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A Life of Variable Speeds

On Constructing a Deleuzian Psychotherapy

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ABSTRACT. In this paper, I attempt to explicate the fundamental ontology of the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze in order to think through the implications of his understanding of the logic of sense for a critique and reconstruction of the ethics and practice of contemporary psychotherapy. I shall argue that Deleuze's understanding of sense leads to a new *intensive* conceptualization of subjectivity, which radically deconstructs the common sense and good sense that has structured Western notions of the subject since Plato. This new understanding of subjectivity opens up the possibility of constructing a different psychotherapy: a psychotherapy of difference conceptualized in terms of an ontology of dual temporalities or variable speeds.

KEY WORDS: Deleuze, difference, logic of sense, psychotherapy, subjectivity, time

The French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, proclaimed by Foucault (1970) to have written 'outstanding books' of 'exceptional merit and importance' (p. 885), has been embraced by researchers in a wide variety of fields, including geography (Bonta & Protevi, 2004; Doel, 1999), history, math and physics (DeLanda, 2000, 2002), organizational studies (Jackson & Carter, 1999), sociology (Goodchild, 1996), gender studies (Buchanan & Colebrook, 2000) and film theory (Bogue, 2003; Pisters, 2003). However, within the field of psychology, references to his work are few and far between. This is strange, in particular since Deleuze thinks through many problems of utmost relevance to the field of psychology and the practice of psychotherapy. I therefore intend, in this paper, to introduce the thought of this philosopher to fellow psychologists and therapists and to make some initial suggestions as to how Deleuzian thought can be made relevant to the construction of a new therapeutic ethics and practice. I deem this to be an important task because, as a clinician in training, I have often been perplexed by the scarcity of

philosophical reflection that informs current understandings of what therapy is and what it should seek to accomplish. I see this attested to in the conformity of current clinical training programs, where either an instrumental cognitive behaviorism or a humanist focus on the whole person has become the unquestioned common sense of the day. By offering a reading of a philosopher whose thinking is untimely in the Nietzschean sense of thinking outside or counter to our times, my hope is to open up a space where the fundamental assumptions underlying the praxis of psychotherapy can become thought-worthy again. The fundamental purpose of this paper is therefore deconstructive as well as reconstructive. It aims not to present a programmatic statement of the way therapy ought to be done, but rather to articulate a different ontological starting point from which novel therapeutic practices might spring.

After identifying the main problem of Deleuze's philosophy as the problem of sense and arguing that this is a problem he inherits from Kant, I will proceed to show that Deleuze's logic of sense takes us in a very un-Kantian direction, towards a differential and self-concealing definition of sense that requires a rethinking of the very concepts of time, world and subjectivity. This new *intensive* conceptualization of reality will radically deconstruct our self-certainty of being a subject in a world of objects and will open up previously hidden opportunities for affirming a life of difference. In summary therefore, this paper has as its purpose to explicate how a reading of some of Deleuze's main texts can help us gain insight into how his novel interpretation of sense can help us re-envision the foundation and practice of contemporary psychotherapy.

Deleuze's Philosophy of the Logic of Sense

To determine the status Deleuze gives to the subject and to derive from that a new vision of psychotherapy, we must first understand the nature of the ontology he proposes as well as the fundamental problem that guides his philosophy. Only from such a foundation can we begin to understand why the time might be ripe for a Deleuzian therapy and how we might design a clinical practice that could be informed by such an understanding.

One way to situate Deleuze within the philosophical tradition would be to view him as essentially picking up the problem, first formulated by Kant (1781/2003), of accounting for the transcendental conditions that make it possible that there should be an intelligible world at all. This problem is one that Deleuze (2001) will refer to as the problem of *sense*: 'This problem', as he says, 'of where statements come from, what their production is related to' (Deleuze, 2002, p. 93).

Kant (1781/2003) raises the question of sense after discovering that Descartes's 'indubitable' truth 'I think therefore I am' is a logical tautology constructed in terms of a set of *meanings* that already presuppose their condition

(existence of an 'I') to begin with. The 'I' of this truth does therefore not lend itself to empirical verification or logical proof, for it has already been accepted *a priori* as the *sense* of the statement, that is, as the tacit understanding or presupposition without which the sentence would not have any *meaning*. Sense and meaning are therefore not identical: the latter explicates the former, while the former is implied by the latter.

The distinction between meaning and sense is carried on in the philosophical tradition after Kant. Gottlob Frege (1892/1952), a famous German philosopher in the analytical tradition, makes the distinction between *Sinn* (sense) and *Bedeutung* (meaning), with the former being said to be expressive of an idea or a thought and the latter being said to refer to what the thought denotes, that is, what it '*stands for* or *designates*' (p. 57). The English translator of Frege's short essay called 'An Sinn und Bedeutung' (On Sense and Meaning) therefore translates the title of this essay as 'On Sense and Reference', equating meaning with reference. In Frege's understanding, both 'morning star' and 'evening star' can be said to have the same meaning or reference while the thought or sense they express is completely different, demonstrating the difference between meaning and sense as a cleavage between what is represented and what is expressed.

We also see the terms *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* used in Heidegger's famous treatise on Being and Time (Heidegger, 1927/2002). Here the phrase 'Sinn von Sein', is translated as 'the meaning of Being', although by deploying the word *Sinn* and not *Bedeutung*, Heidegger is really talking about the *sense* of Being. Heidegger differentiates sense from meaning by treating the former as the existential or pre-ontological understanding which gets actualized as meaning only when the sense of being, in which we always already live, gets explicated through an interpretation and gets attributed to a concrete thing understood either as a tool or as an object. According to Heidegger, when we explicate the meaning of something we always presuppose sense as the pre-understood world or network of significances within which a thing can become what it is. Meaning as what is signified here has to do with what is pointed out, predicated or shared in a communication, whereas sense has to do with the ground of intelligibility of such revelations.

As already stated, Deleuze situates himself within the same tradition of distinguishing between meaning and sense. To Deleuze, the meaning of a statement is always threefold: it denotes an object, it expresses a speaker and it signifies an idea. These meanings are not mere references to a pre-existing reality in which they can receive their validation (synthetically *a posteriori*), nor do they just pertain to the order of logical and abstract ideas (analytically *a priori*). Rather, meanings are the very real effects of sense (as the synthetic *a priori*). To Deleuze, however, the synthetic *a priori* is not some ground that can be recuperated, as in Kant and at least the early Heidegger, for sense is 'pre-philosophical' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 129). This means that 'I can never state the sense of what I am saying', but can only 'take the sense of what I say as

the object of another proposition whose sense, in turn, I cannot state' (Deleuze, 2001, p. 28). The sense of a statement can therefore never be determined completely, for any statement that would attempt to explicate its sense would always already have to presuppose another sense.

According to Deleuze, there is therefore always a disjunction between sense and meaning, a split between the ground and what it grounds: an ontic–ontological difference. This difference is a point of divergence between an *actual* world represented, expressed or signified in thought and a *virtual* world of the unthought in thought which can never become present. Hence, while sense and meaning always presuppose each other, they are also always out of joint, with sense being that which is simultaneously presupposed by and lacking from the statement. Sense is therefore that paradoxical event by which it simultaneously becomes possible to speak and impossible to say it all. It produces a self-revealing self-concealment (Heidegger, 1961/1993a).

Because of this paradoxical nature of sense as existing *through* the statement, but not *in* it, an illumination of its logic necessitates a different metaphysics than what Derrida (1976) has criticized as 'a metaphysics of presence'. Why? Because the present as what can be pointed out, shown or represented, always presupposes something non-present as the basis of itself. The present is always already founded upon sense as the unthought within the present. Hence, as the later Heidegger (1951–2/1968) argues, 'The presence of what is present is not finally and *also* something we face, rather it comes before. Prior to all else it stands before us, only we do not see it because we stand within it' (p. 98).

What comes before is sense itself, but to argue that it comes before what we experience as present is to admit of a temporality outside the present by means of which the present first *becomes* present. This is a phenomenon which leads Heidegger (1927/2002) to claim the existence of a fourth dimension of time, distinct from the three dimensions of the past, the present and the future as perceived within chronological time. To Heidegger, the fourth dimension of time is the existential-ontological condition of time itself describable as the *temporalization* of time, for:

The unity of time's three dimensions consists in the interplay of each towards each. This interplay proves to be the true extending, playing at the very heart of time, the fourth dimension, so to speak—not only so to speak, but in the nature of the matter. (p. 15)

Deleuze describes this fourth dimension of time as the *the Aion* (Deleuze, 2001, p. 162) or *the virtual* (Deleuze, 1994, p. 208), and defines it as a time that is real but not actual.

The virtual is a time which must be presupposed outside of experienced time as what conditions the passage of this time. Why? Because the representation of the present (the actualization of meaning) must occur from a place that is not itself present and precisely therefore is that place from which

the present can be perceived or spoken of as present (virtual sense). To say that sense cannot be explicated without presupposing another sense is thus to say that the present cannot be represented as present without presupposing something non-present as its condition. This non-presence is not a mere nothingness but the very real existence of a time outside the chronological series of presents. It is the time of the saying, not the said, of the point of view, not the view, but as such it is a time without content (a pure time), for the moment we name the saying it has already passed into the said and the moment we view the point of view it is no longer the point from which we view. The virtual time of sense is therefore a time that has always already appropriated us to itself and always already refused itself to our direct apprehension. As such the present can never establish itself in an absolute meaning, for it is always lacks its virtual condition. The virtual and the actual are therefore not the mere co-ordinates of a duality but name a primordial difference, that is, a disharmony or disjunction that disallows sense and meaning from ever corresponding, while nevertheless bringing them into a relation.

The difference between a sense that is virtual and a meaning that is actual is therefore not a difference between two identities, nor is it a difference between the ground and what it grounds; rather, it is a pure difference or difference-in-itself. Deleuze (1994) calls this difference *intensive* rather than extensive, so as to indicate that it consists solely of tension points: pure unmediated distances, structures without content, positions without objects. But, as he goes on to argue, ‘The expression “difference of intensity” is a tautology’, for ‘every intensity is differential, by itself a difference’ (p. 222). With difference or intensity as the (non-)foundation of Deleuze’s ontology we have thereby arrived at the condition of possibility of experience as such, for as Deleuze writes, ‘Disparity—in other words, difference or intensity (differences of intensity)—is the sufficient reason of all phenomena, the condition of that which appears’ (p. 222).

While we cannot represent this difference, since ‘we know intensity only as already developed within an extensity, and as covered over by qualities’ (p. 223), we *can* approximate it through the grammatical tense of *the future anterior*, designating ‘what will have been, given what is in the process of becoming’ (Lacan, 1953/2004, p. 84), or ‘The negation of an accomplished present, and the assertion of a non-accomplished future’ (Irigaray, 2002, p. 62). This tense denotes a pure movement or *becoming* without reference to a present since the determination of the past is here suspended until the future arrives, creating a pure tension between two non-present terms (intensities): a past that never was (past-in-itself) and a future that never will be (future-in-itself).

In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze (2001) provides an example of this temporal tension at work. Here, he talks of Nietzsche, who managed to release himself to the future anterior by extracting the virtual sense of the present in which he found himself individuated as a sick person, thereby freeing himself to become other. By thinking sickness and health as an intensive rather than

an extensive difference, Nietzsche was able to enter into a becoming in which he simultaneously became sicker than he was going to have been and healthier than he was in the process of becoming. Hence, as Deleuze writes, 'Nietzsche does not lose his health when he is sick, but when he can no longer affirm the distance, when he is no longer able, by means of his health, to establish sickness as a point of view on health' (Deleuze, 2001, p. 173). Only then does the pure time of intensive differences cease to be affirmed, forcing Nietzsche to choose in a present whether he is 'sick' or 'healthy'. Only then does he become one *or* the other, instead of *both* as an expression of the same intensive difference: 'then, as the Stoics say, the role is over, the play has ended' (p. 173).

Deleuze's point here is that sickness as an extensive identity (meaning) cannot be discerned unless it tacitly presupposes health as its tacit foundation (sense), or vice versa. Realizing this, we can therefore no longer say that Nietzsche used to be healthy, but is now sick, for he must continue to affirm their difference simultaneously in order to become one *or* the other to begin with. In acknowledging this fact, Nietzsche is able to transcend the present, to overturn its priority, and, as long as he keeps overturning it, to postpone the moment of his actualization as a particular identifiable subject, object or predicate. As long as he affirms the intensive differences that underlie the meanings of his statements, Nietzsche no longer exists in actuality, but *insists* in the difference of the infinitive verb, as pure intensity.

Only by subordinating intensive differences to extensive identities, and thereby slowing down the thought process, does the infinitive receive a concrete determination that brings it to an end, for 'it is the presence of the object that means an action can be considered complete, and therefore repeatable, and predictable' (Irigaray, 2002, p. 58). From being an action which 'is always in the process of happening' (p. 58)—a pre-individual and impersonal event—the infinitive now becomes a determinable action or passion that can be assigned its coordinates in chronological time and space. Intensive differences become extensive and now serve to manifest, denote or signify meanings. According to Deleuze, the temporality of the actual, in which we identify and recognize ourselves for the most part, is thus nothing but the outcome of a repression by which the infinite speeds of the future anterior are slowed down or *territorialized* so as to become livable. Another way to say this is that our *thrownness* (*Geworfenheit*) (Heidegger, 1927/2002) into a world in which we already find ourselves as this or that identity amongst these or those objectified things is conditioned by sense as a *passive synthesis of time* (Deleuze, 1994, p. 71): a *received* time which has already escaped us the moment we come to know ourselves within it.

Being precisely the place of the happening of the two temporalities—the place of the articulation of the difference between sense and meaning/virtuality and actuality—the self in our Deleuzian ontology is not a phenomenological self that can capture itself as the ground of a personal history, for it inhabits the crevice between two disjunct temporalities:

In the one case, it is my life, which seems too weak for me and slips away at a point which, in a determined relation to me, has become present. In the other case, it is I who am too weak for life, it is life which overwhelms me, scattering its singularities all about, in no relation to me, nor to a moment determinable as the present, except an impersonal instant which is divided into still-future and already-past. (Deleuze, 1994, p. 151)

In the following, we shall see how Western metaphysics by its misinterpretation of sense as common sense and/or good sense has led to a forgetfulness of this difference in kind between sense and meaning, virtual and actual, and how the outcome of this has been a reactive conception of the subject as either a subject of identity and ground or a subject of lack.

After critiquing both of these notions, we shall return to Deleuze's logic of sense to attempt to explicate the nature of a specifically Deleuzian subject, which, as I shall argue, is a subject of excess. This will then prepare our way to answer the question which we set out to begin with: that is, how, on the basis of such a novel conception of the subject, we might construct a specifically Deleuzian psychotherapy.

Platonism and the Becoming Reactive of the Subject

Deleuze views the actualization of sense and the canceling out of intensity in extensity as a defining characteristic of human life, but he also argues that the Western tradition of metaphysics, which he, following Nietzsche and Heidegger, refers to as Platonism (Deleuze, 1994, p. 28), has led to a *becoming reactive* (Deleuze, 1983a, p. 54), in which we have become enslaved by the meanings of the actual and incapable of opening up to the sense of the virtual. A fundamental project of Deleuze's philosophy is therefore to envisage a way for the subject to break through the wall of Platonism so thought can again become active and sense can again be affirmed as *difference-in-itself* (Deleuze, 1994, p. 120).

Platonism is so named because Plato was the first to make difference internal to a distinction between common sense and good sense (Deleuze, 1994, p. 265) or a distinction between Being as ground and beings as grounded (Heidegger, 1969/1993b, pp. 432–433), marking the beginning of the history of Western philosophy as metaphysics. This history is characterized by a forgetfulness of the logic of sense as a self-revealing self-concealment and the affirmation of 'the operational and model-based character of representational-calculative thinking' (Heidegger, 1969/1993b, p. 435) in which what differs always differs as parts of the same underlying oneness and according to the rules of formal logic that distribute and order this oneness.

According to Deleuze (1983b), the rationality of good sense subjects difference to the following logical principles: (1) the logic of identity ($A = A$); (2) the logic of non-contradiction (A is not *not-A*); and (3) the logic of exclusive disjunction (A and *not-A* = 1). Such analytical *a priori*s divide the world

of common sense into a hierarchy of mutually exclusive identities: the *logic of identity* predetermines what *is* as self-contained identities (beings); the *logic of non-contradiction* differentiates all identities from each other; and the *logic of exclusive disjunction* defines all actual and possible identities as parts of the same underlying oneness. Common sense, in turn, established the nature of this oneness. Hence, 'good sense and common sense each refer to the other, each reflect the other and constitute one half of the orthodoxy' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 226).

The history of philosophy after Plato can thus be viewed as a history of different existential postulates of the One, which have been invoked to ground the logic of good sense and the identities it distributes. In *What is Philosophy?*—one of Deleuze's collaborative works with Félix Guattari—Deleuze and Guattari (1994) argue that it was not until Descartes and his presupposition of 'I think therefore I am' that the human subject was invoked as the existential ground of good sense. They also argue that the entire tradition of metaphysics after Descartes has consisted in refining this truth, displacing its foundation to first that of a unified passive self in Kant, and finally, in Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, an 'other', whether this be the lifeworld of a human culture or the flesh of a human body.

What Deleuze calls Platonism can thus be defined as a long tradition of Western philosophy of subjecting difference to the image of a pre-existing ground (idea, self, intersubjectivity, flesh), which is rediscovered empirically in terms of particular identities, contradictions and disjunctions (good sense). The result of this *image of thought* is that difference can no longer be conceived intensively, but only extensively. As Deleuze (1994) writes, henceforth, 'Difference becomes an object of representation always in relation to a conceived identity, a judged analogy, an imagined opposition or a perceived similitude' (p. 138). The result of this misinterpretation of sense is that the virtual dimension of life becomes completely repressed and incapable of being engaged as such. Sense is never interrogated on its own terms but is always reduced to a mere derivative of the present. The question of the logic of sense is therefore never posed and the understanding of sense as virtual remains hidden.

Consequently Platonism leads to a reactive conceptualization of the subject, for, having been extracted from the actual which it is simultaneously said to ground, it now merely reaffirms 'the power of an established order' (Deleuze, 1983a, p. 105). This is why Deleuze wants us to rupture, not to strengthen, this idea of the subject, for it leads us 'to miss the essential: the genesis of the act of thought' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 157).

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari (2004) argue that the culmination of the becoming reactive of sense occurs when good sense gets internalized, not only in the consciousness of a subject, but also in a consciously projected unconscious of this subject. Sense, thereby, becomes entrapped in an exclusive disjunction, in which there is no escape from subjectivation, for one must

now either choose to affirm one's subjectivity and desire like a healthy ego, or not to desire this way, but then to affirm the shadow image of this ego. This is how the Oedipus myth, understood as a real social formation, not just as a construct of the psychoanalyst, comes to exercise such great power in the formation of the modern human being: 'Oedipus says to us: either you will internalize the differential functions that rule over the exclusive disjunctions, and thereby 'resolve' Oedipus, or you will fall into the neurotic night of imaginary identifications ... but there is Oedipus on either side' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 87).

The result of this oedipalization of the subject is that differences can only show themselves as signs or indexes of feelings, opinions and perceptions of a more or less integrated ego towards a more or less whole object, with these feelings, opinions and perceptions being evaluated as more or less authentic, more or less distorted, more or less erroneous or more or less mature, always in relation to this ideal identity of a fully matured genital subject and its undistorted perception of its object of desire: the thing-in-itself or the absolute love object.

Resurrecting the Deleuzian Subject

As we saw in the first part of this paper, in contrast to Platonism, which views sense as reason and ground, Deleuze views it as a virtual temporality or fourth dimension of time, which can never be represented in itself, because it is the very temporalization of time. As a consequence of this ontology, the Deleuzian self cannot be said to correspond to itself. It lives in the crevice between two temporalities: one which is virtual and belongs to sense; and one which is actual and belongs to the manifestations, significations and denotations of meanings.

When the subject is oedipalized, one side of this crevice gets completely repressed. By interpreting the virtual as the unconscious, the virtual is effectively reduced to a shadow side of the actual and thus subjugated to the prior affirmation of the present as the ground of the past and the future. However, as Deleuze and Guattari (2004) purport to show, this misinterpretation of sense as the unconscious is founded upon a prior order of intensive difference. This can be shown to be the case, since both the subject and the object of the Oedipal myth presuppose each other and therefore have no clear causality. Hence, we may ask: does the subject desire the object because it is castrated? Or is it castrated because it desires the object? To which Deleuze (2001) replies: 'The question has no answer since it is the characteristic of sense not to have any direction or "good sense" ' (p. 72). Nor can we claim, as in common sense, that the relation between the subject and the object is that of two substances that found each other in an absolute correspondence or harmony, for this is merely to ignore that they receive the criteria for their correspondence from a prior

difference, the origin of which they cannot themselves account for. (In Descartes this difference is a natural harmony guaranteed by God, but this belief is itself in need of validation from somewhere else.)

We see the Deleuzo-Guattarian argument for an intensive non-originary foundation of extensity superbly demonstrated already in Lacan's *Seminar VI: Desire and Its Interpretation* (Lacan, 1958–9). Here, Lacan shows the intensive genesis of the subject and the object as founded upon the differentiations of 'the cut' (*coupure*), which we might equate with what Deleuze calls difference-in-itself.

Lacan understands the cut as the paradoxical rupture in the flow of desire (intensity/the Real) by which the subject discovers itself in a pure distance to what it is not. What *does* the cutting is the word or the concept (the Symbolic). It divides the flow into two asymmetrical sides: on the one side, it leaves an effaced subject that has nothing but the nature of a trace of what was there before speech (past-in-itself); on the other side, it indicates an object beyond speech, which remains forever out of reach (future-in-itself). As can be seen, the cut, here, completely sidesteps the present. Both the subject and the object find their expression as determinations of each other, not in the form of a 1:1 relationship, but in the relation of a Moebius strip, where inside and outside cannot be clearly separated and no clear causality of terms can be established. The object of desire is simultaneously the cause of the subject's being as desiring subject, and the effect of the desire of this subject of which it serves as a support. Nowhere in this movement is there a substantial subject or object, for the subject is always already past and the object is always already displaced to the future. The present in which the subject would ideally correspond to its object is completely eluded.

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari (2004) also adopt the notion of a cut, but unlike Lacan, they do not view it as a fundamental split that posits an unbridgeable gap between the lost wholeness of a subject (the Real) and the dreamed of unity of an object (the Imaginary), for such a description still subdues intensive difference to extensive identities, albeit this time defined negatively as that of which the difference, produced by the Symbolic, is thought to rob us.

Instead of Lacan's interpretation of intensive difference as the cut that perpetually reproduces a split subject (\$), Deleuze and Guattari therefore instead talk of the cut as the perpetual production of an excess. They thereby adopt an affirmative view of difference that views it as the production of the Real rather than the deprivation of the Real. As Deleuze and Guattari (2004) claim, desire never lacks anything, 'for how could what is in life still desire life?' (p. 333). Furthermore, objects never refer to any transcendent thing-in-itself, there is no final referent behind the meaning, 'no dreamed of object behind every real object' (p. 26).

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari (2004) therefore replace Lacan's tripartite structure of the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary, and the split

subject which these distinctions give rise to, with the concept of the 'desiring machine'. This concept is an attempt to capture desire as pure production without reference to lack or identity, something which can only be achieved if we do not start with a projection of a past and a future, which the Symbolic is then said to cut into and hold apart. Rather, we must view past, present and future as three interconnected cuts that each cut into each other.

To understand this we must return to Deleuze's earlier work *Difference and Repetition* (1994). Here he already laid the groundwork for what would later be re-dubbed a desiring machine, describing its three machinic parts through three passive syntheses of time. These syntheses replace the Lacanian Real with the cut of the past-in-itself (the presupposition of a virtual past), the Lacanian Imaginary with the cut of the present (the actualization of meaning), and the Lacanian Symbolic with the cut of the future-in-itself (the contraction of the difference between actual and virtual, meaning and sense, present and past). This may sound very abstract, but all Deleuze is really saying is that meaning becomes meaningful only by presupposing a virtual sense, and that this sense can only become meaningful, in turn, if it presupposes another sense, and, finally, that this revealing and withdrawing can only unfold if the difference in kind between meaning and sense is not covered over. A desiring machine is therefore nothing other than the continuous reproduction of the non-sense of sense within the meanings of actual statements.

But what has become of the subject in this reproduction of the difference between sense and meaning? As an indispensable wheel of the machine, the subject in Deleuzian philosophy corresponds to a contemplating self which exists as nothing but a temporary enjoyment of the difference between the virtual and the actual. The Deleuzian subject is to be found neither in an objective present of an actual meaning or the pre-objective past of a virtual sense, but in the space of possibility or action that opens up in their disjunction: in the undetermined future made possible by their lack of fit. The Deleuzian subject, as the difference between sense and meaning, is the time of their happening. It never *is* and never *was*, and never *will be*, but is always *becoming*, always to-come, receiving itself from the future of the difference; that future which is never a mere calculated future, but always leads to another actualization of sense, another opening, another overflow.

But this means that we are no longer in need a substantial subject, or of a subject of lack to account for reality, for to affirm difference-in-itself is to give thought to the difference between sense and meaning, and this, in turn, is nothing other than to affirm the infinitive of a pure becoming. The Deleuzian subject is therefore always underway; it is a nomadic subject, continuously becoming-other, for 'we exist only in contemplating—that is to say, in contracting that from which we come' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 74).

The self that is most myself is therefore not myself as my own condition, or as an image or representation of myself, but myself as the time of the play between these disjunct ontological realms: the virtual and the actual, which

always co-exist but never pair up like two sides of an equation. I claim myself not from an identification with either of these sides, but only from actively contemplating the difference between the two, forcing me to come into being now as condition and now as object, but always only by displacing one in relation to the other. As such I am the time for the renewed repetition of their difference: 'The future, which subordinates the other two to itself and strips them of their autonomy' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 94).

According to Deleuze, we *are* the future, not the present and not the lack of a present, but the eternal return of difference, the constant giving thought to the future-to-come, the *Zukunft*, which is wrested free only in the difference. To be who we are is therefore to get out of our own way, since to give thought to difference, to think the concept, sense the percept and feel the affect is not to claim them as properties of our own, but to ride them as waves of a giant oceanic desiring machine: so many differences-in-themselves. No longer are meanings to be understood as thing-in-themselves, as ideas, objects or subjects conceived in terms of identities, for every meaning conceals its sense and requires another contemplation of difference. 'Every machine is a machine of a machine' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 36).

On Constructing a Deleuzian Psychotherapy

What I have aimed to show in this essay is that Deleuze's interpretation of the logic of sense leads us to a new understanding of subjectivity, one which can be equated neither with a substantive subject nor with a subject of lack. Instead, the Deleuzian subject is a subject of excess that is always more than itself, inhabiting two temporalities at the same time. Deleuze equates the subject with the extraction of a 'surplus' or an 'enjoyment'; not with knowledge, or with frustrated desire. The self as such, because it does not exist apart from the contemplation that fills it, lives off of the contemplations of difference which it contracts from the virtual past and the actual present, *becoming* with the difference between the two, by releasing the movement of the infinitive. Having no beginning or end, the subject is therefore never lacking anything; rather, it is constantly being carried beyond itself, in a movement of overflow, which ruptures any Cartesian or Oedipal self-certainty and allows time to break through the circular movement of the present to form instead a 'line of flight' that, by actualizing a new past and carrying it towards a future-to-come, transforms the present and frees its sense.

In light of this new conceptualization of the subject and its relationship to the production of sense, psychotherapy is confronted with a new therapeutic task: to free the subject from its current enslavement to the principles of lack, identity and ground and to make sense circulate freely again outside of the Platonic notions of common sense and good sense. As Deleuze (2001) says, 'Sense is never a principle or an origin. ... It is not something to discover, to restore, and to re-employ; it is something to produce by a new machinery' (p. 72).

To remain subjectivated, objectified or signified within Platonism's imprisonment of sense is to negate life by putting active forces (sense as machinic production) at the service of reactive ones (sense actualized as identity, sameness or lack). It is to put the infinite speeds of the virtual at the service of the slow world of a particular actuality. Essentially, it is to espouse a form of nihilism and not, as we have henceforth thought, a way of guarding against it.

Most conventional psychotherapies must on this ground be understood as fundamentally reactive and nihilistic, since they tend to halt the machinic production of sense and allow difference to be contracted only as the differences between pre-existing extensive identities.

In most object-relations therapies and interpersonal therapies, for example, one presupposes a distinction between immature/partial perceptions of the object and mature/constant perceptions of the object, prefiguring mental health as the adaptation by the client to the world of common sense (an agreed upon social reality, which is usually that of the therapist). In most client-centered and experiential therapies, the client is encouraged to become aware of and express a depth of feelings, which serves no more than to have the client identify with prevalent social conventions of speaking and desiring and having the client take responsibility for them as their expressive center or subject. In most cognitive therapies, one starts from a model of the individual in which the client's statements are challenged by one or more principles of good sense, a good sense which in classical psychoanalysis becomes internalized in a conscious projection of the unconscious, creating a subject whose desires are always oedipalized (guilt-ridden) and unfulfilled (lacking). Finally, the eclectic therapist might mix all of these presuppositions together, seeking, at the same time, to strengthen the ego, affirm the reality of the object and enforce a particular logic of signification. In all of these therapies a notion of sense as common sense and good sense reigns supreme.

The Deleuzian alternative, on the other hand, would be different from these practices, for it would evaluate a healthy ego, a fixed view of reality and an immersion into logical systems as examples of repression, that is, as instances of failing to affirm differences in themselves and of ending the becomings of the *infinite*.

This is not to say that repression is inherently bad. It is a way for us to slow down the infinite speeds of the virtual in the face a differential life that threatens to overwhelm us, and even Deleuze and Guattari (1994) concur that 'we require just a little order to protect us from chaos' (p. 201). However, as Zourabichvili (1996) writes in an essay about Deleuze, 'Putting reactive forces at the service of active ones is not the same thing as separating active forces from what they can do, in order to put them at the service of reaction' (p. 211). Hence, to actualize the virtual (which is what produces the enjoyment that we are as subjects) is different from turning the virtual into an actual image that impedes the production of sense. A litmus test of analyzing a client's defenses is therefore the question of whether the client's clinging to identities has become an impediment to further becomings or has produced

transitory moments of rest that can serve as jumping points for new machinic connections.

Obviously what we find in the slowness of the reactions that constitute most symptoms of psychopathology are not momentary rests, but protracted repetitions of actual meanings that conceal their virtual conditions and disallow the contraction of the difference needed for further machinic becoming. They are the outcome of problems that have been reified as extensive, and no solution will ever undo this, for one cannot solve a therapeutic problem without simultaneously reifying it. 'Running away from fear *is* fear' (Watts, 1993, p. 97).

The alcoholic who has been taught various techniques to abstain from alcohol consumption remains an alcoholic precisely because with every abstinence he reifies his nature as an alcoholic. Similarly with the anorexic, she knows she has to eat, and everybody tries to force her to do so, but it is precisely because of this forcing of the solution that she re-encounters herself as anorexic. It is quite unclear in either case what the proper causality is: is alcoholism the effect of sobriety or sobriety an effect of alcoholism? Does the anorexic control food or is she controlled by food? Here, problem and solution seem to presuppose each other, to constitute perspectives on each other and to make up one and the same intensive difference. It is precisely by realizing this, that is, in seeing that the solution *is* the problem, that one affirms the distance between the two and gains the power to enter into a becoming in which one is no longer stuck *within* the difference, but is able to affirm the difference *as* difference.

Opposite this scenario, we find the utter destruction of the schizophrenic who has left the slow world of the actual behind and appears to have entered into a continuous becoming-other. But whereas the becoming of the subject of excess affirms sense by reactualizing it in a new actuality (the slowness of a world of identities), the schizophrenic is unable to actualize sense, and therefore unable to escape the non-sense of a sense that continuously abolishes itself. The schizophrenic has disrupted the circularity of actual time, but has turned it into 'a line of death' (a will to destruction) instead of 'a line of flight' (a will to life). Opposite the neurotic, the schizophrenic is therefore in need of slowness instead of speed.

As can be seen from the latter example, Deleuze's position must not be confused with a glamorization of irrationality, chaos or madness. Deleuze and Guattari (2004) repeatedly distinguish their own description of becoming as a 'schizophrenic process' from the schizophrenic as entity (p. 414), for as they write, 'in one case the schizophrenic is a conceptual persona who lives intensely within the thinker and forces him to think [schizophrenia as process], whereas in the other the schizophrenic is a psychosocial type who represses the living being and robs him of his thought [schizophrenia as entity]' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 70).

In conclusion, therefore, to construct a Deleuzian psychotherapy is neither to do away with repression nor to seek to reify it, but to allow just enough

reaction so that we may become able to actualize the sense of the virtual without becoming enslaved or destroyed by it. A Deleuzian therapy, when properly construed, will therefore be a therapy of *dual* or *variable speeds*, in which the question to be answered is: how slow or how fast a life do we want?

This is not a mundane conclusion, for the real insight of a reading of Deleuze is that while some therapists might long ago have thought themselves to espouse such a view of therapy, the infinite speeds of the virtual have hitherto remained covered over by a slow and reactive interpretation of sense, a fact which the conscious projection of an unconscious has done nothing to change. This is why the issue of constructing a Deleuzian psychotherapy always comes back to the question of the logic sense, for without a proper illumination of this question, a true therapy of variable speeds will remain an impossibility, and therapists as well as clients will forever remain enshrouded in the dull comforts of a Platonistic mythology.

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