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# At the Edges of Thought

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Deleuze and Post-Kantian Philosophy

Edited by Craig Lundy and Daniela Voss

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# Contents

Acknowledgements	vii
List of Contributors	viii
Introduction: Deleuze and Post-Kantian Thought – Method, Ideas and Aesthetics <i>Daniela Voss and Craig Lundy</i>	1
<b>Part I: Deleuze, Kant and Maimon</b>	
1. Deleuze, Kant and the Transcendental Field <i>Daniel W. Smith</i>	25
2. The Problematic Idea, Neo-Kantianism and Maimon's Role in Deleuze's Thought <i>Anne Sawwagnargues</i>	44
3. Maimon, Kant, Deleuze: The Concepts of Difference and Intensive Magnitude <i>Daniela Voss</i>	60
4. Deleuze and Kant's <i>Critique of Judgment</i> <i>Beth Lord</i>	85
<b>Part II: Deleuze, Romanticism and Idealism</b>	
5. What is a Literature of War?: Kleist, Kant and Nomadology <i>Brent Adkins</i>	105
6. The Calculable Law of Tragic Representation and the Unthinkable: Rhythm, Caesura and Time, from Hölderlin to Deleuze <i>Arkady Plotnitsky</i>	123
7. Ground, Transcendence and Method in Deleuze's Fichte <i>Joe Hughes</i>	146

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8. 'The magic formula we all seek': Spinoza + Fichte = x <i>Frederick Amrine</i>	168
9. State Philosophy and the War Machine <i>Nathan Widder</i>	190
10. Tragedy and Agency in Hegel and Deleuze <i>Sean Bowden</i>	212
<b>Part III: Deleuzian Lines of Post-Kantian Thought</b>	
11. Schopenhauer and Deleuze <i>Alistair Welchman</i>	231
12. Feuerbach and the Image of Thought <i>Henry Somers-Hall</i>	253
13. Deleuze's 'Power of Decision', Kant's =X and Husserl's Noema <i>Jay Lampert</i>	272
14. Kant's Bastards: Deleuze and Lyotard <i>Gregg Lambert</i>	293
15. Chronos is Sick: Deleuze, Antonioni and the Kantian Lineage of Modern Cinema <i>Gregory Flaxman</i>	307
Index	330

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## Schopenhauer and Deleuze

*Alistair Welchman*

Deleuze does not mention Schopenhauer very frequently. Certainly Schopenhauer does not appear to be in the counter-canon of life-affirming philosophers that Deleuze so values – indeed, far from it. Nor does he appear to be even a favoured ‘enemy’ as he describes Kant,<sup>1</sup> or as he sometimes appears to view Hegel.<sup>2</sup> In Jones and Roffe’s collection on Deleuze’s historical antecedents, *Deleuze’s Philosophical Lineage*, Schopenhauer is mentioned exactly once (in the chapter on Hume) and certainly not in the dignified role of one of the twenty leading influences on Deleuze.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, I think Schopenhauer’s break from Kant is crucial for understanding not only Deleuze’s account of Nietzsche, but also for a proper grasp of the core Deleuzian distinction between the actual and the virtual, at least in its guise as the distinction between desiring-production and social production in *Anti-Oedipus*.

### SCHOPENHAUER

The general contours of Schopenhauer’s development of Kant’s transcendental philosophy are fairly well known, but bear examination. Schopenhauer was not quite in the first wave of post-Kantian excitement

<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze, ‘Letter to a Harsh Critic’, in *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995 [1973]), p. 6/110. [Note on the citations: the first page number refers to the English translation, the second, italicised, number to the French original.]

<sup>2</sup> Christian Kerslake, ‘The Vertigo of Philosophy: Deleuze and the Problem of Immanence’, *Radical Philosophy* 113, (May/June 2002), pp. 10–23. Henry Somers-Hall, *Hegel, Deleuze and the Critique of Representation: Dialectics of Negation and Difference* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Graham Jones and Jon Roffe (eds), *Deleuze’s Philosophical Lineage* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

that produced Maimon, Fichte, Schelling, and the young Hegel. The early texts of these figures date from around 1790 to perhaps 1809 (the date of publication of Schelling's *Freiheitsschrift*). Schopenhauer was already writing by then, but did not develop his signature doctrine, that the world is representation *and* will, until the publication of his main work in 1819. He was of course also intellectually and socially isolated from the ferment of the early idealist movement, and treated its prominent thinkers (with the occasional exception of Schelling) with polemical contempt.

The world is will and representation. Considered as representation, Schopenhauer's conception of the world is similar to Kant's, although Schopenhauer simplifies Kant's system of categories and collapses the Kantian understanding, the faculty of concepts, into sensibility – the faculty of intuition-perceptions or *Anschauungen*. At the end of this process Schopenhauer retains only space, time and causality as transcendental conditions of the world as representation. Even in this simplification, however, he makes a clear advance (in a Deleuzian direction) on Kant by displacing and exacerbating the concept/intuition distinction.

Early in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze tables his slogan for repetition, 'difference without a concept'<sup>4</sup> and immediately relates the way in which repetition's form of difference escapes conceptuality by appealing to the 'peculiar power of the existent, a stubbornness of the existent in intuition, which resists every specification by concepts, no matter how far this is taken'.<sup>5</sup>

Some of the difficulty of Deleuze's work is due to the fact that what interests him is what resists intelligibility or conceptual understanding and accountability. The (albeit ambiguous) draw of Kant for Deleuze shows the way in which the Kantian concept/intuition distinction lies at the crossroads of modern thought. For Kant intelligibility can indeed be achieved, but its victory is neither easy nor guaranteed: witness the way the problematic of the ultimate intelligibility of nature emerges anew in the third *Critique* of the 1790s. For the absolute idealist tradition culminating in Hegel, intelligibility is presupposed at the outset and the labour of the negative a sham. But there is a counter-tradition running through Nietzsche, in which theoretical attention is directed towards what resists intelligibility, the 'indivisible remainder' in Schelling's words. Such resistance is manifest first of all in the stubbornness of

intuition, but also in Deleuze's subtle reprioritisation of problem over solution.<sup>6</sup>

Kantian intuition marks the first philosophical site of this resistance in modernity. And for Schopenhauer, intuitive knowledge is absolutely primary, so that animals perceive causal connections, and have an experience of objects quite similar to human experience.<sup>7</sup> None of this requires concepts. Schopenhauer's account of human reason and conceptuality (he identifies the faculties, in contrast to Kant) is strikingly modest, not least in comparison with the other thinkers of the classical German idealist movement: reason is a merely passive storehouse for perceptual knowledge. The latter is the 'direct light of the sun' while the former is the 'borrowed light of the moon'.<sup>8</sup> While this has some uses – not least in widening the range of factors that motivate human action – it is at best a discrete approximation to the intrinsic continuity of intuitive perceptual experience:

abstract knowledge is to such [intuitive] nuances as a mosaic is to a *van der Werft* or a *Denner*: however fine the mosaic may be, there always remain borders between the stones, and so a continuous transition of one colour into another is impossible; in just the same way, however much the rigid and sharp boundaries between concepts are divided through increasingly minute definition, they will never be able to reach the fine modifications of the intuitive.<sup>9</sup>

Something always 'escapes' coding, of whatever type it is.

But these are minor modifications of Kant's thought in comparison with the major innovation Schopenhauer introduces: the will. Schopenhauer's rethinking of the notion of will is deep and remarkable. A clear understanding of its nature is a prerequisite for any grasp of his signature claim that the Kantian thing-in-itself is will. Although it is almost a badge of membership of the post-Kantian idealist band to maintain that, despite Kant's strictures, knowledge of some kind of things as they are in themselves is possible, Schopenhauer's claim that the thing-in-itself is will has nevertheless often been regarded as naïve. In

<sup>4</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994 [1968]), p. 13/23.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 13–14/23.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* chap. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. and ed. Judith Norman, Alistair Welchman and Christopher Janaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), vol. 1, §6, pp. 42–3/2:24–5. [Note on the citations: the second italicised reference refers to the volume and page number of the German edition, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Arthur Hübscher, 4th edn (Wiesbaden: Brockhaus, 1988), 7 vols.]

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* vol. 1, §8, pp. 57–8/2:41.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* vol. 1, §12, p. 81–2/2:67.

fact, Schopenhauer is a lot less methodologically naïve than for instance Schelling with his postulation of an active human faculty of intellectual intuition (contempt for Schelling's view is one of the few things that Schopenhauer and Hegel have in common). The reason for this is that the proposition 'the thing-in-itself is will' can be interpreted in such a way that even Kant could subscribe to it. So, far from naively extending cognition there, just where Kant's critique of metaphysics says it cannot go, Schopenhauer is, in contradistinction to almost all the other post-Kantian idealists, sustaining a certain kind of Kantian position.

In what way could Kant agree with this proposition that the thing-in-itself is will? Will [*Wille*] is the faculty acting not just 'according to law', but according to a 'representation' of a law<sup>10</sup> or according to 'concepts' or 'the representation of a purpose'.<sup>11</sup> Kant is clear that empirical concepts will not suffice: after all, if the concept that determines the will is itself a causal product, then the will is itself merely causal. It is therefore only spontaneously generated rational representations that can ground a will: the will is free, or it is not a will.

The overall structure of the critical works, as Kant makes clear, is not to show that the claims of transcendent metaphysics are *false*, but that they are merely 'problematic': since such claims transcend the possibility of any experience, there is necessarily no evidence that can decide such statements. Thus, in the case that is most crucial for the second *Critique*, while the Second Analogy has proven that human beings are empirically determined by exceptionless causal laws, the solution Kant tables is that it remains merely problematic whether human beings *in themselves* might not yet be free: perhaps, perhaps not.

Kant defends the possibility of this kind of transcendental compatibilism in the Third Antinomy. The Antinomy starts out curiously however. The thesis argues that causal explanations are insufficient, because an individual causal explanation of *x* by *y* does not explain the *cause* of *y*. Since causes regress back without limit, causal explanation is always insufficient. And therefore there must be another kind of causation, causation by freedom. The argument has a suspiciously theological ring to it, and closely resembles the First Antinomy, which address the question whether the world has a beginning in time. The freedom at issue looks like the freedom god might have to initiate the causal series

<sup>10</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), AA 4:412.

<sup>11</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, ed. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), §10, p. 105/AA 5:220.

that comprises the world, to 'begin a series of occurrences *entirely from itself*'.<sup>12</sup>

How does Kant negotiate between this theological problematic and the free will that he seeks at least to register the possibility of? By arguing that the in-itself of a human being may (for all we know) be akin to god in its ability freely to initiate causal series. This is an argument whose promiscuity anticipates Schopenhauer: if my in-itself may be transcendently free (for all anyone knows), then so may the in-itself of *anything*.

The last phase in Kant's argument is to allow that although nothing can be strictly *known* about things-in-themselves, we may nevertheless *rationally believe* certain claims about them, if such claims are (a) not impossible and (b) are necessary conditions of practical agency. Of the three claims Kant endorses, the first (that I have a soul) is really indistinguishable from the second (that I am in-myself a will). Since the soul cannot be a Cartesian substance (as the Paralogisms have shown), the only content the notion of 'soul' therefore has is that of 'will'. Of course, the soul must survive empirical death; but so does the will, since it is, as we have seen, atemporal. And the third is that god exists; to the extent that this is not already made true by the frankly divine dimension of the human will, then this claim shows that we may rationally believe that *another* will exists. But it does not say that (we may rationally believe) in-itself I am anything other than will. Taken in conjunction with the promiscuousness of the Third Antinomy argument, then the result is that Kant thinks we may rationally believe that things-in-themselves are will (or if we may not, then we may believe nothing about them). Schopenhauer is not that distant from Kant.

This structural similarity, however, masks a deep shift in the nature of the will. The shift is a consequence of Schopenhauer's revaluation of reason and concomitant privileging of intuitive/perceptual cognition. In a long appendix to the first volume of *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer focuses his critique of Kant here on what he regards as problematic misuse of the terms 'phenomenon' and 'noumenon'. Correctly understood, Schopenhauer argues, these terms apply to just his distinction between intuitive/perceptual cognition and rational/conceptual i.e. abstract cognition.<sup>13</sup> Kant however reapplies these terms so that they become synonymous with the distinction

<sup>12</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), A534/B562.

<sup>13</sup> Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, Appendix, p. 506/2:566.

between appearances and things-in-themselves. This is a serious mistake, because it presupposes that things-in-themselves are essentially intelligible. And applied to the view he shares with Kant that 'will' is the only way we have of viewing things-in-themselves, this presupposition entails that the will comprising things as they are in themselves (what we might call the transcendental or Big Will) must have an intentional structure: rational willing is purposive action, action governed by a concept.<sup>14</sup> Thus the definitions of the Kantian will quoted above represent an assumption that stands in need of justification.

Schopenhauer thinks no such justification can be provided, and (partly as a result) studiously avoids the term 'noumenon', sticking rigorously to 'thing-in-itself'.<sup>15</sup> This drives a crucial wedge between thing-in-itself (as source of pathological stimulation) and its intelligibility. But Schopenhauer's argument is more specific than this: it is not just that the intelligibility of the thing-in-itself is an unwarranted presupposition; in fact Schopenhauer has a positive argument that the presupposition is false. And this has even more specific consequences for the notion of will.

In broad outline, Schopenhauer argues in this way. There are three levels of transcendental condition that make possible the world as representation. At the most basic level is the bare distinction between subject and object.<sup>16</sup> At the next level is Schopenhauer's generalisation of Kant's account of causality. He widens the scope of Kant's reasoning by trying to show that Kant's mechanical conception of causation is only a special case of ground/consequent relations, which Schopenhauer brings together under the general rubric of the principle of sufficient reason. Using this idea he generalises Kant's Second Analogy, arguing that ground/consequent relations jointly comprise the conditions of possibility of experience in general. In the *Freedom* essay he gives a particularly clear version of this argument that stands as an emblem of clarity for a transcendental

<sup>14</sup> Kant's interest of course is in showing the possibility of *purely* rational action, i.e. action governed *only* by a concept or law (the two are identical for Kant), something that Kant equates with moral action.

<sup>15</sup> With one indirect exception: Schopenhauer takes over Kant's distinction between empirical and intelligible character ('On the Basis of Morality', in *The Two Fundamental Problems of Ethics*, ed. and trans. Christopher Janaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), §10, p. 172/4:174). The distinction is important. But to retain the claim that the nature of anyone's in-itself is 'intelligible' is obviously to regard it as still fundamentally a 'thought thing', a *noumenon*. And exactly Schopenhauer's point is that this is not the case.

<sup>16</sup> Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, §1.

argument.<sup>17</sup> Perceptual experience of objects is only possible because, on the basis of pre-objective sensory affections, we project objects in exterior space as the causes of our perceptual experience of them. This projection presupposes the concept of causation. But since the projection is what first constitutes experience this concept cannot be derived from experience. Therefore it must be *a priori*. This argument is the basis of a general argument showing that the principle of sufficient reason is the most general condition of possibility of experience. Lastly, at the bottom-most level come space and time. Schopenhauer describes these two taken together as the 'principle of individuation', i.e. the condition of distinction between different objects.<sup>18</sup> The *relational* nature of the principle of sufficient reason at the second level therefore essentially presupposes the principle of individuation at the third level because there must be individuated things to have 'sufficient reason' relations *between*.<sup>19</sup>

The thing-in-itself is therefore in the first instance negatively drawn:<sup>20</sup> as that which is 'expressed' in representation, the ultimate source of the content of representation, it must be non-temporal, non-spatial and 'beyond' the principle of sufficient reason. It shares its non-temporality and non-spatiality with Kant's thing-in-itself; but the subtraction of Schopenhauer's thing-in-itself from the general form of object-relatedness, the principle of sufficient reason, deprives it of any 'ground'<sup>21</sup> and clearly distinguishes it from the Kantian *noumenon*, which is all intelligibility but without the possibility of confirmation by experience.

This subtraction is the basis of Schopenhauer's account of the 'freedom' of the will, which is really the freedom of the thing-in-itself from its transcendental forms. No individual can be empirically free, i.e. free at the level of representation, for every event has a 'ground'. This is no less true for human beings, who act on 'motives' or on the basis of abstract representations, as it is for inanimate objects operating under strictly mechanical causation. These are only different 'shapes' the principle of sufficient reason may take. So the whole notion of freedom must

<sup>17</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer, 'On the Freedom of the Will', in *The Two Fundamental Problems of Ethics*, ed. and trans. Christopher Janaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), III, p. 50/4:27.

<sup>18</sup> Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, §23.

<sup>19</sup> One might think that the subject/object distinction would guarantee a plurality of things. But this is not so, as the subject is not a cognitive object and has no causal interaction with objects, only the body, itself a representation has causal interaction with (other) objects.

<sup>20</sup> Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, §23, p. 137/2:134.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* §20, p. 131/2:127.

be radically shifted: it no longer signals the freedom of an event from an empirical cause (which is impossible), but is the freedom of things as they are in themselves from transcendental governance. Schopenhauer is quick to derive from this the following entailment: since science in its general conception seeks various kinds of causal relations, or, for Schopenhauer, the lawful relations between ground and consequent in various mutually irreducible shapes of the principle of sufficient reason, it follows that

no science in the proper sense of the term (I mean: systematic cognition guided by the principle of sufficient reason) will ever reach its final goal or be able to achieve a fully satisfactory explanation.<sup>22</sup>

Explanations have to stop somewhere. And where they stop is the thing-in-itself which is *by its nature* inexplicable because it lies by definition outside of the most general principle of explanation: the principle of sufficient reason. Note that Schopenhauer's argument is similar to, but reverses, Kant's. For Kant, approximately, the given failure of explanation to be sufficient motivates the introduction of another form of causality (intentional willing) and starts the search for a way of reconciling this with empirical determinism. For Schopenhauer on the other hand, it is the excess of thing-in-itself over explanation that motivates the *a priori* claim that science can never be complete. Nevertheless, this negative construal of the will as (merely) the groundless is something Deleuze clearly understands about Schopenhauer, and most of his references to Schopenhauer (along with Schelling) outside of the crucial *Nietzsche* text relate, not particularly sympathetically, to the groundlessness of the will. Deleuze's reading is however insufficient, even if not completely askew (see section 'The 1960s' in this chapter).

One way of starting to see why this is so, why the will is not just blank groundlessness, is to see how Schopenhauer derives the identification of thing-in-itself with will, and what consequences his de-rationalisation of the thing-in-itself has specifically for this will.

First, why does Schopenhauer identify thing-in-itself with will? His argument is in part phenomenological. First, negatively, we experience a kind of dissatisfaction with explanations that proceed merely in accordance with the principle of sufficient reason: such explanations relate objects (including our bodies, considered as objects) to each other, but

[w]e want to know the *sense* [*Bedeutung*] of those representations: we ask if this world is nothing more than representation; in which case it would

<sup>22</sup> Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, §7, p. 51/2:33–4.

have to pass over us like an insubstantial dream or a ghostly phantasm not worth our notice.<sup>23</sup>

This is an acute observation that pre-empts both Heidegger's conception of being-in-the-world and the related trend towards an emphasis on the irreducibility of embodiment in cognitive science: the hypervalorisation of the intellect neglects the basic fact that things, even their representations, have a *significance* for us.

But Schopenhauer does not think that embodiment is sufficient to account for the sense of things, for the body is in part an object among objects. But the body is not just an object, it is rather the privileged representation of which we are phenomenologically aware in two distinct ways: as objective representation among others; but also from the 'inside'. For Schopenhauer, the question is what aspect of our phenomenological – i.e. interior – experience both explains the sense of (objective) things and can be successfully subtracted from the governance of transcendental forms, especially the principle of sufficient reason. Will is the answer to this question.

But why? Certainly willing has a phenomenological profile. On the one hand, we have an 'inside' view of the actions of our own bodies that is based (actively) on the experience of intentional action; on the other, things grab us by affecting our wills. Intentional action however takes us back to the Kantian conception of willing as causation by means of concepts (intentions). This is where the second criterion comes in: it is only willing that can be fully subtracted from representation. Every episode of actual willing is inserted into a framework of representation governed by the principle of sufficient reason: in Schopenhauer's vocabulary, I can explain why I willed something to occur on the basis of the representation that forms my motive. But, as with other representational explanations, I cannot explain why I will at all.<sup>24</sup> There might simply be a limit to thinking here: just because we experience a lack of sense, doesn't mean sense-making must be accessible. But willing *can* be so subtracted: there is a core of conative activity in every episode of willing, a not-yet directed striving or surging, that does not require a transitive object, and hence escapes the most general form of representational structure, the division into subject and object. In doing so, of course, it is also independent of the principle of sufficient reason, since causes (of any kind) are relational; but without the transitivity of subject/object division, the pure core of willing is non-relational. Consider two other cases that will not

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. vol. 1, §17, p. 123/2:118 (translation modified, AW).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. vol. 1, §29, p. 199/2:194–5.



survive this subtraction: any representation, or 'thing', including rational representations are completely bound up with the principle of sufficient reason, and hence leave no precipitate when it is subtracted.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, passion or affect, on its own (i.e. independent of the active notion of will) is also inherently transitive, since both terms imply an 'undergoing at the hands of something else' and hence imply an object.<sup>26</sup>

This completes Schopenhauer's reconceptualisation of the notion of will: he makes it undergo a crucial reversal from Kant's view. Will as such is no longer the locus of responsible free human action. Rather it is a fundamentally intransitive form of activity of production:

[T]he absence of all goals, of all boundaries, belongs to the essence of the will in itself, which is an endless striving.<sup>27</sup>

Similarly, 'freedom' as a problematic has also been radically displaced: no longer concentrated in individuated human beings, it is only the will as such that is 'free', a term that therefore no longer implies arbitrary choice, but rather escape from grounding.

This account, from the pivotal Book II of *The World as Will and Representation*, is the centrepiece of Schopenhauer's philosophical novelty. The rest of the work fills out Schopenhauer's system-philosophical ambitions. Most of these are negative: he deduces an *a priori* argument for pessimism from these premises, and argues that the highest practical human goals are to minimise the suffering of others through a compassion-based morality, but ultimately to renounce willing altogether, as the saintly ascetic does.

But before he gets to this, Schopenhauer offers an account of art that only partly shares this pessimism. It is true that Schopenhauer regards the disinterested contemplation of beautiful forms as the most accessible path to at least temporary release from the sufferings of the will:

for that moment we are freed from the terrible pressure of the will, we celebrate the Sabbath of the penal servitude of willing, the wheel of Ixion stands still.<sup>28</sup>

But the freedom of the will in Schopenhauer's sense also makes the will the ultimate originator of those forms that are copied by the artist: the

<sup>25</sup> Of course this means that Schopenhauer's retention of the term 'thing' in 'thing-in-itself' is unhelpful. But it can be regarded as a mere placeholder, to be filled only by the notion of will.

<sup>26</sup> Dale Jacquette, 'Schopenhauer's Proof that the Thing-in-Itself is Will', *Kantian Review* 12:2, (2007), pp. 76–108.

<sup>27</sup> Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, §29, p. 188/2:195.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. vol. 1, §38, p. 220/2:231.

will produces the world as representation, in a series of 'grades of objectivation' that push creatively forward.<sup>29</sup> The problematic of freedom is no longer that of the undetermined individual human action, but the space for nature's creativity in the production of arbitrary new forms.

What is trickiest is Schopenhauer's subtraction of the will from temporality and spatiality. Two aspects in particular make this move implausible. First, some commentators find the very notion of an atemporal act implausible,<sup>30</sup> although it has long been part of a theological tradition and its possibility has been vigorously defended.<sup>31</sup> Second, if Schopenhauer is right that space and time together form the principle of individuation, then it follows that the will as such is incapable of individuation.

And this notion of the identity or oneness of the will is not a free wheel, but appears to play a significant role in the rest of his philosophical system. To pick up the thread: the intransitive nature of the production embodied by the will is the most important of Schopenhauer's arguments for his signature pessimism. *I am* will; although each episode of willing has a rationale, my willing as such has no such rationale. Although *I appear* to will specific things, the will that I am is in fact intransitive, just a willing and not a willing of something. This manifests itself phenomenally in the fact that after achieving one object, I start to will some further object. There is no object that will yield lasting satisfaction because the will that I am cannot be satisfied because it actually *has* no object. With the standard assumption that to will something is to lack it, then the intransitivity of the transcendental will implies the necessity of suffering at the phenomenal level: I keep on willing *stuff*, none of which can possibly satisfy the will at the transcendental level.

Schopenhauer's pessimism about the ultimate value of existence drives both his moral philosophy and his account of religion. And both his arguments appear to make significant use of the claim that the will is ultimately one. Schopenhauer's moral philosophy, for instance, is predicated on a corollary of the unity of the will: the will is the ultimate agent of its own suffering. As Schopenhauer picturesquely puts it, each of us is 'the perpetrator and the victim'.<sup>32</sup> In a way, evil is the result of what Kant would have called a transcendental subreption, a confusion of transcendental and empirical levels: I experience the will as mine

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. vol. 1, §45, p. 246/2:260.

<sup>30</sup> Christopher Janaway, 'Necessity, Responsibility and Character: Schopenhauer on Freedom of the Will', *Kantian Review* 17:3, (2012), pp. 431–57; p. 450.

<sup>31</sup> Brian Leftow, *Time and Eternity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

<sup>32</sup> Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, §63, p. 367/2:402.

because of its individuation within the empirical; but when I act on my own interests to the detriment of others I forget that it is the same (transcendental) will that suffers. The remedy is compassion [*Mitleid*] in which I suffer along with the other, a state that Schopenhauer argues can be achieved by recognition of my metaphysical identity with others, 'seeing through' the 'veil of [representational] Maya'.<sup>33</sup>

Perhaps compassion enables the individual to act so as to reduce the overall level of suffering, but it is at best a Band-Aid on the basic wound that comprises existence. Thus Schopenhauer proposes a deeper value than moral value: asceticism, or denial of the will. Denial of the will is based on an extension of compassionate motivation: where the compassionate person distinguishes 'less' between self and other, the ascetic completely obliterates the distinction between self and other. This insight precipitates a dramatic change: it acts as a 'tranquilliser' on the individual will, 'turning' it away from life in 'renunciation', 'resignation' and ultimately 'complete will-lessness',<sup>34</sup> a state that Schopenhauer describes in religious terms as both saintly and akin to Buddhist nirvana.<sup>35</sup>

It is uncontroversial that these views had a great impact on Nietzsche, who vehemently rejects Schopenhauer's pessimism, compassion and asceticism, all the while retaining the basic framework of a philosophy of will, in the Schopenhauerian sense of intransitive production. Deleuze's proximity to – or at least favourable relation to – Nietzsche makes him reproduce this attitude to Schopenhauer. But in so doing, Deleuze's attitude to Schopenhauer is more dictated by tactical considerations of intellectual positioning than by a proper appreciation of the importance of Schopenhauer's reinterpretation of the notion of will.

#### NIETZSCHE

Overwhelmingly, Deleuze's most extensive discussion of Schopenhauer is in the context of Nietzsche at the outset of the 1962 text *Nietzsche et la philosophie*. But Deleuze's engagement with Schopenhauer in this text is determined mostly by a need to position Schopenhauer with respect to Nietzsche but also with respect to Hegel. Deleuze must make it clear what an advance Nietzsche has made on Schopenhauer, while also marking the importance of Schopenhauer for Nietzsche; at

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. vol. 1, §66, p. 397/2:439.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. vol. 1, §68, p. 406/2:448.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. vol. 1, §63, p. 383/2:421.

the same time, Deleuze seeks to differentiate both the Nietzsche and Schopenhauer traditions from the Hegelian dialectic.

The dialectic is the main enemy in the book: 'There is no possible compromise between Hegel and Nietzsche.'<sup>36</sup> What Deleuze wants to do above all is distinguish Nietzsche's account of the master/slave encounter in *The Genealogy of Morality* from Hegel's master/slave dialectic.<sup>37</sup> Broadly speaking, on the Hegelian account, the master can only even pretend to be master by negating the slave; and this negation embroils the master in a dialectic of negation motorised by the slave. On Nietzsche's account, the master is distinguished 'positively' from the slave. Only in this way, Deleuze argues, can difference be affirmed as such, as difference, rather than reduced to its dialectical forms of negation and contradiction.

Resisting a Hegelian account is a standard procedure, in some ways that of Nietzsche himself, whose 1888 account of *The Birth of Tragedy* describes it as 'offensively Hegelian'.<sup>38</sup> But the procedure leaves Schopenhauer in an ambiguous position: Nietzsche himself claims that the problem with the *Birth of Tragedy* was Hegel and that it was not (despite all appearances) Schopenhauerian.<sup>39</sup> But Deleuze claims the opposite, that the *Birth* is not dialectical but Schopenhauerian.<sup>40</sup> Since Schopenhauer was of course famously anti-Hegelian, studding his works with sometimes unreadably hyperbolic polemics against Hegel, the distinction between Schopenhauer and Nietzsche must be itself distinct from Deleuze's account of the way Nietzsche resists the dialectic.

The fundamental problem of the dialectical account of the will lies in its 'representational' character, according to Deleuze:<sup>41</sup> the Hegelian master is really a slave because 'will' is filtered through 'representation' in the form of 'recognition' (*Anerkennung* in German, derived from the same root, *Erkennen*, as the term Schopenhauer uses for representational knowledge or cognition). Later Deleuze argues that Nietzsche's concept of will-to-power is radically misunderstood if it is treated as a will that

<sup>36</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (London: Athlone Press, 1983 [1962]), p. 195/223.

<sup>37</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson, trans. Carol Diethe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006 [1887]).

<sup>38</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols and other Writings*, ed. Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman, trans. Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005 [1888]), p. 108.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 11/12.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. p. 10/11.

'wants . . . desires or seeks out power as an end'.<sup>42</sup> Will-to-power is not, in other words, a transitive will for some particular end. For it to be so would presuppose a representation, since the 'end' would be represented. We would be back to Kant's conception of will. But as we have seen, this is exactly what Schopenhauer rejects: the (transcendental) will is precisely subtracted from representation and wills without having any particular telos. Schopenhauer inaugurates a critique of representation just as powerful as either Nietzsche's or Deleuze's. This therefore cannot be the point at which Deleuze's Nietzsche departs from Schopenhauer.

What is that point? Deleuze argues that the break is quite specific:

Nietzsche's break with Schopenhauer rests on one precise point; it is a matter of knowing whether the will is unitary or multiple. Everything else flows from this. Indeed, if Schopenhauer is led to deny the will it is primarily because he believes in the unity of willing. Because the will, according to Schopenhauer, is essentially unitary, the executioner comes to understand that he is one with his own victim. The consciousness of the identity of the will in all its manifestations leads the will to deny itself, to suppress itself in pity, morality and asceticism (Schopenhauer *The World as Will and Representation*, Book 4). Nietzsche discovers what seems to him the authentically Schopenhauerian mystification; when we posit the unity, the identity, of the will, we must necessarily repudiate the will itself.<sup>43</sup>

We have seen that Schopenhauer does indeed argue that the will cannot be individuated. And the standard story that he tells about compassion and asceticism, morality and religion, depends crucially in individuated human beings achieving a kind of insight into the 'unity' with others.

But Schopenhauer is guilty of ambiguous formulation at just the point of this claim for the 'unity' of the will. For, on the one hand, he argues that the transcendental will is 'free of all *multiplicity*', but then he tries to infer from this what does not follow, that '[i]t is itself one'. Indeed he knows that it does not follow, for he immediately adds 'but not in the manner of an object, since an object's unity is known in contrast to a possible multiplicity'.<sup>44</sup> Strictly, the will is free from both unity and multiplicity; but Schopenhauer often talks as if the will in itself were thereby one. This of course makes him seem to be a philosopher of identity and not difference, and hence on the face of it, not one with affinity for Deleuze.

But Deleuze himself (with Guattari) suggest that there *is* such an affini-

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. p. 79/90.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. p. 7/8 (translation modified, AW).

<sup>44</sup> Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, §23, pp. 137–8/2:134.

ity. For the notion of multiplicity (as a noun) is precisely distinguished from the Platonic dialectical relation of the one and the many. When Schopenhauer argues that the transcendental will is not multiple, he is using the term as a correlative of the one, as a synonym for the many. One might make a comparison here with Kant. The thing-in-itself in Kant is coded proximally into sensations [*Empfindungen*] which are described as 'manifold [*mannigfaltig*]'. The way in which sensations are manifold cannot be the way in which individuated objects are many since sensations are prior to individuation. Schopenhauer is committed to a similar manifoldness transcending either unity or manyness.

This can seem a rather technical move. Yes, Schopenhauer may be committed to such a notion as a matter of (transcendental) logic. But Schopenhauer in fact thinks of the will as 'one' and deploys this notion to generate the 'extremely unfortunate "tone" or emotional tonality' in the philosophy of the will characterised by pessimism, compassion and asceticism.<sup>45</sup> There's no doubt that Schopenhauer was a pessimist and valued asceticism. But it is not obvious that these really derive, as Deleuze argues, compactly, from any putative postulation of the unity of the transcendental will or from consciousness of that unity. Indeed in the case Schopenhauer's analysis of compassion, despite Nietzsche's hostility to the notion, and despite some of what Schopenhauer says, I think Schopenhauer makes rather a Deleuzian case for the undoing of the representational subject.

The standard view of Schopenhauer's defence of compassion is that one can achieve a compassionate outlook by coming to a consciousness of the metaphysical identity of one's self with others, or at least making 'less of a distinction than is usually made' between one's self and others,<sup>46</sup> as described above. In his 1839 text *On the Basis of Morality*, Schopenhauer argues that it is indeed compassion that is the basis: only compassion motivates us to set aside the interests of our (empirically) individuated wills. Schopenhauer distinguishes traditionally between acts of justice and those of philanthropy or loving kindness [*Menschenliebe*]. In the *Basis* he clearly articulates the dependence of both kinds of moral acts on the motivation of compassion and the dependence of compassion on consciousness or recognition of metaphysical identity.<sup>47</sup> But in the earlier *World as Will and Representation* (1819) compassion is conspicuous by its absence from his account of

<sup>45</sup> Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 82/94.

<sup>46</sup> Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, §66, p. 398/2:439.

<sup>47</sup> Schopenhauer, 'On the Basis of Morality', §14.

justice (section 62). Although the metaphysical identity thesis is mentioned in both cases, compassion comes up only some sections later in the account of the virtue of loving kindness (section 67). This suggests that Schopenhauer is drawing some conceptual distinction between compassion and the identity thesis.

What might this be? Schopenhauer is really reversing the order of priority of the metaphysical identity thesis and the experience of compassion. Rather than consciousness of identity leading to compassion it is the 'everyday phenomenon of *compassion*' that explains the otherwise mysterious 'process' whereby I can be motivated by the suffering of another.<sup>48</sup> His argument is phenomenological: the experience of compassion should not be *equated* with the thesis of metaphysical identity; rather the experience of compassion is the mechanism by means of which the metaphysical identity claim is able actually to operate upon us as an incentive: compassion is our phenomenological mode of access to metaphysical identity, 'the empirical emerging of the will's metaphysical identity'.<sup>49</sup>

But now why should one retain the metaphysical underpinning of identity? The phenomenology of compassion is that of the partial breakdown of the numerical identity of the cognitive subject. The experience of compassion breaks the subject down and marks a non-representational irruption of the other in the subject: it is a contagion or infection that promises no necessary re-unificatory identity at the end.

Everyone agrees that Deleuze's term 'transcendental empiricism' gets at something important about what he is doing. But it is quite unclear what that is. One popular view is that it has to do with specifying the conditions of real rather than possible experience.<sup>50</sup> This view can itself be divided: perhaps it is the conditions themselves that must change, in which case transcendental empiricism describes a certain kind of transcendental condition, the 'plastic' ones of the *Nietzsche* text that are not bigger than what they condition.<sup>51</sup> But another view is that it is not about conditioning at all, but de-conditioning. On this view the 'transcendental' of transcendental empiricism concerns not the various conditioning procedures that do in fact go to comprise representation, but rather concerns the constitution of what resists representation: in

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. p. 200/4:209.

<sup>49</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E. J. F. Payne (New York: Dover, 1969), vol. 2, chap. 47, p. 602/3:691 (my own translation, AW).

<sup>50</sup> Levi Bryant, *Difference and Givenness: Deleuze's Transcendental Empiricism and the Ontology of Immanence* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2008), p. 3.

<sup>51</sup> Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 50/57.

Kant's and Schopenhauer's vocabulary, the thing-in-itself. There is a sense in which Schopenhauer's argument for the claim that the thing-in-itself is will already comprises a form of transcendental empiricism: from an *experience* of willing in intentional actions within the sphere of representation, he argues to a *transcendental* notion of willing subtracted from that representation. The (phenomenological) experience of compassion extends this process of transcendental empiricism by pointing to a paradoxical (though nevertheless familiar) experience of the other invading or infecting the self, that tends to destabilise the very conditions of representational experience.

There is much debate about how to understand the numerous occasions in his texts in which Deleuze appears to inhabit a frankly phenomenological register. He himself describes phenomenology in highly negative terms, terming it 'our modern scholasticism' in the *Nietzsche* book.<sup>52</sup> But it is hard to see how 'empiricism' can be completely divorced from experience. And a solution may be found in the idea that Deleuze is interested primarily in experiences that defeat the conditions of representation and threaten to dissolve the subject in a becoming.<sup>53</sup> Here Deleuze's peculiar relation to phenomenology might actually help Schopenhauer scholarship, which often becomes entangled in issues of epistemic integrity concerning the possibility of a cognitive relation with what, in strict Kantian form, we can have no cognitive relation with: the thing-in-itself.

So Schopenhauer's arguments neither require the will to be thought of as identical (even if he talks that way sometimes), nor do they require anything like *consciousness* of such identity to generate compassion. Rather compassion is itself the experience of the breakdown of (representational) experience in the direction of the impersonality of the will.

Deleuze's accounts of Schopenhauer's two flaws with respect to Nietzsche therefore both fail: Schopenhauer offers a clear critique of representation; and it is not true that either identity or consciousness, i.e. a representation of identity, are required for compassion. Still it is clearly true that Schopenhauer is a pessimist and at the same time as he identifies a form of intransitive production in the transcendental will he also seeks to deny it. And these mark a great difference at least of 'tone' from Nietzsche and Deleuze.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. p. 195/223.

<sup>53</sup> Christian Kerslake, 'Insects and Incest: From Bergson and Jung to Deleuze', *Multitudes* 25, (summer 2006), available at <<http://www.multitudes.net/Insects-and-Incest-From-Bergson/>> (last accessed 10 October 2014).

## THE 1960s

It seems hard to imagine a positive Deleuzian account of asceticism. Yet Peter Hallward's *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* outlines an understanding of 'asceticism', at least of a certain kind, as opening up the space for a critique of representation. Hallward views Deleuze's philosophy as guided fundamentally by a movement out of the (actual) world, and it would be easy to interpret this as involving a certain form of asceticism, albeit of a 'positive and affirmative' kind.<sup>54</sup> In an explanatory comparison, Hallward argues that Deleuze privileges the still figural art of Francis Bacon over the backwater of abstraction for much the same reason.<sup>55</sup> In Bacon the figure is de-formed, in transition, becoming something else (like an embryo); while in abstraction, like negative theology or 'mystical extinction'<sup>56</sup> or the abyss of the undifferentiated, sees the only alternative to the phenomenon as blank absence of individuation.

Hallward's interpretation of Deleuze has not been popular among Deleuzians. But the distinction he tables between a movement out of the actual world (the world as representation) that is deforming rather than blankly abstract raises another of Deleuze's own criticisms of Schopenhauer. This criticism comes from Deleuze's middle period texts, *The Logic of Sense* and *Difference and Repetition*. Whereas in the Nietzsche text, Deleuze identified Schopenhauer's problem as presupposing or asserting the unity or identity of the will; in these texts Deleuze criticises Schopenhauer for making the will 'a completely undifferentiated abyss, a universal lack of difference, an indifferent black nothingness'.<sup>57</sup> These two complaints are similar, but by no means the same: for the 'abyss' (French: *sans-fond*, following the German *Abgrund*, i.e. the groundless) may lack unity while being entirely undifferentiated.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Peter Hallward, *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* (London: Verso, 2006), p. 86.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* p. 85.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* p. 84.

<sup>57</sup> Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 276/354; see also Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester (London: Athlone, 1990 [1969]), pp. 106–7/130. In *Difference and Repetition*, Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* is now included on the list with Schelling and Schopenhauer.

<sup>58</sup> Deleuze distinguishes between differentiation (which is the process of the production of difference as such at the level of the virtual ideas) and differentiation (which is the process of production of empirical differences at the level of the actual). If the abyss lacks differentiation, then it also lacks differentiation, since the latter is the condition of the former.

Indeed that would appear to be the upshot of the argument so far: Schopenhauer's will is indeed subtracted from representation (with its attendant conditions of empirical individuation); it follows that it is neither individuated nor fails to be individuated. This is the very problem of the groundless.

According to Henry Somers-Hall, what the undifferentiated (and undifferentiated) abyss lacks is precisely the resources for an account of the 'production' of the formed matters of the world as representation.<sup>59</sup> This is a plausible view of the deficit. But it is surely inappropriate to single out Schopenhauer. For Schopenhauer's 'deduction' of the will as thing-in-itself subtracts precisely (the experience of) intentional action from the forms of representation. It is thus not a formless *nothing*, but formless *will*. The twin risks of Schopenhauer's philosophy are anthropomorphism (i.e. interpreting the claim 'everything is will' as the claim that 'everything is intentional action') and mystical negation (i.e. interpreting the claim that 'the will is subtracted from the forms of representation' as the claim that 'the will is nothing'). But Schopenhauer is clear that it is will that is subtracted from representation, and the result is not formless nothing but a conception – arguably the first in Western philosophy – of non-teleological becoming or intransitive production. And what gets produced is precisely the world as representation.

It must nevertheless be said that Schopenhauer's system of production is less well worked out than Deleuze's. At the same time, it should also be noted that it took Deleuze a while to work this out too. In the works of the 1960s, Deleuze develops a systematic account of the mechanisms (in the broadest sense) of production of the actual that cannot be themselves regarded as actual. But he locates them topographically outside of the abyss. Often these productive mechanisms are described as 'syntheses', referring to but radically displacing Kant's use of the term. Deleuze treats the abyss as a kind of trap, locating the syntheses of production in *The Logic of Sense* on the surface of sense and making it hard to give an account of the processes of dynamic genesis of sense out of the schizophrenic abyss of the body. But such a dynamic account is surely crucial. In the 1970s this changed, and Deleuze, now in cahoots with Guattari, relocated the mechanisms of synthetic production precisely to what he had previously characterised as the abyss: the transcendental unconscious.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Somers-Hall, *Hegel, Deleuze and the Critique of Representation*, pp. 36, 88–9.

<sup>60</sup> See Alistair Welchman, 'Deleuze: Into the Abyss', in Simon Glendinning (ed.), *The Edinburgh Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh

## ANTI-OEDIPUS

*Anti-Oedipus* is a clearly Schopenhauerian text; and it helps to read the text through the lens of Schopenhauer. Deleuze and Guattari take a lot of trouble trying to pull Freud back to his original energeticism and away from the structuralising interpretations of Lacan and his school. But this is the very Freud who 'fetched up unwittingly' himself, in the course of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, in the midst of Schopenhauer's philosophy.<sup>61</sup> And they spend an equal amount of effort trying to pull Freud back away from the notion of an unconscious that is individuated empirically and personally. But just such an unconscious is the Schopenhauerian will, which Freud had to personalise and psychologise for his own purposes.

The idea that *Anti-Oedipus* is a Schopenhauerian text is not new, it is suggested in Frank<sup>62</sup> and by François.<sup>63</sup> Frank's text is characteristically uncharitable towards Deleuze and Guattari, and he performs his own kind of subreption, persistently mistaking desiring-machines and desiring-production (which operate at the level of primary process or will) for technical machines (which operate at the level of secondary social processes or representation). As a result he regards Deleuze and Guattari as giving a kind of systems-theoretic account of the real that proceeds with automaticity and excludes any form of subjectivity, which, for Frank, necessitates reflection and representation.<sup>64</sup>

But this interpretation is quite incorrect. Deleuze and Guattari's cri-

University Press, 1999), pp. 615–27; and the idea is tabled independently by Daniel Smith, 'From the Surface to the Depths: On the Transition from Logic of Sense to Anti-Oedipus', in Constantin V. Boundas (ed.), *Deleuze: The Intensive Reduction* (London: Continuum, 2009), pp. 82–100.

<sup>61</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle and Other Writings*, trans. John Reddick, with an Introduction by Mark Edmundson (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 226.

<sup>62</sup> Manfred Frank, 'Die Welt als Wunsch und Repräsentation oder gegen ein anarchostrukturalistisches Zeitalter (Besprechung des "Anti-Ödipus" von G. Deleuze und F. Guattari)', in *FUGEN, Deutsch-Französisches Jahrbuch für Text-Analytik* (Olten and Freiburg: Walter-Verlag, 1980), pp. 269–78. Translated as 'The World as Will and Representation: Deleuze and Guattari's Critique of Capitalism as Schizo-Analysis and Schizo-Discourse', *Telos* 21:9, (1983), pp. 166–76.

<sup>63</sup> Arnaud François, 'De la volonté comme pathos au désir comme production. Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Deleuze', in Nicolas Cornibert and Jean-Christophe Goddard (eds), *L'Anti-Œdipe de Deleuze et Guattari* (Milan and Geneva: Mimesis/MérisPresses, 2008), pp. 27–36.

<sup>64</sup> The German translation that Frank is reviewing does not help here. It translates Deleuze and Guattari's French 'désir' with German 'Wunsch', i.e. wish rather than 'Wille', making it sound as if Deleuze and Guattari's conception of primary process should still be identified with the transitive properties of wish-fulfilment.

tique of 'desire' tracks Schopenhauer's deduction of the will closely and critically, as well as illuminating the subreption that Schopenhauer performs and that underlies his fallacious argument from his account of the transcendental will to a pessimistic conclusion. The tradition, Deleuze and Guattari argue,<sup>65</sup> has regarded desire as lack: to desire x is precisely not to possess x, for all x. This conception of desire as lack is internally connected to Kant's conception of desire (*Wille* in German) as transitive and representational: it is because we do not have x that desire can only take the form of desiring in relation to a representation, a representation, namely of the missing x. But the concept of desiring-production is precisely the intransitivisation of desire – desire becomes productive at the point where it is no longer tied to representation through lack.

Isn't Schopenhauer here, however, the arch theorist of lack? Yes. But this is the result of *his own subreption*. In itself the will lacks nothing, because *it does not and cannot* represent anything as missing. The will simply wills, intransitively. It is only at the level of individuated representation that the will can be understood as lacking anything. But the problem is not then the will, but the representation. And this is exactly Deleuze and Guattari's argument. They filter it back through a Kantian vocabulary of legitimate versus illegitimate synthesis. But legitimate means only immanent to desiring-production, i.e. to the will. If the reading of Schopenhauer's account of compassion above is correct, then Schopenhauer also shares with Deleuze and Guattari an account of experiences (experiments) that pull us back from representation into a will that cannot be said to lack anything.

It likely that Deleuze and Guattari would have nothing good to say about the vocabulary within which such a breaking-apart of the cognitive subject takes place in Schopenhauer: Deleuze at least has taken Nietzsche's critique of the morality of compassion too seriously for that. Nevertheless, the *form* of that break casts a revealing light on what Deleuze and Guattari mean by the 'vagabond, nomad subject',<sup>66</sup>

where the reality [*réel*] of matter has abandoned all extension, just as the interior voyage has abandoned all form and quality, henceforth causing pure intensities – coupled together, almost unbearable – to radiate within and without, intensities through which a nomadic subject passes.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (London: Athlone, 1984 [1972]), p. 25/32.

<sup>66</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 26/34.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* p. 84/100.

An *interior* – i.e. in some sense phenomenological journey beyond the representational conditions of materiality – yields an experience that is no longer bound to the sedentary individuality of the cognitive subject, but moves through that of others and ultimately broadens out into the intensive matter of the world as will/desire. Schopenhauer's philosophy anticipates the major contours of Deleuze's in very basic ways that go far beyond the mere privileging of intuition over concept.

Doubtless too much can be made of this – and clearly Schopenhauer has a less worked out understanding of the processes of intransitive production. Nevertheless, he was the first to break through representation and find something there on the order of a transcendental conception of materiality that Deleuze (especially with Guattari) then takes up with such force.

## Feuerbach and the Image of Thought

Henry Somers-Hall

### INTRODUCTION

'The Image of Thought' could be considered to be the most important piece of writing in the entire Deleuzian corpus.<sup>1</sup> This is the chapter of *Difference and Repetition* that several decades later, Deleuze claims is the 'most necessary and the most concrete'<sup>2</sup> section of the book, and the one that provides a basis for his later work with Guattari. Here, Deleuze engages with two basic issues. First, he separates out his conception of thinking, and with it, philosophy, from prior philosophical approaches, explaining why the difference of his philosophy from prior systems itself differs from the traditional relationship between philosophical positions. Second, he raises the question of how one should begin to philosophise. As we will see, a philosopher often begins by refuting the implicit presuppositions that they recognise in prior thinkers. Descartes, for instance, criticises Aristotle for presupposing the transparency of categories such as rational and animal. Kant, in turn, criticises Descartes for presupposing the determinability of his own foundational moment, the *cogito*. If we see the development of philosophy as the unmasking and critique of presuppositions of prior systems, then the endpoint of philosophy will be a system entirely without presuppositions. This is the goal Hegel aims at with his system of absolute idealism. Deleuze's claim is that such a model of the progress of philosophy itself operates within one overarching assumption: the good will of thinking.

In this essay, I want to relate these questions of thinking and

<sup>1</sup> This essay presents an expanded analysis of material originally published in Henry Somers-Hall, *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: An Edinburgh Philosophical Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. xvii.