

BECOMING AGAINST HISTORY DELEUZE, TOYNBEE AND VITALIST HISTORIOGRAPHY

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A few references by Deleuze (with and without Guattari) to the work of the English ‘universal historian’ Arnold Toynbee (1889-1975) might hold the key to a new understanding of Deleuze’s concepts of history and ‘becoming’ [*devenir*], and of their relationship. In a conversation with Antonio Negri in 1990, Deleuze says that in his work with Guattari, he became “more and more aware of the possibility of distinguishing between becoming and history.”¹ It is often asked what Deleuze’s philosophy of history is, and how his notion of ‘becoming’ relates to history and ‘historicity’. My hypothesis in this essay is that his ideas about history emerge from an immanent development and critique of the central theses of Toynbee’s monolithic, but now almost forgotten, attempt at a ‘universal history’ of human civilization. Deleuze’s linkage of ‘becoming’ to nomadism, moreover, explicitly makes reference to Toynbee’s theses about nomadism. Toynbee’s major work, *A Study of History*, contains substantial material on nomadism, which Toynbee presents as the original ‘other’ of human civilization; “nomadism”, he argues, “is essentially a society without a history.”² Deleuze’s ideas about history and the ‘nomadic’ aspects of becoming stand to be greatly illuminated by taking up his references to the work of Arnold Toynbee.

Deleuze’s major philosophical works, *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*, written in the late 1960s, seem on the face of it to be very ahistorical works. Certainly, they do not present themselves as internally related to a historical context; nor is there very much historical material in them. There is one short section in *Difference and Repetition* in which Deleuze attempts to apply his theory of ontological ‘problems’ (which he also calls ‘Ideas’) to the social and historical fields.³ The section is subheaded ‘Are there social Ideas, in a Marxist sense?’, and Deleuze situates his brief discussion of the dynamics of historical movement in the context of the work of the French structuralist Marxists, Althusser, Balibar and Rancière. If classical Marxism is right to claim that economic structures determine social relationships, Deleuze says, Althusser and his collaborators are also “profoundly correct” to insist that that the economic structure of society must be taken in its *simultaneity*, at a separate level from its linear, historical instantiation. “Structure never acts transitively, following the order of succession in time; rather, it acts by incarnating its varieties in diverse societies and by accounting for the simultaneity of all the relations and terms which, each time and in each case, constitute the present.”⁴ As with

his 1960s article ‘How do we Recognise Structuralism?’⁵, it does not take long for Deleuze’s formulations of the principles of ‘structuralism’ to diverge significantly from more established versions. Immediately after the preceding passage, Deleuze adds that the simultaneity of ‘the economic’ must be thought in a specific way: as “a differential virtuality to be interpreted, always covered over by its cases of solution” (ibid). This passage no doubt refers in part back to Althusser’s development of the idea of “problematic” fields behind texts and ideologies,⁶ as well as to Althusser’s ideas (in ‘Contradiction and Overdetermination’) about the accumulation of multiple historical contradictions in given societies.⁷ But there is something else lurking in the shadows of Deleuze’s text even here, and when he proceeds to define ‘the economic’ as “the totality of problems posed to a given society, or the synthetic and problematising field of that society”,⁸ the description of the social field itself as “synthetic” and “problematising” appears to be leading us away from the concepts of Althusserian Marxist theory as they are usually understood. An attached footnote comes to our aid. In it, Deleuze refers the reader in search of a further understanding of “the ‘problem-differentiation’ schema as a historical category” to the work of Arnold Toynbee, who, Deleuze concedes, “it is true, is little suspected of Marxism.”⁹ In defence of this suggestion, Deleuze goes on to cite a key passage from Toynbee’s central work, *A Study of History*:

A society, we may say, is confronted in the course of its life by a succession of problems which each member has to solve for itself, as best it may. The presentation of each problem is a challenge to undergo an ordeal, and through this series of ordeals the members of the society progressively differentiate themselves from one another. Throughout, it is impossible to grasp the significance of any particular member’s behaviour under a particular ordeal without taking some account of the similar or dissimilar behaviour of its fellows and without viewing the successive ordeals as a series of events in the life of the whole society.¹⁰

This ‘challenge-and-response’ model of historical change is the theoretical cornerstone of *A Study of History*, Toynbee’s enormous history of the world, published in twelve volumes between 1934 and 1961. At the collective level, each “society ... is confronted in the course of its life by a succession of problems”, and at the individual level, particular individuals and minorities are called upon to undergo “ordeals” which permit them to solve these evolving problems. The tone of Deleuze’s admission that “it is true [that Toynbee] is little suspected of Marxism” is uncertain. Is it humorous? One of Deleuze’s specialities was in producing ‘monstrous couplings’ between contemporary and half-forgotten, unfashionable thinkers; Deleuze’s conjunction of Althusserian structuralism with Toynbee’s rather grizzly brand of ‘universal history’ is a nice example. Alternatively, there is the possibility that Deleuze really believes that Toynbee’s theories have hitherto unsuspected resonances with contemporary Marxist theory. In any case, Deleuzian ‘humour’ is often indeed a species of *parrhesia*, a subtilized means of expression for unwelcome ideas in public space, so it would be unwise to rule out this possibility straightaway.

But one would have to work very hard to extrapolate a Deleuzian theory of history, society or politics from this one footnote. The prospect of a Toynbeean-Althusserian coupling remains a distant possibility and is by no means explicitly actualised in *Difference and Repetition*. The fact remains that the use of the concepts and discourse of history is generally rare in Deleuze’s work of the 1960s. His philosophy of history at that time seems to be more or less completely undeveloped. However, in the crowning work of his collaboration with Félix Guattari, the sprawling, subversive slab of text that is *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), historical scenarios and examples break out in delirious abundance. Despite Deleuze’s claim that this particular work is “philosophy,

nothing but philosophy”¹¹, *A Thousand Plateaus* presents itself rather as a series of jumbled-up fragments from a global history of humanity. Strikingly, despite the disorder of chronological presentation, the thirteen plateaus that make up the work are dated with a *Christian* chronology.¹² What are the historiographical principles at work in this particular book, the second and final volume of Deleuze and Guattari’s *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*? Do Deleuze and Guattari have a genuine philosophy of history, and if so, what is it? Deleuze’s response in 1990 to Negri’s probing questions about the relationship between history and politics in *A Thousand Plateaus* is that the book has three main “directions”: (1) to focus on what its authors call ‘lines of flight’ in historical movements; (2) to give primacy to minorities over classes, and (3) to elaborate the notion of a *machine de guerre* (war-machine), with reference to the social, technological and military practices of nomadic societies. In what follows, we will see how these three “directions” governing *A Thousand Plateaus*, together with many other ideas that surface in that work, can be read as products of a renewed engagement on Deleuze’s part with the theses of Toynbee’s *A Study of History*. The concepts of ‘minorities’ and ‘creative minorities’, the distinction between nomadic and migrant or sedentary modes of existence, the exploration of nomadic technologies and the special relationship of nomads to their animals,¹³ not to mention an exhaustive account of the nature and movements of the ‘Barbarian War-Bands’ that haunt States – all these themes are developed at length in Toynbee’s *Study of History*. Politically too, the later Deleuze follows lines of thought opened up by Toynbee. His stance on Palestine is almost a repetition of Toynbee’s own controversial statements about Israel and Palestine in the eighth volume of the *Study* (published in 1954).¹⁴ The use of Toynbee’s conception of ‘nomadism’ is explicit¹⁵, but the implicit influence of Toynbee’s ideas and framework extends throughout the text in multiple ways.

That Deleuze made use of the work of this now almost forgotten English historian is in any case not completely unexpected, as Toynbee, like Deleuze, was fundamentally – and explicitly – a Bergsonian. Toynbee’s whole approach was from the outset quite at odds with other contemporary trends in English-speaking historiography and intellectual life in general. His intellectual formation was profoundly influenced by his encounter with the philosophy of Bergson as a student in 1911-12. His first mentor, A.D. Lindsay, was one of the few active proponents of Bergsonism in Britain, and wrote a significant introduction to Bergson’s philosophy (*The Philosophy of Bergson*, 1911). Toynbee in effect brought about a fusion of Bergsonism with a type of historiography rooted in the education in classics offered at Oxford and Cambridge in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rejecting both empiricist and Marxist approaches to historiography, his historiographical inspirations came from the classical historians (Polybius), from Edward Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, from Oswald Spengler’s *Decline of the West*, and, by his own acknowledgement, from the Bible. But, as we shall see, it was Bergsonian philosophy that provided Toynbee with his primary justification for a turn to a global, synoptic view of human history, where the rise and fall of *civilizations* became a further level of differentiation in the ongoing cosmological and evolutionary differentiations that constitute Bergson’s *élan vital*. My overarching thesis here is that the model of historical and social ‘differentiation’ presented in *A Thousand Plateaus* is a development of the vitalist approach to the history of the Earth opened up by Bergson and developed by Toynbee.

Deleuze’s peculiar revalorisation of ‘becoming’ over ‘history’ in particular also emerges logically from an immanent development of key theses of Toynbee’s theory of world history. Deleuze and Guattari’s adherence to some of the more radical and counterintuitive suggestions Toynbee makes about nomadic life (and its fundamental difference to sedentary life) lead them on the path towards a strategical supersession of the very

BECOMING AGAINST HISTORY

idea of ‘History’ itself, in favour of the concept of becoming. An ancient bifurcation – taking place at the end of the last Ice Age – between ‘migrant’ and ‘nomadic’ modes of existence inaugurated a division between two modes of existence which remain at odds throughout the subsequent course of human history. At the current juncture in world history, at the point of emergence of a global State, the ancient conflict between historical, sedentary, ‘civilized’ peoples, and ahistorical, nomadic, ‘uncivilized’ peoples, yawns open once again. History itself ceases to ‘become’ or to develop, and ‘becoming’ begins to turn *against* the current of History, in order to begin to shed it like a skin. In *A Thousand Plateaus* it is as if the materials and theses of Toynbee’s *Study* end up being turned against themselves, their means diverted to new and apparently perverse ends (Deleuze’s standard procedure, of course, with the study of other thinkers). Toynbee’s great calculus of historical currents makes way for Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘cartographies’ of ‘lines of flight’. If this is right, then each of the three “directions” that govern *A Thousand Plateaus* – not just the ideas about minorities and nomadic ‘war-machines’, but the very notion of ‘lines of flight’ – all relate immanently back to Toynbee’s *Study of History*. Following up these connections should lend a new intelligibility to some of the obscure theses found in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

In the following section, I present a brief summary account of Toynbee’s outline of world history. The third section looks at contemporary receptions of Toynbee’s ideas, and inquires into his rapid fall from popularity. In section four, Toynbee’s Bergsonian background is made visible, and the importance of Toynbee’s Bergsonian teacher, A.D. Lindsay, is underscored. In the fifth section, Toynbee’s concept of nomadism is introduced, and the sixth and final section explores the significance of Deleuze and Guattari’s use of Toynbee’s thesis about the inaugural bifurcation between migration and nomadism. By remaining faithful to the thought of this bifurcation, Deleuze and Guattari end up overturning the linear, successive approach to history that remains fundamental to Toynbee’s approach. But in doing so, I shall suggest that they unjustly neglect the very aspect of Toynbee’s theory that initially attracted Deleuze’s attention in *Difference and Repetition* – the strange coincidence between Toynbee and Althusserian Marxism, which, we shall see, turns around the identification of distinct economic, political and cultural *planes* in a society or civilization.

OUTLINE OF TOYNBEE’S MAP OF HISTORY

Toynbee’s central thesis in *A Study of History* is that what we call World History (minimally, the global record of events dating from around five thousand years ago), is really composed of the internal histories of a multiplicity – twenty-one, to be exact – of ‘civilizations’. The notion of ‘civilization’, he argues, has been misunderstood as a unitary phenomenon, when in fact the Earth has been host to an irreducible plurality of civilizations, different in kind from one another. Over the nine volumes which form the main body of *A Study of History*, Toynbee presents a complex account of the parallel series of twenty-one ‘civilizations’ he proposes as the component parts of world history. Toynbee’s historical approach is globalising, but not unifying, aiming to disentangle the threads that run through the warp of history, and to realign them in their proper, internal order. Civilizations are four-dimensional bodies, extending in space and in time. ‘History’ is before anything else the *internal* history of a civilizational ‘body’, although in the later volumes of the *Study*, Toynbee turns his attention to ‘Encounters between Civilizations in Space’ (Volume 8) and ‘Encounters between Civilizations in Time’ (Volume 9), generating from there a new conception of human history in its global dimension.

Toynbee begins from the assumption that the prehistoric humans of the Paleolithic (emerging around two million years ago) during a long ‘food-gathering phase’, enjoyed a more or less permanent “ascendancy over all the rest of the flora and fauna of the Earth.”¹⁶ The earliest civilizations emerged fifty centuries ago in the Near and Middle East, and were, says Toynbee, the products of a fundamental, prehistoric bifurcation in response to the environmental challenge of desiccation, resulting from the end of the last Ice Age 18,000 years ago.¹⁷ There were three possible responses to this environmental challenge, all involving radically different ways of life. The passive response was to stay still and not change, for the primal hunter-gatherers to risk extinction by remaining at home, living wretchedly on the scrawny animals and robust plants that remained after the loss of the rain. But Toynbee says that this was not the path that led from the “Integration of Custom” – where a harmony reigned between evolution and habituation – to the “Differentiation of Civilization”.¹⁸ The second alternative was for the hunter-gatherers to migrate, following their prey as it shifted with the climactic belt. This path was taken and led to the emergence of the first civilizations. The Egyptian and Sumerian civilizations emerged when “heroic pioneers – inspired by audacity or by desperation – plunged into the jungle-swamps” of the lower Nile valley¹⁹ and the valley of the Tigris. Up until the environmental crisis, the valley had been a forbidding and apparently impenetrable wilderness, but with the formation of irrigation systems the jungle was tamed. However, the path leading to ‘civilization’ was not the only successful response to the crisis. The move made by the migrants diverged from another, third possibility, which in its own way, was just as ‘creative’ as migration and urbanization. For, in opposition to the ‘migrants’, the ‘nomads’ refused to budge from their increasingly parched steppes, staying still while the ground moved. This third, enigmatic, alternative in a sense involved the most radical change, in that it involved the retaining of habitat, but a complete change of way of life. The nomad stays still, attempting to harness the power of living organisms (for instance, dogs and sheep) in order to reproduce their existence. *Both* of these ‘active’ responses to the challenge of desiccation are fundamentally ‘human’, in that they move beyond the level of mere animal subsistence. Both harness a creative effort. Toynbee’s examples of human, yet non-civilized societies, such as the Polynesian islanders, the Inuits (‘Eskimos’ for Toynbee, writing in the 1950s), and most importantly for him, the nomads of Central Asia, are presented as remnants of a fundamental bifurcation of the human species, just prior to the Neolithic revolution.

The migrants who built cities in Egypt and Sumer inaugurated the first civilizations proper. History, for Toynbee, is the history of the twenty-one civilizations that have inhabited the Earth; conversely, “nomadism is essentially a society without a history.”²⁰ We will see later that Deleuze problematizes this distinction. For Toynbee, the development of the *élan vital* of the human species must be sought in the creations of civilizations – in history – rather than in nomadism, which, after the rise of the civilizations, becomes parasitic upon them. For Deleuze, on the contrary, ‘societies of History’ are more fundamentally parasitic upon the properly intensive life of the nomadic societies of becoming.

In the first two volumes of the *Study*, Toynbee shows that there is initially a diversity of civilizations, with very different ways of life, coexisting more or less in parallel. The two earliest civilizations – the ‘Sumeric’ and ‘Egyptian’ – emerged on the lush riverine shores of the Tigris and the Nile around six thousand years ago. Toynbee proposes that a number of other civilizations also emerged, more or less independently of each other, during the same period: the Indic, Sinic, Minoan, Andean, and Mayan societies (see the Appendix below

for a table of Toynbee's civilizations). Each of these civilizations, he argues, follows a very specific pattern of development, possessing a duration of several centuries, each terminating at some point in disintegration. But Toynbee also holds that a certain general structure replicates itself throughout these civilizations. Each completed civilization begins with an initial period of the creative construction of institutions, by a "creative minority": "All growth originates with creative individuals or small minorities of individuals."²¹ However, for reasons we will need to examine, the creative minority ends up becoming a merely "dominant minority", which triggers the phase in which the civilization becomes a 'Universal State'. In turn a social division now erodes the State from within and without: those living within the boundaries (the *limes*) of the host civilization form an "internal proletariat", and those "barbarian war-bands" still living according to the nomadic mode of existence outside the boundaries of the civilization make up an "external proletariat" (see Toynbee's table of Barbarian War-Bands in volume 8 of the *Study*²²). The state struggles to maintain itself against internal and external proletariats. A second wave of civilizations emerges out of this clash of forces (the Syriac, Iranian, Hittite, Babylonian, Hellenic, Yucatec and Mexic). These civilizations face new, specifically social and religious, problems that emerge from the ongoing failures of the first wave of civilizations to solve their internal, social problems. This second wave of civilizations, emerging from 1000 BC, precipitated the establishment of patterns of greater interdependence between the civilizations. Nevertheless, a deeper, structural change was also in process. Towards the end of this millennium, 'universal Churches' began to arise from within the internal proletariats of these second wave civilizations, as they themselves reached their imperial phase. Universal churches functioned as "chrysalises" for a new, third wave of civilizations. In the early middle ages, a further three civilizations emerged out of Universal Churches – the two branches of Christianity, the Eastern Orthodox and Western (and 'unorthodox'), and the Islamic civilization.

Perhaps Toynbee's clearest example of this threefold development of a civilization is the Hellenic civilization, which emerges from the disintegrating Minoan civilization, which itself emerged out of the physical challenge of the conquest of the sea.²³ Based in the Aegean, Hellenic civilization faces the problem of barren land on the one side and the sea on the other. With the overcoming of this double challenge the classical age of Greece commences. After the conquests of Alexander, Hellenic society disintegrates, and the creative minority becomes a merely "dominant minority." Brought to the point of disintegration by marauding nomads, a 'Universal Church' (Christianity) finally arises from within the internal proletariat of the Roman Empire, functioning as the "chrysalis" of a new civilization, Western Christendom.

According to Toynbee, many of the early civilizations disintegrated altogether, their populations converted or subjugated by other civilizations. Now there are only five left: the Western and Orthodox branches of Christendom, and the Hindu, Far-Eastern and Islamic civilizations. Alongside and within these five great bodies of civilization, there remains a myriad array of "minorities", whether they are surviving 'fossilised' remainders of extinct civilizations, or renegade nomads and barbarians at the borders of civilization, or itinerant populations. Toynbee believes that the only society currently in the mode of "growth and differentiation" is the Western, the others having been defeated by Western technological dominance (via Western naval supremacy in the 16-17th centuries). Although he rejects Marx's materialist account of advanced Western society, Toynbee does agree with Marx that the economic and technological dominance of this particular society has secured its political dominance over the other great civilizations and societies. On the cultural plane, however, the other

four remaining civilizations remain as resistant to the advances of Western Christendom as previously in their histories.

In modern times, our own Western Civilization has cast the net of its economic system all round the World, and this economic unification on a Western basis has been followed by a political unification on the same basis which has gone almost as far ... These are striking facts, but to regard them as evidence of the unity of civilization is a superficial view. While the economic and political maps have now been Westernized, the cultural map remains substantially what it was before our Western Society started on its career of economic and political conquest. On the cultural plane, for those who have eyes to see, the lineaments of the four living non-Western civilizations are still clear.²⁴

This insistence on the autonomy of the cultural plane is the basis of the curious co-incidence Deleuze identifies between Toynbee and the Althusserian Marxism in *Difference and Repetition*. Toynbee's preliminary distinction between three planes of social life – the economic, the political, and the cultural – echoes Althusser's similar distinction, granting each level its own autonomy, its own record of development, and its special phases of dominance.²⁵ Toynbee says that although the West has secured economic and political dominance, it has not and cannot secure *cultural* dominance over the other great civilizations, not to mention the movements of 'minorities' that are constantly born at its borders. He argues that since Western dominance of the other four civilizations (not to mention of the myriad minorities) cannot be achieved on the cultural plane, it is on that plane – which for him includes religious activity – that resistance to the globalising force of Western society will be registered.²⁶

Moreover, this unique situation is also the key to the nature of the disintegration proper to Western civilization. Following Bergson (as well as Jung, in the later volumes of the *Study*), Toynbee contends that Western technological society has given primacy to the power of conscious intelligence, at the expense of the powers of intuition. Insofar as these powers are still expressed in the cultures and religions of the other societies, they provide the key to future embryological movements in the internal and external proletariats of a politically and economically globalised Western civilization. Toynbee thinks that the disintegration of Western civilization is probably on the horizon unless the West can produce a greater degree of what he calls 'etherialization' in the process of its breakdown. Etherealization, according to Toynbee, is "the process which liberates forces that have been imprisoned in a more material medium and thereby sets them free to work in a more ethereal medium with a greater potency".²⁷ When we return to Deleuze at the end of this essay, we will have to inquire what this notion of etherialization might mean from a Deleuzian perspective. Can one envisage a progressive etherialization for Western civilization on Deleuzian principles? Or does Deleuze rather end up promoting the opposite: the etherialization of becoming detaching itself and turning *against* the industrial systems of the Universal State of Western Christendom? Would this latter move be consistent or not with Toynbee's suggestions about the independence on the cultural plane of the four remaining non-Western civilizations from the incursions of Western civilization on the economic and political planes? Are Deleuze's discussions about Toynbee in *Difference and Repetition* (which concerns the 'problems' that initiate historical change) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (which concerns the nomad/migrant distinction) compatible?

CONTEMPORARY RECEPTIONS OF TOYNBEE'S WORK

A retrospective examination of Toynbee's historiography is overdue for a number of distinct reasons, outside of his relationship with Deleuze. His monstrous tome, and its momentary influence, is a curious anomaly in English-speaking twentieth-century intellectual history, and he himself is an anomalous figure. During the period of composition of *A Study of History* (1934-61), Toynbee worked at the Royal Institute for International Affairs at Chatham House, London, a think-tank attached to the British Foreign Office, and published, with his wife Rosalind Murray Toynbee, an annual report on foreign affairs. *A Study of History* emerged in parallel with these annual reports, published under the auspices of Chatham House, in three instalments (vols 1-3, 1934; vols. 4-6, 1939; vols 7-10, 1954). (A further two volumes, first a historical gazetteer and then in 1961 a lengthy volume of 'Reconsiderations', completed the work in full). The sheer length of the work (even the acknowledgements go on for twenty pages) meant that it was not until the 1946 abridgement of the first half was published that Toynbee's work found any sort of audience.²⁸ In 1947, *Time* magazine hailed Toynbee as the 'universal historian' for our times and he briefly – for less than a decade – became an influential and respectable intellectual figure. Writing in the *New Republic*, Lewis Mumford placed Toynbee in the company of Gibbon and Spengler, saying that he was "the Master, if not the Father of Universal History", while the British literary journal *Horizon* also published an enthusiastic laudation.²⁹ *Time's* motivation was in part political: *A Study of History* was promoted as the successor to Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto*, introducing a new pluralism into the study of world historical development, charting the development of no less than twenty-one 'civilizations' throughout world history and restoring the determining role of culture and religion in historical change.³⁰ From 1947 until about 1955 Toynbee was a ubiquitous figure in British and American intellectual culture, frequently appearing on the emerging medium of television in the guise of a commentator on historical affairs. One imagines him in his brief heyday, ensconced in a red leather armchair, in a wood-panelled office at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London, meditating on global historical currents while idly stroking an antique globe. However, Toynbee's reign as Master of Universal History was brief, and, once the full content and implications of the *Study of History* became known, his eclipse was swift.

Although Toynbee began his work on the inside of the British political establishment, his theoretical and political anti-Statism led him into conflict with it, and he came to claim that the final volumes of his *Study* were written from a religious standpoint – specifically the standpoint of Indian religion.³¹ Toynbee's later writings were frankly prophetic, and he envisioned a new 'higher' religion that would compensate for the emergence of a global Universal State. This universal religion would be somehow composed of all the historically existing higher religions, and would unite the cultural and spiritual aspects of all human beings left out by the Universal State. Despite this apparent "religious" turn in the later volumes of his work, he continued to claim that his goal had been to produce a world history that could be put to "practical use". Outside of recounting the main events that punctuate the internal histories of the twenty-one civilizations, Toynbee's guiding project remained to present the student of history with a map to negotiate the fluxes of 'world history'. With the help of this 'map' (composed, as we will see, of 'cross-sections' revealing concealed 'layers'), the student of history might excavate the virtual, accumulated bodies of the great civilizations (not to mention the numerous non-civilized offshoots of humanity – the Nomads, the Osmanlis, the Inuits, etc) – and find their lines of development, the history of their bifurcations, their contemporary avatars, their possible heirs and enemies, and the potentialities for what

Deleuze called the “condensation and adjunction”³² of the singularities of history. Toynbee’s emphasis on the use of history for *strategic* purposes would not have escaped Deleuze.³³

Nevertheless, Deleuze’s use of Toynbee’s work, beginning in 1968 and developed most powerfully in 1980 in *A Thousand Plateaus*, is unusual as the influence of Toynbee’s work had rapidly waned by the late 1950s. When the last four volumes of the main text (vols. 7-10) of *A Study of History* were published in 1954, a series of wounding criticisms began to flow from professional historians. During the immediate reception of the earlier volumes, and following the publication of the 1946 abridgement, reviewers had correctly placed Toynbee’s work in the company of Bergsonism on the one hand, and Gibbon and classical history on the other hand. Criticisms were until 1954 restricted to customary gripes about empirical errors and omissions, and an unease about the subjectivity of this kind of historiography. It was true that the reputation of Bergson’s philosophy in Britain had undergone a severe decline owing to the attacks it received from Bertrand Russell; but this did not seem to have deterred readers at the outset. However, during 1954-55, Toynbee received a merciless savaging by British academic historians. In the *Sunday Times* (17 October 1954) Hugh Trevor-Roper dripped sarcasm over the idea that historical study allowed one to predict the future: Toynbee “compares himself with the Prophet Ezekiel; and certainly at times, he is just as unintelligible.”³⁴ In the *New Statesman*, A.J.P. Taylor stated that “Professor Toynbee’s method is not that of scholarship, but of the lucky dip”, complaining that

though he claimed to be making a comparative study of twenty-one different civilizations, his scheme was, in fact, a generalisation from the history of the Ancient World. First came independent states, warring against each other in a Time of Troubles; then the Universal State of the Roman empire; and finally, in consequence, breakdown and disintegration. If other civilizations failed to fit into this pattern, they were dismissed as abortive, ossified, or achieving a wrong-headed *tour de force*.³⁵

Taylor also objected that “the book is not designed to serve a historical purpose”, serving instead as a tool for the prediction of the future, and, most damagingly, of a syncretic religious vision. “These monstrous volumes with their parade of learning are a repudiation of Rationalism”, he concluded.³⁶ By the following year, Walter Kaufmann was confident to write that “historians ... have by now roundly condemned his work”,³⁷ and that Toynbee was “endowed with an essentially eclectic and digressive mind”,³⁸ the author of the academic equivalent of a Cecil B. DeMille Hollywood extravaganza. If these criticisms emerged only in 1954-55, almost twenty years after the publication of the first volumes, that is probably for the most part because these last volumes marked the end of the opus. But there are further motivations for the backlash. First, many of the most robust attacks take up and protest at Toynbee’s remarks about the Israel-Palestine conflict. In Volume 8, published in 1954, *Contacts between Civilizations in Space*, Toynbee’s accounts of the Modern West and Islam, the Jews, and other civilizations were each highly politicized, while his own vision of the future development of Western civilization seemed to rely on an amorphous syncretism. In 1955, an enormous outcry about his remarks on Israel’s relation to the Palestinians in the chapter entitled ‘The Modern West and the Jews’³⁹ started to appear, with Toynbee being attacked in several Jewish periodicals, in a book (*The Professor and the Fossil*, by Maurice Samuels, 1957), and perhaps most powerfully in an essay entitled ‘The Toynbee Heresy’, by the future Israeli Foreign Minister, Abba Eban.⁴⁰ Walter Kaufmann followed Eban in expressing his anger at Toynbee’s giving “the impression that the Jews did to the Arabs precisely what the Nazis had done to the Jews”.⁴¹ Other factors also sustained Toynbee’s trouncing. Abba Eban remarked that Toynbee added insult to injury by writing

“what is undoubtedly the worst prose in the English language.”⁴² By the end of the 1950s, Toynbee appeared to have lost the intellectual respect of his peers, and his enormous work was swiftly consigned to cultural oblivion, now appearing as a freakish anomaly of twentieth-century thought. In 1958, a colloquium on Toynbee’s work was held at Cerisy-La-Salle in France, with contributions from Raymond Aron, Leslek Kolakowski, Lucien Goldmann, Francois Chatelet, Eric Voegelin, and Paul Ricoeur among others. In some introductory remarks to the conference, Maurice Crubellier pointed out the importance of Bergson’s influence on Toynbee’s work;⁴³ but the encounter between Toynbee and the French appears to have been muted and unproductive. It seems to be only in the work of Deleuze that the encounter bore any fruit. In the English-speaking world, Toynbee’s work exercised no further influence in academic and intellectual culture, although his synoptic approach to history found some enthusiasts in American science fiction writing.⁴⁴

BERGSONIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

Bergson himself did not apply his vitalistic theory of biological evolution and development, first developed in *Creative Evolution* (1907), directly to the field of human evolution and the history of civilization. It is only in his final work, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* (1934) that he explicitly begins to develop a vitalist theory of socio-historical currents, but the detail is sketchy, and the account is more or less *a priori*. However, from early on in the reception of Bergson’s writings, the potential for the application of Bergsonian principles to historiography had not gone unnoticed, and found its most direct development in the English speaking world, in the lineage that leads to Toynbee’s massive universal history. Perhaps the dominant intellectual influence in Toynbee’s formation had been the work of A.D. Lindsay (1879), a Scottish philosopher who, among other things, had been partly responsible (along with Herbert Wildon Carr) for bringing Bergson’s philosophy to the British Isles. Toynbee had graduated from Oxford University in 1911 during a brief honeymoon period in the English-language reception of Bergson’s philosophy.⁴⁵ In his introductory piece to Toynbee, Tangye Lean writes that “the year in which Toynbee graduated saw the works of Bergson, delayed by translation, sweep into Oxford in an abrupt and surprising flood. They came to Toynbee’s own intellectual world ‘with the force’, he has said, ‘of a revelation’.”⁴⁶ Alexander Dunlop Lindsay had been the catalyst for this revelation. Although he was a classics tutor, his dominant interests lay in modern philosophy, particularly in Kant and Bergson.⁴⁷ Toynbee’s biographer, William McNeill, writes that “Lindsay’s version of Bergson’s evolutionary thinking helped to wean Toynbee away from his inherited Anglican faith.”⁴⁸

In his *The Philosophy of Bergson* (1911), Lindsay had proposed the application of Bergsonian principles to history, saying that “Bergson unfortunately has paid no attention to the nature of historical inquiry, but it admirably illustrates his account of intuition”,⁴⁹ sketching out the idea of a historical method that is “more than a science”, and rooted in the “genius” of the historian, who performs “a synthesis for which there are no rules”.⁵⁰ Lindsay stressed Bergson’s idea (voiced in *Creative Evolution*) that intuition “must be, like art, disinterested, or rather, like art, interested only in its object”, and that “intuition implies sympathy, in the sense at least of caring enough about things to know them in their own nature.”⁵¹ Lindsay’s application of Bergson’s theory of intuition to historiography is sketchy, but it creates the space for a Bergsonian historiography. Toynbee was almost certainly inspired by Lindsay’s suggestion. In one sense, his work is a realisation of the blueprint of the Bergsonian historian sketched out here by Lindsay. However, Toynbee broke with Lindsay in 1916, according to McNeill

because of a disagreement over Toynbee's future career direction; Toynbee never referred to Lindsay in the *Study*, even in the interminable Acknowledgements in the tenth volume.

In his review of the last set of volumes of *A Study of History*, Ernest Barker suggested that Toynbee's entire system was a product of the tradition of the teaching of classics in Oxford. Lindsay too shared this background, and wanted to extend its ethos to the study of modern society.⁵² But if Toynbee's 'universal history' had classical antecedents, his exhaustive application of certain Bergsonian principles to historiography was novel. It has remained largely undiscussed, and this has perhaps resulted in his work being unjustly neglected. The attacks levelled at him by traditional historians (which led to the common opinion that Toynbee's work was 'discredited') were made without taking into account the role of Bergsonism in his approach to studying history. Tangye Lean's early article on Toynbee's work (in the literary journal *Horizon* in 1947) recorded that Bergson's philosophy

gives Toynbee his first coherent picture of impermanence, and spreads out later like a kind of dye in his mind, influencing his sense of values, suggesting clues for further research, colouring even his style of exposition. If direct quotations from *L'Évolution Créatrice* itself are rare twenty, or thirty, or forty years later in *A Study of History*, it is because the book has fused into the whole structure of Toynbee's thought.⁵³

In fact, Toynbee refers to Bergson explicitly a number of times, often citing large chunks of his writings. The first volume of the *Study*, published in 1934, has two citations of Bergson's *Creative Evolution*; in the third volume (published in the same year), there are a number of citations and references to Bergson's *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, published two years previously in 1934.⁵⁴ As Bergson had been dismissed by British philosophers (Russell's attack on Bergsonism was very influential), the basis for Toynbee's approach to historiography tended to remain misunderstood by historians.

At the very outset of the *Study*, Toynbee polemically claims that the study of history has been put at risk in late Western civilization due to the increasing dominance of the institution of the 'Industrial System', the method of operation of which is "to maintain, up to the maximum of its productive capacity, an incessant output of such articles as can be manufactured from raw materials by the mechanically coordinated work of a number of human beings."⁵⁵ While Toynbee acknowledges that "it is possible that no violence is done to the nature of scientific thought through its being conducted on industrial lines", the same method cannot be applied so straightforwardly to the domains of life and history.⁵⁶ In the post-Enlightenment period, he says, "we are sufficiently on our guard against the so-called 'Pathetic Fallacy' of imaginatively endowing inanimate objects with life." Our epoch has the contrary problem: "we now fall victims to the inverse 'Apathetic Fallacy' of treating living creatures as though they were inanimate."⁵⁷ Instead of explicitly justifying why we should be more afraid of the Apathetic than the Pathetic Fallacy (as we will see, Toynbee can easily be accused of an almost frenzied flaunting of the latter), Toynbee immediately goes on to make his first reference to Bergson, implicitly recalling Lindsay's vision of the historian's consciousness. The objection to the Apathetic Fallacy, it turns out, is rooted in Bergson's critique of the limitations of intelligence (in *Creative Evolution*):

It is conceivable that, as Bergson suggests, the mechanism of our intellect is specifically constructed so as to isolate our apprehension of Physical Nature in a form which enables us to take action upon it. Yet even if this is the original structure of the human mind, and if other methods of thinking are in some sense unnatural, there yet exists a human faculty, as Bergson goes on to point out, which insists, not upon looking at Inanimate Nature, but upon feeling Life and feeling it as a whole. This deep impulse to envisage and comprehend the whole of Life is certainly immanent in the mind of the historian.⁵⁸

In *The Decline of the West* (1918), Oswald Spengler had argued that civilizations could by analogy be endowed with a 'life', insofar as their birth, growth, maturation and senescence mirrors the developmental sequence of an organism. Toynbee's argument for the 'life' of civilizations emerges out of his criticism of the concepts of nations or states. He thinks that there is a sort of 'life' or 'élan vital' at work at the historical level, and that civilizations should be treated as bodies moving in space and time. Toynbee's implicit gambit, in the opening pages of the *Study*, is that the 'pathetic' attribution of life to non-organic, abstract forms is already universally practiced, the use of concept 'nation' being the clearest example. His dismantling of the concept of nation, therefore, is a critical preliminary to his unveiling of the *real* non-organic form of life that animates human collectivities: not nations, but civilizations. Episodes in British history are not self-sufficient, but should be seen as chapters in the history of a wider entity, the civilization, "the field of which Great Britain is a part."⁵⁹ Toynbee dismantles the idea of Britain as a 'nation' or State, a misconception or "fiction" that is broken down in pursuit of a more intelligible and real "unit of historical study". 'Britain' is more intelligibly understood as a dominant outpost of Western Civilization, composed of 'layers' or 'strata' of influence by the earlier Hellenic civilization in its (Roman) imperial phase. He argues that in the political as well as the historical sphere, the concept of the State is a misformed idea, and the real 'subjects' of history are civilizations, not States.⁶⁰ Civilizations from Toynbee's perspective are four-dimensional bodies, each following singular, convulsive paths to ultimate disintegration. They extend in space (Britain is part of a wider spatial form, Western Christendom), and in time (Western Christendom first emerged from the internal proletariat of the Hellenic civilization in its imperial phase). 'History' is first the internal history of a civilizational 'body', and the 'Encounters between Civilizations in Space' and 'Encounters between Civilizations in Time' which generate further ordeals will always be interpreted from within the internal history of the civilizations involved. Toynbee uses geological terminology of 'strata' and 'cross-sections'⁶¹ to describe the form in which civilizations appear to the contemporary student of history.⁶²

What is it that governs the 'life' (in the developmental sense) of a civilization? The following citation is from the full version of the passage Deleuze cites from *A Study of History* in *Difference and Repetition*.⁶³

The forces in action are not national but proceed from wider causes, which operate upon each of the parts and are not intelligible in their partial operation unless a comprehensive view is taken of their operation throughout the society. Different parts are differently affected by an identical general cause, because they each react, and each contribute, in a different way to the forces which that same cause sets in motion. In this analysis, Lord Acton has employed the scientific metaphors of his generation, while we, who are learning to be on our guard against the 'Apathetic Fallacy', might find it more natural to describe the experience of History in human terms. A society, we should say, is confronted in the course of its life by a succession of problems which each member has to solve for himself, as best he may. The presentation of each problem is a challenge to undergo an ordeal, and through this

series of ordeals the members of the society progressively differentiate themselves from one another. On each occasion some fail, while others succeed in finding a solution; and, again, some of the solutions found are imperfect or commonplace or inimical to success in solving subsequent problems, while others are exact or original or fertile in possibilities of further progress. As ordeal follows ordeal, some members of the society at some moment fail altogether to adjust themselves, and fall by the way; others struggle on, strained or warped or stunted; others grow in wisdom or stature, and making their own way discover new avenues for a general advance of the society to which they belong. Throughout, it is impossible to grasp the significance of any particular member's behaviour under a particular ordeal without taking some account of the similar or dissimilar behaviour of his fellows and without viewing the successive ordeals as a series of events in the life of the whole society.⁶⁴

Environmental and social problems and ordeals are what singularise a population and make it become a 'civilization'. These problems, and their accompanying ordeals, form the 'themes' that are repeated at different levels throughout the life of a civilization. In a passage that recalls Bergson's conception of instincts as 'musical themes' appearing in different variations in different species, Toynbee says that his aim is to "see the chapters of the story as events in the life of the society and not of some particular member; and to follow the fortunes of the members, not separately but concurrently, as variations on a single theme or as contributions to an orchestra which are significant as a harmony but have no meaning as so many separate series of notes."⁶⁵ Leitmotifs or 'themes' run through civilizations: the inaugural challenge and its vital response is (as Deleuze might say) the 'dicethrow' that generates a series of ordeals, which unfold and continue to constrain the individual lives of members of each generation; events are repeated, sometimes in displaced form, always echoing the 'theme', in each of the later phases of the civilization. "We hardly begin to learn anything about the nature of Life until we succeed in distinguishing the points of relative discontinuity in the ever-rolling stream" of history⁶⁶ – the "singularities" (as Deleuze will say) that identify particular turning-points, bottlenecks, thresholds, blindspots, crises and *infamies*⁶⁷ that punctuate the ordeals generated by physical and social problems.

Toynbee's notion that civilizations are structured by 'life-cycles' is fundamentally different to Spengler's conception of the decline and fall of civilizations, which is avowedly deterministic. Toynbee's biographer, William McNeill, writes that "Toynbee, like Spengler and many other classically educated Europeans, had been haunted during World War I by the thought that European nations were re-enacting these same disastrous passages of ancient history. The eeriness of such an unwilling iteration was, in fact, what provoked Toynbee to construct his pattern of civilizational rise and fall."⁶⁸ But while Toynbee too discovers a cyclical pattern of creation and disintegration in the history of each civilization, he rejects Spengler's view of the historical process as an eternal cycle of growth and inevitable decline. First, his Bergsonian approach to time entails the *accumulation* of the past in the present, and hence the production of novelty and difference in the ongoing, "ever-swollen whole".⁶⁹ Second, his challenge-and-response schema is also indebted specifically to Bergson's vitalism, focussing in on the *effort* and *creativity* of a population when faced by a challenge. Third, he argues that repetition is incompatible with neither creativity nor contingency.⁷⁰ Here we will focus on the first two aspects, which are the cornerstones of Toynbee's Bergsonism.

The basic metaphor that governs Toynbee's whole theory of this collective 'effort' (first set out in Volume 2 of the *Study*) is eminently Bergsonian, in that it stresses the role of intensive difference, accumulation of the past, and duration in historical change. Human evolution is conceived as taking place on a steep mountainside

distributed with ledges. The inhabitation of a ledge on the mountain is equivalent to the finding of a niche in the environment. The inhabitation of this ledge (or plateau, in Deleuze's terms) can continue indefinitely, but sometimes special difficulties arise, which make it impossible to inhabit the narrow ledge any longer. In such cases, the climber is roused "to make a hitherto unprecedented effort". There are only two choices: either to go back down to a previous ledge which demands less effort, or to increase the effort and to attempt to make a leap to the next ledge. Either way, a choice must be made, for on the mountainside of history, "it is impossible to halt and rest before the next ledge, wherever that may lie, is reached."⁷¹ 'Civilizations' are the results of such leaps, but they also themselves generate further plateaus, and demand further, unprecedented leaps. Toynbee's approach to history is built around the privileging of these leaps or crossings of thresholds. The change demanded by an environmental challenge might be so all-encompassing that societies have utterly renew their basis; but Toynbee also suggests that the development of a civilization is marked by a series of internal thresholds as well, the response to which is also determining for the future of the society. Toynbee's approach is receptive to the possible role of intensive difference, accumulation of the past, and duration in historical change. After citing at length an account of the *élan vital* from Bergson's *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, Toynbee explicates it as follows:

[The] thread of continuity which the repetitive character of the process [of challenge and response] is not spatial but summative. This process has ... to be conceived in terms of control and organization, as a progressive and cumulative increase both in outward mastery over the environment and in inward self-determination or self-articulation on the part of the individual or society that is in the process of growth.⁷²

This "summative" approach to historical movement shows that Toynbee is assuming Bergson's theory of duration is functioning in the background. Deleuze will say that the "summative" aspect of duration should more properly be called "intensive", as continual accumulation involves a continual change of the organisation of the whole. Each time a threshold is passed, a transformation comes about in which all the elements are redistributed and new structures come to emerge.

Toynbee's normative conception of growth and differentiation is structurally important. It is the *failure* of creative minorities to sustain growth and differentiation that leads to the conflict between the Universal State and its proletariats. There is a self-justifying notion of "real growth", beyond all merely technological measures of growth or differentiation. "Improvements in technique, agricultural or industrial, show little or no correlation with real growth."⁷³ The problem of how to attain 'real growth' must instead be rooted in the intensive basis of creativity itself, and in the capacity for crossing thresholds and sustaining global rearrangement. "Real progress is found to consist in a process defined as 'etherialization', an overcoming of material obstacles which releases the energies of the society to make responses to challenges which henceforth are internal rather than external, spiritual rather than material."⁷⁴ Following the emergence of Universal States, further, more interiorised types of etherialization come into being, the Earth now becoming the site for the dramatisation of the existential and temporal paradoxes of existence. Toynbee catalogues the different possible responses to the failures of etherialization: archaism (nostalgia) or futurism (dreaming up utopias). Structurally, it is only a "palingenesis", or "rebirth", which can avert disintegration.⁷⁵ Palingenesis involves a "transference of the field of action from the macrocosm to the microcosm which manifests itself in the spiritual phenomenon of 'etherialisation'" (ibid).

Unless a palingenesis is on the horizon, the disintegration can only become more profound, and the majority, for whom civilization has always been a thin veneer, revert to their primal instincts.⁷⁶

One might have thought that Toynbee's plurality of twenty-one civilizations would appeal to Deleuze, who also advocates pluralism in the interpretation of history.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the obvious difference between Toynbee and Deleuze is that the latter does not use 'civilization' as a basic category for understanding history. Deleuze may have been reluctant to take up Toynbee's theory of the civilizations – no matter how pluralistic that theory is – because for him Toynbee's decisive contribution is his conception of a bifurcation between migration and nomadism. He remarks that "I was struck by a sentence of Toynbee's: 'The nomads are the ones who don't move on, they become nomads because they refuse to disappear.'⁷⁸ Deleuze takes up Toynbee's thought that there is a fundamental 'divergence' between nomad and migrant, but when he goes on to draw a radical distinction between 'becoming' and 'history', he can be read as bringing out its implicit radicality, both as an essential concept in the evaluation of historical currents, and as a political concept. Toynbee argues that "nomadism is essentially a society without a history."⁷⁹ But Deleuze in effect reminds Toynbee that he himself has argued that nomadic existence is *different in kind* from civilized existence, and that although it is non-historical, un-'civilized', it is for all that still fundamentally human and not animal. Nomads are human – perhaps even profoundly human – but they are outside of history and, strictly speaking, do not belong to civilization. With Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze proceeds to develop Toynbee's conception of the nomad as 'outside history' to the point that it turns against the very notion of History. What if it is the case, suggest Deleuze and Guattari, that "the so-called ahistorical societies set themselves outside history, not because they are content to reproduce immutable models or are governed by a fixed structure, but because they are societies of becoming (war societies, secret societies, etc)."⁸⁰ The distinction between societies of 'becoming' and societies of 'history' now becomes more important than any distinctions to be found *within* history. "History is always written from the sedentary point of view and in the name of a unitary State apparatus, at least a possible one, even when the topic is nomads. What is lacking is a Nomadology, the opposite of a history."⁸¹ We must now turn to Toynbee's own theory of nomadism, which, if not the only influence upon Deleuze and Guattari's vision in *A Thousand Plateaus* of a systematically privileged kind of 'nomadological' thought and way of life, nevertheless provides the key conceptual material for it.⁸²

TOYNBEE ON NOMADISM

Toynbee's founding bifurcation between migration and nomadism is already present *in nuce* in V. Gordon Childe's exposition of the choice faced by primal *Homo sapiens*.⁸³ Migration and nomadism are the two 'active' responses to the environmental challenge of desiccation. Toynbee's suggestion is that there is a sense in which the change involved in migration is not the most radical kind of change. The migrants "change their habitat in order not to change their habits."⁸⁴ Becoming a nomad, as Toynbee presents it, already contains a quasi-metaphysical meaning, since it involves a special type of change or transformation. The spatiotemporal location remains the same, but the mode of inhabiting it completely alters. In a sense, such a change can be called *absolute*, in that it involves a complete ethological transformation, and a conquest of a new mode of spatiotemporal existence. Taking up Toynbee's distinction between migrant and nomadic groups in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari argue that one of the distinguishing features of nomadism is its special relation to space.

The nomad distributes himself in a smooth space; he occupies, inhabits, holds that space; that is his territorial principle. It is therefore false to define the nomad by movement. Toynbee is profoundly right to suggest that the nomad is on the contrary *he who does not move*. Whereas the migrant leaves behind a milieu that has become amorphous or hostile, the nomad is the one who does not depart, does not want to depart, who clings to the smooth space left by the receding forest, where the steppe or the desert advances, and who invents nomadism as a response to this challenge.⁸⁵

How can this strange leap on the spot of the nomad take place? In order to emancipate themselves from dependence on the physical environment, the nomad creates two decisive new means of production: the domestication of animals and the invention of agriculture. The nomads responded to the same challenge – the ecological challenge of desiccation – as the Sumerians or Egyptians, but responded in a more audacious fashion⁸⁶ – by attaching themselves to their *animals*, rather than their land. The nomads of the Steppes decided to “stake their existence on their latest acquired art, that of the stock-breeder. They flung themselves upon the Steppe, not to escape beyond its bounds but to make themselves at home on it.” Toynbee argues that there is a certain superiority to the nomadic path, as “the domestication of animals is obviously a higher art than the domestication of plants, inasmuch as it is a triumph of human wit and will over a less tractable material.”⁸⁷ Intensively speaking, the domestication of animals involves a higher leap than does the domestication of plants. Bergson’s account of the difference between static and mobile forms of life may have been in Toynbee’s mind when constructing his theory of nomadism, which would allow us to be able to say that what distinguishes the nomad is their attempt to harness a higher, *mobile* form of life, rather than a static, vegetal one. The nomad attaches itself to the moving form, rather than to immobile, vegetal matter (which is in any case in the process of disappearing). The nomad is the one who, when venturing out into the unknown, puts his trust in his animals. “The intimate association of Man and Horse on the Steppe ... actually produced far-reaching and permanent modifications in the physical type of the human participants in the partnership.”⁸⁸ Whereas on the steppes of glacial Europe, the horse was still hunted, in Central Asia the nomads had entered into another kind of relationship with their animals.⁸⁹ Toynbee talks of the mounted nomads as “Mongol centaurs”, who have “become of one flesh with his domesticated mount.”⁹⁰ This is “one of the highest flights of human achievement”, because “the essence of the achievement is the mastery, by a human being, of some non-human animal’s prowess.”⁹¹ Toynbee also explicitly appeals to Bergsonian thought for an account of the basic difference between the animal and human: whereas the animal’s anatomy and instinct continues the work of organisation, “the man who seeks to emulate the animal’s feat has been endowed by Nature with no physical equipment except the human eye and human hand.” The trick of the nomad is to “put off their human nature as far as possible and assume an animal nature instead. If, being human, they cannot really live and act by instinct, they can still train reason to simulate instinct by imprisoning their thought within the confines of a ‘single-track mind.’”⁹² This passage implies that, if one wanted to seek some justification for Toynbee’s centaur, one would have to look for it in Bergson’s theory of instinct, which posits exactly such a “disinterested” reactivation of instinctual consciousness. Toynbee is occupying a Bergsonian evolutionary perspective here, contending that the price paid by the Mongol centaur and the Eskimo merman is the loss of the fluidity of the human hand and eye; consequently, the adaptability of the human mind is sacrificed. The cultivation of the ‘single-track’ mind of the animal involves a different power of consciousness. Toynbee goes on to compare the Mongol centaur with the “Eskimo merman” who is similarly “of one skin with his man-made inanimate water craft”⁹³, and the Spartan who “acquires an artificial fang in the shape of his spear-head and an artificial carapace in the shape

of his shield.”⁹⁴ All, when faced with the loss of their object of subsistence, take an animal as their sole object, and enter onto a unique evolutionary adventure.⁹⁵ In Deleuze’s terms, they ‘become animal’, to some extent – as indeed does their chosen animal become human in turn. Georges Dumézil argues that the mythical race of ‘centaurs’ was a “collective representation” referring to nomad war-bands on the borders of Greek civilized society; here too Toynbee suggests that the fabled races of centaurs and mermen could refer to the tribes that took the nomadic path at the end of the last ice age.

Toynbee concludes that the nomads and Eskimos “betrayed their own humanity” by setting out on “the path of retrogression from humanity towards animalism.” Like the wife of Lot, he says (in one of the many Biblical analogies to be found in the pages of *A Study of History*), they look back at what they leave, and now “like pillars of salt, they stand bewitched and arrested forever at the very outset of their life’s journey.”⁹⁶ For Toynbee, the Nomads, along with the Polynesians, the Eskimos, and traditional African societies, are “arrested civilizations”: societies which are arrested at the point prior to their emergence as ‘civilizations’.

All these arrested civilizations have been immobilized in consequence of having achieved a *tour de force*. They are responses to challenges of an order of severity on the very borderline between the degree that affords stimulus to further development and the degree that entails defeat. In the imagery of our fable of the climbers’ pitch, they are like climbers who have been brought up short and can go neither backward nor forward. Their posture is one of perilous immobility at high tension.⁹⁷

In a sense, the only fault of the nomads was to *overreach* themselves, aiming too high too soon, insofar as their attempt at binding themselves to animal nature proceeds without the support of a sustainable relationship to the rest of nature. As soon as the technological advances of the sedentary civilizations begin to be felt, the nomads were, in intensive terms, on the retreat. From the viewpoint of Bergsonian energetics, a sedentary, town-based civilization is able to exploit the energy contained in the human-animal relationship more effectively, putting nomadic powers of domestications to more profitable use. The nomads do not gain the opportunity to harness greater forces in nature. Despite the original advantage of their mobile foundation, they have no solid support from inorganic and vegetal nature. Ironically, the nomads end up becoming “prisoners of an annual climatic and vegetational cycle; in acquiring the initiative on the Steppe they have forfeited the initiative in the world at large.”⁹⁸ Toynbee’s diagnosis of an arrest in nomadic society at the intensive level, does not stop him recognising and commenting at length on the historical role of nomadic peoples at various decisive junctures in world history. The Huns, Arabs, Vikings, Turks and Mongols all had significant geopolitical effects when they launched their invasions on disintegrating societies. But Toynbee contends that nomads partake in historical change primarily as participants in ‘external proletariats’ who have identified a weakness in their dominant civilization. Once the history of the civilizations is underway, nomads never appear *as* nomads, but always as part of external proletariats. If nomads occasionally impinge from outside upon historical events, it remains the case that in its own terms, “nomadism is essentially a society without a history”.⁹⁹ Arrested civilizations in general are “‘peoples that have no history’. Immobility is their unalterable posture.”¹⁰⁰

The nomads might surrender their roots in the earth and take flight with their animals, creating a highly particular social order, but for Toynbee they remain parasites, and a *threat* to the properly progressive, intensive movement of the history of the civilizations. For Deleuze and Guattari, on the other hand, it is the nomadic

BECOMING AGAINST HISTORY

mode of human existence that continues to hold the key to ‘intensive becoming’. Intensity belongs to the nomad, and if historical ‘events’ add accumulative pressure to the internal histories of the civilizations, that is because the agents who enter the processes of ‘becoming’ that precipitate such events are themselves forced to become ‘nomadic’. The intensive perspective of ‘becoming’, which concerns the subjective, ‘dramatic’ view on events, must *de jure* be assigned to ‘agencies’ [*agencements*] that are essentially nomadic. History is the story the society of the State tells about itself, but the ‘creative minorities’ (a term used by both Toynbee and Deleuze) which actually determine the events and singular points that compose history are societies of ‘becoming’, whose continuous task is to set forth the possible ‘lines of flight’ leading out of any given environmental or social problem.¹⁰¹

DELEUZE AND GUATTARI: BECOMING AGAINST HISTORY

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, there appear to be two fundamentally different kinds of society – societies of History and societies of Becoming – which comprise different existential, spatio-temporal, cognitive and affective coordinates, and can be taken as irreducibly different perspectives (despite, of course, coexisting on the same planet). Deleuze and Guattari’s focus on the fundamental bifurcation between nomadism and migration is perhaps what leads them to affirm that there is after all a special sense in which there is such a thing as History (with a capital ‘H’, despite the plurality of civilizations). The category of ‘civilization’ (the fundamental unit of historical study for Toynbee) drops out in Deleuze and Guattari, and instead, it is as if we are presented with a never-ending conflict or oscillation between History and Becoming.

Despite uncovering the importance of nomadism at the origins of history, as well as the decisive role played by “barbarian war-bands” in historical change, from Deleuze and Guattari’s perspective Toynbee ultimately fails to understand how nomadism on the one hand, and the history of the sedentary civilizations as a whole on the other, develop in fundamental, inverted relation to each other. So long as a civilization remains in the ascending phase of differentiation and etherialization, ‘pure nomadism’ indeed must remain in the position of an ‘outside’, embodied in an external proletariat, as Toynbee says. However, the situation changes in a world where industrial capitalism has taken over the reins of the processes of civilization. Toynbee’s prognosis (in the 1950s) was that the economic and political dominance of Western civilization would eventually generate a Universal State, an Empire, within Western civilization. Toynbee and Deleuze were both writing before the last political and economic obstacle to a Universal State of Western Civilization – the USSR – had collapsed. But in theory, they both agreed that with the final emergence of this Universal Western State, a new bifurcation would emerge between its internal and external proletariats. Where Toynbee emphasises the role of the former, Deleuze and Guattari, implicitly following Toynbee’s own logic to its conclusion, discern the emergence of a new status for the external proletariat of a global State.

Toynbee focuses his attention on the possibility of the future spiritual development of the internal proletariat of the Universal State of Western Civilization. The Western internal proletariat would be forced to build a new Universal Church in order to resist the dominant minority that rules through the State. He suggests that the four non-Western civilizations might hold the key to the required “palingenesis” of the World State. Perhaps it is possible to bring about the subordination of the economic and political means of production of the Western

State to more ethereal ends. For if etherealization tends to transform natural and social problems into more “spiritualised” forms, then by right it should also tend towards the supersession of the material ends of Western civilization. The future Universal Church of the West, Toynbee predicted, would achieve a new synthesis of the five remaining ‘higher religions’.

But Deleuze and Guattari, on the other hand, focus on the new situation of nomadic external proletariats. According to Toynbee’s own argument, in the face of the increasing economic and political dominance of the West, nomadism *also* offers us a peculiarly stable vantage point on the convulsive movements of historical civilization. As we enter the age of the Universal State of Western Christendom, say Deleuze and Guattari, the only real possibility of keeping the ‘crowned anarchy’ of intensive becoming alive is through the turning of minorities away from the political and economic goals of the State, in pursuit of ‘lines of flight’ that are more properly their own, and whose destination, the object of their ‘becoming’, is necessarily ‘futural’ and unknown (and must therefore be subject to a process of ontological creation). If ‘etherealization’ is akin to what Deleuze calls “the interiorization of difference”¹⁰², then it cannot proceed through the organization of a universal State or Religion, but through a radically autonomous ‘individuation’ (whether this takes place in peoples, groups, couples or solitary individuals). We do not need a new civilization, a new State, or a new religion, we need a nomadology. “Becoming-minoritarian is a political affair and necessitates a labour of power (*puissance*), an active micropolitics. This is the opposite of macropolitics, and even of History, in which it is a question of knowing how to win or obtain a majority.”¹⁰³ In the face of the universal State of Western capitalism, according to the logic eked out here by Deleuze and Guattari, the only prospect for genuine ‘deterritorialization’ is through some sort of re-affirmation of the ontological anarchism that characterises nomadic existence in its most primal forms.

But do Deleuze and Guattari fully exploit the potentialities of the Toynbeean ‘study’ of history for political strategy? Do they not end up with an opposition between ‘minoritarian’ nomadic becoming and ‘majoritarian’ civilizational history that is too stark and abstract? Toynbee had claimed that his project started out from a criticism of the idea of a unitary, single civilization common to human beings. He claimed that the peculiar Western tendency to project a unitary, global human History into the past is the consequence of its own blindspot – the undue primacy it gives to economic and political development (industrialization), at the expense of cultural forces.¹⁰⁴ By returning to a global notion of ‘History’, aren’t Deleuze and Guattari complicit in this fundamentally Western error of perception?

If Deleuze and Guattari had made use of Toynbee’s preliminary distinction between three planes of social life – the economic, the political, and the religio-cultural – in which each level is granted its own autonomy, its own record of development, and its special phases of dominance (as in Althusserian Marxism), they could have qualified this apparently ‘molar’ opposition between Becoming and History. For, on the theory of Toynbee’s alluded to by Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*, the religio-cultural planes of the four remaining non-Western civilizations *also retain their resistance against the political and economic dominance of the West*. A third route, a neglected alternative (with its own inherent multiplicities) therefore opens up between the polarities of Toynbeean universal religion and Deleuzoguattarian nomadism: the possibility of ‘nomadising’ *within* the remaining four non-Western cultures and religions. On the Toynbeean model, moreover, the renewed opposition between

BECOMING AGAINST HISTORY

becoming and history can itself be better understood as the outcome of a particular phase of universal, global history, marked by the emergence of a global State. Perhaps an Althusserian-Toynbeeian ‘monstrous coupling’ *is* possible after all – and the accumulation of multiple contradictions on different planes¹⁰⁵ *can* be understood for themselves in a ‘calculus of problems’ of the kind dreamt of by Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*.¹⁰⁶ Accumulations, repetitions and lines of flight could be assessed and evaluated on each of the three planes of the five civilizations. And if, finally, the Universal State of Western Civilization comes to give birth to a new, specific kind of *nomadisation of migration* – where the new economic and political migrants of the Universal State of Western Civilization begin to form concentrations in the nomadic ‘smooth spaces’ of imperial capitalism – then the spatio-temporal conditions for a revolution of Becoming against History would on this model be already in principle discernible. The ethereal powers retained on the cultural planes of the four non-Western civilizations could be nomadised, and used as war-machines on the plane of Western culture. Whichever route might hold the best chance of continuing the etheralisation of the *élan vital*, the Bergsonian, Toynbeeian and Deleuzian approaches to vitalist historiography all ask to be taken as possible strategic instruments for imagining the future of the Earth.

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APPENDIX: TOYNBEE'S 21 CIVILIZATIONS

Derived from E.D. Myers' table of Toynbee's schema of history, published in the 1946 abridgment of *A Study of History*.

CIVILISATION	RELATIONS	TIME AND PLACE OF ORIGIN
1. EGYPTAIC	WHOLLY UNRELATED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NILE RIVER VALLEY • BEFORE 4000 BC
2. ANDEAN	WHOLLY UNRELATED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ANDEAN COAST AND PLATEAU • <i>circa</i> BEGINNING OF CHRISTIAN ERA
3. SINIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRELATED TO EARLIER • APPARENTED TO THE FAR EASTERN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOWER VALLEY OF THE YELLOW RIVER • <i>circa</i> 1500 BC
4. MINOAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRELATED TO EARLIER • APPARENTED (LOOSELY) TO THE HELLENIC AND SYRIAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEGEAN ISLANDS • BEFORE 3000 BC
5. SUMERIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRELATED TO EARLIER • POSSIBLY APPARENTED TO THE BABYLONIC AND HITTITE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOWER TIGRIS-EUPHRATES VALLEY • BEFORE <i>circa</i> 3500 BC
6. MAYAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRELATED TO EARLIER • POSSIBLY APPARENTED TO THE YUCATEC AND MEXICAN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CENTRAL AMERICAN TROPICAL FOREST • BEFORE <i>circa</i> 500 BC
7. YUCATEC 8. MEXIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOTH AFFILIATED TO THE MAYAN • FUSED TO PRODUCE THE CENTRAL AMERICAN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WATERLESS, TREELESS LIMESTONE SHELF OF YUCATAN PENINSULA • AFTER 629 AD
9. HITTITE	POSSIBLY LOOSELY AFFILIATED TO THE SUMERIC BUT WITH A NON-SUMERIC RELIGION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAPPADOCIA JUST BEYOND THE SUMERIC FRONTIERS • BEFORE 1500 BC

10. SYRIAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOOSELY AFFILIATED TO THE MINOAN • APPARENTED TO THE IRANIC AND ARABIC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SYRIA • BEFORE 1100 BC
11. BABYLONIC	CLOSELY AFFILIATED TO THE SUMERIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRAQ • BEFORE 1500 BC
12. IRANIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOTH AFFILIATED TO THE SYRIAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ANATOLIA, IRAN, OXUS, JAXARTES (IRANIC)
13. ARABIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FUSED TO PRODUCE THE ISLAMIC SOCIETY AFTER 1516 AD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARABIA, IRAQ, SYRIA, NORTH AFRICA (ARABIC) • BOTH BEFORE 1300 AD
14. FAR EASTERN (MAIN BODY)	AFFILIATED TO THE SINIC WITH AN OFF-SHOOT IN JAPAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHINA • BEFORE 500 AD
15. FAR EASTERN (JAPANESE OFFSHOOT)	OFF-SHOOT OF THE MAIN BODY OF THE FAR EASTERN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JAPANESE ARCHIPELAGO • AFTER 500 AD
16. INDIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRELATED TO EARLIER • APPARENTED TO THE HINDU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INDUS AND GANGES RIVER VALLEYS • <i>circa</i> 1500 BC
17. HINDU	AFFILIATED TO THE INDIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NORTH INDIA • BEFORE 800 AD
18. HELLENIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOOSELY AFFILIATED TO THE MINOAN • APPARENTED TO THE WESTERN AND THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COASTS AND ISLANDS OF THE AEGEAN • BEFORE 1100 BC
19. ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN (MAIN BODY)	AFFILIATED TO THE HELLENIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ANATOLIA • BEFORE 700 AD • FINAL RUPTURE WITH THE WEST IN THE 11TH CENTURY
20. ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN (RUSSIAN OFF-SHOOT)	OFF-SHOOT OF THE MAIN BODY OF THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RUSSIA • 10TH CENTURY AD
21. WESTERN	AFFILIATED TO THE HELLENIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WESTERN EUROPE • BEFORE 700 AD

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NOTES

1. Gilles Deleuze & Antonio Negri, 'Control and Becoming', in *Negotiations*. Trans. M. Joughin. New York, Columbia University Press, 1995, 170.
2. Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History. Abridgement of Volumes I-VI* by D.C. Somervell. London, Oxford University Press, 1946, 169.
3. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*. Trans. P. Patton. London, Athlone, 1994, 186.
4. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 186.
5. Deleuze, 'How do we Recognise Structuralism?' [1967] Trans. M. McMahon & C. Stivale in Charles J. Stivale, *The Two-Fold Thought of Deleuze and Guattari*. New York, Semiotext(e), 1998.
6. Cf. Louis Althusser, 'The Young Hegel' [1961], in *For Marx*. Trans. Ben Brewster. London, New Left Books, 1969, 66-67, 71-73; Louis Althusser & Étienne Balibar, *Reading Capital* [1968]. Trans. Ben Brewster. London, New Left Books, 1970, 20-24, 52, 115-116.
7. Althusser, 'Contradiction and Overdetermination', in *For Marx*, 97.
8. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 186
9. (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 327.
10. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 3-4; cited in Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 327.
11. Gilles Deleuze, & Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* [1980]. Tr. B. Massumi. London, Athlone, 1988, 176.
12. Thirteen 'plateaus' are presented, each given a historical date, starting chronologically at 10,000 BC and ending on November 28, 1947, the day that Antonin Artaud recorded one of the final segments of his infamous (and banned) radio broadcast, 'To Have Done with the Judgment of God'. Deleuze and Guattari date their chapters in conformity with the calendar of Western Christianity, with 'Year Zero' corresponding to the birth of Christ. *A Thousand Plateaus* appears to be a work of philosophical history, written from within Western Christian civilization, around thirteen historical 'singular' points, or points of transformation.
13. In 1972, the year of the publication of *Anti-Oedipus*, Guattari reports that already "Gilles is working like a madman on his nomads". Félix Guattari, *The Anti-Oedipus Papers*. Ed. S. Nadaud, trans. K. Gotman. New York, Semiotext(e), 2006, 397.
14. The reception of which may have contributed to the swift eclipse of the latter as a public figure and respectable 'intellectual' in the mid-fifties.
15. Cf. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 381, 482.
16. Toynbee, *Study*, 1: 290.
17. Toynbee argues that neither "race" nor "environment" can be taken as the sufficient reason for the origin of a civilization. The study of the meteorological and geological challenges posed to primitive human societies in the last Ice Age is the key to the problem of how the "Integration of Custom" was ruptured by a "Differentiation of Civilization" (Toynbee, *Study*, 1: 270). "Man achieves civilization, not as a result of a superior biological endowment or geographical environment, but as a response to a challenge in a situation of special difficulty which rouses him to make a hitherto unprecedented effort" (*Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 570). Basing himself on the work of ancient historians such as J.L. Myres and V. Gordon Childe, and climatologist Ellsworth Huntington, Toynbee believed that "it was no accident ... that Civilisation, as we know it, began in that ebb and flow of climate, flora and fauna which characterises the four-fold 'Ice Age'" (John Linton Myres, *Who were the Greeks?* Berkeley, University of California, 1930, 277, cited in Toynbee, *Study*, 1: 292). At some point before the last Ice Age, "a band of naked, houseless, fireless savages started from their warm home in the torrid zone and pushed steadily northward from the beginning of spring to the end of summer" (Ellsworth Huntington, *Civilization and Climate*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1924, 405-6; cited in Toynbee, *Study*, 1: 292). As the Würm Ice Age encroached, this group stood its ground, rather than retreating southwards. It is, says Myres, "a paradox of advancement that if Necessity be the mother of Invention, the other parent is Obstinacy, the determination that you will go on living under adverse conditions rather than cut your losses and go where life is easier" (Myres, *Who were the Greeks?*, 277-8). According to both Toynbee and Deleuze, this refusal to budge, this "obstinacy", will become, following an originary bifurcation between sedentary or 'civilised' societies and nomadic societies, the sole property of the latter type of society. But the shift from Paleolithic primitive humanity to post-Würm, 'civilized' humanity was the result of a similar obstinacy. Huntington suggests that of those who wandered during the last Ice Age, "all perished except one small band" (Huntingdon, *Civilization and Climate*, 405-6), which made use of "the loftiest of human faculties, the power of conscious invention". But, Myres adds, it was out of obstinacy that shelters were dug out, huts and beds made, clothing made from animal skins. "Those others won through, and became men, who stood their ground when there were no more trees to sit in, who 'made do' with meat when fruit did not ripen, who made fires and clothes rather than follow the sunshine; who fortified their lairs and trained their young and vindicated the reasonableness of a world that seemed so reasonless" (Myres, *Who were the Greeks?*, 293). Toynbee's suggestion is that the cold became a stimulus for an unprecedented leap or creative transformation on the part of this group of humans. They split off into competing "barbarian war-bands" which coexisted on the Eurasian steppes, during the last centuries of Würm. However, at the end of the last Ice Age (around 18,000 years ago) the European glaciers had begun to melt, leading to the shift northward of the Atlantic cyclone belt, and

the consequent contraction of high pressure above Europe and the diversion of rainstorms to there from the Mediterranean. This resulted in a desiccation or dehydration in the area that had hitherto hosted the bulk of *Homo sapiens*. “Faced with the gradual desiccation consequent upon the reshift northward of the Atlantic cyclone belt as the European glaciers contracted, three alternatives were open to the hunting populations affected. They might move northward or southward with their prey, following the climactic belt to which they were accustomed; they might remain at home eking out a miserable existence on such game as could withstand the drought; or they might – still without leaving their homeland – emancipate themselves from dependence on the whims of their environment by domesticating animals and taking to agriculture” (V. Gordon Childe, *The Most Ancient Near East* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1928, 46; cited in Toynbee *ibid*). In *The Most Ancient Near East*, Childe’s starting point is a reconstruction by Huntingdon, and another climatologist, C.E.P. Brooks, of weather conditions in the immediate aftermath of the last Ice Age. In an article for the Royal Meteorological Society in 1921, Brooks had presented maps showing the assumed paths of rainstorms during various prehistoric phases. In a subsequent book, *The Evolution of Climate* (1922), Brooks presented a further account, showing that climactic conditions in the Late Glacial period were radically different to present conditions. At the end of the Würm Ice Age, the ice sheets covered Northern Europe as far as the Harz mountains, and the Alps and Pyrenees too were capped with glaciers. During the course of the Ice Age, the Arctic high pressure had deflected the Atlantic rainstorms southwards into the Mediterranean basin and into the northern Sahara region, across Lebanon and Mesopotamia to India. In what are now the deserts of the Middle East there had formerly stretched out vast expanses of lush vegetation, watered by the Atlantic cyclone belt. “The parched Sahara enjoyed a regular rainfall and farther east the showers were not only more bountiful than today but were distributed over the whole year, instead of being restricted to the winter” (Childe, *The Most Ancient Near East*, 24; cited in Toynbee, *Study*, 1: 303-4; also in Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 68-9). Childe mentions also mentions geological evidence for this climactic shift, including evidence of streams running through the now desertified Sahara. This pattern of change is the clue for Childe to reconstruct the genesis of human civilization. “The cyclone belt offers a climatic environment most favourable to human energy” (Childe, *The Most Ancient Near East*, 26), says Childe, referring to Huntingdon’s *The Human Habitat* (1928). For a more up-to-date account of the end of the ice age, see Steven Mithen, *After the Ice: A Global Human History, 20,000-5000 BC*. London, Phoenix, 2003.

18. Toynbee, *Study*, 1: 270.

19. Toynbee, *Study*, 1: 70.

20. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 169.

21. Toynbee, *A Study of History. Abridgement of Volumes VII-X* by D.C. Somervell. London: Oxford University Press, 1957, 364.

22. Toynbee, *Study*, 8: 734-35.

23. The Minoan civilization arose among the sea peoples of the Aegean Islands. It was distinct, though affiliated, to the Hellenic civilization that emerged in the second millennium on the coasts and islands of the Aegean. The difference was that the challenge faced by the Minoans was the sea itself, rather than the effects of desiccation (as was the case with the Egyptian and Sumerian civilizations). It was beset by a ‘time of troubles’ in 1750 BC, which was ended by the creation of the Minoan state, which Toynbee calls the ‘Thalassocracy of Minos’. But the Thalassocracy did not last. Minoan civilization disintegrated, and served as a chrysalis for two new civilizations, the Hellenic and Syriac.

24. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 36.

25. Cf. Althusser, ‘On the Materialist Dialectic’ [1963], in *For Marx*.

26. Toynbee argued that Wahhībism is the instance within Islamic civilization of a fundamental bifurcation between ‘Zealotism’ and ‘Herodianism’, which he claims is a universal aftermath of a “successful assault” on a people or society (cf. Toynbee, *Study*, 8:580-623; on Wahhībism, cf. *ibid*, 8: 603-613, and the essay ‘Islam, the West, and the Future’, in Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial*. London, Oxford, 1948.

27. Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 183. “Real progress is found to consist in a process defined as ‘etherialization’, an overcoming of material obstacles which releases the energies of the society to make responses to challenges which henceforth are internal rather than external, spiritual rather than material” (Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, VII-X*, 364). In explaining etherialization, Toynbee refers to the history of telecommunications. With “the invention of wireless telegraphy and telephony – a further technical advance which makes it possible to dispense with the artificial medium of transmission and to radiate the human voice through the natural medium of the ‘aether’ to the distance of hundreds of miles in as short a time as it takes human organs of speech to transmit the same voice a few feet through the natural medium of the air” (*Study*, 3: 174-5). Etherialization involves improvement in technology and simplification in apparatus (*Study*, 3: 179). “In the sphere of human control over Physical Nature it may take the form of a transfer of the field of operation from a grosser to a subtler mesh in the texture of the material universe”; for instance, the move from coal fuel to oil; or the move from water to steam to electric power (*Study*, 3: 183). But this tendency to “simplification” is also present across the social field. “In the domain of Philosophy, a corresponding tendency towards simplification has been taken as an index of progress in intuition by Monsieur Henri Bergson”. Toynbee then cites a passage from Bergson’s *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*. The movement of the hand can be decomposed, but is also continuous. “In the place where ... analysis, remaining outside its object, discovers positive elements in greater and ever greater numbers and in more and ever more astonishing coordinates with one another (in virtue of the very fact that their numbers increase), an intuition which succeeding in planting itself in the interior would be aware no longer of means

combined but rather of obstacles surmounted. An invisible hand passing brusquely through a heap of iron filings would be simply brushing aside resistance; but the sheer simplicity of this act would appear, when viewed from the side of resistance, in the guise of a juxtaposition of the filings in a positively determined order"; *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* [1932]. Trans. R. Ashley Audra & C. Brereton. New York, Doubleday, 1935, 118-119. 'Toynbee himself notes that etherealization is wrongly described as 'simplification'. "Simplification is a negative word ... In fact, the result is not a loss but a gain; and this gain is the outcome of a process of simplification because this process liberates forces that have been imprisoned in a more material medium and thereby sets them free to work in a more ethereal medium with a greater potency ... In other words, the process which we are examining involves not merely a simplification of apparatus but a consequent transfer of energy, or shift of emphasis, from some lower sphere of being or sphere of action to a higher sphere" (*Study*, 3: 183). Toynbee explicitly opts for the term 'etherealization' in preference to 'simplification' for these reasons.

28. The two volume abridgment still amounts to over a thousand pages. Deleuze only ever refers to the abridgment.

29. Tangye Lean, 'A Study of Toynbee', *Horizon*, January 1947, reprinted in M.F. Ashley-Montagu. Ed. *Toynbee and History: Critical Essays and Reviews*. Boston, Mass., Porter Sargent/Extending Horizons, 1956.

30. *Time*, March 1947.

31. "As I have gone on, Religion has come, once again, to take the central place in my picture of the universe.... Unlike the Judaic religions, the Indian religions are not exclusive. They allow for the possibility that there may be alternative approaches to the mystery of Existence; and this seems to me more likely to be the truth than the rival claims of Judaism, Christianity and Islam to be unique and final revelations. This Indian standpoint is the one from which the last four volumes of this book have been written". Toynbee, 'What I am Trying to Do', *International Affairs*, vol. 31, 1955, reprinted in *Toynbee and History*, ed. Ashley-Montagu, 7.

32. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 190.

33. Writing under the heading 'What this Book is For', Toynbee remarks that, following the "technician's feat of 'annihilating distance'", the five civilizations have been forced to come to consciousness of their cohabitation of the Earth with each other. Their tense confrontation, "their atomic missiles ... poised head to head, while their minds and hearts and still poles apart" means that "a synoptic view of History is one of the World's present practical needs"; Toynbee, 'What the Book is For: How the Book took Shape', pamphlet, reprinted in *Toynbee and History*, ed. M.F. Ashley-Montagu, 11.

34. Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'Testing the Toynbee System', *The Sunday Times*, 17 October 1954, reprinted in *Toynbee and History*, ed. M.F. Ashley-Montagu, 122.

35. A.J.P. Taylor, 'Much Learning ...', *New Statesman and Nation*, 16 October 1954, reprinted in *Toynbee and History*, ed. M.F. Ashley-Montagu, 116.

36. *Ibid*, 117.

37. Walter Kaufmann, 'Toynbee and Super-History', *Partisan Review*, vol. 22, no. 4, Fall 1955, reprinted in *Toynbee and History*, ed. M.F. Ashley-Montagu, 305.

38. *Ibid*, 314

39. Toynbee, *Study*, 8: 272-313.

40. Eban was deeply offended by Toynbee's "blasphemous conclusion that the immeasurable torment of Jewry under Nazism is 'less tragic' than the circumstances in which 750,000 Arabs are homeless, though alive, upon the soil and the territory of the independent Arab states"; Abba Eban, 'The Toynbee Heresy', address given at the Israel Institute-Yeshiva University, New York, on January 18, 1955, reprinted in *Toynbee and History*, ed. M.F. Ashley-Montagu, 326. To revisit this debate, one would have to inquire into precisely what Toynbee meant when he described the history of the relationship between the Jews and Western Christendom as a "tragedy with four acts" (Toynbee, *Study*, 8: 285-88). Toynbee's argument rests on a questionable attempt to map the dramatic norms of tragedy onto real historical events. Outlining what he calls 'The Plot of the Jewish Tragedy in a Western Christendom', he identifies the 'fourth act' of this tragedy in a section called 'The Fate of the European Jews and the Palestinian Arabs, AD 1933-1948'. He claims that, in the aftermath of the Nazi Holocaust, "the captivation of the Jews by a Modern Western Gentile Nationalism" (*ibid*, 295) added an extra layer of "horror" (*ibid*, 288) to the historical tragedy, in that it resulted in "inflicting on an innocent weaker neighbour the very sufferings that the original victim had experienced at his stronger neighbour's hands" (*ibid*, 291, cf. 299, 301). Toynbee's identification of the sufferings of the Jews at the hands of the Nazis with the sufferings of the Palestinians at the hands of the Israelis was the spark that ignited the anger of his critics. Moreover, his caricatural descriptions of the contemporary Israeli as "a Janus figure, part American farmer technician, part Nazi sicarius" (*ibid*, 311; cited in Eban, 'The Toynbee Heresy', 326) are callous and idiotic, and further darken any value his denunciations of the "impiety" (299, 301) of Israel might otherwise possibly have had. Future discussion of the possible influence of Toynbee's ideas about the problem of Israel-Palestine upon Deleuze will have to work hard to distinguish their anti-Zionist position from an anti-Semitic one, given Toynbee's lapses into callous pontification and anti-Semitic caricature in the chapter 'The Modern West and the Jews'.

41. Kaufmann, 'Toynbee and Super-History', 309.

42. It is impossible to disagree with him; when Toynbee is bad, he is very bad. Reviewers did not find it hard to find and cite purple, even crimson, passages from Toynbee's later volumes, adding a wry comment if necessary. The final tenth volume,

'On the Inspirations of the Historians', with its eye-fluttering 'beatific visions' of the course of history, is a contender for the direst slab of prose in the English language.

43. M. Crubellier, 'Introduction générale à l'œuvre d'Arnold Toynbee', in Raymond Aron, ed. *L'Histoire et ses interprétations: Entretiens autour de Arnold Toynbee* (Centre Culturel International de Cerisy-La-Salle, 10-19 Juillet 1958). Paris, Mouton, 1961, 13.

44. Charles L. Harness wrote an extraordinary story entitled 'Flight into Yesterday', first published in 1949, which was based on Toynbee's view of history. It was initially called 'Toynbee 22', and was an apocalyptic but baroque imagining of the last days of Western civilization (Toynbee's twenty-first civilization). It was republished as a novel in 1955 under the title *The Paradox Men*. Brian Aldiss described it as the exemplar of an SF genre he christened 'Widescreen Baroque'. "Its style is exuberant rather than fine, sometimes dropping into extravagance – which is one definition of baroque. Widescreen Baroque requires at least the whole solar system for its setting, with space – and preferably time-travel as accessories, and a complex plot with mysteries and lost identities and a world to ransom. Perspectives between Possible and Impossible must be foreshortened dramatically; great hopes must mingle with great destruction. Ideally, the characters involved should have short names and short lives" (Brian Aldiss, 'Introduction' to Charles L. Harness, *The Paradox Men*. London, New English Library, 1974, 8). Using the eyes of a Toynbeeian historian, Harness presents the final days of Western Civilization as dominated by a political schism between the anarchistic 'Thieves' and the State. Amongst Harness's later fiction, the remarkable novella *The Rose* (1953; republished 1968) also echoes Toynbee's discussions of the meaning of cultural 'renaissances' in volume 8 of the *Study*. In his *Foundation* series (first composed between 1942-1950), Isaac Asimov constructed a large-scale intergalactic history which has some interesting resonances with Toynbee's ideas. In the first story of the sequence, 'The Psychohistorians', an advanced mathematician discovers a technique he calls 'psycho-history', which allows him to statistically predict that the galactic Empire will collapse into anarchy and barbarism within 500 years. The mathematician and his allies resolve to create a 'Foundation', dedicated to art and science, situated at distant outposts of the Empire, which will cultivate the power to accelerate and traverse the collapse, contracting an anarchy that would otherwise have lasted for 30,000 years into the intense duration of a millennium. Asimov's general conception of 'psycho-history' is more mathematicising and abstract-statistical than Toynbee's, but it is interesting that he turned to Toynbee's ideas while composing the stories for the middle volume of the initial sequence, *Foundation and Empire* (1952), which depicts the ordeals of the inhabitants of the accelerated, intense Dark Age. Cf. the reference to Toynbee's *Study* in Asimov's essay 'Social Science Fiction' (in R. Bretnor ed., *Modern Science Fiction: Its Meaning and its Future*, New York, Coward-McCann, 1953). Ray Bradbury's 1984 short story 'The Toynbee Convector' is a much more minor use of Toynbee's ideas.

45. There was a brief Bergsonian Spring in Britain in the year of 1911, with the publication of two British books: Herbert Wildon Carr's *Henri Bergson: The Philosophy of Change*, and Lindsay's *The Philosophy of Bergson*, which was a version of his lectures on Bergson at Balliol College, Oxford. The latter work is useful today for readers of Deleuze, as Lindsay's Kantian approach to Bergson foreshadows Deleuze's own approach. Lindsay claims Kant and Bergson both start from the polemical claim that "many difficulties and antinomies in philosophy arise ... from a failure to ask the right question" and that they hold that "the chief part of the philosopher's task is his statement of the problem" (A.D. Lindsay, *The Philosophy of Bergson*. London, J.M. Dent & Sons, 1911: 1-3). Lindsay's emphasis on the "difference of degree" between perception and physical force, and the "difference in kind" between perception and memory also points towards Deleuze's interpretation in *Bergsonism* (Ibid, 159-190). In his 1957 study of Bergson, Ian Alexander remarks that despite recent publications (including Deleuze's 1956 essay, 'Bergson and the Concept of Difference, which he cites), "Lindsay's book is essential for the understanding of *Matter and Memory*" (Ian W. Alexander, *Bergson: Philosopher of Reflection*. London: Bowes & Bowes, 1957, 109).

46. Lean, 'A Study of Toynbee', 13.

47. McNeill notes that Lindsay went to Balliol in 1906, a year before Toynbee came. Lindsay was an active socialist, and in the words of Toynbee's biographer William McNeill, was "intent on disrupting the alliance of aristocracy and talent that Jowett had painstakingly created at Balliol, believing that talent alone should prevail" (William McNeill, *Arnold Toynbee: A Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, 25). Lindsay published his *The Philosophy of Bergson* in 1911, while Toynbee was still an undergraduate. Between 1907 and 1916, Toynbee "became Lindsay's close friend and protégé" (McNeill, *Arnold Toynbee*, 25), despite the former's lack of capacity for philosophy. In a letter from Oxford to a friend written in 1912, the young Toynbee remarked that "Far the biggest man here is Lindsay".

48. McNeill, *Arnold Toynbee*, 26.

49. Lindsay, *The Philosophy of Bergson*, 239.

50. Ibid, 240.

51. Ibid, 236; cf. 221.

52. In her biography of her father, Lindsay's daughter Drusilla Scott says that he was one of the two key architects of the plan in the inter-war years to introduce a 'Modern Greats': "Greats had given men some insight into the structure of a civilization as a whole, Lindsay thought. Modern Greats was an attempt to do the same for modern society" (Drusilla Scott, *A.D. Lindsay: A Biography*. Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1971, 50). This aroused great opposition in the pre-war years; Scott says that this was partly because "some said the modern world was not a fit subject for academic study" (ibid). Unfortunately she gives no

references, but the very thought that the subject of university study was the ancient past potentially sheds interesting light on the nature of *Bildung* in Victorian and Edwardian intellectual life, which would be almost the reverse of our own. What emerged from Lindsay's scheme was the famous 'Philosophy, Politics and Economics' (PPE) degree at Oxford, the schooling ground of today's career politicians. Lindsay was later the intellectual architect of Keele University.

53. Lean, 'A Study of Toynbee', 13.

54. See Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 118-119, 125, 181-85, 225-6, 231-37, 243-47, 254-56. McNeill even suggests that Toynbee's basic version of the Bergsonian dualism between 'life' and 'mechanism' in an early essay from 1907-11 remains his elementary intellectual framework until his latest works, when the dualism finally takes centre stage (McNeill, *Arnold Toynbee*, 267). The opening of Toynbee's student essay, 'The Machine: A Problem of Dualism', is worth quoting: "The whole universe – my consciousness, my body, my safety razor – is all a machine, and the paradox of the machine is inherent in the whole of it. It partakes of two orders of being ... Life, which we know because that is what we are, and that other, which we do not know because we are not it, but which is Life's environment and object of activity" (Toynbee Papers, Juvenilia, Bodleian Library, cited in McNeill, *Arnold Toynbee*, 28). Toynbee goes on that every success achieved by Life induces its opposite, 'mechanization'. McNeill paraphrases: "In becoming conscious, 'Life' devitalizes itself; language becomes mechanical through grammar; morals harden into law and custom as a result of mechanical application to infinitely varying circumstance" (ibid). The young Toynbee here grasps Bergsonian vitalism 'from within', divining the basic Bergsonian spatiotemporal dynamism.

55. Toynbee, *Study*, 1:2. The "industrialization of historical thought" has proceeded to the point where "individuals or communities whose energies are concentrated on turning raw materials into light, heat, locomotion, or manufactured articles are inclined to feel that the discovery and exploitation of natural resources is a valuable activity in itself", and are "even tempted to feel it reprehensible in other people when they neglect to develop all the natural resources at their disposal" (*Study*, 1:5).

56. *Study*, 1:3.

57. *Study*, 1:8.

58. *Study*, 1:8. In the footnotes, Toynbee refers to chapter III of *Creative Evolution* (also important for Deleuze; cf. the 1960 'Cours inédit de Gilles Deleuze sur la chapitre III de L'Évolution créatrice', in F. Worms, ed., *Annales bergsoniennes II: Bergson, Deleuze, la phénoménologie*. Paris, PUF, 2004).

59. *Study*, 1: 22.

60. Like the early 1950s Deleuze (in *Empiricism and Subjectivity* and *Instincts and Institutions*), Toynbee treats the State as if it is really a mere species of the genus 'institution': "In the hierarchy of human institutions the place of States in general must be a relatively low one"; cited in Ernest Barker, 'Dr. Toynbee's *Study of History: A Review*' [1955], *International Affairs*, vol. 31, reprinted in *Toynbee and History*, ed. M.F. Ashley-Montagu, 99. For both Toynbee and Deleuze, institutions do not at all belong to the State; indeed, they are capable in principle of effectively turning against the State. Deleuze and Guattari, of course, played key roles in the revolt of psychiatric institutions against the State in the 60s and 70s.

61. *Study*, 1: 30, 32.

62. The picture is further complicated by the existence of the three "planes" mentioned earlier: the economic, political and cultural. Each stratum varies according to which plane on which it appears. For instance, on "the cultural plane, the present geographical extension of the society to which Great Britain belongs appears to be much smaller" than on its other planes, the economic and the political (*Study*, 1: 31). Each stratum will also appear differently to the student of history, depending on the civilization studied and the civilization of the student. The last phase of the Hellenic civilization, for instance, will be of variable significance depending on whether the student is studying Hellenic or Western civilization. Thus: "The student of Hellenic history, who is following up the social stratum that here still occupies the surface towards a point where this particular stratum disintegrates and disappears, is not primarily interested in the social stratum beneath it, which only appears on the surface beyond the point at which the object of his own study comes to an end. Conversely, the student of Western history, who is tracing this second stratum backwards from those sections of it which lie exposed on the surface to the section which is buried underground, regards the overlying stratum of the Hellenic Society, which can teach him little about the subsequent history of the Western Society, as so much useless rock, which has to be blasted away if he is to succeed in laying bare the subterranean section of the Western stratum which he is attempting to trace back to its starting-point" (*Study*, 1: 42).

63. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 327. Deleuze refers to the abridged version, which is slightly different; see the citation in the first section above from Toynbee, *Study, Abridgment, I-VI*, 3-4.

64. *Study*, 1: 22-23.

65. *Study*, 1: 23.

66. *Study*, 1: 43.

67. On 'infamies' in history, see *Study*, 10: 131. On the fifth anniversary of the 2003 invasion of Iraq by the US and Britain, Seumas Milne powerfully described it as 'a day which will live in infamy'. If March 2003 does not count as an 'event' (in the obtuse sense of some contemporary philosophy), then perhaps it deserves to be called a properly historical 'infamy'. Cf. Milne, 'There must be a reckoning for this day of infamy', *Guardian*, Thursday March 20th, 2008.

68. McNeill, *Arnold Toynbee*, 9.

69. Although Toynbee was a Bergsonian, there nevertheless remain metaphysical and cosmological implications of the Bergsonian view of the past that are only explicitly drawn in Deleuze's own later thought. Deleuze argues that the Bergsonian theory of the past ultimately points to the *coexistence* of the whole past with the present. The present day 'transcendental empiricist' plunges into a gigantic, implicate 'cosmic memory' (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 212), composed of 'ideal events', repeated at various levels of historical development. With this final piece of the Bergsonian approach to the reality of the past in place, Deleuze is free to leave the linear, successive model of time and history behind for a model of temporal and historical development (or 'becoming') as *actualization*. The content of the present moment is not just a result of a chain of previous moments, but is itself ontologically different in kind to the traces of past events. The present, as the site of actualization, becomes the stage for ordeals of *repetition*. The one who actualizes is put in a particular existential position: I have the power to will this into being now – will I be able to re-will this act again in the future? These ordeals would present themselves as tasks that appeal to *each* individual (they are distributively, rather than collectively, universal). Participants in all kinds of institutions periodically have to ask themselves whether they can carry on doing what they are doing, or whether the direction of their institutions must be changed in the light of recurring pressures or traumatic betrayals and infamies.

70. In an essay, 'Does History Repeat Itself?' from his 1948 collection *Civilization on Trial*, Toynbee explicitly thematises the problem of 'repetition' in history. He does not get very far, managing only to make a distinction between mechanical 'repetition' and a repetition in which freedom and contingency are still possible. But it is worth briefly recounting his argument, as it shows him on the trail of a concept of repetition similar to the one later developed by Deleuze. Western Christendom, he says at the outset, has only just awakened to the realisation that civilizations have come and gone before it, and that it too may well be erased from actuality (like the Hellenic civilization, like the Minoan, or Hittite) in the future. History does not inform us of certainties, "but of probabilities, or bare possibilities, in our own future" (Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial*, 30). To say that "history repeats itself" can mean nothing more than that "history turns out to have repeated itself, on occasions, in the past". It is not that human actions are completely free, but rather we are partly free, and partly bound by "inexorably recurrent" cyclical patterns, in the environment (day/night, the seasons) as well as in the instinctual body. History proper begins with human creativity – which involves the application of the mind – (whether conscious or intuitive) that difference begins to creep into the regular repetitions of nature. "Is not history itself, in the last analysis, a vision of the whole universe on the move in the four-dimensional framework of space-time? And, in this all-embracing panorama, are there not many events that the most staunch believer in the freedom of the human will would admit, as readily as the most thorough-going determinist, to be inexorably recurrent and precisely predictable? ... [But] this tendency towards repetition, which thus asserts itself in human affairs, is an instance of one of the well-known devices of the creative faculty. The works of creation are apt to occur in bunches: a bunch of representatives of a species, a bunch of species of a genus. And the value of such repetitions is, after all, not difficult to discern. Creation could hardly make any headway at all if each new form of creature were not represented by numerous eggs distributed among numerous baskets. How else could a creator, human or divine, provide himself with sufficient materials for bold and fruitful experiment and with effective means of retrieving inevitable failures? If human history repeats itself, it does so in accordance with the general rhythm of the universe; but the significance of this pattern of repetition lies in the scope that it gives for the work of creation to go forward. In this light, the repetitive element in history reveals itself as an instrument for freedom of creative action, and not as an indication that God and man are the slaves of fate" (ibid, 31, 37-8). Toynbee's view of 'creation' here is frankly theological. If there is repetition in nature, it is because *Deus sive Natura* is profligate, a fount of creative difference. Toynbee thus participates in the move to theologise creativity that still galvanises theologians today. Deleuze's theory of repetition, on the other hand, as well as his own interpretation of Bergsonism, are fundamentally post-Kantian and concern the durational and intensive character of the temporal synthesis performed by finite thinking beings.

71. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 50.

72. Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 125, 126. For references to Bergson, see note 54 above.

73. Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 364.

74. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, VII-X*, 364.

75. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 530

76. Or in other words, to the relatively stable behaviour patterns moulded by evolution in the Paleolithic. Toynbee would probably have thought of the enthusiasm for evolutionary psychology at the present time as the mere expression of this cultural tendency.

77. Cf. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Trans. H. Tomlinson. London, Athlone, 1983, 4-5.

78. Deleuze, 'On Philosophy', in *Negotiations*, 138.

79. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 169.

80. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 292.

81. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 23.

82. Deleuze was open to multiple influences in his ideas on nomadism. Deleuze's earlier references to the notion of nomadism, in *Difference and Repetition*, for instance, stress the possible etymological relation between 'nomad' and 'nomos', postulating a special "nomadic" kind of "hierarchy and distribution" in space, "without property, enclosure or measure" (*Difference and*

Repetition, 36), opposed to the determinations of “sedentary” space. This is given an immediately ontological significance by Deleuze, so that it denotes a “distribution in which things are deployed across the entire extensity for a univocal and undistributed Being” (ibid). A footnote pursues the etymological meaning of ‘nomad’ with reference to Emmanuel Laroche’s *Histoire de la racine ‘nem’ in grec ancien* (Paris, Klincksieck, 1949). There are a multitude of sources on nomadism cited in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Cf. poet and writer Kenneth White’s recent *Dialogue avec Deleuze* (Paris: Isolato, 2007), which recounts White’s development of his ideas about ‘intellectual nomadism’ with Deleuze as thesis supervisor during the late 1970s. Although White did not publish his book *L’esprit nomade* until 1987, Deleuze and Guattari themselves refer to White’s ideas about “nomad thought” in American literature in (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 379). White’s fascination with the notion of nomadism, which he says pre-dated his meeting with Deleuze, also had its origin in readings of Toynbee, Gibbon, Childe and Spengler (*Dialogue with Deleuze*, 10), but he says it also had a “completely different genealogy” (9), in the literature of Thoreau, Emerson, Whitman and Melville. White cites a passage from Emerson’s journals (‘Nomad and Pivot’) which later found its way into his tract on ‘History’: “Intellectual nomadism is the faculty of objectiveness, or of eyes which everywhere feed themselves. Who hath such eyes, everywhere falls into easy relations with his fellow-men ... His house is a wagon; he roams through all latitudes as easily as a Calmuc” (Ralph Waldo Emerson, ‘History’, in *Essays, Lectures and Orations*, London. William S. Orr and Co., 1848, 12; White *op. cit.*, 9-10). On other possible sources for Deleuze and Guattari’s ideas about nomadism, see also Christopher L. Miller’s chapter, ‘Beyond Identity: The Postidentitarian Predicament in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s *A Thousand Plateaus*’ in his *Nationalists and Nomads*, Chicago, University of Chicago, 1999; on the controversy generated by this latter piece, see Paul Patton, ‘Mobile Concepts, Metaphor, and the Problem of Referentiality in Deleuze and Guattari’, in *Thamyris/Intersecting: Place, Sex and Race*, issue on ‘Metaphoricity and the Politics of Mobility’, 2006.

83. Childe, *The Most Ancient Near East*, 46; cited in Toynbee, *Study*, 1: 303-4; also in Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 68-9; cf. footnote 17 above.

84. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 168.

85. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 381.

86. Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 167.

87. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 168.

88. Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 83.

89. When the Arabs took to the steppes after having been farmers in the Fertile Crescent for centuries, breeding animals for transport, they staked their future survival on their relationship to one particular animal, the camel. Among other things, camels have the capacity to store water; and can relatively quickly traverse long distances across the desert (Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet* [1991]. London, Phoenix, 2001, 57; citing Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 7-22). In the desert, the nomadic Arab’s sensible perception would be reduced to a minimum, and their whole cognitive and affective life would be directed towards their camel, the sole complex object within their spatiotemporal manifold. In support of his claim, Toynbee cites a work by the ancient historian John Linton Myres, his long essay ‘Primitive Man in Geological Time’, published in 1923 as the first chapter of the *Cambridge Ancient History*. Toynbee singles out Myres’s striking hypotheses about the origin of domestication. These ideas originated in Myres’ main work *The Dawn of History* (1911), but their presentation in the later essay is most vivid, verging on the bizarre. Indeed, both of Myres’ contributions were removed from the subsequent (1975) edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History*. Myres speculates that the grazing animals on the plateaus of Central Asia become an “animal host” for the Mongol. The facial features of the Mongols, he says, allow one to infer habituation to food which minimised the pull of the jaw-muscles on the side-walls of the skull, such as milk and its products. The obliquely set eyes and spread nostrils allow the inference that “the parasitic proto-Mongol sat tight upon his host between meals, and shared its wanderings” (Myres, ‘Primitive Man in Geological Time’, *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 1, 1st edition. Eds. J. Bury et al. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1923, 22). This hypothesis, which implies that ancient Mongol children spent most of their time attached to their camels or horses, either requires a Lamarckian account of the inheritance of acquired features, or a longer period of evolutionary change than the millennia immediately following the end of the Ice Age. Although this latter would conflict with Toynbee’s own account, he shows no sign of noticing these problems when he cites Myres’ essay in the *Study*.

90. Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 84.

91. Ibid, 3: 86

92. Ibid, 3: 87

93. Ibid, 3: 84.

94. Ibid, 3: 87.

95. “If they cannot grow the flippers and tails and waterproof skins of seals to make them at home in the sea, or the legs of horses to make them at home on the Steppe, or the fangs of wolves to give them dominion over human cattle, they can at least extend the limited capacities of their human limbs by devising instruments – animate or inanimate – with which they teach their own arms and legs to enter into ... an exquisitely harmonious co-operation. The Eskimo acquires an artificial seal’s body in the shape of his kayak and an artificial pair of flippers in the shape of his mount. The Nomad acquires an artificial horse’s or camel’s body in the shape of his mount” (Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 87).

96. Toynbee, *Study*, 88.

BECOMING AGAINST HISTORY

97. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 164-5; cf. Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 2.

98. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 169.

99. *Ibid.*

100. Toynbee, *Study*, 3: 3.

101. "What history grasps in an event is the way it's actualized in particular circumstances; the event's becoming is beyond the scope of history. History is not experimental, it is just the set of more or less negative preconditions that make it possible to experiment with something beyond history. Without history the experiment [or experience] would remain indeterminate, lacking any initial conditions, but experimentation is not historical" (Deleuze and Negri, 'Control and Becoming', 170).

102. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 261.

103. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 292.

104. Toynbee, *Study, Abridgement, I-VI*, 36.

105. Cf. Althusser, 'Contradiction and Overdetermination', 97.

106. Cf. again Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 186.