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Metaphysics as praxis : Rereading Dōgen's Metaphysics through Deleuzian pragmatism and Pratīyasamutpāda

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CHAPTER FOUR
DELEUZIAN PRAGMATISM AND METAPHYSICS

4.1 Introduction

In the last chapter, I had analyzed the pros and cons of four types of comparative interpretations of Dōgen from the perspective of *pratīyasamutpāda*. I had concluded that all four interpretations by Abe, Heine, Kasulis and Glass not only veered to *dhātu-vāda* by reiterating various aspects of *Hongaku-shisō*, but also shared one limitation. It was their presumption that Dōgen's ontology is describing a 'true' state of reality or of consciousness. This implies that all four readings assumed that Dōgen's ontology functions within a correspondence theoretical framework which conditioned their interpretations within *dhātu-vāda*.

On the other hand, there were several points that could be learned from their readings. Kasulis introduced the initial approach of viewing everything Dōgen says from its utility in practice. However, Kasulis did not take this approach to full effect due to his fundamental reliance on a phenomenological framework which lead him to presume the existence of an objective 'true' consciousness which transgressed into *dhātu-vāda*. In addition, Kasulis tried to avoid ontology altogether rather than to read Dōgen's ideas as metaphysics.²⁵⁴ Glass put forth the view that Dōgen's ideas on Buddha-nature should be of use in meditational practice. This is a view the current study will also attempt to argue for, yet Glass failed to affirm and interpret Buddha-nature in a manner congruent to *pratīyasamutpāda* by taking an essentialist perspective. In addition, while Glass made the bold move to incorporate Deleuze's philosophy in his interpretation of Buddhist practice, he merely reduced Deleuze to his essentialist ontology and failed to use Deleuze in a manner which may have

²⁵⁴ Additionally Kasulis was ambivalent as to how far he took this avoidance of ontology, since despite this seeming avoidance, he latently accepted a fundamental ontology of 'presence,' which again made him veer to *dhātu-vāda*.

freed his Dōgen interpretation from correspondence theory and dhātu-vāda.

The current study attempts to interpret Dōgen's metaphysical ideas of Buddha-nature and temporality by adherence to praṭītyasamutpāda, altruistic ethics and in a manner faithful to Dōgen's concern over the priority of practice. In order to do so, the Critical Buddhist denial of all ontology as dhātu-vāda, or the reiteration of Hongaku inspired dhātu-vāda in the comparative interpretations of Dōgen's ontology should be abandoned. I had shown in the past two chapters that both of these views implied the same prejudice that ontology/metaphysics must be by nature 'representational.' Therefore, Dōgen's metaphysics was understood as a description of a corresponding 'truth' of reality or of the mind. The idea that Dōgen's metaphysics corresponds to reality is dhātu-vāda since the correspondence theoretical framework implies the existence of a corresponding 'truth' independent of the causal process of experience. Rather, the current study hopes to free Dōgen from dhātu-vāda by interpreting his metaphysics as purely practical tools for spiritual practice that does not need to be 'correspondent' to any objective 'truth.' In this sense the current study takes Kasulis's approach of seeing Dōgen's ontology as practically significant to its logical extreme by divorcing ontology from correspondence. My conviction is that Deleuze's concepts based on his empiricist pragmatism, such as 'heterogenesis,' 'internal difference,' and 'virtuality/actuality' can be helpful to achieve such an interpretation of Dōgen. However, we must utilize Deleuze in a manner different from Glass's example. Rather than reducing Deleuze's ideas to essentialism or correspondence theory, Deleuze may offer us a fully alternative approach to metaphysics.

Deleuze's pragmatism may present us with an alternative attitude in utilizing metaphysics centred on how concepts function and for what purpose, as opposed to explicating what reality is. Upon such an understanding, metaphysical concepts do not (and may not necessarily have to) represent corresponding 'truths.' Rather, they become necessary functions for our process of making sense of the world. We will see in this chapter that from the perspective of Deleuze's pragmatism the question of metaphysics becomes: what metaphysical concept, and for what purpose? When this is applied to praṭītyasamutpāda, we may be able to resolve the Critical Buddhist prejudice that praṭītyasamutpāda is incompatible with ontology. Praṭītyasamutpāda may be articulated as a

conceptual condition within which Buddhist practice functions as opposed to being understood as a concept designating the ‘true-way-reality-is.’

When such a pragmatist view of *pratītyasamutpāda* is applied to Dōgen, the question becomes transformed from the representational concern of what kind of reality are his concepts of Buddha-nature and time entailing, to the practical question of how can Dōgen’s concepts of Buddha-nature and time be made to *function* for the practical purpose laid out by *pratītyasamutpāda*? Dōgen’s metaphysical concepts may not have to correspond to some ‘ultimate reality’ or ‘the true-way-reality-is,’ but be purely functional to achieve practical purposes. Such a pragmatist framework may help in presenting an interpretation of Dōgen’s metaphysics which overcomes the limitations of correspondence theory. This may eventually allow us to affirm Glass’s insight that Buddha-nature is an important concept for Buddhist practice yet in a manner beyond correspondence to an ontological ‘locus.’

However, for Deleuze’s concepts to be applicable to an interpretation of Dōgen respecting *pratītyasamutpāda*, we must analyze if Deleuze’s concepts are themselves compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda*. In contrast to Glass, our aim is to understand and utilize Deleuze’s ideas within his contexts of re-conceiving philosophy as practice beyond correspondence theory. This way, we can avoid reducing Deleuze’s ideas to contexts that may not be compatible with his pragmatist stance. Reducing Deleuze’s ideas to an ontology based on representation, essentialism, foundationalism, transcendentalism, and realism, preclude giving full scope to the maximum potential of his concepts. The reason for this will become apparent through the course of the following analysis that Deleuze’s philosophy may be fundamentally antithetical to such perspectives in philosophy. If so, this may be opportune for the current study as it may help locate Deleuze’s philosophy as compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda* which equally do not sit in with the above philosophical views.

Making the case that Deleuze’s concepts may be useful tools to read Dōgen necessitates answering the following questions. How does Deleuze conceive metaphysics as practical in relation to his ethical stance? How does his empiricist based pragmatism and his metaphysical ideas on virtuality/actuality function in relation to such practice? Are these ideas compatible with

pratītyasamutpāda? If so, how can they help reconcile pratītyasamutpāda with ontology and interpret Dōgen’s concepts of Buddha-nature and time in relation to practice beyond correspondence theory and dhātu-vāda?

4.2 The Ethical Backgrounds for Pragmatism

The compatibility between Deleuze and Buddhism founded on pratītyasamutpāda may first be sought in how Deleuze’s philosophy may be designed to be practical. As we saw in our analysis of pratītyasamutpāda in chapter two, Buddhist ideas such as causality, no-abiding-self, and impermanence were integrated within the practice of cultivating altruism through correct insight into the nature of experienced reality. In this sense the ontological implications of pratītyasamutpāda was incorporated within the practice of ethics by conditioning, affirming and supporting the analysis of experience through which altruism is realized. Deleuze’s philosophy may be opportune as a tool to read Dōgen if, and only if it also considers ontology or metaphysics as related to the problem of ethics.

My hypothesis is that Deleuze’s pragmatism establishes the justifications as to how metaphysics can become the tool to construct the conceptual conditions in which certain ethical practices and modes of life can be enhanced. Therefore, examining how Deleuze’s pragmatism and metaphysics of virtuality works first asks for an explanation of how Deleuze’s conception of the act of metaphysical thinking is tied in with his particular ethics of life. This is important since I believe that Deleuze’s pragmatism does not simply replace representation and transcendence with a pragmatist epistemology and ontology. Rather, his metaphysics functions in a manner that becomes “practical” for the sake of fulfilling an ethical purpose. For Deleuze, thinking metaphysically is not a theoretical endeavor; it itself becomes praxis founded on a particular ethics. Therefore, we will need to understand Deleuze’s ethical purpose and how it is linked to the specific problems of representation and transcendence in order to lay the basis of Deleuze’s pragmatism and ultimately help argue why it may be compatible with pratītyasamutpāda. How does Deleuze’s ethics condition his view of

making metaphysics practical? Does this involve the overcoming of correspondence theory and transcendentalism? If so, will this help locate Deleuze's ideas as compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda*?

4.2.1 To Do Away with Ill Conscience: Deleuze's Ethics of Life

The ethical significance Deleuze gives to metaphysics could be summarized by a simple question that forms a maxim for his philosophy. This question is, "What is life capable of?" or, reworded in a more practical manner, "How might one live?"²⁵⁵ Deleuze considers the act of creation as fundamental to existence and that life, the act of thinking, and the creation of concepts all partake in this fundamental activity. Hence, any negative forces that obstruct the potentials of creation to be realized to its nth power must always be resisted. For Deleuze, the correspondence theory of truth, and the privileging of the concept of transcendence in the epistemological and ontological frameworks that have historically moulded the modern mind are hindrances that prevent the realization of this fundamental potential of creation within life. Therefore, ontology needs a thorough reconsideration in order to overcome this problem of representation and transcendence.

For Deleuze, ontology and metaphysics are not a hindrance in addressing this concrete problem of life; accordingly, he finds the question of the "death of philosophy" or the "death of metaphysics" to be absolutely devoid of meaning.²⁵⁶ According to Deleuze, ontology and metaphysics are not in and out of themselves the root of oppression against the creative potential of existence. Deleuze conceives that as long as we can create new ways of understanding and making use of

²⁵⁵ The view that Deleuze's philosophy can be understood as first and foremost involved with the problem of life in transforming the way we conceive of ourselves and reality is shared by such scholars as, Todd May, *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ., 2005), 1-25. John Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 80-111. Claire Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, (London: Routledge, 2002), 1-2. Simon O'Sullivan, "The Production of the New and the Care of the Self" on *Deleuze, Guattari and the Production of the New* (London: Continuum, 2008), 91-103.

²⁵⁶ Alain Badiou, *Deleuze: the Clamor of Being*, Trans. Louise Burchill, (Mineapolis: Minnesota Univ. 2002), 21. Jean-Jacques Lecercle, *Deleuze and Language*, (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 247-248. Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze and Guattari*, (London: Routledge, 1989), 78. May points out that while for Foucault and Derrida to leave behind the dogmatic image of thought means to abandon ontology, "Deleuze does not agree. Ontology itself has strange adventures in store for us, if only we can think differently about how it might be conceived." May, *Gilles Deleuze*, 80-81.

metaphysics, metaphysics continues to hold great potentials to become a tool with which we can create new worldviews, questions, and re-conceptions of what the world and we ourselves are capable of. The problem rather lies in the way metaphysics ties to representation and transcendence. As Deleuze and his co-author Guattari set out extensively in their two *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* volumes, they consider the problem of representation and transcendence as deeply related to human psychological conditions that negate the creative potentials of life. They also observe that the modern social-apparatus constructed by the epistemological and ontological regime of representation, identity, and transcendence seeds these conditions as tools to subjugate people to their power.²⁵⁷ Therefore, overcoming representation embedded in our lives is not only an individual ethical concern, but simultaneously a social/political one, since in effect, it can resist power and free creation from oppression.

Deleuze borrows from Nietzsche in calling these psychological conditions, ‘ill conscience’ or ‘bad conscience.’ Ill conscience is exemplified by such psychological states as resignation, resentment, guilt, reactivity, revenge, nihilism, sad affections and regret. These psychological states share one common feature, which is, that they hinder one’s ability to give unreserved affirmation to the powers of creation, or in other words, they negate life.²⁵⁸ If metaphysics is to become an efficient tool to aid the realization of what we are capable of beyond ill conscience, then it needs to leave behind representation and transcendence. In this sense we can see that Deleuze’s philosophy is founded on an ethical concern which it wants to address through practical philosophy. However, to argue for what extent this ethical foundation is compatible with *pratyasamutpāda* necessitates further analysis of how Deleuze considers the problem of representation and transcendence to be embedded in our psychological conditioning by ill conscience. This leads to examining what Deleuze called

²⁵⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Trans. Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis: Minnesota Univ., 1987), 282, 111-148. Also on *Dialogues II* Deleuze states: “We live in a world which is generally disagreeable, where not only people but the established powers have a stake in transmitting sad affects to us. Sadness, sad affects, are all those which reduces our power to act. The established powers need our sadness to make us slaves.” (46)

²⁵⁸ For example, resignation keeps one away from acting and creating by tying one down to a form of determinism or fatalism founded on an obsession with a judgment of what is to come. Resentment always ties one down to a sense of inferiority and self-denial in contrast to an allegedly superior other. Reacting rather than acting overtakes one’s mind by the need to protect preconceived ideas, statuses and identities, rather than to realize an undeterminable sense of pure creation without attachment to static dogmatism.

‘common sense’ as I will analyze in the following section.

4.2.2 ‘Representation’ and ‘Transcendence’ in Relation to ‘Common Sense’

I had previously analyzed how *pratītyasamutpāda* cannot accommodate ‘representation’ and ‘transcendence.’ The former implies a realism of matter and/or idea which exists apart from the causal process of experience and the later implies an independent existence beyond causality. To the extent *pratītyasamutpāda* conditions Buddhism to understand phenomena as the experience of the causal process of the *skandhas*, this cannot allow for a clearly distinguished independent subject in contrast to an objective reality, as we saw in the doctrine of no-abiding-self. All phenomena including the ‘self’ are a shifting experience which happens by way of the causal relation amongst the *skandhas*. Therefore, if we can show how Deleuze also considers the problem of representation, realism, transcendence, essentialism and foundationalism as problematic, we can make a stronger case for the compatibility between his ideas and *pratītyasamutpāda*. In addition, clarifying what Deleuze calls ‘common sense’ will help elucidate how he analyzed the epistemological and ontological problems of representation and transcendence and how these problems lead to the unavoidable necessity for his pragmatist turn.

Deleuze observes that the ills of representational thought are typified in what he calls ‘common sense,’²⁵⁹ which becomes a major problem for life to affirm and realize its maximum potential to create. ‘Common sense’ for Deleuze is what designates an epistemological framework in which concepts and images are exclusively tied to the correspondence theory of truth whereby ideas pertaining to singularities, multiplicities, constant change and differences are subordinated to homogeneity, identity, reduction to hegemonic ideas and meanings. Common sense makes difference secondary by reducing it to representation and identity, since it relies on the assurance of a three-fold identity structure that is taken for granted. This threefold structure runs as follows.

²⁵⁹ For Deleuze’s view on “common sense” see: Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, Trans. Mark Lester, (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1990), 77-80. Also John Marks, *Gilles Deleuze: Vitalism and Multiplicity*, (London: Pluto Press, 1998), 80-81.

First is the unquestioned expectation that the ‘Self’ perceiving the object is a constant self-identical subject, which stands in contrast to an “objective” world existing “outside” of the ‘Self.’ I will later explain why I believe that this view implies the notion of the ‘Self’ as a persistent essence which complies with what Buddhism problematizes as *svabhāva*. Secondly, common sense takes for granted that this dualistic structure of “inside self” coming in relation to an “outside” reality universally constitutes all of reality/experience, and therefore, is identical throughout all phenomena.²⁶⁰ Thirdly, common sense takes for granted that there exists an assured identity between the knowledge gained by the “inside” self and the objective “outside” reality to which the knowledge corresponds, and that this knowledge is always identical amongst all “selves” coming into contact with that particular “outside” reality. In other words, common sense takes a static and universal notion of knowledge for granted. Let us apply this threefold identity structure of common sense by using the example of a “subject” perceiving a tree. Common sense understands that the “self” that is seeing the tree will always be the predefined “self” and the tree the self perceives will always be what we came to define as the tree. The idea that we may be capable of more than what we defined as our “selves” or that the tree we are perceiving may be capable of more than what we came to identify it to be is neglected by common sense. Consequently, common sense is based on a reduction of difference to a mutual consensus founded on the idea that there must be a common ground amongst all things that makes understanding phenomena possible. In short, common sense is an understanding of reality based on compliance to *doxa*, representation, foundations, hegemonic rules, and static knowledge, and cannot be efficiently expressive or affirmative of multiplicity, difference, creativity, novelty and constant change (or movement, becoming).

Deleuze also observes that the problems of common sense / theory of correspondence repeat what he views as an ill tendency in the way the concept of transcendence had been valued throughout the history of Western thought. For Deleuze, concepts pertaining to transcendence are typified by two overarching qualities. On the one hand, transcendence necessitates two ontological substances which are distinct yet somehow interact. On the other hand, one of these substances is valued as

²⁶⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, Trans. Paul Patton, (London: Continuum, 2004), 226.

qualitatively superior to the other.²⁶¹ Deleuze agrees with Nietzsche on this and observes that placing some kind of superior transcendent reality as being primary to, overruling, and constituting the reason of ordinary reality has led to a history of resentment and ascetic self-denial, inhibiting their power to create in contrast to the omnipotence attributed to transcendence. The qualitative superiority granted to what is transcendent (whether it be God, some Absolute Truth, entity, or metaphysical reality) means that transcendence is privileged at the expense of our immanent reality. Our immanent reality must always be subordinated and negated in order to preserve the superiority of transcendence. Consequently, transcendence seeds ill conscience since it hinders a full affirmation of the creative potentials of life through a prejudice about the limits of what our immanent existence is capable of.²⁶²

The dualism between 'Self' and 'outside reality' embedded in the representational structure of common sense repeats the above shortcomings of transcendence. Because the 'subject' is considered ontologically privileged as preceding and in a position of coordinating what is 'outwardly real.' The tree has no meaning or knowledge produced without a 'Self' that perceives it; the knowledge of the tree and the significance for its existence is only created when the 'Self' interacts with it. According to the dualism of representation, the tree never assumes significance; it is always the judging subject that is superior to the tree, organizes, gives meaning, and value to the knowledge of the exterior world. Here, the assumed self-contained nature and centrality of the 'subject' is always considered naturally granted, unhindered, unaltered, uninfluenced and un-violated by the 'exteriority' it comes to understand; therefore the subject/self always transcends the exteriority (it comes to know).²⁶³ Consequently, the concept of the 'Self' becomes a common sense concept, something considered to be 'obvious' and to somehow be universally common as a 'dogmatic image of thought' which dictates

²⁶¹ May, *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, 29-31.

²⁶² This aspect of Deleuze's practical philosophy that shuns transcendence in preference for a life in immanence, also owes to the influence of Spinoza. In Spinozist terms ill conscience will refer to what he calls "sad affections" which hinder a 'body's' capacity to affirm its innate power to create ideas expressive of its own cause, un-reliant to outside forces (i.e. reaching 'adequate ideas' that "are true ideas, which are in us as they are in God. They are not representative of states of things or of what happens to us, but of what we are and of what things are."). Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza Practical Philosophy*, Trans. Robert Hurley, (San Francisco: City Light, 1988), 74.

As to the link between Deleuze's practical philosophy and Spinoza also see:

Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1993), 56-111. Stephen Zepke, *Art as Abstract Machine: Ontology and Aesthetics in Deleuze and Guattari*, (London: Routledge, 2005), 41-75.

²⁶³ May, *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, 28.

and judges what is an “acceptable” view of selfhood by reduction of all difference to the boundaries of the concept. In short, transcendence, whether as a concept of Self, God, or some principle law, is considered ‘obvious’ whose state of reality is somehow intrinsically-grounded (*causa sui*) and therefore assures common sense as its grounding principle. All differences are measured and judged in contrast to the supposed universality of this principle that negates difference in accordance to what is “acceptable” within its boundaries.

In addition to the above, the dualism of “subject” and “object” embedded in transcendence and representation introduces a form of ontological and epistemological determinism concerning the origins of knowledge. Deleuze and Guattari find such determinism in representation so problematic that they even refer to representation as a recurring disease that is “humankind’s fundamental neurosis,” its “interpretosis.”²⁶⁴ Representation introduces determinism since it places knowledge as rooted in the form of a corresponding truth that is ontologically and epistemologically pre-existing “outside” our mind whether beyond or beneath phenomena, and hidden from immediate reality as a principle of, or as the meaning waiting to be “discovered” by the subject.²⁶⁵ To this extent, ‘common sense’ tends towards a foundationalism and/or an essentialism that believes knowledge is predetermined by either an ‘objectively’ existing ground, or an intrinsic ‘truth’ within each existence waiting to be uncovered. Therefore, “interpretosis” limits the human psychology to a belief that there *must be* “some meaning or truth awaiting interpretation, revelation or disclosure.”²⁶⁶ Consequently, “interpretosis” is a source for ill conscience in the form of fatalism, resignation and nihilism since it is an obsession with pre-judgments concerning what life and reality are capable of. Such a view cannot accommodate the potential that knowledge and meaning may be seen as a continuously mutating reality that is taking place as an inseparable process, whose location is indeterminate by “outside” or “inside,” but always in the “middle.”²⁶⁷ With interpretosis, life loses its creative impetus since one has

²⁶⁴ Deleuze, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 114.

²⁶⁵ As Colebrook points out, Deleuze and Guattari’s critical view of transcendence can well be described in alliance with Foucault’s views on transcendence as a reliance on an ‘exteriority’ as a foundation to knowledge, which leads to an ‘ethics of knowledge’ that imagines “if we get the facts about some outside world right then we will know what to do.” For Deleuze this ethics limits what life is capable of since it is always caught up in chasing an image of what is right which is understood to exist prior to/exterior to the act of thought or language. It traps thought in the image that thought or language must be founded upon its assertability to this exterior truth. Colebrook, 71.

²⁶⁶ Colebrook, 71.

²⁶⁷ Deleuze often describes of the way reality should no longer be conceived of a clear division between subject

already decided on how reality works and can only act and understand in accordance to that view. Consequently, life becomes an obsession with constructing comfort zones by “discovering” preordained meanings, which should be “out there,” and will be the eternal solution that solves problems once and for all.

In summary, Deleuze problematized representation on both ontological and epistemological grounds in relation to his ethics. Representation hinders conceiving phenomena in terms of difference and constant creation by implying the self-identity of a subject in contrast to the objective world. The subject was considered transcendentally privileged to the reality it comes to know, as it was believed to be independent of and unhindered by reality. The knowledge the subject gains from reality was considered identical amongst all cases and therefore universally applicable. In addition, knowledge and meaning were considered preordained and independent from the experience of knowing, a condition Deleuze called interpretosis. Collectively, this means that representation implies a form of ontological essentialism in understanding the duality of subject and object as well as a foundationalism of knowledge which believed preordained ‘meanings’ or ‘truths’ assures the discovery or revealing of the corresponding knowledge.

The tendency towards transcendence as implied in common sense/representation will also be considered problematic from the perspective of *prāṭīyasamutpāda*. *Prāṭīyasamutpāda* will not sustain transcendence since the idea that all things are subject to the process of cause and effect does not allow any concept or entity to be privileged as somehow outside of this process as an existence independent of causality. In this sense, Buddhism as founded on *prāṭīyasamutpāda* is a philosophy entailing a worldview in which all aspects of phenomenal reality is considered absolutely immanent to causality. The idea that there is some kind of independent ground to life, whether this be the ‘Self,’ a principle, metaphysical entity, ‘essence,’ meaning or ‘truth’ of reality that transcendentally overrules or assures phenomena from beyond causality is considered a logical fallacy from the argument of *prāṭīyasamutpāda*. Consequently, Deleuze’s criticism towards common sense’s reliance on the assurance of a preordained ‘Self’ and ‘meanings’ subject to interpretosis, coincides with Buddhism’s

and object, but always happening as an un-locatable relational becoming in the “middle.” Deleuze, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 21, 23, 25.

concern for attachment to grounds though for different reasons. The former is critical of ‘grounds’ for the sake of overcoming determinism in order to affirm life as fundamentally creative and becoming. On the other hand, common sense will be problematic for Buddhism since the attachment to ‘grounds’ it implies hinders the correct observation of impermanence and no-abiding-self. However, these philosophies share the worldview that phenomena are constantly changing. In addition, how these respective philosophies practically engages this worldview for the sake of ethics, brings these philosophies together against the common problems of transcendentalism, representation, realism, essentialism, and foundationalism.

I consider what Deleuze claims to be the problem of an independent subject that is both intrinsically existing, and transcendently privileged over objective reality, as well as the problem of preordained ‘truths,’ can be put in the Buddhist term of *svabhāva*. If we recall, *svabhāva* is the idea that things exist independently by their intrinsic nature, and are self-generated, implying that everything possesses an ontological, epistemological or psychological ‘essence’ transcendent to causal dependence. These ideas are problematic since they negated impermanence and the doctrine of no-abiding-self. We will later see in our analysis of Deleuze’s empiricist reasoning behind his pragmatism, that his ideas on ‘experience’ in relation to the subject may further this observation that Deleuze’s view on ontological and epistemological grounds is close to Buddhist no-abiding-self. Though Deleuze and Buddhism are clearly different in terms of backgrounds and motive, to the extent Deleuze considers philosophy practical and does not side with representation, realism, transcendence, essentialism and foundationalism, his ideas can be considered compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda*.

4.3 Pragmatism: Metaphysics as Heterogenesis

Up to this point of our analysis, we saw that Deleuze’s ethical concern to leave behind representation and transcendence gave us the first clues to locate his philosophy in proximity to Buddhism. For one thing, Deleuze’s view that philosophy ought to be practical for an ethical directive that necessitates the transforming of how we conceive of ourselves and reality coincides with the

Buddhist view that philosophy serves the priority of ethics which needs self-transformation to be realized. Secondly, there was a commonality between how Deleuze and Buddhism view phenomena as changing and what they consider as antithetical to this stance. These included conceptions like representation, realism, transcendence, essentialism and foundationalism. The compatibility between Deleuze's philosophy and *pratītyasamutpāda* may be further cemented through an analysis of Deleuze's pragmatism proper and how it functions based on an empiricist reasoning.

This leads to our next point as to how Deleuze makes metaphysics practical for the sake of answering the question of "How might one live?" Deleuze's use of metaphysics entails the question of life's movement beyond the dogmatism of 'common sense.' This is achieved through considering how life can be continuously conceived and reconceived in multiple ways "to attain the non-stratified by freeing life wherever it's imprisoned."²⁶⁸ To rethink the problem of ontology as the question of how one might live is to urge the transformation of our own understanding of what we (and the world) are capable of and to actually utilize our thinking to live life in creative ways. Deleuze introduces a "new way" to understand and utilize metaphysics for the sake of constantly questioning and recreating our views concerning the self and the world to overcome ill conscience in its many guises. This "new way" is Deleuze's pragmatism as founded on his empiricist concept of 'heterogenesis.' If metaphysics can be utilized pragmatically, one can abandon the view of life as merely a contest for the assertability of truths. Metaphysics, therefore, may be considered as the creation of new concepts to enhance ways of living beyond representation. The question of philosophy may become both pragmatic and practical: "How can ontology and epistemology be made to function?" for us to live outside representation and transcendence.

The current study will utilize this pragmatist framework for grounding metaphysics in order to formulate how Dōgen's ideas can function outside of correspondence theory and in a manner truthful to *pratītyasamutpāda*. Hence, understanding how Deleuze's empiricist pragmatism and especially his idea of heterogenesis works is crucial. It will constitute the epistemological foundation with which I will articulate how *pratītyasamutpāda* is compatible with ontology. And on top of this

²⁶⁸ Eric Alliez, *The Signature of the World: What is Deleuze and Guattari's Philosophy?*, (London: Continuum, 2004), 111.

compatibility, to interpret Dōgen’s philosophy beyond the latent reliance on correspondence theory we saw in the two opposing poles of Dōgen interpretation. However, for this framework to be applicable to a reading of Dōgen’s Buddhism we need to further analyze if it is compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda*. Therefore, the current section will continue to argue for Deleuze’s philosophy’s compatibility with *pratītyasamutpāda* over the course of analyzing how Deleuze’s pragmatism functions.

4.3.1 A Pragmatism Born from Empiricism

Deleuze’s pragmatist thinking is most explicitly elucidated in his early study *Empiricism and Subjectivity* (1953) as well as in his later essay entitled *Hume* published in 1972. However, the themes of empiricism and pragmatism are developed throughout Deleuze’s oeuvre as the founding concepts of his philosophy, often through references not only to Hume, but also to Alfred North Whitehead and American pragmatism.²⁶⁹ Therefore, elucidating the pragmatist framework of understanding metaphysics needs to begin with the following analysis of Deleuze’s pragmatist epistemology and ontology, which was influenced by his interpretation of Hume and various tenets of empiricism. Gaining a sufficient understanding of Deleuze’s empiricism will help lay the foundations as to how his pragmatism functions and to further analyze the case that it is compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda*.

There is an epistemological and an ontological aspect to Deleuze’s pragmatism that are so closely connected to each other that it is impossible to deal with them separately. Hence, it may be more accurate to speak of an onto-epistemology. Yet, if I were to distinguish these aspects for the convenience of briefly introducing them, it would be as follows. First, the epistemological foundation

²⁶⁹ Deleuze finds a degree of resonance between his empiricism and what he observed as similar movements in American pragmatism where salvation has been replaced by experimentation based on a question of trust or confidence. According to Deleuze, American pragmatism is an “attempt to transform the world, to think, a new world or new man insofar as they create themselves,” that fights “against the particularities that pit man against man and nourish an irremediable mistrust; but also against the Universal or the Whole, the fusion of souls in the name of great love or charity,” which “replace knowledge with belief, or rather “confidence” – not belief in another world, but confidence in this one, and in man as much as God.” Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Trans. Daniel W. Smith & Michael A. Greco, (Minneapolis: Minnesota Univ., 1997), 87. On American pragmatism and Deleuze also see: Rajchman, 19. And: *Deleuze and Pragmatism*, ed. Sean Bowden, Simone Bignall & Paul Patton, (New York: Routledge, 2015).

of Deleuze's pragmatism is based on an empiricist approach to reality; what Deleuze calls "modern skepticism."²⁷⁰ Modern skepticism replaces the prejudiced subject-object divide of representation with the observation that knowledge cannot be isolated from the process of experience, and, therefore, cannot be justified "subjectively" or "objectively" either. Consequently, the idea that a stable "objective ground" guarantees knowledge must give way to an alternative understanding of the genesis of knowledge which Deleuze and Guattari call "heterogenesis." Briefly, heterogenesis entails that all categorical explanations of reality (the creation of concepts) needs the simultaneous invention of a respective transcendental condition on which the explanation can be grounded. Transcendental conditions which supposedly explain principles, causes and meanings are not considered objective 'truths,' but are themselves concepts which need to be invented as necessary functions for subordinate concepts which take that condition for granted to make sense. This justifies the necessity for a new way of understanding the function and significance of metaphysics. It does not explain or represent reality, it rather invents concepts for the sake of fulfilling intended functions.

Second, the ontological aspect of Deleuze's pragmatism is based on turning the concept of 'experience' into an ontological concept that functions as the transcendental condition on which the epistemological theory of empiricism is elaborated. This will reveal heterogenesis to also function as an ontological concept.²⁷¹ I will further elaborate on how "modern skepticism" leads to heterogenesis, what heterogenesis is and how it involves an ontological aspect in the coming two sections. If we can make the case that these concepts do not negate *prāṭīyasamutpāda*, heterogenesis may become instrumental for articulating *prāṭīyasamutpāda* in a manner that its compatibility with metaphysics is apparent. This is in opposition to the Critical Buddhist prejudice that *prāṭīyasamutpāda* is incompatible with metaphysics since they assume metaphysics is *de facto* 'representational.' If heterogenesis can establish an alternative role to metaphysics without reliance to correspondence or *dhātu-vāda*, then there will no longer be any problem for metaphysics to be integrated within the practice of *prāṭīyasamutpāda*.

²⁷⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essay on A Life*, (New York: Zone Books, 2001), 44.

²⁷¹ In Alliez's description of heterogenesis (also called ontogenesis), "knowing is ontological." Alliez, *The Signature of the World*, 60-61.

4.3.1.1 Overturning the Mind / Object Duality: Modern Skepticism

What Deleuze calls empiricism's "modern skepticism" is basically skepticism against the non-verifiable nature of the "objective ground" the correspondence theory of truth takes for granted. While correspondence theory holds that knowledge can be grounded by the assertability of an "outside" truth, empiricism holds that the correspondence between "outside" truth and "inside" knowledge can never be verified nor objectively claimed to actually exist as it would require a *tertium comparationis*. This is because empiricism observes that everything we consider to be part of the reality we perceive must be mediated by our experiencing it and therefore cannot be verified to possess any sense of an objective independent existence. If this is the case, we cannot say things exist independently in a subject-object divide, nor can knowledge exist in a manner, which asserts an "objective" truth. We can only say that *the inseparable process of experience is happening*. This is because discerning logic cannot verify how things are in-and-of-themselves,²⁷² or can it verify if our knowledge of a thing truly corresponds to an "objective" reality in an independent manner outside of our experience of objects.

I consider this empiricist framework does not impede with the Buddhist phenomenology of the twelve nidānas and five skandhas. According to praṭītyasamutpāda, phenomena is never considered from the stance of realism as it leads to the problem of independent objective realities implying dhātu-vāda. Rather, understanding the world and self, was considered as the problem of understanding how our experience of reality happens by way of the causal relationship between materiality, perception, cognitive, psychological and affective reactions and habituations (i.e. the skandhas). In other words, from the perspective of praṭītyasamutpāda, phenomena is always the experience of causality and never the problem of existence per se. It is not concerned about any 'reality' outside of this process. In this sense, the priority of experience found in Deleuze's empiricism can be analyzed as non-contrary to praṭītyasamutpāda which equally considers reality as a

²⁷² In deed, from such a perspective we cannot even verify if things can really exist in-and-of-themselves.

product of experience as opposed to being objectively existing.

The non-verifiable nature of the subject-object divide does not imply empiricism is claiming a type of idealism whereby only the subjective mind exists. From the perspective of empiricism, the so-called “human mind” cannot be privileged over experience as a transcendental ground from which reality is judged. We cannot see, feel or locate our ‘Mind’ as an independent reality away from our process of experiencing it, but rather, our ‘Mind’ can only be revealed to us through the process of our experiencing. Therefore, the phenomenon that we define as “our minds,” “ego” or “our subjectivity” is itself a product of experience, the “subjective mind” possesses no qualitative or quantitative privilege over all other phenomena. The entire process of the appearance of the subject is understood as an “effect” or emergent property of experiences.²⁷³ In other words, experience is not what is *given* to a subject, rather it is the subject that is formed in the given, that is, in experience, and “if the subject is constituted within the given, then, in fact, there is only a practical self,” and never a transcendent pre-founded self or “ego.”²⁷⁴

I consider this empiricist view of the ‘self’ adds to the compatibility between Deleuze and *prāṭīyasamutpāda*. The view that the ‘self’ is an effect of experience and therefore does not exist as a grounded reality does not impede with the doctrine of no-abiding-self which equally denies the independent existence of a ‘self.’ From the perspective of *prāṭīyasamutpāda* only conventional or practical ‘selves’ exist which are conceptualizations of our own making arising from the causal experience of the *skandhas*. Otherwise, no permanent or independent ‘Self’ exists transcendent to the causal process of the *skandhas*. What we experience as our ‘self’ is always a product of causality. Though Deleuze’s view on the subject does not specify experience as experience of causality, it will not hinder *prāṭīyasamutpāda* for it equally denies essentialism, foundationalism, realism and transcendentalism. Therefore, Deleuze’s empiricism can be subordinated to the central function of *prāṭīyasamutpāda*.

For Deleuze, understanding the self as a continuous effect of experiences overturns the view

²⁷³ Colebrook, 73-74, 81.

²⁷⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume’s Theory of Human Nature*, Trans. Constatin V. Boundas, (New York: Columbia Univ., 1991), 91, 104.

of the subject as definable through a dualistic design of the interior vs. exterior (mind/body dualism). Instead there is only the “outside” or the plane of experiences, in which the subject itself is constituted and in which it participates.²⁷⁵ Therefore, empiricism in virtue of modern skepticism not only radically challenges the duality of representation (subject vs. object), but also undercuts transcendence. This gives way to a worldview whereby reality becomes absolutely immanent since empiricism observes that the human mind cannot conceive nor talk of a reality that is not part of the process of experiencing, all existence including our own thoughts and concepts becomes a process happening *within* experience. This immanence is also un-contrary to *pratītyasamutpāda* according to which all phenomena, ideas or ‘truths’ are always effects of causality and therefore immanent to the experience of the causal process of the *skandhas*.

Whenever Deleuze mentions “experience” as preceding all knowledge and concepts in his conception of an empiricist epistemology, this is inseparably intertwined with an ontological aspect. Empiricism’s observation that all things we consider to be reality can only happen and be understood inseparably within the process of our experience entails that on ontological terms, one can say that *all phenomena are experience*. According to Deleuze, such empiricism understands “experience” not as experience experienced by a pre-defined subject but as *just experience*, that is, as a multiplicity of *impersonal experiences* that precede the ‘event’ we call the ego while including it.²⁷⁶ With reference to the strong Spinozist influence in Deleuze, we can also articulate this in Spinozist terms: there is only one substance that constitutes reality, whether psychical or physical, this *substance is experience*. Experience then is primary to knowledge and Being.²⁷⁷

For Deleuzian empiricism, the un-assertability of correspondence between knowledge and truth makes the obsession with searching for independently existing truths, principles and grounds to existence futile. In contrast to the representational view that knowledge originates in an “objective” truth, modern skepticism’s view that reality is taking place within experience and therefore irreducible

²⁷⁵ Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, 38. Deleuze’s often repeated phrase that “there is only an outside” is another way to say that there is never an inside/outside duality, but only the field of inseparable multiplicity of experience.

²⁷⁶ Colebrook, 87.

²⁷⁷ This conclusion is indicative of Deleuze’s influence from the “radical empiricism” of William James. For a close analysis of the Jamesian influence on Deleuze see Gregory Flaxman, “A More Radical Empiricism,” in *Deleuze and Pragmatism*, ed. Sean Bowden, Simone Bignall, and Paul Patton. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 66-74.

to a subject-object duality, leads to an alternative view on the genesis of thought, knowledge and concepts. According to Deleuze, knowledge of the “outside object” does not exist beyond our experience of it as an assuring “objective ground,” waiting to be “discovered.” Rather, our experience of thinking simultaneously co-creates the knowledge and the transcendental grounds on which that knowledge rests. From such an understanding, any concept which denotes a principle or ground to reality, being, or subjectivity do not pre-exist experience as transcendentally given, but is understood as created in and through the process of experience. Deleuze and Guattari denote this epistemological condition of the relational process inseparably constituting both “subject” and “object,” with the term *heterogenesis*.²⁷⁸ Heterogenesis constitutes the crux of Deleuze’s claim that concepts can be understood as functional outside correspondence, foundationalism and transcendentalism. Through the course of this section I had analyzed how each of the empiricist concepts leading up to the development of heterogenesis did not impede *pratīyasamutpāda*. Consequently, I argue that heterogenesis can be the alternative framework in which we can articulate *pratīyasamutpāda* as non-contrary to metaphysics. And later, by virtue of this redefined stance on metaphysics, we can interpret Dōgen’s metaphysics as integrated within *pratīyasamutpāda*. I will make the case for the compatibility between heterogenesis and *pratīyasamutpāda* in the upcoming analysis.

4.3.1.2 Heterogenesis

Deleuze’s heterogenesis entails that all creation of concepts including speculations on the genesis of phenomena presupposes the creation of transcendental concepts which conditions all other subordinate concepts. In other words, any creation of concepts including those intended to describe

²⁷⁸ The concept of “heterogenesis” is inspired by biologist, Gilbert Simondon’s view on the “ontogenesis,” in which “relation must be understood as constitutive, as part of the entity under consideration.” See Eliot Albert, “Deleuze’s Impersonal, Hylozoic Cosmology,” *Deleuze and Religion*, ed. Mary Bryden, (London: Routledge, 2001), 191-192. For more on Deleuze and ontogenesis also see Alliez, *The Signature of the World*, 53-62. For Deleuze’s reference to Simondon see Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 307-308. Deleuze and Guattari uses the term “heterogenesis” rather than reiterating Simondon’s term “ontogenesis,” to emphasize that every process of an ontogenesis of knowledge or concepts creates something new (something ‘other,’ ‘hetero’) out of disparate elements un-locatable and beyond the separatism of “subject” and “object” yet all relating within experience. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, Trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Graham Burchell, (New York: Columbia Univ., 1994), 20-21, 199. Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm*, trans. Paul Bvains and Julian Pefanis, (Indianapolis: Indiana Univ., 1992), 50-51. See also Colebrook, 70. Alliez, 101.

causes, foundations or meanings behind reality must in fact simultaneously create or take for granted certain transcendental conditions (or cosmological frameworks) in which those concepts can make sense and function as a proposition. This entails that ideas and concepts do not by nature represent a correspondent truth. Instead, for concepts to function as ‘representational’ it must be contingent on a wider conceptual framework which is itself not ontologically grounded, but must be created within the process of thought.²⁷⁹ Here, Deleuze makes a clear distinction between what are ontologically “transcendent” and what are “transcendental concepts,” transcendental concepts having nothing to do with transcendent realities. For Deleuze, there are no transcendent “things,” but only invented transcendental concepts or conditions, which are themselves immanent to experience and are created to fulfill certain purposes.²⁸⁰ If we can apply this idea to Dōgen’s Buddhism, we can make the claim that all of his ontological and metaphysical concepts, rather than describing reality, are designed to fulfill particular practical functions in accordance to the transcendental conditions of *prafityasamutpāda*. Accordingly, Dōgen’s ideas on Buddha-nature, and temporality can be given a radically different interpretation to that of the Critical Buddhist and the comparative readings.

The nature of heterogenesis further ensures the absolute immanence²⁸¹ of empiricist philosophy. From the perspective of empiricism, any transcendental metaphysical concept, whether it be God, eternal principles, ‘truth,’ or Platonic Ideas that are believed to be the grounding principle to normative reality are not granted any sense of an assured ontological privilege as an independently existing ‘objective ground’ nor as the ‘true-way-reality-is.’ On the contrary, since modern skepticism observes that the subject/object divide cannot be adequately asserted due to the very nature of

²⁷⁹ Deleuze and Guattari make full use of the idea of heterogenesis to understand the function of concepts in their work, *What is Philosophy?* This is especially evident in the section where they discuss Descartes’ concept of the *cogito* in relation to Kant’s objection against the concept. In this work, concepts are treated as not representational, but functional and only making sense within the conceptual contingency through which it was necessitated. This is essentially an application of heterogenesis on articulating the mechanism of philosophical concepts. *What is Philosophy?*, Trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Graham Burchell, (New York: Columbia Univ., 1994), 26-27, 32.

²⁸⁰ In Deleuze’s words: “The transcendent is not the transcendental. Were it not for consciousness, the transcendental field would be defined as a pure plane of immanence, because it eludes all transcendence of the subject and of the object.” *Pure Immanence*, 26.

²⁸¹ What Deleuze means by immanence is an absolute immanence that “is in itself: it is not in something, *to* something; it does not depend on an object or belong to a subject. [...] Immanence is not related to Some Thing as a unity superior to all things or to a Subject as an act that brings about a synthesis of things: it is only when immanence is no longer immanence to anything other than itself that we can speak of a plane of immanence.” *Pure Immanence*, 26-27.

experience, empiricism considers that no transcendental metaphysical concept can really assert the objective truth of such a metaphysical reality. Rather, to the extent that such metaphysical “realities” must be conceived or interpreted through the experience of the human mind, they cannot designate independent realities, but are always created through experience. Simply put, all metaphysical realities are considered primarily as concepts of our creation and hence never ontologically transcendent, but immanent to experience.

The above perspective reflects Deleuze’s reliance upon Alfred North Whitehead’s rule of empiricism whereby “the abstract does not explain, but must itself be explained; and the aim is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced (creativity).”²⁸² Consequently, heterogenesis understands all birth of principles and transcendent grounds as a matter of practical inventions that can no longer be seen as self-contained transcendent ‘truths’ or ‘laws,’ but only as transcendental concepts fulfilling particular functions. The idea of heterogenesis, therefore, while not attributing any “objective” reality to transcendence, does not negate the functional necessity of transcendental concepts within our thought process for us to make sense of reality. Heterogenesis is therefore compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda* since it is antithetical to any claim that considers reality as existing independently or transcendently in relation to the causal process of experience. Much like how Buddhism considers phenomena as an ongoing product of the causal mingling between the *skandhas*, Deleuze’s heterogenesis allows us to understand metaphysical concepts as never representing objective realities, but always products of the process of experience. When applied to *pratītyasamutpāda*, all we have to add is that this experience *is* the experience of causality.

How heterogenesis re-conceives the relationship between metaphysics and spiritual practice can be elucidated with the example of Plato’s metaphysics. Plato’s concept of eternal forms or Ideas claims that all physical things exist in virtue of their being grounded in the transcendental reality of

²⁸² Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), p. vii

For a more detailed view on Whitehead’s influence on Deleuze’s conception of empiricism see Isabelle Stengers, “Deleuze and Guattari’s Last Enigmatic Message,” *Angelaki* 10.2 (2005): 164-166. Also see Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 355-356 for a statement of Deleuze’s admiration for Whitehead for doing a philosophy in which concepts are empiricist and based on experience as opposed to being representational.

eternal forms of which physical reality is a degraded copy. Plato must first create the transcendental concept of ‘eternal forms’ in order for the explanation that the forms are essential to all phenomena to be a functioning proposition that is consistent to his ontology. Rather than revealing the ‘objective truth’ of the reality of eternal forms, Plato is in fact creating that very worldview as he invents and expands on the conceptual system of his philosophy based on that transcendental condition. The worldview founded on the concept of eternal forms ultimately functions to put forth Plato’s ethical argument concerning the existence of an absolute Idea of the Good and that moral perfection lies in one’s striving to attain this Idea. This leads to the practical aspect of Plato’s metaphysics that promotes the necessity to choose to live the moral life of a philosopher. Since the fundamental worldview founded on forms influences the way Plato observes, understands and experience’s life, it also moulds the world Plato experiences. So we can say that the world Plato creates in turn also conditions and influences the development of himself, his concepts, and his spiritual exercises. This means that inasmuch as we want to explain and give answers to the question as to how the world *is*, rather than ‘objectively’ represent this world, we in fact cannot but co-create the nature of that very world we hope to explain. And in turn, the world conditions or creates our very own act of thinking and living.²⁸³ Heterogenesis then asserts the empiricist view of how the “objectivity” or “subjectivity” of the phenomenal world cannot be established as a clear divide, which makes the notion of an accurate representation of a world believed to exist outside our language and mind void of significance.

As Deleuze later supplements the concept of heterogenesis with the term, the “fold,” the process of heterogenesis can be visually expressed by the act of folding.²⁸⁴ Imagine a purely abstract piece of paper or a flat plane that is infinitely folded, and refolded to form new shapes and numerous different planes that are distinct yet inseparable to each other due to it being constituted out of one

²⁸³ Deleuze also finds a parallel to heterogenesis in the biologist Francisco Valera’s concept of autopoiesis where the “subject and object are each other’s reciprocal and simultaneous prerequisite and precondition.” Alliez, 60.

²⁸⁴ The concept of the “fold” is most extensively utilized in Deleuze’s books on Foucault and Leibniz. See Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold*, trans. Tom Conley, (London: Continuum, 2006). And Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand, (London: Continuum, 2006). Also refer to Simon O’ Sullivan’s concise explanation of the concept of the fold on his article, *Various Entries on the Deleuze Dictionary*, <http://www.simonosullivan.net>, June 2005, Accessed September 23, 2013. <http://www.simonosullivan.net/articles/deleuze-dictionary.pdf>.

univocal substance that is the one plane. Much akin to this “folding” heterogenesis expresses the inseparability of the subject and object, the inside and the outside within the univocal process of experience from which they are simultaneously born. The relation of subject and object, abstract concepts and transcendental concepts on which they are grounded, are like folds of the same paper, their relations constantly changing, creating different folds, different shapes, different forms and relations of reality out of the same fabric that is experience.

The nature of heterogenesis assures that ‘experience’ as a transcendental ontological concept, which sustains the conditions for articulating reality in empiricist terms, is never representational in kind, but always functional. Empiricism does not make use of the concept of experience as primary to reality because this is the the ‘true-way-reality-is.’ Rather, the concept is invented as a pragmatic principle in accordance to what empiricism aspires to do, or in Deleuze’s words “philosophy must constitute itself as the theory of what we are doing, not as a theory of what there is. What we do has its principles; and being can only be grasped as the object of a synthetic relation with the very principles of what we do.”²⁸⁵ This “principle of what we do” in the case of Deleuze’s empiricism is something Deleuze learns from Hume. Deleuze inherits from Hume the understanding of the function of empiricism as the method by which the traditional philosophical obsession with truths, and grounds is replaced by a pragmatic concern for making philosophy fulfill practical moral and political concerns through the invention of concepts.²⁸⁶ As previously described, this moral concern for Deleuze is the creation of new modes for life beyond ill conscience.

The above leads to the pivotal point in Deleuzian pragmatism that is *belief*. Because modern skepticism observes that the correspondence between knowledge and truth cannot be asserted, knowledge becomes a matter of choosing which invented grounding principle to believe in.

Therefore, belief becomes naturalized, by which all knowledge becomes a matter of belief. The

²⁸⁵ Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, 133.

²⁸⁶ Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, 132.

According to Deleuze, “empiricists are not theoreticians, they are experimenters: they never interpret, they have no principles.” *Dialogues II*, 41.

According to Hayden, “Deleuze’s point is that Hume, like Deleuze himself, sought to make philosophy more practical, in the sense that it is directed towards questions regarding active composition of an intensive world (or worlds)” Patrick Hayden, “From Relations to Practice in the Empiricism of Gilles Deleuze,” *Man and World* 28 (1995): 284.

Also see Constatin V. Boundas, translator’s introduction to *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume’s Theory of Human Nature*, by Gilles Deleuze (New York: Columbia Univ., 1991), 6.

significance of knowledge and concepts shifts from being ‘representative’ of ‘objective grounds’ to a matter of choosing between qualitatively different beliefs to maximize one’s aspired purpose.²⁸⁷ In contrast to doing philosophy as a search for meaning and truth, empiricism founded on modern skepticism makes philosophy primarily concerned with functions, as Deleuze mentions, “we should not ask what principles are, but what they do. They are not entities; they are functions.”²⁸⁸ Here, there is a fundamental shift of attitude in practicing philosophy, where the obsession of searching for Truth and Being shifts to pragmatically choosing what knowledge/concepts to believe in for their practical functions. Deleuze calls this shift, the “empiricist conversion.”²⁸⁹ This means that the question of philosophy is transformed from “What is truth?” “What is Being?” or “What is the meaning?” to the practical question of “How do particular matters and concepts work? Which principles should I choose? And for what purpose?” ultimately leading to the question of creating new ideas, which is “What new concepts can be made to work to fulfill particular purposes?”²⁹⁰

The question of empiricist philosophy then becomes a pragmatic choice between different concepts suiting different purposes. Therefore, Deleuze’s empiricism allows him to re-conceive the creation of metaphysical concepts beyond representation and transcendence entirely. Consequently, metaphysics becomes a method of constant experiment in creating new worldviews for the sake of maximizing our powers to realize the ethical purposes we have set. To create new ways of making sense of reality through metaphysics and ontology means to create new modes of living founded on such novel views on reality.²⁹¹ In other words, by creating an ontology, understanding the world and living in accordance to that ontology, we in fact co-create the reality we understand. This is possible

²⁸⁷ Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, 44.

²⁸⁸ Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, 132. See also Colebrook, 88.

²⁸⁹ Deleuze, *What is Philosophy?*, 74-75.

²⁹⁰ Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, 17. And also Hayden, 287.

Deleuze’s observation is that Hume’s entire philosophy begins and is founded on top of such an “empiricist conversion.” *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, 28.

²⁹¹ According to May, in Deleuze’s vision, “The destiny of philosophical concepts and philosophical positions lie not with truth or falsity of their claims but with the vistas for thinking and living they open up,” and “that way of doing philosophy is not interested in whether what is seen really exists: Is there difference really? Nor does it, like fiction, assume that there is no such thing as difference, really, but that if we make it up we can create new and interesting worlds. Philosophy is not inspired by truth, but it is not inspired by fiction either. Instead, philosophy creates a way of seeing this world in which we live that disturbs the verities we are presented with, that opens up new ways of seeing and of conceiving this world that, rather than true or false, are interesting, remarkable, or important.” May, *Gilles Deleuze*, 22.

since we come to understand that the way we conceive of ourselves and the world is profoundly related to how we choose and design our lives. Thus to explore and to change how we perceive and understand reality *is* to change the way we live.

Such a practical approach to metaphysics is fully applicable to *pratītyasamutpāda* since it is detached from any concern for the realism of existence or of ontological grounds. Heterogenesis repeats none of the problems rooted in conceiving being or ideas as independently existing (i.e. *svabhāva*) which made representation, essentialism, foundationalism, realism and transcendentalism all problematic from the side of *pratītyasamutpāda*. The concern is shifted from the attachment to the assurance of existence and grounds to how we can make concepts function and for what ethical purpose.

Conclusively, each of my analysis of Deleuze's ethical and empiricist backgrounds as well as their development into the pragmatist concept of heterogenesis made the case that Deleuze's pragmatism is fully compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda*. Therefore pragmatism and heterogenesis allows us to overcome the prejudice that Dōgen's metaphysics must be 'corresponding' to an ultimate 'truth.' When this pragmatist stance is applied to a reading of Dōgen, the question is transformed from a concern for "What is the true nature of reality Dōgen is referring to?" or "What is the truth of Dōgen's words?" to "How can Dōgen's philosophy be reinterpreted in a manner that enhances Buddhist practice founded on *pratītyasamutpāda*?" Such a reinterpretation will be attempted in the next chapter. However, before this is possible we must overcome another prejudice that was problematic in the Critical Buddhist interpretation of Dōgen. The prejudice that *pratītyasamutpāda* is incompatible with ontology despite itself harbouring ontological elements. No reading of Dōgen's metaphysics can be considered to adhere to *pratītyasamutpāda* as long as this prejudice is not sufficiently explained away. I will analyze in the next section how applying heterogenesis to an understanding of how *pratītyasamutpāda* relates to spiritual practice may help reason why *pratītyasamutpāda* is compatible with ontology.

4.3.2 Articulating Pratīyasamutpāda through Heterogenesis

If we recall Matsumoto and Kasulis's views on Dōgen, they both rejected ontology as by nature 'representational.' In the case of Matsumoto, this implied that pratīyasamutpāda is completely incompatible with ontology despite it ensuing the ontological criteria upon which all other dhātu-vādic ontologies were negated. Denying an ontological sense in pratīyasamutpāda is bound to be a paradoxical claim. The reason is as follows: even if pratīyasamutpāda is understood through basic Buddhist phenomenology as a practical explanation that human suffering happens due to a causal process amongst the nidānas/skandhas, one is still taking the law of causality as a transcendental ontological and epistemological premise with which to understand reality and oneself.

Applying the framework of heterogenesis in articulating the relationship of pratīyasamutpāda to Buddhist practice may help construct a counter argument to the above prejudice. By shifting from correspondence theory to pragmatism, pratīyasamutpāda can be understood like any other concept; that it is a heterogenesis. Pratīyasamutpāda is not an independently existing law granted ontological and epistemological privileges as a universally valid explanation to reality that solves all problems regardless of differences in environment. Rather, the concept of pratīyasamutpāda is conditioned by the Buddhist values within which it functions; that is to end suffering and to be practically founded on the primacy of altruistic ethics. In this way, pratīyasamutpāda is itself a heterogenetic concept that is the simultaneous prerequisite and precondition on which these Buddhist values are both formed from and function within as practical alternatives for the Buddhist to realize a 'better' life outside of the worldviews of normative society.

Understanding pratīyasamutpāda as a heterogenesis solves the conundrum of pratīyasamutpāda as hosting an ontological aspect despite being antithetical to the conception of any other (dhātu-vādic) ontology. The problem of if pratīyasamutpāda is or is not compatible with metaphysics, is transformed from a concern for the acceptance or non-acceptance of an underlying ontological nature to pratīyasamutpāda, to how this ontological aspect of pratīyasamutpāda can be

conceptually interpreted and utilized for the sake of enhancing practical functions. The common prejudice that ontology describes a corresponding reality, as well as Critical Buddhism's hesitance of seeing *prafityasamutpāda* as compatible with ontology is overcome. The ontological aspects *prafityasamutpāda* entails do not have to be understood as representational, but simply as pragmatically functional for the sake of enhancing the practical purpose of fulfilling altruistic ethics through correct insight into causality. *Prafityasamutpāda* does not describe reality in any representational sense; rather, it assumes the role of doing so as a transcendental condition upon which the Buddha's teachings and practices targeted at the cultivation of altruism and the overcoming of suffering will work.

The 'empiricist conversion' of Deleuze suggested that concepts do not have to be asserted by 'objective' reality for it to have a practical effect. All that is necessary is that one has an evaluative understanding and conviction (or 'belief') in the concept they choose as practically useful in its function to yield effects for their aspired purpose. As such, *prafityasamutpāda* functions as the transcendental concept which Buddhist's must believe in order to make subsequent concepts and spiritual practices function effectively for the sake of the ethical purposes set by *prafityasamutpāda*. Consequently, *prafityasamutpāda* can be understood as the absolutely foundational framework, or the transcendental condition upon which the Buddhist spiritual techniques of self-care, targeted at the elimination of suffering and the cultivation of an ethical mind/conduct, functions most effectively as an internally consistent system of practices.

Such an understanding of *prafityasamutpāda* makes it possible to reconcile Buddhism founded on the centrality of *prafityasamutpāda* with the idea of utilizing metaphysical concepts. *Prafityasamutpāda* and metaphysics are not mutually exclusive; rather the former conditions the pragmatic utility of the later. Buddhist metaphysics do not/or need to correspond to the 'true-way-reality-is,' for its purpose is to pragmatically enhance the effectivity of the spiritual practices founded on the idea of *prafityasamutpāda*. In the next chapter, this view on the practicality of the concept of *prafityasamutpāda* will be the basis on which I will re-interpret Dōgen's ontological understanding of *prafityasamutpāda* expressed in his concept of Total-function.

Now that the pragmatist framework which overcomes the prejudice that Dōgen's metaphysics is by nature 'representational' and that praṭītyasamutpāda is incompatible with metaphysics has been clarified, I will move on to analyze the final set of conceptual tools the present study hopes to borrow from Deleuze. These are the metaphysics of difference and its articulation through the concepts of 'virtuality' and 'actuality.'

4.4 Making Pluralism = Monism: Virtuality and Actuality

The concepts in question here are Deleuze's view of *multiplicity* or *difference* (what he also calls "*internal difference*" and *becoming*) in relation to a dynamic univocity made possible through his understanding of giving reality two qualities; that of the *virtual* and the *actual*. These concepts may be useful for the current study in order to interpret Dōgen's seemingly paradoxical views on temporality. We had seen in the Critical Buddhist and comparative interpretations of Dōgen, that his views on temporality as somehow simultaneously singular as Dharma-positions and continuous in a holistic manner posited a great difficulty for it to be interpreted in adherence to praṭītyasamutpāda. Critical Buddhism denounced the idea as founded on the Hongaku premise of constant-abiding implying a reliance on an ontological locus. I had analyzed that Abe, Heine, and Kasulis all followed suit in utilizing a variation of the constant-abiding based reasoning. The singular instants of Dharma-positions were considered participating in the interdependent totality of an ever-constant realm of primordial enlightenment, hence simultaneously singular and whole without having to compromise its singularity. As long as such a line of reasoning continues to be applied to Dōgen, his metaphysics of time cannot be understood as in concurrence with praṭītyasamutpāda. How can Deleuze's concepts of virtuality and actuality help us free Dōgen's views on time from such a reliance on an ontological locus and help make sense of it as functional in accordance to praṭītyasamutpāda?

The current section will analyze how describing reality through the dual concepts of virtuality and actuality supplements the aforementioned concept of heterogenesis with an exclusively metaphysical connotation. Virtuality and actuality may be functioning by way of tying seemingly

dualistic and hierarchical ontological concepts into an immanent univocal structure by making them share one and the same sense of reality whereby each side becomes each other's prerequisite and precondition. In this sense, virtuality and actuality helps articulate the ontological relationship between individual phenomena and a metaphysical totality to which they are connected, in a manner that bypasses transcendence, foundationalism and the subject/object divide of correspondence theory. If so, these ideas may help resolve the seemingly paradoxical coexistence of singularity with univocity found in Dōgen's metaphysics in a manner congruent with *pratītyasamutpāda*.

4.4.1 Univocity and Empiricism

Much of Deleuze's concepts in question here have been inspired by Bergson and are elucidated in Deleuze's works *Bergsonism*, and *Difference and Repetition*. A significant portion of what I analyze below are based on these works. However, 'univocity' is a concept Deleuze inherits from the ontological debate harking back to Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus. This concept merits a brief introduction. For Aquinas humans can only speak of God analogously. For example, when one says, "God is good," the "goodness" of God is only applicable in an analogous sense to human "goodness." Therefore, God never shares the same 'predicate' with that of humans, implying a qualitative difference in 'being' between God and man. Duns Scotus objected to Aquinas by claiming that things are describable in the same sense described of God, implying that both God and man shared the same sense of 'being,' though in a modally distinct manner (i.e. in differences of degree).²⁹² Therefore, for Duns Scotus, it can be said that both God's and man's 'being' is attributed 'univocally.' Deleuze's borrows his use of the concept of 'univocity' from this idea designating how all beings share the same sense of 'being.' However, Deleuze creates a maxim for the 'univocity of being' in a radically different manner from Duns Scotus. For Deleuze univocity means that, "being is said in a

²⁹² Dun Scotus's inference is that if what we can say of the 'being' of normative phenomena were only analogous to God vice a versa, then the significance of metaphysics itself will crumble. The object of metaphysics is not God, but its goal, that is to come closer to revealing the nature of Gods existence through discourse on being. If so, the theory that postulates we cannot speak of God as sharing a univocal 'being' with his creations, voids the possibility of constructing any a posteriori arguments establishing the existence of God. Hence, for Scotus, God and his creation must share a univocal sense of 'being.' For Scotus, the idea that human thinking can describe of God analogously already implies univocity.

single and same sense of everything of which it is said, but that of which it is said differs: it is said of difference itself.”²⁹³ In other words Deleuze’s concept of univocity has a Spinozist overtone which allows us to rephrase the above quote as follows: there is one substance which constitute reality, this substance is difference itself, and by virtue of this fact, all individual phenomena share the same sense, that is difference. Deleuze’s view on univocity also amounts to saying that for him, “pluralism = monism.”²⁹⁴

The above proposition echoes an earlier Spinozist formula I have used to describe Deleuze’s ontology of empiricist ‘experience,’ whereby the univocal ‘substance’ constituting all phenomena was said to be ‘experience.’ Deleuze tends to repeat concepts that function in identical ways throughout his oeuvre, but by supplementing it with completely different terms in accordance with their intended setting. Such is the case with his idea of empiricist experience which is interchangeable with other concepts as in the case of his proposition concerning the univocity of being, where ‘experience’ is supplemented with the concept of ‘difference itself.’ In short, for Deleuze, the empiricist notion of experience *is* difference itself.²⁹⁵

The fact that Deleuze’s view on ‘difference’ supplements his empiricist views on ‘experience’ is opportune for the current study as it ensures the compatibility between Deleuze’s metaphysics of difference with *prafītyasamutpāda*. As I had analyzed previously, Deleuze’s viewed that experience is prior to any other ontological, epistemological or psychological category and that everything we come to ‘understand’ about phenomena is itself always conditioned by experience. This idea did not contradict Buddhism’s view that phenomena is always a product of the experience of the causal interaction between the *skandhas*. The fact that the metaphysics of ‘actuality’ and ‘virtuality’ is founded on such a view on ‘experience’ or ‘difference,’ in addition to Deleuze’s fundamental pragmatism which makes his metaphysical concepts purely practical as opposed to representational, allows for the basic inference that these concepts are non-contradictory to *prafītyasamutpāda*.

²⁹³ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 36.

²⁹⁴ Deleuze, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 23. For Deleuze “pluralism” is equivalent to “empiricism,” designating a way of perceiving philosophy as founded on the primacy of experience/difference. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Trans. Hugh Tomlinson, (New York: Columbia Univ., 1986), 4.

²⁹⁵ Boundas, 7-8. Bergsonian process metaphysics therefore adds onto Deleuze’s empiricist foundations to make his philosophy “an empiricism for which difference is the generative force of the actual.” Hayden, 283.

The concepts of virtuality and actuality helps Deleuze articulate his view that “pluralism = monism” within the framework of his metaphysics of ‘difference.’ Therefore, understanding these concepts and to make the conclusive case that they are compatible with *prātīyasamutpāda* necessitates an analysis of Deleuze’s views on ‘difference.’

4.4.2 The Virtual Univocity of Actual Differences

In accordance to Deleuze’s empiricism and loyalty to absolute immanence, he wants to find a way to articulate abstract concepts of difference in a manner that do not rely on principles of transcendence and identity/representation which he sees exemplified in Hegel’s notion of difference.²⁹⁶ The alternative Deleuze finds to Hegelian difference is giving Bergson’s understanding of pure difference, or ‘difference itself’ as internal production, a Scholastic interpretation as internal cause, or *causa sui*. Here difference is not created and sustained by dialectics based on an accidental reliance to an Other (where difference is always a secondary attribute to being), but is primary to being as it’s own necessary continuous self-production²⁹⁷ of difference, what Deleuze later, in *Difference and Repetition*, calls ‘*internal difference*.’²⁹⁸ This means, phenomenal reality is considered a movement or process of *becoming* that is continuously producing its own difference through self-differentiation

²⁹⁶ Deleuze understands Hegel’s difference as fundamentally based in identity since difference can only be conceived in contrast to others as a negation of what it is not. In addition it hosts transcendentalism since negation functions in a way which preserves its own absolute self-identity (in order to create difference from contrast) and this allows Hegel to assert negation as a transcendent form of understanding “which supersedes in such a way to preserve and maintain what is superseded, and consequently survives its own supersession.”

G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Trans. A.V. Miller, (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1998), 115.

Hegelian difference also hosts a sense of universalist reductionism where negation promises the return of an ultimate convergence of all difference back to unity brought on by the power of double negation as synthesis. In Hegel Deleuze sees a philosophy that opposes the one and the multiple that ultimately tries to subsume the later to the former by the encompassing totality of contradiction, thus what is essentially a grand archetype of “common sense” ontology that easily complements the state apparatus that is supportive of reducing individual singularities under the oppressive unity of a central power.

For Deleuze, the concept of difference as based on Hegel’s dialectical negation cannot fulfill the prerequisite for a positive ontology that can free difference from being conceived in connection to representation and transcendence so that it can be given unreserved affirmation for its creative properties. Deleuze observes contradiction as a concept arrived through a purely abstract theoretical basis and is too general and inefficient to make sense of singular differences, since “the singular will never be attained by correcting a generality with another generality.” Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, Trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Barbara Habberjam, (New York: Zone Book, 1988), 14-15.

²⁹⁷ Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1993), 6-8, 17.

²⁹⁸ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 97.

without the need of any oppositional or contrasting identity against other beings. This means that internal difference is always a qualitative difference, or a differing in kind. Since the process of self-differentiation never repeats the same, but is always a *repetition of difference*, internal differences cannot be conceived in comparison or contrast to sameness (i.e. in accordance to identity), as they are always singularities.²⁹⁹ In continuity with Deleuze's empiricist view of phenomena as the shifting process of experience, this view of difference as internally changing singularities does not impede with the Buddhist view of impermanence as it precludes any sense of self-identity or independent existence.

Deleuze's internal difference is juxtaposed with another kind of difference originally articulated by Bergson as 'discrete multiplicity.' Discrete multiplicity designates the kind of conceptualization of difference based on quantitative differences, numerical differences or differences of degree as opposed to the qualitative difference of internal difference.³⁰⁰ Discrete difference is proximal to the actual physical difference we usually take difference to be when interacting with reality. It is the kind of difference we think is differentiated in relation to each other, like how we will differentiate on terms of comparison/contrast and juxtapose a tree to a human being and count them as separate entities. In accordance with the absolute immanence entailed by his philosophy, Deleuze wants to avoid creating a hierarchy between internal difference and discrete differences by giving one side a transcendent ontological status at the expense of the other.

In order to preserve the integrity of absolute immanence without reiterating representation / identity, Deleuze adopts Bergson's ideas to create an immanent metaphysics whereby singular differences can coexist with a sense of a univocal relationship amongst all differences. The aim for such a metaphysics being neither to reinforce a sense of difference as a collection of monadic singularities un-relative to each other nor reinforce a kind of universal reductionism Deleuze sees in

²⁹⁹ Much akin to the vitalist philosophy of Bergson from which Deleuze is strongly influenced, the concept of internal difference or becoming always has a metaphysical connotation to it in the sense that it designates a sense of an undercurrent or "substance" to phenomena as a constantly changing processual flow of creation (what Bergson understands is the vital force of life itself, of life's force of self-production beyond determination, what he calls the *élan vital* which works within a particular time he calls *pure duration* which expresses itself as constant movement). See John Marks, *Gilles Deleuze: Vitalism and Multiplicity*, (London: Pluto Press, 1998). Marks makes a strong point as to the deep influence of vitalism on Deleuze's philosophy.

³⁰⁰ Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 39-42.

Hegel which subsumes all difference to the unity of sameness. Therefore, the question becomes, how can some sort of univocal continuity be constructed amongst internal differences, which are absolutely singular to each other (and therefore resist homogenization)? This question also amounts to asking how can the purely abstract difference of internal difference be connected to physical discrete differences? In effect, creating a metaphysics which successfully answers these questions leads to fulfilling the seemingly paradoxical formula of “pluralism = monism,” whereby the multiplicity of singular differences exists in a univocal relationship.

Deleuze finds in Bergson a metaphysics that answers this question by making internal difference simultaneously coexist with a sense of dynamic univocity amongst each singularity without reduction to universality. This is achieved by one of Deleuze’s most central metaphysical concepts adopted from Bergson, that of placing two distinct qualities to reality: the *virtual* and *actual*. Deleuze adopts these terms from Bergson’s distinction of two concepts of being; first is what amounts to Bergson’s view of pure being, the infinitely cumulating totality of processual internal difference in itself, *pure duration* or its accumulation as *pure recollection*, which are *virtualities* and secondly the expression of *pure recollection* in physical form as individual discrete differences which are *actualities*. What links the virtual to the actual is the vital process of differentiation that is the movement of actual differences passing into a cumulative virtual past within the creative process of becoming (or ‘duration’).

Deleuze considers pure recollection as not only an accumulation of all passing moments, but simultaneously a metaphysical collection of all future potentiality.³⁰¹ Therefore, pure duration is a constant indivisible process of self-differing actualizing or ‘individuating’ metaphysical ‘potentials’ into physical differences which constantly passes and accumulates back into duration as pure recollection. Consequently, the simultaneous correlation between future potential actualizing into the present, and passing into memory entails that the future, present and past share one and the same sense of reality and leads to granting a purely metaphysical status to past memory. *Pure recollection* is not a

³⁰¹ Deleuze eventually conceptualizes duration/pure recollection in combination with his interpretation of Nietzsche’s ‘eternal return’ as a non-linear and circular time movement that folds back onto itself. Consequently, pure recollection not only designates an ontologically accumulative “pure past,” but also simultaneously denotes the infinite totality of all future potentiality.

subjective psychological memory, but a purely ontological memory as an impersonal *virtuality*, or *duration itself*, which works as “a single past in which all psychological memory participate.”³⁰² Here the virtual reality of the past as pure recollection becomes more than a subjective reality, since it coexists simultaneously with the actual present as each other’s simultaneous prerequisite and precondition.³⁰³

The virtual and actual are always constituted of the same ontological reality, which is the infinite self-differentiating process of potentiality continuously actualizing (or ‘individuating’) into events. All discrete differences will be understood as the continuously actualizing expressions of the one virtual ‘substance’ that is the internally differing process of pure duration/experience. Hence, we can observe that pure duration/recollection functions as the transcendental condition within which a sense of univocity is assigned to all individual differences. The plurality of all singularly individuating differences are univocal to each other by virtue of participating in one indivisible process of pure duration. Consequently, the relation between virtuality and actuality creates a consistency out of the seeming paradox of Deleuze’s claim that “pluralism = monism” and reinforces his rule of univocity where “being is said of [...] in a single and same sense, of all its individuating differences.”³⁰⁴

We can now see that concepts such as ‘pure recollection’ or ‘pure duration’ function as the virtual, transcendental conditions by which the univocal relationship between actual differences is constituted. On the other hand, the nature of actual discrete differences passing into a virtual past, or the process of potentials actualizing into concrete events mutually functions as the condition on which the transcendental condition is possible. In other words, virtual conditions and actual expressions always function in a heterogenetic manner in which they are each other’s reciprocal precondition and prerequisite. Whether the concepts of virtuality and actuality are explained through the relationship between singular differences passing to a pure recollection, or as virtual potentials actualizing into individual events, the fundamental function of the concepts remains the same. Virtuality and actuality

³⁰² May, *Gilles Deleuze* 47.

³⁰³ Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 55-60.

³⁰⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 36.

always function by tying seemingly dualistic and hierarchical ontological concepts into an immanent univocity by having them share one and the same sense of reality whereby each side becomes each other's prerequisite and precondition.

At first glance it is easy to mistake Deleuze's binary concept of virtuality/actuality as a logic of transcendental monism whereby the metaphysical Oneness of pure duration overrides individual differences by reduction to the 'Oneness of Being.'³⁰⁵ If this was the case, there is no way the concept can be compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda* as it will imply foundationalism. This is why it is significant to understand Deleuze's metaphysics in reference to his pragmatist/empiricist framework and as an application of heterogenesis. Accordingly, we can see that the virtual has no correspondence to Being since Deleuze's empiricism shifted his concern from the question of what is Being to the question of phenomena as experience. In addition, his pragmatism assured that no metaphysical concept needs to represent reality, but to fulfill functions for intended purposes. Virtual concepts whether it be pure duration, pure recollection, impersonal experience, or internal difference, do not describe or correspond to substantive reality, but are utilized upon the understanding that they are purely abstract concepts significant only to the extent they can fulfill certain practical purposes.

Furthermore, heterogenesis allows us to clarify that the relationship between the virtual and actual are not unilateral, and reductive where the virtual presides over the actual, but rather each is each other's prerequisite and precondition. Therefore, the concepts of virtuality and actuality can be used to understand the relationship between transcendental metaphysical concepts and the individual phenomenon the concepts purport to explain: transcendental concepts are the virtual conditions on

³⁰⁵ This kind of interpretation of Deleuze is exemplified by Badiou who assumes that Deleuze's binary concepts such as virtual/actual shows a relationship whereby "going beyond a static (quantitative) opposition always turns out to involve the qualitative raising up of one of its terms."

Alain Badiou, *Deleuze the Clamour of Being*, Trans. Louise Burchill, (Minneapolis: Minnesota Univ. 2002), 10.

Therefore according to Badiou, ontological priority always lies in those concepts which are variations of univocal reality (i.e. the virtual) which Badiou views is what constitutes a "beings qua Being" for Deleuze since "beings are but modalities of the One, and the One is the living production of its modes (Badiou, 48)." For Badiou, Deleuze is simply a disguised recurrence of a metaphysics of the One ala Plato.

Peter Hallward argues in continuity with Badiou, that Deleuze's ontology and metaphysics of difference prioritizes the virtual above the actual, always abstracting the actual to virtuality and therefore is a "philosophy of (virtual) difference without (actual) others."

Peter Hallward, *Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation: Out of this World*, (London: Verso 2006), 3.

The common problem in these readings of Deleuze is that they ignore Deleuze's pragmatist framework in understanding metaphysics as well as his understanding of concepts as heterogenesis.

which actual phenomena are placed, both made to share one and the same sense of reality (which for Deleuze was experience/internal difference). This sense of univocity between the concepts of virtuality and actuality reinforces an immanent and non-representational ontological status of transcendental concepts such as “pure duration,” “becoming,” empiricist “experience,” etc. in relation to the actual phenomena linked to these concepts.

The virtual and actual form a simultaneous heterogenesis, a fold unto each other out of the same fabric that is difference/experience much like how transcendental concepts and the phenomena these concepts explain are each other’s simultaneous prerequisite and precondition. As a result, ‘virtuality’ and ‘actuality’ can be considered fully compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda* since it does not imply any sense of correspondence theory, realism, essentialism, transcendentalism, foundationalism or hindrance to practical ethics. Therefore, these concepts can be utilized to explain Dōgen’s metaphysical concepts that describe reality both on a transcendental holistic level and on an individual level without having to conjure the image of a literal ontological transcendence by connecting both levels of reality within a univocal relationship. I will demonstrate in the next chapter how applying this concept on Dōgen’s views on time as Dharma-positions, and it’s relation to a universalized sense of Buddha-nature as ‘Total-function’ will allow for an interpretation which makes sense of its seeming paradox in a manner congruent to *pratītyasamutpāda*.

4.5 Conclusion: Deleuzian Pragmatism and *Pratītyasamutpāda*

Through the course of this chapter I had argued that each aspect of Deleuze’s pragmatism were all compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda*. Beginning with his ethical concerns against representation and transcendence, his idea of heterogenesis which founded his view of metaphysics as practical, ending with his metaphysics of actuality/virtuality. Consequently I concluded that all of these ideas are applicable to Buddhist doctrine. This was because Deleuze’s ideas do not negate *pratītyasamutpāda*, but can complement it.

The reason for the complementarity was twofold: First, both concern philosophy in terms of

its practicality for the sake of fulfilling an ethical purpose. Second, both *pratītyasamutpāda* and Deleuze's philosophy are antithetical to similar philosophical ideas. Namely, these ideas were:

- 1) *Representation or identity*, both as the identity between knowledge and object as well as the self-identity of phenomena such as believing there can be a thing-in-itself or a constant Self.
- 2) *Subject/object duality or objective and conceptual realism* implying the belief that reality and/or ideas exist in-and-of-itself independently of the process of experience.
- 3) *Transcendence* implying the existence of privileged ontological realities as God, Self or Truth viewed as the principle to or essence to phenomena existing beyond experience.
- 4) *Essentialism and foundationalism*, implying the existence of essences, foundations, truths or meanings that grounds phenomena and knowledge beyond or prior to experience awaiting to be discovered.

Deleuze's pragmatism can be restated in a somewhat ontological manner. From the perspective of Deleuze's pragmatism, no assertable "objective reality" or entities can be said to exist, and the least we can say is that *only functions are happening*. Consequently Deleuze's concepts do not understand reality as substantively grounded in any manner, but always as happening in the form of a process of shifting functional relations amongst experiences un-locatable in any exclusive positions (i.e. "outside" vs. "inside"). These aspects of Deleuze's philosophy makes his concepts completely compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda*'s view that no independent, self-asserting substantive reality can exist, but that *only the experience of causality is happening*. The only supplementation needed to make Deleuzian empiricism/pragmatism fully compatible with *pratītyasamutpāda* is to specify the priority of experience constituting phenomena as the *experience of causality*.

Deleuze's fundamental pragmatism leads him to view thought as not representing some "outside" reality, but significant inasmuch as they fulfill functions. Deleuze's concept of heterogenesis presented a way of understanding the relationship between transcendental metaphysical concepts and subordinate philosophical concepts as neither representational, nor hierarchical and dualistic. Rather, concepts exist in an inseparable and mutually ever-changing process of folding in

which they are each other's prerequisite and precondition. Transcendental metaphysical concepts do not (and do not have to) represent corresponding absolute truths; rather, they are a necessary function for our process of making sense of the world. Through heterogenesis, concepts are understood as a practical part of how we experience reality in forming the way we understand its nature.

Accordingly, I had resolved the prejudice that *prañīyasamutpāda* is incompatible with ontology by considering *prañīyasamutpāda* as itself a heterogenetic concept, a transcendental concept which conditions all Buddhist philosophy and practice. Consequently, any metaphysical or ontological concept can be utilized in Buddhism given they can function within the conditions of *prañīyasamutpāda*. Upon this basis, we can now interpret the way Dōgen's metaphysical concepts may function within the framework of *prañīyasamutpāda*.

In summary, our original interpretation of Dōgen will utilize the following tools elucidated in this chapter. First, Deleuze's pragmatism laid out an alternative attitude in doing philosophy that is to be centred on how concepts function and for what practical purpose as opposed to describing the 'true-way-reality-is.' This will be the fundamental stance I will take for granted in interpreting Dōgen. Second, with regards to expressing reality, Deleuze's pragmatism amounted to saying that only functions (or relations) are happening as opposed to asserting the existence of objective entities. This may be helpful when interpreting Dōgen's concept of Total-function as a key to unfolding his ideas on Buddha-nature and time. Third, there is a way to articulate differences as singular yet existing in a univocal relationship to each other by virtue of the concepts of 'virtuality' and 'actuality.' By utilizing this binary concept, singular differences can be understood as sharing (or participating in) a univocal sense of reality with metaphysical reality. In this way, singular differences can be connected with transcendental concepts that designate a sense of unity without reliance on principles of representation or transcendence, nor do they have to exist in a paradoxical, or hierarchical relationship in which differences are subsumed by the 'perfection' or 'grounding' of the One. Rather, the concepts of both difference and unity can be seen as working in an immanent relationship between virtuality and actuality in which they are each other's simultaneous prerequisite and precondition. This concept may become useful when interpreting Dōgen's seemingly paradoxical claims of the

simultaneous singularity of time and phenomena as Dharma-positions and its univocity within Total-function. As to how all of these concepts will be put to full use, we shall see in the upcoming chapter where I will present my “new” interpretation of Dōgen’s metaphysics.