

# Transcendental Philosophy in Scotus, Kant, and Deleuze: One Voice Expressing Difference

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**Summary:** 1. Introduction; 2. Scotus; 3. Kant; 4. Deleuze; 5 One Voice Expressing Difference.

**Abstract:** This paper traces a common thread in John Duns Scotus, Immanuel Kant, and Gilles Deleuze: the search for a truly transcendental philosophy. Scotus was the father of transcendental philosophy, Kant transformed the discipline into transcendental idealism, and Deleuze further transformed it into transcendental empiricism. Kant saw previous transcendental philosophy (which he called transcendental realism) as being transcendent, as it purported to give access to things in themselves. In place of this, Kant put forth transcendental idealism, in which we only have access to appearances. Deleuze saw Kant's transcendental idealism as transcendent, as it dealt with the transcendental on the level of conception, which Deleuze saw as empirical. In place of this, Deleuze put forth transcendental empiricism, in which the transcendental pertains only to the realm of immanence, out of which the empirical arises. All three thinkers share a common tradition, transcendental philosophy. Further, they shared a common goal, that of making the transcendental immanent, even though they expressed this goal differently.

**Keywords:** Transcendental, Transcendent, Immanent, Empirical, Metaphysics

## 1. Introduction

This paper is an exploration of a seemingly strange linkage in the history of philosophy: John Duns Scotus, Immanuel Kant, and Gilles Deleuze. In short, Scotus was the father of transcendental philosophy, Kant transformed the discipline into transcendental idealism, and Deleuze further, and infamously, transformed it into transcendental empiricism. The main purpose of this paper is to examine a common thread running through all three of these thinkers: the attempt to make philosophy immanent rather than transcendent. To show this, I will need to outline the contours of their shared tradition, that of transcendental philosophy. It is controversial to say that Scotus was the father of transcendental philosophy and that Kant was (merely) transforming the tradition that came before him, rather than inventing an entirely new philosophical approach (called transcendental philosophy); it is also controversial to claim that Deleuze shared a common tradition with both Scotus and Kant.<sup>1</sup> I hope to show not only that these controversial claims are indeed accurate but also that certain aspects of the thought of Kant and Deleuze (especially pertaining to the relationship of the transcendental, the

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<sup>1</sup> This is especially true given that Deleuze calls his philosophy "transcendental empiricism," which is hardly intelligible if one assumes that Kant's philosophy is the entire framework for understanding transcendental philosophy.

transcendent, and the immanent) can only be understood in light of this common tradition of transcendental philosophy, going back to Scotus. All three thinkers saw transcendental philosophy as the best way to develop a philosophy of immanence.

The central problem concerns Kant's very explanation of transcendental idealism. For present purposes, the intricacies of Kant's philosophy are less important than the pairings he makes when contrasting transcendental idealism with transcendental realism. Kant explains transcendental idealism as "the doctrine that [appearances] are all together to be regarded as mere representations and not as things in themselves, and accordingly that space and time are only sensible forms of our intuition..." (*KrV* A369).<sup>2</sup> He contrasts this with transcendental realism, which he says "regards space and time as something given in themselves....and therefore represents outer appearances...as things in themselves, which would exist independently of us and our sensibility..." (*KrV* A369). The transcendental idealist views appearances as mere representations, due to the limitation of human sensibility, while the transcendental realist views appearances as things as they are in themselves, which are independent of human sensibility. Kant goes on to say that the "transcendental realist...afterwards plays the empirical idealist..." (*KrV* A369), while "The transcendental idealist, on the contrary, can be an empirical realist..." (*KrV* A370). So, for Kant, transcendental realism leads to empirical idealism, while transcendental idealism allows for empirical realism. From this outline, it is clear to see that there is no room for a transcendental empiricism. However, this fact does not mean that Deleuze either misunderstood Kant or was merely playing with words. Rather, Deleuze was drinking deeply from the history of transcendental philosophy, which began well before Kant, in Scotus.

Once the realm of the transcendental is seen in its broader history, rather than only being associated with Kant and the post-Kantian traditions, Deleuze's transcendental empiricism (though perhaps not entirely tenable) can at least make sense as a viable philosophical option.<sup>3</sup> My claim is that Deleuze, in forming his transcendental empiricism, was not only appropriating Scotus' notion of the univocity of being but was also returning, in a sense, to Scotus' notion of transcendental philosophy. Further, while Kant does not lay great importance on univocity per se, and even though Deleuze referred to Kant as an enemy, Deleuze's transcendental empiricism was only made possible by certain innovations Kant made in the construction of transcendental idealism.

This paper goes as follows: (1) I outline the transcendental philosophy of Scotus, focusing on

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<sup>2</sup> References to Kant follow the standard *Akademie* pagination (except for the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which follows the A/B pagination with title abbreviation *KrV*) and translations come from the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*. The only exception is my insertion of *Object* and *Gegenstand* in the discussion of the transcendental object, as the translations render both terms as "object." In a forthcoming work, co-authored with Steve Palmquist and Guy Lown, I explain the difference between the two terms in Kant's philosophical system; put simplistically, *Object* refers to external or determined objects, while *Gegenstand* refers to undetermined objects.

<sup>3</sup> My concern in this paper is to explain these three thinkers in light of their shared common tradition and to show that each provides a viable philosophical option. I am not here concerned with the veridicality of any of their positions.

univocity and haecceity. (2) I outline the transcendental philosophy of Kant, focusing on his transformation of the discipline into transcendental idealism. (3) I outline the transcendental philosophy of Deleuze, focusing on his transformation of the discipline into transcendental empiricism, which is contiguous with Kant's transcendental idealism while returning to some elements found in Scotus. Finally, I will bring the main issues together to show how all three thinkers share a common goal, and even how they share a common voice, despite the fact that they are expressing difference.

## 2. Scotus

For Scotus, "There must necessarily exist some universal science which considers the transcendentals as such. This science we call 'metaphysics, from 'meta', which means 'beyond', and [*physis*] 'the science of nature'. It is, as it were, the transcending science, because it is concerned with the transcendentals."<sup>4</sup> For Scotus, metaphysics is the discipline that studies the transcendentals, so metaphysics is transcendental philosophy.<sup>5</sup> Metaphysics concerns that which is "beyond," and is "the transcending science." Given the name "meta-physics," it seems that it is nature, or the physical world, that is being transcended. This notion of metaphysics is common even in contemporary discussions. However, for Scotus, the issue is not so simple. It is not simply nature that is being transcended. Scotus is clear on this point:

"[...] before "being" is divided into the ten categories, it is divided into infinite and finite. For [...] finite being [...] is common to the ten genera. Whatever pertains to "being", then, in so far as it remains indifferent to finite and infinite, or as proper to the Infinite Being, does not belong to it as determined to a genus, but prior to any such determination, and therefore as transcendental and outside any genus. Whatever [predicates] are common to God and creatures are of such kind, pertaining as they do to being in its indifference to what is infinite and finite. For in so far as they pertain to God they are infinite, whereas in so far as they belong to creatures they are finite. They belong to "being", then, prior to the division into the ten genera. Anything of this kind, consequently, is transcendental."<sup>6</sup>

In Scotus' account, metaphysics is the study of being, and everything has being. So, metaphysics is

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<sup>4</sup> DUNS SCOTUS, *Philosophical Writings*, Allan Wolter (trans.), (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1962), p. 2. Wolter, in an editor's note on this passage, says, "The MSS read either *phivos* or *phyvos*. The text is faulty here as it is in so many other instances. Scotus's meaning, however, seems clear enough" (p. 165). Scotus should speak of "meta" and "physis" in his etymology of metaphysics.

<sup>5</sup> The number of transcendentals was debated in Scholasticism. But three notions were universally included in transcendental thought: unity, truth, and goodness. These are the three concepts that Kant discusses at B113, as we will see below.

<sup>6</sup> SCOTUS, *Philosophical Writings*, 2.

the study of the being of all that is. In Scholastic thought, being was seen as transcending the Aristotelian categories, since every application of the categories pertains to things that are. Typically, the focus was only on finite being, as God was seen as wholly transcendent of the finite world. However, for Scotus, being applies to infinite (God) as well as the finite (creatures). Being is “indifferent to” the categories and the concepts of finitude and infinitude, since any application of these concepts requires something that has being. For Scotus, it is not only infinite being or the being of God that is transcendental; rather, the transcendental is concerned with what is common to both God and creatures. What is being transcended is not the physical, sensory world but is the categories and even the notions of finite and infinite. For this reason (and for reasons developed below), Scotus’ talk of “the transcending science” could also (perhaps more accurately) be called “the transcendental science.”

Implicit in Scotus’ discussion of the transcendental is his notion of univocity. When we speak of being, we must be speaking univocally. To say that God has being must mean the same thing (at least in some way) as to say that creatures have being. The modes of being may be different, but the difference pertains only to the modes and not to being itself. Scotus introduces univocity in order to preserve any hope of talking (or thinking) about God. For Thomas Aquinas, all talk of God is analogical. God transcends the realm of creatures in such a way that we cannot even have a concept of God that would also apply to creatures. When we say that God exists, we are speaking only analogously in relation to any claim that a creature exists. But what is God’s existence to mean if it is only an analogy with any other existence we come to know? For Scotus, it is meaningless. Scotus introduces univocity because he sees analogy as equivocation in disguise. If God’s existence is in absolutely no way similar to our existence, then we are simply equivocating when we say that God exists. God’s mode of existence may be different from ours (God exists necessarily and has aseity, whereas creatures exist contingently), but existence itself has the same meaning when applied to both God and creatures.

To be sure, metaphysics transcends physics. Whereas physics studies things that exist, metaphysics studies the being of the things that exist. Physics applies the categories to things within the finite realm in order to determine our concepts of them (dividing them into genus, species, and particular). Physics is limited to the finite realm. Metaphysics, for Scotus, transcends the finite realm not by only studying the infinite, but rather by studying both the finite and the infinite. Metaphysics concerns being itself, and being is “indifferent to” divisions of the categories and of finite and infinite.

For Scotus, metaphysics is only possible because of univocity. If being is not said in the same way of both the finite and the infinite, then metaphysics would be limited to the finite. This limitation would concern simply the divisions of the Aristotelian categories, and metaphysics would simply be physics. However, it was not only theological concerns that led Scotus to the concept of univocity. Rather, he thought that the nature of the human mind as it forms concepts requires univocity. This is most easily seen in his explanation of our formation of concepts in relation to individuation (or the relation of

difference and identity). According to Scotus, “the [...] more particular things cannot be known unless [the] more common things are first known. And the knowledge of [the] more common things cannot be treated in some more particular science [...] Therefore, it is necessary that some general science exists that considers [the] transcendentals as such.”<sup>7</sup> What this means is that our knowledge of a particular does not, indeed cannot, begin with the particular. Beginning with a particular can never lead to knowledge, for Scotus. If you see a cow (and have knowledge of it as a cow), you have already applied general concepts to the particular (since cow is a species, and to have knowledge of a cow is to have knowledge of “animal” more generally, etc.). Alternatively, if you see something from a distance, you will go through a process of coming to know the thing (provided that you have adequate concepts). You may see a “something” that has “being” (since you see it); then you may determine that it is an animal, then that it is quadrupedal, and so on, until you determine it as a cow. The point here is simply that we know the more general before we know the more specific, when we come to know a particular thing as the type of thing it is.

Scotus uses the method of *resolutio* to explain individuation. A *resolutio* is a reduction (resolving) of something into its more fundamental aspects. For Scotus, a *resolutio* begins with the particular and goes to the most general. According to Scotus,

“[...] every differentia of different [items] is ultimately reduced to some primarily diverse [factors]. Otherwise, there would be no stopping-point in differentiae. But individuals properly differ, since they are “diverse beings that are something the same”. Therefore, the differentia of [individuals] is reduced to some primarily diverse [factors]. Now these primarily diverse [factors] are not “the nature in this [individual]” and “the nature in that [individual],” since that by which they formally agree is not the same as that by which they really differ, although the same [item] can be [both] really distinct [from something] and really agree [with it]. Indeed, there is a great difference between *being distinct* and *being that by which something is primarily distinguished* (and hence it will be so in the case of unity). Therefore, beyond the nature in this [individual] and in that one, there are some primarily diverse [factors], by which the one and the other differ—this [factor] in this one and that [factor] in that one, [respectively].”<sup>8</sup>

The first point that Scotus makes is simply that there must be a stopping point in the examination of a thing, if the thing is to be determined in knowledge. Things have differences that are internal to the things themselves rather than only to the type of things they are. The differences that make individuals

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<sup>7</sup> SCOTUS, *Questions on the Metaphysics of Aristotle by John Duns Scotus vol. II: Books Six-Nine*, Girard J. Etzkorn and Allan B. Wolter (trans.), (New York: Franciscan Institute Publications), p. 8-9.

<sup>8</sup> SCOTUS, *Ordinatio* 2 d. 3 p. 1 qq. 5-6: 170.

be individuals are primary differences, and are inherent in the individuals themselves. Difference has its own existence in the things that differ. Further, these fundamental differences are in the individuals themselves rather than in the nature of the individuals as the type of things they are. For example, one cow is different from another cow by virtue of something in the existence of each particular cow. A cow is different from a horse by virtue of having the nature of cow-ness; this difference is not primarily specific to any individual cow but rather to the common nature shared by cows. The common nature shared between two cows allows them to “really agree” with each other. However, the cows, as individuals, also “really differ” from each other. The most fundamental difference in individuals pertains to a deeper level than the common nature; it exists at the level of the individual. There is difference within unity. Scotus notes the “great difference between” distinct individuals and between distinct species. “Being distinct” is not the same as “being that by which something is primarily distinguished.” We distinguish a cow from a horse not at the level of particularity but at the level of species. However, the same difference in individuation between an individual (as cow) and an individual (as horse) applies as does between two cows; the difference is in how we conceptually determine the individuals in question.

Scotus notes that this method of *resolutio* applies to unity just as to difference. He does not work out the details in this passage, but the method for determining unity is just the mirror image of the method of determining difference. Two things are unified by a common feature, obviously. For two cows, unity is found at the level of species. For a cow and a horse, unity is found at the level of genus (animality). A cow and a pencil must be unified at a more basic conceptual level, since the general is known before the particular. Ultimately, all things are unified at the level of being.

Scotus presents, though does not spell out, two types of *resolutio*. One *resolutio* pertains to individuals as individuals, and ends in haecceity, making individuation possible. This is the level of difference in itself. The other *resolutio* pertains to the common unity of all things, and ends in univocity, making transcendental philosophy necessary. However, it is important that these two aspects (or poles) remain tethered. Unity is always a unity of differences, and differences always exist within unity.

Scotus acknowledges these two poles, but he assigns them to different philosophical domains. For Scotus, logic is the domain of univocity, while metaphysics is the domain of analogy. Giorgio Pini points out that “Both in his logical and in his theological works Scotus holds that only the metaphysician can speak of analogy, which is a real relationship among essences, whereas the logician, who deals with the way things are understood and signified, only speaks of equivocity and univocity.”<sup>9</sup> Scotus’ notion of univocity applies to concepts, since there must be some common point of reference in *our concept of* being. Otherwise, we are using words without having an actual reference. Ludger Honnefelder puts the issue succinctly, saying that “Scotus’ doctrine of the transcendental becomes the

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<sup>9</sup> Giorgio PINI, *Categories and Logic in Duns Scotus*, (Leiden: Brill, 2002), p. 178-179.

whole of metaphysics. First philosophy is either possible as transcendental science, or it is not possible at all.”<sup>10</sup> However, while there must be univocity in our concept of being, the world as it exists contains differences that cannot be explained by concepts. Two horses share in the same nature and in the same being, but their individuation as different horses defies conceptual analysis. They are simply different. The pole of unity is where we find the transcendentals and univocity; the pole of difference is where we find haecceity, which can only be expressed through analogy. Victor Salas summarizes the issue nicely,

In arguing for the univocity of the concept of being, Scotus is not suggesting that there is some reality common to both God and creature; here, he is in complete agreement with Thomas and Henry. Though creator and creature are not diverse with respect to *concept*—i.e., they both fall under the extension of the common concept ‘being’—they are nevertheless diverse in reality (*in realitate*).<sup>11</sup>

What this means is that when metaphysics deals with the transcendental concepts, such as being, it becomes logic, since logic is the domain of univocity. So, for Scotus (even though he did not spell it out), real metaphysics, as transcendental philosophy, is actually transcendental logic. Both poles must be held together, and this is best seen in relation to primary and secondary substances. In the Aristotelian tradition, individuated things are primary substances, whereas species and genera are secondary substances. In our cognition, the most general is primary to the particular; the most general is the realm of the transcendental. However, in the realm of things themselves (apart from our cognition), the particular is primary to the more general. In logic (even in the transcendental logic of metaphysics) things are dealt with in relation to our concepts of secondary substances; in metaphysics, on the other hand, individuated things are primary (as primary substances), while concepts of secondary substances are applied to them.

### 3. Kant

On my view, Kant’s philosophy is best understood as a transformation of philosophy within the transcendental tradition, as seen in Scotus.<sup>12</sup> Kant turned transcendental philosophy into transcendental idealism, referring to past endeavors as transcendental realism. In outline, Kant’s transcendental idealism is the view that all appearances are representations, rather than things in themselves. The empirical world is made possible by the transcendental functions of the mind. The human mind

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<sup>10</sup> Ludger HONNEFELDER, “Metaphysics as a Discipline: From the ‘Transcendental Philosophy of the Ancients’ to Kant’s Notion of Transcendental Philosophy” in Russell L. FRIEDMAN and Lauge O. NIELSEN (eds.), *The Medieval Heritage in Early Modern Metaphysics and Modal Theory, 1400-1700* (Dordrecht: Springer-Science+Business Media, B.V., 2003), p. 59.

<sup>11</sup> Victor SALAS, “Between Thomas and Scotism: Francisco Suárez on the Analogy of Being” in Victor M. Salas and Robert L. FASTIGGI (eds), *A Companion to Francisco Suárez* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), p. 347.

<sup>12</sup> Kant never discusses Scotus directly. However, he mentions the transcendentals in relation to the Scholastics at B113. Further, he interacts with Johann Jakob Brucker’s five volume *Historia critica philosophica* (Leipzig: Breitkopf, 1743-1744), which gives a detailed treatment of Scotus; see A316/B372.

imposes space and time (as transcendental forms of sensibility) onto the things that appear in sensibility, making sense experience possible. This imposition of space and time results in the objects of experience being nothing more than appearances (rather than things in themselves). Sense experience gives us a manifold of intuitions that must be unified in human consciousness. This unity comes through the application of the categories (as transcendental forms of thought) to the intuitions, which are all related to the transcendental subject in the form of the “I think.” This section is an attempt to locate Kant’s thought within the tradition coming from Scotus and also to show how Kant’s transformation of the transcendental, in some ways, paved the way for Deleuze’s further transformation of the transcendental.

Kant makes a clear distinction between the transcendent and the transcendental. However, both terms come from the Latin *transcendens*. When Scotus discussed the transcendental, he always used *transcendens* (or a variation thereof, such as *transcendentis*). Armand de Bellevue, in 1586, lists the different uses the term “*transcendens*” had in his day. The first use pertains to the nobility of being (*entitatis nobilitate*), signifying the transcendent, and the second use concerns common (meaning common to all things) predication (*praedicationis communitate*), signifying the transcendental. Armand is clear that the second use of the term is the more proper one (*Et nec iste modus transcendentis, best ita comunis, & proprius sient secundus*).<sup>13</sup> The introduction of *transcendentalis* came later in Scholasticism, likely in order for the Aristotelian, transcendental thinkers to distinguish their thought from Platonic, transcendent thought (as both used *transcendens* and its variants). Francisco Suárez, in his 1597 *Metaphysicae Disputationes*, uses *transcendendens* and *transcendentalis* (and their variations) interchangeably. For example, he says, “[...] it is usually said that in [...] things belonging to other categories there are included transcendental [*transcendentales*] relation [...] but not genuine [categorical] relations [...] if a transcendental (*transcendens*) relation is true and real, it suffices for all relative denominations.”<sup>14</sup> By the 1700s, *transcendentalis* (and its variants) were primarily used to designate the transcendental, though there were still exceptions.

It is well known that Kant made extravagant claims concerning his philosophy. To my mind, the most hyperbolic claims pertain to the transcendental philosophy that went before his. For example, Kant says that “until now there has [...] been no transcendental philosophy” (4:279). However, Kant immediately goes on to speak of “what goes under this name [transcendental philosophy] is really a part of metaphysics” (4:279). Kant’s point is that what has been called transcendental philosophy has not been a true transcendental philosophy, because transcendental philosophy “is to settle the possibility of metaphysics in the first place, and therefore must precede all metaphysics” (4:279). He was not saying

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<sup>13</sup> Armand DE BELLEVUE, *Declaratio difficilium terminorum theologiae, philosophiae atque logicae*, (Venice, 1586), p. 319. For a fuller discussion of the history of transcendental philosophy before Kant, see Jan A. AERTSEN, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought: From Philip the Chancellor (ca. 1225) to Francisco Suárez*, (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

<sup>14</sup> Francisco SUÁREZ, *On Real Relation (Disputatio Metaphysica XLVII): A Translation from the Latin, with an Introduction and Notes*, John P. Doyle (trans. and ed.) (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2006), p. 45.



that no one had attempted a transcendental philosophy before him. Otherwise, he would not be able to say: “The highest concept with which one is accustomed to begin a transcendental philosophy is usually the division between the possible and the impossible” (*KrV* A290/B346). No one could be accustomed to begin a discipline with the division between possible and impossible if the very discipline did not exist. Kant also made claims such as that “there is as yet no metaphysics at all” (4:256-257). However, he immediately goes on to speak of “a complete reform or rather a rebirth of metaphysics” (4:257). Finally, he claims that “before the coming of the critical philosophy there was as yet no philosophy at all” (6:206). No one doubts that there were attempts at philosophy and metaphysics before Kant; it is equally true that there were attempts at transcendental philosophy.

Kant was the first, so far as I am aware, to clearly distinguish between the transcendental and the transcendent: “**transcendental** and **transcendent** are not the same” (*KrV* A296/B352). His point was not merely, or even primarily, linguistic. Rather, he was making a philosophical point, namely that the transcendental should be related to what is immanent. Kant’s transcendental idealism (as opposed to what he labels “transcendental realism”) is the attempt to make transcendental philosophy a philosophy of immanence. He distinguishes between immanent principles, “whose application stays wholly and completely within the limits of possible experience” from transcendent principles, “that would fly beyond these boundaries” (*KrV* A295-296/B352). He says that a transcendental principle is not the same thing as the transcendental use of the categories. The latter, for Kant, “is a mere mistake of the faculty of judgment when it is not properly checked by criticism” (*KrV* A296/B352). He concludes that “The principles of pure understanding [...] should be only of empirical and not of transcendental use, i.e., of a use that reaches out beyond the boundaries of experience” (*KrV* A296/B352-353). In the very passage where Kant most clearly distinguishes between transcendental and transcendent, he gives a description of the transcendental as “reach[ing] out beyond the boundaries of experience.” This passage has been the cause of much confusion (and frustration) for Kant scholars. Of this passage, Norman Kemp Smith says, “so careless is Kant in the use of his technical terms that he also employs transcendental as exactly equivalent in meaning to transcendent.”<sup>15</sup> Graham Bird offers a more tempered explanation. According to Bird, “Kant’s account invites the two questions: How can he consistently describe ‘transcendental’ principles as also ‘transcendent’? and: How can principles, so described, belong both to an approved Kantian metaphysics, and also to a bad, illusory metaphysics?”<sup>16</sup> Bird explains the problem by claiming that transcendental and transcendent, though not interchangeable, are not exclusive. Rather,

Transcendent principles, and a metaphysics which endorses them, are a sub-branch of transcendental

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<sup>15</sup> Norman KEMP SMITH, *A Commentary to Kant’s ‘Critique of Pure Reason’*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 76.

<sup>16</sup> Graham BIRD, *The Revolutionary Kant: A Commentary on the Critique of Pure Reason*, (Chicago and La Salle, ILL: Open Court), p. 88.

philosophy, but a sub-branch which for Kant is illusory. It might still have been better if Kant had written "transcendent" for "transcendental" in the fourth sentence of the *KrV* B352 passage, but there is no longer any inconsistency, or even conflict, since even transcendent principles count as transcendental.<sup>17</sup>

On my reading of the passage, both Kemp Smith and Bird are missing Kant's point, though, as is often the case, Kant could have been clearer (though in his own context, in which the history of transcendental philosophy was understood, there was no real need for him to have elaborated further). Both Kemp Smith and Bird are incorrect to suggest that Kant should have written "transcendent" instead of "transcendental." Further, though Bird is correct to view transcendental and transcendent as not being mutually exclusive, he has the relationship between the two reversed, at least in a sense. The basic problem is that Bird is assuming that there is only one type of transcendental, thereby failing to account for the radical difference between transcendental realism and transcendental idealism. Kant's point in this passage is basically the same as the point he makes when he says that transcendental philosophy "must precede all metaphysics" (4:279). However, to understand this, it is helpful to understand the Scholastic roots of transcendental philosophy and to keep in mind that Kant is transforming the discipline, from transcendental realism to transcendental idealism.

Kant views transcendental realism as a form of transcendent philosophy in disguise. This is why he claims that "until now there has...been no transcendental philosophy" (4:279). The goal of transcendental philosophy (from the Scholastics until Kant) was to find the elements of our knowledge that are most basic and general. Kant saw the history of transcendental philosophy as being filled with failures precisely because it had gone far beyond the bounds of human experience. For Scotus, the transcendental concerns the realm of being itself. In my view, this type of philosophy is what Kant labeled transcendental realism. Kant saw this as transcendent because we, in our human limitations, cannot experience the being of beings. When Kant says that we do not know things as they are in themselves, he means primarily that we do not know the essence of things. Rather, we know things as they appear to us. As we have seen, transcendental idealism is "the doctrine that [appearances] are all together to be regarded as mere representations and not as things in themselves", while transcendental realism "represents outer appearances...as things in themselves..." (*KrV* A369). So, transcendental idealism is a philosophy of immanence, while transcendental realism is a philosophy of transcendence. On this point, Bird is correct to view transcendental and transcendent as not being mutually exclusive; however, according to Kant, only transcendental idealism is properly transcendental, and it is mutually exclusive with transcendent. Bird does not seem to recognize that when Kant, in this passage, speaks of the transcendental, he relates it to the categories. He does not do this with regard to the transcendent, which has only principles.

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<sup>17</sup> G. BIRD, *The Revolutionary Kant*, p. 89.

This leads to another point, which is crucial to understanding Kant's transformation of transcendental philosophy. For the Scholastics, the transcendental was what transcended the categories. However, Kant makes the maneuver of including the categories themselves as part of the transcendental structure. Kant realized, especially through the influence of Hume, that we do not have access to the things in the world as they are in themselves. We are limited by our human mode of acquiring knowledge, particularly through sensibility. This is why Kant says that appearances "are all together to be regarded as mere representations and not as things in themselves" (*KrV* A369). All we have are our representations of the world. Our representations must come through sense experience. However, we cannot experience things such as causation through sense experience, so causation must be supplied by the understanding. It was this process of "awakening" that led Kant to see the need for a new grounding for metaphysics. This grounding must be absolutely immanent, since all we have are our representations of the world. The ground must be in the very structure of the human mind. The understanding takes the manifold of intuition supplied through sensibility (in space and time) and synthesizes it, resulting in cognition. Concerning the categories, Kant says that his "aim is basically identical with [Aristotle's] although very different from it in execution" (*KrV* A80/B105). The difference in execution is due to the fact that Kant "generated" the categories "from a common principle, namely the faculty for judging [namely, the understanding]," whereas Kant thought that "Aristotle's search for these fundamental concepts was an effort worthy of an acute man. But since [Aristotle] had no principle, he rounded them up as he stumbled on them..." (*KrV* A81/B107). For Kant, the categories do not pertain to things in themselves because "Only the spontaneity of our thought requires that this manifold [of intuition] first be gone through, taken up, and combined in a certain way in order for a cognition to be made out of it" (*KrV* A77/B102). Kant labels this process of the understanding "synthesis," which is, I think, Kant's basic principle for determining the categories. For Kant, the transcendental, including the categories, must be in the mind because we simply do not have access to things in themselves.

Just as Scotus distinguished between metaphysics and logic, Kant distinguished between the "real use" and the "logical use" of the concept. According to Kant, the real use of a concept is a use in which "the concepts themselves, whether of things or relations, *are given*" and the logical use of a concept is a use in which "the concepts, no matter whence they are given, are merely subordinated to each other, the lower, namely, to the higher (common characteristic marks), and compared with one another in accordance with the principle of contradiction" (2:393). From this distinction, Kant concludes: "Thus empirical concepts do not, in virtue of being raised to greater universality, become intellectual in the *real sense*, nor do they pass beyond the species of sensitive cognition; no matter how high they ascend by abstracting, they always remain sensitive" (2:394). Kant's point here is at the heart of his transcendental idealism. For Kant, the logical use of the concept is general logic, or the logical use of empirical

concepts. This discipline “deals with concepts and judgments” (*KrV* A306/B363), under which are subsumed particulars (e.g., Socrates is a man). The real use of a concept is found in transcendental logic, or the real use of transcendental concepts (the categories). This discipline “deal[s] with intuitions, in order to bring them under rules” (*KrV* A306/B363), such as cause and effect. Kant’s point is that the real use of concepts always pertains to the subsumption of (sensible) intuitions under the categories. As mentioned at the beginning of this section, Kant sees true unity as a product of the mind. To be clear, Kant’s view of unity is a unity of the subject: “all manifold of intuition has a necessary relation to the **I think** in the same subject in which this manifold is to be encountered” (*KrV* B132). This representation of the I think, for Kant, “must be able to accompany all others [all other representations] and [...] in all consciousness is one and the same” (*KrV* B132). For Kant, this is the fundamental form of unity, as he refers to it as “the **transcendental** unity of self-consciousness in order to designate the possibility of *a priori* cognition from it” (*KrV* B132). For Kant, we cannot know things in themselves, but “as appearances they must necessarily be connected *in one experience* in a certain way [...] and cannot be separated without *contradicting* that connection by means of which this experience is possible” (5:53). So, Kant has moved both the transcendental and the univocal to the realm of the mind.

Kant was aware of the need to at least think of external, pre-conceptual unity. In this regard, he gave the notion of the “transcendental *Object*,” which he says is that “which might be the ground of this appearance that we call matter” (*KrV* A277/B333) and “matter [...], as a thing in itself” (*KrV* A366). He says that it lies “at the ground of appearances” (*KrV* A613-614/B642). Finally, he says that

“we can call the merely intelligible cause of appearances in general the transcendental *Object*, merely so that we may have something corresponding to sensibility as receptivity. To this transcendental *Object* we can ascribe the whole extent and connection of our possible perceptions, and say that it is given in itself prior to all experience” (*KrV* A494-495/B522-523).

This is the closest that Kant comes to Scotus’ notion of the metaphysical realm. Kant’s point in talking of the transcendental *Object* is the recognition of our need to posit something external that grounds appearances. For Kant, the transcendental *Object* contains “the whole extent and connection of our possible perceptions” and pertains to our sensibility as a faculty of receptivity. However, we do not know the transcendental *Object*, because it is beyond the reach of our sensibility (and hence beyond conceptualization).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The transcendental *Object* should not be confused with the transcendental *Gegenstand* (even though both *Object* and *Gegenstand* are translated with the English term “object.” The transcendental *Gegenstand* is more closely related to the unity of apperception, as it “concerns nothing but that unity which must be encountered in a manifold of cognition [note, manifold

Kant did not abandon the label of “transcendental philosophy” because he was seeking what was most fundamental and general in our cognition. However, he moved the transcendental into the mind, since Hume had shown Kant that the mind was the only possible location for a legitimate transcendental ground. As Kant says, “I call all cognition transcendental that is occupied not so much with objects but rather with our mode of cognition of objects insofar as this is to be possible *a priori*” (*KrV* B25). This innovation gave rise to transcendental idealism. Kant’s basic concern for cognition was the same as that of Scotus, namely finding what is most basic and general in cognition. The problem, as Kant saw it, was the tradition of transcendental realism had seen the transcendental as being located in the things themselves, which is illegitimate because it presupposes that we have access to things in themselves. When Kant speaks of “yet another chapter in the transcendental philosophy of the ancients,” he mentions “the proposition, so famous among the scholastics: *quodlibet ens est unum, verum, bonum*” (*KrV* B113). His conclusion is not that it is incorrect; rather, he says that “it must have its ground in some rule of the understanding, which, as so often happens, has merely been falsely interpreted” (*KrV* B113). The core of the false interpretation is that the proposition was seen as applying to things themselves (thereby being transcendent, as transcendental realism) rather than as being a part of the *a priori* structure of the mind (thereby being immanent, as transcendental idealism).

So, when Kant says that there is no transcendental use of the categories, he means that the categories do not apply to a transcendental reality, namely things in themselves; instead, they apply only to the empirical world of appearances. Had Kant substituted “transcendent” for “transcendental” in making this point, the point would have been entirely lost.<sup>19</sup> To be clear, Kant *could* have substituted “transcendent” for “transcendental.” However, this would give the passage a different meaning. Kant’s point, at *KrV* A296/B352-353 is that the categories only apply to the empirical (things as they appear to us) rather than the transcendental (things in themselves). For Kant, transcendental realism (the application of the categories to things in themselves) is transcendent because it is “a use [of the categories] that reaches out beyond the boundaries of experience.” Kant’s transcendental philosophy is a philosophy of immanence, though Kant saw such a system as being possible only in the form of transcendental idealism.

#### 4. Deleuze

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of cognition, not intuition]... This relation, however, is nothing other than the necessary unity of consciousness, thus also of the synthesis of the manifold through a common function of the mind for combining it in one representation” (*KrV* A109). Kant replaced this passage in the 1787 edition of the *Critique* with the talk of the “I think” (*KrV* B131-132), which we looked at above.

<sup>19</sup> To be clear, Kant *could* have substituted “transcendent” for “transcendental.” However, this would give the passage a different meaning. Kant’s point, at *KrV* A296/B352-353 is that the categories only apply to the empirical (things as they appear to us) rather than the transcendental (things in themselves). For Kant, transcendental realism (the application of the categories to things in themselves) is transcendent because it is “a use [of the categories] that reaches out beyond the boundaries of experience.”

In my view, Deleuze is best seen as falling squarely in the tradition of transcendental philosophy. My reading of Deleuze is in line with his assessment of himself as a “pure metaphysician.”<sup>20</sup> As with Scotus and Kant, Deleuze is concerned with what is most basic and fundamental in our experience of the world. Deleuze’s concept of univocity is clearly an adaptation of that of Scotus: “There has only ever been one ontological proposition: Being is univocal. There has only ever been one ontology, that of Duns Scotus, which gave being a single voice” (DR 35).<sup>21</sup> Yet, despite the fact that Deleuze considers Kant to be a philosophical “enemy,”<sup>22</sup> Deleuze’s transcendental philosophy is only possible due to certain transformations that Kant made to the tradition. Deleuze has no theory of categories, so, the transcendental cannot be that which transcends the categories, as it is with Scotus. Kant’s relocating of the categories to the realm of the transcendental made Deleuze’s non-categorical transcendental philosophy possible. However, Deleuze is opposed to a philosophy of representation, so his transcendental philosophy cannot be a type of transcendental idealism, as is Kant’s. Because of these complexities, Deleuze, in my view, transformed transcendental philosophy (into transcendental empiricism) in a way that is perhaps as radical as the transformation made by Kant. For Deleuze, difference itself becomes a transcendental principle, because individual things are inherently different from one another. Individuals are different from one another, though they do not negate one another; representation negates, while difference itself just is. Being is univocal to all things, but difference is the essence of the ways in which things exist: “Being is said in a single and same sense of everything of which it is said, but that of which it is said differs: it is said of difference itself” (DR 36).

Deleuze is in basic agreement with Scotus concerning the limitation of applying concepts to reality, though Deleuze is more extreme. Deleuze sees this limitation as opening a space for the infinite within conception.

In so far as it serves as a determination, a predicate must remain fixed in the concept while becoming something else in the thing (animal becomes something other in man and in horse; humanity something other in Peter and in Paul). This is why the comprehension of the concept is infinite; having become other in the thing, the predicate is like the object of another predicate in the concept. But this is also why each determination remains general or defines a resemblance, to the extent that it remains fixed in the concept and applicable by right to an infinity of things. Here, the concept is thus constituted in such a fashion that, in its real use, its comprehension extends to infinity, but in its logical use, this comprehension is always liable to an artificial blockage. Every logical limitation of the

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<sup>20</sup> Arnaud VILLANI, *La guêpe et l'orchidée: Essai sur Gilles Deleuze* (Paris: Belin, 1999), p. 130.

<sup>21</sup> References to *Difference and Repetition* are given in text and are from Paul Patton (trans.) (London: Continuum, 2001). For a helpful discussion of Deleuze’s relation to Scotus concerning univocity, see Nathan WIDDER, “John Duns Scotus” in Graham JONES and Jon ROFFE (eds.), *Deleuze’s Philosophical Lineage* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

<sup>22</sup> Gilles DELEUZE, *Negotiations*, Martin Joughin (trans.) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 6.

comprehension of a concept endows it with an extension greater than 1, in principle infinite, and thus of a generality such that no existing individual *can* correspond to it *hic et nunc*... Thus, the principle of difference understood as difference in the concept does not oppose but, on the contrary, allows the greatest space possible for the apprehension of resemblances (DR 12).

Deleuze's point is that the common genus contains difference (for example, in species) within it, and that the common species contains difference (in individuals) within it. Difference is found within unity. The predicate in the concept "must remain fixed," and therefore have a univocal meaning. However, when the concept is applied to things, it becomes "something else." In this vein, Deleuze distinguishes between the "real use" and "logical use" of concepts. Deleuze's real/logical conceptual distinction is not the same as Kant's. Rather, Deleuze's point is much closer to Scotus' distinction between metaphysics and logic.<sup>23</sup> The concept's becoming something else in its real use is, on my view, Deleuze's version of Scotus' theory of metaphysical analogy. The logical use of a concept, such as "animal" must have the same reference in Peter as in Paul. However, Peter and Paul are different. So, even though the referent of the concept, namely the predicate "animality," is the same, the things being referred to are different. The real use of the concept extends to the differences in the things themselves, while the logical use can only extend to the predicate. The real use of the concept can apply to an infinity of things, as there can be an infinite number of individual things, though the logical use of the concept, speaking only of the predicate shared by the things, is artificially blocked by the common referent (the predicate being applied to the different things).

According to James Williams, "In terms of classical arguments from the history of philosophy, Deleuze provides transcendental deductions, that is, arguments that deduce the form of appearance by asking what the conditions have to be for something to be given or to appear as it is."<sup>24</sup> However, transcendental deductions are already working at the conceptual level of representation, concerning "the form of appearance." (Transcendental deductions pertain to the *quid juris* of existing concepts, whereas Deleuze is concerned with philosophy as the creation of concepts.) Deleuze is not giving transcendental deductions. Rather, Deleuze is using another method from the history of philosophy, the *resolutio*. Deleuze explains both the use and limitation of the concept in terms closely resembling Scotus' twofold use of *resolutio*:

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<sup>23</sup> As we have seen, Kant makes the distinction in order to distinguish between the subsumption of intuitions under categories (the real use) from the subsumption of one concept under another. This is a function of Kant's transcendental logic. As we will see, Deleuze sees this process as already happening on the conceptual level, thereby attempting to bypass the notion of difference in itself (positive difference) in the process of arriving at conceptual (negative) difference.

<sup>24</sup> James WILLIAMS, *Gilles Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: A Critical Introduction and Guide*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), p. 17. Transcendental deductions concern the *quid juris* of concepts, which is not Deleuze's concern in his discussion of the transcendental principle of difference, which happens at the pre-conceptual level. The closest Deleuze comes to laying out a transcendental deduction is in *The Logic of Sense*, Mark Lester with Charles Stivale, Constantin V. Boundas (ed.), (London: The Athlone Press, 1990), 115-117. However, it should be noted that this deduction concerns concepts and that Deleuze is clear that it misses the point of the true transcendental (116).

the question ‘What difference is there?’ may always be transformed into: ‘What resemblance is there?’ But above all, in classification, the determination of species implies and supposes a continual evaluation of resemblances. Undoubtedly, resemblance is not a partial identity, but that is only because the predicate in the concept is not, by virtue of its becoming other in the thing, a part of that thing (DR 12).

Remember that Scotus noted the “great difference between *being distinct* and *being that by which something is primarily distinguished*,” noting that “it will be so in the case of unity.” Deleuze turns distinction and unity into difference and resemblance. He notes that resemblance is not partial identity. To repeat, when a concept, such as human, is applied to Peter, the concept is referring to the same thing (humanity) as when it is applied to Paul. The concept has the same referent, the predicate, but the referent is only in the concept itself (in logical use) rather than in the thing to which the concept refers (in real use). The concept is limited (blocked) because the humanity in Paul and Peter may be the same, but this does not help in getting to the difference between Paul and Peter.<sup>25</sup> Real difference lies beneath what can be arrived at by way of concepts. One can distinguish Peter from Paul, but the transcendental principle lies in the process of differentiation that actually makes Peter different from Paul. For Deleuze, there is nothing, such as a Platonic Form, in which common things participate. Rather, there are only the things themselves, which resemble each other. Deleuze puts it nicely:

In effect, the essential in univocity is not that Being is said in a single and same sense, but that it is said, in a single and same sense, *of* all its individuating differences or intrinsic modalities. Being is the same for all these modalities, but these modalities are not the same. It is 'equal' for all, but they themselves are not equal. It is said of all in a single sense, but they themselves do not have the same sense. The essence of univocal being is to include individuating differences, while these differences do not have the same essence and do not change the essence of being.... Being is said in a single and same sense of everything of which it is said, but that of which it is said differs: it is said of difference itself (DR 36).

When we are speaking of the real use of concepts, we can only speak analogically, since the things are inherently different; they merely resemble each other. It is at this point that Deleuze’s criticism of representational philosophy takes affect.

For Deleuze, the “Univocity of being [...] is immediately related to difference” (DR 38) because being itself is univocal and is inherently filled with individuals. Deleuze sees this relationship as being transcendental:

“when we say that univocal being is related immediately and essentially to individuating factors, we

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<sup>25</sup> I am assuming here that the reference (the predicate in the concept) is the humanity of Peter and Paul, rather than Peter and Paul themselves. The same point could be made by saying that the concept has a different referent in each case, though the concept is only able to point out the similarity (humanity) in each case.



certainly do not mean by the latter individuals constituted in experience, but that which acts in them as a transcendental principle: as a plastic, anarchic and nomadic principle, contemporaneous with the process of individuation, no less capable of dissolving and destroying individuals than of constituting them temporarily; intrinsic modalities of being, passing from one 'individual' to another, circulating and communicating underneath matters and forms. The individuating is not the simple individual” (DR 38).

Deleuze again echoes Scotus in this passage. Deleuze sees the transcendental principle as the difference, existing in the univocity of being, that functions in the individuation of individual beings. Deleuze separates the “individuating factors” from the “individuals constituted in experience,” just as Scotus distinguishes between “being distinct” and “being that by which something is primarily distinguished.” The transcendental principle, for Deleuze, “acts in” the “individuals constituted in experience.” Individuation is transcendental, and “is not the simple individual,” as the individual itself is the result of the transcendental process. This transcendental principle of difference is “contemporaneous with the process of individuation,” in which the individual is formed.

Though Deleuze echoes Scotus, Deleuze sees the need for a deeper, more immanent, investigation. For Deleuze, “We must show not only how individuating difference differs in kind from specific difference [as in Scotus], but primarily and above all how individuation properly *precedes* matter and form, species and parts, and every other element of the constituted individual” (DR 38). Individuating difference is transcendental because it precedes every element of the constituted individual. In the maneuver, Deleuze is attempting to continue Kant’s project of making the transcendental immanent. Kant had made the categories transcendental, but for Deleuze, even concepts are empirical, and so cannot be transcendental. Rather, the transcendental pertains to the realm in which difference itself comes to be (in the process of individuation). Just as Kant had seen transcendental realism as being transcendent, Deleuze sees transcendental idealism as being transcendent. In a sense, Deleuze could be thought of as claiming that only Kant's transcendental *Object* is truly transcendental (provided that individuation is seen as happening at this, rather than the conceptual, level).

Deleuze locates the process of individuation on what he calls the plane of immanence.<sup>26</sup> According to Deleuze, Kant’s philosophy lacked the plane of immanence, and this caused transcendental idealism to remain on the conceptual level of transcendence.<sup>27</sup>

When the subject or the object falling outside the plane of immanence is taken as a universal subject or as any object *to which* immanence is attributed, the transcendental is entirely denatured, for it then simply redoubles the empirical (as with Kant), and immanence is distorted, for it then finds itself

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<sup>26</sup> For Deleuze, the plane of immanence is the univocity of being (as the Spinozist substance) expressing difference, via different modes of being, in its very essence; this is how difference itself is the transcendental principle of being. In this way, the transcendental (difference itself) is coextensive with being, which is a return to the Scholastic conception of the transcendental. However, a discussion of Spinoza (or Nietzsche and repetition) is beyond the scope of this paper.

<sup>27</sup> Deleuze’s criticism stands, no matter the interpretation of Kant’s transcendental *Object*, since the real unity Kant focuses on is conceptual, which Deleuze sees as being empirical, and thereby dependent upon the transcendental.

enclosed in the transcendent. Immanence is not related to Some Thing as a unity superior to all things or to a Subject as an act that brings about a synthesis of things: it is only when immanence is no longer immanence to anything other than itself that we can speak of a plane of immanence. No more than the transcendental field is defined by consciousness can the plane of immanence be defined by a subject or an object that is able to contain it.<sup>28</sup>

The dichotomy between subject and object is already working on the conceptual level. For Kant, the transcendental subject is the center of the human person and of our experience of the world. Difference, for Kant, only happens in the application of the categories to sense experience. In this process, “immanence is attributed” to the object, but this conceptual attribution does not get to the real difference at work in things (on the plane of immanence). Individuation, for Kant, is a process of conceptual determination; things in themselves are outside the scope of philosophical investigation. For Deleuze, this conceptual representation of things is transcendent, because it confuses the transcendental with the empirical. The transcendental field of immanence is the place where the transcendental principle of difference operates; difference is immanent to the unity of being, rather than to things that have already been conceptually determined in representation. Deleuze sees Kant’s transcendental philosophy as lacking difference in itself, in the plane of immanence; this is why Deleuze points to the need for the genesis of concepts in representational philosophy. Concepts have a genesis; they are created. Individual things, on the other hand, arise out of the plane of immanence; they are organic.

In place of Kant’s transcendental idealism, Deleuze puts forward a transcendental empiricism, which is, in my view, an attempt to complete Scotus’ project in light of Kant’s criticisms of transcendental realism. According to Deleuze,

Empiricism had always fought for the exteriority of relations. But in a certain way, its position on this remained obscured by the problem of the origin of knowledge or of ideas, according to which everything finds its origin in the sensible and in the operations of the mind upon the sensible.<sup>29</sup>

Deleuze favors empiricism because empiricism sees the relations of things as being external to the subject/object dichotomy; individuation takes place transcendentally in the things that are individuated on the plane of immanence. However, empiricism has focused on the origin of our knowledge of things, which concerns “the sensible and...the operations of the mind upon the sensible,” thereby reintroducing the subject/object dichotomy. The subject/object relationship is already one of the application of concepts to the empirical, so it cannot be seen as transcendental. This is what Deleuze refers to as Kant’s denaturing of the transcendental, making it transcendent. Deleuze puts forth an empiricism that he sees as preserving immanence: transcendental empiricism. He says, “transcendental

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<sup>28</sup> Gilles DELEUZE, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*, Anne Boyman (trans.) (New York: Zone Books, 2001), p. 26-27.

<sup>29</sup> G. DELEUZE, *Pure Immanence*, p. 37

empiricism is the only way to avoid tracing the transcendental from the outlines of the empirical” (DR 144). But how does Deleuze think transcendental empiricism achieves this, thereby overcoming Kant?

For Deleuze, the empirical is transcendent (to the plane of immanence, which is the real transcendental) because it has already been conceptually determined; the immanence of difference itself has been covered over by concepts. (In Scotistic terms, Deleuze is after the metaphysical rather than the merely logical; in Kantian terms, Deleuze is after the transcendental which must precede the metaphysical.) The key to understanding Deleuze’s point is his view of affirmation, which exists in itself apart from negation. He says, “In its essence, difference is the object of affirmation or affirmation itself. In its essence, affirmation is itself difference” (DR 52). Affirmation does not pertain to identity, because identity, for Deleuze, relates to conceptual representation. To identify something is to identify it as a type of thing. This application of concepts is like the Scotist application of secondary substances to the primary substance. For Deleuze, the transcendental is where individuation takes place (and the process by which it takes place); this is difference in itself within the plane of immanence and the unity of being. Identity comes after individuation has already occurred. Identity is negation rather than affirmation. Deleuze says, “The negative is an epiphenomenon. Negation, like the ripples in a pond, is the effect of an affirmation which is too strong or too different” (DR 54). To identify something as a type of thing is to, at the same time, say that it is not another type of thing. This identification is not affirming the thing itself; rather it is simply negating other things from the concept of this thing. To identify a cow is to distinguish it from a horse; however, this identification cannot get at the difference between two cows. Things are individuated in themselves; conceptual distinctions serve to negate other things, but they do not help us get to the essence of the original thing in question. “The negative is an epiphenomenon” because negation is not part of the organic process of individuation. Identity comes at the empirical level; the transcendental must be more fundamental: it must be entirely immanent to itself, preceding the conceptual.

Deleuze claims that Kant’s transcendental idealism was transcendent because the transcendental was concerned with the empirical rather than with difference in itself. As Deleuze says: “Representation fails to capture the affirmed world of difference. Representation has only a single centre, a unique and receding perspective, and in consequence a false depth” (DR 55). This false depth is the seeming transcendental, which in Kant, according to Deleuze, is actually empirical and thereby transcendent. The transcendental must concern what is most fundamental, which, for Deleuze, is difference in itself, occurring prior to representation. To be clear, the empirical has already been conceptually determined: the negative has already appeared in the determination from the positive individuation. Difference itself creates individuals (positively), and this must precede our representation of those elements, in which we

distinguish them from one another.<sup>30</sup> So, transcendental empiricism avoids tracing the transcendental from the outlines of the empirical (as Deleuze accuses Kant of doing) by placing the transcendental entirely beneath the empirical, even prior to the encounter of subject and object, which Deleuze also sees as empirical. For Deleuze, the proper transcendental method should, “go beyond experience, toward the conditions of experience (but these are not, in the Kantian manner, the conditions of all possible experience: They are the conditions of real experience).”<sup>31</sup>

## 5. One Voice Expressing Difference

The title of this paper refers to the meaning of univocity. There are vast differences between Scotus, Kant, and Deleuze. However, despite the differences, there is unity, at least of their common transcendental tradition. They shared at least one philosophical goal, even though each thought their predecessor(s) had failed to reach that goal. The goal was to find the truly transcendental, what is most fundamental and general in our experience of the world. Each of them tried to transform transcendental thought in order to make it more immanent.

Scotus introduced univocity in order to bridge the gap between the finite and infinite, and he introduced haecceity in order to bridge the gap between distinct (non-identical) individuals that cannot be distinguished in the conceptual realm. Univocity and haecceity work together to save the very use of human language and thought, both in reference to God and in reference to non-conceptual distinctions between things. His goal was to overcome the transcendent philosophy of Platonism that had dominated Scholastic thought. This transcendent thought allowed for only analogy in concepts, which reduces to equivocation. For Scotus, the transcendental refers to what is most general, transcending the categories and referring to both God and creatures. The transcendental is coextensive with being, even the being of God. Scotus' goal was to preserve not only theology but the very essence of human conceptualization, rescuing it from mere equivocation in the application of concepts.

Kant labeled the transcendental tradition before him as transcendental realism. He thought that this type of philosophy was transcendent, since it “reaches out beyond the boundaries of experience” (*KrV* A296/B352-353). For Kant, we only have access to things as appearances, since we are limited by sensibility (space and time). We simply do not have access to the realm of being; we do not know things as they are in themselves. True transcendental philosophy is transcendental idealism, since we do not have access to the world as it exists apart from our human perspective. The most fundamental and general elements, if they are to exist, must be located in the mind rather than in the objects we perceive.

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<sup>30</sup> Representation is negation because the application of a concept is to the exclusion of all opposing concepts. However, for Deleuze, difference itself is simply the organic affirmation of things that makes conceptualization possible: “Negation is an epiphenomenon.”

<sup>31</sup> Gilles DELEUZE, *Bergsonism*, Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (trans.) (New York: Zone Books, 1991), p. 23.

Kant's goal, in transforming transcendental thought into a type of idealism, was to preserve the very nature of the transcendental. Further, Kant thought that transcendental idealism was the only way to preserve empirical realism, and thereby to ground science (even the very nature of causality).<sup>32</sup>

Deleuze made a further transformation of transcendental philosophy, turning it into transcendental empiricism. For Deleuze, the conceptual level of representation cannot preserve authentic difference. Representation goes hand in hand with negation, which is the opposition between things in the conceptual realm. Since concepts must be of things, there must be something that underlies the concepts. The transcendental cannot even be in the mind, because the conceptual is already working on the empirical level. So, Deleuze views Kant's transcendental idealism as transcendent. If there is to be something that is truly transcendental, and thereby most fundamental and general, it must be located on the plane of immanence. There must be a level of univocity in which difference itself (the transcendental principle that serves to make individuation possible) functions. Deleuze's goal, in this context, is to point out the limitations of representational philosophy, which cannot reach the true transcendental, the level of difference in itself.

On my view, placing these thinkers in the context of their common tradition of transcendental philosophy provides insight into the depth and richness of their thought that readers are otherwise apt to overlook. Each thinker was attempting to critique the dominant thought of his context, which each saw as being transcendent. In place of this transcendent philosophy, each thinker was attempting to provide a philosophy of immanence that preserved what is most fundamental in human experience. Obviously, there are radical differences in the outworkings of these three philosophical systems. However, these differences are best seen in the common context of transcendental philosophy. To this extent, Scotus, Kant, and Deleuze are univocal in their expression of difference.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Kant also saw transcendental idealism as the only way to preserve morality (and religion): "Thus I had to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith..." (*KrV* Bxxx). However, this issue is beyond the purview of this paper.

<sup>33</sup> I would like to thank Steve Palmquist for reading and commenting on an earlier draft of this paper, and Guy Lown for many helpful discussions on Deleuze's critique of representation.