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Toward a Different Theory of Powers: Dispositional Realism with *Difference and Repetition*

by

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Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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<u>Abstract</u>

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There is, in analytic metaphysics, a debate over the nature of fundamental properties. Having taken the side of the dispositional realists in this debate, i.e. those who believe that there are intrinsically powerful properties at the heart of reality, one is required to adopt a particular ontology of such powers. Extant views in the literature have rooted their frameworks in templates derived from familiar figures: on the one hand, there are Platonic dispositional realists, and on the other there are Aristotelians. Both varieties, this thesis argues (chapters 1-4) suffer from the same explanatory gap: they cannot, upon serious consideration, account for how dispositions conceived these ways come to manifest. Yet manifest they must, if dispositional realism is to make any sense of the (after all quite dynamic) world.

Dispositional realism therefore stands to gain something by looking for an alternative in the metaphysics of a philosopher often associated with a critical reaction to traditional thinkers like the ones mentioned above. Gilles Deleuze is the perfect candidate for this role. In his 1968 *Difference and Repetition* (as is the task to show in chapter 5), Deleuze adduces all the necessary concepts to put together what in this thesis is called a 'realisation set-up': the necessary concepts to try to account for the becoming actual (realised, manifested) of dispositions (powers, dispositions, potencies, the virtual). I argue that not only does Deleuze have the necessary concepts to provide such a set-up, but it manages to forge explanatory links between them in ways I argued extant views cannot. Deleuze's metaphysics, that is, manages to indeed make sense (in any case *more sense* than the extant views do) of manifestation.

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Print name: SIGMUND BRUNO SCHILPZAND

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I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

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3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
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Introduction

Section 1: Why We Need a Different Theory of Powers

There is a debate in analytic metaphysics over the nature of properties. The two sides to the debate are 'categoricalism' and 'dispositional realism'. Dispositional realists think there are *essentially powerful properties* (going by various names: 'powers', 'dispositions', 'potencies'…). The categoricalists, instead, think any power-roles there might be, are only contingently bequeathed unto otherwise inert properties. I side with the dispositionalists, but my project is not to argue in their favour. Rather, I am concerned with the variety within dispositional realism, especially as regards the ontology of powers. There are various answers to the question what exactly the powers dispositional realists subscribe to *are*. My project concerns three such possible answers.

More precisely: it is, first, about two extant answers (*powers are relational structures that include respectively* transcendent *or* immanent *universals*), and problems therewith. Some of these will be specific to one extant variety of dispositional realism or the other, but the problem that motivates my entire project is common to both: *it is hard to understand what it means for such powers to become manifested, but manifest they must if dispositional realism is to make sense*. Hence my introduction of a third view: ultimately, my project is to construct an alternative position with a different ontology that *does* allow us to understand what manifestation amounts to. That I borrow the elements of this ontology from Gilles Deleuze's 1968 *Difference and Repetition*, and that it has recourse to a specific notion of 'difference', explains the title and subtitle of my work.

In other words, my project is:

- **To present (in chapter 5) an alternative, Deleuzean dispositional realism.**
- **To make plausible this is necessary because the extant views I introduce in chapters 1 and 3 are (as I show in chapters 2 and 4) problematic.**
- **To show (chapter 5 again) that the Deleuzean view developed here can solve and/or avoid these problems.**

One (there are several) backdrop to this, is thinking categoricalism has some absurd consequences. I shall say what these are, and more about what categoricalism is generally, shortly. First I will introduce the current *Introduction*'s structure.

It has three sections:

1. **The current section will, in more detail, introduce my project and a rationale for it. By its end, it will have given introductory expositions of the dispositional realism*s* we will be concerned with, and the opposition: categoricalism.**
2. **The second section is an overview of the six (for there is a sixth, as of yet unmentioned chapter!) chapters of this work and contains a reflection on why they are sequenced the way they are.**
3. **The final section reflects *not* on what I think I have been able to nail down argument-wise in the chapters to come, saving *such* reflections for the *Conclusion*. Instead I state what I think the right contextualization for my project is, given the backdrops one could present it against. It is unusual to do this, but my project *is* somewhat unusual, hence my insistence.**

Now let us get on with introductory and expository matters.

We will proceed as follows: first I introduce dispositional realism (systematically and historically), then the opposing side (idem). I then present some systematic details concerning the extant views we will develop critiques of, 'Platonic' and 'Aristotelian' dispositionalism, and their trouble in explaining what manifestation amounts to. This section will be rounded out by the inclusion of a note (again: systematic and historical) on the alternative to these extant varieties that we will be developing, focussing on why it is right that none other than that so-called (or worse) post-modernist from France, Gilles Deleuze, should present a dispositional-realist way forward.

Now, concerning dispositional realism in general (and the contemporary Anglophone context in particular): the philosophers on the dispositionalist side sometimes present themselves as an isolated phenomenon. In his *The Powers Metaphysic*, Neil E. Williams, for example, generates a list of works starting in 1975 (2019, p. 3n2). Alexander Bird (2007, p. 18n15) goes back

no further than 1985. But taking those dates (or even 'the 20ᵗʰ century') as a starting point represents an arbitrary limit. *This should be obvious* to the reader, who just learned (or already knew) that two of the main positions within dispositional realism in contemporary Anglophone metaphysics are the *Platonic* and *Aristotelian* positions (more on their systematics soon, as promised). But why bring this up?

In a nutshell: this arbitrary limiting has a consequence my project can be seen as remedying (another backdrop). Take Aristotle: when one thinks of Aristotle, one thinks of *potentiality and actuality*. 'Aristotelian dispositionalism' lifts these notions from their namesake's oeuvre. Yet, his *Metaphysics* is not included on Williams' or Bird's list. And, of course, Aristotle's primary objective was not (at least not in a self-aware manner) to do powers-ontology. Still, he develops something quite like it. *Moreover*, given that Aristotle has been *very influential*, one may suspect there exists a venerable current of would-be-dispositionalism to be tapped into, both prior to 1975 and beyond analytic philosophy. Few investigate these terrains[1], and as a consequence, we do not realize what interesting materials for dispositional-realist templates there are.

I think the extant Platonic and Aristotelian varieties are implausible (and not for lack of being spruced up with examples from contemporary physics!) and that one might look elsewhere in the history of philosophy for viable alternatives. But before we start in earnest on any of that, let me give a *characterization* of dispositional realism and the categoricalist opposition:

> **Dispositional realism,** as discussed in chapters 1-4, is the view that: properties have dispositional essences, which fix property-identities in terms of what they are potentials for[2]. Or, to introduce language we will see much of soon: the 'standard conception of dispositions' is that a disposition is "individuated by the pair of its stimulus and its manifestation: it is a disposition to M when S" (Vetter, 2015, p. 34). E.g. 'S=heat' and 'M=melting' essentially determine 'P=meltability'. There is a slight variation that drops the 'S' from the formulation of dispositional essence, but all positions in chapters 1-4 share that a

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[1] Luckily, the 2018 *Handbook of Potentiality* (eds. Engelhard & Quante) offers historical views. It leaves out, however, the area we will touch on in chapter 5: 20ᵗʰ century continental philosophy.

[2] Natural laws are, often, by dispositional realists, held to result from dispositions. They might say laws are 'built into', or 'flow' from, them, for example. On the whole, this is a topic I bracket, and restrict myself to investigating what it means for powers to manifest as such.

property P's identity is fixed by its relating to M, such that dispositions
are properties identified by their relation to their manifestation.
Moreover, in chapters 1-4, all these properties are mostly understood
as *universals*.

That both the 'standard conception' *and* the slight alternative take universals as input, does of
course not mean that being a dispositional realist necessitates realism about universals. My
position deviates from this, anyway. The above characterization then is a substantive one, but one
so common that it is a good starting point

In the framework chapter 5 develops, manifestations will be repeating qualities (e.g. green
here, green there) and hence will be somewhat *like* instantiating universals. I claim, however, they
are not exactly that. They are rather what Deleuze calls '*simulacra*'. These do repeat, but without
recourse to universals. Moreover, while the manifestations are then in some sense general, the
powers themselves are *not*. These are completely *singular*. The reader may worry at times that
the view worked out in chapter 5, in virtue of such deviations from the standard set by extant
views, does not belong in the dispositional realist family tree. I put quite some work into making
clear this is not the case.

Here, I may seize the opportunity to make things easy for myself by introducing a less
substantive, more general definition of dispositional realism that would accommodate the
Deleuzean view:

Dispositional realism is, at its core, the view that there are intrinsically
powerful properties. To be powerful, in this sense, is to be that which
gives rise to actuality through realisation (alternatively: manifestation,
actualisation).

Various thinkers cash this out in various ways: they might say powers are what the natural
sciences are interested in, or that manifestations can be thought of as futures to be actualised, or
that powers are what make actualities possible such that they are local pockets of modality, etc.
Now, let me get into, the position dispositional realism operates in opposition to, if only to have
something to harken back to when we need a reminder of what we are in the business of avoiding
falling into:

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> **Categoricalism**[3] is the view that: the nature of fundamental properties
> is captured by 'quidditism'. Categorical properties have primitive
> identities called *quiddities* ('thisnesses': like *haecceities*, but for
> properties). These are taken to be independent of the nomic or causal
> roles properties might have.

Alexander Bird (dispositional realist of the 'Platonic' variety, whose work we will explore in chapters 1 and 2) thus characterizes categoricalism as follows: it is the view that properties "do not, essentially […] confer any dispositional character or power" (2007, p. 67).

I do not want to take the categoricalist view because: were quidditism true, we should accept there could be a world such that some properties exist as they do in this one, but swap roles. The same properties could then make entirely different worlds, for it is not necessary that e.g. 'woodenness' confers 'floating in water'[4]. To elaborate: 'woodenness' need not confer the powers it does because the property could have been related to other properties differently. 'Woodenness' and 'floating' are distinct elements and only contingently related, and 'woodenness', remaining exactly what it is, might have rather been correlated with 'sinking' instead[5]. At the same time, granite might have gotten paired-off with 'buoyancy'. Bird thinks this is absurd; I agree.

Barbara Vetter (dispositional realist of the 'Aristotelian' variety, whose work we will explore in chapters 3 and 4), emphasises, rather, that the natural sciences are seemingly only interested in things qua what they can do, and that it hence is reasonable to say dispositions exist. Vetter (2015, p. 8) explains: "[w]hat physics tells us about […e.g.] negative charge is how that property enables and disposes its bearers to react and interact with things that have the same or other fundamental properties. Physicists have nothing to say about any […] quiddities" because, as we

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[3] With technical vocabulary I find it helpful to know why things are called as they are. In the current case Armstrong writes properties "are thought of by some philosophers as having a nature that is self-contained, distinct from the powers that they bestow" (1997, p. 69). The point of the name is to stress self-containment, the properties' being *directly* what they are, standing apart from powers they confer. Dispositions, by contrast, keep something "hidden" (Williams, 2019, p. 29): there is, after all, a manifestation that makes up their essence even if unmanifested.

[4] Here following Bird (2007, pp. 73-76) who in turn adapts, to this effect, an argument against *haecceities* by Chisholm (1967).

[5] '*How might that be?*', the reader asks. Answer: had the laws of nature been different. The idea is that laws determine extraneously what properties do. The laws could have been different, such that wooden stuff sinks rather than floats.

have already noted, they are "independent of such dispositional patterns". Out of this falls another reason against quiddities: they seem "unwarranted by the standards of physics" (ibid.).

Now, for a historicizing (even politicizing) note on 'categoricalism': Williams suggests that in the debate about properties, something grander is at stake than saying what properties *really* are. Categoricalism, he writes, is embedded in a framework that "dominates […] contemporary philosophy as a whole". This framework is called (Williams, 2019, p. 3) "neo-Humeanism", which holds that "properties are inert" (this being the 'categoricalism'), that "causation is illusory" and that "possibility is unbounded" (e.g. the possibility of floating granite). This talk about 'domination' makes it sound as if my project has a more serious import than working out a coherent powers-ontology. *The view we will work out is potentially party to a revolution*[6] *regarding the basic coordinates of metaphysics* (a third backdrop).

Let us now glance at the Platonic and the Aristotelian parties:

> **Platonic Dispositionalism** adds to the core of dispositional realism that the ontology of powers contains '*ante rem'*-universals. Simply put: this view is the conjunction of dispositional realism with a Platonic view of properties putting them outside space and time. They exist abstractly when unmanifested and are instantiated in concrete particulars when manifested.

> **Aristotelian Dispositionalism** can also be presented as a conjunction of the core of dispositionalism with a view about the whereabouts of universals. Aristotelians say there are only '*in re*'-universals, "'immanent' in space and time" (Tugby, 2013, p. 453) and especially (as the Latin suggests) *in things*. Particulars are a certain way, such that they instantiate these universals/properties. Aristotelians hold, roughly, that universals that "are not instantiated" in effect "do not exist" (Bird, 2007, p. 64). But to be *instantiated*, here, does not equal being *manifested*: potentials can be instantiated, though potentiality is (per definition) *un*manifested.

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[6] In the Kuhnian sense. Williams writes of the current situation in philosophy: "the paradigm needs shifting. And doing that takes nothing short of a revolution" (2019, p. 9).

Both lemmas mention manifestation, which makes up my main research question: '*how do dispositional realists suppose the manifestation of dispositions works?*'. I think positing this as a problem is fairly original. On the one hand, that is good. On the other, perhaps merely socio-psychological, hand, I worried about its legitimacy. Perhaps the answer (which I must have somehow missed) is simply too obvious for the question to even explicitly arise.

Whatever the case may be, my project is concerned with asking this question, and pointing out *where* and *that* extant positions beg it. In the various dispositionalist contexts we encounter (*Platonism, Aristotelianism, Deleuzeanism*) it will be formulated differently, and this shows it is a good question: we *can* ask it, and various frameworks that have this matter in common. There is an intelligible answer to be found in *one* of the frameworks here discussed: Deleuze's. What goes wrong for the others? Basically, although dispositions are of use in explaining what is genuinely possible and what is not (i.e. what manifestations there can be, depends on what particulars are capable of), the Platonists and Aristotelians make it genuinely impossible for themselves to give an account of manifestation. That is my claim (another backdrop), and I shall briefly sketch why I make it.

The Platonic position has one big benefit: the Platonist can always plug in items for the 'M' a 'P' is supposed to relate to, thus ensuring property-identity. That is: even if a disposition is unmanifested, the manifestation it points toward, on their view, still exists abstractly (but actually). It is thus always the case that a disposition is individuated: it is a power for whatever 'M' it leads to, and 'M' is automatically given because Platonists (in contrast to the Aristotelians who we will see run into trouble with this in chapter 4) have uninstantiated universals. What goes wrong for the Platonists is now having to plug '*ante rem*'-items into relations with concrete particulars. Historically (see chapters 2 and 3), this is a good part of the opposition to Platonism: is the gap between the abstract and the concrete not just impossible to bridge? I think so.

Are the Aristotelians better off? Their universals are immanent, which means not having to account for how abstract and concrete relate. But: that properties are in all cases *instantiated* does not clarify how a property instantiated qua potential becomes instantiated qua actuality, i.e. *manifested*. What extrapolations I could perform generated no answer, but rather conjured up a paradox. Roughly: Aristotelians might think a property is instantiated qua potential and then switches to actuality when called upon, but this seems to go against something we want to say, i.e. that the particular caught up in this shift undergoes property-change. E.g.: it is now on fire, whereas it was not. Instead, the thing turns out to be always on fire, mostly merely *potentially*. This is strange, does not explain what the switch consists in and makes impossible to explain what it must explain.

Why do I think it is important to do better? Because (like Williams, whom I think said it rather nicely: 2019, p.2) I think metaphysics is in the business of explaining "how the items [of one's ontology] are connected to one another, and [telling] the story of how the items [...] work together to produce the world around us". Let us say that for both Platonists and Aristotelians there *are* states of affairs in which properties (apologies for the ugly term) *manifestedly beproperty* the world. Whence this world? Powers have something to do with it, but the real answer comes from explicating what manifestation consists in. This backward-implies developing an ontology, or what I will call a 'realisation set-up', that allows for doing so (without transcendence, or the accidental denial of the reality of change).

Where does one get such a set-up? '*Hence started*' (could read an idealization of the chaos of my research) '*a peculiar project: looking for dispositional realism in figures that turn against philosophical tradition.*' Or, still following Williams: with my critiques of the Platonic and Aristotelian positions, I turned the direction of "speak[ing] against traditional realism in all forms" (2019, pp. 94-95), and hence it is only reasonable to try to base a dispositional realism on the metaphysics of a philosopher who did so too: Gilles Deleuze. The focus in my dealings with Deleuze lies with constructing a plausible idea of manifestation. The work of his I will be mostly interested in, 1968's *Difference and Repetition*, explicitly resists Plato, but in a way that also severs ties with Aristotle. It, more importantly, includes a 'realisation set-up' based in power-notions different from that of Aristotelian and Platonic dispositionalists.

There is some (backdrop five) exegetical work to be done to cast Deleuze as a dispositional realist. Here follow historical and systematic shortcuts. Historically, two of Deleuze's inspirations are Nietzsche (of 'will to *power*'-fame) and Spinoza (of 'things happen by necessity of the *powers*/virtues of God/Nature'-fame). Spinoza's interest in power is overtly metaphysical. Deleuze's use of Nietzsche one might call 'metaphysicizing'. Do not discount, moreover, Deleuze's references to Schelling[7], given the value (late-period) Schelling sees in powers (Beach, 1994 cf. Alderwick, 2021). Deleuze, in his own words a "pure metaphysician" (2007, p. 42), put a lot of effort into further developing such power-notions into a system of his own.

Indeed (systematically): the '*difference*' featuring in the title of Deleuze's book will also be called '*intensity*', which I say accounts for the 'oomph' in Deleuze's system (where by 'oomph' I mean a factor that makes properties powerful). Half of Deleuze's ontology is 'virtual' (which Deleuze insists means *real*), '*virtus*' being the term for potency in Spinoza. The virtual is moreover

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[7] In both *Difference and Repetition* and Deleuze's work on Spinoza (2005, p. 118) contemporary with it.

immanent, and different, in the relevant regards, from the general properties it manifests. Therefore, I will show, manifestation no longer structurally eludes us: it is a moment of depotentialization and generalization undergone by powerful and singular (i.e. *un*repeatable) immanent properties. Of course this might now sound disagreeable and/or difficult to the reader, but they must at least admit Deleuze sounds like a dispositionalist (or 'virtualist'?) with an interesting, genuinely non-traditional, realism.

Section 2: Overview of Chapters

It will take us a good while, however, to get to the Deleuzean view. In proposing something non-traditional it is often best to make clear that we seemingly *have to*. The promise of a reward at the end will also help. As mentioned, this work is divided into six chapters. These chapters realise, more or less, the following sequence of tasks:

Chapter 1 – *Introducing a dispositional realist position.*

Chapter 2 – *Problematizing this position, then panning it.*

Chapter 3 – *Introduction of a second, alternative dispositional realism.*

Chapter 4 – *Problematizing the second position, then panning it.*

Chapter 5 – *Introduction of a third and final position that avoids or solves the issues with the previous two.*

Chapter 6 – *Developing (slightly) the ontology underlying the third position, then looking at issues elsewhere in metaphysics through the lens of that ontology, showing that we have gained not only something qua dispositionalism, but on at least one other topic.*

We shall (whittled down to a completely bare structure) thus: *propose-reject-propose-reject-propose-benefit*, realizing the force of having to try something new, and a benefit of having done so. Now let us flesh out this skeleton, taking us from *over*simplification to a more adequate, yet

simple, structural overview, and from there to stating why the contents of chapters 1-4 go in that order.

Chapter 1 introduces *Platonic/'ante rem'*-dispositionalism by exploring Bird's *Nature's Metaphysics*. The chapter is expository in nature: there will be introductions of technical terms, and showing and telling of how the items they stand for (are supposed to) work together. By the chapter's end, the reader shall be thoroughly familiar with what we above called the 'standard conception of dispositions', and know what the Platonic dispositional realist takes dispositions to be: properties with manifestation-relations to contingently abstract universals. But chapter 1 also plants seeds for rejecting Platonism, while indicating leeway for alternatives.

The exposition is, for a good part, achieved by highlighting Bird's responses to extant challenges. I weigh whether these responses are sufficiently helpful, and conclude there are still issues to deal with. The formulation of those issues is my own. I arrive at them by taking extant questions and morphing them into what I think are sharper versions of themselves. This transformative method recurs throughout my project, and in chapter 1 generates the problems coming to fruition in chapter 2.

Moreover, chapter 1 takes a first stab at developing an empty dispositionalist *format*. Although it gives the reader important details of Platonic powers-ontology, it *also* explains that e.g. the transcendence attributed to unmanifested universals is not inherent to what Bird (and we will, too) calls '*monistic dispositional essentialism*' (MDE). This is important because in introducing alternatives, we want a criterion that keep us from accidentally slipping into different territory. As long as our alternatives are MDE-ish, we need not fear.

Chapter 2 shows Bird's framework cannot deal with the issues introduced earlier. The critique I develop aims at showing that what Platonists need to do, explaining how transcendent universals relate to the concrete particulars that are supposed to instantiate them, is impossible. That, as I have already said, is in any case my main matter of concern. But there is an important side-track to this chapter that I will say a little bit about. First, however, I shall say something about my tactic for dealing with the main gist.

I lean, mainly, into the old-school: I invoke Plato-scholars, keenly aware it is indeed hard to explain how the abstract and concrete relate. They make arguments to the effect that there is no way of succeeding. These critiques fairly straightforwardly apply to Bird's project, I say, because by putting transcendent universals in the 'M'-slot of dispositional essences, Bird's set-up introduces a gap between '*ante rem*'-universals and concrete particulars, which is enough for the critiques to apply.

Moreover (the aforementioned side-track): I will be driving at a non-traditional alternative to Platonic dispositional realism, by highlighting there is a way in which parts of Bird's system seem to collapse into something somewhat resembling the view developed in chapter 5. It seems somewhat implausible that the properties Bird accepts can exist *outside of time*, and it moreover seems the status of *actually existing* Bird attributes to them cannot be maintained. I label the result (with a Deleuzean term) '*overturned Platonism*', which says powers are neither '*ante rem*', actual, nor universals.

Chapter 3 is, again, expository in nature and presents the Aristotelian alternative. Again, it achieves exposition through raising and solving problems. My exposition starts with dealing with an extant critique, recapitulating the argument that led Bird, once at a crossroads between '*in re*'- and '*ante rem*'-dispositionalism, to opt for the latter. From there, this chapter, although it has a similar job-description, develops differently from chapter 1: it has to, for among Aristotelian positions there is quite clearly a *variety* of views. We thus start working out a taxonomy, some species of which are not that sensitive to Bird's critique.

Bird reacts against a *version* of Aristotelianism that runs into trouble with immanent universals because it takes such universals to occupy space in a certain way: they are supposed to be 'in' all their instantiations, meaning *in several places at the same time*, in a problematic way. Our taxonomy, however, will for example include a version of '*in re*'-dispositionalism that says the relevant properties are more like activities than like entities, such that the 'can only be in one place at the same time'-rule would seemingly not apply to them.

Such variation is powers-ontological: all the Aristotelians think there are immanent universals, but vary in how they spell this out. It becomes apparent, however, fairly early on, that in spite of escaping the Platonic version of the trouble with manifesting, Aristotelians run into a different version of what is structurally the same problem: here best understood as the question how an immanent (that is: already instantiated) potential comes to be instantiated as actual.

Chapter 4 proceeds to pan Aristotelianism. This takes more work than it took to pan '*ante rem*'-dispositionalism, because there is a variety of views, one of which does better in the face of the problems raised in this chapter than others. I will not go directly for the jugular by zooming in on the (in the previous chapter) adumbrated need for an account of manifestation in the Aristotelian realisation set-up, but introduce new worries first.

The main ones come from Matthew Tugby, himself a defender of Platonic dispositionalism, who claims '*in re*'-dispositionalism is incapable of making true two 'platitudes' dispositionalists take for granted: that "particulars can have dispositions even if [these] are never manifested" and

that "at least some dispositions are instantiated intrinsically to their possessors" (Tugby, 2013, p. 451). For example (concerning the former): the 'instantiation condition' some Aristotelianisms use implies unmanifested properties do not exist. It is impossible, then, to say there are property-universals that as-of-yet unmanifested properties would take for their 'M'. Tugby's worries eliminate all positions in my taxonomy *but one*.

To pan that version, I *do* ask how it would account for manifestation. Trying to show it cannot, I develop the puzzle mentioned earlier: the particular caught up in the manifestation should undergo property-change, but because these Aristotelians think their universals are already instantiated qua potential prior to manifestation, no property change happens during manifestation at all. Their account is then somewhat pointless, on top of not saying what the property's switching from potential to actual amounts to.

Chapter 5, finally, extracts a powers-ontology from the metaphysics of Gilles Deleuze, as per his *Difference and Repetition*[8]. I go on to show that Deleuze's view avoids or solves the issues with the two positions considered previously through the introduction of non-traditional, but therefore not completely alien, concepts. Therefore, this chapter will have to carry out four complementary tasks, which it will sometimes switch back and forth between:

- **Exposition of Deleuze's view (exegesis), focussing mainly on gaining an understanding of his concepts, but it will help our understanding to also highlight how he goes about developing them (transcendental reasoning of a certain stripe).**
- **Showing how aspects of the view solve or dodge problems with either one of the camps of dispositionalism from chapters 1-4, or both (our main issue concerning manifestation).**
- **Showing that these aspects of Deleuze's view, while non-traditional, fall within the MDE-format mentioned earlier.**

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[8] I am not the first to make a connection between Deleuze and dispositional realism (especially if we take the liberty of saying that any mention of 'powers' or 'capacities' in explaining Deleuze's metaphysics counts). Kleinherenbrink (*Against Continuity,* 2019) devotes much attention to the notion of *power* one finds across Deleuze's works. One finds mentions of capacities (and of Nancy Cartwright, a dispositionalist) in relation to Deleuze in Manuel DeLanda's 2002 *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy*, but no extensive attempt is made in either work to explain the detail of Deleuze's work in dispositionalist terms. One does find this in Bryant's 2014 *Onto-Cartography*. I will confine my commentary on the differences between our forgings of the connection to a (sizeable) footnote to 5.2.1.

- **Showing that the solutions, which I introduce somewhat piecemeal, make up a system consisting of balanced and well-argued-for items.**

The most directly powers-relevant notions will be '*the virtual*' (which consists of '*singularities*', which is Deleuzese for *powers*) and '*difference in itself*', a notion so non-traditional it introduces yet another backdrop to position my work against, more on which shortly.

Chapter 6 is, topic-wise, the odd one out: it deals not with powers-ontology, but rather concerns *the metaphysics of pregnancy*. On a meta-level, however, I think it would be fair to say there is some continuity, for chapter 6 continues something we were already doing: explaining, as we said with Williams (2019, p. 2), how the items of an ontology fit together, and how they produce the world around us.

There is in the metaphysics of pregnancy a debate about counting: one might wonder whether a pregnant organism is one being or several, *or* deny that counting makes sense regarding pregnant entities at all. Kingma (in her '*Were You A Part of Your Mother?*', 2019) steers at a countable answer though leaving open whether to ultimately count *one* item (pregnant organism with foetus(es) for part(s)) or *several* (pregnant organism; foetus(es)). Process ontologists (Dupré, Sidzinska, Meincke) meanwhile claim that, since (pregnant) organisms are processes, one *should not* even try to count them. Both camps, moreover, adduce bio- and psycho- or phenomenlogical (I mean: pregnant peoples' self-reports) support for their views.

Does the world then perhaps include a bit of both positions? In this chapter I proceed as if the answer is '*yes*' and show that Deleuze's view fits (or: can be said to produce) a world in which this is so: by the previous chapter's end, we will be familiar with a dynamic metaphysics with which, extrapolating from what we have learned about 'singularity' in that chapter, does not come uncountability. Deleuzean ontology, then, allows one to push for the 'countable' position (more specifically: one on which a pregnant organism is made up of several beings) while answering concerns about Kingma's view's lack of dynamicity and focus on things rather than processes from the process-side.

Now that the reader has a good idea of what we will be up to for the foreseeable future, let me address something that might have crossed their mind concerning the first four chapters: if chapter 2 shows the Platonic view might collapse into something resembling the view worked out in chapter 5, why not just take that shortcut? Why explore Aristotelian dispositionalism *at all*? My answer is twofold: taking shortcuts is (1) not very *thorough*. The suggestion that Platonic dispositionalism collapses into something interesting does not prove that whatever it collapses into makes sense, and there is no precedent for it *yet*. '*In re*'-dispositionalism therefore features here, mainly, as a way of showing I have done due my diligence, and that I have not introduced

Deleuzean innovations merely for the sake of it. There *is*, moreover a small army of Aristotelians out there that (2) seemingly has something going for it (the immanence of potencies) in the quest for an account of manifestation.

Section 3: Scope of the Project

Now that the reader knows the structure, and has an idea of the contents, of my project, we can dwell on a somewhat paradoxical question: we know what my project is, but do we *know its limits, its size*? I fear the reader may think I have tried to do too many things at once, or might feel somewhat torn between placing my work on either side of a scale. After all, the suggested backdrops to position my work against ranged from the minutiae of a debate to revolutionizing our field. I will now proceed to quickly run through the mentioned backdrops to show what of them I (had to) bracket, and what I embrace. That is: to make clearer what the scope of my project is.

First backdrop: *categoricalism's absurdity*. I do not claim to show this, but rather, with caveats, take it for granted. It seems many people do not, if that point about 'neo-Humean domination' raised earlier is to be believed, so that in itself might bear saying. I have sketched, in the first section of the introduction, why *I* think the view is too strange and, apart from a minor repetition in chapter 4, shall leave it at that. I do not think I can make a claim to having shown that dispositional realism is definitely the better of the two camps. If categoricalism and dispositionalism relate in the scientific-revolutionary (Kuhnian) way suggested by Williams above, this *cannot* be done. Because different paradigms are incommensurable, I refrain from making claims to superiority. I will just show *my* view is internally consistent.

Second backdrop: *exploring the history of philosophy*. This backdrop I proudly embrace, although examining a chapter in the history of philosophy is not what my project is after. There *is* work on historical dispositionalisms (see the *Handbook of Potentiality*, eds. Engelhard & Quante), but it leaves out Deleuze, and there is mention of Deleuze in combination with dispositional realism (see Bryant's *Onto-Cartography*) but I disagree with Bryant's reading of the connection. What exegesis I have done was merely a prerequisite for being able to mine *Difference and Repetition* for valuable insights, but may have accidentally contributed modestly in this regard (if my exegesis of Deleuze, spurred on by the hunches about Deleuze's project and allegiances as introduced in Section 1 above, makes any sense).

Third backdrop: *being party to a revolution in metaphysics*. If the balances were to shift, my work will have had nothing to do with it. It does not, nor did it aim to, produce arguments against

categoricalism or the neo-Humeanism it is part of. It, moreover, threatens to betray *this* revolution and indicates the possibility of another (sixth backdrop). The *threat* consists in two factors: (1) possibly accepting the panning of the Greeks but also rejecting Deleuze for some crucial but unacceptable innovation *and* the fact that (2) Deleuze can also be seen (see backdrop five) to entertain some non-dispositionalist ideas, perhaps putting Deleuze himself on a (possibly uncomfortable) middle ground between dispositional realism and neo-Humeanism[9]. I *do* think this can be resolved by saying that while a 'true' Deleuzean would perhaps be after synthesis, there is now such a thing as a powers-Deleuzean, happy to be a hardliner in the relevant sense.

Fourth backdrop: *against Platonic and Aristotelian dispositionalism*. I fully endorse this result. The question concerning manifestation is perfectly poseable and answerable but Platonists and Aristotelians, revolutionary vanguard or not, make it impossible for themselves to give an account. I will add here, and I repeat it in the chapters, that their fault is not merely *substantial*, but methodological too: Deleuze works from the premise that the condition for actuality must be thoroughly different from actuality itself. The other realisms trace their conditions (unmanifested universals) from the given (manifested universals), with only the epithets 'abstract' or 'potential' to differentiate them from the manifestations they need to explain. They thereby ruin their chances: *how can concrete and abstract relate? How is there change without property-change?*

Fifth backdrop: *Deleuze scholarship*. What I achieve is, in terms of Deleuze scholarship, little. It was not my intention to do the work of a Deleuze scholar. Regardless, I might have generated some interesting, or maybe even adequate, assessments of his work by considering it from the standpoint of someone interested in the Deleuzean framework for opportunistic reasons: developing a dispositionalist view that can deal with the question concerning manifestation. Exegesis can, however, go on. There are sources internal to Deleuze's work to discredit or complicate what I have made of it. I mention here: Deleuze's talk (in various works) of possible worlds, which (especially in Vetter's project) dispositions ought to supplant, and his mention of the world being "a Harlequin world of […] fragments" (2004, p 163), sounding indeed not unlike Lewis' famous image of the neo-Humean 'mosaic'.

Sixth backdrop: *difference.* In addressing the third backdrop, I suggested there is *another revolution* my project is a party to. This I proudly endorse. On top of contributing to my favoured party (broadly construed) in a debate about properties (embedded in the larger context of

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[9] If we follow Williams (2019, p. 199) in thinking the "neo-Humean and the powers theorist offer competing and incompatible accounts" and parts of Deleuze's thinking would fit the description 'neo-Humean'.

supposed neo-Humean domination), my project, to do so, has to cross another divide: the analytic/continental-split traversing our discipline. Adrian Moore (2012, p. 554) diagnoses this divergence in terms of (respectively) taking *difference* or *identity* as the basic in- and output of one's thoughts.

Understanding difference as '*oomph*' makes our position revolutionary *vis a vis* the 'oomphless' neo-Humeans, but Deleuze's alternative to the identity of manifested and unmanifested properties (though existing in different modes: concrete/abstract or actual/potential) is a necessary revolution within the revolution. Here, virtual and actual are two different sides of reality, containing different items (*singularities*; *simulacra*), connected through some sort of production. The latter's coming forth from the former does not negate the former, nor does it make the former become the latter or put the former in the latter's place. Such a relation is neither opposition, nor identity: it rather *is* difference.

Now the reader knows what my project *is*: given that categoricalism is absurd, but two main frameworks of the opposing side, Platonic and Aristotelian dispositional realism, are quite faulty, someone needs to come up with an alternative. It was reasonable to look for that alternative among non-traditional thinkers interested in *powers*, and the one I picked to derive a template from is Gilles Deleuze. It was likely that he would be a good candidate. Not only does he have an alternative powers-ontology, his (what one might perhaps call 'meta-philosophical') privileging of difference guarantees we will not fall into the patterns of thought that made an explanation of manifestation impossible to give for the Platonists and Aristotelians. That is my story, and I am sticking to it.

Chapter 1   Introducing *'Ante Rem'*-Dispositionalism

1.0   Chapter Outline

In three parts, this chapter will…

1) **Provide (in 1.1: The Basics of Bird's Monistic Dispositional Essentialism) exposition of the basics of Alexander Bird's version of dispositional realism.** His position is representative of 'Platonic' or '*ante rem*' (as opposed to 'Aristotelian'/'*in re*') dispositionalism. In how Bird spells out the essences of 'potencies'[10], his view is representative of the 'standard conception' (Vetter, 2015, p. 34) of dispositional essences: it links properties to pairs of manifestation- and stimulus-conditions (henceforth: 'M' respectively 'S') that *also* are potencies.

We can call Bird's framework a Platonic *'monistic dispositional essentialism'* (MDE) because it adds an '*ante rem*'-view of dispositions to a framework that can be called *dispositional monism* (DM) for thinking all fundamental natural properties "are all potencies" (Bird, 2007, p.3), and *dispositional essentialism* (DE) for thinking fundamental natural properties "essentially relate" (ibid.), as Bird puts it, to other properties in a dispositional way (op. cit., p. 64), a thought first and foremost cashed out by Bird by generating natural laws from such properties. My presentation of Bird's MDE, however, is geared towards being fruitful for the sections below and the next chapter, and this means focussing less on the idea that natural laws spring from relationally structured potencies (i.e. properties characterized through 'S' and 'M'), and more on the ways in which the relationality introduced can be considered problematic (e.g. the unfitness of relata therein, or troubling regresses).

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[10] Bird calls powerful properties '*potencies*', their essences are *dispositional*. These are dispositional because they include the *potentials* (their manifestation-condition) the properties are *for*. We would now describe Bird as a *dispositional realist*, a realist about dispositions, by which we mean what Bird calls 'potencies' here. In this chapter I will conform to Bird's usage, will start using terms like 'disposition', 'potency', 'potential' and 'power' interchangeably later.

We will, moreover:

2) **Survey and reconfigure (in 1.2: A Catalogue of Worries) objections to dispositionalism addressed by Bird in in *Nature's Metaphysics*.**

Focus lies with *three* main issues:

First, there is the objection ('too little actuality': TLA) that "in resting the essence of a potency on what would happen [as is the case when dispositions are identified with stimulus- and manifestation conditions], there is insufficient grounding in what is actual" (Bird, 2007, p. 6).

Second, there is the issue ('too much potentiality': TMP) that the definition of potencies relies on potentiality in a problematic way. It might be the case that "the possession of a property involv[es] something that doesn't in fact happen" (ibid.) as is the case if entities can have dispositions that never manifest and therefore never exist.

Third, there is the 'regress objection' (RO) that the essences of properties involve an infinite regress of properties because they are relationally defined[11]. TLA and TMP, I will show, come apart into various different issues, hence I arrive at a reconfigured picture of the problems Bird faces. I will keep track of the original and reformulated problems in a table (see section 1.2.4[12]). I conclude that, on review of my set of reformulated problems, there really is one *big* problem for Bird, which concerns the relation of unmanifested potentials, understood as abstract items, to the concrete world.

3) **Discuss (in 1.3: Bird's Solutions) Bird's solutions to the abovementioned problems and state clearly (by, in modified form, reiterating the abovementioned table) which objections are still standing if we accept said solutions.**

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[11] There is a fourth: "involving properties and possibilities external to themselves is importantly like intentionality" (Bird, 2007, p. 6). We will deal with this briefly in 1.2.1 & 1.3.2.

[12] I will mostly refer to these problems with abbreviations, the mentioned table will be a useful reference tool should the reader get lost.

On top of taking stock of his proposed solutions, this section clarifies what issues Bird's system faces that he does *not* address or addresses unsatisfactorily. We will see that though Bird manages to answer many (initial and reformulated) questions, his answers raise questions of their own, with which we then continue in chapter 2.

1.1 The Basics of Bird's Monistic Dispositional Essentialism

In this section, I provide an overview of Bird's MDE with particular focus on the thought that dispositions are essentially relational. Specifically: the "essential nature of a [disposition being] given by its relations with other properties" (Bird, 2007, p.2). This will bring us to say:

- ***What a potency is supposed to be in general and what it consists of on a Platonic view,***
- ***How dispositional essences might be given a determinate identity even though relationally defined, and ultimately…***
- ***…what elements (e.g. background commitments) of Bird's view are really independent of MDE generally, i.e.* sans *allegiance to Platonism.***

A potency is a property of a certain stripe: potencies have 'dispositional essences'[13]. What, then, is a 'dispositional essence'? Consider that: "potencies just are their dispositional powers" (Bird, 2007, p. 46), are "properties [that] are what they do" (op. cit., p. 3), are properties the "nature of [which is] no more than its being a property whose essence is to be disposed to bring about a certain [M] in response to a certain [S]" (op. cit., p. 118), and are properties of which "laws [of nature] are reflections" (op. cit., p. 11) such that potencies have natural laws "built into [them]" (op. cit., p. vii). This all means as much as potencies, on the standard conception, essentially relate to their manifestations (M) and stimuli (S).

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[13] They are, by the way, not always easily recognizable: some may seem at first glance to be non-dispositional. Having, for example, a shape (e.g. triangularity: Bird, 2007, chapter 7) does not really sound powerful in the way 'flammability' does. But objects can do things in virtue of being triangular. Generalizing: shape is powerful.

A potency is a dispositional property, with there being a determinate M and S for every potency, such that potencies are identified by them and, on Bird's view, the laws of nature are reflections of these relationally structured essences. For example: flammability would be the potency to 'M' *burning* (upon flammability, instantiated by some object, being S'ed), and there would be a necessary natural connection (in-built law) between the burning and the sparks: the essence of flammability. Bird moreover specifies that it is especially "sparse, fundamental properties [that] have dispositional essences" (2007, p. 45). 'Sparse' here means 'natural' (op. cit., p. 5): DM is about the properties that could feature in true natural laws (op. cit., p. 20), and such properties are what DM is *monistic* about.

The difference between 'sparse' and (by contrast) 'abundant', 'unnatural' properties is ontological: *only* natural properties are powers. Potencies are properties that on Bird's view: "participate in (or generate) the laws of nature" (op. cit., p. 13). The above flammability-example is thus merely a 'toy example' (while fires do happen in nature, they do not seem especially fundamental, except perhaps to the odd Heraklitean still out there), but one I will continue to use: focussing, as we will mainly be doing, on the *form* of potencies, which just is 'power (to M when S)', 'flammability' (burning, sparking) will do as well as anything.

More importantly going forward, as already stated: potencies are taken to be universals such that it is the *same*[14] property that, in all the instances of a law, causes particular Ms (because it *is* the power-to-M). The '*ante rem*'-view shares this with its Aristotelian cousin. But what is a universal in the Platonic dispositionalist context? Here I will simply cite Bird and delay further, expository or critical, comment until 1.3 and chapter 2 respectively: universals here are "entities [existing] outside space and time" (Bird, 2007, p. 12). They exist without (before; *ante*) being instantiated in objects (*rem*), in a "contingently abstract" (op. cit., p. 113) state. There are alternatives to such universals: '*in re*'-universals. As we will see in chapter 3 Bird thinks these are more troublesome than the Platonic variety.

The following is an important part of the 'standard conception of dispositions': a potency's being "individuated by [its M&S-pair]: [its being] a disposition to M when S" (Vetter, 2015, p. 34). In order to understand how dispositional essences are individuated more exactly, we can simply note that the foregoing is indeed Bird's view and find individuation at work there. Bird proposes the "identity" of potencies is "fixed by their essential powers" (2007, p. 78). DM means that all

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[14] In Armstrong's idiom: these properties *repeat*. Universals are the world's repeatable features (1983, p. 76). In chapter 5 we will see a framework in which there is indeed repetition of actual qualities, but without dispositional universals.

fundamental properties are identically formed out of relations between S, M and the potency, and this relational structure is then filled out for each universal. I.e.: this potency is *this one* because it does *this* M when S'ed. Individuation thus establishes, as I see it, two things: what sets potencies apart from one another (their identity in terms of being *this* one)[15] and that they have, because they just are a certain relational structure, as it were, boundaries: a finite determinateness, even if relational.

Bird writes: "[t]he essential nature of a property is given by its relations with other properties. It wouldn't be that property unless it engaged in those relations" (Bird, 2007, p. 2). This clearly concerns the identity of a property (being the one it *is*). But in what way is a property given by its relation to *other* properties? For we seemed to be saying that, for being determinate or bounded, P *is* to M-when-S. But of course, to return to our example, 'flammable' and e.g. 'burning' are not the same property. However, 'flammable' is what it is because of its relation to 'burning', hence Bird tells us: "[p]otencies are characterized in terms of other properties (their [S] and [M])" and introduces a difficulty (originating in DM) "if potencies are the only properties then these other properties are also potencies and must themselves be characterized in terms of yet further properties" (op. cit., p. 7). The finite determinateness just mentioned above, therefore, will come under attack, the worry being that the proposed relationality ushers in an infinite regress. This puts property-identity at stake, as we will see in 1.2.

Perhaps we should say the relation between the potency and the 'other' properties is *internal*, meaning, as Armstrong (1997, p. 12) has it, a relation such that "it is impossible that the terms should exist and the relation not exist, where the joint existence of the terms is possible", which is well enough in the matters of relationality and identity we are discussing in a Platonic context: there would then automatically be nice, straightforward clusters that form (transcendently existing) dispositional essences. Any *particular* potency is that *specific* one because of its M&S-pair. In turn, each M&S-pair furnishes a property with its dispositional essence (if S, then M), in virtue of which it is a *potency*.

Summarizing, extrapolating and looking ahead:

> **MDE says fundamental, natural properties are potencies. Their**
> **nature, which is what we are really interested in, is specified in**

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[15] Williams, however, conceives of dispositions understood this way, as having no *character* even though they might all have a specific place in a relational network (Williams, 2019, pp. 98-100).

relational and Platonic terms. I see these as respectively form and content: dispositions have a relational form, and the relata therein are '*ante rem*'-universals. Consequently one can construct, provided different 'content', non-Platonic MDEs.

Potencies, again, can be understood as having natural laws built into them (Bird, 2007, p. vii). This would be so in the sense that a network of (instantiations of) universals scattered across the cosmos neatly explains why the patterns of behaviour displayed throughout that cosmos show conformity (things are law-abiding because of these properties existing). The thesis that all properties are potencies then generates an anti-Humean picture of natural laws, on which there *are* necessary (especially causal) connections between properties, which the neo-Humean denies. The 'standard' dispositionalist view is that potencies necessarily have an (internal) relation to an S and an M, also thought of as (other) properties. Thus is constituted the 'standard' form of potencies: "to M when S" (Vetter, 2015, p. 34). But: there is leeway for thinking MDE does not necessarily involve universals as Bird conceives of them (or indeed at all, as we shall see from the conclusion of chapter 4 onward).

1.1.1   MDE's Bare Bones (Developing an Empty Dispositionalist Format)

Above, I did my best to differentiate between the bare bones of MDE, and other commitments of Bird's that motivate the specifics of his view, or come along with it which, in principle, could be stripped from MDE without it collapsing into something else. Much of my project is indeed devoted to looking for dispositionalism outside of the Platonic coordinates Bird set himself to work within. We now move on to the stripping[16].

Consider again how Bird construes the form of a potency such that what it means to be a potency means to be of the relational form 'to-M-when-S'ed'. Bird also holds to two theses that, strictly speaking, go beyond this:

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[16] It is important to point out the flexibility (i.e. its possible compatibility with universals differently conceived, or replaced by something else) of MDE, because it determines whether a view that differs from what Bird says might be considered an alternative rather than changing the topic, thus determining whether the views advanced in chapters 3 and 4, and *especially* chapter 5 are valid moves within dispositional realism.

1) **For P, M and S, Bird (2012, p. 40) takes "a platonic view of properties as universals".**

2) **Natural laws reflect properties thus construed.**

For Bird, it is "the existence of properties" as universals that "entails the truth of at least some nomic facts concerning them" (2012, p. 36): the laws of nature (universal in scope) are generated by there being potencies (that are themselves universals). This points to an effective way of differentiating between MDE and whatever views contingently motivate it:

- **If Bird's demand for such properties is motivated by his view of laws[17]...**

- **...and dispositionalists need not have this view of laws[18]...**

- **...MDE does not necessarily involve generating straightforward support for such laws**

- **So Platonism (or any framework concerned with universals at the heart of reality) need not be involved in MDE, i.e. it would not be 'changing the topic' to try to root dispositional realism in a different metaphysics altogether (e.g. Deleuze's as we will go on to do in chapter 5).**

Bird, of course, grants that there are alternatives to Platonism. We will in chapter 3 see Bird's arguments against the '*in re*'-alternative he at some point considered.

Note that I did not just say 'other options *qua universals* are available', but something slightly more radical. If one reaches for dispositions qua universals because one is concerned with supporting natural laws and thinks universals are the easiest way to get there, one is engaged in a slightly different project than I am. I am concerned with finding the least problematic metaphysics

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[17] Which it is: "[t]here was something wrong with [other views of laws], in the divorce [they operate with] between what properties are and what properties do. The behaviour, or rather the tendency towards certain patterns of behaviour should be built into the properties" (Bird, 2007, p. vii).

[18] Mumford, for example, developed a metaphysics of dispositions "which he thinks obviates the need for laws" (Bird, 2007, p. vii – reference is to Mumford's 1998 *Dispositions*).

of powers *from the point of view of the problem concerning manifestation as introduced in the Introduction,* not qua support for natural laws.

Staunch opposition to '*in re*'-universals (again: chapter 3, amplified by worries that will come to the fore in chapter 4) combined with a strong motivation for wanting universals in his system lands Bird in the position of accepting 'contingently abstract' properties, i.e. the actual existence of unmanifested properties (the Ms involved in potency-essences, prior to manifesting) which "are contingently abstract [but] could be realized and so could be concrete" (Bird, 2007, p. 113). It is in itself not strange that Bird's background-commitment to the necessity of laws is determining his picture of how what there is qua manifested, but I find the notion of 'realization' (alternatively: manifestation, actualisation) he would have to build with his Platonic resources implausible. Others have found dispositionalism *in general* quite implausible, to which Bird's Platonism is already a considered response. We shall get into those critiques below, so we may understand Bird's system in more detail before I will say what I find implausible about it.

1.2   A Catalogue of Worries

Here we will survey and reconfigure three objections to Bird's MDE. There will be many acronyms involved. I am aware this is annoying. Should one lose track of what the acronyms stand for, there is a table listing and explaining all of them in 1.2.4 below.

We begin by analysing, in the following order, the three following problems:

- **TMP ('too much potentiality'): Bird's definition of a property relies on potentiality in a problematic way. That is: "the possession of a property [involves] something that doesn't in fact happen" (Bird, 2007, p. 6).**

- **RO ('regress objection'): dispositional essences, being relational the way they are, risk an infinite regress of properties.**

- **TLA ('too little actuality'): "in resting the essence of a potency on what would happen [as is the case when dispositions are identified with a stimulus- and manifestation condition], there is insufficient grounding in what is actual" (ibid.).**

'Three' is an initial count, but I will pave the way for a recount later: the above problem can be partially conflated (TLA is, in a way, a version of RO: Bird, 2007, p. 110), but TLA also divides into parts, and TMP comes apart into two different issues: one regarding the nature, or the fundamentality, of the relation between P & M although we will pay little attention to this, and one more pertinent issue regarding the ontological status, i.e. existence and hence its suitability as a *relatum* in a dispositional essence-relation, of M. Moreover, TLA and TMP really are two sides of the same coin. I hence arrive at a reconfigured picture of Bird's problems. Since RO can be divided into separate problems that Bird conflates (issues about circularity *and* regress), and comes in four versions (Bird, 2007, p. 132), one can count up to 8 problems here: 1×circularity, 3×regress, 2×TLA and 2×TMP.

One can also go as low as 1: if TLA and TMP are closely related and TLA really is a version of RO, the big problem seems to be RO. Bird, in any case, devotes an entire chapter to it. I distil rather a different big problem, having more to do with metaphysical concerns about non-existence and possibility that TLA and TMP jointly point to, to which the other problems are subordinate. This (I suppose the arithmetic above might *look* utterly pointless) really does matter for how we can critically approach dispositional realism: if we manage to bring the multiplicity of problems back to this root, and construct an MDE rooted in something else, we have a good contender for an allowable alternative view. I will keep track of the original problems and my reformulations of them, including the supposed root of all the trouble in the aforementioned table.

1.2.1   From 'Too Much Potentiality' (TMP) to the 'Relata-Problem' (RP)

TMP, which, to use an alternative formulation, says the "the (extra) being [i.e. potentiality] of potencies [might be] illegitimate" (Bird, 2007, p. 104)[19]. TMP has two respects:

> 1) **"The first respect is […] the [so-called] intentionality of potencies" (ibid.).**

Meaning: the way in which a potency (P) and what it is for (M) are related.

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[19] 'Extra' for falling outside of what we would certainly say exists: the *actual*.

The relation of P to M might be understood as a 'pointing to', as intentional[20]. If potencies are intentional in this way, MDE faces the objection that, if one thinks that intentionality is not fundamental and can "be reduced or explained away" (Bird, 2007, p. 99), then the same is true for dispositionality. This is an issue with the kind (is it fundamental or not?) of relation between properties and the manifestations defining them. Since potencies are taken to be fundamental by Bird, it would be a problem for him if the criticism above meant the relations they consist of cannot be fundamental at all.

2) **"The second respect is the non-existence of […] unmanifested [M]" (Bird, 2007, p. 104).**

This is an issue with the relata of the P&M-relation that is part of the essence of potencies, the complete formulation of which on the standard conception also ties in an 'S'. As with consciousness, the 'pointed to' "state of affairs [might] be may be entirely non-actual" (Bird, 2007, p. 99): as our dreams might never come true, so M might never occur.

Again: a property is essentially identified with its M&S-pair, but we (obviously) would not accept that matches are less flammable because the right occasion (a stressful day, a cigarette…) for lighting it has not presented itself. Flammability yet essentially involves (potential) burning, and this, one could think, creates uneasiness along lines prompting one to ask '*how can some property be in part something that does not even exist (presupposing we are right to restrict existence to the actual)?*'. More succinctly: one worries that "potencies have too much potentiality to be real" (Bird, 2007, p. 6).

With these words, however, one is primed to inquire into the issue as being one of *proportion*. Is 'how much is *too much* potentiality?' a good question? What would be a good ratio? 40% potentiality, 60% actuality? 26.3%/73.7%? The issue, it seems to me, is rather, to put it very simplistically, that *an unmanifested fire is part of what it is to be flammable*, no matter how 'much' of the property is this 'fire'. The predicament is not one of '*how much*', but that Bird's is "a

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[20] In the sense that consciousness is said to be 'intentional', meaning: it is consciousness *of something*, pointing toward a possibly non-actual item, as in an act of imagining. We will see that most positions considered in this project thus take measures to ensure that whatever P relates to *exists*. The Deleuzean position, meanwhile, tries to conceive of powerfulness as being directional without a definite destination by having powers be creative of what they manifest, rather than merely directed towards it.

Meinongian metaphysics, in which actual things are in some way related to non-existent things" (Armstrong 1997, quoted in Bird, 2007, p. 105), the problem being that non-existent items cannot be relata. The issue is not best cast in proportional terms, but would be better thought of as the *relata problem* (RP): focussing on the fact of a relation between the existing and the non-existent (potency and potential). The answer will be (1.3.1) that unmanifested properties are actual, and therefore existent, too.

1.2.2 From the 'Regress Objection' (RO) to the 'Relational Form Problem' (RFP) and the 'Value Worry' (VW)

Since M&S-pairs characterize potencies and "potencies are the only properties" (DM) such that "[M&S] are also potencies and must themselves be characterized in terms of [further ones]" (Bird, 2007, p. 7), Bird faces objections converging on an infinite regress of properties, or if not a regress, then a (vicious) circularity. Bird lists them as follows:

1) **The TLA (to be addressed separately in 1.2.3).**

2) **Regress/circularity implies that "the identity of potencies is indeterminate" (2007, p. 132).**

3) **We are in a position in which "we [cannot] know what properties [anything] has" (op. cit., p. 133).**

4) **Regress/circularity involves "a strict incoherence" (op. cit., p. 132).**

In 1.1 I made a distinction between the form and content of dispositional essences. One form they might take, which we are currently considering is: properties essentially relate to Ms, M'ing upon an S that may never come (such that, moreover, the inclusion of M may be, according to some at least, problematic). Worries 2) and 3) are concerned with this form. Problem 2) in being concerned with whether potencies can indeed be *individuated* by specifying their M&S-pair, where by individuation we mean they would be given a clear-cut identity. Problem 3) concerns whether we can indeed *know* dispositions if they take this relational form.

Consider 2) first. This charge results from the idea that since the essence of a potency involves its manifestation, this manifestation itself better be determinate. Since M, or S, because

it is also a property, has the same structure (in DM) as the potency partially consisting of (or including as a relatum) M and/or S, however, it would involve relating to further potencies, *either* 'all the way down', *or* in circular fashion. Neither option provides a clear-cut identity for our property: in both circle and regress a "sequence of manifestations" (Bird, 2007, p. 136) occurs in the potency's identity, rather than a more concise, comfortable pair. If properties are indeterminate, they are impossible to formulate. Bird's attempt at giving dispositions a finite relational form thus seemingly shoots itself in the foot.

'Unknowability' is a slightly different issue. We recognize which powers things have after "the changes they are powers to produce" have occurred[21]. To recognize these changes "one has to recognize properties" (Swinburne, 1980 quoted in Bird, 2007, p. 133). But now we are saying that properties might not just have M&S-pairs, but there are further properties to relate to, circularly or regressively so. Since properties then are potentials 'all the way down' (*or* circularly), knowing what properties a thing has, is really impossible. It cannot really be said if circularity obtains. If infinite regress does, there is simply too much involved to comprehend. That is: the form potencies take makes them unknowable. Indeterminacy and unknowability are then varieties of a problem again focussed on relationality, but different from the RP above: the *relational form problem* (RFP).

Issue 4) is that 'all properties having the form 'M-when-S'ed'', is really an incoherent thought. It might be so in three ways:

1) **Regresses and circularities, such as might be implied by the formulation above, are types of incoherence.**

2) **One can think of the issue here as being that properties are (roughly) "what they do" (Bird, 2007, p. vii), but all of them essentially are *potentials*, potentials being precisely *not* manifest. That is, they never end up on the right side of 'doing', never manifest, or 'do' anything. If there are *doings* in the relevant sense, there must be something beyond potencies. DM thus may seem self-defeating. This is another reason to say RP is a real issue: it would seem that, as Armstrong has it, "everything**

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[21] This is what seems to be behind a principle like 'ACTUALITY' as formulated by Vetter (2015), as we shall see at the end of chapter 4. The Deleuzean position offers some opposition to this seeming platitude.

is potency, and act is [merely their] shifting around" (Armstrong 1997, quoted in Bird 2007, p. 133) such that potencies never relate to an *actual* M.

3) If potencies exist, they have ontological value (here is *one*, there is *one*…), but what is their value if they partially consist of relations including non-actual (following Armstrong: non-existent) items? This is the 'value worry' (VW): the worry that potencies would have to occupy an ontological value between 1 and 0.

1.2.3   From 'Too Little Actuality' (TLA) to the RP (again), the 'Empty World Problem' (EWP) and the 'Ontological Relational Form Problem' (ORFP)

Now, one version of the RO remains to be explicated: the TLA. Bird phrases it thus: "because a potency's potentiality exhausts its being […] the being of a potency has nothing to guarantee its reality" (2007, p. 100). Here, it is quite clear what happens when we use the problem's original proportional phrasing (1.2.1): since the amount of Ms in a property could be, because of the threatening regress, *infinite*, properties are at an actuality-portion approaching 0% and a potentiality-portion approaching 100%, 'exhausting' the potency. That sounds problematic, but taking measures to pump up the percentages seems less of a solution than a strategy that would replace the supposedly non-existent M with something actual. We will get there, but these remarks do not cover all the complaints under the TLA-heading, such that we must again reformulate.

We concluded earlier that TMP is better thought of as the worry that potencies include relating to non-existence in their essences (RP). If that is right, we should not especially worry about the perceived regress in terms of tipping the percentages toward a higher actuality-count, but worry about stating how properties relate to their manifestations in a way that avoids the problems we have been carving out in this chapter. Nonetheless, what of the TLA-version of the regress? Bird's initial formulation above captures that properties essentially involve potentiality rather than actuality, and that ontologically properties become questionable if the only items we have to slot into the M&S-openings (of which we may have infinitely many) are non-existent rather than existent.

TLA and TMP are then, indeed, parts of the same criticism centred on the role of potentiality in defining potencies (ibid.), so both are better thought of as the RP. Should we solve

it, of course, RO-related worries might still come back into focus[22]: saying that P's identity indudes an endless sequence of actual Ms does not sound much better than P's including an endless sequence of non-actual Ms. Under the TLA-heading, Bird also discusses worries regarding how the concrete world turns out on his picture, including the question *what* potencies are the properties *of*. The issues, respectively, are:

1) **Howard Robinson's (1982, quoted in Bird, 2007, p. 101) worry that Bird's is an "etiolated conception of matter".**

Meant is that if a property is real it has to be "a power to a determinate [M]" (Robinson, 1982, p. 114), but due to the regressive nature of dispositional essences, determinacy can only be generated by something "which is not itself a [potency]" (Robinson, 1982, p. 115). A sort of 'stop' in the web of properties, rather than a further deferring. In DM there are no such items. Much of this issue we have already catalogued, but it allows us to thematise the connection between existence and being determinate: "[e]very real [property] must possess a determinate nature" (Robinson, 1982, p. 114). That is a new concern. It is part of what makes RO effective as a problem, and essentially presents an ontological version of the RFP (ORFP): the problem is that what is indeterminate, cannot be real, i.e. cannot exist.

2) **John Foster (quoted in Bird, 2007, p. 101) thinks that since, for dispositionalists, there are no categorical natures to ground potencies in, dispositionalist metaphysics "is incoherent" (Foster, 1982, p. 72).**

The physical world, which one would want to say is *actual*, specified in power-terms, must rather be *potential* such that we lack, in Foster's words, "items in terms of whose behaviour the content of the powers could be specified" (Foster, 1982 quoted in Bird, 2007, p. 101).

If physical items just cluster potencies, they completely lack 'specification' due to their supposed internal regress. The only way out of this, is by finding physical (I read: actual) items not specified in terms of potency. At this stage in our dialectic with Bird, because properties turn out

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[22] Bird (2012, p. 39) attempts to solve these with graph-theoretical tools, as we shall see in 1.3.

to be wholly potential, the objects (especially if these are clusters of properties) they are properties of will be wholly potential, too. Call this the 'empty world'-problem (EWP). There would be, in actuality, nothing.

1.2.4 A Combinatory of Problems, or: From 3 to 5 to 1 – Bird's Problems Reduced in Number but Increased in Size

So far, I have devoted much life-force to inventing names for problems and abbreviating them. I have moreover morphed Bird's threefold of problems (1.2) into a fivefold of different ones (RP, RFP, VW, EWP, ORFP). An overview is in order, and will allow us to discern a root (OSCQ) common to all these issues.

Table 1: A Catalogue of all our Worries

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3" align="center">A Catalogue of all our Worries</td></tr>
<tr><td align="center">Originally:</td><td align="center">Better Thought of as:</td><td align="center">Root of the Matter:</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>The 'too much potentiality'-problem (TMP): Bird's relying on potentiality in defining properties is problematic.</td>
<td>The 'relata-problem' (RP): Bird's seems a 'Meinongian' metaphysics in which non-existent items are relata. The issue is: the relation between the existing and non-existent.</td>
<td rowspan="6">Reading the formulations of the issues in the middle column, it seems that the nature of the essential relata of properties is at stake in all of them. This mostly comes out in the sharper formulations of the TMP and TLA in the first column. Presented as matters of proportion, these questions were badly formed. Assuming the regress can be stopped, such that the 'amount' of potency becomes 'manageable', a more principled problem remains: we have morphed the core of TMP and TLA into the sharper idea that involving potentiality essentially in properties, is, in fact, problematic, It makes the Platonic MDE seem quite precarious, pending a reply to the root issue I here distil out of the foregoing: 'what <i>is</i> the ontological status and categorization of the constituents of the M&S-pair and what would they have to be for MDE to be plausible?' (the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td rowspan="2">The 'regress objection' (RO): the essences of properties include an infinite regress of properties.</td>
<td>The 'relational form'-problem (RFP): thematises the unknowability (either directly, or because they are indeterminate) of potencies due to the aforementioned regress that springs from the relational form of potencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 'value worry' (VW): what to make of the existence of potencies if P and (e.g.) M have distinct ontological statuses?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td rowspan="3">The 'too little actuality'-problem (TLA): there is not enough actuality in Bird's system to be plausible.</td>
<td>The 'relata-problem' (RP) (see above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 'empty world'-problem (EWP): the physical world, which we tend to think of as <i>actual</i>, is, if a property-cluster view of things is right, wholly <i>potential</i>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 'ontological' RFP (ORFP): if properties are essentially indeterminate, they cannot</td>
</tr>
</table>

	be real: which is the case if properties are constituted by an infinite series of potentials.	**'ontological status or categorization'-question, OSCQ).**

In what follows, we will see to which of the issues in either column Bird has answers, and how satisfactory they are.

Going forward, I will consider the five issues introduced in the second column to be aspects of a unified deeper issue, the 'ontological status or categorization'-question (OSCQ). We will keep all aspects in mind when investigating whether Bird's solutions do away with the catalogued worries. Even if so, we must wonder whether his answers 1.3 do not introduce further problems. In fact, I can assure the reader they do. Which is why chapter 2 will proceed to pan '*ante rem*'-dispositionalism.

1.3   Bird's Solutions

In this section, I discuss Bird's replies to the problems in the left column of the above table and keep track of what those replies might do for the OSCQ (in its various aspects). Combined, this shows us which issues facing Bird he addresses and what Bird introduces to make his attempted solutions work. At the end of this chapter I will state clearly (again in the form of a table) which issues are still standing if we accept these solutions. *That* and *why* I do *not* completely accept the solutions that Bird introduces (graph-theory and contingently abstract objects), will be made clear in the next chapter. In the remainder of the current one we will merely index what they are, how they are supposed to work, and what they seem to solve.

1.3.1   Solving the TMP

TMP is the problem that Bird's relying on potentiality in defining properties is problematic. Reformulated into RP, the issue is that Bird's seems to be a 'Meinongian' metaphysics in which non-existent items are relata, and that non-existent items, it seems, can hardly be relata. I will discuss Bird's three responses in the following order (1 & 2 here, 3 in 1.3.2):

1) **He thinks that "possibilities should be accepted as parts of the actual world" (Bird, 2007, p. 105).**

2) **There is no TMP "since […] relations among universals" (ibid.) are in operation.**

3) **Pointing out that "one cannot in fact deduce the possibility of the manifestation from the potency alone" (ibid.).**

Bird responds that what goes into a potency's essential M&S-slots is *not* non-existent at all. What goes into them are possibilities (or rather, as we will see, M is possible because S is possible: 1.3.2), but unlike Armstrong, Bird regards possibilities as parts (*actual, existent* part) of this world. He captures this with the so-called 'Barcan Formula' "$\lozenge \exists x Fx \rightarrow \exists x \lozenge Fx$" (Bird, 2007, p. 111), where the quantifier expresses potentiality/possibility's being part of actuality. In other words, the view Bird puts forward is: "everything is actual" (op. cit., p. 206). This covers Bird's solution to RP. Then, there is still (the 'C' in OSCQ) the question *what* the M&S-pairs *are*. Bird tells us to interpret these as analogous to "Platonic abstract objects — except that they are contingently abstract" (op. cit., p. 113). They are actual even if unmanifested, and they "could be realized" (ibid.) and thereby become manifested. The essences of potencies then bear no essential relation to non-existent objects, but rather to actual-though-abstract objects.

These entities play another role in making the TMP go away. Bird (2007, p. 107) writes: if one, like Armstrong, sees a problem regarding what is fitted into the M- or S-slots, this is because they are not interpreting these items as universals. Raising the TMP happens at the level of *particulars*: one takes a particular disposition to involve a relation to a non-actual particular (M). The worry then, as we saw earlier, is that flammability relates to *a* non-existent burning. But, says Bird, "all of this can be done at the type-level" such that we are saying that flammability involves the universal of burning, "and at that level all that is required is a relation to something fully actual" (ibid.) if indeed, as above, we are happy to say properties are actual universals, that are in some cases concrete and in others abstract but still actual: Bird's 'Platonism' about properties means they can be "actual without […] being instantiated" (op. cit., p. 51), i.e.: is locally instantiated, but would exist apart from these instances.

1.3.2   Solving the TMP Continued: the 'Production' of Universals qua Manifestation-Possibilities

Above we addressed how Bird conceptualizes the unmanifested in dispositional essences. A second TMP-concern regards properties essentially 'pointing to' a possible M (the intentional

nature of the M/S/P-relation). Not only is it possible to point to M because M is in any case actual, Bird also somewhat tweaks the relation between property and manifestation-condition. He writes that P does not singlehandedly get us ('points to') the possibility of M: "the [possible M] is a product of [an actual P] and the [possible S]" (2007, p. 105). P in conjunction with it being possible that the relevantly bepropertied object is S'ed rather 'produces' "the possible [M]" (ibid.), which *explains* why M must be thought of as a possibility. There is no 'intention' of P to M then: what is gained here is the reconceptualising of the 'intentionality' or 'pointing to'-characteristic in terms of 'production'. Potencies do not brutely involve possibility, but properties *plus* possible-Ss produce possible Ms (ibid.). There is supposedly nothing mysterious in actual things producing more actual things, even if some of these are possibilities.

1.3.3 Solving the RO (including the TLA): Wholes and Graphs

Bird proposes the following to solve RO: "the identity of a property is given by the role it plays within the whole structure of properties" (Bird, 2012, p. 39). *Prima facie* this goes some way to stopping RO: the proposal is that we can use the relations between properties to specify an exact, whole bundle of such relations for every property. This at least sounds like it generates more determinacy than saying a property's essence is 'given by' other properties (of which there might be indefinitely many; the introduction of a 'whole' suggests this will not be so).

We need to see what Bird means by a 'whole structure' and how Bird gets them. Introducing a notion of properties as relational wholes is not the full solution to RO: granted it, the way in which a property's identity is formulated "can be shown to be non-regressive, if the structure has certain graph-theoretic properties" (ibid.). This gives us two items to investigate if we want to understand the solution Bird proposes: structural wholes and (certain particular) graph-theoretic properties that need to be instantiated in these wholes for them to be non-regressive (e.g. asymmetry). Bird gets structural wholes by likening properties to sets of elements, the "identity and distinctness" of which supervenes "on the instantiations of some relation R" (2007b, p. 527) on these elements.
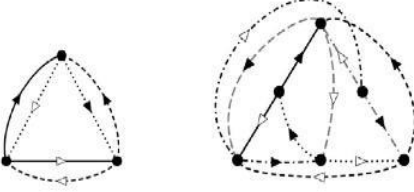
This gives us a more detailed understanding of how Bird conceptualizes the relation between property and manifestation: there is a "manifestation relation" (ibid.) between property and its M. This relation, moreover, is unproblematic if we accept that items like M are actual, and hence fit to be *relata*. To prove that such relations "suffice to determine the identities of each element" (ibid.) Bird turns to the characteristics (e.g. asymmetry) of these relations (see below). As Tugby (2013, p. 457) has it: "[g]rounding the nature of a disposition in a genuine relation would

provide a straightforward answer [regarding] the directedness (and so identity) of dispositions".
That is: if one accepts M and S as actual, it is possible that there is a genuine
(manifestation-)relation between M and P. Given the 'directed' nature of this relation, and since
we can use directedness to build unique positions in a network of elements, we have here a
solution to the RFPs (indeterminacy, unknowability) that stemmed from the RO.

Understanding properties as relational wholes, one can study them by scrutinizing
another determinate-yet-relational entity: *graphs*. Graph theory theorizes "[nodes] and a single
two-place relation" called 'edges' "among them" (Bird, 2007b, p. 527). These can be given
'directions' such as to represent the relation of the S or M to their designated property. As a
translation, I offer:

Table 2: Translation from Dispositionalese to Graph-Theoryese, with Two 'Digraphs'

Dispositionalese:	Graph-theoryese:
Elements (themselves potencies) of potencies	'Nodes'
Relations ('manifestation', 'stimulation') among elements	'Edges'
Property identity (the place of properties in 'structural wholes').	Demonstrated by graphs like these, with white arrows for stimulation-relations and black ones for manifestation-relations Figure 1: Two Directed Graphs (figure 6.10 in Bird, 2007, p. 145)

Checking that properties can be determinate can then be done by stating graph-determinacy in
graph-theoretical terms.

Since the manifestation-relation, which we are at present most concerned with, has a
direction (M manifests P, not the other way around) a representative 'edge' would be an 'arc'
(directional edge) such that "each [node] has at least one arc [leading away from] it" (Bird, 2007,
p. 143). The resulting graph, a 'directed' graph ("digraph": op. cit., p. 142), is perfectly

manageable to construct (see above). The identity of the nodes of such *asymmetric* graphs, Bird says, supervenes on the graph's structure, the "pattern of the edges" (op. cit., p. 140): every node *is* a particular place in that structure such that every node is uniquely determined[23], thus proving that relationality and determinate identity go together.

1.3.4   Clarifying the Solutions Offered: Abstracta, their Realisation, and the Manifestation- and Production-Relations

In solving RO (including TLA) and TMP, Bird introduced:

- *Contingently abstract yet actual universals*

- *'Productive' relations among them.*

- *A notion of 'realisation', as in: "[Platonic universals] are contingently abstract [but] could be realized and so could be concrete" (Bird, 2007, p. 113) involving them.*

- *A demonstration that the 'manifestation relation' does not involve indeterminacy.*

This suggests the following questions:

- *What are such items, exactly?*

- *Is there nothing objectionable (I am thinking: a category mistake) in representing such items as actual alongside other, less controversial actualities?[24]*

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[23] Other kinds of graphs are such that when tilted, they retain their structure but with nodes displaced. Such a graph "fails to determine" node-identity (Bird, 2007, p. 140).

[24] Alternatives might include defending some kind of Meinongianism on which there are things that do not exist (which I will not do), or (which I will, in chapter 5) defending a distinction between the actual and the dispositional (understood as *not* actual) that nonetheless claims both exist univocally.

- ***What relation do 'production' and the 'manifestation relation' have to 'realisation'?***

On some of these Bird says little; he introduces 'realisation' and 'production' without much circumspection. Ms have obviously long been under consideration, but only in chapter 6 of his *Nature's Metaphysics* did manifestation get appointed its own relation. Manifestations (manifested powers), in any case, seem to be the result of the aforementioned realisation. This leads me to conclude the following about Bird's set-up: manifestation is a relation between universals that explains which patterns particular instances will instantiate (hence laws are reflections of properties, including the manifestation-relation), *realisation however* is what must happen for particulars to manifest anything to begin with[25]. The abstracta (or possibilia; I will use these terms interchangeably) were introduced slightly earlier, and Bird has comparatively much to say about them. We start on explicating what they are directly below.

As we saw in 1.3.1, Bird regards the possible manifestations of properties as on par with actualities as expressed with the Barcan Formula ($\lozenge \exists xFx \rightarrow \exists x\lozenge Fx$). In case it did not go without saying: the quantifier being univocal really drives home the point that possibilities exist just like any factual actuality. Bird considers two alternative conceptions of possibilia, 'modal realism' and 'Megarian actualism', but rejects these respectively because they say possibilia reside in possible worlds (which will make a brief return in chapter 4), making it mysterious how they are involved in this one *here* (a thought we will also return to in chapter 4), or deny possibilia can exist without actualisation, which (Bird, 2007, pp. 108-112) makes granting them an ontological status trivial and fails to explain how manifestations themselves can occur (if actions are only possible when they happen, how can one consider them to be, i.e. *exist qua*, possible?).

Bird demonstrates his view with an example: it is possible one folds an origami swan from paper. This possibility 'pretty clearly' *is* the possible swan, and "for there to be [this possibility] is for there to be a possible origami swan" (Bird, 2007, p. 111). *By analogy from such objects to the relevant kind of properties*: for properties like flammability, to be instantiated is for burning to be possible: is for possible burning to be actual but uninstantiated. If we grant the abstracta, we need not worry about ontological values (VW) as would be introduced by Ps essentially involving Ms with a distinct (i.e. non-existent) ontological status, but we may still wonder how the world becomes (partially) realized/actualised/manifested, rather than being entirely

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[25] I find it much nicer to talk about *manifestation* or *actualisation* than about *realisation*. I will use these terms interchangeably, in various contexts one term might simply fit better than another.

unmanifested/potential/unrealised[26]. We are starting to wonder, that is, *what this shift consists in*. What *is* 'realisation'? Bird says nothing definitional about it. I would think, as a first approximation, that particular instances of it would be any suitable (i.e. the right S for the right potency) S-event bringing about M given Ps relation to an M&S-pair.

So Ss, for which we could plug in examples, like 'sparking' for 'flammability', are 'realizers'. 'Production' explains how realisation is possible because it explains possible-M: "[unmanifested-M] is a product of [manifested-P] and [unmanifested-S]" (Bird, 2007, p. 105) in relation to possible/unmanifested S. For:

- ***S's existence 'produces' (given P) possible-M: possible-M exists if possible-S exists***

- ***Possible-S exists as an M of some presupposed actual object/agent down the line*** **(Bird, 2007, p. 57)**

The 'manifestation-relation' we saw in graph-theoretic detail above makes it so that P and M hang together in a directed manner (e.g. asymmetrically: *M is P's manifestation-property, without it being so that P is M's).* Despite having names that seem to point to a similar nature, the 'manifestation-relation' and 'realisation' are not straightforwardly connected: manifestation-relations just nail down parts of property-identities, whereas burning, through realisation (or manifestation, etc.), goes from being unrealized to being realized. Realisation then is (for lack of a better term, my apologies) a *manifestation-status switching-event* brought on by (the 'realizer') manifested-S.

1.3.5   New and Improved Worries

The table below shows what issues (from either the original threefold or my 'sharpened' fivefold, see 1.2.4) Bird has now resolved, supposing that we grant him his solutions, and what issues are still left standing. As foreshadowed, I am not wholly convinced of his solutions, which is reflected

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[26] Possibilia, after all, are "entities [existing] outside space and time" (Bird, 2007, p. 12). How do they get into the spatiotemporal realm? Instead of solving this issue, Bird bets that an immanent conception of universals is even more obscure (op. cit., p. 51). We will see, in chapters 3 and 4 that the 'Aristotelianism' he attacks is not as difficult to defend as Bird claims.

in the right-column of the below table: the 'further questions' concern questions that are raised by the solutions Bird proposes.

Table 3: A Catalogue of all our Worries, Answers and Further Questions

A Catalogue of all our Worries, Answers and Further Questions		
Worries (in Alphabetical Order):	**Answers:**	**Further Questions:**
EWP: the world is completely *potential* instead of actual (a 'reductio').	According to Bird, abstracta *are* actual: Bird has reworked the notion of potentiality to mean (contingently, *when* unrealised) unmanifested yet *actual*. The world is thus at all times fully actual, with different constellations of items being manifested or unmanifested.	It is still not clear how one should understand the onset of the world becoming filled with manifest actuality (realisation, manifestation, actualisation), in other words: how we should conceive of the go-between linking abstract universals and their concrete instances. We have not seen, ultimately, how abstract and worldly items come to connect (although we have learned how to give examples of realizers). Bird (2007, p. 51) is aware of the obscurity of this connection but thinks his Aristotelian competitors have it (even) worse, see chapter 3.
ORFP: essentially indeterminate properties cannot be real.	If Bird's analysis of the elements of properties on the model of (di)graphs works, property-identity *is* determinate.	Although we mapped elements of Bird's metaphysics unto the graph-theoretic jargon Bird introduces, one might think the comparison between the two is not well-founded. The likeness stands or falls with whether Bird has done enough to explain the connection between graphs (model) and properties (modelled).
OSCQ: 'what *is* the ontological status and categorization of the constituents of the M&S-pair and what would they have to be for MDE to be plausible?' (the 'ontological status and categorization'-question, OSCQ).	Possibilia are actual, specifically: they are actual but abstract.	This does not mean that Bird's Platonic position is the unique answer to the OSCQ.
RFP: thematises dispositions as unknowable (either directly, or because they are indeterminate) due to the relational form of dispositional essences.	Since abstracta/possibilia are actual wholes of determinate elements, this problem is avoided.	This only works *if* the analogy between properties and (di)graphs is sound.

RO: the essences of properties include an infinite regress of properties.	The main worry was that the regress makes property-identity indeterminate. Specifying the directionality of the 'arcs' of the graphs takes care of this by specifying potencies as having a definite place in the graph structure, with a determinate bunch of arcs leading away from it (and to it) such that we know what exactly a property's relations are.	This only works *if* the analogy between properties and (di)graphs is sound.
RP: Bird's seems a 'Meinongian' metaphysics in which non-existent items are relata.	Possibilia *are* actual (existent) so Armstrong's worry about 'Meinongianism' is avoided. The relation between unmanifested-M and P is explained by pointing to a production-relation between unmanifested-S, manifested-P and unmanifested-M.	Producing unmanifested-M works *given P* – but we have not seen an explanation of how P, being a universal, can be said to relate to the concrete object it is a property of.
TLA: Bird's system lacks actuality.	Possibilia *are* actual.	This sounds *strange*; like a category mistake.
TMP: Bird's relying on potentiality in defining properties is problematic.	Armstrong's worry about 'Meinongianism' is avoided. Moreover, the worry that a relation to possibility would be to the detriment of a potency's actuality-content is avoided because possibilities *are* actualities.	This means that the being of potencies, is captured by the univocity of the existential quantifier, but it seems Bird at least has not explained to us how to ontologically regard, if there is such a thing, what lies between being manifested and unmanifested (we will see that he claims there might not be such a stage: 2007, p. 61).
VW: what ontological value does P get if its constituents are non-actual?	Possibilia *are* actual.	There is an issue here, namely that on this understanding of possibility one might think that the notion of possibility (i.e. actuality) is not robust enough to explain change (where change would involve the coming into being of genuinely new things): a 'too little possibility'-problem would then emerge (**TLP**).

Some issues, clearly, have been resolved, granting Bird's proposed solutions. The gist of what we would be granting is:

1) **A view about possibility: that some manifestation's being possible *is* the existence of that item, but unmanifested, and...**

2) **...a view about what we are getting a handle on, when we are thinking of potencies: elements that are either manifested or not and (directed) relations between them.**

As we have seen, between the unmanifested and manifested version of such properties lies 'realisation'. *And* the gap between the spatiotemporal and the non-spatiotemporal! We have, hereby, hit upon the main concern of my project. Above, we suggested one might construct realisation as simply being spurred on by whatever S-event manifests from some background object/agent down the causal line. And why *not* be content with all this? We will address this in the next chapter.

Chapter 2   Anti '*Ante Rem*': The Platonist's Explanatory Gap

2.0   Chapter Outline

This chapter has two parts. We will:

> 1) **Critique (in *2.1: Objections to Bird's Solutions*) Bird's proposed solutions to the previous chapter's problems, focussing on how Bird's relying on abstracta makes his position difficult to understand qua dispositionalism. A core feature of dispositionalism is the 'realisation' of unmanifested properties. It is however difficult to see how the properties manifested in the concrete world come out of the '*ante rem*'.**

Do Bird's conceptions of abstract objects and their realisation not create more problems than they solve? I try to show here that they do. I will moreover question whether the graph-theoretic answer we are given to solve the RO is sound, and whether it *really* provides property-identities.

This section includes discussion of specific problems to point out that since Bird's account of the realisation of unmanifested-Ms is unsatisfactory, we can try to augment the 'realisation set-up', with Platonic resources. Unconvinced of Bird's proposed solutions and what additions a Platonist might add, I do not think the project of developing an MDE as such is incoherent: we just need a different answer to the OSCQ, a different conception of unmanifested properties [27].

Therefore…

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[27] For, as Molnar writes (2003, pp. 24-25): "[o]n the account of them descended from Plato, universals [are] in a higher realm from whence they communicate […] in inexplicable ways". Problematic, thus, is not realisation *per se*, but the realisation of *such* items.

...'2.2: Looking Ahead' **provides rough outlines for two alternative conceptions of unmanifested properties, which share as a starting point that unmanifested potentials are '*in re*'[28] (immanent).**

There I will briefly lay out what innovations I think dispositional realists must be ultimately willing to accept given the trouble in this and the previous chapter.

2.1   Objections to Bird's Solutions

Here, I begin critiquing the solutions Bird proposed, focussing on (but not singling out) Bird's 'Platonism'. Remember that this is not historical Platonism, but just the conjunction of dispositional realism with '*ante rem*'-properties. I distinguish, now, between '*Default*' and '*Involved Platonism*'. By 'Default Platonism' I mean:

> **Interpreting unmanifested properties (and/or their essential unmanifested elements) "as akin to Platonic abstract objects — except that they are contingently abstract", a contingently abstract entity being one that "could be realized and so could be concrete" (Bird, 2007, p. 113) but currently is not, which, on Bird's analysis, gives such properties the status of being *actual* but *unmanifested*. Such properties exist (op. cit., p. 12) "outside space and time".**

It is arrived at simply by avoiding 'Aristotelianism'/'*in re*'-dispositionalism, i.e. *by default*, skipping a defence of crucial aspects of the view.

The biggest sticking point will be 'realisation' as it rolls out of Default Platonism's '*ante rem*'-universals, which has been troublesome for historical Platonism. This creates a problem for dispositionalism specifically: the 'realisation set-up' is supposed to cover our understanding of how the unmanifested becomes manifested and the lack of detail concerning how we ought to

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[28] These will be worked out substantially in the following three chapters (see chapter 3 for 'Aristotelianism', and chapter 5 for a Deleuze-inspired proposal. Chapter 4, like the current chapter, carries out a critique of the position advanced in the chapter preceding it).

conceptualize this, is worrying. The worry is that Bird's account simply has a gap in it. One that cannot be closed given the different realms implicated in the Platonic dispositional realist's realisation set-up. Think of my claims as saying that the explanatory gap is simply internal to the Platonic realisation set-up, it exists wherever these items are put together.

I think metaphysics must do more than introduce a connection one is then given no further details of. The *sort* of thing one might hope to find in this regard might look something like this: '*contingently abstract items instantiate in the concrete world through a process X that gets concrete realities from ideal structures through step Y, Z…*'. Nothing of the sort is given by Bird. In an attempt to help Bird, we will build 'Involved Platonism', by which I mean:

> **A Platonic MDE, augmented with patterns of reasoning lifted**
> **from Plato, which could excuse one from including an account of**
> **realisation[29], or indeed provide one.**

Plato himself seems aware his philosophy needs some bridge-notion between Idea and the concrete world. I will examine two proposed bridges, from which Bird might stand to gain if he could adopt them, or some structural equivalent fit for the present context: (1) the participation of particulars in transcendent universals as is associated with Plato in general, and (2) a receptacle of Forms that Plato invents in the *Timaeus*.

Perhaps, however, such notions are *only* part of what is in Plato's *Timaeus* (68d) called "a likely story": not truth, but something to keep Plato's audience engaged. Engaged enough, perhaps, to come to the core of 'Platonic causation': a pattern of reasoning on which the Idea *in fact sufficiently explains its manifestations* and hence obviates the need for bridge-concepts, in asserting that that transcendent universals are all one needs to explain concrete events, a third manner in which we can try to help Bird. The sections on 'Default Platonism' and the three above notions with which one might extend it into an 'Involved Platonism' (2.1.2), are followed by addressing three issues left over from the table in 1.3.5:

> **1) Does Bird's account of possibilia, given that they are always**
> **actual, cohere with a robust notion of possibility?**

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[29] Bird does say *something* about realisation: for fundamental properties it could be "instantaneous" (2007, p. 62). We shall return to this in 2.1.1. But telling us how long realisation takes, is not what I mean by 'giving an account'. What I am asking is something like: 'how are we supposed to conceive of an unmanifested thing becoming manifested *at all*?'.

2) **Does Bird justify modelling property-identity on graph-theoretic notions?**

3) **It is unclear how to label that which lies between manifested and unmanifested. Between the manifested and the unmanifested happens a manifest*ing*. That sounds like a process, or event, or something of the sort. Would that be an actuality?**

Having considered these we move on to section 2, where we will draw a general complaint from the specific problems thus far discussed. Section 3 points the way forward from there.

2.1.1 Regarding Bird's Default Platonism

Potencies are either manifested, or they are not. If currently unmanifested, they might become so by being realised. That sounds intelligible, and I suppose this is what it means for Bird's Platonic universals to be *contingently* abstract. However, since realisation is what makes the unmanifested manifested, Bird needs a plausible account of it: without it we are left with questions like '*how does the one become the other?*', '*how is it that properties move realms?*', '*is moving realms the right way to think of this?*' and '*how are these realms connected?*'. Default Platonism does not provide any answers, yet it is fair to ask them: Bird proceeds (chapter 3) as if Aristotelians have it worse, but that does not mean the Platonists are well-off. One is perfectly within one's rights trying to show this.

Perhaps one will say the problem I am hinting at is not Bird's to solve: '*there just are abstract objects (sets, numbers) that we already accept, and the difference between completely and contingently abstract things just depends on the meaning of 'contingent', so why kick up a fuss about these properties?*'. My problem is not abstracta *per se*, or the meaning of 'contingent', but with introducing contingently abstract items without any further comment as to how to conceive of 'realm-switching' or some other notion with the same result. It is true that their being 'contingently abstract' signals, as opposed to *really Platonic abstracta*, that these items *may become* concrete: but this signal provides no information as to *how to understand this suggestion*.

So there is everything to play for, in putting together an 'Involved Platonism'. The situation seems somewhat hopeless though: Plato's metaphysics really is pretty problematic in this regard. Tugby, in his defence of Platonic dispositionalism, recognizes our issue but provides no aid regarding "how to understand the relationship between universals and their concrete

instantiations" (2013, p. 452). This one is problematic for Platonism, indeed. Going forward I will work toward the conclusion that it is not just that there are no good answers in the bits of literature here explored, but that there cannot be one: Platonic MDE has a realisation-shaped gap in it, entirely down to its fundamental set-up. While fellow-Platonist Tugby is keen to make clear that the Aristotelian position fails to account for two 'platitudes' (see chapter 4), I think it is somewhat fair to say that he overlooks the biggest platitude of all: that powers-ontology makes no sense if one cannot account for powers manifesting.

There are also signs in Bird's work pointing in the direction of providing notions that might cover the aforementioned gap: there is, for example, mention (however, in a context where Bird is discussing the non-fundamental) of a "process whereby a disposition manifests itself [which takes time]" (Bird, 2007, p. 25): e.g. poisons kill at a certain speed. For the foundation of his system, Bird's view is that "[e]ither the manifestation […] is instantaneous [or] the supposed intermediate states do not exist" (2007, p. 61). Bird has reasons for wanting this[30]. However, all three understandings of realisation's temporality one comes across in *Nature's Metaphysics* are problematic:

1) ***Taking some time*: this puts pressure on the idea that the manifested/unmanifested-binary Bird presents us with is exhaustive. We are seemingly presented with a value between full manifestation and full unrealizedness.**

2) ***Instantaneousness*: this raises interesting interpretative questions. For example: is this the kind of instant Plato introduces in his *Parmenides*? That would strictly speaking put manifesting *outside of time* (156e)[31]. Alternatively, if instants are still temporal (but e.g. infinitesimally short) one may understand the instant as a special case of '*Taking some time*'[32].**

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[30] The avoidance of what, in the literature, are called 'finks' that would be capable of stopping fundamental properties from manifesting. If there is no realisation-period, there can be no such interventions.

[31] Although this would be another interesting avenue to explore under the heading of 'Involved Platonism', I think the reader will agree that given that there are non-Platonic alternatives to explore, and given that non-temporality of change does in itself not explain how something abstract becomes something concrete, it will be better to move on.

[32] I.e. taking little enough time to be 'unfinkable', but not to be unproblematic in the regard put forward in '*Taking some time*'.

3) **No interval**: **this puts no pressure on us to go beyond the binary, and raises no difficult questions about what happens between unmanifested and manifested existence. *There is no such time*. It, however, leaves mysterious how one might give an account of this shift in status: the shift rather seems to be denied.**

Either manifestation takes time or it does not. If it does, some manifestation-status/value that we have yet to introduce, is occupied by the relevant property. If it does not, dispositionalism is (from the standpoint of a non-Platonic observer such as myself) made to work in mysterious ways. Bird does not consider these specific issues. This could make us think he implicitly deploys a(n Involved) Platonic pattern of reasoning that excuses Bird from getting into the metaphysics of manifesting. We are merely unaware of this. Let us lean into our ignorance to draw questions from the above.

It seems that, spurred on by the possibility of the upsetting of the binary, we could wonder at the following:

- **Since unmanifested-M is an element of its P(otency)'s essence, P is, prior to M's realisation, seemingly partially spatio-temporal and partially not (after all, per 1.3.3, properties are relational wholes made up of unmanifested and manifested relata). How should we characterize this state of this whole, overall?**

Perhaps we should conclude P (for essentially including unmanifested-M) is both manifested and unmanifested, but that sounds contradictory. One way out of the contradiction would be to say that though P has characteristics of both concreteness and abstractness it is itself therefore neither. We may say: '*P is partially manifested and partially not but therefore neither wholly manifested nor unmanifested. We need some third value*'. There is an innocent term for this value, that moreover seems quite adequate a notion for the conceptual gap we have been trying to cover: '*becoming*'.

Moreover, the above consideration trades on a way in which the '*ante rem*' and the concrete would relate (if they could) in a way one can distinguish from 'realm-switching' (i.e. 'realisation'). I hereby distinguish two ways in which the '*ante rem*' is required to relate to the spatiotemporal realm:

1) **'constitutively'** *in* **property-essences, as the element of an otherwise instantiated property, and...**

2) through 'realisation'.

Bird will countenance both because the relata are actual and relations such as these are not necessarily regressive. But this does not yet tell us what it means for actual possibilities to perform (or undergo, or…) the feat of realisation, or what it means for manifested and unmanifested things to relate in general, or constitutively in particular.

We need, in any case, to provide something like the inner workings of a process by which an unmanifested property switches to manifestedness. This is a broad form of my primary question. In the current context, we want to specifically know: *'how should one conceive of something non-spatiotemporal becoming spatiotemporal?'*. The 'constitutive' aspect of the relation between the '*ante rem'* and the concrete introduced above is new. My question here is the '*property-internal question*' (PIQ): '*what status (or as we may also say: 'manifestation value')* *does a property being essentially constituted by an unmanifested potentiality-element bestow on the property?*'[33]

Regarding 'realm-switching': I think the spirit of Bird's proposal is that 'realisation' is explained by adding any suitable (manifested-)S to P, such that (manifested-)M results (1.3.4). This might provide a *cause* for realization (call these 'realisers'), but does not give us the metaphysical structure of the realization-process, or any other insight into what the structure of the manifestation-status-switching would be. The only details we have in this regard is that realisation either has a timespan or it does not, i.e. no details at all. Moreover, any particular event could be an example of a realiser of a realm-switch, but listing such examples does not answer the question how the '*ante rem*' becomes spatiotemporal. It tells us in every case *why* realm-switching happens, not what spatiotemporalization as such consists in.

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[33] Bird invites this question himself: if we follow his account of 'production' (1.3.4) in which M-possibility comes about due to S-possibility, and if we cast this in terms of spatiotemporality, Bird is saying that spatiotemporal-P in conjunction with non-spatiotemporal-S produces non-spatiotemporal-M. This gives us no good sense of how to think of the status of the conjunction, but the claim is such conjunctions happen, so it seems we need some interpretation of it. Perhaps the reader, moreover, will agree that it sounds odd for non-spatiotemporal things to be *produced*: being produced seemingly makes products temporal, even if they are universals. In the *Timaeus* we find Plato ruling production out as an unjustifiable grafting of temporal characteristics onto the '*ante rem*': "we say [Being] was, is, and will be, when in fact only 'is' truly belongs to it […]. What is […], however, […] was not created at some point, it has not come into existence just now, and it will not be created in the future. As a rule […] none of the modifications that belong to […] the sensible world […] should be attributed to [Being]; they are aspects of time as it imitates eternity" (*Timaeus*, 37e-38a). Why would production then nicely fit in Bird's system?

So it seems Bird owes us *something*, for there really is something missing in this framework[34]. More than some inkling of what realm-switching amounts to, we would like an interpretation of the 'manifestation value' we are asking for in the PIQ. It could be that a more 'Involved' Platonism affords Bird a pattern of reasoning excusing him from providing an account of any of this, or supplies plausible answers. One possibility is that Bird implicitly endorses such a pattern. In that case we will have explicated something for him. Whether such is the case is neither here nor there: let us focus on whether these explications/extensions are any good. We turn to Plato's inventory, where we find *causation*, *relations* and a *being*.

2.1.2 Involved Platonism, or: More Platonism, More Problems – Causes, Relations and a Third Kind of Being

According to David Sedley's account (1998, p. 124) of 'Platonic causation' Plato "does not include in the irreducible kernel of a causal statement the process by which the cause acts". The reason for this is that insisting on a fleshed-out causal process "threatens to dilute the immediacy and transparency of the cause-effect relation" (ibid.). Plato instead thinks causation such that "whatever causes something to be F must not itself be un-F". The idea is that "like causes like" (op. cit., p. 123) in virtue of the intrinsic nature of the cause, and that this is all one needs in terms of explanation.

That is: the real cause of there being concrete-F is (Real, Ideal-)F, and the events leading up to concrete-F (that is: roughly what we have called 'realisers') are 'spurious', as opposed to Real, causes which, as such, do not explain anything (Sedley, 1998, pp. 119-125). One place in Plato where one can see something like this, is in the *Timaeus*' distinction between primary 'intelligent causes' and secondary causation as 'automatic necessity' (46d-e). Secondary causation is what happens between bodies, and one may take this (a topic we again briefly encounter, as a reason for the outcomes of Aristotelian dispositions falling short of *necessary* nomic patterns, in chapter 4) as a *deviation from* divine design. Intelligent causes must be sought in the '*ante rem*' and divine craftsmanship emulating eternal models, making physical processes spurious indeed.

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[34] Moreover, there is some irony in Bird's situation. Molnar (2003, p. 24) writes: as "descended from Plato, universals are inconsistent with naturalism". For a project called *Nature's Metaphysics*, transcendent universals just seem strange (if one goes along with Armstrong (1997, p. 5) in thinking of naturalism as "the contention that" there is "nothing more than the spacetime system"). Bird nowhere specifies how he thinks of the 'Nature' he is doing the 'Metaphysics' of, but something like a 'spacetime system' seems to be the default.

Using Sedley's example: fire "can only make things hot, never cold, because it is itself by its nature hot" (1998, p. 123). *Hot-nature* does the work, thus obviating as 'spurious' any conditions for there being a fire and/or all the micro-scale processes through which heating works: fire's *intrinsic nature* is directly at work. I am not saying Bird relies on divine craftsmanship[35]. I *am* saying the following pattern of explanation might play a role for Bird. He may be understood as e.g. saying '*the 'ante rem' contains causes, operating beyond time*': one might say that what (fully) explains manifest-M in Bird's set-up, is that unmanifest-M exists, which given its actuality and given a certain contingency S, makes for (manifest-)M. Bird then does not make S-occurrences as *spurious* as Plato would: Bird certainly gives Ss a role in the *essences* of properties.

It could be that Bird might implicitly think he avoids having to flesh out 'realisation' in virtue of the nature of unmanifested-M as an element of a potency being enough, given S, to explain realized-M. Even *if* Bird did implicitly adhere to this pattern of reasoning, *do we think it is sound, or does it leave us with constitution- and realization-shaped holes? How to characterize a status between manifestation and being abstract (PIQ) and how to conceptualize the shifting of properties from one pole to the other?* We are indeed back at an old complaint: knowing that Ss are realizers does not cover the gap we see in the concept of realisation, but tells us, given Ss, *why* (not *how*) realm-switching happens.

I conclude the 'Platonic causation'-pattern is incomplete. It leaves *something* unaccounted for (and Bird leaves unanswered whether that *something* exists or happens in an instant, or no time at all), which I think one should try to conceptually cover over with *something* either between or beyond realisedness and unrealisedness (see 2.1.5 for an attempt). We now move on to two bridge-notions: one a relation ('participation'), the other a third kind of being, being neither wholly immutable nor wholly mutable (a 'receptacle' of Ideas).

Could Bird, hypothetically, take 'participation' off the Plato-shelf to prove there are ways of explaining the derivation of concrete instances of properties from '*ante rem*'-universals? I think he cannot, moreover I tend to think he should not. That is a generalizable comment: it seems in some sense bad to outsource what are important scaffolds of one's theory, whereby outsourcing

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[35] Should one, in this regard, try to make something of the line (Bird, 2007, p. vii) "God is in the details"? I am not including this to be snarky, but in an earnest attempt to get on board *all* the coordinates Bird has set himself to work within. One could think that by importing some Platonism, Bird also imports (roughly what Heidegger would call) 'ontotheology': explanation (of the concrete world) in terms of abstract universals *plus* the thought that everything emanates from the divine. I will not pursue this line of criticism.

I mean *invoking a well-known framework without regard for detail, such that the reader may settle on a version of that framework they might endorse, essentially skipping over two important philosophical tasks: defending one's theory and explicating one's thoughts*.

Why *can* Bird not use 'participation' successfully? That 'participation' is not going to help, is down to the following, adapting a characterization by R.E. Allen (1960, p. 161) of the failure of the notion:

> **Participation is a relation (PR) supposed to explain how 'ante rem'-M and instantiated-M are related (such that 'ante rem'-M brings about manifest-M). But ironically, one cannot even say 'ante rem'-M and instantiated-M relate. For PR must be instantiated if it is to do any work. If it is, one will have to explain how instantiated-PR, ante rem-M and instantiated-M are related, doubling the original question instead of answering it.**

Either way, adding the above to 'Default Platonism' does not make for a very helpful version of 'Involved Platonism'.

Let us, therefore, move on to a notion that is not itself a relation: a specific type of existent given a variety of names in Plato's *Timaeus*, which I will refer to, mainly, as 'the receptacle'. Following Bianchi (2014, pp. 86-87): "[t]he cosmogony of the Timaeus unfolds in the context of the familiar Platonic distinction between the realm of [eternal] being [...] and the realm of becoming [...]. Timaeus's task [...] is to show how such an eternal realm could initially give rise to the world we see around us". Bird faces a very similar question.

Plato introduces:

> **"in addition to the [...] the intelligible and unchanging realm of Forms, and [...] the visible world of becoming [another existent called] the receptacle (hupodochē), [...] "the nurse [tithēnē] of all becoming." [49a] This receptacle is [...] "invisible and formless, all-embracing, possessed in a most puzzling way of intelligibility, yet very hard to grasp." [51a-b] [...It] "must always be called in the same**

manner [tauton autēn aei prosrhēteon]; for from its own proper quality [dunameōs] it never departs [ouk existatai] at all." [50b] It is worth noting [...] it must always be called in the same manner, not because it is [...] eternally unchanging [...], but because [...w]hile it is always changing [...] it will [...] return to and remain in its own [...] dunamis [...]. In this way the pluripotent hupodochē never takes on any permanent shape or form, but is [...] a molding stuff or plastic material (ekmageion) for receiving [Forms]" (Bianchi, 2014, p. 90)**.**

Thus is introduced something connecting the concrete and the Ideal: a receptacle capable of taking any shape, achieving something roughly analogous to what we are calling realisation, while remaining thoroughly itself. The way in which this medium is supposed to function becomes clearer as Timaeus invents more names for this novel ontological posit (most notably 'chōra'; 'space'), attributing to it several powers:

"[h]upodochē [...] receives. [...It] envelops with a boundary, it presents a kind of invagination, an opening into interiority, the comfort of welcome, an invitation to filling, inscription, and penetration, whereas chōra [space] does not. Chōra denotes rather an exteriority, an opening, giving room, dimension, depth, and magnitude – spacing – but also, as indicated by the related verb chōrizō, separating, dividing, differentiating, and severing. Chōra thus provides the possibility of [...] any sort of positioning in a field, a giving of alterity through spatial differentiation. [...] Shared [by] hupodochē and chōra, is a sense of creating a position for, giving place to the Forms [...]. They differ in that hupodochē [...] receives, while chōra opens out" (Bianchi, 2014, pp. 98-99)**.**

What might Platonic dispositionalists gain from this? Learning that they might try to develop a bridge-notion that is *not* a relation. It might be hard to capture exactly *what* this

nurse/space/receptacle is[36], but it is a relatum (a being) rather than a relation. It is a being between two other realms; kinds of being. It receives from the one, produces the other; receives Forms and gives them space.

Perhaps it is fair to say, in any case, that Plato himself indeed resolved to move beyond direct relations between things and the '*ante rem*' (that which is, as the Latin suggests, prior to things):

> **"we need to take account of more than we did before. Earlier we distinguished two types of things, but now we have […] a third […]. Our earlier discussion required no more than the two — the model, as we suggested, and the copy [thereof], the first being intelligible […], the second visible and subject to creation […]. But now […] our account should try to clarify this […] obscure [third] kind"** (Timaeus, 48e-49a)**.**

This clarification proceeds by asking after powers: "how [to] conceive of it? What […] capacities does it have?" (op. cit., 49a).

Understanding how powers might become effective is what we were trying to grasp in terms of this third kind, however. If one were to introduce an item to mediate between '*ante rem*'-M and manifest-M one will still have to spell out how it does that. If this involves attributing to it *manifested powers*, as is the case above, we have not explained anything but posited an object with a manifest power to make abstracta manifest. The suggestion above is that there is something like providing '*ante rem*'-items a space and inviting them in. This is more than Bird ever tells us, but again: that way, our new ontological posit would mediate between manifestedness and unmanifestedness by *manifesting some powers*. That is: this special posit seems to come with the same problem as any other 'realizer'. It would be an example of an 'S' qua manifesting, not an explanation of what leads up to M.

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[36] The list goes on (Bianchi, 2014, p. 96): "gold, […] the mother, […] substrate for a fragrant ointment".

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2.1.3   A Category Mistake?: Distinguishing between Potentiality and Actuality

Here I address what I have branded (in 1.3.5) a possible *category mistake*: it sounds strange to say that possibilities are actual. I concede this might just be semantic stubbornness on my part: I would like to use my terms such that 'everything is actual' means 'nothing is possible'. I concede this will depend on what one means by 'actual'. Let me clarify that *I* think it means something like 'the spatiotemporal world, in its manifested state (actualit*y*), made up of bits, like objects, parts thereof, qualities thereof... (actualit*ies*)'.

I also believe possibility-talk, more than anything, makes sense of *shifts* in actuality by talking about the non-actual conditions for those shifts. Its main task is to speculate about some factor (in my view, here taking an advance of the content of chapter 5: a reserve of non-actuality which creates actualities) that accounts for the future in as far as it is different from its past. In language I will introduce later (chapter 5): a surplus of power beyond the actuality from which the *next* actuality results. If all is actual, on my understanding of actual, we lack such power and hence an explanation of something very familiar: change. I think this is a very clear picture. It moreover does not deny potentiality is real; it just distinguishes it from actuality.

What does Bird say instead? That "everything that exists is actual" (2007, p. 112) and that possibilia exist. He adds: "The being [and its equivalent 'existence'] of X consists of those facts that are entailed by the fact that X is" (2007, p. 100), where facts are relations between properties (universals) and particulars, or between universals themselves. In virtue of some existent's essence there will be certain relations: these relations is what that existent's existence is. But there are no further concepts here for the coming into being of said relations.

Bird thinks that, by casting possibilia as actual, he can account for possibility-*language*: he supports adhering to the Barcan Formula by saying "Wittgenstein was right when he instructed us to [...] look carefully at the grammar" (2007, p. 112), meaning, roughly, he is happy to take the phrase '*it is possible that X*...' ontologically serious ("it seems pretty clear that the possibility [of M] is the [possible-M] itself"[37]: op. cit., p. 111): this, he says, "accord[s] better with ordinary [language]" (op. cit., p. 112) than saying that possibilities are non-actual. This, then, is one

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[37] Hence the possibility of making origami swans 'pretty clearly' being an unmanifested origami swan. This seems hardly clear to me. I think introducing something reality *beside* actuality may take care of this. Think about 'my' proposal roughly this way: whereas Bird posits full-fledged actualities linked through becoming concrete, I would say something more along the lines of 'we must presuppose beyond actuality a surplus of power'. *But it is not clear that this surplus and what it culminates in need to be similar* (e.g. abstract swan/concrete swan or abstract fire/concrete fire). On my view (chapter 5), they are not.

function actual possibilities have: to exist as referents. But how about their systematic metaphysical function?

One might ask whether one needs anything beyond actuality to account for certain kinds of states of affairs, i.e. *manifestations*. Even if we need nothing besides actuality to account for possibility-talk, dispositionalism becomes much easier to understand if we introduce some aspect of reality next to actuality. Instead, so far, we have gotten actuality 'all the way up', which is confusing: there are two modes of actuality; there then is talk of fact-entailing but no value for the ontological work-in-progress by which concrete items come into the right kind of relation with universals. Chapter 5 offers a framework I find clarifying in this regard: I propose it is neater to think the manifested and unmanifested are real, but not that both are actual. This pre serves a functional distinction between power and the actual: the actual is an in principle static result, power is what achieves this, is hence presupposed by it and therefore to be distinguished from it.

2.1.4   Regarding Graph-Theory

Bird answers the RO by analysing properties on a graph-theoretical model. One might wonder:

- **Whether what he generates this way really is property-identity**
- **What the connection is between the digraph and property-identity**

'Quidditism' (see Section 1 of the *Introduction*) is a problematic view, but it is not clear that answering RO by defining non-regressive relations between property-elements is a satisfactory alternative. For: understanding P requires knowing "*other properties*" (Bird, 2007, p. 2). One might then complain one did not really get an answer regarding P: the nature of P has rather been displaced. Displaced to a definite locus, if the digraphs work, but nonetheless displaced.

Quiddities could be said to have the advantage here: at least they are primitively what they are, such that there is in some sense a self-contained answer to the question what any property is. I do not think the displacement mentioned would be a serious objection. The reverse would actually be worse: it is true categorical properties simply are what they are but *therefore* it becomes unclear what the essential role of any such property might be (as also explained in the *Introduction*) leaving us to think only of them as quiddities. The displacement of P's identity to M

and S is then the best we seem to be able to do, provided that no infinite regress ensues ('P is the property that relates such and such': an identity in terms of a definite position in a structure).

It is somewhat ironic that Bird employs common-language based reasons for accepting the actuality of possibilia, but that graph-theory (a fairly specialized pursuit) then saves property-identity. I do not think *that many* philosophers have a good handle on graph-theory (I speak, of course, of myself) and would not vouch for its way of thinking squaring well with ordinary thought. If this is not a serious worry either (after all, what is irony?), note that this essentially reprises the complaint that understanding of property-identity has been deferred: this time not by replacing P with M&S, but by providing us with P's identity in a medium we had not asked for, without proof that it must be so that graphs give us information about properties, although I might add that I do think that *if* the essential form of properties is as Bird says, the correspondence is not farfetched.

One might worry that Bird has produced a model of structure- or relational finitude without providing reasons for thinking it really represents properties. The connection seems to be that both properties and digraphs are relational wholes, but does the fact that one might construct graphs with graph-directionality really give us any information concerning the essences of properties? The following has been on my mind: Bird tells us (2007, p. 207) that property-identities must be taken to be fixed because it is possible for digraphs to have definite loci in terms of arrows (white and black, see the images in the table in 1.3.3) pointing at and away from them. But does this prove dispositions have their identity in the directed way Bird wants?

James Williams (the Deleuze scholar, not Williams the dispositionalist I made reference to in the *Introduction* in framing my project) makes the following observation about the use of mathematics in philosophy in general, and it may tell us something about the case of graph-theory: we encounter, through mathematical tools "philosophy as justification rather than as explanation" (2008, p. 119). In this case: we gain some justification for saying properties have bounded relational structures, because such structures are indeed possible. But the question remains whether dispositions are such wholes. Has this been *explained* to us? Have we deduced it in a way that says it must be so?

Dispositionalists disagree on what kind of directed arcs there might be (Vetter, for example, would deny there are S-arcs: see chapter 4), which in itself casts no aspersions on graph-theory as a resource (just drop the white arrows as represented in 1.3.3). But perhaps we can add the following: if we were already saying potencies have relational structures, the fact that graph-theory does what it does adds justification to this view ('*see: no regress!*'). The representational tool *explains* nothing however, in the sense of offering an interpretation of dispositions: it just

orders a view gained by other means. But is it the right view? The understanding of dispositions I will develop in chapter 5 cannot be as easily represented by a graph[38].

An issue much hinted at remains for Bird: understanding properties on the graph-theoretic model stands or falls with whether the arcs of the digraphs (i.e. the manifestation-relations) that Bird commits to, exist. They cannot exist if the (elements making up the identities of) properties are *not* actual since non-actual items, for being non-existent, cannot be relata. Since the actuality of the unmanifested is covered by Bird's reference to the Barcan Formula, we must see whether we should be comfortable with the actual status bequeathed to possibilia. I think there is reason not to be.

2.1.5   The Univocity of Being: either Everything is Actual, or Something Else is Going on

It seems to me that the univocity of 'being'[39] across both unmanifested and manifested items, does not cover the total range of values we need to account for manifestation in Bird's system. I have already (2.1.1) said that there is an innocent term for what we are missing: *between being unmanifested and being manifested lies a third value: one becomes the other, so let us call this 'becoming'*. Since this posit would lie between two modes of actuality, one might say that becoming is itself actual, too. We may then try to develop an understanding of realization to cover the spurts of becoming the world goes through regularly (pints foam, dolphins grow, lightning strikes...) that comes down to this: '$\exists x, x=activity$'. However, since the only way we can think of this third mode is in terms of the unmanifested *becoming* manifested rather than *being* (as applies to the actualities on either side of such becoming), it is not clear this quantification makes sense[40].

My suggestion would be to say we need the introduction of something non-actual to cover over the gap between unmanifested and manifested actualities. But we should not stop there. I am tempted to draw the following conclusions for Bird's framework: it seems we should

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[38] This is for reasons having to do with a different take on directedness, on which the directions in which powers 'point' are created by these powers, i.e. not representable in a manner that presupposes a structure of given wholes as seems to be the case here. The point of '*ante rem*'-properties being that they make for relations and such prior to anything actually ever taking place.

[39] Which we can speak of because "everything is actual" (Bird, 2007, p. 206), that is, everything exists in the same way.

[40] Note, however, that this seems to be, more or less (if the title of his book is to be believed), Kosman's understanding of Aristotle in the next chapter.

say that, effectively, no potencies would be captured by '$\exists x$' (where, again, by the quantifier we mean actuality). This seems to me to be so because, because if we, following our trouble with the PIQ (2.1.1/2.1.2), reinterpret the manifestation-status of properties qua relational wholes to be some synthesis, combination or overlap of the manifest and the unmanifested (a third option), which feature as elements of dispositional essences, 'becoming' is ubiquitous.

2.2   Looking Ahead

The above should shake our trust in the concepts of Platonic dispositionalism. Let us therefore have a look at possible alternatives: specifically, we should try to replace Platonism's *'realisation set-up'*. I do not think the project of developing an MDE as such is incoherent: we just need a different answer to the OSCQ (1.3.5), a different conception of unmanifested properties. For example: we can check whether Aristotelian dispositionalism can overcome the hurdles Tugby sets up for it (see chapter 4) and then offers a better story about realisation. But if I am correct (also chapter 4), we need not despair when Aristotelianism, too, shows itself to be unsatisfactory. 2.2.2 will look ahead to a second alternative which, we will see below, represents a sort of 'overturned Platonism'[41].

2.2.1   Aristotelianism, but not *just* Aristotelianism

Taking stock of the discussion above, we can conclude five things, pointing in two directions: we should consider (following conclusions A and B) Aristotelian dispositionalism (chapters 3 and 4) and we should consider (following conclusions C, D & E) developing the further alternative that the collapse of Bird's system points to (see 2.2.2, with further pointers at the end of chapter 4 and the culmination of my project in chapter 5).

> A)   **My exposition of Bird's position shows Bird takes unmanifested dispositions to be '*ante rem*'-universalia, but he has no account of how these become realised.**

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[41] I borrow this term from Deleuze (1994, p. 67); he uses this term for what he wants to achieve with his own philosophy, among other things to get rid of transcendent universals.

We can conclude this because Bird simply does not give us an account of realization, and because we have tried expanding Bird's Platonism in various ways, none of which were very convincing.

B) It is *because* Bird takes unmanifested properties to be '*ante rem*'-universals that he cannot explain realization.

We can conclude this, simply put, because if one postulates nothing outside the spatiotemporal realm, one would also not need to account for how it relates to and comes into the spatiotemporal realm. Moving on to Aristotelianism would therefore be *the* logical next step. This is not to say that non-Platonic dispositionalists do not have to account for how properties become manifested, of course. It is to say that given that all the options considered above fail, Bird makes unmanifested properties out to be entities whose manifesting is apparently impossible to explain, such that we can independently assess, because they posit no '*ante rem*'-universalia, whether the Aristotelians fare any better.

C) Even if Bird were to bite the bullet and say that, although inexplicable, the '*ante rem*' does manifest, we need further clarifications.

We can conclude this because there is a different, unanswered question about the inhering of these '*ante rem*'-universalia in the concrete world: the PIQ. That is: 'what status does the constituted property (e.g. the flammability that supposedly *is* possessed by a match, in virtue of that transcendent burning) have in virtue of its unmanifested potency-element M?'. This question is still relevant after the bullet-biting, for if one just submits *that* the '*ante rem*' mixes (or overlaps or combines) with the concrete, we still need to find a notion to capture this mixture (or overlap or combination). This brought us to *becoming* (2.1.5).

D) The Platonic MDE is rather low on Platonism.

I do *not* mean Bird's position would have been more Platonic if it included more staples of Platonism (although I suppose that is true). I mean, rather, the following: we have had reasons to conclude that whatever it is that Bird *can* fill in for M, it is not an '*ante rem*'-universal.

We know he thinks P in conjunction with it being possible that the relevant object is S'ed 'produces' (Bird, 2007, p. 105) "possible [M]" (1.3.2). Putting this in terms of spatiotemporality, we take this to imply: spatiotemporal-P with non-spatiotemporal-S produces non-spatiotemporal-M. But one may, I think, reasonably doubt whether the non-spatio*temporal* can be *produced*. Hence, I say Bird's unmanifested properties are not '*ante rem*' in the first place: surely being produced makes something temporal? This opens up some space to reconsider what dispositions really are: in chapter 5 we will exploit the idea that they have a certain temporality, which dovetails well with not being universals at all. That is: we get to "replace [eternal, general essences] with […] malleable singularities" (Kleinherenbrink, 2019, p. 274), which is the point behind Deleuze's 'overturned Platonism'.

> E) **In spite of conclusions A and B, and because of conclusions C and D, Bird's view points to a possible way forward. That is: whatever is left of Bird's system, some 'overturned Platonism', is the start of another.**

It is currently unclear whether anything in this overturned system could be captured by '$\exists x$', whereby we mean *actuality*. That is: if we interpret the manifestation-status of properties to be some synthesis, combination or overlap of the manifest and the unmanifested, a hitherto unexpressed value is ubiquitous. Then, instead of saying *everything is actual*, we may try to provide a system suggesting that, at least as a starting point, everything becomes. It is this position that I want to flesh out below[42], and work out in more detail, and much more nuance, in chapter 5.

Seeking an alternative root-metaphysics for dispositional realism, one that would answer our question about manifestation, we therefore see two options, which share as a starting point that unmanifested potentials are '*in re*' (immanent). That this would be the case for the 'Aristotelian' conception is clear, but it will not yet be clear for the 'overturned Platonism' that will concern us in chapter 5[43]. I will make clear why it will come out that way in 2.2.2.

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[42] By providing intuitions pointing in its direction which are, of course, not *proofs.* Keep in mind that what is to follow is merely the simplest of primers, and that 'everything becomes' is only *in a way* a good slogan for the Deleuzean system.

[43] The latter, especially, comes with some innovations I think dispositional realists must be ultimately willing to accept given the trouble in this and the previous chapter.

Here, let me suggest why an alternative beyond Aristotelianism will be necessary. The next chapter will do for Aristotelianism what Chapter 1 did for Platonism. Chapter 4, moreover, does to Aristotelianism what this chapter did to Platonism. Hence chapter 5: if we want to be dispositional realists, we can be neither Platonists nor Aristotelians. There were already dispositionalists that knew this. I am in broad agreement with Molnar (2003, pp. 24-25):

> **"[w]henever universals are invoked in an account of something of philosophical interest […] we understand less after the explanation is given than we understood before […]. The world seems more intelligible without universals".**

Granted, it was not *directly* for their universality that Platonic universals make for an overcomplicated realisation setup. Platonic dispositionalism, I think, would not benefit, in that regard, from swapping them out for abstract-but-actual tropes, either. There is, however, we will see, a universal-centred argument against Aristotelianism that Bird uses against it. I will discuss it at length under the heading of 'spatialism' early in chapter 3. Molnar (2003, p. 24) summarizes the critique nicely:

> **"[Aristotelian universals] are immanent to the world, being repeatable individuals that manage to be wholly present in all their many instances at once. […Many] philosophers have thought that such entities cannot explain or cast light on anything".**

We will see that this is unnecessarily harsh on Aristotle and the *various 'in re'*-positions one could construct from his resources. Exploring the various ways in which one might be an '*in re*'-universalist will also be a task for chapter 3. Tugby, as mentioned, also has critiques of Aristotelianism. These apply better to some versions of Aristotelian dispositional realism than to others.

Nonetheless, we will conclude Aristotelian dispositionalism is unsatisfactory. This will ultimately be, to paraphrase what I think are the most complicated sections in this document (4.4.1 & 4.4.2) because Aristotelianism is made problematic by defining powers as 'power to X'

(4.2.3) and saying that this is already an instance of X (3.4). In a very formal way, this is still an argument against universals, for X-power can only be an X-instance is X is repeatable in a certain manner. Paraphrased this way (as I shall try to prove is fair), Aristotelian positions may really not be different from Bird's: potential-X is already actual-X. The Aristotelian does not run into trouble with having to provide coverage for the gap between transcendent universals and concrete particulars, but instead runs into trouble with explaining *change*.

We will therefore have to move on to…

2.2.2   Deleuzeanism

If one squints a bit, the ruins of Bird's position, look like Deleuzeanism. In fact, Deleuze's metaphysics can be seen to react against a philosophical methodology at work in Bird's system. That one can pass through a critique of the latter into the construction of the former is then not *that* surprising. Bird's work has relied, throughout, on an inconspicuous analogy: the unmanifested property is like the manifested property, different alone in realization-status. Deleuze has a name for this way of proceeding, which he thinks is bad method: "the transcendental ever being traced from the empirical figures which it makes possible" (1994, p. 151).

Roughly translated: that which makes manifested reality possible ('the transcendental') is assumed to resemble ('traced from') the manifestation ('the empirical') it makes possible, as is the case with origami swans, or burning. If we stick with this method, we will always be trying to understand possibilia by covering them over with actualities, but there is no guarantee that this should work. One can see my project as providing evidence that it indeed does not. It evidently does not work in the Platonic context, because the difference it posits between unmanifested and manifested universals cannot be overcome. The transcendent and the concrete are two separate realms: this is the price one pays, internal to trying to explain concrete burning by positing abstract burning. One gets around this methodology by re-ordering one's concepts around the primacy of difference: *the manifested is unlike the unmanifested*.

Indeed: in Deleuze's understanding, power ('the virtual') has "quite different characteristics" than manifested actuality. "[It] has nothing to do with" relational definitions of power as brought on board so far (Deleuze, 1994, p. 191). The virtual is powerful *in itself,* not for essentially relating to some actual universal. The virtual must moreover be malleable (it 'differen*t*iates') and this malleability in turn explains the change going on in the actual

('differen*ciation*'). Why must this all be so? Because if the existence of any power is not guaranteed by a relation to some 'other' property, powers are always at risk of waxing, waning, mutating. Simply put: since virtual and actual are the two halves of Deleuze's ontology, *everything becomes*. Note, moreover, that if they are *malleable*, powers do not exist atemporally. They are then immanent.

However, Deleuzean dispositionalism is not a version of Aristotelianism for there is a final innovation to mention. Deleuze's position is '*in re*' but not 'universalist': the virtual is made up of singularities instead. The combination of singularity and immanence assures that Deleuzean powers run neither into the transcendence-gap Platonists run into, nor into the problem of denying change listed above for the Aristotelians. When a particular bursts into flames, this is not to be explained by saying it was already *potentially* on fire. That would be (exaggerating a bit) an explanation of the form 'P because P', which is no explanation at all. Instead, the Deleuzean holds there is a powerful surplus different from the qualities now exhibited on the particular's surface (P because of some further condition Q). The difference is twofold: the surplus is powerful whereas the actual result is not, and the actual result is some repeatable item (event, quality, part) whereas the surplus is not.

Chapter 3   Introducing '*In Re*'-Dispositionalism

3.0   The Possibility of Reformulating the Manifestation-Question

This chapter will again be mainly expository in nature, with chapter 4 reserved for the main reflections on the shortcomings of the Aristotelian material here considered. We will in chapter 4, however, also add some details not reached here. This will make the criticisms advanced more fair. The exposition in the current chapter will be less straightforward an affair than it was in chapter 1: for there is a *variety* of '*in re*'-views to consider. The variation regards three topics to be introduced in due course: whether Aristotelians think of universals as having primacy over their instantiations or not (Bird thinks so, but other authors in this chapter show little sign thereof), and whether or not they should accept the 'instantiation condition', saying universals are always instantiated. The third topic is whether Aristotelians instead deal with 'tropes'.

Before we focus on the internal variety generated out of these topics, let us paint '*in re*'-dispositionalism in the broadest of strokes. Bird (2007, p. 12) writes: "[f]or the most part, the argument of [*Nature's Metaphysics*] could accept either" the Platonic or the Aristotelian view of dispositions. That is: the project of providing a dispositionally underpinned account of the existence of necessary natural laws could be carried out with either the 'realisation set-up' provided by Platonism, or the one provided by Aristotelianism. The chief difference between them is, of course, how they characterize universals. I like to think of this in terms of locating them: 'here' in things, or 'elsewhere'.

Aristotelian universals are '*in re*': immanent to particulars. Let us be clear on this: some Aristotelians take this to mean that unmanifested universals are nonetheless instantiated. Others hold, strictly, that *there are no unmanifested universals*. On the former reading, 'instantiated', means as much as 'the property is located somewhere in the concrete world, either in the manifested/actualised or unmanifested/potential mode'. That is: they might say that being potentially instantiated grants properties existence. In this chapter, we will begin investigating whether thinking this way helps Aristotelians in providing what Platonic dispositionalism lacks: an account of how to conceive of the manifested emerging from the unmanifested.

Before we get in too deep, consider the parallels between Platonism and the one version of Aristotelianism introduced by Bird[44]:

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[44] Which he (2007, p. 12) simply calls "**the** Aristotelian [...] conception" (emphasis mine).
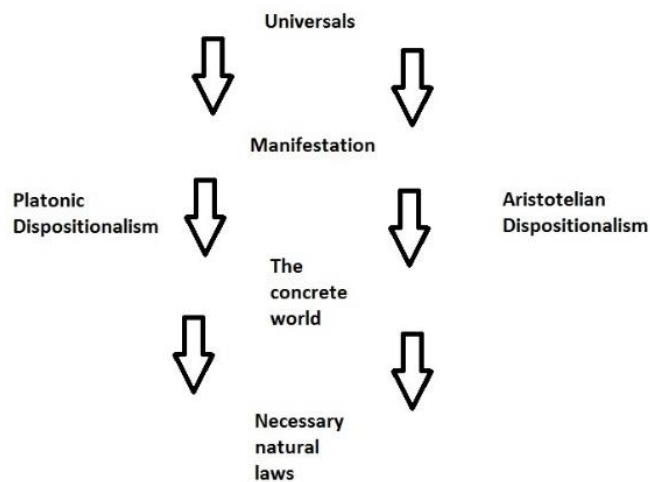
Figure 2: The Supposed Parallel between Platonism and Aristotelianism

On the left, in Platonic dispositionalism, transcendent property-universals undergird the existence of necessary natural laws, through the universals' manifesting in the concrete world. If Bird is right that immanent universals generate a very similar picture, the Aristotelian position can be represented by the arrows on the right. But this will not be the case. In producing expositions of various Aristotelianisms, I show some Aristotelians think in ways not paralleling Bird's. They all, however, face a parallel problem: Aristotelians are united in having a way of dodging questions about how their universals come to relate to the concrete world, but should one adopt this picture, one must of course still explain how universals switch between actual and potential '*in re*'-ness, both of which now characterize the concrete world.

This chapter therefore asks:

> ***'What are the Aristotelian dispositionalist's resources for providing an account of the arrows on their side of the above image?: what, given that they are always in the world, may we say their universals are, and what do Aristotelians think 'manifestation' amounts to?'.***

We start with Bird's *Aristotelian* account. In *Nature's Metaphysics*, he adumbrates a logical space to be investigated beyond the '*ante rem*'-position previously examined. One finds there an

Aristotelian position, distinguished from Platonism in virtue of its universals, which are immanent rather than transcendent. More precisely, Aristotelian dispositionalism *à la* Bird (2007, pp. 50-58) has three tenets:

1) ***'in re'-universals combined with…***

2) ***…commitment to an 'instantiation condition' stating that whatever property-universals there are, are instantiated.***

3) ***Support for necessary natural laws.***

However, we should not think of the logical space adumbrated by Bird as exhausted by these tenets. If we do, we obscure that e.g. a position that drops or significantly alters 2 can be "of Aristotelian pedigree" (Vetter, 2015, p. 1). How the various varieties in 'in re'-universal dispositionalist logical space relate to the historical Aristotle exactly is, moreover, not so important. Relevant views would not suddenly not be an alternative to Platonism if they would be unorthodox in that sense. We will thus explore a wider variety of views: not just what Bird calls 'Aristotelian' but a variety of '*in re*'-views, sharing the thought that universals are '*in*' the concrete world. We will keep track of them with the help of visual aids; the taxonomies that start appearing from 3.3.2 onward.

The 1-2-3-Aristotelianism above (like its siblings, or cousins, including the 'Platonic' position) is, we might moreover say, but one way of filling out a general 'dispositionalist schema', an invention of mine with an eye to check whether the positions advanced in the remainder of this project are sufficiently MDE-like, which roughly looks as follows:

α) some kind of powerful properties, combined with…

β) …the thought that the concrete world is bepropertied, at least qua manifested, by entities accepted in α …

γ) …combined with some stance on natural laws[45].

The use of such a schema is that it makes for an easy tool for spelling out alternatives within recognizable limits, and carrying out comparisons between various frameworks.

Using it we may, for example, say that (as we will see):

Vetter (3.4) espouses an 'in re'-dispositionalism that slots an alternative for 2) into β.

The 'instantiation condition' found in tenet 2) above, or Vetter's alternative to it, are, by the way, not themselves accounts of the realisation/manifestation of unmanifested universals. They really are just characterizations of what kinds of immanent properties there are. As already mentioned, these perhaps void the question we have been asking about realisation (universals *just are in* the concrete world), but also introduce a parallel question about properties qua potential becoming actual ones. One might hope the Aristotelians have resources for answering it.

We may also, using our schema, say:

Lowe and Kosman[46] (3.3 and 3.2 respectively), adhere to α) in a manner quite unlike what Bird would have plugged in for it (had he not rejected Aristotelianism: 3.1) even though they would all have agreed on the immanence of powers.

We will start, however, where we paused to complicate matters: Bird's sketch of Aristotelianism, which we perhaps should (as we will see) be calling 'spatialist law-providing *in re-*

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[45] This is meant as a schematization of views commonly found in the literature. In principle dispositionalist positions do not have to address γ (unless bracketing γ is addressing it) or may opt (like Mumford 1998) for lawlessness. In what follows I will go on to ignore γ as much as possible.

[46] Aryeh Kosman is not a dispositional realist, but an Aristotle scholar. His interpretation of Aristotle, however, introduces an interesting contrast to dispositionalist views discussed here, and hence I will be constructing a (would-be-)Kosmanian '*in re*'-dispositionalism on his behalf.

dispositionalism'. Since that is not very catchy, and we are bracketing discussions of natural laws and we are solely focussing on providing content to fill out β with, an account of how the items introduced in α become manifested, and the entire chapter will only address '*in re*'-dispositionalisms anyway (so we need no reminders that is what we are talking about), I shorten this to 'spatialism'.

3.1 Bird's Spatialism (and Why it was Discarded)

Bird says that in contrast to '*ante rem*'-dispositionalism which says property-universals "exist outside space and time" (2007, p. 12), '*in re*'-dispositionalism takes its universals "to be actually present in all instantiations" (ibid.). This sub-section explicates Bird's understanding of this claim, which in turn explains why Bird opted for '*ante rem*'-dispositionalism. On his interpretation (which, as we will show, overgeneralizes), '*in re*'-universals have a problem specific to them, which I call the 'immanent location-problem' (ILP), which '*ante rem*'-dispositionalism avoids. The issue is that '*in re*'-universals would need to "have the capacity to be in more than one place simultaneously" (ibid.). But the very same thing cannot be here and there simultaneously.

Bird then (wrongly) rejects the '*in re*'-view wholesale. Bird (2007, p. 52) is obviously right in saying that the ILP "does not arise if one adopts" transcendent universals: for these would not be spatial. But what to make of the suggestion that "[f]or [spatialism] to be genuinely distinct from ['ante rem'-dispositionalism] the location of a universal [...] must be a genuine spatial fact" (ibid.)? Bird seems to be saying that for there to be different kinds of dispositionalism, is necessarily for there to be only two varieties. I take Bird to mean that a dispositionalist who interprets '*in re*' as not meaning that there are 'genuine spatial facts' about universals cannot be really committed to immanence.

I say the ILP arises specifically for Bird's understanding of '*in re*'-universals (so: tenet 1) because he interprets universals as taking up space in some 'genuine' sense. He does not explain what that means, but obviously he means it to exclude the ability to be in more than one place simultaneously, and holds that such spatial existence is what immanence amounts to. I call this view of and demand on instantiated universals 'spatialist' and the version of '*in re*'-dispositionalism Bird considers, which includes an instantiation condition, therefore, spatialism. I later contrast this with a view of '*in re*'-universals being like an activity (which, I would say, *can* go on in various places at once, seemingly eluding 'genuine spatiality': it is not a mystery that various groups can simultaneously dance the troika or be capable of doing so).

Alternative conceptions of '*in re*'-ness must for Bird ultimately be "mere *façon de parler*" (2007, p. 52) and necessarily collapse into either Platonism or spatialism. Instead of a genuine alternative immanent view, such a view would be a superficial concealing of transcendence or a clever way of hiding an understanding of immanence that leads only to insurmountable problems. Bird thus claims one either has to defend an impossible '*in re*'-position or become an '*ante rem*'-dispositionalist. I.e.: all dispositionalists should be '*ante rem*'-dispositionalists. I am, taking an advance on our examination of '*in re*'-based suggestions for overcoming (or avoiding) the ILP in sections 3.2, confident this is false.

Note that none of the above need deter us from investigating what, if anything, Bird tells us about the realisation set-up spatialism might harbour. The ILP, after all, really only concerns the fact that, given spatialism, there cannot be more than one instantiation of any property simultaneously. We could ask, for example, half-jokingly, how manifestation would work for that sole countenanced spatialized property. What happens to it when it goes from being '*in re*' and potential to '*in re*' and actual?

3.1.1   The Limits of Bird's Sketch

We will not pursue this in earnest because it does not remotely resemble the world we have to explain, in which manifestations do in fact (to use a bit of an awkward phrase) repeat simultaneously (troika here, troika there…). I hope, instead, the reader agrees that Bird's demand for 'genuine spatiality' is simultaneously so unfriendly to immanence and so underdetermined (what is genuinely spatial, what is not?), that we may instead start investigating what it may mean for '*in re*'-universals to be instantiated in different senses than 'spatialism'. Let us now clarify how the one might have become attached to the other, to underwrite that they are not intrinsically connected and there thus might be such senses.

Bird (2007, p. 51) characterizes the "instantiation condition on universals" which "requires [them] to be instantiated at least once" (op. cit., p. 12). As Armstrong, from whom Bird adopts the condition[47], says: each property-universal must be a "property of some particular" (1989, p. 75), so "there are no uninstantiated universals" (1997, p. 26). This sounds spatialism-neutral (no mention of 'genuine spatiality', after all), and we will keep treating the condition as such, but with

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[47] Armstrong (1989, p. 75) calls it a "principle". I prefer 'condition': being a 'principle' implies being *first*, but the condition seemingly *follows* from Armstrong's naturalism, and it ends up in Bird through this route.

Armstrong's background-assumptions (his naturalism, such that the "totality of entities, is nothing more than the spacetime system": op. cit., p. 5), Armstrong's formulation is a catalyst for spatialist readings of the condition.

Bird-qua-spatialist may have imported spatialism into his sketch this way, although Bird-qua-Platonist seemingly complicates (or: goes astray from?) the naturalism from which spatialism then comes. Extrapolating, one might think this seeming ambivalence regarding naturalism perhaps explains the ambiguity in Bird's introduction of the instantiation condition as a "modern equivalent of Aristotle's *in re* conception of substantial forms" (2007, p. 51). The ambiguity is this: does this equivalence imply Bird's Aristotle is quite modern (a spatialist-naturalist in the modern sense of naturalism?), or ought we to re-Aristotelianize parts of the naturalism Bird would have built his aborted '*in re*'-framework with?

Clearly, *some* selection of items from Aristotelian metaphysics is supposed to provide '*in re*'-dispositionalism with its basic set-up. We have our universals and their immanence, but were there other parts from the Aristotelian conceptual ecology Bird had wanted, or should have needed (as he should have with regard to his Platonism), to include? E.g. should the 'forms' just mentioned be isolated from Aristotle's teleology or not? Would introducing a modern equivalent of such a notion not help in providing an account of realisation? Because Bird's sketch is (quickly) discarded due to the ILP, these matters remained, much as they did for Platonism, unexplored. We shall briefly return to historical matters in chapter 4 to suggest further historical additions would, again, *not* be helpful. The next sections, however, get into '*in re*'-dispositions that do make good claims to already incorporating some truly Aristotelians insights beyond what Bird has presented us with.

More importantly: there is, again, no account of realisation to be found in Bird's work. What *has* become clear is that immanence about property universals bears no intrinsic relation to spatialism. Indeed, my suggestion is that Bird was too strict in thinking of spatialism and '*in re*'-dispositionalism in strict conjunction. There might be different ways of thinking about instantiations. And hence we move on to '*in re*'-dispositionalisms that do so, first specifically to one I construct here from Aryeh Kosman's interpretation of Aristotle, found in his *The Activity of Being* (2013).

3.2   Aristotelian Dispositionalism with Activity-like Universals: a First Alternative to Spatialism

With Kosman/Aristotle we may suggest that one might look at immanent property-universals as more like activities than like objects (I say this because objects seem to me to be of the genuinely spatial sort). Kosman/Aristotle presents a non-spatialist understanding of universals that would dispel the ILP. It therefore makes sense to be aware of this. The difference, for our purposes, would be: objects cannot be in several places simultaneously, but activities can. Moreover, we can suggest Aristotelianism ought not to include the claim: *'property-universals are always of some particular'.*

This may sound surprising, given what we have previously said about the 'instantiation condition'. The gist of the rejection is not some denial of immanence. The 'of' here signals a kind of relationality Aristotle would deny. It has literally since antiquity been a problem for Platonism that it cannot explain the relation between '*ante rem*'-predicates and the subjects they are 'of'. The previous chapter re-enacted the issue, which Kosman (2013, p. 34) calls the "the relational pitfalls of Platonism": a gap remains where there had to be an intelligible fact of relating[48].

Now consider how Kosman/Aristotle thinks the particulars/properties-relation: "there is no relation of a predicated being to a subject that can be identified independently of that being" (Kosman, 2013, p. 166). Predicate, subject and relation are not, as in Platonism, separate Form, particular and e.g. bridge-relation (like 'participation'). Rather (op. cit., p. 34): "in substance, matter and form […] are one" (for 'form' read 'predicate' and 'subject' for 'matter'), such that no manifestation-gap occurs. If one implies particulars existing separately from predicates (in the last instance as so-called 'bare particulars') that somehow become part of them, one has a bad reading of Aristotle.

Keeping this unity in mind, a property-erasing scenario like the one below informs us about what it could mean to say there are no uninstantiated universals:

> **Suppose the last fragile object in the universe were a glass trinket shaped like a hedgehog. Our hedgehog is thrown, as if on purpose, onto a slab of concrete. It breaks. The shards are quickly ground into dust by a parade of steamrollers. What on**

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[48] We have seen three Platonic attempts at fixing this in 2.1.2.

Earth is going on? There is, in any case, no longer anything fragile in the world. This, one would think, erases fragility from existence. But, collect the dust and melt it, and: it is back!

We would like to know, if universals are never uninstantiated (i.e. they are always united with some particular), how to understand what the universal got up to in the interim. If properties do not go to Platonic heaven, the answer must roughly be: not actually fragile, the dust is potentially so, the property remaining nonetheless '*in re*'.

But how to interpret *that*? Here is one option, derived from Kosman's understanding of Aristotle: thinking "matter in general terms of instrumental ability" (2013, p. 112), immanent universals can be instantiated in two ways: being active (actual), or being mere capacity (what is generally called *potential*). But we can go a step further if we follow Kosman/Aristotle in taking "*activity* as a model of being" (2013, p. x): assuming potentials are properties, and properties are ways of being, potentials can also be categorised as goings-on of a sort. To have a potential is then a "being able to be otherwise" (op. cit., p. 70). If we may take this step, neither way of instantiating (actually or potentially) give us reason to think property-universals spatially. Instead of saying fragility (whether actual or potential, as is the case in our hedgehog-dust) is now required to be in various places at once, we may say the same goings-on are in several places, which is much less mysterious.

Roughly, Aristotle(/Kosman)'s universals are immanent because they always go on in some earthly circumstance (and never in Platonic heaven). They are always ways of being of the entities they typify. Consider, now, our hedgehog's power to break. Unexercised, it nonetheless exercises in its current circumstances a way of being of which breaking, in different circumstances, is the product. This involves introducing two "levels" (Kosman, 2013, p. 57) of instantiation: "first realization"/"first actuality" ("capacity"; mere disposition) and "activity"/"second actuality" (op. cit., p. 59) (action).

Let us conclude that, whereas what we said about predication above is a mere detail (although it does seriously inform us about how we may conceive of particulars and how they are, i.e. never apart from properties), accepting spatialism would be a harsh restriction on our thinking. Spatialism captures nothing activity-like about universals. Aristotle(/Kosman) says, rather, that both the actual manifestedness and the potentiality of universals are instantiations, in this manner fulfilling the instantiation-condition while avoiding the ILP. After all: being qua

potential to break, just like the actual breaking, are ways of being (so, in the relevant sense: activities that go one in some earthly circumstance).

Should one adopt this picture, one must of course still explain how universals switch between actual and potential '*in re*'-ness, both of which characterize concrete particulars. This is the 'parallel problem' suggested in this chapter's introduction: accepting an 'instantiation condition' does not solve, but pushes down the line, the question about manifesting we have been asking since 1.3.5. Perhaps the question is here best put as asking: '*how does an instantiated 'first actuality' (capacity, understood as a way of being, characterizing some substance) become a 'second actuality' (i.e. manifested)?*' Thus leaving us, roughly, with these question marks:
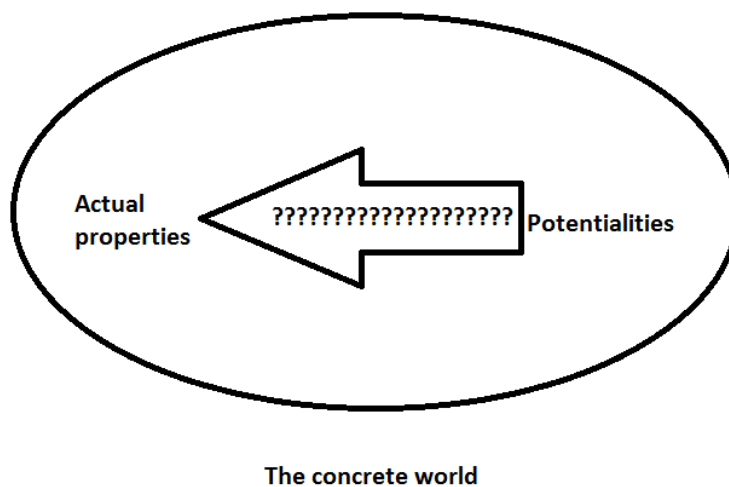
Figure 3: Representation of the Question about Manifestation for the Aristotelians

Resolved *for us* is how the same universal may exist in different places at the same time: the same activity (which is what we are saying ways of being roughly are), surely, can go on, or be possible, in multiple places simultaneously.

3.3   Aristotelian Dispositionalism with Secondary Universals

3.3.1   Responding to Spatialism

Looking to a reading of Aristotle such as the above, generates a way out of the ILP while retaining '*in re*'-universals. E.J. Lowe, in his *The Four-Category Ontology* (2006), sets out to do the same and points out another problem for '*in re*'-dispositionalists. This problem I call the 'absurd location-

problem' (ALP): sameness of property, absurdly, leads to sameness of location. Exploring Lowe's solution to both this issue and the question about aspect-switching continues to repay the advance we took (3.1) on the existence of '*in re*'-dispositionalisms that take property-universals to not be 'genuinely spatial'. I quote Lowe at length, with breaks for commentary, explaining his reasoning and calling back to previous sections.

Lowe writes:

> **"Those who believe in properties as universals […] are apt to say [they] are 'wholly present' in the various individual substances which exemplify them – […] universal redness is 'wholly present' in two different tomatoes […] at the same time. They tell us not to worry that this seems to make no sense, assuring us that we have this impression only because we […] assimilate the spatiotemporal location of universals to that of particulars"** (2006, p. 24).

Whereas Bird considers spatialism the only way to understand the Aristotelian's first tenet (and thus 'assimilates' in the way indicated by Lowe), and hence discards Aristotelianism because spatialism makes no sense, Lowe thinks spatialism is a misunderstanding of what 'redness in two different places' means. So, how does Lowe interpret this, especially in a way that succeeds in maintaining universals to be "immanent" (Lowe, 2006, p. 25), avoiding Bird's conclusion that one should really become a Platonist? Lowe continues, regarding the tomatoes:

> **"Suppose […] A and B exemplify […] redness and that this universal is both wholly in the same place as A and […] B. Then […], given the symmetry and transitivity of the relation being wholly in the same place as, […] A is wholly in the same place as tomato B— […] if tomato A is wholly in the same place as the universal and the universal is wholly in the same place as tomato B, then […] A is wholly in the same place as tomato B— [which] is absurd"** (2006, p. 24).

Hence introducing the ALP, forming another reason to get rid of spatialism.

Does the ALP plague the Kosman/Aristotle-version of universals as activities (3.2), one way of getting rid of spatialism we already introduced? If A and B are being-red (activity), this prima facie does not seem to locate them in the same place, with A being(-red) in Arkhangelsk and B in Blagoveshchensk. Perhaps A & B's being-red means both are in suitable spots, but not in a problematic way (two red-beings in the same place at the same time). The coherence of Lowe's account of universals comes down to substituting something else for spatialism. He writes:

> **"[W]hat are in many different places at once [...], are [...] property instances, although these are united by the fact that they are all instances of exactly the same universal. But the universal itself cannot [...] be said to have a location at all [...]. This, however, does not make it [a] 'Platonic' entity [...]. The universal doesn't have to exist 'elsewhere', just because it doesn't have a location [...]: it just has to exist, but without any spatial determination [...]. We can still say [...] its manner of existing is [...] 'immanent'"** (2006, p. 25).

Given this response to the ALP and that our conditions for solving this problem are that we avoid not only spatialism, but also 'ante rem'-universals, our task seems clear: to understand, first, in what sense such unlocated universals are immanent, and then, how they manifest.

3.3.2   What is Secondary Immanence *really*?

Lowe's universals sound a bit spooky. They seemingly have the classic trappings of a wandering spirit, being neither in heaven nor really belonging on earth. Is their immanence indeed 'mere *façon de parler'*? They share with Bird-qua-Platonist's universals their being nowhere and nowhen. Lowe denies their transcendence. Can he, however, really prevent it? Only if he is right that from being nowhere does not automatically follow something's being 'elsewhere'. But then we need to know how we should, if not spatially, and without (unless activity without *any* spatial determination makes sense) recourse to existence "understood as activity" (Kosman, 2013, p. 240), understand the existence of Lowe's universals.

Lowe goes on:

> **"[their] manner of existing is [...] 'immanent' [...] inasmuch as
> [they exist] only 'in' or 'through' [their] particular instances [...].
> We can insist, thus that there can be no uninstantiated
> universals and that particulars enjoy a kind of ontological
> priority over universals, just as Aristotle believed"** (2006, p, 25).

Lowe assumes properties exist 'in'/'through' particular instances only. Roughly, this would mean that on top of e.g. ten pierogi, the immense-satisfaction-induction-property is neither 'elsewhere' nor absurdly located in all of them simultaneously: it exists only in some secondary sense, in virtue of the particulars. This view indeed avoids ALP and ILP: all the instances being different, there are no issues with the same thing being in too many places, or bearers coming to occupy the same place in virtue of wholly being in the same place as the universal they share.

This *does* raise some questions:

1. *How, assuming one needs to establish the existence of universals before talking of instances, can we have instances of the (assumed-to-be-prior) universals if they only exist 'in'/'through' instances subsequent to them?*
2. *What is the difference between the universals' 'manner of existence' and e.g. nonexistence and the ontologically prior existence of property-instances?*
3. *What could one say about what it means for manifestations to come about, given this understanding of universals?*

Lowe inverts the assumption behind question 1, asserting instead that accepting property-universals into one's ontology first demands "existence of [...] particular instances of those properties which characterize objects" (2006, p. 100).
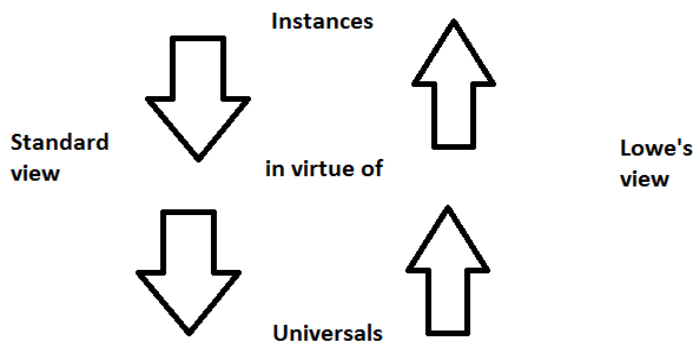
Figure 4: Two Views of Universals and their Instances

More specifically, what justifies Lowe's thinking in terms of universals is that objects exist in a "way" in which "many things can" (op. cit., p. 91). This is not due to there being an '*ante rem*' or '*in re*' deliciousness-universal of which individual pierogi partake. Instead we are made to understand that since pierogi are a certain way (on their own), and other beings seem successful in also being such, we are justified in introducing the analysis that they instantiate the same property-universal. Lowe calls this being that universal's "modes" (op. cit., p. 14). Other authors call these *tropes* (op. cit., p. v).

We now know that for Lowe, tropes have ontological primacy. But in what sense does the resultant universal exist? Tropes having 'ontological priority' over property-universals means, for Lowe (2006, p. 28), that bepropertied things are (as Kosman/Aristotle also holds) "irreducible": they are what we should call substances, inseparable trope+particular units. Assuming (with Lowe: op cit., p. 97) that bare particularity is incoherent[49], ontologically prioritizing universal becomes unattractive for seemingly leading on to this notion by suggesting a gap between objects and properties in virtue of the universal's being '*ante*' (prior).

If universals had ontological priority (pre-exist things they would beproperty), universals inhering in particulars implies particulars would be complexes analysable into "bare particularity" (the particularity-component making them instances, but derivatively so, of universals) and what they get from the property-universals bepropertying them (Lowe, 2006, p. 27). Substances,

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[49] They are, as I know the argument, absurd because they would be featureless entities. I.e.: beings without ways of being.

rather, are irreducibly as they are, without yet involving property-universals. They are not, in that sense, compounds, but nor are they featureless.

Lowe thus accepts property-universals with some secondary 'manner of existing'. I call this existence '*secondary immanence*', by which we will now understand: substances being certain ways which can be repeated by other particulars, ontologically prior to there being universals. Such universals are then not nowhere, nor are they nothing at all. It also seems now, however, that such universals are not what we can be after qua the goal of the process of manifestation. We should rather be interested in the way of being of the particular, i.e. the tropes, and how these switch between levels of instantiation (actual/potential). We thus ask again: '*what could one say about what it means for manifestations to come about, given this understanding of universals?*'.

'Secondarily immanent' universals exist, given that particulars exist in certain ways. The 'instantiation condition' is fulfilled, too: universals are never uninstantiated because it is the particulars that introduce them ('just as Aristotle believed', said Lowe: 3.3.1). Universals thus always correlate with some beings. Lowe cannot, however, really be asked to tell a story about how manifestations and their instantiation/realisation involve the becoming manifest of universals, except for in some secondary sense which does not quite concern us as much as our primary question: '*how do potentials (tropes) actualize? – never mind whether they give rise to universals*'.

In 3.0 we started from the parallel that Bird sees between how '*in re*' and '*ante rem*'-positions account for natural laws, i.e. for particulars behaving the same way if they instantiate the same property. The instantiation of 'ontologically prior' universals accounts for this, wherever these would be located. 'Secondary immanence' rather means that if there are particulars existing in ways that many things can, we get a universal on board. But it really seems to be down to the particulars that there would be repeating behaviours or 'patterns'. Thus appears a division, dividing immanent dispositionalism into views with and without ontologically prior universals, as captured in this taxonomy (note that we have not yet assigned a definite place to the Kosman/Aristotle view, but it, together with Vetter's, will end up on the right hand side):
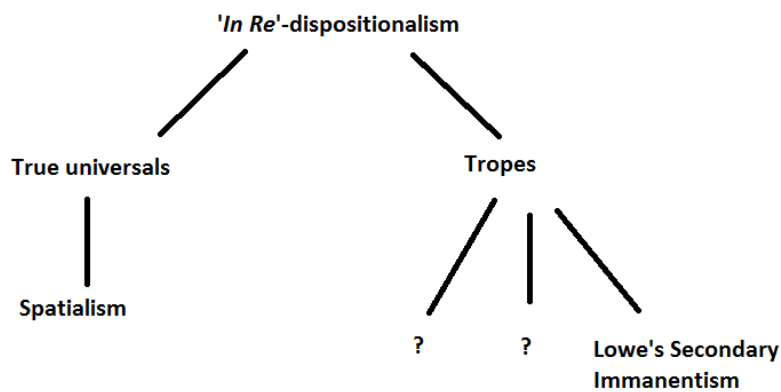
Figure 5: A Preliminary Taxonomy of 'In Re'-Dispositionalisms

Positing substances in the sense above cannot excuse 'secondary immanentism' from the aspect-switching question introduced in 3.2. Lowe must answer a question about manifestation that has a by now familiar structure. Given Lowe's understanding we can only say that it is particulars and the powers instantiated in them that would feature in the answer, and not universals *per se*. The question remains: how does a potential property become actual?

It is interesting to note that Lowe's inversion of the universals/particulars-hierarchy, 'secondary immanentism' gets us somewhat in the neighbourhood of what Deleuze (1994, p. 41) calls "crowned anarchy". This I take to be an aspect of what we called 'overturned Platonism' (2.2.1). It is the aspect of it that holds that there being general, repeatable properties is subordinated to the ways particulars are. Deleuze, however, calls these ways "the different" (ibid.), which does not repeat. In this sense Lowe is, with his repeating yet particular 'ways of being', still far away from Deleuze's view. We will specify in chapter 5 how, in Deleuze's framework repeatability emerges at the same time as the manifestation of powers. We will now, however, explore Vetter's (what I will call) 'potential instantiationism'.

3.4   Vetter's Potentialities (Introducing the 'Principle of Potential Instantiation')

The taxonomy above merely sketches the terrain covered, so far, in seeking to understand how '*in re*'-dispositionalists think the world becomes actually/manifestedly bepropertied (a task regarding which, so far, we have made little progress). Vetter (*Potentiality*, 2015) explicitly thematises and

rejects something all the other views so far accept[50]: the 'instantiation condition'[51]. 'Secondary immanentism' fulfils it, but lets it concern *instances*, not universals. The spatialist- and activity-view also accept it, the latter introducing 'potentiality' to accommodate it: all universals are immanent as ways of being, even if some particulars only exist as potential. In exploring Vetter's position we colour in some more of our sketch-taxonomy. Vetter reasons toward rejecting the 'instantiation condition', before introducing an alternative, as follows (I again quote, with breaks for commentary): If one accepts the instantiation condition, then...

> **"there can be no potentialities to have [...] an uninstantiated property"** (Vetter, 2015, p. 271)[52]**.**

For, if all properties are instantiated properties, both the reality of and potentiality for uninstantiated properties seems to be precluded: there would not be any uninstantiated properties to begin with, so how can there be potentials for them? The condition clearly rules out uninstantiated properties, and although it allows instantiated properties to involve some further instantiated property (e.g. being inflated involves being expanded), there can be no property of having further uninstantiated properties, because there are no such properties (e.g. wingedness cannot confer the potential for flight since it, qua uninstantiated, would be unavailable).

Vetter puts the point about uninstantiated properties as follows:

> **"The potentiality to be F [...] can be instantiated only if there is a property of being F. [...] If there is no property to function as [this potentiality's] manifestation, then [it] never gets to be the potentiality that it is supposed to be. But if there are no**

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[50] Just as secondary immanentism explicitly rejects an assumption previously unthematized: the ontological priority of universals.

[51] Like Armstrong, Vetter calls it the 'instantiation principle'. I edited the quotes to reflect my preference for 'condition'.

[52] 'Potentiality' means "what a given individual can do" (op. cit., p. 1) i.e. what Bird calls 'potencies', the identity of which is given by their "essential powers" (2007, p. 78). There is, however, a structural difference between how these two authors understand dispositions which we will explore in chapter 4: potencies, in Bird, are characterized by "the standard conception of dispositions" (Vetter, 2015, p. 34); Vetter rejects the standard conception in favour of the view that not the M&S-pair, but their M alone individuates properties (op. cit., p. 35).

> **potentialities [...] we cannot account for [instantiation]"** (2015, p. 271).

Assuming this is a fair understanding of the instantiation condition and its consequences, adopting the condition introduces a problem for frameworks that do so. The issue is perhaps best thought of as a version of something we raised against Bird, too (2.1.3): nothing now seems possible.

A more dire formulation applies here, however: if being possible roughly means being the yet uninstantiated property of some actual object, then how can anything be possible if there are no uninstantiated properties? The condition precludes such properties on Vetter's reading: hence allowing no way for their coming to be property anything concretely (instantiate), either. Vetter therefore concludes the condition is "ill-motivated for ['in re'-dispositionalists]" (2015, p. 271). This, of course, invites the question: '*what should the 'in re'-dispositionalist believe, if not that potencies satisfy the condition that there only are instantiated ones?*'. Vetter therefore adopts the *Principle of Potential Instantiation* (PPI) instead:

> **"Every universal must be at least potentially instantiated: there is a [property-universal] only if there is some particular thing which is F, is potentially F, or is potentially such that something is F"** (2015, p. 272).

Note that committing to universals only because particulars are certain ways, seems to commit Vetter, like Lowe, to 'secondary immanentism', i.e. being concerned primarily with tropes (3.3.2). In virtue of accepting the PPI, however, 'potential instantiationism' also comes rather close to Kosman/Aristotle's (as we said in 3.2 potential-having is just a way of being, a goings-on of a sort).

PPI involves broadening the range of 'ways particulars are' to include actual and potential ways of being. Relative to Lowe's position there are thus *more* instantiated properties (assuming that, given Lowe's acceptance of the 'instantiation condition' (Lowe, 2006, p. 25), when he says "an object's properties are ways it is" (op. cit., p. 15), he *implicitly* means to restrict himself to 'actual ways'). In order to defend PPI, one needs to justify this move somehow. Should this succeed;

> **"PPI […] solves the problem with the ['instantiation condition']:**
> **the claim that something has a potentiality to have […] the**
> **actually uninstantiated property of being F is not in jeopardy**
> **because there might be no property of being F. Rather, [the**
> **claim that 'something has a potentiality to have the actually**
> **uninstantiated property'], if true, guarantees that there is such**
> **a [property-universal], because this is precisely what it takes**
> **for there to be [property-universal] F"** (Vetter, 2015, p. 272).

Whereas the instantiation condition implies, at least on Vetter's reading, a world without uninstantiated properties such that particulars could not have potentialities, accepting PPI guarantees that if F is uninstantiated, but there are particulars that bear possible-F, F exists, because something having 'a potentiality to have uninstantiated property F' is sufficient for it to do so. 'Potential instantiationism' is then roughly the view that potentialities *and* realized properties be property particulars such that property-universals always exist, by which we mean: are always instantiated.

Now we can interrogate this view as follows:

> ***Is Vetter's reading (and hence: rejection) of the***
> ***instantiation-condition fair, seeing, as, for example, the***
> ***activity-based view introduces potentiality to fulfil the***
> ***instantiation condition? Moreover, does Vetter bring us***
> ***closer to understanding the manifestation, or rather***
> ***instantiation-mode-switching (potential/actual) of***
> ***dispositions?***

To satisfy the instantiation condition, activity-based '*in re*'-dispositionalism introduced potentiality (that is: a first form of actuality, a way of being), such that property-universals are ever-instantiated, now exercised, then unexercised (existing throughout activity and potentiality respectively: 3.2). This involves introducing two "levels" (Kosman, 2013, p. 57) of realization: first actuality (mere disposition) and second actuality (manifestation). Meanwhile, Vetter concludes that the very condition potentiality helps fulfil, precludes there being potentialities because, this way, there would be no uninstantiated properties.

This is fair only if it is (roughly) correct that '*in re*'-dispositionalism identifies instantiation with 'second actuality'. This is not the case for the activity-based view, so there might be an alternative to the PPI after all. Should we really get rid of the instantiation condition? On the other hand, Kosman(/Aristotle) only saves the instantiation condition by introducing 'levels' of actuality, and one could reasonably think of the introduction of such items as needlessly sinning against parsimony, especially with alternatives around, such as there being two kinds of instantiation (potential, actual) instead of more entities.

Accepting PPI comes at a cost; the 'potential instantiationist' introduces ways of instantiation, on what sounds like a spectrum (but ought to be a binary) that runs from "at least potentially instantiated" (Vetter, 2015, p. 272) to actually instantiated. On the Kosman/Aristotle-view, one says all properties are equally instantiated, but on two different levels. Note here that, if that is true, there is good reason to say that on this view universals are again merely secondary: first come, in substances, their existence as either potential or actual. Kosman/Aristotle's and Vetter's view are, however much they now seem to resemble each other, strictly speaking, different. Either instantiation is univocal but there are different levels, or instantiation is equivocal but both kinds lead to ontological identical results. I am therefore tempted to say these two views nonetheless converge on the same thought: the same property can be real in two ways. *This* thought we will build on in the next chapter.

I take Vetter to mean that potential instantiation occurs when there is an actual particular that is "potentially such that something is F" (Vetter, 2007, p. 272) (where this something might be that particular itself) such that F is potential-instantiated; meaning F is instantiated, just not in the guise of, or to the degree of, actuality. I take this to (again) show that activity-based dispositionalism and potential instantiationism are really very similar. The PPI as introduced above makes a tight connection between existence and being instantiated such that potential instantiation *is* existence. But as Kosman(/Aristotle) brings us in a position to ask (3.2), but not yet to know, what becoming manifest amounts to, the same is true for Vetter.

Kosman(/Aristotle tells us that substances irreducibly exist in ways placeable on two levels of actuality. We do not yet know what it means to go across levels. Vetter tells us, instead, there are two ways of instantiating – but we do not yet know what it means to drop out of one relation and enter into the other. I.e., if it is the case that the two views here discussed share the thought that the same property can be real in two ways, they also share in the problem we have been getting at since the end of 3.2 in the same way: what does it mean for a property to go from that first instantiation to the second, in the sense we have been asking? The accounts given so far do

not express this, and the next chapter will show that there is a real problem in answering the question.

3.5   Conclusion: Summarizing how the Full Taxonomy Might Help the Manifestation-Question

This chapter asked:

> *'What are the Aristotelian dispositionalist's resources for providing an account of the arrows on their side of Fig. 2?:*
> *what, given that they are always in the world, may we say their universals are, and what do Aristotelians think 'manifestation' amounts to?'.*

Since we were faced with a plurality of positions I will answer these questions by leaning on our taxonomy, which now is:
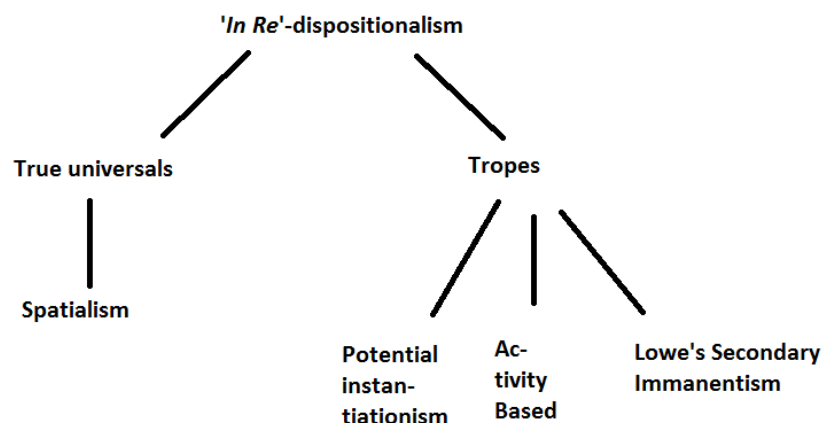
Figure 6: Complete Overview of 'In Re'-Dispositionalisms in Chapter 3

Looking at it, first, however, allows me to return to an issue raised earlier (3.0): do '*in re*'-dispositionalisms run parallel to Platonism?

We can now say that either one's position is untenable because it would be spatialism, *or* drops ontologically prior universals and the supposed running-parallel is thus a gross oversimplification: there are first of all *modes* in substances of which universals themselves are somehow a result. *All the views discussed* apart from spatialism count among the ontologically-secondary-universals-family (we noted that Lowe belongs there in 3.3, and Vetter and Aristotle/Kosman in 3.4[53]), such that '*in re*'-property-universals feature in a rather un-Platonic schema which rules out answering the question how dispositions come to be property the concrete world. Fig. 4 in 3.3.2 illustrated this reversal of operations.

The answers from the three remaining positions to the question how dispositions be property the world have been quite similar: to take an advance on terms we will see much more of in the next chapter, *modality* is (in Vetter's terms) thought to be *irreducibly located in particulars* such that it is their capacities that account for possibility, or (in Lowe's and Kosman/Aristotle's terms), there are substances which irreducibly have powerful 'ways of being'. But *how* (i.e. basic or not) these properties are had does not yet tell us *what their manifesting amounts to*. The positive result in this chapter, in that regard, is that it seems we merely have to worry about how some substance's way of being becomes a slightly different way of being.

3.6 Looking Ahead to Chapters 4 and 5

We will return to that in the next chapter. But we shall also do something else: we shall try to produce a defence of the irreducible existence of powerful properties. My thinking was that, after so many meanderings, it would be useful to return to some basic intuitions. Vetter (2015, p. 24) writes "potentialit[y], [is] metaphysically basic, primitive, irreducible" (ibid.), and *therefore* a defence boils down to amassing intuitions for this view in an attempt to outweigh countervailing ones. Countervailing intuitions would be ones nudging one to stop treating substances as if they, including their 'localized modality', were basic. These intuitions come from the neo-Humeans.

I said in the *Introduction* that I refrain from making claims to superiority on behalf of dispositional realism. What I will do instead is show MDE-like thinking is internally consistent *and*

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[53] This is, in any case, how I read Kosman's presentation of Aristotle because of the critique of the Platonic 'relational pitfalls': 3.2. Subtances are, then, ontologically basic. These properties might then be such that other substances might be the same way. This is what Lowe tells us too, which is why I am putting Kosman/Aristotle, although we did not use the language in presenting the view, under the same heading.

plausible by contrasting what *we* think with some Humean oddities. But some defence of the thought that 'there are basic powerful properties' is not enough. We want to know rather how potentiality may become activity. To this question we still have no answer, but we have come across multiple ways of thinking about it: as 'first actuality's' becoming 'second actuality', as a shift between (in Lowe's terms) 'ways of being' and as structurally constituting a particular's disposition-qua-ever-immanent-'M'-instance (Vetter). What is promising about them is: that the immanence of M (whether manifested or not) would seem to cause less relational trouble than '*ante rem*'-universals.

Getting these details on the table will finally allow us to decide whether we agree with Tugby, who argues we should reject 'in re'-dispositionalism because it cannot account for: 1) "that particulars can have dispositions even if those dispositions are never manifested", which at this stage seems more unlikely, and 2) "that at least some dispositions are instantiated intrinsically to their possessors" (Tugby, 2013, p. 451) which, if the 'basicness' of localized modality means anything, also seems rather unlikely. Moreover, we need to keep sight of whether we are happy with universals *tout court*. We have been considering how they are involved in bepropertying the world, and the most coherent option for thinking about that thus far is to posit particulars that are irreducibly bepropertied, with universals being secondary. This suggests dispositionalism might be able to do without them *completely.*

In the next chapter, therefore, we will also explore whether, by introducing as a first kind of reality some property that then gains some second kind of reality, '*in re*'-universal-dispositionalists are not, as we also said of the Platonists, tracing "*the transcendental […] from the empirical*" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 151). In 2.2.2 I interpreted this as meaning whatever makes (concrete) reality possible ('the transcendental') is assumed to resemble ('traced from') the manifestation ('the empirical') it makes possible. This certainly holds where 'second' and 'first' reality are both F-instantiations. This leads to a problem regarding change, but there is an alternative, the aforementioned 'crowned anarchy', in which the existence of repeatables is subordinated completely to "the different" (op. cit., p. 41), where the idea is that we can get a property F from something that is not F. In working out that stance (chapter 5) we will thus get to welcome another member to the immanent-dispositionalist family:
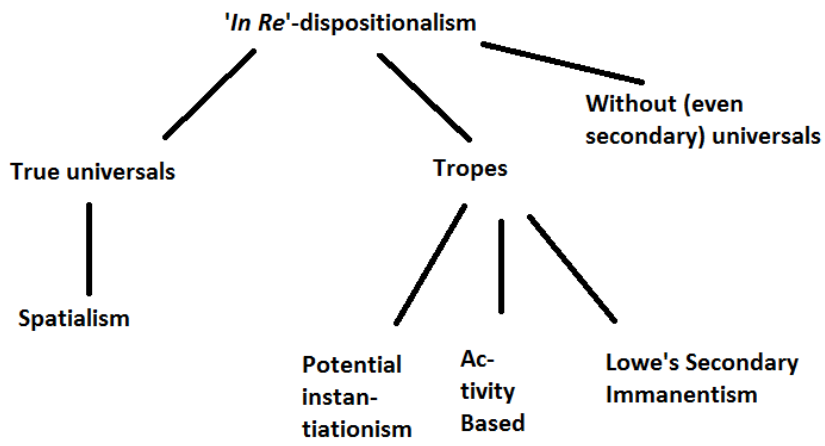
Figure 7: Adding the Final Suggested Branch to the 'In Re'-Taxonomy

Chapter 4 Potentialities and Platitudes: Aristotelianisms Amalgamated and Abandoned

4.0 Introduction

This chapter raises four challenges for '*in re*'-dispositionalism. They are meant to, step by step, increase our scepticism of the view.

- **The first (4.1) is historically inspired, and meant to only raise a suspicion:** ***Aristotle's*** **potentialities did not culminate in** ***necessary*** **natural laws, but in a pattern of (by comparison** ***mere***) **regularities. Can we reasonably expect more from their contemporary counterparts? It will seem easy not to take this seriously, but a systematic feature of contemporary '*in re*'- dispositionalism seems to point in a similar direction: as we will see in 4.2.3, and as will here be prefigured, dispositional essences might be best understood as stating what a thing** *can* **do, not what** *must* **occur (and that might be a problem: 4.3).**

I said in the *Introduction* that securing natural laws would be a matter I would mostly bracket, to which this section forms an exception. I made this exception to illustrate that, as the Platonist could have been aware of the problems in *their* position from a historical point of view, the Aristotelian could also have seen something coming.

I offer this first challenge (and my fourth and final one, too) in the same spirit Tugby (2013) offers the two challenges (so, this chapter's second and third) I will now introduce[54]: as concerning a *platitude*, something many ('*in re*'-, but not *just* '*in re*'-)dispositionalists hold to, and without the securing of which they would consider their view significantly less valuable.

- **The second challenge (4.2.1) will be that '*in re*'-dispositionalists cannot allow property-bearers having properties that never actualize.**

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[54] Finally addressing his critiques head-on in this chapter.

Potentialities withstand these worries when paired with the view that properties are had in two ways, as worked out in 3.4. This thought I will henceforth call 'double instantiation': DI.

- **The third challenge (4.2.2) is that '*in re*'-dispositionalism, as Tugby says, fails to satisfy the platitude that potentialities are intrinsic to their bearers.**

Remember that dispositional essences (on the standard view) include an S in their relational structure. The Aristotelian, moreover (as the Platonist *does not*) needs this S to be instantiated somewhere (in the main: outside of the relevant particular). The particular's having a power is then rather dependent on the outside world. This worry can however be withstood given a non-standard understanding of dispositional essence (4.2.3), which we shall adopt from Vetter after some further exposition (and being prefigured in 4.1).

The fourth challenge, on which '*in re*'-dispositionalism will ultimately shatter, is, of course, the familiar matter of manifestation. We may divide, for clarity's sake, the question how '*in re*'-dispositionalism would account for the manifested properties of substances into two parts, the first part of which we will get out of the way here:

Ch4Pt1): In virtue of what can there be 'second actuality', i.e. manifested properties?

The answer to this question is, as we saw in 3.2, simply that the relevant property has a prior kind of existence (i.e. 'first actuality', or 'potential instantiation'). DI however merely gives us, as it were, the two poles of a manifestation set-up and affirms they both exist. We still then need to know:

Ch4Pt2): How should we understand the *transition* between the ummanifested to the manifested instantiation of some property?

This *cannot* be to ask about *instantiation* as such: for DI just means that properties are had in two different ways, and therefore instantiation as such does not mark the transition we seek. We rather seek a transition between two ways the same property is had (manifestation).

We need to know what resources, if any, '*in re*'-dispositionalism offers for interpreting the transition from '*X has F-potentiality*' to '*X Fs*'/'*is F*'. The being of F as immanent to some particular ought, meanwhile, to be preserved throughout. I show that, given DI, this cannot be done. But it is also true that *without* DI, '*in re*'-dispositionalists cannot overcome Tugby's challenges. This chapter's conclusion is, therefore, that we should give up on Aristotelianism. However, since our taxonomy (fig. 7) lists activity-based dispositionalism, 'secondary immanentism' and 'potential instantiationism' separately, one might wonder on *which* view this chapter focuses. The answer is that, through challenges 2-4, we are developing an overlap between various views: an activity-based dispositionalism which accepts two ways of having properties, while looking to Lowe's and Vetter's work for support.

The resulting position ultimately fails as just laid out. It fails more gracefully, however, it should be said, than the positions separately listed above, because they would not have accepted DI or operated with the standard view of essences. Before we pan our final version of Aristotelianism, I shall make clear exactly which ideas we have synthesized into it in 4.2.3. We end the chapter (4.4.2 & 4.5), as we did chapter 2, by reflecting on the shortcomings of the hitherto discussed views and then advancing some coordinates within which to start working on an alternative, which the next chapter will finally put together. Now let us move on to the first challenge.

4.1   Something Old, Something New: A Historical Reason to be Sceptical about Aristotelian Dispositions

We have said that the '*in re*'-views work with *substances*. The notion of substance we work with pre-empts any problems such as the Platonist might run into regarding the relation between concrete particulars and their properties. We saw (3.2) that Aristotle(/Kosman) diagnosed better and worse ways of conceptualizing the relating of particulars and properties, and that Lowe, too, (3.3.2) rejected bare particulars. Bare particulars, to which substances are the alternative, came up in the context of the observation that by granting properties a transcendent existence, '*ante rem*'-dispositionalists inadvertently introduce entities existing apart from properties.

Implying there would be such particulars makes for a worse way of thinking of particulars and their properties because it generates worries that simply do not (cannot) arise on the secondary-immanent' model, on which one accepts the basicness of substances; entities having "a specific form" (Lowe, 2006, p. 20)[55] throughout their existences, which, adding the thought that such powers have no existence otherwise, is our way of understanding what power-immanence amounts to.

But there is as I will now explain, historically, something about this form that seems not to sit well with the contemporary demands on dispositions. Again, solutions morph into problems. What is the force of the aforementioned form? In other words: do we get from them the natural laws dispositionalists generally seem to want? If one thinks of our dispositionalism as *Aristotelian* along the historical lines set out below, it seems a gap opens between what the position is supposed to achieve and what it does achieve, in terms of natural laws (or: in terms of their necessity). I will briefly discuss two features of Aristotle's world-view.

It is characterized by:

1) **Nature's teleological character.**

2) **Tension between (intelligible) teleology and (material) necessity.**

Aristotelian substances are disposed (in virtue of their powers) toward a '*telos*' (end/perfection), e.g. *acorn* → *tree*. Achieving a *telos* exemplifies, says Kosman (2013, pp. 188-189) nature's *order* ('*cosmos*'), i.e. what is intelligible in the world. Essences, "what it is to be [X]" (Bianchi, 2014, p. 31), collate X's ends together.

Conversely, Aristotle recognizes '*bia*', a countervailing material "*necessity, force or compulsion*" (Bianchi, 2014, p. 51) that introduces irregularities (e.g. there being congenital malformations rather than all animals being perfect exemplars of their species: op. cit., p. 57) into the material world. Such material necessity (we would perhaps rather call it interference, but Aristotle opposed necessity and the intelligible this way) is capable of thwarting the teleological perfecting-developing of 'sublunary' things. Obviously, these specific (outdated) worries are not

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[55] This may include their 'first' actuality/instantiation qua potential, and we unified these distinct ideas in the thought that *properties can be had in two ways* (3.4).

factors in contemporary dispositionalism. Aristotle's world-view is set apart from ours in this respect: the material (i.e. 'sublunary') world does not support ironclad laws, just regularities.

The Aristotelian 'nuance' that material nature's powers can always fail, may today have disappeared[56]: contemporary dispositionalism is often pitched, anyway, as interpreting material nature's necessary connections, supposedly straightforwardly building necessary laws into nature by introducing a "tendency" towards "patterns" (Bird, 2007, p. vii). *Necessary laws* and *tendencies* seem quite different varieties of order, however. Aristotelian (in the historical sense) dispositions certainly support something that could be a *tendency*, but generally end there, since (qua material entities) substances run the risk of 'bia' introducing "*diversions, disruptions, and disorderings*" (Bianchi, 2014, p. 85) into the events they cause and undergo.

Whence the contemporary confidence that powers underpin necessities? That is, after all, their task in the contemporary context. Is it the case that, by purging our world-view of something like '*bia*', powers suddenly produce laws? Consider Armstrong's (1983, pp. 137-140) vocabulary of 'iron' and 'oaken' laws i.e. exceptionless laws and laws to which there are exceptions. We can ask how it can be that some laws are 'iron'. In Aristotle, there is such a thing as exceptionless teleology: Aristotle's "*unmoved mover*" (Bianchi, 2014, p. 131)[57], being (qua immaterial) out of *bia*'s reach, leads a perfectly regular existence. But how, and in which cases, and why in those and not in others, and with what guarantee, have the sciences undergone the swapping of Aristotelian acorns for Armstrongian ore? Moreover: have contemporary dispositions any way of bearing this change out?

This will depend on how one spells out dispositional essences. The above story about 'bia' can of course be easily dismissed: in this regard, the view can perhaps simply be saved by saying that contemporary '*in re*'-dispositionalisms are not *that* closely aligned with what Aristotle thought and moreover that our understanding of the material world has grown to exclude the sort of unintelligible necessity Aristotle was worried about. *However*, as I can merely suggest here,

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[56] From the dispositional-realist context, anyway – in the concluding remarks to *Nature's Metaphysics* Bird mentions that the intuition that laws of nature are contingent is quite common. There are, of course, many neo-Humeans! That is, however, yet a different thought than thinking that there is a material force that might cause the order of nature to go astray.

[57] And for sake of completeness, here is an example of an exception: the 'congenital malformation' mentioned above refers to Aristotle's musings on women. Biological males, exemplify nature's order *qua not having been born women*. The existence of women being merely the effect of material necessities (rather than fulfilling some important final cause), e.g. "the wind [being] in the south" (Bianchi, 2014, p. 38).

but as we will be able to see clearly in 4.3, dispositional essences still seem to bear the trace of 'bia' as discussed above.

The idea is roughly as follows: the standard conception of dispositional essences seems to best read as a *counterfactual conditional*. It then says that *given some S*, will follow *some M*. This will lead the Aristotelian into trouble with one of Tugby's platitudes. Luckily, Aristotelians have at their disposal (courtesy of Vetter) an *alternative way* of understanding dispositional essences. On this understanding, powers are such that they correspond to statements of the form '*X can...*'. This understanding of power-essences, as I will argue, saves '*in re*'-dispositionalism from Tugby's critiques, but it is now unclear how to convert '*X can...*' statements into more modally forceful '*X must...*'- or '*X will...*'-statements. If we cannot be confident about the strength of the laws emerging from this picture, the dispositionalist interested in natural laws should now be mildly sceptical about the '*in re*'-view.

4.2   Tugby's Platitudes

We now move on to the abovementioned critiques. Tugby (2013, p. 453) claims that powers "in the Aristotelian sense" cannot support dispositionalism, for failing to satisfy two 'platitudes' (op. cit., p. 454):

1) **"*A particular can have a [potentiality] even if it never manifests*".**
2) **"*Many [potentialities] are intrinsic*".**

Paired with DI and the non-standard understanding of dispositional essence as sketched above, Aristotelianism can withstand these worries. DI, however, generates further issues (4.4.1 & 4.4.2), such that we will have to abandon Aristotelian dispositionalism nonetheless.

4.2.1   First Platitude: Can Aristotelians Have Unmanifested Properties? – They Can!

Tugby (2013, p. 456) says that since "the nature of [powers] consists in an orientation towards a certain manifestation", satisfying platitude 1) requires introducing a corresponding property as a *relatum* in the essence-structure. Following the normal reading of the 'Aristotelian' instantiation

condition (as discussed in chapter 3 prior to introducing the PPI), if a power's effect has never occurred, the corresponding property cannot exist (Tugby, 2013, p. 463). From this would follow that Aristotelianism cannot provide identities (hence existence) for unmanifested dispositions. I grant this is true. However, a view that adheres to DI would be exempt, for saying that the relevant property can be instantiated even if not actualised.

Having adopted DI, this is what it would mean for powers to be immanent: that effects are already instantiated in substances, though qua potential. Both the manifestation and the potential instantiate the relevant property. This saves us one from Tugby's first critique, however correct for other 'Aristotelianisms'. It is here the case that the relevant 'M'-property is instantiated prior to manifestation, thus generating an identity for the property, individuating it. This would not be so for views using the original 'instantiation condition'.

Of course Tugby might respond to this by saying: 'an instantiation of a potential is still not a *manifestation*, and what an Aristotelian essence-structure ought to do is direct to a *manifestation*, not a potential even if it is, qua potential, instantiated'. But think of the progress made so far this way: to exist is to be a possible *relatum*. One might doubt the existence of instantiated potentials, of course, but *if* we grant that they exist, the relevant position genuinely escapes Tugby's critique. Sure, the *letter* is that we ought to demand manifestations, but the spirit was, I think, that we demand some item we can be realists about. If we are, there is no reason not to posit these items as *relata* in the essence-structure. I thus consider Tugby's criticism escaped.

4.2.2   Second Platitude: Can Aristotelian Dispositions be Intrinsic?

Tugby's second worry that, generally, '*in re*'-potentialities cannot be intrinsic to their bearers, proceeds by way of thought-experiment. The goal is to show dispositions exist relative to their effects existing, and that these can be made to disappear by tweaking the world external to some substance, consequently erasing its power. In other words: '*in re*'-dispositionalists should say there is no power for something that cannot occur even if that is *merely* due to how the world outside of some relevant particular is set up, their powers therefore being *extrinsic*.

Tugby's experiment is as follows: imagine some particular – I will take a gong, meant as a generalizable instance – and imagine the world is tweaked such that nothing…

"…ever [chimed; here a stand-in for some power obviously associated with the generalizable particular], and nothing ever will. In this scenario, the Aristotelian clearly has to say that the [property] does not exist" (2013, p. 467).

Granted that intrinsicality should be understood as "having [a power] is independent of the existence of distinct particulars and x's relation to them" (Tugby, 2013, p. 465), i.e.: x's environment changing cannot affect its having '*P*., and we are here faced with a world, external to the gong (or whatever), in which the gong's power's manifestation-property (idem) cannot exist due to how that world is, it seems that we have a generalizable example of a power, unsuspicious in character, that indeed comes out as extrinsic.

The reason Tugby considers it 'clear' that Aristotelians should give up the existence of their properties when pressed like this, is, again, that the relevant property will lack "*instantiations*" (2013, p. 467). Again, letting 'instantiation' range over 'first' and 'second' actuality, as DI allows, seemingly solves this issue, although I grant that Tugby's criticism applies to views that hold the standard view of essence and use a version of instantiation we reject. It becomes quite important then that DI will by the end of this chapter turn out to make for a rather problematic realisation set-up. Moreover, when we reflect on whether the (generalizable) power above would come out as extrinsic, one might think this is right for powers with essences thought of along the 'standard' line, and then wonder whether there might be an alternative.

Here is why: Tugby's scenario is designed to make the world around the gong such that it effectively cancels all 'chiming-if-struck'-counterfactuals. At least, that is what I take it to mean to design a world outside of the potentially chiming particular such that nothing ever *will* chime: all *stimuli* disappear. It turns out the power was dependent on this. An alternative essence structure might be one that drops the S from the relational structure. Such an essence captures a (supposed) fact ('*x can M*'), and thereby something intrinsic about the relevant substance. Such a notion of essence is available: and if we import it, Tugby's experiment will not affect Aristotelianism, for all opportunities for things to chime being thwarted does not affect chiming-potential construed this way.

4.2.3 Escape from the Second Platitude Explained and Aristotelianisms Amalgamated: The Alternative Essence-Structure and Potentiality's Threefold Nature

To clarify this alternative essence-structure, and with what version of Aristotelianism we have now, after Tugby's critiques, ended up as the lone survivor, we must engage in a bit of exposition (and a prolonged act of synthesis). This section, that is, is aimed at providing a synthesis of features of '*in re*'-dispositionalisms explored in the previous chapters. This variety, is my thought, can be smoothed over by drawing out what is common to its constituents: irreducible, localized modality. To this can then be appended DI and the non-standard understanding of essence. Since nothing unites a multitude as being defined against an opposing view, I will be defining what remains of '*in re*'-dispositionalism in opposition (mainly) to neo-Humeanism[58].

Potentialities are properties that make potentiality-ascriptions true. We came up against a reason for making a distinction regarding these ascriptions in 4.2.2. One can either correlate dispositional essences with '*X can…*' or '*if Stimulated, X Manifests…*'-statements. Focus on the unity amongst these statements first: however one spells it out potentialities are 'local' qua bepropertying something and 'modal' for granting it powers[59], i.e. making manifestations possible for it. Note, however, for power-bearers being substances, that realism about potentiality means acclaiming its *three*fold nature: localization-modality-*irreducibility*. We will focus on the latter aspect directly below where I follow Vetter in setting up dispositional realism by exploring, as contrasts, the supposed explanatory basicness of non-local modality (possibility) and modality's supervening on the non-modal.

One might say possibility concerns how "things in general" might be, filling out statements starting with "it is possible that…" (Vetter, 2015, pp. 2-3: note that in the previous quotations 'things' and 'it' are dummy-subjects, and do not refer to locations for properties). Contrary to the dispositional realist, one might say "localized [modalities] can be defined in terms of [such non-local modality]" (op. cit., p. 5), such that '*it is possible that Ziggy will make falafel*' defines a world

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[58] I said in the *Introduction* that I refrain from making claims to superiority on behalf of dispositional realism, which is indeed not what is about to ensue. Instead I show there is a unity to views previously explored that puts them in opposition to the Humeans. I will add, at times, that their views seem strange, but this is to be taken as a perspectival effect.

[59] Vetter, 2015, pp. 1-5. In paraphrasing Vetter this way, I have taken a bit of a shortcut, although the term 'localized modality' is certainly hers. She writes: (op. cit., p.3): "[p]otentialities […] are possibilities rooted in objects". I.e. they are features of entities making them such that they can do things. Hence: potentialities are modal, because powerfulness is what makes particulars have things they can do (i.e. possibilities of a localized kind). The contrast is with non-local modalities (possibilities). For Vetter, in any case, these root in the local, dispositional kind.

in which chickpeas (and Ziggy, parsley, etc.) can withstand certain processes, and that '*these particulars can make a puree*' is true in virtue of it being possible that they (e.g.) mix.

Dispositional realists hold the inverse (Vetter, 2015, p. 23), for (in the simplest possible terms) it seems that Ziggy, chickpeas, etc., jointly commence a mixing-event such that the particulars (rather than 'possibility') explain the occasion. After all: no chickpeas, no falafel. Especially: no chickpeas *with the right properties* (suppose they were not soaked, or *essentially unsoakable*), no falafel. This straightforwardly illustrates thinking of modality in a way one could characterize as 'potentiality first': the properties seemed, after all, to do all the modal work above: making the making of falafel possible! We should of course clarify that these properties are always borne, such that it is more correct to say *substances* do the work. Moreover, potentialities are 'first' in another way too, if by potentiality we mean *modes* or *tropes*, in relation to which universals have a secondary existence (3.3.2).

The foregoing does not exhaust the options for getting rid of potentialities: neo-Humeans might say the world is thoroughly non-modal, with modality supervening on a "quidditistic" (Vetter, 2015, p. 8) nature, building modality from categorical properties/quiddities and possible worlds. Broadly, there are two ways of understanding those worlds: as abstract entities (e.g. sets of propositions) or as concrete worlds unconnected to actuality. Against the latter, Vetter (2015, p. 24) invokes the "incredulous stare" (op. cit., p. 6)[60]. That is, of course not an argument, but perhaps rather reflects the difficulty of having an inter-paradigm dispute.

She goes on to add: these philosophers believe that possibility can be explained by multiplying worlds (by which they mean: arrangements of quiddities). They suggest that "many of them" (Vetter, 2015, p. 7), might explain modality. Simply put: possibility-talk is about what is actual in an arrangement of quiddities that is not the world we are 'at', and things are possible *here* because they are *actual* there. But it is hard to see why, if believing in (arrangements of) quiddities *tout court* would be contra "the standards of physics" (op. cit., p. 8, as noted in Section 1 of the *Introduction*) this would be a sound strategy. That a multitude of such arrangements

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[60] The introduction of these notions allows us, moreover, to suggest another worry about Platonism. Consider that what makes '*ante rem*'-dispositions '*ante rem*' is their being transcendent. Are they, qua transcendent, not 'non-local' too? Being actual and characterized by analogy to abstract objects (Bird, 2007, p. 113) they, somewhat resemble bits of possible worlds of the actual-but-disconnected sort. We may therefore worry it is unclear what 'Platonism' does better than neo-Humeanism. Amalgamating propertyhood with transcendent non-locality and actuality, 'Platonic' universals might almost as well have been incredulous-stare-invoking disconnected spacetimes.

would explain more than positing one of them, does not seem that plausible. Simply put: relying on quiddities, however multiplied, remains incompatible with physics.

Concerning possible worlds as abstract objects: Vetter (2015, p. 6) asks how to distinguish between those "that do" and "do not correspond to genuine possibilities", distinguishing between what could happen, and what one might *say* but cannot happen. For the neo-Humeans, as suggested, possibility is *unbounded* (see Section 1 of the *Introduction*). This is because they use the imagination as a guide to possibility. *Can we imagine a singing pineapple?* Sure: it is doing a rendition of Bon Jovi's '*You Give Love a Bad Name*' in my head right now. That, say neo-Humeans, means it is possible. But if it is *genuinely* possible, that has nothing to do with our faculties and everything with pineapples. Potentialities explain this difference: what objects can do *can* happen and what they cannot, *cannot*.

We now move on to a more detailed characterization of irreducible localized modality's nature according to Vetter, though still by way of a contrast: the 'standard conception' of dispositions. The main thing to establish, here, is that introducing a different understanding of dispositional essences is not to have changed topics. In other words: one might worry that there being alternatives in matters of essence just gives us essences of different things, such that one might conclude that, really, various dispositionalists are analysing genuinely different items. Per the above exposition we can now simply say: that potentialities make it so that particulars '*can…*', rather than dispose them to '*M when S'd*', does not mean we are not still dealing with irreducible, local modality as discussed above. One of these statements is more local than the other, and therefore more adequate.

Bird's characterization of power-essences is the "standard conception of dispositions", individuating dispositions by "the pair of [their S] and [their M]", generating dispositions to "M when S" (Vetter, 2015, p. 34). Vetter (op. cit., p. 35) individuates potentialities by manifestation alone. We saw that adopting the alternative view helps in answering Tugby's criticism of '*in re*'-dispositionalism. The matter is thus to decide on what formulation best suits a "non-reductive metaphysics of dispositions" (Vetter, 2015, p. 3). So far, the standard seemed serviceable enough. However: if the correlation with counterfactual conditionals ('if, then') makes it so that potentiality "depends on more than the intrinsic nature" (Vetter, 2015, p. 14) of relevant particulars, the former inadequately characterizes powers in virtue of undermining their supposed '*localness*'.

That sounds complicated, but is easily illustrated: whether a gong chimes '*if*' hit, depends not just on the gong. One can pre-emptively wrap it in scarves, hit it with a soap bubble, or *very* gently, etc., and thereby falsify the conditional. The gong, meanwhile, *could* ('*had the potential*

to…') chime throughout. The model '*x can M*' seems to better capture the structure of the power we were trying to get at, allowing one to characterize the powers of particulars free of contextual interferences. 'Standard' essence-structures, with their S-condition, inadvertently achieve the opposite for being quite easily falsifiable. Vetter's alternative characterization of powers, then, does better than the standard conception *at the same essence-characterizing job*.

4.3   History Repeats, and the Beginning of Trouble with 'Double Instantiation' (DI)

Yet again, solutions become problems. Our answers to Tugby's critiques, apart from showing that some form of Aristotelianism is still in the running, also make that view run two risks:

> **1) The worry we introduced by way of historical reflection in 4.1 comes back to haunt us, now that our understanding of dispositional essences is indeed bound up with '*can…*'-statements.**

This, in conjunction with DI, makes it so that Tugby turns out to be right about '*in re*'-dispositions being a poor match for natural laws, but for the wrong reasons. Dispositionalists, says Tugby, want to say there are facts…

> **"…about what the effects of [never-to-occur] interactions would be, […] expressed in [natural] laws. ['In re'-dispositionalists, however] will clearly have trouble accounting for [this]. If the effects […] never physically occurred, [1] then the [corresponding property] does not exist. But [2] if […] the [effect] does not exist, then […] the alleged law governing the interaction is lost. But without the law, it seems [3] there will be nothing to ground facts about what would have happened"** (Tugby, 2013, pp. 463-464, numbering and underlining mine)

Given DI, [1] sounds false. The consequent in [2], then, cannot *for that reason* follow. However, if we read the 'can' dispositional essences are now interpreted by a certain way, it might be that necessary, future-determining, laws fail nonetheless. [3], then, sticks. One may perhaps retort that powers *are* the 'facts about what would have happened' we need. But this is not obvious on our view either, for '*x can M*' and '*x will M/would have M'ed*' are not exactly identical.

It is, however, what *will* (and not what *can*) happen that makes the future. Not immediately seeing how to transmogrify 'can' into 'will', we are unable to provide definiteness to future events. Powers qua 'x *can M*'-structure thus seem to harbour a possibly problematic vagueness: one shall have to consider whether '*x can M*' is actually suitable to provide the powers it attempts to characterize: being of the form '*x can M…*' seems to hold open '…*but then again, it could instead…*', which is maybe not what we wanted out of our powerful properties.

More seriously, however:

2) **One might worry, as must be the case upon accepting DI, that 'potential' and 'actual' being modes of the same property, our notion of immanence is problematic for loading future effects (that is: manifestations) into present particulars. A denial of the reality of change of sorts, cutting against something dispositionalists should embrace**[61].

Throughout 4.2 we have been countering Tugby's criticisms with DI. His critiques targeted 'Aristotelianism' by pointing out (rightfully, as far as I am concerned, given the original instantiation condition) that manifestation-properties, being immanent, cannot exist without "instantiations" (2013, p. 467). Yet, since we are '*in re*'-dispositionalists, we cannot say effect-manifestations may exist beyond the particulars the *local* modalities of which we are talking about. They have to be going on 'at' or simply be 'in' these particulars, and nowhere else.

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[61] Following Williams' suggestion (2019, p. 97) that the following is indeed a kind of change, and one that precisely does *not* go on if we keep DI: "imagine that [a] power is manifested" and therefore gains another property (i.e. from flammability to burning). "In what does this change consist? It seems like there is nothing more to [it] than […] that one property has been replaced by another. […] All we have is a switching in and out". Williams, by the way, also has a tendency to talk about manifestations as futures as I do here.

We have been saying, simply put, that there are properties (qua 'first' actuality) for power-essences to include and thus for substances to instantiate, even in a universe eternally devoid (qua 'second' actuality) of their manifestation/actualisation. That is what I mean by 'loading future effects into present particulars'. Specifically: it is the same property that is instantiated as potential that would have upon some sort of switch been manifested. It must thus hence be present in some way. One might wonder how this can be and/or worry that this spells trouble.

The trouble, I think, can be described as an (accidental) denial of the reality of a particular sort of change: if the same property is instantiated in two different ways [62], it seems that e.g. a non-burning but flammable entity is already on fire *in a way*. But should we not just say it is not on fire *at all*, and that, upon ignition, a fairly serious change takes place? We, however, seem to be stuck with working out an understanding of manifestations and potentialities being temporally co-present: manifestations somehow already characterize their substances' presents.

Of course this is not shockingly new, we talked about 'directedness' in 1.3.3, but note that (for once) Platonist metaphysics is less taxing here than that of the Aristotelians: it is strange to think that manifestations can be nowhere else than in those substances prior to their becoming manifest. Had we recourse to a transcendent realm we could claim a minimum difference between the flammable particular and the flames it is related to. But not so, it seems to me, for the Aristotelian. Perhaps this is ultimately intelligible, or simply a bullet we must bite: we seemingly have no other choice than construing the immanence of manifestations like this.

Having proceeded piecemeal:

- **Our dismissal of '*ante rem*'-dispositionalism (Chapter 2) led to exploring '*in re*'-dispositionalism... (Chapter 3 up until now)**

- **...of which we have seen convincing general critiques... (4.2)**

- **...the direct focus of which activity-based dispositionalism was exempt from. It now seems to have landed in hot water.**

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[62] Remember that we have already used the term 'way of being' for instantiating a power (having a property, properties being ways of being), such that one might now *also* worry that we are now going into a regress of 'ways (of ways, of ways…)'. I will not pursue this any further, however.

Tugby (2013, p. 472) condemned 'Aristotelianism' wholesale, defending 'Platonism' as dispositionalism's "only viable option". The scepticism regarding '*ante rem*'-dispositionalism we have developed, I say, should prevent the dialectic from turning back that way, though we just highlighted a virtue of it. Tugby's critique proceeded by way of suggesting that '*in re*'-dispositionalism could not account for two dispositionalist platitudes – thoughts dispositionalists in general accept (and often go without saying).

Another such platitude has now been put at risk, by the very same way of thinking (DI) that has preserved Aristotelianism so far: dispositionalists in general will want to say the dispositions they are realists about make actuality possible, and therefore they really have a problem if it turns out that given their set-up, manifestation becomes impossible to understand. But DI really *does* make this impossible to understand. We have been steering at that latter issue since 2.2.1[63], and I will explicate it below.

4.4   The Real Trouble with DI: Trying to Account for Manifestation Made Structurally Impossible

We asked: '*how should we understand the transition from potentiality to actuality?*', parallel to our question regarding realisation in '*ante rem*'-dispositionalism. Having introduced DI we noted this question cannot be about *instantiation*, which covers properties at either level of actuality. We do not seek an interpretation of what it means to say a substance instantiates a property: we want to know how they come to instantiate a property they already instantiated *in a different guise*. We thus want to know how to understand, as we said, the transition from '*X has F-potentiality*' to '*X has F-actuality*'. But, it seems that DI conceptually blocks this transition. The problem being that...

> **...given DI we should say substances, throughout their existences, instantiate the same properties, whether they manifest them or not. But, as we saw with Bird (1.1), what one wants to say is that 'M' is a *different* property than 'P'. That is: one wants to say there is change**

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[63] When we said that Aristotelianism is made problematic by defining powers strictly as 'power to X' and saying that this is already an instance of X.

**in what properties things possess when they start manifesting
something.**

This institutes a problem with two sides, which I shall now explain.

4.4.1   The Problem Interpreted in Terms of Individuation

Potentiality-instances are individuated by activity-instances. Therefore, given that we are working in an immanent framework, Ms pre-exist, in substance, their enactment by substance, such that they can be referred to in that potentiality-instance's essence such that the relevant potentiality-instance has identity in the sense in which we used that term in 2.1.4 (call it 'directional' if you wish, I think of it is *deferred*). But given DI, a problem now occurs: the manifestation presupposes the potentiality in the obvious sense, but the potentiality already is the manifestation in some way (and vice versa), for they are both guises of the same property. This is a problem in terms of individuation and it is one that dispositionalists *need not* have if M and P are genuinely *different* properties, such that in individuating properties in saying one particular one is the one that (upon being stimulated) *directs us to this other one*.

'Our' Aristotelian powers, by contrast, seem to *go nowhere*. Or rather: given DI, powers relate not just to themselves, but really, more specifically, to their future selves. This is puzzling. Now, it seems true that burning things *are* (or at least were) flammable, but not always the reverse, which also seems to be the case here, somehow. For: in referring to a would-be (localized) future, that future needs to be instantiated and this can only be '*in re*'. This, I think, makes the Aristotelian's directionality pretty strange, and in any case, does not fit very well with what dispositionalists, in the main, would want out of individuation. What they want out of it, after all, are properties leading to further ones.

4.4.2   The Problem Interpreted Temporally

But there is more. There is now a mismatch between a change we want to explain (first there is e.g. no burning, and then there is, i.e. P has led to M, where P≠M) and its explanation (there is always burning '*in re*'). Right above, I cashed this out in terms of individuation, but one can also cast it as a temporal issue: manifestations individuate powers, yet, to code for a possibility (which would make a difference, i.e. create a future) it needs to be different from the potentiality (present). Our current framework disavows this difference: potential-F and active-F represent the

same property, just as for Bird, although not 'immanently' located, F-possibility just "is the possible [F]" (2007, p. 111) and F-activity manifests that same possibility (although he does take care to distinguish, as said, between P and M: 1.1).

Previously we have always said: there is some sort of directed relation to be established between M and P. But this, in our case, now cannot be a directedness toward a future, although it seems natural to interpret dispositionalists as caring about this. Again, dispositionalists in general, says Tugby (2013, pp. 463-464), want to say there are facts 'about what the effects of [never-to-occur] interactions would be". Williams (2019, p. 27), especially, talks about manifestations in terms of futures: "[p]owers are properties that have possible futures built into them". Getting to such a future would reasonably (given talk, like Bird's, that construes M as a different property from P) involve *change of* property: "one property [becoming] replaced by *another*" (op. cit., p. 97, italics mine). That future effects would, '*in re*', pre-exist their enactment makes our dispositionalism sound strange in this regard.

In fact, it sounds like for both '*ante rem*'- and this final hold-out of Aristotelianism, Timaeus(/Plato) was essentially right: time is the "moving likeness of eternity" (*Timaeus*, 37d), merely instantiating always fully-existent (here: instantiated, therefore existent; in Bird: actual, therefore existent) models. That there would be a real *difference* between power and manifestation is *precluded*, its identity seemingly automatically being woven into manifestation/activity's temporal structure by positing the following: F is manifest, *therefore* F pre-exists as potential somehow, somewhere in the relevant substance (*or* for the Platonist: in some beyond). This idea has been formulated as a principle by Vetter ('ACTUALITY'), and will for the next few pages be our focus, both as the reason for DI-Aristotelianism failing, and as a launch-pad for finding an alternative.

> "**ACTUALITY**
>
> **Potentiality is implied by actuality: Anything which is [F] must also have a potentiality to be [F]**" (Vetter, 2015, p. 209).

ACTUALITY has to mean, one supposes, just that some substance had a potentiality to F before manifesting F. Given DI, however, ACTUALITY lands us in a situation such that we have no resources for answering Ch4Pt2 (4.0 – this chapter's version of the question about what manifestation amounts to): the very possibility of there being a transition between potentiality

and actuality becomes crushed, or evaporates. Potential-F is, like manifest-F, the same F-existence. To have the potential is to have the F. There is no leading from the former to the latter, which is what we were interested in, and so we must give up ´*in re*'-dispositionalism.

4.5 Conclusion: Some Basic Coordinates for a Further Immanent Alternative

Or *must we?*

In a somewhat formal way, the above problem emerges *because* F is repeatable. After all, it is the fact that *F* is repeatable, that it shows up both as potential and manifest and thus shows up in the present although it is also still to come, that leads to the issue we have gotten onto. The same thought applies to Platonism: Platonists want to say (as suggested with e.g. origami swans: 1.3.4) F, after a manner, to wit transcendently, explains there being F in another manner, to wit manifestedly, concretely. Here the difference between them is too *radical* (how do the concrete and the abstract ever relate?), and for the hold-out Aristotelians it is too small. Maybe the problem is with repeatables at the dispositional level which have featured in both failing set-up. Perhaps, moreover, there is a position that does dispositions without dispositions being repeatable.

At the same time, the problem we used to pan '*in re*'-dispositionalism is somewhat contextual: the problem arises only on a DI-infused reading of ACTUALITY where '*potentiality to be F*' just *is* F-being. We could therefore just try to fulfil ACTUALITY without DI, developing an understanding of F-potentiality without presupposing F-being. This sounds abstract, but is it not just right? When there is potential for something, that might *just mean* that the thing itself *is not*. This gives us two options: F-potentiality is either F without manifestation or, conversely, we may have to have to face a reality where there being F-potentiality is first and foremost a reality *without F*. The 'Aristotelians' not following DI took the former and lost (4.2) to Tugby.

Explaining there being F starting from a world without it, thus seems like an interesting avenue to explore. I will try to show (in the next chapter) that we can still be dispositional realists when we avoid projecting universals (and/or tropes, so really: manifestations) backwards into the realm of dispositions, such that we remain at liberty to say that dispositions are, in the relevant regards, different from the properties that fall out of them. In other words, one might think of the systematic task of the following chapter to preserve a difference between the powerful bases immanent to particulars and the effects they generate. One 'relevant regard' is, in a nutshell, as

follows: these powers are *singular* whereas their results are *repeatable*. I.e.: what results from powers are the familiar properties (black here, black there…) but their possibility will not lie in uninstantiated blackness. That is: there *ought to be* a position that does dispositions without dispositions being repeatable.

Chapter 5   Dispositional Realism with *Difference and Repetition*

5.0   Introduction

The preceding four chapters followed a pattern of proposing positions (odd-numbered chapters), then (even-numbered ones) criticizing/discarding them. With this chapter, that pattern breaks down. This chapter differs from previous ones in three ways. Firstly, it does indeed propose a position but instead of paving the way for discarding it later, the current chapter does the work of showing that the position here proposed overcomes or avoids the problems with positions already discussed. The position advanced, a *Deleuzean* dispositional realism, will of course not be impervious to criticism, but I will follow this chapter up with a further recommendation, not a critique.

Secondly, the manner of proposing will be different because, whereas previously I have summarized (and amalgamated) and then panned positions that were already overtly dispositionalist, this chapter will involve exegesis of an infamous piece of continental metaphysics, Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*. What Deleuze proposes, I suggest, is a branch of dispositional realism, i.e. the one suggested as a new branch to the taxonomy at the end of chapter 3. But in 1968 philosophical France, 'dispositionalism' just 'wasn't a thing': we will therefore see some unfamiliar terms, ('intensity', 'the virtual', 'problems', 'difference'…), with which, after the necessary exposition, we can put together an '*in re*'-dispositionalism worthy of the name and recognizable as such[64]. What we call 'dispositional' Deleuze calls (with some caveats) 'virtual', and the reality of such dispositions, their ontological standing, is that they exist, with a technical term introduced in 5.1.4, qua '*problems*'.

Third, there is a deeper difference underlying these superficial ones of placement in a structure and overall approach: a difference in what (I hope) this chapter can do. The reason *why* I am going through the trouble of exegesis, is that I want to be able to explicate potentially helpful

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[64] I had the benefit of drawing on some secondary sources that have done something similar: Levi Bryant, in his *Onto-Cartography* (2014) borrows notions from Molnar (2003) to explain some of Deleuze's metaphysics. I, however, disagree with the degree to which Bryant thinks Molnar's view maps onto Deleuze's. I take the difference to be an exegetical matter, so I will say little about it. What I do say the reader can find in a footnote to 5.2.1. Powers are also important for Arjen Kleinherenbrink's (2019) interpretation of Deleuze, in as far as powers make entities such that they are different from others. Manuel DeLanda connects Deleuze to work done by Nancy Cartwright in his (2002) *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy*.

dispositionalist ideas, from a corner of philosophy I happen to be familiar with, to philosophers who will quite likely never hit upon this corner by their own volition, given the continental/analytic-divide traversing our discipline. In this sense, I see myself as belonging to a (I think, not self-consciously existing) group[65]: one that does the exegesis/'translating'/proposing of Deleuzean philosophy as best it can, in order to give a more 'mainstream' reader the chance to ruminate upon our (or rather: Deleuze's) proposals.

I will consider this chapter a success if such a reader comes away from it saying '*it's not all bullshit!*'. Various shades of failure are on the cards, too. Moore (2012, p. 554) diagnoses the divergence between Franco- and Anglophone metaphysics in terms of (respectively) taking *difference* or *identity* as the horizon against which metaphysics is set. I had never looked at the rift traversing our discipline that way, but there is something to it. I will have failed if the reader does not become somewhat taken with the idea that the metaphysics of powers does not have to be the project (as was the case in chapters 1-4) of understanding power in relational terms. Instead, the project here is to understand a factor powerful *in itself* to explain how the manifested world is possible. I will, however, clarify all the structural convergences between Deleuze's ideas, and dispositionalism as understood in chapters 1-4.

I will *also* have failed if the reader grasps the role of difference in Deleuze's thought, the idea being that "difference is [...] positive and creative" (Deleuze, 1991, p. 103), i.e. "that by which the given is given" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 222), but files the Deleuzean position away under '*B*' for '*bullshit*' regardless. The good news is that, if one has a sense of how, for the current chapter, one difference (what this chapter might do) can underlie certain manifested determinations (of content, of place in a structure), one is well underway to understanding the role of difference '*in itself*'. I will do my utmost to ease the reader into the Deleuzean framework, but it might be comforting to know from the outset that Deleuze's proposals are not completely offensive.

What will follow is meant to fulfil two promises:

- **Every problem dispositionalism faced in previous chapters can be solved by drawing on Deleuze's works[66].**

- **Even though these solutions involve privileging difference over identity, Deleuze's approach is not *antithetical* to dispositionalism thus far considered.**

To fulfil these, this chapter, in…

5.1: introduces Deleuze's notion of 'difference in itself', and outlines of further relevant ideas, in broad strokes and provides links to issues we were concerned with in the previous four chapters, showing Deleuze's relevance to our context.

5.2: clusters the issues and introduces Deleuzean solutions.

5.3: assembles the solutions into a whole, thereby concluding the chapter. This does not result in a view of the whole of Deleuze's philosophy, but will be the whole of his dispositionalism[67].

Deleuze's method for arguing about powers proceeds by a special kind of construction (Deleuze and Guattari call this 'concept creation'), not reference to facts, though it must explain them. It is a sort of 'transcendental reasoning', causing me to regularly talk about 'transcendental' matters[68]. *Alternatively* I will talk about 'concept creation', proceeding along the lines introduced above, by stating the functions a desired concept must fulfil given that the world is a certain way, and then checking for the concept's internal and external consistency. By 'internal consistency' we mean what in *What is Philosophy?* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 22) is called "endoconsistency", and by 'external consistency' what is called "exoconsistency". The former concerns the coherence of the

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substantive ideas from the co-authored works, with a caveat. Kleinherenbrink, whose 2019 work I reference quite a bit, maintains there is an early Deleuze positing the virtual as a continuum out of which individuals *somehow* emerge, and a later Deleuze (with Guattari) who treats the virtual as consisting of individual, entity-bound pockets. In as far as this chapter has an exegetical claim beyond saying Deleuze has a dispositional realism, it is that one can find the entity-bound notion in early Deleuze too (see mentions of 'shreds of pure past' for some evidence – one may find the notion of a 'machine' in *Difference and Repetition* as well).

[67] At least as far as *Difference and Repetition* is concerned – I have reserved some space in the thesis' *Conclusion* for possible add-ons from later works.

[68] I agree with Kleinherenbrink (2019, p. 150) that "Deleuze is not Kant", i.e. that what is worked out under the heading of 'the transcendental' is not a "structure providing the conditions for the possibility of human experience". Rather, what we get is the construction of "that which gives actuality to [anything], but [is not] itself [actual]" under the name of the 'virtual' (op. cit., p. 149).

elements of a concept amongst themselves, the latter the coherence of the concept with the framework that might incorporate it.

As an aspect of Deleuze's work over a 20+-year period, Deleuze's dispositionalist ideas are subject to shifts in vocabulary but this need not concern us, for I will focus on *Difference and Repetition* here (I have made some space in the *Conclusion* for later additions: 3.1.1 & 3.1.2). However: Deleuze also switches between ways of expressing himself *within the same book*. The various vocabularies Deleuze develops this way, combined, have (or ought to have) the benefit of expressing more clearly in one vocabulary what can remain murky in another. We will see cases of such switching below. If my exposition of Deleuze's positions seems piecemeal, this is so because dispositional realism is an aspect of Deleuze's metaphysics seldom treated in a centralized fashion and in a multitude of terminologies: there are only pieces[69].

I have selected the vocabularies of *Difference and Repetition* I found most helpful and will not defend this much further. I will also explicate the lines between the terms adopted, and arguments introduced, thus solidifying a position out of the big-picture introductions and the relatively detailed solutions the previous sections introduce. We will, this way, be able to see that Deleuze's project is always a metaphysics combining immanence and powerfulness. We must then, moreover, check in which ways Deleuze's position is congruent with and/or divergent from dispositional realism as considered previously and what its merit is, *especially* in the divergences.

There will be analogies between the extant views and Deleuze's. Analogy is not proof Deleuze's position is any good, however, especially since the dispositionalisms Deleuze's dispositionalism is analogous to, are precisely what we have been critiquing. What is thus important to keep in mind is that I am generating analogies to convince the reader that what we have drawn from Deleuze has a dispositionalist *format*, filled out with *content* that sets it apart from the positions thus far discussed. This will be clear from the discussion in 5.1.7 where I harken

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[69] There are upsides to what may seem to the reader, already, shaky ground. Had there been a centralized doctrine I would have had to cut it up in order to respond to our manifold worries: dispersal was inevitable. Moreover, what seems confusing in Deleuze's writing ('*why this proliferation of terms?*') seems, to me, an attempt (however flawed) at reader-friendliness. It has (I noticed at the Deleuze reading group at Royal Holloway) real merits: what I 'got' in Kantian and embryological terms, my interlocutors 'got' using terms from e.g. psychoanalysis. 'Regulative ideas' ≠ 'embryos' ≠ 'the unconscious', but overlap in features that are then amalgamated and imputed to 'the virtual'. Multiplying ways for grasping something this way seems useful. It *can* make my exposition seem more wild than it should be (which I counteract by pointing out which terms are interchangeable: e.g. 'difference'/'intensity', 'power'/'problem') *and* make it seem more one-sided than intended to those who would object to privileging any one vocabulary.

back to 3.0's general schema for dispositional realism, which we will then fill out with the content this chapter has by then provided.

The overall aim of this chapter, in short, then, is to show that by taking, as Deleuze does, actualities (qualities, objects, relations and events, especially understood as modifications of the previous members of this enumeration) as targets of explanation of a sustained transcendental argument (see 5.3) that proceeds by setting up conditions for actuality's becoming, one can...

...fill a lacuna in dispositionalism, by explaining how actuality emerges from its virtual conditions. We will see what it means for difference to be '*creative*', to '*give the given*', and answer the question how manifestation works in terms of how the actual follows from 'the virtual'. That is: we will see in what sense 'difference' is an immanent metaphysical '*positive*'.

Before we start: the reader might wonder *why* they should bother with a suspiciously extravagant-sounding (from what I have said between 2.2.1 and now: *overturned Platonism? Crowned anarchy? The virtual? Difference over identity?*) metaphysics. Deleuze offers resources other thinkers do not[70], especially that difficult-sounding aspect of his view, privileging difference over identity[71], with which come original views on the actual and the powerful. The reader, therefore, should care about Deleuze because he discusses, in ways they might not have considered before, and indeed can only be considered with the tools developed below, matters they already care about.

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[70] If Moore is right to distinguish between continental and analytic thought in terms of the difference between taking 'difference' or 'identity' as a starting point, might other continental philosophers not claim the (somewhat ironically) same distinction? No: whereas his contemporaries are e.g. Marxists (Althusser), and/or phenomenologists (Sartre), or more concerned with the critique of institutions and/or their history (Foucault), and/or engaged in (meta-)philosophy of language (Derrida), and/or historical epistemologists (Bachelard), Deleuze is to be considered purely a metaphysician (Deleuze, 2007, p. 42).

[71] The closest we got to this is Lowe's position in which universals are secondary to how particulars are. We will have more to say about why this is *not* Deleuze's position, in 5.1.6. The proximity (hinted at in chapter 3) consists in the thought that repeating properties somehow start in particulars, but this is of course a very general formulation, hiding an underlying difference.

What *do* we care about, then? About what emerged in the previous chapters: dispositional realism's structure and aims. I reiterate these below (5.1.7 & 5.2.1) insofar as they provide talking points for Deleuzeans. Along with these come difficulties (5.2.1), following which I will indicate the direction of my Deleuze-inspired responses, a leg-up to responding in full (5.2.2-5.2.4). These sections, forming this chapter's backbone, will be preceded by, starting below, a broad-strokes introduction to Deleuze's notion of 'difference' and some further big-picture coordinates, and will itself contain comments on how this big picture relates to the aims and problems mentioned above and reiterated later. This will thus reflect that Deleuze matters to what we are already invested in.

Currently, I assume, the elephant in the room is 'privileging difference over identity'. I quoted Deleuze as saying '*difference' is that 'by which the given is given*', that it is '*positive*' and '*productive*'. The analysis of what 'difference in itself' amounts to below was carried out with those statements in mind, and must be read in that spirit. The gist is that we may understand by 'the given' (or: the 'actual'/'present') the products of powers and by 'difference' a productive factor in wresting manifestations/actuality from powers ('the virtual'). I.e.: it is a particular stance on the directionality of powers, on top of being the explanatory factor for manifestation we have been asking for since 1.3.5. Deleuze's project concerns thinking "difference in itself" (1994, p. xix) and this concept, provided an interpretation of Deleuze's work showing why one would accept it, would precisely fill our explanatory gap.

5.1   Deleuzeanism's Basic Concepts Introduced

5.1.1   A First Glance at *Differentiation and the Virtual, Differenciation and Actuality,* and *Difference in Itself*

Below I have aimed, in an attempt to show it has that certain shape, not to do *full* justice to the intricacies of what Deleuze means by 'difference in itself', or why one should accept it, but to do *some*, and to *en passant* showcase Deleuze's method: creating concepts in response to transcendental questions concerning how certain givens (e.g. actuality) are possible. I will start here by introducing some claims Deleuze makes about 'difference' that are relevant to dispositionalism, foremost what it means that 'difference' gives rise to actual qualities. The idea is something like this: actual qualities (which are general, in the sense of repeating in Armstrong's sense) presuppose the manifestation of potentials, which presupposes 'difference in itself'. From here opens a path through many core concepts.

If, to sum the big idea up in a rough slogan, difference plays a crucial role in entities *attaining* qualitative identity, the well-worn phrase 'no entity without identity' should in our context be supplemented (not negated) as follows: '*no entity without identity without difference*'. *That* is roughly what I take 'privileging difference over identity' to mean. Difference is privileged in that it is present in the "virtual proper being" (Bryant, 2014, p. 40) of worldly entities, which makes possible the actual (parts and qualities of objects, events changing them[72]): the virtual's "local manifestation" (ibid.). How manifestations can roll out of powers, is what we have been at pains to understand since 1.3.5. Part of the answer in this chapter lies in not making power definitionally dependent on its results: power is powerful *in itself*.

A first step toward a Deleuzean answer is reforming our question about manifestation to look something like: '*how is it that change in the virtual is reflected in change in the actual?*' Prerequisite for which is: the virtual and the actual both undergo change. Both modes of change get a name of their own in Deleuze's theoretical edifice. To give a rough example: a dying battery (modified power: differen*ti*ation) makes for (change in the actual: differen*ci*ation) a dimmer torch. 'Differen*ci*ate' is not in the English lexicon, though differen*ti*ate is. In French, however (as Paul Patton, translator of *Difference and Repetition* tells us in his *Preface*: 1994, p. xi), these are naturally two distinct verbs. Let us investigate what they stand for, before we press on to laying the foundations for the thought that it is 'difference in itself' that makes it so that virtual changes are so reflected. It is practical to start with these modes of change rather than Deleuze's root-concept, because we will only see what 'difference in itself' must be, if we know the modes of change are useful.

The French '*différentier*' (English: '*differentiate*'), which one can easily remember as applying to the virtual alone, *because 'virtual' contains no 'c' either*[73], is in French solely a mathematical term (as in '*differential calculus*'). As with so many other pieces of terminology (we will again see this with some Kantian terms Deleuze 'adopts', for example), there is something in the borrowed concept that Deleuze uses, and a lot that can be left behind. I do not find Deleuze's discussion of the actual mathematics, and its history (1994, chapter 4), particularly illuminating. Its inclusion does, however, allow us to say some nice things about Deleuze's work in relation to the calculus while shedding light on his use of the term in the current context.

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[72] We will complicate the categorization of events as actual in 5.1.5.

[73] This is, in any case, what I take Deleuze to mean when (1994, p. 187) he ascribes to 'virtual ideas' a being *differentiated* while lacking being *differenciated*. 'Differen*ci*ation' I then reserve for change in the *actual* alone.

- Firstly, the '*dx*' of differential calculus (infinitesimal change: a change approaching zero), which Deleuze expresses interest in, expresses a real differing quite apart from any judgements of *opposition* and *contradiction* (Deleuze, 1994, p. 170). To talk about 'dx' is not yet to start opposing things. One might take this as a quick and relatively easy shortcut to the conclusion that there is an 'in itself' of difference, a notion we will have to invest quite a lot into (and we will!) to get to otherwise.

- Secondly, since our project is to use powers-concepts in explaining how the manifested world is possible, we find an ally in differential calculus. *We* want to figure out how we can say actuality becomes rearranged, and as calculus helps one solve Zeno's paradoxes[74] (which point in the direction of saying change is not real), the notion of the virtual is going to explain how manifestation is possible and hence guarantee the reality of change, by interpreting change in reality.

- Third, the example of calculus allows us to reflect on the relation between the virtual and reality. We will see the virtual *is real*. It seems that if one accepts that scientists using calculus make true statements, one may also accept the concept-creation in this chapter as, at the very least, sensible qua *approach*. After all, the rate of change at a point is a wonderful *construction*, helpful in modelling the world. Much the same might be said for Deleuze's notion of the virtual.

- Fourth and lastly, there is supposedly a sense in which the mathematical operation applies to dispositions. This is, I think, as indicated, only roughly true. I would say: the introduction of '*dx*' into mathematical language introduces a general form for all the particular changes one might do the calculations of. It seems that Deleuze is doing something very similar: all (distinct) powers come about in a uniform way. *At the same time*, however, we will see powers are 'singular' (see 5.1.6), such that they are not

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[74] Remember 'Achilles and the tortoise'? Differential calculus is helpful in dissolving this paradox by helping us understand how an infinity of distances can be retooled to finite terms. More about tortoises, by the way, in 5.1.6.

even in principle shareable between entities (unlike powers understood as universals or tropes). Perhaps there is thus an application of 'infinitesimal difference' in two ways (say: 'comparatively' and 'synchronically'): it might (comparatively) offer one a way of understanding how the 'flammabilities' of two given matches are yet distinct. Synchronically, however, differentiation accounts for how the power of a given entity changes. We may thus think of these changes as smooth, each moment in the process of change might be said to be (only infinitesimally) different from each neighbouring moment. But this does not bar them from having a distinct value.

The French '*différencier*' (Patton's invented English: differenciate) means "to make or become different" (Patton, *Translator's Preface* in Deleuze, 1994, p. xi). We restrict its use to *actual* (one can easily remember this *because both terms contain a 'c'*) and thus deals with extended object-parts and their manifested properties.

Very roughly, Deleuze's view is that there is *difference in itself* from which follows *difference applied to reality's two aspects* – first the virtual, then the actual, between which 'actuality presupposes virtuality (dispositionality)' holds – which attain respectively *generality* and *full determinacy*. Powers make things what they are ('virtual being') but themselves undergo differentiation, and, through the differenciation they spur on, account for the parts and qualities developed ('local manifestation') on the surfaces of things. The powers are, as said, themselves made determinate, but gain determinacy not, as in the previous frameworks, qua their place in a relational structure of universals, but in a so-called "field of individuation" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 38) where takes place change, as we will see in 5.2.2.

That the world is thoroughly dynamic, is, however true for Deleuze as evidenced by the above, our *explanandum*: there are spatio-temporal dynamisms but these presuppose events in 'the Ideal', another name for 'the virtual'. A big question mark is *in virtue of what* both sorts of dynamic, though especially the latter (which in turn explains the former) can occur; a transcendental question to which 'difference' is the response. We must add to this an important detail: although I distinguished 'difference' and 'powers' above, they are much of a cloth in my reading of Deleuze. 'Difference' is 'intensity' and 'intensity' is what makes the virtual powerful.

A further note on dynamicity is in order. The world Deleuze presents is thoroughly dynamic in virtue of *repeatedly* undergoing identifications in the actual and determinations in the virtual, but by actuality itself is merely meant the *present* (see 5.1.2), such that if the world is to indeed consistently be dynamic, potentials must consistently actualise such that a present will be replaced by a new one[75]. As with previous dispositionalist views, we wonder how this is possible but, given a new realisation set-up, we get to ask the question in a slightly different way: '*what is the precondition for there being ever more actualities?*' .This factor can obviously not itself be present or actual, but must somehow be powerful. It must, moreover, if it is to explain anything, not be *mere* potential (as opposed to being *real*), and must withstand all the other problems posed for powers in the previous chapters.

Creating a concept, Deleuze's method in metaphysics, proceeds by collating functions a concept should have, through demands like those directly above. But what reason could there possibly be for thinking of the collated item as 'difference'? Here is a sensitizing start (and only a start): each being "is split between what it is [virtually] and how it manifests […], and [these aspects…] differ" (Kleinherenbrink, 2019, p. 6) — since on occasion (actualisation) powers manifest, one should say virtual and actual do at times relate. What does the relation consist in? It is not plausibly construed as negation (becoming actual does not e.g. necessarily destroy a potential). Nor does it seem that it should be the case that P and M are literally the same property that then changes 'realm' (per the conclusion of the previous chapter).

'Difference', would thus, it seems, be an apt term for the concept Deleuze is creating in response to the question how the actual comes from the virtual: neither through opposition of the two, nor through their identity. Instead, we go from a situation without actual-F to a situation with actual-F by something that is neither opposition nor identity: why not call this difference? Still, 'difference *in itself*' sounds paradoxical, 'difference' more commonly being placed 'between…'. It seems to *just be* a relational notion. Just now we placed it between, and applied it to, aspects of being. Characterizing something as 'in itself', signals, however, existence in isolation. And this is true of the relevant concept of difference too, as we shall shortly see. Difference 'in itself' should not be understood as a comparative notion linking given things (e.g. *the difference between two mandrills*), ideas (e.g. *between miaphysite and monophysite conceptions of Christ*), or anything else. What is it then, and what warrants it nonetheless having something to do with actuality?

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[75] This, by the way, needs to happen at a 'pace' (I invoke here Mason's (2016) distinction between various 'Machs' of flux) that does not immediately void identities, as in the case of Heraklitean flux.

Before doing exegesis and getting to Deleuze's notion that way, I hope to warm the reader up to it by manipulating an absurd riddle trading on the comparative notion, to arrive at Deleuze's non-comparative[76] notion that way. The threefold point of this is to get 1) even more of a feel for Deleuze's transcendental method in metaphysics (because what I do here is the creation of a concept[77]), to be able 2) to get at a core notion of Deleuze's without having to get there through copious quantities of Deleuzean material, and 3) to avoid misunderstanding Deleuze from the get-go ('difference in itself' might conjure up the thought of something absurd along the lines of the riddle below, and hence it is a useful contrast to Deleuze's intended meaning).

The riddle (frequently posed to me at family gatherings by a particular uncle; no wonder I became a philosopher) goes:

Q: '*What's the difference between a dead bird?*'

A: '*Its one leg is equal in length*'[78].

In a normal case of looking for differences, one begins comparing *given* a domain with several entities. In the current case, one is asked to carry out a comparison on a domain of 1. This is what makes the riddle *absurd*. Note that finding any sort of difference between the things we are asked to compare is thus foreclosed: they (it) are (is) (self-)identical, which is what we expected with difference existing either *not at all* or *between several relata*. The riddle thus exploits how 'difference between' works: one needs a more populous domain, otherwise one has (hilariously) asked for identity. Difference, meanwhile, one may think, *just is* relational, implicitly adding a criterion specifying a minimum domain-size. Deleuze's concept is either *that* (but weirdly explained?), or as absurd as the riddle.

Yet, it is neither. Think of it as belonging to a situation that would be a middle ground between the standard comparison-situation (domain≥2) and the absurd/foreclosed situation (domain=1), moreover one that must be admitted to be common: things *can* be compared to

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[76] I hesitate to call it strictly 'non-relational'. It is in any case not a difference between given items (i.e. relating them). Difference is a creative factor, it gives rise to actuality. Perhaps one wants to call that '*relating*' even though it would be a relation that creates one of its relata (hence my hesitance).

[77] I will not lay bare facts, but, by tweaking, build a concept which one remains at liberty to reject (for lacking 'exoconsistency' or change (to amplify its 'endoconsistency').

[78] In my native Dutch: '*wat is het verschil tussen een dood vogeltje?*'; '*z'n ene pootje is even lang*'.

themselves, *over time*. Things certainly are, that is, self-comparable under conditions that culminate in adding entities to a comparison-domain, moreover further entities that emerge from the initial entity in the domain. The answer to the question how *this* is possible will be some (non-absurd) item that, we will see, can legitimately be called 'difference *in itself*'. I.e.: there is some transformative factor that makes the same item appear across a temporal interval (actualities, i.e. *presents*). Deleuze intends to find the same factor for every case of such change, and calls this 'intensity'. A transcendental (for making actualities possible) principle of sorts.

Consider the bird's differen*c*iation (its becoming changed as regards its manifest qualities in virtue of a presupposed differen*t*iation in the relevant entity), e.g.: '*it died at a certain size but now it's shrunk*', and ask how this comparison is possible. The *simple* answer is: we construct relata from the bird (e.g. duplication in memory, with different sizes for image and corpse). We can then find the desired 'difference between'. The answer in terms of conditions of possibility, in turn, is that this is possible only if there *were* the plump bird and there *is* the shrivelled bird (to compare to). Note that this is one bird (domain of 1 throughout) and that, rather than being separate existences, the shrivelled bird emerges from the plump bird. The latter-stage bird and the retained memory of the plump bird make *comparison* possible but are in turn made possible by something else.

Comparing diachronically, then, depends on something 'bridging' the relata that constitute two ends of a temporal interval. The bird also, meanwhile, remains one throughout changing. So: some X capable of variation is required. This, so far, is not very surprising. But: what X, and what is this 'capacity'? One might posit some (X=)underlying entity, but depending on *how* one construes that notion, this might not explain the varying except for introducing an X that (capacity=)undergoes change. But this, as we have seen, does not yet explain what we *also* want to know: '*how can differenciation*', the coming into being of that changed actual state, '*occur?*'.

Deleuze, thus has to add (and does add) a further factor, one more along the lines of a process of *making* the relata which comparative/normal/'between' difference exploits[79]. A case in which we take an actuality to be a reprise of a temporal predecessor, thus indicates a conceptual hole in which some production of change *fits*. This proves nothing regarding this notion's

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[79] See 5.2.3: as already mentioned, Deleuze's *precise* notion is 'intensity'. Whereas a process, it seems, can generally be understood as oriented toward some specific outcome ('the process of doing/making/becoming X'), intensity does not connote *becoming something definite*, hence not introducing, as processes do, *relatum* ere it can become. Processes might fall prey to a worry like Tugby's about directionality as seen in 4.2, 'intensity' cannot.

consistency yet, however. Taking steps in that direction, let us first explicate why such a process is 'difference' *and* why it is 'in itself'.

Call it 'difference' because…:

    1) **…it connects the qualitatively differen*c*iated iterations of an entity and…**

    2) **…within entities (for change to occur) thus has to connect their two aspects (virtual/actual).**

It thus *creates* the entity on the future side of the temporal interval.

Call it 'in itself' because…:

    3) **…whereas actuality can be experienced (to which one may traditionally oppose a *thing* in itself), the epithet 'in itself' applies here to work behind the scenes. That is:**

    4) **…difference does not *become* given (although actuality and shifts therein signal it). It 'differen*c*iates' qualified actualities thus forming a comparison-ready order it does not itself inhabit. Difference thus stands alone, 'in itself'[80].**

I suppose the reader might now object that the notion thus introduced is not 'difference' but 'differ*ing*'. Fair enough: as long as it is taken to be differing *in itself*.

I suppose one reason for thinking of it in terms of a noun rather than a verb, though, came along with the discussion of '*dx*' above: whenever our arguments invoke difference in itself, we are dealing with something general that, as such, is found in all cases of change, and not with, as a verb would seem to suggest, something that *itself changes*: virtual and actual differences come about in structurally uniform ways, not ways that are themselves structurally distinct. We can

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[80] Note that given Deleuze's well-known interest in Nietzsche, one might also try to construe this special place for difference/intensity of being of a certain *nobility*, standing alone at the top of a certain hierarchy of energies.

here, moreover, add a note about the directionality of powers construed this way: if they *create* their results, it would seem strange to call them directed to some pre-given results. To be understood as powerful 'in themselves', powers must simply be called creative in that sense.

5.1.2 More about the Actual (a Given Present) and the Virtual (an Explanatory Presupposition)

The virtual/actual- and corresponding differen*t/c*iation-pairs both demand further exposition. Exposition on the former, undertaken here, requires distinguishing between, yet relating, 'actual' and 'virtual', after which I will distinguish the latter, in as far as this is possible for the terms are obviously part of a family, from dispositions as thus far considered (5.1.6). In order to fully appreciate the latter pair, it must be remarked, as was implicit in the above that the elements making up the pairs relate as product and activity: the virtual is determined through differen*t*iation, the actual emerges as a/out of differen*c*iation.

Let us add to our understanding of actuality. It can be discussed under two aspects. 'Actuality' *qua temporality* means 'the present' and *qua aspect of things* means what has become of them after differen*c*iation/actualisation ("qualification and partition": Deleuze, 1994, p. 245): the qualities and parts they currently have. Relating the aspects, Deleuze tells us that these entities, including their parts and qualities, to which must be added the "diverse real relations" among them, "at each moment" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 183) make up the current state of everything, that is: *the present*. But, the parts and qualities of, and relations between, entities are subject to change (generation, destruction, everything in between). More simply: events take place; presents pass, new states become.

This raises two complementary transcendental questions: '*how can actualities pass?*'; '*how can actualities emerge?*' (note that these are generalized versions of the questions motivated by our riddle above). Deleuze devotes many pages, in various books, to theorizing various aspects (even kinds) of time, which I will mostly bracket. Deleuze's theory of the possibility of the coming-about of the present, or perhaps more accurately, the present states of particulars qua actual, however, encapsulates most (and adumbrates the rest) of his dispositionalism and must therefore be explored. Kleinherenbrink (2019, p. 59) paraphrases it as follows:

> **"If […] entities were purely present […n]o entity would have the non-relational surplus required to ditch old relations and forge new ones."**

To which I want to add three clarifications:

1) **A 'purely present' entity would be fully actual (by itself *all qualities and parts*, nothing besides), stuck in the present (including all relations it has). It would lack, simply put, *power* to do or become anything else.**

2) **It then not only lacks power to form relations, but also any capacity to modify its qualities and parts (or have them modified[81]). Change must thus be rooted elsewhere.**

3) **Why are powers a '*non-relational surplus*'? Powers form a *surplus* in relation to the purely present/actual, which they cause. It is *non-relational* in the sense of being intrinsic (and immanent, avoiding that 'Platonic pitfall') to the relevant entity.**

A succession of current states (presents) thus presupposes the virtual.

5.1.3 The Virtual is Real

Like actuality, the virtual also has a temporal sense. I will discuss it briefly, but my preferred way of understanding the virtual does little with its consisting of "shreds of pure past" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 107)[82]. These shreds are, in any case, easier to understand if we explore other avenues for constructing the notion of the virtual first.

Let us start with a terminological remark, to attenuate a worry about Deleuze qua *realist*. The reader might think: '*Schilpzand is marketing Deleuze as a dispositional realist, but if*

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[81] Since we are saying the actual lacks capacity *tout court*.

[82] This expression, especially, nudged me to extend Kleinherenbrink's analysis of the virtual as constituted of individual cases to *Difference and Repetition*. There is also the mention of a 'machine' on page 78 of the edition here cited.

dispositions are virtual and 'virtual' means 'nearly but not completely' (or, worse, 'software-generated image'), then I am… very sceptical'. We are, rather, reprising the Latin '*virtus*', meaning 'potency'. There are various authors that use the term like this, including Spinoza, whose philosophy Deleuze admired and worked on.

Let us now move on to two senses in which '*nearly but not completely*' seems, but is not, applicable to the virtual's *existence*:

- **The virtual is, writes Deleuze (1994, p. 208), "[r]eal without being actual [and] ideal without being abstract", but it is tempting to think actuality is *more real* than the virtual. After all, one might think the present is, and whatever else there is, is less so. But for Deleuze actuality does not function as a benchmark, compared to which the non-actual would 'not quite' be.**

- **Those familiar with *Difference and Repetition* know that, while most of the book is sandwiched between affirmations of being's univocity[83], Deleuze uses "(non)-being", "or, better still" (Deleuze's words, not mine) "?-being" (1994, p. 64), to refer to the "transcendental element" (op. cit., p. 195) that is the virtual side of entities. Does the '(non)-'/'?-' mean the virtual is 'not quite' real? Despite the seeming exception to being's univocity, Deleuze is naming a *mode* (not a separate sort) of being: the virtual has "the reality of a […] problem to be solved" (op. cit., p. 212).**

This notion of a 'problem' (again: a technical term) will become especially important for us going forward.

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[83] 1) & 2) near the start (Deleuze, 1994, pp. 35-36), 3) at the end (p. 304):
1) "being […] is said […] in a single […] sense of all the numerically distinct [modes]" (i.e. individual things).
2) "[b]eing is said in a single […] sense of everything […], but that of which it is said [includes] difference itself".
3) "[a] single […] voice […] of Being for all beings".

We should recognize, is at least my claim, that in saying the above, Deleuze espouses a view we should call 'dispositional realism': however, rather than a counterfactual or '*can…*'-statement to correlate powers with, Deleuze takes 'problems' as his correlate for the virtual. We will also adopt a general *form* for problems, comparable to the general power-correlates '*X can…*' and '*to M when S'ed*'. I suggest that this must be understood as carrying whatever the metaphysical equivalent of the demanding 'illocutionary force' of imperatives might be[84].

5.1.4   The Virtual has the Reality of a 'Problem'

Let us give some contours to what Deleuze means by 'the reality of a problem', my preferred way of getting at the notion of the virtual, by interpreting the statement that the virtual (without being '*abstract*') is '*ideal*'[85]. First of all, Deleuze must not be understood as opposing the real and the ideal. Rather, the virtual is a real aspect of being (hence its explanatory power). Nor, however, are problems ideal in the Platonic sense[86]: 'idea' and 'problem' may be used interchangeably since Deleuze's source for the concept is not Platonic but Kantian, the reference being (I should add: in a loose way) to ideas in Kant's regulative sense, i.e. in the sense of demanding certain actions. Deleuze finds in Kant the thought that "Ideas are essentially 'problematic'" and, conversely, that "problems are Ideas" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 168). Laying the connotations of rationality and subjectivity aside, Deleuze is telling us he understands *the virtual as that which would explain there being actual behaviours.*

The term 'problematic' collates two functions: first there is the ('Kantian') aspect of demandingness: Deleuze is telling us that, just as regulative ideas ask subjects to exhibit good behaviour in any number of cases (the problem of having to act repeats), the Ideas(/problems)

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[84] I here have a hunch, shy of an exegetical claim: Deleuze could have made much more of the Kantian terms he parasitizes on. He *could* have used the 'force' of imperatives to explain what this chapter is about to explain, but did not. He merely had to correlate the 'essence' to his dispositions ('the virtual') to them. Instead he resorts to 'dice throws' (1994, p. 200) and 'divine games' (op. cit, p. 116), which I find unhelpful. The 'force' of an imperative would really be a good device for Deleuze to latch onto: for imperatives, in their very difference from other sorts of statements, are distinguished by *compelling* – by eliciting acts from those addressed by them.

[85] Like Kleinherenbrink (2019, p. 18) I think '*ideal*', '*virtual' and 'power'* are synonyms.

[86] A point of reference which, in our Platonism-riddled context may have occurred to the reader. *Had this been right,* a discussion would have ensued of what the difference is between Deleuze's claim that the '*ante rem*' is *not* abstract and Bird's claim that it ('*contingently*') is. Instead, the discussion between them I shall stage in 5.2.1 concerns their competing accounts of actuality.

entities carry "in their flesh"[87] (Deleuze, 1994, p. 219) incessantly demand actualisations ("actualise, differenciate [...] and solve" are synonyms: op. cit., p. 211). Indeed (in a loose analogy, and not one Deleuze puts to us): whereas Kant's problems stem from a transcendental drive of *reason*, Deleuze's problems stem from a transcendental ('intensive': 5.1.1) drive of *difference*. In short: the present is incessantly replaced, the virtual is thus introduced as a demand for this being the case.

The notion of *drive*, or something like it (its insertion here is mine, not Deleuze's), is the second aspect the term 'problem' seems to express. What Deleuze sometimes seems to share with a thinker like Heidegger is engaging in "almost crazy etymological exercises" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 8). I suggest 'problem' might be a case in point: the etymology of the terms goes back to 'προβάλλω', which means as much as '*throwing forth*'[88]. By 'problem' we should thus understand some metaphysically real item, immanent to entities, with actualisation (that is: corresponding 'solutions') as a result. There is, of course, something funny about this manner of solving: 'problems', just as regulative ideas pose ceaseless demands, persist through "every response" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 112), the virtual structure (the 'problematic' nature) that engenders the 'solution' is not negated upon actualising, as was already suggested when we said (5.1.1) the relation between the virtual and the actual is neither identity nor negation.

We can wonder whether we *should* think, as Deleuze obviously *does* ('*in their flesh*'), that problems are *immanent*. The alternative is unattractive for reasons stated in chapter 2, and we can add, in favour of immanence, as opposed to (contingent) abstract '*ante rem*'-ness that, since purely actual entities seem rather anaemic compared to what objects are like for e.g. the sciences (which are interested in the world qua powerful: 4.2.3), the concrete does carry with it a not immediately present aspect we become aware of through time (in which changes do occur). One would not from any present configuration of matter infer that it has powers, but material action is what interests the sciences and the capacity for such action can thus seemingly be understood in a naturalist, i.e. *immanent* vein. That is: the evidence for powers perhaps points beyond the immediately perceived parts and qualities of things, but not thereby automatically to '*ante rem*'-properties. I will add a methodological consideration Deleuze seems to follow in concluding powers are immanent in 5.2.1.

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[87] Statements like this put Deleuze firmly in the '*in re*'-camp although we will only see reasons for *why* that is the natural side for him to take in 5.2.1.

[88] I owe this insight to Riccardo Baldissone.

Moreover, I will be able to spell out why Deleuzean dispositionalism does not *require* ('*ante rem*'-or any other kind of) universals: we conclude powers are not relational in the sense that they include the actuality they are directed at in their essence (what we made out P's relation to M to be in the previous chapters). More proof will be in the so-called pudding: showing how problem-based '*in re*'-dispostionalism conceived this way avoids the issues for '*in re*'-dispositionalism raised by Tugby and myself in chapter 4. One thing I assume the reader will have been wondering about will also be addressed there: if problems are broadly comparable to the '*X can...*' or counterfactual correlates of powers, what general formulation will they have? I have already suggested it will be an imperative, and we hereby adopt Moore's (2012, p. 574) formulation: "[p]roceed from here" (I add some qualifications to this in a footnote to 5.1.5).

5.1.5   The Virtual qua 'Pure Past' (a Mutable Cause)

Now, let us have a glimpse at the virtual from an alternative angle (remember what I said in 5.0 about Deleuze's various vocabularies), considering it as 'pure past'.

What *is* a pure past?

> **Whereas (regular) 'past' means bygone time, a 'pure past' was**
> **"never present" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 273) nor will it be. It is a series of**
> **"ideal events" (op. cit., p. 163), by which we mean 'differentiation',**
> **the virtual's becoming determinate.**

Delving into this a bit more allows us to highlight another point in favour of the virtual's ontological status as real, even if non-actual, and allows one to get a better grasp on the virtual/actual distinction. First, however, a further remark about the 'events' (a piece of vocabulary I want to retain) mentioned directly above is in order. This will make clear why it is important to think of the virtual as being a temporal kind, even if never present.

I have so far *very loosely* talked about events. I indicated there be actual (5.0, 5.1.1, 5.1.2), and now also ideal/virtual ones. Let me clean up matters by saying it is rather that events have two aspect ("two dissimilar halves": Deleuze, 1994, p. 210): they are problem-posing/solution-engendering-combos. As we did for other dispositionalists, we are now of course building up to the question: '*but* how *does the virtual achieve anything in the actual?*'. The answer involves

connecting the following dots: actualities are traces left behind (through '*qualification and partition*') by determinations going on in the virtual ('*differenciation*').

That is: a '*problem*' emerges, hence the virtual is a temporal kind. To this temporality corresponds that of differen*c*iation, through which the combo-event shows itself in the actual (cases of '*solving*'). Differen*t*iation modifies powers, showing up as the differen*c*iation of parts and qualities. In a quite unfamiliar way Deleuze's concern is with a familiar topic (I here cite the view we started with in chapter 1, making a start of 'proving' Deleuze's relevance to the dispositionalist context: "the tendency towards certain patterns of behaviour should be built into [dispositions]": Bird, 2007, p. vii): explaining the goings-on in the actual.

The 'pure *past*', then, first of all, makes sense as a name for the virtual because the virtual precedes the present as a presupposition for it. It is '*pure*' because it can never as such become actual. This is, really, quite a big difference with dispositionalisms discussed previously, in which the very same property is supposed to be as both potential and manifested. Moreover, and here we discover another divergence, if we follow Deleuze's text, which presents this idea through transcendental argumentation, one can go further than calling such 'shreds of pure past' (read: entity-bound pockets of power, roughly '*in re*'-dispositions) *presuppositions*: they must, given our anaemic notion of actuality, "cause the present to pass" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 102). This we already alluded to when we said (5.1.3) that problems must carry whatever the metaphysical equivalent of an imperative illocutionary force might be. It was however important to note that, in order to do so, it needs to be capable of change itself and hence be somehow temporal.

Causal power is often invoked as a good reason for according reality to something. We will see that the virtual can only have this role if part of it *is* difference/intensity. Interpreting the virtual this way might help readers accept it as reality. The vocabulary of intensity I will, in any case, adopt. It remains to be seen how this ought to be understood *precisely*, though we already have some idea. For that purpose I prefer Deleuze's 'problematic' language: Deleuze's appropriation of Kant culminates in having the virtual function by 'setting imperatives' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 199 cf. 284) which elicit differen*c*iation. This 'setting' is best understood as the particular it applies to being in some condition (5.2.2). That is, in relation to the entities it is immanent to, the virtual must be said to have a demanding nature. The temporal vocabulary for the virtual we will now drop: it has served us enough in pointing out that actual events have a necessary prerequisite that is itself a temporal kind.

The above got us to the heart of Deleuze's dispositionalism: virtual 'problems', 'regulative ideas' or 'imperatives' are correlates to the virtual that help us get a handle on how the virtual is supposed to dispose and push entities to their behaviour. Think of this along the same lines as

counterfactuals or '*can*'-statements correlating to dispositional essences. Since the virtual is of a regulative sort, 'solving' (or actualising) in any particular case (here and now) does not negate the virtual as such (Deleuze, 1994, p. 228). Regulative ideas, stemming from a transcendental drive (true for both Deleuze and Kant, in their vastly different ways – we will see that to this drive, in Deleuze, indeed corresponds the notion of difference/intensity) can be 'reprised' (op. cit, p. 201) in ways problems in the normal sense of the word usually cannot: having to 'proceed from here' (as we said was the *form* of a 'problem': 5.1.4) always repeats, is a correlate to any entity, at any stage of its existence[89]. We have also hinted, however, that the virtual consists of unrepeatable singularities. This paradox is easily resolved in 5.2.4 by making a form/content-distinction.

5.1.6   The Fine-grainedness of the Virtual compared to Property Instances

In some regards, Deleuze's dispositionalism is not like the others. Directly above I said that a difference with previous frameworks is that it is here not the case that the very same property is part of the framework as both potency and actuality. In other words: it is not the case that it is the very same property that makes up the two sides (5.1.5) of an event. I mean this to be a reiteration of the idea with which we closed out chapter 4: we may think of actualisation as getting from a world without F to a world with F (actuality emerging from a situation *different* from it). Let me add a further difference here: the virtual is fully individuated in a way universals or even their instances are not.

We will see that it is useful for dispositionalism (*and* a correct interpretation of Deleuze, recall what we called 'crowned anarchy' in 3.3.2) to say that *first* there are completely individuated powers and in virtue of them completely differen*t*iated entities, and *then* only in some derivative sense do we get to generalities or universals as their qualities. This is a departure from the Greeks, with their universal-instantiating particulars. In fact, Kleinherenbrink (2019, p. x) goes as far as saying that (far different from the Greeks, I add) "the beating heart of [Deleuze's]

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[89] There is something in this language, carried over into Moore's proposal for capturing 'problems' in the imperative '*proceed from here*', that seems not to work, failing to express the *ongoing* nature it must capture. I think for this reason Deleuze suggests another term of art. More apt than the seemingly 'one-off' command '*proceed from here*' would be language that builds in a sense of ongoing reprisal. Adequate to this task would be a statement like '*proceed from 'erewhon'*', a term lifted from Butler's book of the same name, and interpreted by Deleuze as the "*re-created 'here-and-now'*" (1994, p. xxi). If we add a paradoxical clause like: 'one proceeds to that from which one started' we suddenly express *ongoing* change. The 're-created' aspect now secures exactly what we were after. I will not adopt this language, however, because the reader has been pestered enough. I *will* start calling Deleuze's imperatives '*recursive*'.

philosophy is an ontology of individual [i.e. fully individuated] entities" which are individual in a singular (not merely particular, i.e. as the instantiation of universals) sense. Deleuze, in this spirit, writes (1994, p. 68): concepts of possibility (we should of course make an exception for the framework we are building) are "too general […] for the [virtual] real. The [modal-conceptual] net", which in our context *and* the larger philosophical tradition generally, has included only universals and (instantiated in) particulars, "is [too] loose".

If Deleuze is right, the realisation set-ups we have discussed so far are deficient. So what exactly are they supposedly 'too loose' *for*? There is, if we follow Deleuze, a gap between dispositional property-concepts as we have deployed them thus far, and the virtual in itself[90]. Reflecting on this will be helpful in considering how Deleuze's powers differ especially from the Aristotelian's, with whom we share, of course, a commitment to immanence and with whom we might thus have been expected to be more or less in cahoots. The idea is as follows: the virtual is "not general" (Moore, 2012, p. 548) but dispositions, as thus far discussed, *are* (for being universals or being such ways that many things can be). Let me then, by way of explanation of why Deleuze maintains concepts are *too loose* for understanding modality, say what this difference amounts to.

Remember: the virtual's existence is immanent to objects, just like '*in re*'-dispositions, but this has to be made more precise in a number of ways, focussing here on what it means for the virtual to be completely differen*t*iated. To put this relatively simply, it means Deleuze's understanding of objects qua endowed with powers, is not that of particulars falling under a universal (e.g. to know the concept is to know about the object), even secondarily, but as individuals which, as such, do not have instantiated, but do have individuated, dispositions. The reader, I suppose, may have been wondering whether the virtual, apart from the prospect of another alternative template for essence-structures in the shape of a 'problem', is not just the same thing as Vetter's 'intrinsic localized modality' (4.2.3).

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[90] There are, moreover, Humean reasons for Deleuze's scepticism: concepts must be divorced from real powers (the virtual) because dispositional concepts represent one's *lived* past (think of Hume concerning idea- and habit-formation), and not the *pure* past inaccessible to experience (for Hume on dispositions: see the chapter on British Empiricism in the *Handbook of Potentiality*). This is, I think, what Deleuze (1994, p. 279) means to capture in the phrases "the possible is the mode of identity of concepts within representation, the virtual is the modality […] at the heart of Ideas" and "the virtual […] possesses full objective reality; it cannot be confused with the possible which lacks reality". What sets Deleuze apart from Hume is holding that though powers are not given in actuality, they *are* real. For the purpose of defending this, Deleuze looks to transcendental argumentation.

My answer to this question is '*roughly, yes*'. How, otherwise, could I have started on this project? But the project would not be interesting unless, on the other hand, my response would be a more fine-grained '*no*', the reasons for which I have just introduced: localized modality, for Deleuze, lies not in *universals* as instantiated by (immanent to) particulars, but in thoroughly individuated properties that he prefers to call *singularities*. This is what I hinted at by introducing the term 'crowned anarchy'. The virtual is not the support of an argument like 'steel can break, this thing is made of steel, so it can break' but first of all what answers the question '*how much* stress can this thing withstand exactly?' and further questions that ultimately circumscribe *this* thing, and it alone[91].

Let us consider briefly *why* one might like this: Deleuze posits a chain of 'ideal events' he calls 'differen*t*iation'. Conceive of this chain as transformations of ideas/problems/dispositions. That is: imagine some entity's powers *changing*. Deleuze's claim is that we should understand this not as this entity coming to instantiate various universals, but rather its power differen*t*iating. We leave the 'motor' of such individuations ('*difference in itself*') to 5.2.3.

Let us proceed with an example: there are…

> **"…movements [embryos] alone can […] withstand ([…] the anterior member of the [embryonic] tortoise undergoes a relative displacement of 180 degrees […]). [Its] achievement […] is to […] sustain forced movements […] which would break any [further developed] skeleton".**

We are tempted to say our tortoise, call him Alfred, is 'flexible'.

While Alfred's current fate is to sustain "forced movements […] which" at later stages "would break" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 215) him, Alfred is simultaneously differen*t*iating out of 'flexibility', and into (what we might be tempted to call) 'rigidity'. But *why should we not interpret Alfred's property as a universal, or a relation between universals?*

I answer as follows:

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[91] "[T]he Idea responds to […] questions [like] 'How much?'" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 246). As we will see below, this matter of degree must not be thought of as mixing two properties (e.g. strength and weakness) initially construed as universals; therein lies the singularity of powers.

Several contrasts (rigidity, fragility…) which flexibility *is not* cordon 'flexibility' off. Yet Alfred is becoming rigid. We may think the power Alfred has is a mixing of extremes on a continuum (flexible-rigid), but universals, I take it, do not mix. They just are the property they are and they might be relational, but they do not *blend*. Since Alfred's power (or *any* power) cannot be a mixture, differentiation does not (re)mix it: Deleuze's alternative is that Alfred bears no relation to universals to begin with. Alfred's power, then, stands alone: it is singular in that sense. It is *also* singular in making Alfred the individual he is, in a way not even in principle shareable, in contradistinction to the dispositionalisms rooted in the Greeks.

The downside to this is that, for being singular, real dispositions, for now, lack a clear connection to the repeatable properties we want to ascribe to actuality (e.g. red, square, everywhere…) and that we need some story about what it means for virtual properties to emerge in this way.

One upside of this is that we do not have to introduce an extra metaphysical device ('accidents') to account for Alfred's individuality: Alfred is immediately an individual. The singular is *missed* by the Greeks: one cannot, therefore, seem to build the developing Alfred's power (and *its* development) out of universals in a plausible way[92]. The other upside is that in singularities we thus have a clear candidate for an element for the kind of 'realisation set-up' we said we should look for at the end of chapter 4: something powerful in the world *prior* and *apart from* some generality. What has become clear, then, is that Deleuze's view is really an *alternative* to views queried earlier. The *legitimacy* of Deleuze's alternative (especially within the context of looking for an MDE) is the topic of sections to come. First by proving Deleuze's *relevance* (5.1.7), then by solving some extant problems (5.2).

5.1.7   A 'Further Developed Skeleton', or: 'In their Flesh' – Putting Deleuzean Meat on the Bare Bones of MDE

Let us start by investigating whether Deleuze's framework as presented above even has a claim to being 'dispositional realism' We can check this by establishing boxes to tick, and establishing any

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[92] The reader might object: '*but surely we can just say Alfred's property is a* degree *of flexibility…*'. But we cannot, for reasons implicit in the above, to be explicated in 5.2.3.

leeway in the relevant dimensions. Our starting point, here, will be the following 'schema' from 3.0, which various dispositional realisms fill out in their own way:

α) there are powerful properties (of some metaphysical categorization, e.g. 'universals')...

β) ...commitment to saying such powers (e.g. 'universals') explain how the concrete world becomes bepropertied (e.g. they become 'manifested')...

γ) ...combined with some stance (including lawlessness) on natural laws.

Below, I reiterate parts of the discussions of the general outlines of dispositionalism(s) already worked through in previous chapters, immediately blend Deleuze's framework with said outlines, and adumbrate solutions to the issues for dispositionalism we have been concerned with thus far. Thus far indeed, all positions we have dealt with accepted property-universals, mostly in some 'secondary' ontological sense, derived from 'the ways particulars are'. Deleuze, of course, fills out this schema differently. He does so roughly as follows:

1) **Deleuze does not deny there are natural laws.**

I will be reticent about his exact stance. His view is (seemingly quite) complex *and* underdeveloped (at least in the text I have been primarily engaged with) [93]. I will, however, ignore it not for those reasons, but because, although, qua standard topics for consideration the field calls for it (hence its inclusion in the 'schema'), how γ is filled out exactly is seemingly irrelevant (as suggested in 3.0) to being a dispositional realist.

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[93] On the one hand actuality is governed by natural laws (Deleuze, 1994, p. 241), on the other this is the work of "a saturnine God […], legislating against his creation because he has created against his legislation" (op. cit., p. 227). Explicating what that means would be both difficult and (I think) irrelevant to our understanding of the actualisation of the virtual. See, for a first attempt, a remark I made space for in section 3.1.4 of the *Conclusion*.

2) Deleuze, with the idea of a singularity, surely presents an alternative for universals on the *virtual* side of things. He does not deny, however, that in actuality there are generalities) the genesis of which we have yet to understand).

For α Deleuze clearly does not plug universals. Surely, saying no to universals does not place him outside of dispositional realism, given singularities to be a realist about instead. One no less accepts the reality of dispositions for thinking their reality is fully singular.

The remainder of this chapter, obviously, should mainly be concerned with what happens under β for Deleuze**.** It is clear that we fill out α with 'problems' qua fully *individuated*. But if actuality emerges on condition of there being singularities, how is it that there are general properties at all? And we have indeed said this is the case, when we introduced the univocity of being (5.1.3), which of course only holds if the virtual *and the actual* are both *real*. Our interest in actualisation is then best thought of as twofold: 1) 'how does the actual come out of the virtual *at all?'* (take this as synonymous with the question about manifestation we have been asking all along) and 2) 'how does the general emerge out of the singular?'[94].

As a leg-up, and to clarify why Deleuze's view is not secondary immanentism (i.e. to further distinguish 'Deleuzeanism' and 'Aristotelianism'), consider the following: for e.g. Lowe, in some 'secondary' ontological sense, repeatable properties (universals) derived from 'the ways particulars are'. This remains true for Deleuze, in the sense that it is in virtue of the virtual that there is the actual and the actual is characterized by repeating properties (mammal here, mammal there…). But, I here repeat, there are two aspects to being: the being of an entity qua singular which is not even in principle, for being singular, shared with other entities, and its 'local manifestation' in the actual sense. The former does not include (instances of) universals, the latter perhaps does, or so it now seems (turquoise here, turquoise there…), but we will settle on a notion of generalities just shy of property-universals. This *has* to be so, for actual qualities are really not dispositional in Deleuze's framework; if we are then to be dispositional monists, they cannot be properties either.

MDE is, we established, neutral regarding universals, transcendence and laws (1.1.1, 3.0). DM, saying that properties "are all potencies" (Bird, 2007, p. 3), functions as a yardstick for any dispositionalism's scope (in terms of whether powers are *all* or *some* properties). Bird suggests an alternative option in the *Mixed View*: a narrower-scoped view on which there are also non-

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[94] To which there will be a further element: 'are these actual generalities universals *or not?'*

dispositional properties. Perhaps other readers of Deleuze would place him there. I would say, however, that a dispositional monist might say there are nonetheless non-dispositions which modify objects, if they manage to avoid categorizing these as properties. Deleuze's framework asks for this (we are not just imposing dispositional monism on him) as we will see. Since actualities (the parts and, in our context especially important, qualities of entities) are by themselves merely a present, they are not themselves powerful. Rather, I will (5.2.4) offer an interpretation of them after the manner of an *event* (and not properties) at the surface of entities (this is what it means to be the virtual's 'local manifestation').

We have thus established these very general outlines within which to work:

Two background-assumptions to honour (realism, monism) and three topics to explore, two of which, ultimately, demand being worked out: we must say what our powers, and their manifestations are, if not (instances of) universals. We must moreover give an interpretation of how the world is manifestly bepropertied by them, with some generality being wrested from singularities.

But, does Deleuze not go against the spirit of dispositional realism nonetheless?

DE, the other MDE-related thesis we (in 1.0) introduced alongside DM said property-identities are "fixed by their essential powers" (Bird, 2007, p. 78). Deleuze, after all, seemingly holds an alternative to DE, given the role of differen*t*iation. He rather holds something like '*properties are produced (fixed, then again unsettled) by difference, i.e. the ongoing differentiation of the virtual*'. Moreover, he has a more loose-knit idea of directionality (5.1.1): properties are directed in the sense of creating results, but therefore these results cannot feature in their definition (though the creativity can). This should not be an issue for classifying the position we are working out as a dispositional realism: as long as we remain within α-γ we are dispositionalists. If we honour the background assumption that dispositions are real while giving privilege to difference over identity, we are dispositional realists *of a certain metaphysical stripe*.

5.2 Extant Issues and Creative Solutions & Interventions

5.2.1 First Blush: an Encounter between Deleuze and the Extant Views

Let us now see how Deleuze's framework might react to issues considered in chapters 1-4. The promises made in 5.0 require we find, for all such issues, Deleuzean solutions. We must moreover do so whilst honouring realism, the three tenets of the general schema, immanence, and remaining within the leeway indicated above. Some solutions are perhaps better called *interventions* aimed at avoiding such issues altogether. 5.2.2-5.2.4 will work all this out in full. Here, we I start by partially reiterating table 1[95]:

Table 4: Reiterating some Issues for 'Ante Rem'-Dispositionalism (Reiterated from Table 1)

Originally:	Better Thought of as:
'Too much potentiality'/'Too little actuality' (TMP/TLA): dispositions/powers/potencies have "too much potentiality" (etc.) if their essence-structures involve unmanifested relata.	**The 'relata-problem' (RP):** Bird's seems a 'Meinongian' metaphysics in which non-existent items are relata. The issue is: the relation between the existing and non-existent.
The 'regress objection' (RO): the essences of properties include an infinite regress of properties.	**The 'ontological' RFP (ORFP):** if properties are essentially indeterminate, they cannot be real: which is the case if properties are constituted by an infinite series of potentials.

Reading the table's right side, we see two issues: Bird posits seemingly non-existent relata, and the relations between them threaten to proliferate. Focussing on the former, we asked ('OSCQ'): 'what *is* the ontological status/categorization of M?'. Bird answered with '*actual, contingently abstract universals*', assuaging the Meinongian worry that there are things in his ontology that do not exist, but opening, as we saw, and panned his position for in chapter 2, another can of worms.

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[95] One might wonder at my including issues from chapter 1, since I am developing an *immanent* dispositionalism: I hope it will be helpful to the reader to see the responses to issues coming from the '*ante rem*' side of things. Moreover, my analysis might convince Deleuze-scholars who have subjected "the virtual [...] to [...] the question of whether or not [Deleuze] ended up positing a transcendent ground" (Hughes, 2008, p. 105) that he has not: had he, Deleuze(anism) could not begin to solve these issues.

'Deleuzeans will avoid a suspicion like RP altogether...', starts our intervention, aimed at saving one from busting out the tin-opener. Our position, stated by way of four alternatives to Platonism, is:

1) ***the dispositional is not actual (as it is with the Platonists), though both actual and virtual are real...***

2) ***...neither abstract nor transcendent (as with the Platonists), but ideal/problematic and immanent, and...***

3) ***...does not consist of universals (as with the Platonists), but of singularities in an ongoing process of differentiation.***

4) ***Moreover, manifested qualities are not* instantiations of *actual but contingently abstract properties (as with the Platonists), so: manifested-F is not an instantiation of unmanifested-F. F (qua universal) plays no role in defining singularities in themselves.***

The first point and last point prevent us from having to address the worry about 'Meinongianism': we can say, given the first, that the dispositional is a *mode* of existence (which the second point captures: ideal/problematic) different from actuality, but not therefore non-existent. Given the fourth, it appears that our dispositions are not the same relational structures they are for Bird: singularities somehow create actuality, but the virtual's being stands apart from any general outcome. The actual, in Deleuze, plays no role in the essences of powers, whereas for Bird it does. Unmanifested qualities are not necessarily invoked in defining the virtual. The RP therefore does not appear for Deleuzeans, but does for Bird.

Bird, of course, answers the RP too, and, one might say, with less difficulty than Deleuze. For 'actual' in Bird one must read 'existent' or 'real' in general, whereas for Deleuze the actual is the real result of equally real powers that we characterize as *virtual*, not actual. The thought captured under 4) will, I assume, still sound a bit odd to the reader and whereas Deleuze's ontology invokes various modes of being, one of which ('the virtual') still seems strange, Bird's ontology is entirely contained in what he calls actuality, divided into (contingently) abstract and concrete zones. Dispositions are real (i.e. actual, even if those accusing him of 'Meinongianism' fail to see this) for Bird, but: as transcendent. This may perhaps sound more solid to the reader than 'virtual immanent singularities'.

Nonetheless Platonic dispositionalism, given the world its realisation set-up has to 'put out', invites the question how the transcendent and the concrete relate. This introduces massive issues, however simple a solution it seemed to be to the RP. The second listed alternative allows us to avoid *this* issue. Saying *how* has us engage in a methodological reflection (more in 5.3): Bird chooses to look for the possibility of manifestations in a domain separated from the concrete, Deleuze does not. *Why?* We have seen, in clear opposition to Platonism, the virtual collates (alternatives 2 and 3) *immanence* and *singularity*. From the reader's standpoint, having worked through the issues in chapters 1-4 it appears that this must be so. Powers *cannot* be radically separated from the concrete for then the RP appears, and the virtual must be different from the general qualities in the actual to avoid the issues at the end of chapter 4.

One may, however, be able to grasp this without putting in the work already done, which is what seems to have to happened in Deleuze's case. I propose there might be a rule implicit in Deleuze's transcendental reasoning in virtue of which Deleuze *knows* to start by ascribing immanence and singularity to the virtual. The rule would be something like 'in setting up transcendental arguments, stick as closely as possible to what one is trying to explain', where this possibility is circumscribed by there also being *difference*: i.e. do not directly trace the transcendental from empirical givens (Deleuze, 1994, p. 135). In this case: to account for change (i.e. the manifesting of power) in an ontology of "individual entities" (Kleinherenbrink, 2019, p. x). The singularity matches the individuality, the immanence entity-boundedness.

And there is more a Deleuzean could avoid. A Deleuzean could intervene *before* Bird's 'OSCQ'-response which (adapted from table 3) was:

Table 5: The OSCQ and Bird's Response (Reiterated from Table 3)

OSCQ: 'what *is* the ontological status and categorization of the constituents of the M&S-pair and what would they have to be for MDE to be plausible?' (the 'ontological status'-question, OSCQ).	Possibilia are actual, specifically: they are actual but abstract.	This does not mean that Bird's Platonic position is the unique answer to the OSCQ.

The intervention (and let this also be a way of slowly transitioning into problems with '*in re*'-dispositionalism) could go something like:

We would predict Platonism to be unhelpful because it does not account for manifestation, yet invites questions about it, answering

which goes awry because of the transcendence in the framework. Since it addresses universals, Platonism does not address, is a Deleuzean's suspicion, real modality, which is singular. The same goes for Aristotelians, who crushed manifestation between identical repeating properties. Some of the basic coordinates of these frameworks ought to be avoided from the outset.

Note, moreover, that although Deleuze works out an immanent position within dispositional realism, he does not need any 'principle of instantiation' or suchlike. Instead: if dispositions are fully individuated, they do not instantiate anything[96]. We, consequently, need no instantiation condition. We *do* need an account of the ongoing modification of powers and how these can manifest. To what I hope will be the reader's satisfaction when it comes to the question of how the actual comes from the virtual, we can cash the virtual out in somewhat causal terms, and these causes in terms of linguistic items (imperatives instead of counterfactuals)[97]. This virtuality, crucially diverging from the already immanent 'Aristotelian' frameworks, is *singular*.

We can thus still give a realist answers to question what a disposition's reality consists in (as was the point behind the 'OSCQ', which was couched in a language of universals and relations we have come to see is not inherent to dispositionalism): potentialities are '?-being', not non-existent. To underpin it (why should we believe it?) we will also answer the worry driving the ORFP (see table 4 above): the virtual *is* fully determinate. But how does this come to be the case in the Deleuzean framework?': differen*t*iation.

Now, a note on the essence-structures we have seen in chapter 4. Regarding Bird's account of essences, I want to foreground an aspect of it Deleuzeans might latch on to (from 1.3.5):

There is a production-relation between unmanifested-S, manifested-P and unmanifested-M. Producing unmanifested-M works *given manifested-P*, but Bird's framework does nothing in terms of relating

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[96] Kleinherenbrink (2019, p. x) defends an analogous conclusion for entities: "[Deleuze's] crucial insight is that entities are never a mere […] representation, effect, [etc.,] of anything else".

[97] Without making, of course, language fundamental: involved is the same sort of correlation as with e.g. the counterfactuals and the 'standard conception'. Nor are we making normativity fundamental: the mention of the 'imperative' here only regards their 'force'.

**the transcendent to the concrete, i.e. an explanation of how P
becomes manifest.**

This relation generates the items for power-essences to be built out of. What fixes power-identity is, then, what makes powers. Deleuze's account of differentiation roughly has the same aim, but proceeds by completely different means. First, Deleuze's resources are all immanent; second, the result is *singular*, and third; production is not immediately of the possibility of a universal but of a change in power. We have yet to explain how to get to generalities from there, but whereas we had been somewhat puzzled by the combination of universals outside of space-time and 'production' in Bird, we have already said Deleuze's conception of the virtual overtly has a temporal slant to it (5.1.5).

On the '*in re*'-side, we saw (4.2.3) Vetter's criticism of thinking powers correlate with conditionals between stimuli- and manifestation-conditions. She advances a notion of powers doing away with the stimulus-condition such that powers are given the sense of 'can'. A question then arises *for us*: Vetter's formulation very straightforwardly captures what we take dispositions to be: properties that make particulars *able to do something*. *Will the Deleuzean notion of '?-being' ('problem') be able to provide a similar sense?* We might fear that it cannot, because, by dropping the universal a power would be directed to, we seemingly lose (what can a disposition point to if not the item it is a disposition for?) directionality altogether although I have already suggested this is not the case (for a final statement: 5.3).

Tugby's critique of immanent positions was that they cannot support dispositionalism, failing to satisfy two 'platitudes' (4.2). The first was:

**"A particular can have a [potentiality] even if it never
manifests"** (Tugby, 2013, p. 454)**.**

'*In re*'-dispositionalism largely fails to account for this. For: if a power never manifests, the corresponding universal remains uninstantiated (in Tugby's reading, given that Aristotelians by and large work with an 'instantiation condition': non-existent). It followed that 'Aristotelianism' cannot allocate identities (and therefore being) to unmanifested dispositions. But if Deleuzean powers are not instantiations in the first place, Deleuzean '*in re*'-dispositionalism escapes this problem.

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The second platitude was:

"Many [potentialities] are intrinsic" (ibid.)**.**

The platitude only affected dispositions correlated with the counterfactuals we rejected. Deleuze's singularities are not so-correlated, hence our position escapes the worry. We said, in defence of the Aristotelianism we at that point were investigating, that if there are effect-properties (qua 'first' actuality) for power-essences to include, even in a universe eternally devoid (qua 'second' actuality) of their effects, the resulting position escapes the worry. The reader will recall that, though offering a solution to Tugby's problem, the resulting position engendered a problem that had us abandon Aristotelianism.

5.2.2-5.2.4 will show more clearly how Deleuze's view gets away from Tugby's original worries and that the singularities escape 4.4's puzzle. This will indeed cost us having to reconstruct the directionality otherwise so easily associated with dispositions[98]. The Deleuzean

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[98] Feeling we finally have gotten on board sufficient detail to do so, in this regard I should contrast my view of the connection between dispositional realism and Deleuze's metaphysics with Bryant's. We borrowed from Bryant the distinction between the *virtual proper being* of entities and its *local manifestation* (2014, p. 40) and went along with treating "powers as "virtual"" (op. cit., p. 41). Bryant, however, imputes to Deleuze an allegiance to features of Molnar's view. Among these are (op. cit., pp. 41-42):

A. Powers are actual features of the entity bearing them
B. Powers are directed toward their manifestation

I do not see these in Deleuze.

Regarding A: the virtual *is not* actual. That Bryant says the virtual is an actual feature of an entity, is quite confusing. Of course I am not denying that the virtual is *real* (which is what he seems to mean: "[p]owers are real or actual": 2014, p. 41), but it is important to note that while the actual is equally real, the virtual and the actual do not overlap. For whereas the actual contains parts and qualities, the virtual is an explanatory condition of these actualities. But Deleuze's set-up is really quite different: it is actuality qua general that hides the reality of difference qua singular, and it is confusing to suggest, in a Deleuzean context, that powers would be actual, for it would become unclear what it means for powers to *actualize*.

Regarding B: nowhere in Bryant do we see the contrast between *singularities* and *simulacra*. My reconstruction of directionality goes from the former, powerful pole to the latter, actual pole through a creative act (actualisation by way of generalization and depotentialization, giving rise to some part or quality in the world qua actual). Bryant, however, does not clarify whether he thinks of the directedness of powers as being pre-structured (as on the extant views) or not. This is a real difference between the realisms. An example Bryant uses of directionality being like an operation on input (if we plug a certain number into a certain formula we obtain

position, taking stock of the above discussion, must thus take care of a number of problems, which I here list for the benefit of the reader who might be particularly concerned with one, some, or all of these, and wishes to see their concern reflected by the author. After this list, I proceed to cluster the concerns together under broader headings, to get a better handle on them and *show* the reader the unity of Deleuze's thinking, something our project would otherwise, presentation-wise at least, lack.

1) **We must give a realist interpretation to the being of dispositions ('?-being'/'problems').**

2) **We must spell out what it means for the virtual to be determinate and say how it comes to be so, given that it does not drop out of a network of universals.**

3) **We must show our immanent position hangs together in an unproblematic way, of elements that we want to assert exist. We can do this by reprising Tugby's first platitude, and defending that the virtual *qua unactualized* is real and immanent.**

4) **We must work out a meaning for 'immanence' regarding the virtual: what it means to define it as "part of [a] real object" (Deleuze, 1994, pp. 208-209).**

5) **We must also respond to Tugby's second platitude concerning intrinsicality.**

6) **We must show that what is understood by 'the virtual' is not a collection of properties that are the same ones one finds in the actual world (to make good on the idea that we may think of actualisation as getting from a world without F to a world with F: actuality emerges from a situation *different* from it).**

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another number) makes it sound like he is more on the 'powers make directions' than 'powers have directions' side, as am I. But if this is true, one cannot say powers are directed to their manifestations: powers, rather, give rise to realities that are different from them. Molnar (2003, p. 81), meanwhile, merely writes that the directedness of powers is to be understood as physical intentionality, an "undefined primitive" of his theory, roughly such that what a power is, rolls out of its being *for X*. But this goes against the Deleuzean impulse to understand difference *in itself*.

7) **We must indicate why/in what sense whatever we explicate under the heading of '?-being' approaches the sense of 'power' dispositionalism was conceived under.**

8) **We must spell out more exactly what the Deleuzean's stance on DE is (*'property-identities are fixed by powers*).**

9) **We must give an account of the manifestation of power. Providing one means we have advanced beyond the previous positions (which implies our position is not too alien from those, either). Our interest in this is twofold: 1) 'how does the actual come out of the virtual *at all?'* and 2) 'how does the general emerge out of the singular?'.**

10) **I indicated (5.1.7) a dispositional monist could say there are non-dispositions which modify objects, if we manage to avoid categorizing these as properties. I indicated (5.1.5) Deleuze makes use of the notion of (double-sided) events. We must construct actual, and therefore non-powerful, qualities this way[99].**

Broadly speaking then, we have the following three concerns (clusters A, B & C):

Table 6: Ten Problems the Deleuzean Must Take Care of (in Three Clusters)

A: in what sense is the virtual an immanent condition of actual things, and how do the singular and the actual qua general relate?	B: is Deleuze's a stable, immanent, dispositionalism worthy of the name?	C: is our framework a monistic dispositional essentialism, and recognizable as such?'
We may distinguish two roles for the virtual: saying problems are real, means believing non-actual properties that "[condition] and [engender] solutions" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 212), i.e. actuality. We can focus separately on 'conditioning' and 'engendering' to provide complementary answers to the question what 'the virtual has the reality of a problem' means **(#1)**.	Out of differentiation fall powers defined apart from instantiation **(#2)**, hence Deleuze's dispositionalism escapes Tugby's worry motivated by the instantiation condition **(#3)**. We will be able at this stage, moreover, to understand why Deleuze's position is not strictly a negation of DE **(#8)** and thus	What of the causing or engendering aspect of powers (see A)? The Kantian language of imperatives and problems provides the form **(#1)**, and the content consists of singularities slotting into this form. This form correlates to engendering. We have yet to determine, however, whether we can maintain against Tugby that singularities are

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[99] Note, by the way, that Manuel DeLanda makes a distinction between *properties* and *capacities* in his *Philosophy and Simulation* (2016).

We can flesh this out more, by focussing on the virtual's being a condition, specifically by addressing the sense in which problems are immanent **(#4)**, which will be made more precise by invoking the Kantian vocabulary of imperatives. We will also address the notion of differentiation in virtue of which **(#2)** these imperatives are singular, despite having a general form. The singularity of these imperatives (and thus problems/powers) accounts for why one ought not to say that the virtual is a version of the actual **(#6)**, which after all consists of general parts and qualities). This gives us good reason to ask how the relation between the two comes about **(#9)**.	broadly comparable to, and still capable of being a version of, the MDE as introduced in 3.0. Having also worked out a sense in which singularities are in themselves powerful, we can compare this to the sense of 'power' in chapters 1-4 **(#7)**. This will be important in answering the leading question of this project: 'how to understand actualisation'. The suggestion here is that actualisation must be understood as a diminishing of intensity (which we said is what is what makes the virtual powerful).	intrinsic to individuals **(#5)**, which explicating their role as cause for solutions/actualisation will assist in. This will add to a satisfying answer to **#9** for it means we have retained aspects of dispositionalism desired by the 'mainstream', although the sense **(#7)** in which we say 'power' is different. This pushes us to be clearer on **#9** (the conditions under which Deleuze is able to fill the big explanatory gap) and proceed with **#10**: along with a shift in sense for 'power', must we not also redefine actual qualities? We certainly must if Deleuze's framework is an MDE.

5.2.2   In-Depth: Problem Cluster A (Generality from Singularity by Way of 'Simulacra')

Focussing on the virtual in Deleuze's transcendental *conditional* sense, one can easily discern the virtual's immanence: zooming in on this piece of borrowed and transformed Kantian terminology shows what taking the virtual to be 'part of real objects' means. With Kant, transcendental conditions, account for *possible experience*, but in the Deleuzean context take on an ontological slant and come to apply to what *is* (it is that by which the given is given). Qua immanence, think of conditions applying not just as '*conditions for*' some actuality, but especially as conditions entities '*have*'. It is this aspect of entities that sets them apart from all others (makes each one singular in this aspect).

Within certain limits (i.e. generation/annihilation), everything is always in *some* condition. Moreover, entities also often go from being in one condition to being in another. Call this differen*ti*ation. To differen*ti*ation, being one side of an event, corresponds differen*ci*ation. That is: since the actual is engendered by the virtual, we may say changes in the actual are engendered by changes in the virtual. We might see differen*ci*ation at the surface of things (which changes colour, warps, gains a new measurable extension, goes from being a sheet of paper to being an origami bird, then bursts into flames…) by the general qualities they exhibit, but the current discussion is restricted to the virtual. We move on to how the aspects relate below. We must first ask: '*virtual change in virtue of what?*'. It seems that powers must be subject *to* change for there to be any "determination of the virtual content of a [problem]" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 207) at all.

Conveniently, powers are immanent to entities such that we just have to posit a kind of interaction between those, for which Deleuze (1994, p. 214) indeed introduces the idea that to any one entity, the surrounding[100] further entities present a "field of individuation". This has to be the case since because singularities do not instantiate anything, reciprocal relations (call these 'differen*t*ial') between them must account for the singularities there are. This cannot take the form of a 'production-relation' (as with Bird) in which the possibility of manifestation (which 'is' the universal: 1.3.4) falls out of further universals: it is an operation of entities on each other. Since such differen*t*iation itself needs power to occur, we must emphasize that whatever properties there are, are powerful because of '*difference in itself*', i.e. '*intensity*'; a transcendental *drive* (5.1.4) or 'motor' that exists in any and all singularities. We would have to say that it not *only* accounts for manifestation, but for differentiation, too.

Having returned, then, to the notion of difference, let us understand how general actual qualities might be won from fully individuated powers. Differen*c*iation was (in 5.1.2) introduced as "qualification and partition" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 245). We will have more to say about it, but as a first interpretation, consider the following: we said actuality, like the virtual, is real. We also said that qualities (*general* ones: ones that repeat) fill actuality. But difference, it turns out, is an ineliminable part of Deleuze's system *too*, given that it turns out to be the sufficient reason for the differen*t*iation that spurs on differen*c*iation.

It seems there is only one configuration containing both, and it must be that: insofar as qualities are general, difference is "hidden beneath [it]" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 228) without being, therefore, eliminated. This suggests its remaining embedded in the virtual, being and remaining the sufficient reason for singularities qua powerful. The virtual's consisting of singularities, moreover, entails that the generalities characterizing actuality are, says James Williams (2003, p. 27) what Deleuze calls simulacra: "members of a repeated series that cannot be traced back to an origin" where for 'origin' one may read *a universal to instantiate*.

Deleuze thus has us distinguish repetition and universality. There are many mauves in the world ('members of a series'), but none of them instantiate a mauve-universal. With the concept of the '*simulacrum*', we may then explore a notion of repetition that is not instantiations of genuine universals while avoiding collapse into a system characterized by difference all the way through (difference being, in Deleuze, foremost the condition for actuality different from it). Simulacra do repeat and do so engendered by, while hiding, difference, singularity and the virtual.

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[100] I deliberately keep this vague: it is up to the sciences to track how vast the distances across space and time might be across which entities affect each other.

Such simulacra are the effect of a certain (for lack of a better term) 'mechanism', moreover one for the analogues of which the previously discussed dispositionalists have hardly any concepts, hence our panning their 'realisation set-ups' in previous chapters.

The singular (the virtual/dispositional) and the general (their manifestations) relate, through this mechanism, roughly as follows: treating of difference as intensity, we can say simulacra represent a diminishment, and actualisation the diminishing. Pure actuality (suggested in 5.1.2), after all, is inert and static, a result of powers but not itself powerful. A mere present. Treating of difference as difference (singularity, specificity), we can say simulacra again represent a diminishing: actuality knows, after all, general qualities. Actualisation is then both a process of depotentialisation and the loss of singularness (call this 'generalization'): mauve itself does not confer on anything a further capacity, but is the result of power – and the specific way in which something has come to look, and is, mauve does not prevent it from being as mauve as anything else.

5.2.3 In-Depth: Problem Cluster B (Intensity is a Transcendental Principle)

We said singularities are dispositions in their own right and meant, foremost, the absence of universals in Deleuze's framework. Our task remains to spell out their being powers, i.e. their powerfulness, *positively*. We concluded singularities cannot be thought powerful for pointing essentially toward a universal (whether we think powers as correlated with '*can…*'- or '*if… then…*'-statements). To make their distinction from universals a bit firmer still, I here set powers apart from *gradations* of universals, too. Having done this, we move on to explicating the sense in which difference *is* the metaphysical "positive" (Deleuze, 1991, p. 103) in virtue of which singularities *are* powerful.

We suggested (with Alfred the tortoise) that property-change with universals is awkward. Nonetheless, general terms work quite well for communicating about actuality. As Moore writes: we can accurately assign…

"…*numerical value[s] to [actualities]…*" (Moore, 2012, pp. 557)[101].

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[101] I here, and in the next snippet, replace 'intensive differences' with 'singularities', to stick to the language we have been using thus far. Likewise I substitute 'actualities' for 'extensive differences'.

Shades of black and red can be measured with colorimeters, for example. It seems, by analogy, that we could do the same thing with unmanifested powers. What this would mean, moreover, seems simple enough: if we are driven to call Alfred 'flexible to degree x' (supposed we had a chart for that) this expresses our sense that 'anterior members' once turned, could turn again. But dispositions, we said, are singular and virtual: when we propose powers, or degrees of them, in general terms, the concepts used stand merely for inferences from varying arrangements of parts and qualities (themselves qua actual *not* powerful) projected into the future, and not powers in themselves. Moore (with the earlier example of Alfred spliced in) again:

> ***"if we […] say [Alfred] has ['flexibility'] to degree x […] we [represent a singularity] by [actuality], not […] in itself"*** (2012, pp. 558)**.**

This represents, because of the dichotomy between singularities in themselves and actualities, a Kantian complement to a rather Humean view[102]: powers are not given in the actual and hence an ascription like above fails.

Say that it falls out of an inference like '*Alfred flexes (there is a series of actualities) → parts moved → can move → Alfred instantiates flexibility (dispositionally) → which explains the event from which we started*': this merely shows willingness to produce ideas of qualities, by bundling representations of the lived past under concepts and projecting these into the present and future. Yet what is lived by the observer (and Alfred) is arrangements of inert parts and qualities plus their succession. This succession needs to be explained, but using an abstraction from these successions as an explanation, like above, just seems to put the cart before the horse (again 'tracing the transcendental from the empirical').

We may yet reasonably construct a notion of the virtual being of entities if actuality is to be explained. There really are powers, but only in the absence of universals and abstractions like above do we get at what makes them powerful. One way of making this approach sound somewhat plausible is to remind ourselves of what we said in 2.1.4: that due to the relational nature of dispositions, a straightforward, simple, answer as to their powerfulness is deferred. The promise of *powerfulness in itself* would be, in that sense, an improvement. Note that saying that powers are *degrees* of universals does not get rid of the issue; it keeps the universals and, through

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[102] I take it this is part of what Deleuze calls his "transcendental empiricism" (1994, p. 143), to which we have been opposing tracing the transcendental from the empirical.

abstraction, places us at a remove from what we want to understand. Alfred's *virtuality*, however, is not a universal, nor one of its degrees, but the singularities that make Alfred the individual he is.

How is this to be combined with presenting a sufficient reason for the suggested ideal occurrences, in virtue of which Alfred first changes qua virtual, then qua actual? We account for this, having assumed that every individual is what it is in virtue of a constitutive difference, by saying that this difference, consisting of the singularities, represents not '*power to...*', but is '*intensity*' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 223). Note that the introduction of this *does* represent a bit of a shift from what might have been one's implicit understanding of powers: that the dispositional is merely a reserve to be activated (this was most clear when we considered powers have S-conditions that seems to represent triggers).

The alternative suggested here, is a way of constructing the notion of power conceived in itself: a transcendental principle to which being 'at rest'. i.e. being a reserve to be triggered, being an empirical characterization, (Deleuze, 1994, p. 240), does not apply. We must stress here that intensity is not a big virtual *unity*, it is dispersed across all individual things there are ('shreds of pure past' rather than one big condition for all presents/actualities). Moreover we may here say something useful about the 'directedness' of such power: remember that we are working out what it is for the virtual to *give* the given and be *creative*. It is precisely not to be able to be essentially defined in terms of this or that result, for that would be putting the actual cart in front of the powerful horse. What we may instead say, to use another horrible metaphor, and recycle an image from the section on directionality in Bird's framework (see Figure 1) is that Deleuzean singularities are like arrows: *they always point*, but not essentially at *something*. They cannot, because what they end up pointing at arrives after their being directed there, as this pointing's *result*.

Note that in virtue of not being merely a reserve, "intensity as a transcendental principle" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 231) presents the sufficient reason, as an element *of* singularities, for the necessary differential work. Its being a 'transcendental principle' suggests something about how Deleuze arrives at the notion (it needs to be presupposed to explain what we want to explain), its conceptual role (explaining local modality, i.e. the virtual is still in some sense a condition of possibility) and (in virtue of having a mode of existence different from that of actuality, one in which energy cannot be exhausted such that we can set being a transcendental 'drive' ultimately quite apart from what we know of motors in actuality) opens the possibility of accepting it. If we do, we can say it is what makes powers powerful in themselves, therefore active amongst themselves. This may strike the reader as gratuitous and strange, but given the context, in which

e.g. Bird recognizes 'production' amongst universals, too, it is not *very* much so. Work amongst dispositions seems *necessary* in various frameworks.

Moreover, this complex indicates a strategy regarding Tugby's concern about instantiation. The problem was that since dispositions were (partially) essentially defined in terms of their results (what a '*power to...*' is a power *to*). But if the being of powers is formulated as a recursive imperative like we suggested, and each one is a fully determinate virtual configuration, then the outcomes of powers one would want to predicate of particulars play no part in the reality/essence of dispositions. Tugby's formulation of the problem consequently dissolves. Yet the reader might not yet be satisfied with what we have said of the being of powers. Let us then address, head-on, the question whether the framework around it is a stable, immanent, dispositionalism worthy of the name.

The reader might want to know how our position, in virtue of the proposals concerning ongoing differentiation, compares to DE ('*property-identities are fixed by powers*'). Our view is that '*powers are produced (fixed, then unsettled) by difference*'. Working from the assumption that everything is an individual, by which we mean that everything is what it is because of its singularities, we offer that, indeed, singularities are fixed by powers. The difference with the canonical DE is the sense we give to 'are fixed', and that the act of being 'fixed by' should be understood as a real operation, thus interpreting DE as '*singularities are re-fixed in fields of individuation, through virtual events*'. I would say there is a family resemblance between this and DE. I conclude Deleuze's framework may claim a place amongst the immanent dispositionalisms as suggested by the taxonomy at the end of chapter 3, and is indeed stable in the sense that, if we grant the notion of intensity as worked out above, the system explains actuality[103].

It is, then, starting to look like, for all its new concepts, or alternative takes on items it shares with other dispositionalisms, our framework can realistically be labelled a dispositional realism. We should still, however, clinch the *monism*.

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[103] Note that we have followed Deleuze along creative endeavours. For example the "condensation, or accumulation of" e.g. Kantian "components" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 20) gave the virtual its explanatory-gap-filling role, by ascribing to it the force of an imperative. The current discussion of 'intensity' one might see as explicating further what this consists in through another act of constructive 'condensation'. One ought to gauge the quality of concepts arrived at in this fashion with two criteria: the 'endoconsistency' of their components with each other and the 'exoconsistency' of the concept with its framework (ibid.). I.e.: are there some horrible structural defects here, either in the concepts themselves (amongst their elements) or in the fit between the concepts arrived at and the wider framework?

5.2.4 In-Depth: Problem Cluster C (Why 'Simulacra' are not Proper Properties and Deleuze's Position is an MDE)

If actuality, which is *inert*, includes *properties*, Deleuze's framework is a case of 'the mixed view' (5.1.7), but if simulacra are best categorized as something else, Deleuze's framework constitutes a dispositional monism. Crucial for our understanding of the coming-about of actuality is the 'differen*ci*ation' that intensity spurs on, creating 'solutions' to virtual 'problems'. Such manifestations are events. They come, they go. Of course it is no shock that properties might be borne only for a while, and might thus already be called events in some sense (we did just that in 3.2 after all), but I will suggest various further ways in which the actualities of entities might be thought not to relate to their bearers as we think properties do.

We can provide a clue about how to metaphysically categorize actuality by taking a detour through Tugby's worry about intrinsicality (immanent dispositionalism fails to say that "[m]any [potentialities] are intrinsic": 2013, p. 454) from a Deleuzean angle. We are here concerned with the intrinsicality of powers to their bearers. By 'intrinsicality' Tugby means that x's environment changing cannot affect its having P, and dispositions interpreted in counterfactual terms fail this test, for singularities must be forged in 'fields of individuation'. We respond by saying that whereas the label 'intrinsic' thus defined is an awkward fit for the content of the imperatives (which is contingent, given their emergence out of fields of individuation), it applies straightforwardly to the virtual as such: things cannot but be in a condition.

The imperative form 'proceed from here' (recursively read), is inalienable. We thus establish that power is intrinsic to beings, although their bearing specific singularities is contingent content. These conditions are not condition*als* in the sense problematized by Tugby (4.2), hence, I say, his problems falls to the wayside as inapplicable. Qua specific virtual individual, beings are their singularities. They make up the singular nature of the individual they are the powers of. The same cannot be said of actualities: actuality, for being general, lacks this singular character, and thus stands somewhat apart from the entity it characterizes. It may seem a bit odd to conclude from this that simulacra are events and not powerless properties, yet I think this is a sound conclusion to draw. I reason as follows, in two steps:

- **Remember that every present is only a temporary occurrence sustained by the intensity of the virtual, such that the actual's 'evental' status might be readily accepted.**

- **Step two is establishing that actualities are not proper to entities qua individual: the qualities of things are real qua actual, but therefore precisely do not reflect the singular existence of their bearers. It seems thus somewhat strange to call them their *properties*: such qualities more honestly seem like events merely going on at their exterior.**

This is perhaps a strange view of entities, but I am tempted to conclude that with it, we have indeed been able to offer a Deleuzean MDE.

More, of course, can be said about actualisation/differenciation/solving to clarify what we have already suggested about winning from singularities the generalities of science and experience. This will all be helpful in establishing exactly how Deleuze solves the main question our project is concerned with, i.e: explicating what it means for a singularity to actualize *tout court*. In turn, this will strengthen our sense that Deleuze's position is indeed an MDE. The idea is that even though there are *kinds* we pick out because of real, actual, sameness, differen*t*iated singularities are what "gives rise to [this]" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 247). *Differen*tiation(/*actualisation*) of singularities(/the virtual) makes the "perception of resemblances" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 34) possible because it causes the extensities that bear general enough qualities.

Deleuze's picture of actualisation (distinguishing here between 'explicated'/actualised and virtual being) being therefore this:

> **"For difference, to be explicated is to [evacuate what] constitutes it. […] It is cancelled [insofar] as it is drawn outside itself, […] in the quality which fills [actuality]. [Difference becomes] hidden beneath quality"** (1994, p. 228).

It might be useful for the reader to unpack this with reference to a problem we encountered for immanent dispositionalism in 3.1: 'spatialism'. Deleuze, of course, wrote independently of Bird's worries about this, but perhaps the reader is more inclined to value Deleuze's position as worked out above if shown how it escapes the trouble.

Since powers are singular, we wondered at there being a resulting milieu we can have a handle on with general concepts and metrics. That is: intensity creates, or modifies, on empirical

bodies, which are the results of such singularities, qualities and parts which we seem quite capable of dealing with in quite general terms. These qualities are real (we said the actual is real) and offer fodder for comparison ('crimson here, crimson there, but not over there…'). Yet we should not conclude *that, in Deleuze's terms,* "difference [should lose] its own reality" (1994, p. 35) or *in Bird's terms*, that '*in re*'-dispositionalism will take universals "to be actually present in all instantiations" (Bird, 2007, p. 12) such that there is no difference between the properties of similar entities (implying, for immanent universals, absurdity: 4.4). What can we say instead?

Let us first make clear what this question really amounts to: we must say what the 'exoconsistency' of Deleuze's conception of powers (which, after all, includes complete singularity) with the desired form of generality in the actual might consist in. What is the supposed source of tension? Dispositional reality will be such that everything is an individual, and this means severing ties with universals *altogether*. This seemingly lands us in somewhat hot water given the generalities Deleuze's system is designed to ultimately account for (and therefore: includes). We deduced intensity to account for there being actuality: we have correlated it with recursive imperatives that express a kind of 'oomph'. The contents of these imperatives are completely singular, yet culminate in generalities (pink here, pink there).

Let us construct a response: we have to say qualities repeat in ways singularities do not (it is true that our imperatives have a recursive *form* but also that their contents are precisely *singular*), and can be in many places at once while avoiding spatialist worries. Consequently, it seems that the same actual quality (because the actual is real, let us grant that the repetition within it is also real) indeed has not one corresponding origin, but many singular powers of which it is the effect. This is what we already captured under the name *simulacrum*. But what *is* a simulacrum in more familiar terms? The same category we introduced to escape the spatialist worry in the Aristotelian context (chapter 3): events. In any case, simulacra share with events these two characteristics: they can recur in spite of having different constituents, and can be in many places at once.

From a systematic point of view, we have now made great progress. We discussed that actualisation has a generalizing tendency (from singularity to simulacrum), but we have also been asking for a more general story, which would take us from power to actuality, as we have also requested from the other dispositionalisms. This we have justified by introducing power qua *intensity* and casting the creation of parts and qualities it makes possible as the local occurring of *depotentialization* (5.2.2). Moreover we have been able to place Deleuze in a monistic position by having established that Deleuze's notion of the simulacrum really fits within dispositional monism and the role it fulfils. We should, therefore, again, conclude that Deleuze's position is an MDE.

5.3   Conclusion: The Whole of Deleuze's Dispositionalism in *Difference and Repetition*

That Deleuze's position can be presented as analogous to that of the other dispositionalists my projected has treated of, is no proof that his position is any good. These dispositionalisms were the target of our critiques, but it will have become clear to the reader that although Deleuze's views can plausibly be presented as conforming to a dispositionalist *format*, it fills out this format with *content* that sets it apart from the positions previously discussed. Deleuze's position is congruent with *and* divergent from dispositional realism as considered previously. In this section, this chapter's conclusion, we shall especially pay attention to what merit there is in the divergences and how these are generated.

Because of the divergences:

> **Deleuze can fill a lacuna in dispositionalism by explaining how actuality emerges from its virtual conditions. We can present, that is, all the foregoing as what it means for difference to be the horizon of one's metaphysics, and moreover to be '*creative*' and to '*give the given*'. And that 'difference' (*intensity*) is, and must be presupposed for dispositionalism as, an immanent metaphysical '*positive*'.**

In other words, whereas above we introduced Deleuze's notion of 'difference in itself', and further outlines of Deleuzean ideas relevant to dispositional realism in broad strokes and we, piece by piece, and applied these to issues we had been concerned with in previous chapters. We then clustered these problems, showing the reader there is a certain unity to all the materials so far adduced. The time has come now, however, to assemble all this into a whole. As said: this cannot be the whole of Deleuze's philosophy, but will be the whole of his dispositionalism in *Difference and Repetition*, which we can now say constitutes an MDE.

Moreover, assembling the above into a whole allows us to order claims already made in a different way, to offer the (possibly still somewhat perplexed) reader another way of getting a handle on Deleuzean dispositional realism. Not much new will be said, but a new ordering will bring to the fore some aspects so-far unexplored. Mostly, however, we will be stock-taking, as a

conclusion ought to. This time our path through the material starts with method (or perhaps more broadly: meta-philosophical considerations).

The overall aim of this chapter has been to explain that by taking, as Deleuze does, actualities (there being qualities, objects, their parts, their relations, all qua modificatory events) as *explananda* of a sustained transcendental argument. The reader will have noticed this is not without presuppositions about where and how to start philosophizing, and different ones than those the positions of the other dispositionalists start from.

We start with a comparison and will have gained, by the end of this conclusion, insight into how Deleuze comes to fill the lacuna mentioned above with the specific content generated from those premises whereas his competitors *do not*. We have said Deleuze multiplies vocabularies to provide ways of constructing a notion of the virtual. Deleuze (with Guattari), in '*What is Philosophy?*' puts forward two very simple criteria for judging whether a created concept is any good: the 'endoconsistency' of the components of a given concept, and the 'exoconsistency' of the concept with the framework it would be added to (1994, pp. 19-20). This leaves open the possibility that a reality we are trying to grasp (the virtual) might be 'multiply construable' (for lack of a better term) and that no *particular* formulation gives us its being directly. We have followed Deleuze merely along particular constructive routes. What have we thereby gained?

Surely an end-result to which a mild scepticism must apply. This scepticism lies merely in whether the "problematic and the imperative" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 284), and '*intensity*', or rather other terms, offer the best conceptualizations of the virtual's metaphysical role. What is most important is that we found some way of interpreting this role and build what we say the virtual *is* around that. We have, in other words, taken a conceptual gap found in the other frameworks and followed a particular method in creating a conceptual stop-gap through transcendental reasoning. Nevertheless: the virtual is, although a construction, not to be considered a fiction, even if we must remain conscious of the status of our framework as a *speculative* (dispositional) realism[104].

The other dispositionalists in this project go about acquisitioning their concepts quite differently. It seems the universals they start with are *assumed*: in Bird, certainly, the choice between 'Plato' and 'Aristotle' was necessitated by a quest for consistent universals, seemingly

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[104] That is: we arrive at more or less the same conclusion as Kleinherenbrink (2019, p. 9) when he casts Deleuze as a forebear to the current 'speculative realists', for whom "'[r]ealism' [means] commitment to the existence of a reality beyond [...] experience [and 'speculative'] signals that thought qua thought can conceive of [it]". This Deleuze surely thinks, but I would stress that the conceptions arrived at through his 'creative' method will have to be self-consciously held for constructions (like 'dx', as suggested in 5.1.1).

assuming them in general. In Lowe's system they truly seem like mere honorary citizens. In both cases their possible universals are 'traced' from actual ones. Both Platonists and Aristotelians proceed from a methodological coordinate at the opposite side of the spectrum from our 'crowned anarchy': asking how manifested actualities emerge both answer roughly with '*instantiation of universals*' whereas our explanation of the same result uses neither instantiation nor universals. I assume that in part, at least, this is explained by the weight of tradition and the comfort of taking concepts from common stock.

Deleuze, given that "the beating heart of [his] philosophy is an ontology of individual [i.e. fully individuated] entities" (Kleinherenbrink, 2019, p. x), places these Greeks out of reach. Working on the assumption that Deleuze's system is indeed motivated by this thought, we *can* say that, as for the other dispositionalists, a notion of 'determinacy' takes centre stage. The crucial difference is that in Deleuze's framework, this notion appears in a mode (full individuality: singularity) that simply has no pride of place (think of their need for a notion of an '*accident*') in the frameworks of these Ancients. Yet the thought that everything is an individual might deserve more recognition, even though by and large actuality can be successfully communicated about in terms of generalities. This difference in valuing individuality is part of what puts Deleuze on the track to success, for it culminates in positing a difference (in terms of generality) between powers and actuality.

What we aimed at, we said at the end of chapter 4, was to find a way of thinking there is 'F-potentiality' without presupposing 'F-being', which landed the '*in re*'-framework previously considered in a messy puzzle (4.4). We introduced, in response, a 'realisation set-up' that goes from *the singular to the general* and from the *intense* to the *inert* (by a certain production or creation: depotentialization). The singular and intense is precisely *not* the general and inert quality it creates on the exterior of the entity the virtual is immanent to. Universals, that is, play *no* part in dispositional reality and hence it seems like, more than any other framework discussed, we maintain a robust distinction between the actual qua actual and the dispositional qua non-actual (as we worried about in 2.1.3). This difference in starting-point is thus a difference that makes a difference.

Now consider a similarity between the extant view and Deleuzeanism: we correlated, as the other dispositionalisms did too, powers with a linguistic item. What dispositions as correlated with counterfactuals, for example, add to the world is that the world, in virtue of them, contains law-underpinning 'if S then M'-structures. Deleuze suggests recursive *imperatives* for a similar role. Whereas counterfactuals are too easily defeasible to be worthy contenders for realism

(4.2.2/4.2.3), the recursive imperative form is not, which speaks in favour of realism about it by Vetter's criteria (4.2.3).

Perhaps, however, the combination of 'constructive' or 'creative method' in metaphysics with 'linguistic items' has made the reader worry. Fret not, for Deleuze's view belongs not to those schools of 'constructivism', in which reality is a matter of linguistic consensus or something similiar (i.e.: exactly what the 'speculative realist' movement argues against). The degree to which linguistic items are involved in Deleuze's metaphysics is the same as with the counterfactuals that correlate with power-essences on the 'standard conception' of dispositions as discussed in chapters 1 and 4. Insofar as this form is 'endo-' and 'exoconsistent', and is not by other criteria (e.g. Vetter's (4.2.3) or Tugby's (4.2.1/4.2.2)) horribly faulty, it seems reasonable to suggest the virtual has, indeed, the reality (mode of existence) 'of a problem', i.e. that there really is an aspect to reality that amounts to the 'throwing forth' (5.1.4) of another part of reality.

Moreover, and indeed because the relation proposed is merely a correlation, we are not making normativity (certainly a topic that might have crossed the reader's mind when we discussed the virtual in Kantian terms) fundamental either: the mention of the 'imperative' throughout the above only ever regarded providing a linguistic form for expressing what the virtual is supposed to do (and some force like it, explaining the becoming of actuality qua behaviour of entities). The relevant aspect of the Kantian terms Deleuze mutates is the 'oomph' an imperative expresses – the moral connotation we leave behind.

In fact, and here we hit on an aspect of Deleuze's views we have left entirely unexplored, Deleuze writes that understanding the virtual in terms of problems delivers us a "calculus 'beyond good and evil'" (1994, p. 182). This points to a Nietzschean slant to Deleuze's project that the Deleuzean reader might have sincerely missed. Note that if we can call the virtual something "which is capable of transforming itself" (say this is true in virtue of the differen*tial* relations between entities), it would receive the Nietzschean label "noble" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 41 cf. 2002, p. 42). What is noble is not grounded in what is moral.

It does seem that Deleuze takes his metaphysics to underpin a (neo-)Nietzschean ethics based in 'affirming' the 'eternal return of difference' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 301), but it is not true that I wanted to say, or should conclude, that e.g. only moral things can happen. Precisely not: if the virtual is noble in the sense just suggested, this just means that it changes and spurs on changes in the actual, whatever (non-Nietzschean) moral judgements about this there might be. Deleuze's 'calculus' is thus a metaphysics that accounts for change, not a normative demand on reality.

But more on what Deleuze's position is, rather than what it is not: I have attempted to show it belongs, in spite of the important differences in approach outlined below, to the dispositional-realist family tree. One thing I should thus desperately hope to have avoided is changing the topic of our discussion. There will undoubtedly have been moments when the reader thought I did just that. Most notably, and worrisome, this will have occurred when we concluded (5.2.3) that powers are intensities, and not potentials in the sense of a reserve. '*It is a little unfair*', the reader will say, '*to just assume that there are ideal events and such, when what we want to explain are events in actuality*'. Here I hope to make clear, one last time, that this is not what we have done.

What we have done instead, was to argue as follows: we assumed that by itself, the present is an inert collection of parts and qualities and that this is not what the world is like, all things considered. Then, some form of dispositionalism might be true. The previous chapters showed that two forms of dispositionalism (the Platonic and the Aristotelian) have some defects. The former has trouble accounting for how the abstract actualities they introduce relate to the properties of concrete particulars. The latter, in various shades, either does not account for basic dispositionalist platitudes at all, or ends up crushing the property-change associated with manifestation.

These troubles we wanted to avoid, and following Deleuze's transcendental argumentation accomplishes just this: in asking how actuality is possible, it is prudent to proceed with forging an immanent solution. One too has to avoid putting the manifest cart before the powerful horse. Hence we arrived at Deleuze's picture of singularities: powers that are immanent (which we provided an interpretation for. I.e.: we imputed them to individual things as conditions they are in), and that stand apart from universals. Because they stand apart from universals their powerfulness must lie in something other than the model of directionality other frameworks work with (e.g. capable of being captured in a graph). This way we deduced, rather than assumed, the notion of 'intensity'.

In other, more Deleuzean terms, we constructed a notion of powers qua 'creative', qua 'giving the given'. What is the relation between powers and manifestations then? Perhaps, to provide an image, think of singularities as arrows: they *are* directional no matter which way you point them. But they do more: they *create* the manifestation that results from them, which can thus not be presupposed in their essence. That is what it means to have a framework of powers qua 'creative', qua 'giving the given'. What is given and created this way is the actual: a present state of some entity that is, by itself, not a power (depontentialized being) and (through loss of singularity) belongs to an order of generalities (simulacra).

One might again worry that I have changed the topic, or insist on talking about something from beyond the realm of dispositional monism proper, by inserting simulacra as the outcome of the system: the events given. I insist this is not so. For we said that we can understand dispositional realisms as filling out this 'schema':

α) there are powerful properties (under some metaphysical categorization, e.g. 'universals')…

β) …commitment to saying such powers (e.g. 'universals') explain how the concrete world becomes bepropertied (e.g. they become 'manifested')…

γ) …combined with some stance on natural laws.

And this schema is still filled out – we filled α with a deduced positive reality, which meant reinterpreting actuality as similar to events. The simulacra allow us to say there are *only* powerful properties, supplement with event-like generalities in the actual.

I conclude therefore that, unless one successfully objects to the schema above, or casts serious aspersions on Deleuze's concepts' capacity for accounting for the explanatory gap regarding manifestation by challenging their endo- and/or exoconsistency, we have been able to offer a Deleuzean MDE. Its basis, the horizon against which it was set, we have interpreted as intensity, the existence of which we deduced and the role of which we have interpreted in a way that avoids the pitfalls of earlier frameworks. This, in itself, should be a decent defence of Deleuze's powers-ontology, but a good ontology should provide plausible outcomes in different scenarios too, and may gain some extra credit that way. The next chapter presents an opportunity to do just that.

Chapter 6　　A Different Metaphysics of Pregnancy

6.0　　Introduction: What the Metaphysics of Pregnancy is about, and Why Deleuzeanism Would be a Valuable Addition

This chapter tackles three tasks, accomplishing the first of which falls (by what Williams (2019, p.6) calls "indirect argument") out of accomplishing the others:

> **1)　To demonstrate that Deleuzean metaphysics has merits beyond what it can do (per the previous chapter) for dispositional realism. In other words: this is an effort to show there is a worthwhile story to tell, with Deleuze, about (still following Williams: 2019, p. 2) "how the items" of Deleuze's (powers-)ontology "are connected [such as to] produce the world around us".**

We will do this, as this chapter's title suggests, by discussing Deleuze in the context of the 'metaphysics of pregnancy'. I shall soon *very summarily* sketch this context for the reader unfamiliar with it, such that the other two tasks, which I thereafter introduce, will make sense. Following this, I introduce some independent reasons for wanting the view I am steering at with Deleuze, and say why we might expect Deleuzeanism to bear this view out.

Thereafter, in section 6.1, I give a more detailed exposition of extant views in the metaphysics of pregnancy, naming two groups, and discussing some views therein. We then move on to develop a dialectic between exponents of these groups and tease out what is problematic about them (6.2). In 6.3 we will see how (a, compared to the previous chapter, *slightly* expanded) Deleuzeanism can be productively inserted into the context thus sketched, and (in doing so) provide solutions to, or avoid, the problems introduced earlier. This chapter concludes by recapitulating what aspects of Deleuzeanism have gone, to Deleuze's credit, into constructing a plausible position in the metaphysics of pregnancy (6.4).

Now for a *first sketch* of the context we will be operating in: there are already ways of metaphysically dealing with pregnancy out there. The current literature includes two (intersecting) gross oppositions: giving pregnancy a dynamic treatment *or not* and thinking that the number of entities (usually *organisms*) during pregnancy is countable *or not*. The intersection is such that: those that 'dynamize', process-metaphysicians, foreclose on counting, and the frameworks of those writing in terms of countable entities (holding either the 'Parthood View' or

'Containment View' of pregnancy, see 6.1) have no basic dynamic dimension. This seems odd to the process camp, and also to myself. But so does not allowing counting.

The substantive achievements of this chapter hence are:

2) **To work out (by *slightly* expanding the framework introduced in the previous chapter) an answer to the question whether a pregnant organism ought to be counted as one or several beings, or indeed, *at all*. My answer, rooted in Deleuzeanism, is: '*countable and several*'.**

3) **To develop (as the process camp has also done) a basically dynamic account of pregnancy, but one that, in step with the above, does not foreclose on counting.**

My reason for wanting a dynamic picture is simple: pregnancies have *beginnings* and *outcomes*, and therefore *endings*. They are transient. One would therefore expect to define pregnancy in terms that reflect this.

My wanting countability equally has to do with beginnings and outcomes, although the process view abandons it (6.1.4): it seems that an organism is pregnant once it has become pregnant *with something*, and that the ending of a pregnancy consists in either giving birth to that thing (or *somethings*, e.g. triplets) or losing it (or them) in one of several, voluntary or involuntary, ways. The pregnancies in the world around us thus combine two features: entity-countability and transiency. *Is there one metaphysics offering both?* Deleuze did not think about pregnancy or e.g. miscarriage as such. He did think about eggs, embryos (6.3.3 and section 3.2 of the *Conclusion*) and their development (5.1.6 and 3.2 of the *Conclusion*), but seems to have an ontology in which developmental entities fully *count* (which the process camp does not), without sacrificing (as the opposition does) the dynamic emphasis of his metaphysics.

Hence there is a valuable contribution to be made here, using materials adjacent to we saw in the previous chapter. The merit of the developed view would be to combine, whereas these features currently occur separately, countability with basic dynamicity. It is plausible we should succeed with Deleuze's metaphysics as a starting point: 'intensity', is, after all, an important part of Deleuze's system *and* immanent to entities. Dynamicity and countability will go hand in hand: it is *not only* that capacities (such as those for development) are taken to be instantiated in entities, but that the virtual (just like the actual) is *real* and that therefore anything with a virtual aspect is real in the same way as anything else.

6.1 Exposition: Two Groups, Three Extant Views

6.1.1 State of the Current Debate

The state of the debate in the metaphysics of pregnancy is that the two groups mentioned are at odds regarding basic ontology: the topic either fundamentally involves processes, or things. The former group (exponents of which introduced here are Dupré, Meincke and Sidzinska) I call the *process group*. The latter group I call the *entities-and-relations group*. At the *start* of the current literature (in Kingma's 2019 '*Were You a Part of Your Mother?*') stands a disagreement between two entities-and-relations views: one thinks the relation between 'gravida' and 'foster'[105] is one of mere containment (Oderberg, Smith & Brogaard), or (Kingma) one of parthood. I take it that the *Containment View* has been losing this debate. Consequently I will say little about it, but enough to get it out of the way.

Meincke has, moreover, quite recently (2021) suggested that commitment to one type of relation or the other correlates with how one goes about counting gravida and foster: if you think several individuals "are present where we see a [gravida...] you are likely" but not necessarily "committed to the so-called Containment View [according to which fosters are] *merely* contained in [gravidae]" such that they count 'extra'. Alternatively, if you think "one individual is present where we see a [gravida...] you" likely but not necessarily hold the "Parthood View [...] i.e. the view that the [foster...] is a part of the [gravida]" (Meincke, 2021, p. 2).

In summary: one either numerically assimilates fosters to gravidae, or counts them separately. If one thinks of fosters as gravida-parts, one is more likely to think the former than if one does not. The processual alternative, more about which later, is that the number of beings falls between (Meincke, 2021, p. 3 cf. Dupré, 2021, pp. 161-162) one and two, or is uncountable (Sidzinska, 2017, p. 7).

I now proceed to establish two things about the views within the entities-and-relations group:

- **First, by (shortcut-)argument, that the Containment View is false.**
- **Secondly, by example, that Meincke is right that the counting/relation-correspondence is *contingent*: it is easy to take from Kingma arguments in favour of counting *several* individuals.**

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[105] Kingma's terms. 'Gravida' is medical Latin for 'pregnant woman', here used for pregnant *placentals.* Kingma uses 'foster' (Danish for 'foetus') for "anything" gravidae can be pregnant with: from "early embryo, or perhaps even zygote, up to a foetus-about-to-be-born" (2019, p. 611).

This requires me to produce a somewhat detailed exposition on the entities-and-relations view that *matters* (6.1.3), the alternative having been panned (6.1.2). We then (6.1.4) move on to the process group.

6.1.2   The *Containment View* is False

Although I will (6.3.3) defend the *count* associated with the Containment View above, I take the view itself to be wrongheaded in positing the relation between gravida and foster that it does. Nonetheless (Kingma goes to some lengths to show) it is both philosophically and culturally common. She writes: "[t]he containment view is heavily promoted by the dominant representation of human pregnancy that pervades contemporary Western culture. Images […] tend to de-emphasise, fade out, or omit altogether the gravida, placenta and umbilical cord. [Language-wise] it is common to refer to human fosters as 'babies' almost regardless of their developmental stage" (2019, pp. 613-614), implying that something that *will* exist separately already does, contained in another.

Kingma (2019, p. 609) reproduces some illustrative quotes from philosophers following suit:

> **"Smith & Brogaard (2003, p. 74) contend that the [foster] is inside
> […] the [gravida] the way 'a tub of yogurt is inside your refrigerator'.
> Oderberg (2008, p. 266) writes that the [foster] is 'an organizational
> unity that is not a part of its host'"**.

Kingma makes empirical counter-claims, the most straightforwardly parthood-related of which is that because umbilical cord and placenta fuse them, fosters *just are* gravida-parts.

In Kingma's words: the placenta and umbilical cord "grow directly out of the [foster] and into/out of the maternal uterine tissue [without] separating membrane" (2019, p. 628). This, then, constitutes what I think we should call a 'somatic continuum' with a foster for a part, not a situation plausibly and/or fairly described as 'entities related by containment'. This is therefore the last we shall hear of the Containment View.

6.1.3   Kingma's *Parthood View* (the Possibility of Counting Fosters)

The alternative, put forward by Kingma, is the Parthood View. To explain what she means by

'*parthood*', she adduces that the notion used is...

> **"...our common-sense understanding of part-whole relations, [...] according to which [e.g.] table-legs are parts of tables"** (2019, pp. 611-612).

Meincke (2021, p. 7) criticizes Kingma for leaving unclear what this amounts to[106]. I can proceed as if it *is* clear, because in the relevant regard (counting entities), its application has straightforward consequences, easily illustrated at the end of this subsection. First, however, let us see the labour the Parthood View is the fruit of, and Kingma's justification of it.

Kingma (2019, p. 618) pursues "the metaphysics of pregnancy by looking at pregnancy on its own terms"[107]. Doing so, she manages to vindicate as *literally correct* pregnant peoples' intuitions in as far as these affirm the foster's parthood (op. cit., p. 641). However, pursuing 'pregnancy on its own terms' does *not* equal accepting just *any* pregnancy-related (self-)report. What matters is according with the biological evidence, which Kingma says would support the "metaphysical fact" (op. cit., p. 636) that gravida and foster stand in a relation such that the latter is part of the former.

The evidence, apart from the "topological continuity" (op. cit., p. 628) I already raised in 6.1.2 above, suggests that fosters are (op. cit., p. 622):

- *immunologically tolerated*: i.e. not attacked by the gravida's immune system as foreign to it.
- *homeostatically regulated*: e.g the foster's state (e.g. temperature) exists within that of the gravida, which maintains

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[106] Meincke then goes on to suggest ways (e.g. being an organ) of fleshing this supposedly vague notion out. I think the reverse is Kingma's intention: she seems to be applying 'part' in the *same sense* in 'body part', 'table part', *etc*. That is: one common sense of parthood for *all* parts.

[107] This is the PhD-project I originally worked on. A lot has happened since. I refuse, however, to finish up having, in the words of Dutch novelist W.F. Hermans' masterpiece *Nooit Meer Slapen* (transl. *Beyond Sleep*), 'geen enkel bewijs voor de hypothese die ik bewijzen moest' ('not a shred of evidence for the hypothesis I had to prove'). The hypothesis being that Deleuze has useful concepts to bring to bear on our current topic.

> > itself *and* (implication: *including*) the foster within liveable
> > parameters.
>
> - *metabolically integrated*: gravidae e.g. increase cardiac output to
>   accommodate their fosters' need for e.g. oxygen.

These modes of belonging (to introduce an umbrella-term), assuming they establish parthood, do not force one to count foster and gravida as one *combined* or two or more *separately countable*, entities.

Kingma, at least, writes:

> **"that [fosters are parts] of [gravidae] does not [automatically] entail that [they are not] not also [entities in their] own right"** (2019, p. 610).

The same flexibility is displayed in suggesting pregnancy can be thought of as:

> **"the *incorporation,* as a bodily part, of something that is (also) an individual"** (op. cit., p. 615).

The same indeed seems to go for tables, which Kingma suggested pregnant organisms are mereologically analogous to (or rather, perhaps: plainly share a notion of parthood with, if parthood is univocal): that legs are table-parts does not mean they are indistinguishable from table-tops, which are separately countable. Meanwhile we can *also* count whole tables. This shows the relation/counting-association introduced above (6.1.1) to indeed be loose.

6.1.4 The Process-Group (the Impossibility of Counting Fosters)

Simply because the entities-and-relations views deal with relations between entities, they suggest natural numbers in answering the counting-question (even if we remain at liberty to pick an exact count). Another group of metaphysicians has a different ontology, corresponding to another set of (self-)reports about pregnancy, and in this case a dismissive attitude toward counting. This group interprets pregnancy as a process of bifurcation taking place between organisms that are themselves processes, too. With this comes graduality as applied to the individuality of the foster.

They suggest that this might be (in the words of Dupré, 2021, p. 162 who adopts this point from Sidzinska's 2017) what underlies the "tendency of pregnant [people] to reject the dichotomy of one being or two. For a bifurcating process there is no expectation that there should be a […] point at which one becomes two".

Meincke draws the following conclusion for counting the foster from the fact that there is such becoming: "the foster is not […] a full-blown individual" but rather "in between zero and one" (2021, p. 20) such that, when added to the gravida, a count cannot result in any natural number. More radical (but that Dupré nor Meincke start pairing up decimal numbers with stages of foetal development suggests agreement) is Sidzinska's suggestion that "we can't say "how many" [the pregnant being] is" (2017, p. 7) at all. I problematize this, *and* the suggestion pregnant beings are "neither one nor two but something in between" (Meincke, 2021, p. 22) in 6.2.3.

First, let us see what makes the Process View plausible. The main intuition seems 'graduality over time', applied to the coming into being of an ultimately countable entity. We find this in Dupré when he says pregnancy is a…

> **'…gradual bifurcation' that "will" (2021, p. 161) culminate in an entity**.

Or in Meincke, when she, adding (no doubt important) details to essentially the same view, writes:

> **"mammalian pregnancy is to be understood as the gradual asymmetrical bifurcation of a hypercomplex higher-order autopoietic process" (2021, p. 22) in which the foster "is a coming-to-be individual" (op. cit., p. 20).**

It is also implied by Sidzinska's when she introduces the demand that pregnant beings, undergoing a kind of splitting (2017, p.3)…

> **…be treated neither "as singular, nor as dual" (op. cit., p. 9) because they are in a process both "generative and transient" (op. cit., p. 5).**

> **The implication being that on either side of this generating process stand respectively *one* then *two* beings but during it *neither*.**

What seems to be going at the overlap of these quotes is, put simply: thinking that because the pregnancy (which *is* a bifurcating) "reaches a kind of completion at birth"[108] (Dupré, 2021, p. 161), the result of which is a (countable) neonate, there is *in utero* no second individual to count *yet*. The authors in this camp thus buy into saying that *numerically speaking*, pregnant organisms are non-natural. With the splitting yet to *fully* occur, they rather say gravida and foster are *separating*, granting the pregnant organism the imprecise status of 'between one and two' or, for Sidzinska, 'uncountable'[109].

6.2 Developing a Dialectic

6.2.1 Summary of the Above and Creating Space for a Deleuzean Position

Summarizing the above: for the process camp, *bifurcation is individuation* in the sense of going from a zero gradient of existence to full being. The taking place of bifurcation *is* the taking place of individuation, such that being finally bifurcated means being separately countable. In the Parthood View, by contrast, *fosters, which may be understood as individuals already, are gravida-parts for being integrated in various ways*. That the former summary is fair, can be seen from the following criticism voiced by Dupré. He writes (2021, p. 162) that the Parthood View…

> **"…seems to overlook the process of individuation, in which the fetus gradually becomes more independent from the mother, [reaching] a kind of completion at birth".**

I take this criticism as the starting point of a possible a back-and-forth concerning *overlooking things* between the process group and the Parthood View (6.2.2).

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[108] 'Kind of' because neonates are "hardly fully independent" (Dupré, 2021, p. 161).

[109] *Not counting at all* seems to me to be preferable over counting non-naturally, by the way. Suppose, for example, that an organism is pregnant with triplets, all of which exist 'at' exactly two-thirds of full being. Upon addition would then follow the absurdity that gravida plus triplets together would count as 3 full beings (six-thirds for the fosters equals 2 full beings, plus 1 full being for the gravida).

Kingma indeed makes no mention of bifurcation (especially in the loaded sense in which the process camp uses the term). However: Kingma's account leans on e.g. *integration* (6.1.3), even if she hardly engages in process-talk. Talk aside, we may ask: '*where is the integration in the process view?*'. It turns out (6.2.2) that it does in fact stand alongside bifurcation in their shared framework. I conclude this part of the problematization of extant views by saying that the process view certainly seems more complete. Its real virtue, in my eyes, is being concerned with pregnancy qua transient. It offers a two-sided account of it (though perhaps unnecessarily), but does so in an ontologically suspect manner, whereas Kingma's view seems comparatively one-dimensional.

In 6.2.3 I develop my criticism of standpoints within the process group. Their no-counting stance (perhaps one should be more precise: their no-*natural*-counting stance) strikes me as odd. Especially in Dupré's (providing reasons for implicating Sidzinska and Meincke) phrasing of things this is irksome. I proceed here *without* reference to Deleuze: my criticism will be a reason to look for alternatives, rather than being motivated by a particular one. The criticism is this: the basic process-ontological picture risks falling into what Jennifer Scuro (2017, p. 189) calls the "childbearing teleology", a trope in interpreting pregnancy that performs the "erasure" of pregnancies not leading to birth. Moreover, the indeterminate ontology of the foster ratifies ontologically the ""sort ofs" and "almosts"" (Bueno, 2019, p. 20) that makes pregnancy loss immensely difficult to confront.

6.2.2   A Back-and-Forth between the Extant Views

Dupré's criticism that Kingma 'overlooks' the process of individuation is correct in *three* senses: 1) Kingma's concern is rather with biological evidence for the belonging of the foster to the gravida, 2) Kingma does not flesh integration out in a processual way (perhaps we should read the relevant instances of the suffix '*-ion*' in her paper not as verb-like, but as indicating states of affairs, i.e. the results of processes, not the goings-on themselves), 3) her ontology requires no individuation in Dupré's sense; it seems that the choice between counting foster and gravida separately or not hangs on what we are counting and not on, basically, the foster's relation to birth (i.e. being before or after it).

Why would one want to count several beings during pregnancy? A likely background is some assumption that bars one from buying into individuality *qua gradually perfected*. That is not,

of course, to think that fosters are already fully developed[110], merely that one *can* count developing entities *as* entities. But: *what* does one so count? One may count 'two' just by counting e.g. organisms, one of which is being gestated. If one counts 'one' where one sees a gravida, one might be considering a 'somatic continuum'. Why is the former count reasonable? Kingma (2019, p. 627) naturalistically supports this by dividing the continuum into zones with distinct evolutionary interests, but perhaps one just buys the table and table-leg model (6.1.3).

Nothing seems to *happen* however, on the Parthood VIew. '*What is the story in lieu of gradual bifurcation?*' the process group asks. Here is an attempt: what I have called the 'somatic continuum' becomes discontinuous through birth-related events (notably: the cutting of the umbilical cord, the foster's lungs 'kicking in' as metabolical integration ends). The Parthood View then would have us think of birth as a switch between two situations: 'one continuum/two organisms'-snip-'zero continua/two organisms'. A counter-question from their side, then, could be why processualists want gradual bifurcations if one can have snips instead.

'*Is there even biological evidence for bifurcation qua gradual?*', they might continue. I suppose part of the answer to *that* question is that by bifurcation processualists mean individuation, by which they mean (gradual) fetal development. There is certainly evidence for *that*[111], but the process group begs the question (or at least they certainly seem to do so to me) whether development ought to converge with ontology in the manner they suggest. I shall henceforth refer to this move as 'ontologically loading' the process of bifurcation.

Another question is what processualists think of 'integration'. Sidzinska indeed overlooks this, touching on it only when she mentions, without regard for biological detail, the "splitting-yet-*cohesion*" (2017, p. 11, emphasis mine) characterizing pregnancy. Meincke, however, writes that "[l]ooking at the gravida-processes, we find most importantly active integration in all the respects Kingma [uses] against the Containment View: [e.g. immunological]" (2021, p. 16). Dupré claims pregnancy is a "gradual bifurcation in a flow of living process" (2021, p. 161) but goes on to include among "the mass of changes occurring" during pregnancy that "metabolic processes" (I am assuming he means here those of gravida and foster) "[become] increasingly integrated" (op. cit., p. 162).

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[110] One might wonder what that would even mean. One thing it *could* mean is having a 'preformationist' idea of fosters. Preformationism having historically been the theory that "organisms are generated out of preformed germs, the development of which is merely a matter of growing and unpacking" (Wellmann, 2017, p. 14).

[111] Which is why 'preformationism' lost out to "the "epigenetic" theory of generation in which development is a process of the gradual emergence of forms" (Wellmann, 2017, p. 14).

We saw the process group claim (6.1.4) that bifurcation '*reaches a kind of completion at birth*'. We can now add that they know this also ends (metabolic) integration. Moreover, *both* provide bases for the aforementioned unwillingness of pregnant people to unequivocally say whether they are one or two beings. That bifurcation establishes this is obvious, knowing how it has been ontologically loaded.

Dupré does not make explicit how integration supports the ambiguity, he just adds that it "also provides a basis" (2021, p. 162). I *assume* he (and processualists more generally) would think 'integration', as a process, functions as an activity-term that, due to the bifurcative nature of pregnancy on the whole, stops *short of uniting gravida and foster yet going some way toward it*. Integration is then not (numerical) *assimilation* of gravida and foster, but an ongoing aspect of pregnancy (until bifurcation annuls it).

In light of the above, the Process View certainly seems more complete than the Parthood View. Not only does it deal with integration, but with bifurcation too. For loading 'bifurcation' the way it does, the process camp is, however, somewhat suspect. Moreover, perhaps their view is rather *overcomplete*, as Kingma seems to do fine without introducing a process of bifurcation qua gradual individuation. On the other hand, it *is* a real virtue of the process group to be, as Kingma is not, so overtly concerned with pregnancy qua transient. In 6.3 we will work out a way of keeping this on board (6.3.2), while dropping the anti-counting attitude (6.3.3).

6.2.3   A Critique of the Implicit Teleology and Ontological Loading of the Process View

First, however, I develop my criticism of the process group, which includes detecting a teleological slant to their approach. I reject the graduality they impute to the existence of fosters because it is suspicious – in a way best explained (rare, joyous occasion!) by citing Spinoza:

> **"when [people encounter something] that does not [...] agree with**
> **the exemplar they have conceived of [...], they believe that nature**
> **[...] left the thing imperfect"** (2018, p. 158).

Spinoza's point here, is that seeing imperfection here is a "prejudice" (ibid.) arising from an unjustified comparison. If it is indeed "common to refer to human fosters as 'babies' almost regardless of their developmental stage" (Kingma, 2019, p. 614), and one can find talk about 'almost' and 'sort-of' babies in personal reflections on miscarriage (Bueno, 2019, p. 47), we may justifiably start worrying that the process group is ontologically ratifying this illusion-inducing pattern: one sees a being existing at a degree between 0 and 1 during gestation, or after

pregnancy-termination, because one finds fused with the gravida, or separated from it, not the ('perfected') neonate implicitly used as a benchmark ('all fosters are babies') but something else, creating the illusion of 'imperfection' (i.e. counting as less than the neonate). This is fallacious.

The alternative is that *some full-blown entity* was lost or is being gestated, because the gravida was/is already pregnant with *something*, even if that something is not a baby(/cub/puppy/...). The above does not prove there are no good arguments for withholding natural counting from fosters, nor does it prove me definitely right in applying to them the full-blown existence attributed to everything else. I do think this aspect of the process view currently lacks defence: it gradates development *and* existence but does not say *why*. Whatever the case may be, the only thing one needs to do to get out of this is to make developing entities count[112].

It seems to me that one would more readily accepts this if one disentangles one's view of pregnancy from a teleology[113] implicit in the above:

> **To give organisms full ontological value only after bifurcation**
> **means thinking of individuality as perfectible and of pregnancy**
> **as the path toward it. That is: one buys into the 'childbearing**
> **teleology'.**

The process-interpretation of pregnancy is: integration and bifurcation. Note that (as quoted in 6.2.1) Dupré brings in bifurcation's '*completion at birth*' and Meincke (following suit) treats the foster as a '*coming-to-be individual*' (6.1.4)**.**

I think of these moves as betraying a teleological slant to the process view because *instead* of leaving room for various possible outcomes (including, surely, live birth), Dupré emphasises a sole pregnancy-outcome. This happens to be the one culturally presented as pregnancy's characteristic goal/result/completion. Because this *is* the dominant representation, it is easy to fall into. I call that 'Aristotelian optimism'. The optimist thinks: '*because the world happens by and large along certain 'successful' lines, these are the terms in which we should understand our topic*'.

If one takes this optimistic line then, at the very least, there is a cultural trope at work in one's writing: the 'good' (hoped-for, expected, demanded...) result now looks like a metaphysical

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[112] It might bear explicating that I mean *counting* here *merely numerically*, with no intended implications for debates about e.g. abortion. Nor do I mean people grieving after e.g. miscarriage are not grieving *enough* when they describe the lost being as e.g. an 'almost'-baby.

[113] Which is what Spinoza, too, is reacting to in the above quote, the mention of 'imperfection' echoing the notion of '*telos*' ('end/perfection') he reacts against throughout the *Ethics*.

constituent of the process. One thereby performs the "erasure", from public record, in various discourses (this time metaphysics), of pregnancies not leading "to the "successful" birth of a child" (Scuro, 2017, p. 189). But such pregnancies abound. Therefore, we should not take 'bifurcation' in the ontologically loaded sense to capture the nature of pregnancy. Instead, a dynamic account of pregnancy must be one that foregrounds that the relevant entities may take a variety of routes.

Moreover, even *if* one does take pregnancy to be goal-oriented, one must still separately defend the ontological loading of foetal development: if one follows suit with the process camp in loading 'bifurcation' like above, one makes the being of the foster relative to the pregnancy-outcome that one has privileged over the variety of outcomes there might be. That is: the fosters only fully exists after being perfected. If a teleological understanding of the structure of the goings-on of pregnancy (including foetal development) would ultimately be a bad one, we would of course need an alternative. Instead of taking 'bifurcation' in the ontologically loaded sense to capture the nature of pregnancy, I suggest we need an account of pregnancy in which the variety of routes that might be gone down are circumscribed by powers, these powers are not teleologically structured, and go hand in hand with the singularity of their bearers.

6.3   Deleuze Introduced

6.3.1   Intensity and Singularity

The reader familiar with Deleuze through my exposition in chapter 5 will now hopefully think: '*Ah! I see where Ziggy is going!*'. The reader independently familiar with Deleuze might have some questions however, as might those independently familiar with Kingma's project. I address the latter questions here and the former in 6.3.3.

Questions aside, my aims are simple:

> **In 6.3.2 I carry out a comparison of Deleuze's notion of 'intensity' (or 'difference') to processes as understood above. Because intensity is embedded in 'singularities' – that is, the *powers* mentioned just above – it is easy to see his metaphysics does not risk generating a teleological description of the dynamics of pregnancy.**

In part, this section will zoom in on a distinguishing aspect of Sidzinska's view: she suggests gravidae, and "haploid cells" (2017, p. 11)[114] too, have generative powers. These "draw the singularity of the generative object into question" (op. cit., p. 7), because they contribute to *splitting*. In 6.3.3 I will argue for the opposite conclusion:

> **Because e.g. the foster is characterized by a powerful surplus different from that of the gravida, and the same goes for the pre-implantation entity, their singularity is quite easy to agree to.**

To say how this squares with what we have already seen in chapter 5, I will somewhat expand on what Deleuze had to say about the existence of individuals in e.g. 5.1.6. I will introduce some critical notes to my understanding of Deleuze too, to let the reader independently familiar with Deleuze know why I understand Deleuze this way.

Now, let met address a possible source of scepticism concerning what we are about to do: part of pursuing the metaphysics of pregnancy 'on pregnancy's own terms' is weeding out "philosophical commitments […] formed without […] pregnancy in mind" (Kingma, 2019, p. 618). The worry is that independently formed notions will lead us astray. Although I can present him as a dispositional realist, I cannot make Deleuze say much about pregnancy directly[115] (see, however, section 3.2 of the *Conclusion*).

Here is a reason not to be *too* suspicious, however: on an alternative route toward constructing 'the virtual' in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze leans into notions from reproduction. He seems to take it as a template for the world's dynamicity, with roles for a "sort of pantheism of mothers" in *Logic of Sense* (1990, p. 272) and eggs and embryos in *Difference and Repetition*. That is where we got Alfred the tortoise from (5.1.6) and explains how Deleuze, with a straight face, can churn out statements like "[t]he world is an egg" (1994, p. 216).

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[114] 'Haploid cells' are the gametes (reproductive cells: eggs, sperm) prerequisite to pregnancy. Fertilization amounts to haploid cells forming a diploid cell (zygote). Sidzinska seems to be positing 'generative power' to account for this.

[115] One will perhaps be familiar with the following statement that I cannot resist quoting in the present context: Deleuze tells us he approaches interpreting the works of others as "taking an author from behind and giving him a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous" (Deleuze, 1995, p. 6).

6.3.2   A Different Conception of Pregnancy's Dynamicity

I insist Deleuze's metaphysics is basically dynamic, but not in the sense the process metaphysics discussed earlier is. The difference can be cashed out in attitudes regarding teleology that we may discern in the two set-ups. My claim is not that process metaphysics *must be* teleological: the habit of likening processes to flowing water (Meincke, 2021, p. 14 cf. Dupré, 2021, p. 153) suggests the process group, overall, means to say processes happen as a meeting between power and circumstance, and are not best (certainly not completely) understood as following an inner purposiveness. I hope, however, to have done the due diligence to show that in the case of pregnancy, teleology is on the scene (however accidentally it may be).

What does the Deleuzean alternative consist in? Deleuze's notion of intensity is somewhat *like* a process in that it is never at rest (for being a transcendental principle to which exhaustion does not apply: 5.2.3), but unlike processes for being a transcendental condition and not a series of *actual* goings-on that are a *becoming-something-or-other* (the process of becoming X, where X can be e.g. 'bifurcated', 'individual', etc.). In Deleuze's system, it is not intensity that becomes some definite thing: intensity is, in its many singular ways (the powers it exists as), the surplus (5.1.2) to things that are definite in virtue of having such a surplus, and have the power to act, including power to change in certain ways (let us say: to instigate, undergo, etc. processes) because of this surplus, too.

The reader will recall that the powers making up this surplus are what we called 'problems' (5.1.4). Below (6.3.3) I focus on what that means *ontologically* for power-bearers, and here on what that means *dynamically* for what they do. It should be easy to see that if localized pockets of intensity (which is what problems are: 5.1.3) are the basic constituents of goings-on, Deleuze does not risk generating a teleological description of the dynamics of pregnancy. What would the nature of a pregnancy be instead? It would be essentially transitory in nature, in two senses, neither of which presupposes birth: on the one hand it would be made up of a series of virtual events (i.e. a dynamic, 'differen*ti*ation': 5.1.1), on the other it is also the traces of these differen*ti*ations leave in actuality (through differen*ci*ation: 5.1.5).

As we saw in 5.2.2 through 5.2.4 the state the virtual is in (the specific 'problem' it forms) arises from some contingent trade-off between the power-bearers relevant to the situation we are interested in. As a matter of principle, then, we must leave the directionality of pregnancy *in general* open, while having found the factors that will determine in which direction each particular pregnancy will go. The latter can well include taking the situation into e.g. miscarrying, and so we see what the use of a Deleuzean metaphysics of powers is when exported. We now have a dynamic understanding of the topic at hand, without the teleological presuppositions.

Sidzinska suggests, however, that the generative powers she suggests there are, draw the singularity of the property-bearer into question, rather than helping to establish it, as I am going to suggest. That "the [gravida] is […] generative" is for Sidzinska down to the fact that the "foetal environment influences genetic expression" (2017, p. 10), that is: that the gravida contributes to the foster's developing. We have seen that development, by this group, is understood as some entity's going from a zero gradient to full existence, such that generative powers must be understood as manifesting an uncountable (or 'in between') scenario. But then Sidzinska's account is loaded with the same suspicious ontological stance we were looking to replace anyway, and seemingly not an intrinsic feature of a powers-metaphysics.

6.3.3 A Different Conception of the Embryo's Individuality

I will now, in any case, as announced, argue for the opposite conclusion, for reasons allied to Deleuze's dispositionalism. I side with Kleinherenbrink's reading of Deleuze, which suggests Deleuze's ontology "accords equal reality to entities from any domain whatsoever, […] without requiring any support from some more fundamental [process]" (2019, p. 12). A shortcut to this conclusion, based on what we have already seen, is implicit in our treatment of the immanence of the virtual in chapter 5's talk of surpluses, reiterated above. The gist of 'not requiring support' is that any entity already *has* in the aforementioned surplus a powerful side which makes it an actor. This ought to include fosters, then, and having powers (virtual) and parts and qualities (actual) makes them as real as anything else.

With other dispositionalists we worried (e.g. the 'TMP', see 1.0) their world is one in which things do not fully exist, because they are partially merely potential. We have seen that this worry does not apply to the Deleuzean virtual, for (5.1.3) actual and virtual are equally real such that there is no reason to impute to a foster anything less than full existence. Yet, we might now dig a little further into the reading of Deleuze's ontology suggested by Kleinherenbrink and zoom in on a reason to be adamant that a developing foster is already an individual in its own right (so to agree to some degree with Kingma, on independent grounds).

Everything is indeed half-actual and half-virtual. But virtual and actual have two sides:

> **The "virtual […] aspect of each entity must be one and multiple […].**
> **One to be this, but multiple to distinguish this from that […]. The**
> **same is needed on the […] actual side. One to be this […] but**
> **multiple [for] having qualities distinguishing this from that"**
> (Kleinherenbrink, 2019, p. 39).

Now, I expect the process camp *and* Deleuzeans apart from Kleinherenbrink to join in protest against this.

The Deleuzeans might raise that Deleuze writes of *actualisation* as *individuation* and of *singularities* as *pre-individual* (Deleuze, 1994, p. 246). But I assume that what goes on in the relevant passages, is that Deleuze is looking at his system from what could be called a temporal (in the sense in which we said the 'pure past' is temporal: 5.1.5) or conditional point of view: as with the virtual qua 'pure past' preceding the actual qua present, singularities are pre-individual in a sense relative to the actual 'this' that they manifest into.

'*But!*', says the process group: '*if there is individuation in Deleuze's system, do you not admit the gradual existence we have been imputing to the foster from the very start?*'. Here the answer is simply '*no!*'. For what was meant by actualisation, for which we can at times see Deleuze use the term 'individuation', was simply the accretion of parts and qualities. A foster undergoing development will have fewer, smaller, or simply different parts than a neonate, and different qualities too. But this is not enough to accord it less existence. We have said that actuality exists as well as the virtual does, and (moreover) something's being comparatively less developed does not make the parts and qualities it does have *less actual*.

They are the qualities (and parts) characterizing this entity in the actual, and the fact that they are frail, small or perhaps extremely flexible does not make the entity any less of a 'this' (so: countable). The same goes for the foster's powers: that a foster has powers only to survive within the gravidic environment does not negate its status of being the entity that gathers some powers that we have, in the previous chapter, defended the full-blown immanent reality of. I.e.: powers are fully real, and to be an entity is to be powerful. Hence, fosters count: their undergoing 'qualification and partition' (5.1.5) and their growing capacity for independent survival do not increase their *existence*. What *else* could be the sense of Deleuze's writing "the embryo is the individual as such directly caught up in the field of its individuation" (1994, p. 250)?

6.4   Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to demonstrate that Deleuzean metaphysics has merits beyond what it can do for dispositional realism. In other words: to tell the worthwhile story there is to tell in Deleuze's metaphysics about how dynamicity and individuality go hand in hand, such as to produce a position in the metaphysics of pregnancy. To achieve this we…

> **…worked out an answer to the question whether a pregnant organism ought to be counted as one or several beings, or indeed, can be counted *at all*.**

We have answered: '*countable and several*', for every being on the scene of a pregnancy is one in their own right. What stands in the way, for the process group, to answer the same, is their hunch that pregnancy as a process ought to be ontologically loaded so as to generate the foster's being, gradually, over time.

We, meanwhile…

> **…developed a basically dynamic account of pregnancy that does not foreclose on counting.**

Based on work done in chapter 5, we already expected Deleuze to bear out such a position: this is, once one grasps some basic ontological coordinates of his view, i.e. the virtual and the actual, quite easy to see. After all: in Deleuze's ontology, reality is carved up into these two zones because every entity has these two aspects. Both aspects are equally real, and therefore anything with powers, parts and qualities is as existent as anything else. Because of the power (intensity) embedded in entities in virtue of their virtual side, Deleuze's system is basically dynamic, too.

Deleuze did not think about pregnancy much, however, and thus we might have been worried that whatever conclusion we reach rooted in his ontology will be misguided. It was plausible we should succeed, with Deleuze's metaphysics as a starting point, in sticking together two claims about pregnancy that I find plausible: countability and dynamicity, because 'intensity' is an important part of Deleuze's system *and* we had already seen that this goes hand in hand with the immanence of powers to nothing less than entities. But being able to stick some features together, does not prove that the position makes any sense. Perhaps our view is coherent but misguided.

In one relevant aspect, however, we arrive at a position not unlike the view defended by the person who put forward this worry in the first place. She, Elselijn Kingma, wrote:

> **"that [fosters are parts] of [gravidae] does not, [without] further premises, entail that [they are not] not also [entities in their] own right"** (2019, p. 610)**.**

Based on Deleuze's ontology, we must agree with this statement, although perhaps we are really making a more radical claim: that the foster *just is* something in its own right, even if it stands no chance of survival outside the gravida.

Rather than casting this or that specific configuration of the foster's powers as a blemish on its existence-gradient, as the process group would, in the Deleuzean ontology we just see being in some particular condition as the entity's being what we above called virtually '*multiple*' (6.3.3): it is distinguished from other organisms, and other stages of organisms, in virtue thereof. That it has these properties does not make it less of a thing, it just makes it a specific one.

'*But!*', might now interject the processualists: '*because you arrived at a view on which a foster is a thing, you have foregone a truly dynamic view of pregnancy. Like Kingma, you have simply overlooked the process of individuation/bifurcation!*'. Precisely to ward off this worry I introduced, and will reiterate, the one thing Deleuze *does* say about embryos: "the embryo is the individual as such directly caught up in the field of its individuation" (1994, p. 250). We have talked about these fields in 5.2.2 through 5.2.4. They represent a reason for the differen*t*iation of the powers of that embryo. That embryo is steadily changing, spurred on by its environment (by its environment's 'generative powers', to borrow a term from Sidzinska).

What reason would there be for conflating this change (development) with individuation in the ontologically loaded sense that the process group avails itself of? We have, in the foregoing, seen them not give any *reasons* to say that a freshly implanted, or even pre-implantation embryo *is/exists* any less than a neonate – or, for that matter: than a lighthouse, or an earring, a jar of ajvar, a fake nail, a snail, a lantern, a pine tree, a pine nut, a tardigrade, a kangaroo, a desk, or an amethyst, a guitar pick, a coffee bean, a dybbuk box, a serving of doner kebab, a photon, a harpoon, a well foamy pint of lager, or anything else... With Deleuze we can support the opposite hunch, happily wedding, and this is certainly to Deleuze's credit, a dynamicity already held (in slightly different versions than mine) by established dispositional realist metaphysicians, to (a slight radicalization of) a well-supported view in the metaphysics of pregnancy.

Conclusion

Section 1: Recap of the Main Event

Woven into the chapters the reader has just finished reading was a main project, the results of which I will summarize in the current section (one of three) of this *Conclusion*. Having recapitulated the Deleuzean dispositional realism arrived at, roughly how we got to it, and why it is important that we did, I move on (in the second section) to a relatively detailed breakdown of a couple of important insights or achievements per chapter. Mostly these will be things that directly contributed to the main project, but I have made some space to highlight, here and there, things I found particularly fascinating, even if they were not absolutely central. Before I let the reader go I, in the third section, will expand a bit on what I *have not been able to do*. Think of this not as a sad note to end things on, but as a good omen: *we have hit upon an interesting direction to philosophize in!* My project, one could say, *still has more potential*.

So much for the future. My main project here and now was to make, really, a minor contribution to the dispositionalist literature: this literature is about properties that are powers for manifestations/actualities/realities to come about (manifest/actualise/become realized). It would be good, then, if we could understand *what that amounts to*. The literature has hardly anything to say about this directly. When pressed, it turns out that two main varieties of dispositional realism have structurally shot themselves in the foot in this regard. The main achievement of my project has been to present a different theory of powers, a dispositional realism differing in various regards from the extant views discussed, which manages to provide concepts to understand the sought connection between the powerful and its results with. We, as it were, get inside of manifestation, rather than being merely made to observe there must be something like it, without being able to provide its inner workings.

If I am right that there *is* this problem with extant realisation set-ups, dispositional realism needs to be revamped somewhat (and only *somewhat* – I have been, by always relating Deleuze to the MDE, quite conservative!). What would be the point of observing there are actualities, and calling these the manifestations of powers, without a plausible way of saying what manifest*ing* is? I think it makes dispositionalism look quite vulnerable if it has nothing to say in this regard. Hence my attempt to work out whether extant views *could* have something to say and, when it seemed unlikely to be *good*, to develop an alternative capable of offering an account.

On top of being more complete, how is my dispositionalism different from the others? The most superficial difference is having picked a non-traditional realist metaphysician to borrow

power-(adjacent) concepts from: the extant views borrow templates from Aristotle and Plato, but I derived a dispositionalist template from Deleuze's *Difference & Repetition*. I have been careful to make sure that whatever we took on from there would also be superficially similar to the extant views: the view I constructed can be considered to be one dispositional realism among others because it conforms to the MDE-format presented in various chapters. I have, that is, presented Deleuze's metaphysics as a view on which powers are real *and* they are the only kind of property. Apart from this very broad formal convergence of my view upon the others, there are some substantive similarities (beyond which then lie important differences).

Sure, the Deleuzean view picks a side of the transcendence/immanence-binary represented by the '*ante rem*'- and '*in re*'-camps: it belongs on the latter side. *But* in saying there *really are* immanent powerful properties we mean real qua singular. *Moreover* we do not consider our immanent, powerful properties to be (relational structures of) universals. Sure, in the actual reside repeatable qualities, *but* these are not universals either. They rather are *simulacra*: repetitions without universals, and manifestations that do not resemble their bases. Sure, we correlated, as do the extant views, powers with a linguistic item: *but* we have suggested this to be an *imperative* and not a counterfactual or '*can...*'-statement. Sure, our powers are individuated too, *but* the mode of individuation is different: we take power-identity not to be a relational structure of universals, but a singular condition the power's bearer is in. Sure, our powers, just like the rest's, ought to make manifestation genuinely possible, *but* with the Deleuzean concepts we finally managed to 'get inside' manifestation.

That we have been able to, but the Aristotelians and Platonists have not is, in a nutshell, down to difference between our 'realisation set-ups': what we think powers and manifestations are, and what the difference between the former and latter might be such that manifestation becomes intelligible. The Platonists put manifestations and powers in different realms (too far apart), the Aristotelians cast them as being differently instantiated versions of the same property (too close together) and thereby both foreclose, in different ways, on explaining how we get from one to the other. We, however, have been able to put forward that actualisation has two aspects in which it consists: generalization (so: from singular to simulacrum) and depotentialization (so: from virtual to actual), starting from an entity-bound source combining singularity and power (intensity immanent to an entity).

That, then, is roughly our view. How did we get there? We exploited, simply put, a gap in the extant Platonic and Aristotelian views. This gap I first present through a problem well-attested to for Platonism as such ('*how is it that the transcendent and the concrete connect in this framework?*') and then made the case it also applies to Platonic dispositionalism. I *then* made the

case that Aristotelian dispositionalists run into a *structurally* similar problem. Of course the Aristotelians have no '*ante rem*'-universals so the problem is substantially different, but, as dispositionalists they are saying there are powerful properties that manifest, hence they must provide the same sort of story as the Platonists, though with a different set-up, which for different reasons forecloses on an account of manifestation.

Hand in hand with this opportunistic but thorough approach, zooming in on a shared structural difficulty of extant views, goes a manner of being constructive, for which I am methodologically (so: *apart* from the *content* also provided) indebted to Deleuze. What did we do, after all, in response to the aforementioned gap? We put together, within given conceptual limits, a new realisation set-up: with immanence and powerfulness (Deleuze's *virtual*), a go-between between powers and manifestations (the virtual's *actualisation*) and the actual's crucial difference from the virtual (e.g. singular versus repeatable) without which, seemingly, an account of manifestation is doomed to fail. Doomed to fail *because* without this difference, the manifested and the unmanifested come to be versions of the same item, which are then placed in relations such as to generate the very problems (transcendence, identity) my project was a response to.

Section 2: Achievements and Insights per Chapter

Now we will start taking my achievements and insights chapter by chapter. In the *Introduction* I said my project, as throughout their reading the reader has seen, was roughly as follows:

- **Chapter 5, where we got to the main positive achievement, presented a dispositionalism, based in an unorthodox realism, that accounted for manifestation.**
- **I made plausible that we needed this, because the Platonism introduced in chapter 1 and the Aristotelianism introduced in chapter 3 ran into serious problems in (respectively) chapters 2 and 4.**
- **I showed (5 again) that the Deleuzean view solves and/or avoids these problems.**
- **Chapter 6 showed that the ontology developed has another application: the going hand in hand of the singularity of power-bearers with a dynamic metaphysics makes for a plausible**

conception in the metaphysics of pregnancy, generating some indirect credit for our view.

In short, I got us to: *propose-reject-propose-reject-propose-benefit*. Let us run through this sequence in more detail.

Chapter 1 introduced *Platonic/'ante rem'*-dispositionalism by exploring Bird's *Nature's Metaphysics*, taking the reader through some important notions (with close relatives in other chapters) by running through problems raised for dispositional realism to which Bird's work reacts. That Bird's reactions are themselves (*too*) problematic was for chapter 2 to show. In chapter 1 we established that if one is a Platonist, one thinks that:

- **A manifestation's being possible *is* the abstract, contingently unmanifested, existence of that property. And...**
- **...that powers are individuated in virtue of a finite number of 'directed' relations that lead to and from their manifestation- and stimulus-properties.**

We moreover established that this content is but *one* way of filling out the structure of '*monistic dispositional essentialism*'.

This chapter focussed on ways in which the relationality characterizing dispositionalism has been considered problematic (seemingly non-existent *relata*, worrying regresses of the relations between them), in order to show why Bird's realisation set-up, in response, comes out like it does. Exploring the 'standard conception' of dispositional essences we saw Bird respond to three issues:

1. **The 'too little actuality-problem': because power-essences are identified by stimulus- and manifestation-conditions, powerful properties seem insufficiently actual. Can one really be a realist about them, so-construed?**
2. **The (related) 'too much potentiality-problem': dispositional essences can link conditions that do not obtain. But if there is (as it sounds like there might be) an opposition between *potential* (*supposedly* non-existent) and *actual* (existing) items, potencies involve manifestation-conditions in a problematic way.**

3. **The 'regress objection': dispositional essences involve an infinite regress of properties for being relationally defined.**

The first two, Bird gets out of the way by putting forward that *unmanifested properties are yet actual*. The third is made to disappear by showing, with resources from graph-theory, that one *can have a relational view without infinite regress* (the relational structure is such that all nodes are unique, while the number of relations they have is finite). Reconfiguring these problems brought to light further features of '*ante rem*'-dispositionalism:

- **Bird adopts the 'Barcan Formula', which he takes to express what it is for his contingently abstract universals to exist, i.e.: to be a part of the actual world in a non-spatiotemporal way.**
- **This chapter takes a first stab at developing an empty dispositionalist *format*: we saw that the transcendence attributed to unmanifested universals is not inherent to *monistic dispositional essentialism*.**
- **We also came across what Bird calls 'production', the way in which possible manifestations are supposed to come to be: the possibility of some manifestation-universal is the product of a property and the possibility of it being stimulated.**

This introduces an interesting (but not absolutely central) suggestion: that Platonic universals are supposed to be, qua transcendent, outside of space *and time* might be hard to square with their being *products*. We picked up on this in chapter 2 when I suggested Bird's view seems to collapse into an immanent view this way. In chapter 5, because of this suggestion, we could make another broad analogy between the Deleuzean and the other views: Deleuze has, after all, the 'differen*tia*tion' of the virtual, a series of events pertaining to unmanifested properties.

Whereas chapter 1 put forward a dispositional realist position, chapter 2 carries out a critique of it, resulting in its being rejected. What, then, does it fail to live up to? The question on which Platonic dispositionalism shatters, and through which the Aristotelian's view will later also be judged, is what it must mean for manifestations to come about given the realisation set-up chosen. In the case at hand: does Bird's conception of contingently abstract items, not create more problems than it solves? I conclude that it does. The critique developed is, more or less, that

explaining how transcendent universals can have anything to do with the concrete particulars that are supposed to instantiate them is impossible.

I treated realisation(/manifestation/etc.) as a *core feature* of dispositionalism, and also said (in chapter 4) that its functioning ought to rank among the, to use Tugby's term, '*dispositionalist platitudes*'. This is, again, not because the literature is full of discussions of it, but because (in spite of this lack) the point of having a metaphysics is that it accounts for what there is in the world. It contains manifestations, on the dispositionalist view (and, well, in general). The question is how dispositionalists account for this, or, indeed, whether they *can*, with their realisation set-ups. On Bird's behalf I suggested possible Platonic add-ons with which one might expand his set-up such as to explain what manifestation amounts to on this picture. Alas, to no avail: the various options (a sort of causation, some relation, or some entity) seemed not to help us.

I did yet more: I asked whether Bird's graph-theoretic answer to the 'regress objection' gives us property-identities, and paved the way for immanent powers-metaphysics (plural). The former lead onto a somewhat loose end: the extant views are concerned with property-identity, which they get at with relational essences; I suggested one does not really know properties by knowing what other properties they relate to. What do we know about a property in virtue of knowing it leads to another? That is, however, as good as property-identities get. For this reason, I find Deleuze's thinking of powerfulness *in itself* appealing: we can avoid (relational, therefore) evasive answers to the question what powers are.

An interesting result of this chapter was, by focussing on its internal tensions, the collapse of Bird's Platonism. I called what remained, borrowing the term from Deleuze, 'overturned Platonism'. Being able to put this forward alongside Aristotelian dispositionalism as an immanent alternative, falls out of worries I developed about whether the quantifier in the Barcan Formula really captures the picture emerging from the elements of Bird's view. I suggested that, rather than saying that *everything is actual*, there are reasons (e.g. what Bird calls 'production') to consider that a more apt starting point for dispositionalism is that everything becomes. This is of course not, strictly, an opposition: becoming does not negate there being actuality. What it suggests, anyway, is that there ought to be a thoroughly dynamic dispositionalism, one immanent for ascribing temporality (mutability) to powers. There seems, moreover, to be some tension between full actuality and mutability in *my understanding* of 'actuality'.

Chapter 3 was not to develop, from these hints, a new alternative: it presents, rather, the Aristotelian alternative chapter 2 left open, too. As in chapter 1, I applied the strategy of 'exposition through problem-solving', moreover (as in chapter 5) I made parallels to previous material. We started the chapter with a (deceptive, certainly oversimplifying) parallel between

'*ante rem*'- and '*in re*'-dispositionalism *and* we unearthed a parallel *issue* for the Aristotelian and the Platonist (an important hinge in my project). The (supposed) *former* parallel is that as Platonic universals undergird natural laws, through their manifesting in the concrete, the Aristotelian position can be understood as saying the same for immanent powers. The parallel *issue* is that '*in re*'-dispositionalists must, given their realisation set-up, explain how the relevant properties switch between being '*in re*' qua actual and being '*in re*' qua potential.

This chapter revolves around variations on a minimal definition of Aristotelian dispositionalism. It has three tenets (which I later generalized to become the template for dispositional realism as such):

1) *'in re'-universals combined with…*

2) *…commitment to an 'instantiation condition' stating that whatever property-universals there are, are instantiated.*

3) *Support for necessary natural laws*.

Most variations on this theme are immune to Bird's 'spatialist' critique that '*in re*'-dispositionalism cannot be right because it demands immanent universals to be instantiated in various places at once (which Bird deems impossible). We get around this by plugging into tenet 1 that powers are like activities. It is not so strange to think *they* can go on in various places at once (smashing pumpkins here, smashing pumpkins there…).

This suggestion came from reading Kosman's book on Aristotle's metaphysics. The point was not that the view so derived was *more Aristotelian* and therefore superior (I do find it *fascinating* that some bits of the Greeks' metaphysics did, and others did not, make it into contemporary dispositionalism – *why*, if Kosman is right in his reading of Aristotle, did contemporary metaphysicians ignore the almost literal first thing about his framework, which is that essential properties are activity-like?). The point, instead, was to get rid of Bird's criticism, or indeed: problems with localizing universals generally. This is also the reason for adding the 'secondary immanentist' position to the taxonomy of Aristotelianisms. This position is happy to say *immanent universals are nowhere* themselves, because they are secondary to the ways of being of substances (particulars including properties, these properties being such that other things can be these ways too).

The most interesting variation however, in my opinion, regards the second tenet: the suggestion that the instantiation condition that dictates Aristotelian universals to always be

instantiated can be replaced with a principle that effectively uncouples instantiation and actuality, such that potentialities already instantiate a property. Given this backdrop, it is in virtue of working with a potential/actual-distinction that Aristotelianism can be interrogated the way I did (without it Aristotelianism is implausible on different grounds: having no response to Tugby's criticisms). The Aristotelians need not worry about what Kosman calls the 'relational pitfalls' of Platonism, but instead we can now ask them to spell out what it means for a property *potentially* instantiated (and therefore immanent to a substance) to become *actually* instantiated. Chapter 4 proceeded, ultimately, to do just that.

It does more than that, however. Would it not have been sufficient, in this chapter, to simply subject every variety of Aristotelianism to the question regarding manifestation I had been foregrounding? That certainly would have made sense, but it is not what I did. Why? To imply a point about the history of philosophy as a source of warnings for developing contemporary views; to make sure to include extant critiques of '*in re*'-dispositionalism and show their success; and finally, to put forward a synthesis of 'Aristotelian' elements that escapes the extant critiques, thereby showing the limitations these have in virtue of treating Aristotelianism as a monolithic block.

Step by step, this chapter increased our scepticism of '*in re*'-dispositionalism. The critical program ran as follows: we get off to a slow, historicizing start by simply asking whether Aristotelians are justified in thinking their dispositions support necessary natural laws. The point was to *suggest* they do not get us natural laws automatically, because they (at least as a matter of historical fact) do not really function that way. With Bianchi in hand, in any case, I suggest Aristotelian powers were supposed to only capture those outcomes that normally prevail given that they are not *often* thwarted by some countervailing force (the observation about the place of regularities in metaphysics made a minor return in chapter 6 when I suggest a certain optimism about the relations of processes to their outcomes characterizes one view in the metaphysics of pregnancy). I suggest that this weakness is reflected in the alternative 'essence-structure', especially its correlated '*can…*'-statements, that we saw the Aristotelians adopt.

More serious were Tugby's critiques, centred on platitudes concerning unmanifested dispositions and the intrinsicality of powers, neither of which, supposedly, the Aristotelian can account for. Failing to account for either or both hangs on the combination of (a variety of) dispositional essence-structure with the instantiation condition (or variation thereof). I show these critiques go a long way: they apply to most varieties of '*in re*'-dispositionalism. With the original instantiation condition, and an essence-structure that includes an unmanifested 'M', Aristotelians fail to account for the first platitude. The second they can save by adopting Vetter's

alternative formulation of dispositional essence which drops the stimulus-condition: powers are then not dependent on *circumstance* (the obtaining of 'S'). The first can be saved too, by saying actual *and* potential properties are instantiated.

The '*in re*'-dispositionalism we put together in this chapter through amalgamation, by this point, successfully resists Tugby's critiques. That is: it accommodates powers being intrinsic and there being unmanifested properties. But, in virtue of these features, *also* no longer accounts for change. After having explained this problem at length in the chapter, we can here say the problem boils down to the following: '*what is gaining M if one was already M qua potential under conditions of 'double instantiation'?*'. That is: given what we called DI *being potentially-M* is *already to instantiate M as such*. This realisation set-up must thus be discarded: it leaves itself no realisation to account for.

Chapter 5 introduces, after having panned both extant dispositionalisms, Deleuze's framework. The point was to show that it avoids or solves issues with the extant views proposed and rejected previously. Note, as said earlier in this *Conclusion*, that the Deleuzean remains within the *transcendence/immanence*-binary: it is primarily in its containing no universals that it is an alternative to *both* the extant views. With the concept of *singular* powers, we have built one realisation set-up among others, and thus an alternative answer to the question I had been insisting on: we had been asking what, given a set-up, realisation (or manifestation/actualisation) amounts to. It has something to do with powers becoming manifest. But how can *that* be, on views that either treat power and manifestation as abstract and concrete, or deny robust change?

By now, the reader is hopefully on board with saying the extant positions fail in this regard (whatever other virtues they have; I readily confess to having much sympathy for the Aristotelians). So how can the Deleuzean do better? Our view's being a *viable* alternative judged by the criteria that come with the question I have been insisting on is roughly down to the following: it does not treat powers as abstract (hence does better than the Platonist; this we share with the Aristotelians), *and* Deleuze proposes to distinguish between the powerful and actual sides of his ontology along two lines. 1): powers are singular, actualities general. Going between them, actualisation must be generalization. 2): actuality (qualities, parts) is merely the result of a powerful surplus, so actualisation is (through partition and qualification) depotentialization. This is more than the extant views can say.

True as that is, how much sense does what we said (Deleuze says) make? Note, first, that the framework in which this notion of actualisation (so: combining depotentialization and generalization in one notion) is embedded, retains a lot of traits of the extant views in virtue of also conforming to the dispositional realist format derived from the three tenets of

Aristotelianism introduced in chapter 3. One would therefore *not* be justified in treating Deleuzeanism as not even belonging in the same logical space as the extant views. In other words: I stand by including the view in the taxonomy that closes out chapter 3. On the other hand, it is true that interpreting actualisation as depotentialization and generalization requires notions not found in the varieties of dispositionalism already discussed. So how much sense Deleuze's view makes, ultimately depends on those. They are, primarily: '*the virtual*', '*intensity*' (i.e. '*difference*') and '*simulacra*' (i.e. '*repetition*').

Deleuze's view would not be a dispositional realism if it contained nothing remotely comparable to potencies, hence we hammered on the virtual being real and powerful and being directional. But I have come to imagine Deleuze's concepts linking together such that, even if it were a mistake to think of properties and power separately, singularities are only powerful because of the intensity in them. When I suggested that the virtual is 'problematic' in the sense of carrying whatever the metaphysical equivalent of the illocutionary force of an imperative would be ('oomph!'), 'intensity' accounted for this. That there is actuality is just a given, also in Deleuze's system: but the trick is to know *how* it is given and *what* it is given as. If what is given are *simulacra*, the gap between singular and general is bridgeable, and not absolute (as the gap between powers and the bearers of their results is for the Platonist). After all: both now exist on an immanent plane.

Chapter 6, on the metaphysics of pregnancy, latched on to something about the Deleuzean view that was, perhaps, most pointedly foreshadowed in chapter 2, where I suggested that an apt basic coordinate for dispositionalism is that *everything becomes*. That everything is (to explicate what I meant by 'becoming' there) mutable and indeed changing, is true, on the Deleuzean view, because of the differen*ti*ation of the virtual and the corresponding differen*ci*ation of the actual: reality has two sides, and Deleuze's system is basically dynamic in that the whole thus differen*t/ci*ates. In this sense, Deleuzean metaphysics seems similar in spirit to one camp in the literature on the metaphysics of pregnancy: the process group, with its process-ontology.

In this chapter I argued *against* some claims this group puts forward however, allying myself to the stance toward counting held in the entity-and-relations group: whereas the process group thinks fosters are not full beings in their own right and, as developing processes, should not be counted with natural numbers, the entities-and-relations group makes it easy to make counting claims (entities can clearly be counted). I wanted to assert *both* that a 'foster', even if it would not survive outside of the organism gestating it, fully exists *and* that this is certainly compatible with a dynamic view of pregnancy. That the process group does not combine these factors is down to their having ontologically loaded their notion of individuation with a graded

notion of existence, because of which entities being gestated are said to become more existent throughout their development.

My sense was that with Deleuze, one gets to combine (what I think are) appealing aspects of views in both camps. It seemed plausible we were going to succeed in combining basic dynamicity with countability, because the 'intensity' in Deleuze's system secures the former *and* we saw in chapter 5 that Deleuze foregrounds individuality in various ways, such that it seemed likely that it would go hand in hand with countability: difference/intensity is immanent to entities. The powers of entities are singular, and make their bearers the individuals they are (*this* one, not *that* one). They might have little capacity for extra-uterine survival, but *that* just makes them some specific entity. In no way does having little capacity constitute proof of little existence.

Rather, to have specific properties (to be this, rather than that…) is already to be *this*, without having to put any restrictions on that 'be'. It in any case seems, from a quote I adduced, that Deleuze *literally* has this view regarding fosters: even when caught up in individuation, the embryo is still an individual. Deleuze's view was here presented in an effort to demonstrate that Deleuzean metaphysics has merits beyond adding a realisation set-up to the dispositionalist literature, and to adduce support for the Deleuzean view in this roundabout way. The idea being roughly that: not only does Deleuze's metaphysics present a viable direction for dispositionalism, but that one can produce *from the same elements* a view elsewhere in metaphysics, compatible with a view (that fosters, though integrated by gravidae, may well be entities in their own right) that seems well-defended on independent, even empirical, grounds.

This concludes the chapter-by-chapter summary, promised as far back as the *Introduction*, of arguments made and insights gained. We proposed a view, then panned it because it seemed to have shot itself in the foot with regard to manifestation, then we proposed another view, in various versions, the last holdout of which we panned because it could not account for manifestation either. Then we got to work on deriving an alternative from Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* in chapter 5 (and provided additional support for its ontology in chapter 6) and managed to explain with it what extant views could not: what manifestation amounts to.

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It is because of turning to Deleuze that the next section exists. Doing so drew us into a complicated fold: crossing an intra-disciplinary divide while providing, what I have realised (and warned) is, a somewhat one-sided reading of Deleuze's metaphysics, while participating in a two-sided revolution on one side of the aforementioned divide. Here, then, come some loose ends.

Section 3: A Word on Future Directions

As said above: think of these loose ends not as an unfortunate given, but as good omens that suggest we have hit upon an interesting direction to go on in. Or, really: several. There is further work to be done…

- **…in the *major* direction we have gone: crossing the intra-disciplinary analytic/continental-split, adding to the logical space of dispositional realism from 'the other side'…**
- **…and there are suggestions to be made for the *minor* direction I have also gone into: applying Deleuzean insights to the metaphysics of pregnancy.**
- **Moreover, there are matters to be settled regarding Deleuze's metaphysics that have not made it into my project: omissions in virtue of which I readily admit my presentation of Deleuze was one-sided.**

This I briefly lay out below, leaving the reader on not a sad, but rather a promissory note.

3.1: Major

That there is more to be done as regards Deleuzean dispositionalism I will prove by briefly sketching some Deleuzean notions with parallels in extant dispositionalism, thus making the case for Deleuzeanism even more interesting. Not *only* is there a Deleuzean dispositionalist *core* (a realisation set-up), there is *much more*. I am not saying these are all *excellent* ideas, although I hope that some of them are. I am, for now, merely indicating that there is *more system*, and that bits of this system mirror current discussions, suggesting the option of participating therein. I mention *five* topics for further reflection.

3.1.1: Joint Dispositions and their Bearers/'Assemblages'

For one: in this project we have dealt with the simplest kinds of dispositions: dispositions held by one entity 'solo'. But there might be (Vetter, 2015, p. 31) *joint dispositions*: powers formed when entities come together. If new powers form when entities come together (which seems to be the

case: if I can make falafel and you can make a salad, together we can make a nice meal), one might be interested not only in what they are, but also in what *bears* them. Would it be the extant entities, or would there be formed some extra entity? It seems to me Deleuze would think the latter. He calls such temporary alliances *assemblages*, *rhizomes* or *machines* (Kleinherenbrink, 2019, p. 3). If such entities exist in their own right, as do their constituents, this means that we can think about joint dispositions a certain way: they are then not merely mixtures or sums of the powers of extant individuals, but as such the singular powers of a new individual. Perhaps, ultimately, this is a kind of denial of joint powers, for it seems that we can present this as the view that whatever things can do together is really some 'bigger' thing going it alone.

3.1.2: The Bearers of Dispositions/'the Body without Organs'

Second of all: there is even more to say about what Deleuze thinks power-bearers are. We have gone along, mostly, with an Aristotle-inspired notion of *substance* in the project carried out above. We set up as a contrast a notion we wanted to avoid: *bare particulars*. Bare particulars are particulars understood as distinct from ways of being (their properties). Deleuze seems to operate with a distinction in some way not unlike this. Following Kleinherenbrink (2019, p. 41), we should say that qua virtual, entities are on the one hand what Deleuze calls '*bodies without organs'* and on the other *singularities collected therein*. Ignore the strange terminology: the point is that we should consider the former (still following Kleinherenbrink) a "transcendental unity" (op. cit., p. 87), and not some in principle unbepropertied *thing*. Instead, it seems that Deleuze introduces into the transcendental, alongside intensity, another feature: a parcelling-up of intensity into individuals. Without such unities, it would be hard to make sense of the fact that we indeed find individual things everywhere we go.

3.1.3: The Explanatory Power of Powers

As a third topic for further reflection: Neil Williams puts forward the following worry about the explanatory power of powers (2019, p. 195):

> **"Where we have some phenomenon to be explained, we cannot simply say that there was a power to create it"**

Williams takes the example of opium: answering that opium has a 'dormative virtue' to the question why opium makes people drowsy tells us nothing (2019, pp. 195-196). That this pattern of reasoning is even possible has made philosophers worry: accordingly, powers have been given status as nothing more than "'placeholders' in good explanations, […] until permanent (non-dispositional) explanations [are] found" (Williams, 2019, p. 206). Note, however, that *nonetheless*, as suggested in the *Introduction*, the sciences seemingly *are* interested in objects in the world qua what they can do.

Presumably, if science tells us anything, it is because it does *not* form arguments like the following (indeed quite trivial) sequence: '*there being M means that there is power-to-M in whatever is doing the M'ing – this power-to-M explains M*'. Because Deleuze posits a number of differences between actuality and the virtual, he seemingly sidesteps the particular form of explanatory vacuity outlined above, too. Instead, to know what actualities a thing produces, is still not to know exactly what that thing is *in itself*, barring one from falling into thinking along the lines of a principle like ACTUALITY, which is clearly exemplified in the above pattern of reasoning from some effect to the existence of a power.

I think Deleuze *would* accept that many particular power-oriented explanations are defeasible while not thinking the process of replacement stops at non-dispositional (i.e. categorical) items. Instead, with the Deleuzean powers-ontology we can rest assured *that* powers exist but must also swallow that "[i]nsight into [the powers of anything in particular] will always be […] indirect" (op. cit., p. 155), that our understanding of which ones there are and thereby of their bearers is in principle defeasible and that there is no reason to think there must be non-dispositional items that have more explanatory power. To know about what happens in the actual, is to make (highly) educated guesses about what things are capable of.

Insight therein is gained through what can be called an ongoing "apprenticeship in signs" (Kleinherenbrink, 2019, p. 284), whereby 'sign' we mean actual events qua indication of something different from and presupposed by it. It is up to scientists to be good apprentices of their objects of study, including letting their indirect insights be amended when necessary, by multiplying the occasions for receiving such signs, e.g. through experimentation and observation. The task of (powers-)metaphysics, meanwhile, instead of telling one which powers there are, is to give an account of powers that makes sense of them *in general*. Neither way of knowing the powers in the world follows the pattern warned against above.

3.1.4: The Relation of Powers and Natural Laws ('Flowing' versus 'Tension')

Fourthly: Deleuze has a story to tell about natural laws. When I mentioned this very briefly in a footnote to chapter 5, I adduced a particularly poetic quote. Actuality is governed by natural laws (1994, p. 241), Deleuze ultimately concludes. But this seems to be not *simply* a case of natural laws straightforwardly flowing forth (see e.g. Bird, 2007, p. 5) from the properties of things. Deleuze, it seems, instead suggests there is a tension between natural laws and powerful things. That is, natural laws are (said the poetic quote) the work of a God "legislating against his creation because he has created against his legislation" (1994, p. 227). Rather than trying to here explain what that means (I would start by suggesting that Deleuze's God is that of Spinoza: nature itself), I will simply say that one can (again) ignore the language and note that, if there is anything to this mentioned tension, many dispositionalists, operating within the 'flowing' picture of natural laws, would have to revise one of the basic coordinates of their systems. Moreover: if there is any merit to the thought that the French '*sens*' that features in the title of Deleuze's *Logic of Sense* also has the meaning of 'direction' and this is direction in a sense still related to the *directionality* of powers, one should probably also take that work into account in reconstructing Deleuze's ideas about these matters.

3.1.5: Macro-Scale Powers (Freedom)

Fifth and finally: Bird has put forward that there being fundamental, natural, sparse properties does not get one such supposed, comparatively non-fundamental, powers such as the exercise of *free will* (2016, p. 342). Alderwick, who has undertaken a project somewhat like mine but concerning Schelling (and indeed Schelling's conception of freedom) summarises the predicament as follows:

> **"Bird's conclusion is that however good the arguments are for powers on the [fundamental] level, and however useful powers might be in terms of explaining particular [non-fundamental] phenomena, taking claims about the [former] and applying them at the [latter] level without further argument is [illegitimate]"** (2021, p. 27).

Alderwick proceeds to give "an account of how [this] gap [might be] bridged" (2021, p. 28). Or rather: she contests, from Schelling's point of view, that there *is* such a gap (ibid.).

The same can be done with Deleuze, if the above notions of the 'body without organs' and 'assemblage' can be made sense of: nature's fundamental particles and the things they make up, and the powers they respectively have, then all stand alongside each other on a level plane of immanence. Complicating arguments about freedom in particular is that whereas, with Schelling in hand, Alderwick gets to argue for human freedom directly, Deleuze seemingly would have us take a detour through establishing what he calls "destiny" first, which supposedly nonetheless "accords […] well with freedom" (1994, p. 83).

3.2: Minor: Reproductive Themes in Deleuze's Oeuvre

Here I will expand on the degree to which it is really no coincidence that we have made some sense of the metaphysics of pregnancy with Deleuze. In chapter 6 I adduced a Deleuze-quote concerning embryos and individuality, and here I want to make clear to the reader, who might either be unfamiliar with Deleuze's work or might simply have ignored the theme I here enlarge on due to the 'richness' (read: dense style and relative obscurity) of Deleuze's writings, that once you know to look for them, *reproductive items crop up everywhere*. The list includes, but is not limited to: embryos, the 'body without organs' (which "is an egg" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000, p. 19), and are fertilized eggs not bodies of creatures before they develop organs?) and a 'pantheism of mothers' and that most famous of (again) eggs, Humpty Dumpty, both in *Logic of Sense*.

Deleuze, the metaphysician, as we saw in chapter 6, tells us the world *is* an egg. Let us suppose Deleuze would agree with Neil Williams on the basic job-description of a metaphysician: he is then concerned with setting up a system of concepts that accounts for the way the world is. Unless Deleuze meant a *fried* egg, then, his thinking is likely in some fundamental sense shaped by taking into account development and reproduction. Perhaps we should describe what Deleuze does as projecting such themes into the metaphysical structure of the world in general. Let me here, to underpin this suggestion, introduce some further resonances between Deleuze's metaphysics and reproductive biology. They concerning *folding* and, indeed, *difference* and *repetition*.

In her *The Form of Becoming*, an intellectual-historical study (1760-1830) of embryology, Janina Wellmann shows that 'folding', the fact that embryonic development proceeds by a particular type of movement (folds) carried out by the embryo's various tissues, was an important 19th century discovery in embryology. The 19th century embryologist Pander, she writes, "derived

from [embryonic] membranes' movements in space – their warps, turns, approaches, fusion – a law of folding" (2017, p. 276), thus making great progress: the folds themselves explain the growing complexity of the developing embryo because as a result of these events and movements new (i.e. more developed and/or developmentally necessary) structures emerge in the embryo (op. cit., pp. 276-279).

Wellmann mentions (in the context of arguing for the existence of a culture-wide trend of thinking in dynamic terms that start before and outside of 19th century embryology emerges, which she calls this the "rhythmic episteme": 2017, p. 17), that Deleuze uses his concept of 'the fold', in his book of the same name to understand Baroque culture and *especially* Leibnizian metaphysics (op. cit, p. 275). Wellmann, in turn, casts the Deleuzean concept as "a figure of difference" in its relation to "variations, a perpetual motion of tipping, continued motions, flux from one state to the next, then to the next, and so on" (ibid.). Deleuze, she seems to suggest, discovered a dynamic cultural trope in the Baroque context, somewhat reflective of his own interest in 'difference', and that trope moved into the 19th century biological context from there.

What Wellmann does not mention, however, is the extent to which fold-based terms are part of Deleuze's own conceptual framework. In *Difference and Repetition* folding (French: *plier*) is the root of such terms as "complication" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 247), "perplication" (op. cit., p. 187), "explication" (op cit., p. 228) and "implication" (ibid.), all of which are supposed to cast light on the virtual, sometimes in its relation to actuality (explication, complication), and sometimes as such (implication, perplication). Then there is the notion of the "multiplicity" which "[e]verything is" (op. cit., p. 182), in virtue of containing the singularities we made so much of in chapter 5. I did not use this terminology, but it could be made completely central, given the items it explains.

Noteworthy is also something we *did* see in some detail: our tortoise (Alfred) and the movements, among which are folds, it survives. Deleuze lifts this example from "Vialleton, a disciple of Baer" (1994, p. 215), Baer being next to Pander a "[founder] of modern embryology" (Wellmann, 2017, p. 16). In chapter 5 we exploited these movements to ask about Alfred's powers, but it is equally true that without Alfred's incredible feats the embryo would not grow, i.e. reach the specific arrangement of parts and qualities *and* powers it bears. That is, again, an aspect of what it is for powers to be singular: to be themselves further developments of powers already held – an entity-bound (re)arrangement, and not the instantiation of universals (embryologists call this '*epigenesis*'). It thus certainly seems that, at least in one of his vocabularies, embryological thinking goes to the heart of Deleuze's powers-ontology.

Whether this makes Deleuze *entirely unsuspicious* in terms of the project of thinking 'pregnancy on its own terms' is of course a different matter. Here are some worries: is the model

of embryonic growth Deleuze adopts not *outdated*? Would that invalidate the metaphysics derived from it? Moreover: can we say anything about mammals if Deleuze's way into embryology was development 'in ovo'? Perhaps we can simply check whether the events that Wellmann's embryologists, who were mainly concerned with chicks, conceive of as "repetition and variation" (2017, p. 309), folding and refolding, "repetitions [that] differentiate" the developing body (op. cit, p. 310), i.e. *difference and repetition*, go on not only '*in ovo*' but also '*in utero*'. From there, we may might go on to try to set up criteria for vindicating the claim that "the entire world" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 216) must be understood in the vocabulary adduced here, without lapsing into mere *analogy* to embryonic growth.

3.3: Sins of Omission

The previous subsections represent what more can happen along lines already sketched. Here I suggest what could happen along lines carefully suppressed. I stated in the *Introduction* that Deleuze's view might betray the dispositionalist revolution against neo-Humeanism. There are passages, in *Difference and Repetition* and elsewhere, where complications arise. Whether they are harmful to understanding Deleuze as a dispositionalist depends on how much of an interconnected whole Deleuze's work ultimately is. It has often been suggested that it is, rather, merely a box of conceptual tools that, as such, would not be able to suffer inconsistencies, just more or less cumbersome combinations.

If one takes this toolbox-approach, it really does not matter that Deleuze introduces some things into his work that seem to fly in the face of dispositionalism. We can then simply claim for dispositionalism whatever seems helpful in Deleuze's work in stopping gaps, resolving tensions, *et cetera*, leaving the rest behind. I suppose one can try to do that if Deleuze's system *is* an interconnected whole, which I think is more or less how I have proceeded in chapter 5. The question then becomes whether one can get away with that qua exegesis. If Deleuze's thinking does constitute an interconnected system, two things might be the case for that system *qua whole*. Deleuze's system is either *on the whole* the system of a dispositional realist, *or* it is really something else, but with dispositionalist aspects.

If Williams is right to suggest that the space between neo-Humeanism and dispositionalism is uninhabitable (2019, p. 199), the latter option might become a real problem. Not everything besides dispositional realism is neo-Humeanism of course, but Deleuze starts his career *by writing on Hume* (1953's *Empiricism and Subjectivity*), and may have incorporated some Hume-leaning things along the way. It is, of course, also no coincidence that Deleuze, at times, labels his position

a 'transcendental *empiricism*'. Here, then, are some possible sources of tension between Deleuzean dispositionalism, and Deleuze's framework as a whole:

- **One neo-Humean item we cast aspersions on in chapter 4 is the *possible world*. If dispositional realism is right, *we do not need them*. Therefore, Deleuze should not have them. But they show up, in chapter 5 of *Difference and Repetition* and 'series' 19 of *Logic of Sense*. If they fulfil the role of explaining what is possible, in the sense that imaginations tell us what is possible, then what is the point of the virtual? But perhaps this is not the role of such worlds in Deleuze, who comes by the notion by way of Leibniz, whose guide to 'compossibility' and 'incompossibility' is certainly not *human* imagination.**

- **Then there is mention of the world being "a Harlequin world of […] fragments" (Deleuze, 2004, p. 163). This sounds uncannily like Lewis' famous image of the neo-Humean 'mosaic'. The worry here is that a neo-Humean world is one in which almost any (barring logically contradictory ones) combination of fragments is possible, whereas in dispositional realism, what is possible is circumscribed by powers. However, Deleuze also writes (1994, p. 8): "[e]verything is summed up in power". Note also that the former statement seems to be meant as a summary *of* Hume, whereas the latter seems to summarize Kierkegaard – but do these authors also speak for Deleuze? He certainly has powers in his ontology...**

- **We have insisted that the virtual *is* those powers, and that it is powerful *in itself*, but this perhaps makes singularities look categorical in an odd way. After all: to be a categorical property is to be a quiddity, and to be a virtual property is to be a singularity. These kinds of properties have in common their being unreflective of what they lead onto. Singularities are different from their manifestations, quiddities have outcomes only extraneously, given some natural law.**

- **The conclusion of *Difference and Repetition* rails against the reality of possibility (Deleuze, 1994, p. 279). Although Deleuze is careful to set up a distinction between the virtual (which is real) and the**

possible, I cannot help but wonder whether casting the virtual as akin to potency qua 'localized' possibility (following Vetter) was then not wrongheaded. This makes Deleuze's invocation of possible worlds above all the more puzzling.

Perhaps the above is *qua whole* inconsistent.

On the other hand, maybe Williams is just wrong: Deleuze's framework (qua whole, on top of the parts of it that can be singled out as an MDE) might be, to coin a silly term, a *conceptual extremophile*, capable of surviving in seemingly extreme circumstances (the common ground of powers-ontology and neo-Humeanism). With these matters in mind, we could traverse Deleuze's system again, this time paying attention to whether it presents *not only* useful dispositionalist concepts, but *also* a consistent way of overcoming the opposition between neo-Humean and dispositionalist thinking. *Difference and repetition, indeed*.

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