AGORA

STUDENT SUBMITTED RESEARCH IN PHILOSOPHY

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A feminist reading of Schelling's Philosophical Inquiries into the Nature of Human Freedom, through an examination of birth and matricide.

— By Rosie Massey

This article argues for a feminist reading of Schelling's Philosophical Inquiries into the Nature of Human Freedom. It draws specifically on Battersby's call for 'woman' to be the nucleus of philosophical debate; if applied to Schelling, there seems to be convincing evidence that both cases should be taken in tandem. In order for Battersby's argument to be carried out, it requires an eager attempt to draw attention to metaphysical discussion which hinges on the role of 'woman'. I will argue that it is through Schelling's reliance on references to the mother and the image of birth that this reading can and should be made. I will then draw on an argument made by Beach which presents a mythological reading of Schelling's Inquiries. An acknowledgement of the importance of the goddesses is crucial to my own argument; highlighting how a parallel can be made between the goddess and 'woman' in a more general sense. I tend to agree with Battersby about the urgency of her project and think that Schelling's project goes far in being able to thrust 'woman' to the focal point of metaphysics. Schelling's use of language and metaphor are key; they emphasise the importance of the figure of the mother and of reproduction and birth. Schelling would have carefully selected the language he used and in doing so thinks it is the most suitable for explicating his philosophy of freedom. After laying a basis for a feminist reading of Schelling's Inquiries perhaps it would be useful to pay attention to the significance of 'woman' in his work, and the fact that his project is a philosophy of freedom. Is part of freedom for 'woman' found in placing her at the core of metaphysics?

In this paper I will be examining Schelling's philosophy of freedom in his *Philosophical Inquires into the Nature of Human Freedom* to see if a sufficient argument can be made which would place the role of the mother and the cycle of reproduction and birth at the centre of his philosophy. I will be specifically referring to Battersby's *The Phenomenal Woman* and to Beach's *The Potencies of God(s)*. Battersby wants to propel the woman[1] from the peripheral of philosophical discourse to the centre of it, and rework the notion of identity. I would like to use Battersby's argument to shed new light on Schelling's philosophy of freedom. The themes of birth, dependency and the mother permeate through Schelling's work; from this we can reach certain conclusions about the ontological status of the female. I will then look to Beach's reading of Schelling. I am particularly interested in his observations of the important role played by goddesses in mythology, and what we can draw from this with regard to the relationship between the goddesses and the gods. We can then parallel this relationship with both that of the relationship between the woman and the man as presented by modern western philosophy, and also with that in Schelling's Philosophical Inquiries.

The point from which Battersby begins her project for a feminine metaphysics entirely exemplifies everything that modern western philosophy has failed to notice up until this point. She cites the Cornish man who explains his difficulty in understanding his own birth. Battersby emphasises the philosophical implication of his statement that when he thinks of his own birth his brain goes red. She states that "Philosophers have notably failed to address the ontological significance of the fact that selves are born" (Battersby, 1998, p.3), and it is the male perception of birth and their difficulty in understanding it which raises the urgency of her claim. It is from here that I would also like to begin my analysis of Schelling. I would claim that Schelling's philosophy does not necessarily deny the ontological importance of birth; in fact I would claim

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1 Both Battersby and I mean 'woman' as the universal not particular.

that his philosophy relies on it. If we accept the ontological significance of birth it would be contradictory to argue that the role of the female or the mother is not of the same significance. By this I do not mean to say that Schelling is deliberately hinging his argument on the ontological importance of birth. I merely conclude that there is sufficient argument in Schelling's philosophy to claim that birth is ontologically significant, and in doing so we are obliged to recognise the consequential importance of 'woman'. Schelling's philosophy acknowledges "the necessity of birth and death" (SW VII, 404). The language Schelling uses throughout his Philosophical Inquiries, although intentional, perhaps for Schelling was not so laden with the connotations I wish to bring to it. I think it may be a case that while Schelling uses imagery of birth and matricide in order to illustrate his philosophy of freedom, he did not do so with the aim of centralising the female figure.

Schelling talks of a self-creating ground which could be seen in some way to present the role of the woman as futile. This could however, also be said to do the same to the role of the man. Schelling's concept of self-creation could be seen to undermine my argument; however, I think that the repeated references to the metaphor of birth are used through necessity. It is the metaphor which best illustrates the process of freedom, which then in turn is drawing on the movement from dependence to independence which could be said to elevate the role of the mother (dependency) and then diminish it once again (independency) that I will look at this later in the paper. If Schelling's philosophy of freedom cannot be explicated without drawing analogy to the process of birth, the relevance of the role of the mother must be increased.

Battersby claims that the 'self' and 'not self' are "sub-contraries, not contradictories" (Battersby, 1998, p.38). She maintains this claim by referring to the possibility that a pregnant woman might be both self and not self. I think that this idea should be contrasted with Schelling's idea

of non-being. In the Philosophical Inquiries Schelling states that "while striving to become creature destroys the nexus of creation and, in its ambition to be everything, falls into non-being" (SW VII 391). The idea that a woman can both encompass the state of being and of non-being with the potential of being shows the particularity of the being of woman. For a female to be able to inhabit both being and non-being raises the role of 'woman' in metaphysics. It is problematic in the sense that being and non-being are assumed not to be able to co-exist, in fact non-being is non-existence. The ontological significance of the pregnant woman therefore is profound and the acknowledgment of this will work towards Battersby's aim to normalise the female birthing body.

The historic perception of the female is that she is a carer by nature. Her children are dependent on her; as are men, although perhaps to a lesser extent. Women traditionally are seen as the "most suitable 'nurse' for other dependants" (Battersby, 1998, p.38). This notion of 'woman' can be specifically related to the role of the mother. I think this further still raises the ontological importance of 'woman'. The concept of dependency necessarily sees the co-existence of a dependant and of that upon which it depends. For Schelling's philosophy of freedom nature comes first, and therefore freedom is dependent on nature. "Every organic individual, insofar as it has come into being, is dependent on another organism with respect to its genesis but not at all with regard to its essential being." (SW VII 346). Schelling's discussion of dependency in respect to freedom and nature elevates the importance of the role of the mother. We can see here a consistency with Battersby's project and the significance of this reading of Schelling.

Schelling's philosophy of freedom can be interpreted as a movement from the dependency on the mother, to independence; then dominance over her. Schelling says "a thought once born is an independent power which works on in its own way, and which indeed grows so great in the human soul

that it masters its own mother and prevails over her" (SW VII, 346). This could be viewed as matricidal, and I think the implications of this interpretation are particularly interesting to my argument. This on the one hand could be interpreted as male dominance over his mother. It seems contradictory however, to suggest that thought subjugates its own mother; yet the language used in order to explicate this is metaphorical of birth, hence returning to the necessary importance of the role of the mother through the paired significance of birth and of 'woman'. Even if the mother becomes under the control of that which was once dependent on her, is it not the role of the mother which has taught and enabled the dependent to grow to do so? Battersby discusses the features of the female subject-position that are inconsistent with the dominant models of identity from western metaphysics. I think that Schelling's use of the metaphor of birth supports Battersby's observation that there is a necessity to think of the "normality of the body that can birth" (Battersby, 1998, p.38). I think these references allude to the fact that a body that can birth is not seen as abnormal; there is instead a failure to attribute its importance to 'woman'.

A matricidal reading of Schelling could however be said to lower the importance of 'woman' and elevate that of man. Žižek could be said to support this view when he says: "the last great representative of the pre-modern 'anthropomorphic' sexualized vision of the universe" (Žižek, 1996). While I disagree with this, it could be said that perhaps Schelling cannot see past the image of man. The figure of man places the ego at the centre of all things. "Man is thus the redeemer of nature towards whom all its archetypes strive." (SW VII 411). If thought can grow and prevail over its own mother we can conclude that ultimately freedom is independence from the mother and that this must be the goal of nature. This is more consistent with male dominance and thus would explain why Schelling thinks that all nature's archetypes strive towards the image of man.

In *The Potencies of God(s)*, Beach presents a mythological reading of Schelling's philosophy of freedom. I would like to apply Beach's discussion of the role of the goddesses in mythology and the relationship between the gods and the goddesses to my discussion of birth and feminism in Schelling's philosophy of freedom. The role of the female and of motherhood in mythology was recognised by Schelling. The goddesses assisted the gods and "traditionally assumed the role of being harbingers, bearers and chief sustainers of their masculine counterparts" (Beach, 1994, p.205-206). This therefore, could suggest contrary to my earlier argument that perhaps the language used by Schelling with regard to the metaphor of birth did in fact intend to emphasise the importance of 'woman'. I will now discuss whether the following assumption can be made: Schelling's acknowledgment of the role played by the female in mythology indicates he must also value the role of the woman in metaphysics. The grounds for this claim will draw on his use of the metaphor of birth and creation.

Battersby makes reference to the two meanings of phenomenal; this shows the polarised perceptions of the woman. Phenomenal can be used in both the sense of meaning something which is exceptional and extraordinary and also in the sense of relating to something in the phenomena —an object of sense experience (Battersby, 1998, p.1). What is 'real' is said to be merely phenomenal. The role of motherhood in mythology can be paralleled with Schelling's philosophy of freedom. "In the cycle whence all things come, there is no contradiction to say that that which gives birth to the one is, in its turn, produced by it" (SW VII 358). I think that this is analogous with the cyclical nature of motherhood and what Beach describes as the "progressive quality" (Beach, 1994, p.208) of motherhood. Placing goddesses at the centre of mythology can support the initial claim made by Battersby which perceives women in the first instance of the meaning of the word phenomenal. It is perhaps this idealisation of goddesses and their fundamental role in aiding the gods to maintain their

position of authority which has led to the notion of the phenomenal woman as wondrous and amazing. Here Schelling can be said to raise the ontological significance of birth, and therefore, under my argument the importance of 'woman'. According to Beach feminine divinity was responsible for the actualisation of new developments (Beach, 1994, p.208). 'Woman' is thus at the centre of human progression, both ontologically and culturally. On these grounds it would be fair to say that the role of 'woman' is crucial to 'essence' and must be included in the defining characteristics of a species or thing as stated in Battersby's introduction as one of the aims of her project.

Beach's discussion of the 'femininization' of the gods offers another perspective to Schelling. The claim is that "the regnant deity had to be transformed into a pregnant deity" (Beach, 1994, p.206). This relates back to the importance of normalising the female birthing body, and shows the masculine reliance on the feminine figure in mythology. Once again, this veers back to the concept of dependency and of the mother. The recurrence of motherhood can be seen in Schelling: "the unity which had necessarily but unconsciously existed within nature, as in a seed" (SW VII, 361). This shows nature to be analogous with the womb and unity to be the foetus which exists within it. Schelling's use of the word 'seed' could be compared with the female reproductive organs. The concept of existing within nature as in a seed is significant because again here Schelling draws on the cycle of reproduction and birth in order to illustrate his philosophy of freedom. The comparison of nature with the womb can be seen as another attempt to normalise the female body that births. It signifies that the role of the mother is comparable with that of nature, and therefore, for Schelling with that of God. Schelling makes reference to the female birthing body: "Man is formed in his mother's womb; and only out of the darkness of unreason (out of feeling, out of longing, the sublime mother of understanding) grow clear thoughts." (SW VII, 360). This reading could be used to strengthen Battersby's argument

and I think it goes far to solidify a feminist interpretation of Schelling.

In conclusion I think that there is sufficient evidence to make the claim that the role of the mother portrayed in Schelling and the use of the repeated metaphor of birth increase the ontological significance of 'woman'. I think that this can be used in conjunction with Battersby's argument and aids her project; bringing 'woman' from the fringes of metaphysics and giving her a central position in metaphysics. I think that Beach's account of Schelling facilitates my argument. By claiming Schelling's recognition of the responsibility of the goddess in mythology, especially with regard to their male counterparts, room is made for my interpretation of Schelling's philosophy of freedom. I do not think that the matricidal connotations in Schelling's Philosophical Inquiries undermine the ontological significance of 'woman' through the dominance over the mother. I think that while Schelling may himself not have seen past the image of man and aimed to revolve his philosophy around him, the language he uses cannot deny the ontological importance of birth and hence of 'woman'. A reading of Schelling in this light could further the necessity of placing 'woman' at the centre of a feminist metaphysics.

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Why does Deleuze insist on the concept of 'forces' in his examination of Nietzsche's philosophy?

— By Will Stronge

This essay concerns Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy. Deleuze offers readers an incredibly rich analysis of Nietzsche's key concepts (e.g. the will to power, the eternal return, ressentiment etc) and the text is also an important contribution toward the understanding of Deleuze himself. The essay outlines Deleuze's concept of force and how he applies it to Nietzsche's thought. In this way it is not a discussion of Deleuze's method, nor is it a critique of his conclusions. Rather it is a clear, brief outline of his interpretation – hopefully valuable and interesting to anyone looking to gain a more developed insight into either Nietzsche or Deleuze.

The investigation is structured according to four key themes that Deleuze picks from Nietzsche: the quantity and quality of forces, the will to power, ressentiment, science and finally the eternal return. The essay concludes that despite the radical approach taken by Deleuze, the translating of Nietzsche's central concepts into relations of force is an original and compelling strategy.

Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche rests upon a metaphysical system that he attempts to extract from Nietzsche's work. The unique and fundamental factor is the idea of 'force'. What we find is that Deleuze's insistence on the concept of 'forces' is not unwarranted, and in fact, it becomes even more apparent that forces are essential to an analysis of Nietzsche. We will investigate which key areas Deleuze points to in his examination, with close reference to *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962) and Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morality* (1887) in particular. These topics will include the metaphysical notion of forces, forces relating to the concept of the will to power, the role of forces in *ressentiment* and science, and finally how forces relate to Nietzsche's eternal return. It is important to note that the majority of references that Deleuze makes to Nietzsche – those cited as "VP" or "WP", are taken from the posthumous *Will to Power* (1935,1968). As merely a collection of unpublished notes, Deleuze would inevitably have to employ a good deal of innovation in order to create a coherent theory. Therefore, when discussing Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche, it is *very much* Deleuze's interpretation and far from a neutral commentary. However, despite Deleuze's characteristic approach, we shall see how the concept of forces *can* be applied to all areas and topics of Nietzsche's thought – making Deleuze's interpretation unavoidably compelling.

Deleuze believes that according to Nietzsche, "all reality is quantity of force" (Deleuze, 2006, p. 37) i.e. everything that exists consists of forces. Every force is necessarily in relation to another and "it either obeys or commands" (ibid.). This is the fundamental and indeed, metaphysical fact that Deleuze believes Nietzsche advocates. Every relation of force constitutes a body, and thus what defines a body specifically is the relationship between the dominant and dominated force i.e. inferior and superior force (ibid.). For example, Deleuze points to a section of Nietzsche that discusses the relationship between consciousness and the body –

> *"Consciousness usually only appears when a whole wants to subordinate itself to a superior whole…Consciousness is born in relation to a being of which we could be a function (VP II 227)."*
> (ibid., p. 36)

Nietzsche sees consciousness as the "slave's consciousness in relation to a master who is not himself conscious" (ibid.) - and this master (dominating force) is the unconscious body. In this way the consciousness merely "testifies to the 'formation of a superior body'" (ibid.), and is an example of a dominated, inferior force.

Going further into the examination, Deleuze explains that the difference between such quantities of force is the 'quality' of force (ibid. p. 39). In any body, "the superior or dominant forces are known as *active* and the inferior or dominated forces are known as *reactive*" (ibid., p. 37). Active and reactive are the qualities that we assign to forces to represent the difference in quantity – in this way we form a "hierarchy" (ibid.). An active force, says Deleuze, "asserts itself, it affirms its difference" while a reactive force "limits active force, imposes limitations and partial restrictions" (ibid., p. 52). The distinction of active and reactive forces can be directly applied to Nietzsche's discussion of the 'noble' and the 'slave' in *On the Genealogy of Morality*. Here Nietzsche explains that the noble "acts and grows spontaneously…it says "yes" to itself" (Nietzsche, p. 19, 1998) while the slave "says no…slave morality always needs an opposite and external world…its action is, from the ground up, reaction" (ibid.). It is obvious that (in Deleuzian terms) the noble is the active force, capable of acting, dominating and being superior, while the slave is the reactive force - only capable of being dominated, limiting, and saying no to active forces.

Having grounded Nietzsche within forces, Deleuze introduces the crucial element within this system - this is Nietzsche's concept of the 'will to power'. The will to power can only be understood in relation to force.

Deleuze puts great importance on one sentence from Nietzsche:

> *"The victorious concept 'force', by means of which our physicists have created God and the world, still needs to be completed: an inner will must be ascribed to it, which I designate as 'will to power' (VP II 309/WP 619)."*
> (Deleuze, p.46, 2006)

The will to power therefore exists within a force, as well as being ascribed to it – and the function of a will to power is extremely interesting. Deleuze claims: *"The will to power is the element from which derive both the quantitative difference of related forces and the quality that devolves into each force in this relation"* (ibid., p.46). So the will to power has two simultaneous aspects in its relationship to forces, one – as something which *determines the quantity of force*, and two – as something which *interprets the quality*, or relationship, between two forces. The will to power exists within all force, yet not exactly as an attribute – "if we pose the question 'which one', we cannot say that force is *the one that wills*. The will to power alone is the one that wills" (ibid.). Yet at the same time we cannot talk about the will to power as something that could possibly exist outside of force – "The will to power cannot be separated from force without falling into metaphysical abstraction" (ibid.). It is through the will to power (manifested when two forces come together), that one force prevails over another, and also that one force is made to obey (ibid., p. 47). In this way it is the essential principle needed in the concept of force in order for it to make sense.

The will to power itself has qualities also, although it should not be misinterpreted as a force itself (ibid.). While active and reactive designate the quality of force, *affirmative* and *negative* designate the primordial qualities of the will to power (ibid., p. 50). An affirmation of the will to power is linked to action and a negation is equally present within each

reaction (ibid.). Furthermore, just as reactive forces are still forces, the will to deny is still a will. Deleuze points to the final section of *On the Genealogy of Morality* to show this – "*a will to nothingness* an aversion to life, a rebellion against the most fundamental presuppositions of life; but it is and remains a *will*!" (Nietzsche, p. 118, 1998). Whether a will to power is affirmative or negative determines the quality of force it is interpreting, so in this way it "evaluates" forces (Deleuze, p.50, 2006). Deleuze thus concludes that the will to power is both essential to force, as interpreter and as 'qualifier', while also having existence in force – thereby being dependent on forces for being.

Reactive forces are prevalent and crucial within Nietzsche's idea of '*ressentiment*' – which began with the slave revolt against the noble (ibid.). Indeed *ressentiment* can be seen as a tension between forces. *Ressentiment* is the denying of a true reaction (ibid.) or as Nietzsche puts it, it is the aspect of beings trying to "recover their losses only through an imaginary revenge" (ibid.). This denying of action is an entirely reactive force, for it *limits* active force. For the active noble, *ressentiment* "runs its course and exhausts itself in an immediate reaction" (ibid., p. 21) i.e. the noble "re-acts" (Deleuze, p. 104, 2006) immediately to any effect imposed on him. This is an active force at work, where one externalizes (acts) rather than internalizes (limits) the reaction. This is why Deleuze focuses in on Nietzsche's treatment of memory, that is, memory (in one sense) as a reactive force that the man of *ressentiment* is necessarily tied to. This is contrasted with forgetfulness as an active force, characterising the noble. Nietzsche explains that "Forgetfulness…is an active and in the strictest sense positive faculty of suppression" (Nietzsche, p. 35, 1998). Concerning its opposite, memory, we must then deduce that it is reactive (at least in this sense), as it prevents the active force of forgetfulness from going to the limit of its consequences (Deleuze, p. 108 -109).

Deleuze interprets *ressentiment* as the situation where "*reaction ceases to be acted in order to be felt*" (ibid.) i.e. the *activity* of a reaction is limited

and therefore reactive forces have succeeded. This view is affirmed by Nietzsche in his analogy of the lamb and the bird of prey, where a reaction is no longer a 're-action' but rather an internalised *feeling* (Nietzsche, p. 25, 1998). While the bird of prey feels no anger or hate towards the lamb, rather he just acts (hunts the lamb), the lamb on the other hand hates the bird of prey - declaring that it is evil and that itself, the lamb, is good. Instead of trying to attack (re-act) back, the lamb becomes a beast of *ressentiment*; a reactive force has thus prevailed. Deleuze transfers the analogy into tensions of force, as follows:

> *"It is assumed in the major premise that the bird of prey is able to not manifest its force, that it can hold back from its effects and separate itself from what it can do…It is therefore assumed that one and the same force is effectively held back in the virtuous lamb but given free rein in the evil bird of prey."*
> (Deleuze, p. 115, 2006)

This, according to Deleuze, is the "paralogism of *ressentiment: the fiction of a force separated from what it can do*" (ibid.). By pretending that force can be separated from what it can do, beings of *ressentiment* can define active forces to be "*blame-worthy*" if they act, and "*deserving*" if they do not (ibid.). In this way, active forces *become reactive* – specifically because it is limited and separated (through reactive definitions) by reactive force (ibid., p. 59).

In another area, Deleuze interprets Nietzsche's concept of forces to lead to the conclusion that science, is in fact, reactive. It is apparent that Nietzsche believed that science was dangerous when used as a tool of the ascetic ideal (Nietzsche, p. 111, 1998), and Deleuze interprets him to see that it is reactive forces at work that makes science so. "Science follows the path of consciousness, relying entirely on *other* reactive forces; the organism is always seen from the petty side, from the side of its reactions"

(Deleuze, p.38, 2006). Deleuze believes that "what he [Nietzsche] attacks in science is precisely the scientific mania for seeking balances" (ibid., p. 42). As we have seen, all quantities of force are different – this is their quality (ibid., p. 39), yet science wants to deny this and create equilibriums. Discovering what quantity of acid is needed to *counterbalance* a quantity of alkaline could be seen as an example of this, as it is a dispelling of difference. Deleuze interprets science as denial of difference and as such reactive. "It is in this sense that Nietzsche shows that science is part of the ascetic ideal and serves it in its own way (GM III 25)" (ibid., p. 42). By preferring reactive examinations of things, science serves the ascetic ideal and thus is the "instrument of nihilism" (ibid.). Just as the lamb calls the bird of prey evil by denying their difference of force, science does the precisely the same thing within its area of study – be it chemistry, mathematics or any scientific discipline.

Nietzsche's 'eternal return' also relies (in part) on the concept of force. The key attribute one must remember, when discussing Deleuze's interpretation of the eternal return, is that it is not the "'return of the same'. It is not being that returns but rather the returning itself" (ibid., p. 45.). The eternal return has two aspects according to Deleuze – one cosmological and physical (ibid., p.43) and the other ethical and *selective* (ibid., p.63). Deleuze believes that the eternal return in the first instance "presupposes a critique of the terminal or equilibrium state" (ibid., p. 43) -

> "*Nietzsche says that if the universe had an equilibrium position, if becoming had an end or final state, it would have already been attained. But the present moment, as the passing moment, proves that it is not attained and therefore that an equilibrium of forces is not possible (VP II 312, 322-4, 329 – 330).*"
> (ibid., p. 43)

This infinite process, Deleuze describes as the "being of becoming" (ibid.,

p. 44), and it denies the traditional scientific view of a mechanistic or thermodynamic outlook.

However, it is the second aspect of the eternal return that concerns and influences *forces* – that is, an eternal return of *selection* (ibid., p. 63). Deleuze believes that the eternal return "makes willing a creation" (ibid., p. 64) and by being a creation, will eliminate certain reactive forces from the eternal return – namely the "least developed" (ibid.). However, some (more advanced) reactive forces escape this first selection, and will go to "the limit of what they can do in their own way, and which find a powerful motor in the nihilistic will" (ibid.) – the will to nothingness. It is at this point however (when the will to nothingness is applied to the eternal return), that nihilism "breaks its alliance with reactive forces" (ibid., p. 65). The will to nothingness when applied,

> "*makes negation a negation of reactive forces themselves. By and in the eternal return nihilism no longer expresses itself as the conservation and victory of the weak but as their destruction, their self-destruction.*" (ibid.)

Earlier, we saw how active force could become reactive (by being separated from what it can do), and here we see how the opposite can be true. Deleuze explains, "In self-destruction reactive forces are themselves denied and lead to nothingness. This is why self-destruction is said to be an '*active destruction*' (VP III 8, EH III 1)" (ibid.). Reactive forces become active in their denial of themselves (through the will to nothingness) – and thus "this is the only way in which reactive forces *become* active" (ibid.). We can conclude from this that in the end, reactive forces have no place within the eternal return. Not only is it true that "reactive forces will not return" (ibid., p. 66), but through the nature of the eternal return itself, becoming reactive does not make sense.

> *"The eternal return is the being of becoming. But becoming is double: becoming-active and becoming-reactive…But only becoming-active has being; it would be contradictory for the being of becoming to be affirmed of a becoming reactive, of a becoming that is itself nihilistic."* (ibid., p. 66)

In this way, through selection and the nature of becoming, the eternal return decides the fate of active and reactive forces within the return of difference.

As made apparent, Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy is consistently accompanied by the concept of forces. Most fundamentally, forces are the basis for a metaphysics on which the critique of values (Nietzsche's aim) can rest. Another key aspect to Nietzsche's philosophy is the will to power, which according to Deleuze, is inextricably linked to force – and indeed would not exist independently of it. The idea of active and reactive forces is further present in the discussion of *ressentiment*. As *ressentiment* is the product of reactive forces prevailing over active forces, Deleuze allows us to give a specific definition of what he thinks Nietzsche implies when he uses the term. Moreover, the concept of forces relates to the sciences, or at least explains how science promotes the ascetic ideal. A focus on equilibrium within mathematics, physics and biology is an example of nihilistic denial of difference – that is, a difference of quantity and quality of force. Finally, we have seen how the eternal return has various implications for active and reactive forces – this is the nature of the eternal return of *difference*. In this way we can dispute a mechanistic or thermodynamic interpretation of the universe. Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche has the concept of forces at its core - and forces are a foundation that all aspects of Nietzsche's thought ground themselves on.

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Is disagreement always a feature of the language of politics?

— By Barney Riggs

The main concern of this essay was to answer the question of whether or not disagreement will always be a feature of the language of politics. The focus of this essay was that of a philosophically objective definition, and whether language could ever be truly objective. Claims made with political language often lack clarity and distinctiveness and are all too often vague or ambiguous. This essay aims, if not to solve the issue of definition, to highlight and explore it.

For the essay I researched many philosophers' views and arguments for the objectivity or subjectivity of language, being most useful were the works of Bertrand Russell, Plato and George Orwell. The reading seemed to suggest that the issue of disagreement within language is a significant and already well documented one. As well as reading writings by these philosophers and others, listening to politicians speak (often about absolutely anything) proved invaluable to the conclusions I reached. The findings of the research suggest that political language, such as terms and meanings, as well as the rhetoric used by politicians, is incredibly reliant on techniques such as vagueness, ambiguity and most of the time defined with very little clarity.

The conclusions reached suggest that disagreement will always be a feature of language, especially within the language of politics as long as language itself exists. As documented and highlighted by a range of philosophers, language contains no objective meaning and no clear definitions. It is from this that I have concluded that language is paradoxical, used for communication to unite us, and at the same time, separating us due to vagueness and ambiguity, causing constant disagreement.

Politics is a social activity. Political activity is performed through language whether that is spoken, written, read or heard. The issue of disagreement within the language of politics lies largely in the subjectivity and disputed status of many political terms as well as the often poorly defined definitions of everyday words.

In this essay I will first aim to define what I mean by language and what I mean by words using both Heywood's and Russell's definitions. I will then define what I mean by political language, moving on to discuss the importance of language in politics looking at propaganda and the persuasive element of political language. I will then differentiate between vagueness and ambiguity in language, defining them as two separate features of political language before asking the question; why does disagreement arise in the language of politics? After deciding why disagreement is an issue I will look at the language used in politics concerning propaganda as a political device, and give a fairly recent example of where propaganda has been used to influence public opinion. I will then ask whether it would be possible to create an objective political language looking at evidence from Orwell and Dupré. After deciding that it could be possible I will ask whether or not an objective political language would even be necessary looking at arguments from both Wittgenstein and Williams. From the conclusions of their arguments I will see that the issue of relativism and subjectivity in language arises, as support for this view I will look at Nietzsche before moving on to Plato and Russell in an attempt to resolve this issue using the argument for Forms or Universals. I will then evaluate whether disagreement will always be a feature of the language of politics, concluding that language is best understood paradoxically, and that no objective language will ever be achieved.

Language can be defined as 'a system of expression that employs symbols, (words) to represent things, which includes physical objects, feelings, ideas

and so forth' used primarily for communication whether that is spoken or written (Heywood, 2004). We should also define what we mean by words. Russell splits words into four categories, spoken, heard, written and read, defining words as universals, so that the written word 'dog' is in fact the same as the spoken word 'dog', (Russell, 1948). For the purposes of this essay I shall accept Russell's definition of words, and that they mean the same thing, regardless of the medium in which they are delivered. It may be also be worth stating what we mean by political language. Political language can be said to be a style of language that aims primarily to persuade 'political speaking urges us either to do or not do something' (Aristotle, 2004). Heywood argues that language not only passively reflects reality it also actively shapes it, stating that language is capable of 'firing the imagination' and 'stirring emotions'. Heywood then sees language as a 'political weapon' (Heywood, 2004) capable of great influence and persuasion. The issue of vagueness and ambiguity in political language is also important, so a distinction between the two is worth making. Vagueness is the 'property of words and phrases' and often a feature of the word's meaning, a word is vague if it is 'indefinite and uncertain' as to what is actually being conveyed For example, Iraq's 'weapons of mass destruction' was a purposefully vague phrase. Ambiguity on the other hand is to do with context and the different interpretations that could be taken from a statement, for example the phrase 'He is looking for a match' could mean one of three things; that he is looking for a small stick of wood with a flammable tip, or, another one of the same (as this one, as in a pair), or he is looking for or wants a game of tennis or some other sport (Bowell, 2010). In political language we can see both vagueness and ambiguity, used sometimes together or separately.

The issue of disagreement arises in political language due to the fact that most political ideas are contested; due to reasons such as culture, personality and preconceived views on what these political ideas actually mean. Perhaps disagreement also occurs due to contrasting views on the

tenets of political ideologies; people may disagree on principles that are not conceptualised. For example, in Iran modesty for women is wearing the Burka in public, yet in the United Kingdom the way women are expected to behave is very different. Although not directly a disagreement of language as such, the roots of the difference in opinion lie in the subjective interpretation of 'modesty' and highlight the way that language actively shapes reality, as Heywood suggests.

A reason why language is so important in the realm of politics is often because politicians have an intention to persuade or influence people, concerned as Heywood states, not with the accuracy of the language used, but with its propaganda value. Propaganda aims to 'modify or reinforce beliefs, attitudes and behaviour of a particular group, […] often relying on a selective use of information' (Dupré, 2011). Often modern politicians when speaking publicly will use words and phrases that rely on creating some kind of emotional response; this is known as rhetoric (Aristotle, 2004). Rhetoric does not rely just on reasoning or rational argument in aiming to persuade but also relies on the human emotion, so is therefore subjective. Seen often in politics, propaganda aims to promote the speaker's own causes whilst belittling the causes of their enemies. Here it seems that the importance of the political language used is the reliance on vagueness. For example, in contemporary politics this can be shown through the language chosen by politicians when publicly discussing nuclear arms. Tony Blair and George Bush used the phrase 'weapons of mass destruction' to sway public opinion and form a coalition of nations willing to invade Iraq and overthrow its government to stop the apparent threat. It could be argued that a reason for the willingness and support shown by other states could be because of the choice of words used. The weapons were unlikely to be able to cause destruction in the UK or America and the 'mass destruction' if true would have likely only affected Iraq and neighbouring countries, yet the vagueness of the information given and the rhetorical and carefully selected language used convinced

people otherwise (Bowell, 2010). Another example, perhaps closer to home is from the recent British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, and his references to 'hard working families'. The interesting thing about this sort of political discourse is that it is both vague and incredibly direct, it says very little, but at the same time says a lot. It is a clever political weapon because it can mean different things to different people; its definition changes with context. For example, it can mean its direct meaning, that is, 'families that work hard', yet depending on the listener's political stance its definition shifts. For the right-wing listener a 'hardworking family' is a family that earns a living, without any benefit or help from the state, they are hardworking so would not need any extra help. However, for the left-wing listener a 'hardworking family' could be on the lower end of the socioeconomic scale, needing help from the state, but working hard all the same. Politicians are able to use vague and deceptive language as propaganda, to convince a wide variety of people who would not usually agree with one another. Propaganda does not deceive people 'it merely helps them to deceive themselves' (Dupré, 2011). This then seems to suggest that a better definition or even an objective definition of the political terms and language used would rectify a reliance on this (perhaps immoral) method of political persuasion.

If then we can agree that much of the language of politics is undefined or at least that its meaning is contested, how can we go about defining it to avoid any potential disagreement? Could we perhaps create a political language that would give us objective examples of the definition of words? In George Orwell's '1984' the fictional government of Oceania has created a new language, known as Newspeak, the purpose of was "not only to provide a medium of expression for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc [English Socialism], but to make all other modes of thought impossible. It was intended that when Newspeak had been adopted once and for all and Oldspeak forgotten, a heretical thought – that is, a thought diverging from the principles of Ingsoc - should be

literally unthinkable, at least so far as thought is dependent on words. Its vocabulary was constructed as to give an exact and often very subtle expression to every meaning…" (Orwell, 2008). Newspeak was also concerned with redefining the meanings of words to sway public opinion, resulting in a society where '*War is Peace', 'Freedom is Slavery'* and '*Ignorance is Strength'* (Orwell, 2008).

Despite Orwell's fictional Newspeak sounding rather farfetched, could we not adopt a similar idea? Are we not already advised on what we can and cannot say? In today's society we are constantly reminded to use 'politically correct' speech. Dupré defines political correctness as aiming to 'create a fairer world and correct past and present wrongs […] everyone should be treated as individuals, never as stereotypes; people should be judged on their own merit' (Dupré, 2011). Surely then political correctness is a *good* thing; it aims to make political language fair and give it more definition as to avoid disagreement amongst people. Yet, political correctness tends to gain a relatively bad press. Dupré states that political correctness 'ought' to be a good thing, yet it is often seen in a negative light. Criticisms of politically correct language suggest that it aims to control what language we use, leaving us with less choice of vocabulary if we want to appear politically correct. Often newspapers pick up on often unbelievable examples of 'politically correct' language such as '*her*story' for '*his*tory' or 'wom*yn*' for 'wo*men*' (all of which are real proposals) aim to be both etymology-defying and provocative (Dupré, 2011). Political correctness then appears to be highly controversial, suggesting perhaps that language not only needs to be better defined to avoid disagreement but also redefined to avoid offence.

So can we create some sort of objective definition? Could we create an uncontested language? Perhaps the question is not could we, but would we need to? Wittgenstein argues that any language used has some shared understanding of the meaning, and that nothing said can ever be entirely

subjective. He argues that words, such as 'pain' have a meaning learned from other people, supposing that no experience, or language documenting that experience can be entirely private and such a notion of a private subjective language is nonsensical (Wittgenstein, 2009). However, does that mean that we would be able to establish some sort of objectivity within language? Williams suggests that context plays an important part in language, and that any claim to know or acknowledgement of truth can be split into three categories; certain, qualitative or existentialist. He argues that with a better understanding of grammar and the correct application of operators (for example 'looks' or 'seems') we would recognise the value of sentences (Williams, 2001). It could be argued then that if people had an understanding and were able to differentiate between these three types of contextual sentences Williams promotes, then it would be easier to assess the quality of claims made by politicians resulting in less disagreement and confusion.

Yet this attitude towards claims opens the doors to relativism, if every claim made is reliant on context, then on what basis can we judge them? Perhaps an advocator of relativism, Nietzsche argues that an issue of political language is that of preconception; 'every word is a preconceived judgement' (Nietzsche, 2008). By this he could perhaps be referring to semantics, the meaning of words and the connotations they carry. Because of this idea of relativism with regards to language there is a huge problem in defining political terms and terms in general. For example if a potential political leader promises a just society for his people, what exactly does he mean by 'justice'? His view of justice *could* be very different to what the people interpret it as, therefore causing a disagreement. It appears that to define some sort of objective meaning behind contested terms like 'justice', 'hope' and 'liberty' we are unable to rely on fallible human reasoning to agree on a meaning and must appeal to metaphysics.

Plato's Theory of Forms later critiqued by Russell aimed somewhat to

resolve this issue of definition. Russell's first argument for the existence of Forms, or Universals (as he defined them) was through language itself, for example, he argued that all just acts partake in some common nature, which is found in whatever is just and in nothing else; this common nature is 'justice' itself which is present in all just acts; therefore a Universal objective idea of definition of justice exists (Russell, 2001). This appears to suggest that disagreement is not only a feature of language, but one of reality. Plato argues in works such as *The Republic* and the *Timaeus* that for every particular thing that exists in the sensible world, that is, the visible world of sense perception that we are immediately aware of, there also exists in the intelligible world a perfect version of that thing, or Form[1]. So for example, if I were to take the red, fabric-covered chair in my bedroom and the antique, wooden chair in my kitchen I am able to recognise them both as chairs due to the fact that, according to Plato, they both include in them some quality or attribute of the Form of Chair. Plato's theory then, explains why we're able to understand language to some degree, however it does not give us objectivity, which is what we're after. What is an objective definition of justice or chair? To answer this we must ask, what are the qualities of 'justice' or 'chairs' present in Plato's Forms? We can agree perhaps that all chairs have four legs, but then that rules out the possibility of three-legged chairs being classed as chairs. If then we state that the main quality of a chair is 'something that can be sat on'; does that give us an objective definition? Well, yes, but then we'd also have to include everything else that is 'something that can be sat on', such as benches, rocks, tables, horses etc! It suddenly becomes very difficult to define anything. What does this leave us with then? On the face of it, it appears that we're left with a language that is arbitrary, unable to communicate successfully; but is that really true?

The more we look into it, the more apparent it becomes that language is

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[1]   I realise that I have simplified Plato greatly, but for the purposes of this essay, I feel that this is justified.

paradoxical. For example, I am able to go to the supermarket and see signs and labels written in the language I am fluent in, and 'know' what item in the supermarket they correspond to. I 'know' that if I write this essay in grammatically correct and legible English, that the reader will (I hope!) understand the message I am conveying. I am not at all suggesting that language is pointless, but that due to the clear lack of objective definition, vagueness and ambiguity with almost every word in the English Language it becomes evident that to create a philosophically objective political language, that will keep us away from any disagreement, is impossible.

It would appear from the evidence that disagreement is and will always be a feature of the language of politics. Propaganda treats language as a weapon, used for manipulation of the masses and relies strongly on the vagueness of the language used. Political correctness aims to control the language used, yet this appears to create more disagreement about what language is appropriate and reasonable. It seems that the relativist view is perhaps the most realistic when it comes to language, after all, we all have slightly different ideas of what abstract words such as 'modesty', 'happiness' or 'justice' mean depending on our culture and upbringing. Forms or Universals offer us some idea as to what may be as close as we can get to agreeing on a definition but ignore the logistics of actually locating this definition, where do these Forms or Universals exist, if at all and how are we to decide on the qualities they give to particular things? It seems that language can be understood almost paradoxically as a way of communication that unites us, but also separates us, causing conflict and disagreement.

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Understanding Hegel's Logic

— By Megan Jones

Hegel is a notoriously difficult philosopher to understand. His logic in particular can be off-putting in its abstruseness. Here I hope to present a clear and elucidating summarisation of Hegel's ideas on this subject. I begin by looking at the fundamental questions driving his project: what is the nature of thought and how it is we come to know things? I will then discuss why he wanted to develop logic beyond the syllogistic form established by Aristotle and maintained by Kant in his Critique of Pure Reason, before considering his own logic as presented in the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences, Science of Logic and the Phenomenology of Spirit (lengthy titles which throughout the essay I refer to using acronyms, see bibliography for table). Finally, I will investigate how this logic depicts a process of 'becoming'. I will work closely with the texts of Frederick Beiser, Craig B. Matarrese and Stephen Houlgate throughout. The overall aim of this essay is to equip the uninitiated student with a basic but accurate understanding that can be drawn on in the face of Hegel's ideas in their raw forms.

I approach the task of understanding and evaluating Hegel's logic with some trepidation. Hegel describes it himself as 'the realm of shadows, the world of simple essentialities freed from all sensuous concreteness.' (*SL* §72) Here is a system of which even successful comprehension can offer little reward. Allen W. Wood states that 'Hegel's hopelessly ambitious project proves utterly unconvincing in its execution.' (1998, pg 4) Yet despite its density and complexity, I am attracted to Hegel's project as one that is not 'fixated on the antithesis of truth and falsity' (*PS* 2) but rather comprehends a 'progressive unfolding of truth' (*PS* 2) and am drawn to his considerations of the relationship between human activity and philosophy as described by Craig B. Matarrese:

> *"Philosophy must take 'common sense' seriously, as a philosophically rich interpretation of the world that both reveals and conceals the structure of thought. We should want to understand this structure, Hegel urges, because it often contains contradictions and tensions that ultimately cause human suffering."*
> (2010, pg 4)

In this essay I hope to present an accessible interpretation of Hegel's claims. In the broadest terms, Frederick Beiser describes the purpose of Hegel's 'greater' work on logic, *Science of Logic,* as 'to develop a logic of life, a way of thinking to understand life.' (2005, pg 81) This implies that, for Hegel, our current way of thinking is incorrect. We may then ask in what way is our thinking incorrect? Has civilisation not developed competently enough to warrant some credibility to our cognitive functions? However, Hegel is talking about philosophical thought, i.e. thought that aims to achieve knowledge of what is true: 'the first question is: What is the object of our science? The simplest and most intelligible answer to this question is Truth.' (*EPS §19)* For Hegel, there is a difference between absolute truth and our approximation of the truth that

allows us to live our day to day lives. In section 24 of his *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, Hegel describes the different 'forms' of thought by which we attempt to conceive what is true. He names the first as 'experience', by which we gain 'immediate knowledge', admitting that this form of thought 'may perhaps seem the finest, noblest, and most appropriate' but that 'in experience everything depends upon the mind we bring to bear upon actuality' and therefore 'has no intrinsic value of its own.' This is a compelling argument when taken in conjunction with certain scientific understandings of the human brain as a structure that informs and limits our experience. It allows for the fact that some people are colour blind and others suffer from hallucinations. If we could be said to be experiencing the world directly then all variations of this experience would be true. He names the second form of thought as 'reflection': 'To reflect here means to recollect the right, the duty - the universal which serves as a fixed rule to guide our behaviour in the given case.' A combination of these two forms, empirical data and rational reflection, represents the cognitive tendency of our modern, scientifically preoccupied society; the notion that truth can be acquired without external input is generally considered absurd. Yet for Hegel, 'in these two modes the absolute truth has not yet found its appropriate form' (*EPS* §24) because they are 'finite' (*EPS* §24) and 'it is from conforming to finite categories in thought and action that all deception originates.' (*EPS* §24) This can appear an intuitively odd claim because it is through categories and concepts that we are able to experience the world. We know this, but are not worried because we trust our experience to match reality. To not do so would render all our actions meaningless. But Hegel is arguing that because our experience is mediated in this way we are being 'deceived'. He is agreeing with Kant's claim that 'while the matter of all appearance is given to us *a posteriori* only, its form must lie ready for the sensations *a priori* in the mind.' (*CPR* §1A20) We should not suppose that we are having a direct experience of the world. We are instead imposing our categories onto experience and fitting experience to our own structure of

thinking. This cannot give us to know what is true because, according to Hegel, the truth 'is absolute' (*EPS* §24) and cannot be understood in finite terms. Scientists and other logicians may disagree with this claim. Is truth really so elusive? For Hegel, truth remains elusive if sought after by modes of thought that cannot grasp its nature. How can we get around this problem? In place of experience and reflection, Hegel posits a 'pure form of thought.' (*EPS* §24) What is the relationship between logic and this pure form of thought? 'Logic is the study of thought pure and simple, or of the pure thought-forms.' (*EPS* §24) For Hegel, logic is not so concerned with content or application of thought but rather its inherent structure. This is made clear by his proposal at the beginning of the enquiry into logic in the *Encyclopaedia*:

> "*A main line of argument in the Critical Philosophy bids us pause before proceeding to inquire into God or into the true being of things, and tells us first of all to examine the faculty of cognition and see whether it is equal to such an effort.*"
> (*EPS* §10)

This led Matarrese to observe '…although [Hegel] is committed to a metaphysics of some sort, it is not the familiar and historically entrenched metaphysics of substance, but rather what we might call a 'metaphysics of structure.' (2010, pg 81) Conceiving of Hegel's project in this way facilitates our understanding of the kind of lateral thinking Hegel wishes us to employ, but it is important to keep in mind that his logic is concerned neither solely with logic or with structure.

I will now look at why Hegel was compelled to posit a logic other than the syllogistic form established by Aristotle in his *Metaphysics*. This formal logic is described as:

> "*The axioms from which all demonstration proceeds, e.g.*

'everything must be either affirmed or denied,; and 'it is impossible at once to be and not to be,' and all other such premises."
(996b)

In his book *An Introduction to Hegel,* Stephen Houlgate writes that, in Hegel's view, 'it is the tribunal of reason that constitutes the highest authority for us.' (2005, pg 28) Here, Hegel's is not dissimilar to Kant, who in the preface to his *Critique of Pure Reason* states:

"Pure reason is, indeed, so perfect a unity that if its principle were insufficient for the solution of even a single one of all the questions to which it itself gives birth we should have no alternative but to reject the principle."
(Axiii)

However, Hegel observes that reason itself must necessarily be subject to its own logic:

"Kant undertook to examine how far the forms of thought were capable of leading to the knowledge of truth. In particular he demanded a criticism of the faculty of cognition as preliminary to its exercise. That is a fair demand, if it mean that even the forms of thought must be made an object of investigation."
(*EPS* §40)

Therefore, for Hegel, Kant did not take his demands far enough. The syllogistic form of reasoning makes assumptions about itself that it cannot prove. For example, however compelling we may find the law of non-contradiction, we cannot be absolutely sure that it is the case, and neither can it be proven. Due to the very constraints of our cognitive functions, we

cannot reason about our reason. This would involve a 'stepping back' from ourselves as finite rational beings and assessing our own limitations in relation to what is actual. This opposition to formal logic led many to 'dismiss Hegel's philosophy out of hand because of its apparent irrationalism' (Houlgate, 2005, pg 28) and some have even attempted 'to 'formalise' Hegel's logic.' (Houlgate, 2005, pg 28) Yet I am attracted to the view of human rationality within a self inclusive context, and agree with Nietzche's view, as presented by Houlgate, of 'Hegel's apparent willingness to embrace contradiction as a virtue of his thinking.' (2005, pg 28)

Though Hegel agrees with the notion that our experience is not unmediated, he disagrees with Kant's claim that 'all thought must, directly or indirectly, by way of certain characters, relate ultimately to intuitions, and therefore, with us, to sensibility, because in no other way can an object be given to us.' (*CPR* §1A19) This entails that all we can ever experience is our internal reflection. The mediated experience prevents us from knowing the truth, the actual. As Hegel puts it, Kant 'never got beyond the negative result that the thing-in-itself is unknowable.' (EPS §48) For Hegel, the thing-in-itself is knowable. This is an important distinction between Hegelian and Kantian philosophy.

To summarise what I have discussed so far: logic is the science of pure thought, by which we attain certain knowledge of the absolute, or the truth. Hegel was dissatisfied with formal logic as it presupposes its own validity, works only with finite categories, and 'does not make the effort to be freely self-determining.' (Houlgate, 2005, pg 46) He instead wanted logic to reflect the indeterminacy and movement of thought, or 'the Idea', which Houlgate describes as 'the dynamic, immanent logic though which human beings are led to a full self-understanding.' (2005, pg 25) Hegel writes about the idea in relation to thought in the *Encyclopedia*:

"If we identify the Idea with thought, thought must not be taken in the sense of a method or form, but in the sense of the self-developing totality of its laws and peculiar terms. These laws are the work of thought itself, and not a fact which it finds and must submit to."
(*EPS* §19)

This is a characteristically abstract and loaded passage. What is made clear is that thought should not be subject to rules, or 'laws'. We may then wonder how Hegel is going to present his logic if it is not structured in any determinate way. On this Beiser comments, 'if Hegel has any methodology at all, it appears to be an anti-methodology, a method to suspend all methods.' (2005, pg 160) We are dealing with a very conceptual idea. It is easier to grasp if we can renounce our understanding of thought as something that is bounded by categories, labeled either 'true' or 'false'. In order to clarify what is meant by the term 'self-developing thought', Hegel presents an image of a blossoming flower in *Phenomenology of Spirit*:

"The bud disappears in the bursting-forth of the blossom, and one might say the former is refuted by the latter, similarly, when the fruit appears, the blossom is shown up in its turn as a false manifestation of the plant, and the fruit now emerges as the truth instead."
(*PS* 2)

The flower is a process. At no one time is it possible to say that it is 'true' or 'false'. The bud seems the truth, but then it changes into the blossom, which changes in turn. There is no contradiction here; rather the truth is represented wholly in the dynamic movement from one to the other. Hegel claims that 'to see that thought in its very nature is dialectical and that, as understanding, it must fall into contradiction — the negative of itself — will form one of the main lessons of logic.' (*EPS* §11) It is by this

'dialectical nature' that Hegel presents his logic. How is this different from a formal methodology? Matarrese addresses this in *Starting with Hegel*:

> *"Instead of trying to isolate 'the dialectic' as a formal method […] it is much closer to his meaning to see it as the structure of the thing or practice playing itself out, of its own inertia; Hegel just tries to make this structure clear and perspicuous."*
> (2010, pg 22-3)

Hegel's logic involves the application of this dialectical moment to our thinking. In doing so we find that thoughts are not stable but 'changeable and transient' (*EPS* §81) and will 'pass into their opposites.' (*EPS* §81) He gives the example of man. We consider man as living, but that 'the true view of the matter is that life as life, involves the germ of death' (*EPS* §81) It is also demonstrated by the movement of 'heavenly bodies':

> *"At this moment the planet stands in this spot, but implicitly it is the possibility of being in another spot; and that possibility of being otherwise the planet brings into existence by moving."*
> (*EPS* §81)

With these examples we begin to understand the way in which everything is known by its relationship to everything else. Existence is not cut off into parts. Everything contains its opposite because it is its opposite that defines it. Everything is interconnected and part of a larger system. Beiser's reading supports this: when we examine some particular, we find that 'it is not self sufficient after all, but that it is only comprehensible through its relations to other things.' (2005, pg 167) and when we seek to explain these relations, 'it is artificial to stop at any given point.' (2005, pg 167) This idea is easier to grasp when we apply it to our thinking of objects, concepts and beings. Justice is defined by what is unjust, and the

former can 'pass into' the latter through excess or misuse. You are defined by your relationship to other humans, your place in society, your species, and a countless number of other interconnected systems. You do not remain static but are in a constant process of change, moving from 'you' to 'not you' as you progress through life. The 'not you' becomes 'you' and the process continues. The dialectic therefore demonstrates the 'finitude of the partial categories of understanding.' (*EPS* §81) We cannot understand something with a partial view or without an understanding of the systems that construct it.

Some critics interpret the claim that that something can be known only through its relationship to everything else as a devaluation of the individual, to the extent that the idea is referred to as 'Hegelian totalitarianism' (Howells, 1999, pg 90). When reading Hegel it can seem that his appreciation for the total unity, the absolute, eclipses any consideration for the individual. However I do not think that Hegel is being undemocratic. Rather, he is raising awareness of the 'lapse in natural unity' (*EPS* §24) that permeates all our thinking and pits 'the spirit against itself.' (*EPS* §24) Importantly, for Hegel, 'no such inward disunion is found in nature.' (*EPS* §24)

I will now address Hegel's description of the emergence of 'becoming' through 'being' and 'nothing' - the dialectical movement. His rejection of presupposing and determinate philosophical thinking and his 'endeavor to determine the true characteristics of thought *freely*' (Houlgate, 2005 pg 30) led him to consider how it is that our thinking can arise from indeterminacy. If we reject all determinacy, what is it we are left with? In the first chapter of his *Science of Logic,* Hegel suggests the least that can be thought of is 'being', as in the thought that thought merely is. Therefore, in presupposing nothing, being is 'pure indeterminateness and emptiness.' (*SL* 82) In effect we are thinking of nothing at all, therefore Hegel claims that being 'is in fact *nothing*, and neither more than less

than nothing.' (*SL* 82) He admits that this result seems 'startling or paradoxical in itself' (*SL* 84), because it begs the question: why are being and nothing considered two different concepts if they are the same by description? Hegel insists that 'in science there occur determinations quite different from those in ordinary consciousness and so-called common sense.' (*SL* 84) There remains a fundamental difference between the two, difficult to express in language, in that one simply 'is' and the other 'is not'.

When we try and think of being, we invariably think of nothing, but when we grasp nothing in thought we are grasping that it is, and it becomes being:

> "*Their truth is, therefore, this movement of the immediate vanishing of the one in the other: becoming, a movement in which both are distinguished, but by a difference which has equally immediately resolved itself.*"
> (*SL* 83)

This is the dialectical moment in action. Without presupposing anything, Hegel has identified the (albeit barest) determinate thought and its characteristics. In this way, Hegel claims to provide a real logic of real becoming. However, the use of the term 'logic' in this instance is problematic. As addressed earlier, Hegel does not want to put forward a methodology. Beiser suggests that we should understand the dialectic as the 'very opposite' of logic, as it is 'the inner movement of the subject matter, what evolves from it rather than what the philosopher applies to it.' (2005, pg 160)

Due to semantics and the inherent abstraction of the dialectic, 'no aspect of Hegel's philosophy has been more interpreted, more misunderstood.' (Beiser, 2005, pg 159) However, it is difficult to criticise what is inherently

without presupposition. Hegel is renouncing 'any claim to control the path of thinking' and instead follows 'wherever thought may take him.' (Houlgate, 2005, pg 39) This does not mean that Hegel's philosophy cannot be criticised. Allen W. Wood claims Hegel 'totally failed in his attempt to canonise speculative logic as the only proper form of philosophical thinking.' (1998, pg 4) He draws this conclusion from the fact that speculative logic has been disregarded by twentieth century theorists whose work features 'traditional logic that Hegel thought most dispensable.' (Wood, 1998, pg 5) Yet Hegel's philosophy is worth studying precisely for its unconventional approach to logical thinking. I appreciate Hegel's attempt to recognise and emulate the natural process of thought. His ontology bears resemblance to that of the philosopher Hans Jonas, who studied biological processes and claimed 'the language of ontology can now be called by its familiar name: metabolism.' (1996, pg 88) Metabolism represents the organism's continual effort to sustain itself, and this tension between being and non-being 'belongs inseparably to its nature, for life cannot even be imagined without it.' (1996, pg 62) In a similar manner Hegel is insisting that things are not separate, divided from all else and subject to exclusive analysis, but are defined and sustained by their opposite and their relation to the absolute.

Reference Table

EPS: Hegel's *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*
SL: Hegel's *Science of Logic.*
PS: Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*
CPR: Kan's *Critique of Pure Reason.*

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Social effervescence as self-organisation

— By Alexander J. Gillett

This essay unites insights into group dynamics in the works of Spinoza, Foucault, Bataille and Durkheim, as well as their more rigorous expression in contemporary complex systems theory (especially the works of Prigogine and Kauffman). In conjunction with this we will also draw upon Jung and his theory of the unconscious and the links that can be drawn here to contemporary neuroscience. Through a combination of these works we explore how self-organisation operates in social groups as a primarily emotional process (effervescence) and occurs between bodies at an unconscious level. This process has no central controller and results in a diverse range of emergent phenomena that form around social nexus points (attractors) that are sustained by the groups' affective activities. These attractors are neither eternal nor progressive, but merely perpetuate themselves insofar as they induce group cohesion by using the expenditure of effervescence to re-establish the group dynamic in the fluctuating medium of nature. As such, wastage becomes the source of order. The attractors, around which social groups form, are natural phenomena and ubiquitous and multiple throughout societies as a combination of shifting ritualistic practises and archetypal-symbols. They are physically instantiated as a range of structures such as churches, football teams, celebrity icons, rock bands and music movements, etc. They arise wherever there is sufficient diversity and complexity of transitional emotional/social effervescence (a phase transition).

How does emotion operate in groups? Our first thesis is that when people gather in groups they generate "emotional energy" or "social effervescence" (the latter term will be preferred over energy —see section 2) which tends towards excess and is inherently unstable. Complex systems are self-organising systems that *can* use this instability as a source of order and this self-organisation in emotional groups occurs at an unconscious level. As such, a second thesis is that this is how societies are ordered and although the centres of emotional effervescence (attractors) may change the effervescence itself is, as Foucault puts it, omnipresent.

1.

Spinoza asserted that all things within the universe are sub-systems within a total system and that these sub-systems were finite because they were bounded by their environment (2005: 66). Since all sub-systems are bounded by their environment they are necessarily open systems to differing degrees. Prigogine asserted that complex systems are open systems "far from equilibrium" (1985: 13). This means that there is a constant flux of energy and matter through the system which some previous thinkers saw as a purely negative and destructive force. Bataille, however, revelled in this chaotic aspect. He argued that all systems of energy tend towards excess and that this abundance had to be expended exuberantly but ultimately for nothing; calling it "the accursed share" (1991: 27). Both Bataille and Prigogine noted the importance of instability and difference within a system of energy. But Prigogine saw that this wasting and turbulence of energy and matter wasn't just meaningless expenditure and instead was in fact *the* source of order for these systems. Prigogine called the structures of these systems "dissipative structures" because it optimised the paradoxical nature of wastage being a source of order (1985: 12). To maintain its order a complex system replaces, changes and rebuilds the parts of the system constantly (see Fig 1.1).
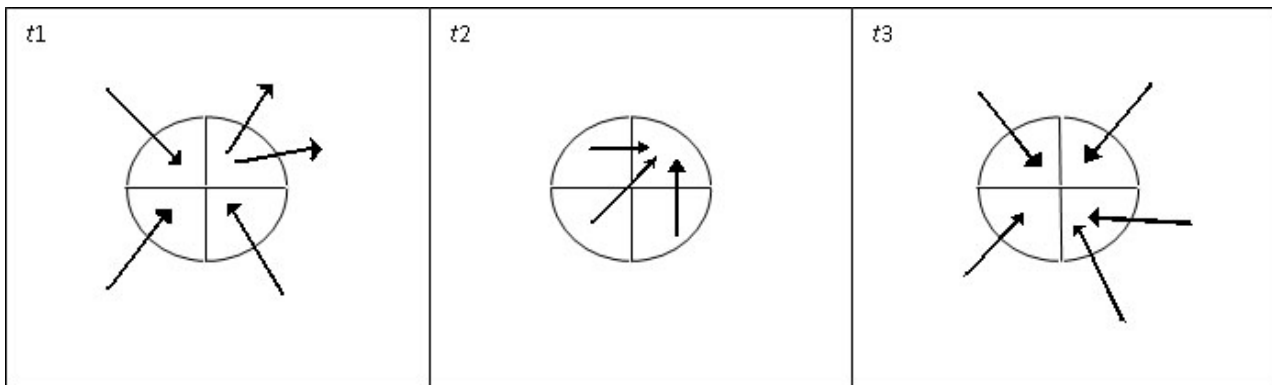
Fig 1.1
A simplified complex system. Its structure has been divided into four hemispheres. At t1, the flux of energy is entering the system through its open boundary whilst the top-right hemisphere decays. At t2 the influx of energy from t1 is then used to rebuild this structure. At t3 the process then begins to repeat in adifferent hemisphere (and so on).

A cursory observation of emotions and groups shows that they can be interpreted as operating like complex systems: the parts of the system change regularly; the parts being individual bodies of the group and the emotional states displayed from moment to moment by the majority; and this flux of energy (emotion) and matter (bodies) maintains the organisation of the social group as a whole. This process of regulation and maintenance takes place through multiple feedback loops which comprise the complex systems' dissipative structures. A feedback loop is any process in which the input into the system is also the output —this causes the system to self-regulate itself by taking into account both its current and previous environment and its own situation. Fig 1.2 below shows a feedback loop with energy entering the system, being registered and initiating a response. This response is both the output and the input back into the system where it is again observed and again it initiates a response. By having feedback loops complex systems are able to control themselves by the fluctuation of energy within themselves. In this way they are self-organising (Capra 1997: 56-61).
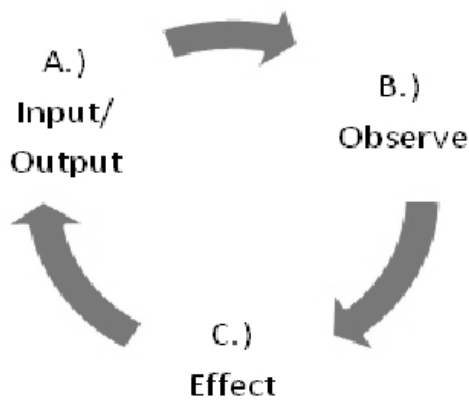
Fig 1.2
A Feedback Loop. Firstly, the system is "started" at [A] where energy comes from outside. Secondly [B], this input energy is assessed and thirdly [C], the system adjusts to the new information. This adjusting becomes both the output and input of the system so that the system not only takes into account new information from its outside environment but also takes into account its past and current state into account, thus becoming self-organising.

2.

Self-organisation is where a system controls and maintains itself with a bottom-up directive. Foucault's theory of power within society asserts that force relations are bottom-up and myriad (1998: 94). He contented the overly simplistic classical misunderstanding of power as binary and from above (i.e. ruler oppressing the ruled). He argued that the body is the fulcrum of power within society —with force relations emanating not from above but from all bodies themselves and directed towards other bodies (1980: 56). As such there is no "central hub" in these relations and hence no controller, no puppeteer elite (1998: 95). All bodies in social groups are within multiple force relations forming a non-hierarchical web that is all embracing because it is omnipresent (ibid: 93). This is for two reasons: firstly, because bodies are finite and bounded by their environment (see section 1); and secondly, "boundedness" necessitates a boundary, which is necessarily open to a degree because it is integral to the continuing existence of the bodies' dissipative structure (see section 1). I.e. the body needs to be engaged and open so as to gain the sufficient energy and matter to rebuild itself constantly. Spinoza called this "conatus" which "is the drive to self-maintenance" (2005: xxx). He asserted that the more complexity and power an entity had, the more it was able to self-maintain and affect its environment; and, at the same time, the more complex a system the more possible ways for it to be affected (ibid: 66). Spinoza

called this degree to which a body affects and is affected "affectus" (ibid: 106-107).

Spinoza's term is etymologically closest to emotion but since Spinoza does not distinguish between "feeling an emotion and thinking" it more accurately means the whole extent to which a body is modified (ibid). Foucault never gave a complete ontology as he saw the positing of one as a discourse itself (an exertion of power), but one possible form of "force relation" between bodies is emotional energy. The terms force relations and affectus cannot be limited to describing emotional energy but are useful in describing and understanding group emotions. There is however a caveat to this terminology identified by Bateson; energy has a specific meaning in physics —mass x velocity^2 —and this is not what we mean by emotional energy (1972: xxii). As such, the term "emotional energy" will not be used. Instead, following Durkheim, we will use the term "effervescence" (2001: xix) for group emotions (additionally, Gilmore's study of the Andalusian Carnival —to which we will return later —also uses "social effervescence" (1987: 122)). This term lacks pseudo-scientific undertones of "energy" but still retains the central elements of this ubiquitous activity. For instance, Bataille uses effervescence to describe this lively tendency towards excess prevalent in nature (1991: 34). The consequences of this excess can give rise to order, as we have already mentioned, but it can also be dangerous (we shall return to this issue later).

Emotional effervescence forms a network that is organised "bottom-up" and has myriad connections between bodies forming a complex system that has no controller. The group emotional state is a controlling affect upon the individual bodies emanating from individual bodies but is not itself a sentient controller. If we were to dissect this system and reduce it to its parts these relations would be severed and the control would disappear. Therefore, the self-organisation of complex-emotional-group-

systems is an emergent property. An emergent property is an intrinsic property of a system that only arises at a certain level of complexity. Below this threshold the property does not exist. Capra uses the example of sugar to demonstrate this: the taste of sugar is an emergent property not present in the carbon, hydrogen and oxygen atoms that comprise it (1997: 28). The taste of sugar can be said to arise at the level of complexity where both the atoms are bonded correctly and this correct combination then comes into contact with a life-form that has an appropriate apparatus for sensing taste. The property is not in any one of these parts but in the correct organisation of these parts, which takes place at a certain level of complexity.

Kauffman called the level of complexity at which a complex system becomes self-organising a "phase transition" and asserted that it arose spontaneously through a sufficient diversity of connectivity and inertia (1995: 64). A phase transition is when a system hits a certain threshold and changes from one state to another. In *At Home in the Universe*, Kauffman uses a thought experiment with buttons and threads to show that in high enough levels of diversity, order can spontaneously emerge — what he calls "order for free" (ibid: 25). Imagine a system comprised of twenty buttons. With five pieces of thread connect up some of the buttons at random. Repeat the process again randomly. When the ratio of threads to buttons reaches 0.5 a spontaneous giant cluster will emerge in the system. When this experiment is repeated with larger numbers, the phase transition becomes even more evident —as seen in Fig 2.
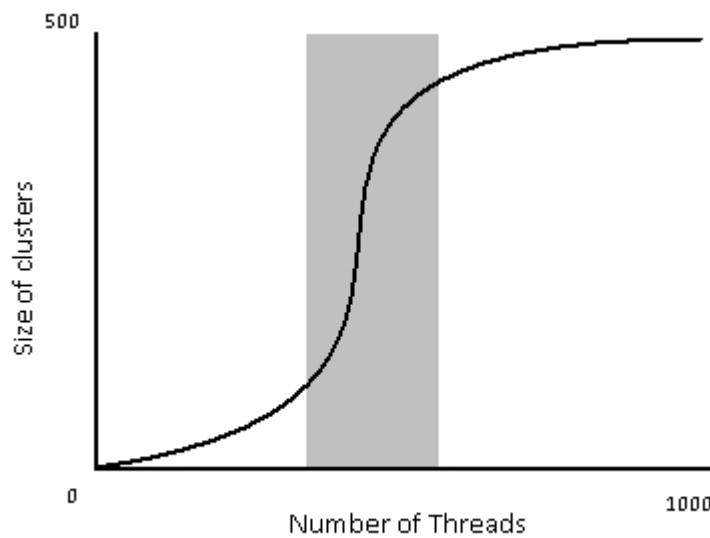
Fig 2
This shows the phase transition in a larger version of Kauffman's thread/bead experiment. The grey area marks out the phase transition.

Langton described a phase transition as being like the surface of the sea between the water below and the air above —a thin membrane separating two other mediums that is not only a boundary but a region (1993: 230-231, 302). The reason for the thinness of this region —of specificity of conditions for self-organisation —is that both static and chaotic elements are necessary if the system is to endure (1995: 87). If the system is too static then the energy will not be able to cross the system and rebuild it; and if the system is too chaotic then an inundation of energy will cause a break down in the coherency of the system and it will be torn apart (ibid: 90). The chaotic elements of the system allow the constant stream of energy (from the open boundary) to make the system flexible to its environment —but if it were too chaotic then the smallest fluxes of energy would have wholesale effects and the system as a viable pattern would disappear. Thus the static parts of the system keep connectivity within the system sparse enough to prevent chaos (ibid: 84).

3.

Emotions operate as complex systems that self-organise groups of people when there is sufficient complexity —but on what level does this self-organisation occur? We are not entirely conscious of this controlling apparatus in social groups and therefore these affective relations occur at an unconscious level. Freud wrongly asserted that the unconscious was the sum of repressed memories (1970: 147) caused by infantile sexuality which fears punishment (2007: 74-75). Freud was right to assert that repression can occur from traumatic experience but this occurs because stress can prevent a multiple memory system from functioning —but stress is not purely limited to sexuality.

Memory operates on two different levels: declarative and non-declarative. Declarative memories are conscious recollections which are formed through a system involving the *hippocampus*; and, non-declarative memories are unconscious behavioural responses to previous encounters — such as the fear response system involving the *amygdala*. Declarative memories are not very accurate, change over time, and are affected by the present every time they are recalled. On the other hand, non-declarative memories cannot become completely extinct and although they can diminish they never truly die. (1999: 179-224, esp. 210-211)

Repression occurs from stress and stressful situations which affects this dual system by causing the body to produce adrenaline. At first, this adrenaline improves the recollections of both systems, but if the situation continues it can have adverse effects on whether declarative memories are formed. This involves a feedback loop with the hippocampus attempting to slow the release of adrenaline. If the balance of adrenaline reaches a certain threshold it incapacitates the hippocampus and consequently prevents it from forming declarative memories (ibid: 240-242). Since conscious memories are not actually formed, they cannot be retrieved and therefore Freud's account is spurious. The memories he recovers are in

fact fabricated —which has been shown experimentally to be easy to induce (ibid: 244-245).

Jung never accepted the oedipal complex nor Freud's excessive use of it as an explanation (1970: 694); instead he proposed that an "individual unconscious is open to the collective unconscious of archetypes" (ibid: 147). Jung's understanding of the unconscious is based in German Romanticism and Leibbrand argued that it is inseparable from the work of Schelling (ibid: 204). For the German Romantics the unconscious was

> *"the very fundament of the human being as rooted in the invisible life of the universe and therefore the true bond linking man and nature."*
> (ibid)

For Jung our individual unconscious is connected to the group unconscious through archetypes, which are symbols that individuals congregate around as "centres of psychic energy" (emotional effervescence) (ibid: 706). Durkheim asserted that ritual symbols were an expression of this effervescence (2001: 302). As such, it is conceivable that unconscious emotional processes are the main relation that draws humans together in groups. And it is at this level that self organisation occurs.

4.

Before we examine these archetypes or symbols more closely we must return to cybernetics and the nature of feedback loops and explicate them in more depth —this will clarify why these archetypes/symbols (what we will collectively term "attractors" in section 5) are important. In a feedback loop each causal link (e.g. from B to C in Fig 1.2 above) is designated in cybernetics as either positive or negative depending upon its relationship to the previous link in the chain. If it causes a change in the same direction it is termed positive, if it is different it is negative. These

terms are relative because they are dependent upon their response to the previous causal link. If a feedback loop has an odd number of negative links then it will be self-balancing (negative). Negative feedback loops are more predominate in nature; e.g. homeostasis —the ability of organisms to maintain regular internal conditions despite massive fluctuations in their external environment. (1997: 56-61)

Positive feedback loops are self-reinforcing and are generally quite destructive because they amplify instabilities (a "concrete" example is urban decay) (1985: 203). However this amplification can also lead to new forms of organisation (1997: 59-60, 89). These moments in the dynamic-structure of a system's organisation are called "bifurcation points", which are moments of instability where the way the system is organised tends in one direction or another (1985: xv, 160-161). Complex systems inherently pass through these moments of instability because they are far from equilibrium and therefore subject to a constant fluctuation of energy and matter. But complex systems can use the fluctuations as their source of order: their dissipative structures —comprised of myriad connective and inertial feedback loops —recycle the organisation of the whole through the varying fluctuation of the parts. Additionally, this instability allows the system to potentially adapt to radical changes and achieve new forms of organisation where more rigid competitors would be eliminated (1997: 89).

The multiple feedback processes within a complex system that "decide" the outcome of bifurcation points are nonlinear —i.e. the affects are disproportional. This means that infinitesimal changes within the system can either have no effect or cause huge changes to the whole system's organisation. Furthermore, this directionality at bifurcation points is inherently unpredictable —this is known evocatively as "the butterfly effect" because the discoverer of this phenomenon, Edward Lorenz, was studying weather systems which were extremely sensitive to slight perturbations (forces equivalent to that of one wing-beat of a butterfly).

This means that infinitesimally small differences or irregularities could lead to vastly different outcomes. As such, complex systems are not totally predictable because there are so many tiny nonlinear variables that defy perfect measurement —and these tiny variables can have drastic effects. To highlight this Lorenz dreamed up a hypothetical weather forecasting machine. It would have multifarious sensors spaced approximately one foot apart in all 3-dimensions across the whole face of the earth from the soil all the way up into the stratosphere. But despite the vastness of this machine and the colossal amount of data it could collect, it would still ultimately be inaccurate because of infinitesimal events occurring in-between the sensors (1998: 8, 14-23).

5.

If groups of humans generate effervescence and this takes place at an unconscious level to form affective relations —between individual bodies — operating as feedback loops then we can assert several things. Firstly, these processes are not at equilibrium and so tend towards excess when there are sufficient numbers of bodies producing affective relations. Secondly, effervescence in abundance must be exerted and therefore if it is not controlled or mediated it can be dangerous. This control does not come from above but is an inherent part of complex systems. When diversity (of connectivity and inertia) and complexity reach certain thresholds (a phase transition) order *can* emerge spontaneously. Therefore the symbols/archetypes and focus upon which group emotions instantiate themselves *occur naturally*.

Durkheim stated that "grouping does not take place suddenly as a result of a miracle" (1970: 30) but occurs naturally when people congregate because there is a "surplus" of effervescence (2001: 158). This is similar to Bataille's idea of the accursed share. For Durkheim, rituals were a way of controlling this effervescence and controlling and maintaining social groups (ibid: 175-176). On the other hand, Bataille saw rituals as a way of

expending excess effervescence for no other purpose than the glorious destruction of that itself (1991: 22). Gilmore's study of the carnival in Andalusian culture is the synthesis of these two theories.

Gilmore's study showed how Andalusian society was maintained, in part, by the carnival because it acted as a "heterotopias" where excess effervescence could be alleviated but also simultaneously and *inadvertently* reinforced social norms through gossiping (1987: 101-106). Gossip works in several ways: firstly, the shame that individuals feel when they are the targets influences them to follow social norms to try and avoid this. Secondly, the pleasure that is felt by those who gossip expends excess effervescence. Thirdly, combined, these processes reinforce social norms by re-establishing what is acceptable and expending the accursed share in doing so (ibid: 117-121). I.e. this reiterates Prigogine's fundamental insight that *Waste becomes a source of order.*

Foucault created the concept of heterotopias to describe places or events within society that inverts normal society (1986: 24) — e.g. in the Andalusian carnival, it is the poor who dominate the town and it is those who are flaunting all their culture's social norms who are reinforcing them in others (1987: 105, 123). Heterotopias have multiple functions which change over time but mostly act as venting points and/or controlling points of the accursed share (effervescence in abundance) and because of this they exist in all societies (1986: 24-25). Durkheim noted the importance of rituals within societies and the rituals he describes are also heterotopias. Durkheim also noted that although rituals and their symbols change over time ("there are no immortal gospels" (2001: 322-323)), they are "an essential and permanent aspect of humanity" (ibid: 3).

Durkheim thought rituals were essential because they maintained social groups by "reaffirming feelings that might fade if left to themselves" (ibid: 157). But he also saw effervescence as potentially dangerous and he saw

rituals as a way of acting out collective effervescence, although this in itself was dangerous because rituals potentially exaggerate or intensify feelings which can exacerbate situations (ibid). When we understand group emotions as complex systems we can see how they act as force relations forming networks of feedback loops between bodies. If group emotions become over-stimulated then they can have dangerous consequences as positive feedback loops lead to exponential explosions of raw emotions —e.g. rioting, mob lynching, stampedes, etc.

Group emotions are formed from a union and therefore only the strongest characteristics emerge in this synthesis (1974: 26-27). Durkheim notes that this has two results: firstly, these powerful emotions lift up all members of a particular complex-emotional-group-system so that they can become hyper-stimulated and this "reinvigorates" them for daily life (2001: 158, 176, 284-285); and, secondly, this first effect makes individuals feel in "moral harmony" with the rest of the group and subsequently happier (ibid: 159). This is how certain symbols are sustained: through "rewarding" behaviour that actively sustains the group and expressing contempt towards that which would cause it danger (ibid: 159, 288).

Zizek noted that "enjoyment" was a large factor in racism and nationalism (1991: 2, 19). Both activities, although based on metaphysical category errors[1], can be understood as products of symbols and ritualistic activities that are trying (unconsciously) to sustain themselves (conatus). In mathematics these symbols and associated activities are called "attractors" because they appear to pull the system toward them and this area of influence is called a "basin of attraction"(1997:130, 134)(see Fig 3).

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1 Racism is an example of the form/ content mistake identified by Kant in the third Critique. Skin is important, structurally – if you didn't have it you would dissolve both emotionally into the others, and also materially because your innards would be exposed to too much fluctuating energy and you would drift apart. Its specific colour is a mere addendum. Additionally, racism usually extrapolates from limited examples of interactions with specific members of different cultures to then identifying entire associate abstract peoples as exactly the same. This is both an inductive fallacy and a mistake of eminence (taking the part as more important than the whole).
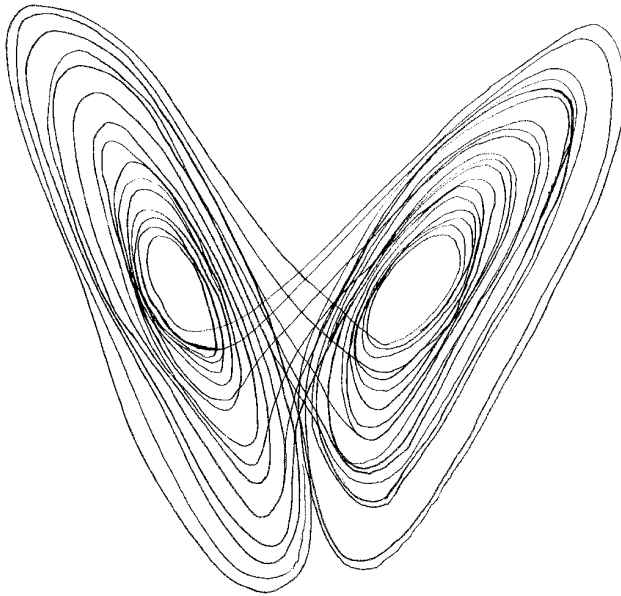
Fig 3:
An example of an attractor.

A mathematically pictorial representation of how a dynamic system tends to be drawn around certain centres. This attractor is a variation of the Lorenz attractor which represents the weather system (as discussed at the end of section 4). It has two points of attraction around which the system oscillates unpredictably.

In societies, shared social practises and events act as attractors for social effervescence. But these are not eternal; as complex-emotional-group-systems change, their attractors change too. This either occurs gradually or it can happen rapidly, even spontaneously, because of the amplifying effects of positive feedback loops which operate within these systems. So, when a system changes (a bifurcation point) it moves into a new basin of attraction with a new attractor. Examples of this changing of social nexus points include the rise to prominence of sports —especially football —as unifiers of social groups, as well as new religious and cult movements, the emphasis on Nationhood since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, celebrity idols, consumerism, and gymnasiums as temples to the body (etc.). However, our purpose here is not to list and detail the exact happenings of this process but to identify it as a ubiquitous state of evolving affairs throughout human cultural history.

6.

In conclusion: humans live in groups, in these groups unconscious

emotional relations interact between the bodies of individuals. In a sufficient diversity —balanced both of individuals and emotions, and chaotic and static parts —complex systems can spontaneously emerge and self-organise. This occurs because the system uses the flux of emotional effervescence as a source of order by replacing the bottom-up structure to maintain its organisation. The complex-emotional-group-system's structure is comprised of myriad interlaced feedback loops of emotional effervescence, which, due to the system's existence far from equilibrium, is tending towards excess. Because feedback loops are nonlinear, affective relations are amplified disproportionally. These instabilities (bifurcation points) are normally dynamically-harmonised by self-balancing feedback loops but occasionally these instabilities are amplified by self-reinforcing feedback loops which either destroy the system or shift into a new basin of attraction and thus a new form of order. We have argued that most of these relations operate at an unconscious level.

The arbitrary products of these multiple force relations are the shared symbols and practises between individuals which comprise the group — what we have collectively termed "attractors". These attractors enhance social cohesion and expend effervescence which is essentially tending towards excess. If this process promotes social cohesion then the attractor re-establishes and maintains itself but they are not eternal and do change. It should be noted that this implies a quasi-functionalist-nihilistic reading of shared social effervescence as self-organising. Attractors are only inadvertently functional for the parts (individuals) insofar as they perpetuate themselves; therefore, there is no ethical or intentional purpose to these attractors and nor is there any drive to promote progress or morality, merely survival of a particular instantiation of order.

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