

[translation]
Desire & Pleasure
Gilles Deleuze
trans. Melissa McMahon
1997

Editorial foreword
by Francois Ewald 1

The following text is not just unpublished. There is something intimate, secret, confidential about it. It consists of a series of notes - classed from A to H - that Gilles Deleuze had entrusted to me in order that I give them to Michel Foucault. It was in 1977. Foucault had just published *La Volonté de savoir*, the introduction to a *Histoire de la Sexualité* which challenged the play of categories through which the struggles of sexual liberation reflected itself. The reception of the book, poorly understood, was contemporary with a sort of crisis in Foucault, already wholly bent to the task of bringing out of himself, and converting himself to, what would become the problematic of *L'usage de plaisirs* and the *Souci de soi*. Gilles Deleuze, sensitive to what he perceives as a suffering in his friend, thus writes up these notes: therein he gives the account of his convergences and divergences with Foucault. It is not a matter of a critique, even less of a polemic, but of an invitation, entirely imbued with the sincerity of friendship, to take up again a dialogue which had been interrupted.

Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault became acquainted in 1962 at Clermont-Ferrand, at the house of Jules Vuillemin. Gilles Deleuze has just published his *Nietzsche et la philosophie* and Foucault is seeking to have him nominated (against Roger Garaudy) for a position at the University of Clermont-Ferrand where he teaches. It is the beginning of a long friendship. Deleuze invites Foucault to the Colloque de Royaumont dedicated to Nietzsche and which he has been given the task of organising. It is together that they take, in 1966, responsibility for the French version of the new Colli-Montari edition of Nietzsche at Gallimard. When Deleuze publishes *Différence et Répétition* and *Logique du sens* in 1969, Foucault reviews them in *Le Nouvel Observateur* and in an article in *Critique* where, according to a formula which will become famous, he declares: "But one day, perhaps, the century will be deleuzian". Deleuze, on his side, reviews *L'Archéologie du savoir* in *Critique*. In the post-May '68 period, Deleuze joins Foucault at the heart of the *éGroupe Information Prisons* (G.I.P). They are often seen together at the anti-judiciary demonstrations at the beginning of the 70's. The publication of *L'Anti-Oedipe* in 1972, an "extraordinary profusion of new notions and surprise concepts", shows Deleuze to be one of the great thinkers of the post-May '68 period. In the aftermath of this publication, *L'Arc* dedicates an issue to him: therein figures an important interview where the two philosophers come together to define in common the new status of the intellectual, of his work and of his relationship with the struggles. *L'Anti-Oedipe*, published three years before *Surveiller et Punir*, has no doubt been an arresting work for Foucault, who soon proposes his own version of Oedipus ("*La Vérité et les formes juridiques*")², a text and a theme that he will take up several times again. In 1977, Foucault prefaces the American edition of *L'Anti-Oedipe*, presenting it, in the categories which will be the same as those of his last work, as an "Introduction to non-fascist life". Deleuze reviews *Surveiller et punir* in *Critique* (no.343). Then the dialogue is interrupted. Foucault will never see Deleuze again.

One of his last wishes, when he is hospitalised in June 1984, will be to see him again. These notes are thus the last text of the Foucault-Deleuze exchange, a call which went without response. In them can be found, beyond the friendship between two men, all that can be wished of the dialogue between two philosophers.

A

One of the essential theses of *Surveiller et Punir* (SP) was concerning the systems [dispositifs] of power. It seems essential to me in three respects:

1. In itself and in relation to "leftism": profound political novelty of this conception of power, in opposition to all theory of the State.
2. In relation to Michel, because it permitted him to go beyond the duality of discursive and non-discursive formations, which subsisted in L' Archéologie du Savoir (AS), and to explain how the two types of formations distributed or articulated themselves segment by segment (without being reducible to the other or resembling each other, etc.). It was not a matter of suppressing the distinction, but of finding a reason of their relations.
3. Leading to a precise consequence: the systems of power proceeded not by repression nor by ideology. Thus a rupture with an alternative that everybody had more or less accepted. Instead of repression or ideology, SP formed a concept of normalisation, and of disciplines.

B

This thesis on the systems of power seemed to me to have two directions, not at all contradictory, but distinct. In any case, these systems were irreducible to a State apparatus. But according to one direction, they consisted in a diffuse, heterogenous multiplicity, micro-systems. According to another direction, they referred to a diagram, to a sort of abstract machine immanent to the whole social order (such as panopticism, defined by the general function of seeing without being seen, applicable to a given multiplicity). It was like two directions of micro-analysis, equally important, since the second showed that Michel was not satisfied with a "dissemination".

C

Volonté de Savoir (VS) makes a new step, in relation to SP. The point of view remains exactly the same: neither repression nor ideology. But, to go quickly, the systems of power are no longer content to be normalising, they tend to be constitutive (of sexuality). They are no longer content to form knowledges, they are constitutive of truth (truth of power). They no longer refer to "categories", negative despite everything (madness, delinquency as object of confinement), but to a positive category (sexuality). This last point is confirmed by the Quinzaine interview 3, beginning of page 5. In this regard, I believe then in a new advance in the analysis in VS. The danger is: does Michel return to an analogy of the "constitutive subject", and why does he feel the need to resurrect the truth, even if he makes a new concept of it? These are not my own questions, but I think that these two false questions will be posed, as long as Michel will not have explained further.

D

A first question for me was the nature of the micro-analysis that Michel established at the moment of SP. Between "micro" and "macro", the difference was evidently not of size, in the sense that micro-systems would concern small groups (the family has no less extension than any other formation). Neither was it a matter of an extrinsic dualism, since there are micro-systems immanent to the State, and segments of the State apparatus also penetrated the micro-systems - complete immanence of the two dimensions. Must we then understand that the difference is of scale? One page of VS (132) explicitly challenges this interpretation. But this page seems to refer the macro to the strategic model, and the micro to the tactical model. Which bothers me; since Michel' s micro-systems seem very much to me to have a strategic dimension (especially if one takes into account this diagram from which they are inseparable)-. Another direction would be that of the "relations of force", as determining the micro: cf. notably the interview in Quinzaine . But Michel, I believe, has not yet developed this point: his original conception of relations of force, what he calls relation of force, and which must be a concept as new as all the rest.

In any case there is a difference in kind, a heterogeneity between micro and macro. Which in no way excludes the immanence of the two. But my question would be, in the end, this: does this difference in kind still permit one to speak of systems of power? The notion of the State is not

applicable at the level of a micro-analysis, since, as Michel says, it is not a matter of miniaturising the State. But is the notion of power any more applicable, is it not also the miniaturisation of a global concept?

Which brings me to my primary difference from Michel at the moment. If I speak with Felix Guattari of desiring-assemblages, it's that I am not sure that micro-systems can be described in terms of power. For me, the desiring-assemblage marks the fact that desire is never a "natural" nor a "spontaneous" determination. Feudalism for example is an assemblage that puts into play new relations with animals (the horse), with the earth, with deterritorialisation (the battle of knights, the Crusade), with women (knightly love), etc. Completely mad assemblages, but always historically assignable. I would say for my part that desire circulates in this assemblage of heterogeneities, in this sort of "symbiosis": desire is but one with a given assemblage, a co-functioning. Of course a desiring-assemblage will include power systems (feudal powers for example), but they would have to be situated in relation to the different components of the assemblage. Following one axis, one can distinguish in the desiring-assemblage states of things and enunciations (which would be in agreement with the distinction between the two types of formation according to Michel). Following another axis, one can distinguish the territorialities or re-territorisations, and the movements of deterritorialisation which carry away an assemblage (for example all the movements which carry away the Church, knighthood, peasants). Systems of power would emerge everywhere that re-territorisations are operating, even abstract ones. Systems of power would thus be a component of assemblages. But assemblages would also comprise points [pointes] of deterritorialisation. In short, systems of power would neither motivate [agenceraient], nor constitute, but rather desiring-assemblages would swarm among the formations of power according to their dimensions. Which permits me to respond to the question which is necessary for me, not necessary for Michel: how can power be desired? The first difference would thus be that, for me, power is an affection of desire (having said that desire is never "natural reality"). All of this is very approximate: the relations being more complicated between the two movements of deterritorialisation and re-territorialisation than I have put it here. But it is in this sense that desire seems to me to be primary, and to be the element of a micro-analysis.

E

I never cease to follow Michel on a point which seems fundamental to me: neither ideology nor repression - for example the statements [énoncés] or rather enunciations which have nothing to do with ideology. Desiring-assemblages have nothing to do with repression. But evidently, in relation to the system of power, I don't have Michel's firmness, I fall into vagueness, given the ambiguous status that they have for me: in SP, Michel says that they normalise and discipline; I would say that they code and reterritorialise (I suppose that there again there is more than a difference in wording). But given my primacy of desire over power, or the secondary character that the systems of power have for me, their operations still have a repressive effect, since they crush, not desire as a natural given, but the points of desiring-assemblages. I take one of the most beautiful theses of VS: the system of sexuality reduces sexuality to sex (to the difference of sexes, etc.; and psychoanalysis abounds in this gesture of reduction). I see there an effect of repression, precisely at the frontier of the micro and the macro: sexuality, as a historically variable and determinable desiring-assemblage, with its points of deterritorialisation, flux and combination, will be reduced to a molar instance, "sex", and even if the processes of this reduction aren't repressive, the (non-ideological) effect is repressive, in so far as the assemblages are broken, not only in their potentialities, but in their micro-reality. They can no longer exist then except as fantasies, which completely changes or distorts them, or they exist as shameful things etc. A small problem which interests me very much: why are certain "disturbances" more susceptible to shame, or even dependent on shame, than others (the enuretic or anorexic, for example, are not very susceptible to shame). I thus need a certain concept of repression, not in the sense that repression would bear on a spontaneity, but where the collective assemblages would have many dimensions, and the system of power would only be one of these dimensions.

F

Another fundamental point: I believe that the thesis "neither repression nor ideology" has a correlate and is perhaps itself dependent on this correlate. A social field is not defined by its contradictions. The notion of contradiction is a global, inadequate notion, which already implies a strong complicity of the "opposites" [contradictoires] in the systems of power (the two classes, for example, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat). In effect it seems to me that another of the great novelties of Michel's theory of power would be: a society does not contradict itself, or hardly. But his response is: it strategises itself, it strategises. And I find that very beautiful, I see clearly the immense difference (strategy/contradiction), I must read Clausewitz again in this regard. But I don't feel at ease with this idea.

I would say for my own part: a society, a social field does not contradict itself, but what is primary is that it flees, it flees first from all sides, the lines of flight are primary (even if "primary" isn't chronological). Far from being outside of the social field or leaving it, the lines of flight constitute its rhizome or cartography. The lines of flight are more or less the same thing as the movements of deterritorialisation: they imply no return to nature, they are the points of deterritorialisation in the desiring-assemblages. What is primary in feudalism are the lines of flight that it presupposes; as also for the 10th-12th centuries; as also for the formation of capitalism. Lines of flight are not necessarily "revolutionary", but they are what the systems of power will plug and bind. Around the 11th century, all the lines of deterritorialisation which accelerate: the last invasions, the pillaging hordes, the deterritorialisation of the Church, the peasant emigrations, the transformation of knighthood, the transformation of the cities which abandon territorial models more and more, the transformation of currency which injects itself into new circuits, the change in the condition of women with the themes of courtly love which even deterritorialises knightly love, etc. The strategy could only be second in relation to lines of flight, to their conjugations, orientations, convergences or divergences. There again I find the primacy of desire, since desire is precisely in the lines of flight, conjugation and dissociation of flux. It merges with them. It seems to me then that Michel encounters a problem which hasn't at all the same status for me. For if the systems of power are in some way constitutive, the only thing that can go against them are phenomena of "resistance", and the question bears on the status of these phenomena. In effect they themselves would not be anti-repressive or ideological either. Whence the importance of two pages in VS where Michel says: let no one tell me that these phenomena are an illusion. But what status will he give to them? Here there are several directions:

1. that of VS (126-127) where phenomena of resistance would be like the inverted image of the systems, they would have the same character - diffusion, heterogeneity etc, they would be vis à vis; but this direction seems to me to block the escapes as much as it finds one;
2. the direction of the Politique Hebdo interview: 5 if the systems of power are constitutive of truth, if there is a truth of power, there must be as a counter-strategy a sort of power of truth, against powers. Whence the problem of the role of the intellectual for Michel; and his way of reintroducing the category of truth, since, completely renewing it in making it dependent on power, he will find in this renewal a material that can be turned against power? But here I don't see how. We must wait for Michel to speak of this new conception of truth at the level of his micro-analysis;
3. third direction, it would be pleasures, the body and its pleasures. There again, same waiting on my part, how do pleasures animate counter-powers, and how does he conceive this notion of pleasure? It seems to me that there are three notions that Michel takes in a completely new sense, but without having developed them yet: relations of force, truths, pleasures.

Certain problems are posed for me which are not posed for Michel because they are resolved in advance by his own research. Inversely, in order to encourage myself, I tell myself that other problems are not posed for me, which are necessarily posed for him by virtue of his theses and feelings. Lines of flight and movements of deterritorialisation, as collective historical determinations, do not seem to me to have any equivalent in Michel's work. There is no problem

for me in the status of phenomena of resistance: since the lines of flight are the primary determinations, since desire makes the social field function, it is rather the systems of power which, at the same time, find themselves produced by these assemblages, and crush or plug them. I share Michel's horror of those who call themselves marginal: the romanticism of madness, of delinquency, of perversion, of drugs, is less and less tolerable for me. But lines of flight, which is to say assemblages of desire, are not created by marginal elements for me. It is on the contrary on the objective lines which traverse a society that marginal elements install themselves here and there, to complete a circle, a tournament, a recoding. I thus have no need of a status of phenomena of resistance: if the first given of a society is that everything flees, everything deterritorialises. Whence the status of the intellectual, and the political problem will not be the same theoretically for Michel and for me (I will try and say in a moment how I see this difference).

G

The last time we saw each other, Michel says to me, with much kindness and affection, something like: I cannot bear the word desire; even if you use it in another way, I can't stop thinking or living that desire = lack, or that desire is the repressed. Michel adds: As for me, what I call "pleasure" is perhaps what you call "desire"; but in any case I need another word than desire.

Evidently it is again something other than a question of words. Since as for myself I can hardly bear the word "pleasure". But why? For me, desire does not comprise any lack; neither is it a natural given; it is but one with an assemblage of heterogeneous elements which function; it is process, in contrast with structure or genesis; it is affect, as opposed to feeling; it is "haecceity" (individuality of a day, a season, a life), as opposed to subjectivity; it is event, as opposed to thing or person. And above all it implies the constitution of a field of immanence or a "body without organs", which is only defined by zones of intensity, thresholds, gradients, flux. This body is as biological as it is collective and political; it is on this body that assemblages make and unmake themselves, it is this body which bears the points of deterritorialisation of the assemblages or lines of flight. It varies (the body without organs of feudalism is not the same as that of capitalism). If I call it body without organs, it is because it is opposed to all the strata of organisation, that of the organism, but just as much the organisations of power. It is precisely the set of organisations of bodies which will break the plane or the field of immanence, and will impose on desire another type of "plan" [plan], each time stratifying the body without organs.

If I say all this in such a confused way, it is because several problems are posed for me in relation to Michel:

1. I cannot give any positive value to pleasure, because pleasure seems to me to interrupt the immanent process of desire; pleasure seems to me to be on the side of strata and organisation; and it is in the same movement that desire is presented as internally submitted to law and externally interrupted by pleasures; in the two cases, there is negation of a field of immanence proper to desire. I tell myself that it is no accident if Michel attaches a certain importance to Sade, and myself on the contrary to Masoch. It's not enough to say that I am masochistic, and Michel sadistic. That would be good, but it's not true. What interests me in Masoch is not the pain, but the idea that pleasure comes to interrupt the positivity of desire and the constitution of its field of immanence (as also, or rather in another way, in courtly love - constitution of a field of immanence or of a body without organs where desire lacks nothing, and guards itself as much as possible from the pleasures which would come and interrupt its process). Pleasure seems to me to be the only means for a person or a subject to "find themselves again" in a process which overwhelms them. It is a re-territorialisation. And from my point of view, it is in the same way that desire is related to the law of lack and the norm of pleasure.

2. On the other hand, Michel's idea that the systems of power have an immediate and direct relation with the body is essential. But for me it is to the extent that they impose an organisation on bodies. While the body without organs is the place or agent of deterritorialisation (and in this the plane of immanence of desire), all the organisations, all the system of what Michel calls "bio-

power" operates the reterritorialisation of bodies.

3. Can I really think of equivalences like: what for me is "body without organs-desires" corresponds to what is, for Michel, "body-pleasures"? Can I relate the "body-flesh" distinction of which Michel has spoken to me, to the "body without organs-organisation" distinction? There is a very important page of VS , 190, on life as giving a possible status to forces of resistance. This life, for me, the very one that Lawrence speaks of, is not Nature at all, it is precisely the variable plane of immanence of desire, across all the determined assemblages. The conception of desire in Lawrence, in relation with the positive lines of flight. (Small detail: the way in which Michel uses Lawrence at the end of VS , opposed to the way I use him).

H

Has Michel advanced in the problem which occupied us: how to maintain the rights of a micro-analysis (diffusion, heterogeneity, piecemeal character), and yet find a sort of unifying principle which is not of the "State", "party", totalisation, representation type?

First of all on the side of power itself: going back to the two directions of SP, on the one hand the diffused and piecemeal character of the micro-systems, but on the other hand machine or abstract diagram which covers the whole of the social field also. One problem remained in SP , it seems to me: the relation between these two instances of micro-analysis. I think that the question changes a little in VS : there, the two directions of micro-analysis will be rather the micro-disciplines on the one hand, and on the other hand the bio-political processes (pp.183 sq.). This is what I wanted to say in point C of these notes. However the point of view of SP would suggest that the diagram, irreducible to the global instance of the State, perhaps effected a micro-unification of the small systems. Must we now understand that it will be the bio-political processes which will have this function? I admit that the notion of the diagram seemed very rich to me: will Michel find it again on new terrain?

But on the side of the lines of resistance, or of what I call lines of flight, how can we conceive the relations or conjugations, the conjunctions, the processes of unification? I would say that the collective field of immanence where the assemblages form at a given moment, and where they trace their lines of flight, also has a veritable diagram. We must find then the complex assemblage capable of effectuating this diagram, by operating the conjunction of lines or of the points of deterritorialisation. It is in this sense that I spoke of a war-machine, quite different from the State apparatus or military institutions, but also from the systems of power. One would have then on the one hand: State - diagram of power (the State being the molar apparatus which effectuates the micro-givens of the diagram as plane of organisation); on the other hand war-machine - diagram of lines of flight (the war-machine being the assemblage which effectuates the micro-givens of the diagram as plane of immanence). I shall stop at this point, since this would put into play two types of very different planes, a sort of transcendent plane of organisation against the immanent plane of assemblages, and we would come across the preceding problems again. And in this I no longer know how to situate myself in relation to Michel' s current research.

(Addition: what interests me in the two opposed states of the plane or diagram is their historical confrontation, and in very diverse forms. In one case, one has a plane of organisation and development, which is hidden by nature, but which makes seen all that is visible; in the other case, one has a plane of immanence, where there is no longer anything but speeds and slownesses, no development, and where all is seen, heard, etc. The first plane is not identical with the State, but is linked with it; the second on the contrary is linked to a war-machine, to a dream [rêverie] of a war-machine. Cuvier, but Goethe also, for example, conceive of the first type of plane at the level of nature; Hölderlin in Hyperion , but Kleist even more so, conceive of the second type. Suddenly we have two types of intellectuals, and what Michel says in this regard, compared with what Michel says on the position of the intellectual. Or else in music, the two conceptions of the sonorous plane confront each other. Could the power-knowledge link such as Michel analyses it be explained in this way: the powers imply a plane-diagram of the first type (for

example the Greek city and Euclidean geometry). But inversely, on the side of the counter-powers and more or less in relation with the war-machines, there is the other type of plane, sorts of "minor" knowledges (Archimedean geometry; or the geometry of cathedrals that will be fought by the State); a whole knowledge proper to lines of resistance, and which does not have the same form as the other knowledge?)

Endnotes

1. Translation of "Désir et plaisir", in Magazine littéraire 325, October 1994, pp. 59-65.
2. Appearing again in Dits et Ecrits, no. 139, p. 553. The other texts evoked in the course of this introduction, that have marked the exchanges between Foucault and Deleuze can be found in the four volumes of Dits et Ecrits.
3. "Les rapports de pouvoir passent a' l' intérieur des corps" (interview with Lucette Finas), La Quinzaine Littéraire, no. 247, 1-15 January 1977, pp.
4. cf. Dits et Ecrits, no. 197, III, p. 288. ["points" should be understood in the sense of an extremity of something, it' s four edge, rather than a "point" in the mathematical sense]
5. "La fonction politique de l' intellectuel", Politique Hebdo 29 November - 5 December 1976, cf. Dits et Ecrits , no. 184, III, p. 109.
6. Deleuze has dedicated a book to Sacher-Masoch, Presentation de Sacher-Masoch: la Vénus á la fourrure (Editions de Minuit, 1967).