

DELEUZE'S USE OF KANT'S ARGUMENT FROM INCONGRUENT COUNTERPARTS

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this paper is to explore Deleuze's use of Kant's argument from incongruent counterparts, which Kant uses to show the existence of what he calls an "internal difference" within things. I want to explore how Deleuze draws out an important distinction between the concept and the Idea, and provides an incisive account of his relationship to both the Kantian and Leibnizian projects. First, I look at Kant's use of the argument to provide a refutation of the Leibnizian account of space, before showing how this criticism in fact rests on the question of the conceptual determination of object. Second, I show how Deleuze develops a taxonomy of difference on the basis of his reading of Kant's argument. Finally, I look at what Deleuze sees as the limitations in Kant's understanding of this concept and Deleuze's attempt to overcome these limitations through the introduction of the notion of the Idea, which will provide a genetic and nonconceptual account of the object. In doing so, I show why Deleuze takes the formulation of an adequate account of difference to be one of the central aims of his own metaphysics.

1. INTRODUCTION

In his preface to the English edition of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze criticizes the "majority of philosophers" because although they had "introduced difference into the identity of the concept, they had put difference in the concept itself, thereby reaching a conceptual difference, but not a concept of difference" (Deleuze 2004, xiii). The aim of this paper is to explore this distinction that Deleuze makes between a concept of difference and conceptual difference, and to show how it has its roots in the debate between Kant

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and Leibniz over the nature of space. I want to focus on Deleuze's use of an argument by Kant, the argument from incongruent counterparts, which shows the existence of what Kant calls an "internal difference" within things. This is a notion of difference that is not a part of our concept of the object, nor is it a form of difference that exists between entities. Rather, it is a nonconceptual determination of the object itself. In the process of developing his account of difference, Deleuze draws out an important distinction between the concept and the Idea, and provides an incisive account of his relationship to both the Kantian and Leibnizian projects.

I will deal with three issues in this paper. First, I want to look at the concepts of extension and comprehension. Deleuze introduces these terms from the *Port-Royal Logic* in order to show why conceptual thinking can only give us a difference between concepts rather than a concept of difference. Second, I want to look at Kant's incongruent counterparts argument, with a focus on his early formulation of it in *Concerning the Ultimate Foundation for the Differentiation of Regions in Space*. In order to do so, I also want to show how this argument relates to Leibniz's accounts of determination and space. Kant's concern is to show that even a complete conceptual determination of an object is unable to fully determine an actual object. In order to explain this fact, Kant introduces the concept of an "internal difference" which escapes conceptual determination. This will be the basis for the distinction between concepts and intuition in the critical philosophy. Finally, I want to look at what Deleuze sees as the limitations in Kant's understanding of difference, and Deleuze's attempt to overcome these limitations through the introduction of the notion of the Idea, which will provide a genetic and nonconceptual account of the object by reintroducing some central Leibnizian themes. I will conclude by providing an alternative to the common view that Deleuze simply replaces the concept with the Idea in order to overcome the limitations of conceptual thinking.¹

¹ Compare for instance, Levi Bryant's analysis of what he calls the "Deleuzian concept": "As a result, Deleuze would claim that there is no concept of the color red, but only of white light, of which red is a variation. If red does not form a proper Deleuzian concept, then this is not because it is not real but because it does not mark the joints of being. Red marks a difference in degree from other colors, whereas color as such is a difference in kind" (Bryant 2008, 72). Here, Bryant makes a distinction between nonproper concepts (the color red), and Deleuzian concepts (color in general). While the reason Bryant gives for Deleuze's rejection of the nonproper concept is correct, Deleuze is consistent throughout *Difference and Repetition* in distinguishing between concepts, which are representational, and Ideas, which are nonrepresentational. Color, following Bergson, is consistently used as a paradigm case of the latter, rather than former case. Bryant's analysis suggests that Deleuze's project is to replace one form of conceptual thought with a more sophisticated, nonrepresentational form. I will argue instead in the final sections of this paper that his project of finding a "concept of difference" is in fact the project of attempting to represent something which is fundamentally nonrepresentational.

2. EXTENSION AND COMPREHENSION

As is apparent from its title, Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* argues for the centrality of the concepts of difference and repetition in our understanding of the relationship between concepts and objects. Deleuze's chief aim in introducing these concepts is to oppose the classical conception of judgment, the subsumption of a particular object under a universal (or in Deleuze's terms, general) concept. Deleuze calls the model of thought that underlies the priority of judgment in thinking representation. Representing an object is key to two processes: memory and recognition. In the case of memory, this is because the object to be remembered is not present. In the case of recognition, we need, in some sense, to compare our internal representation of the object with the object itself. How do we structure such a representation? We normally see objects as composed of substances and properties, and we describe these objects using concepts structured in parallel terms of subjects and predicates. Depending on how many predicates we ascribe to an object, we can determine which objects fall under that concept. For example, we can restrict the application of a concept by stipulating that it only applies to objects having a certain property. This is, for instance, the model we find in Aristotle's account of definition, where the species to which an object belongs is defined by the progressive division of a genus into smaller and smaller classes. For example, if we want to determine what the definition of something is, we may begin with a very general property of it, like the notion of a living body, and by adding a further determination, say that of being sensitive, we can further define it as an animal body. Animals can be further divided into rational and nonrational animals. By the continual addition of properties to our characterization of a particular, we therefore cut down the field of particulars our definition applies to, until we conclude with a definition that only applies to one class of particulars, in this case, man, as a rational animal. Each of these properties functions as a generality, in that it applies to a group of particulars, but by combining them, we are able to provide an adequate definition of at least a class of them. Deleuze's argument is that this basic model of thought, which involves the subsumption of particulars under generalities, is also found within the concept of law found in science (Deleuze 2004, 3), as well as in moral theory, at least in the case of Kant (5). What is key in all of these cases is a central conception of the way in which we represent the world.

This brings us to the comprehension and extension of a concept. These two features of a concept were introduced in the *Port-Royal Logic*, the textbook on logic written in 1662 and widely considered to be the definitive reference until the mid-nineteenth century. They effectively provide a more

generalized account of the notion of definition that Aristotle uses. It defines the two terms as follows:

I call the COMPREHENSION of an idea, those attributes which it involves in itself, and which cannot be taken away from it without destroying it; as the comprehension of the idea triangle includes extension, figure, three lines, three angles, and the equality of these three angles to two rigid Angles, etc.

I call the EXTENSION of an idea those subjects to which that idea applies, which are also called the inferiors of a general term, which, in relation to them, is called superior, as the idea of triangle in general extends to all the different sorts of triangles. (Arnauld 1850, 49)

The class of objects that a concept ranges over is therefore governed by its comprehension and extension. An object only falls under a concept if that concept comprehends the object, that is, if it has all of the properties specified by the concept. The extension determines how many objects fall under the concept. Now, it should be obvious that the extension and the comprehension of a concept are inversely proportional. That is, the more we specify a concept, the fewer objects will be subsumed by it. If we are to remember a particular event, or recognize a particular object, then the extension of that concept must be 1—it must only refer to the particular experience or object under consideration. But this implies, since extension and comprehension are inversely proportional, that the comprehension of the concept must be infinite.² So the question is, is it possible to develop a concept with infinite comprehension that allows us to remember or recognize in the way that representation claims that we can?

In practice, it is impossible to specify a concept through attributing to it an infinite number of properties. Aristotle makes this point in the *Sophistical Refutations*: “names are finite and so is the sum-total of accounts, while things

² This claim in fact only holds true if we are dealing with a universe that has an infinite number of objects that differ from one another. An example of such a model of the universe would be that provided by Leibniz's *Monadology*, where “each portion of matter can be conceived as a garden full of plants, and as a pond full of fish. But each branch of a plant, each limb of an animal, each drop of its humors is still another such garden or pond” (Leibniz 1989a, 222). For a finite number of things we would seem to only need a finite comprehension to isolate an object. Perhaps even if we had an infinite number of things we could develop a concept with a finite comprehension and an extension = 1 (a world with an infinite number of white swans and one black swan. In this case, we could pick out the black swan with one predicate: the black color). Rather than distinguishing an object from any other actual object, I take it Deleuze is here talking about distinguishing it from any other possible object. To single out one object in particular, our concept of it would have to differ from the concept of every other object in at least one predicate. To distinguish it from an infinity of possible objects, our concept of it would have to differ from every possible object in at least one predicate, and hence would have to contain an infinite number of predicates (have an infinite comprehension).

are infinite in number. Inevitably, then the same account and a single name signify several things" (Aristotle 1986b, 165a). For this reason, the notion of a species always has an extension potentially greater than 1 since its comprehension will be finite. As Deleuze notes, however, although we cannot in fact specify a particular through a process of division, because we will always have to stop somewhere (what he calls a matter for "logic pure and simple" [Deleuze 2004, 14]), there is a deeper problem of whether things are in principle specifiable in representational terms, a problem which "refers to a transcendental logic or a dialectic of existence" (Deleuze 2004, 14). Deleuze's concern will therefore not be with an "artificial blockage" of the concept, which is a question *de facto* about how we represent it in practice, but will be that there is a further *de jure* limitation which emerges from the *a priori* impossibility of providing a complete determination of the object. The reason why this is a real problem for representation is that it implies that a purely conceptual understanding of the object will fail to properly characterize it. If this claim is justified, then Deleuze's argument for a radically nonrepresentational approach to philosophy becomes significantly strengthened. Before turning to the argument from incongruent counterparts itself, I want to turn to the debate between Leibniz and Newton in which it is first deployed. While this debate is about the nature of space, we shall see that at the heart of the debate over the nature of space is the question of whether all properties of an object really can be specified in conceptual terms, or whether some spatial properties are not conceptual determinations. That is, whether it is *de jure* possible for a concept to have an extension = 1, or whether it is always possible for the same concept to refer to distinct individuals with different (nonconceptual) properties.

3. LEIBNIZ, NEWTON, AND SPATIALITY

Kant's argument from incongruent counterparts is first introduced in relation to a debate between Newton (and Clarke) and Leibniz on the nature of space. One of the central points of contention between Newton and Leibniz was the question of whether space was absolute, or relative to the objects which were contained within it. For Newton, we can make a distinction between absolute and relative space:

Absolute space, in its own nature, without relation to anything external, remains always similar and immovable. Relative space is some moveable dimension or measure of the absolute spaces; which our senses determine by its position to bodies; and which is commonly taken for an immovable space; such is the dimension of a subterraneous, an aerial, or celestial space, determined by its position in respect of the Earth. (Newton 1934, Defs., Scholium II)

So for Newton, in practice, we determine the positions of objects in space by their relations to one another. For Newton, therefore, a frame of reference is defined by inertia; that is, we assume the fact that even if the frame of reference is in motion compared to absolute space, this motion is at a constant velocity. On this basis, it is very difficult to even differentiate between a relative and absolute frame of reference. In spite of this, he claims that in order for these relations between objects to be possible, there must be an absolute frame of reference that is logically prior to the existence of objects themselves. Absolute space is therefore a metaphysical posit within Newton's physics, which grounds the possibility of relations between objects. This frame of reference is essentially a homogenous, isotropic medium where each point is identical to every other, and which does not causally interact with the objects within it.

In contrast to Newton's analysis of space as absolute, Leibniz claims that space is a secondary, derivative concept that emerges from the relations that exist between objects. He presents several arguments that seem to show the problematic nature of absolute space (Buroker 1981, ch. 2). First, for Newton, space is supposed to have existence, but it clearly is not a physical substance, as Newton's theory relies on it being causally inert, and being able to enter into causal relations appears to be an essential part of what makes a physical substance. It obviously cannot be a property, either, as it is supposed to precede objects, and properties are logically dependent on them. The ontological status of Newton's concept of space is thus problematic.

Second, the notion of absolute space is problematic when we take into account Leibniz's view that every event must have a reason or cause. The reason why this presents a problem is because it is impossible to explain, on Newton's model, "why God, preserving the same situations of bodies among themselves, should have placed them in space after one certain particular manner and not otherwise" (Leibniz and Clarke 2000, 15), given that space itself is absolutely homogeneous. The ground for the position of any object, whilst it may be explained by reason in relation to its relative position, is inexplicable in terms of the absolute position of the system as a whole.

Third, the notion of space contravenes Leibniz's notion of the identity of indiscernibles. That is, if there is no way to distinguish one point of space from any other, then we can say that each point in space is identical to every other one, and so, as they are identical, "all empty space is an imaginary thing, for they differ only as greater and less" (23).

Leibniz presents his alternative view as follows:

As for my own opinion, I have said more than once that I hold space to be something purely relative, as time is—that I hold it to be an order of coexistences, as time is an

order of successions. For space denotes, in terms of possibility, an order of things that exist at the same time, considered as existing together, without entering into their particular manners of existing. And when many things are seen together, one consciously perceives this order of things among themselves. (15)

Space in this sense is therefore secondary to the “order of things,” and exists only insofar as it allows us to see the relations that obtain between these entities. But this raises the obvious question, given that these cannot be spatial relations between things (as this would be to presuppose the notion of space), what relations manifest themselves within the spatial *milieu*?

4. LEIBNIZ'S MONADOLGY

In answering this question, we need to return to the initial question of representation. As we saw, Deleuze's concern was with the limitations of the characterization of the world which subsumed particulars under universals in the form of judgments. Now Leibniz holds to the view that all truths take the form of subject-predicate judgments: “In every categorical proposition (for from them I can show elsewhere that other kinds of propositions can be dealt with by changing a few things in the calculus) there are two terms, the subject and the predicate” (Leibniz 1989b, 11). We can note that it is certainly the case that some truths take this form, such as the claim that “man is a rational animal,” or that “seven is a prime number.” If we hold that our judgments are able to accord with the world, then it is going to be the case that the basic elements of existence are also going to be substances of some form, possessing of properties (what Leibniz calls monads). If we see the basic substances in existence as purely defined in terms of substances and properties, we encounter a problem when we deal with relations between substances, as these do not seem to fit this structure. If we say, for instance, “Paul is taller than John,” then it does not seem clear what is the subject and what is the predicate (we might want to say that ‘Paul’ is the subject, and ‘is taller than John’ is the predicate, but what about if we rephrase the proposition as ‘John is shorter than Paul’?). Similarly, relations of cause and effect seem to involve two subjects and a relation between them. If we accept Leibniz's assumption that all propositions can be reduced to judgments, therefore, we seem to be left with a world of noncausally interacting entities—“the monads have no windows through which something can enter or leave” (Leibniz 1989a, §8).

We now have a fundamental problem to deal with: how do we explain these interactions without relations, given that we appear to live in a world of

causally interacting substances? Leibniz's solution is to see each of these monads as somehow containing the relations between different substances as properties. This means that 'taller than John' would be a property of Paul, and 'shorter than Paul' would be a property of John. If causal interactions are going to be understood purely as properties of each subject, then each monad will have to contain all of its causal interactions with the rest of the world. Leibniz therefore writes that: "This interconnection or accommodation of all created things to each other, and each to all others, brings it about that each simple substance has relations that express all the others, and consequently, that each simple substance is a perpetual, living mirror of the universe" (Leibniz 1989a, §56). Each monad is therefore made up of an infinite number of properties which together describe the totality of its relations with the universe, and hence, in a sense, the universe itself. The second question that emerged from the notion of representation was that, although we are forced in the end to halt any process of definition, since we cannot specify every property an object possesses, is this limitation an empirical result of our own finite existence, or is it a result of a lack of complete conceptual determination in the object itself? For Aristotle, the essence of something is always determined in relation to a species. "Every definition is always universal; for the doctor does not say what is healthy in the case of some individual eye; but either in the case of every eye, or determining some species of eye" (Aristotle 1986a, 97b). That is, the extension of a concept is naturally blocked. In Leibniz's case, however, while we may not be able to provide a complete description of a particular, this is a *de facto*, rather than *de jure*, limitation.³ To this extent, the monad is infinite, in the sense that even the smallest elements of the universe are contained within the concept of each monad. Deleuze therefore writes of Leibniz's definition that: "The inessential refers here not to that which lacks importance but, on the contrary, to

³ "There is no such thing as two individuals indiscernible from each other. An ingenious gentleman of my acquaintance, discoursing with me in the presence of Her Electoral Highness, the Princess Sophia, in the garden of Herrenhausen, thought he could find two leaves perfectly alike. The princess defied him to do it, and he ran all over the garden a long time to look for some; but it was to no purpose. Two drops of water or milk, viewed with a microscope, will appear distinguishable from each other. This is an argument against atoms, which are confuted, as well as a vacuum, by the principles of true metaphysics" (Leibniz and Clarke 2000, 22). Deleuze alludes to this case, noting that the question of difference cannot be defined properly in these empirical terms: "Why, however, do we feel that the problem is badly defined so long as we look for the criterion of a *principium individuationis* in the facts?" (Deleuze 2004, 29). He also rejects Hegel's analysis of the same case, where Hegel argues that "it matters not to us whether or not there are two things (that look) identical, for this is the superficial sense that does not concern us here" (Hegel 1990, 191). Instead, as we shall see, Deleuze wishes to present a middle way between the two approaches, where we trace back empirical differences to a transcendental ground.

the most profound, to the universal matter or continuum from which essences are finally made" (Deleuze 2004, 58). Deleuze makes use of this fact to claim that we can distinguish two varieties of representation: finite and infinite representation. While both understand the world in terms particulars and generalities, finite representation sees blockages of the extensions of concepts as being natural, whereas for infinite representation, such blockages are always only artificial. Aristotle falls into the former category, while Leibniz and Hegel fall into the latter. For Leibniz, therefore, the concept of each monad does have an infinite comprehension, and an extension of 1.

We have noted that each monad contains, in its concept, a series of properties that amount to a complete description of the world. The question, therefore, is how do we differentiate monads from each other, given that each expresses the whole of the universe? While each monad expresses the whole of the universe, each does so from a particular perspective, so while the whole universe is contained in each one, only that which is proximal to the monad is expressed distinctly. Causes which are at some remove from the monad are only perceived confusedly: "Monads are limited, not as to their objects, but with respect to the modifications of their knowledge of them. Monads all go confusedly to infinity, to the whole; but they are limited and differentiated by the degrees of their distinct perceptions" (Leibniz 1989a, §60). Each monad, however, "perceives" (and Leibniz is using the term perceive by analogy to spatial perception) the world from a particular position. This perception can be divided into three possible levels: bare entelechies perceive the world without any awareness, animal souls perceive the world primarily in terms of spatial perception, and minds (such as that of man) in terms of reason. Just as some aspects of the world as we perceive it are distinct and well-defined (those aspects that are near to us), and some are confused (those that are at a distance from us), each monad's perception of the world is partly distinct and partly confused. The concept of each monad thus contains the complete specification of the world as a series of properties, although not all of these properties are clearly perceived by the monad.

Space emerges because the purely intellectual nature of the universe is only perceived confusedly by the monad. When the monad has only an incomplete perception of a substance, its imagination has a tendency to create false unities, much as we perceive the color green, but not the colors blue and yellow of which it is composed. The result of this is that our understanding of the world as spatial only emerges as a confused and incomplete perception of an essentially conceptual reality. On this view, therefore, things (the monads) precede space, which is in no way a real feature of the world. If this is the case,

then Newton's absolute theory of space must be false. A corollary of this is that monads do not have any spatial properties. This does not mean that spatial properties are entirely arbitrary, however. They are what Leibniz calls, "well-founded phenomena." That is, they are analogous to the conceptual properties of monads.

The main point to take from the Leibniz discussion, in terms of representation, is that for Leibniz, all of the properties we encounter in space can be understood purely in conceptual terms. There is nothing that is in principle out of reach of our intellectual understanding of the world. Thus, for Leibniz, it *is* in principle possible for a concept to specify one unique individual, or to have an extension = 1.

5. INCONGRUENT COUNTERPARTS

Kant first introduces the incongruent counterparts arguments in his precritical work, *Concerning the Ultimate Foundation for the Differentiation of Regions in Space* (1768). Here, his aim is to show that the Newtonian view of space is correct. The argument is presented as follows:

Let it be imagined that the first created thing were a human hand, then it must necessarily be either a right hand or a left hand. In order to produce the one a different action of the creative cause is necessary from that, by means of which its counterpart could be produced.

If one accepts the concept of modern, in particular, German philosophers, that space only consists of the external relations of the parts of matter, which exist alongside one another, then all real space would be, in the example used, *that which this hand takes up*. However, since there is no difference in the relations of the parts to each other, whether right hand or left, the hand would be completely indeterminate with respect to such a quality, that is, it would fit on either side of the human body. But this is impossible. (Kant 1968, 42–43)

Kant's point is that the conceptual determination of the object, the hand in this case, as a set of relations between parts, is not sufficient to determine whether the hand is a left hand or a right hand. In both cases, the relations between the parts that make up the hand are identical, and so the hands are also conceptually identical. This presents a serious problem for Leibniz, however, as space is simply a confused perception of conceptual relations between monads. This means that the nature of space should be completely determined by these conceptual relations. The fact that hands are left- or right-handed therefore means that there must be what, as we shall see, Kant calls an "internal difference" that falls outside of the representational paradigm.

We can make this point clearer by noting that the property of handedness is intimately related to the nature of the space in which the object is placed.⁴ If, instead of a hand, we drew the shape of a glove on a two-dimensional plane, it should be clear that there is no way that we could rotate it so as to cover its mirror image. If we consider the same triangle in a three-dimensional space, however, it should be clear that we could flip the glove shape over, thus making it congruent with its mirror image. The dimensionality of space therefore determines whether the counterparts are congruous or incongruent, meaning that handedness is a property of space, and not purely a conceptual relation. For this reason, Kant rejects his earlier Leibnizian interpretation of space in favor of the Newtonian conception.

In Kant's later critical philosophy, space is seen as transcendently ideal, but empirically real. That is, while statements we may make about space may be valid, their validity stems from the fact that we condition experience, rather than because space itself is absolute. This therefore involves a rejection of the notion of Newtonian space. In spite of this fact, although the incongruent counterparts argument does not appear in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, it does make an appearance in the *Prolegomena*. Kant formulates it as follows: "I cannot put such a hand as is seen in the mirror in the place of its original; for if the one was a right hand, then the other in the mirror is a left, and the image of the right ear is a left one, which can never take the place of the former" (Kant 1997, §13). How does this relate to the critical project? Kant's system, and its claims to be able to give us *a priori* knowledge of the world, relies on distinguishing two faculties which operate on the world: the understanding, which is representational, and intuition, which is passive and presentational. The incongruent counterparts argument lays the groundwork for this distinction by showing that space cannot be understood in conceptual terms, and therefore has to be the domain of a different faculty than the understanding: "Now there are no inner differences here that any understanding could merely think; and yet the differences are inner as far as the senses teach, for the left hand cannot, after all, be enclosed within the same boundaries as the right" (Kant 1997, §13). Space is an intuition, or a mode of sensibility, by

⁴ Moebius makes this point in his *On Higher Space*: "It seems remarkable that solid figures can have equality and similarity without having coincidence, while always, on the contrary, with figures in a plane or systems of points on a line equality and similarity are bound with coincidence. The reason may be looked for in this, that beyond the solid space of three dimensions there is no other, none of four dimensions. If there were no solid space, but all space relations were contained in a single plane, then it would be even as little possible to bring into coincidence two equal and similar triangles in which corresponding vertices lie in opposite orders. Only in this way can we accomplish this, namely by letting one triangle make a half revolution around one of its sides or some other line in its plane, until it comes into the plane again" (Moebius 1991, 40).

which we apprehend the world. In the transcendental aesthetic of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant makes two claims about intuition: that it is *a priori*, and that it is nonconceptual. We can see how these two claims fit in with Kant's argument. In this sense, space is *a priori* to the extent that it is presupposed by our knowledge of spatial objects, rather than emerging as a result of them.⁵ Furthermore, space is an intuition to the extent that it differs in kind from conceptual knowledge. The incongruent counterparts argument shows this latter point clearly, and Kant reiterates it by noting that whereas spaces with a smaller extension exist within larger spaces, concepts with a smaller extension fall under concepts of which they are a specification in the form of a hierarchy. So while the conclusion Kant draws from the incongruent counterparts argument changes between the precritical and the critical period, the argument itself, and the claim for a mode of difference which is not a part of representation, remains.⁶

6. THREE FORMS OF DIFFERENCE

One of our initial questions was about whether the world should be understood in terms of particulars and generalities, or whether Deleuze was right to introduce an alternative conceptual scheme in terms of difference and repetition. As we have seen, this question is initially played out in terms of the differences between the accounts of space of Newton and Leibniz. Underlying this dispute was a question about whether the nature of space could be seen as completely determined by conceptual relations. The fact that this question is essentially about what we are capable of thinking, or representing, becomes especially clear once we look at Kant's repurposing of the incongruent counterparts arguments between the precritical and critical writings. To return to

⁵ "Space is not an empirical concept which has been derived from outer experiences. For in order that certain sensations be referred to something outside of me (that is, to something in another region of space from that in which I find myself), and similarly in order that I may be able to represent them as outside and alongside one another, and accordingly as not only different, but in different places, the representation of space must be presupposed" (Kant 1929, A23/B38).

⁶ Earman (1989, 150–52) distinguishes between a conservative and a more radical reading of the reuse of the argument between the precritical and critical writings. The conservative reading sees the renewed use of the argument emerging from the "expansion of Kant's possibility set" to include the possibility of space as an intuition, thus providing an alternative to absolute space as a response to Leibniz. The more radical view would claim that Kant's move into the critical period is motivated by a recognition that a version of the incongruent counterparts argument can also be applied to the absolutist account. While my argument does not rest on this point, the traditional reading seems better supported by textual evidence, as the problems with alternative views of space do not seem to be the sole motivation for the critical project, as is emphasized by Kant's decision not to present the argument from incongruent counterparts in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

the *Port-Royal Logic*, we can see that the fact that objects possess a handedness means that it is impossible for a concept, even if its comprehension is extended to the maximum possible extent, to have an extension equal to 1. We are also in a position now to see how the concept of difference differs from conceptual difference. In order to show this, I want to go through three kinds of difference that we have encountered so far in this paper.

First, there is conceptual difference. This is the kind of difference that can be represented. There is a conceptual difference between a man and a horse in that their concepts have different comprehensions. While rationality may be an essential attribute to man, it is clearly not an essential attribute of horses. They also have different extensions, in that the classes of entities to which they refer do not overlap. The reason why Deleuze considers this to be an inadequate account of difference is that difference only emerges through the method of division. That is, difference only appears as the principle used to divide a prior conceptual identity (the genus), rather than in its own terms. Conceptual difference takes two forms. Not only do we have the kind of difference we find in Aristotle's essentialist notion of difference, but we also have the Leibnizian notion of difference provided by the principle of the identity of indiscernibles. Deleuze glosses this in modern terms as follows: "no two grains of dust are absolutely identical, no two hands have the same distinctive points, no two revolvers score their bullets in the same manner" (Deleuze 2004, 29). Such differences are conceptual, but accidental. They are differences *between* concepts, rather than differences in themselves. In the case of Aristotle's notion of difference, this is clear since difference is introduced by *differentia*, which divide the genus into opposed concepts. This is also the case for Leibniz, as while each monad differs from every other, this is only on the basis of the fact that they relate to the same world. "There are, as it were, just as many different universes (as there are monads), which are, nevertheless, only perspectives on a single one" (Leibniz 1989a, §57). In both cases, the concept of difference is always understood on the basis of a prior identity.

Second, we can see that in actual fact there are differences in the world that cannot be captured by our conceptual understanding, the differences between the incongruent counterparts themselves. Deleuze defines this kind of difference as a form of repetition: "repetition thus appears as difference without a concept, repetition which escapes indefinitely continued conceptual difference" (Deleuze 2004, 15). This claim rests on the fact that repetition relies on two seemingly incompatible aspects. First, repetition requires there be at least two different instances of an object or event, since otherwise, there is nothing to do the repeating. Second, these two instances must be absolutely identical, otherwise the second instance would not

actually be a repetition of the first. These two aspects can be made commensurate by incongruent counterparts, in that while conceptually they are absolutely identical, their nonconceptual determinations allow us to distinguish them from one another. Repetition is therefore possible on the basis of the failure of the principle of the identity of indiscernibles in the case of incongruent counterparts.

There is a third kind of difference, however, which Kant suggests is not relational, and that is the difference that gives rise to the incongruent counterpart. Kant hints at this difference in the early *Regions in Space* essay:

It is already clear from the everyday example of the two hands that the figure of a body can be completely similar to that of another, and that the size of the extension can be, in both, exactly the same; and that yet, an internal difference remains: namely, that the surface that includes the one could not possibly include the other . . . this difference must, therefore, be such as rests on an inner principle. (Kant 1968, 42)

The inner principle that allows internal difference to emerge in the case of Kant's thought is the relation of the incongruent counterpart to space itself, and this remains the same whether space is taken to be absolute, as in Kant's early writings, or transcendental, as we find in his critical writings. Deleuze's claim will be that this is the fundamental limitation of the Kantian project, which he discusses using the mathematical term for handedness, enantiomorphism:

In the case of enantiomorphic bodies, Kant recognized precisely an *internal difference*. However, since it was not a conceptual difference, on his view it could refer only to an *external relation* with extensity as a whole in the form of extensive magnitude. In fact, the paradox of symmetrical objects, like everything concerning right and left, high and low, figure and ground, has an intensive source. (Deleuze 2004, 290–91)

Kant takes the source of nonconceptual difference to be space itself. As his fundamental project is to show how synthetic *a priori* propositions are possible, he has no need to go further and analyze the reason why space has this characteristic, but merely need to note that space is nonconceptual. This allows him to claim that such propositions are possible due to the understanding's operations on intuition. This is, however, only the *appearance* of repetition, or its "figure." In fact, there is a fourth, deeper kind of difference. Deleuze will instead want to provide a transcendental account of the operation of this principle of difference which explains why cases such as left- and right-handedness appear in the first place.

7. THE FOURTH FORM OF DIFFERENCE

This brings us to the final distinction. As we saw, Leibniz provided an account of the origins of space. This account took spatiality to be generated by certain confusions present in the monad's perception of the world. Whilst the concept of each monad contained a complete account of the world, the monad could only perceive this account confusedly, and so it was forced to present the order of things in spatial terms. Space was thus a "well-founded phenomenon," in that it represented the concept, albeit in an inadequate way. We can therefore see Leibniz as providing a genetic account of the actual world of phenomena, showing how the concept expresses itself in spatial terms. Kant rejected such an account on the basis of the fact that the object exceeded representation, or, in other words, was not fully determined by the concept. Leibniz therefore attempts to provide an account of the genesis of the well-founded phenomenon of space, but this account finally fails, as it is unable to account for certain spatial properties such as handedness. Kant's solution is therefore to reject both the notion that space is conceptual, and the notion that one can provide a genetic account of the origin of spatiality.

Deleuze's approach will essentially be to take the middle course between these two possibilities. On the one hand, he will with Kant reject the notion that space emerges as the result of the unfolding of conceptual determinations. He will, however, accept with Leibniz that we need an account of the genesis of space. Rather than space unfolding from a representational principle or concept, therefore, Deleuze will argue that it unfolds from a radically nonconceptual principle. Deleuze thus retains the classical understanding of the concept, but since he argues that it is unable to account for all of the differences that we find in the structure of the object, he argues that we need a new model of how objects are determined that is not structured in terms of subjects and predicates. In order to distinguish this nonconceptual form of determination, he introduces a new term, the Idea.⁷ In this regard, Deleuze reformulates his question concerning the concept of difference as follows: "what is the concept of difference—one which is not reducible to simple conceptual difference, but demands its own Idea, its own singularity at the level of Ideas?" (Deleuze 2004, 30). Such a difference would bear the same genetic relation to the difference between incongruent counterparts as Leibniz's concept of the monad bears to the accidental differences between two grains of dust or two revolvers. It would be the transcendental ground of enantiomorphism.

⁷ Deleuze's introduction of the notion of the Idea is a deliberate reference to both Plato's forms and Kant's notion of the Idea in the transcendental dialectic of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

There are two final questions I want to address. First, what is the structure of an Idea? If Deleuze wishes to replace the model of determination found in conceptual thought with a new account of determination, it is clearly incumbent on him to provide a positive account of what this notion of an Idea is. Second, what is the relation between the concept of difference and difference itself? Answering the first question is at the heart of *Difference and Repetition*, and so here, I only want to run through the conditions that Deleuze claims an Idea must fulfill. Deleuze begins by claiming that “Ideas are multiplicities: every Idea is a multiplicity or variety” (Deleuze 2004, 230). Multiplicity is in turn defined as “an organization belonging to the many as such, which has no need whatsoever of unity in order to form a system” (Deleuze 2004, 230). In order to clarify what Deleuze means by this characterization, he specifies three conditions under which we can talk of an Idea as a multiplicity. First, “it must have neither sensible form nor conceptual signification” (Deleuze 2004, 231). It thus can neither be given in the sense that Kant’s incongruent counterparts are given, nor can it be representational in the way that Leibniz’s concept of the monad was. If the Idea is to be able to ground empirical differences, then it cannot itself be given, ruling out intuition as the basis for the Idea. Similarly, it cannot operate conceptually, since conceptual thought is unable to capture all empirical differences. Second, “these elements (which constitute it) must in effect be determined, but reciprocally, by reciprocal relations that allow no independence whatsoever to subsist” (Deleuze 2004, 231). We can relate this to Kant’s characterization of space as an intuition in the *Critique*:

Now every concept must be thought as a representation which is contained in an infinite number of possible representations (as their common character), and which therefore contains these *under* itself; but no concept, as such, can be thought as containing an infinite number of representations *within* itself. It is in this latter way, however, that space is thought; for all the parts of space coexist *ad infinitum*. (Kant 1929, B40)

If the Idea is to provide an alternative to the forms of determination given by intuition and concepts, it cannot have the structure of either of them. Deleuze’s approach to determination is therefore going to be to suggest that rather than determination operating subsumptively and hierarchically as is the case for judgment (man is necessarily an animal, but an animal is not necessarily man), determination will instead operate reciprocally. While space is presented to us nonhierarchically, it is not presented as determined, since “space is essentially one; the manifold in it, and therefore the general conception of spaces, depends solely on (the introduction of) limitations” (Kant 1929, A25/B39). Parts of space are indeterminate or indifferent to one

another until divided by the introduction of limits. The Idea will once again form the unity of these two categories: the determination of the concept with the unity of intuition. Finally, the Idea must be “actualized in diverse spatio-temporal relationships” (Deleuze 2004, 231), if it is to have explanatory value.

The key issue, therefore, is how we can make sense of this characterization of a determination that is not hierarchical. We can find a clue to this notion of determination in Deleuze's characterization of the Idea of color as a multiplicity,⁸ which is an allusion to Bergson's discussion of color in *The Creative Mind*. Here, Bergson notes that normally we develop a notion such as color by abstracting from a whole series of colors that which is common to them. Only once we are left with that which is common to all of the colors do we have the concept itself. We thus develop a hierarchy of concepts with a smaller extension subsumed under those with a greater extension, with comprehension varying inversely to extension. This standard conceptual approach “really proceeds by gradual extinction of the light which brought out the differences between the colors” (Bergson 1992, 225). The alternative Bergson favors consists in “taking a thousand and one different shades of blue, violet, green, yellow, and red, and, by having them pass through a convergent lens, bringing them to a single point” (225). Rather than having an overarching unity which is then progressively differentiated, here the unity itself is constituted out of the reciprocal interplay of the diverse variety of colors themselves. On Bergson's model, comprehension is not inversely proportional to extension, since the single white light both gives us a notion of color in general whilst maintaining the determinations of all of the colors that make it up. Furthermore, rather than talking of the one x or y , or the many x 's and y 's, where the organization is imposed on the elements, and describes the elements adjectivally, here multiplicity is itself a substantive term. The concept of color here is one that is not oppositional and based on negation, but rather additive. This gives a hint at how the second criterion of the Idea might be met, as here we have an idea that is not hierarchically determined as the concept was, but yet does not collapse into the undifferentiated unity that we found with intuition. Clearly, however, light does have sensible form, or at least can be presented in intuition, and so fails the first criterion of the Idea. Similarly, it is tied to one kind of phenomenon. Bergson's example can therefore at best be seen as an indication of the structure of the Idea. That it

⁸ Compare to, for instance: “The Idea of colour, for example, is like white light which peripetates in itself the genetic elements and relations of all the colours, but is actualised in the diverse colours with their respective spaces; or the Idea of sound, which is also like white noise” (Deleuze 2004, 258), or, “the Idea of colour is an n -dimensional, continuous, defined multiplicity. Colour—or rather, the Idea of colour—is a three-dimensional multiplicity” (Deleuze 2004, 230).

is intended to apply more generally is clear from Bergson's further metaphorical use of the example of light: "The object of metaphysics is to recapture in individual existences and to follow even to the source from which it emanates the particular ray which, while it confers on each one its own particular shade, attaches it by that means to the universal light" (Bergson 1992, 225–26). This account therefore sees metaphysics as inquiring into the nonconceptual determinations which govern the spatio-temporal nature of actual existents. Bergson is here, therefore, prefiguring the kind of differential genetic account that Deleuze will aim to give, and much of the work of *Difference and Repetition* will involve attempting to show how such an account of determination can be made to meet the first and third criteria of the Idea.

8. CONCLUSION: THE CONCEPT OF DIFFERENCE

I want to conclude by returning to the question of the concept of difference. Given that difference is now understood as nonconceptual, how is it possible to have a concept of difference? As Deleuze writes, "difference is not and cannot be thought in itself, so long as it is subject to the requirements of representation" (Deleuze 2004, 330). Given that conceptual thought cannot capture the structure of difference, it seems as if the possibility of a *concept* of difference is ruled out. Given the care with which Deleuze distinguishes concepts from Ideas, it cannot simply be the case that Deleuze is seeking to replace a concept of difference with an Idea of difference. The interpretive problem in reading *Difference and Repetition* is therefore to determine why, with the alternative account of determination offered by the Idea, Deleuze reiterates the need for a concept of difference at all. Here, however, we can make use of another Kantian concept. Deleuze notes that "representation is a site of transcendental illusion" (334). This is the illusion that everything that is determinable is determinable under the form of judgment (the claim that lies at the heart of Leibniz's metaphysics). In the *Critique*, Kant deals with a similar transcendental illusion that emerges from reason's task of systematizing knowledge. Reason operates by determining the conditions (or premises) (Kant 1929, A331/B387) of conditioned judgments in much the same way that we can proceed to more and more general (and universal) statements in the Aristotelian hierarchy. Now, according to Kant, while reason is justified in the task of seeking the condition for any given conditioned, it assumes as an objective principle that "if the conditioned is given, the entire sum of conditions, and consequently the absolutely unconditioned . . . is also given" (A409/B436). This principle is valid as a subjective precept, as it allows us to "advance towards completeness by an ascent to ever higher conditions" (Kant 1929, A309/B365). When reason confuses the subjective precept with an

objective principle, however, we ask questions of the world as a whole such as whether it has a beginning. As not all of the conditions for phenomena are accessible to us, the question leads to antinomy. Reason therefore goes wrong by making the false assumption that the totality of what there is can be understood in terms of phenomena. In order to prevent us from forming such a totality, Kant introduces the limit concept of the noumenon, which is simply negatively determined as “the entirely *indeterminate* concept of an intelligible entity, namely of a something in general outside our sensibility” (B307). As such, it prevents us from forming a concept of totality by representing the fact that some conditions cannot be determined within the phenomenal world. Deleuze’s concept of difference operates in a similar way, in that simply by reference to a domain beyond judgment (by “demanding an Idea”), it prevents us from falling for the transcendental illusion that all determinations can be captured by judgment. In this sense, Deleuze asserts that “difference is not phenomenon but the noumenon closest to the phenomenon” (Deleuze 2004, 280). The “demand” of a concept of difference for an Idea, therefore, is what prevents us from seeing all difference as determined in accordance with judgment. The concept of difference is therefore what allows us to continue to think in conceptual terms without seeing conceptual thought as capable of capturing all of the determinations of the object.

While the Kantian concept of the noumenon is clearly at play in Deleuze’s analysis, there is also a more positive moment that allows him to put forward his genetic account of the determination of the object. In fact, the situation is, I think, closer to Kant’s account of incongruent counterparts themselves, which are “intelligible through no concept alone, but only through the relation to left hand and right hand, which refers immediately to intuition” (Kant 1997, §13). In this case, therefore, conceptual thought is only capable of capturing the difference by referring to something outside of itself. We *can* have a concept of handedness, but only on the basis of a reference beyond the conceptual to intuition. In a similar manner, Deleuze claims that “something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*” (Deleuze 2004, 176). Just as with the concept of handedness, the concept of difference refers to something outside of it, but in this case, this encounter is “not (with) the given but that by which the given is given” (176): the Idea. Whereas for Kant, we do not have access to the realm beyond appearances, for Deleuze, thinking in terms of the Idea *would* give us access to the genetic conditions that underlie the objects we find around us, much as Leibniz believed we had access, albeit imperfectly, to the concept of the monad. Contra Leibniz, these genetic conditions would not themselves be conceptually specifiable, as Kant’s argument shows the impossibility of completely specifying the object in conceptual terms. An account

of how such an encounter is possible would entail a detailed analysis of Deleuze's theory of the faculties, but at least in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze sees the work of art as providing this kind of access to the conditions of the given itself (and we might here cite Paul Klee's dictum that the role of the artist is "not to render the visible, but to render visible"⁹). Deleuze therefore sets up a very different relationship between conceptuality and Ideas than that found in Kant. For Kant, Ideas are *conceptual* structures that refer to entities that cannot be encountered in experience, and therefore cannot be known (such as the world, the soul, and God). They can, nonetheless be thought, and, insofar as they perform a regulative function in allowing us to systematize our knowledge of the world. For Deleuze, Ideas do not have a conceptual structure, and so, insofar as they allow us to think the conditions of genesis of difference, we cannot think these conditions in a conceptual manner. On this basis, the concept of difference will emerge through the reference to a fundamentally nonconceptual element which determines its content, and prevents us falling into the transcendental illusion that everything can be captured by the structure of judgment. This also explains why for Deleuze philosophy has to be understood as the process of "forming, inventing, and fabricating concepts" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 2),¹⁰ since by reworking our concepts, on the one hand, we forestall the possibility of our concept of difference becoming sedimented and losing its reference beyond itself. On the other hand, conceptual thought is inherently inadequate to represent the content of the encounter. This means that our concept of the encounter, although determined by the Idea, will never be able to give an exhaustive account of it. Our characterization of the Idea will therefore always have to be creative, and will always be provisional. In spite of this, our characterization, provided it retains its connection to an outside of thought, will not be arbitrary. To conclude with a quotation from Nietzsche cited

⁹ Deleuze introduces this dictum in both *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 377), and *Francis Bacon: the Logic of Sensation* (Deleuze 2005, 40). Deleuze's account of the work of art in *Difference and Repetition* is as follows: "When it is claimed that works of art are immersed in a virtuality, what is being invoked is not some confused determination but the completely determined structure formed by its genetic differential elements, its 'virtual' or 'embryonic' elements. The elements, varieties of relations, and singular points coexist in the work or object, without it being possible to designate a point of view privileged over others, a centre which would unify other centers" (Deleuze 2004, 260).

¹⁰ While this notion of concept creation is most clearly present in the later works, we must be careful to note that there is also a reworking of the notion of concept itself in Deleuze's work with Guattari that means that any extrapolation between his early and late work must be tentative. In spite of this, Deleuze's statement in his final work does make explicit a theme which runs throughout his writings. In *Difference and Repetition*, for instance, he makes the parallel claim as follows: "To think is to create—there is no other creation—but to create is first of all to engender 'thinking' in thought" (Deleuze 2004, 185).

approvingly by Deleuze and Guattari, we “must no longer accept concepts as a gift, nor merely purify and polish them, but must first *make* and *create* them, present them and make them convincing” (Nietzsche 1968, 409).

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