

Logics of Life

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What interests Deleuze most of all is logic, or the production of logics. If there is one trait that distinguishes him from Foucault, Sartre, or Bergson, it is this passion for logic. Each one of his books is a 'Logic'. His first book on Hume could have been called 'Logic of Experience', or 'Logic of Empiricism'; his book on Proust could have been called 'Logic of Signs'. What he seeks in an author like Proust is not the narrative structure of the work or the profundity of its analysis, but the logic that envelops it like a chrysalis. With every author, and in each domain, the question remains the same: how does it run [*marche*]? Or rather, what's the logic? When, later on, with Guattari, they critique psychoanalysis, it is still in the name of logic. Oedipus is first of all a paralogism, a mistake in the logic of desire. The ultimate importance of Guattari is precisely to have seen that the coupling of the unconscious and capitalism answers to a logic other than that of Freud and orthodox Marxism. *Anti-Oedipus* could have been called 'Logic of Desire' as, later, *A Thousand Plateaus* could have been called 'Logic of Multiplicities'.

However, logical does not mean rational. It even seems that, for Deleuze, the more something is irrational, the more it is logical. It is like with Dostoevsky's characters: they are not able to give any reasons, but they nonetheless obey an urgent logic. As Zourabichvili has shown, the irrational is not synonymous with the illogical for Deleuze, quite the contrary. That is why, from beginning to end, the only logics that interest him are those that escape all reason - the logic of masochism, the logic of Lewis Carroll, the logic of schizophrenic processes and capitalist production, or even the logic of some philosophers who, under the cover of reason, invented logics that had little to do with being rational (Hume, Bergson, Spinoza or even Leibniz). This would be a second distinctive trait: a profound perversion at the very heart of philosophy.

As a ruthless logician, Deleuze is therefore indifferent to the description of lived experience [*vécus*] (from the most original to the most ordinary/everyday). In his eyes, the philosophies of the original and the ordinary/everyday are still too tender, too sentimental. Logic alone is what counts, but precisely because it has a way of merging, beyond lived experience [*vécus*], with the very powers of life. Hence the rigorous vitalism that runs through all his work. It is not that life inflates logic with gusts of irrationality, without which it would be defective; it is rather that the powers of life constantly create logics that subject [*soumettant*] us to their irrationality.

Translation : Ian Jakobi