

# THE SUBJECT: DELEUZE-GUATTARI AND/OR LACAN (IN THE TIME OF CAPITALISM)?

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper addresses the question, whether Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the human subject, as articulated in (mainly) Anti-Oedipus, is as irreconcilable with Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytical theory of the subject as one might expect, given Anti-Oedipus' attack on the "Oedipal" basis of psychoanalysis. The notion of the multiplicitous "subject", as fleshed out in Anti-Oedipus, is reconstructed with the requisite attention to Deleuze and Guattari's ontology of flows, desiring-machines, desiring-production, schizophrenia, the "body without organs" and the emergence of a "spectral" kind of subject. It is argued that the so-called "body without organs" may be read, in one sense, as their term for the concept of (ego-) identity, which is anathema to the dynamism of the process of desiring-production. For purposes of comparison, Lacan's theory of the subject is briefly reconstructed as well in terms of the registers of the imaginary, the symbolic and the "real", with a view to uncovering those aspects of it that are compatible with Deleuze and Guattari's ontological emphasis on process and becoming, instead of substance. Finally, the problem of the relation between capitalism, on the one hand, and Deleuze/Guattari's process-ontology, as well as Lacan's understanding of the discourse of capitalism, is addressed in light of the question of the subject of capitalism, and of the possibility of a critical understanding of capitalism.*

...man and nature are not like two opposite terms confronting each other – not even in the sense of bipolar opposites within a relation of causation, ideation, or expression (cause and effect, subject and object, etc.); rather, they are one and the same essential reality, the producer-product. Production as process overtakes all idealistic categories and constitutes a cycle whose relationship to desire is that of an immanent principle. That is why desiring-production is the principal concern of a materialist psychiatry, which conceives of and deals with the schizo as *Homo natura* (Deleuze & Guattari 1983, *Anti-Oedipus*).

Wouldn't the real difference be between Oedipus, structural as well as imaginary, and something else that all Oedipuses crush and repress: desiring-production – the machines of desire that no longer allow themselves to be reduced to the structure any more than to persons, and that constitute the Real in itself, beyond or beneath the Symbolic as well as the Imaginary? (Deleuze & Guattari 1983, *Anti-Oedipus*).

This formal stagnation is akin to the most general structure of human knowledge: that which constitutes the ego and its objects with attributes of permanence, identity, and substantiality – in short, with entities or “things” that are very different from the *Gestalten* that experience enables us to isolate in the shifting field, stretched in accordance with the lines of animal desire. What I have called paranoid knowledge is shown, therefore, to correspond in its more or less archaic forms to certain critical moments that mark the history of man’s mental genesis, each representing a stage in objectifying identification (Lacan 1977, *Aggressivity in psychoanalysis*).

When thinking of what is distinctive about the human subject, one is confronted, sooner or later, by the question whether there is a fundamental difference between the conceptions of the subject encountered in the work of Deleuze and Guattari, and in that of Jacques Lacan, respectively. On the face of it one would expect them to be irreconcilably different, given that Deleuze and Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus* (1983:51-56) announces itself as a critique (and a rejection) of psychoanalysis, at least of the Freudian variety. However, as I shall attempt to show, on Lacan – or rather, the Lacanian notion of the subject – they are, to say the least, ambiguous, which opens the way to a *rapprochement* between them.

**Keywords:** Deleuze; Guattari; Lacan; capitalism

## DELEUZE AND GUATTARI

For Deleuze and Guattari, the neurotic is a metonymy of Oedipal society,<sup>1</sup> where subjectivisation is a function of submission to Oedipal (that is, patriarchal) authority and power in all its manifestations, and is, moreover, symptomatic of castration as disempowerment on the part of the desiring, multiplicitous “subject” – small wonder that the subject of psychoanalysis is conceived as a subject that “lacks”! By contrast, they stress the production, through desire, of the “schizophrenic” subject: the “schizophrenic” embodies, for them (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:1-8), what is distinctive of what they call “desiring-production” – the cycle of “producing production”, which is “repressed” by “Oedipus”, or Oedipal psychological mechanisms of configuring society in terms of the repressive, triadic parents-child structures of authority. “The schizophrenic is the universal producer”, they claim (1983:7). It should be stressed from the outset that Deleuze and Guattari do not here have in mind the clinical, pathological meaning of the term, “schizophrenic” – in fact, they state this explicitly (1983:5), labelling the latter “the artificial schizophrenic”. Hence, it seems less misleading to reverse the sentence, quoted above, to read: The universal producer is schizophrenic (in a specific, non-pathological sense). The link between “desiring machines” which comprise social and natural reality

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1 Apropos of this, an observant Deleuzian scholar has remarked: “More important than the neurotic being the metonymy of Oedipal Society, for D&G what is central is that psychoanalysis – with its distinctions, including the one of the neurotic on the couch – is the metonymy of capitalism... an exercise of trapping desires and totalizing subjectivity...” I give attention to this aspect of capitalism below.

– seamlessly it seems: they “make no distinction between man and nature”<sup>2</sup> (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:4) – and production, is articulated as follows:

Schizophrenia is like love: there is no specific schizophrenic phenomenon or entity; schizophrenia is the universe of productive and reproductive desiring-machines, universal primary production as ‘the essential reality of man and nature’ (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:5).

What does Deleuze and Guattari’s ontology of desiring machines, including their account of the human subject, in *Anti-Oedipus*, look like? Desiring-production is fundamental, or rather, ubiquitous and pervasive: “It is at work everywhere, functioning smoothly at times, at other times in fits and starts” (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:1). Desiring-production is a function of desiring-machines, and *vice versa*; hence all is *process* (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:2):

There is no such thing as either man or nature now, only a process that produces the one within the other and couples the machines together. Producing-machines, desiring-machines everywhere, schizophrenic machines, all of species life: the self and the non-self, outside and inside, no longer have any meaning whatsoever.

Deleuze and Guattari reject the usual distinctions between nature, industry, production, consumption and distribution, and refer approvingly to the way these supposedly distinct elements are explained by Marx’s notion of “false consciousness” acquired by subjects under capitalism (1983:3-4). The truth, manifested in “delirium”, is that these spheres are not independent, but connected:

...production is immediately consumption<sup>3</sup> and a recording<sup>4</sup> process...without any sort of mediation, and the recording process and consumption directly determine production, though they do so within the production process itself. Hence, everything is production...this is the first meaning of process as we use the term... (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:4).

The second meaning of “process” concerns what was mentioned earlier – dualism is rejected, and they claim that there is no fundamental distinction between humanity and nature; nature is conceived of as constituting the “natural essence of man” (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:4) who is no longer elevated to the position of lord of creation, but is understood as the being who is intimately connected with and to all life-forms. For them, humanity and nature:

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2 Here one notices the influence of Spinoza’s metaphysical ontology (which conceives of humanity and nature as being coterminous with God, as one encompassing totality or process) on Deleuze and Guattari’s thinking. It explains their denial of transcendence in favour of immanence.

3 By “consumption” Deleuze and Guattari (1983:4) seem to mean not only the consumption of “useful” objects or products, but something much more encompassing, including the consumption of natural energy (cf. note on this page regarding the derivation of this meaning from Bataille).

4 By “recording” they seem to mean a variety of things, including recording as a diverse process (mechanical, electronic or administrative, as in the productive “recording”, or “reproduction” of images everywhere, as well as the recording of births and deaths) as well as the recordings produced in this way (such as phonographs, compact discs, videos and DVDs).

...are one and the same essential reality, the producer-product. Production as process overtakes all idealistic categories and constitutes a cycle whose relationship to desire is that of an immanent principle. This is why desiring-production is the principal concern of a materialist psychiatry, which conceives of and deals with the schizo as *Homo natura*<sup>5</sup> (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:5).

This is where the third sense of “process” as used by these two thinkers emerges: “process” is the condition of the possibility of such immanent desiring-production, and any artificial “perpetuation”, or alternatively termination of the process of desiring-production would pervert the “process” by making it an end in itself, instead of allowing it to reach its own (intermittent) “completion(s)”.

A question that crops up here is the one concerning the status of what is ordinarily regarded as “things”, or, for that matter, “identifiable” human subjects or individuals. Deleuze and Guattari’s answer is framed in terms of desiring-machines, binarity, flows, coupling, interruptions and identity (1983:5-8). Desiring-machines are subject to the law of binarity – each such machine is always connected to, or “coupled with” another. Because such desiring-machines are embedded in the flow of production, the latter may therefore be seen as being “connective”. Deleuze and Guattari depict the structural dynamics of this endlessly (but intermittently interrupted) productive process as the connections between “flow-producing” machines which are “interrupted” by other machines that “draw off” the “flow” of the former, so that an aggregation or complex series of linearly, but multi-directionally linked binary machines constitutes an inclusive world or totality (characterised by immanence instead of transcendence). This is what they call the “partial object-flow connective synthesis”, otherwise known as “product-producing” – producing invariably assumes the form of something “grafted onto” what is produced.<sup>6</sup> Pervading the whole process, is desire (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:5): “Desire constantly couples continuous flows and partial objects that are by nature fragmentary and fragmented. Desire causes the current to flow, itself flows in turn, and breaks the flows.” Think of a mouth being attached to another mouth, or to a nipple, or drinking from a mountain stream, or an electric drill, or hair drier plugged into an electrical current, themselves being “linked” to a piece of wood or someone’s wet hair, and so on. Or, in their words, emphasising pervasive “flow”:

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5 Hence the task facing such a materialist psychiatry (or psychoanalysis with a difference), namely “schizo-analysis” (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:310-382).

6 Deleuze and Guattari (1983:7; see note on p. 7 as well) illustrate this “grafting producing” by referring to Lévi-Strauss’s concept of the “*bricoleur*” (a tinkerer or handyman, as opposed to the “engineer”), who is constantly finding new ways to produce things, even though his means are limited and not, like the engineer’s instruments, intended for a specific purpose. The *bricoleur* makes things with “whatever is at hand”, and offers a parallel to the schizophrenic as “universal producer”. It is interesting to note Derrida’s (1978:284-286) elaboration on the same distinction in the work of Lévi-Strauss, but with something else in mind, namely to illustrate that humans are not in a position to *choose* between the engineer (who represents the ideal of precision and rational certainty) and the *bricoleur* (who stands for the unavoidable recourse to means, methods, tools, that are subject to ruin and fallibility). For Derrida as poststructuralist, we need *both* heuristics.

Amniotic fluid spilling out of the sac and kidney stones; flowing hair; a flow of spittle, a flow of sperm, shit, or urine that are produced by partial objects and constantly cut off by other partial objects, which in turn produce other flows, interrupted by other partial objects. Every 'object' presupposes the continuity of a flow; every flow, the fragmentation of the object. Doubtless each organ-machine interprets the entire world from the point of view of the energy that flows from it: the eye interprets everything – speaking, understanding, shitting, fucking – in terms of seeing. But a connection with another machine is always established, along a transverse path, so that one machine interrupts the current of the other or 'sees' its own current interrupted (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:5-6).

The binary character of the linear series between and among desiring machines assumes a ternary form when the process is momentarily interrupted before it commences again. This is the moment when "identity" appears as a third term in the multidirectional, linear production process, and although it seems puzzling at first, Deleuze and Guattari appear to think of the identity generated in this way as "the body without organs".<sup>7</sup> A concept that derives from the work of Artaud (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:9; see note at bottom of page as well), the "body without organs" denotes something undifferentiated and unproductive, although it is itself produced by the activity of desiring machines' desiring-production. The multi-faceted description of the "body without organs" is such that it is clearly distinguished from the processual nature of being, the world, and of the subject. While Deleuze and Guattari are at pains in their ontology to stress the becoming, or the dynamic character of everything that is, at bottom, driven by desire, the so-called "body-without organs" is a liminal notion representing an undifferentiated stasis which, in a certain sense, is illusory and cannot even be said to exist. They introduce it as follows:

Producing, a product: a producing/product identity. It is this identity that constitutes a third term in the linear series: an enormous undifferentiated object. Everything stops dead for a moment, everything freezes in place – and then the whole process will begin all over again. From a certain point of view it would be much better if nothing worked, if nothing functioned. Never being born, escaping the wheel of continual birth and rebirth, no mouth to suck with, no anus to shit through... Desiring-machines make us an organism; but at the very heart of this production, within the very production of this production, the body suffers from being organized in this way, from not having some other sort of organization, or no organization at all...The automata stop dead and set free the unorganized mass they once served to articulate. The full body without organs is the unproductive, the sterile, the unengendered, the unconsumable... The death instinct: that is its name, and death is not without a model. For desire desires death also,

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7 As far as I could ascertain, Deleuze first mentions the "body without organs" in *The logic of sense* (2001:147;216-220;227.) What he says on especially p. 216 seems to me to be compatible with my interpretation of it as being synonymous with (the illusion of unchanging) identity. I realize, however, that the so-called "body without organs" is a problematic notion in Deleuze and Guattari's work, and to claim that it is *nothing other than* their term for the concept of (ego-) identity would be, as a helpful Deleuzian critic has pointed out, a "rather bold statement". My claim should therefore be seen as one possible interpretation, and one that enables a comparison with Lacan's work.

because the full body of death is its motor, just as it desires life, because the organs of life are the *working machine*...The body without organs is non-productive; nonetheless it is produced, at a certain place and a certain time in the connective synthesis, as the identity of producing and the product (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:7-8).

This is a mouthful that calls for some mighty exegesis, if one is up to the task. In an almost allegorical fashion, Deleuze and Guattari insinuate Nietzsche and Freud into their deconstruction of “identity” – for that is what this ultimately amounts to, in my judgement. The Oedipal “identity” of subjects in patriarchal society, according to them, is tantamount to a denial of the “becoming” which pervades their ontology of the desiring subject, their Spinozian-naturalistic account of productively desiring beings becoming-subjects. Moreover, this vaunted Oedipal “identity”, attained via the “identification with” the authoritative “father”, comes at the price of the child, in the process, denying their own productive desire, that is choosing “death” over the “schizophrenic” life of creative desiring-production that they might have had. Hence Deleuze and Guattari’s invocation of the Freudian “death drive” or Thanatos, which, in Freud is complexly intertwined with the life-drives or Eros, but ultimately appears to hold sway over the latter (Freud 1968:258-259).

The subtle intertextual reference to Nietzsche near the beginning of this quotation should not be missed, either, given the nuance that it adds to their own notion of identity fleshed out here. “Never being born, escaping the wheel of continual birth and rebirth...” is an allusion to Nietzsche’s story, near the beginning of *The birth of tragedy* (Nietzsche 1993) of King Midas capturing the satyr, Silenus, and the latter, under duress, revealing the “secret” of human life to Midas, namely, that it is better not to have been born, or, failing that, to die quickly. But here it is stripped of its Schopenhauerian pessimism, by being reinscribed into the Nietzschean, life-affirming ontology of Deleuze and Guattari, altering its meaning: the “wheel of continual birth and rebirth” is not here a reference to a Pythagorean or Buddhist notion of metempsychosis, but to the structural dynamics of the life of the subject. Recall that, for Deleuze and Guattari, desiring-production involves the binary coupling, in all directions, of desiring-machines, in the process directing and interrupting flows (of productive desire). Every time there is a coupling, or a corresponding uncoupling, of such desiring-machines, it marks the coming into life, and alternatively, the death – that is, the birth, death, and rebirth – of the subject. But not, here, a subject with an Oedipal ego-identity; rather, a perpetually *becoming-subject*, one peripherally accompanying desire as a process. In everyday language one might say that the illusion of “identity” arises when one confuses the product of one’s desire (the body without organs) with desire as a process. The subject, in so far as it may be discerned at all, hovers like a phantom alongside of desiring-producing, desiring machines, such as eyes, mouths, ears, tongues, arms, brain-function, and so on. Paradoxically, given its complex interwovenness with this dynamism of the process of living, (the full body of) death (the death drive) is said to be the “motor” of desire. If life is driven by Eros in the guise of desire, this desire is, in turn, motivated by its striving for a product, which turns

out to be that which, fleetingly, manifests itself as “identity” of sorts. But – recalling what they stated earlier – when the process of desiring-production is artificially cut short, arrested, or perpetuated, what results is something “truly” pathological (as opposed to their use of the term “schizophrenia”). This is what Oedipal identity is for them – the death of desire, of creativity, of life.

Hence the question must be posed: given this, if anything, thoroughly paradoxical understanding of the human subject, could one claim, unambiguously, that it is one where the subject is transformed into something pathological, namely a “schizophrenic” subject? Here one must keep in mind Deleuze and Guattari’s idiosyncratic interpretation of “schizophrenic”, of course, which cannot simply be termed “pathological”, unless the latter term is also revised according to their ontology. In fact, they leave one in no doubt that, contrary to the received meaning of the word, the “schizophrenic” subject is a “healthy” subject, at least in the sense of being at one with nature conceived of in terms of “flows”. But how does their notion of the subject compare to that of the psychoanalytical theorist, Jacques Lacan?

## LACAN

At first blush one might suspect that Lacan’s subject would fall under the same scythe which mowed down the Oedipal (Freudian) subject. But matters are not that simple; as Deleuze and Guattari (1983:363; see also 309-310) themselves admit, Lacan “...was the first...to schizophrenize the analytic field...”. To make sense of this observation, one might start by reminding oneself that, in “The mirror stage” (Lacan 1977a:3) – where Lacan describes how the primitive ego develops through a dialectic of *méconnaissance* (“misrecognition”), on the part of the infant, of its mirror image as “itself” – he talks of “...the social dialectic that structures human knowledge as paranoiac”. This insight should be scrutinised in conjunction with Lacan’s remark, in “Aggressivity in psychoanalysis”, concerning “stagnation” of one of the stages of organisation of the ego and of objects (which are said to be experienced as “events in a perspective of mirages”), that:

...this formal stagnation is akin to the most general structure of human knowledge: that which constitutes the ego and its objects with attributes of permanence, identity, and substantiality, in short, with entities or ‘things’ that are very different from the *Gestalten* that experience enables us to isolate in the shifting field, stretched in accordance with the lines of animal desire... What I have called paranoiac knowledge is shown, therefore, to correspond in its more or less archaic forms to certain critical moments that mark the history of man’s mental genesis, each representing a stage in objectifying identification (Lacan 1977:17).

What Lacan is claiming here anticipates and informs Deleuze and Guattari’s project in *Anti-Oedipus* (1983). He is extrapolating (Lacan 1977:20), to the world of objects, what he argues in “The mirror stage” (1977a) regarding the genesis of the subject’s sense

of self as “ego” in the imaginary register<sup>8</sup> – that it emerges from a kind of alienating projection of vaunted “permanence” into a mirror image which is then mistakenly taken as being the subject “itself”, despite really being a fantasy, or fictional construct distinct from the “I”-position from which one speaks (Lacan 1977a:1-7).<sup>9</sup> As in the case of the infant at the stage of its alienating identification with its “own” mirror-image, objects, in the “shifting field” of quotidian experience, lack the ostensible “permanence” or substantiality attributed to them by the subject through this psychically (and ontologically) constitutive gesture of “stagnation”.

From this it should be apparent that Lacan, no less than Deleuze and Guattari, believes fundamental experience to be of flux – “events in a perspective of mirages”, and “*Gestalten* that experience enables us to isolate in the shifting field, stretched in accordance with the lines of animal desire”. For Lacan, the dynamic field of experience is constituted by humans *as if* it consists of relatively unchanging objects, ontologically similar to themselves as “egos” or “selves” in terms of (putative) “permanence”. But fundamentally, as for Deleuze and Guattari, humans are situated in a “shifting field” which is a function of “animal desire” – this is no ordinary affirmation of the commonly human, naïve realist ontology on Lacan’s part. On the contrary, what Deleuze and Guattari depict as a field of “desiring-production”, of “flows”, by and among “desiring-machines”, which intermittently produce the “body without organs” when flows are interrupted, seems to me to be compatible with Lacan’s ontology of a dynamic or fluctuating (“shifting”) field of “events” (that is, of “*happenings*”, not things or objects) and “*Gestalten*” which are fundamentally the function of “animal desire”. Not only do they agree on the genesis and provenance of “identity” as something “produced” by desire, but there is also a consonance between Lacan’s notion of “animal desire” (on the part of humans) and Deleuze/Guattari’s rejection of the humanity/nature dualism in favour of an encompassing “nature”. These similarities are confirmed where Lacan says:

The *mirror stage* is a drama whose internal thrust is precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation – and which manufactures for the subject, caught up in the lure of spatial identification, the succession of phantasies that extends from a fragmented body-image to a form of its totality that I shall call orthopaedic – and, lastly, to the assumption of the armour of an alienating identity, which will mark with its rigid structure the subject’s entire mental development (Lacan 1977a:4).

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8 For Lacan, the human subject is articulated between three registers, namely the imaginary (the register of alienation and of fantasy), the symbolic (the register of language as discourse) and the “real” (the register of what surpasses, or resists symbolization and the imaginary, or fantasy). For an elaboration, see Lee (1990:82).

9 Lacan’s insights remind one in some respects of the teachings of the Buddha, Siddharta Gautama, from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Like Lacan, Siddharta regarded the self as a fantasm, that is, as the result of fantasy, or of the need to experience the self as a unity. One does not encounter any of the Buddha’s metaphysical doctrines such as the way in which asceticism can free one from the wheel of Karma on Lacan’s part, however. See in this regard Leonard Shlain’s insightful discussion of the Buddha’s significance for contemporary culture (Shlain 1998:168-178).



The moment of “identification” with an image that is taken to be one’s “own”, or worse, “oneself”, is a fantasy, or fiction, which is at the basis of one’s so-called (Oedipal) “identity” or self as “ego”. Why? Because the infant’s body-experience is primarily one of fragmentation – comparable to a concatenation of what Deleuze and Guattari call “desiring-machines” – which is subjected to the orthopaedic (that is, “corrective”), totalising, alienating, substantialising and *unifying* effect of “spatial identification”, which is ultimately, for Lacan, paranoid or delusional.<sup>10</sup> Commenting on Lacan’s notion of knowledge as being inherently paranoid, Bowie (1991:40,42) remarks:

...Lacan...talks about an immanent structure of the human world. Human knowledge begins from an illusion – a misapprehension, a deceit, a seduction, an inveiglement – and constructs an inescapable autonomous system in its wake...the structure of the ego and the structure of knowledge are both typified by a will to alienation, a sought-after madness, that seems on the face of it unanswerable and untreatable.<sup>11</sup>

What help is available to humans concerns what Lacan (1977b:49) refers to as the “transindividual reality of the subject” – “*trans*-individual” in so far as the “third term” structuring the conversation between an analysand and an analyst, namely the *unconscious*, is not merely something peculiar to each individual in the form of particular “tendencies”, but constitutes the “discourse of the other” (Lacan 1977b:55). What access does the analyst have to the unconscious as a structuring force on the part of the analysand, then? Per definition it is not directly accessible. Lacan acknowledges the significance of parapraxes or “slips” of all kinds as meaningful signifiers – the “language” of the unconscious is legible in, among other things, the subject’s somatic symptoms, the memories of his/her childhood and in the very specific “idiosyncratic” diction or verbal expressions on his/her part (Lacan 1977b:50; Lee 1990:44). In his

10 I should stress that it is not only in the work of Lacan and Deleuze/Guattari that one encounters resistance to the traditionally Western tendency of substantialising manifestations of flux, becoming or multiplicity. Jacques Derrida, for instance, seems to be in substantial agreement with Lacan’s, as well as Deleuze and Guattari’s conviction, that it is misleading to prioritize the (Oedipal) self-identical ego at the cost of the subject’s becoming, multiplicity, diversity or heterogeneity, where he remarks in “Sauf le nom” (Derrida 1995:35) that “...it is always necessary to be more than one in order to speak, several voices are necessary for that...” Similarly, in *Circumfession* he insinuates that he lives in heterogeneity, observing among other things (Derrida 1993:155) that “the constancy of God in my life is called by other names”, but simultaneously that “I quite rightly pass for an atheist”. One could also point to Foucault, who claimed that, in order to discover what one is, one has to “open” oneself to all the multiplicities with which one is shot through from head to toe (Miller 1994:245). (It is probably no coincidence that Foucault regularly attended Lacan’s famous seminar in Paris.) A final example, from literature: In Hermann Hesse’s (1963) novel, *Steppenwolf*, the main character, Harry Haller, talks about his discovery that not only one, nor even only two different *persona* (as he thought at one stage concerning human and wolf) live in a person’s psyche, but a variety of personalities or selves, which are usually repressed by most people for the sake of the illusory ideal of unity as represented by the ego. However, from Hesse’s narrative it is clear that, for the sake of a balance between stability and renewal, an individual can actualise only one of these selves at a time.

11 See in this regard Olivier 2008.

elaboration on the significance of Freud's *The psychopathology of everyday life*, Lacan (1977b:58) clarifies the sense in which a so-called "Freudian slip", despite being a "mistake" or "failure" in speech as far as conscious intention is concerned, may be understood as being "successful" in a different sense, namely to the extent that it reveals, as a linguistic fragment of the "discourse of the Other",<sup>12</sup> what *unconsciously* determines the subject as conscious *moi*.

The status of the unconscious is another point of rapprochement between Lacan and the writers of *Anti-Oedipus*. For example, Deleuze and Guattari's (1983:310) affirmative interpretation of Lacan in this respect is evident where they say: "...it is certain that he [Lacan] does not enclose the unconscious in an Oedipal structure. He shows on the contrary that Oedipus is imaginary, nothing but an image, a myth...". In fact, Deleuze and Guattari (1983:310-311) see Lacan as having brought psychoanalysis (or what they call Oedipus) to the point where self-critique is possible. They claim that Lacan's symbolic order works in conjunction with the imaginary order of the ego, through symbolic "castration" (of the subject, which becomes subject to the "law of the father" by entering the symbolic order<sup>13</sup>), to reproduce the Oedipal structure of authority and power. *But* Lacan's approach does not end up by imprisoning the unconscious in an Oedipal straitjacket. On the contrary, Deleuze and Guattari point out that the structural sequence of imaginary identification and symbolic castration is necessary to prepare the way for "linguistic autocritique", when one is faced by the insight that the way in which signifiers are organised depends centrally on what they call a "despotic Great Signifier" (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:310) – what Lacan calls the "name of the father" (which "anchors" signifiers in such a way that authority may be seen as inhering in "feudal patriarchal structures") (Lacan 1977b:67; 1977c:199).

"What is this point of self-criticism?" they ask (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:311), and proceed to answer in a way that brings them even closer to Lacan, despite the obvious idiomatic divergence between themselves and the latter:

It is the point where the structure, beyond the images that fill it and the Symbolic that conditions it within representation, reveals its reverse side as a positive principle of nonconsistency that dissolves it: where desire is shifted into the order of production...and where it lacks nothing, because it is defined as *the natural and sensuous objective being*, at the same time as the Real is defined as *the objective being of desire*. For the unconscious of schizoanalysis [which they take Lacan to have inaugurated; B.O.] is unaware of persons, aggregates, and laws, and of images, structures, and symbols. It is an orphan, just as it is an anarchist and an atheist.

Although the claim, that these utterances are compatible with Lacan's notion of the subject, seems counter-intuitive to a reader of Lacan at first, one has to admit that Deleuze and Guattari may be right when one considers the following. In Lacan's

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12 Especially in his later work, Lacan tends to capitalise "Other" in the phrase "discourse of the Other" (referring to the unconscious). On the significance of this sometimes confusing term in Lacan's work, see Bowie (1991:82-83).

13 See Lacan, 1977b:67; 1977c:199; 1977d:154; as well as Olivier 2005.

work one could go further than the “name of the father” as pervasively grounding signifier which organises the “discourse of the Other” – the unconscious linguistic-cultural system – along axiological (if patriarchal) lines. If there is a signifier more fundamental than this one, it is the signifier referred to as “the phallus”<sup>14</sup> (which must be carefully distinguished from Freud’s concept of the penis in his theory of castration) (Lee 1990:66-67):

In effect, the phallus is the ultimate *point de capiton*, the signifier that fixes the meaning of the signifying chains of every subject’s discourse, by virtue of its being ‘veiled’ or repressed. The phallus is present beneath every signifier as the signifier that has been repressed, and as such every signifier in effect is a metaphor substituting for the phallus...As such a signifier, the phallus is not anything that any man or woman could possibly ‘have’ (hence, it must not be confused with the penis)...Precisely because no one can *have* the phallus, it becomes that which all want to *be*. The phallus then serves to signify as well that fullness of being, that complete identity, the lack of which is the fact of our ineluctable want-of-being.

Does this sound familiar? Recall Deleuze and Guattari (in the quotation above) intimating that Lacan takes psychoanalysis to the point of self-critique where one discovers “a positive principle of nonconsistency” that dissolves the Oedipal “structure”, and where “desire is shifted into the order of production...where it lacks nothing”. This suggests a consonance with Lacan’s notion of the “phallus”, to say the least, and also with what he calls the “real”. In *The ethics of psychoanalysis* Lacan remarks:

...my thesis is that the moral law, the moral command, the presence of the moral agency in our activity, insofar as it is structured by the symbolic, is that through which the real is actualized – the real as such, the weight of the real...Moral action is, in effect, grafted on to the real. It introduces something new into the real and thereby opens a path in which the point of our presence is legitimized (Lacan 1997:20-21).

Although Lacan here refers to the (“our”) activity of psychoanalysts, it applies, I believe, to that of all people. It is notable that he appears to reverse his claim: the symbolically structured moral agency is that through which the real is actualised, but the former is also “grafted” onto the real. This seems to suggest that the way to align the inescapable, albeit unsymbolisable real with the function of therapy as the “talking cure” at the level of the symbolic register, is to take into account the effects that this “real” has in the symbolic; in other words, that a symbolically *disruptive* encounter with unpredictable and uncontrollable “events” – traumatic ones, especially – elicits in relation to the world of symbolically mediated moral action. The relevant point here – as far as Lacan’s stance *vis-à-vis* Deleuze and Guattari goes – is that the disruptive impact of the “real” on one’s imaginary and symbolically configured social “reality” has the effect of re-configuring one’s desire. This is what opening “...a path in which the point of our

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14 Interestingly, the “phallus” may be regarded as the symbolic counterpart, not only of the penis, but also of the clitoris (*Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 1983:768). This would legitimise Lacan’s use of the term as signifier of (unattainable) fullness for both men and women.

presence is legitimized” suggests, and when read in conjunction with Lacan’s sustained exhortation (1997:311-325), that the subject should “act in conformity with” his/her “desire”, it points to a compatibility with what Deleuze and Guattari describes as “a positive principle of nonconsistency that dissolves it [the Oedipal structure; BO]: where desire is shifted into the order of production” (quoted above). Only by following the path of one’s *singular* (usually hidden or repressed) desire – revealed to us in moments of trauma, or through what Lacan calls the “object *a*”<sup>15</sup> – is it possible to confront, in the form of an ethical act, the effects of the (impossible) real in human reality – effects which are likely to reconfigure one’s world in surprisingly productive ways. Such “productive” (re-)configuring of one’s desire (and world) appears to me to be consonant with Deleuze and Guattari’s “schizophrenia” as the universal condition of desiring-production, unimpaired by structural restraints of an Oedipal kind.

By way of a slight digression, one could add something illuminating regarding the relation between flux and the moment of reconfiguration of something (a field, a fragment, a process) from another poststructuralist, Jean-Francois Lyotard’s *Libidinal economy* (2004:253). It concerns political and military practice, where the “movement of conquest” is said to involve the “displacement”-relation between empire, its borders, and (its) “beyond”. Although empire is inclined to “fix” its borders from time to time, relegating or reducing the beyond to “nothing”, the transgression of these borders by travellers and adventurers registers that there is, indeed, *something* there, even if it is as yet unrecorded. “These moments”, says Lyotard (2004:253) “are not ones of permanence, but of discontinuity, not ones of inhibition, but of delirium assumed and carried to its end. They do not reduce the unknown to the known, *they make everything one thought one knew unstable in proportion to what one used to know...*” [own italics; BO]. Put differently, the rumblings of indeterminate entities beyond the imperial borders reconstitute the very ontological fabric of imperial space. By analogy, an encounter with the unfathomable (Lacanian) “real” reconstitutes the subject in a hitherto un-anticipated manner. Or, as Deleuze and Guattari might say, the illusory, unproductive, yet somehow “produced” body without organs “exacerbates” the flows of desiring-production by reconstituting them as fragmented, schizophrenic flows of desire from its undifferentiated corpus to which the desiring-machines intermittently “attach” themselves.

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15 Žižek (1993:206-207) draws one’s attention to a paradigmatic instance, in Freud’s work, of the *objet petit a*, as Lacan calls it, in which the subject’s desire is concentrated and can therefore become “visible” to the analyst. It concerns the wound, on the left ring finger, of a woman who “accidentally” inflicted it when cutting her nails on the anniversary of her wedding to a lawyer (a *Doktor der Rechte*), while she was in fact in love with a medical doctor (a *Doktor der Linke*). Significantly, in Austria women wear their wedding band on the right-hand ring finger. An “object *a*” could be anything, from a song that inexplicably haunts one, to the stain that results from spilling tea on one’s clothes upon receiving certain information. The point is that it exposes one’s motivating desire to visibility, albeit a visibility that is still subject to interpretation.

## CAPITALISM

The subtitle of Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* is significant: *Capitalism and schizophrenia*. At a time when the figure of Oedipus (and its counterpart, the neurotic) as mediating the passage into law-abiding citizenship, should no longer be seen as resonating with social reality, Deleuze and Guattari (1983:34) seem to argue, the figure of the "schizophrenic" should take its place, or perhaps rather, has always already taken its place. In quasi-materialist fashion their account of the emergence of the schizoid subject locates its formation at the generative interface between subjects as a concatenation of "desiring machines" (mouths, ears, eyes, anuses) and the "body without organs", to the opaque surface of which "desiring machines" attach themselves intermittently. Putting it differently, the "body without organs" is produced in the process of the productive-connective synthesis of schizophrenic desiring machines' interrupted, alternating coupling and uncoupling. And in the present age, capitalism (or rather, capital) can be understood as the (or a) "body without organs". The relation between capital, the "subject", and the "body without organs" is probably one of the most puzzling aspects of the ontology articulated in *Anti-Oedipus*. Regarding successive couplings with capital as the "body without organs", it is said, for instance, that:

...the production of consumption is produced in and through the production of recording. [On 'consumption' and 'recording' see notes 2 and 3 above; BO.] This is because something of the order of a *subject* can be discerned on the recording surface. It is a strange subject, however, with no fixed identity, wandering about over the body without organs, but always remaining peripheral to the desiring-machines, being defined by the share of the product it takes for itself, garnering here, there, and everywhere a reward in the form of a becoming or an avatar, being born of the states that it consumes and being reborn with each new state... Doubtless all desiring-production is, in and of itself, immediately consumption and consummation, and therefore, 'sensual pleasure' (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:16).

As intimated before, the "body without organs"<sup>16</sup> – the "enormous undifferentiated object", "identity" (if I am right in my interpretation) or third term in the linear series of productive desiring-machines (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:7) – is produced every time the flow of desiring-production stops momentarily, before resuming again with the renewed coupling of machines and "partial objects". The "body without organs" is said to be "smooth" and "slippery" (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:9), suggesting that nothing "really" sticks to it permanently, moving, instead, over its surface. Moreover, it "resists" organ-

16 It is interesting to note that, in the companion volume to *Anti-Oedipus* (1983), namely *A thousand plateaus* (1987:149-166), Deleuze and Guattari seem to be poking "serious fun" at their characterisation of the "body without organs" in the earlier work. "Serious" fun, because by parodying, and thus subverting their earlier description, they are seen as escaping the clutches of the tendency towards "death", "identifying" and "identity", in the process being "faithful" to the fundamental becoming-character of "reality". In contrast to what they do in the first volume, here they present the "body without organs" as an unmitigated "flow" of *desire* as a "*field of immanence*" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987:154), mocking our, and their own, habitual proclivity to substantialise everything into an enduring "object" of sorts, in this way mastering, wielding ("fascist") power over it.

machines, implying that the desiring-production of such machines is anathema to it. The “strange subject...with no fixed identity”, which they discern roaming over the body without organs, may be said to be strange because it is, precisely, not the Oedipal subject with its ego-identity. At most, it is a spectral subject of sorts, which evaporates as soon as it seems to materialize – not surprisingly, because (if I am right about this) “fixed” identity as traditionally conceived, is an “enormous, undifferentiated thing”: the body without organs.

And capital? “Capital”, Deleuze and Guattari (1983:10) aver “is indeed the body without organs of the capitalist, or rather of the capitalist being”.<sup>17</sup> Here one encounters all manner of surprises, if not paradoxes, given the fact that (as one might say intuitively) capital is nothing concrete, but the process of reducing-transforming, vampire-like, all values (“intrinsic” as well as “use”-value) to exchange value, as Marx saw. In other words, there seems to be a strange consonance between schizophrenia as the *universal* process of production, on the one hand, and the *capitalist* process of production. In fact, Deleuze and Guattari (1983:33-34) point out that capitalism tends to “...produce the schizo as the subject of the decoded flows on the body without organs...” – the latter being capital, which (if understood as the paradoxical “identity” of capitalism) does not display the character of supposed “fixity” that ego- or object-identities usually exhibit. On the contrary, as Marx’s famous phrase informs one, under capitalism “all that is solid, melts into air” (Marx & Engels 1985:83-84), given the transmogrifying effect of exchange value linked to the profit motive.

Why should the schizo here be the subject of “decoded flows”? Because the principle of exchange value, the major signifier of which is money, “decodes” or replaces intrinsic and use-value of things – your favourite watch, reduced to exchange value, seems incongruously worthless. This has far-reaching effects:

By substituting money for the very notion of a code, it [capitalism] has created an axiomatic of abstract quantities that keeps moving further and further in the direction of the deterritorialization<sup>18</sup> of the socius. Capitalism tends toward a threshold of decoding that will destroy the socius in order to make it a body without organs and unleash the flows of desire on this body as a deterritorialized field (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:33).

What does this mean? At first blush, it appears undeniably to promote precisely the conditions that favour the schizophrenic as “universal producer”. But there is more. Capitalism is thoroughly paradoxical – through its mode of production, it generates an

17 It is understandable that it is “capital”, and not capitalism, which qualifies for this description (as “body without organs”), given its abstract character, which is nothing in social reality but has far-reaching effects in social-economic reality. This is why it is to be grasped as “real” in Lacan’s sense (Žižek 2009:67-68).

18 By “deterritorialization” Deleuze and Guattari seem to mean the undoing of the stasis that accompanies identifications of all kinds, and the setting free of desiring-production. It goes hand-in-hand with “decoding” (of flows) and is the opposite of “reterritorialization”, which is said to “arrest the process” (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:382). As such, it is part and parcel of what they understand by (the task of) “schizoanalysis” (1983:316).

awe-inspiring “schizophrenic accumulation of energy”, but simultaneously also what Deleuze and Guattari (1983:34) call its “vast powers of repression” regarding the very limit of “schizophrenic” production that it strives towards. While it characteristically “decodes” flows, that is, things and people, and “deterritorializes” the socius (the principle upon which society is based, at any given time), for the maximization of production, it also “recodes” and “reterritorializes” these in imaginary and symbolic ways (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:34). Hence, everything “returns” under capitalism (“states, nations, families”), but as part of this rollercoaster alternation between ceaseless production and “violent, artificial” imposition of boundaries.

If this seems cryptic in the extreme, Deleuze and Guattari’s (1983:34-35) characterisation of this ambivalence at the heart of capital becomes more comprehensible where they elaborate on its production-promoting tendency (decoding and deterritorialization of productive flows), on the one hand, and its countervailing tendency (artificial reterritorialization) on the other: the “capitalist machine deterritorializes” flows to extract “surplus value” from them, and correspondingly, what they call “its ancillary apparatuses, such as government bureaucracies and the forces of law and order”, strenuously “reterritorialize”, absorbing surplus value as they do so.

Considering the integral role played by Marx’s thought in *Anti-Oedipus* (references and quotations from his work abound in it), it appears that “surplus value” is used in the Marxist sense here, namely as the source of (capitalist) profit, given the difference in value between workers’ products and the (inferior) wages they are paid. Keeping this in mind, one might translate what was said above from its Deleuze-Guattarian idiom as meaning that, while capitalism’s tendency to reduce everything that exists – and even that which does not yet exist (think of futures trading on stock exchanges) – to a means for the generation of profit through surplus-value production, it requires the otherwise production-inhibiting agencies of the state and the law to be able to proceed unhindered in this “schizophrenic” production. In other words, the “schizophrenic” aspect of capitalism can never exist in its purity, unencumbered by the return of precisely those social practices that undermine its “schizophrenization” of social and economic life. What Deleuze and Guattari describe (and valorise) as the “flows” of “desiring-production”, which are exacerbated by one side of capitalism’s being, faces an apparently impenetrable wall of repulsion in the guise of capitalism’s other, repressive side.

The tension at the heart of capitalism can be expressed in different terms, as Žižek (2009:67-68) does where he points to one of the “dangers” inherent in this hegemonic economic system. On the one hand, as a global phenomenon, it encompasses the world, and yet “...it sustains a *strictu sensu* ‘worldless’ ideological constellation, depriving the large majority of people of any meaningful cognitive mapping”. “Capitalism”, he goes on to say, “is the first socio-economic order which *detotalizes meaning*: it is not global at the level of meaning (there is no global ‘capitalist worldview’...capitalism can accommodate itself to all civilizations)...” Its global aspect, which Žižek thinks of along

the lines of what Lacan calls the (inaccessible) “real”, would correspond to the abstract level of Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of perpetual capitalist “flows”. On the other hand, what they conceive of as the repressive face of capitalism via impersonal bureaucracies and laws, is consonant with the “detotalization” of meaning that is capitalism’s shadow.

## THE SUBJECT OF CAPITALISM

What kind of subject exists under capitalism, in light of Deleuze and Guattari’s exploration of schizophrenia under conditions of its dominance? And are there resonances between this and Lacan’s thought?

One gets a clue to the status of the capitalist subject in *A thousand plateaus* (Deleuze & Guattari 1987:457-458) where the downside of capitalism is put in clearer perspective. Deleuze and Guattari argue that, while the modern state has taken the subjection of people further than ever before by means of technological development, it is capitalism that has radicalised subjection, by taking it beyond the slavery and serfdom of previous ages to the subjection of the “naked” or (ironically) “free” worker of capitalism. They point out (1987:457) that “capitalists” and “proletarians” are both subjectified in terms of the flows of capital, that is, constituted by capital as subjects, *but* the former are “subjects of enunciation [that is, speaking subjects; BO] that form the private subjectivity of capital”, and the latter “subjects of the statement [that is, spoken subjects at the receiving end of capitalist discourse; BO] subjected to the technical machines in which constant capital is effectuated”.

Subjectification and subjection are flipsides of the same process, but the workers and the consumers, as the ones being “spoken” in a capitalist universe, are infinitely worse off than the capitalists. This is especially apparent from Deleuze and Guattari’s analysis of the relation between consumers and the new informational or “cybernetic” machines, of which humans as consumers are said to be “constituent parts” (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:458) instead of merely users. Here a new kind of enslavement, concomitant with subjection, enters the picture. While it may appear as if “consumers” such as television audiences are in the privileged position of “speaking subjects” of enunciation (after all, are the programmes not designed especially for them – that is “by” their tastes?) they are already, according to Deleuze and Guattari, beyond that, in the position of being “component pieces” of a production process of information-exchange. It seems that the field of “schizophrenic” capitalist production is not exempt from repression and subjection – quite the contrary.

The subject of capitalism, according to my reading of Deleuze and Guattari, is therefore in an ambivalent position. Like all subjects for them, it is “peripheral” to what are the most fundamental “elements” of their ontology, namely, desiring-machines. It is as if the subject is the shadow of the flows of desire produced by the desiring-machines on the “recording surface” of the body without organs. As such, the “subject” is nothing as self-identical as the “ego”, and “identity” only enters the picture, in my



reading, with the “body without organs” – the “undifferentiated object” that comes into view when desiring-production stops intermittently, before resuming again. As pointed out earlier, the (seductive) illusion of Oedipal “identity” arises when one confuses the product of one’s desire with desire as a process. The subject, to the degree that it may be apprehended at all, floats like a shadow alongside of desiring-producing, desiring machines, such as ears, mouths, tongues, eyes, hands, arms, penises, vaginas, brain-function (that is, minds), and so on.

What is different about the subject of capitalism, then? To be sure, given the way that capitalist production, according to Deleuze and Guattari, exacerbates productive flows, this subject would remain in the position of being a kind of appendix to the processes involved, garnering pleasure with each act of consumption that simultaneously marks its intermittent, ephemeral genesis. That is the one, “schizophrenically” productive (and enjoyable) side of the capitalist subject, the other side corresponding with Deleuze and Guattari’s description of the repressive agencies that prevent capitalism from ever attaining the schizophrenic limit that it strives to actualise. Here the subject is constantly subjectivised (that is, constituted) as subject of capitalism, either as “capitalist”, or as “worker”/“consumer”, the latter two positions also marking the site(s) of subjection. In sum, whether one is in the commanding position of the “capitalist” (who “speaks”), or in that of the worker/consumer – and capitalists are also intermittently consumers, such as when they watch television – the subject of capitalism shares in the ambivalence of capitalism itself, being productive and subjected (repressed) at the same time. Because it occupies this position, it lends itself, no less than other subjects, to the liberating effects of what Deleuze and Guattari call “schizoanalysis”, which works by the motto (firstly) to destroy all vestiges of (Oedipal) ego-repression through deterritorialization, and (secondly), in the process, free schizoid desiring-production optimally (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:310-382).<sup>19</sup>

As an aside, it is interesting to note that Deleuze and Guattari (1983:366) attribute a revolutionary function to schizoanalysis, to wit, a “schizoid revolutionary pole”, which is distinct from its opposite pole of “libidinal investment”, namely “the paranoiac, reactionary, and fascisizing pole”. In their discussion that follows, it is apparent that schizoanalysis leads, along this trajectory, to the overthrow of (a certain kind of) power, which would exhibit in varying degrees the structure of “fascism’. Their observation (1983:367) is telling, that the “fascisizing pole” of libidinal investment is “defined by subjugated groups”, while the “schizoid revolutionary pole” is marked “by subject groups”. They grant that this distinction is still problematical (the schizoid investment could prove to be utopian, instead of being capable of “real[ly]” investing the “sociohistorical field”), but their intent should be clear: schizoanalysis is conceived of as overthrowing the social and psychic shackles that all kinds of “territorializations”

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19 As they put it (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:316; italics in original): “*Psychoanalysis settles on the imaginary and structural representatives of reterritorialization, while schizoanalysis follows the machinic indices of deterritorialization.*”

and “(re-)codings” of social life impose on people, subjugating them to the weight of some or other “body without organs” or anaesthetising “identification”, from the tentacles of bureaucracy and overt political totalitarianism to an ostensibly “free market system” which ensnares and subjugates people no less through the mechanisms that are inseparable from it. If one understands Deleuze and Guattari as saying that the subject’s “freedom” comes at the price of intermittent, fleeting moments of “identification”, which are constantly subjected to new acts of schizoanalytic destruction of these would-be, potential “identities” (liberating the subject’s desire in the process) then their position is reconcilable, in my judgement, with that of Lacan. Needless to say, their stance on this has implications for revolutionary political praxis, too.

Not surprisingly, therefore, in Lacan’s work one finds a consonant position on the subject of capitalism. Recall that, earlier, the complexly interwoven, distinctively (that is, singularly) desiring Lacanian subject was discovered as being compatible with the “schizophrenic” subject of Deleuze and Guattari. For Lacan, it was pointed out, one’s desire – revealed through the object *a* or in rare moments of trauma – defines you as singular or unique subject. In his “theory of the four discourses” (those of the master, the university, the hysteric and the analyst) Lacan (1978; 2007; see also Bracher 1994; Pauwels 2008; Olivier 2009) sets out the trajectories for the articulation of different types of desire, each one of which has the effect of constituting the social field in terms of different, mutually incompatible power-relations.

So, for instance, in the master’s discourse the master signifier organises social relations in such a way that the truth about the master’s own fallibility as a subject of the unconscious is repressed, left unacknowledged, while simultaneously commanding existing knowledge for its own benefit, and concomitantly producing pleasure. The university discourse (or the discourse of knowledge) organises society by pursuing or commanding surplus pleasure, concomitantly producing the split subject of the unconscious, while repressing or hiding the truth about its own connection with the master signifier (the fact that it is in the service of the master, or dominant power). The hysteric’s discourse structures social relations by addressing, or perhaps rather “indicting” the master signifier, simultaneously producing knowledge and repressing the truth of its own surplus pleasure (“*jouissance*”). The analyst’s discourse, represented by the symbol for surplus pleasure (*a*), which is predicated on (repressed) knowledge, structures social relations by addressing the (signifier of the) split subject (*\$*), and generates knowledge, as well as a temporary master signifier, in the process.

What the differences among these four discourses are supposed to indicate, in my understanding of it, is that every subject, in so far as he or she is a subject of desire, is able to occupy different positions in discourse, where “discourse” means, broadly, the Lacanian symbolic order – that is, language, which is not neutral or innocuous, but comprises a point of convergence between meaning (signification) and power. In brief, there is no position in the symbolic register that is exempt from inserting a speaker into a certain set of power-relations. The master’s discourse represents the dominant discourse

of the time (religion in the European middle ages, for example, economics today); the university discourse stands for the valorised knowledge-systems of the time (which, like Hegel's slave, serves the master); the discourse of the hysteric not only instantiates those discursive positions that are at odds with the master's (and the university's) discourse, but also that of genuine science, given its persistently interrogative, structurally indeterminate character; and the discourse of the analyst stands for that symbolic position from the perspective of which the desire of the split subject (that is, all human beings) may be discerned. As one may gather from this, admittedly brief, sketch of structural differences among the four types of discourse, the "hysteric" – whether as pathological person or as slaves in pre-modern times, or as maverick intellectuals who resist the hegemonic powers of an era – questions or interrogates the master, or those who occupy positions of dominant power.

Lacan (later, in the so-called Milan lecture) adds another type of discourse – an aberrant one, to boot – to the four discussed above, namely, that of the capitalist (Lacan 1978:11), the structural characteristics of which suggest that it is a variation, or rather a perversion, of the hysteric's discourse. Recall that the hysteric is in the position of one whose desire and pleasure consist in questioning the master insistently, in the process – it should be added – exposing the knowledge (or information) regarding the master's position of dominance. The discourse of the capitalist – which Lacan calls "wildly clever" – is, to put it succinctly, a pseudo-hysterical discourse, which dissembles in the sense that, by overtly putting the capitalist in the position of the split subject, it *ostensibly* questions the dominant discourse of the master. *However*, instead of this way of organising the social field being predicated on the truth of the split subject's surplus pleasure (*jouissance*), it hides the truth about its covert dependence on the master signifier, while commanding knowledge, and producing pleasure along the way.

Hence, the subject of capitalism, in terms of Lacan's theory, again displays the lineaments of ambivalence. On the one hand – as in the case of the "capitalist" in Deleuze and Guattari's theory – it is positioned in terms of a discourse that is covertly sustained by the dominant power of the time. In fact, one may go as far as saying that it *is* the dominant discourse of the present era, but that it scrupulously hides this fact behind a pseudo-hysterical mask. On the other hand, the subject of capitalism, in the sense of the non-capitalist "consumer" could occupy any one of the remaining three discourses: that of the university (which covertly serves the master's discourse), or of the hysteric (who resists the capitalist master's discourse by interrogatively showing up its hidden claims to power), or of the analyst (who plays the role of the diagnostician, by decoding the "true" desire of the split human subject, as well as its dependence on intermittent, and revisable, master signifiers, in the process). Which one of these it occupies will determine its position or relationship to the agencies of power. The consumer could be "spoken" by the university discourse, in which case he or she surreptitiously serves the capitalist master (as in the case of someone who teaches business science or accounting at university), or he/she could be in the positions of the hysteric or the analyst, neither

of which could escape their subjection to and by the master's discourse completely. However, it seems likely that, in the case of Lacan's "hysteric", the "flows" of "desiring-machines" would be optimally activated (as in the case of Deleuze and Guattari's schizophrenic), while Lacan's subject of the analyst's discourse would be in a position where she or he could mediate intermittent desiring-machine "attachments" on the part of "hysterics"/"schizos".

## CONCLUSION

Taking all of the above into consideration, it appears as if Deleuze/Guattari and Lacan are not that far apart on questions regarding the subject, and specifically the subject of capitalism. In light of what was said earlier, even "schizoanalysis", for Deleuze and Guattari, would serve a similar purpose to that of the discourse of the analyst, for Lacan. The latter yields successive, intermittently valid master signifiers in terms of which the subject would enjoy fleeting stages of "power" – that is, not hegemonic power – while the "destructive" aims of schizoanalysis (Deleuze & Guattari 1983:311-322) appear to allow for such intermittent moments of (relative, not complete) "stability" if one interprets the nomadic wanderings of their "spectral subject" across the body without organs in a similar sense. And in both cases the theories of the subject enable one to conceive of a "revolutionary" practice regarding capitalism, even if this practice has to bring about such a "revolution" within the subject her- or himself in the first place, without the illusion of a prescriptible programme of economic and political revolution.

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