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INFLUENCE AND INFECTION  
Georges Bataille and the fate of critique

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## For the Shroud Shifter

### Abbreviation key

- OC = Oeuvres Complètes vols 1-12 by Georges Bataille (Gallimard 1970-88)  
WD = Writing and difference by J Derrida (RKP 1978) trans A Bass  
TP = Thousand Plateaux by G Deleuze/F Guattari (Athlone 1987) trans B Massumi  
AO = AntiOedipus by G Deleuze/F Guattari (Athlone 1985) trans R Hurley,  
M Seem, H Lane  
M = Coldness & Cruelty by Gilles Deleuze in Masochism (Zone Books 1991)

## SUMMARY

The thesis argues for the pertinence of the Kantian 'topography' of the mental faculties and the power of critical thought in assessing the philosophical importance of Georges Bataille's writing. Such an argument runs counter to the received tradition of interpretation of Bataille's work, which has, given the influence of Derrida, construed these texts as works of phenomenological philosophy. The thesis shows that Derrida's interpretation must, by virtue of its exclusivity, be incorrect. Bataille is concerned with the trajectory of thought - that is with the dynamics or energetics of thought - rather than with the articulation of the logic of representation, an articulation which characterises phenomenological thinking. The thesis argues that Bataille's concern with the energetics of thought represents an extension of Kant's critical project. This relation is borne out by the new uses to which he puts the Kantian terminology of continuity, transcendence, subjectivity and communication. Rather than simply exaggerating the power of critique, which Kant countenanced as an influence on the mental processes, Bataille dissolves the critical difference and fuses the status of all thought with its energetic and thermic trajectory. For Bataille, thought is associated with the free contagions or infections of thermic communication. Thus Bataille's relation to Kojève and Hegel is only part of a wider move in designating the energetic nature of critique over and above its restricted and conceptual uses. Critique does not survive this definition. The thesis shows the nature of the critical project as it is articulated by Kant in the critiques of pure reason and judgement and how Bataille's major concepts come to inhabit this terrain whilst subjecting themselves and it to the dissolution which is the result of the rational groundlessness of critique. Bataille's treatment of this topography shows that it can be used to infer the attributes of a philosophy of intensities and change.

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## Introduction: INFLUENCE AND INFECTION

This thesis argues that Bataille's importance as a philosopher lies in his revaluation of the Kantian notion of critique. At the general level of philosophical history and at the level of concepts specific to the Idealist and phenomenological traditions within that occidental philosophical history, Bataille's writings constitute an irruptive force, a quanta of energy in an influential and infectious mode which transforms the terminology of Kant's critical philosophy by challenging the values which underlie Kant's rational and restricted use of critique. Bataille's writing can be related to the tradition of post-Kantian libidinal energetics (Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Freud, Deleuze and Guattari), especially Nietzsche's genealogy of morals in relation to the will to power; but a rigorous examination of this relation lies outside the scope of this thesis, which is rather interested in Bataille's revaluation of the Kantian 'conceptual geography' or 'topography' which underpins those instances of libidinal energetics themselves. The point of departure of the thesis is an argued refutation of Derrida's influential interpretation of Bataille as a quasi-Hegelian philosopher (in other words, as a philosopher like Derrida himself). I argue that Bataille's transformation of the Kantian conceptual topography (the deployment of concepts in an 'inner space') is of primary importance for understanding every single one of his fundamental philosophical notions: Time and the annihilatory subject, the distinction between continuity and discontinuity, or immanence and transcendence, communication, general economy and the sacred.

I would argue that Bataille's writing (insofar as it is philosophically valid) is a contestation of Kantian discourse. Insofar as it is irreducible to the rigorous conditions of that discourse, it mutates into a complex discursive chaos which contests the principles of a wider Kantian culture, that is the epoch of interested or restricted capital, which is itself slowly but contemporaneously dissolving into a technocracy which is much less humane than the rationalised slow progress of the last half a millenium. Kant's critical project represents the highest achieved degree of formulation and regulation of the processes which were conceived as the conditions of the growth of occidental capital. In Kant's work human mental processes and morals are described as suited to a careful but optimistic movement of the expansion of

wealth, in which the minimal forms of transactions (mental or commercial) are optimised as quantitative events by their conforming to the universal form of human 'communicability', that is the innate human capacity for communication (for mental processes or for commercial transactions to occur). Within Kant's account of mental processes, the forms of transactions imply a distinction between formal or transcendental Subjects and real events; yet at the same time the major distinction between the formal and the real is subordinated to the minimal distinction between the transcendental and the empirical; together these form for Kant a virtual realm of possibilities which are lent a dynamism of sorts by the innate tendencies of mental faculties to conform to the form of 'communicability'.

For Kant critique shortcircuits judgement and exposes concepts to their formal or transcendental conditions of possibility. Kant visualises the set of concepts regulated by critique as affording a set of legitimate uses for concepts, and in an essential spatial analogue, as designating their deployment in an expanding but limited realm. It is with this visualisation that Kant most obviously bridges the gap between conceptual and trade-economic or political schemas. Trade and warfare, like philosophical argument require justification (if they are to appear 'just'). Kant attempts - in the first and third critiques - to present critique as a regulated interference of the empirical employment of the understanding, which is regulated by the attractive power of the higher faculty of reason. But this is no regulation at all because reason is simply the unnecessary idea of a maximal capacity in general, and inversely critique is a free mental process, separate from the understanding and only minimally oriented by reason. Kant's major interest is in the limited order which reason can still impose through critique; his major fear is critique's further and inevitable interference in reason. Kant only presents this fear and this sense of infectious critique indirectly, through a strict (and usually uni-lateral as one proceeds up the hierarchy of the faculties) regulation of the influence of mental processes on one another, through the relegation of influence to the low faculty of sensation and through his negative presentation of the object-in-itself (noumenon) and the concept of nothing. Kant's disavowal of influence presupposes the static spaces and equilibrium which critique and transcendental philosophy are incapable of vouchsafing; thus if the interface of interior space and external

stimuli is impossible as far as Kant is concerned, it is only because of the extent to which influence happens inevitably. And the magnitude of this extent is suggested by the influences which affect reason from within inner space. Influence is an impossible yet real quantity in the relation of critique to reason.

The attempt to exclude the quanta of influence from its rationalised definite spaces is the primary characteristic of Kant's critical philosophy. Bataille's writing charts the ultimate outcome of such an attempt. If influence is simply an (albeit catastrophic) moment of the interface of a virtual schema with quantities of stimulus (which we can only so far designate as 'external'), in the impossible economy of reason; then critique and transcendental philosophy are themselves rather active infections or contagions within those inner spaces, infections which share their contagious attributes with the general movements of energy which pertain 'outside' inner space. Bataille's post-critical gesture consists in relaying the transcendental as libidinal energy rather than mental form towards the energetic level of immanence or intensive zero from which the specific magnitudes of the play of energy in general can be registered. The maximal law in the energetic universe is that energy intensifies as the communication between energetic particles increases; thus Bataille replaces the Kantian rational idea of communicability with the principle of intensive communication.

It would be wrong to suggest that Bataille subordinates philosophy to thermodynamics with this post-critical gesture. It is in order to distinguish the levels of a universal energetic model that Bataille concentrates on the limit experiences of the human animal. These experiences express the centrality of the ecstasies of infection and death to a libido which is human but unconscious and impersonal, and in which the particular human is undisturbed by thoughts of its own safety. Only certain sensations and even, exceptionally, thought brought to the peak of sensation communicate with the overwhelming rages of infection, virulence and death which constitute our immediate environment. In fiction, theoretical analyses and near psychotic ramblings Bataille's 'subject' is always the human craving for the intensity commonly associated with the sun, an intensity which must damage then destroy

the thirsty supplicant. Bataille never ceases to meditate on the indifference shown to the rational sense of utility and individuation (on which the deviations of occidental philosophy in general and the historical results of protestantism depend) by this primary addiction of the emotions and sensations, an addiction which conditions both individuals and cultures, as well as determining their belief systems (for instance the 'useful' as a means to rational ends). Any account of Bataille's contribution to the lazy habits of our libidinal energies which we call philosophy which does not capitalize on his ecstatic perception of the infections which wrack and kill us in time can only constitute a neo-kantian regressive reorientation of the schema of critical philosophy around the restricted senses of the notions of influence and affect.

The etymology of the word 'influence' emphasises why it is such an important term for understanding the trajectory of Kantian critique and Bataille's relation to Kant. It is a word which has two tendential senses, one linked to the ideal schemas and models which characterise the projects of Occidental rational science, religion and philosophy; and a more primitive base significance in which 'influence' designates the affective mode of simple quanta. It is this latter sense which has informed the relatively recent sciences of virology, the thermodynamics of dissipative structures and information theory, - and been intuited at the interface of philosophy and psychosis by the ragged pack of writers weakened by their bulimic feasts of scrupulous thought and libidinal energy. Bataille runs with them.

The word's Romantic language source (Latin 'in-fluere' = to flow in) suggests 'primitive' origins in the agricultural understanding of base hydraulics, necessary for the planning and building of irrigation channels. The term suggests an operative schema which foregrounds the mode of the process involved rather than the essential qualities of its quantities understood as objects. This base conception of influence predates the antinomy of process and state (in which states are necessarily transformed by flows) as well as the problematic of the object which comes to dog rational conceptions of influence. It is only with these latter conceptions that influence gains its irruptive sense and yet is at the same time opposed - as involving a passive relation - to the active operation of infection (in facere = to make in or

through [a process]). From the 4th century AD onwards the sense of influence appears to have been distanced from the meaning of the term 'process'; processes came to be understood in terms of causal agents and effects whilst influence was conceived either as a rigorous determination of a state/entity or the determining attribute of an entity, determined by divine power. The very neutrality of the quanta involved in the initial operative schema of influence lent itself to the overcoding which produced the abstractions of metapsychological entities, such as divine power, cause and emanations and the psychological states they effected, the human or sublunary effects/states of influence. Perhaps a basic fear of the process of influence (associated with the great fluxes of hydraulic natural phenomena and time) necessitated its identification with divine power; thus inadvertently causality and the human projection of order onto the universe was born. Dark Ages' astrologers associated influence with the fluid or matter of divine emanations, thereby subordinating fluid or energetic matter to its divine cause.[1] Their accounts of astral influence identify an ethereal fluid streaming from the stars and acting on the character and destiny of all things sublunary. The general trajectory of early accounts of influence lies in identifying immaterial astral fluid with the abstract divine power which causes it, so that influence comes to be associated with the infusion of 'insensible' divine power into persons or things. Such an account is quintessentially religious; influence is seen as an unknowable operation which is only given in its effect of derangement, disease or vision. The cause (the fluid) is insensible and the cause of the cause (God) is only given in an 'act' of faith.

With the growth of Occidental science the relation between God and human changes and the sense of influence changes with it. The mystery of influence had been safeguarded by the very height of the gap dividing the heavens and the sublunary, a distance which stressed the radicality of the changes which influence brought about. With the growth of science culminating in the doctrine of 'physical influence' in the 19th Century, [2] the spectacle of influence, of violent influx, the irruption of 'divine' lunacy in humans was replaced by the sense of influence 'on' or between entities, objects or people. The turbulence of the process of 'flowing in' is replaced by the 'state' of influence between two bodies, a state which tends towards

stability, continuity and even reciprocity because the distance between the two bodies has decreased, and the magnitudes of influence are measurable and minute relative to the magnitude of lunatic behaviour. Yet even this scientific conception can be seen as analogous to a religious conception, since the Enlightenment humanists had drawn the paradigm for such a reciprocal relation when they reduced god and human to a minimal relation of projection and consonance.

Priestly's 1767 text 'The History of Electricity' [3] exemplifies the modern connotations of influence; where electric fluids can be said to influence each other, the chaos and unpredictability of influence tends to be denied and influence is identified with induction, that is with the exercise of a quantified cause. Priestly's 'influence machine' built according to the principle that electrical fluids influence each other is also called an 'induction machine', a machine within which a closed system of electrical processes can be initiated and regulated and terminated usefully, to bring about a state of electrification or magnetization.

This supplanting of influence by induction occurs in the human sciences too, where influence is either identified with induction, with the initiation of a process to a certain end, for instance the logical induction of general principles from particular examples; or else influence is considered in opposition to formal legitimate authority, as psychological manipulation, or, as with Kant, the influence and irruption of the sensible - the emotive, influenced, and unfounded - as opposed to the rational - the substantiated or the argued.[4]

The strict regulation of influence in scientific and philosophical closed systems completes the denial of the base hydraulic sense of influence; it becomes impossible for quanta of influence to 'flow in' and disturb balances unless this transformation is the effect of a known cause, already explicable as the exercise of a known quantity. Influence is thereby supplanted by the term exertion, in relation to directed dynamical action, in which the quanta of an influence is necessarily related (as was the fluid medium of astrological influence to divine power) to a strict and determining local cause and its definitive nature and attributes (for example resistance or the property of conduction, or most importantly in Kant, sensation's attribute of

uni-directional relay into the hierarchy of the faculties). The intransigences of both medium and affect are denied by the scale of the closed dynamic systems in which they are situated, and by the objective status of the transactions taking place within them. A concern with the states of influence proper to objects replaces the base hydraulic sense of influence, in which the quanta channelled were simply fluxes showing turbulent, chaotic and arbitrary behaviour.

The history of the usages of the term influence in science and philosophy presents us all too often with the image of restricted closed energetic economies, that is limited energetic mechanisms tending towards a functional equilibrium of symmetrical and reversible relations between terms - a further example would be the exchange-cycle of influent and refluent blood in 18th century biology.[5] The fact that science and philosophy are both informed by the same image of mechanistic space will be of fundamental importance when it comes to characterising Kant's account of influence and energetics in more depth.

Steam power and the science of energetics (thermodynamics) represented influence in relation to energetic systems which were open (to influence) yet ideally isolated by boundary conditions. In a thermodynamic system quantities of energy available for work are inevitably dissipated as heat in the process of that system. In classical thermodynamics this growing entropy within a closed system tends to a thermodynamic state of a maximal entropic value within a given system. Chaotic or dissipative thermodynamics elides the measuring sense of this boundary condition: insofar as a growing entropy represents the adaptation of a system to outside conditions, and represents one system as influenced by a larger one, that system's entropy can be seen as an irreversible and evolving process, the process of change of that system in relation to a larger system which itself represents the continuity of the potential maximum of the non-equilibrium state of spontaneous behaviour and free molecular movement relative to each system. In other words the regulation of entropy by boundary conditions is replaced by concerns of scale, micro- and macro-systems and the unilateral relations as one pours into the other.

Philosophers especially find the positivity of entropic or intensive zero - the free and useless radiations of heat - abhorrent. Anthropology is a full witness to the fact that historically waste products and the useless have provoked fear and repulsion; the ultimate proof of this is their treatment in the guise of the abstractions of death and nothing by the Idealist and phenomenological traditions as negatives or lacks, which remain preferable - as markers of the hold of logic - to the positivity of useless thermic death. Zero is also more palatable when considered in terms of the process which ultimately leads there; but even this inevitability is challenged by philosophical logic. Bataille's writing charts this inevitability in processes of thought and culture without the complacency of science - the irruption of overwhelming influences into the rational schemas of human life gives death a rabid and exclusively human sense. As we have seen influence was deemed destructive at some inscrutable point of sacred pre-history, and its disturbing quanta regulated by its association with a divine power. The return of the import of unbridled influences attests less to the universal progress of scientific method than to the dissolution of moral certainty which follows from the aborting of that divine power in the processes of global capital:

"The true universality is the death of God" (OC1 473)

For Bataille, infection is the properly human mode of influence, the influence that rages virulently and impersonally, that is, which is most simply designated by its contagious spread and intensity. And this sense of infection is linked to the base significance of influence - the flow of quanta. Since the Middle Ages, Europe has suffered mysteriously anonymous viral assaults of gargantuan proportions, which were announced by similar simple symptoms across great swathes of the continent. In 1504, the Northern Italians, totally ignorant of the cause of one such viral spread simply called it 'influenza', thereby designating nothing except a pattern of growth. The cause of the disease and its means of transmission were both unknown and the term designated a pattern of epidemic growth rather than a general relation of cause to effects. This statistical point of view became the original perspective of epidemiology, in which it is not causal relations between entities but the new directions and patterns of growth of a contagious disease which constitute the basic information; a science of quantitative

communications which is concerned with the simultaneity of effects or a time of evolution rather than temporal causality. The term 'influenza' spread to other social events; 'religious' and 'financial' influenzas struck church and financial markets. [6] In each case, the infection 'influenza' is an impersonal and unconscious energetic communication with potentially disastrous results for individual or social life.

The fact of the discovery in 1933 of the viral conditions of influenza foregrounds the base hydraulic sense of influence in identifying it with the viral sense of infection. This viral sense of influence and infection entails a rigour foreign to the metaphorical use of the term in science, psychology and philosophy. The nature of the virus even destroys the sense of certainty which was associated with causal relations in scientific enquiry; the virus is a biological non-entity prone to turbulent and periodic behaviour and only exists in its active parasitic mode as a pattern of influence and ingression or growth within a host biological being. Viruses like the influence of libidinal energy in critical philosophy are optimally described using (biological) models of irreversible but periodic processes evolving against a background of normal (cell) functions which are themselves changed by the foreground activity; rather than using mechanistic models of basic states. Bataille's account of the trajectory of critical philosophy supplies us with such a lucid description, but his writing also resounds with the fevered ecstasy of infection; and this is less a summation and resolution of critical philosophy than its dissolution in the fever-coursings of the impersonal and unconscious intensities which condition it.

## Chapter One: DERRIDA - THE LANGUAGE OF COMPLICITY AND CONSTRAINT

### Phenomenology versus libidinal materialism

The enormous influence which Derrida's essay 'From Restricted to General economy - a Hegelianism without reserve' [1] has had on the reception of Bataille since its first publication in the journal 'L'Arc' in May 1967 should not be underestimated. The influence has been general rather than specific, in so far as commentators on Bataille following after Derrida have picked up on the broad alliances which Derrida draws; either the Bataille-Hegel connection which Derrida foregrounds in this article or else the Heidegger-Bataille connection which is suggested by Derrida's own immediate philosophical antecedents. The 1990 Yale French Studies 78 collection [2] of papers, included work by Jean Luc-Nancy, Rebecca Comay, Jean Michel Heimonet, Denis Hollier and others which emphasised the strain of 'marginal logic' or the economics of philosophical logic which Derrida extracts as the fundamental motif of Bataille's work. The value of this work lies in the fact that it renders the one-sided nature of Derrida's representation of Bataille's writing explicit, if only by extending and consolidating this prejudice. These writers emphasise the importance of the regulative function of the necessary 'double bind' of Heideggerian 'presencing' in Bataille's philosophy; this idea is presented as the most noteworthy philosophical problem in his texts. For me, their presentations immediately gives rise to the question of how so massive a denial of the contents of the 6000 pages of the Oeuvres Complètes could occur. For it must be obvious to any reader of Bataille's writing that in his texts the importance of the logic of representation is the primary victim of the revaluation effected by the intensive and contagious quantities of libidinal energetics. The logic of representation is subordinated to its further condition of possibility in the intensive flows of the inhuman will to expenditure.

Recent work on Bataille by sociologists who are reappraising the French anthropology of Durkheim, Tarde and Mauss, has done nothing to alter the conception in Philosophy/Literature/Cultural Studies departments of Bataille as a mad, bad, 'black' - to use Descombes' phrase in his Modern French Philosophy' [3] - excessive Hegelian, who takes Hegelian logic to an explosive

conclusion. Although Derrida cannot be held responsible as the originator of this position, he is its most public proponent. Foucault's lecture 'Introduction to Transgression'[4] which predates Derrida's article by five years and which appeared first in the journal 'Critique' 195-6 1963 does not avoid being retroactively sucked into this sphere of influence. Derrida's own work is an example of the fact that (at least the appearance of a) radical transgression in thought and written style can in fact designate an eminently Hegelian operation. Derrida's work constantly demonstrates the necessary reliance of transgression on law in general, and the reliance of deviations from reason on the mechanisms internal to reason. According to Derrida transgression is compromised by reason, whereas for Bataille transgression attests to the energetic conditions of possibility of reason and law. Deleuze appears to have shied away from discussing Bataille, although the work of both is based on Kantian problematics and their Nietzschean solutions; an important exception is the passage in Anti-Oedipus[5] which emphasises the relation between The Accursed Share and Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals. One reason for Deleuze's ignoring of Bataille may be the very extent of Derrida's hijacking of Bataille for his own speculative and Hegelian ends. In Dialogues[6] Deleuze refers to Bataille as a hybrid of Hegel and Freud, as 'an eminently French writer' fixated on his own oedipalised 'dirty little secrets'. Even Kristeva's early championing of Bataille in the Powers of Horror[7] is played out simply at the level of sensibility, i.e at the very level which the phenomenological and idealist traditions disparage and subordinate, from Kant to Derrida.

Contesting Derrida's interpretation of Bataille is difficult first and foremost because of the disproportionate effect which the essay 'From restricted to general economy' has had relative to its clumsy or 'strategic' [8] (as you will) arguments, claims, and selective readings. The idea of the primary importance of the Hegelian shade to Bataille's work has penetrated so deeply into institutional criticism in general that a contestation of any particular text will almost definitely appear unconvincing, because it must fail to destroy the hegemonic hold of Derrida's interpretation. However, the general influence of the essay is a cause for joy when one considers the magnitude of its perverse rejection of the facts of the Bataillean text, from the initial premise to the details of 'arguments'. It seems obvious to me

that Bataille's relation to Derrida and the phenomenological tradition can only be called superficial because Bataille is blatantly a thinker of the post-kantian tradition which opposes the phenomenological tradition. Bataille and Derrida represent the different responses of different traditions to the problematics of transcendental philosophy.

Kant sought the grounds of possibility of thought in the structures of human perception; his critical account of what is possible according to these structures can itself be read critically. The critical reading of Kant concludes that the possibility of a ground of knowledge is continually qualified by its inability to account for its own status, a contortion that is based on the transcendental principle that if the ground is a possibility it cannot also be a ground. Thus critical enquiry is continually faced with its own groundlessness. In the history of philosophy after Kant there are two responses to this problematic: Hegel and the phenomenological tradition curtail the 'bad infinity' of the critical regress in emphasising the (historical - in Hegel's case) bilateral mediation of grounds and groundlessness as proper to the 'logical' structures of human reason: the energetic or economic tradition (Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Freud) takes this groundlessness as a symptom of the failure of the logic and values of reason, and seeks to explore those values and terms encountered in reason's haemorrhage into groundlessness. This experiment revalues aspects of transcendental philosophy that are the sites of more or less explicit repressions and restrictions of sense in both Kant and the phenomenological response to Kant; the noumenal (and its association with the negative, insofar as Kant calls the noumenon a negative concept), the intensive, the transcendental, and sensation.

The first term of transcendental philosophy to be transformed in this experimental tradition is that of the 'will', which is after Kant thought as a productive will (producing objects of desire) whilst remaining distinct from (and for Kant at least secondary to) the machinations of reason. Will is no longer considered as a rational will, but as a desiring will; and its impersonality is emphasised by the non-alliance of this primary production to the rational restrictions produced by the container-forms of the mental processes which inevitably define for Kant the arena of an individual's moral

action. With Schopenhauer and Nietzsche the primary processes of 'will' and the measures which pertain to their productions are superimposed on the rational schemas which they are now seen as constituting. It is important not to reduce the effects of this superimposition to a logical structure, to reduce the critical difference that appears between two levels of will or energy to a difference internal to reason, or, which is the same thing only reoriented by degree, in a relation of any qualitative kind to reason. The form and project (critical or eugenic in Nietzsche's case) is always secondary to the productions of will and their creative articulation. Freud's psychodynamics [9] gives a similar account of the productions of unconscious libidinal energy which constitute and dissolve the integrated organism/ ego (and even its unconscious attempts at self-protection from the flows of psychic energy). In all of these thinkers 'will' or 'desire' exceeds the human power of rational control, is inhuman; at the same time human experience 'plugs into' the impersonal movement of these forces in artistic creation and very strong sensations.

In the course of the thesis I shall attempt to situate Bataille in relation to several aspects of the Kantian inheritance. For our purposes at the moment it is more important to situate Derrida in relation to transcendental philosophy. Derrida cannot without qualifications be identified as part of the phenomenological tradition: he uses the rhetoric which one associates with the energetic and economic tradition to conceal a response to Kantian problems which is still phenomenological. This can be seen most clearly in relation to his own account of Bataille in his use of the term 'general economy'. For Bataille the term refers to the levels of the cosmological dissipation of energy. For Derrida, the term implies an economy of concepts considered as writing (as syntactical units) which of necessity find themselves in a minimal logical structure of binary oppositions and which are regulated by a (quasi-) transcendental principle of the irreconcilable difference between identity and non-identity. This is the marginal law of (re)presentation. One can contrast the critical role of this quasi-transcendental principle and its law of representation with Bataille's transformation of the Kantian transcendental principle into a principle of immanent differentiation in which things are differentiated from the zero of immanence (i.e, things transcend the zero of immanence to different intensive degrees). There is a swamping

or flooding of the difference between the transcendental and the empirical (the immanent). Bataille's principle is a principle of intensive or energetic differentiation rather than a law of representation. Derrida solves the Kantian problem of transcendental groundlessness in replacing it with a principle of transcendental and constitutive impossibility proper to signification. Derrida calls this principle the principle of 'différance'. This difference is irreconcilable because phenomena are for Derrida, as for Heidegger before him, essentially linguistic and thus given in a paradoxical manner - given in language rather than in themselves. This principle is the basis of the reconstruction of metaphysics which the deconstructive method effects. For all concepts are given in this paradoxical manner, not as 'present' but in a process of 'presencing' which is never completed because of the passive intervention of the absence which is constitutive of language. Derrida's philosophy is only phenomenological in a marginal sense, because it undoubtedly stretches the phenomenological logic which one associates with Hegel, or rather it associates that logic with the more general logic of a transcendental principle of difference. This principle of difference is itself the product of a binary opposition which is essentially logical (pertaining to the opposition of identity and non-identity). Deconstruction is also only marginally phenomenological because of its veneer of energetic radicality; because it rigourously commandeers the names and terms of the energetic tradition and forces them to speak its phenomenological obnubilations.

This stretched logic entails that any possible term must be drawn into a relation with the (quasi)-transcendental principle of difference and the traditional conceptual baggage it carries with it. It is the reduction of energetic and economic terminology to the conceptual level and logical jargon of identity and difference which is particularly repulsive to the intensive reader of Bataille's writing. When Nietzsche and Bataille have charted the course that runs from concepts to physiological sensations and the energetic economies of intensive quantities, the mapping of conceptual economies is a redundant activity, only minimally less redundant than returning to Kant's descriptions of mental mechanisms. Yet here comes Derrida, translating concepts into written units, and thereby reducing the patterns of energetic quantities to the level of conceptual economies played out within a porous

logical structure. And these regressive steps are concealed by a spurious gesture of radicality! The porous structure of logic in relation to the transcendental principle of différance entails a dynamism of sorts between the grapheme elements. The principle regulating them is minimal, and thus their relations are freed up relative to the strict stasis of metaphysics; but in this weak regulation another sort of necessity is incurred - the complicity and constraint which Derrida explores between Bataille and Hegel - , that is, the constraint of metaphysics' relation to the transcendental différance, and the complicity of Bataille (and all discourses) in that metaphysics. Such an account is woefully inadequate for describing the dynamic forces which the energetic tradition liberates. Dynamic effects are irreducible to the necessary (non) relations contained in a revisionist transcendental philosophy; in fact if Bataille is convincing, those (non) logical relations are themselves first and foremost speeds and intensive quantities. Derrida's achievement lies in having singlehandedly created a generation of readers of Bataille who cannot register the speeds and intensities of his prose and the values they represent, who home in on the dried out, brittle and contorted bones of the law of différance, using the deconstructive method to ignore the evidence of a totally different approach (which is irreducible to the jargon of logical difference) to the inherited Kantian problematic.

The critical mode of the deconstructive method operates by consolidating the function of a given rational binary opposition (thereby consolidating the bilateral and reflexive structure of the logic which is constituted by such oppositions). This necessary form of philosophical terms - which privileges one term over the other - is then reversed, and related to the quasi-transcendental 'ground' of the 'principle' of différance [10]. The hold of oppositional logic is stressed not only despite the relative liberation of the terms from a spurious conceptual reflexivity and equality (a liberation which is equally spurious because of the relation of the terms to the law of difference in relation to which the opposition still holds): but also because the first move of the deconstructive method is to perfect the megalomania of metaphysics in order to contrast it with the 'radical' dissolution of presence achieved by its own method. Deconstruction describes, in its first instant, tendencies as completed metaphysical events, as presences, as totalities. These remain in deconstruction as the backdrops against which an economy of

conceptual writing shows up, as the negative image of these presences and totalities. The relation to these metaphysical entities is emphasised in the very distance of the deconstructive method and the principle of différance from them. Such a relation gives deconstruction a strong sense of self-legitimation. At the same time the articulation of the same relation in all possible conceptual cases eliminates the possibility of different movements which it might be possible to follow in specific cases. We are left with a general principle of all texts and a general effect of deconstruction which itself necessarily accompanies the necessary general effect of metaphysics. As the relation between deconstruction and metaphysics is consolidated, becomes necessary, other effects and trajectories of thought are repressed. We are left with the single path of metaphysics and its deferral. Bataille (and even Kojève) take issue with this idea of the virtual possibility of the totality of a system of knowledge, as it appears in Hegel's work. As we shall see, their rejection of the relevance of the issue of totality is the point at which both see the need to return to the Kantian problematic.

The most important term of transcendental philosophy for Derrida's deconstructive approach is 'the negative'. For Kant, as we shall see later, the negative is associated with that which is beyond the limits of conceptuality which are marked out by the limit/negative concept of the noumenon. The energetic tradition associates the will with that which is irreducible to the concept and thus embraces the negative of the concept as the basis of a transformation of thinking, which rejects the values and attributes of the logic which excludes the negative (except as a formal limit to reason which is internal to reason). This transformation entails an experimentation with the discernible attributes of the negative, or that which is excluded. For Hegel, the negative is associated with the resource and the process of reason itself (abstract negativity, determinate negation) in overcoming the limits of conceptuality as formulated by Kant.

For Derrida, the negative is the limit concept of reason, which places the restricted economy of reason into contact with the general economy of reason regulated by the law of writing as différance. Derrida calls this wider structural logic an 'economy', thereby foregrounding the quasi-energetics of the freer flow or circulation of syntactical units in the written trace which is essentially impenetrable to rational discourse. Thus the negative

regresses from one limit to another, from the limit of oppositional logic to the limit of the opposition which regulates that oppositional logic (the irreducible difference between presence and absence). In relation to the experiments with the negative that come under the general heading of 'general economy' in Bataille's writing, Derrida's notions of the negative and general economy constitute a peculiar revisionist 'logicization' which he justifies using the necessary principle that logic is an economy of oppositions and relations conditioned by the impossibility of writing's determination of presence, i.e by his conception of the negative. Presence is not annihilated by the negative, but simply deferred, precisely because according to Derrida the negative works only one way (in a strictly Kantian fashion), qualifying the project of philosophy from within, regulated by the limit law of representation i.e différance. Derrida is in this sense very much a part of the Kantian project of negative critique, and involved in policing philosophical claims (especially the claims of radically different solutions to the problems of transcendental philosophy).

For Derrida, the negative, like the related notion of death is a limit law of representation; whereas for Bataille it is the communicative flows of energy with their designated speeds and intensive magnitudes. Derrida cannot even countenance what Kant suffers in the Critique of Judgement - the impact of death as sensation on rational philosophy, and the dizzying nausea caused by the unilateral propulsion of critique into the negative of the concept and into death. For Derrida, there is only a bilateral reflection, a reflection onto différance within a propulsion towards the phenomenological determination of the impossibility of plenitude.

Kant and Hegel are the obvious antecedents of the tortured clumsy leviathan of deconstruction in the belly of which the flows and movements of concepts are translated into involuted and near-meaningless logic-speak which are almost identical to the basic categories of logic. The simple addition of a negative prefix to a logical concept appears to be sufficient proof for Derrida that the invasive claims of reason are deferred. Derrida champions the minimal difference between non-relations and the thoroughly metaphysical Hegelian concept of indeterminate relations; champions the reciprocal (non) determination of the concept and its negative etc. But these differences are

minimal and therein lies their compromising relation to the metaphysics of Kant and Hegel.

On 'From Restricted to General Economy'

The deconstructive method, in its youth, had a certain hooligan charm: assertions without close readings (let alone arguments), swift generalisations without epigrammatic wit, but with some bravado. How unfortunate that these outrages to intellectual decency and standards, perpetrated in the name of the phenomenological tradition, were swallowed up in the neurotic indexing which characterises Derrida's later work. This future trajectory is perhaps already given in the philosophical concerns which induced such acts of intellectual bravado. Early in the essay, Derrida brusquely asserts: (WD253) [11]

"Taken one by one and immobilised outside their syntax, all of Bataille's concepts are Hegelian. We must acknowledge this without stopping here."

No amount of careful textual close reading can conceal the tendency of deconstruction to make statements such as this. In Derrida's hands the deconstructive project gains legitimation from the generality of its claims and from the generality of its (alleged) effects. The attributes of metaphysics are couched in the abstract terminology of phenomenology, as are the attributes of différance, and thus the generality of the jargon common to both forms the 'economy' of the written trace. This economy is not primarily a mapping of writing as intensities or quantities, but rather the economy or circulation of logical concepts which have been 'transformed' by their relation to a (quasi) transcendental principle of difference, and rather spuriously called graphemes etc. The nature of this transformation is minimal because the difference between the metaphysical concept and the concept subject to différance is minimal; it is simply subject to a further relation, between empirical 'concepts' and a quasi-transcendental principle. In their relation to the transcendental principle of différance, such metaphysical concepts are constituted as both present and absent, as having both identity and not. Thus the imperfection of metaphysics revealed by deconstruction is also its sole possible perfection, the only way in which it

can be perfect and self-identical. The generality of the deconstructive jargon which relates metaphysics and différance (and that is all it does), that is, Derrida's notion of general economy, appears to allow the tendencies, movements and intensities repressed by metaphysics to operate, but they remain inarticulable outside the logic-speak of différance. These speeds and heats of thought are represented as little more than resonances, echoes of or metaphors for the central relation of concepts to différance, as interferences on the logical relay from metaphysics to différance, the relay which carries - according to deconstruction - the only philosophical message: the news of the relay's own status.

For Derrida all 'philosophemes' must relate to the porous structure of logic regulated by the transcendental principle of différance; thus the difference between Bataille and Hegel can only be considered as a difference proper to this expanded structure of logic. It is thus totally consistent for Derrida to use the terms "complicity" and "constraint" (WD251) to describe Bataille's relations to other philosophers (above all Hegel). It would be impossible for Bataillean 'concepts' to extricate themselves from the rule of différance which is, according to deconstruction, the sole concern of any philosophy which is trying to think itself out of metaphysics. The effects of this expanded logic are general and formal i.e self-representing (albeit qualified by the law of 'constitutive absence'). Derrida has a Kantian taste for the dramatisation of concepts and thus still entertains thoughts of Idealist space; the totality or the 'Whole' of Hegelianism can be represented, and at a more empirical level the field of the play of graphemes develops into 'scenes' (see [13] below).

Derrida follows Kojève in identifying the most developed metaphysics, the summit at which the impossibility of full presence becomes most apparent, with the name of Hegel. This identification conceals the importance of Kant for Hegel, Derrida, and Bataille. All can best be conceived in terms of the attempts to dissolve the problems of transcendental philosophy inherited from Kant. Hegel's phenomenology is nothing more than one such attempt. Derrida like Hegel seeks to cancel the problem of transcendental groundlessness and critical regress, but with the notion of transcendental impossibility (constitutive absence etc) rather than in the processes of a self-transcending reason powered by circular presuppositions. Deconstruction's presupposition

of the quasi-transcendental principle of différance appears to achieve what Kant could not, that is the containment of critique; because the formulation of this principle regulates the whole field of possible phenomena qua representations, including the overwhelming flows of critique which continually unbalance transcendental philosophy. These flows, liberated and intensified by the groundlessness of the enquiries associated with them, are themselves regulated, according to deconstruction (and thus curtailed in so far as they are reduced to the status of representations in relation to this principle), by the principle of différance, the principle of the paradoxical constitution of representations.

For Derrida, Hegel is the tyrant of philosophy because he proposed that the self-transcending processes of reason were actual and necessary and embodied in the course of world culture and history. The name Hegel appears wherever transcendental philosophy culminates in teleological metaphysics, that is, in the sublimation of the empirical real in the processes of transcendent conceptual abstraction. If Hegel is the inescapable trajectory and culmination of philosophy, one can, according to Derrida, recognise the "self-evidence" (WD 251) of the inescapable, and this entails recognising the necessary failure of the inescapable to complete itself. For Derrida philosophy must traverse Hegel to arrive at deconstruction, which is essentially the deconstruction of "Hegelianism". Derrida's identification of Hegelianism and metaphysics paves the way for the phenomenological terminology of deconstruction, and emphasises its spurious exclusive necessity. Derrida continually stresses the danger inherent in the philosophical bypass of Hegel, in the other routes of transcendental philosophy and its aftermath. His argument is nonsensical and unarguable - such moves compound Hegelianism's "historical domination" - and presupposes the inescapable 'constraint' of Hegel. In fact, Derrida conceives of these other routes - in a typically self-important phenomenological manner - as involving the claim to have "undo(ne) the constraint of Hegel". For Derrida philosophy is simply a question of degrees of awareness of the Hegelian logic of the negative:

"Treated lightly, Hegelianism only extends its historical domination.... Hegelian self-evidence seems lighter than ever at the moment when it finally bears down with its full weight" (WD251).

But the energetic tradition is more concerned with contesting transcendental

philosophy in general than Hegel's particular and peculiar brand of metaphysics.

Derrida presupposes the essentially unquantifiable relationship between Bataille and Hegel, (provided by their shared proximity to the formulation of the formal - i.e unquantifiable - law of representation) by developing Bataille's comment on the 'self-evidence' of Hegel into the essential moment of his thought. [12] As we shall see, the empirical evidence at the level of concepts is against him; however the presupposition remains and consolidates the relation between Hegelianism and deconstruction. Derrida approaches this question of intellectual influence with little regard to Bataille's own comments. For Bataille intellectual inheritance is less a question of the 'figures' and 'scenes' which Derrida deploys [13] than of the mode of influence itself (i.e contagion) which is linked to the impersonal libidinal excitation which require novel types of description or quantification. Derrida reduces the importance of the mode of influence to the secondary question of psychological identification and thereby relegates the importance of the intellectual influence of Nietzsche on Bataille - which would urge an account of the contagious mode of influence - to the status of a proof of the necessity of Bataille's relation to Hegel and the importance of the formal law of representation: (WD 251-2)

"And if Bataille considered himself closer to Nietzsche than anyone else, than to anyone else, to the point of identification with him, it was not, in this case, as a motive for simplification:

'Nietzsche knew of Hegel only the usual vulgarization. The 'Genealogy of Morals' is the singular proof of the state of general ignorance in which remained, and remains today, the dialectic of the master and the slave, whose lucidity is blinding...no one knows anything of himself if he has not grasped this movement which determines and limits the successive possibilities of man'".

Due to the extended power of representation - the increased and inclusive self-representation of the idealist spaces of philosophy - made possible by the quasi-transcendental principle of différance, Derrida can argue (WD 252) that Bataille inflects the whole Hegelian economic model and its terminology; that he traverses the Whole of the Hegelian model in order to exceed it. According to Derrida, Hegel seeks to include all the different moments contained in his account of the movements proper to the history of self-

consciousness (in the The Phenomenology of Spirit) [14] within an Absolute Spirit which is substantiated in the very machinations of self-consciousness. Hegel does not, according to this reading, posit the possibility of either an exteriority to that movement, or a remnant after the kinked loops of Spirit in which all moments are always already given and one moves endlessly from one presupposition to another. Even aporias, failures and contradictions are revealed within and thus proper to reason, are necessarily recuperable and thus can be considered as capitalising or profitable risks. Even the negations of reason, the enunciations of that which is not rational are regulated by reason: "the slumber of reason" is "slumber in the form of reason, the vigilance of the Hegelian logos." Derrida argues that Bataille's discourse remarks on this "ruse of reason", and that this is not simply another moment of super-vigilance proper to reason, but rather a philosophical position which cancels itself out at the same time as it is reached through philosophy. Derrida treats this 'cancellation' as an 'expiation' effected through the principle of the paradoxical constitution of presence at the empirical level of the space of concepts as writing. At the same time Derrida designates the dissolution of concepts qua writing into the general spatial economy of the play of graphemes as 'laughter'. Thus he identifies general economy (as he understands it i.e as the play of differance) with the base energetic realm of the sensible and the physiological: (WD253)

"To bear the self-evidence of Hegel, today, would mean this: one must, in every sense, go through the "slumber of reason", the slumber that engenders monsters and then puts them to sleep; this slumber must be effectively traversed so that awakening will not be...a ruse of reason.....[for Bataille] it is necessary, in order to open our eyes...to have spent the night with reason.... To laugh at philosophy (at Hegelianism) - such, in effect, is the form of the awakening - henceforth calls for an entire "discipline", an entire "method of meditation" that acknowledges the philosopher's byways, understands his techniques, makes use of his ruses, manipulates his cards, lets him deploy his strategy, appropriates his texts. Then, thanks to this work which has prepared it...quickly, furtively and unforeseeably breaking with it, as betrayal or as detachment, drily, laughter bursts out. And yet, in privileged moments that are less moments than the always rapidly sketched movements of experience; rare, discreet and light movements, without triumphant stupidity...very close to that at which laughter laughs: close to anguish."

Derrida's is an inadequate description because it formulates Bataille's writing in terms of a method and more importantly because it misses the irreducible difference between the confessional mode of critical philosophy and the libidinal shudderings of physiology (and the base energetics which is the condition of them both). Dissolution is not a limit concept which inflects the stale jargon of the phenomenological tradition but an energetic process of transformation, that is a process which transforms events into energetic quanta on the heels of the critical irruption of sensibility and physiology into rational schemas. Derrida uses the physiological phenomenon which has its own economy of intensities, tensions and releases - in line with base energetics itself - as a metaphor for a limit state of conceptual phenomena; justifying this with the basic yet determining idea that writing and the principle of paradoxical presence it embodies is the sine qua non of all possible representation. But laughter is more than a symptom of the (logical) difference between reason and différance. In so far as Bataille opposes laughter and reason (at the level of his general economy they are both energetic phenomena), he consistently opposes the contagious mode of nervous excitation to limited static philosophy, and describes the quantities of a nervous excitation as a physiological sensible response to an impossible rational position (cf OC5 388-92, OC6 71-5, 154-5). Derrida however subsumes the two positions under the principle of différance, with all its logico-structural resonances, and drags reason and sensibility back into an implicit ethics of critical super-vigilance.

As we shall see with Kant sensations can be differentiated from the logicised relations of idealist philosophy and designated as intensive quantities, which allows for a scalar mapping of concepts and events as energetic fluxes. Derrida moves from analyses of simulation and proximity in the currency of his Kantian dramatisation of general economy, to the implicit ethics of philosophical complicity in the phenomenological tradition; but Bataille follows the trajectory of the opposition between the physiological and the rational, - where laughter is the irrecuperable physiological ruination of conceptual economies and does not itself live in their shadow through the operations of linguistics, but is a symptom of the opposition between the intensive/ the energetic and the linguistic.

Derrida's claim that Bataille is constrained to Hegel and complicit with Hegelianism does not simply refer Bataille's texts to the principle of différance. Derrida claims that Bataille is engaged in a methodical and disciplined simulation and betrayal of the entirety of Hegelian terminology (thankfully he does not attempt to argue this term by term). How can Derrida make such a statement when Bataille's mutterings on Hegel are clumsy, generalised and uninformed? How can Bataille's improvisations around the most obvious elements of one text of a notoriously difficult philosopher's work, (improvisations which are only explicitly related back to a substantial reading of this text in two late essays on Hegel ('Hegel, Death and sacrifice', 'Hegel, Man and History'[15])); which are themselves passed down as 'the ideas' contained in this text by a bizarre literalist commentator (Kojève), be called a serious encounter let alone "a complicity without reserve" with Hegelianism? It is undeniable that Bataille had a vulgar and indirect reading of Hegel, and I would argue that this has a sense: Bataille believed that Hegel's logic was characterised by obvious and restricted moves (Kojève's account of Hegel certainly was), and could therefore discard it in order to experiment with elements of post-Kantian thought in a manner which also has nothing in common with events within Derrida's 'scenes' of identification and simulation conditioned by the written trace. Bataille is simply not that interested in Hegel.

Yet Derrida rationalises Bataille's methodless philosophical stammerings and represents them as exemplifying the method of deconstruction. Derrida does not worry unduly about the insubstantial nature of the 'relation' between Bataille and Hegel: (WD 253)

"rarely has a relation to Hegel been so little definable: a complicity without reserve accompanies Hegelian discourse, "takes it seriously" up to the end, without an objection in philosophical form, while however, a certain burst of laughter exceeds it and destroys its sense, or signals, in any event the extreme point of 'experience' which makes Hegelian discourse dislocate itself: and this can be done only through close scrutiny and full knowledge of what one is laughing at".

Derrida presents Bataille's superficial and secondhand account of Hegel, in which depth is sacrificed for a perception of the breadth, i.e Hegelianism's internal economy is sacrificed for a perception of its energised trajectory, ("I have wanted to demonstrate the incomparable breadth of his undertaking...and [its] even inevitable degree of failure"(WD n1 333)) as a

rigorous account of the totality of Hegel's system. Ironically, Derrida proceeds to substantiate his claim in a fashion which lacks rigour to an almost Bataillean extent, all the while characterising Bataille's method as impossibly precise and delicate: (WD253)

"To take such a system seriously, Bataille knew, was to prohibit oneself from extracting concepts from it, or from manipulating isolated propositions, drawing effects from them by transportation into a discourse foreign to them ..... Bataille doubtless put into question the idea or meaning of the chain in Hegelian reason, but did so by thinking the chain as such, in its totality, without ignoring its internal rigour".

Derrida, as we shall see, proceeds to break each of these impossible rules of well-mannered deconstruction, extracting and manipulating isolated concepts torn from context in order to prove with the help of the 'formal law' of differance that all Bataille's concepts are Hegelian: (WD253)

"Taken one by one and immobilised outside their syntax, all of Bataille's concepts are Hegelian. We must acknowledge this without stopping here."

For the deconstructor this is surely an incitement to heresy; the isolation of concepts is necessary - their representation in an ideal pure state - in order to register the transformations ("the rigorous effect of the trembling") to which they succumb in the play of differance, once back inside their contexts. Astoundingly then, Derrida's formal law of differance appears to allow him to distinguish a transcendent realm of pure ideas from the empirical realm of textual free motion!

Derrida diagnoses Hegel correctly in pointing out the intentional form of reason, its figures and its foundation: (WD 260)

"[With the notion of the necessity of logical continuity] Hegel has bet against play, against chance. He has blinded himself to the possibility of his own bet, to the fact that the conscientious suspension of play.. [is] itself a phase of play...meaning is a function of play".

But he perpetuates this intentional structure with his minimal logical principle of differance and associates Bataille with this move. Derrida wants to posit the notion of a single philosophical impossible or paradoxical discourse, resulting from the opposition of sovereignty and discourse; he then wants to identify that discourse with Hegelian logic: (WD 261)

"There is only one discourse, it is significative, and here one cannot get around Hegel".

Derrida believes that Bataille's language is a language of simulation and

ruse, simulating presence and allowing the impossibility of presence - sovereignty - to 'shine through' as the foundation and trajectory of utile language. The paradox contained in language becomes the model for all Bataille's concepts: (WD 263)

"[each] risks making sense, risks agreeing to the reasonableness of reason, of philosophy, of Hegel, who is always right, as soon as one opens one's mouth in order to articulate meaning."

Bataille is much more concerned with the degrees of the inadequacy (informational redundancy) of language in expressing that which is not servile, i.e the sovereign immensity of communications of energy which condition this redundancy. In Inner Experience he decides that sovereign language is impossible and entertains a paradoxical and anguished style of the 'impossible'. The 'impossible' is the real, that is the necessity of experience and sensation exceeding rational possibility, utility, and language. The impossible is only a problem in so far as it is formulated by a philosophy which operates according to a delimiting, exclusive and subsuming logic. The notion of statistical improbability associated with science is often used by Bataille to resolve this unnecessary problem [16]. Bataille makes extensive use of scientific discourses throughout the Oeuvres Complètes, in order to circumvent the tedious and washed out problems of self-referential idealist philosophy, which involute endlessly so that out of mad paranoid confusion can be drawn the liberal commonsense of morality and ethics. He uses discourses without too much 'discipline' and 'method'; the overwhelming sensation is of discourses crunching together and a resulting belittling of the concerns of anthropocentric idealist philosophy. Such discourse is ironic and paradoxical but the compromise of the object of knowledge by the subject is minimal, given that this discourse foregrounds the different scales of perception which are not all effectively intentional, and which do not all result in the useful activity of the human subject. In fact the telescoping scales of perception, and their extremes of activity (the energetic activity of micro-molecules and macro-environments) overwhelms human perception; this is evidenced by the credibility gap presented by Bataille's account for the idealist philosophical mind.

The impossible is thematised in Bataille's accounts of general economy [17]; the discourse he uses is quasi-scientific but its improbability resonates with the tension of utile values and the sovereign communication of expenditure. In this sense there is no contradiction between a text like 'The Accursed Share' and surrealist early work in which stylistic anguish and biological science are juxtaposed. In general, it seems to me that Bataille does implement an alternative discourse to that (Hegelian) discourse which Derrida deems exclusively necessary. Bataille's general economy is related to the sciences of thermodynamics and information theory, as well as the schizoid dissolution of philosophical discourse which is typified by Nietzsche, rather than to any self-reflexive analysis of the intentional structures of Kantian and Hegelian reason.

#### A complicity without reserve?

Derrida uses cheap rhetorical tricks to promote the deconstructive method of 'ethical reading' and force the issue of the exclusive importance of the relation between Bataille and Hegel. He equates the Bataillean term 'sovereignty' and the Hegelian term 'lordship' (WD254) in a passage describing the Hegelian account of the lord/slave relation, then suggests that Bataille himself equates the two terms in his reflections on Hegel ("Such, according to Bataille, is the center of hegelianism"). Derrida adds that "Bataille did not cease to meditate...this absolute privilege given to the slave" (in philosophy and culture) as if 'slave culture' was an exclusively Hegelian notion. Of course Bataille's conceptions of sovereignty and servility contain all the attributes of Nietzsche's notions of sovereign and slave morality and are deployed in similar genealogical contexts [18]; but his conception of sovereignty also has important connections, as we shall see, with the Kantian idea of the rational freedom of the human capacity for communication [19].

Derrida emphasises the connection between the figure of sovereignty and general economy, and between general economy and the space that contains that figure. Bataille's general economy, unlike Derrida's, does not regulate any space or scene, nor contain the restricted economy of reason and utility. Such structures of containment are thoroughly metaphysical. It is important

to associate Bataille's notion of sovereignty with his notion of general economy, that is, with the impersonal flows of energetic matter and their principle of expenditure. [20] Sovereignty is simply a problematic designation of that economy (problematic because of its intentional resonances).

Derrida admits that 'sovereignty' and 'lordship' are different without giving the obvious proofs; that Bataille always distinguishes the two terms (even in the 'Hegel, Death and sacrifice' essay [21]) and tends to use the term 'sovereignty' in relation to the ecstatic expenditures of religion, art and the philosophy of Nietzsche (cf Theory of Religion, On Nietzsche, Manet, Sovereignty [22]). For Bataille, the problem with the term lies in its designation of both an impersonal libidinal motor and its intentional, human element [23]. The accounts of religious sacrifice and Nietzsche foreground this general economy of sovereignty (the relation between the human desire - conscious or unconscious - to expend and the general energetic economy which conditions that desire), and defend sovereignty from the accusation of "voluntarism", which Derrida describes as an "operating activity of the subject" (WD336 n27). Throughout the essay, Derrida emphasises the term 'sovereignty' because it still has a figurative sense which relates it to the figures or personae of Hegel's system.

It comes as no surprise to find Derrida examining several Bataillean 'concepts' in terms of major Hegelian concepts; he uses the former to articulate the quasi-transcendental principle of difference which affects the latter, thereby emphasising that his primary interest lies in the treatment and transformation of the terminology of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit, and to extend the critical application of that terminology (to, for instance, the genealogical mode of critique in Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals [24]). Thus Derrida equates sovereignty and Hegelian lordship (WD254) in order to show that the difference between the two defines sovereignty exclusively in relation to lordship and to an extended Hegelian terminology:

"And we are interested, first of all, in the difference between lordship and sovereignty. It cannot even be said that this difference has a sense: it is the difference of sense, the unique interval which separates meaning from a certain non-meaning".

For Derrida, this interval has the logical status of a necessary (non-)

relation, a status which remains eminently logical if like Hegel and Derrida - and against Bataille's professed position - one is an 'idiot of rationalisation' who thinks that "the absence of a system is still a system" (OC1 183). According to Derrida this interval remains an element in an extreme or extended logic because logic is characterised by oppositional relations and 'non-relation' is - in the Hegelian tradition - one term in the logically primary oppositional relation of 'relation/non-relation'. Derrida is obsessed with the relational syntax associated with phenomenological logic. He connects general economy to dialectics through the logical base unit of relation; relation (dialectics) and non-relation (sovereignty) are members of the set regulated by the notion of relation. Ultimately sovereignty is related to the trajectory of the master and slave as Derrida describes it in relation to the principle of difference. According to Derrida, sovereignty attests to that trajectory, voids itself of the same rational characteristics as the master (memory, consciousness, interiority). Sovereignty is simply Hegel's master transformed by the imperative of the principle of difference: (WD 265)

"It must expend itself without reserve, lose itself, lose consciousness, lose all memory of itself and all the interiority of itself".

For Derrida, the effects of the principle of difference show up best when superimposed on the limit notions of transcendental philosophy/phenomenology, notions which are under-determined by traditional logic, unlimited and open in their Kantian/ Hegelian situations to the necessary relations of a qualified or 'expiated' logic. Thus Derrida, like Hegel before him, turns to the notion of the negative to intervene his deconstructive logic into the terrain of transcendental philosophy. In the context of this essay, Derrida takes his cue from Bataille who uses the Hegelian notion of negativity as an example of restricted expenditure (an example which he recognises as thoroughly restricted; as a reversal and domestication of the value of consumption) in 'Hegel, Death and sacrifice' [25]. The notion of the negative as Derrida understands it can contain the critical moment implied by Bataille's example within its own second-order rationalisation, reducing the importance of the different intensive magnitudes of the terms in the thematisation of similarity itself. The negative is transformed back into a problematic logical concept because similarity and the simulation of presence are the operative modes of

the differential principle of which the 'negative' is only a symptom. Both Hegel and Derrida are involved in a logicisation of the negative which Kant restricted himself from exploring. Hegel uses negativity as the motor of reason, whilst Derrida transforms the negative into a principle of transcendental impossibility, that is a principle of representation which regulates the movement of significations, which are constituted as partial, deferred or suspended presences. The negative and death are thus associated with a lack or absence which constitutes presences.

Even though Bataille makes a fundamental distinction between Hegelian 'abstract negativity' and the 'negative' of expenditure in relation to rational and utile values, Derrida, like Descombes [26], describes Bataille in terms of an extreme process of abstract negation in which the restricted economy of investment and return, risk and capitalisation symbolised by the mutual relations of master and slave is haemorrhaged. In that economy, the standoff between master and slave must not result in death; both must remain alive in order to sustain a recognition of self-consciousness. For Derrida, the 'extreme' or 'excessive' Hegelian economy entails a 'rush' to self-destruction: (WD 255)

"To rush headlong into death pure and simple is thus to risk the absolute loss of meaning, in the extent to which meaning necessarily traverses the truth of the master and of self-consciousness. One risks losing the effect and profit of meaning which were the very stakes one hoped to win. Hegel called this mute and non-productive death, this death pure and simple, abstract negativity."

It seems to me that the values associated with this 'non-productive' death have little to do with Hegel's notion of abstract negativity, and everything to do with a misinterpretation of Bataille's interpretation of Kojève. Bataille, in 'Hegel, Death and sacrifice' and 'Hegel. Man and History', posits a negative of expenditure and consumption which is associated with the biological life or base energetics which the abstractions of rational life, including that of abstract negativity, come to rationalise and conceal. This negative is associated with death (the degree of the negative at which the integrity of an organism is irremediably overwhelmed) in so far as both are considered as the tendential intensifications of positive quanta, as increases or intensifications of libidinal or general energy, attesting to the tendential loss of the inhibition of energy in an organic system and its

release as an increase in the energetic communications between that system and its environment, an increase which designates the overwhelming of the defenses of the system (including reason) and its equilibrated economies. If human thought can survive such intensive communication (up to the degree we call death), it will be necessarily increasingly and irreversibly transformed. In Bataille's philosophical writings thought survives, but not to repeat the tortured and impossible syntax of logic; in fact as thinking becomes impossible (and thus as 'suited' to the flows of the energetic unconscious as remains possible) it can dimly stammer out the jargon of speed, intensity and magnitude which describe the patterns of its dissolution. [27]

Derrida assumes too much in associating the non-productive death of abstract negativity with Bataille's notion of expenditure; the association is a major part of his attempt to include this notion in the logic or non-logic which is the issue of Hegelianism and différance.

Derrida continues his attempt to assimilate Bataille's philosophical schemas into the extended logic of différance by identifying abstract negativity, considered as an absolute risking of death and thus as a challenge to the restricted economy of dialectics, with 'laughter': (WD256)

"Laughter alone exceeds dialectics and the dialectician: it bursts out only on the basis of an absolute renunciation of meaning...what Hegel calls abstract negativity".

As before Derrida's connection relates the energetic and the physiological (the negative, death, laughter), which are, in Bataille's work, refutations of dialectics and the privileged sites of 'sensing' energetic magnitude in sensation, to a concept from that dialectics (abstract negativity) which also has a 'marginal' sense which articulates the principle of différance. Derrida uses the term 'laughter' as a bridge to minimize the difference between energetic expenditure and dialectics; to minimize its oppositional effect on dialectics by the addition of similarities. For him, laughter is not a physiological response to the massive magnitude of sovereignty or energetic immensity, but a measure of the distance of sovereignty from and relative to dialectics; laughter defines sovereignty as "more and less than lordship ...simultaneously more and less a lordship than lordship" (WD 256), but still defined relative to dialectics.

Derrida can even distance sovereignty/expenditure from the specific marginal concept of abstract negativity given that he has connected expenditure and dialectics at the level of a general economy of dialectics. Unsurprisingly, however the 'novel' aspect of expenditure/sovereignty remains less important to Derrida than the trace of this cancelled link: (WD256)

"Far from being an abstract negativity, sovereignty (the absolute degree of putting at stake), rather, must make the seriousness of meaning appear as an abstraction inscribed in play. Laughter...is not a negativity..."

Derrida replaces negativity with negative logical definitions; the exceeded model and its terms recur as the negative concepts which restrict access to the experimental values of expenditure.

Derrida deconstructs and propagates the essential operation of transcendental philosophy, i.e the limiting of the critical regress; the logic of representation is considered as the exclusive general formal frame of meaning and thereby conditions a dramatisation of the scenes of philosophy: (WD 256-7)

"What is laughable is the submission to the self-evidence of meaning, to the force of this imperative: that there must be meaning, that nothing must be definitely lost in death, or further, that death should receive the signification of 'abstract negativity', that a work must always be possible ...[which through a discourse] gives meaning to death, thereby simultaneously blinding itself to the baselessness of the nonmeaning from which the basis of meaning is drawn, and in which this basis of meaning is exhausted.... Thus is sketched out a figure of experience - but can one still use these two words? - irreducible to any phenomenology, a figure which finds itself displaced in phenomenology, like laughter in philosophy of the mind, and which mimes through sacrifice the absolute risk of death. Through this mime it simultaneously produces the risk of absolute death, the feint through which this risk can be lived, the impossibility of reading a sense or a truth in it, and the laughter which is confused, in the simulacrum, with the opening of the sacred."

Derrida substitutes the simulated phantoms of dialectics for Hegel's 'Aufhebung'. The terms of dialectics stretch grey ligatures over the boundaries of phenomenology to drag back their intensive conditions, and inhabit them parasitically. Thus laughter and sovereignty remain 'figures' which necessarily replicate the phenomenological forms which they have shot beyond.

Derrida relates the attributes of the sovereign operation to the "point of non-reserve" (WD259) at the margins of yet proper to the phenomenological

model, in that such a point 'opens up' that model, constitutes it as such:

"The blind spot of Hegelianism, around which can be organised the representation of meaning, is the point at which destruction, suppression, death and sacrifice constitute so irreversible an expenditure, so radical a negativity - ...an expenditure and a negativity without reserve - that they can no longer be determined as negativity in a process or system".

He is thus still involved, despite all his protestations, in the "immense revolution" of critical philosophy, which liberated, valued and 'gave meaning' to the negative, thus transforming it into a resource for the positivity of meaning. To 'go to the end' or the limit of phenomenology and discover the general economy of dialectics remains a phenomenological project, and its effects are different from those of the general economy of energetic matter which is regulated by the principle of expenditure. The difference is scalar: Bataille's scale (on which he designates what is 'general') is bigger, more general than Derrida's, as proven by the disparity (magnitude of the difference) between restricted and general economies, i.e the meaninglessness of the latter from the perspective of the former and the difference (which is not simply the effect of a formal principle) between the values associated with both. This difference is exemplified in the wild and irrational quality of Bataille's descriptions of general economy; arguments and terminology have an experimental edge and an evanescent power of conviction which rather influence the reader with their intensity, incautiousness and speed. [28]

For Derrida, general economy is a negative, self-limiting process in which the interminable end of phenomenology is followed and described as "exhibit[ing] within the negative, in an instant, that which can no longer be called negative". The rigorous links which attach sovereignty/ expenditure to phenomenology create a vortex of imperatives which produce increasingly more self-legitimizing links and ultimately a project for philosophy in general (as well as Bataille specifically): (WD 259)

"[Bataille] must mark the point of no return of destruction, the instance of an expenditure without reserve which no longer leaves us the resources with which to think of this expenditure as negativity [i.e as a resource for positivity]".

Derrida's careful analysis relates sovereignty/ expenditure back to the safety and self-assurance of phenomenological jargon and figural positions: (WD 260)

"In doubling lordship, sovereignty does not escape dialectics. It could not be said that it extracts itself from dialectics like a morsel of

dialectics which has suddenly become independent through a process of decision and tearing away. Cut off from dialectics in this way, sovereignty would be made into an abstract negation".

Derrida's perverse argument is that any philosophical quanta detached from phenomenology would become a moment of phenomenology! This is an archetypical Hegelian argument because it presupposes the determining power of its own presupposition. Derrida transforms the restricted economy of Hegelian logic into the linguistic currency of his general economy. In Bataille's account of general economy the figures of dialectics do not survive their dissolution in the general economy of energy flows; it is these flows which become the impossible object of discourse. Thus Derrida thoroughly domesticates sovereignty and the general economy of expenditure when he describes its critical power as resulting from its simulation of all the figures of Hegelian dialectics (rather than from its status as their energetic condition) and its constitution of a critical shadow wherein the impossibility of Hegelian 'full presence' is revealed. For Derrida, this impossibility becomes the new sense of Hegelian dialectics:

"Far from interrupting dialectics, history, and the movement of meaning, sovereignty provides the economy of reason with its element, its milieu, its un limiting boundaries of non-sense. Far from suppressing the dialectical synthesis, it inscribes this synthesis and makes it function within the sacrifice of meaning." (WD260-1)

Derrida must misconstrue all of Bataille's important 'concepts' because he approaches them as a phenomenologist. For instance, Derrida associates continuity with the impossible language of sovereignty, and sovereignty with an experience of the continuum of this impossible language. In repressing Bataille's own formulations of continuity and discontinuity [29] which are irreducible to the context of a discussion of sovereignty or language, Derrida relates continuity back to the figures of experience in the Phenomenology. Continuity is:

"the experience of the continuum ... the experience of absolute difference, of a difference which would no longer be the one that Hegel had conceived more profoundly than anyone else...." and thereby reduces the difference between the two thinkers to and links them finally in "the difference between these two differences"(WD263).

The notion of continuity is irreducible to the experience of the continuum (an experience which itself remains outside the structure of the logic of experience). The differentiation of discontinuity from continuity is not

primarily an "incision of difference" (WD263) within discourse or language. Discontinuity refers, as we shall see, to the intensive degrees of transcendence of events from the zero of continuity. The degree of matter in its spatio-energetic dissipation is wholly different from the point at which language affects the metaphysical ideality of concepts.

For Derrida, the difference between the two thinkers lies exclusively in the displacement to which Hegel's concepts are treated in Bataille's work. Thus Bataille's concept of sovereignty depends on the similarity of Hegel's concept of lordship; sovereignty is a contrastive concept. This difference is revealed in the neutral space of textual differences in which concepts are inscribed or erased and traced in a general economy of writing. One symptom of this general economy is the very displacement of those concepts from Hegel's to Bataille's texts. The concept remains as a problematic presence, as the displacement or sliding proper to it which occurs in the general economy of writing: (WD 267)

"this displacement is powerless to transform the nucleus of predicates. All the attributes ascribed to sovereignty are borrowed from the (Hegelian) logic of "lordship".....Since the space which separates the logic of lordship and, if you will, the non-logic of sovereignty neither can nor may be inscribed in the nucleus of the concept itself (for what is discovered is...that the concept is produced within the tissue of differences); it will have to be inscribed within the continuous chain or functioning of a form of writing."

Once again, différance emphasises the initial promise of presence (the concept) as well as its final impossibility; (WD 265)

"presence is irremediably eluded in [the trace], from its initial promise, and only if it constitutes itself as the possibility of absolute erasure."

Derrida is more concerned with the forms of différance and general writing than with describing the empirical flows of texts (in fact, as we have seen, when he does describe these flows he gives us a static representation of the drama of philosophical scenes and personae). Derrida's economy of phenomenology constantly reinvests in itself as an abstract conceptual economy rather than being simply a series of figures of experience (like Kojève's account). Derrida is concerned so exclusively with the "formal necessity" of concepts as graphemes (Bataille's included) that he does not need to indulge in close reading. He presupposes the formal necessity of a neutral point of

difference which affects every discourse. This makes reading Derrida an oppressively repetitious experience. Derrida's analysis is an arch example of negative critique; critical and suspicious, resentful and reactionary it approaches Bataille's writing which distances itself from the jargon of phenomenology, only to apply that jargon again, without bothering to examine the new directions implied in Bataille's texts. Bataille's implicit claim to philosophical experiment is not even examined, but simply represented in the language of a phenomenology presided over by différance. The transgression of the limits of philosophy by the novum of intensive thought is represented as consolidating the general model of phenomenological logic (a model which includes a critical or quasi-transcendental moment which is the condition of metaphysical logic): (WD 268)

"The transgression of meaning is not an access to the immediate and indeterminate identity of a non-meaning, nor is it an access to the possibility of maintaining nonmeaning"

Derrida is obsessed with the status of the relation between knowledge and unknowledge (and their interdependence); according to him Bataille is concerned - in relating knowledge and sovereignty - with "institut[ing] a relation in the form of a non-relation" (WD268). The stability of this relation and the logic which conditions it gives Derrida the safe critical position from which to pinpoint the source, the trajectory and the principle which regulates reason, its opposite and even the critical perspective of différance:

"an absolute unknowledge from whose nonbasis is launched chance, or the wagers of meaning".

But Bataille is concerned with the unilateral and irreversible direction from restricted knowledge to its energetic conditions. The idea of a similarity between projectile reason and its energetic result is irrelevant in Bataille's propulsive scheme of things. For Bataille, there is only one economy and that is the general economy of energetic quanta; he can only register the stability of the relational logic of phenomenology (however extreme or absolute) and its impossible jargon of absolutes (minus the absolute of intensive zero) as energetic resistors.

Derrida's protestations that the sovereign non-basis of meaning must not be considered a condition of possibility or the transcendental principle of a discourse (WD269) cannot be taken too seriously: if both concepts are exposed

to difference and the law of their own articulation their functions are also only minimally altered. Derrida describes such an alteration in terms of a reduction of sense and a restriction of the possible discursive moves; thus the attributes of the quanta of Bataille's general economy - intensity and immensity - are logicised as the involuted and simulating moves of discourse itself. Due to this restriction, non-knowledge simulates intentional reason to the extent that it can replicate its projects: (WD269-70)

"In this simulation, I conserve or anticipate the entirety of knowledge, I do not limit myself to a determined and abstract kind of knowledge or unknowledge, but I rather absolve myself of absolute knowledge, putting it back in its place as such, situating it and inscribing it within a space which it no longer dominates".

According to Derrida, a final moment of absolution from the reduction of non-sense to reason and the complicitous involvement of non-sense in the powers of reason is provided by the simple formulation of the minimal effect of the law of representation; this suffices to offset the perfect simulation of reason and expiate the spurious consolidation of the powers which characterise knowledge. This is not a sufficient response.

### Linguistic and energetic general economies

Derrida ignores Bataille's definition of general economy as a 'political economy' of expenditure rather than utile values (WD270), and relates general economy back to sovereignty; ignoring the fact that sovereignty is not only an example of the constitutive impossibility of conceptual meaning, but is also the value associated with the intensive magnitudes of general economy. Derrida relates the significance of general economy exclusively to the necessary paradoxical structure of sovereignty: (WD 270)

"The writing of sovereignty places discourse in relation to absolute non-discourse. Like general economy, it is not the loss of meaning, but the "relation to this loss of meaning". It opens the question of meaning. it does not describe unknowledge, for this is impossible, but only the effect of unknowledge"

Derrida's account is a massive reduction of the sense of general economy, which no empirical interpretation would read as simply designating the logical relation of a utile object (of knowledge) to that which allows no relation, i.e the relation to a nonrelation, or the relation to its own loss of

'meaning'. General economy is first and foremost a discourse which describes the flows of energy towards intensive zero including the increases of energy due to the dissolution of restricted energetic economies. Any rigorous interpretation of Bataille's work inevitably encounters these principles and their effects on philosophy before any other philosophical concerns.

The form of the logical relation implicit in Derrida's notion of general economy entails the 'inscription' of restricted economy "within the opening" (WD 271) of general economy:

"General economy folds ..[the] horizons and figures [of meaning] so that they will be related not to a basis, but to the nonbasis of expenditure...to the indefinite destruction of value."

This inscription is the reinvestment of phenomenological terminology in the process whereby it is inflected and related to the deferral (not dissolution) of its own optimal (and unquantifiable) value. Bataille's general economy cannot be conceived as 'folding' or 'relating' the series of phenomenological figures, because it does not 'inscribe' the elements of restricted economy, but dissolves them in the trajectory towards intensive zero. His general economy is not a paradoxical or constitutively impossible discourse, but a dissolving discourse, becoming incoherent. A discourse about meaninglessness or immensity which is in the process of becoming meaningless and immense. I would want to minimally distinguish the content of general economy from its epistemological status as a discourse; general economy's lack of credibility stems from its stating the irrational truth of the drive towards immensity, and thus its own dissolution as a discourse into meaninglessness (into what that discourse designates - immensity); there is no implicit relation here between meaning and meaninglessness, but simply a single irreversible direction towards meaninglessness, a haemorrhage at variable speeds. Derrida's account of general economy is unconvincing because it accounts for the sensations induced by the inevitable dissolution of Bataille's texts (sensations and dissolution which these texts carry like viral agents) in terms of a traditional logico-epistemological structure.

Derrida is correct in defining restricted economy as "the circuit of reproductive consumption" which marginalises its condition, "the absolute production and destruction of value, the exceeding energy as such" (WD271);

but he identifies restricted economy with "phenomenology in general", when the term applies to any economic process which produces utile values and is subject to changes of speed, growth and intensity, i.e is subject to forces inconceivable in the phenomenological model. The incompatibility of any energetic sense of consumption and 'phenomenology in general' is emphasised each time Derrida is forced through incomprehension to account for Bataille's concepts in terms of phenomenological logic. The essential difference between Derrida's and Bataille's accounts of general economy lies in the currency of their respective economies. For Derrida the currency is language as writing, for Bataille energy. The former currency reinvests itself; the latter dissipates. Derrida justifies his particular brand of philosophical regression (reinvestment) as a strategy of "backwardation" in the fight against the tyranny of metaphysics: (WD 272)

"The concepts of general writing can be read only on the condition that they be deported, shifted outside the symmetrical alternatives from which, however they seem to be taken, and in which, after a fashion, they must also remain. Strategy plays upon this origin and "backwardation"."

Thus, in the writing of the relation between restricted and general economies:

"that which indicates itself as nonvalue within the closure of metaphysics, refers beyond the opposition of value and non-value, even beyond the concept of value, as it does beyond the concept of meaning."  
(WD272)

For Derrida, this logical formulation exhausts the sense of this economy; there is nothing less formal or abstract to say of this space beyond oppositions, and what has been said is alone necessary ("can be read only.."). But expenditure is not an extreme logical possibility, an abstract non-value, it is the actual tendency to the dissolution of value (meaning, negentropic information) in energetic matter.

Derrida identifies the haemorrhage of meaning in the surface matter of Bataille's texts with the structural logic proper to concepts; the elements, relations and predicates of these concepts, petrified in the limbo of differance cause these surface textual effects. He states that in the concepts of general writing, "the predicates are not there to mean something..but in order to make sense slide, to denounce it or deviate from it" (WD 272). Derrida attempts to describe the single surface on which concepts as writing are deployed. This writing does not disseminate

conceptual unities, but rather the major and minor modes of concepts, and the difference between them. Derrida even attempts to characterise this new conception of a plane of concepts by introducing magnitudes (those heralds of the post-critical) as the major attributes of those grapheme-concepts: the new concepts are distinguished not by essential predicates but "by qualitative differences of force, height etc, which themselves are qualified in this way only by metaphor. Tradition's names are maintained, but they are struck with the differences between the major and the minor, the classic and the archaic"(WD272). Bataille has no concern with such a surface; his general economy is an open field of energetic flows, which has many planes or levels of scalar intensity on which the filters (or entities) of restricted economy can be situated.

Some basic rule of typology has to be applied if one wants to gauge the intensity of a set of such filters; concepts have to be distinguished from the flows of syntax, rational thought from sensation, life from liberated energy; and these distinctions will themselves designate the differences of degree of intensity traversing the levels and planes, from the high degree of restriction and thus intensification associated with strictly aggregated filters (pure static concepts, higher animals) to the low degree of the freer flow of textual intensities and speeds, and onto the intensive zero of the random and free flow of energy in a free state. In an early text 'Academic Horse' (OC1 160ff) Bataille writes of classic culture and its barbaric simulation, of classic and barbaric (as opposed to archaic) forms; the difference between Bataille's barbaric mode and Derrida's archaic mode is telling; the archaic is the conceptual and logical precondition of all aspects of the classical, whereas the barbaric is associated with the mutation of specific existing cultural commodities and artefacts. Bataille's discourse can be considered barbaric or virulently mutational at the level of norms of rational discourse without thus necessarily and exclusively reconfiguring logical structures of reason.

Derrida's logicisation of intensive degrees on a single surface of différance creates its own future fears; given the proximity of the play of difference to Hegelian 'anticipated discourse', it might be subordinated to the return of the anticipated discourse of reason in another guise: (WD273)

"One must not submit contextual attentiveness and differences of

signification to a system of meaning permitting or promising a formal mastery".

Given the proximity which characterises Derrida's discursive relation to the Hegelian system, the fear of this influence can not be put aside. Derrida is so obsessed with the trace of the full structure of possibility (différance) that the ghost of metaphysics cannot but haunt him. In stressing the spaces of metaphysics, and the "distances" and "proximities" (WD271) proper to elements of phenomenology as figures of an 'erased' metaphysics, Derrida cannot avoid the fear of influence, the fear of microscoping differences which is proper to reason as an extensive space. He thus rediscovers the essentially critical or transcendental fear of the groundlessness of the critical position. The hysterical tone of this polemical essay is itself a symptom of this fear; we are no longer in the Kantian 'scene' of the equal and opposing dogmatists. Derrida's critic-spectator does not present two arguments (Bataille and Hegel), but one (deconstructed Hegelianism), in neither a 'sober' nor 'just' fashion, because he himself is on the run, reduced to praying for a return to order in the face of a critical meltdown, in proclaiming the necessity and determining importance for philosophy of the self-evidence of Hegel; and thereby himself promoting and extending a minimal form of Hegelian "historical domination". For there can be no doubt that articulating the melodrama of Hegelianism (and the logical necessity of 'complicity' and 'constraint' which can only be partially 'expiated') as a grand historical tyranny encourages it, not to anything grand of course, but to the pomposity of the the most petty form of Statism, academic Teutonicism, that is academicism which is blind to its own obsolescence.

Because he is a phenomenological thinker, Derrida cannot fathom Bataille's energeticist approach. He interprets each marker of the intensive dissolution of energetic matter as proposing projects within the enclosed field of writing as constitutive of reason. Where Bataille's notion of the immediacy of experience as opposed to reason is conditioned by the sensations induced by the approach of 'immanence' or intensive zero, Derrida conceives it as conditioned by a structural super-phenomenology, that is phenomenology related to the critical position of difference: "How can mediacy and immediacy be transgressed simultaneously?": How can the "philosophical logos be exceeded in its totality?" (WD273). These questions ignore Bataille's revaluation of the

Kantian notion of the limiting function of concepts. For Bataille, the limit is a rational abstraction - a rational defence mechanism against energetic flows - which is applied by the understanding to real energetic economies of a low intensity. All concepts contain this function, but those concepts which reveal it have a privileged relation in experience (i.e. in their very irreducibility to knowledge, in the failure of a logic which can only represent) to energetic excess and immensity. Thus limit, totality and transgression are limit-concepts and thereby, agents of the intensive haemorrhage of reason, modes of excess and immensity and symptoms of an intensive energetic drive common to all matter. The whole energetic terrain of restricted economy is only minimally differentiated from the immensity of intensities and speeds which is general economy, by this limiting function; or rather, restricted economies are the specific discontinuous entities which are formed, primarily as degrees of intensity from intensive immanence or zero by this limiting function.[30] Rationalised restricted economies are premised on the notion that independence from energetic conditions can be attained in an involuted expansion, extension and replication of this limiting function, which in itself only registers a degree of intensity. In fact there are no real limits, only degrees of intensity.

Derrida reduces the sense of intensive or real dissolution in analysing its status as an element within a problematically constituted conceptual discourse; for him the destruction of meaning multiplies signification (!), precipitates and engulfs words in "an endless and baseless substitution whose only rule is the sovereign affirmation of the play outside meaning...a potlatch of signs" (WD274). For Bataille, potlatch [31] is an example of a cultural limit-event, in which a social whole (which occidental reason would rationalise as economically organised around the principle of the accumulation of wealth, and which Bataille thereby calls a restricted economy) demonstrates - over and above the complexities of human interest - its energetic condition in general economy; insofar as potlatch favours the dispersal of the quanta of energy that constitute that social whole. Potlatch is a dissolution, or a becoming-flow of energy rather than an endless substitution effected within language by its relation to its impossible and sovereign outside. Derrida's idea of destruction is defined within the limits of the logical analogue of concept or sign for presence, i.e. within the erased structure of reason and

the interminable play or substitution of its conceptual elements. Concepts and the rational demand for metaphysical presence are subject to deferral not dissolution in this play of substitution:

"none of the concepts satisfies the demand, all are determined by each other, and at the same time, destroy or neutralise each other" (WD274)

The impossible demand for presence, for metaphysical full structures and integrated systems remains in this 'destruction', and yet Derrida calls this ghostly replay of metaphysics a "transgression of discourse"! It is no surprise then to find Derrida trotting out the Hegelian cliché concerning transgression, with regard to Bataille's work, precisely because Derrida cannot understand that Bataille designates the notion of the limit as a marker of an intensification which can only be registered in the local flows of the general economy of energetic matter. I refer to the cliché that relates transgression in general to the moves of phenomenological logic: Derrida states that such a 'transgression of discourse';

"must, in some fashion, and like every transgression, conserve or confirm that which it exceeds. This is the only way for it to affirm itself as transgression and thereby to accede to the sacred, which is presented in the violence of an infraction". (WD274)

I have examined Bataille's use of the notion of transgression below [32]. It suffices here to note that for Bataille the term designates the relay of the Hegelian logical cycle of law and transgression to the energetic trajectory of general economy. For Bataille, the 'violence of infraction' - the rupture of the logical law which connects law and transgression - designates an intensification of energy which is itself a symptom of the general economy of energy.[33]

Derrida defines transgression as a simulacrum of Hegel's notion of the 'Aufhebung', a superimposition which emphasises the extent to which he is blind to Bataille's major concerns and simply intent on presenting his own intellectual project:

"Bataille..can only use the empty form of the 'Aufhebung', in an analogical fashion [to designate that] within a form of writing,.. the speculative concept par excellence, is forced to designate a movement which properly constitutes the excess of every possible philosopheme. This movement then makes philosophy appear as a form of natural or naive consciousness...natural and vulgar...[because] it does not see the nonbasis of play on which the history of meaning is launched."(WD275)

Derrida would have Hegelian phenomenology - which is 'naive' and 'vulgar'! -

revised by its Bataillean simulation and refinement. This ignores the relevance of the very passage from Method of Meditation which Derrida quotes: "between extreme knowledge and vulgar knowledge...the difference is nil"(WD276) which surely means that, according to Bataille, the difference between any states of knowledge is unworthy of mention from the point of view of the general economy of energetic fluxes. The whole idea of a Bataillean simulation of the 'totality' of Hegelian discourse is preposterous when every Bataillean text is in such a state of fragmentation as to teeter on the edge of semantic explosion. No Bataillean text is intact enough to be inflected, so its parasitic constitution cannot be recognised as even an adequate simulation of a logical discourse such as Hegel's. Derrida consistently takes Bataille too seriously in relation to phenomenology (and not at all in relation to the post-Kantian energetic tradition). The difference or fragmentation present in Bataille's texts is pragmatic and empirical rather than absolute and phenomenological; it is a product of the crashes of sense and the resulting release of contagious intensities which is designated in these texts by the tangible juxtapositions of different discourses, or rather by the fragmentation of senses proper to hereto rigorous discourses. The novum of Bataille's philosophical position lies with this registering of 'rigorous' philosophemes as intensive quanta and a concomitant virtual reduction of their negentropic sense. This virulent fragmentation of meaning cannot plausibly be reduced to the simple philosophical formulation of the law of discursive presence. Derrida's texts, like Hegel's, impose a sense of their authority through the repetitiveness of a spare vocabulary, a style suited to the restricted number of contortions of which phenomenological reflection is capable. This distances them both from the scandal of Bataille's textual surface, with its concepts butchered by intrusive scientific (biological and physical) fragments in an aborting barbaric interdisciplinary half-sense. This language cannot be considered simply as a simulacrum of 'full' phenomenological rational discourse, nor simply as the language of the effects of a formal and abstract statement of an absolute difference on phenomenological logic. [34] Even when Bataille is most conceptual - with his notion of general economy - the transcendental groundlessness or impossibility of his discourse does not preclude it from being a substantial discourse, ranging from thermodynamics to a genealogy of morals and religion. For Bataille, the result of the critical examination of

the conditions of possibility of discourse is the exacerbation of critical energies (his texts remain interesting and thought-provoking) and not simply an interminable meta-discourse which articulates the law of signification thereby arresting critique in the banal repetition of its formula. Derrida's deconstruction should rather be thought of as a 'metaphenomenology' in which the erasure or qualification of the phenomenological series is added to that series, as a minimal critical difference. Deconstruction is no solution to the problems of transcendental philosophy; it poses as a critical examination of the conditions of possibility of metaphysics only to arrest its movement at the articulation of the law of signification. Bataille on the other hand analyses the logic of representation and then goes on to discover its energetic conditions. [35] But this latter move can no longer be considered critical as it dissolves into a jargon of intensities and speeds which tend towards the incoherence of sensation. The critical discourse about the immensity of energetic conditions (meaninglessness) itself becomes intensely energetic, immense and meaningless. For this reason Bataille must be considered a post-critical thinker, whereas Derrida has halted the revolution of critique in metaphenomenology.

The project to 'bear the self-evidence of Hegel' which emphasises the orientation of philosophy around Hegel results in the articulation of the indifferent neutral formal law of différance which presides over the history of metaphysics. Such a law constitutes Derrida's own peculiar brand of Hegelianism. All Derrida's 'arguments' in this essay seek to emphasise the relation between general economy and the phenomenological logic of reversible or reflexive terms. I have shown the inscrutability of the currency circulating in Derrida's notion of general economy: this currency is graphemes - concepts as syntactical units - and yet these units can form themselves into the scenes and figures which are associated with specific phenomenological positions. Given this inscrutability, why does Derrida not remark on the self-evident character of the quanta which differentiate Bataille's general economy from his own? Bataille's claim is clear: the quantities liberated in general economy (and thus circulating in restricted economy) are quantities of energy, which remain distinct from their formal representation as signifiers and elements of a discourse, as well as from the discontinuous intense matter they constitute. This level of general economy is disavowed by Derrida, who

is more interested in understanding general economy in terms of its linguistic pre-conditions, that is, the interweaving of nonmeaning and signification. This is an exclusive and therefore unnecessarily restricted identification of general economy with syntax in which general economy is conceived as exhausted in subsuming or containing the play of significations.

To contest the claims of deconstruction one need only be empirically statistical and show the amount of Bataille's text that does not utilise obsessive phenomenological language. Using the same method we note the amount of phenomenological jargon which informs Derrida's texts (despite his attempts to conceal it in contorted stylistic and rhetorical tricks, which are themselves eminently Prussian). Statistically, this text 'From restricted to general economy' conserves the broad outlines of a phenomenological language (albeit a language in relation to the general economy opened up by the principle of written differance) which is itself archetypically associated with restricted economy, by the very frequency of its use of the terms and models of that language. Whereas it seems obvious to me that Derrida is open to charges of philosophical conservatism, I note with alarm that he still enjoys the hype of radicality - turning to a recent 'Dictionary of Modern Culture' I found next to the Derrida entry a symbol which was shorthand for the highest accolade: 'anarchist/punk/deconstructor', the term even making it into the basic currency of contemporary culture. Is deconstruction the manner in which Hegelianism ultimately extends its historical domination?

It is important to give a collected works-wide perspective to the arguable necessity of each assured move which Derrida makes in his article. Derrida attempts to convince us of the importance of Bataille's relation to the phenomenological tradition, with little more than the urgency of the terms 'complicity' and 'constraint' behind him. He substitutes the anguish of the concept for the anguished sensation of death and immensity. He substitutes a drama based on the inflection of a philosophical tradition for the account which leads to the overcoming and obsolescence of that tradition. This drama of substitution conceals the mundanity of Derrida's philosophical position in a complex tangle of phenomenological terms and spurious hijackings of the extremes of sensation which Bataille associates with the intensity of dissolving thought. Derrida ignores the way in which primarily Kantian

notions such as communication, continuity and discontinuity, immanence and transcendence are oriented by Bataille's notion of the general economy of energetics. He stresses only those articles where Bataille appears to regurgitate Kojève's account of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit and Bataille's infrequent throwaway manifestoes for aborted and impossible projects. [36] It seems to me that the general tenor of general economy is self-evidently extra-phenomenological, yet Derrida worries about the preconditions of such a discourse and reorients it around essential phenomenological presuppositions. It is now time to show how Bataille arrives at his general economy of energetics through 1) a contestation of the thought of Hegel and Kojève, in those very texts which Derrida uses as proof of their influence on Bataille and 2) an examination of the essential terms which I have noted above and which Derrida ignores, both in their Kantian deployment and their reorientation within Bataille's notion of general economy to the post-critical dissolution of the problems of Kant's transcendental philosophy.

## Chapter Two: BATAILLE - THE NOVUM OF INFECTION

### Ridiculing intellectual influence

We have seen that Derrida's image of Bataille owes much to his own meta-phenomenological concerns. However, there must be some reason for the similarity of their approaches to Hegel, however inessential this similarity is, and however much Derrida comes to overcode it in the fashion which I have described. Alexandre Kojève's interpretation of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit is the common link between them; Bataille attended his lectures in 1930's Paris, and Derrida's work on Hegel can be construed as a correction of Kojève's reading of Hegel, from a Heideggerian perspective. This correction is the basis of Derrida's claim to a rightful supersession of the French throne of Phenomenology; just as Kojève presented Hegel and Heidegger to the French intellectuals of the 1930's (he was the first - and an inaccurate - translator of Heidegger, and a vulgar over-simplifying literalist interpreter of Hegel), Derrida presents these figures to the post-modern millennial world. In fact, Kojève's reading of Hegel emphasises an essentially Kantian topography of the space of reason, a topography which, as we have seen remains an essential element of Derrida's interpretation, and which as we shall see, remains important for a proper understanding of Bataille's texts. [1] Bataille's forcefully critical use of the Kojévian interpretation of Hegel includes an account of the physiological conditions of the Phenomenology which neither Hegel nor Kojève concern themselves with. The presence of this element in Bataille's account may be conditioned by the real psychological influence that Kojève exerted on Bataille in the 1930's. It is probable that the presence of a personal relationship between the two men, developed at the interface of philosophical argument and emotional recrimination facilitated Bataille's theoretical writings on the psychodynamical and energetic conditions of transcendental and phenomenological philosophy in general.

It is almost certain that Bataille's access to Hegel's work was exclusively mediated through Kojève's Paris seminars at the 'Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes' of 1933-9 and the notes from the years 1937-9 compiled by Raymond Queneau in a book Introduction to the reading of Hegel (Gallimard 1947). Bataille's contestation of the values of Hegelianism feed into a general

critique of 'utile' values which predates his exposure to Hegel's work, a critique which results from reading Nietzsche in 1923 [2] and which can be found fully formed in important essays from the pre-1933 era of his writing ('Base Materialism and Gnosticism', 'The use-value of DAF de Sade', 'The Notion of Expenditure'[3]).

I will show in this chapter that Bataille warms to Kojève's account of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit only in so far as it presents an example of the refutation of the necessity of the rationalised dimensions of restricted or utile economy - (in the terms of the Phenomenology: experience, knowledge and history) - in the process of their epistemological dissolution into their intensive and energetic conditions. Hegel's Phenomenology is thus, for Bataille, an example of a system of utile values which comes to eradicate itself, or is dissolved in a Time irreducible to the 'logic' of History.

Bataille's attitude to the teaching and personality of Kojève (and thereby the figure of Hegel) might be described as ambivalent, and thus Bataille would appear as a traditional pupil, both disciple and contestant, loving the rigour of Hegelian logic as revealed in Kojève's simple prose yet desiring to escape its hold. Such a view of their relationship would justify itself at a textual and thematic level by noting the contradiction which becomes apparent as soon as one treats Bataille's texts as rigorously philosophical. Bataille intends to describe the dissolving trajectory of critical philosophy, in which his own discourse inevitably becomes meaningless, and yet he associates this trajectory with Hegelian discourse, which combats its inevitable dissolution in time with all the ingenious obfuscations and disavowals which the lunacy of German Idealism could intrigue. It suffices to apply the phenomenological reflexive model of logical relations at this empirical level of human relations (a literalism vulgar enough to be worthy of Kojève), to miss the essential direction of Bataille's attitudes to Hegel and Kojève. For Bataille, Kojève's interpretation reveals the simple mechanisms which characterise the Hegelian rationalisation of experience; and this simplification permits Bataille to relish and slaver over the spectacle of Hegel as an inevitable intensification of reason, an intensification which blows itself out [4]; whilst admitting that this intensification, this influence or infection proper to reason, is itself only a symptom of the energetic immensities of annihilatory Time. Bataille could formulate his

notion of general economy - which was informed by readings in the biological and physical sciences - because Kojève reduced the stature and importance of Hegel, made him representative of a general problematic of logic encountering its own impossibility which was, for Bataille, the starting point of another type of intellectual enquiry, one concerned with events considered as intensive quantities. The real contestation of Kojève's philosophy by Bataille concerns the ultimate relevance of the former's own uncritical representation of Hegel's texts; over an extensive period of years he appears to have simply elaborated the systems of the Logic and the Phenomenology [5]. The real confrontation, which is resolved in Bataille's texts, was between the value of an uncritical account of these phenomenological mechanisms and the scientific and Nietzschean discourses which gave Bataille grounds for a reevaluation of the relevance and importance of the former.

Many texts in the Oeuvres Complètes - right across Bataille's writing career - show the influence of biological or physical theses; and these are not mere addenda or additions to a primary traditional philosophical discourse, but rather are constitutive of a specifically Bataillean discourse. Bataille considered that the scientific enquiries he engaged in and the rigour of Hegelian discourse were fundamentally opposed, which suggests that this was no ordinary scientific enquiry; it lacked method, but Bataille had had enough of method with Hegel:

"From 33 (I think) to 39 I attended the course that Alexander Kojève gave over to the explanation of 'The Phenomenology of Spirit' (an inspired explanation, to the standard of the book: often Queneau and I left the room - suffocating, nailed to the floor.)

During the same period, due to a lot of reading, I knew the way the sciences were moving.

But Kojève's course broke me, crushed me, killed me ten times over." (OC 6 p416)

The level of scientific research he engaged in can best be gauged by looking at the those texts he wrote whilst a member of the College of Sociology (1937-39). [6] Bataille referred to this period as a time of the most scientifically adventurous and ultimately useless research. The importance of this research lay in its speculative nature as he admits in the 1946 article 'The moral sense of sociology' [7]: (OC11 58)

"It is doubtful that, on the limited level of scientific knowledge, any great results came from it. But the new realm of interest as thus defined, demonstrates, without a doubt, important sorts of unrest."

I do not intend to discuss the scientific texts which Bataille read; he himself mentions some of the authors he studied: the biologist Rabaud, the physiologist Edith Bowen, (who are mentioned in the College's 'Connections...' lectures (OC2 291ff), Paul Langevin, the physicist author of The Notion of Corpuscles and Atoms (OC5 98), and the physicist Georges Ambrosino - who was a member of Acephale and the College of Sociology - who is thanked for helping Bataille with his knowledge of physics in the Preface to The Accursed Share (OC7 P23), and who wrote essays on physics for the journal 'Critique' in the years after the war when Bataille was editor. [8]

The important fact is that this scientific line of enquiry was contemporaneous with Bataille's attendance of Kojève's seminars. Given that Bataille's scientific enquiries continually faced him with the fact of chance and improbability in natural existence - totally foreign to phenomenological logic - in relation to the multiplicity of different forms of life and the scales on which life operates, we can start to comprehend his oppositional and at times simply uninterested attitude to the 'rigorous logic' of the Hegelian system. Raymond Queneau states of Bataille's lecture-room behaviour:

"He was not a listener whose attentiveness was exemplary...sometimes he even managed to doze" [9].

Was Bataille thinking of hours spent staring glazedly at Kojève when he wrote:

"It is impossible to reduce the appearance of the fly on the nose of the speaker to the pretentious logical contradiction of the I and of the whole of metaphysics. But if we lend a general value to the improbable character of the scientific universe, it becomes possible to proceed to an operation contrary to that of Hegel, and to reduce the appearance of the I to that of the fly" (OC1 184). [10]

These scientific enquiries which Bataille followed were speculative and as useless as the freeflows of energetic matter in the universe, the truth of which they measured. With their concern with scales of perception, cell growth and the nuclear forces of attraction and repulsion, they circumvented the spurious restrictions placed on intellectual thought by the traditional philosophical concern with the given scale of the form of perception and the content of reflexive or hierarchical relations proper to human-centred reason. With regard to the human, these enquiries reached nature's level of insulting indifference. Only later would the extent of the critical power of such 'speculative' thought become apparent to Bataille. So, at the same time he continued to do his Hegel-speak homework and could regurgitate the schemas

which Kojève used to characterise Hegel's work:

"Whilst I wrote a ladybird flew under my lamp and landed on my hand: I lifted it off and placed it on a piece of paper. Some time before I had copied on the sheet a schema of the diverse forms, according to Hegel, from one extreme to the other: from universality to particularity. The ladybird landed on the column 'Spirit', where it went from Universal Spirit to sensible consciousness (particularity), passing through The People, State, and Universal History. Starting its disconcerted walk again it ended up in the column 'Life', its own domain, before attaining, in the central column 'unhappy consciousness', irrelevant to it except as a named creature" (OC5 281). [11]

Bataille's response to Kojève's Hegelianism is thematised in the two essays from the middle 1950's which I shall deal with in some detail. Bataille's ambivalence has become the object of the articles, the matter of the interpretation, whence Bataille's ability to give a calm appraisal of the importance of the 'man' as an intellectual figure:

"Alexander Kojève's originality and courage, it must be said, is to have perceived the impossibility of going any further, the necessity, consequently, of renouncing creating an original philosophy, and thereby the interminable recommencing which is the avowal of the vanity of thought"(OC12 326)

This appreciation reaches a peak of over-zealousness in the 1948 Theory of Religion, with a celebration of Kojève's brand of Hegelianism which is belied by the substantial critical arguments against the tenor of Hegelian logic contained in that text and more especially, in the essays which I examine closely below:

"Whatever opinion one might have of the correctness of his interpretation of Hegel (and I believe the possible criticisms on this point should be assigned only a limited value) the 'Introduction to the reading of Hegel' - relatively accessible - is not only the primary instrument of self-consciousness; it is the only way to view the various aspects of human life .....No-one today can claim to be educated without having assimilated its contents" (OC 7 359)

The earlier evidence of Bataille's relation to Kojève foregrounds the same critical arguments as the later essays, but in a fashion which suggests the initial resentful ferocity of Bataille's intellectual difference of opinion. [12]. This is best represented by the letter of the 6th December 1937, later published in an abridged form as an appendix to Le coupable (OC5 369-71). Bataille's contention is that Kojève (and by implication Hegel too) has not asked himself what happens to the Negativity or Action which drives History at

the end of history.[13] Bataille posits the idea of a final figure - a Nietzschean 'Last Man'[14] - of phenomenology, a man of "unemployed negativity" (OC5 371) who recognises the redundancy of his power of negativity:

"No matter how disquieted he is he knows that henceforth nothing can be ruled out since negativity no longer has any prospect".

Bataille identifies himself as such a man and equates such an identification with the refutation of Hegelianism and the effects of its logico-reflexive linguistic models in history and experience: (OC5 370)

"I imagine that my life - or better yet, its aborting, the open wound that is my life - constitutes all by itself the refutation of Hegel's closed system".

Bataille says that he approaches his "irrevocable insignificance" gay and serious. The man of unemployed negativity has a project:

"What he has 'to do' is to satisfy the portion of existence that is freed from doing".

The refutation of Hegelianism is here seen in terms of a consciousness of 'the accursed share' in human affairs, the inevitable release of positive quanta of energy which is the end product of rationalised processes of reinvestment and use. Bataille still considers this outcome, this 'abortion', as an object of consciousness, which would open him to the recurrent charge of voluntarism, the ghostly shadow of Kantian morality which also dogs Bataille in his accounts of general economy and the hypermorality of sovereignty [15] except that this negativity is the noumenal or affective object itself, under the influence of which rational schemas of thought are translated into their energetic conditions, the positive quanta associated with physiology, sensation and base energetics. For Bataille, Hegel's importance is limited to having made this transformation possible: the ultimate abstraction performed by reason - the description of energy as lack - the least empirical and least compelling abstraction, demonstrates the irrationality of reason and results in the recognition of the artificiality of the systemic edifice built over this abstraction and the wracking of conceptual schemas by the liberated quantas of that base negativity. If Hegel is to be praised for recognising negativity, writes Bataille, it is because he described it as effecting radical changes in the history of reason. Hegel described negativity "at the moment when it enters the workings of existence as a stimulus to major vital reactions", and attempted to contain this motor within reason. But in the

light of the nature of the motor and the overwhelming quanta which it produces, these defensive reactions can no longer be justified and eternalised as mental, rational and necessary, but are subject as sensation to turbulent intensive changes and ultimately, a 'rigorous' dissolution.

It is the radicality of the physiological aspects of negativity that Bataille perceives as lost both in Kojève and in the supreme rationalisations which Hegel imposes in his notion of negativity. In so far as Hegel could not envision the role of the man of 'recognised negativity', affirm the knowledge of negativity and the redundancy of such a knowledge of the excessive energies which condition the restricted sense of negativity and the rational monster that crystallises from it, he "risked nothing", writes Bataille. Although the terms of reference of Bataille's argument necessitate a certain compromising involvement with the babble of phenomenological terminology, the tenor of his complaint is as clear as it is irreducible to that terminology. It only remains for this difference to be substantiated in an argument, for the critical power of base energetics to shine briefly before it too blows itself out. The two essays, twenty years on from the letter to Kojève, provide us with this.

#### Kojève & Hegel - energetic matter and the logic of representation

Bataille published two essays in the mid 1950's that are critical appreciations of Kojève's Introduction to the reading of Hegel. The first, 'Hegel, Death and sacrifice' appeared in the journal 'Deucalion' no 5 in 1955. The second, 'Hegel, Man and History' appeared in 'Monde Nouveau-Paru' no 96 in 1956. Both essays are worth looking at in detail because they lay to rest the misinformed idea that Bataille's work is an extension of the scope of Kojève's 'anthropological history'. These essays refute that idea in the face of explicit statements on Bataille's part - both here and scattered through his texts [16] - that he is involved in analyses based on Kojévian principles. The essays are useful in showing, through Bataille's critical appreciation of Kojève's work on Hegel, the details of the intellectual distance between them.

These essays emphasise the fact that Bataille's perception of Hegel's work can in no way be divorced from the Kojèveian account of Hegel's Phenomenology as a philosophy of negativity or death; an account which describes Hegel using neo-kantian terminology from which, I will argue, Kojève and Bataille extrapolate and concentrate on the metaphysical notions of totality and limited entities. I would argue that even though Bataille distances himself from Kojève - especially in these essays where the difference between commentary on (Kojève's) text and a critical position on it is marked - that Bataille relies - to an extent which we will have to measure later, but which we can provisionally call 'unnecessary' - on the terminology of a philosophically 'restricted economy' to describe the basic attributes of a 'general economy' of philosophy, morals and culture. With the exception of these essays, this terminology is explicitly Kantian rather than Hegelian [17]; thus this compromise of the language of intensities 'proper' to general economy can be considered symptomatic of the fate of critique itself, as one mode of the general infection, contamination and collapsing of the distance from intellectual internecine combat of the 'safe seat' of the Kantian critic. [18] Even in these essays Bataille's contestation of Kojève's Hegelian agenda implicitly refers to the relay of intellectual influence from Kant to Nietzsche to Bataille, the very relay which Derrida ignores in his treatment of the texts.

Bataille states at the beginning of 'Hegel, Death and sacrifice' (OC12 327) that Kojève finds the key to Hegelian philosophy in the idea of 'free determinate negation'; which Kojève is quoted as describing thus:

"the idea that the foundation and the source of human objective reality (Wirklichkeit) and empirical existence (Dasein) are the Nothingness which manifests itself as negative or creative Action, free and self-conscious".

Bataille is correct to point out (OC12 327-8) the distinction implicit in Kojève's statement between 'Nothingness' - the immanent relation of human existence to Nature - which is a potential reserve for acts of consciousness, with a single condition i.e that human existence differentiates itself 'within it' for only a duration within the annihilation which is time; and the principle of that differentiation, the principle of action of the ego on Nature, which Kojève calls 'Negativity', and in which the human negates the natural, destroys and transforms the world in the process of history. Kojève

also calls this process (OC12 333) 'the actualisation of Nothingness' (the reserve) through 'the annihilation of Being' (for Kojève, 'Being' designates the natural world in so far as it is not simply included in Nothingness). Abstract rationalisation or negativity induces a death of sorts but nothingness (or the immanence of man and nature), in so far as it is irreducible to the abstract totality of a reserve of rational processes, is the more radical (and illogical, non-rational) negative, because it can be subtracted from the rational processes as their 'condition'.

Bataille remarks on the non-logical differentiation which this radical negative makes possible, yet the essay in general is rather concerned with Kojève's juxtaposition of the abstract totality of a reserve of possibilities and an indeterminate process of actions. Kojève links the two phases of 'negativity' at the level of discourse; he sees the special project of Hegelian discourse as, in Bataille's words, "to describe the totality of what is" (OC12 328) which includes the discourse which reveals that totality. Kojève conceives of the Hegelian totality as a 'concrete totality' of natural knowledge and experience or history (OC12 329), which arises from the logical structures 'appropriate' to Nothingness and Negativity, in the course of the fragmentation of the pre-logical structure of the former in the logical history of the latter (OC12 332). For Kojève, the totality of 'Nothingness' is an abstract but spatial reserve of possibilities, the immanent totality of Nature, wherein no 'constitutive elements' are separated by the transcendence of language or action, and all things are connected by material and indissoluble bonds, including the human considered as animal. The violence of reason comes to particularise and individualise objects and subjects, and thus the human elements come to feel their own particularity and finitude. The fear of death is born and in turn the power and violence of rationalisation is increased - to overcome that fear. As we shall see, the trajectory of such a restricted economy entails the endpoint of an ultimate extension of rationalisation, a state of completion which returns the human to the death it feared, through its own rational processes. [19]

Bataille uses Kojève's account of Hegel's Phenomenology to emphasise the notion that lies at the base of his genealogy of restricted economies in human cultures; that it is the finitude of the human being and its conscious fear of death which goads the human to action and into history. This point is

central to Bataille's accounts of general economy and the genealogy of morals and religion, and its full import can only be shown when it has been liberated from the context of an appreciation of Kojève's work on Hegel [20]. However this notion basic to the differentiation of restricted and solar or general economy is indubitably present in Bataille's reading of Kojève. Here, Bataille concentrates on the specifics of the Hegelian articulation of this fear of death. Hegel's contribution to philosophy is reduced to the status of an example of a thesis which his work only unconsciously demonstrates; but the critical extrapolation of this exemplarity - common to both Kojève and Bataille - posits it as the ultimate example of rationalisation. For Kojève and Bataille the characteristic impossibility of this ultimacy is given in the final concept/figure of the Hegelian Logic/Phenomenology: the Hegelian Sage. For Bataille, the critical examination of the impossibility of the figure of the Hegelian Sage (i.e. of a figure embodying the concept of the 'absolute knowledge' of the totality of natural knowledge and history) results in a 'comic recapitulation' of the processes of knowledge which culminated in the figure of the Sage; in which these processes are conceived as different rational attempts to evade the overwhelming influence of energetic flows and are thereby transformed into intensive quanta in relation to the intensive zero of death. [21] Bataille follows Kojève in interpreting Hegel's phenomenology as a 'philosophy of death', but for Bataille this description simply highlights the irruption of the magnitude or intensity of death in human affairs and the revaluation of those affairs in the light of this intensive measure of zero. Thus Bataille writes that the human reaches knowledge in general only by 'raising itself' to the 'height' ('magnitude' or 'intensity') of death.

We should not lose sight of the critical basis of this essay (the conception of the condition of the energetic negative) and its critical result (the revaluation of the processes of knowledge as intensive quanta) despite all the complexities and compromises which arise as a result of the form of Bataille's commentary on Kojève and Hegel. Otherwise we might overemphasise the extent to which Bataille's own 'concepts' are irremediably tainted by their superimposition onto elements of the traditional framework of phenomenological logic. [22] If this compromise concealed the importance of the critical base, Bataille could be said to be deconstructing his own radical

departure from transcendental philosophy and phenomenology, domesticating notions such as immanence and transcendence, continuity and discontinuity in relation to a phenomenological logic which subordinates their independent import to the functioning and complication of traditional metaphysical arguments and topographies. To an extent (the boundaries of which I discuss later [23]) Bataille necessarily injects the jargon of transcendental philosophy into his accounts of all his major 'concepts'; the mode of transcendence has a limited and necessary sense for a philosophy of immanence, not as the transcendent operations of abstraction, exclusion, confinement or limitation, but as the transcendent degrees of immanence (i.e. of the immanent flows of energetic matter). Matter is made up of degrees which 'transcend' or are differentiated from the zero of immanence. The matter of immanence is necessarily discreet and thus transcendent; and it is only the relations of degrees to zero-immanence in general economy and the revaluation which accompanies this relation which renders obsolete, for Bataille the abstractions of 'Nothingness' (as a reserve of consciousness and thus as a totality) and the posited totality of history. [24]

Bataille turns from analysing Kojève's account of Hegel to a comparison of the Hegelian doctrine of death and his own notion of sacrifice (OC12 336ff). He emphasises the substitution which occurs in both sacrificial practice and the stand-off of the Master and Slave and their 'consciousness of death' in Hegel's Phenomenology [25]. For Bataille, this substitution characterises rational thought and human life itself; an encounter with death is mediated through this substitution, a fusion with zero is replaced by identification with the sacrificial animal, or with the thought, or the fear of death and its myriad perverse formations; desire for completion, fear of completion, deferral of completion. The perverse formations which inhabit the site of this substitution also include erotic transgression; all are responses to the fear of death, the fear of a fusion with the immensity of intensive zero. In so far as Bataille distinguishes judgementally between these reaction formations, he approves the substitution which most nearly disintegrates and returns to fusion and thus designates the highest intensive degree sufferable by the human. Bataille's dark enthusiasm manages to discover suicidal energy even in Hegel. Hegel supplies the validation for such a masochistic aesthetic; Bataille states that the requirement fulfilled by such an extreme

and fragile substitution is the Hegelian formulation that "Spirit attain its truth only by finding itself in absolute dismemberment" (OC12 335).

Of course, as far as Bataille is concerned, Hegelian discourse in general lacks the intensive energy associated with other effusive substitutions, for instance the sensation of "sacred horror" (OC12 338) that rips through a cruel religious community when faced with an act of sacrifice. Bataille suggests that Hegel can only have experienced the fear of death despite his rationalisations (as well as because of his rationalisations; his fear intensified when the attempt to alleviate it failed). For Bataille, these fears [26] characterise the post-Kantian, post-critical individual of "involuntary sensitivity", who is panicked by the groundlessness of its rational defence mechanisms and their auto-immune failure in the flows of the intensive energies liberated by the productions of unbounded capital.

Bataille juxtaposes the involuntary and implicit sense of Hegel's fear to the unconscious yet socially "intentional" excitation of sacrifice as a social or communal value and as a given degree of intensity with a contagious mode which corresponds to that communal value. [27] The difference between Hegel's negativity and Bataille's notion of sacrifice is thus a difference of intensity, and of the immediacy of the registering of that intensity. The most that can be expected of a reading of Hegel is a conscious formulation of the subterfuge implicit in the rationalisations of the fear of death. [28] The sacrificial participants' unconsciousness of the causes and effects of the sacrificial act allows for a different level of perception with regard to their action; rather than a self-knowledge, a fusion in the dimly glimpsed motions of intensity and intensification which wrack the group, and which can be peremptorily perceived by the armchair anthropologist as affecting individuals and societies in general, if in specific and evanescent formations. Bataille attempts a bastard fusion of the two approaches with the perspective of the 'lucid consciousness' of death (OC12 342):

"Gaiety, connected with the work of death, causes me anguish, is accentuated by my anguish, and in return exacerbates that anguish"

This curtailed phenomenological and rationalised economy of exacerbation (which is dangerously pat and glib) still manages to attest to a disturbing of the optimal Hegelian state of equilibrium (which is identified with the end of history), a leaking in of the concerns of forces and affects which are

themselves the quanta of dynamic tensions which imbalance and destroy the symmetrical and logico-reflexive models of phenomenological figures from within; and which thereby relate those figures back to their quasi-energetic conditions in the siege logistics of the Kantian mindscan.

The intensive attributes of these diversions from zero (thought, sacrifice, sex..) allow for the prolixities of second order pleasure, the weak attractions of an almost rational certainty that stimuli can be channelled through privileged and numbed, fixated senses. And doubtless pleasure - as the deviation from zero, as the deviation from deviation itself, towards order - can reinvest in its own deviation from and domestication of death in the compromise formation of transgression. Bataille is thus correct to state that (OC12 340):

"the idea of death helps, in a certain manner and in certain senses, to multiply the pleasures of the senses"; and to go on to associate this pleasure with "the breaking of an interdiction".

The psychological complexities of the second-order subterfuge whether pleasure or sacrifice's "sacred horror" (or some clever mixture of the two) are endless, but secondary for Bataille to the general question of utility that they pose. Pleasure is the currency of the substitutions for death; every extreme sensation, if it is not fatal, can be transformed into useful servile pleasure; that is the nature of the subterfuge:(OC12 343)

"the simple manifestation of Man's link to annihilation, the pure revelation of Man to himself (at the moment when death transfixes his attention) passes from sovereignty to the primacy of servile ends".

Bataille seeks to describe intensity without phenomenology or individual psychology, to describe intensity at the point of "absolute dismemberment" of the compromise formations of the substitutions for death, the point at which these formations dissolve, and the point at which the duration which transforms intensity into the limited organism dissolves into a larger time. Bataille calls this point 'sovereign'; at the same time he distinguishes the sovereign from the mundane privilege given to the moment or point in Idealist and utile schemas such as the occidental conception of the line of time. [29] The sovereign is associated with the proliferation of scales of perception rather than with the single scale implicit in those schemas. The sovereign designates scales on which the models of intentional psychology and utility

are irrelevant, that is, it designates the scales of the compositional flows of energetic matter.

It seems to me that the notion of sovereignty can only be detached from utile values in so far as it is associated with the will to intensity, i.e. the quantifiable excitations which traverse and wreck organisms, excitations which are themselves associated with the general economy which registers where the limits of organisms return them to their constituent energetic flows. Bataille also attempts [30] to associate sovereignty with the Kantian and Hegelian notions of independence and autonomy, as distinct from the characteristic 'non-logical difference' or detachment of general economy (considered as a parallel energetic account of phenomena which itself makes possible an energetics of morals) from the restricted sense of these phenomena. Such an attempt can only be impossible and repeat endlessly the move between two rational absolutes (absolute knowledge, absolute dismemberment) and its result in the type of failure which is constitutive of the subterfuges of death under the logic of representation.

If Bataille only repeated the conceptual moves which are regulated by the logic of representation (with its model of constitutive absence demonstrated by the subterfuges of death) his concept of sovereignty would remain eminently Hegelian and Derridean [31]; an incomplete concept or a sensation of incompleteness without dismemberment - his failure would be the characteristic failure of phenomenological logic. Bataille is correct to call this failure "an authentic movement, weighty with sense" because this is the proper realm of phenomenological logic and of the ambivalent status of all its concepts: (OC12 344-5)

"Man is always in pursuit of an authentic sovereignty. That sovereignty, apparently, was, in a certain sense, originally his, but doubtless that could not then have been in a conscious manner, and so in a sense it was not his, it escaped him.....The essential thing is that one cannot attain it consciously and seek it, because seeking distances it. And yet I can believe that nothing is given us that is not given us in that equivocal manner."

The absolute is always a source of failure, the source of a controlled intentional compromise or subterfuge - a representation - in which the minimal deviation from the zero of death can become a source of pleasure, that is a concealing of fear and pain. Extreme intensity shortcircuits the logic of

representation because it is registered as an overwhelming sensation in the physical body and as an intensity on the scale of ceilingless degrees which register any degree including those which envelop the degree associated with the complex formations of the rational subject, and those which waste and destroy the physical body. To seek sovereignty as an absolute independence or autonomy (and not as the chaotic state of flux associated with intensive energetic degrees) is to flirt with the Hegelian logical substantiation of the Kantian One of communication [32], with the Hegelian project of the Hegelian Sage; and to remain exclusively tied to the forms of substitution associated with 'servile' discourses when the transformation of these forms into chaotic accidents and thermodynamic inevitabilities can be traced and described, as can the tensions specific to each formation which affect the duration and intensity of their composition and dissolution. The perspective of intensities is radically different from the perspective of the still metaphysical doublebind of the second order subterfuges of representation. [33]

Bataille starts the essay 'Hegel, Man and History' by making a strong claim for the importance of Hegel's account of the opposition of the Master and Slave in the Phenomenology, not only for understanding the fundamental dialectic of Hegelianism, but for contemporary thought in the human sciences in general:

"[This representation] exists and imposes itself to the extent to which we know it" (OC12 349).

Yet he proceeds to transform the dialectical account into a Nietzschean genealogy of cultures, a genealogy which is fuelled by the critical forces of energetic expenditure and the energetic value of sovereignty, rather than the desire for recognition. Firstly, Bataille relates the (OC12 351) 'fight to the death' which constitutes 'the dialectic of the master' to the 'similar form' of the sovereign. Thus Bataille's point of departure is the Nietzschean notion of sovereignty, rather than the sequences of the birth and history of reactive resentment which he construes as detailed in Hegel's account of the dialectical struggle of master and slave. Again, Bataille immediately relates the moments of the dialectic to a general genealogy of cultures [34] in which the history of servile action is designated as a restriction of the positive value of expenditure (which sovereignty designates).

Bataille contests Hegel's account at the level of a philosophy of history (replacing the motor of the dialectic with the value of expenditure) and at the level of history itself; for Bataille the move from the value of sovereign expenditure to the idea of the dialectic has a historical parallel in the move from religious societies of sacrifice and internal expenditure, to military and expansionist societies. It is military society which regulates its expenditures in order to maximize its extensive potential. The Hegelian dialectic is the rationalised or utile model of the history of a military culture, which has streamlined itself into high capitalism.

According to Bataille, in the servile history of philosophy typified by Hegel the motor of history - the sovereign glory of waste for pure prestige which can end in the dissipation of the wealth of a culture and even its death (for instance Aztec culture as Bataille describes it in 'The Accursed Share' [35]) - is replaced by the mechanism of the dialectic and the restricted struggle over the desire for recognition by individual figures in which death must be deferred. The tendency for cultures to expend in a useless and sovereign fashion and thereby endanger their continued existence is replaced in the historical era of capital by the tendential flows of the accumulation of wealth and the desire to protect it from dissipation. For Bataille, this tendency is typified in Hegel's formulation of the dialectic of the master and slave. [36]

Hegel's account of the master and slave dialectic is transformed beyond recognition by Bataille's 'interpretation' which is itself filtered through his own 'anthropological' interests in the 'social and religious functions' of expenditure. Bataille's account of the (pre-) history of expenditure [37] has only a few resonances in common with the 'Introduction' of the Phenomenology of Spirit. Bataille realises that Hegel's internalised history of consciousness from the point of pure negativity has little in common with his own empirical anthropological and ethnological examination of the opposition of religious and military powers within a society which is based on the primary process of sovereign or energetic expenditure [38]. He presents this fundamental difference of approach as a mild criticism of the Phenomenology, as if it were reducible to an anthropological account of the history of proto-capital (OC12 356):

"..The most bizarre thing in the development of forms described in the

Phenomenology is the ignorance of any properly human existence anterior to the the reduction of the vanquished to slaves."

Bataille is aware of the general structure of the Phenomenology and its effects; that it is atemporal, that its condition is the constructed whole of Absolute Knowledge, and that history is thereby reduced to a logical succession of figures within a historical consciousness. He even admits that this structure embodies the conviction which his own intellectual product lacks: (OC12 356):

"The logical construction of a series of appearances which consciousness 'conserves' has more weight than any reconstitutive discussion arising from the fragmentary data of science".

So when Bataille analyses pre- or extra- phenomenological figures such as the sovereign, in relation to phenomenological jargon, he is not simply referring them back to that jargon; he is concerned with determining their difference from it. The difference or compromise of those figures, notions or values, has an empirical existence as well; thus Bataille asks whether sovereign events are not contaminated by utile concerns. [39]

Bataille associates the 'structure' of the Phenomenology with the operation which I argue [40] characterises Idealism in general; the conception of time as subject to a spatial distribution, an operation which I call 'spatialisation'. Bataille argues that the figures of the Phenomenology inhabit an internalised space rather than a timespan. In this internalised space the clear distinction of the parallel continuums of sacred and profane time is eradicated by the process of division internal to this given, enclosed space; the relative distance and proximity of the dialectical oppositional figures blurs the difference between these oppositional terms (OC12 357):

"The transition from time to space implies a reversal: in temporal division, the clarity of the opposition [between sacred and profane time] was an (obviously provisional) element of stability: in the spatial division, the opposition of the Master and the Slave announces the instability of history: the master is what he is not and is not what he is, he cannot have the 'autonomy' of 'sacred time', he even inserts the movement of profane time into sacred existence..His being even introduces, given that he lasts, an element contrary to the instantaneity of 'sacred time'".

The use to which Bataille puts this fundamental difference between temporal and spatial differentiations in this passage is less important than the articulation of this difference itself. [41] The difference between the

account of the temporal sacred-profane distinction and its Hegelian spatial interruptions is clear, and is a continuation of Bataille's radical rethinking of time which we find in the early writings [42]. For Bataille, it is the association of time with the compositions and decompositions of energetic matter in general (rather than with the single mechanism of mental processes) which lends it a critical power. Time is intensity as annihilation, inevitable destruction; and therefore the most effective 'critique' of rational concerns. Ultimately it is time that renders Hegel impossible, and in this sense everything given or possible is also impossible [43]; that is, the real is irreducible to the category of the possible, and is conditioned and dissolves in a larger fluid energetic virtuality. However, the very affectivity of time renders any attempt to reduce it to the level of a critical power slightly ridiculous. It would be ludicrous to treat time as if it were subject to any sort of rational revisionism. Bataille's early writings do not cease to present the bowel-loosening terror and unsublimable impact of annihilatory time as terminal condition rather than idealistic category. We face time and lose; only when it is transformed into a weak value can it perform critical operations. There is only a resonance between annihilation and critique, shared attributes when both are subjected to low levels of rationalisation.

For Bataille, this impossibility of the Hegelian Totality, the effect of time, is - like the linked problematic of the end of history - another facet of the impossibility of a fully conscious human interface with death (OC12 359):

"I can imagine - and represent - such a perfect achievement of discourse, that following it no other developments have any meaning or teach anything, but stand to mark the abyss left by the end of discourse. Thus I touch on the last problem of Hegelianism. This ultimate moment of the imagination implies the vision of a totality from which no constitutive element can be separated, and which, consequently, lastly, leads all elements to the moment where death touches them: which moreover, tears the truth of each element from this imminent absorption in death. But this contemplation of the totality is not truly possible. It is no less out of our reach than death."

The impossibility of this totality and its enclosed spatial structure provokes a representation of the energetic dissemination of its contents and the inevitable growing redundancy of meaning as it radiates vertiginously towards a free brownian motion of information as energy at the intensive 'zero' of entropy. Bataille's reading of Kojève is itself a product of this post-

rational fusional freefall. The strength of the 'vulgar' reading of Hegel is that it attests to the failure of the Hegelian project which must result in the release of the constraint of the primary discourse on its interpretations. The conjectures extrapolated from it fall faster and wilder and cannot meaningfully be reduced to the status of misinterpretations of a subsisting rational text. Bataille emphasises the pressure created by the containment and restriction of this impossibility, and its inevitable release and intensive impact on rational and utile projects in general, teasing us with the extent of those restrictions and their final intensive impact (OC12 359):

"Hegel's discourse only has meaning in so far as it is finished, and it is only finished at the moment that History itself, and everything finishes. For, if not, History continues and other things must be said. The coherence and even the possibility of the discourse is thus put into question."

Bataille will suggest that both death and the end of history are anticipated and deferred by the subterfuge of discourse or thought; whereas for Hegel, the form of the Book mirrors this circular anticipation (OC12 361). The death of the rational or the possible and the death of history are only "second-degree" (OC12 360) deaths, deaths in discourse, and thus although they remain 'necessary' conditions of thought and discourse, Bataille is not interested in their function. Bataille is not primarily concerned with the structural inadequacies constitutive of thought; for him the Hegelian project and the idea of the end of history pose the question of the inadequacy of the 'map' provided by the Phenomenology of Spirit of the "apparent forms of existence" (OC12 360). Bataille is interested in the general map or chart which can be glimpsed beyond the revealed form of the double bind of representation, and on which the physical patterns of sovereign expenditure [44] can be registered. Bataille uses Kojève's text to attempt to determine the attributes of this new map, which Kojève could still only conceive under the rubric of the hypothetical sense of the 'end of history'. Unfortunately Bataille's reading of Kojève's work remains too close to the literalist spirit of the latter to perform an adequate critical transformation; thus he in part regurgitates Kojève's weak formulations on the historical reality of the end of history:

- 1) subject and object disappear (OC12 361) "Man disappears in so far as he is defined as the negating Action of the given.. and, in general, the Subject opposed to the Object"
- 2) Rational servile action is replaced by "Art, love, play, in brief everything that makes Man happy" [45].

Despite this lapse into metaphysics, I would argue that the general trajectory of Bataille's use of Kojève's text edges towards a conception of time and energetic movement which is free from the spatial restrictions imposed on both by the Idealist structures of thought. From this perspective the notion of the end of history is both a metaphysical conception which replaces the spatialised time of history with the indefinite time of eternity; and also the marker of the redundancy of metaphysics which itself suggests radical if tentative steps towards a new conception of time after philosophy and history.

In this essay, Bataille has an ambivalent attitude to the panic resulting from the failure of reason: he wallows in the still rational effects of its impact - to the point of digging himself into the last-ditch humanism of the 'fugitive knowledge' (OC12 364) of the inescapable subterfuges of representation which defer any effective sense of the completion and death of reason [46]. At the same time he moves beyond that knowledge of the logic governing representation itself to what for our purposes is an initial formulation of the general economy of energetic matter which conditions that logic. For Bataille, general economy is also the 'project' of human freedom; the ultimate human freedom lies in self-overcoming, becoming different indefinitely in emulation of the intensive degrees of the free energetic transformations which constitute the universe of energetic matter, zeroing in on the transformative energies of the will to expenditure. The insanity of this position is clear and I shall examine its status as a bizarre mutation of Kantian autonomy in a later chapter [47]. It suffices to state here that even to articulate such a 'project' is to haemorrhage the very possibility of its results - the results can only be inhuman and the project thus abortive. There can be no symmetry in the relation between the immensity of the universe and the human scale of perception [48] - the human scale is bound to dissolve.

Bataille states that from the perspective of the unfolding of Time, the human acts as part of living (energetic) matter, which is indefinitely producing more energetic quanta than is necessary for its subsistence. Thus the human emulates the universe: (OC 12 365)

"Everything occurs like a slow firework explosion; from this explosion rain out the multiple arabesques of life and death, but the explosion never stops prolonging (or intensifying) its explosive movement. If even death is thus sumptuous, everything is sumptuous in nature."

The 'principle' of solar radiation, of sumptuous expenditure, applies throughout nature. Only at the secondary level of species and habitats does the concern with scarcity arise. At this secondary level, Bataille argues, species, habitats (of every scale) and organisms attempt to balance their growth and expenditure in relation to a "point of saturation" (OC12 366) proper to them, which Bataille defines as a point "beyond which one would see the individual share of resources diminish". This notion of a point of saturation has an ambiguous value; on the one hand it simply designates the tendency of energetic systems operating a restricted economy to dissolve into the general economy of energetic matter; on the other hand it is a retrograde step connecting Bataille's study of general economy to the spatial model which I have associated with Idealist systems of thought; not only because of its explicitly spatial frame of reference, but also because of the logical manner in which it presents the relations between individual and species (i.e as a form of the relation between the particular and the universal). I will argue later that this logicization of general economy only operates as a minor restriction to the sense of general economy [49]. I argued above that the privileging of the human perspective in general economy could not be sustained given the sovereign 'project' or will to expenditure and transformation. Bataille's notion of the point of saturation in restricted economies represents an attempt to accentuate the parallelism between the human utile and evolutionary perspective and the 'perspective' proper to the universe in general by distinguishing the human from natural and biological systems. Bataille argues that only the human can defer the point of saturation, by creating useful and useless expenditures (development of the means of production, sacrifice etc); he thereby imposes a perverse evolutionary argument in which the human is shown to be best suited to the energetic conditions of the universe, yet one in which human and utile evolutionary concerns apply to the rest of the biological universe (Bataille implicitly suggests that organisms are utile and concerned with what is 'best' for the growth of their communities or species). But as the 'College of Sociology' lectures make plain [50] micro-organisms (and viruses) also develop resources through growth, and their growth is not simply the sort of extensive growth which necessarily leads them to points of saturation; the complexities of the possible transformations and thermic changes of shape and size within organisms makes the viewpoint of the point of saturation irrelevant (or rather

the point is best understood as a point of transformation [51]). The sovereign project of transformation is as applicable to these organisms as to the human; and who knows whether our transformations after the human may not lead us to a potential for further transformation equal to that of the virion or the amoeba.

In other words, Bataille overemphasises the restricted nature of the biological organism in relation to the general economy of energetics and privileges the human (and essentially Idealist and spatial) perspective on the difference between biological spaces (and their integrity) and their dissolution in their energetic conditions. But these differences are only thermic or energetic and the same potential for difference is found at every level, on every scale of energetic economy.[52]

Thus I would argue that the double sense of the term 'point of saturation' should not be used to reduce it to the level of an ambiguous concept; because one of its senses entails a radical transformation and revaluation of the other, and this 'novum' should be emphasised. The same is true for many of Bataille's terms; they have a traditional antecedence and a radical new sense which even Bataille himself underplays. I shall consider this model of the divergent senses of Bataille's terms in relation to the paradigmatic notion of transgression below. [53]

Analysing these two essays, I am struck by the unintentional rigour with which Bataille finally deduces the attributes of energetic materialism from a melee of Hegelianism and anthropology. Bataille describes the "Hegelian Totality" (OC12 363) as "a holocaust offered 'in the face' of the devastation of Time". The function of the representational subterfuge extends, as we have noted, to the extreme metaphysical ideas of totality, completion and death; but it is not only the function of that subterfuge which is revealed in these ideas; the terrifying immensity of change in time is also glimpsed at the point of substitution. Death is not disarmed, neither deferred nor second-guessed by any discursive or sacrificial substitution, for it would then be an entity or a concept which could have power imbued or expelled from it. But death is change itself and proceeds in modes of infection, intensity and speed which have no counterparts in the realm of representation which is regulated by a notional structural inadequacy. Even the 'failure' of metaphysics is only

relevant in that it liberates its ideas, projects them contagiously as accelerating and intensifying quanta into change and death. In these essays Bataille is perhaps too ready to emphasise the resistance posed by the spirals of profane time in the general movement of 'sacred' or annihilatory time, but the direction and inevitability of the affectivity of that general time cannot be in doubt; and we thereby only feel the rush and terror of reason's haemorrhage more. As we shall see with the early texts on annihilatory time, no conceptual grasp on this general time is possible, or rather its devastating effects on the projects of profane time are the only clues to its behaviour. It is the impossibility of accounting for Time or death itself (as an object for the rational subject) that draws Bataille elsewhere to accounts of the processes of dissipative structures which are traversed by the energetic flows of Time. [54] In these essays Bataille doggedly remains within the arena of the cautionary example of Hegelianism and the 'Hegelian Totality' which has the status of an extreme example of the tendency of Idealist philosophy to spatialise Time. Hegelianism is an extreme enterprise and an extreme failure which has only a negative pedagogical value for the human annihilated by time. It is a mistake to conclude (as Derrida does) from the subject matter of these two essays that Bataille extends the values of Hegelian discourse to discourses in general. The spatialisation of Time as a rational operation occurs to different intensive degrees in different texts and experiences; and the question whether this rational operation is a general condition of discourse or culture is irrelevant when the different degrees of the emulation or restriction of the flows of time and energy are the foremost empirical attributes of many texts and experiences.

Bataille's readings of Kojève emphasise his own lack of involvement in the Hegelian project. I have shown that even when interpreting Kojève's account of Hegel, Bataille's concerns are almost wholly with an energetic reappraisal of the Kantian terrain of transcendental philosophy. He only crosses Hegel's path insofar as Hegel shares in this Kantian terminology, or else in so far as Bataille finds the dialectic of the master and slave useful for his own accounts of the energetic genealogy of cultures, a genealogy which is itself based on the energetic conditions of critique. Derrida's concern with the simulating function of Bataille's concepts blinds him to the double sense of those concepts, their idealist and energetic deployment. In order to

comprehend the extent to which general economy and its connected terms respond to (both perpetuate and dissolve) the problems of transcendental philosophy it is essential to analyse the stake and result of Kant's critical philosophy, the terms and terrains which Bataille comes to transform, disperse and reconfigure. Only then can we piece together an account of Bataille's work which can challenge - with its consistency - Derrida's general, unsubstantiated and phenomenologically bullying interpretation of these texts.

## Coda: Transgression and the novum of infection

Before entering the critical theatre I would like to emphasise the paradigmatic sense of the concept of transgression for comprehending the novel function of all Bataille's major concepts. It is this function which Derrida ignores when he reduces these 'concepts' to a simulation and inflection of the concepts proper to the Hegelian system. I want to argue that Bataille's concepts - transgression, limit, excess, communication, restricted and general economy - all function similarly in relation to similar terms in Kant's transcendental philosophy, exacerbating the idea of influence which is central to critical philosophy, but which in Kant's hands is itself the object of a massive rational domestication; exacerbating this idea and thereby transforming the Kantian rational schema into the passage of an infectious intensive quantity. This exacerbation is due to the radical independence of one sense of each term from the other more traditional sense, and its designation of energetic quanta as the viral agents of the influence or infection which wracks critical reason. We have already seen an example of this with the notion of a point of saturation. [55] I have chosen the concept of transgression to exemplify this general function because it can be conceived as functioning as a meta-concept which designates the general and rationally limiting operation of the understanding/ reason in both Kant and Hegel's work, as well as having the disjunct sense and infectious intensive designation of Bataille's term. In Kant, the understanding transgresses the limits given its empirical employment, and thus the act of transgression is corrected by the regulative idea of the limit of that employment. For Bataille, as respondent to Kant, the notion of transgression in part designates the illegitimacy and inevitable exceeding of the Kantian rational schemas in extreme experience. But, I will argue that this function is itself irreducible to the Hegelian function of transgression, to which Derrida relates Bataille's notion of transgression, arguing, as we have noted, [56] that it is an inflected Hegelian concept. For Hegel attempted to bridge the abyss between law and transgression implicit in the Kantian rational schema (the relative lack of enforcement of the rule of the legitimate employment of the understanding) by positing transgression as the logical negation of law and as thereby inscribed in (or simply related to in Derrida's case) the cycles of the sublating motion of the 'Aufhebung'.

For Bataille, transgression has an empirical sense, as is demonstrated in his accounts of institutionalised sacrifice and religion [57]. Here the act of transgression tends to consolidate the institution involved (although it can also exceed its social utility and threaten to destabilize that social institution). According to Bataille, this act has an albeit compromised sovereign value, insofar as the institution of sacrifice has domesticated the will to expenditure which characterises formations at every level of energetic matter. Thus even the most empirical event of transgression has a free energetic sense, that is an abstract sense of quantities and values which relates it to the energetics of the topographies of rational and utile schemas - and the exceeding of their limits by certain elements which are supposed to be contained within them. It is this sense of transgression - of values and quanta which challenge and contaminate reason irrecuperably - which seems to me to be proper to Bataille's texts. He develops this sense of transgression in his texts On Nietzsche and Literature and Evil [58]. In both texts transgression is associated with what Bataille calls the 'sovereign value of evil'. Bataille qualifies Nietzsche's formulation: beyond good and bad - terms which regulate the utile physiological health of the human organism - lies the energetic summit and condition which can only be valued as evil, because it cannot be regulated within the organism. It is not simply pain - the opposite of pleasure - but the virulent surges and influences of immense quanta of an indifferent, impersonal energy which inevitably comes to place the physiological economy of pain and pleasure in abeyance: (OC6 42)

"The summit entails excess, the exuberance of forces.. the violation of the integrity of beings".

The evil value of this summit attests to the uselessness and inevitability of the condition it imposes. This sense of transgression as evil (i.e as immense expenditure, immense energetic quanta) is formulated most fully in Literature and Evil. Here, Evil and its excessive value is seen as irreducible to the economy of utile pain and pleasure; it must be considered in terms of the general economy of intensity and the will to expenditure which characterises energetic matter in general: (OC9 219)

"Humanity pursues two goals - one, the negative is to preserve life (to avoid death), and the other, the positive, is to increase the intensity of life".

Intensity and Evil are therefore inextricably bound together; the quanta of intensity endow evil with its positive value and allow for the critical

reevaluation of the rational moral and utile schemas which orient themselves around the concepts of the good and the pleasurable (and the bad and the painful) in the hope of thereby deferring the disorienting power of intensity:

"The mainspring of human activity is generally the desire to reach the point furthest from the funereal domain, which is dirty, rotten, impure... This distressing inclination plays a greater part in our assertion of moral principles than in our reflexes. Our assertions are no doubt veiled. Great words give a positive sense to a negative attitude... All we can propose is the good of all .. legitimate but purely negative aims, which are really ways of banishing death. Our general concepts of life can always be reduced to the desire to survive" (OC9 212-3).

This critical reevaluation entails a rigorous account of its own condition in intensity (the energetic quanta of the will to expenditure) and the value of evil proper to its process of the continual exceeding or transgression of rational economies: (OC9 219)

"The notion of intensity cannot be reduced to that of pleasure because...the quest for intensity leads us.. to the limits of consciousness.. The desire for Good limits the instinct which induces us to seek a value, whereas liberty towards Evil gives access to the excessive forms of value [and]...the very principle of value wants us to go 'as far as possible'".

The law is good, but value is evil. Thus intensity, transgression and the critical reevaluation of rational utile moral schemas are themselves inextricably bound together and yet remain in a state of disjunction from those schemas. This disjunction does not simply designate the critical distance between critique and its object; for the reevaluation or intensification of the critical object, (that is the utile and rational schemas which are applied to human life) entails the dissolution of that object's independent status. Rational schemas are translated into the quanta proper to intensive critique, but critique itself is thereby influenced, intensified and its rational groundlessness exacerbated in a contagious flurry of energetic activity; its rational control is lost. Bataille calls this fluctuating state in which the transcendental positions of subject and object are lost to thought 'communication', in a perverse and thermodynamic reprisal of the Kantian schema of sovereign human freedom. [59]

The paradigmatic concept of transgression supplies us with the schema which will inform our reading of Kant's first and third critiques. The notion of transgression designates the exceeding of rational schemas, their description

and revaluation as intensive quantities, (that is the influence of these intensive quantities on reason, an influence which is itself preempted by the Kantian fear of influence); but also the resulting blurring of the critical disjunction between reason and intensity, i.e the loss of the clarity which distinguishes the critical position. Critique as the unilateral influence of intensity into reason thus collapses into the post-critical state of intensive communication, that is of thought as virulent infection. Critique is not self-evident, not simply the designation of conditions and the operation of revaluations, but also the groundless speeds, intensifications and movements of a thought which is dissolving itself and goaded to destruction by the energies surging through it. The Kantian texts are explicit witness to this trajectory in which critique transgresses rational idealist schemas and designates itself as intensity only thereby to lose its critical status, because the measurement of its own magnitude is subject to the infective mode of its influence, so that: (OC9 249)

"after a point excess can no longer be gauged".

The fate of critique is to be infected by an energetic immensity which cannot be rationalised.

## Chapter Three: KANT - THE CATASTROPHE OF CRITIQUE

### Kant and Bataille on critique

Kant's notion of critique inhabits the space created by transcendental philosophy, a space still characteristic of modern continental philosophy and its interface with the occidental culture of capital [1]. Bataille's work is symptomatic of the gradual deregulation of the movements of the elements and local terrains within this space, a deregulation effected by the passage of time on the restrictions imposed by the entrepreneurial developers of that space to facilitate the growth of their Kantian culture of capital. The elements of this space are acceding to a molecular brownian motion in which all trace of their origins in the limiting conditions of individualism, phenomenalism and their moral justification of the accumulation of wealth, is eradicated. Bataille's work is part of this culture - and the philosophy which legitimated it and thereby described the impossibility of moral certainty (the death of God), if only to staunch the resulting moral bloodflow with the groundless, unconvincing and unfelt substitution of moral feeling. Bataille's reading of the 'traditions' of modern philosophy is selective and superficial, but this only affirms his concern with the wider culture of occidental capital. His contestation of the explicitly Kantian attributes of this culture is fragmented, epigrammatic, banal but essential. A passage from the novel L'Abbe C is symptomatic in this regard:

The pious Robert has become a humiliated and self-hating debauchee. In the middle of a violent storm he dreams of meeting his disintegrating ego-ideal, Immanuel Kant:

"A night as interminable as feverish dreams. A storm began when I got home, a storm of frightening violence. Never have I felt smaller. Sometimes the thunder rolled crashing in from all sides, sometimes it bolted straight down; a flickering of lights bursting into blinding bites of white. I was so sick that I trembled, thinking that I was no longer on earth but in the terrible sky itself... Liquefaction, the crashing of the water from the sky.. no more earth, only an echoing space, overwhelmed and drowned in rage. The storm was illimitable. I had been tired but a dazzling lightning flash intensified my vision, energised me, and as the thunderbolt hit my alertness became a kind of sacred terror... I saw a wedge of light shining under the door... Above the roaring of the sky I heard a sneeze.. I got up to switch off the light . I was naked and hesitated before opening the door... I was certain that I would find Immanuel Kant waiting for me behind the door. He would not look like a corpse, filmy and translucent. He would be a

shaggy and messy haired young man wearing a tricorn hat. I opened the door and to my surprise found myself looking into empty space. I was alone. I was naked in the middle of the greatest rolls of thunder I have ever heard.

I said to myself gently, 'You are a clown'" (OC3 343).

Bataille correctly represents the results of the Kantian notion of critique: piety reduced to the rabid terror of the howling beast, the diminishing of the relevance of the human scale of the perception of phenomena, the dissolution of the rational poles of subject and object in the overpowering energy of storms, the dissipation of spaces and entities into raging intensities, the destruction of resistances and equilibriums by immense forces of heat, light and sound. The exactitude of this description of the endpoint of critique will become apparent when I turn to the Critique of Judgement [2] and Kant's attempted rationalisation of the Sublime; but the relation between the catastrophic disintegration of reason in such events and the power of critique is central to Kant's account of the pre-emptive defence mechanisms of the hierarchy of the faculties in the Critique of Pure Reason [3].

Kant differentiates the power of critique and the functioning of thought through the hierarchy of the faculties and the transcendent operation of the movement of necessary illusion. For Bataille, the general trajectory of thought - which is how he designates critique - must dissolve any such hierarchy of the faculties. This trajectory does not correct or justify an intellectual movement of sensibility-driven expansionism, but is itself the accelerating drive of thinking to its own incandescent immolation.

Kant's notion of critique is inseparable from a topography suggested by the a priori forms of intuition, space and time. The introduction of the forms of intuition in the 'Transcendental Aesthetic' [4] in the first critique gives us the syntax with which a peculiarly Kantian strategy of containment will be deployed. This is the strategy of the containment of the understanding's movement of extension within a movement proper to reason, i.e critique. Kant states (A761 B789) that the critique of reason examines "reason itself in the whole extent of its powers and as regards its aptitude for pure a priori modes of knowledge... [Reason's] determinate and necessary limits.. are demonstrated from principles". Critique has, for Kant, a positive and a negative sense: a positive sense for the practical or moral employment of pure reason, and a

negative sense when applied to the sensibility's reorientation of the understanding [5]. I will argue that in the course of his explication of the notion of critique, the two values of critique (positive and negative) are related to a value of critique which cannot safeguard the positive moral sense and which reveals the negative sense to be the site of a displacement and substitution of values. This revaluation of critique threatens Kant's strategy of containment and all its constitutive functions, that is all the operations of the intellect which congeal into compositions which Kant would wish to see unified in a single limited spatio-temporal domain.

The very concept of the limit (and therefore the concepts of limited space and time, and critique as limitation) is in danger of conflicting with the processive nature of these different mental operations or functions. Thus in the first critique a tension arises between these mental processes and the 'tribunal' which attempts to enforce their characteristic limitation. Kant attempts to identify critique with this tribunal, and spells out the moral and juridico-political resonances of both. With the articulation of a critique immanent to it, the process of reason becomes self-regulating - critique and reason form a tribunal:

"a tribunal which will assure to reason its lawful claims, and dismiss all groundless pretensions, not by despotic decrees, but in accordance with its own eternal and unalterable laws."

Such a critical tribunal limits mental processes and acts as a 'propadeutic' to an (Preface A xxi) "inventory" or systematic arrangement of the possessions of pure reason. Critique is thus linked to the system or inventory of rational accumulated wealth, in the form of an ideal composite unity or saturated field of the principles of knowledge and their legitimate and illegitimate employment:

"Pure reason, so far as the principles of its knowledge are concerned, is a quite separate self-subsistent unity, in which, as in an organised body, every member exists for every other and all for the sake of each other, so that no principle can safely be taken in any one relation, unless it has been investigated in the entirety of its relations to the whole employment of pure reason" (Preface B xxiii-iv).

On the other hand, critique is necessarily involved in the 'warfare' of metaphysics (Preface A viii), in the endless struggles between dogmatists and sceptics. It is this association of critique with warfare which comes to

overwhelm the sense of critique as a disinterested tribunal. The essential difference is not that between the positive and negative senses which Kant attaches to critique (in which the negative sense 'makes room for' the positive moral sense, for an extension of practical reason into the super-sensible (Preface B xxii [6]) by subtracting the illegitimate employment of the understanding from the 'fullness' of the idealist spatial unity of composition, thereby requiring the 'refill' of the practical moral ideas of reason); but rather between those two senses and the rationally disorienting positive sense of critique as the continual opposition and differentiation of ideas, which is first noticeable in critique's intervention into the 'futile' struggle of the dogmatists and sceptics, and more generally in the critical strategy which when unleashed as the pure pulses of unrestrained and total warfare is suicidal for reason.

Kant attempts, at the end of the 'Paralogisms of Pure Reason' section from the first edition to define restrained, limited and negative critique (A395). Only, states Kant:

"the sobriety of a critique at once strict and just can free us from .. dogmatic illusion....Such a critique confines all our speculative claims rigidly to the field of possible experience..by an effective determining of these limits in accordance with established principles, inscribing its nihil ulterius on those Pillars of Hercules which Nature herself has erected in order that the voyage of our reason may be extended no further than the continuous coastline of experience itself reaches, a coast we cannot leave without venturing upon a shoreless ocean which after alluring us with ever deceptive prospects compels us to abandon as hopeless all this vexatious and tedious endeavour".

Kant attempts to identify critique with a single movement of expansionist thought and its two modes: extension/possession followed by limitation /justification. This expansionist thought is condemned to the vulgar psychology of a damage-limitation exercise proper to the occidental psyche, which Kant describes as fleeing the despair of frustrated possession to hide behind the stockades of property and territory claims [7]. In fact Kant goes on to reveal that this restriction of the sense of critique is untenable; the libidinal flows of critique are themselves the limits which provoke the reactions of consolidation and justification proper to reason, the limits which mark the insurgence of noumenal intensive energies into the extensive movement of reason. It is Bataille who registers this fact most succinctly in regard to the terrains of thought and their solar condition; in Bataille's

account of thought it wills the hopeless, thirsts after the intensity of despair, and the ruination of intentional and limited thinking in the intensity of an impersonal energetic radiation:

"Despair is simple: it is the absence of hope and allure. It is the state of deserted expanses and - I imagine - the sun." (OC5 51)

Kant's most concerted attempt to keep critique within the bounds of reason occurs in a section of the 'The Discipline of Pure Reason'(A739ff B767ff). Yet here, despite all Kant's disavowals, the two Kantian senses of critique collapse in the fever pitch critical strategy of a more general positive sense of critique. Kant again attempts to link the power of critique to a "judicial" reason (A739 B767) which is itself analagous to a 'democratic' civil power; the power of critique is supposed to be the proof that Reason is not a "dictatorial authority", and yet Kant is also adamant that the outcome of the war waged by critique on the polemicists suggests that Reason "knows no respect for persons". Kant distinguishes the metaphysical warfare of the polemicists and "the critical scrutiny of a higher judicial reason", whose judicial verdicts attest to the agreements between "free citizens". Yet as the account of critique progresses the distinction between critique as it is deployed as warfare or military strategy, and critique as a correction proper and limited to reason and its correlative rational body politic, increases. Critique even lessens the distance between the state of warfare and the state of the rational 'community', for even within this democratic community, the necessary possibility of an individual veto qualifies the unity of reason's judicial verdict; in the "agreement of free citizens..each one must be permitted to express, without let or hindrance, his objections or even his veto."

Kant inverts and attempts to positivise the threat posed by critique, transforming it into a tonic for reason. He states that should reason limit the "freedom" of criticism by any prohibition it must "harm itself", and that further "reason can never refuse to submit to criticism". Kant's texts are full of such perverse inversions, denials and substitutions of the damage caused by critique, the noumenal and the pathological, to reason. This danger and threat is often minimised by the introduction of a secondary use, purpose or transcendence. [8] Thus Kant posits purpose as an attribute of

the entities of the natural world insofar as they are, as representations, part of the "nature of reason itself" (A743 B771). Just as, Kant contends,

"everything which nature has itself instituted is good for some purpose - even poisons have their use, they serve to counteract other poisons generated in our bodily humours - ",

so the polemical alternative to Reason's judicial verdict, the dissension of citizens, and critique itself "arise from the very nature of reason itself and must therefore have their own good use and purpose". This is an unconvincing analogy but is exemplary of Kant's oft-used second order rationalisation of a primary affect.[9] Kant only equates the physiological equilibrium-seeking life-system and the transcendental operation of a subsuming higher purposive rational unity as a last resort, to designate the most general form of rational unity and thereby to lessen the possibility of conceiving of any "outside influences" (A744 B772). More often it is the difference between the pathological and the higher faculties which Kant stresses. Kant attempts to make all such disruptions internal and proper to reason. Even the circuit breakers of sensibility are in part included in a hierarchisation which makes good use of them. He is more concerned with the mechanics of limitation than with the inconceivable quantities that this limitation is supposed to repress. But this concern can itself be inverted to the detriment of its second order rationalisation: Kant does not have to conceive of outside influences because critique effects the same disruption from within reason's enclosure.

At the heart of Kant's account of the minimal danger of both critique and necessary illusion to reason lies the perception that both are concerned with the merely speculative employment of reason. Neither critique nor polemics threatens reason's practical moral interests; and thus, states Kant, there is no reason to "raise the cry of high treason" (A747 B775). The critical position is itself distanced from any real practical effects; and to enter the practical realm of morality is to leave both metaphysical speculation and critique behind:

"the question at issue is not what ..is beneficial or detrimental to the best interests of mankind but only how far reason can advance by means of speculation that abstracts from all interests and whether such speculation can count for anything or must not rather be given up in exchange for the practical. Instead of rushing into the fight sword in hand we should rather play the part of the peaceable onlooker from the safe seat of the critic. The struggle is indeed toilsome to the combatants but for us it can be entertaining; and its outcome - certain

to be quite bloodless .... Besides reason is already of itself so confined and held within limits by reason that we have no need to call out the guard with a view to bringing the civil power to bear upon that party whose alarming superiority may seem to us to be dangerous".

However, as we have seen, the moral sense of reason is a product of its most general spatial form, and it is precisely this space which critique comes to contest. Thus, in the interests of universal human morality, which is witness to the 'necessary' form of reason, critique and the internecine quarrels of the polemicists must be ultimately restricted to that form too. It does not suffice that from its 'safe seat' the critic only witnesses the safe fight in which reason escapes the danger of its own internal relations; this war must be stopped so that critique can be reduced to the status of the tribunal of reason. Kant realises that critique is complicated at the level of its strategic deployment or unleashing, and attempts to reorient it to reason by means of morality, arguing that the spectator's laissez-faire attitude and assumption of the universal form of the rational and the good in the polemicists' arguments can - on the analogy of moral sublimation - only be considered (A748 B776) a "provisional arrangement". If the critic does not eventually turn from this assumption of the good, it will be transformed into an injurious duplicity. The spectator's 'laissez faire' attitude is replaced by a sterner judgement on the spectacle. Kant goes on to state that critique is the termination of the polemic of pure reason: (A751-2 B779-80)

"[Critique], arriving at all its decisions in the light of fundamental principles of its own institution..secure[s] us the peace of a legal order in which disputes ..have to be conducted by the recognised methods of legal action".

It is now critique which is identified with reason itself which imposes a "judicial sentence which strikes at the very root of conflicts" securing the destruction of conflicts and "an eternal peace". Kant identifies critique with reason thereby transforming the intensive disruption of thought into a legislative procedure.

This judicial sentence and the termination of polemical struggle is only the intended and anticipated horizon of critique. Kant goes on to contradict himself by suggesting that the moral justification of critique can be discounted and the critical warring strategy upheld for as long as the polemical struggle persists and disrupts reason. The danger of this strategy remains that it compounds the disturbance of reason: (A756-7 B784-5)

"To set reason at variance with itself and, to supply it with weapons on both sides and then to look on quietly and scoffingly at the fierce struggle .. suggests a mischievous and malevolent disposition. If we consider the invincible obstinacy [of the polemicists] there really is no other available course of action".

This warlike tone and the actual substance of the critical strategy is developed in the 'Discipline of Pure Reason in Regard to Hypotheses' section. Hypotheses are strategic and thus critical concepts, compromises that make possible an aggressive 'defensive' attitude in the polemical war, by countering the force of a given argument (A777-8 B805-6):

"Hypotheses are..permissible only as weapons of war, for the purpose of defending a right, not in order to establish it".

However, blocking the enemy's argument with an equal quantity of force cannot be sufficient, given that the ultimate goal of the mobilization of critique is war and the annihilation of the era of polemical argument. Critical principles must seek out the stunned polemical arguments, trace them to their conditions and terminate their validity with extreme prejudice, for the sake of the tranquil functioning of reason and its legitimate judgements:

"in order that by annulling [polemical arguments] we may establish a permanent peace. External quiescence is merely specious. The root of these disturbances which lies deep in the nature of human reason must be removed".

Yet how can Kant avoid the possibility that critique is not suited to reason, and that this all-out mobilization of critique threatens to destroy the rational power base. Kant's fantasy consists in believing that the maximal unleashing of critique will strengthen the hold of the intended pro-rational strategy, and that the critical tracing of conditions of possibility is the same as the (A794 B822) "rational justification" which each participant in transcendental philosophy indulges in:

"Everyone must defend his position directly, by a legitimate proof that carries with it a transcendental deduction of the grounds upon which it is itself made to rest."

This is a fantasy of suicidal faith in reason; for Kant the unleashing of critique remains a controlled part of reason, which yet results in the definitive annihilation of the polemical disturbance:

"By giving human reason the freedom to send out shoots so that [the root disturbance] may discover itself to our eyes and that it may then be entirely destroyed".

The rational strategy consists of surrendering its own weapons and positions

to the polemical and critical disturbances which wrack it; given Kant's blind faith in the minimal difference between reason and its critical interruption, he states:

"We have nothing to fear in all this but much to hope for.. that we may gain for ourselves a possession which can never again be contested".

This suicidal rational strategy yields a martyr's death for reason and its blind faith in the orientation of critique to reason.[10] It is thus the defeat of critique considered as a strategy which necessarily consolidates the status of the Kantian subject, and the end of the necessity of considering critique as reducible to a rational project. Critique itself spins out of the orbit of reason, away from the tribunal ruled over by critical principles and into the flows of time which Bataille will call the death of god.

It is Bataille who most succinctly summarises the movement and fate of Kantian critique, and rises to the challenge posed by the liberation of critique from the intentions of reason. Bataille describes himself as "speaking after a catastrophe of the intelligence" (OC5 40). He is certain that the unmitigated and immense disaster of critical rigour has struck down reason, flayed metaphysics and morals down to their conditions of possibility and that now the body-parts are dissolving in an acid bath of 'non-savoir'. Critique is the fulfillment of thought in so far as reason sought, in a rigorously Kantian fashion, to discover the unconditioned unity of every conditioned knowledge. What reason found through critique was its own inevitable groundlessness, its own intense disorientation. Bataille tends not to differentiate the extensive processes of thought and natural illusion in his epigrammatic remarks on the subject. Such a distinction is unimportant in relation to the critical point both are brought to. For Bataille, thought, by which he means critical thought, only poses the problem of what is legitimate on the way to its own inevitable exhaustion. It is pointless to call this exhaustion illegitimate, although reason would want it so; it would only be illegitimate if reason still applied. Instead, this exhaustion is inevitable in the immanent processes of thought, and is marked by an exceeding of the limits proper to thought, an exceeding which cannot be reduced to an instance of the illegitimate employment of the sensibility:

"Thought driven to the limit of thought necessitates the sacrifice or death of thought" (OC8 460)

"We only reach the ultimate object of knowledge when knowledge is

dissolved" (OC7 76)

"Thought has as its goal its own derailing" (OC8 259)

"Reason alone has the power to undo its work, to throw down what it has built up" (OC5 60).

Knowledge dissolves at a critical point. Although Bataille sometimes refers to a resultant 'non-savoir' (and it is these resonances of logical opposition which attract the phenomenologist Derrida), it would be irresponsible to suggest that he stresses anything except the intensive pitch of the dissolution itself:

"For a long time I have sought not knowledge.. but its opposite, non-knowledge. I do not await the moment when I shall be rewarded for my effort and finally 'know', but the moment when I will no longer know, when my expectations are resolved into NOTHING" (OC8 258).

Bataille will often describe the effects of this non-logical 'nothing' in Kantian topographical terms, and when he does so the 'nothing' has the implicit sense of an evaluative principle which registers the impoverishment of that framework and the utile values which underscore it; but the 'nothing' is first and foremost an intense sensation which overwhelms intelligence and thus rubs out a certain form and line of rational philosophical conduct which is oriented by the model of the Kantian subject/citizen and the objects which are its proper possessions:

"All that could be seen [of philosophical problems] was their dissolution into movement, their rebirth in other shapes, their acceleration to catastrophic speeds" (OC 6 198)

"There is a shuddering moment when everything blows out, everything strobos: the deep solid reality of a person disappears and all that remains are charged, mobile, violent, inexorable presences..all that remains are forces possessing the violence of an unleashed storm" (OC2 245-6).

In bursts of misguided enthusiasm, Bataille recuperates reason in relation to this sensation, littering his texts with impossible and abortive projects such as:

"A philosophy of pure sensibility opposed to the intelligible" (OC8 601)

This particular issueless manifesto emphasises the difficulty facing whoever would remain true to the pitch of intensive zero and its holocaust of reason. The jargon of sensation itself tends to be sucked up into the rationalised realms of existential psychology or 'aesthetics', as in one discursive mode in Inner Experience [11] and formulae such as:

"Intelligence survives the death of ethics and finds itself in the realm of the aesthetic" (OC8 646).

However, despite all these qualifications, Bataille is adamant that in the face of the Kantian culture of capital "Intensity alone matters" (OC5 29). The general tenor of his texts lies with his emphasis on the excessive nature of intensity in relation to the closed conceptual topography of Kantianism; implicit in this account is the notion of intensity as a scale of energetic quantities.

Throughout Inner Experience the critical point of the overwhelming of reason is described as 'the extreme limit of the possible', a Kantian tag which stresses the unrepresentability of the overwhelming fluxes of intensity which occur at that point. The limit of the possible was for Kant the limit of intentionality, the limits of the utile machine of consciousness which included the hypothesis of noumena. But in the blurs of intensity the difference between the rigours of a power which traverses and overwhelms the machine and threatening external stimuli is lost. The limits of the possible are washed away by the tides those limits excluded, the tides which were rationalised as impossible, the tides which suddenly become real.[12]

The extent to which this simple if catastrophic picture overturns the Kantian topography hemmed in by limits and maximums, the extent to which every major strut supporting the transcendental idealist edifice is countered by a catastrophic definition of the same, including a definition of a generalised intensity bound not only to sensation, remains to be shown.

#### The control of critique by the forms and maximums of the faculties

The power of critique attests to tensions within the operations of the faculties and between faculties as they lie in the hierarchy of the faculties. At this latter level, the lower faculties are represented, in general, in terms of processes and quanta whereas the higher faculties are represented in terms of rules, principles, limitation- and container- functions. We have already seen how critique itself splits between process and limitation, and how Kant uses the practical employment of reason to reorient the power of critique around rational limitation enacted at the level of commonsense civilities; critique as democratic civil power, as judiciary or tribunal acting with strict method to pronounce 'judicial sentences' on polemicists and

their idle chatter and create 'eternal peace'. But this is only the most practical strategy of rationalisation which Kant uses on critique as an example of mental processes in general. The hierarchisation of the faculties is the major strategy of containment deployed in the course of the first critique, even if Kant conditions it in the pure a priori forms of intuition and the transcendental unity of apperception. We will see that Kant uses three sub-strategies with regard to the hierarchy of the faculties and its rational reorientation of critique: 1) he mobilises pure forms against the quanta-flow of affects, 2) he emphasises the affects of a transcendent influence in the hierarchy of the faculties, and 3) he transfers the transcendent functions associated with the transcendent illusions of thought onto a transcendental plane, thereby abstracting the transcendental ideas as exceptions from the critical rule.

How can we call Reason a 'container' when it is simply the faculty of principles? Because of the necessity of the relations between these principles and the rules of the understanding, and the shape of reason which all these forms describe.[13] In knowledge from a principle, Kant states (A300 B357) "I apprehend the particular in the universal through concepts" i.e. reason infers the truth of the relation of rule to judgement (where the rule is the condition of the judgement). In so doing reason seeks the universal condition of each judgement, thus bringing the multiple rules of the understanding under the smallest possible number of universals/principles. Reason seeks the unconditioned as a limit endowing unity for every conditioned knowledge, through the process of the understanding. Thus Kant presents the process of understanding as derivative and regulated by reason and its transcendental ideas; at the same time reason is described as transcendent with regard to the immanent processes of the understanding. Kant's telling analogy for the necessity of the idea of the totality of conditions for any given knowledge concerns time (A410-4 B437-441). A given moment of time depends, states Kant, on the entirety of the regressive series of past times. Space relies on the same idea, although it is an aggregate of coexistent parts; for any given space is measured by or limited by all other parts of space. The identification of time and space emphasises that their respective parts are measures or units related to a base unity/totality. I

will argue that this analogy refers to a primary spatialisation of time which itself orients the thought processes around the unity of apperception.[14]

Kant determines influence in terms of inner processes (rather than external influences) and primarily in terms of the highest faculty, reason rather than pathological sensibility. He connects influence to the status of the limit i.e the idea of the unconditioned as a unifying force (and later to the idea of the noumenon [15]); the unquantifiable influence of these ideas relates them, and the understanding they influence, Kant argues, to morality. Thus the transcendent employment of the transcendental idea of the unconditioned unity of any conditioned knowledge - which consists in the idea of its totality being illegitimately used as a concept - is itself fostered by the influence of the idea, and through this influence reason directs the employment of the understanding towards the purposive unity of the moral ideas, a unity of which the understanding has no concept. Such transcendental ideas have no object in experience: "being simply the concept of a maximum" (A327 B384) they do not affect the understanding in so far as it contains the ground of possible experience. But the mere idea of a maximum is itself enough to unite all the acts of the understanding into an "absolute whole". [16] The practical employment of the understanding is always under the influence of such transcendental ideas, which are always ideas of "the necessary unity of all possible ends" (A328 B 385); thus the idea and its influence is designated as an original condition of the practical employment of the understanding, and a catalyst for the influence and extension of the "moral ideas" (A329 B386).

It is critique which exposes the transcendental illusions, showing that they arise because we treat such transcendental ideas as objects or their concepts, as contents and manifolds and actual absolutes. However, Kant argues that critique does not apply to the orientation of the faculties to the moral ideas because these ideas have only a general influence and form. This status of the moral ideas also applies to the general influence and minimal form of the subject as Kant examines it in the course of the 'Paralogisms of Pure Reason'. Kant argues that the I is a simple and empty representation which accompanies all concepts, a form of representation in general, a transcendental subject whose representation is simple only because there is nothing determinate in

it. The four paralogisms consist in treating this I as substantial, as simple (in itself), as a unity throughout time and as a principle of life in matter. They arise as responses to the intense disjunction between the 'I think' and self-consciousness [17]; responses wherein self-consciousness represents the I to itself as that which is the unconditioned condition of all unity and yet which can be also (and paradoxically) be known through categories. Kant simply retorts: "I cannot know as an object that which I must presuppose in order to know any object" (A346 B404). This is a simple and devastating argument, the effects of which I will spell out later. [18] Critique stresses the radicality of the minimal form and lack of content associated with the 'I think':

"The identity of the consciousness of myself at different times is only a formal condition of my thoughts and their coherence and in no way proves the numerical identity of any subject" (A363).

Unfortunately Kant goes on to bring the very form of personality which he is criticising back from the minimal form of the 'I think', which he now calls the 'logical identity' of the I. Kant suggests that the logical identity of the I might contain a function which "retains the thought" of preceding subjects and passes them onto subsequent subjects. Thus Kant halts the extreme possibility that the logical identity of the I distributes a veritable 'tsunami' of contents, with the concept of the necessity of the form of the series of those contents. He organises the memory function of the logical identity of the I around a traditional time series structure, imagines this function working cumulatively through (A365) a series of states and states that the last state will be conscious of all the previous states (A364n).

Kant transforms the transcendent concept of the person into impersonal and abstract quanta, only to reiterate the retentive, abstract and thus transcendent function in relation to these quanta. His emphasis on the I as a process of abstract quantities distributed according to the time-series assimilates the logical identity of the I to the rest of the mind processes, or at least minimises the distinction. The problem with this as far as Kant is concerned is that 1) the distinction between the logical identity of the I and the flux of subject-contents is threatened, 2) the distinction between faculties and the ability of higher faculties to direct lower faculties is also called into question, and 3) the reduction of the difference between the

general form of the transcendental realm and immanent mental processes threatens the control-function of the former.

In order to combat the critical dissolution of a few too many metaphysical illusions Kant sets about emphasising the influence of the similarity between the formal simplicities of the transcendental subject and the transcendental object qua noumenon (A358) - between both of them and in their relations to the forms of intuition. Both the transcendental subject and object are formal unities which function as syntheses and limitations. Both are construed over and against a matter of outer appearances which are subject to sensibility and its intuitions, affects and influences. At the same time, both resemble and depend on the empty forms of intuition which are also limit-containers of representations. We might imagine Kant's picture of self-consciousness as a loop of these four empty forms which functions to regulate and process external stimuli and create the transcendental illusions. The empty ciphers preside over an inner extension, an interiorisation of space as extension and synthesis and which is itself limited and mapped out in relation to the (A381) "fixed and abiding substratum" of the concept of the transcendental object and its necessary relation to the transcendental subject.

As we have seen Kant attempts to reorient critique with the analogies of the practical employment of reason. He argues that the critique of the transcendent employment of reason does not affect the practical employment of reason B424:

"Yet nothing is thereby lost as regards the right of postulating a future life in accordance with the principles of the practical employment of reason".

In fact mumbles Kant unconvincingly the 'proofs' which necessitate such a postulate are clarified in the process of critique, for the limitation of reason which critique carries through confines reason to its proper sphere - A425 "the order of ends" - which Kant will argue is approached by behaviour in accordance with moral laws. The order of ends is characterised as exceeding or transcending nature, which Kant conceives as working on principles of utility and proportionate function. Thus the order of ends is characterised as useless and disproportionate, involved in an excessive and

virulent movement, (a virulence which we have associated with general critique,) which is also a resumption of the type of movement which is the object of critique within the bounds of reason, i.e "extending the order of ends ...beyond the limits of experience and life". Kant cannot associate rational critique with the search for moral ends without suggesting that morality itself can be seen as an extension of the impulse to extend, conquer, and possess illegitimately; whilst the general sense of critique escapes these rational impulses because it is not involved in an extensive process of legitimation, but a process of virulent differentiation. [19]

Kant goes so far as to state that the excessive in nature is itself only proof of the illimitable extension of human knowledge and the illimitable avidity of the human will: (B426)

"This powerful and incontrovertible proof is reinforced by our ever increasing knowledge of purposiveness in all that we can see around us and by the contemplation of the immensity of creation and therefore also by the consciousness of a certain illimitableness in the possible extension of our knowledge and of a striving commensurate with it."

The perversity and anti-intuitive nature of transcendental idealism is overwhelmingly obvious in passages such as this. The representation of the abstract relations between components in the mind machine of apperception may designate assimilations and internalisations as the a priori conditions of that representation, but the heights of self-deceit are reached when for the same reason the representation of stunning external stimuli is described as affirming teleological human-centred goals. [20]

In the 'Antinomy of Pure Reason' critique shows that the two conceptions of the unconditioned sought by reason for every conditioned knowledge are illusory because they presuppose that a manifold objective totality corresponds to the problematic concept of the absolute totality of the series of conditions. The critical dissolution of the antinomy emphasises reason's error in assuming that if the conditioned knowledge was given in an empirical synthesis, then so was the complete series of its conditions. The series is neither an infinite nor a finite whole, because the maximum proper to it occurs at the transcendental level. I will argue that the general sense of critique itself does not recognise the idea of a maximum (which is proper to reason and its unities); it thereby does not differentiate between the

concepts of the transcendent and the transcendental which is central to Kant's rationalisation of the immanent mental processes.

For Kant the affects of transcendental pure reason are essentially distinguished from the illusions created by the different transcendent operations. The transcendental pure reason supplies a regulative rather than a constitutive principle (the latter characterises the transcendent illusions) for the empirical regress of conditions in appearances, a rule

"prescribing a regress in the series of conditions of given appearances and forbidding [its closure]..a principle of the greatest possible continuation and extension of experience, allowing no empirical limit to hold as absolute". (A509 B537)

Yet reason also seeks its own absolute unity of synthesis via the synthesis of the understanding according to rules, ignoring the fact that the conditions of the two faculties are mutually exclusive. To fulfill the conditions of one faculty is to fail the conditions of the other: (A422 B450)

"the conditions of this unity are such that when it is adequate to reason it is too great for the understanding; and when suited to the understanding, too small for reason".

The importance of this passage in suggesting 1) that the differences between the faculties rests solely on the magnitudes of the quanta which occupy them, and that 2) these faculties have thresholds and limits, maximums and minimums beyond which they relay into other faculties, is lost amidst the argument for the critical dissolution of the antinomy. Again this dissolution includes the reprise of the transcendent function and its spatio-temporal coordinates - the demand for 'absolute totality' within space and time - at the transcendental level. [21] The general sense of critique would surely examine the distinction between the concepts totality/infinity (Kant argues A513 B541 that infinity designates the infinite divisibility of a given whole or totality in space) and the indefinite/unlimited (which he associates with the trajectory of an element which extends "indefinitely far" because it does not entail any absolute body). Critique beyond the influence of reason queries the possibility of the 'absolute totality' which lies at the base of the transcendent illusions and which reason replicates at the transcendental level. Rather than replicating infinity and totality at the transcendental level, as rational ideas, critique prioritises the processive quanta which are indefinite and unlimited, and which Kant associates either with the

divisibility of a whole body or with the impossibilities or zeroes of empty time and space.[22]

We have seen that Kant attempts to revise the power of critique by relating it to the values of human moral freedom, that is to the rational idea of an empirically unconditioned non-sensible condition for knowledge (A528 B556). It seems to me that the general sense of critique must include even this idea in the same limit-container of the forms of space and time regulated by reason which produces the transcendent illusions. Kant argues that causality can exist independently of time (symptomatically, Kant does not suggest that this causality can exist outside the real condition of idealist schemas - space) through the self-acting freedom of human will, which opposes the 'tyrannical' direction of time and natural influences (A534 B562). This human will is shown to be 'independent of coercion through sensuous impulses' in that it can instigate series of events separate from those of natural causality. Kant disavows the untenability of this conception by equating the failures of this causality with its necessity. Kant argues that man is the emblem of this free causality insofar as the relation between the faculties of reason and the understanding is ruled by the virtual ought proper to reason which is superimposed over sensuous influences: (A547 B575)

"'Ought' expresses a kind of necessity and of connection with grounds found nowhere else in nature".

This is no necessity at all; for this 'ought' is added to given sensuous influences, as an exercise in rational damage limitation. The moral evaluation of stimuli is first and foremost utilitarian, that is concerned with the protection of the mental mechanisms from those stimuli. Kant relates the 'ought' to the very structure of mental representation, but thereby gives both the status of reactive resistors: (A802 B830)

"we have the power to overcome the impressions on our faculty of sensuous desire by calling up representations ...of what is useful or injurious ..These considerations as to what is desirable in respect of our whole state i.e as to what is good and useful, are based on reason".

Kant does not complete the critical movement here, but rather rejects it; in the face of the fact that reason and the human sense of time are reactive second order effects of energies and time which condition the human mental processes, (knowledge which might be the basis of a revaluation of those

processes) he writes of the blatant lie of the "power of origination" (A552 B580) inherent in the causality of human freedom and its independence from 'phenomenal time'. However, the general sense of critique revalues all thought in the light of the discovery of its conditions in the affects of physiological stimuli and dissipative time. It is the effects of such powerful stimuli and this time which pulse to the rhythms of the unbridled destruction and chaos wrought by critique.

Kant goes on to posit the idea of a being correlative to rational causality; this idea of an intelligible being can itself become the object of a transcendent illusion in which the principle of the intelligible being or *ens realissimum* which applies to ideas and their relation to concepts is applied to objects of experience and is transformed into the 'personality' of a completely determined (A576 B 604) "*omnitudo realitas*" or "transcendental substrate" of phenomena. Kant wants to save the 'authority' of the *ens realissimum* from critical dissolution and have it as a regulator of our obligation to practical moral laws, (A589 B617)

"obligations to which there would be no motive save on the assumption that there exists a supreme being to give effect and confirmation to the practical laws".

Kant attempts to argue that it is precisely the minimal difference between the transcendental and the transcendent employments of the idea of the intelligible being which inclines us towards the moral laws, because this minimal difference focuses our attention on the danger facing reason and reason's own specific demands. Kant argues that our perception is so oriented around the higher faculty of reason, and its formal, qualitative problems that the problems posed by immense quantitative external stimuli are irrelevant; for Kant these quanta can always be registered as rational magnitudes of measurement and thereby 'decathected' [23] This underplays the impact of those quanta on the supposedly enclosed structures of reason: (A613 B641)

"Unconditioned necessity ..is for human reason the veritable abyss. Eternity itself in all its terrible sublimity ..is far from making the same overwhelming impression on the mind; for it only measures the duration of things. We cannot put aside and yet also cannot endure the thought of a being which we represent to ourselves as supreme amongst all possible beings".

We saw above that Kant conceived of the natural order as evidence of an order of ends. The idea of the intelligible being is consolidated in a similar manner; Kant sees natural content and change as indicators of purposiveness and adaptability which suggest the possibility of a form-giver (rather than creator of the world), an architect who is "hampered by the adaptability of the material in which he works" (A627 B655). Such an idea cannot be the determinate concept of a thing, Kant states; it can only be determined in indefinite judgements which use superlatives to describe excessive magnitudes (A628 B656):

"the predicates 'very great', 'astounding', 'immeasurable' in power and excellence give no determinate concept at all and do not really tell us what the thing is in itself. They are only relative representations of the magnitude of the object which the observer in contemplating the world compares with himself and with his capacity of comprehension and which are equally terms of eulogy whether we be magnifying the object or be depreciating the observing subject in relation to that object".

Kant is correct to suggest the possibility of magnitudes which are excessive relative to the human [24]. He however denies the relevance of the sensible impact of magnitudes; for him they are first and foremost rational comparisons, in which magnitudes are measured relative to the 'originary power' of reason and its influencing ideas. This is strictly untenable given that the generality of the predicates suggests that the 'measurement' might in fact simply be a physiological sensible 'registering' of impact.

Kant's attempts to restrict critique are driven by the desire to effect a rationally influenced regulative employment of the understanding, which can be directed to the "focus imaginarius" (A644 B672) which gives concepts their greatest extension and unity in a system of determinate knowledge. The systematic unity of reason is a maximal formal unity which is analogous to the purposive unity of things (A686 B715); thus Kant goads thought to a state of maximal knowledge and morality. This regulative employment operates by reducing the diversity of appearances to a "hidden identity" (A649 B677) by comparison, using laws of the homogeneity, specification and continuity of forms. Kant deploys the notion of continuity amongst appearances considered as degrees, in tandem with a law of specification which turns diversities into subspecies and subgenres. For Kant each magnitude as degree is related to a ceiling or maximum magnitude of its own genus or degree as well as being involved in its own infinitesimal division. Thus for Kant the horizon of

continuity lies in the convergence of continuous genera on one base genus or base unit.[25] The regulative principle of the maximal unity of reason (A665 B693) is itself the form of the series of regulative assumptions we have looked at which limit critique and thereby secure the maximal possible systematic unity in the empirical and practical employment of reason (A671 B699). Thus Kant justifies reproducing the illusions of psychology, cosmology and theology at a transcendental level of assumption in the name of the system of pure reason: (A832 B860)

"By system I understand the unity of the manifold modes of knowledge under one idea. This idea is the concept provided by reason of the whole insofar as the concept determines a priori not only the scope of its manifold content but also the positions which the parts occupy relatively to each other".

Reason mobilises critique in order to destroy the polemical arguments; but unleashed critique threatens to destroy the minimal remainders of the transcendent arguments which constitute reason itself. Critique liberates the processes of thought and thus reason attempts to curtail critique through the replication of transcendent functions at the transcendental level of hypothetical reason and morality; through the rigour of the hierarchy of the faculties (as we shall see below) and by the simple but insubstantial identification of critique with reason. Critique is neither extension nor legitimation of knowledge; it is the intensification of knowledge and liberates the processes of thought in a headless loop of accelerations and intensities.

### The containers and contaminants of time and subjectivity

We do not have to make do with a negative definition of the general sense of critique; we can infer more than strategies of the topographical containment of critique from the first critique. However we can only infer this general sense of critique after examining these strategies and discovering, under the ordering of the faculties by reason, an account of the immanent processes of thought. More specific strategies of containment than I have considered hereto are oriented around the key concepts of Kant's idealist edifice: time, subjectivity and the transcendental unity of apperception.

I have already noted that there is a tendency in Kant's text for time to be subject to a spatial overcoding, to the extent of being defined in terms of extensive spatial metaphors. However, it is also certain that his conception of time feeds into Kant's radical conception of subjectivity. I will attempt - over the next two chapters - to deduce a revalued fusion of space and time from a general critical reading of the restrictions which Kant's concepts of time and subjectivity place on each other.

The implications of Kant's account of time for his notion of subjectivity are succinctly expressed by Deleuze in Kant's critical philosophy and What is Philosophy[26]. For Deleuze, the Kantian novum consists in the introduction of a new conception of time into the Cartesian cogito. The 'I' of the 'I think' is a spontaneous mechanism which simply performs a synthesis of time - i.e a demarcation of present, past and future in every instant - whilst the 'I am' implied by this 'I think' is a passive, changing, phenomenal ego which is affected or changed by the activity of its thought in time. Deleuze's academic formulation does not quite convey the terror this contemporary conception has provoked in a long list of the suicided and insane;

"I am separated from myself by the form of time yet the 'I' affects this form by carrying out its synthesis: thus the ego is affected as content in this form" [27].

Deleuze's formulation at least abstracts the grounds for a vertiginous panic from the dense and obfuscating pages of the first critique; a panic which Kant avoids at all costs. It is up to others to invoke the suffering implied by this axiom and to give us grounds for suspecting that Kant simply hides his madness well (Kleist, Rimbaud, Artaud, Bataille....):

"I suffer from a fearful mental disease. My thought abandons me at every stage. From the mere fact of thought itself to the external fact of its materialization in words....I am in constant pursuit of my intellectual being. Thus when I am able to grasp a form, however imperfect, I hold on to it, afraid to lose all thought. As I know I do not do myself justice, I suffer from it, but I accept it in fear of complete death" [28].

Perhaps it is fear which drives Kant to his most unconvincing and 'imperfect' conceptions too. But where the madman embraces the "deep insecurity" of his thought and is only too happy that "this insecurity is not replaced by the complete non-existence I sometimes suffer", the philosopher attempts to cover over the traces of insecurity and illegitimate judgement with the force of a

prolix prose and a system of rational operations which overcodes a more primary machinic madness. The madman whose personality dissolves at the zero of 'complete non-existence' is immersed in "total abstraction" which is the same as the "pure wastage" of unleashed thought. This is an encounter which Kant takes every opportunity to avoid.

In Kant's account time is the immutable form of interiority in which the I affects the ego - i.e in which a succession of changes take place - and it must therefore have three modes; the mode of succession of those changes in various times, the mode of simultaneity of those changes and those various times in the form of time itself, and the mode of permanence proper to the immutable form of time and its infinite possible contents or possible limitations. It is the superimposition of these modes of time which suggests that time is subject to space and that the forms of intuition can be considered the spatial containers of manifold representations, just as representations are the signs of intensive quanta. It is the tension between the two senses of the 'forms' of intuition - forms as conditions and containers or sets - which I want to go on to examine now, and show how they arise from the overcoding of time by space. Ultimately a proper fusion of space and time can be conceived from a critical reading of the first critique.[29] In the section on time in the 'Transcendental Aesthetic' time is described as a pure form of sensible intuition in which inner sense deploys the representations of outer sense according to the three possible modes of relation in time. Kant states that no content of representations is given in the pure forms of intuition nor in pure intuitions themselves [30]. However, the form of intuition itself becomes a content when it is represented in inner sense; that is, it is shown to be a container whilst itself contained in the receiving inner sense. This representation represents: (B68)

"nothing but the mode in which the mind is affected by its own activity (through this positing of its representation), and so is affected by itself".

The representation of the form of intuition resembles the representation of the ego to the 'I think' in the self-consciousness of apperception. Common to both representations within inner sense (of the form of intuition, of the subject as it affects itself) is the relay structure by which form is converted into content within another form, and the resulting minimal

difference between forms and representations considered as quanta. All of Kant's mental mechanisms can be interpreted using this paradigm of the relay which serially contains sets of representations as quanta. Thus Kant's description of mental processes and faculties can be seen as liberating the currency of representations as quanta to the detriment of the formal differences between the faculties and their orientation to reason. So Kant continually reminds the reader of the original and a priori status of the different container-forms, their immutable totality and necessary effects and relations. Thus he defines time as an infinite and necessary "original representation" underlying all intuitions:

"In it alone is actuality of appearances possible at all. Appearances may one and all vanish; but time (as the universal condition of their possibility) cannot itself be removed," (A31 B46)

and continues by stressing that every determinate magnitude of time is a 'limitation' of this original 'total' representation. My reading of Kant's account of mental processes will highlight the seminal tension between representations considered as quanta & magnitudes and the limited container-forms associated with the hierarchy of the faculties, and thereby draw out the powers proper to a post-critical account of intensive space-time and its events.

Kant divorces this 'original representation' of time from the change and alteration which characterise its determinate magnitudes. Thus time is infected by the simultaneity and permanence proper to idealist space. For different times can only succeed, be simultaneous or coexist within the infinitude of time, which is the set of those different times, and is thus a container form like the simultaneity and permanence of idealist enclosed space. [31] Kant is at pains to suggest that the spatial interferences of time are solely analogous; but then representations are themselves only analogies of objects and yet still essential. For Kant time (A33 B50) has shape only by analogy:

"We represent the time-sequence by a line progressing to infinity in which the manifold constitutes a series of one dimension only; and we reason from the properties of this line to all the properties of time, with this one exception, that while the parts of the line are simultaneous the parts of time are always successive".

The mode of succession is itself a further example of the superimposition of the properties of space on time; the length of the line of time is schematised

in space, by the succession and simultaneity of space. This spatialisation accords with Kant's general schema in which forms (faculties and functions) confine the (the radical import of) basic quantitative processes of the mind. These quanta originate outside the mental schema, and intrude only to be processed and relayed; thus they are essentially affects. In the course of their subjection to the functions of the hierarchy of the faculties all resonances of the primary power of the affect are replaced by the equilibrations internal to the faculties, and the affect becomes a content of consciousness which has the sole function of being a raw material for the transformations, overcodings and categorisations of those faculties. This damping down of the affect is not surprising given Kant's attitude to the noumenal, i.e his inability to consider an affect as primary (and the mental as a reactive response) which might also be too powerful for the overdetermined and restricted mechanisms of the mind. The rational defence mechanisms which react at such a preposterously massive level of overkill, internally producing an environment to swamp the complexities of the environment of the initial external stimulus are so detailed that Kant can go so far as to emphasise the 'objective reality' of the object, thereby designating only its measurement and control by the understanding and reason. Kant's fear should be bulimic - the fear of incorporating more affective quanta than one can transform and reduce - but Kant shows little explicit unease about what the mental operation might come into contact with. There is, however in this still an implicit awareness of the threat posed by the affect:

"It is only if we ascribe objective reality to these forms of representation, that it becomes impossible for us to prevent everything being thereby transformed into mere illusion". (B70-1)

The 'Transcendental Deduction A' section suggests that the influence of spatialisation extends far beyond the account of the pure forms of intuition to the functions of the imagination, the understanding and the transcendental unity of apperception. At the same time the status of the transcendental unity of apperception calls into question the validity of the model of the container sets and unities of the faculties, not because of any transcendence or detachment from the general mental move towards the unity of judgement and reason, but because of the immanence of the transcendental unity of

apperception to the field of consciousness, and thus its redundancy. This qualification allows for a reading of the operations of the faculties without the defence mechanisms of the container sets of unity.

In the imagination and understanding representations are linked to the functions of concepts of the understanding oriented towards the unity of judgements. Where intuitions rested on affections, concepts rest on functions, and are identified as subsumptions of manifolds under a common representation, as "the unity of the act of bringing various representations under one common representation" (A68 B93). Kant calls judgements - the goal of these functions - "functions of unity among our representations", which seems to suggest that the difference between a concept and a judgement is only a quantitative one, a question of sets and container sets. Kant attempts to complicate the issue by designating the functions in judgement as 'categories', and by emphasising the connections between the general function of synthetic unity and the operations of the higher faculties. In general he is quick to counter the suggestion that the difference between representations, functions, concepts and judgements is purely quantitative; it is certainly true that it becomes more difficult to account for the higher faculties in terms of the machinic base economy of quanta/flows which are also forms, i.e degrees, which constitute the processes of the pathological faculties - but this is simply the product of an increasing rationalisation. For Kant, the abstract mental sequences (of for instance: intuitions > concepts > judgements, relations > functions > unities, representations > relations > syntheses) all tend towards unity via the category of community, not because of their base currency of representations but because of their shared regulated end-point of synthetic unity. The free sequences and flows of representations are increasingly supplanted by the machines of composition and reciprocal determination, to the point where the idea that time and quanta have a privileged relation to the flux and influence of affectivity is irrelevant.

The spatial container mechanism associated with the hierarchy of the faculties reaches a new level of complexity with the disjunctive mode of the relations

of thought within judgement. Kant creates a structure at the level of propositions and judgement, i e at a macro or logically 'substantial' level, which allows for the containment of divisions and differences within knowledge, and which retroactively affects the orientation of the base machinic level of sensations, intuitions and concepts which lead up to judgement. Kant's account of the disjunctive mode of the relations of representations in judgement gives us a first full image of the terminal point which he would have for the sequences of representations. The disjunctive logical function of judgement entails the pure concept of a unity of knowledge which is created by the division of its parts, be they representations, concepts or propositions. The concept of this disjunctive unity allows us to understand the similarity of the structures involved in the relay of representations into concepts and judgements. Kant states that the disjunctive mode in judgement is the site of the community of propositions in the unity of the knowledge at stake: "a certain community of the known constituents" which mutually exclude each other and thus determine the "totality", the "whole content" of a given knowledge. (A74 B99)

The sequence of representations is synthesised into the sphere of a judgement or knowledge which is represented as a whole divided into parts, the multiplicity of subordinate concepts coordinated with each other, reciprocally determining each other as excluded. A coordinated space results, and thus a spatial composition replaces the sequences which had at least the minimal temporal resonance of succession.

The understanding's logical category of community entailed in the form of the disjunctive judgement extends towards objects in general; thus we can see that 'community' is the horizon-event for representations at all levels of thought and not simply the base machinic level of sensations and intuitions. This disjunctive 'community of things' (B112) is both the ultimate concretion of transcendental containment and as will slowly become apparent in the next chapter, the site of a new space-time fusion.

The container and contaminant of transcendental apperception

The Transcendental Deduction A and B detail the spontaneous synthetic operations of the base machinic levels of intuition, imagination and understanding, operations which can be read as producing the penultimate spatial containment of the flows of time and as helping to liberate a radical new conception of space-time. Kant's text emphasises the necessity of a relation between the synthetic operations and the transcendental unity of apperception, a relation which also both constitutes the last containment of space by time, and can be read - given a certain reading of the status of the transcendental unity of apperception - as the point at which the hierarchy of the sequence of receptors and transformers internal to the faculties, rather than being necessitated by any necessary terminal point, is transformed into a self-affecting loop of immanent processes.

Kant defines synthesis as a power of combination, a further quanta or representation ensconced within the qualitatively interior activity of the mind: (B131)

"the representation of the synthetic unity of the manifold...within the self-activity of the subject".

This is the first time that mental processes have explicitly been identified with the activity of the formal subject, and thereby involved in the integrated structure of the hierarchy of the faculties. Kant maintains that the a priori faculty of combination is proper to the understanding but is only effected in synthesis in relation to the imagination, so the synthetic operation proper to intuition appears to be only indirectly regulated i.e. regulated only in so far as it is necessarily drawn up into the synthetic operation proper to the imagination. Kant attempts to achieve similar necessary inclusions of the representations of base faculties in 'high' faculties throughout the first critique with the use of what I would call a 'recursive transcendent operation'. Each of the base faculties has both an empirical employment/contents and a pure or intellectual form/employment which connects it with the understanding, in which the pure forms can themselves become contents or representations as concepts. Each base faculty thus transcends itself in so far as it has a pure form/employment and connects necessarily with a higher faculty.[32] Thus the empirical element of the faculty can be described as conditioned by the transcendental element - pure form - of that faculty as well as by the form of the operations of the faculty

above it. Kant's general strategy here is to posit the pure forms of the base faculties as necessary links of dependency from the lower faculties and their manifold content to the regulating functions of the higher faculties. This 'transcendent operation' can be said to create the hierarchy of the faculties in so far as its effect is to connect pure forms and intellectual employment (i.e include pure forms in the understanding), and inversely exclude direct connection between the quanta of representations as sensations and the understanding. Yet this operation consists solely of repeating the minimal distinctions already manifest in the base faculties between form and content. Can this simple recursive distinction necessarily effect the hierarchisation of the faculties which is set as its task?

This operation is aided by the concept of transcendental unities in general (which I would argue is in its deployment little different from a transcendental idea of reason). We have noted above [33] that Kant states that the unity of the form of intuition (time) and its minimally differentiated content - formal intuition (space) - presupposed the forms of the transcendental subject and object. Kant now argues that the unity of formal intuition thereby depends on the syntheses of the understanding and thus on the understanding's spontaneous act of transcendental imagination; which itself is evidence of a transcendental unity of apperception. The relations between intuitions and the transcendental unity of apperception and between appearances and a transcendental object, are necessitated, Kant argues, by the transcendental law that representations obey the understanding's a priori rules of synthetical unity.

Transcendental unities would escape this problem of the circularity of their own presuppositions if they were properly transcendent and detached from the operations they performed; but the distinction between the transcendent and the transcendental emphasises that transcendental unities are immanent to the field of possible experience, thus only further sequences within the understanding's "synthetic unity of appearances in accordance with concepts". This furnishes us with a definition of a 'transcendental ground'; it is a transcendent operation drawn back into the immanent processes of thought. The circularity of their presuppositions damages the (transcendental) status of these unities, concepts and the understanding; accordance is impossible when

each is only arbitrarily distinguished from the circular processes of representations as quanta. Even Kant admits that the transcendental unities do presuppose a loop or circularity of presuppositions; but for him this does not affect the unilateral dependences of the base faculties on them, because the loop is necessary - all possible appearances relate to an original apperception in which, Kant states, everything must conform to the unity of self-consciousness. (A112) Kant does not ask whether his unities and operations are necessary; for him a function or a process that does not zoom in on the base unit of One would be simply inconceivable, a zero or type of nothing [34].

Thus, for Kant, inner sense and empirical apperception are connected to 'original apperception' and its transcendental unity of apperception. Such a connection encloses the mind-machine within itself, between empirical and transcendental apperception. Kant can argue for the existence of an 'original apperception' and a transcendental unity of apperception, despite the almost viral growth of the number of relations between faculties, because of the general perceived unilateral orientation amidst these relations. For the same reason, however, we can state that original apperception and the transcendental unity of apperception must be included in the immanent processes of the mind-machine. The term 'original' is to be understood in terms of the definition of unity implied by Kant's deduction of transcendental apperception:

"All necessity without exception is grounded in a transcendental condition. There must be a transcendental ground of the unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of all our intuitions..of the concepts of objects in general..of all objects of experience, a ground without which it would be impossible to think any object for our intuitions; for this object is no more than that something, the concept of which expresses such a necessity of synthesis".(A106-7)

Kant calls this original and transcendental condition "numerically identical...pure, original, unchangeable consciousness..transcendental apperception", and opposes its numerical identity and unity to the manifold representations to be found in the flux of inner sense, which includes the unity of pure apperception i.e the spontaneous act of self-consciousness, the representation 'I think'. (A116-7) Thus even the unity of pure apperception depends on a transcendental unity of apperception and its power of (B133) "original combination". Transcendental apperception is less an act than a

representation; from this we can infer that the transcendental unity of apperception is, as a representation, simply another quantum, but a quantity which is also a numerical identity or unity. The term 'origin' here denotes the unity of the One, the unity of the unit; the unit which measures quantities or the number which constitutes numbers. The problem with the container-set theory of representations, syntheses and unities is that the unit is not a set of manifold representations, but the unit of their measurement. Thus original apperception and transcendental unity can be conceived as immanent to the mind-machine, as its measuring units.

Kant conceals the import of this definition and presents the transcendental affinity of representations to this unit as the influence of that unit, from the point in space at which sequences of representations stop. The unit is also the measure of a complete sequence, that is it is also a totality and a maximum. Kant describes all possible representations as 'belonging' to the totality of a possible self-consciousness (A113-4), yet presents this transcendental affinity as if it were not already immanent to those processes of synthesis and representations; it has to be conferred by the understanding [35]. The understanding is the regulator of the law of the transcendental unity of apperception, a law which Kant imposes needlessly (in terms of the description of mental processes as immanent), and thereby creates a spurious hierarchical order in mental processes. In the immanent processes of thought, convergence is not the product of the order of the faculties, but is simply a further episode of the recursive operation immanent in representations as quanta and the effect of their interaction. In the immanent processes of thought, representations and their forms are quanta, and the differences between operations within and across faculties is purely quantitative or scalar - the same operation replicates itself at different magnitudes of representation. We could even describe 'unities' and forms as residual or redundant aggregates or composites, crystallisations within the fluxes of representations, effects of the habitual movement of representations - but certainly neither lawgivers nor regulators of those flows. Such crystallisations are themselves inherently open to change as the affective representations change, and as the energetic environment of their stimuli changes. The unities and their transcendental orientations are merely second order descriptions of the recursive sequences of representations as quanta.

If transcendental unity can be conceived as immanent to intellectual processes we must differentiate it from Kant's designation of the transcendental. I suggest referring to it as a transcendental operation. This also marks its minimal difference from the transcendent operations which the rational sense of critique exposes. Deleuze and Guattari's What is Philosophy succinctly defines the complexities of Kant's attempt to utilise critique and preserve transcendence with his notion of the transcendental: [36]

"Kant calls the subject transcendental and not transcendent, precisely because it is the subject of the field of all possible experience, which nothing can escape, the exterior as much as the interior. Kant challenges all transcendent use of the syntheses but he adds immanence to the subject of synthesis as a new unity, a subjective unity. He even allows himself the luxury of denouncing Transcendent Ideas in order to make of them the 'horizon' of the immanent field of the subject. In doing this Kant discovers the modern way of saving transcendence: it is no longer the transcendence of Something or of a One superior to all things (contemplation) but that of a Subject to which the field of immanence cannot be attributed without also belonging to an ego which necessarily represents to itself such a subject (reflection)."

Our critical reading which seeks to expose the strategies of containment which are applied to the flows of time by the superimposition of a characteristically Idealist sense of space must take account of the processes of the transcendental synthesis of imagination, by which the passive subject is represented to the spontaneous 'I' of the understanding. This pulsing 'I' produces a series of representations of the 'I' (which is a content of intuition), in conformity with time as the form of inner sense. (B159) In this synthesis time as succession is inscribed within motion in space, and time's continuity - that is, its spatial divisibility - helps produce the requisite representation of the subject as a manifold of intuition. Kant identifies the necessity of the transcendental synthesis of imagination with the necessary inscriptive nature of all representations of change and process, in which successions in time are necessarily represented as motions in space: (B155)

"We cannot think a line without drawing it in thought...Even time itself we cannot represent save in so far as we attend in the drawing of a straight line (which has to serve as the outer figurative representation of time), merely to the act of the synthesis of the manifold whereby we successively determine inner sense, and in so doing attend to the succession of this determination in inner sense. Motion, as an act of the subject..and therefore the synthesis of the manifold in space, first produces the concept of succession - if we abstract from this manifold

and attend solely to the act through which we determine the inner sense according to its form. The understanding does not, therefore, find in inner sense such a combination of the manifold, but produces it, in that it affects that sense".

Kant extends the necessity of the spatialisation of time for all representations of alteration or change, not just the alterations of subjectivity. (B156) He does not consider the necessary analogy of time as space to be restrictive; he is more concerned with the fact that an emphasis on outer sense and space defends him from the charge of idealism. Kant argues this in the section on the refutation of the charge of idealism (B275-279) and in the 'Postulates of Empirical Thought section' (A227-235 B279-294). For Kant, time is as we have noted [37] the permanent form of inner intuition; the concept of permanence is exclusively linked to the concept of substance, which itself depends on the form of outer intuition in space. Thus he cannot be accused of idealism, when he is so wantonly engaged in 'transcendental empiricism'! Permanence is an attribute of space not time:

"For space alone is determined as permanent while time and therefore everything that is in inner sense is in constant flux" (B291).

Kant even domesticates the flux of time by associating it with alteration rather than change - because alteration like motion is a rearrangement of permanent space (B292) rather than a dissolution of entities or energies. This notion of alteration is expanded in Kant's work on Physics, which is Newtonian in orientation.[38] Kant uses the notion of spatial alteration in relation to time as a foil to the dissipative chaos of time's flux; by extension the concepts of unity and community - as they are applied to time - are also part of this domestication. [39]

Kant's account of the transcendental synthesis of the imagination is a good example of the extent to which mental processes characterised by time are subjected to a spatial overcoding. This account is as close to describing the pure processes of representation-as-quanta as Kant gets. It is interesting to note that the Kantian revisionists, Deleuze and Guattari, use a revaluation of the three modes of this synthesis as a framework for their critique of Kantian culture. It is certainly true that the operations of this synthesis do not require the hierarchy of the faculties to which Kant restricts them in order to flow and operate (A97-A104).

The first synthetic operation is the connective synthesis of apprehension in

intuition, in which a series of impressions is intuited in sequence. This synthetic operation distinguishes the "absolute unity" (A99) of each impression in the series of impressions, given that "it is contained in a single moment". This equation of a unit of time and a unit of space (1=1) is a radical element in Kant's account, with its suggestion that unity itself is simply a coordination of units of space and time, the full import of which will only become apparent in Bataille's work on the planes of transcendence in relation to the zero of immanence.[40]

The second synthetic operation rescues unity from this simple dependence on coordinates of space and time, and returns it to the idealist idiom of transcendent spatial containers or unities. The sequence of impressions is "run through and held together" in a single representation of the manifold of intuition. This synthesis acts as a kind of memory which renders minimal the difference between the coexistence and the sequence of representations. It connects one representation with another in a reserve in which the preceding representations are reproduced as the mind advances to the next representation.

The third synthetic operation is essentially rational (A103-4) and fulfills the requirement that the manifold of the representation be transformed from a succession/sequence into an addition, a total or concept. The concept then functions as the consciousness of the unity of the complete synthesis.

Deleuze and Guattari's account in Anti-Oedipus[41] of the syntheses of desiring production inflects this Kantian schema of synthesis; they generalise the model of desire, as Kant defines it, and interpret it as primary to the self-affecting loops of desire- (rather than mind-) machines. They do not think that the machinics of process need be defined in terms of human knowledge processes. Thus they can be said to liberate powers of synthesis from the restrictions placed on them by the mind-machine and its hierarchies, and might be said to liberate the free flows of time from their spatial containers. However they approach their task as an extension of the critical enterprise and simply seek to distinguish legitimate and illegitimate uses of those powers of synthesis. This critical endeavour, although central to the form of the Critiques, remains foreign to the Kantian general idealist topography which Bataille employs and which snags on the 'general economy' which shares attributes with Deleuze and Guattari's legitimated energetics.

Bataille would surely consider the critical designation of legitimate and illegitimate uses of powers to be a rationalisation of energy which has one mode only, although this is not to say that this critical distinction is not implicit in everything he wrote, if one wishes to interpret it from the perspective of a second order servile consciousness.

Deleuze and Guattari are useful Kantian revisionists; we could use them to define the transcendent operation which we have noted so often in the preceding pages [42]; we could even follow their extrapolation of the use of the transcendent operation in the Kantian culture of capital. [43] But Deleuze and Guattari are concerned with an intensification of the Kantian notion of critique; by which I mean that they re-run the critical mechanism in the light of the limitlessness proper to the scale of intensive degrees and attenuate the transcendent resonances which stick to Kant's use of transcendental terms such as 'transcendental' and 'unity'. They redraw the critical machine as distributed in an unhierarchised space, a space proper to the distribution of intensive quanta. This is still transcendental philosophy - even if it is called 'transcendental empiricism'. Compared to the iconoclastic jargon debauches of Bataille, who thereby distances himself from philosophy as such, Deleuze and Guattari's attempts to innervate Kantianism are the acts of scholastics seducing schoolboys with smutty readings of classic texts. Deleuze and Guattari's revaluation of critique is very different in tone from Bataille's post-critical interest in the effects of such a revaluation (the critical basis of which remains implicit in his work). Bataille can still articulate general thetic schemas or charts - including the space-time fusion of intensive or energetic differentiation in general economy; it is just that he also admits to the exceeding and ruination of such schemas in the very extreme sensations which are thereby charted.

Deleuze and Guattari hope to bring a corrective balance into the traditional Idealist picture with considerations of intensity, scale and improbability. This is still philosophy, and must end up privileging one redundant degree (the human) out of all proportion to its status on the scale of intensive quantities. They open up philosophical economies through the reappraisal of intensive scales of differentiation and thereby interface philosophy and the hereto repressed sense of time as uni-directional. But the latter is still

articulated in terms of its rationalisation, in terms of philosophy. Perhaps philosophy is incapable of not reducing time, putting it to work to its own constructive or intensive purposes (although intensity has a privileged attributive relation to time at a physiological and psychological level). This is true for Deleuze and Guattari as much as Kant; it takes a non-philosopher to panic at time and feel its intensity. At least Deleuze and Guattari are adamant about the interests they serve. In What is Philosophy they admit to chasing a definition of philosophical time and identify it with a time of layers and co-existence which is excessively Kantian, stretching and complicating the sense of topography which he originated: (QP58)

"This is a stratigraphical time where the before and the after only indicate an order of superimpositions.....philosophical time is a grandiose time of coexistence which does not exclude the before and the after but superimposes them in a stratographic order..Philosophy is becoming not history: it is the coexistence of planes rather than the succession of systems".

Let us now turn our attention to the claims of intensity, as they appear in Kant and are given centre stage in Deleuze and Guattari. Can philosophy even turn intensity into one of its territories and render Bataille's scream that "Intensity alone matters" OC5, conceptually valid?

## Chapter Four: KANT - SENSATIONS AND INTENSITIES

### Time and magnitudes

The difference between Bataille's and Kant's conceptions of time and the effects of time is linked to a series of Kantian terms which Bataille also deploys in an altered state: space and unity, but also limit, continuity, intensity, infinity/the indefinite. As we have seen with regard to time, Kant's definitions of such terms is marked by a restriction of their sense to a specific application; thereby Kant delimits a rational realm of the mind and its relaying hierarchical processes. We have already noted the primary functions imported from the attributes of a specific notion of space in this delimitation of the processes of the mind. I now want to account for these terms which challenge the orientation of time to this conception of spatial unity. It is the nature of the map of processes of 'becoming' in general which changes when these terms are liberated by the explosion of the mindscape of their Kantian context.

It is in the 'Schematism of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding' section that Kant first discusses intensity. Kant has already shown that time is a condition of the manifold of inner sense and itself transcendently determined as an a priori manifold of pure intuition by the concepts of the understanding. Now that sensibility's necessary relation to the pure imagination and the higher faculty of the understanding has been shown, Kant can formulate this relation as reciprocal by emphasising the integration of the understanding in the formal conditions of sensibility. He argues that every concept entails a 'schema', that is an image (A140 B180) of its formal condition in sensibility. The schemata of the categories include the schema of magnitude or number, which Kant defines as "the successive addition of homogeneous units" (A142 B182). It is no surprise to find Kant orienting number around the restricted value of time i.e around the synthetic unity of time, rather than stressing numerical and temporal multiplicity. Kant argues that number is necessarily linked to the synthetic unity of time because a given number is generated through the successive addition of a unit-number in intuition: "due to my generating time itself in the apprehension of the intuition" of the successive addition of a unit-number. For Kant then, a

number is a succession or series of degrees attesting to the unity of a unit-number; a given number correlates with the degree of an intentional act within the synthetic unity of the time of intuition. I will argue that the identification of magnitude with the idea of a unit-number, and the relation of both to the synthetic unity of the time of intuition is problematic; an alternative approach is identifiable from Kant's remarks on intensive magnitude, from which we can only conclude that neither number nor time are exclusively tied to the time of intuition. Kant will continually attempt to disavow the disjunction between magnitude and the unit-number of a time proper to intuition and the hierarchy of the faculties.

The difference between the two conceptions of number can usefully be related to the transcendent and immanent descriptions of the Kantian mental processes which I have already considered. I argued above [1] that Kant's text applied a transcendent operation to the mental processes as even when unities were called transcendental Kant wanted them to appear qualitatively different from the quanta which they regulated. I associated this transcendence with the unity of apperception, which is itself simply a transcendent base number, the One which is associated with both unity and unit. The unit functions as a unit of measurement and produces measurements which are degrees in relation to this presupposed number. The unit thus presupposes the difference between one given dimension of the enumeration of quanta as units and the transcendent and unconditioned dimension of the unit, unity or principle which performs this enumeration. For Kant time is denumerable in such a manner; he will go on to suggest that intensity and continuity are too.

Deleuze and Guattari suggest an alternative to this transcendent orientation of numbers.[2] This involves conceiving numbers themselves as substantives, as multiplicities which are distributed in a movement of "autonomous arithmetic organisation" (TP389) in a space of  $n$  dimensions, i.e in a space in which changes in numbers or degrees (or 'events') equal changes in the directions of motion of 'events', because numbers are less measurements (magnitudes as units) than the distances and duration across which numbers as degrees or 'events' are transformed into other numbers. As Deleuze and Guattari put it: "The number is no longer a means of counting or measuring but of moving" (TP389).

For Deleuze and Guattari the number as multiplicity is related to the image of thought as multiplicity which they call the rhizome and in which unity, the unique unit of One, is transformed into one number among many such virtual multiplicities, rather than being subtracted as a precondition of units of measurement. The rhizome lacks the supplementary dimension needed for transcendent overcoding because it is not composed of units and their necessary unity, but of differentiating "directions in motion" (TP21) which are themselves "varieties of measurement":

"The number is no longer a universal concept measuring elements according to their emplacement in a given division, but has itself become a multiplicity that varies according to the dimensions considered (the primacy of the domain over a complex of numbers attached to that domain.) We do not have units of measure, only multiplicities or varieties of measurement. The notion of unity appears only when there is a power takeover in the multiplicity....Unity always operates in an empty dimension supplementary to that of the system considered (overcoding)"(TP8-9).

Number as degree is an event in the fusional space-time proper to the mapping of intensive energetic movements. We will see later how such movements interrupt Kant's account of intensity and how they ultimately inform Bataille's account of the temporal energetic differentiations of general economy.[3]

For Kant, the schema of reality of every represented object which has a determinate place in time entails a given degree of sensation; thus the quanta of every sensation is a magnitude. Magnitudes 'fill' a specific time to a specific degree - that is their event - and time in general to different degrees; but thereby they are degrees related to the base unit of One. Kant can only conceive of changes of degree (and time) in relation to that base unit. He concentrates on the restricted change brought about by the continuity - or infinite divisibility - of every degree and of the 'whole' of time in general. He is unwilling to consider a form of number or degree which threatens the unity of apperception:

"Now every sensation has a degree or magnitude whereby in respect of its representation of an object otherwise remaining the same, it can fill out one and the same time, that is, occupy inner sense more or less completely, down to its cessation in nothingness (=0=negatio). There therefore exists a relation and connection between reality and negation, or rather a transition from the one to the other which makes every reality representable as a quantum" (A143 B182-3).

Kant countenances zero only to defer it with the notion of the continuity of time and magnitude in a given reality - of the "continuous and uniform production" of that reality; and with the notion of the continuity or infinite divisibility of that reality as a degree in the 'full time' proper to it. The transformation of reality into negation promised in the passage is a horizon event the import of which Kant cannot countenance because of the form of the unit which proceeds from One. The approach of zero is indefinitely rerouted through the division of each given degree of reality into further degrees which are themselves oriented to the base unit One.[4] This operation is possible - as are all other Kantian mind-operations - because of the difference between the quantities proper to sensation and the qualitative nature of apperception. This difference is thematised by Kant's distinction between the schemata of magnitude and quality: magnitude is "the generation of time itself in the successive apprehension of an object" whereas quality is "the synthesis of sensation or perception with the representation of time [i.e] the filling of time." Kant's distinction between quantity and quality is typically perverse; as both appear as looping presuppositions of each other one is tempted to state that their qualitative opposition must be false. We have noted the way that the operations of the mind-mechanism can be reduced to the level of the recursive fluctuations of representations as quanta. Thus the difference between quantity and quality - that is between sensation and apperception - can be called internal to the 'problematic' of quantity i.e to the problem of how quanta can be described as changing in time. This is a problem which the alternative notion of number-as-multiplicity begins to unravel. [5] Kant, of course, is adamant that quantity and quality are distinct in the synthetic generation of time in subjective experience. This allows him to render magnitude or quantity dependent on the quality of the coding number, the original unit, One, and its simple numbering operation. Thus magnitude is related to the professedly qualitative processes of synthetic subjective experience and numbers or manifold units are related to the qualitative unity or One of apperception.

Kant argues that magnitudes are implicated by their structure in the a priori form of inner sense - time - and thus necessarily in the process and anticipated unity of synthetic judgement, with its necessary unity of apperception. (A154 B193) He defines the concept of a magnitude in general as

(A162 B203)

"consciousness of the synthetic unity of the manifold and homogeneous in intuition in general [by means of which] the representation of an object first becomes possible."

Every appearance is, - if it depends on intuition - an extensive magnitude because appearances are intuited as the successive syntheses of magnitudes i.e because in every intuition space and time are the magnitudes - the line of successive points and the sequence of the series of moments - which are overcoded by the exclusive synthetic unity of the original unit of One.

In the 'Anticipations of Perception' section Kant distinguishes extensive and intensive magnitudes. Intensive magnitudes are so-called because they are quantities unrelated to the extensive intuitions of space or time, but simply mark the registering of a sensational affect in consciousness. Kant states (A166 B207-8) that the real - insofar as it is an object of sensation - has a degree or intensive magnitude; that is, all appearances have intensive magnitudes and a corresponding effect on the faculty of sensation. Intensive magnitudes are the product of the affecting of sensation by intense appearances. Kant argues, unconvincingly, that intensive magnitudes anticipate perception and the operations effected by the hierarchy of the faculties, even though sensations are merely "subjective representations" which "give us only the consciousness that the subject is affected and which we relate to an object in general." Here, Kant is arguing that in sensations without intuition, the notion of an object in general is still incurred; and it is this notion which drags sensation into the hierarchy of the faculties. The "real in sensation" (which as the 'real' is, for Kant, already opposed to negation=0 and therefore oriented around a base unit) presupposes the figure of the a priori schema of reality (the transcendental object which functions as the boundary or base unit of experience in the same way as the transcendental subject does [6]). Thus the intensive magnitude of sensation is implicated in the extensive synthesis of perception. But the relation of sensation to the transcendental object occurs in intuition and independently of sensation; Kant's description of its action as an anticipation of perception is purely hypothetical. Kant even admits this, in stating that sensation is independent of a priori knowledge; (A167 B209)

"sensation is just that element which cannot be anticipated".

Sensation is both excluded from and included in the faculties, and thus Kant cannot account for the difference between extensive and intensive magnitudes or between the higher faculties and sensation without exacerbating the affect of sensation and its intensities on the hierarchy of the faculties.[7] Given its problematic epistemological status, might sensation not be capable of a redrawing of the complete hierarchy and its operations? It is possible that extensive degrees are simply intensive degrees overcoded by the base unit associated with the unity of apperception. It is possible that this account of the sensational intensive degrees of intellectual events would account for fluctuations of degree and change in general in a more precise manner. It is possible that the noumenon (with which sensation shares its epistemological status), rather than the transcendental object, is the object proper to sensation; that is, an object which is the massive radiation of intensive energies which come to affect the subject as sensation. [8]

The notion of intensive magnitude affords insight into the changes wrought by time, which the Kantian schema itself cannot supply. Ultimately, Bataille's account of annihilatory time can - as we shall see - be rationalised as providing such information.[9] Intensity also reconfigures the Kantian idea of community as the distribution of intensities on the grid supplied by the fusion of time and space.[10] Kant, however, is intent on reducing the impact of intensity on his rational schema. He achieves this by associating it with restricted - enclosed spatial - notions of alteration and continuity.

For Kant, extensive magnitudes are the units of measurement (of space and time as points and lines) proper to intuition. Intensive magnitudes are the degrees of sensation, which is characterised by its fluctuations and changes. Yet Kant can only describe these changes in terms of the alteration and divisibility proper to spatial enclosures, in which divisions are smaller units which are still related to their specific magnitude as its fractions, and thus to the One as their ordinal number. Thus intensive magnitudes analogically share the dependence of extensive magnitudes on the base unit of the ordinal transition or moment of pure consciousness in which the difference between zero and one is elided. Kant states that sensation can fluctuate to zero, but gives us no account of how that is possible. He ignores the impact of the intensive nature of change in sensation - after designating it - and

attempts to use sensation to consolidate the hold of a pure consciousness on given magnitudes of representation. He does not infer the full effect of his own notion of the difference between positive magnitudes as units issuing from the zero (=1) of pure consciousness and positive magnitudes of an intensive zero.[11] His emphasis reduces the values of degree in general to the fixed value of a unit of measurement (even of sensation), a unit overcoded (implicitly) by the moment of pure consciousness.[12]

Kant attempts what is merely hypothetical - the implication of intensity in the time and space foreign to sensation - by introducing the concept of the quality of continuity. Kant demands that there be continuity of degrees and continuity of the fractions of those degrees in intensive magnitudes. On the one hand this adds to the "profoundly schizoid" (A019) picture of intensities as seething positive quanta (A168 B210); on the other hand Kant's agenda in outlawing any absence of sensation is to outlaw the possible threat of interference to his procedures posed by the 'emptiness' which he associates with the zero intensity of noumenal nothingness:

"Between reality in the field of appearance and negation there is a continuity of many possible intermediate sensations, the difference between any two of which is always smaller than the difference between the given sensation and zero or complete negation. In other words the real in the field of appearance has always a magnitude".

This continuity is little different from the divisibility of the units of measurement which we noticed in extensive magnitudes.[13] Continuity defers change with its orientation to the base unit of one; the value of change being present in the quote as complete negation. With regard to intensive magnitudes Kant's definition of continuity as (A170 B211) "the property of magnitudes by which no part of them is the smallest possible..by which no part is simple" emphasises the division of a unified measured magnitude rather than its mode of transition. It is no surprise to find Kant concluding that all magnitudes, extensive as well as intensive are continuous, and characterising continuity in terms of the points and instants, "positions" and limits in space and time, descriptions straight out of the descriptions of the forms of intuition in the 'Transcendental Aesthetic.' At the same time Kant has the gall to call continuous magnitudes 'flowing magnitudes' since all such magnitudes are intuited in time:

"and the continuity of time is ordinarily designated by the term flowing or flowing away".

Thus Kant presents us with 'flowing magnitudes' of intensity, but only as supplements to the permanence of the extensive. From this Kant concludes that even at the level of the universe there is no diminution or fluctuation in extensive magnitude. He argues that alteration or difference only occur at the level of degree, at the level of the fluctuations and gradations of intensive magnitude. From this passage:

"Intensive magnitude can in different appearances be smaller or greater, although the extensive magnitude of the intuition remains one and the same"(A173 B214),

Kant extrapolates the thesis that matter in general subsists and that only heat and radiation fluctuate. Kant's brief flip into a personalised Newtonian physics is liberating because it presents us with an account of intensities which is untainted by the restrictions of inner sense. Unfortunately the rest of the critique sets about reorienting fluctuations and alteration around inner sense and the spatial constructions of time which we encountered interminably in the 'Transcendental Aesthetic'. [14]

At the level of the physical universe as well as at the level of transcendental philosophy Kant divorces intensity from matter, which is a mistake as common as the distinction between quantity and quality. But the fate of this latter distinction in the section we have been reading is premonitory of the abortion of transcendental philosophy to come: quality melted down into the intensive quanta (the fluctuating degrees) immanent to the extensive quanta of a representational matter which fills and intensifies its given space. We should not be surprised if this intensification of the Kantian topography inevitably leads to its explosion. Bataille will conclude this era of philosophy by fusing intensity with matter in general and allowing it to diminish to zero in the energetic dispersal of space-time.

### A revisionist Kant

We have seen that Kant orients conceptions of intensity and continuity around his notion of time as inner sense i.e around units of inherently spatial measurement, around numbers coded by One. Given Kant's strategy we have

inferred that at a textual level intensity and continuity are only defined negatively, i.e in terms of what they are not and against what they are not. So what are they and how do these positive definitions relate to the post-critical attributes of Bataille's thought? These problems can best be approached through an analysis of the revisionist Kantian Idealist energetic schemas of Deleuze and Guattari. They best define the terms which the novum of Bataille's thought uses and dissolves in its direct revaluation of critical philosophy through the values of energetic sensation. This critical meltdown occurs in Kant's critical project itself - in the Critique of Judgement; and Bataille's accounts of impersonal energy and intensive sensation owe more to the Kant of hysterical aesthetic judgement than to the Idealist principles of space-time, intensity and continuity - the rational 'principles' which 'condition' his accounts - as Deleuze and Guattari calmly articulate them.

We saw above [15] that unities themselves can be considered as parts which do not unify or overcode other parts but exist with those parts in a spatium of n dimensions.[16] We saw how a number itself might be considered as a multiplicity, as a substantive variety of measurement rather than as a unit of measurement. Now we shall see how these notions might feed into more positive notions of both continuity and intensity, definitions which tackle the central question of the transition between degrees or change in general.

In his brief excursus into physics at the end of the 'Anticipations of Perception' section Kant posited a theory of intense matter as that which always fills space to given degrees of intensity. Kant is wrong to suggest that this theory emphasises the difference between matter as extension in space and intensity. It is rather a question of 'matter=energy'; or a system in which space is only occupied to an intensive degree. This links up with our earlier questions as to what 'realm' or 'community' was proper to numbers considered as multiplicities, and what principle was proper to their distribution. Not that intensities are numbers per se but that both numbers and intensities share the attributes of substantive multiplicities; not that numbers and intensive matter are distributed together, but that their different distributions can be mapped out using a single matrix.

Deleuze and Guattari call this intense matter, in so far as it is perceived pulsing in the schizophrenic's desiring-production, 'the body without organs' (BwO):

"The BwO causes intensities to pass: it produces and distributes them in a 'spatium' that is itself intensive, lacking extension. It [BwO] is not space, nor is it in space: it is matter that occupies space to a given degree - to the degree corresponding to the intensities produced. It is ...intense matter, the matrix of intensity, intensity=0" (TP153)

Throughout Anti-Oedipus and Thousand Plateaus Deleuze and Guattari superimpose the distributions of varieties of multiplicities on this basic map of an intensive spatium. These varieties of multiplicities share certain attributes that the authors associate with intensity rather than extension, which is linked to units of measurement. The most important and novel attribute of the varieties of multiplicities they choose is that of continuous variation, or the continuity proper to multiplicities. One problem with zero as matrix of intensity - rather than One as unit of measurement - is that magnitudes are not fixed in relation to their base unit, but relative to other magnitudes; they are all differences above zero. Thus Deleuze and Guattari reanimate Meinong and Russell's distinction between constant magnitudes and fuzzy or "anexact yet rigorous" distances, the former relating to fixed magnitudes (magnitudes fixed in their dependence on a base unit) and the latter to intensive degrees in multiplicitous space (TP483):

"[Distances] cannot divide without changing in nature each time: An intensity ..is not composed of addable and displaceable magnitudes: a temperature is not the sum of two smaller temperatures, a speed is not the sum of 2 smaller speeds. Since each intensity is itself a difference, it divides according to an order in which each term of the division differs in nature from the others. Distance is a set of ..differences that are enveloped in one another in such a way that it is possible to judge which is larger or smaller but not their exact magnitudes... these multiplicities of 'distance' are inseparable from a process of continuous variation, whereas multiplicities of 'magnitude' distribute constants and variables."

The principle of intensive continuity is not simply: "everything divides, but into itself" (A076) in an indefinite scalar involute. It is also a principle of continuous variation in which each intensity is "relatively indivisible" (TP30) i.e indivisible above or below a certain threshold (relative to other degrees into which above or below that threshold it is transformed). Where Kant's magnitudes were indivisible by other degrees yet fixed in relation to the base unit=1, intensive multiplicities divide into one another and thus change their dimensions and yet remain indivisible despite their tendential move towards intensive zero, which is not itself a base-unit of measurement. Deleuze and Guattari argue that the divisibility of units is proper to

discreet multiplicities or extensive magnitudes whereas continuous or intensive multiplicities contain magnitudes and dimensions which increase and thus change the nature of those multiplicities, adding dimensions and new possible combinations of dimensions. Inevitably the question of the most adequate mode of description of these multiplicities is posed and a change of scale deemed necessary - from the reflexive, philosophical and human to the level of the base communication of atomic particles. These continuous multiplicities are:

"composed of particles that do not divide without changing in nature and distances that do not vary without entering another multiplicity and that constantly construct and dismantle themselves in the course of their communications, as they cross over into each other at, beyond or before a certain threshold. The elements of this kind of multiplicity are particles; their relations are distances; their movements are Brownian; their quantities are intensities." (TP33)

The multi-dimensionality of intensive multiplicities presents us with a representational problem because its complexities are figuratively resolved in two distinct ways. Deleuze and Guattari continue to insist on presenting a spatial matrix or grid on which the movements and communications of particles/multiplicities occur. They call it a 'plane of consistency' because even though its dimensions proliferate as the connections between multiplicities on it increase, both plane and multiplicities occupy all of their dimensions, and Deleuze and Guattari argue,  $n$  dimensions is as good as flat! (TP9)

They oppose this plane of consistency to the transcendent plane or dimension of overcoding, organization and development which was implicit in their account of transcendent operations. The plane of consistency on the other hand is:

"a plane of proliferation, peopling, contagion; but this proliferation of material has nothing to do with an evolution, the development of a form or the filiation of forms...It is on the contrary an involution, in which form is constantly being dissolved, freeing times and speeds...It is the absolute state of movement as well as of rest, from which all relative speeds and slownesses spring" (TP267).

It might be argued that the difference between the matrix of the plane and its multiplicities cannot be simply quantitative; thus this picture could be said to reintroduce the transcendent distinction between quantity and quality as content and structure. But the matrix is only a condition immanent to the compositions and modifications which traverse it. Deleuze and Guattari are

the first to concede the difficulty of thinking the plane of consistency, but this difficulty is not due to any problematic difference between the two kinds of planes:

"It is a question not of organisation but of composition: not of development or differentiation but of movement and rest, speed and slowness [of elements and particles]....We must try to conceive of this world in which a single fixed plane - a plane..of absolute movement - is traversed by non-formal elements of relative speed that enter this or that individuated [composition]..depending on their degrees of speed or slowness" (TP255).

At this far side of transcendental philosophy notions of intensity and continuity which have been reoriented around their physical/biological origins, change the subject of study. Principles of differentiation are no longer of any concern, and are relegated to the pile of enlightened idealist ideas. What is now of concern are speeds. Deleuze and Guattari define movement as motion of an object relative to two points, i.e as extensive, and define speed as intensive because it gives us the "absolute character" of a body for a period until that speed and body change. Thus the term 'absolute movement' in the passage above designates a consistency of speeds in terms of which speeds relative to each other are perceived (TP381). Speeds are perceived relative to other speeds only insofar as their limits are perceived, only insofar as the composition of speeds serving as the limit of that relation is perceived i.e only insofar as speeds or their elements are composed and changed on a plane of speed rather than movement. We shall see that the relation between plane and speeds is best described as 'fractal', in the sense that they share compositional recursive formulae and only differ in terms of periods. Composition and speed are the two characteristics of the fuzzy aggregate 'intense matter'. Their fusion collapses two distinct effects: changes of state which arise on the 'spacetime' plane and intensive quanta as affects/ states. Thus intense matter can be seen as a fuzzy aggregate reorienting the traditional schema of form and matter, as

"a zone of medium and intermediary dimension, of energetic, molecular dimension - a space unto itself which deploys its materiality through matter" (TP409).

It is worth considering the extent to which this conception reformulates or answers the manifold problems which we have associated with Kant's mechanisms of perception and apperception in the first critique.

My account of those mechanisms emphasised the role of container sets and recursions and argued that Kant could not convincingly substantiate the claim that the faculties were qualitatively different from each other. I juxtaposed the explicit intentions of Kant's hierarchical map of the mind with a reorientation of that map around representations as quanta which I perceived as being channelled into several restrictive 'containers' in the course of their processing by the faculties. These containers are constructed in the presuppositions which are inherent in the forms of intuition: time and space qua forms are necessarily represented in spatial terms, the internalisation of time and space entails a configuration of them as inner spaces. Thus it can be said that representations occupy space at the expense of any conception of time other than that of an adjunct to space, as that which can only be represented in space.

I want to stress the fact that Deleuze and Guattari are involved in 'loosening up' these structures, intensifying and stretching them to the limits of their conception rather than destroying them; and that this preciousness distinguishes their work from Bataille's. In all the literature which I have researched Bataille's conception of time stands out as the foremost expression of the alternative to philosophical time (even if philosophical time = Deleuze and Guattari's 'stratigraphical time' distributing singularities and affects). This alternative is the apocalyptic and dissipative structure of time, time as energetic matter and its tendential dissolution. For Bataille, time IS the differentiation and destruction of intensive matter.[17] It is also true that Bataille prefigures many of the models and conclusions at which Deleuze and Guattari arrive i.e transcendent and immanent planes of events in Inner Experience and Theory of religion, a concern with biology and physics in The accursed share and the College of Sociology papers, a concern with speeds and intensities in many literary and philosophical styles.[18] In all these cases the point of contact between writers is their Kantian terminology (linked to a Nietzschean sensibility [19]). Bataille's distinction remains his ability to escape academicization in the insanity of his picture of time and through the proliferation of fragmenting literary forms which he uses.[20]

Deleuze and Guattari call their intensification and extension of the idea of the community of events traversing intensive space an involution, and we can trace the way this idea arises out of the mind machine models of the first

critique. At the same time this account of 'liberated' Kantianism is also informed by the basic arguments of meta-mathematics; thus we have an example which is symptomatic of the replacement of philosophical by mathematical logic in post-phenomenological philosophy. However, the implicit anthropocentric formalism of even such mathematical logic - that is, its rigour - can be distinguished from the hysterical value with which thermodynamics informs Bataille's work.

I argued before that recursions and container sets constituted the major functional forms of the mind machine in the first critique. Kant's object of critique is certain inferences from the Transcendental Ideas which assign a substantiality or content to the unity of the unconditioned which is presupposed by the series of conditions for any given knowledge. But the power of critique can be applied to the absolute unity which I have associated with those container sets. The critical point will not be, as Kant would have it, that this unity is purely formal (in the same way as is the unity of apperception) - we have exposed the invalidity of the distinction between form and content [21] - but that the inadequate size of this unity cannot but be felt. Any presupposed unconditioned unity is not big enough for the possible representations *qua quanta* and multiplicities which it is supposedly added to or contains. In other words the virtual influx of sensations is greater than the rational or possible series of representations which are processed in the hierarchy of the faculties.

Our moves in this direction are similar to those of the meta-mathematical set theory oriented around the paradoxes of the Cantor set. The problems in set theory, like those in philosophy, occur at the extremes or limits of proposable sets where the forms of sets are themselves questioned, i.e where the possibility of self-referential sets poses questions about how sets work. It is here then that in set theory as in transcendental idealism machinics are reduced to one operation: the scalar replication of recursive sequences.[22] Recursion in meta-mathematics entails the infinite proliferation of replications of a simple informational sequence (the form of the set) in the enumeration of infinite numbers. (Although more 'a propos' for our concerns is the biological or viral sense that such recursions occur within a unilateral flow of time.) Recursion in the enumeration of the infinite numbers necessarily entails the set of transfinite numbers which constitute the Cantor

set.[23] In general the sequences of any base values or formulae may follow the same recursive rules and the skeleton of those base values be found nested in each section of a graphed account of that sequence. Thus replication necessarily involves complexity. A graph of these base values and their recursive sequences would be made up of discontinuous bands of rational numbers and an infinity of sparsely distributed points or continued fractions which are the irrational numbers of the Cantor set. The Cantor set is an open set of numbers which are transfinite rather than infinite i.e inferred from but never included in the tabulation or enumeration of infinite numbers. In some ways this distinction can be associated with Kant's distinction between the indefinite and the infinite, although Kant will associate the indefinite with the impossibility of a series of conditions which has no unconditioned as a given member: "such an experience would have to contain a limitation of appearances by nothing, or by the void.. which is impossible" (A517 B545).[24] There are more real and irrational numbers than can be enumerated in the set of units or rational numbers. Likewise there are more multiplicities than can be accommodated in the units of the container sets of unity in the first critique, and these excesses can be designated by the terms 'void' and 'nothing'. It is not only in a numerical and virtual sense that continued fractions or multiplicities are bigger than units and their divisions; or rather this virtual sense is designated by the energetic intensities associated with the 'negative' status of sensation and the noumenon, virtual intensities which Kant will not recognise. Just as continuous fractions are virtual and have a 'fuzzy' effect on the processes perceived in terms of integers and units within which they are implied yet distinct, so sensation and the noumenon must be conceived as affecting the operations of the faculties.[25] What the Cantor set allows us to perceive is the possibility of 'objects' as multiplicities of  $n$  dimensions, (although in fact these objects must remain intermediary and their dimensionality less than that of the phase-space which they occupy [26]) and the effects of these noumenal objects on the integrated enumerations of consciousness.

It is important to demonstrate the connections between Deleuze and Guattari's work, meta-mathematics and science in order to distinguish it from both Kant's architectonic idealist schemas and Bataille's fragmented work in a similar physical science direction.

Kant restricts processes in terms of specific applications i.e to the mind and its relaying hierarchical processes. We have seen a revisionist Kantianism which calls itself transcendental empiricism open up these processes, inflect and reorient Kantian schema without explicitly attacking Kant's notion of threefold time. I argued that recursions and container sets constituted the major functional forms of the mind machine in the first critique and that the ability of these sets to function was called in question by a critical angle on the unity which they presuppose which cannot be big enough for the quanta traversing it. I have shown that Kant's text depends on a transcendent base counting/measuring number, the One of both unity and unit, which makes time and space denumerable. But the application of this schema to intensity suggests an alternative to this use of numbers, an alternative which involves conceiving numbers as substantives and multiplicities, and as inhabiting an intensive space. We have seen how Deleuze and Guattari's strategy here is to liberate the intensive zero from Kantian space-time. Where Kant emphasises the difference between matter as extension in space and intensity, they stress the equivalence of matter and energy which is distributed as singularities in this intensive space or community. I have now to show that the differences between transcendental empiricism and Bataille's base materialism are linked to his radical foregrounding of a conception of time as influence and infection, and as the virulent differentiation of matter, as announced by the harbinger of intensity - the noumenon - at the intensive limits of sensation; a conception of time altogether more aesthetic, 'sensible' (and less reasonable) than Deleuze and Guattari's. Bataille thinks time as both an 'emotional subway' [27] (to use Céline's phrase) and as a thermodynamic element, and this time is an antidote to every philosophical (even stratigraphical) conception of time.

#### Noumenon - the intensive limit

We have seen that sensation and its intensive quanta are both included in and excluded by the hierarchy of the faculties [28]. Thus the possibility of their affecting that hierarchy must be given, and the exclusive sense which Kant gives the operations of the higher faculties must be attenuated. The implications of the leaking of sensation into the faculties will become

apparent in the Critique of Judgement. However, I want to pre-empt Kant's argument that in that text the influence of sensation is permissible because of the status of aesthetic judgement as inessential to the basic functions of the understanding; by showing that Kant has already not only accepted the necessary possibility of the affective object external to the faculties, but has given it pride of place within his rational schema.

Kant counters the paradox of the limit - that the limit borders on an exterior - and the question it raises - of possible external influence - with the notion of limits internal to reason. He presents us with the image of an extensive field of measured knowledges which are constituted and united by the limit of the possible extent of knowledge based on One. We have already seen that Kant deploys limiting and limited processes in order to curb the pretensions of the understanding and construct the hierarchy of the faculties, and how this allows him to curb the power of critique and flirt with transcendent ideas. But the essential limit-position in his rational schema is given to the negative aspect of the concept of the noumenon. The noumenon allows Kant to ask what the limits of thinking in general are; it should also allow him to register what sensational affects are problematically excluded and included as thinking approaches its limits. But Kant will only argue that the concept of the noumenon (A236-244 B295-302) determines the limit of the empirical employment of the understanding. Rather than allowing the noumenon its affective value as the quanta of sensation, Kant uses it as proof that A255 B310 "knowledge cannot extend its domain over everything which the understanding thinks." This double delimitation of sensibility and the understanding is supposed to cut them off from all possibility of external affection; these limits are exclusive, and thus the faculties are hermetically sealed from external influence: (A256 B312)

"What our understanding acquires through this concept of a noumenon, is a negative extension; that is to say, understanding is not limited through sensibility; on the contrary it itself limits sensibility by applying the term noumena to things in themselves... .But in so doing it at the same time sets limits to itself, recognising that it cannot know these noumena through any of the categories, and that it must therefore think them only under the title of an unknown something".

Kant's achievement lies in turning the mutating process of the understanding back into a 'negative extension' of the field of knowledge. Kant is so sure of having consolidated the claim to the territory of knowledge that he calls

the domain beyond the "limiting concept" of the noumenon, empty A255 B310-1:

"The domain that lies out beyond the sphere of appearances is for us empty" and concludes:

"The concept of a noumenon is therefore a merely limiting concept, the function of which is to curb the pretensions of sensibility".

For Kant the concepts of empty space and time are impossible [29], as is all externality to the faculties; he thereby forgets that sensation has a problematic status, both within and without the faculties and their operations. For this reason, the quanta of sensation are the quantities of an impossible affectivity which flows into the operations of the faculties, and the noumenon is both the threshold of that affectivity and the object which can be seen as producing the quanta in their invasive mode. The noumenon designates the positive zero proper to the intensive magnitudes of sensation. For Kant the noumenon is a limit, a purely negative concept, that is one partially excluded, partially an empty space, partially impossible, partially nothing or zero but still a zero with a rational function. He designates 'Nothing' strictly, emphasising in the 'Transcendental Analytic' that zeroes are internal to reason (without realising that he is thereby inviting trouble). The four 'nothings' are only negatively inferred from the categories in accordance with the unity of apperception (A290 B346), as four impossible subtractions from one. Kant opposes the noumenal zero (the object of a concept without an intuition) to "the concepts of all, many and one" A290 B347; "the concept of the absence of an object", a psychological nothing of deprivation or lack which is impossible given any description of the positivity of the operations of the faculties, but which designates the values associated with the transcendent application in all its forms; the zeroes of the mere forms of intuition; the zero implied by the impossible object as an object which has a concept which contradicts itself.

Bataille registers the paradoxical nature of these zeroes, the manner in which despite their rational and limited articulation they designate reason's invitation to the impossible, and precipitate the sunstorm of the excessive magnitudes of sensation. Bataille inflects the four zeroes so that they become symptoms and effects of the flowing quanta of pulsing zero. He recognises the limits of the rational apparatus and the understanding's self-contradictory exclusion of the impossible (4); whilst suffering the impossible

as the invading and affective noumenon (1), the rush of intensities which challenge rational limits and disperse according to the principle of energetic matter; and which inform the sovereign value of exuberant and explosive expenditure as the human counterpart of solar intensity. He represents intensity through time rather than space (3) whilst recognising the symptoms of the general and cultural transcendent application of unity in phenomenology, world religions and national/international currency economies (2).

For Bataille time and sensation are the repressed quanta of philosophy and culture in general. In Kantianism and its sequels the extensions, maximums, limitations and measurements of space oriented around the unity of apperception deaden time and the intensive quantities associated with sensation. But implicitly - philosophers may be too rational to notice - these quanta inevitably ruin their schemes. Kant's rational project of critique runs aground in inferring - despite itself - a philosophy of intensities from within its spatial schemas. The critical deduction of the massive liberation of intensive quantities from aesthetic judgement infects judgement as a whole and represents the ultimate and explosive condition of Bataille's thinking.

## Chapter Five: KANT - AFFECTS AND COMMUNICATION

### The swamping of communication

Kant's Critique of Judgement [1] attempts to salvage the rational critical project from the virtual ravages of sensation and time by defining a peculiarly 'aesthetic' kind of judgement, ie a judgement which necessarily connects sensation to the higher faculties of knowledge and desire. Kant argues that the possibility of such an aesthetic judgement is presupposed by the 'simple' presupposition of transcendental philosophy (which is also, as we have seen, the general tenor of all its arguments) that nature is adapted to our cognitive faculties (Intro 25). He calls this presupposition 'necessary' in so far as it arrests the swamping of rules of experience by the chaos of empirical information; and thereby undermines his position in revealing that his a priori presuppositions are second-order reactive defence-mechanisms. For Kant, there is a harmony of natural laws and principles of mind, a harmony which is contingent on its own presupposition, and yet necessary for our understanding. It is this harmony - which suggests "a finality by which nature is in accord with our aim, but only so far as this is directed to knowledge" (Intro 26) - which is the subject of aesthetic judgement. For Kant, aesthetic judgement entails the sensation of pleasure associated with this harmony and the exercise of the higher faculties which it attests to. As we shall see, Kant's major problem in aesthetic judgement lies in distinguishing this higher sense of feeling or pleasure from the base sensation which he attempted to regulate so strictly in the first critique. He posits the exercise of the faculties involved in judgement as an a priori source of pleasure, yet the presupposition of harmony can be conceived as an attempt to block the primary energy of overwhelming quanta of sensation; energy which Kant will only countenance as displeasure and as a 'product' of the failure of judgement. He diverts our attention from his failure in this regard by repeating the limiting critique of the employment of such judgement for knowledge in relation to the possibility of a teleological principle in nature. This simple repetition of the limitation of the transcendent ideas from the first critique is as unconvincing as the positing of the a priori blocking of base sensation, when such a transcendent operation can be conceived as a secondary response to the dangerous influx of sensation.

Ultimately, Kant can only present us with the baselessness of the analogy of the human and the natural; he will call this 'communication' and thereby deliver himself into Bataille's gory talons.

According to Kant, the understanding has the task of discerning the order implicit in the commensurateness of the variety and heterogeneity of natural laws to mental powers, via the unity effected in judgement. The feeling of pleasure arises from this operation itself:

"The attainment of every aim is coupled with a feeling of pleasure.. the discovery that two or more empirical heterogeneous laws of nature are allied under one principle that embraces them both, is the ground of a very appreciable pleasure" (Intro 27).

In cases where this attainment is dependent on an a priori representation, the feeling of pleasure can be said to be universally valid, for all members of the human species. Kant goes on to submit this pleasure, which is grounded in the a priori, to a physiological principle, linking it to an intensive fluctuation in time, in that it both anticipates and is dissipated in the simple act of cognition. Thus pleasure is necessarily linked, Kant argues, to the processive continuation of judgement. New judgements attesting to the finality of natural, the relation of heterogeneous laws to the understanding are continually necessary for the production of pleasure. For Kant then, pleasure and the proper exertion of mental powers in judgement prolong and extend each other, in a sensible manner, insofar as pleasure fluctuates in time. And thus both pleasure and displeasure - which Kant represents as arising wherever the action of the understanding is impeded by the heterogeneity of natural laws - remain the merely 'subjective' elements of a representation, which are themselves incapable of becoming elements of any act of cognition (Intro 29).

Kant presents pleasure (as sensation) as a product of the proper functioning of the operations of the imagination and the understanding; yet sensation is also supposed to be primary in the hierarchy of the faculties, the faculty in which affective quanta are registered and perception is anticipated. Added to this contradiction we might also ask how displeasure is possible if pleasure is linked to an a priori ground of representation; that is, how can the understanding be overwhelmed by quanta which are regulated by its own presupposition, unless these quanta are in fact primary and have a necessary

relation to displeasure, that is to the damaging of the operations of judgement? Kant gives displeasure a negative definition as a reject product and symptom of the incorrect use of the mental powers, but this is not a sufficient argument, given the repressed status of sensation as is evidenced throughout the first critique. The impeding of the action of the understanding towards judgement is only possible if the influx of the quanta of sensation cannot be as strictly regulated as Kant would have us believe; and if this influx is primary and remains affective despite the rationalised transcendences to which it is subjected. Kant, however, merely reiterates that pleasure in aesthetic judgement is an expression of a specific conformity of the object to cognition, which he calls that object's 'subjective formal finality' relative to the subjective finality of reflection in aesthetic judgement (Intro 30). This move contains an implicit critique of the a priori possibility of judgements of taste. Aesthetic judgements of taste (and thus pleasure) are themselves a posteriori and thus depend on empirical representations; they cannot be united a priori to any concept, but only to the a priori concept of the subjective finality of reflection. This finality of the object is relative to the aesthetic representation of mental operations in general, which have their own sense of finality, human moral agency or freedom, which is also a source of pleasure. Kant will go on to argue that the feeling of the sublime is a source of pleasure too and designates a subjective finality or freedom of mental processes in relation to the formlessness or excessive nature of objects (relative to the imagination).

Kant's critique of teleological judgement effects a restriction of the use in judgement of the concept of objective finality ("the definite cognition of the object under a given concept") (Intro 34) through this analogy of subjective finality or beauty. Kant argues that we can call a natural object a natural end only by analogy:

"we read into it our own concept of an end to assist our estimate of its product" (Intro 34).

The object can be considered a natural end only so far as it is a 'technic' or apparently self-organising organism, which thus shows signs of the form of finality, order, which is also found in human free action. The concept of the finality of nature is transcendental (useless) and only reflects the form of human subjective reflection; it can thus only be a subjective principle of

judgement and not an objective principle of logical estimation.

On the other hand, although the practical rules of freedom have no effect in nature, the supersensible concept of free causality is the ground of the rational determination of the causality of things of the sensible world in relation to their appropriate laws (Intro 37). This ground is, as we shall see, purely formal and "impenetrable". This concept of human freedom entails the idea of an ultimate or final end in human nature, which itself necessitates the a priori possibility of a similar final end in nature. This possibility, is, as we have noted, given only analogously in aesthetic judgement.

Kant manages to play down the role of sensation in his accounts of the beautiful and the sublime because he distinguishes the aesthetic judgement on the beautiful which he characterises through its "disinterested delight" (pp2 p 44) in the form rather than the existence of the object, from delight in the agreeable and delight in the good. Kant relegates sensation to the realm of the 'agreeable' which he characterises as sensation oriented around gratification, which has no interest in cognition or judgement of the object.

[2] At the same time, Kant notes defensively that any faculty of knowledge could be described in terms of this pathological sensation oriented around the gratification of feelings, but that this would be to miss the point of the project of transcendental philosophy. Kant later makes a similar remark with regard to Burke's work on the Beautiful and the Sublime. He can tolerate the possibility of a neutral physiology of taste (Burke) but abhors the possibility of his transcendental schemata in general being interpreted in terms of pathological sensation and the base interests of gratification. Thus he misses the essential point that such an account might revalue both base sensation and the transcendental schemata that regulate it. The orientation of sensation to gratification is unnecessary, and could be conceived as the major stratagem used to hierarchize the faculties and bind them to reason. Sensation is, even in the Idealist realm, as we have seen, a question of intensive quantities veering towards intensive zero; Kant here, as in the first critique, represses the quanta which could effect massive reorientations of the rational topography; he continues in his account of the sublime, but by that time his counter-intuitive rationalisations have

accumulated to such an incredible degree that neither argument nor entreaty render them convincing.

According to Kant the aesthetic judgement of the beautiful resembles the judgement on the 'good' - which is oriented around the concepts of 'means' and 'ends' (the 'useful' and the 'good in itself') and 'delights' in the existence of the object as a concept - in that its delight is judged as valid for all humans. This is an aesthetic rather than a logical judgement and thus cannot claim the status of universality associated with concepts and ideas. The aesthetic judgement is disinterested, that is, impartial as to the real existence of the beautiful object as an object of cognition (pp6 p50). Beauty is a quality of an object which is not known through concepts but in a judgement which merely necessarily entails a reference to the cognitive status of the representation of the object to the Subject. Aesthetic judgement thus has general rather than universal validity, obeying a series of empirical rules guided by a principle of "subjective finality" (6 55):

"it does not join the predicate of beauty to the concept of the Object taken in its entire logical sphere, and yet does extend this predicate over the whole sphere of judging subjects" (8 55).

Thus the general rules of aesthetic judgement are principles of the form of subjective finality applied to 'subjects' as phenomena in general, that is as quanta. I would argue that Kant engages in an intensive reading of the beautiful, given the minimal content of what is designated through the beautiful, that is the form of communicability. Kant defines the subjective condition of aesthetic judgement, subjective finality, as simply "the universal capacity for being communicated" (9 57) or "subjective universal communication" (9 58). He associates this with the 'freeplay' of the imagination and the understanding, which is requisite for 'cognition in general' (9 58), but this cannot be considered a sufficient description of the massive expenditure of intensive communication and the freeplay of energetic information in general which is involved. I would argue that Kant's account of the beautiful designates the communicative principle of so empty a form of quanta as to be easily resolved into the general economy of intensive quanta once the transcendent project of the sublime - and thereby the limits of the utile model of the 'means' and 'ends' of the 'good' - abort in oceanic intensity, allowing the models of intensive processes to feedback through the

rules of aesthetic judgement, intensive motors replacing those mechanisms oriented teleologically to reason. Kant's account of the beautiful formulates the incessant intensive recursion of quanta which lies at the heart of the Kantian schema; it is simply a question of whether such 'empty' communicative replications or contagions are restricted in their orientation to practical reason or not.

For Kant, pleasure is the necessary product of aesthetic judgement because the latter attests to an "inherent causality" (12 64) in any representation of an object. Having earlier admitted the possibility of displeasure in so far as the formulation of the beautiful was impossible, Kant now refers the fluctuations or tension of pleasure and displeasure to the emotions provoked by the sublime (14 68):

"Emotion - a sensation where an agreeable feeling is produced by means of a momentary check followed by a more powerful outpouring of the vital force".

Kant rationalises displeasure using a physiological model; displeasure is a deviation which propels the norm of pleasure (or its further rationalisation - respect), even in the extreme case of the sublime. Kant's model is mundanely utilitarian; pleasure, delight and even the pathological agreeable are positivised relative to displeasure, designated as more useful than displeasure as means to the end of 'subjective finality' and its moral analogue. To the extent that even displeasure feeds pleasure and its utile drive. But if subjective finality attests only to the form of communicative quanta (subjects and objects), the sense of this 'utility' is rather the virtual tendency for communication to optimise itself, irrespective of the transcendent operations performed on it. The orientation of sensation or these quanta around pleasure is a serious handicap when it comes to describing the complexities of libidinal fluxes.

For Kant, aesthetic judgement presents us with the object's "finality of form" relative to the form of representation itself. This subjective finality is the a priori ground of aesthetic judgement: (15 77)

"The judgement is called aesthetic for the very reason that its determining ground cannot be a concept, but is rather the feeling of the concert of the play of the mental powers as a thing only capable of being felt."

This 'concert' is the ideal of free beauty itself, the ideal of the universal communicability of the sensation of this final form, [3] which is an individual presentation, a quantity rather than a qualitative concept. For Kant, the ideal is ultimately the human figure itself as an expression and embodiment of the moral (17 79); and aesthetic judgement is the judgement correlative to this representation of the human: (20 82)

"they must have a subjective principle, and one which determines what pleases or displeases, by means of feeling only and not through concepts, but yet with universal validity. Such a principle can only be regarded as a common sense understood as the effect arising from the free play of our powers of cognition".

This common sense is a "fundamental feeling" (22 84) which is not private and personal but rather communicative and contagious. Of course, for Kant, common sense entails the public realm of moral duty, and thus common sense contains an 'ought' and has an "exemplary validity" as a regulative principle formed by a higher principle of reason, over and above its communicative or contagious mode. But this intervention of extraneous material of the second order dimension of utile morality (including the representation of the human figure) is unnecessary and cannot be sustained given the effect of the quantitative and sensible analysis of judgement with which Kant has supplied us. The quanta of sensation which inform mental processes in general operate at a level more primary than that of utile pleasure and can produce feelings of both pleasure and displeasure in their general intensification. These quanta are not inherently useful, and if Kant has shown that human aesthetic judgement is purely quantitative, and includes an image of optimal communication, it is his rationalisation of it as useful which is second-order and redundant.

### The inevitable affects of the Sublime

For Kant, the 'delight' associated with the beautiful expresses the accord of the imagination (as a faculty of presentation) with the understanding and reason. This delight is effected as a 'higher' feeling of pleasure in the calm contemplation of natural or artistic forms which attest to the order and finality of rational mechanisms. For Kant, displeasure has no place in the aesthetic judgement of the beautiful; the fluctuations of pleasure and displeasure, or rather the unilateral mental movement from displeasure to

pleasure, is described in his account of the feeling of the sublime. In addition, Kant will still emphasise that the sublime, like the beautiful, is relevant only insofar as it is overcoded by judgement informed by the understanding and reason, rather than in relation to pathological sensation and its intensive magnitudes. (23 90)

We have seen that the judgement on the beautiful relates to the limited form of an object, to the recognition of an order in its form analogous to the order of its representation in the mind. The feeling of the sublime arises where an object is massive or chaotic, and yet for Kant not only is a representation of its limitlessness and formlessness possible, but also and thereby a conception of its 'totality' (23 90). Kant would have it that where the beautiful is a presentation of an "indeterminate concept of the understanding", the sublime is a presentation of "an indeterminate concept of reason"(23 90-1). In this sense the sublime will facilitate the move of aesthetic judgement towards its articulation of moral freedom.

Given Kant's continual subjugation of sensation under the mechanisms of the hierarchy of the faculties, none of his rationalizing moves in relation to the sublime can be considered surprising. However, it is worth assessing the base dynamic of sensation which Kant himself hints at, only then to treat it to a transcendent operation of the mental faculties. According to this base dynamic, the subject is powerfully stimulated by an external stimuli, which is internalised as a quantity of sensation, i.e as an intensive magnitude in an affective mode. Kant has argued (in the 'Anticipations of Perception' section of the first critique) that such a sensation is a representation of an object (the intensive magnitude) insofar as sensation anticipates cognition. We have seen that there is no necessity to this attractive power of the hierarchy of the faculties, and that an intensive magnitude is no simple idealist object of cognition. The affective mode of an intensive magnitude is more relevant than its subsequent processing by the operations of the higher faculties. However, in his account of the sublime, Kant identifies the formlessness of an object with its extreme intensive magnitude only to reduce the importance of the strong affective power or influence of this noumenal object. As we have seen, for Kant, any degree of magnitude implies a continuity of perception; and thus by analogy no object, however formless and limitless, is inconceivable - the sublime simply needs to be conceptualised in relation to a

higher faculty. Kant is well aware of the prejudice throughout his critical philosophy in favour of the phenomenal object; but the extent of his disavowal reaches an extreme point in the sublime. For what he attempts to deny in the identification of the sublime object and the continuity of its intensive magnitude is the very presupposition of the rationalisation of the sublime itself, what is presupposed by the scale of perception at which the sublime occurs; that the intensive magnitude of an object has, in the first place, an overwhelming effect on the subject. The overwhelming object is an affective object and not an Idealist object of cognition. In the base account of the sublime, the affective or noumenal object affects the cognitive subject in the first place; and only then, secondarily, is this influence treated to a containing rationalisation by the subject on the grounds of the existence of a higher faculty.

Kant hints at the affective power associated with this noumenal intensive object (only to treat it to a transcendent operation) in describing the dynamic of the emotions provoked by the object which he will rationalise as 'sublime'. He contrasts the beautiful and the sublime: (23 91)

"For the beautiful is directly attended with a feeling of the furtherance of life and, is thus compatible with charms and a playful imagination. On the other hand, the feeling of the sublime is a pleasure that only arises indirectly, being brought about by the feeling of a momentary check to the vital forces followed at once by a discharge all the more powerful."

We should not be deluded by the emphasis on physiological quanta in this account of pleasure in the sublime. Kant associates pleasure with the furtherance of the 'vital forces' (an association which already links the sublime to the beautiful and the idea of rational finality). We must contest this association precisely because pleasure is second-order and 'indirect'. Pleasure is definitely post-traumatic; the event of shock displeasure patently precedes the event of its rationalisation - the designation of this transcendent operation as a 'discharge' alters nothing in this regard. A connection between pleasure and the 'vital forces' cannot be necessitated by the fact of a post-traumatic exacerbation of those forces. His identification of pleasure and the 'furtherance of the vital forces' allows Kant to think of a certain kind of pleasure as ultimate, both in principle and in empirical fact after the shock-event. Such pleasure involves a return of

subjective rational control after the shock of the powerful stimuli. Thus Kant's psychodynamic account of pleasure as a discharge intensified by resistances remains for him a useful analogy for the rational finality of human life. Pleasure in the sublime reverts momentarily to its sensational conditions in a libidinal dynamic (which is itself oriented around the identification of reason and pleasure) only to be further designated as a "negative pleasure" (23 91) of 'admiration' and 'respect', as befits an analogy for the moral law.

Kant argues that natural beauty allows us to perceive the 'technic' of nature, its system of organisation and its finality relative to the employment of judgement i.e to conceive of nature through the analogy of art (23 92). Likewise, sublime "chaos", formlessness and "irregular disorder and desolation" attests to a finality proper to the human and its attitude of mind. This conclusion is only possible on condition that Kant distinguishes the affective object and its sensational influence from a power of rationalisation proper to the higher faculties. Yet in the attempt to distinguish these two realms Kant's starting point is the "signs of magnitude and power" shown by sublime objects (23 92) - the status of intensive magnitude itself - which can only be conceived as a hypothetical anticipation of perception leading to cognition. In other words, Kant's argument is doomed to prove nothing. On the other hand, it is easy to demonstrate that the feeling of displeasure associated with an overpowering stimuli is undeniably different from the transcendent operation of the sublime.

For Kant the concept of the sublime object is erroneous, not because the affective noumenal object is to be distinguished from an object of cognition, but because the sublime is a power of resistance of the mind: (23 92)

"the object lends itself to the presentation of a sublimity discoverable in the mind.. [the sublime] cannot be contained in any sensuous form, but rather concerns ideas of reason, which although no adequate presentation of them is possible, may be excited and called into the mind by that very inadequacy itself which does admit of sensuous presentation. Thus the broad ocean agitated by storms cannot be called sublime. Its aspect is horrible and one must have stored one's mind in advance with a rich stock of ideas, if such an intuition is to raise it to the pitch of a feeling which is itself sublime - sublime because the mind has been incited to abandon sensibility and employ upon itself ideas involving higher finality."

It seems to me that the relevance of the fact that intensive sensation can be

injected into the rational processes (as a 'pitch of feeling') is overwhelmed by the importance of the description of the generally defensive nature of those processes which use memory as a protective reserve to resist overwhelming intensive sensations.

At the base of Kant's distinction between the mathematical and dynamic sublime lies the distinction between the notion of intensive magnitude as a measurement and affection as a mode of influence. As Kant notes (23 93-4) the formlessness of the sublime and its massive power of affection on the imagination necessitate an analysis in terms of quantities. The account of the mathematical mode of the sublime takes as its point of departure the paradox of the notion of magnitude which eventually reorients the sublime around the subjective finality of aesthetic judgement. The magnitude of the sublime appears to be impossible, given the excessive and absolute jargon in which it is formulated. Kant calls the sublime "absolutely great... beyond all comparison great" (25 94), yet intensive degrees are characterised, as we have seen, [4] as being necessarily relative and having no maximum, ceiling or absolute magnitude; what can absolute magnitude signify when (25 95):

"the computation of the magnitude of phenomena is in all cases utterly incapable of affording us any absolute concept of a magnitude and can only afford one that is always based on comparison".

For Kant absolute magnitude "a greatness comparable to itself alone" (25 97) attests to the subjective finality implicit in human cognitive functions and the sublime: (25 97-8)

"Here we readily see that nothing can be given in nature, no matter how great we judge it to be, which regarded in some other relation, may not be degraded to the level of the infinitely little, and nothing so small which in comparison with some still smaller standard may not for our imagination be enlarged to the greatness of a world. Telescopes have put within our reach an abundance of material to go upon in making the first observation, and microscopes the same in making the second. Nothing, therefore, which can be an object of the senses is to be termed sublime when treated on this footing. But precisely because there is a striving in our imagination towards progress ad infinitum, while reason demands absolute totality, as a real idea, that some inability on the part of our faculty for the estimation of the magnitude of things of the world of sense to attain to this idea, is the awakening of a feeling of a supersensible faculty within us; and it is the use to which judgement naturally puts objects on behalf of this latter feeling, and not the object of sense, that is absolutely great and every other contrasted employment small... The sublime is that, the mere capacity of thinking which evidences a faculty of mind transcending every standard of sense."

For Kant then, the maximal possible magnitude is the unit for the mathematical estimation of the multiplicitous magnitudes of phenomena. This "fundamental measure" (26 98) is in turn an aesthetic estimate of what constitutes the 'absolute measure' of subjective finality. Kant's absolute magnitude is a ceiling proper to the power of the subject, "an absolute measure beyond which no greater is possible subjectively (i.e for the judging Subject)" (26 99). Thus for Kant the sequence of events which he designates as 'calling forth the feeling of the sublime' is terminated in the aesthetic estimation of the sublime as a limit at which the magnitude of the sensation and the power of perception of the subject are reconciled; that is, the idea of communication which is the form of human freedom.[5]

According to Kant, the mathematical sublime designates the maximal unit corresponding to a moment of comprehension which curtails the ad infinitum process of the logical apprehension of the infinite set of possible magnitudes; thus an aesthetic judgement becomes possible. The infinite itself can be comprehended in this fashion in the idea of the noumenon (26 103) as a substrate or negative resource underlying the phenomenal world. Such comprehension and the judgement it makes possible attest to a human supersensible faculty of reason. Thus nature is sublime in so far as its phenomena convey the idea of infinity, an idea which cannot be comprehended in the imagination which attempts to relate it to a sensible natural object; thus the idea of infinity (rather than the quanta of a powerful sensation) is relayed from the thwarted imagination to the "supersensible substrate (underlying both nature and our faculty of thought)" (26 104) which is proper to it. The course of an irritant sensation is transformed into the mutual presuppositions of the source and trajectory of reason: (27 106)

"The feeling of the sublime is, therefore, at once a feeling of displeasure, arising from the inadequacy of imagination in the aesthetic estimation of magnitude to attain to its estimation by reason, and a simultaneously awakened pleasure, arising from this very judgement of the inadequacy of the greatest faculty of sense being in accord with ideas of reason, so far as the effort to attain to these is for us a law".

Kant's strategy to reduce the fact of the affective power of the sensational or noumenal object to the idea of infinity is deeply unconvincing. Even Kant is humiliated into qualifying his position: he admits that the sublime adds a

new element of dynamism to the account of mental processes. Of course there is no chance that his account of the dynamically sublime could show that libidinal processes are 'set in motion' by the representation of the sublime, and come to overcode the transcendental account of the hierarchy of the faculties which the sublime is supposed to consolidate. Kant simply states that the sublime subjects reason to a vibration or an oscillation, "a rapidly alternating repulsion and attraction produced by one and the same Object" (27 107), and thereby adds a psychodynamic edge to his account of the overwhelming of the imagination and the overcoding of the sensational quanta which effect this by the ideas of reason, such as infinity. [6]

Kant's account of the dynamical sublime emphasises the exacerbating tension between the pulsional overcoding of the Kantian topography and the attractive power of the transcendent operation which characterises that topography. Kant's major problem lies in renegotiating his rational and qualitative distinctions once he has presented both sensible influx and the resistance of the rational faculties as quanta of energy ("powers") (28 110). He even goes so far as to conceive of rational resistance as an increase of 'general' power. He weakly suggests that the sublime is a power which overcomes resistances, but 'does not dominate us'! Our resistances are washed away and yet we are safe! Kant reverts from the psychodynamic level to a hybrid energetic Idealist jargon to justify this peculiar statement; arguing that the sublime is a phenomenal object (albeit an "object of fear" - and one might argue, given its magnitude, no longer an 'object') in relation to the 'secure position' of the standpoint of negative critique. Kant revamps the platitudinous definition of critique as a 'safe seat' which we noted in the first critique [7]; but here it appears after the virtual haemorrhage of reason in critique, as a last vain attempt to staunch the overcoding flush (whereas in the first critique, the security of the seat was only subsequently called into question: (28 110-1)

"Bold, overhanging and as it were, threatening rocks, thunderclouds piled up to the vault of heaven, borne along with flashes and peals, volcanoes in all their violence of destruction, hurricanes leaving desolation in their track, the boundless ocean rising with rebellious force, the high waterfall of some mighty river, and the like, make our power of resistance of trifling moment in comparison with their might. But, provided our own position is secure, their aspect is all the more attractive for its fearfulness; and we readily call these objects sublime, because they raise the forces of the soul above the height of

vulgar commonplace, and discover within us a power of resistance of quite another kind, which gives us courage to be able to measure ourselves against the seeming omnipotence of nature".

For Kant the pulsing flows of the dynamical sublime necessarily foregrounds the freedom implicit in the mathematical sublime: (28 111)

"the irresistibility of the might of nature forces upon us the recognition of our physical helplessness as beings of nature, but at the same time reveals a faculty of estimating ourselves as independent of nature".

Kant describes this successful outcome of the shock trauma as a "self-preservation" of kinds. Humans are annihilated but free; external nature challenges us to hold wealth and life at nil and seek comfort in a 'higher finalty'. As in the passage on rational suicidal strategy from the first critique,[8] Kant elaborates on this perverse freedom, giving the example of the improving power of warfare for nurturing our sublime sense of morality. The nation which exposes itself to the 'danger' of expansionist war gains an increase in the 'sublime' power of freedom: (28 112-3)

"[War] gives nations which carry it on .. a stamp of mind only the more sublime the more numerous the dangers to which they are exposed, and which they are able to meet with fortitude."

The state of war (a state of the mobilisation of powers of influence and resistance) is itself conducive, according to Kant, to nurturing its regulating imago or super-ego, state religion or capital, in which the human can recognise (28 114) "the existence in himself of a sublimity of disposition consonant with His will". Thus warfare attests to the moral form of communication itself. [9]

For Kant the sublime depends on and consolidates an innate human capacity for moral feeling; but this 'moral feeling' simply designates the notion of a maximal capacity and base unit of communication itself. Moral feeling IS the notion of 'universal communicability' and thus simply a minimally formal maximal state of communication or information or energy flow. For Kant this universal communicability itself presupposes the supersensible sphere of reason, but I can see no reason for this. Instead, I would see this notion as a precedence for Bataille's notion of communication, because Kant's notion of 'universal communicability' can be seen as an idea in which the difference between the libidinal dynamics of pathological sensation and the overcoding operation of reason is reduced to a point of low level content at which the

two notions fuse in the principle of a neutral third energetics - the principle of a maximal state of energetic transactions.

After the formulation of this minimal energetic principle the critique of aesthetic judgement now dives into considerations of privileged intensive states which are marginalised by the transcendent operations of the ideas of practical reason, and yet which attest to the liberated dynamic of sensational affects and the contagious communication of their energetic quanta. Kant finally countenances displeasure in the form of disgust, characterising it in terms of urgently interventive and affective quanta which disturb the possibility of aesthetic delight and judgement: (174 312)

"the object is represented as insisting, as it were, upon our enjoying it, while we still set our face against it".

Kant goes on to give a psychodynamic account of laughter in which the possibility of the reduction of the understanding to zero, in the face of internal affective stimuli, is given. This is seen as effecting the relay of the affective quanta associated with the mental faculties to the physiological body in general: (199 332)

"In jest...the understanding, missing what is expected, suddenly lets go its hold, with the result that the effect of this slackening is felt in the body by the oscillation of the organs... Laughter is an affection arising from a strained expectation being suddenly reduced to nothing".  
[10]

The fulcrum notion in this respect - for the revaluation of mental processes in terms of affective quanta - is that of the 'genius'. Kant describes genius as the power of creation in a spontaneous, original and exemplary fashion, "a talent for producing that for which no definite rule can be given" (46 168), and a natural endowment through which "nature gives the rule to art". Thus, Kant's attempt to distinguish human art, and the subjective finality associated with it, from natural mechanisms ruins itself by placing the rule-creating capacity associated with art back in the hands of the spontaneous creations of nature. This is no compromise of reason and noumenal nature at all, but rather the inevitable 'deduction' of intensive machines of production of affective quanta or energies from the intensive conditions of the restricted mechanisms of reason.

The course of Kant's Critique of Judgement presents us with the slow haemorrhage of the power of conviction associated with the rationale of the critical project. Kant attempts to rationally regulate his account of sensation and its registering of the affective mode of stimuli by relating it to the rational (and subjectively final, or human) form of communication which is analogous to moral freedom. But the power of his account of the affective mode of sensational quanta overwhelms this secondary reorientation; in fact the form of communication becomes a description of the principle of contagious intensive quanta themselves. In designating a sensibility proper to the terror of time, Bataille will latch onto this critical description of communication as the state of intensive energies, will formulate its 'general economy' and dissolve the essential Kantian terminology of continuity, transcendence and immanence, and subjectivity, in the solar maelstrom of post-critical libidinal writing.

Coda: Bataille - the sensibility of the sacred

"We trembled and marvelled and after the fact [the bombing] we thought of the victims" (OC6 174)

"The Mithraic cult of the sun led to a very widespread religious practice: people stripped in a kind of pit that was covered with a wooden scaffold, on which a priest slashed the throat of a bull; thus they were suddenly doused with hot blood, to the accompaniment of the bull's boisterous struggle and bellowing - a simple way of reaping the moral benefits of the blinding sun." (OC1 232)

For Bataille, sensation and experience are irreducible to the Kantian account of mental faculties. Experience is not an object for intelligence, an object constituted by the separated and hierarchised functions of a transcendent operation of discursive thought, which subtracts itself from the field of its objects. Sensation does not consolidate the transcendental subject; rather, in extreme experience the I is transformed into a site of communication, the site of the fusion of the quanta which are only habitually designated as subject and object: (OC5 485)

"It is not a question of philosophy - it is not a question of knowledge. It is not the intelligible but the sensible which is object"

Sensibility urges extreme behaviour on the scale of the enormous expenditures of energy which are associated with solar radiation - rather than moral action. [11] But sensibility thereby also designates a revaluation of morality, a translation of its terms and schemas into the terms and intensive attributes of sensation which becomes the basis for Bataille's Nietzschean 'genealogy' of religions and cultures; thus this description of the maniacal fusion of the worshipper with the intensive zero of the sun entails a revaluation of the notion of the utility of 'moral benefit'. [12]

Intensity is proper to sensation which inevitably feels the "invading flood" (OC5 30) of the affective quanta of stimuli and contagiously replicates the psychological neutrality of these quanta, provoking maniacal behaviour at the macro-level of the human organism. The urgency of the sensible and/ or unconscious desire for intensity or solar fusion 'sacrifices' the unity and security of the stable ego and its moral and practical supports. The states of excitation into which the 'subject' is thereby dissolved are comprehensible as "illogical and irresistible impulses rejecting the material and moral good"

(OC1 319), and more fundamentally as approximations to the intensive communicative state of energetic matter in general. In Bataille's writing, the second sense consolidates the schizoid and impersonal tendency of the first, thus he writes: (OC1 334)

"Despair is really only affective behaviour of the greatest dynamical value".

The drive to intensity privileges change and thus emulates the waste of time. For the schizo supplicant 'subject' the immense spectacles of intensity are simply the modes of this drive, with which the subject is fused or communicates. Thus, for instance, warfare is simply an energetic experience rather than a sublime furtherance of moral freedom, as Kant would have it. Only wars, states Bataille (OC12 369) represent the teeming intensity of the universe's expenditure over and above the imperialist need that requires them, - waste out of all proportion to use: (OC12 369)

"Wars are perhaps the last convulsions of a movement inclined in its expansion to that terminal radiation, typified by heat, which disperses itself in wasting itself, and where the difference and the intensity are wasted too".

Bataille often calls this intensive experience which can be found at the end of philosophy (as well as without philosophy..) the 'sacred', thereby suggesting a primary resonance between the will to expenditure which animates all energetic matter and the widest possible sense of 'religion', as the ecstatic tendency in human life: (OC8 371)

"The sacred is given in experience as a fact not as the result of a judgement or a rational operation",

"This is no longer philosophy, but sacrifice (communication)" (OC5 65)

According to Bataille, these energetic processes can be experienced with minimal effective interference from the second-order processes of self-consciousness, which would polarise those energetic processes around the utile values of pain and pleasure. These utile values attest to the essentially discursive nature of the 'self' which formulates its nature, its needs and threats, as a natural organism. Sensation is non-discursive, and its analogic descriptions are intensive to the point of abstraction; that is, sensation is best described in terms of the flows and accelerations which characterise it:

"There is an interrupted moment in which everything is blown away, everything flickers: the person's profound and solid reality has disappeared and all that remains are charged up, mobile, violent and

inexorable presences.. all that remains are forces possessing the violence of the unleashed storm" (OC2 245-6).

The sensibility of the sacred, of the unconscious will to expend and emulate the larger energetic movements of the universe (which on the grounds of this impossible emulation cannot be exclusively associated with a psychological deathwish) informs human life at every level and time, according to Bataille. Thus we have noted that pre-Christian and pagan cults embrace a form of this sensibility which is free of the contaminations of the excessive self-hating rationalisation which characterises the Christian period of occidental culture and produces the overcoding dualist divorce of pathological or 'bodily' sensibility and pure mental reason. But this sensibility is also, as we have exhaustively shown, evidenced by the outcome of critical philosophy.

Bataille explicitly emphasises this critical trajectory himself, when he designates experience as "a voyage to the end of the possible of man" (OC5 19). According to Bataille, intensive experience and sensation are irreducible to the restricted set of logical possibilities proposed by rational knowledge. Intensive experience attests to energies which are 'bigger' than those that traverse the space inhabited by the logical possible. However the immensity of these energies (which is simply designated negatively as 'the impossible' from the perspective of logic) interface with the space of logic at the extreme or marginal point at which intensive experience or sensation occurs in the rational schema. Thus the impossible (that is, these excessive energies) becomes real. Because the reality of sensation and these energies themselves are shown to be the possible conditions of the categories of the logically possible, it is the very improbability of the exclusive nature of the logically possible which is critically demonstrated by the influence of sensation on reason. This constitutive 'improbability' urges a change of scale of perception, away from the scale proper to the spatial awareness of the logically possible and towards a scale which describes the motions of its energetic conditions. Bataille will supply this scale in his account of 'general economy'.<sup>[13]</sup> Bataille describes the failings of reason with regard to sensation in a peculiar paradoxical Kantian fashion: in knowledge-oriented philosophy the fact of affective experience overflows these limits of reason "by an immense possible" in so far as "the measure given to experience [by these limits] is at once too much and not big enough" (OC5 20).

The critical moment is essential for Bataille's thought, even if it is itself exceeded by the fact of the affect and the scale of perception which it entails: (OC5 385)

"However the limited system must be questioned once more; critique [also] applies to the absence of limits and the possibilities of infinite growth and acquisition.. critical questioning introduces a general critique applied to the results of successful action from the point of view not of production.. but of waste, sacrifice."

For Bataille, it is the disjunct status of the affective object as approach to intensive noumenal zero which must be safeguarded from philosophical rationalisations of critique and experience: (OC8 259)

"The NOTHING is given in experience...The metaphysician will say that 'nothing' is reducible to the nothingness of which he speaks. The whole movement of my thought is opposed to his pretention, reducing it to NOTHING"

The novum of this affective zero is generated through critique, only to dissolve critique along with the rational schema of the logical relations between subject and object. In this sense, subject and object (and critique as a grounded knowledge) are subject to time which dissolves all stable grounds, and throws each into the self-perpetuating abyss of the groundless. Thus the dissipative object - "the NOTHING is the object which disappears" (OC8 281) - produces a "contagious subjectivity" (OC8 288) in which the form of subjectivity is translated into "a sensible emotional content" of energetic quanta which has a privileged communicative mode which constitutes and dissolves in time the provisional entities which philosophy calls 'subjects'.

Bataille's sensibility of the sacred is a product of the Kantian critical project in general as I have analysed it. His account of intense experiences is especially analogous to Kant's account of the sublime, although he distinguishes his concern with the primary shock and anguish of the sensations caused by affective stimuli - and the revaluation of rationalised experience which this shock revelation of the energetic conditions of thought makes possible - from the reactive operative transcendences with which Kant turns the sublime into a moment of rational thought, objectifying and measuring energetic immensity relative to the unity of apperception. Bataille describes the Kantian rationalisation of the sublime as first and foremost a domestication of the intensive zero of the noumenon, the zero which wracks consciousness as terrible sensations (independently of the controlled

operations regulated by the concept of the transcendental subject). For Bataille, this domestication is subsequent to the effects of this shock on consciousness, and constitutes a simple repetition of the principled processes which that shock has made the objects of a critical revaluation: (OC8 408-9)

"[Immensity] is no longer the NOTHING where I too was NOTHING.. Immensity becomes something".

If the sensation of shock effects a critical revaluation of rational and utile economies, the value of this revaluation is itself dissolved in the intensive neutrality of the principles of 'communication' which are supposed to 'ground' that revaluation. Thus it is with his thermodynamic notion of 'communication' that Bataille strays furthest from the realm of philosophy in its widest possible sense and enters a post-critical state of semantic freefall.

## Chapter Six: BATAILLE CONTRA KANT - COMMUNICATION AND INFECTION

### The continuity of sensibility

The extent of Bataille's engagement with the Kantian critical project is emphasised by the fact that we have noted precedents for all his major concepts in the preceding pages. I now want to demonstrate the extent to which he transforms those concepts, of continuity, transcendence, time, subjectivity and communication in formulating his general economy of energetic matter. Yet for Bataille, the human experience of time is privileged or cursed in designating the infectious dissolution of thought, discourse, intensity and life itself. Time is the infection implicit in Bataille's discourse as those intensive elements which are irreducible to any rationalised formulation. It pulses and accelerates beneath the 'strict' (relative to the rest of his writing) conceptions of general economy, and even under the image of the dissolution of critique itself. It is this element and its infectious shock which is present in Bataille's post-critical style - a style which is a fragmented differentiation of longueurs and speeds - which is inevitable and which attests to the dissolution of all mannered literary and philosophical 'styles' or energetically distributed syntaxes.

For Kant, continuity operated as the division of a given unified space, and was linked to the spatialisation or enclosure of time which permitted time to be conceived as having three modes: succession, simultaneity and permanence. [1] For Bataille, continuity is inseparable from the differentiation of intensive events, of compositions and spaces, in an energetic and unidirectional time, which he calls discontinuity. Bataille's notion of continuity would be associable with Deleuze and Guattari's 'intensive spatium' [2], except that for Bataille space is subject to, and only differentiated in the energetic compositions and annihilations of time. For Bataille, continuity is a question of waves of duration, like the waves of energy which constitute and dissolve the energetic and social hierarchical compositions which Bataille analyses in the College of Sociology lectures [3]; and must itself be distinguished from the static discontinuities at the crystalline tips of its energetic matter, as different as zero from any degree. We shall see that continuity and discontinuity are linked to Bataille's parallel

conceptions of transcendence/immanence. These terms have definite Kantian resonances, but Bataille designates with them the immanent principle of differentiation of the degrees of transcendence (or transcendent matter) from the zero of immanence (which itself can be considered as both pure energetic communication and the zero energy of entropy) [4]. Likewise, the discontinuous is to be considered a degree from the zero of continuity, that is as an intensive degree. Whereas Bataille tends to treat immanence and transcendence as the terms of a purely quantitative description of energetic matter and abstract thought, he analyses the couple continuity/discontinuity as terms of the sensible and psychological economy of eroticism; examining these notions will present us with a bridge from Kant's account of the invasion of sensibility by affective quanta to the abstract dimensions of general economy.

Bataille defines the sensible and human sense of continuity and discontinuity with platitudinous precision:

"Each being is distinct from all the others...Between one being and another, there lies an abyss, a discontinuity...We try to communicate, but no communication between us can suppress this primary difference"  
(OC10 18-9)

According to Bataille (although this perception is hardly original), the essential pathos of the human condition is that our sense of our own individuality is linked to a perception of the irremediable distance between us and other people. We perceive our finitude and experience the 'abyss' of our discontinuity as our own proper death. However, Bataille argues that the general economy of energetic matter enables us to perceive that the intensive degree of each aspect of human life is involved in a multiplicity of intensive communications, at the level of intensive communications or continuity. This is no real solace since continuity is synonymous with the death of the human considered as an integrated organism and a rational, moral free agent.[5]:

"For us, as discontinuous beings, death means the continuity of being"  
(OC10 19).

It is conceivable that through this knowledge death has an added sense and thereby provokes less fearful anguish, but knowledge of continuity is useless (negative, noumenal, and impossible in the Kantian schema); it could as easily provoke more panic with its revelation of the energetic conditions which must inevitably destroy us: (OC10 25)

"There is a horrible excess in the movement that animates us: the excess sheds light on the sense of the movement. But this is only a terrible sign for us, reminding us that death, the rupture of that individual discontinuity in which anguish encloses us, tempts us as a truth more primary than life".

The unfreedom of intensity and death is neither reduced nor distanced by knowledge; in fact, for Bataille, the human - in common with all energetic matter - 'wills' the exacerbation of intensity and the approach of death by its inherent energetic mode of communication. This 'truth' is sensibly registered in communication of certain consciously extreme intensive kinds, especially sex which Bataille describes as: (OC10 21)

"substitut[ing] for the isolation of being, discontinuity, an action of profound continuity" (OC10 21).

Death and eroticism are linked as approaches to intensive zero [6]; and not simply at the level of biological sexual reproduction in which, for instance, discontinuous sperm and ovum fuse in continuity to create a new discontinuous being; or as in asexual reproduction, where a cell bifurcates and the original disappears. Sex is a 'little death' relative to the 'little' energetic liberation of the death of the organism. The human is privileged in that it registers the passage of continuity - the instantiation of an energetic communication which is tendentially 'bigger than life' - in all these intense instances, either as participant or victims.

Bataille's relation to the exceeding of the Kantian schema can best be shown in that his terminology is indissociable from the terminology of Kant's account of sensibility in aesthetic judgement, especially with reference to the 'violence' done the imagination by the sublime or massively affective object. Bataille extends the scope of this violence to the status of the organism itself.[7] Violence, for Bataille, is an abstraction designating the overwhelming of physiological equilibriums by the influx or expenditure of massive quanta of energy. Reason and cultures are, according to Bataille, simply "composite beings", having "on the plane of affectivity... continuity of being" (OC10 28) and are thus examples of such economies of equilibrium which must seek to regulate their expenditures and influences. Thus within a rational community, sexual love itself - in which the physiological 'integrity' of the discontinuous lovers is dissolved momentarily - becomes the object of social regulations. Prohibitions regulate sex as they do death,

and thereby point to the threat of excessive releases of energy from the rational body, a threat that is itself rationally registered. For Bataille, eroticism is disequilibrium rather than the pleasure of equilibrium. The violent fusion of passion is analagous to the fusion of intensive energetic continuity, a disorder so violent that it cannot be called pleasure: (OC10 25)

"Its essence is the substitution of a marvellous continuity between two beings for their persistent discontinuity" (OC10 25).

Bataille's account is at once a psychology and an energetics of eroticism: The abstract energetic poles of continuity and discontinuity are transformed in this account into the poles of transgression and prohibition around which the psychological and energetic motions of attraction and repulsion play. A level of energetic principle and a level of Kantian sensibility are superimposed, one on the other. This is a typically Bataillean form of bastard discourse; and precisely refers to the outcome of Kantian critique, in so far as sensibility was shown to be the condition of thought and culture, and yet attempted to critically ground itself (at the level of a general energetics). This perverse post-Kantianism is evident when Bataille describes the sensibility of infection and threat as 'moral sympathy', the properly human communication: (OC10 25)

"First and foremost the passion of lovers prolongs in the domain of moral sympathy the fusion of their bodies " (OC10 25).

Bataille even describes the trajectory of his account of eroticism in terms reminiscent of the invasion of the Kantian rational schema by sensation: (OC10 24)

"It is a question of introducing into the interior of a world based on discontinuity, all the continuity to which this world is susceptible".

His account prioritises sensibility, sensitivity, and affectivity and can thereby be designated as a post-critical celebration of influence and infection.

For Bataille, eroticism attests to the impersonal libidinal drive towards the energetic continuum, which is 'felt' at the point of violation of the integrity of the discontinuous being, and is felt in addition to the unconscious sexual urges (for control, possession, manipulation) which are studied by psychoanalysis. The intensive extremity of sex and death is relative to these second order unconscious but therapeutically conscionable desires for an equilibrium of the psyche, which constitute, however sadistic,

the normal attitude:

"There is in the move from the normal attitude to desire a fundamental fascination with death" (OC10 24).

This fascination with death is too fundamental to be powered by the negative zero of lack; it is rather a question of the energetic accord with the excessive energies which are perceived, at the conscious level, as wracking and threatening us. If Bataille is thereby distanced from the psychoanalytic project in general, his account of the unconscious energetic conditions of the sensible account of human life is in basic agreement with the psychodynamic model of unconscious processes as described by Freud in Beyond the pleasure principle. [8]

It is in this text that the impersonality of the libido is emphasised, which would in other texts and in ego-psychology in general be a complex of 'personal' libidinal formations, determining characteristic behaviour. Freud opposes the pleasure and reality principles, the flows of libidinal energy seeking pleasure and the constraints imposed by the super-ego. This is a symptomatic but secondary distinction, given that within the pleasure principle itself, a more radical distinction is drawn by Freud. The energy flows appear to have, writes Freud, two tendential motions; following an erotic 'instinct', libidinal energy flows towards sexual behaviour, in which the unpleasure of a primary excitation is regulated and transformed into pleasure; another motion tends towards this primary energetic excitation, and Freud calls this the 'Death Instinct'. This does not mean that death or any other analogy for this chaotic movement becomes an object of fixation in the machinations of the unconscious. The 'death instinct' is as little to do with the behaviour of libido in relation to objects of desire as it is to do with the behaviour of persons. Such a libido is eminently Kantian and internal. In this sense the parallelism which Bataille suggests between 'sensible' human behaviour and its energetic conditions is meaningless. It is rather a question of the interruption of impulses oriented to the erotic by the motor which drives them, by a greater quantity of energetic pulses which threaten to overcode erotic impulses and return them to the maximal and chaotic behaviour which would damage the integrity of the psychical organism.

Within the Pleasure Principle, the erotic tendency composes and isolates libidinal whilst the thanatoid tendency induces transfers and communications of energy which themselves tend to dissolve integrated organisms in the general flow of an energetic environment. Thus within the pleasure principle - were it not for the fact that the two tendencies are only ever mixed - the extremes could both be considered 'death', although the isolation of the psychical organism from its larger environment is impossible, whereas the eventual flooding of this organism by the energetic matter of the environment is simply a question of time. For clarity of distinction it is simplest to consider death as a result of the isolating tendency which occurs at the point where such a tendency is overcome by external excitations.

The libidinal compositions of the Pleasure Principle are precarious stabilisations in which Thanatos urges the interactions and communications between elements, and between any composition and the flows of invasive energy around it. Any level of erotic composition is thus, at the same time, a degree of thanatoid fusion between the composition and its environment.

#### Immanent zero and its transcendent degrees

We can extend the scope of this model to all energetic events, and thereby define Bataille's notions of the temporal intensive differentiations of transcendence/immanence. Intensity as a degree depends on the event of isolation (that Bataille calls transcendence or discontinuity). All intensive quantities are transcendences, degrees from the intensive zero of communication, continuity or immanence. Intensity and extensive magnitude are given together in the temporal intensive differentiation of space. A proper extension of this principle would concern itself with degrees of composition (rather than beings), in which changes of degree are brought about by intensification, that is from the increase of transcendence or intensive events within integrated compositions. This can best be illustrated by returning to the model of the Pleasure Principle, where every intensity or libidinal composition can likewise be considered as a differentiation from intensive zero to which it returns in the trajectory of Thanatos (intensive zero being the transcendental principle of Thanatos of which Deleuze writes [9]). Of course the novelty of this account is that this primary excitation

can no longer be said to be internal to a composition or an organism or any libidinal formation. Both refer to energy in general. Thus Freud's account gives us three levels of description of energy distribution; the level of psychical investments, the economy of the invasion of massive quantities of excitation from outside the psychic organism, and the economy of those quantities themselves insofar as they can be seen as separate from the damage they inflict on the psychic organism. Intensification is registered at the negative limit of concepts or organisms; or rather the point at which they are overwhelmed by the energy flooding in and circulating around them, so that they dissolve outwards, is registered at the level of general economy (at the level of the most primary process) as an increase of energy circulating in a free and random state at the level of that primary process. Intensive quantities result in intensifications on the scale of the macro-environment, an intensification which makes the speed and intensity of local compositions increase.

The most general energetic sense of transcendence and immanence which Bataille deploys refers to this 'plane' of temporal and energetic differentiation of transcendent degrees of matter from the immanent zero of entropy, which can be seen as replacing the Idealist plane of limitation marked out by the logical negative and the exclusive zones of reason. The quantitative nature of the intensity and intensification of quanta in this immanent differentiation of time and energetic matter emphasises the fact that all compositions or events tend towards an entropic intensive zero in time, and behave relative to their elements, environments and this immanent zero at a variety of continuous degrees and speeds of change up to the threshold at which they are irremediably transformed.

Bataille uses the notions of transcendence and immanence to designate this abstract energetic model, but he also associates these notions with the history of the religious and moral resolutions of the problem of expenditure - that is, the problem posed by the tendency of the energies which constitute social compositions to increase, capitalise themselves and threaten the negentropic equilibrium of the composition - a problem which faces societies in general. Both deployments of the terms feed into Bataille's account of the general economy of energetic matter.

## Transcendence and genealogy

Bataille develops both senses of the terms in Theory of religion and On Nietzsche. [10] In the Theory of religion Bataille presents the reader with a pre-history of the philosophical moves which I have associated with Kant, but which apply at least as much to the whole phenomenological tradition. At the same time, this genealogy of philosophy and culture designates the parallel concerns of the energetic plane which I have described above. [11] We saw there that the scales of transcendent energetic matter were situated relative to an immanent intensive zero, and that the perception of these events could be conceived as immanent to the energetic events of the forms, movements and transformations which occur on these multiple scales. Bataille attempts to define this paradoxical immanent perception in the opening pages of Theory of religion, before going on to define human transcendent perception, which he conceives as founding the human attitude to the world. Bataille attempts to define immanence in relation to animality (OC7 292-3), by imagining how the animal senses difference, only to give up the attempt as nonsensical. However, he recognises the importance of the question as to the possibility of a 'non-logical difference' as distinct from a logical difference which posits transcendent objects. In a move reminiscent of Kant's rationalisation of the Sublime, Bataille infers the attributes of immanent intensive differentiation from the very form of the failure of his original act of 'imagination' (OC7 293-4); in which an impossible object of perception (immanence - one of Kant's zeroes) dissolved. According to Bataille, in its passage this 'concept' was no longer an object of knowledge but rather a movement on a terrain or a landscape, a movement among others which all "slip toward the unknowable". This concept of immanence is itself 'a dissipative object in time', characterised by its fluctuating degree of reality in time. Bataille states that such an object cannot be described in a precise way, and that even a perception of its changes is problematic. Only the general principle of the modification and disappearance of the object in time can be safely assumed, and local and specific immanent activities can only be formulated as also tending to randomness. The magnitude, like the animal:

"has only diverse behaviours according to diverse situations" (OC7 295). Immanence is less a question of a principle of difference than of a process of temporal differentiation and dissolution of transcendent quanta. The novum of

chaotic behaviour is inevitable and attests to the inadequacy of principles and regulations in restricting and articulating this temporal differentiation: (OC7 295)

"We cannot say concerning a wolf which eats another wolf that it violates the law decreeing that ordinarily wolves do not eat one another. It does not violate this law: it has simply found itself in circumstances where the law no longer applies" [12].

Bataille opposes the intensive perception of "immanent animality" to the perception formed by the Kantian distinction of the transcendental ego and the form of the non-I or object in general. Bataille considers the transcendental ego as functioning by positing "the transcendence of things in relation to consciousness (or of consciousness in relation to things)" (OC7 295-6), and thereby 'lifting up' all elements and objects of consciousness including the self-determining subject onto a plane of discontinuity or transcendence. Bataille associates this transcendent operation with human utile activity and with the delimitation of the possible from the immensity of immanent virtuality (which the transcendent operation designates as 'impossible'): (OC5 207-9)

"Activity dominates us .. making acceptable - possible - that which without it would be impossible",

"We bring possibility to existence with a stupid absentmindedness; and everything finally contradicts this; it is the result of the postulate of work... everything is impossible".

For Bataille, the form of the transcendent operation is the template applied to human activity in order to formulate life as goal-oriented and useful. However, utile values are themselves only validated by a further transcendent operation, as relative to the furtherance of either a divine principle or to the principle of Kantian human moral freedom. Bataille treats the Kantian schema which I have touched on [13] as of value for culture 'in abstracto', in so far as cultures treat the excessive energies which traverse them as necessitating or provoking a useless expenditure which they value ambivalently as 'sacred'. The 'sacred' approximates to the immanent energetic conditions of life which utile action disavows, and can approach, in its expenditures, this zero of immanence to a dangerous degree. Thus the energetic movement of human social life is played out around the poles of the transcendent isolation of the objects posited by work and their values; and the 'sacred' approach to intensive zero and the dissolving values of that approach. This movement and

its events is temporally differentiated on the plane of transcendence relative to the zero of immanence. Bataille explicitly designates this plane in On Nietzsche.

This plane is a plane of interference, contamination and contagion of the thermic and moral values associated with the 'drives' to transcendence and immanence. In Theory of religion Bataille concentrates on the religious and moral aspect (that is, the values) of these thermic degrees and describes the complication of the drives which resulted in the occidental culture of capital. He describes the reorientation of these values - which are originally the degrees of events in which the higher values approach the zero of the sacred - around the moral dualism of transcendence and immanence, a moral dualism which is overcoded - that is, the terms distinguished - by the transcendent operation of the drive to transcendence itself. According to this analysis (OC7 324ff), the value of sacred immanence - which was initially the site of an ambivalence, being both beneficent and malefic, release to and threat of zero - is historically overcoded by the transcendence of the object in the profane world and its functional values which peak with the Kantian idea of rational morality. Thus a rational moral (divine) principle comes to regulate the moral world view of capital, dissolving the malefic sacred in the sensuous and profane world and transforming the beneficent sacred into the higher human faculties. The profane world is considered both malefic and beneficent in so far as it is both unpredictable (sensuous) and predictable (rational). Bataille is most interested in the value of violence and contagion which was associated with the malefic sacred: this is transformed, he argues into the value associated with the transcendent operation itself (OC7 331). The originary violence of the sacred entailed the tendency of sacred release to destroy utile objects and hold utile values in abeyance; transcendence reduces violence to good and bad influence - the influence of rational faculties as legitimations of the conception of phenomenal objects and utile projects, and the restricted, hardly countenanced influence of noumenal objects on those projects and faculties. The latter approximates to the violence and 'intimacy' of the sacred insofar as it involves a dissolution of the transcendence of the utile object and subject. Intimacy can only be considered an intensive act of violence and transgression because it is an approach to zero which occurs within the dualist territory lorded over by the

transcendent operation: (OC7 311-2)

"What is intimate ..is what has the passion of an absence of individuality.. intimacy is violence ..because it is not compatible with the positing of the separate individual".

The death of the Christian God is an example of the inevitability of the intimate sacrifice of the transcendent legitimations of the transcendent operation, that is the inevitable haemorrhage of the values of reason and morality; which is only inevitable because of the inevitable thermic death of all such values and degrees in the unleashed contagions of the energetic movements towards zero: (OC7 333)

"In death the divinity accepts the sovereign truth of an unleashing that overturns the order of things, but it deflects the violence onto itself and thus no longer serves that order".

Thus Bataille equates the transcendent operation with the delimitation of the utile and the possible, and thereby ultimately with the formation of a moral image of the legitimation of that delimitation. He defines God as produced through the operations of transcendence which characterise the Kantian mind-picture: (OC5 207)

"1) aspiration to the state of an object (to transcendence, to definitive immutability) 2) the idea of the superiority of such a state. The order of things ordained by God...submits to the principle of the possible... One says of the word God that it exceeds the limits of thought - but no! it allows a definition on one point, that of limits... The order of things willed by God is submitted to the principle of the possible".

But God is also a symptom of the inevitable death of transcendence, its return as a degree to the summit of the immanence of zero thermic energy, as a result of its own intensification of the energies which run through it: (OC6 163)

"Transcendence has become mortal by consolidating the idea of God..Without the development of transcendence - transcendence that founds the imperative temper - human beings would have remained animals. Though the return to immanence takes places at the elevation at which humanity exists.. Immanence signifies 'communication' at that level, without going down or up again".

Transcendence is the tendency of degrees of energetic matter to isolate themselves and become negentropic; but isolation and negentropy can only culminate in a return to immanence. Immanence is the dissolution of values and degrees, and thus only transcendent events can be said to signify:

"Only transcendences (discontinuities) are intelligible. Continuity is only intelligible in relation to its opposite. Pure immanence and the

nothingness of immanence are equivalent and signify nothing" (OC6 176). However, immanence affects transcendence, revealing transcendences as dissolving degrees and values, rather than as immutable entities. Thus the transcendent degrees called morals are shown to be relative to immanence, to be dissolving degrees, in sensation. Morals are simply attempts to restrict this dissolution with intellectual formulations, yet still simply manifest the powerlessness of thought before the unconsciousness of immediate (sensible) reactions to strong stimuli (OC8 633). Immanence is the revelation of the energetic condition and trajectory of transcendence in sensibility:

"The state of immanence signifies 'beyond good and evil'.

It is linked to non-asceticism, to the liberty of the senses" (OC6 170)

"We are bound to flee the emptiness (insignificance) of infinite immanence, insanely dedicating ourselves to the lie of transcendence! But in its madness this lie lights up the immanent immensity. An immensity now no longer a pure non-sense or a pure emptiness, it is the foundation of full being, a true foundation before which the vanity of transcendence dissipates. We would not have known transcendence...if we had not first constructed it and then rejected it, torn it down" (OC6 181).

Bataille chooses to concentrate in the Theory of Religion and On Nietzsche on the complexity of the plane of immanent transcendence in so far as it presents us with a map of the temporal differentiation of energetic matter as degrees, values and morals. Thus I have emphasised the sensible condition of morals as well as the intensive condition of sensation. An account of the intensive differentiation of matter can have other than a moral orientation. [14] Bataille consolidates his energetics of morals in his account of general economy, by giving it a biological and thermodynamic base. But we should not lose sight of the general effect of the trajectory of sensation and the noumenal object proper to it - "the time-object which destroys [the subject] whilst destroying itself" (OC6 159). Bataille replied to Sartre's phenomenologist's complaint (almost worthy of Derrida in its obstinate rejection of the possibility of the thermic contagion of thought) that immanence and non-knowledge were "hypostasies of pure nothingness" (OC6 197) and thereby simply articulated the phenomenological relation between subject and object; by relegating concerns with transcendentals and absolutes to the trashcan of "slow thought". This slow thought, writes Bataille, is itself no

longer possible; after the catastrophe of thought and its transformation into the quanta of a thermic contagion, thought is like:

"the blurring countryside seen from a train, problems perceived dissolving in movement and accelerating to a calamitous speed as they reappear in new forms".

The effect of sensation, of the affect of the noumenal object on the subject is the dissolution of thought in its intensification, in its accelerating incoherence, which maps out the general terrain of its own extinction.

### Intensive communications

We saw above [15] that Kant arrived at an unconvincing conception of 'communication' as the intensive quanta proper to the form of human moral freedom in the course of the Critique of Judgement. For Bataille the quanta of communication are the energetic events which constitute the alternative terrain of the 'general economy' of restricted and rationalised economies such as that of the Idealist schema of mental processes. This notion of communication is resolutely inhuman and posits a scale of perception which is useless for the practical tasks of a philosophy which would associate humanity with independence from its natural energetic conditions. At the same time the notion of communication cannot be reduced to this critical function. Bataille uses this notion in analyses which map and compare energetic events according to general principles of energetic distribution (as we shall see); but over and above this sense of communication hangs the horrible senselessness of that which it designates, the dissipative nature of communication as the condition of energetic matter in time. The critical function of the notion of communication dissolves in the senselessness of the intensive zero of communication, thereby exacerbating the contagious condition of energetic matter at the intensive low-level of the philosopher's vertiginous panic. The disjunction between the will to expenditure and the necessarily rationalised desire for the equilibrium of sense is bridged, and liberates the discursive panics of thought which fluctuate in their accelerations towards and from the base energetic zero. This communicative behaviour of attraction and repulsion to zero is one novel characteristic of Bataille's texts, and drives them to their post-critical state.

In Inner Experience Bataille heralds the arrival of communication as the dissolution of the basic co-ordinates of Idealist philosophy: (OC5 74)

"Above all no more object... There is no longer subject=object, but a 'gaping breach' between the one and the other, and in the breach, the object and the subject are dissolved, there is passage, communication, but not from the one to the other, the one and the other have lost distinct existence".

The general characteristics of communication are described with remarkable similarity throughout Bataille's work. All these accounts of communication emphasise a novel scale of perception, which does not register the scaled bodies of individuals or individual organisms (which Bataille calls 'ipseities', that is, simple or essential entities); but rather a microscopic and macroscopic, molecular or "granular" (OC5 472) perception, which describes the movements and flows of particles which cannot be said to have 'ipseity' because their movements can only be perceived relative to other particles, and yet which constitute and deconstitute the bodies of ipseity in the flows of their time, in a complex manner that beggars human comprehension. Communication involves human understanding in a new sublime, an immensity of the micro- and the macro-scopic. The salient points are rapidly articulated in one page of the 'Communication' section of Inner Experience: (OC5 110-1)

"What one calls a 'being' is never simple ..it is undermined by its profound inner division, it remains poorly closed, and at certain points, open to attack from outside.....What you are is connected to the activity of the numberless elements which constitute you, to the intense communication of these elements amongst themselves. These are contagions of energy, of movement, of heat, and the transfers of elements ... Life is never given at a particular point: it passes rapidly from one point to another (or from multiple points to other points), like a current or like an electrical circuit. Thus where you would like to grasp your timeless substance, you encounter only a haemorrhaging and the uncoordinated play of your perishable elements".

This change of scale of perception refutes our basic assumptions about ourselves - that we are static 'beings', and that a privileged human scale provides us with the problems we face - , reveals the 'improbability' if not impossibility of these habitual conceptions from the energetic perspective of the conditions of life: (OC5 68)

"subject, object are perspectives of being at a moment of inertia". Our habitual conception of a human scale to the problems facing our bodies and property takes no account of the fusional scalar intricacies of the communication of elements, both within the macro-bodies of 'ipseities' or

organisms and in the interface of these elements (which we consider 'proper' to us) with the energetic economies of the 'threats' posed by external energetic stimuli.[16]

Given the complexity of the communications the essence of which he is trying to describe, it is no wonder that Bataille's account favours the disproportionate and dissolving relation of the human scale to communication in general; there is a dramatic certainty to the dissolution of the human perspective: (OC5 111)

"Your life is not limited to that ungraspable inner streaming [the communication of the elements]; it streams to the outside and opens itself incessantly to what flows out or surges forth towards it. The lasting vortex which you are runs into similar vortices, with which it forms a vast figure, animated by a measured agitation".

This intermittent prejudice for the human sense of communication waylays Bataille's account of communication into Kantian (and even proto-Habermasian) formulations, most notably in Literature and Evil, where he describes communication as: (OC9 312)

"the supreme appearance of existence, which reveals itself to us in the multiplicity of consciousnesses and in their communicability".

The tension between the human sense of communication and its impersonal energetic sense recurs throughout the analyses which Bataille gives of 'composite beings' of several kinds. This is unsurprising given that the energetic sense of communication exceeds or covers a set of events which is bigger than and includes the events of human communication. At the same time, this tension creates dazzling mental resonances and conceptual complexities in those accounts.

The notion of communication dissolves the model of affectivity which I have associated with sensation in Kant's critical project. For here the difference between internal and external influence is negligible; all communications are quanta in a dissipative and contagious mode. In a sense this was also true of sensation - which was both inside and outside the enclosure of the faculties. However, with the notion of communication the contagious mode of energy transfers is seen as the primary object of description and itself the basis for the entities which organise themselves around a shortlived internal economy. The energetic notion of communication entails the topography of a

spatial dissipating differentiation relative to and veering towards a base zero of communication, rather than a limited spatial Idealist topography of enclosures and impossible excluded zones.[17] The flows of communication may affect the matter which congeals at the tips of their swirls and eddies ('being'), but this is simply a continuation of their nature as pathways of energy flow, passages of heat and energetic movement. For Bataille, intensity is only in the second place a marker of sensibility, the sensation of anguish which responds to the threat of dissolution for energetically challenged human beings. Contagious intensity is primarily the attribute of energetic communication itself.

The complexities of the compositions thrown up in the course of energetic communication are detailed in the section of Inner Experience entitled 'The Labryinth' [18] and in the College of Sociology lectures (OC2 291-363).

In both these texts the appearance of energetic compositions other than organisms depends on changes of the scale of perception, changes which affect the status of the perceiver as well. The 'subject' of such a perspective is no more than an energetic superconductor itself, that is, itself has the form of communication; its 'perception' is therefore little more than the mapping of the energetic communications which constitute it and into which 'it' dissolves. The human is only privileged in having a general awareness of - an ability to register - the immense movements which occur on the scales which exceed and humiliate it. The human is simply another energetic element and superconductor, increasing the intensity of the energetic quanta which passes through it [19]: (OC5 112-3)

"You and me are, in the vast flux of things, only resistances favouring a resurgence.....To the extent that you are an obstacle to overflowing forces, you are headed for pain...But you are still free to perceive the sense of this anguish within you; the way in which the obstacle which you are must negate itself and will itself destroyed, given that it originated in forces which break it". (OC5 112-3)

It is the equation of an unconscious human will with energetic communication in general which effects this intensification of energy, despite all human conscious intentions; for these intentions are necessarily utile: (OC7 271)

"Each of us is only a resistance favouring a resurgence.. our isolation permits a halt but this halt only increases the intensity of the movement when it is liberated. Separate existence is only the condition of retarded and explosive communications...The halt is only a recharge",

"The intensity of a contact.. is a function of a resistance" (OC5 390)  
It would be a regressive step to designate this function of resistance (especially in its human example) as 'affecting' the scales of the general economy of energetic communication. Intensity and intensification have local values for the restricted economies of compositions which appear on certain scales of energetic communication, as well as designating the differential principle which is at work across scales in relation to intensive zero. Intensity grows locally, to points of saturation which are themselves local and which dissolve into the flows of immense time; but intensity also grows and is dissipated universally and thereby produces these minor localities in the process of its intensive temporal-spatial differentiation.

Bataille succumbs to the temptation of prioritising the perspective of the human organism with regard to its destruction, partly because he tends to treat physiology and energetic economy as indistinguishable, and partly because of the energetic value of the spectacle of the violent dissolution of human concerns in time. Given the 'neutrality' of the scientific fact of the pure thermic contagion of communication, Bataille's prioritisations designate a perspective proper to an energetics of thought or libidinal materialism. In 'The Labyrinth', Bataille associates the will to expenditure, which he argues is found at all levels of energetic matter, with the sovereign value of human action which is "a tragic and incessant combat for a satisfaction which is almost beyond reach".(OC1 434) Only the human seeks sufficiency and thus finds itself insufficient. But this state is unnecessary from an energetic perspective; the human intensification of existence happens despite the utilitarian values which come to frame all human behaviour. Despite the utile frame, all aspects of existence at the human level (as at every other) can be conceived as a question of compositions of excessive (over-sufficient) energy. This includes the social and historical compositions which philosophers - such as Hegel - take as the objects of pure formulations:

"The contradictory movements of degradation and growth attain, in the diffuse development of human existence, a bewildering complexity. The fundamental separation of men into masters and slaves is only the crossed threshold, the entry into the world of specialised functions where personal 'existence' empties itself of its contents: a man is no longer anything but a part of being, and his life, engaged in the game of creation and destruction which goes beyond it, appears as a degraded particle lacking reality".

It is the values of utile knowledge given to the human social formations of the indifferent energetic quanta of the universe which splits the trajectory of human life. Bataille continues:

"'Being' increases in the tumultuous agitation of a life that knows no limits; it wastes away and disappears if he who is at the same time 'being' and knowledge mutilates himself by reducing himself to knowledge."

But every path is only a symptom of the immensity of energetic 'being'; thus utile knowledge and its goals - the dream of divine sufficiency, the reflection of an ideal ego, - simply defer the encounter with the 'uncertainty' and improbability of energetic nature:

"It is a clumsy man, still incapable of eluding the intrigues of nature, who locks being in the ego. Being in fact is found NOWHERE and it was easy prey for a sickly malice to discover it to be divine, at the summit of a pyramid formed by the multitude of beings, which has at its base the immensity of the simplest matter." (OC1 435)

The summit becomes for Bataille the privileged site of the displacement which affects all energetic elements, which is itself effected through their tendency to expend. The particles which constitute an entity are also involved in other communications, other complex energetic compositions on other scales of energetic distribution, which are themselves also subject to time. The summit is the threshold or point of dissolution at which these minor chaotic behaviours overwhelm the clear picture of an entity on a given scale, necessitating a change of perspective, a change of scale and the annihilation of that entity. Bataille discusses the impossibility of the independence of any level of energetic particle (the organism included) using the analogy of a sponge (OC1 436) [20]; the fact that simple organisms can constitute aggregates which function autonomously only goes to show that both elements and aggregates are as heterogeneous as each other, traversed by the same energetic flows and unbearable tensions. The stability of the organism is a convenient illusion for the initial registering of the thermic changes occurring within an energetic environment:

"A man is only a particle inserted in unstable and entangled wholes. These wholes are composed in personal life in the form of multiple possibilities, starting with a knowledge that is crossed like a threshold - and the existence of the particle can in no way be isolated from this composition, which agitates it in the midst of a whirlwind of ephemerids. This extreme instability of connections alone permits one

to introduce, as a puerile but convenient illusion, a representation of isolated existence turning in on itself" (OC1 437)

The summit comes to replace this convenient illusion, marking as it does the point at which the integrity of an entity is compromised, overcome and even 'transcended'. It is not so much that particles exclusively enter into a single aggregate which 'transcends' them, but that particles and aggregates are only distinguished by scales, and that the summit marks the point of inscrutability at which an entity is transcended by its constitutive communications and perception reconvenes on another scale. Transcendence is in this situation, simply the register of a change, a movement between scales of immanent communication in relation to an intensive zero.[21]

According to Bataille, the pretence of autonomy, a deduction or subtraction of a base unit of One from the perception of a multiplicity of communications, which is first made as a claim proper to human rational knowledge, leads the human ("that unpredictable and purely improbable chance" (OC5 101)) to seek a total perception of "the whole of transcendence", "to complete being" (OC5 105) that is, to delimit the base of the pyramid (the immensity of energetic matter) with regard to the summit and reorient affects and energetic quanta within a given spatial distribution. This would be a pre-Kantian schema, from which Kant himself cannot be totally divorced, as we have seen. Such a metaphysical substantiation of the image of thermic contagion eliminates the basic effects of the processes of communication; that its differentiation of substances occurs in time and that thus substance (like being) is a spatial differentiation of "irreducible differences" (OC5 110) subject to time:

"What we call 'substance' is only a provisional state of equilibrium between the radiation (loss) and accumulation of force.. life itself is no less accumulation and loss of force, a constant illicit compromise of this equilibrium which makes it possible" (OC5 250).

Bataille points out in a Kantian fashion that the human is chasing the tail of its intelligence in seeking to substantiate the summit as a completion point of existence:

"We can enclose nothing, we can only find insufficiency" (OC5 104)

"[The summit] is only 'grasped' in error; the error is... the condition of thought". (OC5 98)

This 'flight towards the summit' is only one path in the labyrinth of

communication (OC5 102). But all paths eventually lead to the truth of the summit as the threshold of change, states Bataille (OC5 102), because of the attractive power of the will to expenditure which urges energetic matter to communicative change and dissolution. The image of the pyramid and its summit, combined with the model of nuclear attraction gives us the paradigm for Bataille's account of the analogical behaviour of intensive entities and energy in general. Both are related to thresholds of change and dissolution, the immanent zero of communication of new thermic degrees or an entropic state respectively. This sense of the threshold can be distinguished (as we have noted [22]) from the traditional sense of measurement - typified by Kant's account of degree - fixated on the base unit of One. As Bataille goes on to describe the model of the summit and the pyramidal base, we see that it provides an exact image of the liberated critique which we attempted to define in Kant's 'Critiques'. In this image, the summit represents the attractive power of the immanent intensive zero and the 'base' the transcendent planes of energetic matter which tend to this zero. The drive to zero is exacerbated by the communication between degrees of transcendent matter, as critique tended to unconscious senselessness as it contested every single remnant of transcendent thought in Kant's 'Critiques'. In both transcendent matter and the Kantian operations of the faculties, the explicit desire for sufficiency is lampooned as the excessive nature of the forces traversing these transcendent events resonates through matter and thought: (OC5 107)

"The summit incessantly throws the base back into insignificance, and in this sense, waves of laughter traverse the pyramid, contesting degree by degree the pretense of sufficiency in beings of a lower level. But the first network of waves from the summit flows back and a second network traverses the network from bottom to top: the reflux contests the sufficiency of those beings placed higher. This contestation preserves the summit until the last moment: it cannot fail, however to reach it. In truth, numberless being is in a certain sense suffocated by a reverberating convulsion."

Zero is inevitably reached even without the critical exposure of the laughable pretences of reason towards a would-be universal totality. The article 'The Labyrinth' finishes with a surreal image of the intense and explosive situation which Bataille saw as shared by the extreme nature of human endeavour and energetic matter in general. Everything rushes to zero: (OC1 440)

"THE UNIVERSAL resembles a bull, sometimes absorbed in the nonchalance of animality and abandoned to the secret paleness of death, and

sometimes hurled by the rage of ruin into the void ceaselessly opened before it by a skeletal torero. But the void it meets is also the nudity it espouses".

The 'College of Sociology' lectures (OC2 291-363) apply the notion of communication in studies of social formations, taking as their point of departure the idea that societies can be analysed as fields of unconscious energetic forces, as 'composite beings' traversed by 'communal movements' (OC2 295). Bataille associates the idea of a composite social being with the French Sociological tradition of Durkheim, Tarde and Mauss (OC7 265ff). Such a composition is composed of micro-scalar and chaotic energetic communications which can transform the macro-composition itself. The composite form is a minimal 'unity' for these scales of communication, an arbitrarily totalled addition of the scalar forms which compose 'it', which recollects, adds to and differentiates them (OC2 297). It is as much a movement of transformation as a composition:

"Just as in nature itself everything remains vague, composite and rich enough in possibilities for diverse forms that it endlessly reduces human intelligence to shame".

The scale of composition is continuous, and thus the differences in attributes between the scalar forms in a composition can only be quantitative, that is, of degree (OC2 299). Thus for Bataille, consciousness is a degree of intensive matter, another communication, and for instance as in death, the higher aggregates of energetic communication can disperse with a minimal effect to the micro-scale energetic communications which constitute a composition. Thus the communal movement is not proper to the composition as a whole - which is itself an inert negentropic communication relative to the intensive communications which constitute it - , but rather to the movement of the composite elements over and above it! Composite beings are radically open to time through this constitution and dissolution by their communicative elements: (OC2 305)

"Such composite existences simply have differences of intensity and movement which depend on the number of elements that they reunite and on the concentrations of certain functions which arise in the biggest agglomerations".

These differences are provoked by motor forces of attraction and repulsion, that is forces of attraction to intensive zero and of resistance to this

attraction. For Bataille the essential contagious nature of communication in energetic compositions is oriented around the intensive zero of the summit or nucleus which attracts peripheral elements towards it. (OC2 292). In religious societies, this zero is represented by the 'sacred nucleus' (OC2 315ff), and the approach to it, its mode of sacred power, is given in the prohibitions and their transgression which regulate the movement of energetic elements in that society. [23] Bataille thus reduces individual and group psychology to elements of a communal energetic movement of communication:

"the active function [of the sacred nucleus] is the transformation of a depressive content into an object of exaltation" (OC2 316).

Prohibition and transgression are themselves only second-order formulations of the powers of attraction and repulsion which characterise physical entities (atoms and electrons) as well as psychological economies; that is, which characterise communication in general. [24]

In sacred societies, the summit or nucleus is as mobile as the communications which it attracts, in keeping with the tenor of its immanent process:

"The driven movement is more important than its occasional object" (OC2 326).

The values associated with the summit and the regulations which restrict access to them and it have arbitrary sites (places, rituals, objects) associated with them, but the movement is immanent to them in so far as they are considered energetic events and dependent on the transformations of time. Religious and social events are associated with intensities and thus a mapping of their energetic status is possible. These events, like all energetic events, are transcendent to the immanent zero which they are attracted towards; communication is an immanent process which has as its effect the transformations of the energetic differentiation immanent to time, transformations which themselves occur within time. Bataille's account of the energetic communication constitutive of sacred societies preempts the critical and genealogical trajectory of his account of general economy. [25] But paradoxically, it is the human psychological resonances of communication which attest to the vertiginous contagion of an energetic communication which must overwhelm and dissolve the rational uses and discourses to which we can restrict it. This can best be designated at the level of sensibility, in the fear of a contagion and infection which comes to usurp all rationalisations.

Bataille's notion of communication can be clarified (and rationalised further) by examining its thermodynamic properties. A thermodynamic system is one in which the energy available for the compositions and formations of life tends towards an intensive zero, entropy, a state of the maximal chance distribution of energy in a system. This movement is closely linked to the conception of a unidirectional or irreversible time which can be contrasted with the reversible time imagined by classical mechanics, and with the logics of mathematics which reduces time to the status of a variable element. Thermodynamics, like Bataille's communication sees time as the principle of variation or differentiation of energetic matter itself which effects the move from order and difference to disorder and dissolution in the maximal entropic state of any system. Time effects the transition of transcendent degrees of matter to zero. Scales of complexity are important in analyses of thermodynamic as well as communicative structures. As we noted with communication, energy intensifies and degrades to entropy on the scale of the universe or the system; and intensifications also occur at the level of the intensive degrees of matter, which are themselves in a tendential negentropic state of disequilibrated energy flux and composition. This negentropic state can only be provisional, as is attested to by the intensifications which wrack them, and which mark a crossover between degrees and between scales of degrees, (and thus a growth in entropy, in so far as energy is liberated). Bataille's quasi-phenomenological formulae on representation as a substitution of appearance for intensive reality - an appearance which is conditioned by a disappearance [26] - has a thermodynamic interpretation and condition, in that intensities are positive registers of the intensive degree of an event hurtling towards the intensive zero of death; intensities are representations which occur insofar as they become entropic.

As we have noted, there is no contradiction between the dissipation of differentiated entities at the macro level and the increase in thermic differences in a local negentropic environment. Both are symptoms of the increase of energy - its increasing virulent differentiation in time - towards entropic or intensive zero. Negentropy is only the provisional tendency of matter to organise itself into informational redundancies, habitual and simple communications which come to be called - on the human scale - self-evident truths or 'meanings'. Recent developments in

thermodynamics have replaced the study of ideal closed thermodynamic systems with that of open systems in which the general and specific imbalances of a system are emphasised - that is, the way in which negentropic turbulence creates eddies and involutes so 'independent' from the general movement towards entropy that, for instance multitemporality can occur within irreversible time. [27] This can be considered a regressive step given that it makes possible the deflection of the radical import of energetic dissolution; entropic zero becomes a horizon event which is simply taken into account in articulations of the quasi-independent 'restricted economies' of local environments. Similarly, in Bataille's account of general economy the import of intensive death is decathected through the question of the relative status of general and restricted economies. The notion of the contagious mode of communication affects a critical reevaluation of minor and irrelevant restricted economies; whereas the niceties of the principle of general economy posit the relative independence of general and restricted economies, only then to demonstrate the conditions of the latter in the former. Bataille's account of general economy can almost be seen as a moment of transcendental philosophy, except that the general movements of energy are shown to be immanent to the restricted energetic economies of organisms, exacerbating and intensifying their impossible equilibriums. Bataille's account of general economy is best seen in relation to the account of communication which I have detailed above; general economy is nothing more than the scales of energetic movement and temporal differentiation in relation to thermic zero. This is no economy at all, nor does it entail a transcendental principle, but is simply a mapping of the temporal differentiation of solar radiation, of the irradiating and contagious energy which creates as it dissolves.

However the simple mode of energetic contagion is not only the 'principle' of a still rational general economy, although there it dissolves the problems of transcendental philosophy; it is also the infectious and virulent mode of energy at every level of energetic matter. Human sensation is privileged - or cursed - in this regard, registering contagious intensity independently of its subsequent relay to and effect on second-order rationalisations. [28] The value of these sensible episodes of contagion is that they demonstrate the inevitability of our dissolution in energies which overwhelm us: (OC7 276)

"The accord, at the base of things, of our joy and a movement which

destroys us".

For Bataille, this inevitability and accord provokes a practical irreason of sorts: (OC6 167)

"If I cannot make the summit an object of action or intentions, I can make my life an ongoing evocation of possibilities".

This glib project cannot withstand the pressure of the energetic infections or intensities which wrack our bodies and can as easily turn joy into pain. Intensity - neither pleasure nor pain - is frightening in its neutrality as well as in its contagious growth in time.

The surface of Bataille's writing registers the sensible events of these contagions and enthusiasms, in which thought has no resistance to the external affects of its energetic environment and becomes oversensitive, immensely sensitive; and is thereby dissolved in the rush of sensations in time which overwhelm it and hurtle it on to the post-critical dissolution of sensation itself, according to the principle of all thermic quanta.

## Chapter Seven: BATAILLE - RELAPSE AND COLLAPSE

### The formulae of general economy

The term 'general economy' may be particular to Bataille's work, but it does not therefore designate a 'philosophical project' and a solution to the problems of critical thought inherited from Kant. To suggest that it does would be a hideous misrepresentation of the outrage presented by 'general economy' from the perspective of any traditional philosophical method which includes a notion of its own verifiable epistemological status. Bataille's philosophical writing can be traced to a tradition of critical thinking, but his writing can only be considered, at the level of philosophical analysis, as a series of symptoms of a massive breakdown of the rational immune system, which inevitably destroys the ground of critique itself. Having said that, the account of 'general economy' is Bataille's most rationally formulated although fragile and minimal measurement of the energies liberated by that critical explosion. It designates a field of quanta in a similar manner to that of the general rules of Kant's form of aesthetic judgement. It could therefore be conceived as a minimal relapse to reason on Bataille's part. However, the phrase 'general economy' is neither a concept nor a schema on the scale of Kant's 'transcendental idealism'; not a project for philosophy, but - just as Kant's rules formulated, given an intensive reading, the rules of the form of communication - the general set of thermic principles by which philosophy, in common with all human and energetic activity, is ruined.

In the course of the Accursed Share[1] Bataille posits a secondary level at which philosophy and human activity in general can contend with these principles, change their own behaviour and attempt to 'emulate' these principles of energy (albeit in a necessarily restricted fashion) in order to avoid the unnecessary violence of the effects of utile accumulatory activity, such as crises of over-production, and global inequalities of wealth.[2] However, the basic - and still critical - trajectory of Bataille's account of general economy lies with the revaluation of utile products as energetic quanta obeying energetic principles rather than principles of utility. Most of the concepts and values which Bataille extracts from his Idealist heritage do not outlive their uses, when these are themselves related to their

conditions in thermic contagious communication. The levels of utility and energetic expenditure must conflict, and this conflict is, for Bataille, at the basis of all historical and cultural developments. Those values and concepts which do survive, because of their relative proximity as degrees to the intensive zero, are imbued with a new sense of harshness or cruelty which is witness to the indifferent intensity of energetic contagion. Thus, although Bataille develops what might be called a 'thermodynamics' of knowledge, history and culture, this discourse itself has a deviant status, a savage intensity rather than a rhetorical or reasoned power of conviction.

It is possible to distinguish between the deployment of two senses of the term 'general economy' in Bataille's texts. One minor sense in which 'general economy' designates the set of conceptual possibilities or knowledge in relation to its excess (non-knowledge) in a schematic manner, as a field, and maintains the philosophical jargon proper to philosophy in that field. This is the sense which Derrida picks up on and treats too 'seriously', identifying it with the deconstructive methodology. This minor sense is the less frequent of the two; it lessens the difference between restricted and general economy by construing general economy as an extension of restricted economy, arising from it, and remaining internal to it, insofar as one can only describe general economy by traversing restricted economy in each of its conceptual moments. This eminently philosophical sense of general economy still inhabits the German Idealist space of the interior experience of the transcendental ego and the limits of possibility proper to its understanding, albeit including at these limits the self-destructive 'sovereign operation' which opens this space to what it cannot regulate. At a philosophical level, this sense of general economy is simply a revisionist Kantianism, emphasising the limit of the noumenal in shifting its function as a negative limitation of the understanding onto the indeterminate notion of a general economy of reason, whilst the effects of the noumenal (and this is a radical departure for Kantianism - to recognise the feedback of sensation into reason) are described at the level of sensibility (anguish, ecstasy etc). The resonances of this sense of general economy with traditional philosophical schema facilitate a reduction of the difference of general economy from the concepts of the post-Kantian Continental tradition. General economy is thereby implicated in the substitutive series of Bataillean 'concepts' whose necessary relation to

traditional philosophical problems is thereby consolidated. Derrida and the commentators who have followed his lead have forged links between this sense of general economy - only found explicitly in a couple of fragmented statements in the 'Method of Meditation' - and the schema of knowledge and experience found in 'Interior Experience'. This is, as we shall see, a reorientation and fundamental domestication of the energetic concerns of the major sense of general economy, around traditional static philosophical concepts.

The very fact that the trajectory of philosophy or utile activity, as opposed simply to their limits of possibility, is of concern in the restricted sense of general economy, is symptomatic of the attributes of the major sense of the same. For this restricted and still Idealist philosophical model to be possible, the energetic principles which coordinate the trajectories of its elements must be in place. Derrida misrepresents Bataille when he extracts only the minor sense from the fragment in the 'Method of Meditation' in which both senses are given together and related to sovereign occurrences: (OC5 215-6)

"Sovereignty is no different from the limitless dissipation of 'riches' or substances; if we limit this dissipation, we are left with a reserve for other moments, which itself limits or annuls the sovereignty of a given immediate moment. The science relating the objects of thought to sovereign moments is in fact a general economy, envisaging the sense of these objects in relation to each other, and ultimately in relation to their loss of sense... General economy foregrounds the fact that excesses of energy are produced which by definition cannot be used. The excess energy can only be lost without the least end in sight, and thus without the least sense. This useless, senseless loss is sovereignty. (The sovereign like the solid is an inevitable and constant experience)".

This quote is important for several reasons; firstly, it circumvents the complexities of the relation of recuperability which Derrida draws between phenomenological logic and sovereignty, emphasising instead the irrecuperability of the loss involved in expenditure. Secondly, the nature of this expenditure or loss is made explicit, and it has only an indirect relation to a loss of phenomenological sense; this loss is identified with the thermodynamic dissipation of substances in time. Thirdly, the basic process of the restriction of energy necessary for life (absorption and reserves of

energy) is detailed; and fourthly, the basic principle of general economy is given ("that excesses of energy are produced which by definition cannot be used").

It is worthwhile emphasising the relation between Bataille's account of general economy and the general principles of the science of thermodynamics. Although Bataille himself does not use the term or those immediately associated with that science's field of enquiry, Georges Ambrosino - Bataille's physicist collaborator on the 'Accursed Share' - details the connections between Bataille's conception of the biological necessity of restricted economies and the economy of negative entropy or informational redundancy in an essay ('The thinking machine and life') on Wiener's book Cybernetics. [3] His account clarifies the most difficult elements of both thermodynamics and Bataille's account of energetic materialism; the parallel and inverse relations between energy, entropy and negentropy, or between the general and restricted economies of energy.

According to Ambrosino, the universe can be considered a thermodynamic system in so far as the energy available for the compositions and formations of life tends towards a maximal entropic state, a maximal chance distribution or equilibrium of energy. Useful energy is degraded, in time, into useless entropy. The energy available for work decreases as the measure of entropy increases; however in any system regulated by this general principle, provisional orders, equilibriums and balances of real energy occur which can be considered 'redundant' in so far as they are no longer available for work in the system. The sum of these provisional orders in a system at any one time is the negentropy of the system. Bataille's version of thermodynamics emphasises the importance of differential scales of economy in the universe or system as a whole. Restricted economies and general economy are simply different scales at which the same principle operates. At first glance it appears that the energy degradation (entropic increase) on the scale of the whole system is qualitatively different from the intensities and intensifications which continually occur at the level of negentropy or disequibrated energy flux and compositions. But these negentropic quanta, are, as intensities, simply markers of a growth in entropy because energy is liberated in their passage, that is in their duration. As I have noted above [4] this conception of an irreversible and dissolving time proper to thermodynamical systems is a radical novum for knowledge; we need only remind

ourselves of the conceptions of time contained in the texts of German Idealism which are subject to the laws of the inner spaces of human intentionality, so that orders of time replace the unidirection of time, to register this 'novum'. The nature of intensive quantity resolves the apparent contradiction between the dissipation of difference at the level of the whole system and the increase in difference at a local negentropic site. Intensities occur as energy becomes entropic, that is as energy reaches a relative point on each possible scale of formation at which that scale loses its negentropic consistency, and is reduced to the nonsensical energy flow of irradiation. This consistency can be reconvened provisionally on a higher scale (of an organism or its elements, or an environment like the earth considered as a single 'biomass'). Given the cumulative effect of the intensifications and increases in energy at every scale of a formation it is easy to see how an organism's absorption of energy effects its resolution into an entropic quanta, because, at every level of that formation (organism) intensification designates an entropic increase.

Thus one can state that intensive quantities are registered at the point at which degrees and scales are enveloped in macro-scales. The cumulative effect of the scales of irradiation applies not only to individual organisms but to environments in general; all formations as such can be gridded and linked on the scales of intensive magnitude (and the higher the scale of formation does not necessarily mean the more extensive the formation - intensity can create complexity). The intensive and entropic scales apply to all formations within the process of energy flows and dissipations which is the approach to intensive zero. Intensive zero is the zero around which Bataille constructs his notion of general economy. Intensive zero is implicit in the interval between the immanent principles of general economy and the transvaluation of the objects and values circulating in restricted economies into intensive quanta, a transformation which these principles make possible, yet which is effected in the flows of intensive thought. But intensive zero is itself the dissolution of all thermic events, including thought, through their intensification. As thought dissolves it returns to its physiological condition in sensation, which experiences the duration of fluctuation and dissolution at the expense of all knowledge. This is why the general economy of energy - which those restricted economies obey - is constitutively irrational, even though it has 'strict' principles that 1. energy irradiates

in general and 2. thereby produces different compositions of matter which 3. can themselves not only absorb but also produce energy the necessary irradiation and entropic loss of which (despite all the work this energy can be used in) 4. affects their local environment.

General economy is general and irrational (rather than universal) and thus related by its status to the general rules of communication which Kant deduced from sensible aesthetic judgement. [5]

Bataille complicates his notion of general economy with his constant examination of the intensive points of restricted economy. This is an understandable obsession, given Bataille's concern with the anguish of the human condition, but it is precisely, to the extent that it occurs, a concentration on the humanism and utile values which the approach of intensive zero destroys. This humanism is evident at several levels; most obviously in the explicit aim of the Accursed Share to reveal the principles of general economy and thus allow humankind to regulate its own useless expenditures and avoid the catastrophic expenditures of war. In a more confusing and damaging fashion, Bataille's constant use of the Kantian jargon of excess, limits and extension to designate the intensive point of restricted and utile economies, compromises the 'independence' of the terminology of intensifications, expenditures and intensities which general economy attempts to elucidate. Bataille's account tends to extend the reach and effectivity of the human and restricted realm of activity (typified by the Kantian topography) by projecting its terminology onto the levels and scales of energetic matter in general. The overwhelming haemorrhage of sense presented by the primary production of solar radiation is lost. All levels of matter are identified with human organisation and opposed to the general movement of entropy and the chaos of intensive zero. The differences between those levels remain under-emphasised, and conversely the global human negentropic intensification takes on proportions which are belied by the relative size of the 'little heatdeath' which will end it. In this sense, Bataille's approach to general economy can be linked to the functioning of the closed systems of classical thermodynamics, rather than to the open systems and dissipative structures of chaotic thermodynamics because he emphasises the abstract general energetic principles which govern general and restricted economy, and only examines the

specific behaviour of open systems of expenditure - in the 'Accursed Share' - at the empirical anthropological level of societies.

### Post-critical knowledge

Bataille characterises general economy as articulating (OC7 14) "the point of view of excess energy", that is the point of view of energy which is irreducible to the 'uses' to which it can be put in human and even biological activity. Energetic matter could be considered a continuum of productive flows in which the entropic sum slowly increases and has as its symptom an increasing production of low intensity compositions. But the human perspective essentialises the negligible energetic difference between useful and useless production and projects this distinction as a regulating factor for every existent entity and its products. The paradox of articulating (in human discourse) the point of view of energy which exceeds (conditions yet is useless for) human activity, thus imposing human perspectival vision on pre-organic matter, is not lost on Bataille, as is proved by the Introduction to the Accursed share; but this paradox lessens the value of useful discourse in general, by juxtaposing it with the half-glimpsed immensity in time and space of excess energy: (OC7 20)

"This work tends to increase the sum of human resources, but its results teach me that accumulation is only a delay, a recoil in the face of an inevitable expiration, in which accumulated wealth only has value for an instant".

This paradox opens up human perception to questions of scale; Bataille argues that the scale on which general economy is deployed is different enough from the mundane human scale of vision to elucidate certain problems which dog a humanity bent on useful activity to the exclusion of its energetic conditions. Thus the paradox of articulating the 'point of view' of excess energy results in one part in the usefulness of general economy, but in another part in the exposure of human activity to its own uselessness: (OC7 28)

"Economic phenomena are not easy to isolate, and their general coordination is not easy to establish. It is however possible to ask the question...[whether] the whole of productive activity must not be considered with regard to the modifications it receives from that which surrounds it... is there not a place for the study of the system of human production and consumption as internal to a larger whole?... Are there not in the whole of industrial development, social conflicts and

world wars... causes and effects which only appear on the condition that we study the general facts of economy?".

Thus the 'knowledge' which Bataille's conceptions of communication and general economy make possible cannot be described as a new form of intellectual activity; rather it charts the critical trajectory within which its own validity burns up. Bataille uses the terms 'communal' or 'communicative' knowledge to designate this evaporating movement (OC7 526). Such 'knowledge' has a primarily regressive effect in revaluing knowledge in relation to the perception of the full impact of the affectivity of the general movements of energy on knowledge. These general movements are given and do not themselves require explication; they are the empirical conditions of rational explication, the full sense of the flows of energetic information. The notion of the given-ness of energetic communication as an immanent condition distinguishes Bataille's thinking from the basic projects of phenomenology and Kantian idealism: (OC7 529)

"[Communication] is inserted in the explicable but is not itself explicable... communication has full sense without being subjected to the 'how' of the explicable".

This 'knowledge' provides us with a chart of the trajectory of critical thought on one level of the visualised 'field' of the general movements of energy. At the level of energetic communication designated as philosophy, the modification of the philosophical subject by the object is itself modified and dissolved as the object is dissolved in the flows of 'noumenal' energy: (OC7 530)

"Communal knowledge is not properly speaking objective knowledge. Like rational knowledge it accounts for a modification of the subject by the object, but where reasoned knowledge leaves this modification in order to account for the object in isolation, communal knowledge remains knowledge of this modification at the same time as of the object; no separation of the subject and object is possible, it is necessary to envisage a field of communication rather than an objectal point.. the modification of the subject is indistinguishable from the projection [of such a field of communication]".

This evaporating knowledge accepts the full import of its sensational and physiological conditions; its last intellectual gesture is to describe the dissolution of its own claims to validity. For this reason, it can be called 'post-critical'.

Bataille argues that political economy is only concerned with particular and restricted economies (OC7 33), modelled on the cycle of useful demands (primarily to overcome scarcity, and then to exclude scarcity in the accumulation of wealth) and their satisfactions. According to Bataille, this description of a cycle of utility and wealth ignores the "unilateral character" (OC7 10) of the limitless play of energy in general. Bataille argues that we must take account of the gift of this general scale of perception, and recognise, beyond the minor demands of scarcity and necessity, the major and unavoidable problems presented by the immensity of excess energy. Again, on the one hand, Bataille conceives of general economy as presenting us with an almost Sartrean choice to acknowledge the human need to expend at moments of dangerous accumulation (and to regulate that expenditure in as minimal a fashion as possible) or to have that accumulated energy explode catastrophically and generally; on the other hand Bataille's general economy is an act of intellectual terrorism, a bogus justification for exposing rational restrictions to the intense thought which is fuelled by the increased sensations affected by the approach of the intensive zero.

It is essential to emphasise the difference between the scales of perception associated with general and restricted economies. These are all scales of intensive degree, as are the quanta deployed on them. The scale of general economy is the most distinct scale because of the immensity of the energetic behaviour it describes, and includes the behaviour of energy on the lesser scales which it envelops, although the specifics of that behaviour are only visible on those scales themselves. On this scale of the energetic universe dissipative energetic quanta remain positive despite the increasing entropic value of the sum of this energy. Energy remains radiant and productive and increases because the value judgement which distinguishes useful and entropic useless energy pertains to the scales of restricted economy. Energy in general is productive and excessive despite being increasingly entropic (in time). Energetic production or expenditure has three minor intensive modes: production, accumulation and consumption. On the scale of this radiant movement of energy, the importance of that quantity of energy which is available for work is swamped by the immensity of its entropic trajectory, which Bataille calls its growing expenditure, and which itself includes the negentropic compositions of life. Expenditure is the primary production of a

process of energetic dissipation: (OC7 9)

"energy is the basis and the end of production... The amount of energy produced is always greater than the amount necessary to produce it".

The restricted economies of bio-systems obey the same principle, but in these systems - traditionally conceived by science as organisms - the principle has become the site of a fundamental value-judgement, based on a fear of the modification of the human organism by its environment. All conceptions of economy acknowledge expenditure and excess energy, but use them to consolidate their sense of necessity and scarcity: (OC7 10)

"We perceive at the same time the excess of production [energy] relative to necessary energy and the general effect of this excess".

Expenditure is 'accursed' because it is conceived as ruining the utile projects with which we overkill scarcity; but in this our projects are themselves ultimately expenditure, because accumulations can only be provisional in the radiation of time.

Such economies of life are a consequence of the solar economy which engenders and rules them: (OC7 10)

"Ultimately we are nothing but an effect of the sun... The solar energy which we are is an energy which dissipates.. All it effects in us is a passage. We can only stop the solar rays for a time".

The solar economy of radiation typifies the universe's general movement of dispersal of galaxies and stars, within which local movements of attraction between stars and satellites can occur (OC7 187-8). As a star and as part of this general movement of energetic matter in the universe, the sun's radiation can be thought of as a projection into space of a certain quantity of the star's substance, which has been transformed into great intensive degrees of energy as heat and light. Solar substance or mass is fusional rather than solid, that is, the behaviour of its atoms prolongs the transformation of mass into heat and light, i.e into radiation or the expenditure of that star's energetic mass. The atoms of a radiating star like the sun are fused in its whole mass and in its central radiating power. In time, radiated atoms lose the degree of energy which bound them in a fusional mass; they cool in space and are randomly attracted into local and specific formations. The atom found on the surface of a dead star like the earth exists at a much lower intensive degree of energy and is not fused in any central radiating energetic mass. On the earth's surface different atomic

formations can proliferate and their complexity and scale increase; atoms form molecules, molecules form crystalline and colloidal compositions which eventually form living organisms. Bataille suggests that the degree of composition and energetic isolation or transcendence in any formation increases during the evolution of the planet and its life forms; he also suggests that planetary life is characterised by a parallel extension or growth up to and then remaining constant at a state of 'full volume'. I shall return to this point but it suffices to say here that any increase in the degree of composition of living formations need not be dependent on the scale of that composition.

For Bataille, a high degree of composition (isolation or transcendence) designates a state of low radiation. Compositions are not only coagulated energetic matter; they are capable of developing and growing in size and/ or complexity, transforming and internalising the energy in their immediate environment. As particular compositions they can be conceived as absorbing energy; the power of radiation is replaced by the absorption of radiation, by the 'ability' of the organism to accumulate energy:(OC7 188)

"The star lavishes its powers; our earth divides itself into particles which crave power".

The conception of such particular compositions as absorbing energy projects us into the realm of the restricted economies proper to life considered in terms of the porous bio-systems of organisms; such a conception ultimately entails a correlative intentionalist fallacy in which absorption as internalisation is transformed into the metapsychology of a will which is intent on overcoming lack and increasing power. [6] The provisionally equilibrating states of organisms in restricted economy foreground 2 modes of energetic activity: accumulation and expenditure. An organism attempts a regulation of the inverse relation between its accumulations and its expenditures, but external factors and even growth threaten this inverse relation and the organism's energetic equilibrium.

The accumulative mode is perceived on condition that organisms are differentiated from their energetic environment, and their economies are given a relative autonomy. The accumulation or accretion of energy is a facet of the process of composition, (which is as Bataille points out also a process of "decomposition" OC7 510) and thus can be seen as the identifying element of

those improbable provisional equilibriums which occur within the flatlining pulses of radiating energy. Thus within the restricted economy of an organism, accumulation is linked to the inevitable and total expenditure which is the decomposition of that organism. Thus Bataille's emphasis on the perspective of restricted economy, which accentuates the autonomy of the organism's provisional equilibrating economy in order to explode it at a catastrophe point, can be seen as artificial and melodramatic. [7]

According to Bataille, the mode of expenditure of the biological system emulates the expenditure of the sun in so far as its composition and decomposition produces more entropic energy than it accretes, and its expenditure has an intensive degree albeit lower than that of solar radiation. Such a massive expenditure affects the local energetic environment of the biosystem in an intensification of the available energy, but its effect on the movement of energetic dispersal in general is negligible, despite adding minimally to it. A bio-system - an energetic production of a lesser intensive degree than the fusional matter which produces it - is composed and decomposed in the communications of energetic matter in time towards entropic intensive zero. The bio-system is a symptom of the growth of entropy in the general energetic dispersal, and itself finally produces a sum of entropic energy in the lowburn of death after using accreted radiant energy for sustenance and growth.

In Bataille's text there is a level of confusion between the intensive scales of energy dispersal; Bataille discusses systems which he calls 'general' other than that of solar economy. It is important to distinguish the major general system of global life (which Bataille calls the 'biomass') from the general economy of energetic matter. For Bataille, living systems are characterised by their use of radiation to accumulate and grow, yet, states Bataille every living system and the system that is the "biosphere" (OC7 35) itself must eventually reach a limit of growth at which energy becomes irreducibly excessive and superfluous: (OC7 29)

"the living organism, in its situation determined by the play of energy on the surface of the globe, receives in principle more energy than is necessary to maintain life: the excess energy (wealth) can be used for the growth of the system (for instance an organism); if the system can no longer grow, or if the excess cannot be entirely absorbed in its growth, it is necessary to lose it without profit, to waste it,

voluntarily or not, gloriously or else catastrophically."

It seems to me that these limits of growth or limiting conditions of life can themselves be considered provisional; the complexities of energetic formations must be able to circumvent them, even within the restricted economies of bio-systems; growth can occur within an organism on infinitesimal scales, or the organism can change in order to accommodate energetic changes. Bataille's perspective is a little too restricted. His formulation of the laws of restricted economy curtails the examination of energetic complexities with a direct relation to the principles of general economy within organisms, and in so doing repeats the intentionalist anthropomorphic fallacy which I noted above. On the other hand, the form this fallacy takes is an extreme mutation of the Kantian idealist topography of limitation, an extreme mutation which exposes the necessary ruination of that topography on the flows of noumenal energy. Bataille is at his most Kantian when he states, with regard to the limit of growth proper to every biosystem: (OC7 11)

"The limit of growth is the limit of the possible".

Bataille emulates the Kantian topography in describing the biosphere as a 'full space' and thereby a fundamental limit to life considered as a space and a volume. But he also admits that on the scale of the biosphere growth like death - which Bataille envisages in a Kantian fashion as a subtraction from this full space which causes a local movement of pressure to fill the resulting void - is secondary to the movement of expenditure which conditions the restricted economy of growth and pressure. The biosphere is from a more general perspective a constant volume of life, an equilibrium of economies of accumulation and expenditure, and it is precisely from this perspective that the general character of energy as expenditure appears: (OC7 39-40)

"if one envisages life as a whole, there is really no growth but a maintenance of volume in general.. possible growth is reduced to compensating for the destructions brought about.... there is generally no growth, but only, in many ways, a luxurious wasting of energy... The dominant event is the development of luxury, the production of more expensive forms of life."

The behaviour of organisms with regard to volume, growth and extension is a secondary phenomena in relation to the primary production of energy which is the limitless condition of that behaviour. This primary energetic production creates increasingly expensive/ intensive energetic formations, the size and extent of which is irrelevant. It seems to me that Bataille emphasises the

use of energy for growth in restricted bio-systems to the detriment of any account of the micro-scales of such organisms at which intense and contagious energetic formations would be possible. Similarly, his exclusive deployment of the Kantian term 'limit' in relation to extension conceals the possibility of the term having a thermodynamic and scalar sense, designating the intensive degree of energetic formations and the thresholds of their degrees. The limit would then simply designate a change of degree, an intensive or energetic marker rather than a negative limit. This would register an intensification, a new degree rather than an exclusive limitation. Bataille's schema of 'extension' and 'limit' arrives at the same result; the thermic events of intensification and expenditure, but only in relation to the macro-scale of the organism, to the surpassing of the organism, exceptionally if inevitably, at one moment and one point, when in fact this result is common to every scale of energetic matter, and to every pulse on those scales.

Bataille allows for the intensification of the space internal to bio-systems only in relation to human labour - and even then only exceptionally, for intensification is most often associated with the haemorrhage of that space in death - but other organisms effect the same result i.e simple organisms and viral replication which both proceed by a sort of intensive 'growth' which is negligibly extensive. To essentialise death amongst all intensive communications which tend to thermic zero is, paradoxically, a very anthropocentric prejudice when death is simply an example of expenditure - albeit expenditure of a high degree. For growth can be considered as the inevitable increase or intensification of energy which occurs independently of any extensive growth, within bio-systems, at the interface of those systems and the general economy of energy, as well as in that 'economy' as a whole. Such a conception of intensive growth would be in keeping with the general effects of Bataille's interpretation of the Kantian negative limit as an intensive degree. He interprets the limit of the extension of the understanding as the site of the intervention of the process of intensive radiation which floods and swallows up the distinctive growths and equilibriums of accumulation and expenditure associated with the restricted economies of the rational 'organism', subjecting that organism to the increasing virulent differentiation and intensification of itself by intensive degrees. The general economy of energy formulates the true energetic

conditions of rational and restricted 'organisms', subjects them to their constitutive communications of energetic matter; thus the nature of these organisms, their growths must be considered as transformed into intensive growths or communications, rather than being simply conceived as destroyed.

Bataille himself remarks on the link between general economy and his conception of the always positive quanta of communication, by remarking on the compositional nature of any energetic formation, and the movements proper to it as "a field of concentrations" (OC7 265). These concentrations are formed by the tendency of "circuits" of energy to stabilize themselves provisionally, isolate themselves from the general circuits of the communication of energy. From the perspective of the anthropomorphic level of bio-systems, the particularised circuit is continually threatened by the disequilibrating flows of communication, communication which it filters and restricts to sustain itself. This restriction channels energy but thereby subjects it to an intensification which becomes apparent when the degree of intensity grows to a degree at which the energetic equilibriums of the particularised circuit are upset, become chaotic and ultimately dissolve the circuit in the free flow of communication. The higher the degree of channelling (or composition in energetic matter) the greater is the tendency for the intensification of energy to increase exponentially or virulently within the restricted economy of a bio-system:(OC7 270)

"Each of us, in the limitless movement of all worlds, is only a resistance which favours a relay. Our isolation allows the resistance but the resistance only means that intensity is added to the movement when it is relayed. Separate existence is only the condition of retarded but explosive communications."

The tendency of energy to provisionally isolate itself occurs at every level of energetic matter, but arguably only with the animal kingdom do biosystems experience the threat of the overwhelming energetic forces which surround them. A few more degrees of complex energetic channelling and rational processes emerge which contest the sensation of threat which constitutes the sacrificial notion of the immanent provisional subject (immanent to its conditioning energetic flows, consumed and transformed by them (OC7 63)) with the philosophical transformation of these flows - in a restricted form - into transcendent (with regard to the immanent subject) yet utile objects. The

utile status of these objects reduces the influence of the energetic flows on the subject to relations of utility, and this in turn raises the subject to a level of transcendence as a meta-object which controls these objects considered as tools. We have already seen this energetic trajectory - from the biological to the rational - spelled out in the Theory of religion [8], and it lies at the base of the energetic sociology which Bataille develops in the Accursed share.

### General economy and genealogy

Bataille's anthropological and sociological studies take as their starting point the human cultural responses (conscious or not) to the problems posed by the general economy of energy. At the same time, Bataille sees these problems as culminating in (contemporaneously to the writing of the accursed share in 1948) a potentially catastrophic problem for global political economy.

For Bataille, history recounts the changes in size and intensity of cultures and societies, changes brought about by the treatment of excess productive energies in those societies. The uses a society makes of its productive surpluses determine that society: (OC7 105)

"The surplus is the cause of the agitation, of the structural changes, and of the entire history of a society"

Societies are almost inevitably involved in misrepresenting the pressing energetic conditions which influence them; the history of occidental culture is the history of a neurotic desire to accumulate wealth in order to compensate for the fact of scarcity and the fear of death, a fear which is irrational (because thermic death is the endpoint of the energetic condition of the universe) and dangerous because of the socially disequilibrating effects of excessive accumulations of wealth: (OC7 247)

"The death of a galaxy or a star is the condition of its brilliance... Man's misery comes not from dying - to die is to live gloriously - but to desire to escape fate. Fear of death is the principle of avarice. Man can only choose between dying gloriously or miserably."

Bataille would prefer an empirical nihilism, a realism based on the proximity of life to expenditure and death, to the hysterical idealism which represses

death and buffers itself against it in a process of wealth-bulimia. Classical economy is the restricted economy which sets out the principles which rationalise this fear of scarcity and death; it is an economy of isolated transactions, or else of processes which have an optimal state in which profits increase despite production costs. In classical economy, the term general economy can only designate the sum of isolated economic transactions, whereas for Bataille in so far as general economy intervenes into political economy it attempts the integration of the global movements of capital 'liberated' from the law of profit which characterises those isolated transactions (OC7 167). Classical economy can only seek to further the accumulation of wealth and limitless economic growth because it cannot conceive of any limits to the process of its specific transactions, to its own restricted and accumulatory growth; limits which are presented by the limitlessness of general economy itself. For Bataille, as we shall see, general economy designates the true character of capital and can be used as a corrective to the damage caused by a restricted classical economy fixated on the accumulation of wealth. However, this usefulness of general economy is a secondary effect of the perspective peculiar to it; growth is secondary to the distributions of the intensive fluctuations of energy which condition it: (OC7 178)

"Growth must be situated in relation to the instant in which it resolves into pure expenditure".

Bataille juxtaposes capitalist society and those sacred societies in which the religious practice of sacrifice was a minimally regulated emulation of the luxurious nature of the cosmos. Of course the human attitude to the sacred entailed a paradox: such societies placed the ultimate value of life in the destruction of the servile value of possessions, but at the same time, this destruction was also transformed into a socially useful function, creating the caste hierarchies in those societies (OC7 75). The utility of sacrifice can be over-emphasised; in societies where the practice was not overtly institutionalised (exclusively associated with the mediating role of a priestly caste), sacrifice was the site of potential socially ruinous contests for power. It is also true that the production of social hierarchies through the practice of sacrifice is not of itself a useful human activity, but rather an energetic effect which is appropriated by human activity.

The sacrificial spectacle of expenditure is only minimally linked to - as a social instance of - the regulation of expenditure in the necessary subterfuge performed in the 'law' of representation. For Bataille, the specific cruelty of these sacrificial religions has a "demonstrative value" (OC7 511) for the study of occidental formations of capital; relative to these formations which are often accounted for in terms of restricted economies of utility, the excessive expenditures of cruel religions (that is the massive quantitative difference between their accumulations and expenditures of energy, and the proximity of their habitual, sacrificial expenditures to a point of no return which would ruin those societies totally) reveal the principles and tendential movements and effects of energetic movement in general, in line with the principle that: (OC7 511)

"an excess renders the effect of a force more visible".

Thus these societies are remarkable to the extent that they maintain such an immediate proximity to their own energetic death: such communities live "at the height of death" (OC7 511), at an intensive degree which Bataille can only discover in occidental culture in global war and in the ravings of the solitary philosopher who paradoxically seeks "the intimacy of passion" (OC7 76) and finds when faced with death that (OC7 245) "all that remains in us are sensations of a great intensity".

Bataille's description of the ritual contest of wasting valuable goods which the North-West American Indians call 'potlatch' conforms to this general trajectory of sacrifice; expenditure is revealed as the source of value and of the movement of social differentiation. Despite the dangers of an unrestrained potlatch (and sacrifice), Bataille construes the practice as having, in a minor mode, intentionalist resonances: (OC7 72)

"Gift-giving has the virtue of a surpassing of the subject who gives, but in exchange for the object given, the subject appropriates the surpassing."

This utile sense of the custom is only perceived by the contestant who fails to equal the expenditure of the other contestant, and who leaves the eternally chaotic and destructive (useless) arena of the contest in order to take a place in the social differentiation which it effects. Bataille suggests that this distinction between first and second order energetic effects is the historical basis for the hierarchies in all historical societies, hierarchies

which have ultimately produced the dangerous disequilibrium of wealth in the world, which he would have dissolved in the fusional mass resulting from the intentional structure of the Marshall Plan. Bataille conceives of the Marshall Plan's project for the redistribution of global wealth as a gift or a sacrifice (on the part of a North America which consciously recognises the global necessity of expenditure in the form of a gift to the under-developed world). He goes on to suggest that the suspicion that such a gift is a further example of American imperialism would itself be swamped in the effect of the gift - a new world order of globally integrated energetic capital, in which the first order of the intensity of the potlatch arena swamps the secondary effect of social hierarchisation, and the intensity of potlatch becomes a global event.

As we have seen above,[9] Bataille makes a fundamental distinction between sacred and military societies. He argues that the earliest societies regulated their productive surpluses of energy in ritual forms of expenditure; for instance the Aztecs, the North Western American Indians, or the sacrificial community of Lamaist Tibet, which Bataille describes as characterised by: (OC7 101)

"a power that could not be exercised, that was essentially open to the outside and that could expect nothing from the outside except death".

According to Bataille, later societies regulated their energetic surpluses with external, extensive growth through expansionist wars (Bataille's example in the Accursed share is Islamic culture). Thus for Bataille, the occidental growth of capitalism is due to the reorienting of sacred tendencies by military tendencies within a single culture. The Catholic Church of the Middle Ages placed restrictions on the development of productive forces; development had as its only justification the glory of God, and thus most surplus productive wealth was dissipated in Church procedures, ceremonies and festivals. With the Reformation came the theological rationalisations for the accumulation and dynamic growth of productive apparatuses which supplanted the Catholic static economy of hierarchical consumption. Luther and Calvin were able to accuse the Catholic Church of betraying God in so far as the Church minimized the distance between the human and the sacred by emphasising the procedural dogmas of its own institutions. The individual's relation to God supplanted the Catholic Community with God and thus the individualism

necessary to kickstart capitalist free enterprise came to be formulated. The basis of moral judgements was irreversibly transformed from the 'glory' associated with expenditures in the name of God (Bataille sees the Catholic Church as resolutely 'sacred') to the utile values of the acquisition and production of objects as commodities (OC7 198).

### The explosive liberation of capital

For Bataille, the history of capital is the history of the overcoming of the restrictions placed on it by the values of utility. Bataille sees capital as a fusional radiating (and thereby 'capitalising') mass of seething intensive quanta. He describes capital as (OC7 221) "a machine condemned to increase generally" in which (OC7 230) "each unproductive expenditure augments the sum of produced forces" over and above the restricted economy of capitalist interests which attempts to restrict expenditure to the utile reinvestments of surplus energy in consolidating their productive forces. The limits of this conception of restricted, extensive growth can only be shown in the energetic communications which cumulatively constitute general economy itself, one level of which is the proliferating virulent intensifications of liberated capital. Bataille conceives of the Marshall Plan as an act which induces the haemorrhage of restricted economy into general economy, and reveals the explosive energetic truth of the virulence of capital, as an economy of the intensification of intensive quanta. For Bataille, the Marshall Plan designates an ultimate or "final use" (OC7 171) which will terminate the epoch of economic utility. It is an intervention of the general economy of capital, that is capital conceived as a concentration of energetic intensities obeying the four principles of general economy, into restricted political economy. This constitutes a (OC7 171) "general operation", and a renunciation of the utile principle of the growth of productive forces. It reorients political economy around the problems posed by the necessary and inevitable increase of produced forces:

"By and large there exists in the world an excess share of resources that cannot contribute to a growth for which the 'space' (possibility) is lacking. Neither the share that is necessary to sacrifice, nor the moment of sacrifice are ever given exactly. But a general point of view requires that at an ill-defined time and place growth be abandoned,

wealth negated" (OC7 171).

The Marshall Plan pinpoints the contemporary tension point - the "explosive mass" of the American economy - caused by an excessive accumulation of wealth and the 'sacrifice' necessary to decathect a potentially catastrophic situation: (OC7 161)

"The world economic situation is in fact dominated by the development of American industry... by an abundance of the means of production and of the means of increasing them... the economic problem is becoming a problem not of outlets .. but of consumption of profits without compensation",

and thus (OC7 46):

"General economy proposes..a transfer of American riches to India without reciprocation".

For Bataille, the Marshall Plan - were it to have occurred - would designate the intensive condition of capital and the general economy of energetic communications at every level of energetic matter. General economy itself is less the sum of the energetic communications of matter in general than the form of communication in general, insofar as the sum of such communications must remain indefinite. General economy states that energetic matter at every level and scale obeys the four general rules that I outlined above. Again, it is worth noting the analogy between general economy and the Kantian schema of the form of communication and its general rules. That schema arose from the debris of the critical project, as a last stand against the flood of sensations which were infected with the notion of the immense intensive degrees of noumenal objects; objects which changed in time and caused changes in the subject in time. Kant relegated the perception of these magnitudes to the minor aesthetic judgement, but Bataille places his energetic judgement centre stage, as the formulation of a minimal set of general rules which is the ground for a critical genealogy of historical and cultural events in terms of their responses to their own energetic conditions. These must be unsatisfactory judgements because their grounds are energetic rather than logical. But the form of Bataille's account of general economy still refers back to the (albeit ruined) Kantian form of communication and thereby indirectly to reason - although reason itself, if we are convinced by Bataille's account, is only a virtual restricting overcoding of the givens of the general economy of energetic quanta. However, Bataille is not simply

interested in describing the dissolution of philosophical judgement which must inevitably be represented in terms of the ideas or schemas of 'sensation', 'intensity' etc.. He is also interested in experiencing the intensive quanta of sensations as they are affected in the fluctuations of time and as they dissolve towards zero. He thirsts for the inarticulacy, senselessness, incoherence and unconsciousness of such sensations, in writing. This is the post-critical state, in which the rigour of abstract formulation is dissolved in the speeds and intensities of a writing which is fuelled by the fear and thirst for the intensity of sensations - sensations which must pulse and accelerate vertiginously with time.

### The collapse of time

Bataille's resonant response to Kant peaks with the quasi-rational formulations of the 'rules' of general economy; general economy represents the form of Bataille's extension and dissolution of an 'energized' Kantian topography. On the other hand, Bataille is never less Kantian than when he writes of time. Time is the fluid medium in which Bataille's revaluations of the Kantian topography occur. Bataille identifies time and the infection of communication; thus time is no longer simply the form of intuition proper to a subject, nor simply the external quanta which dissolves the subject. Time corresponds to the process of the communications of energy, to the pure change of becoming-zero in energetic matter. Time is the energetic matter which forms itself around the transcendent and immanent tendencies: (OC1 96)

"There is neither isolated being [transcendence] nor isolated nothingness [immanence]: there is time. To affirm the existence of time... does not give the vague attribute of existence to time: it gives existence the nature of time... it empties the notion of existence of its vague and limitless content, it infinitely empties the notion of existence of all content".

Time is the process of collapse of matter, the collapse of critique into the senselessness of thermic zero, the collapse of the economy of objective knowledge and of objects along with the foundation of the objective realm - the subject. However its harbinger and marker is the still critical noumenal and feared object which infects thought and brings it to a recognition of its own catastrophic dissolution: (OC1 94)

"In this position of object as catastrophe, thought lives the

annihilation which constitutes it as a catastrophe and vertiginous fall...[thought's] structure is the catastrophe; thought is an absorption in the nothingness which supports and kills it".

Bataille emphasises that catastrophic time can only be distinguished from the utile time of the punctual points of past, present and future through the influence of the intensive noumenal object, that is through the sensible intensification and dissolution of critique. For Bataille, catastrophic time is necessarily linked to the action of the noumenal "time-object" (OC6 159) which destroys the subject whilst destroying itself. The noumenal object is the inevitable and traumatic object of 'inner experience': (OC5 88)

"This object, chaos of light and shadow, is catastrophe. I perceive it as object... perceiving it my thought sinks into annihilation...Something immense and exorbitant is liberated in all directions with the noise of a catastrophe..a crash of telescoping trains".

This perversely Kantian noumenal object in general has as its correlate the improbable and dissipative subject, the subject which has been haemorrhaged by general critique and shown to be differentiated from intensive existence in general only in so far as it subtracts itself through a transcendent operation in a rational and abstract manner (calling itself 'necessary') from that matter in general. The ego is secondary and provisional in the process of intensive time and critique:

"The ego is no longer a foundation but a result.. it dissolves in the examination of its conditions... The ego is not an immediate given but, being the movement of which I speak, is the result of complex conditions". (OC6 444)

According to Bataille, the ego is energetically and temporally speaking just an element of individuated matter in general. In On Nietzsche Bataille associates the immanent differentiations of time's energetic matter with chance. Individuated matter is the continually improbable result of chance-time, and the quantitative difference of the individual ego is simply another improbable dissolving node in an indefinite space-time. [10] Bataille calls time "the duration of waste" (OC6 150) and goes on to link time and chance: (OC6 154)

"Chance is the duration of the individual's wasting.. chance is a series of interferences between death and being".

Bataille's attitude to chance is ambiguous: in a Nietzschean fashion, he posits chance as an 'object' of affirmation ('amor fati')[11]; but he also

sees it as simply effecting the energetic dissolutions of time. On the one hand chance is sovereign freedom: (OC6 142)

"Chance occurs in us as time..Time is freedom..To be a bridge but never a goal." [12]

The sovereign rejects the idea of sufficiency instilled by the serial time of points and positions which are related to the possibilities of an enclosed space and the ego that regulates it, for the perception of the 'repeatedly broken fall' (OC5 316) of the chance play of time. This affirmation of chance attests to the creative energies of time in matter; thus time can be rationalised as analogous to Kant's 'genius': rule-breaking, random, disoriented yet creative. On the other hand, this sovereign affirmation and perception are themselves subject to the destruction wrought by chance and time: (OC6 116)

"Chance lifts us up to drop us further; we can only hope that it destroys us tragically rather than letting us die stunned".

For Bataille existence in general is the improbable effect of time and this improbability has a fluctuating value for the human. It is the site of an affirmation and a dissolving communication:

"The essential is aberration

"The impossible is given (I am IT)" (OC5 204)

"The individual in time is wasted, loses itself in a movement in which it dissolves - is 'communication'" (OC6 153).

This paradox is too ephemeral to be called a 'contradiction'. Bataille, like Kant has a human figure of communication, a figure that sums up this paradoxical, or rather libidinal human thirst for its own energetic dissolution: the acephalic figure (OC1 470), the headless human, heart and knife in hand. This is also the figure of the suiciding divinity; thus time is humanised as the history of the death of god. The negentropic composition of the acephale attests to the tension between the minimally human sense of communication and the resolutely inhuman infectious time and communication which constitutes and dissolves it. The human figure will always remain a platitude which does not convey the immensity of the contagious communications of time. Bataille infers the attributes of time from the multiple faces of god and man: time is acephale, time is sadistic rather than imperative and moral (OC1 95)... Always the same, always too much god. For time is not to be characterised but inferred, and less from its effects than from its accelerating devastations in the collapse of matter. This is the sense of the

early essay 'The Obelisk'. Bataille describes the way that the sacred conception of time - based on the terror of the changes it wrought - was replaced by the representations and measurements of utile time. Hours are limits that came to arrest and contain the sensations of time (OC1 505). Yet like the monuments to death - the pyramid, the obelisk, the house, the hovel - built to resist and slow down the truth of time, these resistors eventually intensify the quanta they are intended to repress. And time is intensifying matter and its thermic trajectory; thus time collapses matter and is liberated as uncontrollable and surging speeds tracing the "immensity of an illimitable catastrophe": (OC1 505)

"[they] are no longer obstacles to the haunting sensation of disappeared time, but the high places from which the accelerating speed of the fall [of time's "lacerating explosion"] is possible; and the high places themselves will collapse before the revelation is complete. The lands stray from their sun, the horizon is annihilated"

Time is sped up by the collapse of matter; its accelerations as it is liberated from the intensive restrictions of organisms entail a privileged relation to the sensations of fear and vertigo which it provokes in the human supplicant. This very collapse which it brings about is the source of its inevitable intensive mode of contagion and infection. How does Bataille designate this general horrific senselessness of time, beyond the all too rational concerns with science, sensibility and even style? Through the syntax of his writing rather than his style, ('style' has all the resonances of an opposition to content). I would argue that Bataille's syntax is a set of horrifying symptoms of the inevitable infections brought in time's intensive matter, which wracks the human in its irrational generality and not simply its second-order rationalisations, the hierarchy of the mental faculties. Bataille's syntax is a bursting purulent bubo, a bloodblister disgorging its thinned contents inflamed cellular cystic sac by sac, horrifying symptoms of the viral mode of intensified, pressurised, erupting and collapsing matter. Syntax, like science and sensibility, succumbs to the ecstasy of illness which constitutes the duration of its waste, culminating in the 'nihil ulterius' of thermic zero. Bataille's syntax tensely spatters out in a poor low-level replication of the 'repeatedly broken fall' of time's fluid intensive matter. Like time this syntax has differential speeds of disintegrating matter, decelerations and accelerations, resistances and

resulting intensifications, resulting fragmentations. Time brings critique and senselessness, noumenal object and thirst for zero, in its trajectory to zero, in the 'duration of waste'; and Bataille's fissured, aborting, explosive and tedious texts present us with an abject and near meaningless syntax full of breathless arhythmias and longueurs of redundant philosophical complexity in a written replication of this intensive collapse of time. It is Bataille's naked, supplicant, inordinately sensitive, intensively infected syntax which delivers the reader over to the vertigo of the acceleration of time and the contagion of sensations which it provokes, over and above any exposure to general energetic critique and the genealogy which it makes possible, only to dissolve us body-speeding in the senseless rages of thermic zero. This trajectory of sensation after critique must be differentiated from critique and thus I have called it the infectious mode and trajectory of the post-critical process.

## Conclusion: INFECTION

I have argued for the relevance of the Kantian notion of critique and the conceptual topography associated with it, for an understanding of Bataille's philosophical work. It would be wrong to call this relation between Bataille and Kant 'rigorous', 'necessary' or 'determining', given that Bataille's writing is characterised by the moves it makes away from the concerns of the 'spaces' of the Idealist topography. It would be wrong to reproduce Derrida's argument - that 'taken one by one all Bataille's concepts are Hegelian' - simply substituting the name Kant for that of Hegel. This would be to miss the novum of Bataille's treatment of such concepts: for there they and the restricted economy of which they are the currency are dissolved in the fluctuating character of their conditions, that is in the intensive realities of sensation. The processes of sensation tend to an exacerbated dissolution or becoming and so although the dissolution of those concepts entails their revaluation relative to the value of expenditure, this is no rational value, nor a rational revaluation, but rather a becoming valueless proper to the fate of the power of critique. I have argued that Bataille's revaluation and dissolution of Kant's terminology cannot therefore be reduced to the 'influence' of critique on reason (an influence which Kant himself formulates and regulates albeit in a restricted fashion), as the influence of external considerations or even quanta of sensation on the enclosed fields of rational enterprise. This schema of influence is eminently critical. Bataille's philosophical work is rather an influenzoid infection of reason, for in it thought is reduced to its infectious condition, not through an accomplished intervention into reason, but because of the relay of the scale of rational economy into the larger scale of sensation and intensive energetic quanta. Bataille provides us with a schematic description of the energetic states and trajectory of thought as it veers towards its inevitable intensive immolation. Thought is only an example of events in general, which are exacerbated and dissolved by their energetic fluctuations; this constitutes the incandescence characteristic of events in time.

The melodramatic flavour to Bataille's writing is peculiarly exacerbated by the neutrality and indifference of the quasi-scientific discourses with which he generalises this immolation of thought as the thermic contagion and

heatdeath proper to energetic events in the universe in general. If this makes possible novel accounts of historical and cultural events and change from the perspective of the principle of solar radiation, accounts which are inevitably strange and unconvincing, these accounts in turn conceal, with their radicality, the intuitive nature of the energetic 'truths' which Bataille wishes to articulate. There can be no doubt that Idealist philosophy shuns describing change, being rather obsessed with the states of entities; and yet change is the problem facing every living organism, the problem that our sensations, rather than our rationalisations register. Bataille's writings help us think change on the model of the temporal fluctuations of sensation, which are also the temporal fluctuations of energetic matter in general.

We have seen the way that Bataille replicates essential Kantian concepts: continuity, transcendence, communication, the noumenal, whilst adding to their senses. Thus the set of general rules of the form of human communication becomes the form and rules of intensive communication and general economy; the moral feeling of communication is translated into the sensibility of the sacred; the notions of the transcendent and the transcendental become the status of the temporal energetic differentiations of events from an immanent zero and continuity becomes the basic sensibility of the immanence of energetic communication. The figures of time and the impossible are emphasised in Bataille's revaluation of the Idealist topography. Time as the fluctuations of change supplants the spatial considerations of time as it was conceived within the enclosures of reason and their unity of apperception. The impossible, which was one of Kant's negatives - the limit of the limited realm of knowledge - becomes the swamping real, that is the influx of the intensive real into the abstract restrictions of Idealist philosophy. Thus there is an extent to which Bataille's philosophical writing is concerned with the influence of extraneous matter on reason; but this is only the first move on the way to describing the infectious mode of the intensive distributions and fluctuations which traverse and constitute and dissolve reason. Kant deployed the notion of influence in a restricted manner; as the influence of the higher faculties rather than as the influence of the quanta of pathological sensibility on the higher faculties. But Kant is surely correct in associating influence with the dynamics of critique, that is, the

application of critical principles to objects of thought in the employment of the understanding. Influence cannot escape this critical schema which presupposes the elements and enclosures of transcendental philosophy which it comes to problematize. Bataille's approach is more than a resuscitation of this topography and thereby entails more than an 'extremising' of the mode of influence proper to critique. This is why Derrida's interpretation of Bataille as steeped in the phenomenological tradition is doubly perverse - Bataille is both a post-critical thinker and thereby a post-phenomenological thinker. The condition of Bataille's writing is the failure of critique; rational logic is perceived as no longer capable of explaining the effects of an intensive time which is also the condition of logic. With Bataille's writing we are no longer in the realm of critique and affectivity, in the realm of the model of influence on subsistent rational entities. With Bataille we are rather concerned with a perception which is fused with time and its process of virulent intensive differentiation, that is the fusion of the infectious or contagious nature of perception and infectious events, and their continuous production of exacerbating intensive changes and further and intenser energetic events. This perception has the characteristic of fluctuating intensively and distancing itself from rational meaning in the exacerbation of these fluctuations. Thus it tends to become meaningless as it approaches to intensive immensity; yet it constitutes a minimal thermic charting of this trajectory of thought or life, as opposed to an explanation of the logical structure of its elements or events. It is as difficult to consciously alter this process of intensification as it is easy to sense it coursing through all things.

Change is the spiralling vortexing intensification of events in time. Our extreme sensations scream this at us despite the inability of our conscious intentions to affect this movement. We only have a power of decision or choice on the edge of the tips of a swirling eddy of energetic and intensively transforming matter. Our consciousness is a crystalline formation of these fluctuations yet our scale of infectious perception allows us to sense the wider scales of energetic fluctuation. We fuse with the changing movements of impersonal unconscious energy and glimpse them as occurring recursively throughout the scales of existence. These scales are only minimally and inevitably decreasingly objects of perception as the process of perception

accelerates in its fusion with the teeming of energetic matter, as one scale of the general fusion which is exacerbated by the general and specific thermic attraction of degrees to the summit degree of their own annihilation.

The term 'infection' designates the fluid vortices of becomings, the accelerations and intensifications of fluidic processes. Bataille charts the process of vertiginous time from its almost total disavowal in the rational stasis which produces the mode of influence as one of its internal elements, as critique, to the teeming immensities of infectious thermic energy. From the perspective of critical thought and reason the difference between these two terms is minimal - influence is the state of these processes as seen from without, as they affect presupposed abstract and restricted economies of objects and entities; whereas infection is the fusional movement of these processes of change themselves - but this minimal difference constitutes the definite liberation of perception and attests to the inevitable fate of critique.

## NOTES

### Introduction: INFLUENCE AND INFECTION

1. referred to in "A short history of astronomy" by Arthur Berry (Dover, New York 1961) p 35ff and "Cosmic Influences & Human Behaviour" by Michel Gauquelin (Garnstone, London 1977) p 25ff
2. referred to in "Science in the nineteenth century" ed Rene Taton (Thames & Hudson, London 1965) p 90ff
3. discussed in "Electricity in the 17th & 18th centuries; a study of early modern physics" by J L Heilbron (Univ of California 1979) p 427-8, 457
4. The paradox inherent in the rational marginalisation of influence must appear to anyone versed in rhetoric: the passivity of influence is considered irrational and yet the desired effect of a 'good' argument is to influence and persuade.
5. referred to in "Science since 1500" by H J Pledge (HMSO 1966) p 125ff
6. referred to in 'Doctor' xxiv by R Southey (London 1834)

### Chapter One: DERRIDA - THE LANGUAGE OF COMPLICITY AND CONSTRAINT

1. 'From restricted to general economy: a Hegelianism without reserve' in "Writing and Difference" by Jacques Derrida (RKP 1981)
2. 'Yale French Studies' no 78 (Yale University Press 1990) ed A Stoekl
3. "Modern French Philosophy" by Vincent Descombes (Cambridge Univ Press 1980) trans Scott Fox-Harding p 1-50
4. 'Introduction to Transgression' by Michel Foucault in "Language, Counter-memory, Practice" (Blackwell 1977) ed/trans D Bouchard p 29-52
5. 'Anti-Oedipus' by Gilles Deleuze/Felix Guattari (Athlone 1984) p 4 & 190
6. 'Dialogues' by Gilles Deleuze/Claire Parnet (Athlone 1987) p 22
7. 'Powers of Horror' by Julia Kristeva (Columbia Univ Press 1982)
8. Such is the retroactive power of this essay that the names of the hegemonic critics - interpreters of the relation between Bataille and Marx and Nietzsche - whom Derrida writes 'strategically' against, have themselves been effaced.
9. 'Beyond the pleasure principle' by Sigmund Freud in "On Metapsychology" Vol 11 Penguin Freud Library (Penguin 1991)

10. "Positions" by Jacques Derrida (Athlone 1981) trans Alan Bass p 41ff
11. 'From restricted to general economy' hereafter 'WD'
12. Derrida gives Bataille's fragmented syntactical units the sense of a systemic project at the level which transcends the texts themselves:(WD252) "To bear the self-evidence of Hegel, today, would mean this...". The value of any sampling as representative of a particular writing is problematic; but with Bataille's texts so 'torn apart', Derrida's 'concretion' of the Bataillean project can only be a symptom of his own extreme control mania.
13. Derrida's accounts of 'figures' and 'scenes' presents us with one example of deconstruction's hijacking and domestication of the syntaxes and concerns of the energetic tradition. The principle of differance regulates a space of graphemes called a 'scene' - reminiscent of the Kantian notions of space and representation as dramatisation - in which energetic quanta are reduced to the status of objects of identification, personified concepts or personae (WD253). Thus Hegel, caricature of metaphysical over-reaching and self-justification is a 'figure' in a 'scene'. Derrida would have it that Bataille dramatises the series of metaphysical moves associated with Hegel (although Derrida admits in "Glas" (Univ of Nebraska 1986) that this figure of Hegel is itself a cipher for his own concerns, and this holds true for the figure of Bataille too.) The 'scene' lacks the attributes of the energetic differentiation of events which is posited as the 'space' of the energetic tradition. Instead we have the unquantifiable relations between elements which still have a human form. The terms Derrida uses to describe Bataille's simulation of Hegelian discourse alert us - with their vagueness, "close.. very close" - to his suggestion without substantiation of the quantitative nature of events as they are conceived in the spatiums of the energetic tradition.
14. "The Phenomenology of Spirit" by GWF Hegel (Oxford Univ Pres 1977) trans A V Miller
15. 'Hegel, Death and Sacrifice' and 'Hegel, Man and History' in Bataille's OC 12 330-348, 349-366
16. OC5 97ff, 156ff see chapter six below
17. see chapter seven below
18. OC6 1-205, OC7 284-367, OC8 243-455
19. see p 137-8, 145-6 below
20. Likewise 'mettre en jeu' - risk - is irreducible to the risk of the master and slave (as Derrida would have it). The operation 'mettre en jeu' also

relates to sovereignty, to the impersonal operation of the energetic principle 'putting into play' quantities of free energy.

21. OC12 333ff

22. OC7 284-367, OC8 243-455, OC9 135-56

23. OC9 150, OC6 140ff

24. Derrida distrusts history (WD269); given that Hegel demonstrated "the ontological unity of method and historicity", sovereignty, as an oppositional concept must exceed the subject and history. Non-knowledge is super-historical for Derrida; but it is the basis for a genealogical critique relative to the base value of expenditure. Bataille applies his energetic principles to history, whereas Derrida is only concerned with the deep structures of the logic of representation.

25. OC12 331 The similarity between the 'negative' and expenditure which provokes the sensations of anguish, ecstasy, fear is for Bataille only a second order rationalisation.

26. "Modern French Philosophy" by Vincent Descombes (Cambridge Univ Press 1980) trans L Scott Harding & JM Harding p 9-48

27. OC12 330-366

28. OC6 195ff see chapters six and seven below

29. see p 153ff below

30. Utile values are still degrees on ceiling-less scales, which is why Derrida's obsession with 'full' metaphysics, with totality and presence rather than intensive degrees is so foreign to Bataille's perspective. To envisage the endpoint or maximum of metaphysics is to wallow in its detritus.

31. see p 195 below

32. see p 72ff below

33. However Bataille himself suggests the Hegelian logic of law and transgression, for instance in 'Eroticism' OC8 1-178 Transgression remains for Bataille a question of the designating of intensive quanta, in cultures or syntax; that is a mapping of the movement from the restricted sense of economy to the freeplay of intensive quanta.

34. One might also ask whether phenomenological and rational are not mutually exclusive terms anyway, and to what extent Kantian or Hegelian discourse is useful?

35. Bataille takes critique a stage further than Derrida, who is content to

simply display the logic of representation.

36. see especially the unpublished early texts of OC2

## Chapter Two: BATAILLE - THE NOVUM OF INFECTION

1. Terminology from Kojève's Kantian reading of the 'Phenomenology' can be discovered in Bataille's texts. Thus jargon specific to an example of restricted economy - Hegelian phenomenology - creeps into Bataille's descriptions of utile and general economies (see chapter seven). But this is only a minor resonance relative to the immensity of the energetic perspective which swamps the niceties of phenomenology and Kantian space.

2. see 'Autobiographical Note' OC7 459 and note that neither Kojève nor Hegel are mentioned. One might extrapolate the following trajectory of Bataille's thought from this text: from an early encounter with Nietzsche, Bataille is obsessed with the genealogy of morals and the notion of the will to power; sociological and anthropological leanings lead him from Durkheim and Mauss to Kojève; at the same time, an encounter with biology and physics allows him to expand on the notion of an energetics of culture and the principle of expenditure.

3. OC1 220-26, OC2 54-69, OC1 302-20 respectively

4. It is no wonder that Bataille sought to repeat the adrenaline dose of the spectacle of reason interminably, stating that this failure of the logic of representation and its expiation repeats itself OC12 337ff.

5. This was perhaps enough to infect a generation of thinkers with quasi-Hegelianism, despite the fact that most of the intellectuals who attended 'disagreed' with Hegel. Sartre is a good example of the way that the phenomenological tradition was revitalised despite the intentions of the participants at these lectures - see his remarks on 'Inner Experience' OC6 195ff.

6. OC2 291-363 see p 173ff

7. Even the utility of the project for the Marshall Plan in the 'Accursed Share' (OC7) contemporary to this essay is swamped by the uselessness of the overwhelming energies to which it attests.

8. see 'Critique' Tome 1 1946 91ff, 325ff, 458ff, 558ff; Tome 2 268ff; Tome 3 1947 259ff, 546ff; Tome 6 1949-50 70ff

9. 'First confrontations with Hegel' in 'Critique' 195-6 Aug/Sept 1963 p 695

10. This procedure is still too Hegelian, still too logically reflexive, entailing "a simple logical mockery of the inverse operation".
11. 'Ladybird' in French is 'bete a bon dieu'.
12. I am sure that this could be rationalised in terms of typical pedagogical relations, after the intensive facts of the behaviour shown in this relation.
13. As we shall see, the concepts of negativity and the end of history are the sites of Bataille's contestation of Kojève's interpretation of Hegel.
14. "Thus spake Zarathustra" by Friedrich Nietzsche (Penguin 1961) trans R Hollingdale p 46
15. see OC9 182 and chapter seven below
16. It is easy enough at an anecdotal and textual level to find in Bataille's writing explicit equal measures of celebration and rejection of Kojève's readings; that is why one must take account of those passages where disagreement over fundamental points is implicitly registered, i.e where Kojève is simply ignored.
17. In so far as the Hegelian project is described as impossible, that is unable to account for its own status and authority, both Kojève and Bataille return to Kantian problematics: For Kant, totality is impossible but given as a project whilst 'limited being' has a provisional sense. Bataille emphasises the limits of a certain philosophy and its dissolution into the stunned sensational response - of sensation understood as the release of libidinal energies - a response (which remains after the process of the invalidation of reason) to the non-logical differentiation which overruns reason virulently and is superimposed on rational projects in the descriptions of solar or general economy.
18. "Critique of Pure Reason" by Immanuel Kant (Methuen 1929) trans NK Smith A747 B775 see p 81-2 below
19. Bataille calls the Hegelian Totality 'impossible' but thereby designates the inevitable ruination of the concepts of the transcendental/phenomenological tradition and their restricted economies by the energies which constitute and exceed them. The 'impossible' has only a minor phenomenological resonance and cannot be reduced to its limited and limiting Kantian sense.
20. see p 148ff below
21. The simple but extensive effectivity of this critical move is developed when the historical process is revealed to be the gradual exposure of the

falsity of an eternal god and the correlative truth of the annihilation of humankind through time. see chapters six and seven below

22. For instance, in passing, Bataille associates sovereignty with the state of impotent beauty in the 'Phenomenology' (as opposed to the violence of the understanding). Impotent beauty feels the totality of natural immanence and suffers its break up by the understanding.

23. see chapters six and seven

24. The full critical import is only registered in texts such as 'Theory of religion' and 'The accursed share'. Yet even here Bataille attempts to deduce an 'immanent totality' from the totality of the reserve of Nothingness, the reserve which Kojève describes as founding the negativity of action.

25. 'Independence and dependence of self-consciousness: lordship and bondage' in "Phenomenology of spirit" see above para 178-196

26. Bataille was fond of allocating such fears to Hegel see OC5 56

27. Which is only 'intentional' in that its effect, the habitual liberation of quanta of energy can be demonstrated as constantly orienting the community around its repetition.

28. Bataille prefigures Derrida in discovering the logic of representation; but Bataille goes on to distinguish this logic from the perception of the degrees on intensity.

29. see chapters three and four below

30. see OC6 140ff and pages 198ff below

31. we have seen that 'constitutive absence' was the regulatory mode of differance. see chapter one

32. see p 137-8, 145-6 below

33. One problem with Bataille's continual use of the jargon of totalities, absolutes and extremes, with their senses of unity and maximum, is the resulting lack of differentiation between the description of the extremes of metaphysical subterfuge and the intensities which constitute them. Thus, for example Bataille can describe the fear of death, the mundane foundation of all activity as an extreme desire although it involves a wholly exclusive operation, the psychologising of raging intensities.

34. He notes that his specific concern is the analysis of 'social and religious functions' of expenditure throughout history and culture in relation to the servile reactive model of the dialectic.

35. OC7 50ff

36. OC12 352 According to general economy, the expenditure associated with prestige is sovereign, even if it also has a utile secondary effect. Such a contest of expenditure can be said to have a utile result, in the sense that social hierarchies are created as a result of the contest; but the nature of that hierarchy is evanescent and chaotic, for all such hierarchies and powerbases remain at the mercy of further contests of wasting. The activity of wasting remains sovereign and has the ultimate issue of useless expenditure which surpasses the result of recognition and prestige.

37. This term differentiates the duration of expenditure from history considered as the realm of the dialectical overcoding of expenditure.

38. Since Marx's and Weber's exhaustive accounts of the rise of capital such approaches have lost their interest, especially when they renegotiate the Hegelian paradigm for those accounts. Bataille here sketches the way that the slave becomes "the master of nature" OC12 354, the proponent of negativity as action and is differentiated from the powerless master who has delegated work and falls back into the 'impotent beauty' of the religious order. The servile motor of action and negation starts up but is initially concealed by the 'charisma' of the self-immolating master (this allegory refers to the growth of the proto-capital in the era of Catholicism). The slave overcomes his slavery through work. The master consumes the products of the slave whilst the slave represses his desire for consumption and defers the anguish of death (OC12 355) through work and the transformation of objects. Bataille quotes Kojève, deducing the general tenor of history from the action of the slave "History is the history of the Worker-Slave... The fear of death embodied for the slave in the warlike master is the sine qua non condition of historical progress".

39. For instance, the sovereign and the sacred values or degrees are compromised by their implication in social functions: at the heart of the pure religious order, Bataille suggests (OC12 357) lies an interdiction on consumption and sacrifice which prefigures the regulation of consumption in the slave's history of the Hegelian dialectic. At the same time such a compromise does not necessitate an empirical regress in search of an instance of pure wastage; it does not affect the principle of the positive value of expenditure as a base for critical and genealogical accounts of morals and societal attitudes to expenditure.

40. see chapters three and four

41. Bataille's reading of the Master is idiosyncratic - he associates stability with the parallel planes of time and the instability of history with the fixed choreographic moves of the figures of the 'Phenomenology'.
42. see p 198ff below In the early writings it is time which is continuous chaos outside of the phenomenological dispersal or order of history. Time causes the dispersal of all thematic degrees, including the irruption of meaning loosed by the impossibility of the 'Phenomenology' or the explosion of any rational project into drifts of matter, into redundant negative entropy. This fusional fallout of meaning is itself attested to by Hegel "Dismemberment is full of meaning" (OC12 344).
43. as well as being statistically improbable on the scale of the universe see p 166ff, OC5 95ff
44. as opposed to the (OC12 358) "the possibilities generally open in the conduct, thought and discourse of Man" which are the concerns of phenomenology.
45. Bataille's account is, insofar as it is a reading of Kojève's text, a hideous Hegelian revisionism: on the strength of the view that Hegel posits the end of history, Kojève and Bataille point out its impossibility and attenuate the claim until it becomes possible as a historical reality. Bataille quotes Kojève OC12 362: after the end of history, humans will be devoid of spirit, action, and profane time and spirit will be reduced to the stonecold history book of the 'Phenomenology', which helps the reader anticipate his/ her death. Bataille follows Kojève in considering the end of history as a possible social and cultural event. For Bataille OC12 363 after the end of history comes the epoch of social homogeneity, the zeroing of social and cultural differences which, claims Bataille, clashes with the human individual's desire to "conserve" its difference from others. Here - unlike the early texts on time OC1 495ff - Bataille makes the mistake of treating change as a principle of differentiation which can be conserved. This notion is more at home in the logic of history which inhabits a metaphysical space of difference, a full series of events and a completed map of spatial differences. Here, Bataille misconstrues the nature of the fallout from the holocaust of reason and history and reorients it around what he calls the fundamental value of human social life, "the human will to be endlessly different from what it was". However, the currency of this future human life - degrees of difference - reflects the immense change which the fallout of

reason effects; and general economy will be the name of the behaviour of these energetic degrees, despite the virtual endpoint of phenomenological logic.

46. For this quasi-Derridean Bataille we do not even have the assurance of the final event OC12 365 "It is certainly more captivating to represent to our measure a definite fatality: the anticipated contemplation from which we can never escape can only be knowledgeable. We must bear to tell ourselves the history of the antecedents of the event."

47. see chapter seven

48. It is precisely this symmetry which Kant tries to regulate in the 'Critique of Judgement' in identifying communication and human freedom cf chapter five below.

49. see p 191ff

50. see OC2 291-363

51. see below p 123ff

52. Thus the restricted/general economy distinction is basically false: there is only one economy, and it is thermic/energetic.

53. see p 72ff

54. see p 198ff

55. see p 69

56. see p 36

57. for example OC10 66ff

58. OC6 1-206, OC9 171-314

59. see chapters five and six below Bataille even reconvenes the Kantian schema by going so far as to associate communication, morality and freedom! Thus OC9 313 "powerful communication abandons the consciousnesses that reflect each other, to that impenetrability which they 'ultimately' are. At the same time we can see that powerful communication is primary, it is a simple given, the supreme appearance of appearance, which reveals itself to us in the multiplicity of consciousnesses and in their communicability". Transgression is associated with communication, and communication with "hypermorality" or "complicity in the knowledge of evil" OC9 182, as well as with intensity and critique. Literature reveals "the process of breaking the law - without which the law would have no end - independently of the necessity to create order"; but it is also "the expression of those in whom ethical values are most deeply felt" as instanced in "the desire for a fundamental communication

with the reader". Before we interpret Bataille as a humanist Habermasian, it is worth remembering that his examples include Sade!

### Chapter Three: KANT - THE CATASTROPHE OF CRITIQUE

1. One could mention any number of 'post-modern' thinkers: Lyotard, Deleuze & Guattari, Baudrillard, Foucault who share an avowedly Kantian heritage.
2. "The critique of judgement" by Immanuel Kant (Oxford Clarendon 1952) trans JC Meredith
3. "The critique of pure reason" by Immanuel Kant (Methuen 1927) trans NK Smith
4. A19 B34 - A49 B73
5. Preface second edition Bxxiv - vi
6. "It is still open to us to enquire whether in the practical knowledge of reason data may not be found sufficient to determine reason's transcendent concept of the unconditioned, and so to enable us, in accordance with the wish of metaphysics ... to pass beyond the limits of all possible experience. Speculative reason has at least made room for such an extension and if it must at least leave it empty, yet none the less we are at liberty, indeed we are summoned to take occupation of it, if we can by practical data of reason." We can note the expansionist tone to this passage and its presentation of a desired state of consolidated idealist space. Morality and critique are presented as extensive expansionist forces.
7. See also the 'fantasy' of the Paralogisms B410, where Kant states that if all thinking beings were simple substances "we should have taken a step beyond the world of sense and have entered into the field of the noumenon: and noone could then deny our right of advancing yet further in this domain, indeed of settling in it, and should our star prove auspicious of establishing claims of permanent possession" - if this is a rational fantasy, the expansionist protocols of legitimation are the same as those of the inventory of the propaedeutic of reason.
8. see p 104 and chapter five
9. the primary fact/ event/ affect of the interface and swamping of the phenomenal by the noumenal.
10. Kant morbidly justifies the autonomous choice of the suicidal strategy using the transcendental hypothesis - that is a concept "devised merely for

the purposes of self-defence" A780 B808 - that birth and death are simply appearances!

11. OC5 51-53, 64-9 Although these passages can also be treated as simply describing the energetic trajectory of thought.

12. OC5 48

13. As morality kept the shape of reason. Kant states that the relation between reason and understanding is like the relation between founding moral principles and the multiplicity of civil laws A302 B358.

14. see p 105ff below

15. see p 129 ff

16. see p 106ff

17. Kant states B415 that the 'I think' has intensive quantity, degrees of reality to zero. This suggests as we see below p 105ff an alternative economy and currency to that fixated on the unity=1 of apperception.

18. see p 98ff

19. Kant portrays the human impulse for moral law/ teleology through reason as beyond natural utility and thereby influencing critique; whereas Bataille presents thinking as enthusiasm on a par with cosmic radiation and utility and morality - together - as fleeting and dispersing epiphenomena in the human realm. We shall see in chapter five how Kant's minimal form of human freedom - communication - dissolves into the principle of contagious thermic contagion.

20. This is the same movement as Kant shows in his account of the transcendence of the sublime see 138ff.

21. The thesis of the first conflict of the antinomy argues that only a finite series of conditions can be completed by a successive synthesis and that thus beginning and limits are implicit in time and space. The antithesis argues that beginnings and limits are necessarily dependent on the impossible zeroes of empty time and space which as types of nothing cannot be conditions of existence, according to Kant; thus space and time are infinite. Critique points out the contradiction implicit in both thesis and antithesis A487 B515 that "to obtain absolute totality in the empirical synthesis it is always necessary that the unconditioned be an empirical concept", i.e that the unconditioned be a conditioned concept.

22. see p 129 below

23. see p 99ff

24. see chapter five below
25. see 98ff and for the alternative 'unit' of zero 114ff
26. "Kant's critical philosophy" by Gilles Deleuze (Athlone 1984) trans Tomlinson & Habberjam p ix and "Qu'est ce que la philosophie" by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (Editions de minuit 1991) p 35
27. "Kant's critical philosophy" ix
28. Letter to Jacques Riviere 5th June 1923 in "Collected Works" Vol 1 by Antonin Artaud (Calder & Boyars 1968) p 27-8
29. see p 121ff
30. Pure intuitions are simply containers of the possible modes of the relation of representations, containing "nothing but mere relations: of locations in an intuition (extension), of change of location (motion) and of laws according to which this change is determined (moving forces)" B67. However, empirical intuitions are related to objects as representations in so far as these objects affect sensibility and cause sensations.
31. At the same time Kant states that the transcendental exposition of the concept of time explains change (as alteration in time and space A32 B48) not just as succession, but in terms of the three modes of time - thus there is a multiplication of the possible alterations and a multitude of virtual connections. In general, Kant downplays the fusion of space and time except in so far as it feeds into the spatial hierarchy of the faculties. That is why we have to contest the spatial overcoding of time as a tendency throughout the critiques.
32. This applies especially to sensation and intuition: both provide representations for the mind machine, yet sensation is only partially mediated through forms of intuition, which themselves are exhausted in the relation of mutual dependence with the understanding - the unity of the synthesis proper to the understanding depends on the form of the time-sequence in inner sense. Thus the forms of intuition are exhaustively drawn into the rational machine whereas sensation remains in part pure quanta which register as independent of the mind machine at the very point at which they invade the mind and kickstart the machine in the form of affects.
33. see p 101
34. see p 121ff
35. According to Kant the understanding is a "lawgiver" - "a faculty of rules.. which confer upon appearances their conformity to law" (A125). Thus

Kant creates law where it is not necessary, i.e in the immanent processes of the mind.

36. "Qu' est ce que la philosophie" p 48

37. see p 97ff

38. see p 120 and "The philosophy of material nature" by Immanuel Kant (Hackett 1985) trans J Ellington chs 2 & 3 'The metaphysical foundations of dynamics' and 'The metaphysical foundations of mechanics'

39. see p 121ff

40. see p 158ff

41. "Anti-Oedipus" by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (Athlone 1984) trans Hurley, Seem & Lane

42. The first section of Anti-Oedipus distinguishes three operations of the energetics of desiring production: a connective synthesis of production, a disjunctive synthesis of recording and a conjunctive synthesis of consumption/consummation.(Anti-Oedipus 73ff). The connective synthesis has an immanent nature, producing the sequences, series and flows of desire/energy, and a transcendent use - in psychoanalysis and philosophy - which is justified/underwritten by the paralogistic argument (as Kant would have it, although he associates the hypostasization of cause with the antinomy of pure reason) that series presuppose conditions which constitute those series as their additions or totals. The transcendent use involves an operation in which one term from the series is extracted and considered as the unity of that series, the unity from which that series is derived. The difference between origin and derivation is held to be qualitative i.e the difference is between a first order origin and a secondary derivative series. In the transcendent use of the disjunctive synthesis the derived reality of the illegitimate connective synthesis is differentiated in line with its transcendent presupposition/principle. This constitutes a reintegration of the transcendent principle into the series where it carries out a series of mutual exclusions between terms and creates the illusion that all terms are derived from a larger reality i.e are at least less than their sum, if not qualitatively different from it. In relation to this synthesis Deleuze and Guattari carry out a critical move which is not to be found in Kant, for who the disjunctive synthesis is exclusive and only definitive because the divisions presuppose a given body of knowledge or a full first order reality. Deleuze and Guattari transform the a priori principle of disjunction into an

energy of production and inscription whose attributes are significantly different from those of an a priori principle, in that this energy is an immanent process. They describe their legitimate immanent disjunction as (A076): "A disjunction that remains disjunctive, and that still affirms the disjoined terms, that affirms them throughout their entire distance, without restricting one by the other or the other from the one....'Either..or..or', instead of 'either/or'." The term 'distance' alerts us to the dissipative nature of the inclusive process, i.e its reliance on time, whereas the exclusive use of the synthesis emphasises the simultaneity of the division of parts within a given derived reality. The inclusive disjunction carries out its synthesis as it passes from one term to another: either z or a or b..., where each term is the terminal point of a distance from another point and a point in a distance which exceeds it. The result is a disjunctive network of differences, a continuum of differentiations, a multiplication of parts obeying the principle that "everything divides, but into itself". In one sense then this synthesis is a connective synthesis operating according to an immanent disjunctive principle. The transcendent use of this synthesis imposes an exclusivity of relations between both the disjunctions qua differentiation and the whole of those differentiations and its presupposition, which is not conceived as an origin (as it was in the transcendent use of the connective synthesis, thereby giving us the model of the transcendent operation) but as an alternative (either/or) to the whole of the disjunctions i.e as undifferentiated. The disjunctive principle enters into the series of exclusive disjunctions, after excluding a presupposed alternative to the whole of its operation. Deleuze and Guattari present this presupposition as itself presupposed by the operation and as the factor which kickstarts the operation on a logical grounding of opposition and contradiction. It is the "one too many" (AntiOedipus 79) which is envisaged and presupposed by the operation as the terminal alternative to its complete disjunctive whole. In terms of the Kantian schema which they are inflecting, Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of the third immanent conjunctive synthesis of consumption/consumation reorients all three syntheses around sensation rather than the understanding, and around a peripheral subject proper to intensive sensation. In so doing they are holding onto an exaggerated conception of the relevance of the human for intensive processes. The conjunctive synthesis is a matter of "a series of emotions and feelings as a

consummation and consumption of intensive quantities" (A084), a matter of intensive emotions or affects which inhabit an intensive order. The series of singularities created by the disjunctive network become intensive states in a "conjunctive tissue" (A088) and a transpositional subject moves through these states as a changing formation which changes as it 'identifies' itself with them. The inadequacy of this picture arises from the stubbornness of the values which have accreted to the notion of the subject for the duration that it was considered more than a blip in libidinal processes.

43. Thus Anti-Oedipus traces the fragmentation of the economy of the oedipal triangle which is protected by transcendent operations back into the multiplicities and flows from which those operations are illegitimately extrapolated. Anti-Oedipus shows that these flows themselves operate to produce more singularities than appear as a result of those transcendent operations and thus those transcendent operations can be said to replicate restricted versions of those flows. I use the word replicate carefully for as we shall see the relation between flows and their extrapolations is reducible to quanta of the recursions of simple combinations, i.e. to the quantitative replication of recursive formations. At the level of economies and operations Anti-Oedipus opposes the restricted transcendent uses of movements and energies which are themselves unbounded. Deleuze and Guattari describe the oedipal triangle as (A096): "a porous or seeping triangle, an exploded triangle from which the flows of desire escape in the direction of other territories". The threesided triangle is supplemented by the transcendent operation and the transcendent quantity which defines it. This constitutes an economy; but the explosion of the triangle relates the restricted economy to the economy of  $n$  values or multiplicity. So the oedipal triangle does not consist of 3 or 4 singularities but is created from a multiplicity of singularities which are unrelated to this restrictive use or application; thus the transcendent operation can be opposed to the immanent operation: the terms are "not even  $3+1$  but  $4+n$ "

#### Chapter Four: KANT - SENSATIONS AND AFFECTS

1. see p 104
2. see "Thousand Plateaux" by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (Athlone 1987) trans Brian Massumi p 389

3. see p 121ff and chapter seven
4. Kant's fear of the zero is present in his obsession with the impossibilities of empty space and time (see p 129ff). He sees these notions of emptiness as pathologically tempting a transcendent application of the understanding. This may actually be a fear of the fractional and the zero as opposed to the unit of measurement; a fear not of empty dimensions but of multiplicitous dimensions which do not suffer the exclusive logic of transcendent(al) application. There can be no doubt that Kant's definition of magnitudes is exclusive: 1 time=1 magnitude=1 reality.
5. see p 121ff
6. see p 90
7. For instance, Kant attempts to consolidate the necessity of intensity's anticipation of perception by referring to the continuity of sensations as degrees; yet continuity is thereby related to extensive degrees too, and the attributes of sensation to extensive magnitudes and the intellectual processes which utilise them as well.
8. see p 129
9. see chapter seven, especially p 198ff
10. This constitutes a reformulation of the category of community at the level of a fusion of space and time see p 121ff. Deleuze and Guattari invoke the attributes of intensive magnitudes in their account of the intensive 'spatium'. They liberate time by equating it with space and matter under the rubric of libidinal production or energy. They thus replace the base unit with the intensive zero. Bataille does something similar but stresses the value of that zero, the intensifying differentiations and annihilations which it brings about.
11. see p 121ff
12. Kant states that an extensive magnitude is a representation, entails an intuition of space and time, and thus occurs as (A167 B209) "a successive synthesis proceeding from parts to the whole representation". An intensive magnitude or sensation, on the other hand, 'occupies' a moment only and is thus instantaneous: intensive magnitude is "a magnitude which is apprehended only as unity and in which multiplicity can be represented only through approximation to negation=0". This conception of intensive magnitude breaks the hold of space on time, despite the fact that this magnitude is seen as occupying an instant, and precisely because each magnitude is a unity i.e in

this case a multiplicity.

13. Kant describes the alteration of an entity from state a-b as a novum, a zero by which a and b are measured in relation to a base unit. But from the perspective of time there remains a causal connection between instants - sequence. Thus Kant distinguishes the sequence of degrees of the durational cause a-b from the indivisible relations a-o, b-o which constitute singular magnitudes of measurement. Kant displaces the status of singularity from the measurement onto the object qua permanent substance which is undergoing alteration, turning the instants a and b into the limits of the time of an alteration which is itself continuous: (A208 B253-4) "Between two instants there is always a time and between any two states there is always a difference which has magnitude..the magnitude of the reality is..generated through all smaller degrees which are contained between the first and the last".

In Kant's description the alteration is given so that it is itself only continuous in so far as it is the period of a continuous action of causality. Even though Kant identifies continuity with the (A208 B254) "continuous action" of a cause over the period of an alteration, he remains very aware of the apparent paradox of "the law of the continuity of alteration": (A209 B254) "that neither time nor appearance in time consists of parts which are the smallest..and that nevertheless the state of a thing passes in its alteration through all these parts, as elements, to its second state". It seems then that Kant must depict change as a given which can only be measured in relation to a base unit, yet assigns it a cause whose effects are also measured in terms of divisible magnitudes of time. Kant simply describes change as a measurement of extensive magnitudes.

14. Kant reorients intuition to the hierarchy of the faculties in the 'Analogies of Experience' section. The analogies of experience emphasise that relations between appearances lie under rules which connect them to the unities of time, space and apperception (A180 B222) in that perceptions must be in a time-relation to each other of duration, succession or coexistence (which all stress the form of inner sense's dependence on space). As we stated above Kant discusses alteration rather than change because alteration is defined as a rearrangement of points within permanent space. Kant uses the notion of spatial alteration to disavow the chaos of temporal flows. The rules appear hierarchical with the third rule from coexistence containing the other two in 'community', in a manner which is analogous with the

communities organised and limited by the syntheses of the forms of intuition and the unity of apperception. The analogy of duration states that changes of appearances in time presuppose and occur within a 'substratum' of time in general and that the permanence of substance is analogous to this permanent time. (A183 B226) The rule from the analogy of succession states that (A189 B234) "the apprehension of the manifold of appearances is always successive". This rule emphasises that the sequence of perceptions obeys the necessary order of cause and effect and that thus the extension or the advance of time in the determinations of inner sense (A210 B255) is linked inexorably to the understanding's causality based series of appearances. The third rule from the analogy of co-existence states that (A211 B257) "the perception of..objects can follow each other reciprocally". Kant states that appearances can be perceived in a "reciprocal sequence", where, given a & b, each influences the other: (A211 B258) "the relation of substances in which the one contains determinations the ground of which is contained in the other is the relation of influence; and when each substance reciprocally contains the ground of the determinations in the other the relation is that of community or reciprocity".

The relevance of temporal sequence becomes secondary to the completed apprehension of a dynamical community. Without this community there can be no perception of coexistence or simultaneity or permanence in space and in its analogue the time-space proper to the (A214 B261) "community of apperception" of appearances in a possible experience. The notion of community repeats those problems of illegitimate totality and equilibrium i.e of the status of the transcendent(al) seen as a reserve and an application, which Kant solved with critique only to reintroduce them in order to orient his account of perception around the horizon of useful transcendent ideas; hypothetical god, hypothetical purposiveness, hypothetical unity.

15. see p 114

16. It could be countered that this transformed definition of unity does not emphasise the difference between the accreted value of unity and the novum of the zero as virulent multiplicity.

17. see chapter seven especially p 198ff

18. see p 158ff

19. The general economy which drives Bataille's biophysics and thermodynamic genealogies of culture has obvious links to Nietzsche's will to power.

Although it can only be asserted here, it seems to me that philosophers after Nietzsche are involved in the slow shrugging off of Kantian jargon. Deleuze and Guattari render this necessary abortion of sense respectable by feeding the will to power as desiring production back through the Kantian synthetic machine to arrive at a philosophy of intensities. In terms of the syntactic explosions of Bataille's texts and the sensibility to which it is witness, these are regressions to the staidness of philosophical culture.

20. see p 201ff

21. see p 87ff

22. Recursion is best defined as replication by isomorphism i.e something being defined in terms of simpler versions of itself, versions which are information preserving transformations of a formula, such as a DNA structure. To take another example drawn from "An eternal golden braid" by Douglas Hofstadter (Penguin 1980) p146 subatomic particles made up of electrons, protons, neutrons and photons can be said to be nested inside each other in a way which can only be described recursively; and these recursions create a complicated loop of virtual processes (possible and necessary) in which every particle interacts with every other. Thus the physical particle consists of a bare particle only minimally distinguishable from "a huge tangle of virtual particles inextricably wound together in a recursive mess". This process should not be seen as made up of logical or reflexive dependencies of particles on each other, nor is it simply a question of enumerating the recursions involved.

23. It is not enough to simply stamp a process with the attribute of infinity in order to stop those who would reduce the fusion of replication and complication to a state of accountability by logical reflexion. Kant as we have seen tames infinity in such a manner, and in so doing typifies idealist and phenomenological philosophies in so far as they force mathematics - and physics previously - into commonsense and create abominable mutations for the philosophy of experience.

24. The technical difference between the two types of infinity is best described by Hofstadter who remains suspicious of the artificial presupposition of an infinite directory (EGB421-2): "one kind of infinity describes how many entries there can be in an infinite directory or table and another describes how many real numbers there are (i.e how many points on a line or line segment) and this latter is 'bigger' in the sense that the real

numbers cannot be squeezed into a table whose length is described by the former kind of infinity...The set of integers is just not big enough to index the set of reals".

25. As we have seen the virtual aspects of the transfinite associate it with models in many fields outside meta-mathematics, in any area where proliferations of activity or growth occur.

26. In terms of set theory the Cantor set is a set intermediate between a denumerable set such as the integers and a continuum such as the points of a line. But moving up the dimensions the Cantor set allows us to think the possibility of objects whose dimensionality is between that of a point and a line or between that of a line and a surface or between that of a surface and a volume. These objects are often called fractal objects. Deleuze and Guattari define them thus: (TP486) "Fractals are aggregates whose number of dimensions is fractional rather than whole, or else whole but with continuous variation in direction." For example if one takes a closed segment on a line and divide it into three equal parts, subtract the middle part and repeat the procedure for the remaining parts endlessly you will end up with an infinite non-denumerable set of non-connected points, which has no intrinsic length but has a dimension in between that of zero and one, between that of a point and a line. The Cantor set is exemplified at the level of three dimensional space in a variety of ways, the most distinct being the Sierpinsky sponge, in which each surface of a cube has a segment cut from it and is then surrounded by segments a third of its size for each direction of the surface, which are themselves surrounded by segments a third of their size and so on ad infinitum, leaving us with a cube of proliferating surface area and near zero volume. This is an example of a recursive operation which produces a transfinite set of points (here area surfaces). Displayed differently on a Poincare surface of section this 'non-denumerable infinity' would describe the onset of chaotic turbulent behaviour in dynamical systems which are evolving in phase spaces of dimensions greater than two. And this might operate as a physical model for the intensive space which Deleuze and Guattari concern themselves with. Indeed in summing up the 'The Smooth and the Striated' plateau of 'Thousand Plateaus' they pick on several attributes of fractals which provide general determinations of 'smooth space' - the intensive space as it is coordinated by numbers as multiplicities (TP488). They emphasise that smooth space is the construction of a line or of a surface which has a

fractional number of dimensions; that only a fractional number of dimensions can give variations in direction in space; that - unlike geometrical fractal objects which must have less dimensions than the phase-space in which they move - multiplicities have the same dimensions as the space in which they are distributed (and thus multiplicities are flat), and thus that space is identified with that multiplicity due to the "anexact yet rigorous form" of the number as multiplicity which occupies space without measuring in relation to a unit; and finally that the fuzzy nature of the number as multiplicity entails proximities and tendential transformations of dimensions.

27. "Entretiens avec le professeur Y" by LF Céline "Oeuvres de LF Céline" Vol 3 (Andre Ballard 1967) p 389

28. see p 113-20

29. Kant's image of an empty space left open for "other and different objects" A288 B344 emphasises - by the fact that Kant countenances this impossibility - the central point which I have made concerning the Kantian topography; its spatial tendency. Kant argues in the 'Amphiboly of the concepts of reflection' that even the concepts of the thing in general and the unity of apperception presuppose a space of relations proper to intuition. At the base of all intuition and all perception lies the intuition of things as relations, a space of possible relations: A285 B341 "All that we know in matter is merely relations (what we call the inner determinations of it are inward only in a comparative sense) but among these relations some are self-subsistent and permanent, and through these we are given a determinate object"

#### Chapter Five: KANT - AFFECTS AND COMMUNICATION

1. "Critique of judgement" by Immanuel Kant (Clarendon Press Oxford 1958) trans JC Meredith

2. Kant notes that sensation has two senses: that associated with the first critique where sensation is "the representation of a thing through sense as a receptivity pertaining to the faculty of knowledge" pp3 p 45; and the sense associated with the agreeable, in which the subject seeks pathological gratification through the influence and affects of objects which effect "a modification of the feeling of pleasure or displeasure" in the passive subject. I would argue that the difference is minimal.

3. Kant distinguishes the idea - the concept of reason - and the ideal which

he defines here as "the representation of an individual existence as adequate to an idea" (17 76) It is the form of the individual human which Kant will associate with communication and freedom.

4. see p 119ff

5. Kant admits that the pure mathematical estimation of the magnitude of the sensation entails no maximal unit, but emphasises that only the negative estimation of 'rude nature' calls forth the feeling of the sublime. The aesthetic estimation contains the infinite mathematical measuring operation and introduces the ceiling necessary for comprehension. We have seen that the process which Kant perceives as culminating in the sublime entails processes of libido, sensation and affectivity which are not fixated on rational unity; but Kant subjects all these to the aesthetic estimate of subjective finality.

6. Kant posits the affective overwhelming of the imagination as attesting to the "point of excess" of the imagination. It is in fact the subjection of reason to the pulsional overcoding of the unconscious libido which can be called, following Kant, the "point of excess" proper to reason in general; for Kant's protection of the rational ideas of the supersensible from this overcoding is unnecessary humanist mawkishness. Bataille's deployment of the term 'excess' can be exclusively traced to the Kantian treatment of the sublime as the excess of spatial limitations proper to reason. For Bataille, however, reason is physiological as well.

7. see p 82

8. see p 84

9. for Bataille as well see p 149

10. Laughter and repulsion (disgust) are privileged sites of contagions of energy for Bataille too see chapter six.

11. Although morality is only a minor mode of the restriction of such energy.

12. which is eminently Nietzschean in its genealogical principles

13. see chapter seven

#### Chapter Six: BATAILLE CONTRA KANT - COMMUNICATION AND INFECTION

1. see p 98

2. see p 114ff

3. see p 168ff

4. see p 158ff

5. Thus communication in Bataille's sense has an energetic sense foreign to the Kantian notion of communication which designates an abstract form proper to human freedom and morality.

6. It would be a mistake to identify death and zero unless one considered death as the liberation of energy in a local environment, and zero as that liberation of energy on the scale of the universe.

7. And this is valid in Kantian terms, given the accord of natural organisms and reason in the 'Critique of Judgement'.

8. 'Beyond the pleasure principle' by Sigmund Freud in Penguin Freud Library Vol 11 (Penguin 1984)

9. The association of this 'instinct' with death entails the moves which symptomatically differentiate the two modes of philosophy - major and minor: in the major mode, death is associated with a logicised negation of all concepts whereas in the minor mode the death of the organism is a masochistic humiliation of the values of the individual at the hands of biological energy. The role of transcendental philosophy is interesting in this respect, as it situates the problematic of critique in relation to the two modes of philosophy. Deleuze's account of 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' in 'Coldness and Cruelty' in "Masochism" (Zone Books 1991) is an extreme case of the former association. Deleuze approaches Freud's text as if it were a work of transcendental philosophy. He justifies this by emphasising the 'critical' aspect of the term 'principle', and proceeds to show that if the death instinct is regulated by Eros within the Pleasure Principle, that principle itself cannot account for its own status as the regulator of psychic life (M97). A further foundation is required, in line with the general precept of transcendental enquiry: "It is proper to any transcendental enquiry that you cannot stop it when you want to. How could one determine a foundation without being pushed again and beyond into the groundlessness out of which the ground emerges?" (M114). Deleuze posits the idea of the transcendental principle of a Death Instinct outside of the Pleasure Principle, and calls it in a moment of almost Derridean phenomenological logorrhea, a principle of "absolute negation" (M27). Due to some momentary reassertion of the lesser principles, Deleuze feels constrained to follow the logical argument of traditional philosophy and define in a negative fashion as a negative quantity, the chaotic flows of energy outside of the pleasure principle. Deleuze, surprisingly, given his other works, seems to have

forgotten the inversion of the critical principle by the motors of the will to power, Eros and Thanatos, general economy: it is less a question of transcendental principles than of primary and secondary processes, the primary process which includes the secondary process, and for which the secondary process is still primary. Nor is the primary process simply impenetrable.

10. OC7 281-361, OC6 1-205

11. previous section

12. of course the wolf does not find itself anywhere, the analyst does, thereby discovering the truth of general economy and transgression: the inevitability of the liberation of energy at a level at which no law applies any longer see OC1 319 "matter can only be defined by the 'non-logical difference' which represents in relation to the economy of the universe what crime represents in relation to the law".

13. see chapter three

14. Deleuze and Guattari examine some of these in "Thousand Plateaux". It is worthwhile mentioning the differences between Bataille's account of the plane of transcendence in relation to immanence and Deleuze/Guattari's account in "Thousand Plateaux" and "Dialogues" (Athlone 1987) trans Tomlinson & Habberjam 92ff of the planes of consistence and organisation. Bataille has intensive 'stackings' of matter on scales from zero, whereas Deleuze/Guattari have a plane of consistence (relations of movement between particles) and a plane of transcendence (organisation) which is only inferred: Bataille's notion designates a thermodynamic plane of complexity of transcendence relative to immanence.

15. see p 138, 145-6

16. Such scales of perception inform medical accounts of pathology: for instance the chaotic and turbulent behaviour of cells at a micro-level affects the behaviour of a macro-organism.

17. just as Bataille's account of transcendence/ immanence differentiates planes of transcendence from the communications of the zero of immanence, which can be visualised as the horizontal laminae of transcendence in relation to the horizon of zero.

18. a version of an essay first published in 'Recherches Philosophiques' 5 1935-6 OC1 433-41

19. This basic principle informs all levels of Bataille's account of the general economy of energy including human culture.

20. We saw above the fractal nature of the sponge see p 127-8
21. Such a change is primarily thermic.
22. see p 122ff
23. The relation between law and transgression is secondary to considerations of the increase of intensity (as Bataille points out the transformation of a depressive content into excitation is essential to religious rituals). Crime OC2 331-2 is an energetic phenomenon involving the liberation of energy repressed by prohibition. Where taboos are set up to regulate the social body and its wastes using the force of repulsion, crime is the resurgence of attraction "Crime puts into circulation massive quantities of energy in a free state".
24. Bataille juxtaposes his account of sacred power to Hegel's/ Kojève's account of negativity OC2 324 "What Hegel described was perhaps only the effect of the shadow projected across the conscious region of spirit by a reality which remained unknown or very obscurely known by him in so far as it is unconscious".
25. Thus here Bataille demands (as a project) "a virulent religious organisation" OC2 353 to be set up to counter the homogeneity of man and recreate the attractive power of sacred society. This demand is the result of the analysis of the history of military/imperial subordination of religious sacred power OC2 350.
26. see p 60ff
27. see "La distribution" by Michel Serres (Editions de minuit 1977)
28. One example of the sensible value of contagion is presented in Bataille's account of laughter OC7 272 "Amongst all the sorts of intense communication, none is more communal than the laughter which spreads through a group". Laughter is best understood for Bataille in terms of the patterns of contagious growth of sensations rather than in psychological terms of the alleviation of dynamical tensions. Bataille treats tickling as a potentially ceilingless sensation in a similar manner OC7 274-5. Tensions and resistances are second order attributes of these processes. The contagious aspect of single cell organisms and viruses is instructive in this respect. The virus is a parasitic genome, a cell-free block of genetic material in a protein coat which is activated inside a host cell where it is integrated into the DNA of that cell and reproduces along with it. Its simple organisation means that it

is only perceptible in its infective mode when only speeds of replication distinguish moderate or stable viruses from destructive ones.

Chapter Seven: BATAILLE- RELAPSE AND COLLAPSE

1. OC7 1-179
2. Bataille will often present projects for science, philosophy or political economy, but always in the form of the fragment which attenuates the possibility of a project; he presents the reader with paradoxical, impossible projects with a certain mania which conceals his ironic intent.
3. in 'Critique' Tome 6 1949-50 p 80
4. see p 175-6
5. see p 138, 146
6. The scalar perception proper to the energetic scale of the universe corrects this metaphysical prejudice.
7. Inso far as composition=decomposition, a more fluid and unpunctual timescale could be used to describe biological systems.
8. see p 162ff
9. see p 160ff
10. We have already seen this in the early writing OC1 183 "If we lend a general value to the improbable character of the scientific universe, it becomes possible... to reduce the apparition of the I to that of a fly".
11. see "The Gay Science" by Friedrich Nietzsche (Vintage 1974) trans W Kaufmann pp 276
12. Bataille quotes Nietzsche OC6 154 "We haven't the right to only wish for a sole state, we must will to become periodic beings - like existence". The major difference between Nietzsche and Bataille concerns the role of time, as being periodic or annihilatory. For Nietzsche the cycles of the Eternal Return produce the proliferating compositions of life. For Bataille a single and irreversible arrow of time composes and dissolves - time is annihilatory and energy productive. This is the difference between quantum mechanics and thermodynamics.

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