

## MAIMON AND DELEUZE: THE VIEWPOINT OF INTERNAL GENESIS AND THE CONCEPT OF DIFFERENTIALS

Daniela Voss

### INTRODUCTION

The philosopher Salomon Maimon (1753-1800), a contemporary of Immanuel Kant and one of his greatest critics, is undoubtedly one of those philosophers whose place in history has almost been forgotten. This is all the more surprising, since Maimon was a very active figure on the philosophical scene during his day. He wrote several books, commentaries and journal articles developing his own philosophy (which Maimon himself described as a ‘coalition system’ of Leibnizian, Humean and Kantian views<sup>1</sup>), and kept up correspondence with prominent scholars such as Ben David, Reinhold and not least Kant himself. Although Kant never responded to Maimon’s numerous letters (apart from a short note in which he affirms having read the manuscript of Maimon’s *Essay on Transcendental Philosophy*<sup>2</sup>), he acknowledges the “excellence” of Maimon’s *Essay* in a letter to his friend Marcus Herz, and admits “not only that none of my opponents has understood me and the principle question as well as Mr Maimon, but also that only a few people possess such an acute mind for such profound investigations [as he does].”<sup>3</sup> Fichte, who can be regarded as Maimon’s main philosophical heir, confessed in a letter to Reinhold his limitless respect for Maimon’s talents and warned that future generations would ridicule them for not having appreciated Maimon’s accomplishments.<sup>4</sup> We are left to speculate why it is that Maimon’s philosophical work was and still *is* marginalized in philosophical discourse. One reason might be the prevalent anti-Semitism in his time. Given his social background as an Eastern European Jew born into an impoverished family and his unusual career as a self-taught philosopher, Maimon had to face many prejudices.<sup>5</sup> A further reason for being unduly neglected might be the intricacy and obscurity of his philosophical thought, which at least in part resulted from his unusual style of writing. As Gideon Freudenthal points out, Maimon was educated in the Talmudic tradition and was used to writing commentaries, a genre which essentially differs from the systematic form of philosophical discourse common in the western world.<sup>6</sup> Samuel Atlas suggests that the grandeur and splendor of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel and their metaphysical systems simply overshadowed Maimon’s philosophical investigations.<sup>7</sup> For these and maybe other reasons, Maimon has not received

appropriate attention until this day. Significantly, the first English translation of Maimon's major work *Essay on Transcendental Philosophy* appeared only in March 2010.<sup>8</sup>

One of the few philosophers who did recognize Maimon's achievements is the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze. Why is it that Deleuze takes interest in Salomon Maimon, in particular, the *Essay on Transcendental Philosophy*? Without doubt, Maimon had a crucial impact on Deleuze, although Deleuze never discusses him at great length. (In fact, Deleuze devotes only a few pages to him in his masterpiece *Difference and Repetition*.) Nevertheless, Maimon's name is explicitly mentioned in many of Deleuze's books, essays and seminars,<sup>9</sup> and Maimonian thoughts can be traced throughout Deleuze's work. Deleuze deems Maimon a "great, great philosopher"<sup>10</sup>, who managed "to pass from a transcendental philosophy to a genetic one".<sup>11</sup> He praises "Maimon's genius" for having realized "how inadequate the point of view of conditioning is for a transcendental philosophy."<sup>12</sup> Maimon rejected the Kantian viewpoint of *external conditioning* between concepts and intuitions, and offered a model of *internal genesis* based on his concept of 'differentials', which he defined as 'ideas of understanding'. Although Deleuze by no means simply adopts the philosophical solution that committed Maimon to a form of rational dogmatism he does assume the Maimonian notion of genetic and differential ideas. In Deleuze's own philosophical project, differential ideas account for the production of the real (sensible qualities between real objects, and space and time as extensive quantities), and for the genesis of the act of thinking within thought. In this sense, Maimonian ideas are fundamental for Deleuze's 'transcendental empiricism', and, if we may say so, his 'noology'. Yet there hardly exists any scholarship on the Maimon-Deleuze nexus. In the last two years, two book chapters by Graham Jones and Daniel Smith have appeared, and Levi R. Bryant and Christian Kerslake touch the subject in their monographs on Deleuze and Kant.<sup>13</sup>

This article will focus on (1) Maimon's criticism of Kant (a critique of the viewpoint of external conditioning and the demand for an internal genesis), and (2) the concept of reciprocally determined 'differentials of consciousness', which Maimon invented on the basis of the mathematical model of infinitesimals such as  $dx$  and  $dy$ . The last section (3) will indicate the way in which Deleuze develops the Maimonian approach into a theory of a differential unconscious swarming with problematic, differential ideas.<sup>14</sup>

## 1. MAIMON'S DEMAND FOR A GENETIC METHOD

Maimon's reformulation of Kantian transcendental philosophy does not aim at dismantling transcendental philosophy. He rather uses Leibnizian elements in order to amend critical philosophy by eliminating its weaknesses. Maimon seeks to overcome the Kantian dualities between understanding and sensibility, concept and intuition, form and matter. Naturally, Kant himself could not approve of this project, which undermines his basic tenet of the heterogeneity of the two sources of human knowledge, i.e. receptive sensibility and active understanding, a tenet by which he basically intended to ward off dogmatic idealism from his transcendental idealism. In *The Critique of Pure Reason* Kant attacked Leibniz for treating sensibility and understanding as a single cognitive faculty that is distinguished only in terms of the clarity of the representation.<sup>15</sup> Leibniz, he said, "conceded to sensibility no kind of intuition of its own, but rather sought everything in the understanding, even the empirical representation of objects, and left nothing for the senses but the contemptible occupation of confusing and upsetting the representations of the former" (A 276/B 332). Thus, sensibility, for Leibniz, is just an inferior confused mode of cognition and not a special source of representations (A 271/B 326). Consequently, Leibniz allowed only conceptual differences between things. While for Kant space and time are irreducible forms of sensible intuition, Leibniz defined them as "outer" relations that have their ground in something absolutely internal (A 285/B 341). This means that space and time must be reducible to inner conceptual determinations, contained in the concepts of purely intelligible things. These intelligible things, or things in themselves are entirely thought without any schema of sensibility (A 286/B 342). Only a sort of non-sensible or intellectual intuition, that is, "an entirely different intuition and an entirely different understanding than our own" (A 287/B 344) can have this immediate access to things in themselves. Although Kant does not state it explicitly at this point, he refers to the notion of an *intuitive intellect*, which does not require 'schemata' or 'sensible images' of space and time in order to represent objects. Instead, an intuitive intellect entertains a

## MAIMON AND DELEUZE

---

direct relationship with objects, in the sense that the very act of intuiting produces them at the same time (B 139; B 145).

After having read the *Essay on Transcendental Philosophy*, Kant responded to Maimon's criticism with the accusation that Maimon assumed precisely such an *intuitive intellect* as "the originator [*Urheber*] not only of sensible forms but also of their matter, i.e. of objects".<sup>16</sup> For Kant, the idea of an intuitive intellect is absurd, "since we are acquainted with no sort of intuition other than our own sensible one and no other sort of concepts than the categories" (A 287/B 343). Kant insists that our human understanding is *discursive* and not intuitive. It relies on something given in the senses, that is, a spatio-temporal manifold of intuition to which it can relate its categories. If we abstracted from sensibility, that is, the manner through which objects are given to us, then our concepts of understanding would have no relation at all to any type of object. "[W]ithout the *data* of sensibility they would be merely subjective forms of the unity of the understanding, but without any object" (A 287/B 343). For Kant, understanding and sensibility are two entirely different sources of representation, "which could judge about things with objective validity *only in conjunction*" (A 271/B 327). Therefore, a special act of synthesis is required through which a manifold of intuition is united in accordance with the a priori representation of an object in general. In Kant, this transcendental synthesis of apperception is the supreme principle of all use of our understanding. For Maimon, on the contrary, the conjunction of form and matter, or concept and intuition in an a priori synthesis remains incomprehensible, given that they stem from completely heterogeneous faculties. His skeptical challenge can be summarized in his doubts about Kant's solution to the question '*quid juris?*': By what right do *a priori* concepts apply to something given in intuition?

Kant addresses this problem in the *Transcendental Deduction*, as well as in his chapter on the *Schematism* of the pure concepts of the understanding. He tries to prove not only the objective validity of the categories, that is, their being necessary conditions for the possibility of objects in general, but also their objective reality.<sup>17</sup> That is to say, Kant not only makes the *hypothetical claim*: "if anything is to be an object of experience for us, then it must conform to the a priori concepts of understanding", but he also seems to suggest the factual reality of synthetic judgments a priori with regard to mathematics and pure physics. In Maimon's terms: Kantian transcendental philosophy not only claims to *think* logical objects or an "object in general" in accordance with the a priori concepts of the understanding, but also to *recognize* these concepts in empirical objects through 'schemata' or spatio-temporal marks of the object (Maimon, 435).

Maimon's rejoinder is very complex. He pursues several lines of attack. In a first approach he doubts that the Kantian categories can be applied to empirical intuition, that is, to something given to the senses. Derived from mere logical principles, categories can hold only for *thought objects* or 'objects in general'. Thus, transcendental philosophy as conceived by Kant is nothing more than an instance of *formal thought*, which deals with mere logical and empty forms. Kant provides only the epistemological ground (*Erkenntnisgrund*) or nominal definition of a possible object of experience, but he does not give a real ground (*Realgrund*) or sufficient reason for its existence in real experience. That is to say, Kant has to prove at least the *possibility* of the objective reality of the categories.<sup>18</sup>

It should be noted that Maimon does not simply deny the *fact* of synthetic a priori judgments, for instance, in natural science. Such a skeptical objection would not have a great impact on Kant's transcendental philosophy, since factual claims about the objective reality of the categories have only an explicative, not a demonstrative value. Maimon's objection goes much further: he questions the transcendental *possibility* of applying synthetic judgments a priori to intuition. That is to say, he calls into question that the categories are *capable* of determining intuition.<sup>19</sup> Given the objective validity of the categories as necessary conditions for *possible* experience, Kant needs to show that they are also necessary conditions of *real* experience. He has to prove that the manifold of sensible intuition *can* be united according to the transcendental conditions of its unity, that is to say, that there is a harmonious accord between the empirical synthesis of the manifold and the general form of objectivity. For, it could very well be the case that the understanding never had the opportunity for making use of its a priori concepts. As Kant himself concedes:

“[A]pppearances could after all be so constituted that the understanding would not find them in accord with the conditions of its unity, and everything would then lie in such confusion that, e.g., in the succession of appearances nothing would offer itself that would furnish a rule of synthesis and thus correspond to the concept of cause and effect, so that this concept would therefore be entirely empty, nugatory, and without significance” (A 90/B 123).

In his chapter on *Schematism*, Kant introduces the transcendental schema of time in order to mediate between the given in sensibility and the a priori concepts of the understanding. Time as pure intuition is “a third thing” or “mediating representation” (A 138/B 177) that is at once homogeneous with a priori concepts and intuition. The argument that Kant puts forward can be compared with the structure of a traditional Aristotelian syllogism as Henry Allison suggests. A syllogism is composed of a major premise that expresses a universal claim, followed by a minor premise that limits the major premise. Similarly, the synthesis of experience applies universal categories to intuition, limited by transcendental schemata. The transcendental schema is capable of serving as a ‘middle term’ because it shares with categories the feature of being formal and a priori, and at the same time belongs to intuition as its form.<sup>20</sup> Thus, for Kant, the question ‘*quid juris?*’ appears to be solved: A priori concepts do not apply to empirical intuition directly but only through the mediation of pure intuition. But for Maimon, on the contrary, the question ‘*quid juris?*’ arises again: “How can an a priori concept apply to an intuition, even to an a priori intuition?”<sup>21</sup> The crux of the matter is the notion of pure intuition, and in particular, the notion of a *synthesis* of pure intuition, which is required in order for synthetic a priori judgments to relate concepts to pure intuition. Maimon argues that *such a synthesis of pure intuition is either impossible or, in any case, it cannot fulfill the function that it is supposed to have.*<sup>22</sup>

Let us first look at Kant’s notion of pure intuition, i.e. space and time. As Henry Allison suggests, we must actually distinguish three ‘senses’ of pure intuition.<sup>23</sup> Kant himself distinguishes space and time as ‘forms of intuition’ and as ‘formal intuition’ (B 161, n.1). As ‘forms of intuition’ space and time signify the a priori subjective condition or manner of intuiting. Human beings have no other means than to intuit what is given to them spatially or temporally. Space and time thus belong as a priori or innate forms to our subjective disposition of intuiting. But, Kant argues, space and time also have a pure matter of their own which is logically independent and irreducible to either concepts or empirical intuition. As Allison puts it, a formal intuition is a determinate intuitive representation of certain ‘formal’ (universal and necessary) features of objects qua intuited. Kant claims that through a method of abstraction, it is possible to isolate and have access to the formal properties of an object given in intuition. One needs to remove from the representation of an object everything, which the understanding thinks about it through its concepts, as well as all sensory content of empirical intuition. What remains is formal intuition, that is, the extensive magnitude (extension and figure) of the determinate, represented object.<sup>24</sup> Henry Allison further mentions another sense of space and time, namely as “the essential structure, of that which is *intuited*.”<sup>25</sup> For instance, in the *Transcendental Aesthetic* Kant presents space as a single, all-encompassing, infinite and a priori intuition, which can neither be identified with our subjective manner of intuiting, nor with the a priori representation of a determined extensive magnitude (formal intuition). The definition of a single, infinite space is perhaps reminiscent of Newton’s absolute conception of space as a sort of invisible, extended container independent of the actual things in it. But Kant did not seem to conceive of space as a real substance, rather, as Allison argues, as a ‘pre-intuited’ framework or essential structure presupposed by the mind for the representation of any determinate region or configuration of space.<sup>26</sup> Maimon’s argument against Kant relies to some extent on Leibniz’s argument against Newton’s absolute conception of space. So it remains to be seen if Maimon still succeeds in refuting Kant, when we assume Allison’s interpretation of space as an essential framework or structure which is ‘pre-intuited’, i.e., which is not itself actually intuited as an object.<sup>27</sup>

In unison with Leibniz, Maimon denies that space can be represented separately from any content as an absolute, continuous and homogeneous whole.<sup>28</sup> Absolute space, absolute movement, and the like are fictions or imaginary beings (*ens imaginarium*) produced by the faculty of imagination, which imagines something as absolute, although it exists only in relation to something else (Maimon, 19). According to Maimon, we can

## MAIMON AND DELEUZE

---

only imagine such a thing as an empty uniform space, because we unconsciously relate it to differentiated sensible representations, for instance, a manifold of distinct objects. He provides the following example:<sup>29</sup> a river can be imagined as a continuous and homogeneous body of water whose parts are indistinguishable. Yet, Maimon insists that we can only represent it to ourselves as such, *because* we refer the water to distinct objects on the riverbank. If there were no distinct objects, the parts of the river would be indistinguishable. According to Leibniz, this means that these parts or points are *identical*, since there is nothing to distinguish them qualitatively or quantitatively (Leibniz's principle of the identity of indiscernibles). Hence, the supposed extensive magnitude of the continuous and homogeneous field would collapse and shrink to nothing.<sup>30</sup> The representation of space as a continuous and homogeneous whole "lacks the diversity that is required to see things apart from one another".<sup>31</sup> Now, if we take on Allison's interpretation of Kant assuming that the single infinite space can in no way be represented as an object but is a 'pre-intuited' framework or structure, can we still uphold Maimon's argument? Yes, I think so. Maimon's example of the river implies that it is impossible to distinguish and identify 'parts' of an indeterminate, continuous and homogeneous whole, be it space or time.<sup>32</sup> But Kant does assume a pure manifold of space and of time, which can be synthesized to determinate and measurable extensive magnitudes (cf. A 77/B 103). In fact, the assumption of a pure synthesis of space or time, resulting in the *unity* of this manifold (that is, *formal intuition*), is crucial for Kant's purpose in the *Transcendental Deduction*. By means of formal intuition, Kant wants to explain how it is possible that a priori concepts relate to a posteriori intuitions.<sup>33</sup> But how are we supposed to conceive a pure synthesis of homogeneous spatial or temporal parts, which are indeed indistinguishable? The notion of formal intuition (allegedly being the result of a pure synthesis) looks suspiciously inconsistent. As Maimon argues, a synthesis always means 'unity of difference',<sup>34</sup> and as such every synthesis presupposes a manifold or diversity to be unified in a whole. In other words, *every synthesis requires difference*.<sup>35</sup> A synthesis of pure, homogeneous spatial or temporal parts is a fiction just as the representation of an empty uniform space or time. Kant models the pure synthesis of space and time on an empirical synthesis of already spatially or temporally differentiated representations (for instance, the synthesis of a particular triangle from three given lines). He misses the point that a synthesis of a pure spatial or temporal manifold in one (formal) intuition is indeed impossible.

But let us assume for a moment that a synthesis of pure intuition is somehow possible. Kant admits that synthesis in general proceeds obscurely: "Synthesis in general is ... the mere effect of the imagination, of a blind though indispensable function of the soul, without which we would have no cognition at all, but of which we are seldom even conscious" (A 78/B 103). Suppose that the transcendental faculty of imagination is capable (albeit in an obscure manner) to perform a synthesis of pure intuition. For Maimon, this is not a solution to the problem: the unity of a pure spatial or temporal manifold (i.e. formal intuition) would be *given* to the understanding but *not* produced by it (Maimon, 20). Kant says that the unity, which belongs to formal intuition, is the product of a pure synthesis of apprehension, which belongs neither to the senses, nor to the understanding. In fact, the unity of space and time "precedes all concepts" (B 161). Formal intuition is the product of a synthesizing activity of the imagination, which is performed only *in agreement* with the categories, that is, *in agreement* with the synthesis of apperception (i.e. the synthesis of the understanding). Thus, it remains "to bring this synthesis *to concepts* [which] is a function that pertains to the understanding" (A 78/B 103). Hence, it seems as if the pure synthesis of the spatio-temporal manifold is given to the understanding *qua synthesis*, that is, as a product of the imagination, before the understanding has intervened at all. Maimon criticizes that inasmuch as formal intuition is still conceived as *given*, the synthesis of pure concepts and intuition remains incomprehensible. The legitimacy or truth of the application of pure concepts to intuition has not been shown.<sup>36</sup> Thus, Maimon cannot agree with Kant's solution to the problem '*quid juris?*'. Kant tries to fill the gap between thought concepts and given intuition by the intermediary of formal intuition. But formal intuition cannot fulfill the function that Kant ascribes to it.

Does this critique of formal intuition (i.e., a unity of a pure manifold of homogeneous spatial or temporal parts) compel Maimon to reject the possibility of geometry and mathematical natural science? Both sciences depend upon the possibility to determine measurable spaces and times, and both claim a pure *a priori* status (that is to say, they allegedly abstract from sensory content, for instance, the blackness of a line). Although Maimon

calls the possibility of formal intuition into question, this does not mean that he would deny the possibility of geometry or mathematical natural science. On the contrary, Maimon confers on these sciences the status of ‘real thought’, that is, a creative thought, which generates real objects or new determinations of objects. For this reason, Maimon demands a new conception of synthesis, according to which synthesis is essentially *genetic* instead of merely conditioning. In contrast to Kant’s view, “the understanding does not subject something given *a posteriori* to its *a priori* rules; rather it lets it arise (*läßt entstehen*) in accordance with these rules (which I believe is the only way to answer the question *quid juris?* in a wholly satisfactory way)” (Maimon, 82).

Maimon agrees with Kant that the task of synthesis is to bring necessary unity into a manifold. This means, however, that the synthesis—if it is to be an objective, i.e. necessary synthesis and not merely an arbitrary one—needs to have an *objective ground*. With Kant we have seen that he assumes a synthesis (the pure synthesis of apprehension), which is already *given* to the understanding but not *produced* by it. The Kantian synthesis of apprehension acquires its objectivity, that is, its objective significance or relation to an object, when it is brought under concepts (synthesis of apperception). This relation is one of subsumption or *conditioning*: the understanding subjects the productivity of the imagination to its *a priori* rules. Maimon, on the other hand, demands that the understanding itself produces the synthesis according to an objective ground (Maimon, 20-1).<sup>37</sup> In Maimon’s view, the question that Kant fails to solve is: How can the understanding subject something merely given but not thought to its power (to its rules) that is not in its power? (Maimon, 63). “This question would not come up if our understanding could produce objects out of itself according to its prescribed rules or conditions without needing to be given something from elsewhere” (Maimon, 63). That means, both parts of the synthesis must equally be *thought*. Concepts and intuition, form and matter must equally arise through an internal genesis from the understanding.

## 2. DIFFERENTIALS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Maimon’s strategy for solving the problem ‘*quid juris?*’ is to reduce everything given to thought relations. He draws the leading idea from the mathematical model of differential calculus in its very early phase. Between Leibniz, Newton and their followers, there was no consensus of how to interpret the ontological status of differentials (such as  $dx$  and  $dy$ )—are they ‘infinitely small quantities smaller than any given quantity’, ‘evanescent quantities’, ‘qualitative zeros’, ‘differences on the point of vanishing’, or ‘momentary increments or decrements of a flowing quantity’?<sup>38</sup> But nonetheless, differentials provided a convenient means to determine, for instance, the slope of a tangent to a curve at a single point, or the rate of change of a body in motion. Maimon was particularly intrigued by the fact that differentials cannot be given in intuition, yet their ratio  $dy/dx$  equals  $z$ . Leibniz defined the term  $z$  as the gradient of the tangent to a curve at a single point. Thus, while  $z$  has a value, which can be represented in intuition, the differential elements of the ratio  $dy/dx$  cannot be intuited. With respect to intuition differentials are equal to nothing (Maimon, 32). Interpreting this peculiar characteristic of differentials and their reciprocal relation, Maimon states that differentials are the genetic elements, out of which space, as extensive magnitude, is generated. He conceives differentials as “intensive magnitude (the quality of the quantum)”, while “extensive quantities are the integral of intensive magnitude” (Maimon, 394-5; 122). Hence, for Maimon space and time as *extensive* quantities can be dissolved into *intensive* magnitude, that is, a manifold of distinct, reciprocally determined ‘differentials’ which can entirely be thought. On the basis of this mathematical model, Maimon develops the philosophical-metaphysical concept of ‘differentials’, by means of which he will explain not only the generation of extensive quantities, but also of sensible intuitions given to our consciousness. For Maimon, differentials are “the infinitely small of every sensible intuition and of its forms, which provides the matter (*Stoff*) to explain the way that objects arise” (Maimon, 82). The crucial point is that differentials and their reciprocal relations *precede* any cognition of objects and even constitute it (cf. Maimon, 168-9; 190; 192). In this way Maimon seeks to eliminate the Kantian ‘sensation’, that is, anything given to our consciousness through causal affection. The *givenness* of sensation always indicates a referential relation to something ‘outside’ consciousness. Maimon argues that we have no right to posit the origin of sensation outside of us. Instead, he intends to give a purely *immanent* account according to which matter and form, intuition and concept arise from the same source. He therefore assumes (*at least as an idea*) an infinite

## MAIMON AND DELEUZE

---

understanding, which is the source of matter and form alike. The infinite understanding is essentially the same as our finite understanding, which is to say that the finite and the infinite understanding only differ in degree. There is continuity between them, a passage from the finite to the infinite (Maimon, 64-5). According to this immanent account of cognition, sensation itself needs to be regarded as a synthesis, generated from thought relations between differentials, which have to be located in a pre- or subconscious realm (Maimon 205). Thus, differentials are not only the genetic elements of extension, but also the subconscious genetic elements of conscious intuitions, in short, ‘differentials of consciousness’.<sup>39</sup>

By means of his theory of differentials, Maimon provides a solution to the question ‘*quid juris?*’, “because the pure concepts of the understanding or categories are never directly related to intuitions, but only to their elements, and these are ideas of reason concerning the way these intuitions arise” (Maimon, 355). Unfortunately, Maimon fails to exercise care in distinguishing clearly between ‘ideas of reason’ and ‘ideas of understanding’. Sometimes Maimon calls differentials ‘ideas of reason’ (Maimon, 32; 355); but most of the time he refers to differentials as ‘ideas of understanding’. However, he dedicates a whole chapter to the end of opposing ideas of reason and ideas of understanding, from where it becomes clear that differentials—since they provide the *material* completeness of a concept and not its formal totality—have to be interpreted as ideas of understanding (Maimon, chap. 3). The ambiguity in Maimon’s expression might have to do with the fact that the Kantian conception of ‘noumenon’ as an ‘idea of reason’ clearly serves as an inspiration. Maimon likes to refer to differentials as *noumena* (Maimon, 32), as limits or limiting concepts (Maimon, 186; 194; 349),<sup>40</sup> but in contrast to Kant, Maimonian *noumena* never refer to transcendent objects or things in themselves. Maimon puts his solution to the question ‘*quid juris?*’ in the following way:

“... I prove only the possibility that they [the categories] are objectively valid of the limits of objects of experience (which are determined as objects by reason in relation to their corresponding intuitions), not [that they are valid] of objects of experience (which are determined in intuition). As a result, the question, *quid juris?* must fall aside (in as much as pure concepts are applied to ideas). So things *can* stand in this relation to one another; but whether they do so in fact is still in question” (Maimon, 186-7).

Hence Maimon claims to have proven the objective validity of the categories in their application to ideas of understanding (i.e., the differentials of objects of experience). He has also shown the *possibility* of the objective reality of the categories. In some places, Maimon even seems to be convinced of their objective reality:

“Just as in higher mathematics we produce the relations of different magnitudes themselves from their differentials, so the understanding (admittedly in an obscure way) produces the real relations of qualities themselves from the real relations of their differentials. So, if we judge that fire melts wax, then this judgment does not relate to fire and wax as objects of intuition, but to their elements, which the understanding thinks in the relation of cause and effect to one another. Namely, I hold that the understanding not only has a capacity to *think* universal relations between determined objects of intuition, but also to *determine* objects by means of relations.” (Maimon, 355-6).

Maimon’s theory of differentials presupposes an unconscious and obscure activity of the understanding (in a way similar to Kant’s presupposition of a blind and unconscious activity of imagination). Differentials are below the threshold of consciousness. They form a kind of *primitive consciousness*, which falls outside the order of representation. The genetic differential elements are defined as ‘presentations’ (*Darstellungen*); they do not represent anything, for in order to represent something they would need to be synthesized to the unity of an object. In fact we can make out a *series of degrees of consciousness*.<sup>41</sup> The consciousness familiar to us is a *consciousness of representation*, in which things are represented as objects of experience. However, our conscious representations only amount to the reproduction of a *part* of the synthesis (Maimon, 349). As Maimon says, “we start in the middle with our cognition of things and finish in the middle again” (Maimon, 350). Therefore, the consciousness of representation is incomplete. It lies in the middle between two limits or limiting ideas: primitive consciousness and the consciousness of a complete synthesis. The consciousness of a *complete synthesis* is the superior limit of our conscious representations, which can never be attained, because of the infinity that it involves. The consciousness of a complete synthesis possesses the complete concept of an object, that is, it

knows its relation to all possible objects.<sup>42</sup> Maimon's idea of an infinite intellect is reminiscent of Leibniz and his idea of a divine intellect, which knows the complete concept of an individual substance. However, Maimon does not conceive a divine or infinite intellect *external* to our human intellect. Instead, our human intellect is continuous with the infinite intellect. Only in this way can he give a truly internal, genetic account of our cognitive faculties and free them from the presupposition of an external harmony between them.

### 3. DELEUZE ON MAIMON

Maimon's solution to the question '*quid juris?*' consists in filling the gap between given intuition and pure concepts, by dissolving the given into reciprocally determined differentials which are entirely thought. Everything is thought, nothing is given. Surely, the very thinking of the differentials, which produces real objects, takes place only subconsciously from the point of view of our limited understanding. It seems that the original differential production must therefore be assigned to the unconscious activity of an infinite understanding.

Now a certain difficulty arises which in a way repeats the initial problem on the level of the infinite understanding. The conflict between the given and pure thought appears again. There is a "minimum of given (*minimum de donné*)"<sup>43</sup> even in the infinite understanding, namely precisely the differential rule of production itself. In other words, the processes of differentiation cannot be reduced to pure thought. If pure thought proceeds according to the principle of reciprocal determination, if it is the *nexus* between differentials, there always remains a residue of something given. One is compelled to introduce a 'given', an '*ens reale*', which is irreducible to the pure thought of the infinite understanding. Maimon recognizes this difficulty, but seeks to resolve it "in the same way as with a finite understanding":

"The given intuited by an infinite understanding is either an *objectum reale*, signifying something present in the infinite understanding, but not thought by it (this does not contradict its infinity, because this consists only in the ability to think everything that is thinkable and the given is by its nature not thinkable); or the given is a mere idea of the relation of the concepts to something outside it, which in itself is merely a modification of the understanding. In the latter case the actuality would not consist in something outside the understanding, but merely in this relation." (Maimon, 251)

Maimon's response seems far from satisfying. What he suggests is that both can be the case: First, there can be something given to the infinite understanding (though it cannot have been given from outside). Second, this given can be conceived *in analogy* to an empirical representation consisting in the relation of a concept to some external object. However, as Maimon has explained elsewhere, the relation to something outside is illusory, since a representation is nothing but an internal modification of the understanding. "This 'outside us' signifies something in whose representations we are not conscious of any spontaneity, i.e. something that (with respect to our consciousness) is purely passive and not active in us" (Maimon, 203). The problem with transposing this 'solution' to the infinite understanding is that with the acceptance of something given to the infinite understanding, we have reintroduced an unintelligible and "occult quality".<sup>44</sup> Maimon's insistence that this 'unthought' in thought does not contradict the infinity of the infinite understanding, appears rather lame. Maimon's 'solution' is prone to serious criticism, which is presented by Martial Guérout from a Fichtean perspective. For a Fichtean, the claim that there is something given to thought, which cannot be brought to consciousness, is "dogmatic and contradictory".<sup>45</sup> There are two main reasons why our consciousness of representations can principally never shed light on the original differential production. First, bringing differentials into our consciousness of representation would mean destroying their definition as 'presentations', i.e. something that neither represents anything nor can be represented. Second, if we define consciousness as a pure for-itself, that is, not only as a consciousness-of-something but also as a lucid, transparent self-consciousness, there can be nothing unthought in it. This given residue would instantly dissolve by virtue of the capacity of consciousness to penetrate itself (capacity of auto-penetration).<sup>46</sup> Consequently, if one follows this line of argument, the manifold of differentials could only be *outside* consciousness, located in a non-consciousness. This position would imply a separation of the conditions of knowledge (forms of thought and the sensible *given*)

## MAIMON AND DELEUZE

---

from the conditions of existence (differentials or rules of production). In other words, the reason for knowing would be distinct from the reason for being. As a consequence of this distinction, the *immanence* of the subject of cognition would be undermined, since the constitutive elements of knowledge, i.e. the differentials, would be an *extrinsic* reality located in an objectified infinite understanding. The subject would actually be *posterior* to the reality of which it seeks to gain knowledge.<sup>47</sup> The claim of immanence could not be a change for the better. It seems that the infinite understanding is qualitatively distinct from the subject of cognition, separated by the limitation of our cognitive faculty. If we follow this argument to its ultimate consequence, Maimon would have only reinforced the Kantian dogmatism of the thing-in-itself: the occult character, which in Kant inhabited the thing-in-itself, would range over the whole of empirical experience.<sup>48</sup>

Jules Vuillemin, who endorses this line of argument, sees the linchpin of Maimon's reasoning in "the refusal to assign a full self-consciousness (*conscience de soi*) to consciousness. [...] Consciousness is still conceived outside self-consciousness and thus the whole of philosophy has become impossible, because truth escapes cognition."<sup>49</sup>

Deleuze, however, defends Maimon against this criticism. He claims that the unconscious nature of differential Ideas has been misunderstood.<sup>50</sup> It is a mistake to believe that "the unconscious of a pure thought must be realized in an infinite understanding" (DR 193). It is equally mistaken to make "the differentials [...] to mere *fictions* unless they acquire the status of a fully *actual* reality in that infinite understanding" (DR 193). The alternative between mere fictions and actual reality in an infinite understanding is simply false.<sup>51</sup> Instead, Deleuze will assign to differentials the ontological status of virtual Ideas. According to his definition of virtuality, which he largely takes from Marcel Proust, Ideas are real but not actual, ideal but not abstract (DR 208). For Deleuze, differential Ideas are elements of a differential unconscious, which is immanent in finite thought.<sup>52</sup>

Against the objection, that Maimon's 'unthought in thought' is self-contradictory, Deleuze responds that the 'unthought in thought' only seems contradictory, *if* we attribute the unconscious Ideas to one exclusive faculty—be it understanding or reason—which is constitutive for our acquisition of knowledge. That is to say, it does not matter if we consider differentials as Ideas of understanding or Ideas of reason, as long as understanding or reason is still defined as a faculty that constitutes a *common sense*. Briefly, according to Deleuze, the model of common sense presupposes the harmonious accord of all the faculties under the legislation of one supreme faculty. Under this condition, it is natural that such a faculty, which legislates over the empirical exercise of our cognitive powers, "cannot tolerate the presence within itself of a kernel on which the empirical exercise of the conjoint faculties would break" (DR 193). The model of common sense does not allow for something that escapes its power of representation.

Yet, it is incomprehensible *only* from the point of view of a common sense that thought should find something that it cannot think. In fact, it is precisely the occult quality of differential Ideas of being simultaneously the unthinkable and that which must be thought (DR 192), which pushes our faculties to their limits and liberates thought from the constraint of common sense. Deleuze argues that Ideas are the paradoxical or problematic element, which is capable of carrying the faculties to a disjoint *transcendent exercise*. "It is a question, therefore, not of a common sense but, on the contrary, of a 'para-sense' (in the sense that paradox is also the contrary of good sense)" (DR 194).

Deleuze insists that differential Ideas are not the exclusive object of one particular faculty, neither of understanding or reason, nor any other. Instead, Ideas occur throughout the faculties and concern them *all* (DR 193). For instance, the violence with which a sensible Idea affects sensibility is communicated to another faculty; it carries the faculty of imagination to its own limit, which in turn animates thought to transgress the constraints imposed by the logic of representation. In fact, Deleuze finds a model for this paradoxical exercise of the faculties in the Kantian account of the experience of the beautiful and the sublime in Kant's *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*.

"Ideas must be called 'differentials' of thought, or the 'Unconscious' of pure thought" (DR 194). Although

Ideas concern all faculties, they are, for Deleuze, particularly important for the faculty of thought: “thought thinks only on the basis of an unconscious” (DR 199). Deleuze agrees with Maimon on the characterization of Ideas as unconscious, sub-representative elements. Yet he does not follow Maimon in locating them within understanding and extending the understanding to infinity. Instead, he develops the notion of a differential unconscious present within the finite self.<sup>53</sup> It is important to grasp that this differential unconscious is not a realm enclosed within the identity of the subject. It is rather a fracture or rift, swarming with ideas, which cannot be filled (DR 169-70). As Deleuze remarks, “the mistake of dogmatism is always to fill that which separates” (DR 170). Maimon envisages a continuity between sensibility and understanding as well as between the finite and the infinite understanding. By contrast, Deleuze holds firm to the distinction between the faculties. Instead of seeking a principle of identity, in order to guarantee their harmonious accord, Deleuze affirms difference as the principle that “reunites” (DR 170) *qua* difference. In order to restore difference in thought, Deleuze argues, we have to introduce a fissure or crack in the thinking subject. The harmonious accord of the faculties must be suspended. The relation among the cognitive faculties is rather one of dissension, a ‘discordant accord’. The genetic elements, which set our faculties into motion and push them to their utmost limits, effectively disrupting the harmonious accord of the faculties and the order of representation, are precisely the differential and problematic ideas. However, Maimon’s differentials of consciousness cannot fulfill this function, as long as they remain engulfed in an overall identity, the understanding, whose principle task is still to produce unity through its conceptual rules. As Deleuze remarks in his discussion on Leibniz: The danger is that representation conquers difference; that difference, even the infinitely small, is united in an infinite analytic identity. This would mean nothing more than “allowing the identical to rule over infinity itself” (DR 264).

Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that Deleuze finally returns to Kant, who in a “furtive and explosive moment which is not even continued by Kant, much less by post-Kantianism” (DR 58), split the subject by the pure and empty form of time, thereby distinguishing between the ‘I think’ and the empirical subject. Deleuze argues that the ‘I think’ is already ‘an other’ in thought—as in Rimbaud’s famous formula “The I is an Other”—it is the unthought in thought, the nonself in the finite self. Although Kant tried to resurrect the identity of the subject in a new form—the original-synthetic unity of apperception—Deleuze acknowledges that “for a brief moment we enter into that schizophrenia in principle which characterizes the highest power of thought, and opens Being directly on to difference, despite all the mediations, all the reconciliations, of the concept” (DR 58).

DANIELA VOSS is currently a PhD candidate at the Free University of Berlin under the supervision of Gunter Gebauer and Paul Patton from the University of New South Wales/Australia. Her doctoral thesis focuses on Deleuze’s conception of transcendental conditions of thought.

NOTES

1. Salomon Maimon, *An Autobiography*. Trans. Clark Murray. Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001, 279-80 (*Salomon Maimons Lebensgeschichte*, 1792).
2. Immanuel Kant, "Letter to Maimon, 24 May 1789" *Briefwechsel*. Ed. Rudolf Malter and Joachim Kopper. Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1986, 394.
3. Immanuel Kant, "Letter to Herz, 26 May 1789" *Briefwechsel*, 395. An English translation can be found in the Appendix of Salomon Maimon, *Essay on Transcendental Philosophy*. Trans. Nick Midgley, Henry Somers-Hall, Alistair Welchman and Merten Reglitz. London & New York: Continuum, 2010, 230-7.
4. Cf. J. G. Fichte, "Letter to Reinhold, (March or April) 1795" *Gesamtausgabe; Briefwechsel* 1793-95, vol. III, 2. Eds Reinhard Lauth and Hans Jacob. Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog Verlag, 1970, 282. An English translation of the quotation can be found in Nick Midgley, "Introduction" to Maimon, *Essay*, xiii.
5. Not even Kant, who is commonly regarded as a leading figure of enlightenment, can be exempt from the charge of anti-Semitism. In a letter to Reinhold he wrote (in stark contrast to his favorable remark, which he had made only five years earlier): "As regards Maimon with his 'improvement' of the critical philosophy (a thing Jews like to do to make themselves self-important at the expense of others) I have never really understood what he intended." Immanuel Kant, "Letter to Reinhold, 28 March 1794" *Briefwechsel*, 662-3. Quoted in Gideon Freudenthal, "A Philosopher Between Two Cultures," *Salomon Maimon: Rational Dogmatist, Empirical Skeptic*. Ed. Gideon Freudenthal. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2003, 11.
6. "The difficulties in understanding Maimon's philosophy are due to its unique inter-cultural character ... Maimon philosophized in the form of commentaries, as was common in pre-modern philosophy, and ... reading these commentaries requires special hermeneutic techniques, usually unfamiliar to modern readers." Freudenthal, "Between Two Cultures", 2.
7. Samuel Atlas, *From Critical to Speculative Idealism; The Philosophy of Solomon Maimon*. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964, 12-3.
8. This and all parenthetical references are taken from Salomon Maimon, *Essay on Transcendental Philosophy*. Trans. Nick Midgley, Henry Somers-Hall, Alistair Welchman and Merten Reglitz. London & New York: Continuum, 2010. The page numbers refer to the original German edition and are marked in the English translation at the top of each page.
9. Deleuze mentions Maimon's name explicitly at various instances. See, for example (1) Lecture Course on Chapter Three of Bergson's *Creative Evolution*, held at Ecole Supérieure de Saint-Cloud, 14 March 1960. Trans. Bryn Loban. *SubStance*, Issue 114, 36:3 (2007, 72; 77; 78). (2) *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson. London: Athlone Press, 1983, 52 footnote (*Nietzsche et la philosophie*, 1962). (3) "The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetic" (*L'idée de genèse dans l'esthétique de Kant*", 1963) *Desert Islands and Other Texts* (1953-74). Ed. David Lapoujade. New York: Semiotext(e), 2003, 61. (4) *Difference and Repetition*. Trans. Paul Patton. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, 170; 173-4; 192-3; 310; 324; 326 (*Différence et répétition*, 1968). (5) Lecture Course on Kant, held at Vincennes, 14 March 1978 (The transcript is available on-line at <http://www.webdeleuze.com/sommaire.html>). (6) *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. Trans. Tom Conley. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993, 89 (*Le Pli: Leibniz et le baroque*, 1988).
10. Deleuze, Lecture Course on Kant, 14 March 1978, 10.
11. Deleuze, Lecture Course on Bergson, 14 March 1960, 72.
12. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 173. Henceforth all references will be placed within the article as a parenthetical citation abbreviated as 'DR' followed by the page number.
13. Daniel W. Smith, "Genesis and Difference: Deleuze, Maimon, and the Post-Kantian Reading of Leibniz" *Deleuze and the Fold: A Critical Reader*. Eds Niamh McDonnell and Sjoerd van Tuinen. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, 132-54. Graham Jones, "Solomon Maimon" *Deleuze's Philosophical Lineage*. Eds Graham Jones and Jon Roffe. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009, 104-29. Levi R. Bryant, *Difference and Givenness; Deleuze's Transcendental Empiricism and the Ontology of Immanence*. Evanston Ill: Northwestern University Press, 2008. Christian Kerslake, *Immanence and the Vertigo of Philosophy; From Kant to Deleuze*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009. To my knowledge the first mentioning of the Maimon-Deleuze nexus can in fact be found in Michael Roubach's article "Salomon Maimon's Philosophy and its Place in the Enlightenment; Wandering in the Land of Difference" *Salomon Maimon: Rational Dogmatist, Empirical Skeptic*. Ed. Gideon Freudenthal, Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2003, 86; 88. However, his reference remains too brief and obscure to be helpful. Nick Midgley in his excellent "Introduction" to Maimon's *Essay* mentions the importance of Maimon's philosophy for a "thoroughgoing philosophy of difference in which relations and differences are prior to their objects" (Maimon, *Essay*, xlv), but he does not refer to Deleuze explicitly.
14. The importance of Kant for Deleuze's notion of ideas should not be downplayed. It is Kant from whom Deleuze draws the aspect of ideas as problems. Since a discussion on this subject would go beyond the scope of this article, readers are referred to Daniel W. Smith, "Deleuze, Kant, and the Theory of Immanent Ideas" *Deleuze and Philosophy*. Ed. Constantin V. Boundas. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006, chap. 3, 43-61.
15. Immanuel Kant, "Remark to the amphiboly of concepts of reflection" *Critique of Pure Reason*. Trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. This and all parenthetical references are taken from Kant, CpR.
16. Immanuel Kant, "Letter to Herz, 26 May 1789" *Briefwechsel*, 396. For the English translation see Maimon, *Essay*, 231. Interestingly, in this same letter Kant attempts to make a difference between Maimon's assumption of an intuitive intellect and that of Leibniz (and Wolff). As he says "I very much doubt that this was Leibniz's or Wolff's meaning, or whether it

can really be inferred from their definitions of sensibility as opposed to the understanding” (Maimon, *Essay*, 231). Kant apparently tries to reinterpret Leibniz in the light of a model of *distinct* cognitive faculties which harmonize with one another. Thus he says that Leibniz had in mind “the harmony of two faculties belonging to one and the same being in which sensibility and understanding harmonize in an experiential cognition” (Maimon, *Essay*, 234). Does he want to exempt Leibniz from the accusation of a sort of Spinozist monism, which he sees present in Maimon’s way of thinking (Maimon, *Essay*, 231)?

17. With regard to the distinction between objective validity and objective reality, see Henry Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism. An Interpretation and Defense*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983, chap. 7.

18. Cf. Salomon Maimon, *Streifereien im Gebiete der Philosophie* (1793). Collected Works, vol. 4. Ed. by Valerio Verra. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1970, 73: “Although critical philosophy is to the highest degree systematic, that is, self-coherent (*unter sich zusammenhängend*), it does not refer to anything real. Its transcendental concepts and principles, categories, ideas, etc. have no reality. With regard to the origin of these forms of thought of the understanding, and with regard to the completeness and systematicity, it [transcendental philosophy] refers to logic” (my translation, D.V.).

19. Cf. Peter Thielke, “Discursivity and Causality” *German Idealism*. Ed. Klaus Brinkmann. London, New York: Routledge, 2007, 149: “It must be emphasized that this is a transcendental issue: Maimon challenges the *possibility* of applying categories to particular instances, rather than the empirical fact of whether the causal judgments we make are borne out by experience.”

20. Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism*, 178-9.

21. Salomon Maimon, “Letter to Kant, 7 April 1789” *Essay*, Appendix I, 229.

22. Cf. Nick Midgley in the “Introduction” to Maimon, *Essay*, xxvii.

23. Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism*, chap. 5, 94-8.

24. Cf. *CpR*, A 20-1/B 35, also A 22/B 36.

25. Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism*, chap. 5, 97.

26. Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism*, chap. 5, 97.

27. Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism*, chap. 5, 95.

28. Cf. Maimon, *Essay*, 180: “the possibility of thinking space without objects is purely transcendent”.

29. Maimon, *Essay*, 135-6 and 346-7. See also Salomon Maimon, *Versuch einer neuen Logik oder Theorie des Denkens* (1794) *Collected Works*, vol. 5. Ed. Valerio Verra. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1970, 480.

30. This argument is clearly presented in Frederick C. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte*. Cambridge MA, London: Harvard University Press, 1987, chap. 10, 302.

31. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 301.

32. The argument on space functions in the same manner for time. As Maimon explains: “so if we nevertheless still represent in space things like water that are identical in intuition, this takes place only in relation to something different, i.e. the representation is transcendent. It is the same with time: if I have slept for, say, a few hours, then I can only perceive the time by means of the different position of the hands of a clock for example” (Maimon, *Essay*, 134).

33. The significance of ‘formal intuition’ for Kant’s argument is underlined by the fact that he introduces the distinction between ‘forms of intuition’ and ‘formal intuition’ only in §26 of the *Transcendental Deduction*, where he seeks to prove the objective reality of the categories.

34. Maimon argues that consciousness requires synthesis, that is, “something must be given that is thought by the understanding as a manifold (through unity of difference)” (Maimon, *Essay*, 130-1).

35. Cf. Nick Midgley in his “Introduction” to Maimon’s *Essay*: “without *difference*, synthesis is impossible to conceive” (Maimon, *Essay*, xxxviii).

36. Maimon, *Essay*, 60: “So, assuming that time and space are *a priori* intuitions, they are still only *intuitions* and not *a priori concepts*; they make only the terms of the relation intuitive for us, and by this means the relation itself, but not the truth and legitimacy of its use.” And Maimon, *Essay*, 64: “But we have already shown that even if they are *a priori*, intuitions are still heterogeneous with concepts of the understanding, and so this assumption does not get us much further ...” See also Maimon, *Essay*, 35.

37. I will leave out Maimon’s attempt to ground objective syntheses by means of his *principle of determinability* (see, for instance, Maimon, *Essay*, 20; 258; 260). Maimon believed that with his principle of determinability he had found a truly immanent, genetic principle which served as an *a priori* criterion, and even as a sufficient reason (“real ground of possibility”) for the synthesis of mathematical concepts. But in fact, he could not do without something extrinsically given, namely space as the highest ‘determinable’. Besides, the principle of determinability is of no avail in the realm of experience, where a solution to the problem of objective syntheses is urgently needed. I therefore agree with Martial Guéroult, that Maimon eventually felt he had to search for another “superior principle” which will be ‘difference’ or ‘the differentials of consciousness’. Cf. Martial Guéroult, *La Philosophie transcendantale de Salomon Maimon*. Paris: Alcan, 1929, 53.

38. Cf. Carl B. Boyer, *The History of the Calculus and its Conceptual Development*. New York: Dover Publications, 1959, 12-3; 212; 216; 219.

39. As Martial Guéroult explains: “There are therefore *differentials of consciousness* which are neither objects of intuition, nor of consciousness, but the generic (and genetic) elements of the intuitions of this consciousness” (Guéroult, *Philosophie Transcendantale*, 60).

## MAIMON AND DELEUZE

---

40. For Kant, the *noumenon*, as the supersensible substratum which underlies all phenomena, is an idea of reason. It can be understood in two senses. In its positive sense, that is, taken as a designation of a thing in itself, it is inadmissible from an epistemological point of view, since no object can be determined by the concept. Yet, Kant acknowledges that the concept of *noumenon* has an important use if taken in its negative sense as a limiting or “boundary concept” (A 255/B 310-1). As such it functions as “a boundary for given concepts, connected with other cognitions” (A 254/B 310). It does not designate a real object or given thing, but serves to provide unity or an objective ground, in relation to which other cognitions can be synthesized.

41. Cf. Guérout, *Philosophie Transcendantale*, 65. See also Martial Guérout, *L'Évolution et la Structure de la Doctrine de la Science chez Fichte*, vol. 1, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1930, 115-7.

42. Maimon, *Streifereien*, 64.

43. Guérout, *Philosophie Transcendantale*, 59; 84.

44. Guérout, *Philosophie Transcendantale*, 84. See also Guérout, *Fichte*, 122; 131.

45. Guérout, *Fichte*, 122. Such a critique of Maimon can indeed be found in Samuel Atlas, *From Critical to Speculative Idealism*, 117: “For to have something ‘given’ and not to be conscious of it is self-contradictory.”

46. Guérout, *Fichte*, 122.

47. Guérout, *Fichte*, 126.

48. Guérout, *Fichte*, 122; 131.

49. Jules Vuillemin, *L'Héritage Kantien et la Révolution Copernicienne; Fichte, Cohen, Heidegger*. Paris: PUF, 1954, 48; 49 (my translation, D.V.).

50. Given that Deleuze writes the word ‘ideas’ with a majuscule, I will follow this notation which has become customary in Deleuzian scholarship.

51. Samuel Atlas, for instance, clearly states that the two possibilities—differentials as fictions or actual reality in an infinite understanding—are mutually exclusive and therefore necessitate a choice. Atlas argues that Maimon must be interpreted as to have a strictly idealistic view of the differentials. Differentials should be understood as “ideas of reason”, that is, “immanent ideas invented by the mind for the purpose of deducing reality [...] from principles posited by the mind” (Atlas, *From Critical to Speculative Idealism*, 118).

52. It should be noted, however, that Deleuze’s notion of a differential unconscious does not coincide with the “Leibnizian or Maimonian unconscious” as he explicitly states in a discussion subsequent to his presentation “The Method of Dramatization” *Desert Islands*, 61.

53. See, in particular, Deleuze’s Lecture Course on Leibniz, held at Vincennes, 29 April 1980 (available online at <http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/sommaire.html>), and his book *The Fold. Leibniz and the Baroque*. Trans. Tom Conley. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993, chap. 7.