

Fascism, Irrationalism and Creative Evolution or Deleuze, Running Away

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...rationalism is an attitude of readiness to listen to critical arguments and to learn from experience. It is fundamentally an attitude of admitting that "I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer the truth."

Karl Popper¹

...philosophers have very little time for discussion. Every philosopher runs away when he or she hears someone say, "Let's discuss this."

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari²

On the basis of these two quotations, one would imagine that any conversation between Gilles Deleuze and Karl Popper would be destined to be a short one. The differences in approach they represent are certainly reflected in their comments on each other's ideas: to the best of my knowledge there are none. Indeed, even in secondary sources one would rarely expect to find their names referred to in the same book, let alone on the same page. To put it more precisely, their respective understandings and practices of philosophy appear so incompatible as to preclude any "common territory" between them. What they write about, how they write about it, and even who reads

them seem to place them, and their ideas, in distinctly different philosophical milieus. There is, however, at least one point on which Deleuze and Popper could be said to agree unequivocally: they both ‘detest’³ and ‘abhor’⁴ Hegel, and both posit a relation between Hegelian philosophy and totalising or even totalitarian political formations. Indeed, in *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Popper explicitly argues that what he calls ‘irrationalist philosophy’ in general (and Hegelianism in particular), has both a specific responsibility for the rise of fascism in Germany, and for 20th century totalitarian political thought in general. He takes this responsibility to be serious and substantial enough to describe his analysis and critique of it as his contribution to the Second World War: “It should not be forgotten that I looked upon my book [first published in 1945] as my war effort: believing as I did in the responsibility of Hegel and the Hegelians for much of what happened in Germany.”⁵ However, the routes that Deleuze and Popper take to reach these conclusions about Hegel and Hegelianism are radically divergent, to the point that, if one followed Popper’s path, Deleuze would appear not as the implacable enemy of Hegel he is often presented as, but rather as one of the “inheritors” of Hegel that Popper so vehemently condemns. That is to say, from a Popperian perspective, Deleuze’s ideas would lead us not to the kind of leftist politics of difference that Deleuze is usually associated with, but rather to a totalizing and totalitarian politics of the sort Deleuze is so often at pains to critique. At the heart of this divergence is Popper’s critique of irrationalism (and his corresponding defense of rationalism) and his identification of Henri Bergson as one of irrationalism’s Hegelian avatars: if Popper is correct about Bergson, much of the weight of Popper’s critique also falls on Deleuze, by virtue of the foundational role Bergsonian ideas have for his philosophy. Deleuze, on the other hand, finds in Bergson’s ideas a means to critique and even to ‘escape’ Hegel.⁶ I think that Popper’s defense of rationalism is important and valid, but I also think he is wrong about Bergson (and by inference, Deleuze). Moreover, the basis on which he criticizes Bergson seems to me very close to some of Bergson’s (and Deleuze’s) own core propositions, most specifically in relation to the ontological openness and creativity of Being. This doesn’t make Popper a Bergsonian (or Deleuze a Popperian). It does, however, suggest that exploring the relation between Popper and Deleuze (via Bergson) may offer us useful insights into both.

Why Irrationalism Tends Towards Totalitarianism (and Rationalism Doesn't)

In a sense the interpretation of Bergson is peripheral to *The Open Society and Its Enemies*—he gets a handful of brief mentions in several hundred pages devoted mainly to Hegel and Marx⁷. At the heart of Popper's dispute with Hegel and those whom he sees as Hegel's inheritors is, rather, the conflict between rationalism and irrationalism as modes of thought and of engagement the world, a conflict which, he says, "has become the most important intellectual, and perhaps even moral, issue of our time."⁸ In simple terms, Popper's argument is that irrationalism leads to dogmatism and absolutism in ideas, and from there to totalitarianism in Politics.

Popper's attack on irrationalist philosophy and the "enemies of the open society" is a corollary of his conception of rationalism as a commitment to the possibility and the practice of ongoing critique. In essence, he aligns "the rationalist attitude" with the possibility of reasoned argument between individuals. It is, as he puts it, "an attitude of readiness to listen to critical arguments and to learn from experience. It is fundamentally an attitude of admitting that *'I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer the truth.'*"⁹ This conception of rationalism is in effect a generalisation to social, political and moral realms of the model of the scientific method that he proposes in *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. The scientific method, in Popper's terms, subsists in the posing of hypotheses, which are then subject to attempts at refutation or falsification. These are either rejected or revised on the basis such testing, or, if they survive, lead to a kind of provisional acceptance. The more attempts at falsification an hypothesis stands up to, the more likely it is to be an accurate model of, or statement about, the real world, at least until a better one is found—although it can never be taken to be definitively true as such, merely "not yet falsified." That is to say, it remains permanently open to possible refutation. Popper's rationalism generalises this by requiring that *any* statement or claim (not only those that lay claim to the status of science) must be open to argument and critique by others, whose claims and arguments are in turn equally open to questioning. Rationality thus lies neither in the content of a statement, or in the qualities or faculties of an individual, but rather in the process of "testing" itself. In this sense, "reason, like language, can be said to be a product of social life."¹⁰ It is the process

of challenging by individuals of each other's ideas that constitutes the provisional validity of any position, and which establishes what he describes as "the 'rational unity of mankind.'"¹¹

It is important to note here that the 'unity' Popper is referring to is not a unity of agreed beliefs reached through discussion, but rather a unity of commitment to the rational *process* of the ongoing challenging of beliefs, in which "we must recognize everybody with whom we communicate as a potential source of argument and reasonable information."¹² A consensus model would be far too Hegelian, reducing reason to a kind of "collectivism," "a kind of department of the soul or spirit of society (for example, of the nation, or the class)."¹³ Reason is, for him, a product of inter-personal, and never collective, discussion or consensus.¹⁴ By the same token, neither are we rational as individuals (we are not rational by right or by necessity), since it is the *process* of testing and challenging that gives rationality its reason. Rationalism is, for Popper, fundamentally a position of "intellectual modesty" that acknowledges the limitations and errors of our individual knowledge and understanding, and the necessity of an engagement with others who will test and contest our ideas. Such contestation cannot lead us to certainty. It may, however, improve our ideas, and prevent them from falling into dogmatism: "argument rarely settles a question, although it is the only means for learning—not to see clearly, but to see more clearly than before."¹⁵

This is, in effect, the heart of his critique of irrationalism, and of his association of it with totalising and totalitarian political formations. Because irrationalism offers no basis for the critique or contestation of ideas—no basis for reasoned rejection or (provisional) acceptance—it tends necessarily towards dogmatism: "where there is no argument, nothing is left but full acceptance or flat denial."¹⁶ Moreover, having abandoned argument as a basis for thought, "it must nearly always...produce an attitude which considers the person of the thinker instead of his thought. It must produce the belief that 'we think with our blood,' or 'with our national heritage,' or 'with our class.'"¹⁷ Such a break divides humanity into friends and foes,

into the few who stand near, and the many who stand far;
into those who speak the untranslatable language of our
emotions and passions and those whose tongue is not
our tongue. Once we have done this, political
equalitarianism becomes practically impossible.¹⁸

Popper's reference to "equalitarianism" points us towards the heart of the issue: what is at stake in the tension between rationalism and irrationalism is not truth, or even the elimination of falsity, but rather morality, or more precisely, the *limitation* of immorality. Subjecting one's ideas and claims to rational criticism does not *of necessity* make them better (though it may), or even more likely to be true (especially given that what is often at stake in the social, political and moral realms—the statements that must remain open to criticism—are precisely questions about what is "better" or "true"). No matter how much rational criticism an idea or proposal is opened to, it may still lead to negative consequences for some or for all (and in that sense may show itself to have been at the very least a flawed idea.) Rational criticism *may* reduce the chances of going wrong (by "testing" the options conceptually rather than practically), but the only *necessary* outcome of a rationalist approach is a limitation on absolute claims, inasmuch as it at least requires one to listen to the arguments of others, since, as Popper says, "they might be right, and you might be wrong."

Rationalism is therefore bound up with the idea that the other fellow has a right to be heard, and to defend his arguments. It thus implies the recognition of a claim to tolerance, at least of all those who are not intolerant themselves. One does not kill a man when one adopts the attitude of first listening to his arguments.¹⁹

If one holds ideas irrationally and dogmatically, on the other hand, the arguments and claims of those who hold different ideas become irrelevant, as do the needs and desires that arise from them. In other words, the other person becomes a mere tool whose potential suffering is secondary to the dictates of your irrational beliefs, irrespective of their own: they become an object to be used or thrown away in the service of the absolute and undeniable faith that drives you. This is the immorality that Popper's rationalism seeks to limit.

Why Popper is Right about Bergson

Popper's identification of Bergson with Hegelianism, irrationalism, and ultimately with totalitarianism and fascism is both right and wrong. It is wrong inasmuch as Popper fundamentally misinterprets certain key Bergsonian ideas, and thus ends up with a

distorted understanding of Bergson's philosophical position, some elements of which are in fact very close to the ideas that Popper draws on to attack Hegel and the "Hegelian" Bergson. It is right in the sense that, historically speaking, the political impact of Bergson's ideas has, in some areas, been precisely as Popper claims.²⁰ However, as I will argue, the political appropriations of Bergson's ideas that Popper holds him responsible for are the result of a misinterpretation of certain key aspects of those ideas. Moreover, Popper's interpretation of Bergson suffers precisely the same misconceptions.

We can start to justify these claims by looking at the historical influence of Bergson's ideas in the political realm. This is a rather complex web to try and unravel—his ideas were praised and vilified by different elements from both the right and left of French politics throughout his life.²¹ However, inasmuch as Bergsonian philosophy has been nominated as a theoretical and ideological influence upon actual political practices by its practitioners, that politics has often been in varying degrees nationalist, anti-liberal, anti-democratic, quasi or even just plain fascist in orientation.²² That is to say, far from being associated with pluralism of any sort, in practice the political influence of Bergsonism has been most strongly felt in totalising and totalitarian formations of one kind or another (although the specific nature of that influence differs with the grouping one examines). The key figure here is Georges Sorel, the French pre-war anarcho-syndicalist leader and philosopher, admired for his "anti-intellectualism...his dislike of Kant, his Bergsonism, and his contempt for bourgeois and liberal values, democracy, and parliamentarianism."²³

Sorel was described by Georges Valois²⁴ (himself a key figure in the French fascist movements of the 1920s) as "the intellectual father of fascism."²⁵ Sorel regularly attended Bergson's lectures at the *Collège de France*, and was quite explicit that he considered his work to be a practical application of Bergsonian philosophical principles to the world of political action.²⁶ Furthermore, he wrote extensively on Bergson,²⁷ and his most famous work, *Reflections on Violence*,²⁸ published the year after *Creative Evolution*, "was immediately compared with Bergson's theories of life and vitality," so much so that he was described at the time as being a disciple of Bergson.²⁹ Neither was Sorel's influence on fascist thinking limited to France. Benito Mussolini is reported to have quipped, "Everything I am, I owe to Sorel,"³⁰ and Charles F. Delzell specifically includes Bergson's emphasis on the role of intuition and

the creative power of *élan vital* among the pre-war currents of philosophical and political thought that contributed the development of Italian Fascism.³¹

There are two key Bergsonian themes that seem to have been taken up by Sorel specifically, but also by diverse groupings on the extreme left and right of French politics in the pre and inter-war period, as both models of, and justifications for, political action.³² Firstly, the critique of the limits of scientific or mechanistic thought in terms of its inability to grasp real movement, and Bergson's corresponding correction in terms of the intuition of duration; secondly, the emphasis on the notion of creative evolution as unceasing change. Bergson in fact is quite explicit that he by no means dismisses science, nor seeks to devalue it. Instead, he seeks to make "a clear distinction between metaphysics and science. But at the same time we attribute an equal value to both."³³ Rather than attacking or rejecting science and mechanistic approaches to understanding, he understands them limited, or rather, as operative only within the confines of an arbitrarily closed whole, and considers his metaphysics as simply the attempt to restore real duration to the spatialized time of science and mathematics.³⁴ For Sorel and others at the time, however, this appears to have been interpreted as a critique of all rational thought as such, and linked to the critique of materialism and Enlightenment values that Zeev Sternhell identifies as a key unifying theme across the fascist and quasi-fascist groups in question.³⁵ Moreover, Bergson's emphasis on the method of intuition was taken as justifying the place of the irrational within political thought and action, especially in terms of spontaneous (revolutionary) action and the mobilising power of social myth, Sorel's favourite myth being that of the "Total Strike."³⁶ Thus Gilbert Maire, a member of the Sorelian nationalist right grouping organised around the *Cahiers du Cercle Proudhon*, argued that "Sorel's method...derived from a Bergsonian anti-intellectualism that recognised the limitations of abstract or logical reasoning. The theory of myths and the concomitant theory of violence were both products of this method."³⁷

In conjunction with the emphasis on an "irrationalist" concept of intuition, the Sorelian interpretation also takes up Bergson's theories on creative evolution as further justification for the role of violent change in political life. Kennedy argues that, for Sorel,

"creativity is a spontaneous expression of self.
Furthermore, the creative energy of society is necessarily

violent; civilizations depend on the dynamism of their dominant classes and when those cease providing new ideas and inventions, their civilizations begin to decline.”³⁸

Such an interpretation of Bergson appears to read the *creation of the new* in terms of the destruction of the old, so that, for Sorel, “Bergson’s intuition, being a direct insight into creative evolution, could also be used to provide a philosophical justification for revolution.”³⁹ Sternhell points out that

Sorel referred to Bergson’s *Données immédiates de la conscience* [*Time and Free Will*] at length to show that ‘movement is the main element in the life of the emotions,’ and it is ‘in terms of movement that one should speak of creative consciousness.’ [Thus for Sorel] the idea of class struggle fulfils this function of promoting movement; it is in fact a myth aiming at the maintenance of a state of continuous tension, scission, and catastrophe, a state of covert war, a daily moral struggle against the established order.⁴⁰

In this way the Bergsonian intuition of duration as creation is transliterated into Sorelian revolutionary violence, to the point that “Julien Benda, one of Bergson’s most critical contemporaries, understood his philosophy as encouraging social instability through a blindly irrational approval of change for its own sake.”⁴¹

Where Sorel and Popper Go Wrong

It is difficult to reconcile the Sorelian appropriation of Bergson with what we know of Bergson’s own political leanings. Certainly, according to Kennedy, Bergson “was not enthusiastic about Sorel and certainly took no part in the syndicalist or socialist movements of pre-war France.”⁴² Moreover, far from being anti-democratic in orientation, or a proponent of revolutionary violence, he was an advocate of and participant in the internationalism of the League of Nations.⁴³ At one point at least, he even links Hegelian philosophy to German militarism in a manner similar to Popper.⁴⁴ And certainly the political implications the Sorelians draw from Bergson’s work seem starkly at odds with the vision of the ‘open society’ described in his final work, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*.⁴⁵

So where did the Sorelians go wrong? We can start to unpack the problem by looking at the relation between Bergson's concept of "creative evolution," and the rise of what one might call "evolutionary thought" in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Popper's critiques of what he calls "historicism," and of its misappropriation of evolutionary theory have some relevance here.⁴⁶ He uses the term to refer to theories of social history that seek or lay claim to predictive value. Historicism, in this sense, predates Darwin (he includes Hegelianism in this category, and indeed traces it as far back as Heraclitus and Plato).⁴⁷ However, he argues that historicist social and political theory from the mid-nineteenth century onwards latched on to various misinterpretations of Darwin's evolutionary hypothesis as predictive (a universal law), rather than descriptive (an account how specific species arrived at their current form), so far as to define their task as the laying bare of "the *law of evolution of society* in order to foretell its future."⁴⁸ Thus, when I speak of the development of "evolutionary thought" from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, I have in mind here not only the impact of Darwinism, or more strictly Spencerian social Darwinism, but also its convergence with various tendencies to think of change or progress in terms of conflict (often specifically violent conflict) and a correlative valuation of *will* as the driving force of such change. This convergence does not so much constitute a coherent philosophical position as it represents the cultural influence of a series of diverse and sometimes conflicting strands of thought which would include not only Darwin, but also Hegel, Marx, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Herbert Spencer alongside Bergson.

This tendency to conceive of change (or evolution) in terms of *conflict* can be traced in part from Hegel through to Marx, and then to the fascist attempt to "transcend socialism." In Marx, the Hegelian dialectic becomes dialectical materialism, driven by class war explained in economic terms, while Sorelian influenced fascism in turn aims to "transcend" socialism by unifying the proletariat and the bourgeoisie under the banner of nationalism, and conceives of "evolution" in terms of the an essentially dialectical conflict of nations rather than classes. From this perspective, the adoption of Bergsonian creative evolution as an explicit theoretical influence by Sorelian fascism can be understood in terms of the conflation of Bergsonism with an implicitly Hegelian conception of evolutionary development as violent conflict, or *negation as war*. Indeed, according to Jack J. Roth, Sorel

saw a great similarity between Hegel and Bergson...both considered abstract understanding and discursive intelligence to touch only the surface of the real; they both had qualitative and dynamic conceptions of the spirit; and they were one in negating the substantialism and atomism which would isolate and fix the moments of the life of the spirit.⁴⁹

Popper, in his turn, presents the dialectic as a form of creative evolution:

We can say that Hegel's world of flux is in a state of 'emergent' or 'creative evolution'; each of its stages contains the preceding ones, from which it originates; and each stage supersedes all previous stages, approaching nearer and nearer perfection.⁵⁰

In this way Bergsonism is linked to the Hegelian roots of twentieth-century totalitarian political practice that Popper identifies in *The Open Society and Its Enemies*.

At the same time, however, Popper also gives us the key to understanding the disjunction between "Bergsonian" fascism and Bergson's own apparent political leanings. Popper identifies Hegel's dialectical theory of historical development as essentially evolutionist (in the historicist, rather than properly Darwinian, sense), and as a corollary, any evolutionist theory as essentially Hegelian and dialectical—hence his reading of Bergson's concept of creative evolution as fundamentally Hegelian.⁵¹ Moreover he explicitly classifies both the extreme left (whom he identifies with Marxism) and the extreme right (whom he identifies with fascism per se) as having fundamentally dialectical conceptions of political "evolution": "the left wing replaces the war of nations which appears in Hegel's historicist scheme by the war of classes, the extreme right by the war of races; both follow him more or less consciously."⁵² Indeed, if Popper's analysis is correct, fascism's conflation of race, land and nation reconfigures the class conflict of socialism as a conflict between nations, and in doing so has in fact returned to its Hegelian roots. Such an approach conceives of evolution as a teleological model of historical development (history as *progress*), which Popper dismissively sums up as "Hegel's hysterical historicism...the fertilizer to which modern totalitarianism owes its rapid growth."⁵³ Thus for him,

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The transubstantiation of Hegelianism into racialism or of Spirit into Blood [in fascism] does not greatly alter the main tendency of Hegelianism. It only gives it a tinge of biology and of modern evolutionism. The outcome is a materialistic and at the same time mystical religion of a self-developing biological essence, very closely reminiscent of the religion of reative evolution (whose prophet was the Hegelian Bergson).⁵⁴

The key slippage that allows Sorel and the Sorelians to appropriate Bergson's ideas in the service of violent revolution and totalising political ends takes place, I would argue, in their misconception of the organism in relation to Bergson's creative evolution (a misconception that Popper's understanding of Bergson shares.) If one looks at Sorel's application of the notion of "creative evolution" to class conflict, or the properly fascist application of Sorel's ideas to the conflict of races and nations, the organic metaphor is being applied to distinct individuals (individual classes, individual races, individual nations seen as *organic unities*) involved in what is conceived of as an evolutionary battle for "the survival of the fittest," to use Herbert Spencer's phrase.⁵⁵ That is to say, their conception of evolutionary adaptation ultimately treats the organism as something separate and distinct from its environment, rather than continuous with it, and thereby thinks the continuous movement of evolution (adaptation) on the basis of static points. It therefore operates on the basis of the determined identity of either species/class/nation taken as "closed systems simply subjected to external forces and determinations"; in other words, it treats the organism as a closed whole.⁵⁶ To put it bluntly, in their thinking about creative evolution, though they were reading Bergson, they were thinking Spencer, and what this leads them to is a de-facto Hegelianism.⁵⁷

This conflation of Bergson and Hegel (by both Popper and the Sorelians) requires a substantial misreading of Bergson, who in fact argues that change in the organism (evolutionary "movement") expresses itself in and through a continuity of change in relations with its environment, of the ways in which they interact, in both directions. That is, any change in relations between *aspects* of the whole expresses itself in the transformation of the whole in its entirety.⁵⁸ Thus, as Deleuze points out, the organism can only be taken as analogous to the whole to the extent that *both* are open.⁵⁹ In essence, the Sorelians' (and Popper's) mistake is to conceive of creative evolution as something

which is expressed *in* the organism/species/class/nation—evolution as action upon closed, self-identical, actual entities—when it is more properly understood as something manifested only in terms of the continuous transformation of a strictly virtual whole, of which the organism is only an open and “mobile section,” to use Deleuze’s terminology.⁶⁰

Where Popper and Bergson Agree

The danger Popper seeks to avert in his critique of irrationalist and historicist predictions lies in the acts that are justified on their behalf. As Popper puts it,

If you know, on the basis of historical prophecy, what the result of the social revolution must be, and if you know that the result is all that we hope for, then, but only then, can you consider the revolution with its untold suffering as a means to the end of untold happiness. But with the elimination of the historicist doctrine, the theory of revolution becomes completely untenable.⁶¹

If one holds to such prophetic doctrines, then no counterargument based on the human pain or suffering can sway you, since the end—the future your doctrine has determined—justifies the means. Impervious to criticism or evidence, such doctrine is necessarily irrational. The moral importance of a rationalist approach lays not in its ability to lead us to the “right” conclusions and actions, but in its capacity to help us limit the impact of bad conclusions and actions by subjecting them to criticism. In this sense, rationalism has a strictly negative power.

The key issue here—and the point on which Popper takes up a key Bergsonian position—is the necessary openness and unpredictability of the future. Bergson criticises both teleological and mechanistic philosophies for treating the “future and past as calculable functions of the present, and thus claim[ing] that *all is given*.”⁶² Inasmuch as the whole is given (either in relation to a pre-given goal, or as causally determined by its starting conditions and laws), there can be no real change, no production of the new or unforeseeable, since every moment is in some sense “given in advance.” That is to say, for Bergson, both teleological and mechanistic determinism treat the whole as *closed*. Deleuze summarizes Bergson’s position this way:

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The confusion of space and time, the assimilation of time into space, make us think that the whole is given, even if only in principle, even if only in the eyes of God. And this is the mistake that is common to mechanism and to finalism [teleology]. The former assumes that everything is calculable in terms of a state; the latter, that everything is determinable in terms of a program: In any event, time is only there now as a screen that hides the eternal from us, or show us successively what a God or superhuman intelligence would see in a single glance.⁶³

Popper's critique of historicism reaches very similar conclusions, with regard to both teleological modes of prophecy (for which Hegel provides his example) and causally determinist ones (which is how he characterises Marxian economic determinism): they treat the future as closed, as if all were given in advance.

This similarity seems to me more than superficial or accidental. Popper notes that, in *The Poverty of Historicism*, he "only tried to show that historicism is a poor method; I did not try to refute it."⁶⁴ In *The Open Universe*, he takes up the task of refuting not only historicism, but also deterministic prediction in all forms, including that of science. His arguments (which are too lengthy to summarize here) aim to refute determinism by showing that, although the past is determined, the future is necessarily undetermined and thus open.⁶⁵ In doing so, he comes to a characterisation of science that seems to me very close to Bergson's. While Bergson attacks both teleological and mechanistic manners of conceiving of the whole, of the universe, as given in advance, he by no means dismisses science, or the value of its findings. Rather, he sees science as dealing only with limited or closed "sets" (to use Deleuze's terminology), artificially abstracted from the openness of the whole by spatialising duration—thus treating change in time as equivalent to translation in space. He argues that this spatialising tendency is a necessary function of thought, perception and language, insofar as these are tools for abstracting or isolating something to act on from the unbroken continuity of change that he argues characterises real duration. This is the "cinematographic illusion,"⁶⁶ in which

we take snapshots, as it were, of the passing reality, and, as these are characteristic of the reality, we have only to string them on a becoming, abstract, uniform and invis-

ible, situated at the back of the apparatus of knowledge in order to imitate that which is characteristic of this becoming itself.⁶⁷

This illusion is a pragmatic one, and one that is common to all life, inasmuch life is that which acts. Reality, for Bergson, is continuous change (that is to say, duration), but in order to act, life must perforce “cut out” static points from this continuity in order to act upon them:

Our needs are, then, so many searchlights which, directed upon the continuity of sensible qualities, single out in it distinct bodies. They cannot satisfy themselves except upon the condition that they carve out, within this continuity, a body which is to be their own and then delimit other bodies with which the first can enter into relation, as if with persons. To establish these special relations among portions thus carved out from sensible reality is just what we call *living*.⁶⁸

The closed and limited systems that characterise the objects of science are cut out in precisely this manner, and are no more “false” than the bodies and objects we delimit for ourselves in order to act in the world. Such systems, or sets, or bodies serve a pragmatic and necessary function, but cannot provide an adequate characterisation of the whole as such: “The real whole might well be, we conceive, an indivisible continuity. The systems we cut out within it would, properly speaking, not then be *parts* at all; they would be *partial views* of the whole.”⁶⁹ But if we mistake these “partial views” for “parts”—if we take our spatialised abstraction of reality for reality itself—we fall into the trap of thinking that the predictions we make successfully with regard to closed systems can be extended to the open whole as such. This is the error of positivist determinism, the error of regarding the whole as giveable in advance, even if only in principle.

This conception of science as dealing only with closed or limited systems—but never with reality as a whole—is very close indeed to what Popper has to say about science and its limits. He argues that

the method of science depends upon our attempts to describe the world with simple theories: theories that are complex may become untestable, even if they happen to be true. Science may be described as the art of systematic over-simplification—the art of discerning what we may

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with advantage omit. . . . Our attempt to describe the world in terms of universal theories may be an attempt to rationalize the unique, the irrational, in terms of our self-made universal laws. . . . each step of approximation seems to describe a partial aspect of the world without which we could not understand the next.⁷⁰

This notion of science as “the art of discerning what we may with advantage omit” corresponds closely with Bergson’s treatment of science as that which deals with limited or closed systems. The “simplification” that science performs is not merely omission, but omission *to our advantage*, omission that gives us greater power to act upon the world by virtue of our (limited) models of it. Popper describes scientific theories as “nets designed by us to catch the world.”⁷¹ In testing those theories (through attempts at falsification), we may get better nets, “yet they will never be perfect instruments to catch our fish, the real world. They are rational nets of our own making, and should not be mistaken for a complete representation of the real world in all its aspects.”⁷² Testing for falsification may lead to better theories, but those theories will never be fine enough nets to capture all of reality. To put it another way, it is possible to improve the pragmatic usefulness of our theories—to increase our power to act upon the world—but we cannot in principle or in fact devise theories which capture the whole, precisely as a function of its openness to the future. This openness, then, is fundamental to Popper’s conception of science, and scientific methodology (and its limits); to his arguments in favour of rationalism and its role in limiting immorality; to his critique of Hegelian evolutionary historicism, and thus to his implicit attack on Bergsonian philosophy as a variation on that Hegelian historicism. And that same openness is one of the fundamental tenets of Bergsonian philosophy.⁷³

Why Popper is Not Bergson.

Of course, Bergson and Popper’s shared commitment to the openness of the future does not commit the latter to the former’s proposal that it is duration *as such* that escapes our nets. Although a full analysis of the divergence of their philosophical approaches belongs elsewhere, I would contend that the key point of difference lies in their analysis of the relations between past, present and future. Despite the

fact that Popper finds it “crucially important to distinguish between the determined *past* and the open *future*,”⁷⁴ he has nothing to say about how it is that the future becomes the past, how the undetermined becomes determined.⁷⁵ That is to say, Popper does not deal with the present as such, with the mobile point at which past and future meet. Bergson’s treatment of duration, memory, the nature of the open whole, on the other hand, are fundamentally entwined with his analysis of the paradoxical relation of the present to both past and future. As he points out, “nothing *is* less than the present moment, if you understand by that the indivisible limit which divides the past and future. When we think this present as going to be, it exists not yet, and when we think it as existing, it is already past.”⁷⁶ In particular, problems arise when we consider how it is that the present becomes the past. If present and past are different in kind (which would be a “commonsense” position), then there is no way for the present to pass, to become past, and duration ceases to be real (time stops). If, on the other hand, present and past are continuous and undivided, the present is always and already ‘in the past’ at the very moment it is present. I would argue that much of what is so foreign and alien in Bergson’s work to a Popperian perspective—despite their shared commitment to the openness of the future—arises out of Bergson’s analysis of these paradoxes of the present.

Despite this key divergence, given their belief in the openness of the future that they share, the question arises of whether there is a sense in which Bergson and Popper’s respective philosophies might be said to at least overlap, or complement each other. Although Popper gives metaphysical speculation (such as Bergson’s) no particular value in its own right, he does note in *Conjectures and Refutations* that it can play a productive role within a strictly scientific and rational methodology, although this is by no means necessary or inevitable. Within his framework, the “scientificity” or “rationality” of hypotheses or statements does not derive from their content, but rather from the *process* of falsification or critique one subjects them to. Even metaphysical statements can play a valid part in this process, to the extent that they prompt the investigation of other, genuinely testable and falsifiable hypotheses.⁷⁷ Given that Bergson sees science and metaphysics merely as “two opposed although complementary ways of knowing,”⁷⁸ it might be tempting, then to see his “intuition” simply as a means of inventing new metaphysical statements, or “myths” that might prompt new

directions for properly rational or scientific critique and testing. However, such a proposal would be deeply flawed, even on Bergson's terms. Even if we allow the intuitive grasp of real duration that Bergson proposes as a given, by his own argument there is no way for any such intuition to be communicated without spatialising its grasp of real duration. As he points out, "whether we would think becoming [that is to say, duration], or express it, or even perceive it, we hardly do anything else than set going a kind of cinematograph inside us... the mechanism of our ordinary knowledge is of a cinematographical kind."⁷⁹ If this is the case, then any attempt to think about the duration one grasps intuitively—let alone communicate it—will of necessity turn it into a spatialized reduction of itself. No matter what metaphorical or poetic resources one is able to draw on to communicate one's intuitive insight to someone else, that act of communication will always take place in language, and thus always be "cinematographic" in nature. Intuitive insight can thus never become "raw materials" for rational critique or science, *because they can never be communicated*, even as "myth."

It seems worth pointing out at this point that Popper's distinction between "rational" and "irrational" does not coincide completely with Bergson's distinction between "intuition" and the "cinematographic" products of language, thought and perception. Clearly, for Popper, language can say many irrational things, as well as being used for rational discussion, but for Bergson, language can say nothing of intuitions at all. As a result, any irrationally (that is to say, dogmatically) held belief, philosophy, claim, or statement may certainly be subject to Popper's criticisms—but any intuition of real duration *as Bergson defines it*, is not, and cannot be, subject to the same, because whatever an intuition might be, it cannot be a belief or an idea or a philosophy (since the latter are all functions of "cinematographic" thought), nor can it be a claim or a statement, let alone a political program (since they are all dependent on being expressed in "cinematographic" language).⁸⁰ In Bergson's terms, intuition *as such* must always remain a "private matter." By the same token, however, it can never be used as the basis for any social or political action either. This underlines my argument that Popper's accusation of irrationalism misses its mark with regard to Bergson, but it also precludes Bergsonian intuition from playing even a marginal role in Popperian rational discussion.

Deleuze Runs Away

This, finally, brings us back to Deleuze. The bulk of my argument so far has been devoted to showing that Popper's accusation that Bergson's philosophy is Hegelian, and thus irrationalist, is based on the false assumption that Bergson's "creative evolution" is a variation of Hegel's evolutionary historicism. In fact, the premise on which Popper bases his attack on historicism (that the future is open) is the very same basis upon which Bergson develops his philosophical framework (the whole is open). In short, if my argument is convincing, the weight of Popper's accusation no longer falls on Bergson's shoulders, and as a result it no longer falls on Deleuze's either—at least to the extent that Deleuze cannot be accused of irrationalism on the basis of his Bergsonism. However, the quotations with which I began this essay imply a far more direct way of targeting Deleuze. If rationalism is can be summarised as a willingness to "sit down and talk it through," then Deleuze's and Guattari's comment that every philosopher "runs away" from discussion suggests rather strongly that their conception of philosophy is one that Popper would not hesitate to call irrational and dangerous.

Of course, one can always invert the accusation: from Deleuze's (and Guattari's) perspective, whatever Popper's rationalism is, it is *not* philosophy, and those who engage in it are not philosophers. The reference to philosophers 'running away' from discussion comes in the context of their definition of philosophy as the creation of concepts.⁸¹ Discussion, or criticism, or agreement, have nothing to do with philosophy in this sense, because philosophy creates while discussion or debate can only repeat or negate (Is it right? Is it wrong?). The Deleuzian philosopher's question is "What can I do with it? What new weapons can I make?"⁸² Even in his work in the history of philosophy, Deleuze's approach is not to clarify or explain or critique his subject, but to "give birth to monsters."⁸³ To sit down and talk it over, to criticize, is to turn philosophy into a contest of "rival opinions at the dinner table."⁸⁴ Consensus or argument can only dispute, negate or limit, and never create: it is a purely negative and reactive conception of philosophy. As Deleuze puts it, "All these debaters and communicators are inspired by *ressentiment*."⁸⁵

This emphasis on philosophy as creative can certainly be linked to the ontology of difference, and thus of creativity, that Deleuze takes

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up from Bergson.⁸⁶ Like Bergson, he accords science an equal, though distinct, value to that of philosophy (as a creator of functions, rather than concepts; art, on the other hand, creates affects.) Thus, as Paul Patton puts it,

scientific functions refer to bodies and states of affairs while philosophical statements express pure events. This implies that philosophy does not provide discursive knowledge of the kind provided by the sciences. In particular, it does not provide proof of its claims in a manner that may be disputed from the standpoint of facts or even from that of another concept. A philosophical concept cannot be disproved, it can only be discarded.⁸⁷

Thus it would seem that, in “running away” from discussion to create, the Deleuzian philosopher does indeed leave the field that Popper wishes to claim for rationality, the plane on which science creates its functions, and camps upon a different territory, a different plane. But this plane seems to be precisely that which Popper would call that of irrationalism.

I noted in my introduction that both Deleuze and Popper share a concern and interest in the political implications and effects of philosophy. As I’ve suggested, the political significance of rationalism for Popper has little or nothing to do with any attempt to reach agreement or consensus. His rationalism is pragmatic, realist and limited, and aims at a strictly negative relation to politics. That is to say, it proposes no positive scheme or plan or action, no model of “the people,” or their rights, beyond that of maximising one’s negative freedom, freedom from the schemes and designs of others. Its only *necessary* outcome is the limitation of immorality, by preventing the dogmatic application of theories or programs of action regardless of the views of others, and of the harm it may cause them. Deleuze’s conception of the relation of philosophy to politics is rather different. According to Paul Patton, “Deleuze and Guattari see the invention of concepts as a means of breaking with self-evidence”—a way, one might say, of freeing thought from its cinematographic trap.⁸⁸ A concept extracts from the actual what they call “the event”; that which is neither *an* event—“what happened”—nor the abstract and eternal (Platonic) concept of actual things or states of affairs. The event, as virtual, “is actualised or effectuated whenever it is inserted, willy-nilly, into a state

of affairs; but it is *counter-effectuated* whenever it is abstracted from states of affairs so as to isolate its concept.”⁸⁹ Philosophy, as the creator of concepts, extracts or frees the event from things, the actual, from what happens: “to the extent that the pure event is each time imprisoned forever in its actualisation, counter-actualisation liberates it, *always for other times*.”⁹⁰ But what has this to do with politics?

Deleuze says of the events of May ‘68 that “we’re told revolutions go wrong, or produce monsters in their wake: it’s an old idea, no need to wait for Stalin, it was already true of Napoleon, of Cromwell. To say revolutions turn out badly is to say nothing about people’s revolutionary becoming.”⁹¹ I would unpack the final sentence of this quote like this: to say that actual revolutions turn out badly is to say nothing of people’s revolutionary becoming, of the revolution as virtual event, as pure event. To the extent that one is able to counter-effectuate an actual revolution (Stalin, Napoleon, Cromwell) to find its concept, one liberates the event from its entrapment in the actual, the political, the violent, and the monsters that follow, in favour ‘other times’. Philosophy understood as the creation of concepts is not concerned with the attempt to limit the *actual* violence and immorality of the revolution, and the monsters we suffer in its wake (whichever revolution it may be)—that is to say, with the negative but actual freedom of Popper’s rationalism. Rather, it seeks its relation to the political in the positive creation of the concept, the counter-effectuation of the virtual event as “the contour, the configuration, the constellation of an event to come.”⁹² When Deleuze and Guattari thus come to speak of a “people yet to come” on the final page of *What is Philosophy?*,⁹³ it seems to me that this is not a reference to some future (i.e. possible) social or political organisation, but rather the giving over, here and now, of the human to the *impossibility* of actual community, of just politics, of humanity, as the *condition* of community; the unavowable community, the ethical community. Deleuze flees discussion, critique, a rationality modelled on the methods of science in order to create ‘the constellation of an event to come’—not an event that will come, not a *possible* event, but rather the impossibility of the event, the impossibility of the people, *here and now*, impossible in the same sense death is impossible:

Every event is like death, double and impersonal in its double....‘For in it *I* do not die. I forfeit the power of

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dying. In this abyss they [*on*] die—they never cease to die, and they never succeed in dying.’

How different this ‘they’ is from that which we encounter in everyday banality. It is the ‘they’ of impersonal and pre-individual singularities, the ‘they’ of the pure event wherein *it* dies in the same way that *it* rains. The splendour of the ‘they’ is the splendour of the event itself.⁹⁴

Popper’s Infinite Conversation

It appears that there is no chance of Popper and Deleuze sitting down to talk. Deleuze’s creation, it seems, is Poppers irrationalism. Popper seeks the limitation of actual immortality, of the actual suffering of you and I, in a politics of negative freedom. Deleuze’s ethics, his politics, lies the creation of concepts for the “they” who never cease to come, and never succeeds in coming. But perhaps, after all, there is a faint echo of this coming in Popper. Rational discussion is actual, part of the realm of action, politics, of the violence it seeks to limit and forestall in this world. But the founding act of Popper’s rationalism is precisely the decision at every moment not to kill, not to act, to speak first, and to keep speaking. This is the only necessary outcome of rational discussion: to keep speaking, endlessly, infinitely, to extract from the world of action a pause in killing, endlessly extended towards an open future, a time ‘yet to come’. The infinite conversation as the counter-actualisation of the event of death: not morality (as Popper says), but as (impossible) ethics in favour, not of an actual humanity (the monsters in the wake of revolutions), but of a people yet to come.

Of what do you complain, silence without origin? Why come here to haunt a language that cannot recognize you? What draws you among us, into this space where the brazen law has forever asserted itself? Is it you, that plaint not yet heard?⁹⁵

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Notes

¹ Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, vol. 2, *The High Tide of Prophecy: Hegel, Marx, and the Aftermath* (London: Routledge Classics, 2003), 249.

² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchall (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 28.

³ “What I detested most was Hegelianism and the dialectic.” Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 6.

⁴ “I neither could nor wished to spend unlimited time upon deep researches into the history of a philosopher [Hegel] whose work I abhor.” Popper, *The Open Society*, 1961 Addenda, 446.

⁵ Popper, *The Open Society*, Addenda, 445.

⁶ Michael Hardt offers a useful analysis of the starting point for this escape in his chapter on Deleuze’s early work on Bergsonian ontology. See Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 1-25.

⁷ Hegel and Marx are the focus of the second volume of this work; the first is devoted largely to Plato.

⁸ Popper, *The Open Society*, 248.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 249.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 250.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 252.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 264.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 260.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 260-261.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 263.

²⁰ It is worth emphasizing again that Popper has little to say directly about Bergson; the claims I refer to are made by Popper with regard to Hegel, and only indirectly with regard to Bergson inasmuch as Popper identifies him as an Hegelian.

²¹ For a good introduction to its complexities, see Sanford Schwartz, “Bergson and the Politics of Vitalism,” in *The Crisis in Modernism: Bergson and the Vitalist Controversy*, ed. Frederick Burwick and Paul Douglas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 277-305.

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²² This is particularly so in the period of Bergson's greatest prominence, roughly from the last years of the nineteenth century, through to the early 1930s.

²³ Zeev Sternhell, *Neither Right nor Left: Fascist Ideology in France*, trans. David Maisle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 11.

²⁴ Georges Valois was one of the leaders and founders of the *Cabier du Cercle Proudhon*, a publication of the Sorelian nationalist right, founded in 1911, and of the *Faisceau*, itself one of the major French fascist organizations of the 1920's, which advocated an anti-liberal, anti-democratic and corporatist synthesis of nationalism and socialism.

²⁵ Sternhell, *Neither Right nor Left*, 9.

²⁶ Ellen Kennedy, "Bergson's Philosophy and French Political Doctrines: Sorel, Maurras, Péguy and De Gaulle," *Government and Opposition* 15, no. 1 (1980), 77-78. For Sorel's own comments on the significance of Bergsonian philosophy to his political thought, see: Georges Sorel, "Letter to Daniel Halévy," in *Reflections on Violence* (New York: Collier Books, 1972), 28-29, 46-49, 52.

²⁷ Most particularly on *Creative Evolution*, see, for example, Georges Sorel, "Études Et Critiques: L'évolution Créatrice," *Le Mouvement socialiste*, no. 191, 193-194, 196-197 (1907-1908).

²⁸ Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, trans. T.E. Hulme and J. Roth (New York: Collier Books, 1972).

²⁹ Kennedy, "Bergson's Philosophy and French Political Doctrines," 78. She is referring to an interview with Bergson by Jacques Morland, published in *L'Opinion* in which Morland describes Sorel as "*un disciple de M. Bergson*." Reprinted in Henri Bergson, *Mélanges*, ed. André Robinet (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972), 940.

³⁰ Alice Yaeger Kaplan, *Reproductions of Banality: Fascism, Literature, and French Intellectual Life* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 59.

³¹ Charles F. Delzell, "Fascism in Italy: Origins and Ideology," in *On the Origin and Evolution of European Fascism* (Claremont, CA: The Family of Benjamin Z. Gould Center for Humanistic Studies, 1995).

³² Jack J. Roth refers to the existence of a "Sorelian left" and a "Sorelian right," the left being largely defined in terms of vary degrees of attachment to socialism and syndicalism, the right by their nationalism. Jack J. Roth, *The Cult of Violence: Sorel and the Sorelians* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 120. Sorel himself was at times equivocal about the nationalism of the right, without ever rejecting it as such. It is worth keeping in mind, then, that the "Sorelian" fascist synthesis of left and right might be more aptly attributed to the Sorelians than to Sorel himself. Thus Alice Yaeger Kaplan makes the point that "any link between Sorel and fascism is much clearer in Sorel's disciples than it is in Sorel's own writings" (Kaplan, *Reproductions of Banality*, 60).

³³ Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics* (New York: Citadel Press, 1992), 37.

³⁴ "It is what Bergson ultimately aims to do: to give modern science the metaphysic which corresponds to it, as one half lacks the other." Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 7.

³⁵ Sternhell, *Neither Right nor Left*, ix-xvi.

³⁶ For example, Sorel writes that "Bergson has taught us that it is not only religion which occupies the profounder region of our mental life; revolutionary myths have their place there equally with religion." Sorel, "Letter to Daniel Halévy," 52.

³⁷ Henri Bergson and Gilbert Maire, "Bergson à G. Maire," *Cahiers du Cercle Proudhon II*, March-April (1912): n.a.

³⁸ Kennedy, "Bergson's Philosophy and French Political Doctrines," 80.

³⁹ George Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*, 3rd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961). Quoted in Kennedy, "Bergson's Philosophy and French Political Doctrines," 76.

⁴⁰ Sternhell, *Neither Right nor Left*, 78-79.

⁴¹ Kennedy, "Bergson's Philosophy and French Political Doctrines," 76. She is referring to Julien Benda, *The Treason of the Intellectuals* (New York: Norton, 1969). Popper's brief reference to this work as Benda's "great book" suggests the possibility that his views on Bergson may be in part influenced by Benda's own critical perspective. Popper, *The Open Society*, Addenda, 445.

⁴² Kennedy, "Bergson's Philosophy and French Political Doctrines," 79.

⁴³ For example, in 1922 he was appointed President of the 'International Commission of Intellectual Co-operation' set up by the League of Nations. Keith Ansell Pearson and John Mullarkey, "Chronology of Life and Works," in Henri Bergson: *Key Writings*, ed. Keith Ansell Pearson and John Mullarkey (New York & London: Continuum, 2002), x.

⁴⁴ This takes place in an address given to the *Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques* in late 1914, although in this case, it is the First World War that is in question, and Bergson identifies Hegel not as a cause of militarism, but as a source of theoretical justification for it after the fact: "Germany, finally having become a predatory nation, invokes Hegel as witness" (Henri Bergson, *The Meaning of War: Life and Matter in Conflict* [London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1915], 6. This work can be accessed from the 'Project Gutenberg' site, at <http://gutenberg.org/etext/1711>).

⁴⁵ Henri Bergson, *The Two Source of Morality and Religion*, trans. R. Ashley Audra and C. Brereton with the assistance of W. Horsfall Carter (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1974). According to George Soros, Popper actually adopted the phrase 'the open society' from this work, which makes his

alignment of Bergson with the open society's enemies somewhat mystifying, unless one assumes that Popper sees a radical conceptual break between Bergson's final work and all that came before. However, Popper never actually says this, and nor do I think it a sustainable claim to make with regard to Bergson's work. George Soros, "The Capitalist Threat," *Atlantic Monthly* 279, no. 2 (1997): 45.

⁴⁶ This critique is the explicit subject matter of *The Poverty of Historicism*, but it is a topic that arises regularly throughout much of his work. Karl Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002).

⁴⁷ Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism*, xiii.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 97-108.

⁴⁹ Jack J. Roth, *The Cult of Violence: Sorel and the Sorelians*, 96.

⁵⁰ Popper, *The Open Society*, 37. Just in case the reader doesn't pick up the allusion to Bergson here, Popper footnotes the sentence to make it unequivocal, and goes on to say that "It appears that the Hegelian character of this work [*Creative Evolution*] is not sufficiently recognized; and, indeed, Bergson's lucidity and reasoned presentation of his philosophy sometimes makes it difficult to realize how much his philosophy depends on Hegel. But if we consider, for example, that Bergson teaches that the essence is change... then there remains little doubt." Popper, *The Open Society*, 342n.25.

⁵¹ Popper, *The Open Society*, 33, and 341n.6.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 33.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁵⁵ "This survival of the fittest, which I have here sought to express in mechanical terms, is that which Mr. Darwin has called "natural selection, or the preservation of favoured races in the struggle for life." Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Biology*, vol. 1 (London: Williams and Norgate, 1864), 444.

⁵⁶ Keith Ansell Pearson, "Bergson and Creative Evolution/Involution: Exposing the Transcendental Illusion of Organismic Life," in *The New Bergson*, ed. John Mullarkey, *Angelaki Humanities* (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1999), 147.

⁵⁷ And of course it is in his reaction against the mechanism of Spencer that Bergson begins to develop his ideas on movement and real duration: "Some fifty years ago I was very much attached to the philosophy of Spencer. I perceived one fine day that, in it, time served no purpose, did nothing. Nevertheless, I said to myself, time is something. Therefore it acts. What can it be doing?" Henri Bergson, "The Possible and the Real," in *Henri Bergson: Key Writings*, ed. Keith Ansell Pearson and John Mullarkey (New York & London: Continuum, 2002), 224.

⁵⁸ See Chapter 1 in particular; Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Dover, 1998).

⁵⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, 10.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 9.

⁶¹ Karl Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, Fourth edition (revised) ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), 344.

⁶² Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 37.

⁶³ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 104.

⁶⁴ Karl Popper, *The Open Universe: An Argument for Indeterminism* (London: Hutchinson, 1982), 64n.1. This work itself is one of three volumes that form a *Postscript to The Logic of Scientific Discovery*; see the editor's Forward, xi-xvi.

⁶⁵ For these arguments, see "The Case for Indeterminism" in Popper, *The Open Universe*, 41-85.

⁶⁶ Popper's critique of metaphysical, as opposed to scientific, determinism even proceeds via his own account of something very similar to Bergson's "cinematographic illusion. In *The Open Universe*, he recounts a conversation with Albert Einstein, in which attempted to (rationally) persuade Einstein away from what Popper saw as his underlying metaphysical determinism. In this conversation he refers to Einstein as Parmenides, "since he believed in a four-dimensional block universe, unchanging like the three-dimensional block universe of Parmenides" (Popper, *The Open Universe*, 90). The metaphor Popper uses to describe this block-universe is that of the motion picture: "in the eyes of God, the film was just there, and the future was there as much as the past: nothing ever happened in this world, and change was a human illusion, as was also the difference between the future and the past" (ibid.). The arguments he uses against Einstein derive from absurdities that arise from this "cinematic" ontology.

⁶⁷ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 306.

⁶⁸ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York: Zone, 1988), 198.

⁶⁹ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 31.

⁷⁰ Popper, *The Open Universe*, 44-46.

⁷¹ Ibid, 42.

⁷² Ibid, 42.

⁷³ Popper refers to the open universe," and the 'openness' or indeterminacy' of the future, whereas Bergson generally refers to 'the open whole.' However, given that the openness of this whole is a function of Bergson's conception of an ontologically creative universe, and that this creativity has as its consequence the indeterminacy of the future, I think it safe to use these phrases interchangeably, at least in this context.

⁷⁴ Popper, *The Open Universe*, 48.

⁷⁵ Although he gives careful attention to the asymmetry of their relation; see Popper, *The Open Universe*, 57-64.

⁷⁶ Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 150.

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⁷⁷ “The Copernican system, for example, was inspired by a Neo-Platonic worship of the light of the Sun who had to occupy the ‘centre’ because of his nobility. This indicates how myths may develop testable components. They may, in the course of discussion, become fruitful and important for science.” Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, 257.

⁷⁸ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 344.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 306.

⁸⁰ Such as Sorel’s.

⁸¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 15-34.

⁸² “When philosophers criticize each other it is on the basis of problems...that melt down the old concepts in the way a cannon can be melted down to make new weapons...those who criticize without creating, those who are content to defend the vanished concept without being able to give it the forces it needs to return to life, are the plague of philosophy.” Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 28.

⁸³ “The main way I coped with it at the time was to see the history of philosophy as a sort of buggery or (it comes to the same thing) immaculate conception. I saw myself as taking an author from behind and giving him a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous.” Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 6.

⁸⁴ “This is the Western democratic, popular conception of philosophy as providing pleasant or aggressive dinner conversations at Mr. Rorty’s.” Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 144.

⁸⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 28-29.

⁸⁶ If there were such a thing as a quintessentially Deleuzian question, it would be ‘How is something new possible?’

⁸⁷ Paul Patton, *Deleuze and the Political* (London & New York: Routledge, 2000), 25.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 28.

⁸⁹ The quote is from Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 159.

⁹⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin Boundas, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 161, emphasis added.

⁹¹ Deleuze, *Negotiations 1972-1990*, 152-3.

⁹² Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 32-33, emphasis added.

⁹³ *Ibid*, 218.

⁹⁴ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 151-2. The reference is to Maurice Blanchot, *L’espace littéraire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1955), 160.

⁹⁵ Maurice Blanchot, *The Infinite Conversation*, trans. Susan Hanson, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), xxii.