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DELEUZE AND THE HEGELIAN STATE¹

ABSTRACT

This paper analyses Gilles Deleuze's political philosophy in relation to the Hegelian concept of the State. To do this, we identify three interpretations of the term "State" in Deleuze's work: 1) as the reference point defining the three forms of *socius* presented in *Anti-Oedipus* (primitive territorial, barbarian despotic, and civilized capitalist); 2) as a defining trait of the despotic *socius* form; and 3) as the internalization of this form (*Urstaat*). Deleuze emerges as a harsh critic of the State in each of these interpretations. However, the subsequent part of the paper reveals that this critique does not advocate for societal fragmentation. By comparing Deleuze's political philosophy with Hegel's, we demonstrate that the forms of *socius* in Deleuze's system occupy the conceptual place of the State in Hegel's framework. Through an exploration of the role of differential calculus in the ontology of both philosophers, we establish the groundwork for a philosophical examination of the dominant social relation in the modern world (which is capitalism and not the State) and the prerequisites for a novel political *socius*.

KEYWORDS

Deleuze, Hegel, State, civil society, aggregate, differential calculus, capitalism, individuals

Introduction

Gilles Deleuze thinks *against* the State. This is apparent in his works, spanning from *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962) to *Negotiations* (1990), including his key publications such as *Difference and Repetition* (1969), *Anti-Oedipus* (1972), and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), the two later written with Félix Guattari. He believes the State – and State thought – should be surpassed. Deleuze consistently holds this stance. Consequently, the existing vast literature on Deleuze tends to advocate for a nihilistic or postmodern approach that limits political action to

1 Certain sections of the paper are derived, with significant alterations, from an article originally published in Spanish as "Deleuze y el Estado", in an issue of the Argentine journal *Deus Mortalis* which is now out of press.

micropolitics and an ambiguous “molecular revolution”.² Such a philosophical and political perspective, however, exposes individuals to unpredictable encounters, leading them to be “poor devils defending their skins” (Strauss 1965: 233). This paper’s contribution to Deleuzianism is to show how the ontological principles of the French philosopher allows us to construct a macro-political perspective on the State that can counter the influences of capitalism. It also adds to state theory by presenting the State as a Deleuzian, immanent power rather than a sovereign authority with a transcendent foundation.

In order to conceptually achieve this, Deleuze will be compared with his supposed adversary, Hegel.³ The analysis will transition from ontology to political philosophy, demonstrating – through the two authors’ treatment of differential calculus – how Deleuze’s concept of “form of *socius*” occupies the conceptual place of Hegel’s notion of the State. According to the ontological disparities between the two, the conclusion will show how Deleuze envisions what Hegel cannot: the potential for a new *socius* where human life can thrive. In order to achieve this, the first step is to study the role of the State in Deleuze’s work.

1. Deleuze and the State

“Philosophy does not serve the State or the Church, who have other concerns. It serves no established power”, states Deleuze in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1983: 106). “Recognition is a sign of the celebration of monstrous nuptials, in which thought ‘rediscovers’ the State, rediscovers ‘the Church’ and rediscovers all the current values that it subtly presented in the pure form of an eternally blessed unspecified eternal object”, Deleuze maintains in *Difference and Repetition* (1994: 136). “There exists a Hegelianism of the right that lives on in official political philosophy and weds the destiny of thought to the State”, he asserts along with Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 556).

2 This is the mainstream position in Deleuzian studies: “The possibility of understanding revolution from the point of view of small politics, that is, micropolitics [...] The possibility of a revolution, normatively based on a vague notion of freedom, is brought about by temporal, albeit non-sequential, moments” (Bolaños 2020, ix). See for example: Negri 1977, Alliez y Lazzarato 2016, Colson 2018, Patton 2000, Mengue 2003, Sibertin-Blanc 2013, Reyes 2020, Pal Pelbart 2019, Rolnik 2019, Sztulwark 2019, Koenig 2013. For a criticism of such positions, see Ferreyra 2022.

3 The debate between Deleuze and Hegel has been one of the longest-standing discussions in Deleuzian philosophy. It began with Jean Wahl’s review of Deleuze’s *Nietzsche and Philosophy* in 1963 and continued through various scholars (Houlgate 1986, Hardt 1993, Malabou 1996, Simont 1997, Brusseau 1998, Butler 1999, Smith 2001, Faucher 2010) until reaching a climax ten years ago with three dedicated books: Somers-Hall (2012), Houle-Vernon (2013), and Lundy-Voss (2015). Initially marked by the authors’ opposition, further academic research revealed significant points of commonality, leading to a recognition of the value in considering their ideas together. In previous publications, I have tried to contribute to uncovering the underlying affinities beneath their seemingly irreconcilable differences (Ferreyra 2021).

As we can see, criticism of the State is prevalent throughout Deleuze's work. However, what does he specifically mean by the term "State"? Examining the various references to this concept in his work reveals three distinct interpretations:

1) In *Anti-Oedipus*' third chapter, Deleuze and Guattari (1977: 139–271) identify three types of forms of *socius* or social organization: the primitive *socius* (body of the earth), the barbarian *socius* (body of the despot), and the civilized *socius* (body of capital). Each form of *socius* is characterized by the State's structural role. The primitive *socius* opposes it,⁴ while it dominates in the despotic *socius* and is controlled by the capitalist *socius* based on objectives that are foreign to it. This concept, termed the "apparatus of capture" in *A Thousand Plateaus*, alongside the "war machines", shapes all political structures: "Everything is not of the State precisely because there have been States always and everywhere" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 429). This initial portrayal of the State in Deleuze's work defines it in a broad sense, as an institution that is not merely "one formation among others, nor is it the transition from one formation to another" (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 219), but a reference point to delineate diverse social structures.

2) In a more restricted sense, the term "State" is equivalent to the despotic *socius*, that is, a formation where the State plays a predominant role, influencing both social relations and their circulation. Deleuze often critiques the State as a centralized and hierarchical system composed of similar parts with a transcendent foundation: the organic unity of the despotic *socius*. The imperial form of social organization aligns with what Deleuze terms "organic representation", associated with an Aristotelian mindset. This representation is also described as the "dogmatic image of thought" in *Difference and Repetition* and as the arborescent model of thought in *A Thousand Plateaus* ("The State as the model for the book and for thought has a long history", Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 24). Its key traits include recognition and reproduction, reminiscent of Hegel's concept of understanding (*Verstand*) or common sense (*gemeiner Menschenverstand*) in the *Science of Logic*, characterized by fixed categories and resistance to proper thinking (Reason) (Hegel 1969: 25–42).

4 Deleuze and Guattari draw from an extensive anthropological bibliography, influenced by Claude Lévi-Strauss, to argue that the State's dominance as a form of social organization is not the sole model. Primitive societies exhibit a unique organizational structure that does not require unification into a state-like entity. This concept inspired Pierre Clastres' research, who through fieldwork observed the para-state operations within primitive societies: "Primitive societies are societies without a State. This factual judgment, accurate in itself, actually hides an opinion, a value judgment that immediately throws doubt on the possibility of constituting political anthropology as a strict science. What the statement says, in fact, is that primitive societies are missing something – the State – that is essential to them, as it is to any other society: our own, for instance. Consequently, those societies are incomplete; they are not quite true societies – they are not civilized – their existence continues to suffer the painful experience of a lack – the lack of a State – which, try as they may, they will never make up [...] Incompletion, unfulfillment, lack: the nature of primitive societies is not to be sought in that direction. Rather, it asserts itself as positivity, as a mastery of the natural milieu and the social project; as the sovereign will to let nothing slip outside its being that might alter, corrupt, and destroy it" (Clastres 1987: 189–199).

It is unclear whether Deleuze and Guattari's basic and straightforward portrayal of the despotic *socius* indicates a belief in its actual historical existence or an attempt to explain common perceptions of power dynamics. Regardless, they assert that in this organizational structure, every component and role is clearly defined and influenced. Nothing exists without a purpose within the whole system:

[...] he “megamachine” of the State, a functional pyramid that has the despot at its apex, an immobile motor, with the bureaucratic apparatus as its lateral surface and its transmission gear, and the villagers at its base, serving as its working parts (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 194).

This *socius* is characterized by direct alliances with the despot rather than lateral alliances with other members of the tribe. This is not a contract whereby the savages relinquish their rights to a representative, but the result of a violent conquest. As a result, the primitive codes that controlled the tribal functioning become the “bricks”, which, without losing their form, remain subject to the new organization's codes (“overcoding”, according to Deleuze and Guattari), and where the conquerors become either the Despot (apex of the pyramid) or a part of the chain of command that ensures the obedience of the base.

The Chinese imperial state reproduced, on a large scale, a pattern of state-formation that was probably more the rule than the exception in ‘high’ civilizations of the non-capitalist world: a bureaucratic hierarchy descending from a monarch to administrative districts governed by royal functionaries and fiscal officials, who extracted surplus labour from subject villages of peasant producers for redistribution up the hierarchical chain. Something like this pattern is visible in many of the most highly organized civilizations, from the relatively small and modest states of Bronze Age Greece to the more elaborate and powerful New Kingdom of Egypt, and even, much further afield, the vast empire of the Incas (Meiksins Wood 2003: 27).

3) The third characterization of the State in Deleuze and Guattari's work has nothing to do with empirical reality, but with a phantom image rooted in common sense. A psychological aspect rather than a political one: it involves the interiorization of the despotic model, the monomania of referring to everything that occurs to it, and is described by Deleuze as the “Urstaat”: “the primordial *Urstaat*, the eternal model of everything the State wants to be and desires” (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 217). The State is no longer a political body or the point of reference for different organizations, but a spiritualized and internalized model that serves as an unattainable reference point.

2. Misunderstandings

Deleuze's approach to the State, however, does not agree with his ontological and ethical perspective. In the first place, the belief that the State is inherently deleterious (with associated notions such as “tree” or “root”), while

concepts like the war machine and rhizome are essentially worthy, is more of a moral view (where there would be an essential Good and an essential Evil as transcendent values), than an ethical view (where good and bad depend on the encounters that increase or decrease the power of a concrete form of being) (Deleuze 1983: 119–122). Deleuze and Guattari promote the idea of an essentially good rhizome through slogans such as “Make rhizomes, not roots, never plant!” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 24). However, they also caution against the axiological error: “The first is axiological and consists in believing that a little suppleness is enough to make things ‘better’” (ibid.: 215). Despite the caution, most Deleuzian references to the State reinforce the notion that it, along with other unified models, are pernicious and should be opposed.

The axiological error is just the first issue arising from the Deleuzian theory of the State. The second problem lies in the emphasis on the pyramidal structure, whether in the political constitution or at the subjective level. Hence, Deleuze apparently aligns himself with criticism of subjectivity and Cartesianism, suggesting that the crux of the problem may be the existence of a foundation (social or individual) and the solution lies in overthrowing it. However, the most interesting aspect of Deleuze’s theory is his shift in focus, introducing tools that bring a new perspective to the debate. His approach to the history of philosophy differs significantly from Heidegger’s, emphasizing not the foundation (of the State or the subject as *sub-jectum*), but the novel forms of organization emerging from the dissolution of grounding. In essence, he seeks to explore what arises from the breakdown of the State and subjectivity (without relying on a predefined axiological value).

The Deleuzian theory of the State commits a third error when compared to his deep ontology. This error involves the assumption that the individual is the foundation for the development of society. According to this perspective, the despotic *socius* emerges from primitive communities that serve as its building blocks. These communities are believed to be the initial historical stage, which the despot seizes and exploits for personal gain, particularly in wealth extraction. Deleuze, however, supports Marx’s insights from the early sections of *Grundrisse*:

Individuals producing in society – hence socially determined individual production – is, of course, the point of departure. The individual and isolated hunter and fisherman, with whom Smith and Ricardo begin, belongs among the unimaginative conceits of the eighteenth-century Robinsonades [...] The more deeply we go back into history, the more does the individual, and hence also the producing individual, appear as dependent, as belonging to a greater whole (Marx 1993: 83–84).

Replacing lonely and isolated individuals with lonely and isolated tribes is neutral from an ontological perspective. Ontology aims to uncover the genetic factors behind seemingly isolated entities like the human individual, the State, communities, or atoms. Deleuze’s theory of the State fails to elucidate what he intends to convey: the genetic element of forms and contents in empirical

reality. It is only in his theory of the capitalist *socius* that we can discover hints leading beyond experiential limitations into a transcendental realm that not only influences reality but also gives rise to it (“we push each line beyond the turn, to the point where it goes beyond our own experience”, Deleuze 1988: 27).

3. Capitalism is More Than Just the Dissolution of the Social Bond

“With contemporary capitalism, *Deleuze gets what he wants. Does he not?*” (Mengue 2003: 121). This perspective places Deleuze among thinkers who view capitalism in an exclusively negative way (as the *absence* of the social bond). Such interpretations stem from misunderstandings that Deleuze himself promotes, with a simplistic view of the State as a social organization that unites independent elements. The despotic *socius* is seen as connecting communities in an external manner. Therefore, capitalism, the subsequent *socius*, could be seen as simply breaking down social bonds. If, at the same time, his ontology seems to celebrate everything that flows and all that dissolves itself, Deleuze would indeed *get what he wants with contemporary capitalism*. Viewing current social events through this ontological lens may lead to the conclusion of societal fragmentation. Deleuze would be one face of the manifold enemy of State thought:

The State’s decline and the undermining of its *centrality* in creating social cohesion doesn’t necessitate a stronger entity to take its place. This scenario is taken into account amid *fragmentation, globalization*, and the decline of disciplinary society. However, the social bond is a product of political construction, not an attribute of civil society. This construction is shared by the state and currently exists, albeit with significant challenges, through the operation of a group of institutions known in the past – in times that were less fragmented – as the *ideological state apparatus* (Abad and Paez Canosa 2007: 382).

The bleak evaluation of the current state of social unity implies indifference among the elements within the political realm. Considering the Deleuzian State as a group of parts, it is understandable that its deterioration could be seen as the vanishing of the societal bond. These external parts may appear capable of regaining their previous independence (with the primary objective being to revive the customary tribal communal bonds, known for their violence, caste systems, and more).

However, the Deleuzian political theory does not follow this perspective. Although he recognizes capitalism’s potential to weaken the State (“It is beneath the blows of private property, then of commodity production, that the State witnesses its decline”, Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 218), he does not suggest that we are facing a sheer unorganized flow. The political contemporary framework, according to Deleuze, is distinct, robust and fully determined. Capitalism is not just about *quantitative* relationships between different elements; it also plays a crucial role in shaping the determination process through *qualitative* connections.

Deleuze defines capitalism in an obscure fashion: as a relationship of flows dy/dx . “This is the differential relation Dy / Dx , where Dy derives from labor power and constitutes the fluctuation of variable capital, and where Dx derives from capital itself and constitutes the fluctuation of constant capital” (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 227–228). The second part of this paper will shed light on Deleuzian capitalism: according to his theory, this *socius* does not fragment external elements but holds back such fragmentation. By drawing on Hegel’s analysis of the formula dy/dx , we will chart a new approach to Deleuzian political philosophy. Even if the Hegelian State, as analysed by Hegel, differs from the concept of the State in Deleuze’s work, their relation opens up the opportunity to enhance our understanding of Deleuzian political philosophy by integrating Hegelian concepts, which focus on intrinsic relations rather than extrinsic elements. Hegel’s approach moves beyond external multiplicities (*Menge*), numbers, and compositions (*Zusammensetzung*) towards a positive quantitative infinity, exemplified by the expression dy/dx . Sounds *Deleuzian*, doesn’t it?

4. Differential Calculus, From the White Nothingness to the Qualitative Relation

Deleuze refers to the breaking down of bonds as the *white nothingness*: “the white nothingness, the once more calm surface upon which float unconnected determinations like scattered members: a head without a neck, an arm without a shoulder, eyes without brows” (1994: 28). Hegel describes this phenomenon as an aggregate (*Menge*): “existing, independent parts, which are only externally combined into a whole. [...] an aggregate of atoms external to one another” (Hegel 1969: 222). In his work *Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*, Hegel locates these aggregates within civil society, characterized by “arbitrariness and external contingency [...] extravagance and want” (Hegel 2008: 182). Civil society is, according to Hegel, “the sphere where quantity, not the concept, is the principle of determination” (ibid.: 202), that allocates “individuals as a mass [*Menge*], in such a way that in any individual case this allocation appears as mediated by circumstances, the individual’s arbitrary will and his personal choice of vocation” (ibid.: 238).

Individuals exist (*Dasein*) as components but cannot possess actuality (*Wirklichkeit*). When examining Kant’s antinomy regarding the infinite divisibility of space, Hegel decisively addresses the ontological standing of the extensive components forming the whole:

[*Bayle*] rejoins that if matter is infinitely divisible, then it actually [*wirklich*] contains an infinite number [*Menge*] of parts, [...]. Such intellect commits the error of holding such mental fictions, such abstractions, as an infinite number of parts, to be something true and actual (Hegel 1969: 198–199).

The mass is simply the representation of reality as grasped by the understanding, appearing to be a collection of parts or atoms. Yet, these individual

components lack true existence in terms of ontology. The connection with Marx's criticism of the idea which suggests that isolated individuals may have been the starting point of society, is explicit:

Its development affords the interesting spectacle (as in Smith, Say, and Ricardo) of thought working upon the endless mass [*Menge*] of details which confront it at the outset and extracting therefrom the simple principles of the thing (Hegel 2008: 187).

The understanding (as in the theories of Smith, Say, and Ricardo) focuses on interactions within civil society involving isolated individuals. However, the reality is that society fundamentally consists of individuals belonging to a greater whole. Society is not a mere sum of individuals (it is not a *Menge*, it is not a quantitative aggregate), but rather requires a qualitative aspect for its existence. This confusion in political science is linked to the "atomistic principle, according to which the essence of things is the atom and the void" (Hegel 1969: 166). Atoms represent pure externality, where "all determination, variety, conjunction remains for it an utterly external relation" (ibid.: 166). This challenges the conventional "theory of the State which starts from the particular will of individuals" (ibid.: 167). Hegel argues that this simplistic view, characteristic of representational thinking, is limited in grasping the true nature of reality. "In thinking that is not based on the Notion [*begrifflosen Vorstellung*]" (ibid.: 188), relationships among individuals would be merely external compositions (*Zusammensetzung*).

In Book One of *The Science of Logic*, the quantitative external relations are discussed in Section Two: Magnitude (Quantity). The sublation of this partial and insufficient viewpoint is presented towards the end of the section, serving as a pivotal link not just to the subsequent section on "measure", but also as a crucial transition from Being to Essence. Hegel delves into differential calculus through three notable remarks, which are significant for their depth and are among the extensively revised pages in the 1832 edition of *The Science of Logic*. The initial 1812 edition featured a single lengthy remark spanning 40 pages, while the revised 1832 edition included over 60 additional pages of remarks. This expansion may have been a response to critiques from mathematicians, but the primary focus should remain on the conceptual aspects. Hegel's curiosity extends beyond mathematical discourse, demonstrating a keen interest in the significance of differential calculus. It is within these detailed remarks that the formula dy/dx is introduced.

The three remarks on differential calculus follow the ones about the number (ibid.: 204–217), where he criticized the excessive pretensions of the mathematics of his time and, in particular, "The Employment of Numerical Distinctions for Expressing Philosophical Notions", as the title of the second remark points out (ibid.: 212). In arithmetic, according to Hegel, combinations and differences do not occur in the object, but are effected on it in a wholly external manner; its objects do not have internal relations (*Verhältnisse*). As a consequence of this indifference of the factors, thought is forced to move into "a realm of

thoughtlessness” (ibid.: 213). Its point of departure is sensible intuition, the *quantum* as a pure number, which has only exterior relationships through arithmetical operations: addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and exponentiation. The number “forms the latest stage in that imperfection which contemplates the universal admixed with sense” (ibid.: 213).

The imperfection of the quantum appears to be resolved in its projection towards infinity. However, Hegel argues that infinity surpassing the quantum is, in fact, a quantum itself. “[...] infinitely great or infinitely small] still bears the character of quantum [...]. This infinity which is perpetually determined as the beyond of the finite is to be described as the spurious quantitative infinite” (ibid.: 227–228). In this passage, Hegel explicitly rejects Deleuze’s characterization of his ontology as that of the “infinitely large” (Deleuze 1994: 42–43). Genuine infinity is only revealed through the sublation of this spurious infinite progression. The three remarks on differential calculus aim to achieve this sublation. Hegel demonstrates how the infinite quantum inherently encompasses both externality and its negation.

[...] it is thus no longer any finite quantum, not a quantitative determinateness which would have a *determinate being as quantum*; it is simple, and therefore only a *moment*. It is a quantitative determinateness in *qualitative* form; its infinity consists in its being a *qualitative determinateness*. As such moment, it is in essential unity with its other, and is only as determined by this its other, i.e. it has meaning solely with reference to that which stands in *relation* to it. *Apart from this relation* it is a *nullity* – simply because quantum as such is indifferent *to the relation*, yet in the relation is supposed to be an *immediate*, inert determination. As only a moment, it is, *in the relation*, not an independent, indifferent something; the quantum in its infinity is a *being-for-self*, for it is at the same time a quantitative determinateness only in the form of a *being-for-one* (Hegel 1969: 244–245).

Hegel’s goal is to understand elements that only exist within a relation and have no separate existence (in political terms, the individuals who exist outside of a social relation – a form of *socius* – have no existence). He seeks to identify a specific relation where the terms are interdependent: the differential relationship. Hegel uses mathematical examples to demonstrate this concept, eliminating false relations where the terms are external to each other. For instance, in the case of fractional numbers like $2/7$, the individual numbers 2 and 7 are independent of each other. 2 is 2 outside the relation with 7, while 7 is 7 outside the relation with 2. Later, he examines fractions involving unknown quantities represented by letters such as a and b : a/b . Unlike specific numbers like 2 and 7, a and b represent undetermined numerical values. However, even though they lack a specific value, they still signify a finite quantity without their relation.

Hegel also explores the use of variables x and y in functions involving curved lines, illustrating *qualitative* relations rather than mere quantities. The function usually expresses power-relations (y^2/x), where x has no relation to y but to its

square (y^2). “The relation of a magnitude to a *power* is not a *quantum*, but essentially a *qualitative* relation” (ibid.: 252). However, on the one hand “in the place, too, of x and y of a function, there can be put an infinite, i.e. inexhaustible, multitude of numbers” (ibid.: 251), that is, x and y are nothing else than signs that take the place of the variable. “In an equation in which x and y are determined primarily by a power-relation, x and y as such are still supposed to signify quanta” (ibid.: 253). On the other hand, the power, as a number, is still an aggregate (*Menge*).⁵ In essence, the reference to relations between independent elements, the relations conceived as either *Menge* or *Zusammensetzung* are still implicit. The essence of quantum is only found in the formula of differential calculus (dy/dx):

Dx dy, are no longer quanta, nor are they supposed to signify quanta; it is solely in their relation to each other that they have any meaning, a *meaning merely as moments*. They are no longer *something* (something taken as a quantum), not finite differences; but neither are they *nothing*; not empty nullities. Apart from their relation they are pure nullities, but they are intended to be taken only as moments of the relation, as *determinations* of the differential co-efficient dy/dx (ibid.: 253).

It is true that Hegel still presents the quantitative determination (*Bestimmtheit*) as a fundamental principle. However, the differential relation dy/dx indicates the quantitative elements it determines only in one direction, while pointing to the qualitative element underlying every quantitative relation in the other direction: the interior relation, which is not exterior (*Verhältnis*). “With the qualitative aspect as such there begins a new order, the specifying of which is no longer only a matter of quantitative difference” (ibid.: 362). This qualitative element is not only the condition of possibility of *quantum*, but also its genetic element.⁶ By maintaining its quantitative nature, Hegel avoids reverting to mere quality (first section of the *Doctrine of Being*) and achieves the unity of quantity and quality: transition to the measure (*das Maß*), and, in short, to the sublation of Being into Essence, where all the quantitative differences, the independent “somethings”, will only be the appearance of the Essence.

Briefly, the remarks on differential calculus are crucial to the *Science of Logic*. And the exposition presents a strong affinity with that of Deleuze:

[The pure element of quantifiability must] be distinguished both from the fixed quantities of intuition [*quantum*] and from variable quantities in the form of concepts of the understanding [*quantitas*]. The symbol which expresses it is therefore completely undetermined: dx is strictly nothing in relation to x , as dy is in relation to y [...] but they are perfectly determinable in relation to one

5 “Now power is number (magnitude as the more general term may be preferred, but it is in itself always number), and hence a plurality [*Menge*]”, Hegel 1969: 280.

6 Deleuze contends that post-Kantian thinkers criticized Kant for holding fast “to the point of view of conditioning without attaining that of genesis” (Deleuze 1994: 170). Deleuze suggests that the perspective of genesis is connected to the ability to envision relationships that are “internal to the Idea”, rather than being external or merely quantitative.

another. For this reason, a principle of determinability corresponds to the undetermined as such. The universal is not a nothing since there are, in Bordas' expression, 'relations of the universal'. Dx and dy are completely undifferentiated [*indifferencies*], in the particular and in the general, but completely differentiated [*differencies*] in and by the universal. The relation dy/dx is not like a fraction which is established between particular quanta in intuition [...]. Each term exists absolutely only in its relation to the other (Deleuze 1994: 171–172).⁷

The undetermined (dx , dy), the determinable (dy/dx), and the determination (values of dy and dx) form the internal relation of the Deleuzian Idea (ibid.: 171).⁸ This does not involve relationships between external, quantitative elements. Deleuze implicitly adopts Hegel's description and moves away from a quantitative perspective on reality towards the pure concept of quality: the relation (*rapport*). Reality's constituent parts are not isolated entities (not 2 or 7 , not a or b , not y or x) with a self-sufficient or external determination, but the undetermined (dy , dx) that solely reach their determination dy/dx in their connection.

Deleuze, like Hegel, acknowledges the limitations of the differential relationship. According to Deleuze "in so far as it expresses another quality, the differential relation remains tied to the individual values or to the quantitative variations corresponding to that quality" (ibid.: 172). The qualitative connection between dy and dx actualizes itself in individual values (*quanta*) through the process of *différenciation* (with a "c"), also referred to by Deleuze as the "actualization"

7 "We will define it verbally, conventionally; we will say that dx or dy is the infinitely small quantity assumed to be added or subtracted from x or from y . Now there is an invention! The infinitely small quantity, that is, it's the smallest variation of the quantity considered. And whatever you say, if you say, ah good, so it's the ten millionth, it's still even smaller. As we say, it is unassignable; one must not try to assign it, it's unassignable. By convention, it's unassignable. You'll ask me, so what is that, $dx =$ what? Well, $dx = 0$; $dy =$ what? $dx = 0$ in x , in relation to x ; it's the smallest quantity, right, from which x might vary, and that equals 0. $dy = 0$ in relation to y . [...] miracle! dy over dx is not equal to zero, and furthermore: dy over dx has a perfectly expressible finite quantity" (Deleuze 1980).

8 Deleuze exemplifies the tripartite structure of the Idea with the difference between the Cartesian and the Kantian Cogito: "nothing is more instructive than the difference between the Kantian and the Cartesian Cogito. It is as though Descartes' Cogito operated with two logical values: determination and undetermined existence. The determination (I think) implies an undetermined existence (I am, because 'in order to think one must exist') [...] The entire Kantian critique amounts to objecting against Descartes that it is impossible for determination to bear directly upon the undetermined. The determination ('I think') obviously implies something undetermined ('I am'), but nothing so far tells us how it is that this undetermined is determinable by the 'I think'. [...] Kant therefore adds a third logical value: the determinable, or rather the form in which the undetermined is determinable (by the determination). [...] Kant's answer is well known: the form under which undetermined existence is determinable by the 'I think' is that of time" (Deleuze 1994: 85–86). Further on, he will link this tripartition to his theory of the Idea: "It is apparent that Ideas here repeat the three aspects of the Cogito: the I am as an indeterminate existence, time as the form under which this existence is determinable, and the I think as a determination" (ibid.: 169).

(or even “incarnation”) of the virtual, where the Ideal field is the realm of the *virtual* while the quantitative/extensive field is the *actual*. This interpretation allows for understanding the differential relationship of the Ideas through the empirical bonds that tie them to reality. However, “this is only a first aspect” (ibid.: 172). The ontological significance of the differential relationship mirrors Hegel’s approach, expressing the pure element of quantifiability and *différentiation* (with a “t”). The *différentiation* – ensemble of differential relationships in the field of Ideas – leads to the transcendental realm of thought, where the genesis of the world and social structures becomes conceivable.

5. State and Capitalism

In Deleuze, similar to Hegel, the Idea serves as the genetic element from which seemingly autonomous existences follow. This ontological basis allows for the exploration of the political realm, moving beyond the image of social relations as mere coincidental connections among individuals (*Zusammengesetzung*). Instead, the focus shifts towards understanding individuals in relation to social structures, aiming to uncover the productive instance or the pure *social* component element of the quantifiability (Ideas).

In Hegel, the differential relation is the basic stage from an ontological perspective. It appears towards the end of the section on Being, with the doctrine of Essence and the entirety of subjective logic (the doctrine of Notion) yet to follow. Nevertheless, in terms of political philosophy, this marks a significant moment, aligning with the shift from civil society to the State. Within differential calculus, we can understand why the State is not reliant on the individuals considered as its foundational components (as suggested by the contractualist tradition). Instead, it is the State that gives reason to them; “the social bond is a product of political construction, not an attribute of civil society”, in terms of Abad and Paez Canosa, as we saw above (2007: 382). The influential Argentine political philosopher Jorge Dotti points out this convergence of the political and ontological points of view in Hegel:

Family and civil society come before the State sphere in the exposition. However, this derivation does not imply that the State is conditioned by its preceding moments. On the contrary, it emerges as their reason for being from both a metaphysical and juridico-philosophical perspective. [...] “In reality”, the “true essence” of the family and particularly of civil society is to be “ideal moments” (that is, to be dialectically dissolved into the apparent hostility of the universal), serving as preparatory stages for the ultimate blooming or extroversion of their deeper reason of being, the State as the totalizing and worldly fulfillment of the absolute (Dotti 1983: 121).

The State is the political instance which incarnates the sublation of external relations among independent elements (*Menge*) and gives reason for them. According to Hegel, it corresponds to the rich development of the Essence and the Notion (*Begriff*) within the Idea. Deleuze also envisions a concept that

transcends independent elements and acknowledges them, referring to it as the “Idea”. However, he avoids to identify it as the “State”. This rejection is not primarily due to his rejection of “negativity” as commonly believed, but more accurately due to the process of alienation and return (*Rückkehr*) involved in the Hegelian Essence, and the circular relationship between the Notion and its political realization (the State). Hegel views the circular form as a means to avoid descending into spurious infinity (or quantitative infinity). Conversely, the Deleuzian social concept does not alienate itself, but rather differentiates within the political structure (forms of *socius*). There is no return or circularity, and notably, there is no unity of the Idea. Deleuze rejects the notion of a singular Idea, consequently negating a single social form capable of embodying it. Perhaps Deleuze’s divergence from the “Hegelianism of right”, as proposed by Weil and Kojève (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 556), stems from the rejection of a unified Idea and its singular embodiment, whether as State or Capital.⁹

Based on our research, the Deleuzian social concept does not oppose the State in Hegel as Deleuze suggests in his statements, but rather shows conceptual affinity. In the Deleuzian system, the forms of *socius* hold a similar conceptual position to the State in Hegel’s system. Therefore, we believe that Deleuze’s political philosophy does not signify a complete departure from Hegel’s philosophy, but can be seen as part of its legacy. Unlike Hegel, who sees the State as the sole means of realizing a single Idea, Deleuze presents a multitude of Ideas with various manifestations. Each social relation or form of *socius* represents a *différentiation* of a social Idea that is not unique, but the outcome of an ongoing synthesis of differences. Our current social structure embodies a specific Idea. On this ground, Deleuze and Guattari define “capitalism” as a differential relation dy/dx , in a quite mysterious passage that we are now able to comprehend:

[...] the capitalist machine begins when capital ceases to be a capital of alliance to become a filiative capital. Capital becomes filiative when money begets money, or value a surplus value [...] We are no longer in the domain of the quantum or of the quantitas, but in that of the differential relation as a conjunction that defines the immanent social field particular to capitalism [...] This is the differential relation Dy/Dx , where Dy derives from labor power and constitutes the fluctuation of variable capital, and where Dx derives from capital itself and constitutes the fluctuation of constant capital (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 227–228).

9 In the case of Weil, the Hegelian ontology will realize itself in a State that has not yet existed, but is on the horizon. Its realization through war may explain Deleuze’s rejection of the State (Weil 1970: 130–131). In the case of Kojève, through his interpretation of the “death of man” in the last pages of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in the form of hegemony of capital and the triumph of the *American Way of Life*, he was “led to conclude from this that the ‘American way of life’ was the type of life specific to the post-historical period, the actual presence of the United States in the world prefiguring the ‘eternal present’ future of all of humanity. Thus, Man’s return to animality appeared no longer as a possibility that was yet to come, but as a certainty that was already present” (Kojève 1969: 161).

The reference to Marx's variable and constant capital might be misleading. Within Deleuze and Guattari's framework, these concepts should not be understood in the context of quantitative logic. Neither is Dy derived from labor force as it existed in pre-capitalist societies, nor is Dx derived from merchant capital. What is described as existing "in the very pores" of the old social structure according to Marx's formula (ibid.: 223) is not a reference point for the development of capitalism. Labor power and capital are not quantitative, indifferent, or random components. The differential relationship is not "tied to the individual values or to the quantitative variations corresponding to that quality" (Deleuze 1994: 172).

The Hegelian perspective enables us to access the pure element of quality. The components (dy , dx , labor flow, capital flow) are dependent on the social relationship (dy/dx), which in turn relies on the ideal genetic element: the form of the determinable, serving as the mediation that articulates and generates the flow constituting the process. Once more, we encounter the tripartite configuration of the Deleuzian idea: the undetermined (dx , dy), the determinable (dy/dx), and the determination (values of dy/dx). However, this time, it is manifested within the components of the capitalist *socius*: the labor and capital value as determination, the human and monetary material as the undetermined, and the differential relation between labor and capital as the determinable.

There is no despotic determination that compels the elements to operate in a capitalist manner. The determination does not directly affect the undetermined. This does not lead to the breakdown of social bonds or fragmentation into aggregate or mass (*Menge*). The concept "reunites and articulates that which it distinguishes" (ibid.: 170) and adds a quality to the extension that goes beyond mere quantity.¹⁰ The real subsumption of the production process to capital does not rely on an external entity to explain how the worker "obeys" the capitalist, but the determinations (*value* of labor, *value* of capital) are produced by the genetic instance in the capitalist social process. Additionally, these eidetic relations, in order to exist, must be reflected in empirical relations, where human struggles play a crucial role.

This conception applies not only to capitalist societies but also to all types of social organizations. The political incarnations of distinct Ideas do not emerge from the collision of external elements, and it does not occur as a miracle, but is the object of a careful creation, which is the task of political philosophy.¹¹ This applies also to a *future socius* yet to be created. At the same time, it must be politically incarnated, through the struggle of the concrete human beings that shape history.

10 "These give rise to the greatest monotonies and the greatest weaknesses of a new-found common sense in the absence of the genius of the Idea, but also to the most powerful 'repetitions' [...] when the Idea emerges in all its violence" (Deleuze 1994: 195).

11 On political creation, Ferreyra 2022.

Conclusion

If the “war machines” were the Good, while the “apparatus of capture” was the Evil, then the only practical conclusion of Deleuze and Guattari’s political philosophy would be an intensive struggle through micro-politics and various forms of resistance to the macro-political alliance of the Evil forces of Capitalism and the State. However, if the State and the “apparatus of capture” are not essentially evil, then we can find in these concepts, such as they are exposed in Deleuze and Guattari’s work, many valuable elements that can be useful tools in contemporary struggles. The Deleuzian State, differing from traditional perspectives, would lack a transcendent foundation, would be immanent to the people, and thus responsive to the varied needs and demands of minorities. Amidst the tumult of today’s political landscape, where individual profit-driven motives and brute strength often take an inhuman shape, the Deleuzian State, rooted in the differential relation of multiplicities, appears as a realm where the vital essence of human power to exist can be fostered and preserved.

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Hulijan Ferejra

Delez i hegelijanska država

Apstrakt

Ovaj rad analizira političku filozofiju Žila Deleza u odnosu na hegelijanski koncept države. Da bismo to uradili, identifikujemo tri interpretacije pojma „država“ u Delezovim delima: 1) kao referentnu tačku koja definiše tri oblika socius-a kako je predstavljena u *Anti-Edipu* (primitivni teritorijalni, varvarski despotski i civilizovani kapitalistički); 2) kao određujuću crtu despotske socius forme; i 3) kao internalizaciju ovog oblika (*Urstaat*). Delez se u svakoj od ovih interpretacija pojavljuje kao oštar kritičar države. Međutim, sledeći deo rada otkriva da se ova kritika ne zalaže za fragmentaciju društva. Upoređivanjem Delezove političke filozofije sa Hegelovom, pokazujemo da oblici socius-a u Delezovom sistemu zauzimaju konceptualno mesto Države u Hegelovom okviru. Kroz istraživanje uloge diferencijalnog računa u ontologiji oba filozofa, uspostavljamo osnovu za filozofsko ispitivanje dominantnog društvenog odnosa u savremenom svetu (koji je kapitalizam, a ne država) i preduslove za novi politički socius.

Ključne reči: Delez, Hegel, država, građansko društvo, agregat, diferencijalni račun, kapitalizam, pojedinci.

