

**Science and other different things**  
**Variations on Deleuzian themes**

**Maison Française d'Oxford**  
**7 June 2024**

Convenors : Sara Franceschelli, Adrian W. Moore

**Argument**

The philosophies of Deleuze, Simondon, Ruyer are entwined with their authors' understandings of the mathematics, sciences, and technologies of their time. Readers of these philosophers are familiar with terms such as singularities, metastability, transduction, morphogenesis, information, plateaus... as they inform and structure their works. These works, in turn, may be read with questions in mind coming from our endeavours to make sense of things that surround us today. This process might introduce a move on the way one feels allowed to use these terms that, suddenly, seem to lose their acquired philosophical binds to face, once again, the question of their pertinence for particular scientific or technical questions or for different scopes. In this workshop we convene researchers who are interested in this kind of diving from Deleuzian perspectives, both into contemporary science and into other different things – with a special attention to the variations of this experience in the passage from one thing to another when one re-emerges.

**Programme**

9:30 Wellcome and Introduction

9:45

Alessandro Sarti (EHESS, Paris)

*Differential heterogenesis: The plane of immanence's dynamics*

10:30

George Webster (Worcester College, University of Oxford)

*Deleuze and Contingent Transcendental Arguments*

11:15 Coffee break

11:30

Francesca Perotto (University of Genova)

*On Experience as Primarily Aesthetic. Whitehead's Feeling and Deleuze's Affect*

12:15 lunch

13:30

Ashley Woodward (University of Dundee)

*The Concept of Information*

14:15

Clémentine Lessard (ENS de Lyon, IHRIM)

*Technology of philosophical machines: transduction, neoteny and hypertelia in Deleuze and Simondon*

15:00 Coffee break

15:15 Sara Franceschelli (ENS de Lyon, IHRIM)

*Did you say "different"? Morphogenesis, individuation, metastability*

16:00 General discussion

17:00 The END

## ABSTRACTS

### **Alessandro Sarti (EHESS, Paris)**

*Differential heterogenesis: The plane of immanence's dynamics*

Abstract

I will propose a journey through material dynamics from physics to structural dynamics and to heterogenesis as in the Deleuze-Guattari meaning. I will outline the transition from the concept of multiplicity as a Riemannian manifold to the one of multiplicity of multiplicity (Rhizome) as a sub-Riemannian geometry, in which new spaces of possibility can be assembled.

### **George Webster (Worcester College, University of Oxford)**

*Deleuze and Contingent Transcendental Arguments*

Abstract

This paper identifies illuminating parallels between Deleuze's transcendental empiricism and recent work in which philosophers of science reimagine the Kantian apparatus of transcendental arguments to reflect the abductive reasoning they take to be characteristic of scientific inquiry. I claim that there are parallels because both involve stripping transcendental arguments of their Kantian appeals to the innate capacities of a subject, inaccessible 'things in themselves', and necessity in any strong sense. I claim that such parallels are illuminating because they help to provide a common conceptual framework within which we can put Deleuze into conversation with contemporary philosophy of science - something commentators have been trying (but failing) to do for many years. Such parallels also shed light on Deleuze's relationship to Kant and his numerous references to the sciences and mathematics throughout his philosophical writings.

### **Francesca Perotto (University of Genova)**

*On Experience as Primarily Aesthetic. Whitehead's Feeling and Deleuze's Affect*

Abstract

In both Whitehead's and Deleuze's philosophies, experience is primarily aesthetic. This implies a completely revolutionised understanding of the sensible, as aesthetics becomes the cosmogonical force that weaves together and makes possible every folding process, every individuation. To display some features of this conception of experience and its consequences in conceiving its objective and subjective poles, I will explore the Deleuzian concept of affect in relationship with the Whiteheadian feeling.

### **Ashley Woodward (University of Dundee)**

*The Concept of Information*

"Information" names at least two things: a mathematical theory, and a concept. Information is frequently discussed as a process or flow, but the theories that aim to understand it are not typically framed in terms of "process philosophy." This paper aims to remedy this by sketching a process-philosophical account of information. It does so by following Deleuze and Guattari's distinction of *philosophical concepts* and *scientific functions*. The mathematical theories of information quantitatively measure information by "freezing" points in its flow (Shannon and Wiener/Brillouin at different points, corresponding to their characterisations of information as "entropy" or "negentropy," respectively). The *concept* of information is understood as a process, described via Deleuze and Guattari, along with their application of Raymond Ruyer's notion of *survol absolut*. This then aims to account for the difference between mathematical and philosophical notions of information, and explain their communication. This process account of information is illustrated by showing how it increases the coherency of Ruyer's

distinction of quantitative information and “quasi-information,” and Simondon’s distinction of quantitative information and ontological “primary information.”

**Clémentine Lessard (ENS de Lyon, IHRIM)**

*Technology of philosophical machines: transduction, neoteny and hypertelia in Deleuze and Simondon'*  
Abstract

It is striking to note that the notions of *transduction*, *neoteny* and *hypertelia*, once cultivated by Simondon in contact with the technology and sciences of his time, now find a remarkable application in this particular technology that we shall present as a "technology of philosophical systems". With important variations, these notions give us a unique insight into the "mode of existence" of philosophical objects, without this being a mere metaphor. While the transductive paradigm is all the rage in reception studies, the notion of neoteny is just as instructive for understanding Deleuze's reading of Simondon. Given that Deleuze wrote a review of Simondon's main thesis, which uses the notion of neoteny to describe the slowing down of morphogenetic processes, we should not overlook to his assertion, in *Difference and repetition*, that '[c]ommentaries in the history of philosophy should represent a kind of slow motion, a congelation or immobilization of the text'. Thus, Deleuze's reception of Simondon could be a case of neoteny. The notion of *hypertelia*, applied by Simondon to technical objects and philosophical doctrines that are obsolete and maladjusted because of their over-specialization, directly addresses the workshop's topic: if the philosophies of Deleuze and Simondon were adapted to the problems of their time, have they become hypertelic or do they continue to "function" well today, in other fields and in other contexts? The notion of dysfunction, highlighted by Deleuze in his theory of the machine, could provide an enriching dialogue with Simondon.

**Sara Franceschelli (ENS de Lyon, IHRIM)**

*Did you say “different”? Morphogenesis, individuation, metastability*

Abstract

Arguments of stability, intended in a wide sense, including the discussion of the conditions of the onset of instability and of stability changes, play a central role in the main theorisations of morphogenesis in 20th century theoretical biology.

I will consider the interplay of qualitative and numerical analysis of non-linear differential equations, thermodynamical conditions, diagrams, and material models making sense of the abstraction of embryological development in terms of a series of metastable equilibria.

I will claim that this level of abstraction allows one to look at René Thom’s theory of morphogenesis and at Gilbert Simondon's philosophy of individuation beyond the stability/metastability divide.

To illustrate the theoretical and philosophical interest of this shift I will show a video of an analog morphogenetic process that was performatively conceived within this perspective. Will we be facing a Deleuzian objectile or something different?