

The Distancing Act

Creation and Capitalism

Creation. How does one reconcile the concept in the age of “content creators”, “brand creation”, finally, the capitalist adage of “value creation”? Creation has been co-opted into the regurgitation of the same, a copy of a copy of a copy... Malevich’s thoughts on representational art, but mechanized, amplified, globalized to the largest scale possible.

In repeating or tracing the forms of nature, we have nurtured our consciousness with a false conception of art

The work of the primitives was taken for creation.

The classics also.

If you put the same glass down twenty times, that's also creation.¹

It is not a simple, direct replication that happens - as with representation art. What started as imitation, “the conscious imitation of nature’s forms”², the savage’s dot and sticks as reflections of his image³, turns out to be insufficient for the aesthetic eye. Vanilla representation (already a non-direct medium) enhances its aesthetic quality through an intermediary. Reality passes through the representational aesthetic sense to produce art.

The masters of Rome and Greece, after they had attained a knowledge of human anatomy and produced a depiction that was to a certain extent realistic: were overrun by aesthetic taste, and their realism was pomaded and powdered with the taste of aestheticism. Hence their perfect line and nice colors. Aesthetic taste diverted them from the realism of the earth, and they reached the impasse of idealism. Their painting is a means of decorating a picture.⁴

Thus, the representational aesthetic of the Same takes hold of creation. To create, that is, to reproduce a work that can be subsumed under the aesthetic identity.

A similar situation happens with Capitalism (Art) and the market (Representational Aesthetic Sense). Now, we are not talking merely about a simple Same of production, “X amounts of steel is needed for construction”, also the non-Vanilla Same of the market. That of trends, that of manufactured desire, “what the market wants”. We don’t sell “straightforward” services now, we market revolutionary services that transform your personal growth (and 101 bullshit words you could add in there).

Creation is bastardized. It’s a non-simple reproduction under a normative identity.

What 'is' Creation?

How does one 'define' creation? Ah, but is that not the question of representation. To define X, so that creation can be subsumed under that genus. What is it? It is x, it resounds, the form of the answer implied by the question. That human is a featherless biped or a rational animal, for example. It becomes a question of judgment. And begins the four-level pursuit of judgment: identity, analogy, opposition, and resemblance.

However, does this questioning of judgment imply the relativistic chat, usually associated with art: "is subjective" "is relative" "cannot be defined" - No. Precisely because it allows the conservative, multiple conservative representations, to exist. Relativism of such kind must be rejected - not because it's open, but precisely because it still aims to conserve, to represent: a muted broader conservation, much like the Maximal Liberal.

An inverse interplay of the horizontal and the vertical. The old order, the colonial one, perhaps the inadvertently tainted liberal order, according to critics, is maximally vertical. It imposes conservatism on the other, in depth. Liberalism, of a maximal kind, the essence of modernity, transfigures depth into breadth. A horizontal collection of multiple muted conservatism(s), a lack of intensity, of aggression.⁵

Often in Pure Mathematics, entities are 'defined' not in terms of what they are, the question of representation, but what they can do. To quasi-borrow that convention, to define creation on what there is not (yet), as with the property: that which hasn't existed hitherto. Now, this leaves the question, hasn't existed with respect to what? As it is left unanswered, the question is posed to the universal scope. That is what has allowed for this 'universal' to exist, the Ontological, specifically that of representation.

Representation, as the dominant ontological thought for most of human history, almost as the only (if not for certain hermits and frenchmen). Posing the 'question', more accurately, the possibility of creation to Representation: what hasn't existed hitherto, in the Ontological? The Univocal Being of Difference, the event Nietzsche-Deleuze would bring about.

Nietzsche-Deleuze: A Spectacle of Inward-Outward Movement

Nietzsche-Deleuze is an assembled unit. Why so? For after Nietzsche's, untimely demise into madness, then death - the oeuvre of his work was left incomplete, as is with any philosopher worth their salt. Specifically, an incompleteness was felt in

“grounding”, in a lack of ground, in suspension, of the so-called “postmodern” ontology. That, however, was achieved around a century later by Deleuze.

Well, let’s begin with the first event of the unit: Nietzsche(-Deleuze). Polemics are the event’s constituent movement, prominently with the Genealogy of Morality. But it isn’t merely the polemic against the surface historical morality that the event critiques, rather Morality as ought, ought-itself.

For just as the popular mind separates the lightning from its flash and takes the latter for an action, for the operation of a subject called lightning, so popular morality also separates strength from expressions of strength, as if there were a neutral substratum behind the strong man, which was free to express strength or not to do so. But there is no such substratum; there is no "being" behind doing, effecting, becoming; "the doer" is merely a fiction added to the deed-the deed is everything.⁶

Actor and the act. The dual separation isn’t a moral ought like “Murder is wrong”, nonetheless it is an ought, how x is ought to be, regarding the act. Polemic takes the form of the “Why” - why... to the power of n, until it receives no answer that can be answered with why, for representation (as the question of Why arises from representation itself) ends with the obvious, dogma, common sense; or as philosophers will conceal it, intuition.

I call this capital M-Moral. The obvious oughts, yet unaddressed, unrealized, as oughts. Such as the ought of representation. To “What is it”, why must an answer ought to be of the form “It is x”. Why must there be a resolution in the form of the grand unified theory of physics? Why must there be the possibility of knowledge in all totality? And at the genesis: Why must difference be subordinated to identity?

...is difference really an evil in itself? Must the question have been posed in these moral terms? Must difference have been 'mediated' in order to render it both livable and thinkable?⁷

What is Nietzsche’s response to the ‘obvious’? It’s a co-existent outward movement, accompanying the inward movement of “Why..why..why...”, out of which creation emerges. As Deleuze rightfully notes with The Eternal Return, Nietzsche opens up a “Copernican revolution which opens up the possibility of difference having its own concept”⁸.

What, if some day or night a demon were to steal after you into your loneliest loneliness and say to you: 'This life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more' ...

Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who spoke thus? Or have you once experienced a tremendous moment when you would have answered him: 'You are a god and never have I heard anything more divine.'⁹

Eternal return is the ultimate selective test of univocity. With the first possible response, "gnash at your teeth and curse the demon who spoke thus", the implicit context-setting is one of monotony. Would you gnash your teeth at a demon who curses you with an infinite monotonous life? And the other- would you answer it, claim it to be your God, to be your valuation, a selective test that even raised to the infinite allows for the anti-monotonous to subsist: the purely different, difference-in-itself.

With this Nietzsche becomes the first philosophical creator in its history. Much like Malevich, the 'similarity' between them which Zupancic notes, who calls his black square "the first new form that was ever created, the first artistic creation in the strong meaning of the word"¹⁰. Difference becomes primary, identity can only be spoken of it, about it -

The eternal return does not bring back 'the same', but returning constitutes the only Same of that which becomes...

Returning is thus the only identity, but identity as a secondary power; the identity of difference, the identical which belongs to the different, or turns around the different.¹¹

Now the second unit of the assembly, (Nietzsche-)Deleuze. The event is the finest exposition and development of univocal thought, post-leap made by Nietzsche. There's a certain rigor that accompanies the methodical development, the rigorous of them all. Representation, as it acts as the basis of not just philosophy, but physics, mathematics, at times art even(!), has claimed rigor for itself. Unified field theories, proofs of equalization, the wacry over 'modern' art (God forbid, Raygun try something not the Same). But Deleuze shows the lack of rigor with the Aristotelian conception, therefore all blocks of representation stumble, like dominos arranged.

When Aristotle faces the "the undifferentiated abyss, the black nothingness, the indeterminate animal in which everything is dissolved"¹² how does he react?

It is not possible that either unity or being should be a genus of things; for the differentiae of any genus must each of them both have being and be one, but it is not possible for the genus to be predicated of the differentiae taken apart from its species (any more than for the species of the genus to be predicated of

the proper differentiae of the genus); so that if either unity or being is a genus, no differentiae will either be one or have being.¹³

That is, being cannot be a genus, for if being 'is' a genus - what accounts for the genesis of this 'is'? The problem is not the incompleteness of this position, but that this incompleteness is unaccounted for in the Aristotelian lineage. Here, Aristotle introduces paronymy: "When things get their name from something, with a difference in ending, they are called paronymous"¹⁴.

Just as that which is healthy all has reference to health - either because it preserves health, or because it produces it, or because it is a sign of health, or because it is capable of receiving health - . . . , so too that which is is said in several ways, but all with reference to a single principle.¹⁵

Multiple equivocal categories of being are, thus, paranomously related to the central 'being'. Aristotle cuts being into equivocal categories, he makes the leap, without accounting for its genesis. To repeat: it is not that a leap/cut is "wrong/bad", it is precisely that representation attempts to do away with the leap/cut. It is Deleuze that, in a rigorous fashion, shows us the leap here. He maps behind the cut of representation, this ghost-like paronymous link, and what he finds is the univocal being.

How can representation be addressed in univocity? As a system founded in this leap, as ontologically incomplete, we have no reason to 'reject' it as a whole - just the rejection of representation as the absolute. What is X? X as the concept that has existed hitherto in representation, we can answer. Definitions make way for conceptualization. No more are we concerned with the 'true' definition of X, we speak of new conceptualizations given X, Y, and Z, as they have existed hitherto.

This translates to my other point, namely acknowledging Hegel and Kant (perhaps Leibniz too). When contemporary Kantians and Hegelians, Župancic and Žižek, speak of ontological incompleteness, is not precisely a way to (ad)dress this cut? It seems like the problem, as with Guattari's feud with Lacan, is not that representation doesn't exist or can't exist within univocity - rather representation as the inescapable inherent, the symbolic cut as necessary, that seems to be the source of Guattari v. Lacan (Although an interpretation of late-Lacan might find out that both are closer than they think).

The Distancing Act: An Orbital Movement

Quasi-circular imagery is frequent with Nietzsche-Deleuze. When the demon speaks, "The eternal hourglass of existence is turned upside down again and again, and you

with it, speck of dust!”). Consider, on the eternal return again, the centrifugal movement:

If eternal return is a wheel, then it must be endowed with a violent centrifugal movement which expels everything which 'can' be denied, everything which cannot pass the test.¹⁶

Allow the raise to (+1)th power, the orbital movement, the inward-outward movement out of which emerges creation: the distancing act. Here, I will conceptualize the distancing act as one related to the Ontological. Thus, there has only been a distancing act, much like the result of the echoed statement, “There has only ever been one ontological proposition: Being is univocal”¹⁷.

The Inward movement of the Polemic, of the Why, the questions of Socrates and Pyrrho. Combined with the Outward movement, of that ‘negative’ property of creation, what that has not existed hitherto. Now, with this comes the question: one associated with Deleuze, another associated with Hegel. Wasn’t Deleuze against negation? Doesn’t this prove Hegel’s point, that negation as precursor of a “new” synthesis? Ironically, Deleuze will answer both.

In very general terms, we claim that there are two ways to appeal to 'necessary destructions': that of the poet, who speaks in the name of a creative power, capable of overturning all orders and representations in order to affirm Difference in the state of permanent revolution which characterizes eternal return; and that of the politician, who is above all concerned to deny that which 'differs', so as to conserve or prolong an established historical order, or to establish a historical order which already calls forth in the world the forms of its representation.¹⁸

Negation lays down the carpets for affirmation to come about. It is merely a direction, a secondary fiddle, to the affirmative difference-in-itself. Furthermore, negation, the not, as a universal operator can only be conceptualized assuming representation. Note that the first distancing act happens precisely at shaking this ground, asking Why? to representation. It enters the area of the leap/cut, the spaces of ghosts, the construction site of paronymy. Here negation is outside its typical battleground of the universal operator, therefore it ceases to be the same ‘negation’, it cannot be constituted in universal terms.

At the same time, the inward venture proceeds. Creation distances from what has existed hitherto, moves away and to at the same time in that nautical-aerial space. What is the consequence of this? As it moves away and inward, it starts circling the genesis of representation. Nietzsche-Deleuze catches Aristotle without his

underwear, by his wet dangling balls, and commences the creation of the univocal being.

Speculative Distancing for the New (Ontology)

The first distancing act was of the univocal being, representation to univocity. What does the (speculative) distancing act look like next? Given a space, a differential space, where difference “remains attached in the depths of its own space, in the here-now of a differential reality always made up of singularities”¹⁹. Can it be leaps? The long legs Nietzsche spoke about, peak to peak, the rarefied atmospheric expedition.

In the mountains the shortest way is from peak to peak but for that one must have long legs. Aphorisms should be peaks—and those who are addressed, tall and lofty. The air thin and pure, danger near, and the spirit full of. gay sarcasm: these go well together.²⁰

What can a leap be in space, where peaks become stars? Where the air has lost all rarefaction altogether, where one needs not just long legs but voluminous lungs to traverse. Does the distancing look like a movement from one singularity, that is one star, to another? A leap from and from, the nautical-aerial coordinates marked, so that one can commence the distancing.

And what is the moment of distancing? Can it be an explosion, a contraction of space itself - is it a black hole, more importantly, a black hole with what's after a black hole?

For I have no answer. For there are bounds and leaps to be made still.

References

1. Malevich, Kazimir. (1916). From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism: The New Realism in Painting. p. 122. In Bowlit, John. Russian Art of the Avant-Garde Theory and Criticism. 1902-1934. hereafter referred to as FCFS.
2. FCFS, p. 119
3. “The savage was the first to establish the principle of naturalism: in drawing a dot and five little sticks, he attempted to transmit his own image.”. FCFS, p. 119
4. FCFS, p. 121
5. Krishna, Niranjana. (2024). Liberalism = B-Conservatism. p. 3.
6. Nietzsche, Friedrich. (1887). *Genealogy of Morality*. p. 53.
7. Deleuze, Gilles. (1968). Difference and Repetition. p. 30. hereafter referred to as D&R.
8. D&R, p. 40-41
9. Nietzsche, Friedrich. (1882). The Gay Science. Section 341, p. 273.

10. Zupančič, Alenka. (2003). *The Shortest Shadow: Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Two*. p. 6
11. *D&R*, p. 41
12. *D&R*, p. 28
13. Aristotle (1984b), 'Metaphysics', trans. W. D. Ross, in Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1552–1728. 998b.
14. Aristotle (1984a), 'Categories', trans. J. L. Ackrill, in Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 3–24. 1a.
15. Aristotle 1984b: 1003a
16. *D&R*, p. 55
17. *D&R*, p. 35
18. *D&R*, p. 53
19. *D&R*, p. 52
20. F. Nietzsche. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. from *The Portable Nietzsche*. W. Kauffman.p. 152