

THE FRACTURE OF THINKING



Yet how does this correlation between expressing thought and expressed Idea come about? What generates the correspondence between intensity and Idea through which actualization occurs?

Deleuze characterizes the relation between the first and second passive synthesis as one between an empirical foundation of time and a ground of time that is at once transcendental and metaphysical.

The synthesis of memory harbours a transcendental aspect insofar as it constitutes the being of the past which makes the present pass, but it also harbours a metaphysical aspect because it invokes the 'in-itself' of this pure past as the ground of the consciousness of the present (Deleuze 1968: 374, 1994: 293).

Thus the contraction of habit founds the physical presentation of time in the organism, but the contraction of memory grounds

its metaphysical representation in consciousness. This grounding is metaphysical precisely to the extent that it allows the past relative to which every present passes to be represented as the originary model for the latter.

Representation institutes a series of concentric presents expanding outward in ever-widening arcs from an originary but always already past present. As a result, the relation between the a priori past and the presents which it grounds becomes one of resemblance and the difference between past and present is subordinated to an identity in the concept

(Deleuze 1968: 351, 1994: 274).

But actualization occurs through an individuating difference which is the determination of a differentiation in the Idea, not the specification of a difference in the concept. Thus actualization is the determination of the difference between two differences: the extrinsic difference between instants contracted in the present and the intrinsic difference between the degrees of contraction of memory. The difference between the past and the present resides in the difference between these two contractions of difference – between the repetition in extensity of extrinsically related successive instants (*partes extra partes*) and the repetition in intensity of internally related co-existing levels of the past (Deleuze 1968: 114, 1994: 84).

Actualization as determination of the difference between the contraction of habit and the contraction of memory implies a third synthesis, and it is the latter that institutes a correspondence between expressing and expressed, thought and Idea. Between the determination of thought in the passive self of the larval subject and the indetermination (i.e. indifferenciation) of problematic being in the Idea lies the

pure and empty form of time as the transcendental condition under which the indeterminate becomes determinable (Deleuze 1968: 220, 1994: 169).

It is 'pure' because it is the exclusively logical time internal to thinking, rather than the chronological time in which thought unfolds. It is 'empty' because it is devoid of empirical content (the living present of habit), as well as of metaphysical substance (the contractions and dilations of ontological memory). And it is 'transcendental' because it ensures the a priori correspondence between thinking and being as expressing and expressed. Accordingly, it establishes the correlation between the determination of thought as individuating difference borne by the intensive thinker, and the determinability of being as differentiated but undifferentiated pre-individual realm. Thus it is the third synthesis of time which accounts for the genesis of ontological sense as that which is expressed in thought, and which relates univocal being directly to its individuating difference as the expressed to its expression.

In this regard, it is indissociable from the transcendent exercise of the faculties through which the Idea is generated

(Deleuze 1968: 251, 1994: 194).

The third synthesis is the properly ontological synthesis which determines actualization as the differentiation that generates the future through the division between past and present. Moreover, as actualization of the future, it conditions the actualizations comprised in the past and the present because it generates the correspondence between thought and Idea which is already presupposed in them. Thus

the third synthesis not only generates the specifically ontological difference between two sorts of difference – the extrinsic difference that separates instants contracted in the present and the intrinsic difference that separates the contractions of memory – it also brings together what it separates since it establishes a correspondence between the larval thought contracted in the present and the Idea embodied in the degrees of contraction of ontological memory.

The 'fracture' of pure and empty time conjoins thinking and being even as it separates the past and the present which are retained as degrees of contraction in the Idea: 'For just as difference is the immediate gathering and articulation of what it distinguishes, so the fracture retains what it splits, and Ideas also retain their sundered moments' (Deleuze 1968: 220, 1994: 170 tm).

Accordingly, thinking is never the activity of a constituting consciousness.

Likewise, transcendental synthesis is not anchored in the subject of representation. Rather, both thinking and the subject of thought are engendered through the empty form of time that fractures the 'I' which is supposed to lie at the origin of thinking and correlates it with the larval consciousness which crystallizes through the contractive contemplation of pre-individual singularities (the undifferentiated 'groundlessness' of the Idea):

It is the empty form of time that introduces and constitutes Difference in thought; the difference on the basis of which

thought thinks, as the difference between the indeterminate and determination. It is the empty form of time that distributes along both its sides an I that is fractured by the abstract line [of time], and a passive self that has emerged from the groundlessness which it contemplates. It is the empty form of time that engenders thinking in thought, for thinking only thinks with difference, orbiting around this point of ungrounding.

(Deleuze 1968: 354, 1994: 276 tm)

Between the determination of the passive self and the indetermination of the I fractured by the Idea lies the difference generated by thinking, and it is through the latter that the pure form of time establishes the correlation between expressing intensity and expressed Idea (Deleuze 1968: 332, 1994: 259). Thus the key distinction (though it remains unstated in Deleuze's text) is that between the specifically ontological differentiation carried out by *thinking* and the clear-confused *thought* of the larval subject which expresses that difference. Yet thinking is an act, precisely 'the most intense or most individual act' (Deleuze 1968: 285, 1994: 221) insofar as it overthrows the identity of the I and the resemblance of the self (Deleuze 1968: 283, 1994: 219).