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ISSN: 3085-6434•

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.71263/82k4y906>

Critical Review of the book "The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque" by Gilles Deleuze

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"The Baroque is inseparable from a new regime of light and colors. Initially, light and darkness can be considered as 1 and 0, as the two floors of the world, separated by a thin line and waters: the blessed and the damned" Gilles Deleuze

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The book *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, by the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995), published in Paris in 1988 (for this review the 6th Brazilian edition, from 2018, by Papirus Editora, was used), is the work in which Deleuze focuses his spotlight on the German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716), presenting, in his way of creating concepts and teaching us to think philosophically, Leibniz's relationship with the Baroque period.

The Baroque, as an artistic, cultural, aesthetic, philosophical and religious movement, born in the heart of the Catholic Church at the time of the Counter-Reformation at the Council of Trent, had its peak between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a time in which Leibniz lived and presented to the world his Monadology, his mathematics, his concept of bending (of matter and soul), his theory on the relationship between substance, space and time and the paradoxical ideas of aesthetics and thought of that time.

While reading the book, the reader will realize that Deleuze sees in Leibniz a thinker who anticipates key concepts of contemporary philosophy, and of Deleuze's own philosophy, such as the concepts of one and multiplicity, criticism of the notion of fixed identity, individuality, freedom, body, and also resignifying his own concept of event versus singularities widely addressed in *Logic of Meaning* (1969).

For Deleuze, Leibniz's concept of monad is a way of thinking about *uniqueness* and individuality as a complex network of relationships

between things and substances (body and soul, matter and spirit, light and shadows, elements that reflect the antitheses and paradoxes of the aesthetics of the Baroque movement as a metaphor for the duality that has always inhabited humanity). We know, from the Deleuzian perspective, a Leibniz who reinterprets classical conceptions of space and time as internal relations to their monads, emphasizing the notions of multiplicity and complexity of the world in which events occur.

Deleuze emphasizes how Leibniz uses the metaphor of the fold to describe the relationship between substance and space. The fold represents the ability of a substance to bend and unfold on itself, infinitely, in a rhizomatic way, resulting in a multiplicity of relationships and perspectives based on the concept of monad and understanding them as fundamental units of reality that reflect the universe in a unique way, exploring its expressive capacity.

Deleuze is clearly a philosopher who appropriates the arts to disseminate his philosophy of difference, create concepts and present new ways of seeing art as a bridge to great philosophical reflections. He sought to translate this symbiosis between art and philosophy into several works such as *Logic of Meaning*, *Kafka: For a Minor Literature*, *Francis Bacon: Logic of Sensation and What is Philosophy*.

As secondary themes of *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, Deleuze resorts to the French symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé to present us with the relationship between the poetic language of Symbolism (which affirms nothing, only suggests in a game of synesthetic sensations) to explore the concept of event. Deleuze also

resorts to Whitehead² for his critique of classical ontology; he also dialogues with Heidegger to expose his concepts of being and time and his critique of classical metaphysics.

The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque is an excellent book for introduction to Leibniz's philosophy, to know the spirit of the time, the aesthetics and the thought of the Baroque man and his dualistic dilemma and, of course, to start or deepen the study of Deleuze's philosophy of difference and understanding of his concepts. The book presents a text with a certain hermetic bias, a fact that requires previous knowledge in philosophy, science and arts, essential elements for a better understanding of the work itself; a fact that can, in principle, be solved with a quick search to solve this gap, when appropriate.

The book is important and recommended for philosophy students from high school onwards, teachers and researchers. It is an excellent source to know the genius of the philosophy of two great thinkers, Leibniz and Deleuze; each in their own time, yet their ideas dialogue with each other. Both shed their light on philosophy, bringing clarity about the sensible and the things that make up the world.

² Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) was a British philosopher and logician, founder of the philosophical school known as Process Philosophy, currently applied to several fields of science, such as pedagogy, physics, biology, economics and psychology.

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