

PHILOSOPHIZING THE DOUBLE-BIND
Deleuze reads Nietzsche

I say unto you: one must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star. I say unto you: you still have chaos in yourselves.

---Nietzsche, "Zarathustra's Prologue"

Much has been made of the "failure" of the critique of metaphysics. Habermas and others have argued that this critique presupposes concepts and argumentative strategies that are at the core of the tradition of metaphysics itself, and thus the critique fails to overcome this tradition.¹ This criticism is not new. It was Heidegger's criticism of Nietzsche's inversion and reversal of Platonism, and it is commonly found in the Platonic dialogues when Socrates' interlocutors end up contradicting their initial position, thereby revealing that they ultimately affirm the very position they had been criticizing (e.g., Thrasymachus, *Republic* 349b-350c).

Although the critique of metaphysics, at least with Nietzsche, does claim to be reversing the tradition of metaphysics since Plato, what is being criticized or reversed is, we will show, the notion of reversal itself. What is therefore being criticized is the very premise upon which

1. In *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, translated by Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1990), Habermas cites Derrida's reference to Heidegger's claim that the Nietzschean reversal "and demolition remains dogmatic and, like all reversals, a captive of that metaphysical edifice which it professes to overthrow" (p. 166). Habermas then claims that such a claim is equally valid of Heidegger and Derrida themselves. In particular, he feels that they are each within "the constraints of the paradigm of the philosophy of the subject," a paradigm they claim to be criticizing.

For more criticisms along these lines, see Ferry and Renaut, *French Philosophy of the Sixties* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1990); and Ferry and Renaut, eds., *Pourquoi nous ne sommes pas nietzschéens* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1991), in particular Vincent Descombes' article "Le moment Français de Nietzsche" (pp. 96-128). And see: Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991).

Habermas's critical strategy acquires its force - in particular, the faith in oppositions, or the logic of either/or, whereby either one opposes and reverses the tradition completely, or they remain stuck in this tradition. What we would like to show is that a critique need not presuppose or utilize the logic of either/or; consequently, a critique need not be a reversal, inversion, or opposition to that which is critiqued, nor need it be a Kantian styled critique which reveals 'conditions of possibility'. We will sketch, rather, an understanding of critique as that which neither transcends nor resolves binary oppositions (*à la* Hegel), nor attempts to reveal and restore a pre-existing order and realm of ideas (*à la* Plato and Kant); in short, we will set forth the notion of a critique without redemption.

To address this issue we will discuss, in the first section, the manner in which Deleuze reads Nietzsche's reversal of the tradition; more particularly, we will analyze Deleuze's understanding of will to power as the non-identifiable differential element. In the second section we will trace the consequences of this reading by placing Nietzsche and Deleuze's writings in the context of the concept of a double-bind. This concept, as developed by Gregory Bateson, was to have a profound influence on Deleuze and Guattari's work. More importantly, however, this theme can already be seen in the work of Nietzsche, for in Nietzsche one finds a critique which does not depend upon the logic of either/or, but instead resists this logic. And in resisting this logic this critique affirms the both/and which eludes the logic of either/or, and hence eludes the double bind which presupposes it.² In the final section we will compare our reading of Deleuze's Nietzschean critique with the work of Jacques Derrida and Phillippe Lacoue-Labarthe. This should show that whereas Derrida and Lacoue-Labarthe leave largely unanswered the question of how interpretive critique ought to proceed, we will see that Deleuze and Guattari are very specific and straightforward in answering this question. In short, they set forth a protocol which calls for a critique which affirms and orders the "chaos in oneself" in a way which prevents this chaos from dying.

2. For example, if a father tells his son that he ought to get angry with him, and then gives strong indications that such anger would not be allowed, the double bind of this situation depends upon the impossibility of doing both. The two actions are mutually exclusive: *either* do one *or* the other, but not both, and yet the double bind is precisely the demand to do both.

I

The "chaos in oneself," Nietzsche argues, needs to be ordered: "Not 'to know' but to schematize - to impose upon chaos as much regularity and form as our practical needs require."³ And what our practical needs require is that the strange and unfamiliar be reduced to what is familiar and the same: "only when we see things coarsely and made equal do they become calculable and usable to us [i.e., conform to our "practical needs"]." The predictable, regular, and ordered is therefore necessary for life; and Nietzsche will again stress this same point in *The Gay Science*, arguing that our need for knowledge is nothing more than a need for the familiar, for the same,⁴ but since Nietzsche also believes that "nothing is really equal,"⁵ nothing is really the same, the schematism thus comes to be viewed as nothing more than the imposition of a useful fiction (or, as Nietzsche will often refer to it, a "necessary lie"). And in imposing such fictions, Nietzsche argues that "no pre-existing 'idea' was here at work."⁶ The categories, ideas, etc., under which what comes to be known are subsumed, are themselves the *result* of the schematism, not something which *precedes* it. As Heidegger puts it in his discussion of the "fictioning essence of reason," a reason which fictions: "That which is fictioned in such a fiction is categories. That which properly appears

3. Friedrich Nietzsche. *Will to Power*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), 278, as well as the following quote. This fragment is dated March-June, 1888.

4. *Gay Science*, 300-301: "What is it that common people take for knowledge? What do they want when they want 'knowledge'? Nothing more than this: Something strange is to be reduced to something familiar...Look, isn't our need for knowledge precisely this need for the familiar, the will to uncover under everything strange, unusual, and questionable something that no longer disturbs us? Is it not the *instinct of fear* that bids us to know?"

5. *The Gay Science*, §111.

6. *Will to Power*, 278.

to us and shows itself under its aspect: this same thingness of the thing - what in Greek would be referred to as 'Idea' - thus created, is originally fictioned."⁷

With Nietzsche's interpretation of the schematism, his reversal or inversion of Plato becomes more clear. First, for Nietzsche, unlike Plato, the ideas (*eidōs*) do not pre-exist their being applied to the realm of practical, day-to-day necessity; they are a consequence of this necessity, of our "practical needs." The fictioning process is an expression and characteristic of life. For Plato, on the other hand, the fictioning process transcends life; thus, when Phaedrus "tells the myth of the descent of the 'idea' from a place above heaven, *hyperouranios topos*, into the human soul," Heidegger notes that "this myth is...none other than the Greek interpretation of the fictioning essence of reason."⁸ The fictioning of the "ideas," in other words, occurs in the supersensuous realm "above heaven." It is therefore the relationship between the sensuous and the supersensuous which Nietzsche reverses, and it is precisely this reversal which Heidegger finds problematic:

But what does that [Nietzsche's inversion] mean - the sensuous stands above all? It means that it is the true, it is genuine being. If we take the inversion strictly in this sense, then the vacant niches of the "above and below" are preserved, suffering only a change in occupancy, as it were. But as long as the "above and below" define the formal structure of Platonism, Platonism in its essence perdures. The inversion does not achieve what it must...namely, an overcoming of Platonism in its very foundations. Such overcoming succeeds only when the "above" in general is set aside as such, when the former positing of something true and desirable no longer arises, when the true world - in the sense of the ideal - is expunged.⁹

7. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, vol. I, 584 (German edition). Quoted by Lacoue-Labarthe in "Typography," in *Typography: Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics*, edited by Christopher Fynsk (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 70.

8. *Ibid.*, 585. Quoted by Lacoue-Labarthe in "Typography," 71.

9. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, vol. I. Translated by David Farrell Krell (San Francisco: Harper Books, 1979), 201.

What Heidegger believed Nietzsche failed to overcome is the very opposition between an “above” and a “below”; he left this oppositional, metaphysical structure intact. But did he? Heidegger grants that Nietzsche did come to question this faith in opposing values, but that he did so "only in his final creative year (1888)."¹⁰ However, Nietzsche was well aware of this faith in opposing values, and in fact criticized, in *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), the fundamental metaphysical "faith in opposite values," suggesting that "maybe" these opposites are "insidiously related," or even one in essence (§2). And in *Human All-too-Human* (1878, §1) he calls for a "chemistry of moral feelings," a chemistry which *might* find that the glorious and the logical are "insidiously related" to their “supposed” opposites, to the despised and the illogical, "maybe even one with them in essence. Maybe!" One must therefore question Heidegger's claim that Nietzsche's inversion and reversal of Platonism “means” that the sensuous "is the true...genuine being [as *opposed* to a false and counterfeit being]."¹¹

But what is this inversion, or, to put it another way, how does Nietzsche avoid binary oppositions (e.g., supersensuous/sensuous, appearance/reality)? His answer: "will to power." It is the will to power which imposes order on the chaos or frenzy in oneself, and it does this not by virtue of a pre-established truth or binary opposition, but rather it is this will which is constitutive of, or fictions, these oppositions and truths; or, as Nietzsche puts it, it is the will to power that idealizes:

10. Ibid., 202. Heidegger claims this questioning first occurred in a section in *Twilight of the Idols* entitled "How the 'True World' Finally Became a Fable: the History of an Error." In this section Nietzsche claims that not only is the “true world” to be abolished, but "along with the true world we have also abolished the apparent one!" With this move, Heidegger believes that Nietzsche conducts himself "for the first time into the brilliance of full daylight...Thus the onset of the final stage of his own philosophy" (p. 208). It is for this reason that Heidegger devotes much of his long work on Nietzsche to an analysis of the late notes to *Will to Power*, the notes of his "final creative year."

11. This is in effect Derrida's criticism of Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche: "Nietzsche has written what he has written. He has written that writing - and first of all his own - is not originally subordinate to logos and to truth." *Of Grammatology*. Translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 19.

If there is to be art, if there is to be any aesthetic doing and seeing, one physiological condition is indispensable: frenzy....What is essential in such frenzy is *the feeling of increased strength and fullness*. Out of this feeling [i.e., will to power] one lends to things, one forces them to accept from us, one violates them - this process is called idealizing.¹²

By idealizing, Nietzsche does not mean a process of "discounting and subtracting what is petty and inconsequential," but rather "a tremendous drive to bring out the main features so that the others disappear in the process." A decision, an aesthetic differentiation, is made, and it is the dionysian frenzy and chaos in oneself that makes this possible. This dionysian frenzy, with its "increased strength and fullness," is the medium of this decision, the condition for this difference (i.e., difference between the "main features" and the "others" that disappear). And when referring to this state of "increased strength and fullness," a strength which is discharged or expended as the medium of a decision or difference, Nietzsche will most often refer to this as "will to power."¹³ Consequently, "will to power" is to be understood as the medium or condition which makes decisions (i.e., differentiation) possible. "Will to power," as Deleuze puts it, is "the genealogical element of force, both differential and genetic."¹⁴ And what is differentiated are forces, the forces that are part of the "feeling of increased strength and fullness." The "main features" are thus forced to the fore, while the "others" are forced to disappear, and hence the decisions or differences that are made possible by will to power are decisions and differences of force.

12. *Twilight of the Idols*, p. 518 (emphasis added).

13. See, for example, *Beyond Good and Evil* (§13): "A living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength - life itself is *will to power*..."

14. Gilles Deleuze. *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 50.

The importance of “force” within Nietzsche's thought has long been recognized, at least since Heidegger.¹⁵ Deleuze, however, does not follow Heidegger in identifying force as simply another name for will to power¹⁶; rather, Deleuze argues that “will to power” is the *non-identifiable* differential element which allows for the identification of forces and the evaluation of the differences between them (e.g., active and reactive, main feature, etc.), and yet “will to power” is not something separate from these forces, something which “lacks” force, or something that acts from above, so to speak (i.e., transcends these forces); on the contrary, as differential element “will to power” “inheres or subsists,” to use a phrase of Deleuze's,¹⁷ *within* forces, but it is not to be identified with these forces - “will to power” is non-identifiable.

This notion of a non-identifiable differential element which is perhaps the most “central” notion of Deleuze's work, and he will use a number of different terms throughout his writings to refer to it: “singularity,” “aleatory point,” “event,” “inclusive disjunction,” “incorporeal transformation,” and “becoming-x” (e.g., “becoming-animal,” “becoming-woman,” “becoming-imperceptible”). In *Logic of Sense*, for example, he claims that an “event,” as with “will to power,” is neither separable from actual bodies or states of affairs (i.e., forces), it “inheres or subsists” in them, nor is it to be identified with them. It forever eludes such identification:

With every event, there is indeed the present moment of its actualization, the moment in which the event is embodied in a state of affairs, an individual, or a person, the moment we designate by saying 'here, the moment has come'. The future and the past of the event are only evaluated with respect to this definitive present. On the other hand, there is the future and past of the event considered in itself,

15. See *Nietzsche*, vol. II, 86: “What is the pervasive character of the world? The answer is: ‘force.’”

16. *Ibid.*, 87: “What Nietzsche calls ‘force’ becomes clear to him in later years as ‘will to power.’”

17. Gilles Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, translated by Mark Lester (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 228. Deleuze is speaking of “sense” subsisting or inhering in propositions and states of affairs in this context, but for him sense is an event, and thus the same applies for events more generally.

sidestepping each present, being free of the limitations of a state of affairs, impersonal, pre-individual, neutral.¹⁸

The “event” thus has, as Deleuze notes, a "double structure." An event is not separable from the “present” of some body or state of affairs, it inheres or subsists in them, and yet an event eludes this present, is simultaneously past and future. Will to power, likewise, is "never separable from particular, determined forces, from their quantities, qualities and directions,"¹⁹ but, Deleuze cautions, "inseparable does not mean identical." Will to power is *both* inseparable from particular, identifiable, interpretable forces, *and* as the non-identifiable element which allows for this identification and interpretation, it “itself” eludes identification. This is the double structure of will to power, its "both/and," or it is will to power as “event.”

The double structure of will to power follows, Deleuze argues, from Nietzsche's own emphasis upon becoming, whereby becoming is the condition for knowledge but is itself unknowable. That much of Nietzsche's writings were concerned with stressing the role of becoming over the role of being is common knowledge. Claims to this effect abound: "Heraclitus will remain eternally right with his assertion that being is an empty fiction"²⁰; "...everything has evolved; there are no eternal facts nor are there any absolute truths"²¹; "It is of time and becoming that the best parables should speak: let them be a praise and a justification of all impermanence"²²; "The character of the world in a state of becoming as incapable of formulation, as ‘false’, as ‘self-contradictory’."²³ But what is perhaps unique to Deleuze's discussion of this theme is the stress he places on the “self-contradictory” nature of becoming, or the double structure of becoming. In *Logic of Sense*, for example, Deleuze claims that there is

18. Ibid., 151.

19. *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 50.

20. *Twilight of the Idols*, 481.

21. *Human, all-too-Human*, translated by Marion Faber and Stephen Lehmann (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 15.

22. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* ("Of the Blessed Isles"), in *The Portable Nietzsche*, pp. 198-9.

23. *Will to Power*, no. 517.

a simultaneity of becoming whose characteristic is to elude the present...becoming does not tolerate the separation or the distinction of before and after, or of past and future. It pertains to the essence of becoming to move and pull in both directions at once: Alice does not grow without shrinking, and vice versa.²⁴

The reference to Alice is to Alice in *Through the Looking Glass*, and when "Alice becomes larger" she becomes larger than she was and is yet smaller than she becomes. Or, as Deleuze puts it, "she is not bigger and smaller at the same time. She is larger now; she was smaller before."²⁵ The claim is thus not that Alice *is*, at some "present" moment, bigger and smaller at the same time, but rather that in becoming larger she is simultaneously smaller than she becomes. Becoming entails this double structure, this being pulled in both directions at once, and this "at once" is not an identifiable, present moment, but is a "self-contradictory" moment which will forever "elude the present."²⁶

As that which forever eludes the present, by being non-identifiable and "self-contradictory," becoming also eludes being "known," at least if knowledge is assumed to be a manner of grasping and identifying something. And this is precisely what Nietzsche, after stating that becoming is "self-contradictory," claims: "Knowledge and becoming exclude one another."²⁷ But if we are to get on with our lives we must have "knowledge," or the strange and unfamiliar (i.e., becoming as "self-contradictory") must be reduced to the habitual and the familiar (i.e., being as

24. *Logic of Sense*, p. 1.

25. Ibid.

26. It is for this reason that the "both/and" is not to be understood as being simultaneously two things at once, whereby the difference between the two is overcome; rather, and as this is put in *Anti-Oedipus*, translated by Robert Hurly, Mark Seem, and Helen Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), it is not a matter of being "both at once, but each of the two as the terminal point of a distance over which he glides" (p. 76). This gliding is precisely becoming, a being pulled in both directions at once which maintains the difference between these two directions.

27. *Will to Power*, no. 517, 280.

non-contradictory). "Consequently," Nietzsche continues, "there must first of all be a will to make knowable, a kind of becoming must itself create the deception of beings."²⁸ This will is the "will to power": "To impose upon becoming the character of being: that is the supreme will to power."²⁹ Yet as "a kind of becoming" will to power must itself be "self-contradictory," or have the double structure of being simultaneously pulled in two directions at once, and indeed this is what Deleuze claims is the case. The will to power is simultaneously pulled toward becoming *both* affirmative *and* negative, becoming and being, chance and necessity.

The will which wills and affirms "being," for example, the "will to make knowable," is for Nietzsche a *negative* will. This will affirms being, it says yes to being, yet it simultaneously *negates* becoming, and negates it in order to have knowledge; but since the will to power, even the "will to make knowable," is a "kind of becoming," this will consequently negates itself. It is a will directed against itself, or, as Nietzsche puts it, "the condemnation of life is only a value judgment of life..."³⁰ And with this Nietzsche concludes that this condemnation is symptomatic of a "declining, weakened, weary, condemned life." This is a will and life that does not have the "strength of spirit"³¹ to endure the "truth" of itself - i.e., the "truth" of becoming. Consequently, this is a will that simply reacts to and affirms the results of a fundamental negation (i.e., it affirms beings as negated becomings), and thus this affirmation is not, Deleuze argues, an affirmation of strength, or even affirmation which affirms what *is*. This is the affirmation of the ass in *Zarathustra* (IV, "The Awakening"): "He carries our burden, he took upon himself the form of a servant, he is the patient of heart and never says No."³² In other words, as a result of negating its own becoming, the ass's "Yea-Yuh" and affirmation does not know how to say "no" to this fundamental negation (i.e., nihilism). The ass's "Yea-Yuh" reacts to, or is a servant of, the consequence of this negation (i.e.,

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid., no. 617, p. 330.

30. *Twilight of the Idols*, p. 490.

31. *Beyond Good and Evil* (p. 49): the "strength of a spirit should be measured according to how much of the 'truth' one could still barely endure..."

32. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 424.

the affirmation of “being,” “reality”), or, as Deleuze puts it, “he always answers yes, but answers yes each time nihilism opens the conversation.”³³

But the will to power is not simply pulled in the direction of becoming a negating will. It is also simultaneously pulled toward becoming an affirming will, and that which is affirmed is will to power itself, or, since will to power is a kind of becoming, it is the affirmation of becoming. Furthermore, since “the world [and Nature] viewed from inside...would be ‘will to power’ and nothing else,” the affirmation of will to power is thus the affirmation of all that *is* - i.e., being as a whole. However, because the will to power is the non-identifiable medium which evaluates, affirms, and wills, it itself can only be affirmed if another will affirms it. Thus, Nietzsche has a conception of being, Deleuze argues, but this being entails a “double affirmation”: “It is primary affirmation (becoming) which is being, but only as the object of the second affirmation. The two affirmations constitute the power of affirming as a whole.”³⁴ Dionysian affirmation, in order to be raised to the level of being, must itself be affirmed, and for this reason Deleuze feels Nietzsche had to discuss not only Dionysus's affirmation, but also Ariadne's affirmation of Dionysus. This second affirmation is a repetition or recurrence of Dionysus's affirmation, but this is not a repetition of an identifiable, static “being,” - i.e., repetition of the same. Ariadne's repetition is also not a repetition that repeats at some “present” moment something that has already happened in the past (as habits and memories do³⁵). The will to power as Dionysian affirmation, as becoming, forever eludes the present, and hence Ariadne's affirmation repeats that which is timeless, or that which cannot be understood in terms of the passing of “present” moments into the past. Ariadne's repetition is a recurrence of the timeless and eternal - it is “eternal recurrence,” and for this reason Nietzsche

33. *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 182.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 186.

35. Nietzsche critiques/reverses Plato on both these issues. He wants to find both the singular and unique creation which underlies habits which come merely to repeat this act, whereas Plato, in *The Republic* for example, sought to replace bad habits by good habits (See *Republic*, 401b, and *Human, all-too-Human*, p. 206, for Nietzsche's critique of habits); and Nietzsche also argued for the necessity of forgetting, whereas Plato endorses a theory of recollection (See *Meno*, 82a, and *The Gay Science*, p. 41, for Nietzsche's critique).

claims that the eternal return "is the closest approximation of a world of becoming to a world of being."³⁶ Becoming is what *is*, but only through the eternal return of a second will which affirms it, or through the "sacred 'Yes'...[wherein] the spirit now wills his own will."³⁷

But what is left for interpretation to do in the wake of the eternal return, or with the repetition of that which is non-identifiable and forever eludes the "present"? To identify a "proper" standard or task for interpretation would be to run counter to the very claim that what is crucial for any interpretive, evaluative task is precisely that which is non-identifiable and "improper" - i.e., the differential element. Are we left with relativism? On the one hand, no, we are not left with relativism, for the weight of the criticism which accuses a position of relativism resides in a faith in objective standards, or a faith in an either/or (either objective or relative); but the position we have been discussing is critical of this very either/or, and thus would accuse the objectivist critic of "enlightenment blackmail."³⁸ On the other hand, this response seems to leave the question of interpretation, or the question of how a philosophical discourse is to proceed, unanswered. But there is indeed an answer to these questions, and the answer, put briefly, is will to

36. *Will to Power*, no. 617, p. 330. Quoted by Deleuze (ibid.).

37. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* ("Of the Three Metamorphoses").

38. This phrase is from Foucault, but it should be noted that Richard Bernstein makes use of this notion in his recent book *The New Constellation* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991). He also notes, and I will echo this, that despite the poststructuralist's emphasis upon a "both/and" which eludes the constraints of the enlightenment blackmail's "either/or," one "cannot avoid asking...[regarding the poststructuralist critique]...'critique in the name of what?'" (p. 318). For example, Bernstein argues that Foucault's critique implicitly affirms, or is in the name of an "ascetic-aesthetic mode of ethical life," but that he never says why such a life is "desirable" (p. 164), or why it should be affirmed. Bernstein calls for this type of affirmation, but he recognizes the necessity of a "double attitude," or what I would prefer to call a "double bind," which calls both for the necessity of affirmation and the recognition "that any affirmation can be called into question" (p. 318). I am very sympathetic to Bernstein's position - one could even say that he calls for a critique without redemption - but there are important differences. For example, Deleuze will be seen, in the final section of this essay, to have a response to Bernstein's question - "critique in the name of what?" - although Derrida (as Bernstein is correct to note) and Lacoue-Labarthe do not.

power. To clarify this, we will further elaborate the “double structure” of will to power as that which conditions the logic of binary oppositions (either/or), and hence the double bind. We will first refer to Gregory Bateson's theory of the double bind. Bateson has had an important influence on Deleuze's work, and this might explain why the behavioral consequences of the double bind Bateson cites are so similar to what Deleuze believes to be the philosophical consequences of the double bind, consequences that delineate how philosophy *ought* to proceed.

II

Bateson argues that a double bind consists of two injunctions. The first or primary injunction says that one must or must not do so and so; the second injunction is more general, or more "abstract," and it conflicts with the first. For example, a mother might tell her son not to do so and so, but then might, by her more general behavior - i.e., gestures, intonation, or other non-verbal means of communicating - tell him not to submit to her prohibitions. Regardless what the son does, therefore, he will be in the wrong.³⁹ Subsequently, Bateson argues that to defend himself from such a situation, this person is likely to choose one of several alternative responses to this inability to judge what a person “really” means, what Bateson refers to as the ability to discern the "metacommunicative level," the level where we are "able to comment directly or indirectly on an expression." Most of the responses to this failure Bateson claims are pathological: e.g., paranoia, when the person assumes that what is “really” meant is ultimately harmful to him; hebephrenia, when the person gives up on attempting to distinguish between levels of meaning and hence either takes everything literally or takes nothing seriously; catatonia, when the person detaches from external communication and withdraws into internal processes; and even schizophrenia where

39. Bateson describes the following example in "Toward a theory of Schizophrenia," in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 213.: "if he responds to his mother's simulated affection, her anxiety will be aroused and she will punish him....if he does not make overtures of affection, she will feel that this means she is not a loving mother and her anxiety will be aroused. Therefore, she will either punish him for withdrawing or make overtures to the child to insist that he demonstrate that he loves her." But if he does this, obviously, he will arouse her anxieties and be punished; hence the "no-win" situation of the double bind.

hallucinations and delusions are *created* to resolve the double bind.⁴⁰ Not all consequences of a double bind, however, are pathological. Bateson notes that just as the schizophrenic responds to the double bind by creating hallucinations, delusions, etc., so too, he claims, can this creativity be used as a means of resisting pathological consequences. Bateson observes "that if this pathology can be warded off or resisted, the total experience [of the double bind] may promote creativity."⁴¹ Rather than submit or succumb to the "pain and maladjustment" of the "no-win" double bind, the resistance to this pain and maladjustment can be creative, a creativity which actualizes this pain while being counter to it; or, to put it another way, it "counteractualizes" this pain.⁴² Thus, although the double bind can result in the failure of communicative interaction, wherein either it collapses into being nothing other than a self-referring threat (paranoia), or it disrupts conventional forms of communication to the point where it no longer refers (schizophrenia); it can also be circumvented with the creation of new forms of communication, new conventions, that can re-open the lines of communication.

This creative response to the double bind is not simply a phenomena of individuals, but is one of cultures as well. In Bateson's analysis of Balinese culture, for example,⁴³ he claims that their cultural interactions are greatly different from traditional cultures of the West. Bateson claims that

40. As an example of the latter, Bateson cites an experiment of Erik Erickson's. Erickson was "able to produce a hallucination by first inducing catalepsy in the subject's hand [through hypnosis] and then saying, 'There is no conceivable way in which your hand can move, yet when I give the signal, it must move.'...When Erickson gives the signal, the subject hallucinates the hand moved, or hallucinates himself in a different place and therefore the hand was moved" (223).

41. "Double Bind," 278.

42. Bateson cites 'play therapy' as one means of working through, or "counteractualizing," the effects of the double bind (See "A Theory of Play and Fantasy," in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*). Bateson also notes that the double bind can be used against itself, and cites a therapeutic situation in which Frieda Fromm-Reichmann placed her client into a double bind in order to engage her in the therapeutic process; and once engaged the client was then able to confront the symptoms which resulted from her initial double bind situation (i.e., she counteractualized them).

43. See "Bali: The Value System of a Steady State," in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 107-27.

in the West cultural/individual forces and tensions are built up to a point where there is a release of tension, or a return to calm, order, and stability. This usually entails either some climactic release of tension, after which the intensity is greatly reduced (Bateson cites orgasm as an example), or some power or force intervenes from outside to restrain the build-up of intensity (e.g., government intervention). The Balinese, on the other hand, are confronted with a double bind: they *both* demand order and stability, *and* demand that the instability, intensity, and dynamics of forces be maintained from *within*, and thus their cultural interactions reflect an effort to maintain stability while not allowing for a climactic resolution, nor for a restraining *outside* force.⁴⁴ The Balinese response to this challenge, or to this double bind, is the creation of what Bateson refers to as a "plateau of intensity" (p. 113). For example, rather than building up sexual intensity to a climax and release of tension, the Balinese substitute a plateau of intensity which is maintained and stabilized without release (i.e., without orgasm); and with quarrels, to take another example, rather than resolving them, two men "will register their quarrel [formally], agreeing that whichever speaks to the other shall pay a fine or make an offering to the gods" (p. 113). This is not, Bateson observes, a means of resolving the hostility between the two, but rather a means of stabilizing it, or a recognition and maintaining of this hostility. The Balinese thus do not attempt to resolve the build-up of tension by transcending it and bringing it to a close, whether from within or from without, but they maintain a "plateau of intensity" from within, a plateau without resolution.

With this notion of a "plateau of intensity," the influence of Bateson on Deleuze (and Guattari) becomes clear. In fact, the very title of Deleuze and Guattari's companion volume to *Anti-Oedipus*, *Thousand Plateaus (Mille Plateaux)*, is indebted to Bateson's discussion, a debt they acknowledge:

A plateau is always in the middle, not at the beginning or the end. A rhizome is made of plateaus. Gregory Bateson uses the word "plateau" to designate something

44. Ibid., 119-20. Bateson points out that the Balinese do not have an understanding of "laws" which transcend individual interactions, or that are dictated from someone on high "who made the rules" which require one to treat him or herself, as well as others, in a particular way; rather, they view wrongs as being "against the natural structure of the universe," against its stability, order, etc., of which they are a part.

special: a continuous, self-vibrating region of intensities whose development avoids any orientation toward a culmination point or external end....It is a regrettable characteristic of the Western mind to relate expressions and actions to exterior or transcendent ends, instead of evaluating them on a plane of consistency on the basis of their intrinsic value....We are writing this book as a rhizome. It is composed of plateaus.⁴⁵

In contrast to what Deleuze and Guattari will refer to as the "regrettable characteristic of the Western mind," with its emphasis upon "arboreal" roots and transcendent ends,⁴⁶ they propose to write plateaus, rhizomes, and planes of consistency. Within this writing they are neither interested in arboreal roots (i.e., a single origin, beginning, or primary cause), nor are they interested in transcendent ends (i.e., a purpose, goal, or *telos*); rather, they map the plateaus within which such goals come to the fore - i.e., come to be the predominant forces, intensities, etc. And with this move we find the continued link to Nietzsche, for this concern for plateaus and planes of consistency (i.e., consistency of intensities and forces) which one cannot get beyond, or which one is always already "in the middle of," was a concern already at work in Deleuze's book on Nietzsche, and in particular with the discussion of will to power.

Because will to power is the non-identifiable differential element, it is impossible to decide, evaluate, or interpret it, for such an evaluation would entail stepping outside or beyond it, and it is impossible, Nietzsche argues, to go beyond will to power, or life, in order to evaluate it - this was his "unapproachable" problem.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, since all there is for Nietzsche is will to power and

45. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. *Thousand Plateaus*, trans. by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 21-2.

46. For a discussion of the distinction between rhizomatic and arboreal perspectives, see "Rhizome," in *Thousand Plateaus*, 3-25.

47. *Twilight of the Idols* ("Morality as Anti-Nature," 5): "One would require a position outside of life, and yet have to know it as well as one, as many, as all who have lived it, in order to be permitted even to touch the problem of the value of life; reasons enough to comprehend that this problem for us is an unapproachable problem."

"nothing else," and since will to power is precisely what evaluates, differentiates, or is, in short, "the difference which makes a difference," it is also impossible not to evaluate and interpret. Furthermore, since the world and Nature understood from within (since we can't get beyond it, or outside it) is also will to power and "nothing else," and because Nietzsche claims that the fundamental character of the world is "chaos,"⁴⁸ we are subsequently led to a double bind with respect to the theme with which this essay began: the chaos in oneself. It is thus impossible to know and evaluate the chaos in oneself, and yet it is necessary to know it, to impose an order and "knowledge" upon it. And it is precisely Nietzsche's response to this double bind, or what he thinks *ought* to be our response to it, which answers the question concerning how a philosophical discourse is to proceed.

Nietzsche's response, *à la* Bateson, is *to create*. Thus, rather than submit or succumb to the pain and suffering of our existence, or our double bind, one can *actively resist* this pain through creativity. We can turn our pain and suffering into an active, creative suffering, or what Nietzsche calls "great suffering," which he believes "has created all enhancements of man so far" as a result of "its inventiveness and courage in enduring, persevering, interpreting, and exploiting suffering."⁴⁹ As an active, creative suffering, this "great suffering" is to be contrasted with the suffering of a passive "creature" who simply accepts and succumbs to its suffering:

In man creature and creator are united: in man there is material, fragment, excess, clay, dirt, nonsense, chaos; but in man there is also creator, form-giver, hammer hardness, spectator divinity, and seventh day: do you understand this contrast?⁵⁰

It is with respect to the latter, "great suffering," for which he has pity, and this pity is contrasted to the pity for the *passive* suffering of the creature within us. Nietzsche calls his pity a "converse pity," and "thus," he concludes, "it is pity versus pity," for the "great suffering" does call for pity, but this is not a pity for the creature who has succumbed to suffering, but rather a

48. *Gay Science* (§109): "The total character of the world...is in all eternity chaos..."

49. *Beyond Good and Evil* (§225), p. 154.

50. *Ibid.*

pity for that which creates in response to its suffering; it is a pity that is counter to this pity - i.e., it “counteractualizes” this pity.

Yet not all responses to the double bind, following Bateson again, are creative, and Nietzsche was well aware of this. He recognizes, for example, the possibility of what he calls "the greatest danger that always hovered over humanity," this danger being "the eruption of madness - which means the eruption of arbitrariness in feeling, seeing, and hearing..."⁵¹ In short, the danger is that the will will succumb and submit to chaos, to "arbitrariness"; however, this danger should not be eliminated, should not be denied, for madness and chaos are necessary to create: "almost everywhere it was madness which prepared the way for the new idea, which broke the spell of a venerated usage and superstition."⁵² And thus madness is necessary to avoid what Nietzsche takes to be our other danger: the collapse of the will into the "venerated" repetition of the *same* "enduring habits,"⁵³ customs, and traditions. One must be a little crazy, or one must have a little chaos in oneself, in order to create, to "throw off the yoke" of tradition.

There is thus a two-fold danger associated with the delicate balance of creativity, or a danger inherent in the non-identifiable both/and structure of will to power. In short, the both/and of will to power runs the risk of collapsing into a destructive either/or: either the eruption of madness, or the repetition of the same. In both cases what is destroyed is the ability to create and impose order, or what Nietzsche will also speak of as the ability "to promise."⁵⁴ One who is subservient to custom and tradition would be unable to promise for they would lack the ability to create, to be inventive and experimental, an ability which is often necessary to fulfill our promises (especially when contingencies arise); but one who is mad would also be unable to promise for they would lack the

51. *The Gay Science* (§76), p. 130.

52. Friedrich Nietzsche. *Daybreak* (§14), trans. by R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 13-14.

53. See *The Gay Science* (§295) for Nietzsche's critique of "enduring habits."

54. See *Genealogy of Morals*, second essay, section 2; and also *The Gay Science*, p. 303.

necessary order and regularity. Promising is thus a delicate, difficult and dangerous undertaking - it forever risks collapsing into one side of a destructive either/or.⁵⁵

The both/and of creativity, of will to power, continuously dances this fine and dangerous line between tradition and madness, or between chaos and the repetition of the same. The same is true of Nietzsche's philosophical enterprise itself, or his attempt to affirm and reveal the unique, singular, and perspectival conditions for the possibility of identifiable habits, forces, values, and "knowledge." This whole enterprise risks the possibility of either repeating venerated customs and

55. Vincent Descombes, in a recent article, "Le moment Français de Nietzsche," in *Pourquoi nous ne sommes pas nietzschéens*, edited by Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1991), argues that this discussion of promising shows that "Nietzschean philosophy does not have principles other than those of the modern project, theirs is only another version of these principles" (p. 126, translation mine). This applies, he adds, to contemporary interpretations and approaches to Nietzsche as well, in particular Deleuze. He claims that Deleuze's stress upon "irresponsibility" in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, and the resulting claim that Nietzsche eliminates "all subjection of the superior individual," whereby this individual is a "sovereign and legislator" without being subject to this legislation - and hence the individual is "irresponsible" with respect to such legislation (pp. 123-5). Descombes' criticisms would have some force if Nietzsche's notion of self-creation were simply a "repetition" of the "modern project"; however, since he is interested in the non-identifiable both/and (e.g., both creator and creature) which allows for the distinction to be made between irresponsibility and responsibility, Descombes' criticisms prove to be misdirected. We are responsible, Nietzsche (and Deleuze) would claim, but we are responsible not for repeating "venerated" ideas and customs, but rather are responsible for actively creating in response to the chaos in oneself. This responsibility is thus not to be understood as the opposite of irresponsibility, if irresponsibility is understood to be the absence of obligation or duty (this is Descombes' interpretation), but neither is this a responsibility obligated to the "morality of custom." This is a responsibility whose obligation is to create in response to the chaos in oneself, and thus it is to be understood as a "converse responsibility," or a "counteractualized" responsibility. This is the sense Nietzsche, and Deleuze, give to irresponsibility.

philosophical traditions, or collapsing into the arbitrariness of relativism.⁵⁶ One must, Nietzsche believes, *both* create new ideas *and* affirm the tradition. This is the dangerous both/and Nietzsche recognizes: "He who strays from tradition becomes a sacrifice to the extraordinary; he who remains in tradition is its slave. Destruction follows in any case."⁵⁷ To avoid this destruction requires the paradox of creativity wherein we have both chaos in ourselves, a chaos which we creatively affirm without forsaking order, "knowledge," and form; and we have the creator in ourselves who creates this order without disenfranchising chaos, and thus without succumbing to the repetition of the same.⁵⁸ To extend Nietzsche's metaphor, therefore, "one must have chaos in oneself to be able to

56. Despite Nietzsche's avowed perspectivism, he argues that this is not to be confused with relativism. For example, in *The Gay Science* (§345) Nietzsche finds both the claim that there are "unconditionally binding" principles, and the relativist claim that "no morality is at all binding," "equally childish."

57. *Human, all-too-Human* (§552).

58. With this interpretation we can respond to Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut's recent criticisms of Nietzsche in "Ce qui a besoin d'être démontré ne vaut pas grand-chose," in *Pourquoi nous ne sommes pas nietzschéens*. They argue that Nietzsche's attempt to merge what is independent of tradition with tradition is an impossible one. For example, in *Twilight of the Idols* Nietzsche claims that "Democracy has ever been a form of decline in organizing power...[and the primary reason for this is that there is no longer] the will to tradition, to authority, to responsibility for centuries to come, the solidarity of chains of generations, forward and backward *ad infinitum*" ("What the Germans lack," 39). What Nietzsche is critical of is the rejection of the past, of tradition, for the sake of some future state. For example, Socrates' rejection of the Hellenes in order to obtain some future recognition of the truth by means of the dialectic; or the Christian denial of their finite mortal selves in order to obtain future salvation. This is the modern malaise as Nietzsche sees it, and it entails two presuppositions he seeks to overcome: 1) a faith in opposite values, e.g., past/future, appearance/reality, good/evil; and 2) an affirmation of one as superior to the other, an other that needs to be overcome - e.g., tradition, appearance, and evil. The result of this move is an either/or: either you seek to maintain tradition, or you progress towards the emancipation of man (i.e., the modern, democratic move), but not both. Ferry and Renaut interpret Nietzsche in terms of such an either/or, and consequently see problems in his position. For example, they see Nietzsche's notion of the eternal return as nothing more than a Hegelian *Aufheben*, or a resolution of the opposition between tradition and creative change. Ferry and Renaut thus feel Nietzsche is committed to the idea of

give birth to a dancing star," yet this creative birth risks resulting not in a "dancing star," but collapsing either into a "black hole" of forever repeating the same, or exploding into a fiery "supernova" of madness.

Much of Deleuze's work can be seen to be a similar extension of Nietzsche's metaphor. For example, in reference to the notion of an "event" in *Logic of Sense*, Deleuze claims that: "This event is, of course, quickly covered over by everyday banality or, on the contrary, by the sufferings of madness."⁵⁹ The double, paradoxical structure of the event, the event that *both* inheres in the state of affairs of some 'present' *and* always eludes this present, being simultaneously past and future; this unique and singular event risks collapsing *either* into the repetition of the same, *or* dispersing into the chaos of madness. The fusion or 'black hole' of the same, or the fission of the supernova: these are the two poles that forever threaten the event, the destructive either/or which haunts it.⁶⁰

progress, or to some future synthesis and transcendent state, but they note the idea of the eternal return "negates by definition such an idea." Nietzsche is thus attempting an impossible, contradictory task. What we have tried to show, however, is that Nietzsche's position is not one of founding positivity (i.e., eternal return) on a negation or opposition. Rather, he affirms the non-identifiable both/and which makes the opposition between past and future, tradition and modernity, possible. Thus, the will to power wills both "forward and backward," or it is the paradoxical condition which is always already past (i.e., tradition), and always willing and creating that which is yet to come. It is this both/and which is the condition for, and always runs the risk of, collapsing into a destructive either/or: either a slave to tradition, or a sacrifice to the extraordinary.

59. *Logic of Sense*, p. 249.

60. Constantin Boundas, in his introduction to *The Deleuze Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), refers to this notion of the two poles as Deleuze's *idée mère*. He notes "that fusion and fission are the external limits of all functioning assemblages, natural or man-made...[and that] assemblages...that are still in operational order avoid these external limits through the preventive mechanism of a controlled repetition: they repeat the very conditions the extremes of which would have brought about their entropic *stasis* and death" (p. 11). In other words, they repeat the paradoxical both/and (i.e., both fusion and fission, tradition and novelty, or, to use some of Deleuze's common polarities, intensity and extension, paranoia and schizophrenia, sense and nonsense, sedentaries and nomads) which is the condition for the destructive either/or.

To avoid this consequence requires responding creatively to the double bind, to the dual impossibility and necessity of being both unable to identify and interpret the chaos in oneself, and being unable not to identify and interpret this chaos. This creative response affirms the differential both/and structure of will to power, and, in Deleuze's theory, entails creating a plateau and plane of consistency that is both fusion and fission; or, to use Deleuze and Guattari's terminology, both territorialized and deterritorialized. However, if a plateau, assemblage, plane of consistency, or event were to be completely territorialized, this would result in the blind repetition of the same and would render it incapable of responding to the unpredictable, and hence it would ultimately be destroyed; and yet if it were to be completely deterritorialized it would render the event incapable of acquiring the necessary order and stability to function, and it would likewise be destroyed.⁶¹ To avoid this consequence, there must be the continual, eternal return of the event, the return of that which is both past (i.e., tradition, territorialized, being) and future (i.e., progress, deterritorializing, becoming). The both/and of the event must eternally return in order to prevent or correct the destructive tendency of this both/and to settle into an either/or: either "everyday banality" or "the sufferings of madness." The event eludes this either/or, and since the double bind presupposes such a logic, it likewise eludes the "double pincer" action of the double bind.⁶² The event is therefore the "negentropic activity" which actively resists the sedimentation of the both/and into an either/or.⁶³

61. See also *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 162. Here Deleuze and Guattari discuss Carlos Castaneda's distinction between "tonal" (i.e., reterritorializations) and "nagual" (i.e., deterritorializations) in *Tales of Power* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), and the necessity to avoid both extremes.

62. *Anti-Oedipus*, 83. See also 75-84.

63. This is an instance where Deleuze's work parallels chaos theory. One of the central claims of chaos theory is that the universe is not going to suffer an "entropic" death; that is, the universe will not achieve a state of equilibrium wherein no heat is generated, heat being dependent upon non-equilibrium conditions. Rather, they argue both that the universe is sufficiently chaotic such that "negentropic" activity can arise (order out of chaos), and some claim that the universe itself is expanding in the manner of a fractal, or it is expanding infinitely within a finite area, and thus it won't reach the point of entropic death (See *Scientific American*, April, 1993, p. 24) . There will consequently always be room for, and the necessity for, negentropic activity.

This theme becomes even more important in Deleuze and Guattari's most recent book, *Qu'est-ce que la Philosophie?* In this book they recognize both the impossibility of identifying and ordering chaos, but they in turn recognize the necessity of this identification and ordering. This is the double bind they explore, and what interests them are the creative responses the scientists, artists, and philosophers take with respect to it. The artist, for example, creates what Deleuze and Guattari refer to, following James Joyce, as a "chaosmos," or an ordered chaos: "art isn't chaos, but a composition of chaos which gives rise to sight or sensation, with the result that it constitutes a chaosmos, as Joyce said, a composed chaos - neither predicted or anticipated."⁶⁴ Art is thus *both* chaotic and unpredictable, *and* it is ordered and composed. The artist creates a composed chaos,⁶⁵ but this creative act also risks the possibility of either being a mere cliché, or it risks being a chaotic piece which lacks the order necessary for "sight or sensation," or for something new and determinate to be seen rather than being something that is merely indeterminate, non-differentiated porridge. The artist is thus both for and against chaos: she is against chaos insofar as it needs to be ordered, given a form, etc., and she is for chaos as that which allows her to create something that is not a repetition of the same, a cliché. This both/and is not only true of the artist (the scientist, and the philosopher), but is true of all creative responses to the double bind which actively resist the double bind's "pain and maladjustment," and the tendency to submit and succumb to this pain, to

Brian Massumi also notes the close relationship between Deleuze and chaos theory. See: *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1992).

64. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la Philosophie?* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1991), 192 (translation mine).

65. The philosopher, similarly, creates a "concept," a concept being itself a creative response to the double bind of having to order that which cannot be ordered, make sense of that which makes no sense, etc.; and the scientist creates "representations" which map the world to some function, a function which is an attempt, and this is the scientist's double bind, to predict the unpredictable. It is for this reason that Deleuze and Guattari stress the importance of "strange attractors" in contemporary science (p. 194). The "strange attractor" has the unique characteristic, although chaos theorists would say they are not unique but rather the norm, that it is both predictable and unpredictable.

the pain and destruction of the either/or. Our “proper” activity, therefore, or the “proper” task of philosophy, science, art, etc., is to create a plateau, plane of consistency, assemblage, work, or self that is both for and against the "chaos in oneself"; our activity, in short, *ought* to be "negentropic" activity.⁶⁶

But is not Nietzsche's response to the double bind, and hence Deleuze's, a metaphysical response? In particular, is not Nietzsche's effort to liberate and "restore the innocence of becoming"⁶⁷ simply a version of the modern, "enlightenment" project of restoring the bonded liberty and freedom (i.e., becoming) of human beings? If this is so, then is the contemporary "critique of metaphysics," a critique that is largely motivated by Nietzsche, not simply continuing the enlightenment project? Is it doing anything different, or has it, as Heidegger might argue, simply kept the redemptive motivation of metaphysics to recover a lost or deeply buried truth and reality, where in this instance that which is to be recovered is a non-identifiable becoming rather than an identifiable being? A brief summary of the critique of metaphysics as found in Derrida, Lacoue-Labarthe, and Deleuze will clarify what is at stake in this project, and it will explicate the manner in which this critique is not redemptive, but rather is a critique without redemption.

III

Derrida would indeed characterize metaphysics as being concerned with redemption: metaphysics is the attempt to restore to “presence” some simple, ideal, normal, self-identical origin. Derrida's subsequent 'deconstruction', his critique of metaphysics, consists in demonstrating the play of an "undecidable" which prevents such a simple return, recovery, and liberation of some

66. In *Anti-Oedipus* the task was to resist the double bind of Oedipus - "the 'double bind' is none other than the whole of Oedipus" (80) - This resistance, or "schizoanalysis," critiques the "exclusive disjunction [i.e., either/or] upon which the double bind depends, and reveals instead the "inclusive disjunction" wherein "the problem of Oedipus can no longer even be raised" (82).

67. *Twilight of the Idols*, p. 500: "...there is nothing besides the whole [i.e., will to power, life, becoming]...the world does not form a unity either as a sensorium or as 'spirit' - that alone is the great liberation; with this alone is the innocence of becoming restored."

lost “presence.” These undecidables entail a fundamental both/and which cannot be decided or identified by the logic of either/or, and yet it is precisely this both/and which allows for the possibility of deciding with respect to an either/or. The both/and is thus what a text must acknowledge and suppress in order to function, i.e., to decide and identify. In Plato, for example, Derrida claims the *pharmakon* is the undecidable that is both acknowledged and suppressed, but throughout his writings these undecidables (e.g., supplement, hymen, gram, spacing, incision, iteration, etc.⁶⁸) will play the crucial role in his critique of metaphysics, or in his effort to explicate that which makes metaphysical decisions possible while forever eluding and limiting such decisions.

A fundamental consequence of this critique is that Derrida will not see the task of interpretation as one of recovering and revealing some fundamental meaning (i.e., a transcendental signified). But neither does he feel that there are no standards or criteria for interpretation, or that one interpretation is as good as the next. An interpreter cannot, Derrida argues, “add any old thing” to the text that has not been “rigorously prescribed” by the text, “by the logic of *play*”⁶⁹ of this text. Furthermore, to follow this logic in a text is for Derrida to remain “true” to the text, whereas if this logic is not followed a reading will likewise be, as Derrida claims is often the case in interpretations of his writings, “false.” “The value of truth,” Derrida points out, “is never contested or destroyed in my writings.”⁷⁰ But this logic which one is to follow to remain “true” to the text, which Derrida admits implies “protocols of reading” that will act as guardrails to prevent any reading whatsoever from being advanced, is itself left undecided. Thus, when pressed to state what such protocols might be, or the logic one is to remain “true” to, he confesses that “I have not yet

68. See Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, translated by Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 42-3, for a discussion of these undecidables.

69. *Dissemination*, translated by Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 64. This is from the brief introduction to the long essay “Plato’s Pharmacy,” an essay which is itself written “by force of play” (65).

70. *Limited, Inc.*, p. 146. Derrida claims in this work that Searle, for example, sets forth a false reading of his texts.

found any that satisfy me."⁷¹ Consequently, despite Derrida's claim that "undecidability is always a *determinate* oscillation between possibilities...[and that] they are *pragmatically* determined," if the protocol and standard whereby such determinations can be judged is not clarified, one is again left wondering whether any "*determinate* oscillation" will do. How are we to know when the deconstructionist has gone too far?

A similar question can be asked of Lacoue-Labarthe. Lacoue-Labarthe is also critical of the metaphysical enterprise to restore a lost signified, a deeply buried "presence" that the philosopher will then re-present. Lacoue-Labarthe will subsequently argue that mimesis is "undecidability 'itself'," and that "the 'essence' of mimesis...[is] the very lapse 'itself' of 'essence'...[or] what is 'proper' to mimesis...[is] the fact that mimesis has no 'proper' to it, ever."⁷² Mimesis is nevertheless the condition which allows for the possibility of representation for it is always already a (re)presentation of that which is not "present."⁷³ And it is in this context that Lacoue-Labarthe finds a necessary double bind, a bind from which he believes philosophy cannot escape. This double bind calls for the the necessity of (re)presenting that which was never present, or, it is impossible to fiction the fictioning process, but it is impossible not to fiction it.⁷⁴

Lacoue-Labarthe will then argue that the consequence of this double bind for philosophy, for a philosophy that cannot twist free from it, is that it must simply accept it. Philosophy must accept the situation as being one wherein we cannot return to and restore some originary

71. *Positions*, p. 63.

72. *Typography*, p. 116.

73. Lacoue-Labarthe uses parentheses in "(re)presentation" for this is neither a re-presentation of something which is no longer present, nor is it presenting something, for this something cannot be presented, it has no "proper" to it; but it is a form of presentation - i.e., (re)presentation.

74. For a more complete discussion of these double binds, see "Holderin and the Greeks," in *Typography*, and "History and Mimesis," in *Looking after Nietzsche*, edited by Laurence Rickels (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990). In both these articles Lacoue-Labarthe discusses the double bind that confronts the Germans, from Winckleman to Heidegger through Nietzsche. I would add Kafka to this list as well. The double bind is that it is necessary to imitate the inimitable, utter the unutterable, and become other to become who you are.

“presence,” and therefore we must reconcile ourselves to the fate of representing that which has already been represented. This acceptance of our fate, however, is not understood by Lacoue-Labarthe to be a resignation on the part of philosophy, a fatalism which renders all purpose for philosophy moot; to the contrary, he claims that the task for philosophy is to confront representations with representations:

...there is only one remedy against representation, infinitely precarious, dangerous, and unstable: representation itself....there is never any factuality that is not from the “start” hollowed out and eroded by representation....Everything “begins” also by representation.⁷⁵

But how are we to go about correcting or remedying representation by representation? And how are we to determine whether a given representation even needs remedying or not? Clearly Lacoue-Labarthe would not argue for some proper standards and criteria which would allow us to answer such questions, for besides the fact that the notion “proper” is itself subject to a deconstructive critique (i.e., “proper” presupposes or entails some recoverable, “essential” characteristic which one can then use in judging the merit or *propriety* of some work, and thus the use of scare quotes throughout this essay), the idea that there is anything “proper” to mimesis is itself something Lacoue-Labarthe flatly rejects. Yet Lacoue-Labarthe also doesn't seem to want to leave philosophy without the possibility for judging the merits of some work, a judgment which would serve as the basis for a critique of this work, even if the critique itself is merely the remedying of a representation by a representation. But Lacoue-Labarthe, as with Derrida, never clarifies what the protocol might be that would serve such a critique; consequently, despite the fact that they each reject an “anything goes” relativism, it is nonetheless unclear to what extent they have shown what it is that does go.

Deleuze is less hesitant to state and attempt to clarify what this protocol might be. He feels, as with Derrida, that this protocol is *pragmatically* determined; however, there are some crucial differences between them. First, although Derrida claims the “oscillation between

75. Ibid., 117.

possibilities" is "pragmatically determined," he then admits that the nature of this pragmatic determination itself needs further elaboration, elaboration he has not yet given.⁷⁶ Deleuze on the other hand, along with Guattari, go to great lengths in their two volume work, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, to set forth their version of "pragmatics" (also referred to as "schizoanalysis," "rhizomatics," and "nomadology"), and with it clarify the process of pragmatic determination. Secondly, whereas Derrida focuses almost exclusively upon the "determinate oscillations" of some written text, Deleuze and Guattari are interested in the oscillations (e.g., between fusion and fission, paranoia and schizophrenia, black hole and supernova, etc.) of activity in general, both natural and human activity.

Part of the reason for Deleuze's more developed clarification and concern for the "pragmatic determination" of activity can be traced to Nietzsche; in particular, to Nietzsche's claim that we need "to impose upon chaos as much regularity and form as our practical needs require." The protocol which is to serve a critique for Deleuze is thus, following Nietzsche, determined by the practical needs of the functioning assemblage, whether this assemblage be human, social, natural, etc. This protocol, moreover, is the *manner* of a creative response to the double bind, a response which resists the tendency to collapse into a destructive either/or. Deleuze's more explicit dependency or repetition of Nietzsche is therefore to be seen as an advantage rather than a detriment,⁷⁷ for it is because of this that Deleuze is better equipped to grapple with, unlike Derrida and Lacoue-Labarthe, the problem of clarifying the pragmatic determination of the protocols of activity, including interpretive, natural, and revolutionary activities.

To briefly summarize the manner of this pragmatic determination, it must first be stressed that the attendant protocol is *both* an attempt to impose a form, order, and regularity upon chaos,

76. *Limited, Inc.*, p. 148, n. 16: "Grammatology has always been a sort of pragmatics, but the discipline which bears this name today involves too many presuppositions requiring deconstruction....A pragmatology (to come) would articulate in a more fruitful and rigorous manner these two discourses."

77. Ferry and Renault, for example, in *French Philosophy of the Sixties* will fault Deleuze for "merely repeating the Nietzschean approach" (p. 19), whereas we claim it is precisely this repetition which helps him and us to address key problems in contemporary philosophy.

and it is also an attempt "to institute," as Deleuze puts it, "the chaos which creates."⁷⁸ Without a protocol which demands order, form, and regularity, the corresponding activity would collapse into non-sense; but without instituting the chaos which creates and gives rise to that which is unpredictable, then again nothing is said or done: "...what we call the meaning of a statement is its point. That's the only definition of meaning, and it amounts to the same as the novelty of statement....the problem isn't that what someone says is wrong, but that it's stupid or irrelevant - that it's already been said a thousand times."⁷⁹ With this claim we can see an interesting parallel with contemporary chaos theory, in particular information theory. Claude Shannon, for example, has argued that the more chaotic a message is, the more random and unpredictable, the more information it has. Shannon makes a distinction between meaning and information, and thus would not follow Deleuze in claiming that chaos gives rise to meaning, but Robert Shaw, a more recent proponent of chaos theory, does argue that chaos is the source of everything that is new, and thus he would agree with Deleuze.⁸⁰ Chaos theorists also argue, as does Deleuze, that there is a necessary form and order to chaos, but that this order cannot be used to predict what a given system will do next (the "strange attractor" is their famous example). Similarly, Deleuzian pragmatics will argue for a necessary order, form, protocol, etc., but will likewise claim that such a protocol cannot, nor should it, be used to determine what the order will be like in the future. There is thus a purposiveness to Deleuzian pragmatics, for there is the creation of a necessary order and protocol which circumvents the double bind, but there is no purpose or goal which transcends this purposiveness.

As purposiveness without purpose, Deleuzian pragmatics attempts to clarify the plateaus, planes of consistency, and assemblages that are themselves constitutive and constituted

78. "Plato and the Simulacrum," in *Logic of Sense*, 266.

79. "Mediators," in *Incorporations* (New York: Zone Books, 1992), p. 289.

80. See Claude Shannon, "A Mathematical theory of information," in *Bell System Technical Journal* 27 (1948): 379-423, 623-656; and "Prediction and Entropy of Printed English," in *Bell System Technical Journal* 30 (1951): 50-64. See also Robert Shaw, "Strange Attractors, Chaotic Behavior, and Information Flow," in *Zeitschrift für Naturforschung* 36A (January): 79-112.

exemplifications of this purposiveness without purpose. Pragmatics has no prior agenda (i.e., purpose), nor is it without purpose; it makes plateaus and rhizomes:

Schizoanalysis, or pragmatics, has no other meaning: Make a rhizome. But you don't know what you can make a rhizome with, you don't know which subterranean stem is going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment.⁸¹

Experiment. A Nietzschean theme for sure, but we are still left with the question of how we are to go about experimenting? Aware of such a question, Deleuze and Guattari admit that their 'experimentation imperative' is "easy to say," but might be hard to follow, especially since there are no "preformed logical orders to becomings," to rhizomes and plateaus, an order that can be used to guide such experimenting. Nevertheless, they do claim that "there are *criteria*" that are to be adhered to in experimenting, or in making a rhizome - i.e., for pragmatics. For example, pragmatics is not to be used after the fact, but is to be applied "in the course of events...[and it should] be sufficient to guide us through dangers,"⁸² such as the danger of collapsing into one of the two poles of the either/or. Secondly, pragmatics will "reject the idea of an invariant immune from transformation."⁸³ There is nothing, following Nietzsche, that is not part of becoming, and hence immune to becoming other than what it is. Third, pragmatics will explicate the internal reasons which will not allow something (e.g., language⁸⁴) "to close itself off,"⁸⁵ or to be immune to transformation. And finally, though not exhaustively, pragmatics will trace and map processes of transformation whereby non-formed flows and processes of becoming are selected, territorialized,

81. *Thousand Plateaus*, 246.

82. *Ibid.*, 251. Previous two quotes are from this page as well.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 139.

84. For a discussion of this theme, see Therese Grisham, "Linguistics as an Indiscipline: Deleuze and Guattari's Pragmatics," in *SubStance* 66 (1991): pp. 36-54.

85. *Ibid.*, 82. In support of this position they refer to François Jacob. See *The Logic of Life*, translated by Betty Spillman (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973).

and stratified, and will then show how these territorializations are in turn susceptible to deterritorializing flows, to "lines of flight" that will transform it again. Every assemblage, every plateau, has both its elements of territorialization and its deterritorializing flows. For example, in discussing genetics Deleuze and Guattari note that with any genetic or structural identity that is passed on through hereditary succession there coexists a simultaneous de-coding, an ever-present becoming-other (i.e., transformation). There is "no genetics," they conclude, "without 'genetic drift'."⁸⁶ And it is precisely the task of pragmatics, its protocol, to note both the territorializing and deterritorializing poles between which all assemblages, according to Deleuze and Guattari, oscillate. These poles are not to be understood as binary opposites, but rather as the both/and which is constitutive of these assemblages (there is "no genetics [territorialization] without 'genetic drift' [deterritorialization]"). And pragmatics, furthermore, notes the express purposiveness of these constitutive both/ands of resisting the tendency to settle into one of the two poles, a pole which would bring about the destruction of the assemblage (e.g., *either* the genetic succession repeats the same - territorializes - to the point where the organism cannot adapt and thus becomes extinct, *or* it transforms and mutates - deterritorializes - into an organism that cannot adapt and dies).

Deleuze and Guattari discuss these constitutive both/ands, or what they refer to in *Anti-Oedipus* as "inclusive disjunctions," throughout *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*; or, as the title suggests, they make a thousand plateaus. They also set forth a criteria or protocol for this enterprise - i.e., for pragmatics - a protocol both for resisting the tendency to collapse into an either/or, or into a double bind, and one which helps to clarify the manner in which differentiations are pragmatically determined. It is this latter clarification which is lacking in Derrida and Lacoue-Labarthe. Derrida does indeed demonstrate the limits of oppositional differentiation, or the logic of either/or, but he leaves unanswered the question of how a positive, nonbinary mode of differentiation *ought* to proceed, or what protocol it is to follow. Likewise, Lacoue-Labarthe is important for demonstrating both the limits and necessity of representation, but he also leaves unanswered the question of how a representational differentiation *ought* to proceed, or how representation is to be remedied by representation. With Deleuze and Guattari's pragmatics, however, we have both a critique of binary oppositions, the logic of either/or, and we have a

86. Ibid., 53.

protocol which clarifies how one can positively differentiate, evaluate, judge, etc. Pragmatics is also a critique with no goal or purpose of restoring and liberating something that has been held captive. It is a critique of resistance, for it resists the double bind that forever threatens it (i.e., its purposiveness without purpose), but it is neither a critique which transcends and resolves this double bind, *à la* Hegel, nor is it a critique which follows a "pre-existing" logic or idea. Pragmatics, in other words, is a critique without redemption. Consequently, rather than having an order, form, or idea (*eidos*) in ourselves, an order that *ought*, *à la* Plato, to remain the same, we ought to have chaos in ourselves, a chaos that gives birth to a dancing star; and this dancing star is not a repetition of the same, but is a repetition of the difference that is constitutive of it, a difference whose destructive consequences *ought* to be resisted. For if we are not careful and diligent, if we slack in our rigor and resistance, then the chaos in ourselves might not give birth to a dancing star, but, as a result of either collapsing into a black hole or exploding into a fiery supernova, this chaos might die.

