

Nietzsche's Reversal of Platonism and the Simulacrum

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Abstract

In this paper, I seek to show how both Baudrillard and Deleuze analyse simulacra and simulations in the spirit of Nietzsche's demand to "philosophize with a hammer" in order to reveal the hollowness of the idols that have traditionally founded philosophy. I start by arguing that Nietzsche overcomes Plato's affirmation of the super-sensuous world of Forms as a standard of truth by exposing the production of truth as an illusionary process. In his reading of Nietzsche's reversal of Platonism, Deleuze champions a radical reign of simulacra, because simulacra undermine the distinctions between models and copies, the true and the false, and the very foundations of Platonic thought. Both Deleuze and Baudrillard stress the inseparability of appearance and truth in simulacra. Yet, unlike Deleuze, Baudrillard does not celebrate the rise of the simulacrum. Systems of simulacra are self-referential and self-legitimising. Baudrillard's work seeks to challenge processes of simulation that try to create "effects" of the real ("hyperreality") based upon pre-conceived models.

Keywords: Baudrillard; Deleuze; Nietzsche; Heidegger; Plato; Platonism; simulation; simulacrum; hyperreality

1. Introduction

The subtitle of Nietzsche's *Twilight of the Idols* is "How to Philosophize with a Hammer" and the first target of Nietzsche's hammer is Plato's belief in super-sensuous Forms. For Deleuze, Nietzsche inaugurates a philosophy of the future for an era of simulacra.¹ From the 1960s on-

¹ Simulacrum is the Latin term for "statue" or "idol," and translates the Greek

wards, Deleuze publishes essays on the simulacrum and, although his analysis of the simulacrum proceeds in less historical fashion than Baudrillard (Section 4), Deleuze is close to Baudrillard in the sense that they both stress the inseparability of appearance and reality in simulacra. In this paper, I show how Baudrillard and Deleuze analyse simulacra in the spirit of Nietzsche's demand, as a cultural physician, to "philosophize with a hammer" in order to "sound out" all the hollow "idols" (such as Plato's super-sensuous Forms) through a process of "auscult(ur)ation."² Conflating the musical and the medical, Nietzsche emphasises that it is "*eternal* idols, ... [that] will be touched here with a hammer as with a tuning fork."³ What Nietzsche considers as "idols" are those unexamined prejudices that pretend to be truths and are worshiped as such. Nietzsche's method involves enfeebling the highest values and pushing them off their pedestals, reversing established hierarchies as preparation for their revaluation.

I start this paper (Section 2) with an outline of Nietzsche's "reversal of Platonism." In "On Truth and Lying in the Non-Moral Sense," Nietzsche regards the "pure drive towards truth" as an "effect" of deception and he exposes the production of truth as an illusionary process.⁴ I then move to Deleuze's view of Nietzsche's reversal of Platonism (Section 3) and Deleuze's affirmation of the simulacrum's disruptive power. For Deleuze, the simulacrum produces an "effect of resemblance" that simulates the real.⁵ Similarly, Baudrillard's work sketches the rise of the "hyperreal," which itself produces "effects of the real" in an "empty space of representation."⁶

Unlike Deleuze, Baudrillard is much more ambivalent about the

phantasma. The plural form is simulacra.

² Duncan Large, "Introduction," *Twilight of the Idols*, Friedrich Nietzsche, trans. Duncan Large (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, trans. Duncan Large (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 155.

⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, trans. Ronald Speirs (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 143.

⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (London: Continuum, 2004), 295.

⁶ Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, trans. Ian Hamilton Grant (London: Sage Publications, 1993), 70.

simulacrum. Baudrillard is concerned with a constructed conceptual system that results in a world where the real (“defined in ego-psychological terms as something that is external and beyond personal control”⁷) is not represented (which requires a distance between copy and model) but is rather “simulated.” Images and signs are their own models; they precede reality due to the “precession of simulacra.”⁸ The logical and temporal relation between the image and the real has been reversed. Systems of simulacra are for Baudrillard self-referential and self-legitimising. They set the standard for their own evaluation. Before examining Baudrillard’s problematisation of simulation⁹ and simulacra, I first set the scene with an outline of Nietzsche’s challenge to Platonism.

2. The Reversal of Platonism

Nietzsche argues that Western epistemology has attempted to create a timeless foundation to guarantee knowledge and truth. The Judeo-Christian tradition and Platonic thought share a similar conception of “this world” (of appearances and images) as reflections of a higher and immutable reality. In what follows, I discuss the relation between the true and apparent within the framework of Nietzsche’s “reversal of Platonism” and, in Section 3, I move to Deleuze’s view of the simulacrum in the wake of Nietzsche’s reversal and, in Section 4, I turn to Baudrillard’s genealogy of the orders of images and of simulacra.

The mission of Nietzsche’s philosophy, according to Heidegger, is to overthrow Platonism: “the farther removed from true being, the purer, the finer, the better it is. Living in semblance as goal.”¹⁰ For Nietzsche, Plato’s Socrates devalues the mutable realm of appearances in favour of

⁷ Charles Levin, *Jean Baudrillard: A Study in Cultural Metaphysics* (Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall Europe, 1996), 200.

⁸ The word “precession” stems from the Latin verb *praecedere*, meaning to “happen before.” A precession must be clearly differentiated from a “procession.” A “procession” refers to a chronological, sequence-based approach to time. Simulacra do not proceed according to a linear sequence.

⁹ Simulation refers to a process, an action, a relation, whereas the noun “simulacrum” refers to the resulting product of this process.

¹⁰ As cited by Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes One and Two*, trans. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 154.

an immutable realm of Forms¹¹ (the realm of Forms is a phantasmagoria of an “another,” a “better” life, according to Nietzsche). In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche sees the task of philosophy as a “revaluation of values,” which entails a dismissal of the realm of Forms as a chimera.¹² Does Nietzsche merely elevate what Platonism denigrates (i.e., appearances, becoming)?

Nietzsche’s reversal of Platonism has been a central issue of debate in the treatment of his work and Heidegger argues that to reverse Plato’s thinking without re-evaluating its overall structure is to fail to overcome it in a radical way. Given Nietzsche’s rejection of Plato’s true world of Forms, Heidegger claims that the reversal must not simply affirm the world of appearances if it seeks to avoid repeating the structural missteps of Platonic thought. The realms of both essence and appearance must be abolished in the manner in which they are seen within Platonic thought, along with the hierarchical structure “above and below.”¹³ A “reversal” must involve the destruction of both the world of essence and the world of appearance.¹⁴

According to Heidegger, the language of opposed realms of being is metaphorical. Socrates’s discourse on the Forms in Plato’s *Republic* implies the existence of a *single* realm that reveals and shows itself in two ways. The distinction between two “modes of showing,” John Sallis maintains, “is more fundamental than the distinction between the intelligible and the visible.”¹⁵ The philosopher does not have access to a separate ontological realm, but rather penetrates the surface of a single realm of being and understands things as they are. For Heidegger, Nietzsche “completes”

¹¹ It must be noted that “forms” are introduced in Plato’s *Republic* without a formal argument for their existence.

¹² Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Aaron Ridley, trans. Judith Norman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 155.

¹³ Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes One and Two*, 201.

¹⁴ Heidegger critiques Nietzsche for being a metaphysician who only “inverted” the Platonic opposition between Being and Becoming by making Becoming, in the form of the endless flow of power, primary. Nietzsche awards Becoming the character of Being — that is the supreme will to power. I seek to show how Nietzsche overcomes the binary opposition in his attack of the Platonic tradition.

¹⁵ John Sallis, *Being and Logic: Reading the Platonic Dialogues* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996), 385.

the history of metaphysics through the inversion of Platonism.¹⁶

Alan D. Schrift¹⁷ rightly points out that Heidegger fails to acknowledge the extent to which Nietzsche breaks down privileged hierarchical relations. Nietzsche also reveals that the hierarchical opposition originates from the assignation of prior value that must be problematised. Concerning the genealogy of the “will to truth,” for instance, Nietzsche first inverts the Platonic order of truth over falsity; secondly, he delves into the origin of the positive value placed upon truth and he finds it “simply a moral prejudice to affirm truth over error or appearances.”¹⁸

Nietzsche targets the unquestioning value of truth, the ascetic impulse to eradicate insecurity to a supposed truth, in whatever form a supposition may take, even an anti-metaphysical one (science).¹⁹ Truth for Nietzsche is dependent on our interest in truth. In the “Third Essay,” paragraph 24, of *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche says that the idea of “*presuppositionless* knowledge” is “unthinkable.”²⁰ A certain amount of “faith” is the precondition for any knowledge.²¹ Without a

¹⁶ The peculiarities of Nietzsche’s “inversion” of Platonism is the focus of the concluding chapters of Heidegger’s first lecture series on Nietzsche, *Nietzsche. Volume One. The Will to Power as Art*. Alan D. Schrift (1990, 44-45) says that “Nietzsche’s inversion of the Platonist hierarchy is made on *historical* rather than theoretical grounds. That is to say, Nietzsche’s inversion of the Platonist standards is grounded in history and the fundamental historical event of nihilism, that is, in the event of the highest values devaluing themselves. Nietzsche’s overturning of Platonism is thus the result of his inquiry into the history of philosophy as the history of the devaluation of the highest values (nihilism) [...] Nietzsche’s inversion of Platonism must be understood in terms of the overcoming of nihilism: the Platonist affirmation of the super-sensuous has, as a matter of historical fact, given rise to our present nihilistic situation and, if nihilism is to be overcome, we must, therefore, overcome the affirmation of the super-sensuous as the standard of the true.” Alan D. Schrift, *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation. Between Hermeneutics and Deconstruction* (London: Routledge, 1990). As we shall see in Section 4, Baudrillard’s phase of “simulation” and “hyperreality” brings Nietzsche’s analysis of nihilism up to date.

¹⁷ Alan D. Schrift, *Nietzsche’s French Legacy. A Genealogy of Poststructuralism* (London: Routledge, 1995), 22.

¹⁸ Ibid., 22.

¹⁹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson, trans. Carol Diethe (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 112.

²⁰ Ibid., 112.

²¹ Ibid., 112.

certain “faith,” knowledge lacks “a direction, a meaning, a limit, a method, a *right* to exist.”²² Knowledge cannot be free of such (perspectival) limits. Nietzsche concludes the “Third Essay” of *On the Genealogy of Morals* by saying that science is not the obvious opponent of the (Christian) “ascetic ideal,” because regarding the access to “truth,” it also rejects unstable forces.²³ The “ascetic ideal” is transcendent: like truth, it is something that does not bear the features of the sensuous world. A genuine alternative to the ascetic ideal “tentatively” puts the value of (super-sensuous) truth “into question.”²⁴

Nietzsche’s early work “On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense” shows how he overcomes the dualistic and hierarchical order between illusion and reality by exposing the production of truth as an illusory process. In this text, Nietzsche claims that “truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions” and that truth is nothing more than a “mobile army of metaphors.”²⁵ Nietzsche begins this important text by focusing on the human intellect’s powers of deception and how this quality is crucial for human development. Deception (*Verstellung*) is the “means to preserve those weaker, less robust individuals, who, by nature, are denied horns or the sharp fangs of prey with which to wage the struggle for existence.”²⁶

Humans overcome their physical weaknesses by devising subtle, deceptive intellectual strategies. We also find this idea in Nietzsche’s story of the “slaves” in *On the Genealogy of Morals*. The slaves transform their physical weakness into strength through conceptual inventions such as “freewill” and “the subject.” In addition, for Nietzsche, “the priestly caste” devises “the ascetic ideal” precisely as a compensatory strategy for their physical weakness. As Nietzsche puts it in “Essay Three,” Section 13: “the ascetic ideal is a trick for the preservation of life.”²⁷

²² Ibid., 112.

²³ Lawrence J. Hatab, “How Does the Ascetic Ideal Function in Nietzsche’s *Genealogy*?” *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, n. 35/36 Spring-Autumn (Penn State University Press, 2008), 114.

²⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 112.

²⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, trans. Ronald Speirs (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 146.

²⁶ Ibid., 142.

²⁷ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 88.

Returning to his earlier text "On Truth and Lying in the Non-Moral Sense," Nietzsche explains that a common feature of these "tricks" is that they are lies that the intellect produces to preserve itself by playing on the "surface of things" and producing favourable appearances.²⁸ Nietzsche regards such an "art of dissimulation" as necessary for the maintenance and development of human society.²⁹ Deception can take various forms such as self-deception and deception of others, which in both cases involves a deception about the nature of the world. For Nietzsche, we misunderstand the intellect if we ignore that it is an organ of the will, and that man does not exist in order to know.

The question remains: where did the desire for truth come from? Nietzsche here points to the state because "man out of need and boredom wants to live socially and herdlike, he requires peace and strives to eliminate from his world at least the crudest *bellum omnium contra omnes*."³⁰ Peace entails something that looks like a step toward understanding the urge for truth. Nietzsche identifies a transition from concealment towards a general "peace treaty" that establishes a common set of rules to avoid the "*bellum omnium contra omnes*" (Hobbes' expression for the "war of all against all" to describe the state of nature).³¹ The idea of universal truth was devised to enforce peace treaties, because the value of truth must be accepted by all.

This new concept of universal truth is an effect of the "legislation of language" (*Gesetzgebung der Sprache*), which creates a universal way of designating things that has "the same validity and force everywhere."³² The legislation of language gives order to the chaotic world. The boundaries between truth and lie are the rules by means of which a community structures and maintains a sense of itself. For Nietzsche, any concept is formed by reducing particularity in favour of a predicable world.

In addition, Nietzsche claims that it is only through "forgetfulness" that we come to imagine the possibility of truth as a perfect fit with things-in-themselves.³³ We forget that the relation between our words

²⁸ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, 142.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 143.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 143.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 143.

³² *Ibid.*, 143.

³³ *Ibid.*, 148.

and concepts, on the one hand, and things themselves, on the other, is purely a metaphorical relationship. Metaphors are not inferior expressions of a superior pre-linguistic reality. Instead, they produce a reality-effect that we call the “world,” which is then reviewed in terms of ideal truth and value.

Words are copies in images and sounds of “nervous stimulations” of the body and brain.³⁴ A metaphor is a translation from one realm to another; and Nietzsche will speak, in this context, of the differences between languages or the peculiarities of a particular language.³⁵ The arbitrary relation between words and things is obvious from the fact that different languages use different words to attribute various properties to the same objects.

Nietzsche reviews the relationship between metaphor and truth by regarding the “pure drive towards truth” as an effect of deception.³⁶ He calls into question (a) the moral interpretation of the difference between truth and error (that truth is something good and error something evil), (b) the metaphysical interpretation of the difference between truth and error (that truth represents a world of unchanging facts, and error, a world of becoming), (c) the logical interpretation of the bivalence between truth and error (truth is not opposed to error). In this skepticism, “error” becomes the metaphor for a world without vertical antitheses and oppositions between good and evil, being and becoming, beauty and ugliness.

Nietzsche’s essay “On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense” provides an account of the origin and meaning of language in the style of a fable that is still reflected in his mature views on language. For instance, in a later text, “Reason in Philosophy,” from *The Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche outlines the emergence of conceptual representation.³⁷ Reason requires that the real be other than what the senses bring forth, and reason demands that this other (Being/permanence) be conceptualised. Thus, the (merely) apparent world of sense experience, which reveals only becoming, is opposed to the real world (Being). “Being” is divided into true and untrue. Plato’s philosophy for Nietzsche revolves around this hierarchi-

³⁴ Ibid., 144.

³⁵ Ibid., 144.

³⁶ Ibid., 143.

³⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Aaron Ridley, trans. Judith Norman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 167.

cally-based difference between true and apparent world.

The section on "Reason in Philosophy" is followed by "How the 'True World' Finally Became a Fable," which provides a brief account of a "history of an error." In six aphorisms, Nietzsche traces the trajectory of the "true" world, which was at first within grasp of thinkers, then promised to the faithful and then mobilised by the positivists; it then becomes unattainable, unknown, and finally useless. The "true" world is an idea that is no longer good for anything, not even obligating. The only thing worse than the "true" world and an all-encompassing regime of judgment (Platonic, Christian, Kantian, etc.), however, is finally not to have faith in any world.

The end of the longest error is the end of both truth and illusion — which is the "properly Nietzschean moment" as it represents the point of departure for interrogating the status of fiction.³⁸ Neither reality nor appearance triumph, because both share the same realm, the midday of philosophy eliminates any such distinctions in an immanence with no more shadows — in Deleuze's words, the "terrifying models of the pseudos in which the powers of the false unfold."³⁹

For Deleuze, modern philosophy must establish itself by reversing Platonism, as Nietzsche did in *Twilight of the Idols*. In his reading of Nietzsche's reversal, which will be discussed below, Deleuze champions a radical reign of simulacra, because the latter undermine the distinction between models and copies and the very foundations of Platonic thought. In the next section, I show how Deleuze seeks primarily to understand Plato's "motivations"⁴⁰ for banishing the simulacrum (the false pretenders) to the Idea. This search for the "motivations" overcomes the alleged "abstractness" of Nietzsche's reversal.⁴¹ I then discuss Baudrillard's simulacrum in Section 4.

³⁸ Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *The Subject of Philosophy*, trans. Thomas Trezise, Hugh Silverman, Gary M. Cole, Timothy Bent, Karen McPherson and Claudette Sartillot, ed. Thomas Trezise (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1993), 5.

³⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 128.

⁴⁰ Individual signs are unmotivated, so a linguist must try to reconstruct the system. It is the system alone which motivates individual signs.

⁴¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (London: Continuum, 2004), 291.

3. The Simulacrum and the Motivation for Plato's Method of Division

In the previous section, we saw how Nietzsche exposes the supposed truth behind language as a fiction. Concepts that supposedly refer to truth and reality are merely solidified metaphors that seek to provide categories for understanding. Nietzsche thereby sets the scene, as we shall see below, for Deleuze and Baudrillard's world of simulacra.

It is important to bear in mind that the simulacrum has long been implicated in the ancient theory of imitation (*mimesis*) and that it has also been part of the controversy concerning the legitimacy of images. Historically, simulacra have been regarded as equivalent to images, although in most cases their illusionary aspect is emphasised. The deceptive aspects of simulacra spring from their associations with the spheres of death and ghostly appearances.

The monotheistic prohibition against images that was philosophically supported by Plato's sharp critique of the image as "far removed from the truth" in Book X of *The Republic* would lead to the bloody wars during the Middle Ages and the Reformation. The Western world's rejection of the image took another turn in the 19th century with the arrival of Romanticism and Nietzsche. Nietzsche's philosophy, as we have seen, does not however merely champion illusion against Plato's critique of appearance, because for him the production of truth is an illusionary process.

The aesthetics of appearance makes its way to France thanks to the surrealist interest in the irrational, the unconscious, dreams, and phantasies.⁴² The simulacrum (singular) is in this sense related to the Greek *phantasma*, which the ancient theories of perception used synonymously with simulacrum or *eidolon*. As a product of *phantasia* or the imagination, *phantasmata* are associated with illusions and appearance, although to a lesser extent than with simulation.

The terms simulacrum and simulation become important within French theoretical discourse thanks to the Argentine poet Jorge Luis Borges as well as the artist and writer Pierre Klossowski who, in turn,

⁴² The surrealist poet and ethnologist Michel Leiris published in 1925 a range of poems entitled *Simulacra*; André Breton the programmatic mastermind of surrealism (along with Paul Éluard) published *Essais de simulation* in 1930.

influenced Deleuze and Lyotard. Roland Barthes regards the production of simulacra, that is to say the making of models, as the epistemological method of structuralism. Starting from the 1960s, Deleuze publishes essays on the simulacrum in Plato and Lucretius, which define a position close to Baudrillard's notion of simulation (Section 4). In Nietzsche's footsteps, both Deleuze and Baudrillard stress the inseparability of appearances and truth in simulacra.

Deleuze's reflections on the simulacrum are contained mostly in two texts: *Difference and Repetition* and the essay in his appendix to *The Logic of Sense*, namely "The Simulacrum and Ancient Philosophy." In what follows, I focus on the latter text. For Deleuze, Plato's world of Forms is a Nietzschean idol, a myth constructed to legitimise Plato's ambition for philosophy as a path to truth. As Daniel Smith remarks, "[i]n the Platonic dialogues, according to Deleuze, myth functions as a narrative of foundation."⁴³ It is myth that makes the categorization of differences possible. Deleuze says the "myth constructs an immanent model or the foundation-test according to which pretenders should be judged and their pretensions measured."⁴⁴ Any truth-claim relies on myth and the production of truth is thus revealed as an illusionary process.

Smith explains that Plato created "the Idea of something pure, a pure quality. The Idea, as foundation, then allows its possession to be shared, giving it to the claimant (the secondhand possessor), on condition that the claimant pass the 'foundation' test."⁴⁵ Only the foundation itself, the Idea possesses something firsthand — for instance, only Truth is true and only Justice just. The Idea "is what objectively possesses a pure quality, or what is nothing other than what it is."⁴⁶

The claimant adheres to the object of the claim only insofar as it is "modelled internally on the Idea, which comprehends the relations and proportions that constitute the essence."⁴⁷ It is on this condition that the

⁴³ Daniel Smith, "The Concept of the Simulacrum: Deleuze and the Overturning of Platonism," *Continental Philosophy Review*, vol. 38, n. 1/2, 89-123 (2006), 95.

⁴⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (London: Continuum, London, 2004), 293.

⁴⁵ Daniel Smith, "The Concept of the Simulacrum: Deleuze and the Overturning of Platonism," *Continental Philosophy Review*, vol. 38, n. 1/2, 89-123 (2006), 96.

⁴⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 29-30.

⁴⁷ Daniel Smith, "The Concept of the Simulacrum: Deleuze and the Overturning of

claimant can rightfully participate in the Idea. Smith claims that the “Platonic conception of ‘participation’ (*metechein*, lit. “to have after”) must be understood in terms of the role of this foundation: an elective participation is the response to the problem of a method of selection.”⁴⁸

The Platonic meaning of representation is clear: all well-founded pretensions are re-presentations of the Idea. Even the ultimate “well-founded pretension” is subordinate to the founding Idea. The Idea is appealed to only as a basis of what is not “representable” in things themselves.⁴⁹ Plato’s tripartite structure, according to Deleuze, involves the ground (the unattainable Idea that provides the foundation for participation), the quality of the ground (the object for the test of foundation) and the claimants to the ground (those who participate unequally in the object). Platonic division establishes a hierarchy among the most faithful copies of the original Idea, but it also includes images that are only illusions of the founding model (simulacra). The real Platonic division lies not in the distinction between original and image, but rather lies between two types of images (*idoles*); good copies (*icônes*) that faithfully follow the principle of internal resemblance, and bad copies or simulacra (*phantasmata*) that are false pretenders to the Idea.

Platonism seeks to banish the simulacrum to the “bottom of the Ocean,”⁵⁰ because its presence causes us to question the structure of the intelligible model and of the sensible copy. It even threatens to break down all foundations. The simulacrum thus indicates the way towards reversing Platonism. For Deleuze, Plato thus himself perceived the threat of the “simulacrum.” In the *Sophist*, Plato distinguishes between two types of imitation: likenesses or similitudes (Greek: *eikon*) and semblances or simulacra (Greek: *phantasmata*). Plato proposes (in the voice of the Stranger) that the “perfect example” of a likeness “consists in creating a copy [of a statue] that conforms to the proportions of the original in all three dimensions and giving moreover the proper colour to every part.”⁵¹

Platonism,” *Continental Philosophy Review*, vol. 38, n. 1/2, 89-123 (2006), 97.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 96.

⁴⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (London: Continuum, 2004), 296.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 293-6.

⁵¹ Plato, *The Sophist*, 235d-e, *Collected Dialogues*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, Bollingen Series 71,

On the other hand, simulacra are improper and manipulative imitations. Plato's example is of "colossal" works such as sculptures at the top of temples, the upper parts of which were out of proportion and exaggerated. In such works, the imitation "only appears to be a likeness of a well-made figure because it is not seen from a satisfactory point of view, but to a spectator with eyes that could fully take in so large an object [it] would not be even like the original it professes to resemble."⁵² Simulacra fail to have the structural similarity that likenesses are said to have. As Deleuze explains, "simulacra are like false pretenders, built upon a dissimilarity, implying an essential perversion or deviation."⁵³ According to Deleuze, Plato is disturbed by the "non-productive" nature of the simulacrum as it

implies huge dimensions, depths and distances that the observer cannot master. It is precisely because he cannot master them that he experiences an impression of resemblance. This simulacrum includes a differential point of view; and the observer becomes part of the simulacrum itself, which is transformed and deformed by his point of view.⁵⁴

The simulacrum is built on an internal difference and is dissimilar to what it represents, but it still produces an "effect of resemblance."⁵⁵ This focus on "effects" underlines the future oriented, mutable aspect of the simulacrum. Identity and resemblance continue only as external effects of the internal differential dynamic of the simulacrum.

Plato rejects the simulacrum because it causes us to question the very notion of the model and the copy, and turns us away from the "good." In addition, the simulacrum generates confusion with regards to the possibility of selection and judgement. The simulacrum involves "the false as power, Pseudos, in the sense that Nietzsche speaks of the highest power of the false."⁵⁶ As a strange grey area, the simulacrum is neither a self-contained/containing ontology nor merely the reflection of an *a priori* ontology.⁵⁷

1961).

⁵² Ibid., 236b; 979.

⁵³ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 294.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 296.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 295.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 300.

⁵⁷ Jonathan S. Boulter, "Partial Glimpses of the Infinite: Borges and the Simulacrum," *Hispanic Review*, vol. 69, n. 3, pp. 355-377 (2001), 360.

Deleuze sees a connection between Nietzsche's "eternal return" and the simulacrum, because both involve a subversion of any ideal difference between the copy and the original, the past and the future. Here, according to David Lane, Deleuze follows Klossowski in regarding "the eternal return as a parodic play of mimesis" that overcomes the primacy of an original model and the very notion of origin itself."⁵⁸ For Klossowski, the eternal return is the "simulacrum of a doctrine."⁵⁹ Klossowski writes "The simulacrum, in its *imitative* sense, is the actualisation of something in itself incommunicable and non-representable: the phantasm in its obsessional constraint."⁶⁰ Simulacra are *phantasmata*, i.e., impulses and affects. For Klossowski, "*mimesis* is not a servile imitation of the visible, but the simulacrum of the unrepresentable."⁶¹

Likewise, according to Deleuze, to affirm the simulacrum and the "chaodyyssey" (*chao-errance*) of the return is to deny Plato's transcendent plane of Forms, as well as "true being."⁶² Deleuze focuses on Nietzschean "becoming," which has no model and fulfils no end. He concludes that to "reverse Platonism" is to undermine the world of representation — the "twilight of the idols."⁶³

In Nietzsche's *Twilight of the Idols*, we finally see that the "same and the similar no longer have an essence except as *simulated*, that is as expressing the functioning of the simulacrum [...] it is the triumph of the false pretender."⁶⁴ As David La Rocca rightly points out, however, it is

⁵⁸ David Lane, "Deleuze and Lacoue-Labarthe on the Reversal of Platonism: The Mimetic Abyss," *SubStanc*, vol. 40, n. 2 (2011), 105-126, 110.

⁵⁹ Daniel Smith, "Klossowski's Reading of Nietzsche: Impulses, Phantasms, Simulacra, Stereotypes," *Diacritics*, vol. 35, n. 1 (Spring 2005), 16.

⁶⁰ Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, trans. Daniel Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). Pierre Klossowski, *La ressemblance* (Marseille: André Dimanche, 1984), 76.

⁶¹ Smith ("Klossowski's Reading of Nietzsche: Impulses, Phantasms, Simulacra, Stereotypes," vol. 16, n. 11) claims that, unlike Baudrillard, Klossowski never doubts the real. For Klossowski, simulacra are no less real than phantasma or impulses. I agree with Butler (*Jean Baudrillard: The Defence of the Real*), who claims that Baudrillard's work focuses on the "real" as a problem and on how simulacra are responsible for the creation of a self-referential impasse. This will be discussed in Section 4.

⁶² Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 301.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 299.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

strange of Deleuze to insist on a “triumph” when the simulacrum is characterised by neutrality and horizontality.⁶⁵ A victory can only be proclaimed by defeating a rival (i.e., the icon and the copy).⁶⁶ To regard simulacra as “rising” and “affirming” themselves implies a power struggle, the “rights” of simulacra conflict with the removal of hierarchy.⁶⁷

I agree with La Rocca's view that the point of Nietzsche's “reversal of Platonism” is not the “triumph” of one system for another. As he says, the “simulacrum has not replaced the icon: both have become possible aspects of perception.”⁶⁸ In my view, Baudrillard, unlike Deleuze, is open to such an alternation. In what follows (Section 4), I outline Baudrillard's genealogy of images and simulacra, which involves both Plato and Nietzsche.⁶⁹ In her study on Deleuze, Claire Colebrook contrasts Deleuze's simulacrum with that of Baudrillard and she reads Baudrillard as “lamenting” the “loss of the real” in simulacra.⁷⁰ Colebrook claims that in Deleuze's world of simulacra “each event of life is already other than itself, not original, a simulation.”⁷¹

Without a doubt, the Baudrillardian stance towards the simulacrum is more ambivalent than the Deleuzean one.⁷² In my view, however, Rex

⁶⁵ David La Rocca, “The False Pretender: Deleuze, Sherman and the Status of Simulacra,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 69, n. 3 (Summer 2001), 326.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 326.

⁶⁷ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 299.

⁶⁸ David La Rocca, “The False Pretender: Deleuze, Sherman and the Status of Simulacra,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 69, n. 3 (Summer 2001), 327.

⁶⁹ Levin (*Jean Baudrillard. A Study in Cultural Metaphysics*, 82) calls Baudrillard a “perverse Platonist” and Julian Pefanis (*Heterology and the Postmodern: Bataille, Baudrillard and Lyotard*, 60) sees Baudrillard's work as “operating within, and on, the epistemological framework of [...] Platonic discourse.” Yet Pefanis quickly also moves from the Platonic parallel to a Nietzschean one. Baudrillard's position is close to that of Nietzsche, because, for both thinkers, “the sham world is the real world, whereas the real world is the world of illusion” (Pefanis, *Heterology and the Postmodern: Bataille, Baudrillard and Lyotard*, 60).

⁷⁰ Claire Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze* (New York: Routledge Critical Thinkers, 2002), 98.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁷² According to Sylvère Lotringer (“Remember Foucault,” 20): “Deleuze probably regretted praising the simulacrum after Baudrillard used it to cancel every dif-

Butler provides a more convincing analysis of Baudrillard than Colebrook: “Baudrillard’s [...] problem is how to think the real when all is simulation, how to use the real against attempts by various systems of rationality to account for it.”⁷³ Baudrillard seeks to challenge processes of simulation that try to bring about a real (“hyperreality”). Butler rightly claims that “Baudrillard’s point is that each system he analyses (and the work of any great thinker) creates its own reality, sets out the very terms in which it must be understood.”⁷⁴ Yet, in Baudrillard’s work, there is another side to any attempt to bring about the real in simulation, a side which is the ultimate resistance to simulation.⁷⁵

In what follows, I outline the “short” version⁷⁶ of the genealogy of images that Baudrillard provides in *Simulacra and Simulations* and, in the process, I discuss the parallels between Baudrillard’s account and Nietzsche’s *Twilight of the Idols*.

4. Baudrillard’s Simulacrum

In Section 2, we saw how Nietzsche questions the privileged (moral) status of truth over appearance and regards the “pure drive towards truth” as an “effect of deception.”⁷⁷ Nietzsche reverses Plato’s affirmation of the super-sensuous as a standard of truth by exposing the production of truth as an illusionary process.

In Section 3, we turned to Deleuze, for whom Nietzsche inaugu-

ference between the real and the referential, turning the entire system into Disneyland, a world-size simulacrum.”

⁷³ Rex Butler, *Jean Baudrillard: The Defence of the Real* (London: Sage Publications, 1999), 17.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁷⁵ Butler (*The Defence of the Real*, 53) explains that “[i]t is this real, excluded by any attempt to speak of it, that is the limit to every system — it is the Platonic paradox that Baudrillard means by the real.” The paradox first raised by Plato in his dialogue *Cratylus*. Derrida deals with Plato’s *Cratylus* in *Plato’s Pharmacy*.

⁷⁶ It is unclear, however, how the four-stage model outlined in *Simulacra and Simulations* relates to the three-stage model of *Symbolic Exchange and Death*. Baudrillard’s “long” version of the genealogy of signs and simulacra is in *Symbolic Exchange and Death*. Baudrillard does not see a contradiction between the two models, because in his later text *Simulacra and Simulations* he refers to terminology developed earlier in *Symbolic Exchange and Death*.

⁷⁷ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, 143.

rates a philosophy of the future for an era of simulacra. The simulacrum, according to Deleuze, produces an "effect of resemblance."⁷⁸ It thereby completely undermines the distinction between the model and the copy. In this section, I turn to Baudrillard's genealogy of images and simulacra. By generalizing the simulacrum to the whole societal realm, Baudrillard (like Nietzsche) emphasises much more than Deleuze that simulacra involve social rapports and power.

According to another critic, Christopher Norris, Baudrillard's project is "a species of inverted Platonism."⁷⁹ For Norris, "Baudrillard's [...] discourse [...] systematically promotes the negative terms (rhetoric, appearance, ideology) above their positive counterparts."⁸⁰ In the same vein, Drew A. Hyland says that one could see a kind of "reverse Platonism at work in Baudrillard. Instead of the supposedly Platonic degrees of reality metaphysics, we have a degrees of unreality doctrine."⁸¹

Norris and Hyland do not, in my view, however, acknowledge the extent to which Baudrillard, like Nietzsche, breaks down privileged hierarchical relations altogether. Like Nietzsche, I show below that Baudrillard's analysis of the simulacrum does not simply involve the triumph of appearances and the false. In Baudrillard's view, there now only exists an "empty space of representation," which produces "effects of the real."⁸² Baudrillard calls this "the hyperreal." Hyperreality is a self-referential world composed of pre-established models or codes of simulacra that are grounded in no other "reality" than their own. "Hyperreality" puts an end to distinctions between object and representation, thing and idea.

To understand the full scope of this development, it is necessary to see how Baudrillard's work provides a theoretical link between structural linguistics and simulation. The precondition for any simulation is the disconnection from reality and this fits perfectly with the semiological paradigm. In Saussure's theory of the sign, a word is a sign, and a

⁷⁸ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 295.

⁷⁹ Christopher Norris, "Lost in the Funhouse: Baudrillard and the Politics of Post-modernism," *Jean Baudrillard. Sage Masters of Modern Thought*, ed. Mike Gane, vol. 1 (New York: Sage Publications), 364.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 364.

⁸¹ Drew A. Hyland, "Simulate This! The Seductive Return of the Real in Baudrillard," *Subjects and Simulations: Between Baudrillard and Lacoue-Labarthe*, ed. Anne O'Bryne, and Hugh J. Silverman (Lexington Books: 2014), 28.

⁸² Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, 70.

sign consists of a signifier and a signified; the signifier is the sound pattern of the word, e.g., c-a-t, and the signified is the meaning of the word, “furry animal with whiskers,” which Saussure describes as a “mental image.” The referent is the thing, the physical cat, which is simply left out of his structuralist account.

Saussure’s contribution to the study of language was to show that the meaning of a word, the signified, is not determined by the referent — as Aristotle believes — but rather by its place in the system of signs and its relation to other signifieds: the meaning of a word is determined differentially or negatively, i.e., by its relation to other meanings. Saussure saw a relation of arbitrariness between signifiers, and between signifiers and their signified. The signification of words and phrases is based neither on verifiable facts nor on observations, so signification can only be expressed with a set of words or concepts that belong to a common language system.

For Baudrillard, in Saussure’s model of linguistic signification, there is no significance outside the system (of significance) to serve as its (transcendent) assurance of significance — or, of its truth, because meaning is determined internally in the system of language, not through an external relation between language and reality. As Baudrillard says in the chapter of *Simulacra and Simulations* entitled “The Precession of Simulacra”: “liquidation of all referentials [...] with their artificial resurrection in the systems of signs.”⁸³

The concept of simulation refers to two aspects: firstly to the disappearance of reality behind (its) signs and secondly to the “effect” of reality. The first aspect is connected with the semiological method and can be derived from its premises or alternatively its radicalisations. The second aspect is related to the production of culture (in the broadest sense). Baudrillard’s work therefore provides a theoretical link between semiology and simulation. Structural linguistics does not merely present us with a new theory of language, but rather describes the social reality of late modernity.

The concepts of simulacra, simulation and hyperreality serve Baudrillard as tools to analyze current society and its “crisis of representation.”⁸⁴ This crisis contains a dimension of historical depth that refers

⁸³ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 2.

⁸⁴ For more on the “crisis of representation” in relation to Baudrillard, see Pefanis (*Heterology and the Postmodern: Bataille, Baudrillard and Lyotard*, 61).

to a long history of images and signs. In *Simulacra and Simulations*, Baudrillard sketches four stages of the image:

1. It is the reflection of a basic reality. In this case, the real is represented by the image of the real, as a copy.
2. It masks and perverts a basic reality. Here the real is represented by an image that disfigures the real.
3. It masks the absence of a basic reality. At this stage, the real is replaced by an image, and the image conceals the fact that there is no reality. There is dissimulation or play: one pretends to have something (i.e., pretends not to have nothing, not to have no truth).
4. It has no relation to any reality whatsoever; it is its own pure simulacrum. In this final stage the image eliminates the referential relation altogether.

Baudrillard names the four orders of the image — the order of the sacrament, the order of the malefice, the order of sorcery, and the order of simulation. He differentiates between signs and images that dissimulate something (the first two stages) and signs and images that dissimulate that there is nothing (stages three and four).

For Baudrillard, as for Nietzsche, the point is that there are no essential things-in-themselves that are perspective-free. According to Paul Hegarty, Baudrillard's stages of the image indicate that "[t]here are always images, and the image removes the reality of whatever may or may not be there [...] [Baudrillard's] texts on simulation do not have a genuine reality as a necessary base, they deal instead with alterations in the perception of reality, and this perception is as much real as there is."⁸⁵ For Baudrillard, "the perspective of the human self, its self-identifications through images and objects, and its capacity to represent — produces the 'illusion' of the real world."⁸⁶ Illusion is not opposed to reality. "Truth, i.e., the true as constant, is itself a kind of semblance that is a necessary condition of life."⁸⁷ Both Nietzsche and Baudrillard, in my view, seek to overcome the hierarchical ordering between truth and illusion by exposing the production of truth as an illusionary process.

Baudrillard uses the example of religious iconography to argue that

⁸⁵ Paul Hegarty, *Jean Baudrillard: Live Theory* (London: Continuum, 2004), 51.

⁸⁶ William Pawlett, *Jean Baudrillard. Against Banality* (London: Routledge, 1999), 59.

⁸⁷ Alan D. Schrift, *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation. Between Hermeneutics and Deconstruction* (London: Routledge, 1990), 50.

those iconoclasts who feel threatened by the images of God are the ones who recognise the real importance of religious simulations. Baudrillard accentuates the non-mimetic mode of simulation and he refers to simulation as the “divine irrelevance of images.”⁸⁸ Iconoclasts seek to destroy images “because they sense this omnipotence of simulacra, this facility they have of effacing God from the consciousness of men and the overwhelming destructive truth which they suggest: that ultimately there has never been any God, that only the simulacrum exists, indeed, that God himself has only ever been his own simulacrum.”⁸⁹ The implication of such “hyperreality” is that the supposed real, which they were once thought to be representations of, no longer exists. Images and signs precede reality due to the “precession of simulacra.” The logical and temporal relation between the image and the real has been reversed.

As already mentioned above, simulation for Baudrillard is a process that consists of coded signs (and images) that refer to other signs in a model, not to an external referent. The concept of simulation is often linked to computer technology and Baudrillard’s concept comes close to these cybernetic associations, but it is also used in a much more general way. As Charles Levin rightly explains, “[s]imulation refers to something deep but calculable in the real construction of actual technical, practical or social ‘spaces’. Simulation is not so much an attempt to resemble something in ‘appearance’ as to *reassemble* it from ‘within’, algorithmically.”⁹⁰ The hypothesis of simulation is that the world can only be grasped as a simulation. In his entry on “Simulacra,” in the *Baudrillard Dictionary*, William Pawlett correctly sees the influence of Nietzsche and Klossowski on Baudrillard’s theory of simulation.⁹¹ In addition, Pawlett claims that Baudrillard rejects a Platonic understanding of simulacra because Plato’s understanding of the simulacrum focuses on the issue of falsity. For Baudrillard, simulacra are certainly not false images because the simulacrum claims to be true. The simulacrum is that which hides the truth’s non-existence.

Baudrillard is therefore not in search of the truth “behind” simula-

⁸⁸ Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 3.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹⁰ Charles Levin, *Jean Baudrillard. A Study in Cultural Metaphysics* (Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall Europe, 1996), 191.

⁹¹ William Pawlett, “Simulacra + Simulacrum,” in *The Baudrillard Dictionary*, ed. Richard G. Smith (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 196.

cra. As Alexander Gungov rightly puts it, “a simulacrum is not simply a false ideology that can easily be criticised, unmasked, and abolished forever. [...] We live comfortably in a world organized by several prevailing codes, usually not suspecting this and being content with what we have available at hand.”⁹² To search for the truth is, according to Baudrillard, the intention of the critique of ideology. “Ideology corresponds to a corruption of reality through signs. It is always the goal of the ideological analysis to restore the objective process, it is always a false problem to wish to restore the truth behind the simulacrum.”⁹³ Any ideology critical⁹⁴ of representation, as Andreas Huyssen points out, “must continue to rely on some distinction between representations” — Baudrillard’s last stage of the image collapses distinctions and “the viability of any ideology critique.”⁹⁵

It must be emphasized, however, that Baudrillard’s work still very much seeks to challenge processes of simulation that try to generate “effects” of the real. Baudrillard’s work follows a strategy of reversibility, which according to Butler means that the “basic axioms of the system” under examination must be pushed “to the point where they begin to turn upon themselves, to produce the opposite effects from those intended.”⁹⁶ Reversibility is in tune with Baudrillard’s rejection of any notion of linear progress and his Nietzschean view⁹⁷ that systems have a built-in obsoles-

⁹² Alexander Gungov, “Simulacra in the Age of the New World Order,” *Proceedings of the Twenty-First World Congress of Philosophy*, vol. 2 Social and Political Philosophy (2006), 267.

⁹³ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 27.

⁹⁴ According to Charles Levin (*Jean Baudrillard. A Study in Cultural Metaphysics*, 203), Baudrillard seeks to eradicate all traces of a sociological theory of ideology: “the theory of simulation seeks to abandon the mind-body split in sociology and absorb the problematic of ideology into a more all-encompassing metaphysical account of social being.”

⁹⁵ Andreas Huyssen, “In the Shadow of McLuhan: Jean Baudrillard’s Theory of Simulation,” *Assemblage*, n. 10 (December 1989), 9.

⁹⁶ Rex Butler, “Reading in the Shadow of the Silent Majorities as an Allegory of Representation,” *Art and Artefact*, ed. Nicholas Zurbrugg (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 52.

⁹⁷ As Nietzsche (in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 119) puts it: “All great things bring about their own demise through an act of self-sublimation: that is the law of life, the law of *necessary* ‘self-overcoming’ in the essence of life, — the law-

cence and that systems self-destruct by their very functioning.⁹⁸

According to Nietzsche's definition of "nihilism," the highest values cannot resist their own devaluation and subsequent revaluation — their reversal. Generally speaking, nihilism takes two forms in Nietzsche. The first is when life is judged lacking in relation to something super-sensuous beyond it, as in the case of Platonism or Christianity. In this case, truth, meaning, and value are derived from a transcendent origin. The second form of nihilism is when these higher values are devalued, as in the case of the Enlightenment. In this case, meaning and value are put into question.

For Nietzsche, any philosophy must decide how to deal with these two problems, which are integral to thought. Passive nihilism remains locked within the recognition that the world is without true foundation, ungrounded, and meaningless. Active nihilism, on the other hand, arises from the general insight that "the meaning and value of life depend on fictions that we must accept as true."⁹⁹

In Section 2, we saw how Nietzsche problematises the value of truth (without simply overturning the super-sensuous Platonic value structure, i.e., by privileging appearances). In the same way, for Baudrillard, as Butler rightly puts it,

the world can resemble itself, can realise itself, only because of or lead to an entirely 'other-worldly' explanation: the very difference between the world and itself, the real and its copy. It is this point — already two — at which absolute resemblance and absolute difference come together (death, symbolic exchange, seduction, reversibility, evil) that Baudrillard means by the real. It is this Platonic paradox — unrepresentable, unthinkable — that for Baudrillard is the most real thing in the world.¹⁰⁰

giver himself is always ultimately exposed to the cry: '*patere legem, quam ipse tulisti*' [Submit to the law you have yourself made]."

⁹⁸ In his entry on "Nihilism," Rex Butler (*The Baudrillard Dictionary*, 139) says "Nietzsche is one of Baudrillard's defining influences. He is one of the few thinkers whose presumptions are not turned against them," as Baudrillard did with Marx in *The Mirror of Production* and Saussure as well as Freud in *Symbolic Exchange and Death*.

⁹⁹ Rafael Winkler, *Philosophy of Finitude: Heidegger, Levinas and Nietzsche* (New York: Bloomsburg Publishing Inc., 2018), 105.

¹⁰⁰ Rex Butler, "Reading 'In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities' as an Allegory of Representation," *Art and Artefact*, ed. Nicholas Zurbrugg (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 62.

In the final phase of simulation there is no real to reflect or imitate, because simulation is a replacement. Simulation totalises the world in its own image. In the order of simulation, the model and its internal system of relations generate phenomena. Although science demands an end to mimetic as well as to mythical thought, Baudrillard shows that this rejection is deluded. The demand for direct access is mythical but also fatal.

For Baudrillard, the rationality of the Enlightenment produces “the orders of simulacra” that destroy it. As Baudrillard puts it in *Fatal Strategies*, the “real does not efface itself in favour of the imaginary; it effaces itself in favour of the more real than real: the hyperreal. The truer than true: this is simulation.”¹⁰¹ The real has become its own simulation. Political and cultural events are inextricably linked to their mode of (re)presentation. In the same way, processes of simulation mistake reality with their reproduction.

In his study “Nihilism and the Sublime Postmodern,” Will Slocombe rightly regards Baudrillard’s simulation as arising “from the Enlightenment desire to attribute Reason as the measure of all things, to quantify and control by scientifically replicating the Real under laboratory conditions.”¹⁰² Slocombe points out that simulation “is not an *escape* from Enlightenment rationality but the ultimate *culmination* of it.”¹⁰³

Baudrillard follows Nietzsche’s critique of the machinery that continuously revives the divine along with everything that gives meaning to a world and a humanity that finds itself moulded through the character of that meaning. As David Allison puts it, Baudrillard’s “oversaturated world of hyperreality [...] [is] for Nietzsche, precisely the entire symbolic of the religio-moral idiosyncrasy.”¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Jean Baudrillard, *Fatal Strategies*, trans. Philip Beitchman and W. G. J. Neisluchowski (New York: Semiotext(e), 1990), 11.

¹⁰² Will Slocombe, *Nihilism and the Sublime Post Modern: The (Hi)Story of a Difficult Relationship from Romanticism to Postmodernism* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 69.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹⁰⁴ David Allison, “Iconologies: Reading Simulations with Plato and Nietzsche,” *Nietzsche, Epistemology, and Philosophy of Science II*, ed. Babette Babiche (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999), 183; spelling modified.

5. Conclusion

According to Nietzsche, Plato devalues the mutable realm of appearances in favour of an immutable, transcendent, true world of “Forms.” Nietzsche does not simply invert the Platonic hierarchical order of truth over error or appearance, he also delves into the origin of the positive value placed upon truth and he finds it “simply a moral prejudice to affirm truth over error or appearances.”¹⁰⁵ In the wake of Nietzsche’s “reversal of Platonism” and the concurrent “twilight of the idols,” Deleuze and Baudrillard conceptualise simulacra and simulation not simply as a false portrayal (with no “real referent”). For Deleuze, the simulacrum is not derived from a prior identity. A simulacrum is dissimilar to what it represents, but it still produces an “effect of resemblance.”¹⁰⁶ This focus on “effects” is in tune with the future oriented, mutable aspect of the simulacrum. Identity and resemblance continue as external effects of the internal differential dynamic of the simulacrum. In Deleuze’s world of simulacra, “each event of life is already other than itself,” “not original,” a “simulation.”¹⁰⁷

Unlike Deleuze’s straightforward affirmation of simulacra, we have seen how Baudrillard’s work seeks to challenge processes of simulation that try to generate “effects” of the real. Hyperreality, for Baudrillard, is a self-referential world composed of models or simulacra grounded in no other reality than their own. By means of his metaphor of “the precession of simulation,” Baudrillard discusses how cultural models seem to circulate as “self-fulfilling prophecies.”¹⁰⁸ Social and geopolitical events repeat themselves in an endless cycle. In Baudrillard’s work, simulation is not about emancipation, as in the case of Deleuze, but about control.

¹⁰⁵ Schrift, *Nietzsche’s French Legacy. A Genealogy of Poststructuralism*, 22.

¹⁰⁶ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 295.

¹⁰⁷ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, 99.

¹⁰⁸ Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society*, 128.