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Deleuze's Nietzsche

Petra Perry

In their 1976 manifesto,[1] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari elaborate the qualities of the rhizome, their homely figure for thinking: a subterranean clump of bulbs or tubers, constantly proliferating and, although invisible from aboveground, always changing direction and form as a pell-mell assemblage of parts. Next to this image, Deleuze and Guattari pose, as the figure that has dominated the procedures for thinking of Western rationalism, the tree and its mirror image, the radicle root system. The dominance of these arborescent structures, with their interlocking arrangement of symmetrical and polarized branches—either-or, thesis and antithesis, and division and analogy all serving equally this formalization—have dictated the limits and reductions built into an inherited mode of thinking. In this pairing, the rhizome stands apart from the arborescent: It is not an opposition, since it has

1. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Rhizome: Introduction* (Paris: Minuit, 1976), subsequently included as the introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987). The latter work is hereafter cited in my text as *Plateaus*.

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existed all along as an underground activity, unappreciated but serviceable, an unofficial mode of production.

One surprise in this exposition of the rhizome is that Deleuze and Guattari attack Nietzsche. Deleuze's earlier elaborations of alternative styles of thinking—ludic, delirious, ecstatic, and nomadic—were explicitly linked to and fortified by reference to Nietzsche. The rhizome, however, is "antigenealogy" and opposed to "returns" (*Plateaus*, 11, 16):

> Nietzsche's aphorisms shatter the linear unity of knowledge only to invoke the cyclic unity of the eternal return, present as the nonknown in thought. This is as much to say that the fascicular system does not really break with dualism, with the complementarity between a subject and an object, a natural reality and a spiritual reality: unity is consistently thwarted and obstructed in the object, while a new type of unity triumphs in the subject. (*Plateaus*, 6)

Rather than wrestling with the terms of Deleuze and Guattari's argument, let it suffice at this point to register that the poststructuralist reception of Nietzsche, very largely an affair of Deleuze's reading and advocacy, has taken a twist. Equally important, Deleuze's earlier formulation of his relation to Nietzsche no longer fits the revised criteria: "I find among Lucretius, Hume, Spinoza, and Nietzsche a secret link which resides in the critique of negation, the cultivation of joy, the hatred of interiority, the exteriority of forces and relations, the denunciation of power, etc." The lineage into which Deleuze reads himself, "by loving authors who were opposed to the rationalist tradition," turns out to be just another branch on a tree, and his "secret link" simply a validation of the arborescent model.[2]

Both admirers and detractors have been unanimous in crediting Deleuze with a privileged role as a primary instigator of a new reading of Nietzsche, one that has pervaded and strongly influenced the climate of French poststructuralism.[3] Therefore, the suggestion of a revised version

2. The preceding quotations are from Gilles Deleuze, "I Have Nothing to Admit," trans. Janis Forman, *Semiotext(e)* 2, no. 3 (1977): 112; hereafter cited in my text as Nothing.

3. Several essays trace specifics of Deleuze's use of Nietzsche: Vincent Pecora, "Deleuze's Nietzsche and Post-structuralist Thought," *SubStance* 48 (1986): 34–50; Hugh Tomlinson, "Nietzsche on the Edge of Town: Deleuze and Reflexivity," in *Exceedingly Nietzsche*, ed. D. F. Krell and D. Wood (London: Routledge, 1988), 150–63; and Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze and Guattari* (London: Routledge, 1989). A sharp contrast needs to be stressed between the reception Deleuze has been afforded from within the French intellectual community and that from without, where residual versions of Nietzsche

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of Nietzsche in Deleuze and Guattari's *Rhizome* rebounds on a larger French reception. To measure its impact, a sketch of Deleuze's earlier contributions is useful.

Deleuze's career spans more than four decades. The first decade fits neatly within the routine prescribed for obtaining a professorship: lyceum teaching and a substantial production of modest anthologies and monographs. From *David Hume, sa vie, son oeuvre* (1952) through *Le Bergsonisme* (1966), and including both of the books on Nietzsche, Deleuze's publications fall easily into various series of Presses Universitaires de France; they are introductions directed largely to undergraduates preparing for exams. Deleuze's books on Nietzsche, Proust, and Bergson, and the slightly aberrant essays of the period—on Sacher-Masoch or Klossowski—appear remarkable only within the context of later work. Whatever "secret links" or personal accounts Deleuze may have felt himself settling during this period,

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exert more influence. Foucault exemplifies the former perspective as he argues against "a single Nietzscheanism": "Deleuze has written a superb book about Nietzsche, and although the presence of Nietzsche in his other works is clearly apparent, there is no deafening reference . . . nor any attempt to wave the Nietzschean flag for rhetorical or political ends" (see "Structuralism and Post-structuralism: An Interview with Michel Foucault," trans. Jeremy Harding, *Telos* 55 (1983): 203. Early French responses demonstrate consonant reception: see André Glucksmann, "Préméditations Nietzschéennes," *Critique* 213 (1965): 125–44; Angèle Kremer-Marietti, "Différence et qualité," *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* 3 (1970): 339–49; Jean-François Lyotard, "Capitalisme énergumène," *Critique* 306 (1972): 923–56; René Girard, "Système du délire," *Critique* 306 (1972): 957–96; and Michel Foucault's notices: "Ariane s'est pendue," *Le Nouvel Observateur* 229 (1969): 36–37; "Theatrum philosophicum," *Critique* 282 (1970): 885–909; and his preface to *Anti-Oedipus* (New York: Viking, 1977), xi–xiv. This reception solidifies with the special issue on Deleuze of *L'Arc* 49 (1972; revised, 1980). Further contributions in the same tradition are Vincent Descombes's chapters on Deleuze in *Modern French Philosophy*, trans. L. Scott-Fox and J. M. Harding (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 152–67 and 173–90, and Jean Jacques Lecercle's *Philosophy through the Looking Glass* (La Salle: Open Court, 1985). The consistent and substantial opposition, although focused on Foucault, is best formulated by Jürgen Habermas in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, trans. Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987). His argument is based on the proposition that Nietzsche "is [or should be] no longer contagious" ("Zu Nietzsches Erkenntnistheorie [ein Nachwort] 1968," in *Kultur und Kritik* [Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1973], 239). Habermas's position is furthered by Manfred Frank, "The World as Will and Representation: Deleuze's and Guattari's Critique of Capitalism as Schizo-analysis and Schizo-discourse," trans. David Berger, *Telos* 57 (1983): 166–77; Christa Bürger, "The Reality of 'Machines': Notes on the Rhizome-thinking of Deleuze and Guattari," trans. Simon Srebrny, *Telos* 64 (1985): 33–44. A neopragmatist perspective is rather poorly served by a cursory review by Richard Rorty, "Unsoundness in Perspective," *Times Literary Supplement*, 17 June 1983, 619–20.

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his actual production fits easily within generous boundaries of the history of philosophy; that is, precisely within the terrain of his own institutional training (Nothing, 111).

An overlapping of the history of philosophy with the history and philosophy of science—these within the institutional framework of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique—alter the shape of Deleuze's career during the second decade. Michel Foucault, who throughout his own career shared and acknowledged much common ground with Deleuze, registers, in his homage to Georges Canguilhem, the themes of investigation within this environment: social and historical preconditions for thinking, institutional practices accompanying fields of knowledge, and ideology built into the theoretical formulations of science. Foucault also provides a lucid summary of a shared preoccupation

> to discover what was (in its chronology, consistent elements, historical conditions) the moment when the West for the first time affirmed the autonomy and sovereignty of its own rationality—Lutheran reform, "Copernican revolution," Cartesian philosophy, Galilean mathematization of nature, Newtonian physics[.] On the other hand, to analyze the "present" moment and to seek, in terms of what the history of reason had been, and also in terms of what its current balance sheet may be, what relation it is necessary to establish with this founding gesture: rediscovery, recapture of a forgotten meaning, completion, or rupture, return to an anterior moment, etc.[4]

Haunting this investigation is a second set of issues deriving from an attempt to place the Enlightenment within this series. Its version of "scientific and technical rationality in the development of productive forces," its "hope" attached to a "Revolution" to apply a comparably universalizing rationalism to the political management of social beings:

> Two centuries later, the Enlightenment returns: but not at all as a way for the West to take cognizance of its present possibilities and of the liberties to which it can have access, but as a way of interrogating it on its limits and on the powers which it has abused. Reason as despotic enlightenment.[5]

4. Michel Foucault, introduction to Georges Canguilhem, *On the Normal and the Pathological*, trans. C. R. Fawcett (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1978), xi. See also Foucault's comments on the parallel "point of rupture" ("Structuralism and Post-structuralism," 199), which Nietzsche afforded both himself and Deleuze.

5. Foucault, introduction to Canguilhem, *On the Normal*, xii.

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Foucault's "reason as despotic enlightenment" translates into his own analyses of the *carceral* in *Discipline and Punish* as well as Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of the *order-word* in their eventual collaborations. To the extent to which Foucault's description of a procedure toward this conclusion sounds like a sociology of knowledge, it also invites comparisons: to work of the Institut für Sozialforschung; to Karl Mannheim and Max Scheler, and backward along obvious lines to Max Weber and Georg Simmel, to Henri Bergson and Gabriel Tarde, to Thorstein Veblen and George Herbert Mead; to numerous predecessors to the same inquiry.

Foucault's magisterial account of an inherited problematics of reason is too grand to measure Deleuze's actual production during the 1950s and early 1960s. The bulk of his contributions—his pieces on Bergson, Spinoza, Nietzsche, and Hume—were packaged tamely as introductory surveys and collections. What distinguishes Deleuze's work on Nietzsche—his two books, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962) and *Nietzsche* (1965), and the volumes he edited for the Gallimard publication of Nietzsche's works[6]—from his other work was its effect. Importing Nietzsche into the academic environment had a shock value that Bergson, Spinoza, and Hume, either individually or as a cluster, did not have. Equally important, Deleuze's focus on anti-Hegelianism in Nietzsche provided a lever against current discussions of the logic of the dialectic and the phenomenology of the subject. That is, Nietzsche provided Deleuze with his own way of shifting away from dominant preoccupations of the previous generation's discussion. The 1964 Royaumont colloquium on Nietzsche, a scholarly conference under the auspices of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and for which Deleuze provided the summary analysis, yields a tidy sample of the tenor of dispute. In the midst of a discussion concerning the "necessity of negation," the "negation of negation," and the contribution of "negation to elevating mankind," Deleuze responded with what became his most characteristic argument throughout the next decade: One finds many examples of negativity throughout Nietzsche's texts, but one finds them subsumed under the heading of *ressentiment*, while "the direction of Nietzsche's philosophy is to expose and eliminate" this dialectical configuration by means of a transversing affirmation.[7]

6. Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Oeuvres philosophiques complètes*, ed. M. de Gandillac and Gilles Deleuze (Paris: Gallimard, 1967 and following). The Gallimard edition follows the publication of the Colli-Montinari edition. In addition, Deleuze, with Michel Foucault, provided an introduction to volume 5, *Le gai savoir*.

7. *Cahiers de Royaumont: Nietzsche* (Paris: Minuit, 1967), 36.

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For Deleuze, Hegel comes progressively to represent a whole inventory of themes and preoccupations by immediate predecessors based on subject-object identity and historical systematizations (whether positivist or dialectical): These predilections become the large categories that need to be displaced, and Nietzsche supplies the required tool. Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, especially its final two sections, "From *Ressentiment* to the Bad Conscience" and "The Overman: Against the Dialectic," provide the argument for this use of Nietzsche.[8] *Ressentiment* is used to frame logics of opposition, while affirmation assumes the role of a translogical, transhistorical, and transversing *force* capable of avoiding the chain of negation and reproduction through opposition. Deleuze's statement of this theme will continue to echo as one of poststructuralism's most durable slogans.

Deleuze's precise targets in 1964—aside from other colloquium participants, who had somehow managed to misread Nietzsche—are easily mythologized in retrospect. Deleuze's account of the school rooms of his own education gives representative significance to Ferdinand Alquié and Jean Hyppolite, "two professors, whom I liked and admired a lot . . . [one] harnessed to the service of Cartesian dualisms. The other . . . rhythmically beat[ing] out Hegelian triads with his fist, hanging his words on the beats."[9] This personalized account aside, the more conspicuous and provocative presences—and implied targets—from the prior two decades would have been the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre and the legacy of phenomenology from Maurice Merleau-Ponty.[10] Claude Lévi-Strauss had, two years before, assailed Sartre in *La Pensée sauvage*.[11] Two years later, Jacques

8. For concise summaries of the variety of anti-Hegelianism posed by *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, see Keith Pearson's review in *Radical Philosophy* 38 (1984): 35–37, and Vincent Descombes's comments in his first chapter of *Modern French Philosophy*, 1–8.

9. Gilles Deleuze with Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 12.

10. It is worth registering that both Deleuze and Guattari make consistently affectionate remarks concerning Sartre. For Deleuze's own university days, Sartre was "the breath of fresh air . . . an intellectual who singularly changed the situation of the intellectual" (*Dialogues*, 12). Guattari "owe[s] a lot" to Sartre, "not so much for the consistency of his theoretical contribution, but the opposite—for the way he goes off at tangents, for all his mistakes and the good faith in which he makes them" (Félix Guattari, *Molecular Revolution: Psychiatry and Politics*, trans. Mary Sheed [Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984], 27).

11. Lévi-Strauss's comments compete with Martin Heidegger's in Sartre's eclipse from prominence. "Über den Humanismus," although written in 1947, was not published in translation until 1957. As a convenience, Claude Lévi-Strauss serves as a boundary marker, where the resurfacing of French anthropology, fortified by linguistic models and

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Derrida would invoke an argument in line with Deleuze and, in turn, against structuralism:

> As a turning toward the presence, lost or impossible, of the absent origin, this structuralist thematic of broken immediateness is thus the sad, *negative*, nostalgic, guilty, Rousseauist facet of the thinking of freeplay of which the Nietzschean *affirmation*—the joyous affirmation of the freeplay of the world and without truth, without origin, offered to an active interpretation—would be the other side.[12]

The themes of another side, a third road, and a beyond continued to shore up a variety of specific debates in the next decade; Nietzsche's primary role in this earlier moment was to inspire confidence in an alternative.

Vincent Descombes is probably correct to describe this early use of Nietzsche as primarily a local phenomenon, an affair of the syllabus, taking place within institutional confines and being of primary concern to those engaged in teaching philosophy within the French university system.[13] The public addressed by Klossowski, Foucault, and Deleuze in the Royaumont colloquium was, after all, a small group of professionals already interested in Nietzsche. The 1966 Johns Hopkins symposium, at which Derrida spoke, claimed international status ("over one hundred humanists and social scientists from the United States and eight other countries gathered in Baltimore"[14]), although Derrida's provocative role remained within the purview of, to use Guattari's high-spirited language of the next decade, "the technocrats of ideas."[15] Within the French academy, an immediate consequence of this atmosphere of debate was the formation of study groups, such as the Groupe de Recherches sur l'Enseignement Philosophique. Deleuze's

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bearing the heading *structuralism*, challenged two lines of philosophical discourse: one, from within academic confines, although with echoes outside, under the banner of Western Marxism (even though Lévi-Strauss dedicated *La Pensée sauvage* to Merleau-Ponty); the other, *Existenzphilosophie*, from outside, but with strong reverberations within the academy. Again, as a convenience, it is worth noting that poststructuralism emerged almost immediately, as though to fill a vacuum.

12. Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourses of the Human Sciences," in *The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, ed. Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), 264.

13. Descombes emphasizes the peculiarity of the "cult of the Syllabus" within the French institution, especially as it forms the basis for the state exams for the teaching of philosophy. See *Modern French Philosophy*, 5–6.

14. Derrida, *Languages*, ix.

15. Guattari, *Molecular Revolution*, 238.

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primary role, however, was to continue doing what he had been doing, with the unremarkable assumption that the easiest way to change a syllabus was simply to alter the reading list.

A cautious notion of *popular* is needed to comprehend the second period of Deleuze's career, his continued use of Nietzsche, and his role as a conduit for a reception of Nietzsche. Beginning with the 1968 publication of *Différence et répétition* and extending through the series of collaborations with Félix Guattari, which culminated in *A Thousand Plateaus* in 1980, Deleuze played two roles: He taught as professor of philosophy; and he found himself included in the ranks of a journalistic invention, a corps of intellectuals who increasingly occupied the space in the popular media that was formerly reserved for an artistic avant-garde. One consequence of the invention of this broader audience was that the lineage of a "counter-philosophy,"[16] within which Nietzsche had appeared exemplary, opened out toward the possibility of a different genre of presentation. Deleuze had invoked this possibility early, thinking of his writing as a mixture of "crime novel" and "science fiction," similar to the way Foucault would later reflect on his own institutional histories as "novels."[17] Here, again, Nietzsche lent assurance with his deprecation of "professorial philosophy"[18] and the promise of a book to "carry us beyond all books."[19]

Deleuze's first product of this second period, *Différence et répétition*, is notable for anticipating this notion of a wider audience, although neither it nor any of the collaborative works that come after it can be consid-

16. Gilles Deleuze, "Nomad Thought," trans. D. B. Allison, in *The New Nietzsche*, ed. David Allison (New York: Dell, 1977), 149. This work is hereafter cited in my text as NT.

17. Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et répétition* (Paris: PUF, 1968), 3; Michel Foucault, "The History of Sexuality," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 193. These comments can easily be inflated, especially to argue about genre boundaries (or their absence). It is important to underline Deleuze's self-understanding—parallel to, but aside from, his numerous invocations of "l'oeuvre d'art": There is a fundamental "rapport between the arts, science and philosophy. There is no privilege of one discipline over the other. Each is creative. The object of science is to create with functions, the object of art is to create with sensory assemblies, the object of philosophy is to create with concepts" ("Entretien," *L'autre journal* 8 [1985]: 13). This train of thought is elaborated in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Minuit, 1991). *Différence et répétition* is hereafter cited in my text as *Différence*.

18. Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 137.

19. Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974), 248.

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ered "popular" in the loose sense of writing to patronize a diverse reading public. *Différence et répétition* has direct lines of continuity to Deleuze's earlier work: It recaptures the central term, *difference*, from his 1956 essay on Bergson,[20] it is sustained by consistent reference to Nietzsche, and it restates the talismanic argument of the Royaumont colloquium by criticizing a logic based on identity, analogy, and opposition. Nietzsche's *eternal return* becomes *repetition*, leading to a moment of intensity and difference; the nearest correlative of such a moment of emergence is the creative act, the work of art. That parallel moments belong to other realms of concept formation and theorizing is clear, as well, from sections of *Différence et répétition* devoted to philosophy, mathematics, and life sciences.

Although humbly submitted as his dissertation, *Différence et répétition* exhibits the extravagance and breadth of survey that the later collaborations with Guattari will crystallize into a style. This kind of admixture has ample precedents (with Nietzsche himself as an example), although it is perhaps most reminiscent of the polyhistors of the beginning of this century. Many of these scholars are noted in the endearingly grotesque bibliography that closes the book: 20 complete works and 150 diverse titles are annotated as contributing specifically to subcategories of Deleuze's two guiding terms, *repetition* and *difference*. The bibliography may not be "exhaustive," as Deleuze warns in introducing it, but it does contain the assortment of references a reader will subsequently expect of Deleuze: Sollers and Duns Scotus, Althusser and Borges, Carnot and *Finnegan's Wake*, Renouvier and Butor, Tarde and Carroll, et cetera. Even if readers have subsequently learned to be blasé about the procedure, in the wake of similar extravagant displays by others, something of an original freshness and daring remains in this attempt to avoid the boundaries of specialized disciplines.

Intensity, the working notion that emerges from *Différence et répétition*, becomes the last transformation of Nietzsche's "joyous affirmation" to evolve specifically in reference to Nietzsche and within a context of discussion based deliberately in the history of philosophy. The etymology back to Nietzsche will remain through subsequent mutations—*délire*, desire, and assemblage. Deleuze finds occasion to mention Nietzsche in nearly every subsequent work; however, it is a Nietzsche by way of allusion and not a new application. *Différence et répétition* is Deleuze's summation. That it represents his first major attempt to go *beyond* Nietzsche is also clear; as such, it shares ground with numerous attempts to fill in the blanks of Nietz-

20. Gilles Deleuze, "La conception de la différence chez Bergson," *Etudes bergsoniennes* 4 (1956): 79–112.

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sche's provocatively unfinished last book. More particularly, Deleuze takes up Nietzsche's eternal return and, following Klossowski's (not Heidegger's) lead, transforms it into a notion of difference within repetition, with a side-glance at the artistic as the specific creative moment. Deleuze surfaces with an "inscription of difference within identity" and an accompanying "intensity," which he can then use to go behind a twenty-five-hundred-year tradition of "the subordination of difference to opposition, analogy, resemblance, all the aspects of mediation" that have confined Western thinking to "representation" (*Différence*, 48). Deleuze himself later reflects lightheartedly on this attempt at a "*renversement du platonisme*,"[21] although the bizarre cluster of vocabulary Deleuze accumulates essentially remains with him, up to and including the collaborations with Guattari: intensities, nomads, multiplicities, chaosmos, schizophrenia, the sense of nonsense, delirium, cellularity, and pluralism. In addition, the promise of a devolution, possibly glimpsed even within antagonistic traditions of thinking, like the history of philosophy, continues to be a subject to flirt with.

Deleuze emerges with a reformulated image of "dionysiac thinking" (*Différence*, 332) that promises to *transverse* a Cartesian notion of "clear and distinct ideas" confined to a thinking subject. Nietzsche points the way to "a scintillating world of metamorphoses, of communicating intensities, of differences within differences, hints, inspirations and expirations" (*Différence*, 313). It is this prospect, however grandiloquently stated, of moving beyond universalizing representations, including those of *subject* and *man*, that Deleuze has gleaned from his reading of Nietzsche and has restated in a vocabulary of his own. Deleuze later qualifies Nietzsche's attempt: He could "only sketch in something embryonic and not yet functional."[22] Fulfilling this promise of "something . . . functional" remains Deleuze's preoccupation throughout the next decade, and it takes numerous shapes—as "schizoanalysis" at the service of a "desiring machine," as a "pragmatics" driving a "nomadic war machine." At the beginning of this decade, however, with his own two "embryonic" works, *Différence et répétition* and *Logique du sens*, Deleuze is content to promote "the joy of diversity, the practical critique of all mystifications,"[23] and to pursue these under the sanction of his reading of Nietzsche.

By all accounts, the 1972 Cerisy-la-Salle colloquium on Nietzsche is

21. Gilles Deleuze, *Logique du sens* (Paris: Minuit, 1969), 292.
22. Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Séan Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 130.
23. Deleuze, *Logique du sens*, 324.

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the high-water mark of the French poststructuralist reception of Nietzsche. The papers and discussions have the tone of a high ecumenical council, and the range of participants indicates the measure of attention Nietzsche receives in the years immediately ahead: Jean-Luc Nancy, Jacques Derrida, François Lyotard, Sarah Kofman, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, and Angèle Kremer-Marietti, all of whom continue to integrate Nietzsche into the intellectual climate. Deleuze's contribution, "Nomad Thought," is striking, however, in that it makes only parenthetical reference to Nietzsche. Deleuze alludes to arguments he has previously made in detail, but his version of Nietzsche is summary and not a fresh reading. The "aphorism," with its "exteriority" and its ability to "transverse the frame," signals the possibility of "a new kind of book" (NT, 144).[24] Nietzsche's "break with philosophy" opens the way at the "level of method" to avoid the "tragedy of interiority," with its anguish, solitude, and guilt. "Illegitimate misunderstandings" of Nietzsche—whether by national socialist appropriation or the absorption by phenomenology into a "cult of interiority"—are contrasted with "legitimate misunderstandings" of the type Deleuze advocates. This latter sort is characterized as "schizophrenic laughter or revolutionary joy," capable of bringing about a "transmutation" of thinking (NT, 146–49).

The notable aspect of Deleuze's contribution to the colloquium is its avoidance of a new and direct reading of Nietzsche's texts. Instead, it concentrates on a program: the construction of "a war machine which will not recreate a state apparatus," generating an "amalgam of forces," gaining access to a "pulsional intensity," and assembling a strategic instrument for an assault on the "bureaucrats of pure reason" (NT, 145–49). In short, Deleuze is reactivating a French tradition from the turn of the century. He continues throughout this period to memorialize Nietzsche, but the language of his production, especially in the collaborations with Félix Guattari, from *Anti-Oedipus* (1972) through *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (1991), evokes other sources: the total critique of rationality as a state apparatus as articulated in Georges Sorel's notion of diremption, the flux and multiplicity

24. The papers and discussions from the 1972 Cerisy-la-Salle colloquium are published in the two volumes of *Nietzsche aujourd'hui* (Paris: 10/18, 1973). The range of participants has broadened conspicuously in contrast to the 1964 Royaumont colloquium; Foucault registers some of the difference: "It is not at all true that Nietzsche appeared in 1972. He appeared in 1972 for people who were Marxists during the '60s and who emerged from Marxism by way of Nietzsche. But the first people who had recourse to Nietzsche were not looking for a way out of Marxism. They wanted a way out of phenomenology" ("Structuralism and Post-structuralism," 199).

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of Henri Bergson's elaboration of the *durée*, Gabriel Tarde's sociology of desire, invention, and imitation, and Péguy's images of warrior-saints. The space levered open by Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche becomes progressively more consonant with turn-of-the-century French vitalism.

One aspect of this reemergence of themes from French vitalism needs to be underlined, if only for journalistic purposes: The "new" Nietzsche, as it seems to evolve from poststructuralist discussions, is not very new. The major Nietzsche reception in France took place at the turn of the century and within a generation of iconoclastic intellectuals who were very close to being Nietzsche's contemporaries; that is, they were born within a decade before or after the middle of the nineteenth century. This earlier French Nietzsche operated through very conventional apparatuses: Support came through Henri Albert's translations, which coincided with the posthumous publication of *Der Wille zur Macht*; exegesis and influence followed (as canvased, in retrospect, by Geneviève Bianquis in *Nietzsche en France* [1929]); there was a spilling over by way of quotation or allusion, especially in conspicuous instances, as with Bergson and Sorel; and there was a drift into literary production, with obvious exemplars as Valéry and Gide. This literary current continued, not at all subterraneously, and was reissued by later fictionist-philosophers, such as Georges Bataille, Pierre Klossowski, and Maurice Blanchot. Perhaps most importantly, however, this earlier Nietzsche reception was mythologized by Julien Benda in *La trahison des clercs* (1927) and in terms resonant, mutatis mutandis, with the two major subsequent scoldings of intellectuals in the century: Georg Lukács's *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft* (1954) and Jürgen Habermas's *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne* (1985).

If one simply extracts these three books and ignores the satellite discussions, a fable begins to emerge. Benda's contribution is aimed specifically at French vitalism (and parenthetically at pragmatism). Lukács addresses "romantic anticapitalism," but his specific target is *Lebensphilosophie* (with side-glances at pragmatism and French vitalism) and a sociology that had abandoned economics as its central category. Habermas directs his attention to French poststructuralism (and, in a significant excursion, to his own immediate predecessors, Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*).

In all three, Nietzsche is *the turning point*, the key for deciphering the misdirection of a huge expanse of discourse. Between them (although in the name of quite different programs), Benda and Lukács band together to indict what otherwise might appear to be a very diverse set of virtuoso intel-

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lectuals, including those who read and first reviewed the second and third volumes of *Das Kapital*—Sorel, Sombart, and Veblen; those who operated precariously at the edge of emerging disciplines—Tarde, Simmel, Weber, and the Chicago school in sociology, and James and Bergson under the heading of psychology. Perhaps the strangest aspect of this fable is that when all the proper names and movements are bundled together from this first decade of the century, only one writer surfaces who knew Nietzsche's work well—Georg Simmel. Certainly, the indictment of both Benda and Lukács is of a climate of thought, a shared tendency to *betrayal* or a collective alignment to destroy reason. It is this bundling, this assembling, that generates a boogeyman version of Nietzsche.

In contrast, Habermas's version of the fable has considerable specificity. In large part owing to Deleuze, Nietzsche does come to occupy a significant place in the reading list. Derrida's *Spurs*, Foucault's "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," and Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* are readerly exegeses. By the time former students appear with provocations of their own—André Glucksmann's *Les Maîtres penseurs* or Bernard-Henri Levy's *La Barbarie à visage humain*, for example—they, too, will be outfitted with fresh references to Nietzsche. Habermas also brings the advantage of having already committed considerable effort to disentangling salvable work of his predecessors within the Frankfurt school from disturbing Nietzschean motifs. Habermas's examples have the additional weight of reference to a Weimar intellectual climate, to a historical moment when Nietzsche was very much "in the air,"[25] and of numerous attempts within the period to go *beyond* him, a moment that transmuted, so quickly, into national socialism. By the time Habermas enters the dispute, however, poststructuralism had itself become bound as a period. Foucault's own work, by the time of his death in 1984, had taken a major shift toward "care for the self"; Deleuze had turned toward his more closeted studies of the movies; and, within a year, the boundary is marked, at least for journalistic convenience, by Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut in *La Pensée 68* (1985) and *68–86* (1987).

In terms of Deleuze's own oeuvre, the 1972 Cerisy-la-Salle conference had marked an end point. Deleuze had already done his share to manufacture a new Nietzsche. If the effect of this advocacy was ultimately a domestication of Nietzsche, resulting in a tolerant institutional broadening of the syllabus rather than antiphilosophy, it did, at least, open a territory that Deleuze could fill by reaching back and reassembling a wide range of

25. Habermas, *Kultur und Kritik*, 239.

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turn-of-the-century themes. Deleuze remarks (in 1972) how he had been "reproach[ed] . . . for having written even on Bergson. Perhaps because they know nothing of history. They don't know how much hatred focused on Bergson at the beginning" (Nothing, 113). Nietzsche had served the purpose of reinstating this aura of outlawry, while traditions growing out of vitalism, neo-Kantianism, and pragmatism had largely lost this edge through routines of application and dissemination.

If one returns, then, to Deleuze and Guattari's elaboration of the rhizome, their critique of Nietzsche seems less of a surprise. Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* comes as the summation of a decade of collaboration. That Deleuze was the original carrier of a "legitimate misunderstanding" of Nietzsche to the collaboration is clear, but, at the same time, the collaboration needs to be understood as essentially post-Nietzschean from its beginning. The point to be stressed is not that Guattari adds significant modifications—which he certainly does—but that Deleuze had already paid whatever personal or institutional debts he felt he owed Nietzsche and had already broadened his own philosophizing in consonance with themes from Tarde's interactionist sociology, Bergson's process philosophy, and Worringer's abstractionist aesthetics.

The collaboration with Félix Guattari began in 1969, the same year that the first two books—*Différence et répétition* and *Logique du sens*, both of which bear a uniquely Deleuzean style—were published, and the year in which Deleuze took a post at the Université de Paris VIII at Vincennes. Guattari came to the collaboration as a veteran of two decades of skirmishing, reform, and, finally, exclusion within the Parti Communist Français. He also brought a different professional perspective, having spent fifteen years as a practicing psychoanalyst and former student of Jacques Lacan and, later, as an experimenter in clinical reform and as an editor and writer promoting change within the institutions and practices of psychiatric treatment. In addition to a long investigation of applications of linguistics to psychoanalytic theorizing (specifically, his acquaintance with Charles S. Peirce's writing), Guattari brought a style of renegade intelligence that both complemented Deleuze's style and echoed an earlier historical moment when conspicuous French intellectuals were not only professors or heads of faculties—like Bergson or Durkheim—but were also retired judges, engineers, and bookstore owners, such as Tarde, Sorel, and Péguy.

The popularity of the first product of the collaboration, *Anti-Oedipus*, owed much to the fact that Guattari's profession was already very much a topic of popular journalism, both because of the provocations of Jacques

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Lacan and through the antipsychiatry movement in which Guattari had been central. While a Nietzsche reception may be somewhat confined as an esoteric affair of higher education, mental health seems to be a subject more immediately accessible to a public purview.

Anti-Oedipus demonstrates the duplication of the model of psychoanalysis, "the familial representation," as it echoes within a political horizon; the practice of psychoanalysis, its adjustment of the individual to the Oedipal model, replicates the ordering "theater" of the nation-state's political apparatus and the field of thought available for revolutionary change, which is similarly dominated by the "despotic signifier." The "revolutionary schizophrenia," which Deleuze and Guattari espouse, must, therefore, counter "capitalist paranoia" at a microscopic level; a "desiring machine," a "libidinal economy[,] and a libidinal politics" can only be constructed at the "most minuscule level," at a level where mutation has a chance of competing with reproduction.[26] Deleuze's Nietzschean motifs are still threaded into the argument: This micropolitics of desire is explicitly linked with an affirmative and liberating will to power. This theme, however, is mixed together with Bergsonian creative intelligence. Desire: "You have to create it, know how to create it, take the right directions, at your risk and peril. . . . Those who link desire to lack, the long column of crooners of castration, clearly indicate a long resentment, like an interminable bad conscience."[27] Deleuze repeats his early version of a Nietzschean escape route from negation, although the terms are now transformed as biopsychical figures of libidinal and revolutionary change at the level of molecules.

That the broader public addressed by *Anti-Oedipus* was not altogether satisfactory to Deleuze is suggested by subsequent comments. Popularity gave him a personal taste of the consequences of entering a mass market oriented industry, with its apparatuses for promoting and manipulating topicality. It is important to register that Deleuze fulfilled at least one requirement of this industry, the promotional interview, in an exemplary fashion.[28] Deleuze reevaluated his own experience in this arena, however, and used it for his blanket dismissal of the media event and hit parade strategies exploited by Bernard-Henri Levy to promote the set of authors he edited for Grasset to the rank of *nouveaux philosophes*. A second conse-

26. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (New York: Viking, 1977), 49–55.

27. Deleuze with Parnet, *Dialogues*, 91.

28. Most of these interviews are collected in Gilles Deleuze, *Pourparlers: 1972–90* (Paris: Minuit, 1990).

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quence of the popular reception of *Anti-Oedipus* was a significant attempt by Deleuze to qualify his own position. The neovitalist program remained supported—a creative emergence, motivated by intensities, ecstasies, and desire—but Deleuze distanced himself substantially from the image of reference he had found serviceable in *Anti-Oedipus*: "No, we have never seen schizophrenics . . ." (Nothing, 116). He moved away from "schizoanalysis" and toward broader notions like "minoritarian becoming."

A Thousand Plateaus, with the third section of *Anti-Oedipus*, "Savages, Barbarians, Civilized Men," and *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* serving as prologues, stands as the culmination of Guattari and Deleuze's collaboration and as the significant text for attempting to redefine an intended public. *A Thousand Plateaus* maintains or exceeds the tone of maverick extravagance set in earlier work by both authors. Beneath the figure of rhizomatic thinking, the last book extends a conspicuously invented and pilfered vocabulary to lavish proportions, a constant attempt to pose "a new classification system" (*Plateaus*, 347), as though Deleuze and Guattari were furiously trying to stay ahead of a perpetually reforming problematics. "Lines of flight" and "planes of consistency," "flat multiplicities" and "fuzzy aggregates," "territorialization" and "de-" and "reterritorializations," "continuums of intensity" and "machinic assemblages"—these sample the mode. Specific transformations from the earlier collaborations are notable. "Schizoanalysis" is largely replaced by "pragmatics" as the model for a critical endeavor; the "desiring machine" is transformed into the less frenetic activity of "assemblage." As *A Thousand Plateaus* enacts rhizomatic thinking, it proliferates an idiom, more incantation than vocabulary, in spite of the suggestion of the glossary that closes the book.

Nietzsche's presence in *A Thousand Plateaus* corresponds to the qualifiers Deleuze and Guattari had advanced in *Rhizome*. Nietzsche is responsible for demonstrating the "failure" of establishing a fixed "plan or plane," "a pure 'stationary process' for thinking," and, further, for showing that this failure is necessarily built into the plan or plane (*Plateaus*, 268–69). This same disguised homage to Nietzsche is restated, in less opaque language, in Deleuze's 1983 preface to the English translation of *Nietzsche and Philosophy*: "Without doubt this is the most important point of Nietzsche's philosophy: the radical transformation of the image of thought that we create for ourselves."[29] Although demonstrating by failure, Nietzsche still

29. Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), xiii.

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provides the charter for a liberating mode of thinking. The labor of fulfilling this provocation has passed on to others; a creative enactment is required, a rhizomatic thinking.

A Thousand Plateaus represents Deleuze and Guattari's version of this creative realm beyond the dominance of metaphor, ideology, and signifier and is equally immune to notions of "original, free and savage experience [that] lies beneath knowledge, as phenomenology would have it."[30] The figure for thinking they pose requires a Bergsonian methodology, "a *problematizing* method (a critique of false problems and the invention of genuine ones),"[31] and a Sorelian notion of forces that can be assembled strategically to oppose power as the captured possession of the state. Their efforts consist in naming and placing "arborescent thinking," in exposing its dominating image of branching oppositions, and in invoking the construction of a "nomadic war machine" at the boundary of Platonic or Cartesian or bureaucratic-state rationalism. Using the language of vitalism, they reassert a concept of "life" consisting in "vital forces . . . entering into new combinations and composing new figures."[32]

Yet, in spite of the profuse evocations to mutation, to becoming, and to emergence, it requires little penetration to realize that *A Thousand Plateaus* is a barely disguised reading list. It is a great stir-pot of reference, very much within the form Deleuze had developed in *Différence et répétition*, although now Deleuze includes as yet "unpublished work" by former students. Deleuze has placed himself firmly—even if resistively—into the mold of the professorial intellectual. The model space held up to a readership for *A Thousand Plateaus* is an extended seminar room. There is something bold in this attempt to suffice with resources at hand, since a whole tradition of professorial intellectuals with whom Deleuze has a kinship—including Foucault, Merleau-Ponty, Mauss, Bergson, and Tarde—has eventually had the additional benefit of the unique forum of the public lecture from a chair at the Collège de France.

The years following the publication of *A Thousand Plateaus* have not been sympathetic to the "search for allies"[33] to which the language and procedure of the collaborations appeal. The authority of Jürgen Habermas's

30. Deleuze, *Foucault*, 82.
31. Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone, 1988), 35.
32. Deleuze, *Foucault*, 91.
33. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 54.

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critique of the "aporias" of poststructuralism and the mood captured in the sloganistic term for dismissal, "la pensée 68," leave a disconsolate Guattari addressing the "years of winter" of the 1980s. During these same years, Deleuze expresses nostalgia for a "creative" and shared endeavor by art, science, and philosophy, against "an impoverished epoch, when philosophy seeks refuge in reflection 'on' . . . universal rights and eternal values."[34] Michel Foucault had earlier posed the images of Bouvard and Pécuchet to characterize Deleuze's (and, presumably, his own) work.[35] Flaubert's pair of characters has become a favorite in the twentieth century, surpassing the *salon des refusés* and *poètes maudits* as figures for the intellectual. Bouvard and Pécuchet's compulsive efforts to reinscribe texts by others and to compile a dictionary of received ideas continue to haunt present production. Deleuze's writing in the last period, however, when *Nietzschean* again becomes a term for dismissal, resembles more closely the *lettres de cachet* from which Foucault drew his "Life of Infamous Men": glimpses of "obscure men, based on the discourses which in misfortune or in rage they exchanged with power."[36]

34. Deleuze, "Entretien," 12.

35. Michel Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, ed. and trans. Donald Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 188.

36. Michel Foucault, "The Life of Infamous Men," in *Michel Foucault: Power, Truth, Strategy*, ed. M. Morris and P. Patton, trans. P. Foss and M. Morris (Sydney: Feral, 1977), 80. This essay introduces Foucault's anthology of "novels" culled from official documents.

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