high or buried himself so deep that it is no longer possible to dig himself out from his grave. In order to *return*, man must become woman.

On the molar level, the politics of becoming-woman remains, of course, extremely ambiguous and “(i)t is of course, argue Deleuze and Guattari, indispensable for women to conduct a molar politics, with a view to winning back their own organism, their own history, their own subjectivity: “we as women...” makes an appearance as a subject of enunciation”(Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 275-276). But becomings are not organizations that can be captured by the State nor seized by dissident factions: encapsulated in a politics of Identity nor a micropolitics of difference and its degrees. Becomings-woman are not effected at the level of molar organization. There is, of course, always the danger that these becomings will be appropriated by negative nihilistic elements that would use them to their own ends, breaking them up, stopping the flow, as in microfascist politics, or salvation stories, such as the ‘feminization’ of nature. Microfascist politics merely miniaturizes dialectical difference, as salvation stories magnify it; these are false becomings. For example, a micropolitics of difference can be described using the analogy of a ‘cluster bomb’. Contained within the shell (of Identity) are multiple pellets(differences). The shell (Identity) encompasses the pellets but, at the same time, it is also the core (the explosive) around which the pellets are clustered. When dropped the pellets become exploded into all directions and the shell and the core are wasted. However, the existence of the now multiply scattered pellets (differences) still rely on the, once present, absented shell and core (Identity), for differences cannot exist without a centre against which to be opposed, no matter how dispersed they have become; no matter whether one ‘other’ or Multiple. Whatever came into contact with the pellets (differences of degree) would also come into contact with the absent shell and core

(the cluster bomb - the One Identity). This is not at all the same 'kind' of bursting shell that Bergson uses as an analogy to express the movement of vital life, the life described here is Identity and difference of reactive life. Each micro-destructive pellet carries with it a miniature death of Man, of animal, of plant, fuelled as it is by resentment and bad conscience. It is clear here that this concept of a shell, which when bursting scatters micro-death all around, differs in kind from that bursting shell that Bergson's alludes to as the propulsion of vital life.

Take also, as an example of a false becoming, the recent concern that nature is becoming 'feminized'.⁴¹ In these stories, men, or the male of the species, is becoming demasculinized due to large amount of man-made synthesized chemicals, including pesticides, industrial chemicals, metals and synthetic products have, which over the last few decades, been released into the environment. The fear is that men are becoming feminized, or becoming female, for these, it has been surmised, have the potential to disrupt the endocrine systems of animals, including humans. Contained within these chemicals are contaminants such as, PCBs, DDT, DES, and dioxin, it is claimed are synthetic hormone disrupters. These act like the female hormone estrogen, and which even in tiny amounts have the effect of causing demasculinization and feminization in species, birds, fish, mammals, and humans. Evidence given to substantiate these claims explain that estrogens effect the development of brain function causing hormonal imbalance wich then effect sex-related characteristics. Scientists and researchers have argued that these are the cause of cancer, reproduction problems and change in sexual characteristics.

However, this 'so-called' feminization must not be confused with becoming-woman, certainly not, at least, when approached in the terms of the organic compound. What could be conceived as the possibility of all sorts of veritable becomings molecular

⁴¹ See, for instance, (Cadbury: 1998), (Colburn et al: 1997)

falls back into a false becoming. If the male in this scenario is becoming anything, it is not a woman, either in the organic sense, nor the molecular sense. What actually begins as a promising becoming collapses into a line of abolition from which Man must be saved. Feminization then becomes a false becoming, in which the becoming is dried up, killed. Feminization then is a false becoming because man it demands man's salvation, and not his overcoming. In this way, difference is not miniaturized, but magnified, Man is not woman and does not want to become a woman. Thus the binary becomes exaggerated, this is not a celebration of difference(micropolitics), in this, the 'otherness' of the female, in becoming magnified, becomes painfully transparent. Whether dialectical negation be miniaturized or magnified, we have become polluted more by the overproduction of our own ascetic ideals than by our toxic wastes (Ansell-Pearson: 1997: 55).

Becoming-woman is not a feminization as is conceived of in these writings. It should not be considered in any way a process through which Man can become a woman, but is rather the becoming-woman of Man. Becoming-woman does not produce organic compounds nor does it imitate these, it produces nothing other than itself. It is perfectly real. But what kind of reality is at issue here? What is real is the becoming itself, the movement of becoming, and not the seemingly end terms through which becoming-woman passes. The becoming-woman of Man is real, even if the woman the Man becomes is not; and the becoming-other of the woman is real, even if that something other it becomes is not. Becoming can and should be qualified as becoming-woman even in the absence of a term that would be the woman become. Becoming-woman becomes something other for it is not an end in itself. In becoming other it changes its nature. The becomings that feminization produces do not reconstitute 'a man' as 'a woman' on the level of organic compound(the molar) rather, the molecular man and molecular woman, at the plane of 'microfemininity', are becoming something else. It is not about progressing or regressing - getting more

womanly, or getting less womanly - more manly or less manly - it is a perpetual creative process, the virtual co-existence of a multiplicity of becomings.

Becoming-woman is no longer a matter of organs and functions. It is of another plane entirely than that of the transcendent Plane which presides over organic organization by means of analogical relations and types of divergent development. Organic organization and development no longer take precedence, rather it is a matter of composition and differentiation, of movement and rest, speed and slowness. "It is a question of elements and particles, which do or do not arrive fast enough to effect a passage, a becoming or jump on the plane of pure immanence". (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 255)

"It is the principle according to which there is a reality specific to becoming (the Bergsonian idea of a coexistence of very different "durations," superior or inferior to "ours," all of them in communication)". (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 238)

What is opposed to filiation is epidemic, to heredity, contagion, to sexual reproduction, peopling by contagion, to sexual production, propagation by epidemic. Contagion has nothing to do with filiation by heredity, "even if the two themes intermingle and require each other".(Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 241) Contagion, epidemic, involves terms that are entirely heterogeneous and not founded on dualistic differences. "This is a far cry from filiative production or hereditary reproduction, in which the only differences retained are a simple duality between sexes within the same species, and small modifications across generations" (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 242). It is right, therefore, to conceive of becoming-woman as a pack, a peopling, a propagation, a becoming that is without filiation or hereditary production. Rather, there are "as many sexes as there are terms in symbiosis, as many differences as elements contributing to a process of contagion" (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 242). Intuition knows that, in becoming-woman, infinite multiplicities of beings pass

between a man and a woman, or a man and a man, or a woman and a woman. These are of different worlds than the binaried, or pluralistic, sexual crossings of organic couplings. We must not ask therefore what sexes, whether binary, bisexual or plural for this is to think only differences in degree which merely serves to view sexes as deteriorations or ameliorations on the theme of the Same. Sex, or sexuality in this way is a badly posed problem. We should ask instead, what is the becoming-woman of sexuality? or, what multiplicity is the virtual multiplicity of a person (Deleuze: 1988: 45)?

“(S)exuality ... it is badly explained by the binary organization of the sexes, and just as badly by a bisexual organization within each sex....Sexuality is the production of a thousand tiny sexes, which are so many uncontrollable becomings” (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 278-279).

The symbiotic contagions that bring together the human being with a bacterium, a virus, a molecule, a microorganism are not combinations comprehensible as genetic or structural. These are ‘interkingdoms’, ‘unnatural participations’. *Sexuality proceeds by way of the becoming-woman of the man and the becoming-animal of the human: an emission of particles*”. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 278-279) Nature, Deleuze and Guattari insist, operates against itself. Sexual selection by the fittest has little to do with unnatural participations. When Spinoza asks, ‘What can a body do?’, he is thinking in terms of these becomings.

These are becomings of speeds and affects which happen on the the plane of consistency, or of immanence. Becomings are nothing but speeds and slownesses, the movement of symbioses. In symbiosis we encounter compositions movements which are entirely different from those based in form, or in analogy, or resemblance, nor indeed are they products of the imagination.(Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 305). It is in the domain of the interkingdom that Man effects a becoming-woman, through the

creation of *assemblages*. Assemblages are not to be conceived of as in any way structural or comprised of series. They are a ‘complex aggregate’ which are spread by epidemic across and beyond organic frontiers. Assemblages involve populations that vary not only by filiative productions but also by transversal (side) communications (of which filiative productions are but off-shoots of) between heterogeneous populations. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 239)

Becoming-woman is the domain of symbioses, *side communication*, that brings into play beings of totally different scales and kingdoms, with no possible filiation. This form of evolution between heterogeneous terms is referred to by Deleuze as “involution”, on the condition that involution is in no way confused with regression of series. “Becoming is involutionary, involution is creative. ...to involve is to form a block that runs its own line “between” the terms in play and beneath assignable relations”. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 238) Involution lies beyond hereditary filiative evolution, as the domain of the communicative or contagious. There are involutions that sweep up the orchid and the wasp, but from which no wasp-orchid can ever descend or regress. There is an involution that takes hold of the cat and baboon, not possible through filiative production of evolutionary process, that which is effected by a C virus. There is an involution between young roots and certain micro-organisms, a side communication effected by the materials synthesized in the leaves (rhizosphere) (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 238).

Indeed, at the time of writing this conclusion, man, on the plane of the virtual, has become caught up in a becomings-animal effected by the recent ‘foot and mouth’ epidemic. In this involution organic and inorganic are being swept up as so many becomings-animal. Becomings-animal do not happen on the plane of transcendence, the level on which is witnessed the outpourings of outrage, despondency, accusation, resignation, indifference and pity of activists, environmentalists, mothers, farmers, hoteliers, the hauliers, walkers, shop owners, vets (but never the animals!). On this

plane, independently of which stance is taken on the issue of destroying healthy animals, whether viewed as good economic practice or genocide, what cannot be overlooked is the strange panic that is quietly but surely taking hold of man. Beyond the plane of transcendence man, the illusory world in which man 'is', he is intuitively aware of the restless stirrings that are the becomings-animal of his own being and that he is losing the control that he never had. Viewing his own acts with repulsion and horror, Man, on another plane, is painfully 'aware' that he is rushing towards his own extinction. In the speeding up process through which organic animals have been rushed to the conclusion of their organic existence man has become acutely aware of his own organic destiny. And he fears, and he should, on one level, for his intuition tells him that his own organism is fatal to him. On the plane of nature (immanence) it matters little whether his actions are condoned or condemned at the level of enunciation. Intuitively he knows that, on another plane altogether, real becomings are taking place, through which man is already becoming-woman, becoming-animal, becoming-child, becoming-plant, becoming imperceptible..... At the level of the organic, animal carcasses may, seep fluid, give off gas, swell-up, burst open, exceed their organic boundaries, omit putrid unknown smells, offend the senses, give off poisonous dioxins, are devoured by strange other worlds under man's nose, die too fast, burn too slowly, become too numerous, become a health threat etc. As man attempts to 'count the cost', on this organic plane of numerical multiples, these is altogether different movement taking place which cannot be contained in concepts. This other plane (of immanence) is comprised of perfectly individuated multiplicities all working at the level of the virtual, producing symbiotic becomings which man cannot conceive of. Man cannot add, subtract nor multiply these becomings for a multiplicity is not defined by the number of elements of which it is comprised, nor by a center of unity around which such elements could form a coherent or logical identification. It is not divisible in this way, and it is rather defined by the number of dimensions it has. This is a non-numerical multiplicity which, rather than lending itself to numerical division and calculation, lends itself to modes of expansion,

propagation, occupation, contagion, peopling. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 239)
 Every becoming is a pack. A becoming always involves a pack, a band, a population, a peopling, for these are non-numerical multiplicities.

“Since its variations and dimensions are immanent to it, it amounts to the same thing to say that each multiplicity is already composed of heterogeneous terms in symbiosis, and that a multiplicity is continually transforming itself into a string of other multiplicities, according to its thresholds and doors”(Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 249).

A non-numerical multiplicity is not a question of addition nor deduction, nor multiplication for it is a symbiotic becoming composed of heterogeneous elements, which, if it does divide, changes its nature in the ‘division’(differentiation).

On the level of intuition, man can know that there are strange becomings taking place, but he cannot, on another level, know where these will lead, for “each multiplicity is symbiotic; its becoming ties together animals, plants, microorganisms, mad particles, a whole galaxy”. (p.250) It is error “to believe that there is a kind of logical order to this string, these crossings or transformations. It is already going too far to postulate an order descending from the animal to vegetable, then molecules to particles(Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 250) since they are not defined by their progression or number since they always come in infinities. “Indeed, the whole of Nature is a multiplicity of perfectly individuated multiplicities”. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 254) This is what Bergson meant when he conceived of creative involution in terms of duration as the continuous movement of temporal vital virtual multiplicities. Nature is a becoming of perfectly individualized multiplicities all co-existing in One time. Nature is not an evolution of form, matter, organisms, species, are blockages which stop the flow, “(i)t is on the contrary an *involution*, in which form is constantly being dissolved, freeing times and speeds”. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 267) This is the plane of Nature, although nature really has nothing

to do with it, for on this plane does not distinguish between natural and artificial. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1902: 266).

“This plane has nothing to do with a form or a figure, nor with a design or a function. A plane of immanence or univocity is not an analogy. Its unity has nothing to do with a ground buried deep within things, nor with an end project in the mind of God. Instead, it is a plane upon which everything is laid out, and which is like the intersection of all forms, the machine of all functions; its dimensions, however, increase with those of the multiplicities or individualities it cuts across. It is a fixed plane, upon which things are distinguished from one another only by speed and slowness” (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 254).

Man does ‘feel’ (intuitively) that his own evolution is at stake. However, it is not a matter of what evolutions will follow man, a problem properly posed of ‘nature’, should not ask, what evolutions succeed one another?. To free himself of his organic fate to become differentiated, Man must make an intuitive leap towards becoming-woman. In taking the leap man casts himself into the fringe of his consciousness and discovers there, in that abandonment, all other becomings of different speeds and durations than his own, co-existing on the plane of immanence. A nature freed from the constraints of evolutionist theory does not comprise a succession of events whether progressive or regressive. What man discovers there are the infinite multiplicity of involutions he is already caught up in. Of course, there is always the danger that a becoming will itself get “bogged down and fall back to the Oedipal family animal, a mere poodle”. Or that it will, encounter the another danger and turn into “a line of abolition, annihilation and self-destruction...”(Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 250) It is for this reason that the it is crucial to create the right kind of concepts.

This thesis has been arguing that Man, as that which returns as the Same, is a concept. The reader may have noticed, in this claim, what appears to be an inconsistency. Deleuze has already contested (this was referred to in the conclusion of Chapter Two of this thesis) that Man is not a human compound, *conceptual* or real. Let us clarify this point. When Deleuze contests that man should not be thought of as a concept this is meant in a very particular sense. Man *is* a concept, but only in part, only on one side of the line of differences of degree. If man were fully on the line of degree then there would be no point in pursuing his overcoming. There would be no escape from the endless cycle of the Same. What finite knowledge has lost the ability to know is that man is a false problem. Man, is misunderstood because an impure composite concept, shows only its line of space to the logic of reason. Man in being conceptualized has lost something of himself along the way. It has been shown that concepts contain within them a confusion of duration and space, the root of false problems.

Yet, in man, there is the potential for that other line, of kind or of duration to sweep up the line of degree through which the forces in man enter into a relation with other forces from the outside. This line through man, the vital movement of life becomes freed. For, in Man, the vital movement (the *elan vital*) continues though, it is as if this 'vague and formless being, that which has been referred to as the overman, or superman, had sought to realize itself through man, but had only succeeded in abandoning a part of itself on the way' (Bergson: 1983: 266). Intuition reinstates the role of instinct in intelligence, through which a different evolution, a 'creative involution' is the possibility of knowing the overman, or becoming-woman, as that which differs in-itself. Only intuition can rediscover this 'part' which has been lost, that which this thesis has argued is the becoming-woman of man. Becoming-woman is what follows the death of the concept. There is no inconsistency, therefore, in claiming that man is a concept but that also man should not to be conceived conceptually. For, on one line, that of degree, man is an impure concept, but on

another line, that of kind, man is a pure concept, which, because of its nature, cannot be conceived conceptually. In Man becoming-woman 'gets through' as the the rebirth of a concept in its pure form, as the source of all true problems and solutions.

"Bergson has coupled matter and the form of our knowledge together again. He has re-established contact between our minds and reality, no longer with a phenomenal reality, relative to man and constructed by him, but with the reality given and created, with a simple and, in some sense, absolute reality, apprehended from within. In this way he has raised the standing of all our knowledge". (Chevalier: 1928: 327)

That is not to say that a new image of knowledge of vital life is *particular* to man for, Bergson's philosophy of life encompasses animals, bacteria, plants, viruses, fungi, planets, insects, water, light, computers, indeed all things travelling at different speeds than ourselves; each sharing, in a strange way, with our own duration. Yet, Bergson has insisted, it is in man that the 'knowledge' of these other diverse and divergent durations becomes actualized in self-consciousness.

The Eternal Return of Difference (the Rebirth of Difference In-Itself)

To return then, in closing, to the opening proposal 'Man is that which differs in degree from himself, whilst 'becoming-woman is that which differs in kind in-itself'. Man's overcoming is the becoming-woman of Man'. It has been demonstrated in this thesis that becoming-woman is the overman. It is the active thinking of a positive death through which, in Man, life as creative involution can return of difference in-itself. Becoming-woman is the instrument through the elan vital 'gets through' in man, coming into consciousness of self as pure concept. On this line of virtuality, '(o)n the near side we encounter becomings-woman, becomings-child. On the far side, we find becomings-elementary, -cellular, -molecular, and even becomings-imperceptible'. (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 248)

In becoming-woman, 'man will be erased like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea' and the "child and the woman are now inseparable from the sea and the water molecule". (Foucault: 1992: 387) (Deleuze and Guattari: 1992: 308)

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