Review essay by Daniel W. Smith

Deleuze and the liberal tradition: normativity, freedom and judgement

Text reviewed

Paul Patton (2000) *Deleuze and the Political*, London: Routledge

Abstract

This paper is a critical review article of Paul Patton's book, *Deleuze and the Political*, and analyzes the relationship between Deleuze and the 'liberal' tradition of political philosophy. It focuses on three concepts drawn from the liberal tradition – normativity, freedom and judgment – and in each case shows how these concepts are capable of being transformed in light of Deleuze's philosophy. For Deleuze, a truly 'normative' principle must be a principle of creation as well as critique: it must not only provide norms for condemning abuses of power, but also a means for transforming norms that have themselves become abuses of power. From a Deleuzian perspective, the normative is thus seen as the condition for the production of the new. The liberal notion of 'negative freedom' in turn finds itself transformed into the stronger notion of 'critical freedom' (Tully), which entails the freedom to critique and create, to transform (and not merely pursue) one's own interest and desires. This entails, finally, an exercise of a kind of judgement outside pre-existing rules or norms that would be truly creative of the new (e.g. the production of new rights). A concluding section of the concept of the 'social imaginary' shows how Deleuze's work might contribute to a transformation and rejuvenation of the liberal tradition itself.

Keywords: Deleuze; liberalism; normativity; freedom; judgement; social imaginary.

Paul Patton's *Deleuze and the Political* is without doubt one of the most significant books yet written on the work of Gilles Deleuze. It is a short book, but its

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brevity belies its depth. It approaches Deleuze's thought from a specific perspective – the question of the 'political' (the book is part of Routledge's 'Thinking the Political' series) – yet at the same time it provides a succinct and subtle assessment of Deleuze's philosophy as a whole.[1] The book contains concise overviews of such 'idiosyncratic' (Patton 2000: 1) Deleuzian concepts as 'virtual multiplicities', 'machinic assemblages', 'becomings' and 'deterritorial-izations', which will be invaluable to readers new to Deleuze's thought. At the specifically political level, it also contains the most extensive discussion yet of the abstract typology of social formations that constitutes the fundamental innovation of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 1987), including Deleuze and Félix Guattari's important but ill-understood concept of 'nomadic war-machines'. On both these fronts, Patton's analyses of Deleuze's concepts, though necessarily selective, are exemplary. Readers will find Patton to be a reliable and judicious guide through the labyrinth of Deleuze's novel concepts and political terminology.

Deleuze and the Political is a personal book as well. Patton is not only a well-known scholar of Deleuze but also a political thinker in his own right, having written widely on the history of modern political philosophy (see Patton 1989, 1993, 1998). In reading the book, and particularly the chapter on power, one gets a clear sense of the figures who have influenced Patton's own political thought, including Hobbes and Rawls as much as Nietzsche, Foucault and Deleuze. Patton has also written on Aboriginal land rights in Australia, and published important analyses of the landmark 1992 Mabo case (Patton 1995, 1996); the final chapter of the book, which is one of its most original sections, attempts to examine and re-analyze the issues of colonization and native title from a specif-ically Deleuzian perspective. *Deleuze and the Political* can therefore be read not only as a commentary on Deleuze but as a synthetic work of Patton's own, the result of years of research and reflection, bringing together these various inter-ests into a coherent (if brief) whole.

Of the many riches in *Deleuze and the Political*, I should like to focus here on a single aspect of the book, namely, Patton's analysis of Deleuze's relation to the 'liberal' tradition of political philosophy. In my opinion, this is one of the most important contributions of Patton's study, if only because Deleuze's political thought has usually been read in the context of the Marxist tradition, and not the liberal tradition. While Patton does not ignore this Marxist heritage, Deleuze's relationship to Marxism is already well known and well documented. Deleuze explicitly characterized himself as a Marxist, insisting that 'any political philos-ophy must turn on the analysis of capitalism and the ways it has developed' (Deleuze 1995b: 171). But, as Jean-François Lyotard observed long ago, *Capi-talism and Schizophrenia* nonetheless contains an implicit critique of Marx, since a number of classical Marxist concepts, such as the super- and infra-structure, the workers' struggle, the proletariat and work-value theory, drop out of Deleuze and Guattari's analyses completely: they are neither analyzed nor criticized, but simply ignored (Lyotard 1972). Moreover, traditional Marxism taught that there was a limit beyond which the capitalist machine would break apart and finally

collapse, and Marxist politics was built on the search for this limit, that is, for the revolutionary 'conditions' that would make possible the appearance of a new type of social formation – first 'crude communism' (the abolition of private property), then the positivity of a 'fully developed humanism'. Deleuze and Guattari likewise abandon this eschatological conception entirely, defining capitalism in terms of its lines of flight and its minorities rather than its contradictions and classes (capitalist versus proletariat) (see Deleuze 1995b: 171–2). This strategy in no way implies a rejection of Marxism, since Marx himself insisted that his own analyses of capitalism would necessarily have to be modified in light of changing conditions. Deleuze and Guattari are therefore able, without inconsistency, to situate themselves squarely in the Marxist tradition, while at the same time rejecting crucial Marxist concepts. The new concepts proposed in their analyses, they insist, are those required by the new problematics posed by the present state of capitalism. The result is a Marxist politics that functions with a new set of political concepts, such as lines of flight, difference and becomings, all of which Patton analyzes in detail (see, e.g., Patton 2000: 6–9).

   In contrast to this critical affirmation of the Marxist tradition, however, Deleuze's relationship to the liberal tradition of political thought is much more tenuous, and often negative. Patton notes on his opening page that Deleuze's work 'shows an almost complete lack of engagement with the central problems and normative commitments of Anglo–American political thought' (2000: 1), largely ignoring the issues that most concern the liberal tradition, such as 'the nature of justice, freedom, or democracy' or 'normativity' or 'procedural justification' (2000: 1). If Deleuze was willing to ignore certain Marxist concepts, one might say that he was more or less willing to ignore the concepts of the liberal tradition *in toto*. This is where Patton intervenes: could not the conceptual apparatus of the liberal tradition, he asks, be open to a similar transformation from a Deleuzian perspective, just as Deleuze himself transformed the Marxist tradition? Patton's book in this way injects itself as a forceful intervention in the current reception of Deleuze's thought: it stages a complex confrontation between Deleuze's political thought and the liberal tradition, in the context of which it attempts to demonstrate not only the contemporary relevance of Deleuze's concepts, but also the potential they have to transform *both* the Marxist and liberal traditions of political philosophy.[2] In proposing such a confrontation, Patton is staking out a new and rich territory in the study of Deleuze, and setting out a research agenda that will no doubt be taken up by others. Patton necessarily pursues this agenda somewhat obliquely in *Deleuze and the Political*, given the several aims of the book, and my aim in what follows is simply to highlight the way in which this particular trajectory unfolds in the course of Patton's analyses.

The import of Deleuze's analytic of concepts

In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari define philosophy, famously, as the *creation of concepts* (1994: 5). Patton rightly makes this activity of concept

creation the first explicit focus of his book, since it not only provides the viewpoint through which he presents Deleuze's thought, but also the basis upon which he undertakes his own revisionary project. 'A guiding principle of this study', he writes, 'is that Deleuze's contribution to political thought must be assessed in relation to his own concept and practice of philosophy' (Patton 2000: 2). The first chapter ('Concept and image of thought: Deleuze's conception of philosophy') thus opens with an examination of the political concept of the 'social contract', which Patton uses to illustrate the various aspects by which Deleuze and Guattari define a concept: its intensive *components*, which in turn constitute concepts in their own right (e.g. the state of nature; the restless desire for power; the artificial person that results from the contract); its internal *consistency* (the way these elements are linked together internally; the 'endo-consistency' of the concept); its *plane of immanence* (the way the concept of the social contract links up externally with related concepts such as sovereignty, legitimation, justice, etc.; the 'exo-consistency' of concepts). Surprisingly, Patton does not discuss the crucial Deleuzian notion of *conceptual personae*, which in the context of political philosophy might include the Leviathan, the Noble Savage, the Prince and so on (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 63). The *critique* of a concept can take place at any of these levels: one can add, subtract or transform the components, or alter the relations between them. For instance, in Locke's version of the social contract, subjects are no longer determined by the desire for power, as in Hobbes, but rather by their ownership of property – a change in components – which in turn implies obligations towards oneself and others – a change in consistency. This is a good example of the transformative process through which concepts can be rejuvenated and renewed throughout history, and it lies at the basis of Patton's own project to reinterpret liberal concepts from a Deleuzian perspective. Finally, Patton emphasizes the fact that, in all these aspects, concepts always derive their necessity from historically determined *problematics* (Patton 2000: 21). Whereas Hobbes' problematic was the constitution and legitimation of civil authority, for instance, John Rawls' problematic in *A Theory of Justice* (1971) concerns the principles of a just society, in the context of which Rawls himself would take up and transform the concept of the social contract yet again (Patton 2000: 13).

This analysis, though scarcely three pages long, is a *tour de force*, and provides a far more accessible example of conceptual analysis than the one Deleuze and Guattari themselves provide in *What is Philosophy?* (via the somewhat obscure Deleuzian concept of the *autrui*) (see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 16–19). It plays a double role in the context of Patton's study: it allows him to summarize Deleuze and Guattari's conception of concepts, while at the same time providing us with a capsule history of one of the founding concepts of the liberal tradition of political philosophy. It immediately leads us to the second explicit aim of the book, the one that concerns us, which is to show 'the points of connection' between Deleuze's work and the Anglo-American tradition of political philosophy (Patton 2000: 135). This, however, raises a preliminary but necessary question: w*hy* did Deleuze himself largely ignore the political

concepts of the liberal tradition such as the social contract? The reason for this evasion, Patton suggests, can be found in a fundamental shift in the status of the subject that is effected in Deleuze's philosophy. The general question posed by the theory of the social contract is: how can individuals enter into a mutually beneficial political alliance? In this sense, the social contract presupposes the prior existence of already constituted individuals as political subjects. In Deleuze, by contrast, the subject itself becomes a secondary phenomenon, the product or the 'effect' of more primary sets of flows or *processes* (what Foucault called 'processes of subjectivation'). The political questions Deleuze asks are therefore always posed at the level of *pre-subjective* processes. For example: how is it that desire, as a process, can come to desire its own repression? How can a subjective (though abstract) process such as labor be 'captured' by institutions or state apparatuses? The political philosophy developed in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* attempts to analyze social formations primarily as physical systems defined in terms of their processes – or, more precisely, in terms of a generalized theory of 'flows' (*flux*): flows of matter, flows of population and commodities, flows of capital and labor, flows of traffic, flows of knowledge, flows of desire and so on. Simplifying to the extreme, one could say that Deleuze is not a philosopher of the subject but a philosopher of pre-subjective processes or flows. This is the fundamental metaphysical shift in Deleuze's philosophy, and it is these processes that Deleuze's concepts attempt to describe.

The task Patton takes on, then, is to show if and how liberal political concepts can be retained and transformed in light of this metaphysical shift. In turn, the possibility of such a transformation, he suggests, must itself rest on Deleuze's own analytic of concepts, and on the 'cognitive function' Deleuze assigns to them (Patton 2000: 26). On this score, Patton emphasizes the definition, provided in *What is Philosophy?*, that philosophical concepts 'provide knowledge of pure events' (Patton 2000: 26). But what is a 'pure event'? Deleuze distinguishes between the actualization of an event in a state of affairs or in lived experience, that is, in *history*, and the pure event, which is irreducible to its actualizations, 'the event in its *becoming*, in its specific consistency', which escapes history and is 'utopic', both now-here and no-where (a play on Samuel Butler's utopian neologism *Erewhon*), and is expressed in a 'self-positing concept' (Patton 2000: 27). As an example of this distinction, Patton points to Kant's famous reflections on the French Revolution in *The Contest of the Faculties*, a text that has recently been taken up by thinkers as diverse as Foucault, Habermas and Lyotard. Kant distinguished between 'the concept of a revolution in favor of the universal rights of man as this was expressed in the "enthusiasm" of Europeans for those ideals' (this is what marks their 'becoming' in relation to the concept) and 'the manner in which that concept and those ideals were actualized in the bloody events of 1789' (this is 'history') (Patton 2000: 27). Patton reformulates this Kantian distinction (between spectator and actor) into a Deleuzian one (between an event and a state of affairs), showing how political concepts such as 'revolution' (considered as a kind of 'territoriality') have a double structure: on the one hand, there is the concept insofar as it is actualized

in or refers to a particular state of affairs (e.g. the actual events of 1789) where it effects movements of *relative* deterritorialization, movements that can be blocked or reterritorialized (the 'betrayal' of the revolution, its inevitable disappointment); on the other hand, there is the concept insofar as it expresses a 'pure event' that posits revolution as an *absolute* deterritorialization, a self-referential movement of pure immanence, a 'pure reserve' that is never exhausted by its various actualizations (Patton 2000: 97, 107, 136). Deleuze uses the term *utopia* to designate the 'critical point' at which these two aspects of the concept are brought together: the point where the absolute deterritorialization expressed by the concept is connected with the present relative milieu. 'To say that revolution is itself utopia of immanence', write Deleuze and Guattari, 'is to posit revolution as plane of immanence, infinite movement and absolute survey, but to the extent that these features connect up with what is real here and now in the struggle against capitalism, relaunching new struggles whenever the earlier one is betrayed' (1994: 100).

It is this event-based theory of the concept that Patton puts to work in his revision of liberal political concepts. His method is to extract the 'pure event' of a liberal concept in order to, at the same time, reinject it into the current situation and thereby effect its transformation. 'Remarkable or interesting concepts', Patton writes, 'are those that can be taken up again and again in new circumstances, continuing to work their subversive way through history' (2000: 133). This might appear to be a curious conception of the political, which is here defined in terms of one's relation to a concept or Idea rather than in terms of one's relation to a concrete state of affairs or a political situation. In Kant, for example, the 'enthusiasm' of the Europeans, their becoming-revolutionary, is explicitly linked, not to the historical revolution as it unfolded before them in France, but rather to its *concept*, that is, to a 'pure event', almost as if the revolution itself were something secondary. But, as Hannah Arendt suggests in her *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, this is a definition of what political *philosophy* is: 'Robert Cumming recently wrote that "the subject matter of modern political philosophy . . . is not the polis or politics, but the relation between philosophy and politics." This remark actually applies to all political philosophy and, most of all, to its beginnings in Athens' (Arendt 1982: 22). Such seems to be the case with Deleuze: 'The word "utopia" designates *that conjunction of philosophy, or of the concept, with the present milieu* – political philosophy' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 100). Using Deleuze's own methodology, then, Patton's proposal is to treat certain liberal concepts (normativity, freedom, judgement) as 'pure events' in this Deleuzian sense – utopian concepts that are irreducible to their various actualizations, whether in a state of affairs or a particular political theory, and hence are themselves capable of transformation in connection with changing historical problematics.

This methodological approach, however, raises a delicate problem that Patton does not discuss directly, although it is implicit in his entire project: the possibility of what one might call *exhausted* concepts. If certain concepts can be taken up again and transformed within philosophy (e.g. the social contract in Hobbes,

Locke, Rawls), it is because what the concept expresses (the 'pure event') is irreducible to its actualizations (for instance, Patton argues that the concept of the social contract, as an expression of absolute deterritorialization, 'can be regarded as an expression of the pure and indeterminate event of a political system based upon equality before the law' (2000: 28)). But do some concepts, even as pure events, eventually become 'exhausted'? Deleuze suggests that the concept of 'truth' is itself so under- (or over-) determined in philosophy that the problematic to which it corresponds must always be carefully delineated (see, for example, Deleuze, 1994: 158–9). Elsewhere he and Guattari write, in a similar vein, that 'reason is only a concept, and a very impoverished concept' at that (Deleuze and Guattari 1994). If Deleuze tended to ignore liberal concepts, or even certain Marxist concepts, was it because he deemed that such concepts had become exhausted, or were no longer relevant to contemporary problematics? Moreover, is this not why Deleuze defines philosophy as the creation of *new* concepts – new concepts that would constitute a response to changing conditions? Put simply, how does one assess the difference between the need to create a *new* concept in philosophy and the possibility of reactivating or transforming an *already existing* concept?

One can raise this question already knowing, at least in principle, the inevitable response: there can be no pre-existent criteria to determine the direction a philosopher should take, which is why Deleuze constantly insists on the necessity of *experimentation*. But, in practice, this is a difficult question and complex question, which has given rise to some well-known and dramatic passages in the history of philosophy. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, for instance, Kant takes care to carefully explain his appropriation of the Platonic concept of the 'Idea', even as he introduces significant changes into the concept (1929: A312/B368ff.). Likewise, in *A Theory of Justice*, Rawls is compelled to justify his own retention of the terminology of the social contract in the context of his theory of 'justice as fairness' (1971: 16), just as Heidegger takes care to explain his retention of the traditional concept of the 'understanding' in *Being and Time* even as he dramatically reconfigures it as a fundamental *existential* of Dasein (1962: H143–5). A similar drama is at work in Patton's book. Patton is not simply writing as a commentator, offering a generalized criticism of Deleuze's rejection of liberal political concepts. More subtly, he is writing as a philosopher, suggesting that Deleuze's philosophy can and should be re-evaluated in light of our contemporary historical situation and changing philosophical problematics. What light would the liberal concepts that Deleuze ignores shed on Deleuze's own political philosophy? Conversely, what kind of transformations could Deleuze's concepts introduce into the liberal tradition, given its current situation? In short, what kind of 'becoming' would liberal and Deleuzian concepts enter into when they are brought into contact with each other? The fact is that one can never know in advance the course of the becoming of a given concept. As Deleuze writes, 'it's not a matter of bringing all sorts of things under a single concept, but rather of relating each concept to the variables that explain its mutations' (1995b: 31).

Deleuze's analytic of concepts, in short, can only be worked out experimentally, and in this case the experimentation is carried out on several 'liberal' concepts that Patton, somewhat surreptitiously, imports into his analyses of Deleuze: normativity, freedom and judgement (as well as a non-liberal concept, the social imaginary). This experimental confrontation is not heralded loudly, but is pursued quietly and patiently throughout the entire book. In the sections that follow, I should simply like to explore, in a provisional manner, how Patton transforms each of these concepts experimentally in the course of his analyses, in a way that points to a new understanding of the liberal tradition of political philosophy.

Normativity and the condition of the 'new'

The first liberal notion Patton makes use of in his reading of Deleuze is the concept of *normativity*. Though the term is not listed in the index, it appears frequently in the third section of the chapter on power.[3] One of Patton's tasks in these two central chapters – on 'Power' and 'Desire' – is to argue (persuasively, in my view) that Deleuze's theory of desire can be brought together with the theory of power one finds in Foucault and Nietzsche, despite certain conceptual differences. The discussion of normativity that occurs in this context, however, touches a much more difficult question, one that lies at the heart of several recent debates in political philosophy. Critics such as Nancy Fraser and Jürgen Habermas, for instance, have argued that Michel Foucault's well-known theory of power is entirely 'non-normative' (Patton 2000: 59). Normativity is itself a somewhat overdetermined philosophical concept, one that corresponds to the question, 'What is the source of the authority that moral considerations have over us?' It is usually contrasted with the descriptive, as 'ought' is contrasted with 'is'. When Habermas and Fraser critique Foucault for failing to provide normative criteria for discriminating between different *ways* of exercising power, they are therefore accusing Foucault of failing to answer one of the central concerns of liberal political theory and the social contract tradition, namely, 'When and in what ways is power, especially State power, justified?' (Patton 2000: 59).

Patton attempts to respond to such criticisms from a Deleuzian perspective. 'Unlike Foucault's analytic of power', he writes, Deleuze's approach to power is '*explicitly normative*' (Patton 2000: 65, 49). This is a somewhat surprising claim, since Deleuze is often condemned along with Foucault for neglecting (or avoiding, or refusing) questions of normativity. Indeed, one could imagine two possible Deleuzian responses to the criticisms of non-normativity. One might ask if normativity is a good or rigorous concept, and proceed to criticize the concept from a Deleuzian viewpoint. In this case, one could argue that Foucault and Deleuze do not address issues of normativity because their work entails a critique of the very notion of normativity. Patton, however, follows the opposite approach. He takes the problem of normativity seriously, and argues that,

despite appearances, one can find an explicit normative criterion in Deleuze's work, which he identifies by name: 'The overriding norm is that of deterritorialization' (Patton 2000: 9). This is the third key thesis of *Deleuze and the Political*: 'A central claim of the present study is that it is the concept of "deterritorialization" which bears the weight of the utopian vocation which Deleuze and Guattari attribute to philosophy' (Patton 2000: 9). In what sense, then, does Deleuze's notion of deterritorialization play the role of a normative concept?

If Deleuze's political philosophy effects a shift from subjects to processes, then the concept of normativity would have to be altered accordingly. According to Patton, this is exactly what occurs in Deleuze's work: it is the concept of deterritorialization that provides 'a normative framework within which to describe and evaluate movements or processes' (Patton 2000: 136). For Deleuze, to analyze a social formation is to unravel the variable lines and singular *processes* that constitute it as a multiplicity: their connections and disjunctions, their circuits and short-circuits and, above all, their possible transformations. To introduce elements of transcendence into the analysis of such fields of immanence, says Deleuze, it is enough to introduce 'universals' that would serve as constant co-ordinates for these processes, and effectively 'stop their movement' (see Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 47; Deleuze 1995b: 85, 145–6). Deleuze constantly insists that universals are abstractions that explain nothing; they are rather what need to be explained. For instance, there is no such thing as a 'pure reason' or a universal rationality, but rather a plurality of heterogeneous 'processes of rationalization' of the kind analyzed by Alexandre Koyré, Gaston Bachelard and Georges Canguilhem in the field of epistemology, Max Weber in sociology and François Châtelet in philosophy. Likewise, there is no universal or transcendental Subject, which could function as the bearer of universal human rights, but only variable and historically diverse 'processes of subjectivation', to use Foucault's term (Deleuze 1988a: 14–17, 1992: 162). What one finds in any given socio-political assemblage is not a universal 'Reason', but variable processes of rationalization; not universalizable 'subjects', but variable processes of subjectivation; not the 'whole', the 'one' or 'objects', but rather knots of totalization, focuses of unification, and processes of objectification. Such processes operate within concrete multiplicities, and are relative to them, and thus need to be analyzed on their own account.

Deleuze would no doubt have followed the same approach in his analysis of normativity had he addressed the issue directly. Foucault himself spoke of the power of what he called the process of *normalization*, which creates us, as subjects, in terms of existing force relations and existing 'norms'. For Foucault, normalization is not merely an abstract principle of adjudication but an already actualized (and always actualized) power relation. Foucault's question then became: is it possible to escape, or at least *resist*, this power of normalization? In Deleuze's terminology, the same question would be stated in the following terms: within a given social assemblage or 'territoriality', where can one find the 'line of flight', or the movement of relative deterritorialization, by means of

which one can escape from or transform the existing norm (or territoriality)? From this viewpoint, neither Foucault nor Deleuze avoid the issue of normativity, they simply analyze it in terms of an *immanent process*. The error of transcendence would be to posit normative criteria as abstract universals, even if these are defined in intersubjective or communicative terms. From the viewpoint of immanence, by contrast, it is the process itself that must account for *both* the production of the norm as well as its possible destruction or alteration. In a given assemblage, one will indeed find normative criteria that govern, for instance, the application of the power of the State, but one will also find the means for the critique and modification of those norms, their deterritorialization. A truly 'normative' principle must not only provide norms for condemning abuses of power, but also a means for condemning norms that have themselves become abuses of power (e.g. the norms that governed the treatment of women, slaves, minorities, etc.). An immanent process, in other words, must, at one and the same time, function as a principle of *critique* as well as a principle of *creation* (the 'genetic' method). 'The conditions of a true critique and a true creation are one and the same' (Deleuze 1994: 139). The one cannot and 'must' not exist without the other.

If deterritorialization functions as a norm for Patton, then, it is a somewhat paradoxical norm. Within any assemblage, what is normative is deterritorialization, that is, the creation of 'lines of flight' (Deleuze) or 'resistance' (Foucault) that allow one to break free from a given norm, or to transform the norm. What 'must' always remain normative is the ability to critique and transform existing norms, that is, to create something *new* (the category of the new should be understood here in the broad sense, including not only social change, but also artistic creation, conceptual innovation and so on.) One cannot have pre-existing norms or criteria for the new; otherwise it would not be new, but already foreseen. This is the basis on which Patton argues that Deleuze's conception of power is explicitly normative: 'What a given assemblage is capable of doing or becoming', he writes, 'is determined by the lines of flight or deterritorialization which it can sustain' (Patton 2000: 106).

(One might note here that the concept of 'nomadic war-machines', which was introduced in *A Thousand Plateaus*, is Deleuze and Guattari's attempt to address the question of a social formation that would itself be constructed along such movements or lines of flight. Patton suggests that such assemblages should in fact be called 'metamorphosis' machines (2000: 110), since they have only an external relation to war and a historically contingent relation to nomads; this is a suggestion that will no doubt be taken up by others.

> Metamorphosis machines would be the conditions of actualization of absolute deterritorialization and the means by which relative deterritorialization occurs: 'They bring *connections* to bear against the great *conjunction* of the apparatuses of capture or domination.' . . . A metamorphosis machine would then be one that . . . engenders the production of something altogether different.
>
> (Patton 2000: 110)

Patton is therefore using the concept 'normativity' in a quite different manner than Fraser or Habermas. They would say that deterritorialization is not normative, and cannot be, since it eludes any universal criteria and indeed allows for their modification. Patton in effect responds by saying: for that very reason, it is deterritorialization that should be seen as a normative concept, even if that entails a new concept of what normativity is. At one point in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze writes that 'one can conserve the word essence, if one wishes, but only on the condition of saying that essence is precisely the accident or the event' (1994: 191). Patton seems to be saying something similar: one can conserve the word normativity, if one wishes, but only on the condition of saying that the normative is the new or the deterritorialized. Patton's own trajectory is thus beginning to come into focus: rather than simply dropping or ignoring the concept of normativity, he instead proposes to create a new concept of normativity by critiquing components of the old one, and linking it up with a quite different set of related concepts. In this manner, he is effecting a transformation of the liberal concept, while still attempting to situate his own work fully within the liberal tradition.

The concept of 'critical freedom'

A second concept Patton incorporates into his analyses of Deleuze, and links to the concept of normativity, is the concept of *freedom*, even though Deleuze himself rarely uses this term in his writings (Guattari is said to have remarked that he disliked words that, in French, end with an accent: *verité, liberté, taraté taraté. . . .*).[4] Patton nonetheless entitles his fourth chapter 'Desire, becoming, and freedom', and goes so far as to describe Deleuze's thought as an 'ethics of freedom' (Patton 2000: 83). In characterizing Deleuze's philosophy from the viewpoint of a concept that is foreign to Deleuze's own thought, Patton is in fact utilizing a strategy that is itself Deleuzian. In his books on Spinoza, for instance, Deleuze claims that the concept of univocity is 'the keystone of Spinoza's entire philosophy' (Deleuze 1988b: 63), even though the term 'univocity' does not appear even once in Spinoza's texts. The effect of such a technique, however, is to produce what at one point Deleuze calls a 'double becoming' (1989: 221, 222): the introduction of a foreign concept can often serve as a prism or point of reference by which to evaluate the movement of thought of a given thinker, while at the same time the concept itself is transformed, and enters into its own becoming. (It nonetheless remains an interesting question to ask why Deleuze might have avoided concepts such as normativity and freedom, while freely adopting other highly charged philosophical concepts such as 'idea' or 'essence'.)

How is the concept of freedom transformed when it is brought into contact with Deleuze's thought? What Patton finds in Deleuze's work is an activity of what he calls 'critical freedom' – a term developed by James Tully in his book *Strange Multiplicity* (1995) – which he distinguishes from the notions of negative

and positive freedom. *Negative freedom*, as formulated by Isaiah Berlin in his canonical essay 'Two concepts of freedom', is one of the concepts that lie at the heart of the modern liberal tradition. It defines freedom negatively as 'the absence of obstacles to possible choices and activities' (Berlin 1969), an 'area of non-interference' in which agents are allowed to pursue their desires and goals freely without having their choices limited by the intervention of others. By contrast, the concept of *positive freedom*, as championed by Charles Taylor (1985), implies the stronger notion of 'self-mastery' or 'strong evaluation', that is, the idea of actively 'exercising control over one's life' by evaluating and defining one's own desires and goals (Patton 2000: 84). Berlin sees positive freedom as a threat to liberty because it implies that subjects will be constrained to act in prescribed manners; Taylor insists that our freedom of choice is always already partly limited and prescribed by our milieu, and that one evaluates and chooses only within the context of that milieu (culture, community, the state and its laws, and so on).

What both these notions of freedom share, however, is a conception of the subject as a determinate structure of interests, goals and desires: the freedom of the subject lies in its ability to act in pursuit of these interests and goals. What they overlook, or underemphasize, Patton argues, is the fact that individuals often *distance* themselves from their initial (or inherited) preferences and *alter* them in fundamental ways (Patton 2000: 84). This may happen at an individual level (e.g. a person altering or leaving a religious heritage) or in a social context where one is exposed to alternative ways of thinking and living (e.g. exposure to feminist or racial critiques, contact with other cultures or minorities within one's own culture and so on). Such transformations presume a capacity to alter one's thought and actions, to 'question in thought and challenge in practice one's inherited cultural ways' (Patton 2000: 85), and it is this capacity that Tully terms 'critical freedom'. It is the freedom to critique, the freedom to be transformed, to be changed. It entails, as Foucault said, the ability to 'think otherwise' (1985: 8), or, as Deleuze might say, the capacity of the self to *affect* itself. Patton's proposal here is to align Deleuze with Tully's contribution to liberal political thought, and to assign to critical freedom a 'normative' status.

But how then does Patton position this notion of critical freedom within Deleuze's thought? Deleuze in fact is not completely silent with regard to the liberal tradition. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari attempt to show how, within the liberal tradition itself, the notion of the freedom of *subjects* is inevitably tied to an 'image of thought' derived from the *State*. Social contract theory, in their analysis, operates between two poles, the subject and the legislator: as a subject I give up my freedom to the State in return for protection from others and from the state of nature (the State as an 'agent of servitude'); in return for this servitude the State, as legislator, affords me the greatest possible scope of liberty (the State as the locus of negative freedom). In Kant's hands, however, this link between subject and legislator would be pushed to its limit in the notion of a subject that is subjected *only to itself* as a self-legislating rational being ('autonomy'): 'The contract must be pushed to the extreme; in other

words, it is no longer concluded between two people but between self and self, within the same person – *Ich = Ich* – as subjected and sovereign' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 460). In the Kantian formulation, freedom becomes defined as the *identity* of subject and legislator in the same person. 'The more you obey [as subject], the more you will be master [as legislator], for you will only be obeying pure reason . . . in other words, *yourself*' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 376). What one finds here is a mysterious 'nexum' between the subject, the State and reason, which perhaps reached its apotheosis in certain forms of Hegelianism: reason invents the fiction of a State that is universal by right, it elevates the State to a *de jure* rationality, such that realized reason is identified with the *de jure* State and the State is the becoming of reason itself (the particularity of States being a mere accident of fact); the State in turn provides thought itself with a model (the republic of free and rational minds, a *cogitatio universalis*) which is internalized in the self as both legislator and subject (under formal conditions that allows thought to conceptualize their identity) (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 375–6, 556, note 42).

Now, if Deleuze's own philosophy breaks with this nexus, then any reformulation of the concept of freedom in Deleuzian terms would have to operate, not at the level of subjects or the State, but rather at the level of their genetic processes (subjectivation, statification, rationalization). As Patton shows, this is indeed the case in one of the few texts in which Deleuze actually uses the term (Patton 2000: 41–2). In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze writes that the 'differential object' of sociability cannot be lived with actual societies, but 'must be and can only be lived in the element of social upheaval (in other words, *freedom*, which is always hidden among the remains of the old order and the first fruits of a new)' (1994: 193). Here, freedom is not equated with the liberty to move about and pursue one's interests within a given social formation or State; rather, it concerns the conditions of change for the social structure itself. (In *A Thousand Plateaus*, it is the war-machine that will come to play this role, in contradistinction to the State.) Already in *Difference and Repetition*, then, Deleuze was giving the concept of freedom an altered set of components, making it correspond to one of the fundamental problems of his philosophy, namely, the conditions for the production of the new. (This is a different question from that of the conditions of *change*, since the new, in order to be truly new, can be neither foreseeable nor conceptualizable nor even expected or hoped for.) Freedom, as a condition of the new, appears here as a limit concept (or Idea) in a far more radical sense than one finds even in Kant.

When Patton parses this limit notion of freedom, he does so in terms of Deleuze's distinction between the *connection* and the *conjugation* of processes (Patton 2000: 101–2). This distinction is a difficult and nuanced one in Deleuze's philosophy, but Patton argues that it functions as an immanent normative criterion for evaluating the modes of interaction between processes or flows. A *conjunction* of flows occurs when one flow blocks or constrains other flows, in such a manner that it brings the latter under the dominance of a single flow capable of 'overcoding' them (hence Deleuze and Guattari's use of

terminology such as 'capture', 'integration', 'sedimentation', 'stratification' and so on). By contrast, a *connection* occurs when two flows enter into relation in such a manner that something passes *between* them, and their interaction produces something *new* which introduces a real transformation in a given field. This third thing is what Deleuze terms a 'becoming' (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 232–309), and Patton rightly characterizes Deleuze's philosophy of the new (or 'ethics of freedom') as a politics of becoming. But he also stresses the complexities and uncertainties involved in such a politics.

> Whereas the normative status and the value of liberal freedom is straightfor-wardly positive, critical freedom is a much more ambivalent and risky affair: more ambivalent, since it involves leaving behind existing grounds of value, with the result that it is not always clear whether it is good or bad; risky, because there is no telling in advance where such processes of mutation and change might lead, whether at the level of individual or collective assem-blages.
>
> (Patton 2000: 87)

This is a succinct statement of Patton's revised concepts of normativity and critical freedom, and of the 'exo-consistency' he is attempting to establish between them. Here, again, one can get a clear sense of the conceptual apparatus Patton is in the process of creating, step by step, in the midst of his commentary on Deleuze.

The theory of judgment in Deleuze

The third foreign term Patton brings into his analyses, although only in passing, is the term *judgement*. At one point, he describes Nietzsche's thought as 'a complex and nuanced system of judgment' (Patton 2000: 63) – a phrase that brought me up short, since one of Deleuze's most persistent themes is the need 'to have done with judgement' (a formula derived from Artaud, though Deleuze assigns it a much broader scope). Deleuze prefers the term 'evaluation' to 'judgement', and constantly criticizes what he, following Nietzsche, calls 'the system of judgement' in philosophy. My initial reaction was that Patton's use of the word was simply infelicitous, but, the more I read, the more it became clear that Patton's positive appeal to a theory of judgement was not incidental. Why is Deleuze 'against' judgement? Judgement is the act of subsuming the particular under the general, and Deleuze is clearly critical of the notion of the general or the universal. Universals explain nothing, Deleuze constantly says, but are themselves what need to be explained (see, e.g., Deleuze and Parnet 1987: vii), and Patton likewise insists that there neither is nor can be any 'transcendent point or uniform standard of judgment' (Patton 2000: 64).

But does this mean we must have done with the concept of judgement as such? Kant himself, for instance, in the *Critique of Judgement*, developed the rich notion of *reflective* judgements – judgements that start with the particular and

look for the general, which is *not* given but merely has a 'problematic' status.[5] Thinkers such as Jean-François Lyotard and Hannah Arendt have demonstrated the importance of the notion of reflective judgement for political philosophy. Deleuze's own distinction between the regular and the singular is germane here: the regular is that which is submitted to a general rule, which is regulated, but the singular is that which lies outside the rule. But is not this what we mean when we speak of 'sound' judgement: the ability to act when there is no clear rule? This is a point that Arendt makes in her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. What we expected, or at least hoped, of people in situations like that of Nazi Germany, she says, was:

> that human beings be capable of telling right from wrong even when all they have to guide them is their own judgment, which, moreover, happens to be completely at odds with what they must regard as the unanimous opinion of all those around them. . . . Those few who still were able to tell right from wrong went really only by their own judgments, and they did so freely [in an act of what Patton would call 'critical freedom']; there were no rules to be abided by, under which the particular cases with which they were confronted could be subsumed. They had to decide each instance as it arose, because no rules existed for the unprecedented.
>
> (Arendt 1965: 294–5)

In his concluding chapter on native title entitled 'Nomads, capture, and colonization', Patton seems to follow a trajectory similar to Arendt's. For Deleuze, the law is a kind of axiomatic system: laws or rights (such as human rights) are axioms from which certain theorems are deduced (e.g. torture is a violation of my rights). But undecidability is inherent in every axiomatic system: undecidable cases are what wind up in the courts, before a judge, who in the end must make a judgement in the absence of any rule (if there was a clear rule the case would not wind up in court). The decision then enters the body of law as a precedent, as a singularity. The law thus operates on two registers: legislators create laws and decide on axioms, rules; while the judiciary (common law) moves from case to case, from singularity to singularity; it is a prolongation of singularities. The landmark 1991 Mabo case of the Australian High Court, which first affirmed that native or aboriginal title formed part of Australian common law, is such a singularity, and Patton analyzes the case in Deleuzian terms: it was not simply a deterritorialization of the State's legal mechanism of capture, but the creation of a kind of 'zone of indiscernibility' between indigenous law and the common law (Patton 2000: 128–9), a kind of 'jurisprudential smooth space' (Patton 2000: 31) which has had and will continue to have profound 'prolongations'. But Patton's analyses lead to the following question: is not the Mabo decision itself the result of an act of *judgement*? Deleuze himself says that 'it is jurisprudence which is truly creative of rights' (Patton 2000: 3, 120), it is a potential space of metamorphosis. Why then does Deleuze want to have done with judgement? In jurisprudence, is it not an act of judgement that *creates* rights? Is not judgement operative at the level of both 'court decisions'

and 'legislative enactments'? Is it not therefore possible to *retain* a concept of judgement (freed from the universal) when one speaks of the creation of rights in jurisprudence? Patton's analyses seem to point in this direction. Moreover, one can see how such a concept of judgement would link up with the other 'liberal' concepts introduced by Patton: (1) deterritorialization is indeed 'normative' because (2) it opens up a space of 'critical freedom' within which (3) one can exercise a judgement, outside pre-existing rules, that would be truly creative and productive of the new (e.g. new rights).

Patton's analyses of native title in Australia and of the creative role Deleuze assigns to jurisprudence is, in my opinion, one of the most original sections of *Deleuze and the Political* (2000: 120–31), since it addresses the concept that perhaps lies at the heart of the liberal tradition, namely, the concept of *rights*. Yet again, this is a concept Deleuze rarely discusses, and, when he does, he is surprisingly critical of the very notion of human rights (or in French, *les droits de homme*, the universal 'rights of man'). 'The reverence people display toward human rights', Deleuze muses in the 1988–9 *Abécédaire* interview, 'almost makes one want to defend horrible, terrible positions' (Deleuze 1995a: G). Deleuze's critique, however, is directed less against the concept of rights *per se* than against the *universal* status accorded to human rights, which turns it into a 'pure abstraction', an 'empty' concept, to the point where Deleuze can even speak of the 'mystifications of human rights' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 225, note 18). In Deleuze and Guattari's terminology, human rights are not universals but axioms, and they coexist within the capitalist market with other axioms – notably the axiom of the security of property, which will often simply ignore or suspend human rights. 'What social democracy has not given the order to fire when the poor come out of their territory or ghetto?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 107). Moreover, as Alain Badiou has remarked, axioms such as human rights do not concern individuals directly, in their concrete multiplicity, but only insofar as this multiplicity is reduced to a 'one' that can be counted (the individual who votes, who is imprisoned, who contributes to Social Security, etc.) (Badiou 1991: 39–57). In other words, 'human rights say nothing about the immanent modes of existence of the people provided with rights' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 107).

In the *Abécédaire* interview, Deleuze points to the example of the then-unfolding situation in Armenia: Armenians living in an enclave in a Soviet Republic had been massacred by Turks; the survivors escaped into the Armenian republic, where they were almost immediately devastated by a tremendous earthquake. 'It's like something out of the Marquis de Sade. These poor people have gone through the worst ordeals they could face, and they barely escape into shelter when nature starts it all up again' (Deleuze 1995a: G). It is not sufficient, Deleuze continues, to insist that the Turks had no right to massacre the Armenians or that they violated the Armenians' rights. The abominations the Armenians suffered are not denials of abstract rights; they are *cases*, abominable cases, singular cases (even if such cases often resemble each other). In this case, what is at issue is a specific case of territorial organization, that is,

an enclave in a Soviet Republic, surrounded by hostile Turks. How can the enclave be eliminated, or made livable? What can be done to enable the Armenians to extricate themselves from this situation, so they are no longer simply delivered into the hands of the Turks? The earthquake raised different questions concerning, for instance, the unsuitable construction of buildings. What is needed in each of these instances is not an application of universal rights, but rather the invention of jurisprudences so that, in each case, this or that will no longer be possible. Those are two quite different procedures. As Deleuze says, 'there are no 'rights of man', there is life, and there are rights of life. Only life proceeds case by case' (Deleuze 1995a: G).

Deleuze is here simply following the trajectory laid out above: universal co-ordinates such as 'rights' explain nothing; what need to be analyzed in a concrete assemblage are the *processes* by which rights are both created and critiqued. Hence the importance of jurisprudence: it provides Deleuze with a model for the creation of rights that are not universal, but always linked to a given assemblage and the particularity of specific cases or singularities. In the *Abécédaire* interview, Deleuze also provides a more quotidian example. In the late 1970s, a taxi driver was successfully prosecuted in Paris for prohibiting passengers from smoking in his taxi. The pretext for the decision: a passenger in a taxi is like a tenant in an apartment. Tenants are allowed to smoke in their apartment under the right of use; taxis are like mobile apartments that passengers occupy as temporary tenants; therefore when someone takes a taxi they are considered to be a tenant and must be allowed to smoke. By the late 1980s, smoking was prohibited in every Parisian taxi, because taking a taxi was no longer equated with renting a private apartment, but was considered to be a public service, and it was legitimate to prohibit smoking in public areas. Such is the process of jurisprudence: it is not a question of universal rights; it is a question of a situation, and a situation that is evolving. 'To act for freedom, to become a revolutionary', Deleuze says, 'is to act on a plane of jurisprudence' (1995a: G). This is the precise path Patton follows in his analyses of native title, and the implications of landmark decisions such as *Mabo* in Australia and *Calder* in Canada (Patton 2000: 127–31). 'We should not be too quick to discount the deterritorializing power of new rights', writes Patton. 'Rights too are virtual singularities, the consequences of which are only actualized in specific court decisions, legislative enactments and the interactions between these' (2000: 127).

And yet, despite his appeal to the process of jurisprudence, it remains note-worthy that Deleuze never offered a concomitant concept of judgement. Given his own theory of the concept, it would seemingly have been possible for Deleuze to retain the notion of judgement simply by altering the components of the concept, and Patton's analyses hint strongly at this possibility. Why then did Deleuze himself decline to take this path – a path that had been charted out by Arendt and Lyotard in their appeals to 'reflective judgement'? This question perhaps takes us to the heart of the differences that separate Deleuze from his contemporaries. Jacques Derrida, for instance, once wrote that Lyotard 'has

launched a categorical challenge against our epoch. . . . He is telling us: you have not had done with, you will *never* have done with judgment' (Derrida 1985: 96–7). Intentional or not, it would not be difficult to read into this willful inversion of Artaud's phrase a direct challenge to Deleuze's thought as well. For his part, Derrida presented his own analysis (or deconstruction) of the theory of reflective judgment in his essay, 'Force of law: the "mystical foundation of authority"' (Derrida 1992: 25–7). The directions Deleuze and Derrida take their analysis of judgement are indicative of two general trajectories in contemporary French thought.

In Kant, a reflective judgement is a judgement that is made in the absence of a rule, that is, without a determinate concept: the imagination becomes free at the same time that the understanding becomes indeterminate. But what is the condition that makes this 'free play' of the faculties possible? It is possible, Kant says, only through the intervention of an *Idea* of reason. 'Reflective judgment would not be able to trace its passages were it not inspired by the unity and systematicity that the suprasensible Ideas (of the Soul, the World, and God) "project by analogy" into experience' (Gualandi 1999: 119).[6] If determinate judgements operate under a rule or concept, reflective judgements rely on the directive role of Ideas and their 'analogical' connections. One of the aims of the *Critique of Judgement* is to analyze the manner in which transcendent Ideas are presented in sensible nature through analogy (the sublime, symbolization, genius and teleology).

But this is precisely the reason why Deleuze offers a strong critique of the 'analogy of judgement' in *Difference and Repetition*. Since reflective judgements are grounded in Ideas (whereas determinate judgments are grounded in concepts), the difference between theories of reflective judgement can be evaluated in terms of the corresponding theory of Ideas. In Lyotard, for instance, Ideas are fundamentally 'unpresentable'. For Derrida, the judgements of the law operate on the basis of an infinite and transcendent 'Idea of justice', in relation to which the condition of possibility for any decision or reflective judgement is its very impossibility. It is this element of transcendence, however, that Deleuze refuses: in the fourth chapter of *Difference and Repetition* ('Ideas and the synthesis of difference'), Deleuze attempts to develop a purely immanent and differential theory of Ideas (1994: 168–221). It is this break with transcendence that allows Deleuze to effect a corresponding break with the doctrine of judgement. Immanent Ideas, in being actualized, are dramatized, but the agent of this dramatization is not judgement but rather *desire*. 'Desire is productive', writes Patton, 'in the sense that it produces real connections' (2000: 70). Or, as Deleuze and Guattari put it, simply: 'Desire is the set of passive syntheses' (1977: 26). In the realm of law or rights, Deleuze does not appeal to the transcendence of an infinite idea of justice; the movement of the immanent Idea is actualized in becomings and the production of affects – this is the process of desire itself. Immanent Ideas in Deleuze in a sense remain 'regulative', but only insofar as they pose problems, they are 'problematizing'. Deleuzian Ideas map out directions and vectors of synthesis (connection, conjunction,

disjunction), which are actualized, not by a conscious judgement, but through an unconscious process of desire (a 'passive' synthesis). This is why Deleuze says the unconscious is not pre-given, but must itself be *constructed*: in the law, it is the process of desire that constructs the movement from case to case, the prolongation of singularities. This is also why Deleuze can say that the question of human rights 'is not a question of justice, it is a question of jurisprudence', that is, of desire (Deleuze 1995a: G).

This is a good example of the 'labor of the concept' one finds in Deleuze. It is a change in the concept of an 'Idea' that allows Deleuze to 'have done with judgement', and to replace the notion of a conscious reflective *judgement* (which is guided analogically by a transcendent Idea, in the Kantian sense) with an unconscious but productive process of *desire* (which effects the passive synthesis of an immanent Idea, in the Deleuzian sense). Kant himself presents the *Critique of Practical Reason* as an analysis of a 'higher' faculty of desire that is determined by the representation of a pure form, namely, the pure form of a universal legislation (the moral law) (see Deleuze 1984: 28–9). If a reflective judgement of beauty can be presented as a 'symbol' of morality in the *Critique of Judgement*, it is because its object can be taken as the analogue of an Idea of reason (a white lily is the analogue of the Idea of innocence), and therefore can be said to 'predispose' us to morality. Even in Kant, then, the function of the doctrine of reflective judgement is to point us in the direction of the 'higher' faculty of desire, which is our ultimate destination as moral beings. Like Kant, Deleuze will insist on the fundamental role of desire in 'practical' philosophy, but he will effect an inversion of Kant by synthesizing desire, not with a transcendent Idea of *universal* legislation, but with an immanent and differential Idea that operates through a prolongation of *singularities*. One of the aims of *Anti-Oedipus*, from this viewpoint, is to formulate criteria to distinguish between legitimate (immanent) and illegitimate (transcendent) syntheses of desire (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 75), and, in this sense, *Anti-Oedipus* can be read as Deleuze and Guattari's own version of the *Critique of Practical Reason*. The immanent relation Deleuze establishes between a differential Idea of jurisprudence and the process of desire can thus be contrasted with the aporetic relation Derrida establishes between an infinite Idea of justice and an impossible decision or judgement. For Deleuze, the Idea constitutes the condition of real experience, and not merely possible experience; for Derrida, the Idea constitutes the condition of possibility of justice only by constituting its impossibility at the same time. The differences between the two are profound. Patton's reflections seem to suggest that a concept of judgement might nonetheless be able to be reformulated in Deleuzian terms, but it would certainly have to take into account this conceptual movement of Deleuze's thought.

Liberalism and the 'social imaginary'

There is a final non-Deleuzian term that Patton imports into his analyses of Deleuze, a notion that does not stem from the liberal tradition, but which can

perhaps serve as a final example to demonstrate the scope of Patton's own project. This is the concept of the *social imaginary* (see Patton 2000: 72, 79, 80, 81, 89, 119, 126). The notion of social imaginary has been utilized by various contemporary thinkers to refer to those imaginary constructions – such as political fables, collective illusions, legal fictions, metaphors, myths and images – which, while often unconscious and unthought, are nonetheless constitutive of the embodied identity of individuals and collectivities. Spinoza, in particular, emphasized the fundamental role of the imagination in social and political life. As Moira Gatens and Genevieve Lloyd have noted:

> Spinoza's account of the imagination is not a theory about a 'faculty' but a theory about a permanent structure through which human beings are consti-tuted as such. . . . The strength of the social imaginary is that it constructs a logic of its own – a logic which cannot be shaken or undermined simply by demonstrating the falsity of its claims, its inherent contradictions or its aporias.
>
> (Gatens and Lloyd 1999: 143; see also Gatens 1996: viii)

Given Deleuze's indebtedness to Spinoza, one might expect to find in Deleuze's work a strongly developed theory of the imagination or the social imaginary. But in fact this is not the case. *Negotiations* includes an interview entitled 'Doubts about the imaginary', in which Deleuze asks the question: 'Is "the imaginary" a good concept?' and finds that it is 'a rather indeterminate notion' (Deleuze 1995b: 65–6).[7] Elsewhere, the reason Deleuze gives for having doubts about the concept is that the processes he analyzes throughout his work – becomings, de- and reterritorializations, flows, affects and so on – belong to the domain of the *real* and not the imaginary (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 30, 83, 304–7).

In several passages, however, Patton mounts a quiet challenge to Deleuze's doubts, intriguingly suggesting that these real processes nonetheless have an imaginary dimension. He equates Deleuze and Guattari's theory of the 'socius' or the 'body without organs' with a kind of social imaginary (Patton 2000: 71–2, cf. 89: 'the socius is the imaginary body of society as a whole'), and suggests that what Deleuze and Guattari define as 'becomings', such as becoming-woman, can take place in relation to the images found in the social imaginary (Patton 2000: 81). Patton does not develop these points in detail. Yet given his own emphasis on the role of concepts and the need for their consistency, his claims invite a number of interesting questions. How does Patton himself overcome Deleuze's 'doubts about the imaginary'? How, within Deleuze's own work, do these 'doubts about the imaginary' relate to Deleuze's own interest in the analysis of images (images of thought, the images of cinema, etc.)? How might Deleuze's thought relate to works such as Gatens and Lloyd's, *Collective Imag-inings: Spinoza, Past and Present* (1999), Michèle LeDoeuff's *The Philosophical Imaginary* (1989), Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991), and Cornelius Castoriadis's *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (1987) – all of which make use of the concept of the social imaginary in varying (and not necessarily commensurate) manners? Most importantly, how could the concept of the social

imaginary consistently connect with the revised liberal concepts Patton has introduced into his reading of Deleuze (normativity, critical freedom, judgement)?

These are large issues, and to my mind they remain genuinely open questions, prompted by Patton's admittedly passing appeal to the social imaginary. For my part, it seems there are at least three aspects of Deleuze's thought that might be relevant to an analysis of the social imaginary. Patton explicitly addresses the first aspect, which concerns the relation of images to embodiment (which admittedly constitutes a small part of the theory of the social imaginary). It has often been noted, for instance, that images of idealized bodies (in advertising and television, as well as less obvious imaginaries) can affect, even if unconsciously, my relation to my own body, to the point where I become willing to subject my body to the demands of the image (e.g. via dieting, bodybuilding, surgery, cosmetics, etc.). This can be seen as an instance of the more general problem of *desire*, which Deleuze and Guattari have identified as '*the* fundamental problem of political philosophy': 'Why do people fight *for* their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 29). In this case: why would I voluntarily subject my body to an idealized image to which I can never conform, and whose real effect, in the end, is to produce in me the 'sad' affects of inadequacy and resentment? Although this phenomenon is common, the mechanism by which is takes place is less so. How exactly does the social and public production of images affect the private production of my personal desires? Stated in broader terms, what is the relation between political economy (social production) and libidinal economy (production of desires) – in short, between Marx and Freud?

As Patton observes, this is a problem that is explicitly addressed in *Anti-Oedipus* (Patton 2000: 68–9). A common response is to say that I somehow 'internalize' or 'introject' the information and connotations contained in the images; and, conversely, that the images themselves are nothing more than 'projections' of the desires of those who consume them, to the point where the producers of the images can claim that they are simply 'giving people what they want'. But the entirety of *Anti-Oedipus* is directed against this thesis: 'The Marx–Freud parallelism remains completely sterile and indifferent as long as it is expressed in terms that make them introjections or projections of each other without them ceasing to be utterly alien to each other' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 28–9). Deleuze and Guattari's claim is that the social production of images (or imaginaries) and the production of desire are *one and the same process*, and thus that there is no need to posit any mediating psychic operations such as introjection, projection or sublimation to account for the power of images (or any aspect of social production). Patton analyzes this famous (and complex) thesis in his chapter on desire (Patton 2000: esp. 68–70), which precludes any simple summary. But his analyses here link up with his earlier claims about the general orientation of Deleuze's philosophy: despite his doubts about the imaginary, Deleuze could no doubt acknowledge the existence of a social imaginary, but his primary concern would be with the underlying *processes* that account for

both its production and its effects (in this case, image and embodiment). For Deleuze, as long as social production and desire are seen to be two different processes, the actual operation of social imaginaries would remain a mystery.

The second aspect concerns the question: *why* is the imagination nonetheless not a prominent concept in Deleuze philosophy? I would suggest that, in a sense, the imagination *does* play an important role in Deleuze's thought, but that it appears in a form that perhaps owes as much to Kant as it does Spinoza. In the schematism chapter of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant makes a novel distinction between the *reproductive* imagination and what he calls the *productive* imagination (1929: 180–7 (A137–47/B176–87)). The activity of the reproductive imagination is to reproduce a concept in images: a plate, the sun or a wheel are images of a circle, just as a taut string or a figure drawn on a blackboard may be considered images of a line. But the activity of the productive imagination is quite different: here the imagination produces a 'schema' that will allow me to construct something round or straight in experience that conforms to the concept. The schema is necessary, says Kant, because neither the concept nor the image tell me how to produce a circle or a line in intuition. The concept may allow me to *recognize* a straight line, but only a schema can tell me how it is possible to *construct* a straight line in experience. Kant thus argues that 'the shortest path' should not be understood as a *predicate* of the concept 'straight line', but rather as a *schema* for constructing a straight line ('follow the shortest path between two points . . .'). As a rule of production, a schema must therefore be seen as an aspect of lived experience, something that must be *lived* dynamically, as a dynamic process, albeit in conformity with a concept.

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze reformulated Kant's theory of schemata into a complex theory of 'spatio-temporal dynamisms' (manners of occupying space and time), to which Deleuze gave a much broader sphere of application.[8] In biology, for example, the concept of an animal can be determined by its genera and specific differences, but what *cannot* be derived from the concept is the way the animal inhabits space and time: its territory, the paths it follows, the times it takes these paths, the traces it leaves in its territory, the excitations to which it responds, the affects of which it is capable and so on. This is why Deleuze exhibits such interest in the discipline of 'ethology' (and frequently appeals to von Uexküll's ethological analysis of the tick; see Uexküll 1957: 6–8), which attempts to classify animals in terms of their spatio-temporal dynamisms, that is, as blocs of space-time that are not only lived but 'embodied' (what can a body *do*?). Similarly, ethnologists can be said to describe the spatio-temporal dynamisms of humans to the degree that they describe their manners and affects – dynamisms that will necessarily vary the generic concept 'human' (see Deleuze 1978). Native Americans, for example, often died under colonialism because they could not survive the diseases that were introduced by Europeans, such as influenza: they were not capable of the same affects. At a more abstract level, one of the aims of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* was to develop a complex typology of such dynamisms that are actualized in concrete social formations and enter into varying combinations and interactions: primitive societies, states,

nomads and capitalism all occupy space-time in different manners – forming territories (primitive), striating space (states), occupying a smooth space (nomads), deterritorializing and reterritorializing space (capitalism), etc. Deleuze explains, for instance, that war-machines 'have nothing to do with war but with a particular way of occupying, taking up, space-time, or *inventing new space-times*' (1995b: 172, cf. 30). Moreover, the revolutionary potential he ascribes to war-machines (or 'metamorphosis-machines', as Patton prefers to call them) is derived from their capacity for construct *new* spatio-temporal dynamisms. 'People don't take enough account', Deleuze writes, pointing to one example among many, 'of how the PLO has had to *invent* a space-time in the Arab world' (1995b: 172). If the imagination plays a role in Deleuze's political philosophy, in other words, it seems to appear primarily under this form of the productive imagination (production of spatio-temporal dynamisms), rather than that of the reproductive imagination (production of images), though the two roles of the imagination are obviously related.[9] If this thesis is correct, then Deleuze's thought might open up a new way of thinking about the nature and functioning of social imaginaries as 'spatio-temporal dynamisms'.

The third aspect, finally, concerns the ways in which social imaginaries can be *transformed*. One (and only one) Deleuzian response to this question would address the political role of *art* (see Patton 2000: 72–3). What we encounter in everyday life are images that have been reduced to the status of clichés – conventions and opinions that are in the service of forces other than themselves – and it is not difficult to produce works of art that merely reproduce such conventions (the 'culture industry'). The political act of resistance against such ready-made images thus entails, in a sense, a struggle of image against image, and Deleuze repeatedly emphasizes the 'battle against clichés' that artists must undergo *just to produce an image* – not a 'just' image, as Godard says, but just an image, any image.

> To make an image from time to time: Can art, painting, and music have any other goal, even if the contents of the image are quite meager, quite mediocre? . . . . It is extremely difficult to make a pure and unsullied image, one that is nothing but an image, by reaching the point where it emerges in all its singularity.
>
> (Deleuze 1997: 158)

At various points in his work, Deleuze discusses the political effect of such image making or 'fabulating', notably in his analyses of the status of Third World political film making in *The Time-Image* (1989: 215–24), the role of the image in Samuel Beckett's work (1997: 152–74), and the battle against the cliché in Francis Bacon (1981: 57–63). To be sure, the notion of the social imaginary encompasses far more than artistic or informational images, but the political function of art touches on the broad question of enigmatic link between artistic creation and political change (the constitution of the people), both of which are instances of the Deleuzian problematic concerning the conditions for the production of the new.

There is much else to be said of Patton's book. Its strongest elements are certainly its readings of Deleuze's concepts and its overview of Deleuze's philosophical project, which will benefit all readers, beginning or advanced. But the more creative aspect of the book, as I see it, is this somewhat clandestine 'Pattonian' project that is working out alongside the interpretation of Deleuze, of which we will no doubt see more in the future. By forcing Deleuze's thought into a confrontation with the liberal tradition, Patton is able to show the way towards a transformation of such familiar concepts as normativity, freedom and judgement. Moreover, Patton brings into his analyses other non-Deleuzian concepts – such as the 'social imaginary' – which show that the scope of his own project goes beyond the Deleuze–liberalism confrontation. The next task, one might imagine, would be for Patton to show the consistency (endo- and exo-) of the conceptual apparatus he himself is in the process of developing. The outlines of such an apparatus, I have been suggesting, are already visible in *Deleuze and the Political*. Normativity is redefined in terms of the movement of processes of 'deterritorialization'; these processes in turn constitute the condition for the exercise of 'critical freedom', that is, the exercise of a judgement, outside pre-existing rules, which would be productive of the new (the creation of rights, the creation and transformation of social imaginaries, the production of new space-times, etc.). *Deleuze and the Political*, then, does not simply present a reading of Deleuze, or even Deleuze's political philosophy. It is at the same time an elaboration of Patton's own project, one of whose aims is to challenge traditional liberal conceptions of politics. Patton accomplishes this not simply by 'applying' Deleuze's thought to liberal concepts, but rather by forcing them into a becoming that itself produces something new, something irreducible to either Deleuze or liberalism, but which constitutes Patton's own singular contribution to contemporary political thought.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1   Routledge's important 'Thinking the Political' series is edited by Keith Ansell-Pearson and Simon Critchley, and thus far includes volumes on Foucault, Derrida, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Lacan and Lyotard.
2   In this respect, Patton's primary precursors are Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, whose works, though overtly Marxist, also include important analysis of the liberal tradition from a broadly Deleuzian perspective. See their influential *Empire* (2000), as well as the earlier *The Labors of Dionysus* (1997).

3   See Patton (2000: 9, 20, 49, 59, 87, 106, 135, 136, 144 note 11).

4   On-line anecdote from 'bifo', on the Spoon Collective's 'Deleuze-Guattari List', Monday 18 March 2002, <http://lists.village.virginia.edu/cgi-bin/spoons/archive1.pl?list = deleuze-guattari.archive/deleuze-guattari.0203>, Message 111.

5   In his book on Kant, *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, Deleuze discusses the ambiguities of judgement, which always depends on a certain accord of the faculties. See the short but important section entitled 'Is judgment a faculty?' (Deleuze 1984: 58–61).

6   See also Gualandi's book on Deleuze (1998). Lyotard's and Deleuze's respective theories of judgement figure prominently in Gualandi's analyses.

7   For an example of the kind of critique that has been leveled against the notion of the imaginary, see Pierre Bourdieu's *Masculine Domination*:

> The language of the 'imaginary', which one sees used somewhat recklessly here and there, is even more inadequate than that of 'consciousness' [as in 'consciousness raising'] inasmuch as it inclines one in particular to forget that the dominant principle of vision is not a simple mental representation, a fantasy ('ideas in people's heads'), an ideology, but a system of structures durably embedded in things and in *bodies*,
>
> (Bourdieu 2001: 41, emphasis added)

Deleuze, however, ascribes to the concept of the imaginary precisely that affective and embodied dimension that Bourdieu denies to it.

8   Although Deleuze considers the schematism to be among the most novel and important innovations of Kantian thought, he himself takes the notion in a quite different direction. If the 'schema' is outside the concept in Kant, what Deleuze calls a 'dramatization' is internal to Ideas in the Deleuzian sense: 'Everything changes when the dynamisms are posited no longer as *schemata of concepts* but as *dramas of Ideas*' (Deleuze 1994: 218). Under a similar inspiration, Pierre Bourdieu, throughout his work, distinguishes between 'categories or cognitive structures' and 'schemes or dispositions' (the habitus) (see, e.g., Bourdieu 2001: 8–9).

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