

FOUCAULT'S DELEUZEAN METHODOLOGY OF THE LATE 1970S

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The talk will explore the Deleuzean nature of Foucault's differential historical methodology in the mid-to-late 1970s. We will track formulations that suggest the key concept of *Difference and Repetition*: individuation as the integrating of a differential field or "multiplicity."¹

In *Discipline and Punish* (1975), Foucault uses "war" (or at least "battle") as a "model" for understanding social relations.

Now, the study of this micro-physics presupposes that the power exercised on the body is conceived not as a property, but as a strategy, that its effects of domination are attributed not to 'appropriation,' but to dispositions, maneuvers, tactics, techniques, functionings; that one should decipher in it a *network of relations*, constantly in tension, in activity, rather than a privilege that one might possess; that one should take as its model a perpetual battle rather than a contract regulating a transaction or the conquest of a territory. (DP 35F / 26E; emphasis added).²

As a result of conducting his genealogy of the war model in "*Society Must Be Defended*," Foucault comes to nuance his use of "war" in *History of Sexuality, volume 1*,³ where war is no longer seen as a grid of intelligibility that reveals a regime of truth governing a particular historical discourse. Rather, it is seen as a practical option for "coding" the multiplicity of force relations, that is, an optional and precarious "strategy" for integrating them:

Should we turn the expression around, then, and say that politics is war pursued by other means? If we still wish to maintain a separation between war and politics, perhaps we should postulate that this *multiplicity of force relations* can be coded—in part but never totally—either in the form of 'war,' or in the form of 'politics'; this would imply two different strategies (but the one always liable to switch into the other) for *integrating* these unbalanced, heterogeneous, unstable, and tense force relations (HS1, 123F / 93E; emphasis added)

Thus at this point Foucault has "power" as the grid of intelligibility for social relations and "war" as an active strategy of political practice; looking at the social field in terms of power lets us see war as a possible strategy for integrating a multiplicity of force relations, whereas power "itself" can only be seen if we look at it *as* such a multiplicity: "It seems to me that power must be understood in the first instance as the *multiplicity* of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization" (HS1, 121-22F / 92E; emphasis added).

So, in HS1 the "multiplicity of force relations" is the grid of intelligibility for power, which is in turn the grid of intelligibility of the social field. These successive grids of intelligibility reveal a dynamic social ontology, an interactive realism, in which war is a strategy for action in the social field, a way of integrating the multiplicity of force relations that constitute that field and thereby constituting the protagonists of political history as engaged in a "war by other means." The looping effect or self-fulfilling prophecy here should be clear: it's almost a cliché to say that naming yourself and others as warriors tends to

create the reality in which others treat you as such and you respond in kind since they have just proved your point.

It's important not to confuse his historical realism with Foucault's celebrated genealogical analysis of the constitution of the objects of the human sciences, to which he compares his analysis of the constitution of the objects of the liberal and neoliberal power-knowledge *dispositifs* and their regimes of truth (e.g., various forms of *homo economicus*). I qualify the ontological status of these objects as "interactively realist" in the sense that they are not dependent on a human subject or intersubjective community, but are, in Foucault's terms, "marked out in reality" as a result of the *dispositif* of practices that constitute them (NB 21-22F / 19E). "Interactive realism" is basically the same as what Ian Hacking calls, in an update to his important essay "Making Up People," the "looping effect" of a "dynamic nominalism."⁴ That is to say, the interaction of the constituting practices and the constituted objects is extended in time and is structured by feedback loops, so that the expectation of an action increases the probability of that action. We also know this phenomenon by two other terms: "self-fulfilling prophecy" and "methodology becomes metaphysics," as when a policy based on an assumption creates the conditions that produce behavior conforming to that assumption.⁵

With the shift to "governmentality" in *Security, Territory, Population and Birth of Biopolitics*, there is still the Nietzschean-Deleuzean concept of integration of a multiplicity of differential elements and relations as embedded in the interplay of power and resistance in practices, but there is a change in the nature of the relata; it is no longer "force" relations, but relations of "actions," as we read in "The Subject and Power": power is the "action on the action of others." Thus

with governmentality, we still find a differential field, but one of actions rather than forces: "to govern ... is to structure the possible field of action of others."⁶

In STP and NB the grid of intelligibility is governmentality, which prevents us from hypostasizing the state as a substance, and lets us avoid what Foucault will call "state phobia." In an important passage in *Naissance* Foucault concentrates on the "statification" of governmental practices. But this does not mean starting by analyzing the "essence" of the state and then trying to deduce current practices of state governmentality as accidents accruing to the substance defined by that essence. For Foucault, "the state does not have an essence"; it is not "an autonomous source of power" (NB 79F / 77E). Rather it is only the "effect, the profile, the mobile shape [*découpe mobile*] of a perpetual statification [*étatisation*] or perpetual statifications [*étatisations*] in the sense of incessant transactions which modify, or move, or drastically change, or insidiously shift" multiple practices such as finance, investment, decision-making, control, and relations of local / central authorities (NB 79F / 77E). The state has no essence; it is not a substance with changing properties, but is an individuation of what Deleuze would call an Idea, a multiplicity, a system of differential elements and relations involved in "incessant transactions."⁷ Foucault continues with his nominalist anti-essentialism: "The state has ... no interior. The state is nothing else but the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities" (NB 79F / 77E).

Foucault's move to governmentality as the horizon for examining the state enables a nominalist anti-essentialism that, in seeing concrete state as individuations of a multiplicity, outflanks the "state phobia" against which he rails in both its left and right wing manifestations. A genealogy tracks

individuations as the integration of a multiplicity of heterogeneous differential elements and relations, as opposed to a causal and substantialist narrative, which Foucault will call a "genetic analysis." By focusing on the integration of a multiplicity we can replace a "genetic analysis through filiation with a genealogical analysis ... which reconstructs a whole network of alliances, communications, and points of support" (123F / 117E).⁸ For instance, a genealogy of military discipline connects it to a series of problems – floating populations, commercial networks, technical innovations, models of community management – problems which are the very ones out of which certain state organs emerge as a "stratifying" solution. Thus we see military discipline is an integrator of a differential field, being composed of "techniques with operative value in multiple processes"; the state does not provide the horizon for understanding this multiplicity, for it is itself immanent to it (123 F / 119E).

In naming his differential historical methodology, Foucault insists upon the difference between a genealogy and a "genetic" analysis, which proceeds by identifying a unitary source that splits into two.⁹ To establish intelligibility, he asks, "could we not ... start not from unity, and not even from ... duality, but from the *multiplicity* of extraordinarily diverse processes" (STP, 244F / 238E; emphasis added). Foucault continues that establishing the intelligibility of these processes would entail "showing [*montrant*] phenomena of coagulation, support, reciprocal reinforcement, cohesion and *integration*" (STP, 244F / 238-239E; emphasis added).

So by having a differential grid of intelligibility we see the revealed reality of the stratification process is differential; in the classic Deleuzean manner, the integration of a multiplicity produces an emergent effect: "in short it would

involve showing the bundle [*faisceau*] of processes and the network [*réseau*] of relations that ultimately induced as a cumulative, overall effect, the great duality" (STP, 244F / 239E). Foucault's notion of individuation as integration of a differential field is clear as he concludes this very important passage:

At bottom, maybe intelligibility in history does not lie in assigning a cause that is always more or less a metaphor for the source. Intelligibility in history would perhaps lie in something that we could call the constitution or composition of effects. How are overall, cumulative effects composed? . . . How is the state effect constituted on the basis of a thousand diverse processes ...? [*Comment se composent des effets globaux, comment se composent des effets de masse? Comment s'est constitué l'effet Etat à partir de mille processus divers ...?*]" (STP, 244F / 239E).

It's the processes that constitute the state as their effect, not Foucault as subject of knowledge; Foucault's contribution is to provide the grid of intelligibility that reveals this individuation as integration of a differential field at work in historical reality.

In *Sécurité*, Foucault's differential method provides us with a genealogy of the modern state on the basis of the history of governmental reason. In the 19th century we see the breakup of the administrative state's police apparatus into different institutions: economic practice; population management; law and respect for freedom; and the police (in the contemporary sense of a state apparatus that intervenes to stop disorder). These are added to the diplomatic-military apparatus (STP 362F / 354E). But it's crucial to see that the administrative state's police apparatus that is here broken up was itself differential; it was not a unitary source. It arose with *raison d'Etat*, which is itself

"something completely different [which] emerges in the seventeenth century" (STP 346F / 338E). The administrative state emerges from a "cluster [*faisceau*] of intelligible and analyzable relations that allow a number of fundamental elements to be linked together [*lier*] like the faces of a single polyhedron" (STP 346F / 338E).

We note the by now familiar Deleuzean language of the linking together of differential elements and relations.¹⁰ Foucault here lists four elements: the art of government thought as *raison d'Etat*; competition of states while maintaining European equilibrium; police; and the emergence of the market town and its problems of cohabitation and circulation (themselves being, quite obviously, a differential field of multiple processes and practices). So police is part of a larger *dispositif*, and is itself concerned with a multiplicity of all the factors going into providing for the being and well-being of men, that well-being which, in a fascinating phrase, Foucault qualifies as a "well-being beyond being [*ce bien-être au-delà de l'être*]" (STP 335F / 328E).¹¹ More precisely, police integrates relations between the increase of those forces and the good order of the state (321F / 313E). Police does not deal with things but with "forces" that arise from adjusting the relations among the rates of increase of multiple processes. As noted before, here we see forces as elements of the state as analyzed by *raison d'Etat*.

With *Naissance*, Foucault enriches his discussion of novelty in history with a more explicit focus on the notion of "regimes of truth." Identifying the novelty of liberalism and neoliberalism entails using as a grid of intelligibility the institution of "regimes of truth," which are defined in terms reminiscent of those for "episteme" in earlier works: "the set of rules enabling one to establish which statements in a given discourse can be described as true or false" (NB 37F / 35E;

SD 145F / 163-64E). For instance, the question of liberalism is that of a new "regime of truth as the principle of the self-limitation of government" (NB 21F / 19E). Compared to *raison d'Etat*, classical liberalism constitutes a new question, the self-limitation of the government to allow the natural mechanisms of exchange markets to operate, just as *raison d'Etat* asked about the "intensity, depth, and attention to detail" of governing for the sake of the maximum growth of power of the state (NB 21F / 19E).

We will conclude our discussion of Foucault's differential methodology with a problematic text. Concerning the establishment of the market as the site of veridiction for liberalism as a governmental practice, Foucault insists that we not look for "the cause" of this novel constitution. Instead, if we are to understand this historical novelty we have to understand the "polygonal or polyhedral relationship" between multiple elements which are themselves changing rates of change of heterogeneous processes: "a new influx of gold ... a continuous economic and demographic growth ... an intensification of agricultural production" (35F / 33E). This is a clear example of a Deleuzian multiplicity: a system of differentially linked processes exhibiting changing rates of change. Foucault follows up by claiming that in order to "establish the intelligibility [*effectuer ... la mise en intelligibilité*]" of the process by which the market became a site of veridiction one must "put into relation the different phenomena [of "influx of gold," "continuous economic and demographic growth," and "an intensification of agricultural production"] [*la mise en relation de ces différents phénomènes*]" (35F / 33E; translation modified).

So far so good; rendering something intelligible comes from the integration of a multiplicity that preserves the heterogeneity of the processual

elements. Foucault continues on with an odd bit of quasi-ontological modal analysis that is the key for our understanding of the realist ontological status of the regime of truth as that which is revealed by a grid of intelligibility (as opposed to the interactively real status of the objects of a regime of truth). Establishing the intelligibility of the process by which the market became a site of veridiction is a matter of "showing how it was possible [*Montrer en quoi il a été possible*]." We do not have to show that the establishment of such a site of veridiction "would have been necessary [*qu'il aurait été nécessaire*]"; this would be a "futile task." Here is the key: neither do we have to show of the process that "it is a possibility [*un possible*], one possibility in a determinate field of possibilities [*un des possibles dans un champ déterminé des possibles*]." Rather, to establish the intelligibility of a historical novelty consists in "simply showing it to be possible [*Que le réel soit possible, c'est ça sa mise en intelligibilité*]" (35F / 34E; translation modified at several points).

This is difficult to reconcile with Deleuze, given his well-known adoption of the Bergsonian critique of the possible-real relation as opposed to the virtual-actual relation (*Bergsonisme* 99-101F / 96-98E; DR 272-74F / 211-212E).¹² Nonetheless, we might be able to salvage something by focusing on Foucault's denial that the establishment of the intelligibility of a historical novelty consists in showing it is one possibility in a determinate field of possibilities. For that's Deleuze's main target in adopting Bergson. The virtual as differential field gives rise to actual entities – its differentiated state passes through individuation and dramatization on the way to differentiation – but is not itself composed of actual individuated / differentiated entities; at most it consists in potentials for individuation processes that are triggered at critical points in the relations of

other processes – hurricanes are individuated at critical points in the relations of wind and water currents provoked by temperature and pressure differences. This seems to resonate with Foucault's denial of a "determinate field of possibilities" in which the novelty under consideration was an individuated member. So as long as Foucault insists that intelligibility entails the putting into relation of multiple processes we can see the phrase "showing it was possible" in terms of establishing the differential field of processes (influx of gold, economic and demographic growth, etc.) out of which the market as site of veridiction was actualized. What we can say is that Foucault's showing a regime of truth as an immanent historical reality meets Deleuze's requirement that one show the conditions of genesis of "real experience" (DR 200F / 154E) in the integration, resolution or actualization of a differential field.

NOTES

¹ Foucault does not mention integration in "Theatrum Philosophicum," though he does discuss multiplicity. See *Dits et Ecrits I* (Paris: Gallimard Quarto edition, 2001): 958 and *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977): 185.

² Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir*. (Paris: Gallimard, 1975). Translated by Alan Sheridan as *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage, 1979).

³ Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité, tome 1: La volonté de savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976). Translated by Robert Hurley as *The History of Sexuality, volume 1: An Introduction*. (New York: Random House, 1978).

⁴ Ian Hacking, "Making Up People," in *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, ed. by Weller, Sosna, and Wellberry, Stanford University Press, 1986. The updated version to which I refer was published in the *London Review of Books* 28.16 (17 August 2006); only this version contains the phrase "looping effect."

⁵ For an article examining just such a looping effect in contemporary practices based on the assumptions of Rational Choice Theory producing the neoliberal *homo economicus*, see Elinor Ostrom, "Policies that Crowd out Reciprocity and Collective Action." In Herbert Gintis, Samuel Bowles, Robert Boyd, and Ernst Fehr, *Moral Sentiments and Material Interests: The Foundations of Cooperation in Economic Life*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2005: 253-275.

⁶ Foucault's differential methodology accords with his desire to avoid positing a transhistorical constant, a "universal" that is simply treated differently in different epochs (NB 4F / 2-3E; 64F / 63E). To take a famous example, in *Surveiller et punir*, it's never the case that he wants to examine how the prison changes from absolutism to liberalism. That would be a closet substantialist metaphysics in which the prison is a substance that receives different properties. Foucault analyzes this substantialist model as "historicism" (NB 5F / 3E). Foucault instead proposes a genealogy of constitutive practices; we are accustomed to calling this his "nominalism."⁶ From this perspective, the absolutist monarch didn't have prisons at his disposal. He had a mechanism, enclosure, which was put to a certain function: enclosure for protection to await later punishment. If we had to give a name to the place, the building, where the enclosure happened, it would be better to call it a "jail." You only get prisons with a new *dispositif*, where the mechanism of enclosure is put to a different function, punishment (and penitence, and rehabilitation, etc.).

⁷ With "incessant transactions" we have a strong echo of the Deleuzean notion of a multiplicity as a structure of continuous variation. Relatively implicit in DR (e.g., 326F / 253E), continuous variation is a major concept throughout *Mille Plateaux*.

⁸ Can we go outside the state? There is an immediate problem: is not the state the totalizing field for all these "outsides" of institutions, functions, and objects? Can we ever get outside such a horizon for social being (123F / 119E)? Again, the

focus in a genealogy is on the different means of integrating a multiplicity of socio-economic processes and governmentality practices. Foucault suggests that studying military discipline is not a matter of studying state control of its military institution, for this would be a substantialism entailing the study of different accidental properties surrounding the unchanging essence of the state and its army.

⁹ We see here a merely terminological difference with Deleuze. In DR, the conditions of real experience (not merely possible experience) form an "intrinsic genesis" (200F / 154E). But insofar as this genesis is the integration of a differential field, we see that "genesis" in DR is equivalent to "genealogy" for Foucault, albeit that Deleuze works in an ontological register and Foucault in an epistemological register.

¹⁰ The editor of *Naissance* notes the appearance of similar language defining a genealogy in terms of "singularity" and "multiple determining elements" in a roughly contemporaneous essay by Foucault (NB 50n8F / 49n8E).

¹¹ Is the mere "being" of men here just physical survival that forces men back onto themselves in desperate selfishness, while "well-being" allows for productive relations among men? So that free sociality is dependent on a guarantee of the necessities of life? In another context, we might attempt to draw out the classic questions of the relations of *oikos* and *polis*, of necessity and freedom, from this small phrase of Foucault's.

¹² Gilles Deleuze, *Le Bergsonisme* (Paris: PUF, [1966] 1997). Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam as *Bergsonism* (New York: Zone Books, 1988).