



ARTICLE

Faux Amis, Vrais Amis? Amis.

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ABSTRACT. Recent commentaries on the relation between Deleuze and Foucault often operate with an implicit idea of compatibility or consistency that postulates systematic harmony as the decisive criterion for the affinity between them. Accordingly, the predominant question is whether Deleuze and Foucault are “true” friends philosophically and politically. Although the assessments differ, they share a likewise implicit notion of the friend as familiar that excludes any form of ambivalence in amicable relations and consequently cannot fully account for the dynamics and variability of the relation between Deleuze and Foucault. This article tries to address this problem by suspending the notion of the friend-as-familiar, effectively posing the question of what concept of friendship we would have if the ambivalent relation between Deleuze and Foucault would be the model. For this, the reconstruction begins with the early encounters and follows their relationship until the supposed split in the context of the desire-pleasure-debate. What becomes apparent is the dialogical structure of the philosophical friendship between Deleuze and Foucault that entails convergences as well as divergences, which will eventually be related to their own and fundamentally different concepts of friendship. Deleuze and Foucault, as will be argued, are neither “vrais amis” nor “faux amis” but simply *amis* that practised a form of philosophical friendship, lasting for more than 15 years.

Keywords: Deleuze, Foucault, friendship, dialogue, power, desire.

I

Between friends – what do we mean, when we speak of the friend, philosophically? Are we still asking, like Plato, what differentiates the true from the false friend?¹ Are we still in need to know the truth about an amicable relation, to know the truth about the reality

¹ See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* [1991] (1994), 2-6.

of its desire (“Mais que fabriquent donc les hommes ensemble...”?²)? Or is the friend philosophically conceived in terms of the social relation called friendship, in all its historical contingency? Is the friend in philosophy in the end a double of the empirical friend? And if so – which empirical friend exactly is the model of the philosophical friend? The free and equal man of the *pólis*? Faderman’s romantic woman-friend?³ Our childhood friends?

The problem of the friend in philosophy becomes even more delicate when it comes to friendships between philosophers. More delicate not because these types of friendships would be exceptional in any way but insofar as the intermingling between the empiricity of a social relation called friendship and the quasi-transcendental meaning of *phílos* as a prerequisite for philosophical practice is almost inevitable. At the same time, the problem becomes more concrete insofar as the opportunity is provided to suspend the usually moralising approach to speak *about* the friend *in abstracto*, to define its essence, to categorise its phenomenal abundance, that characterises philosophies of friendship from Plato to Montaigne. Instead, friendships between philosophers, philosophical friendships, allow for a consideration of a mode of speaking *to* the friend retraceable in the respective writings.⁴ Friendships between philosophers provide the opportunity to consider the practice of (philosophical) friendship *in actu*, so to speak, before or beyond its projection onto ready-made images of friendship.⁵

A recent and often commented example of these kinds of philosophical friendships would be the relationship between Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault. Besides the well-known biographical reconstructions of their shared philosophical and political engagement,⁶ the comments on their philosophical convergences and divergences – a debate that starts as early as the 1970s and thus doubles not only their reception but also

² Michel Foucault, “Michel Foucault, une interview: sexe, pouvoir et la politique de l’identité” [1984], in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 4: 1980-1988* (1994), 745.

³ See Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from Renaissance to the Present* (1981).

⁴ This possibility of addressing the friend in philosophy appears, at latest, with Michel de Montaigne’s self-inquiry that was initiated and structured by the event of the death of his friend Étienne de La Boétie (see Michel de Montaigne, “Of Friendship” [1580], in *The Essays of Montaigne* (2013)). As such, “Of Friendship” marks a caesura as well as a mediation insofar as Montaigne draws on antique debates about friendship that had come to a halt during the times of the Christian overcoding of *phília* through *agape*, while establishing the form of the essay as an actualised form for this debate. This mode of writing *to* and *for* the friend has been readopted in the 20th century by philosophers like Jacques Derrida and Avital Ronell. See Jacques Derrida, *The Work of Mourning*, ed. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (2001) and Avital Ronell, “On Friendship; Or, Kathy Goes to Hell” [2002], in *The ÜberReader: Selected Works of Avital Ronell*, ed. Diane Davis (2008).

⁵ Arno Böhler similarly conceives of friendship as a field where the empirical appearance of living bodies starts to matter and the singularity of some-body, of an other, becomes significant. See Arno Böhler, *Unterwegs zu einer Sprache der Freundschaft. DisTanzten: Nietzsche – Deleuze – Derrida* (2000) and Arno Böhler, *Singularitäten. Vom zu-reichenden Grund der Zeit. Vorspiel einer Philosophie der Zukunft* (2005).

⁶ See especially the biographies of Foucault – Didier Eribon, *Michel Foucault* [1989] (1991), James Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (1993), and David Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault* (1994) – as well as of Deleuze respectively Deleuze and Guattari – François Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: Intersecting Lives* [2007] (2010) and Frida Beckman, *Gilles Deleuze* (2017).

the very relation it comments upon⁷ – show very clearly how difficult it is to do justice to the singularity and processuality of *a* friendship, i.e., to suspend the ideas of what a “true” friendship ought to be in favour of its concrete, sometimes ambivalent givenness. The respective comments could be roughly grouped according to two more recent, almost emblematic, publications, namely Wendy Grace’s “Faux Amis: Foucault and Deleuze on Sexuality and Desire”⁸ and Christian Gilliam’s “Vrais Amis: Reconsidering the Philosophical Relationship Between Foucault and Deleuze,”⁹ inasmuch as the faux/vrais-distinction marks the overall coordinates along which large parts of the debate is conducted. The question is whether Deleuze and Foucault are “true” friends philosophically and politically.

To be clear: It is not about denouncing Grace’s or Gilliam’s take on this subject or the debate on Deleuze and Foucault in general; quite the opposite. I am also aware that the notion of the friend has no explicit conceptual status in Grace or Gilliam but reacts, in the case of Grace, to an overly sympathetic reading of Deleuze and Foucault that focuses almost exclusively on their commonalities, thus highlighting important differences, towards which Gilliam, in turn, reacts, emphasising a fundamental, ontological continuity. Grace’s “faux amis” and Gilliam’s “vrais amis” are not even pre-conceptual figures but catchwords for their respective assessments of Deleuze’s and Foucault’s philosophical compatibility that should not be overinterpreted as such. Nonetheless, Grace’s and Gilliam’s accounts, as well as the majority of the corresponding scholarly “camps,” revolve around an implicit idea of compatibility, consistency or commonality that postulates systematic harmony as the decisive criterion for the affinity between Deleuze and Foucault. The problem is that the concrete givenness of the differential and ambivalent relation between Deleuze and Foucault is measured against a pre-given and hardly questioned ideal. The *difference* can be semantic at most; philosophically, ontologically and politically there is either harmony or not, either *philia* or not.

Given this ideal of systematic harmony, it is not by chance that the *ami* comes to be the headline under which the compatibility of Deleuze and Foucault is assessed, despite the fact, again, that the friend is not an explicit analytical notion. For how do we understand the notion of the friend, of friendship, contemporarily? The friend is first of all a confidant, a familiar, at least since Montaigne, whose considerations on friendship mark the definite conclusion of a process of displacement of the political, public meaning of the friend towards an almost exclusively private, depoliticised one. What was once an equal and rival in public debates is now a familiar to which I privately confide, so to speak. As said, there are contemporary attempts of a rehabilitation of a public (aestheti-

⁷ See for example Jacques Lagrange, “‘La Volonté de savoir’ de Michel Foucault ou une généalogie du sexe,” *Psychanalyse à l’université* 2:7 (1977), and Maurice Dayan, “D’un ci-devant sujet,” *Nouvelle Revue de psychanalyse* 20 (1979), as Wendy Grace noticed (see Wendy Grace, “Faux Amis: Foucault and Deleuze on Sexuality and Desire,” *Critical Inquiry* 36:1 (2009), 53).

⁸ Grace, “Faux Amis.”

⁹ Christian Gilliam, “Vrais Amis: Reconsidering the Philosophical Relationship Between Foucault and Deleuze,” *Foucault Studies* 25 (2018).

co-ethical) or transcendental/nological notion of the friend, as, for example, in Foucault and Deleuze, but the overall idea of the friend, its *dóxa* or cliché that comes automatically to our minds when we think of the friend, does rather correspond to the image of the friend-as-familiar.

This habitual figure of the friend appears to be what Deleuze calls a “subjective or implicit presupposition.”¹⁰ That is the presumption that everybody knows what is meant by friend or friendship and that therefore these notions can provide the mutually accepted beginning of the enquiry (as for Descartes the notions of self, thinking, being, for example). As Deleuze shows, however, subjective or implicit presuppositions are contained in mere opinions or feelings, thus repeating or doubling their historical context and reducing every problem to the recognition of the already known. Subjective presuppositions only ever allow for the explication of the implicit opinions or *dóxa* in which they are contained.

In short: Besides all content-related criticism one could have regarding Grace’s, Gilliam’s or any other faux/vrais-approach, the critique also needs to be extended to the model of friendship implicitly at work in these approaches, a model that seems to merely copy a common sense idea of the friend, thus hypostatizing it, which in sum equals more or less a crypto-normative evaluation of a concrete relationship according to a pre-given, almost transcendent ideal. In other words, it is less about a criticism of a specific reading of Deleuze and Foucault and more about a problematisation of the categories in terms of which these readings and the corresponding debates are conducted. If we say that the basic category of these readings is the friend-as-familiar, the fundamental aim of this contribution would be a suspension of this category. As we will see, this suspension ultimately leads to a notion of the friend that oscillates between agreement and distance, thus acknowledging the possibility of ambivalence in amicable relations as well as a perspective on Deleuze and Foucault that accounts also for the dynamics, the temporal succession and variability of their relation.

For this, I will start from the actual material, the implicit and explicit references between Deleuze and Foucault, and the assumption that their relationship can be in fact described as a friendship. In other words, I am posing the question of what concept of friendship we would have if the relation between Deleuze and Foucault would be our model, instead of asking whether Deleuze and Foucault are true friends in a meaning superimposed on their actual relation and modelled after the *dóxa* of the friend. In order to avoid the pitfall of an overly affirmative and in itself hypostatizing conceptual elevation of an empirical fact (a social relationship), I will relate the dialogical conception of friendship indicated by the relation between Deleuze and Foucault with their own concepts of friendship. The idea is to show that the respective philosophical behaviours, the convergences and divergences, are related to the respective concepts of friendship, thus bringing the idea of a unitary conception of the friend and of friendship at all into question. The dialogical model of friendship is thus just one possible type or form of friend-

¹⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* [1968] (1994), 129.

ship among others, which specifically aims at the relationship between Deleuze and Foucault.

Though there is a connection between Deleuze's and Foucault's philosophical relation, characterised by the dialogical model of friendship, and their respective conceptions of friendship, they are not identical. The main concern of this article is, as said, the implicit model of friendship operative in large parts of the commentaries on the relation between Deleuze and Foucault that is challenged by a dialogical model of friendship. Deleuze's and Foucault's conceptions of friendship come into play only where they correspond to this dialogical model and explain some aspects of the way they perceived and enacted their relation, but they are not the conceptual resources of this dialogical model. In other words: It would be absurd if the dialogical model representing the relation between Deleuze and Foucault would have nothing to do with their conceptions of friendship, but it is not an interpretation, systematisation or variation of these conceptions. The dialogical model concerns the overall structure of the philosophical, not biographical or personal, relation between Deleuze and Foucault, conceptualised as this specific type or form of friendship that emphasises temporal dynamicity and amicable ambivalence in its performance. The question of whether this image of friendship could be a productive complement to, alternative to or critique of the socially, politically, and – as accordingly modelled – also philosophically predominant image of the friend-as-familiar shall remain open, since it is not the concern of this contribution. The construction of an inverted image of the friend-as-familiar serves the methodical purpose of taking the entirety of the relationship between Deleuze and Foucault into account without its hasty projection onto the *dóxa* of the friend.

II

First, however, we should have a closer look at the comments. As said, we could roughly group the literature on the philosophical relationship between Deleuze and Foucault according to Grace's and Gilliam's faux/vrais-distinction inasmuch as both approaches presuppose the same image of the friend-as-familiar, while differing in the assessments of whether the relationship between Deleuze and Foucault meets this criterion or not. In presupposing this – generalised and simplified – ordering of the rather abundant literature, I am passing over a third camp – for the sake of consistency rather than elegance we could call it post-faux/vrais-approaches – that is negligible for my purposes insofar as there is no implicit or explicit concept of the friend or of friendship at work, as far as I am aware, except for Christopher Penfield's contribution, which will be discussed in section IV. Generally, these approaches postulate either to investigate the conceptual tensions between Deleuze and Foucault further, as these tensions seem to represent the actual productive encounters,¹¹ or they are stressing some sort of dynamicity or tem-

¹¹ See Dianna Taylor, "Uncertain Ontologies," *Foucault Studies* 17 (2014), Leonard Lawlor and Janae Sholtz, "Speaking Out for Others: Philosophy's Activity in Deleuze and Foucault (and Heidegger)," in *Between Deleuze and Foucault*, ed. Nicolae Morar, Thomas Nail and Daniel W. Smith (2016), and Thomas Nail, "Bi-

poral aspect in the relation between Deleuze and Foucault.¹² Post-faux/vrais-approaches thus relate Deleuze and Foucault without subsuming one under the other through a consideration of the shared becoming of and between Deleuze and Foucault. This is important since almost all faux/vrais-approaches are systematising ones but only inasmuch as they are implicitly or explicitly adopting and privileging one side, which consequently amounts in showing whether the other side conforms with the adopted one or not. What seems to be left unconsidered in these approaches is the possibility that there could be some sort of dialogue, some sort of back and forth movement, or some sort of reconsideration of older positions.

Vrais

The subsumption of one under the other is especially prevalent in vrais-approaches, which, interestingly enough, are often adopting a Deleuzian standpoint or framework corresponding to the double meaning of the virtual multiplicity as an ontogenetic as well as noogenetic concept. Primary examples for these approaches would be John Protevi, who understands Deleuze's concept of multiplicity as the basis for Foucault's analytics of power, and Colin Koopman, who tries to mediate Deleuze's and Foucault's critiques against the backdrop of Deleuze's theory of thinking in *Difference and Repetition*.¹³

A second starting point for systematising approaches, and generally the most important aspect discussed when it comes to the question of true friendship between

opower and Control," in *Between Deleuze and Foucault*, ed. Nicolae Morar, Thomas Nail and Daniel W. Smith (2016).

¹² See Judith Revel, "Foucault lecteur de Deleuze: de l'écart à la différence," *Critique* 591/592 (1996), Ralf Krause and Marc Rölli, "Die Subjektivierung der Macht. Zu Begehren und Lust bei Gilles Deleuze und Michel Foucault," in *sinn macht unbewusstes, unbewusstes macht sinn*, ed. Ulrike Kadi and Gerhard Unterthurner (2005), Marc Rölli, "A Pragmatism of Difference? Gilles Deleuze's pragmatic move beyond structuralism," *Deleuze Online* 1 (2008), Christopher Penfield, "Toward a Theory of Transversal Politics: Deleuze and Foucault's Block of Becoming," *Foucault Studies* 17 (2014), Kevin Thompson, "Foucault and the 'Image of Thought': Archeology, Genealogy, and the Impetus of Transcendental Empiricism," in *Between Deleuze and Foucault*, ed. Nicolae Morar, Thomas Nail and Daniel W. Smith (2016), and Wendyl Luna, "Re-Thinking Thought: Foucault, Deleuze, and the Possibility of Thinking," *Foucault Studies* 27 (2019).

¹³ See John Protevi, "Foucault's Deleuzian Methodology of the Late 1970s," in *Between Deleuze and Foucault*, ed. Nicolae Morar, Thomas Nail and Daniel W. Smith (2016), Colin Koopman, "Critical Problematization in Foucault and Deleuze: The Force of Critique without Judgement," in *Between Deleuze and Foucault*, ed. Nicolae Morar, Thomas Nail and Daniel W. Smith (2016), and Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 129–167. Similar to Protevi, Marco Checchi, Erinn C. Gilson and Gordon C.F. Bearn develop ontological Deleuzianisms in order to mediate between Deleuze and Foucault (see Marco Checchi, "Spotting the Primacy of Resistance in the Virtual Encounter of Foucault and Deleuze," *Foucault Studies* 18 (2014), Erinn C. Gilson, "Ethics and the ontology of freedom: problematization and responsiveness in Foucault and Deleuze," *Foucault Studies* 17 (2014), and Gordon C.F. Bearn, "Careful Becomings: Foucault, Deleuze, and Bergson," *Human Affairs* 27 (2017)). Marc Rölli adopts a mediary position in this regard, inasmuch as he presupposes a Deleuzo-Spinozistic *potentia/puissance* as the basis of his considerations without neglecting the importance of historical shifts in the relation between Deleuze and Foucault (see Marc Rölli, "Deleuze as a Theorist of Power," *Coils of the Serpent* 1 (2017)). Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, on the other hand, operate, similar to Koopman, in a general political Deleuzian framework, where Foucault acts as a cursory source of inspiration (see Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (2000)).

Deleuze and Foucault, is the desire-vs.-pleasure-debate. One could even argue that it is *in nuce* this problem that provokes the abundance of literature regarding the relationship between Deleuze and Foucault at all since almost every scholarly comment on this topic addresses the problem in one way or another. In a recent take on this subject, Nicolae Morar and Marjorie Gracieuse, for example, argue that there is, against Deleuze's and Foucault's own views, no real tension between Deleuze's desire and Foucault's pleasure but rather a common enemy, namely liberationist theories.¹⁴ Similarly, Gilliam argues in his "Vrais Amis" that there is just a semantic difference between Foucault's power-knowledge/pleasure and Deleuze's micropolitics/desire, while the real and underlying consistency is to be found in a shared ontology of immanence (via Nietzsche, not Spinoza).¹⁵ Desire and pleasure are different on an ontic level but ontologically they are consistent insofar as both notions are committed to an ontology of pure immanence. The difference is semantic inasmuch as it expresses a difference in emphasis concerning the affectivity of power; both desire and pleasure, however, express first of all an increase in power understood, fundamentally Deleuzian, as an affective-virtual multiplicity.¹⁶ While it is certainly true that there is an idea of immanence in Foucault, it remains arguable if this immanence can be identified with Deleuzian immanence, as we shall see later, since it seems to be a consequence of a non-substantialist concept of power, whereas Deleuze's immanence has its origins, besides Nietzsche, precisely in the Spinozistic premise of the equivalence of substance, power as *potential/puissance*, nature, and god. In postulating precisely this – that Foucauldian immanence is more or less identical with Deleuzian immanence – however, Gilliam reads Foucault from a Deleuzian perspective, effectively claiming him to be a sort of crypto-Deleuzian.

Besides this contentual critique, which is again not the main concern here, Gilliam, similar to Morar and Gracieuse, makes a crucial point for the entire debate when he clarifies that Deleuzian desire has to be understood in terms of Nietzschean will to power: Far from being some sort of "pre-symbolic libidinal flux,"¹⁷ desiring-production and social production are exactly the same. There is no separation between an originary libidinal domain of desire and a secondary, essentially repressive and overcoding social domain in Deleuze and Guattari – an idea that would rather resemble liberationist theories – but an immanence of both. This remark is highly important because the majority of the faux-approaches base their argument in one way or another on the difference between the affirmation of a supposedly natural and primordial desire on behalf of Deleuze and a less naïve distancing of this notion in terms of a cultural-historic method on behalf of Foucault.

¹⁴ See Nicolae Morar and Marjorie Gracieuse, "Against the Incompatibility Thesis: A *rather* Different Reading of the Desire-Pleasure Problem," in *Between Deleuze and Foucault*, ed. Nicolae Morar, Thomas Nail and Daniel W. Smith (2016).

¹⁵ See Gilliam, "Vrais Amis," 194.

¹⁶ See *Ibid.*, 209.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 199.

Faux

One early example of this strategy that heavily influenced the faux-camp would be Judith Butler, who grants Deleuze to have left behind Marcuse's binary scheme (eros vs. civilisation).¹⁸ Nonetheless, Butler continues, Deleuze neglects the cultural history and cultural constitution of desire in favour of an ontological conception, which Butler calls an "erotics of multiplicity,"¹⁹ that has its origins in his reading of Nietzsche.²⁰ Foucault, who reads Nietzsche as a theorist of discursive power, in turn, acknowledges the historical constitution of desire and is able to avoid the problem of a naturalisation of desire.²¹

While, as already said, it is true that Deleuze's concept of desire is essentially ontological, it is not a libidinal conception in the first place. To add a Spinozistic remark to Gilliam's Nietzschean one, we could say that desire is an ontological concept inasmuch as it means something like *potentia* or *natura naturans*, but it is not a mere ontologisation or substantialisation of libido. It seems important to repeat this since subsequent faux-approaches agree with Butler in this regard and take the Deleuzian notion of desire more or less literally as sexual, libidinal desire, which Foucault opposes insofar as it is a naïve naturalisation of a cultural-historical complex. Grace, for example, contends a general irreconcilability on the basis of the desire-pleasure-difference.²² In doing so, Grace expands Butler's thesis, which was limited to the very notion of desire, inasmuch as she grants only Foucault to have a fundamentally new conception of (productive) power.²³ This new conception poses power-relations as primary, meaning primary also to relations of production, which is incompatible with Deleuze and Guattari as they remain stuck in an anachronistic Marxism that operates with the conception of power as repression.²⁴ Thus, Deleuze and Guattari are perfectly in line with Freudo-Marxisms à la Reich or Marcuse inasmuch as they repeat the traditional equation of power-as-repression and the state in general: the state has power insofar as it represses through laws.²⁵ Much like Gilliam, Grace concentrates her arguments around the desire-pleasure-problem, although, like Butler, situated in a general Foucauldian framework, and corresponds her assessment with Deleuze's and Foucault's ontologies derived from their respective readings of Nietzsche. Similar to Gilliam, Grace thus tends to assume a specific Foucauldian ontology that now, of course, is more or less the negation of Deleuze's on-

¹⁸ See Judith Butler, *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France* [1987] (2012), 213.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 216.

²⁰ See *ibid.*, 214-215, 219.

²¹ See *ibid.*, 214-215.

²² See "Faux Amis," 53. For a similar standpoint, see also David Rabouin, "Entre Deleuze et Foucault: le Jeu du Désir et du Pouvoir," *Critique* 637/638 (2000), and Frida Beckman, *Between Desire and Pleasure: A Deleuzian Theory of Sexuality* (2013).

²³ See "Faux Amis," 58.

²⁴ See *ibid.*, 63.

²⁵ See *ibid.*, 71. Grace substantiates the thesis of a fundamental irreconcilability between Deleuze and Foucault in a further article that relates the respective standpoints – in a manner similar to Butler as well as Gilliam although with different results – to their readings of Nietzsche, which basically amount to an ontology of beings on behalf of Deleuze and an ontology of culture on behalf of Foucault. See Wendy Grace, "Foucault and Deleuze: Making a Difference with Nietzsche," *Foucault Studies* 17 (2014).

tology but in line with Butler's accounts of Foucault's reading of Nietzsche. But both Grace and Gilliam are very quick to assert a Foucauldian ontology. We discussed the purpose of this in the case of Gilliam already – constructing a systematic harmony on the basis of an ultimately Deleuzian ontology, adopted also by Foucault – but in contrast to Gilliam, for Grace this requires the construction of a genuine Foucauldian ontology radically different to Deleuze's. Grace implements this in suggesting an ontology of culture. But what does an ontology of culture mean other than a theory of culture? And would the difference still seem as radical if we oppose a Deleuzian ontology to a Foucauldian theory of culture? Nonetheless, it is certainly true that Foucault's reservations against the notion of desire cannot be argued away.²⁶

In the light of this discussion – where to start the reconstruction of the relationship between Deleuze and Foucault? First of all, the predominant concentration on the desire-pleasure-debate seems to be a major problem insofar as it generally leads to a homogenisation and reduction of the relationship between Deleuze and Foucault – supported by their own statements of course – to a conceptual difference that seems to be obvious, mutually accepted, and determinant. A relationship that lasted for about 15 years is thus considered in terms of some – not even all – of the reciprocal references in the years 1976 and 1977.²⁷ Starting from this, the enquiries tend to substantiate their assessments through the reconstruction of matching ontologies that serve as the secret reason for either the consistency or inconsistency of their standpoints. Ultimately, this means that the entire relationship between Deleuze and Foucault is read against the desire-pleasure-problem through a systematic homogenisation and ontological founding, which effectively equals a liquidation of the relational dynamics and postulates a stasis and conformity in the respective perspectives that were factually related in a continuous movement of convergence and divergence. Accordingly, we would need to invoke a temporal perspective that would also take account of the early encounters. Insofar as the space is limited here, I can only roughly outline the early years of their relationship. But this should suffice to invert the predominant perspective that starts from the end and reads the relationship entirely according to this end, subsuming it under the categories already mentioned. In contrast, coming from a consideration of their early years should

²⁶ Daniel W. Smith, for example, also claims that the incompatibility of Deleuze's and Foucault's concepts of resistance relates precisely to Deleuze's specific notion of desire (see Daniel W. Smith, "Two Concepts of Resistance: Foucault and Deleuze," in *Between Deleuze and Foucault*, ed. Nicolae Morar, Thomas Nail and Daniel W. Smith (2016)). Similarly, Paul Patton relates Foucault's polemics against the state phobia to political differences with Deleuze and Guattari and understands the difference between Deleuze and Foucault as a political-philosophical rather than ontological one (see Paul Patton, "Activism, Philosophy and Actuality in Deleuze and Foucault," *Deleuze Studies* 4 (Supplement 2010) and Paul Patton, "Deleuze and Foucault: Political Activism, History and Actuality," in *Between Deleuze and Foucault*, ed. Nicolae Morar, Thomas Nail and Daniel W. Smith (2016)).

²⁷ The *loci classici* would be, of course, Michel Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality, Volume 1* [1976] (1978) and Gilles Deleuze, "Desire and Pleasure" [1994/1977], in *Between Deleuze and Foucault*, ed. Nicolae Morar, Thomas Nail and Daniel W. Smith (2016).

lead to a reassessment of the desire-pleasure-debate and the period 1975-1978²⁸ that also accounts for the fundamental ambivalence and dynamicity.

III

Apropos ambivalence: As Morar and Gracieuse demonstrated, it is questionable whether Foucault's critique of desire was actually aimed at Deleuze and Guattari or rather targeted pre-Deleuzo-Guattarian notions of desire that conceived of desire as a permanently assignable character trait of an individual, as the truth of the individual that reveals its essence ("Tell me what your desire is, and I'll tell you what you are as a subject").²⁹ Besides, it is also questionable whether Foucault in fact tries to establish the notion of pleasure as an alternative to desire or if he rather confines himself to a historical scepticism towards this notion in general ("I'm fundamentally not attached to the notion of pleasure, but I'm quite frankly hostile to the pre-Deleuzian, non-Deleuzian notion of desire").³⁰ There is even a sort of late, positive reappearance or adoption of desire understood as an aesthetico-ethical possibility for creation in Foucault ("Nous devons comprendre qu'avec nos désirs, à travers eux, s'instaurent de nouvelles formes de rapports, de nouvelles formes d'amour et de nouvelles formes des création").³¹ But on the other hand, Foucault's interview with Jean Le Bitoux from 1978 also shows the possibility that the difference between Deleuze and Foucault regarding the notion of desire is even more profound inasmuch as Foucault's general criticism concerns the explanatory role typically assigned to desire, which Deleuze and Guattari perpetuate to some degree,

²⁸ Besides the debateableness of any periodisation, we could structure the interchange or dialogue between Deleuze and Foucault in the narrower sense (i.e., despite their earlier encounters, for example, due to their work on the French translation of Colli and Montinari's Nietzsche-edition and the cooled down politeness after 1978) in three phases: 1. From 1965-1969 there is a shared engagement with and critique of transcendental philosophies, resulting in Deleuze's transcendental empiricism and Foucault's archaeologies of knowledges as a sort of historical transcendentalism. 2. From 1970-1974 and roughly co-extensive with the existence of the GIP (*Le Groupe d'information sur les prisons*) the subject of dialogue becomes predominantly the question of what new figure of the intellectual one could construct that would correspond with May 1968. This most convergent phase is related to an activist reading of Nietzsche, hence to a Nietzschean politics. 3. From 1975-1978 the focus of their dialogue shifts to the question of the state and the role of repression due to the impression of the failure of the revolution 1968 and the subsequent backlash. Marx is the shared but hidden point of reference here, although the conclusions regarding state, repression, revolution, and resistance differ fundamentally.

²⁹ See Morar and Gracieuse, "Against the Incompatibility Thesis," 241, and Michel Foucault, "The Gay Science" [1978], *Critical Inquiry* 37:3 (2011), 390. That Foucault actually had Freudo-Marxisms like Marcuse or Reich in mind when he criticised desire is also made plausible by an entry in one of his personal notebooks, accessible at Bibliothèque Nationale de France, from 1st January 1973, where Foucault explicitly opposes Marcuse's production-eros-dichotomy with Deleuze's (and Guattari's – though Foucault does not mention him here) differentiation of productive and anti-productive forces. See Michel Foucault, "72-73 Pouvoir-Savoir" [1972-1973], Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des Manuscrits, Fonds Michel Foucault, NAF 28730, box 92, document 14. I would like to thank Arianna Sforzini and Laurence Le Bras for their invaluable help with the *Fonds Michel Foucault*.

³⁰ Foucault, "The Gay Science," 390.

³¹ Foucault, "Michel Foucault, une interview," 735. See as well "Against the Incompatibility Thesis," 242.

although rather in the philosophical tradition of the principle of sufficient reason.³² And interestingly enough, it is not questionable at all if Deleuze was sceptical towards the notion of pleasure; on the contrary, he was explicitly against this notion (“I cannot give any positive value to pleasure because pleasure seems to me to interrupt the immanent process of desire”).³³ But we will come back to all that later on. First, we should have a look at their early encounters before reassessing the well-known references from 1975 onwards.

The early and middle years: 1965–1974

Generally, we could say that the dialogue between Deleuze and Foucault in the narrower sense starts more or less in the middle of *The Order of Things* with the chapter on “Man and His Doubles” inasmuch as Deleuze takes up the idea of the irreducible and inevitable structure of reduplication in the modern episteme, especially the reduplication of the empirical in the transcendental, in *Difference and Repetition*, where he attributes it – in contrast to Foucault – as a hidden gesture or even method explicitly to Kant.³⁴ What, at first glance, seems to be a singular and cursory reference to Foucault turns out to be decisive in the light of Deleuze’s review of *The Order of Things* as well as an article with the instructive title “How Do We Recognize Structuralism?,” written about the same time, where Deleuze stresses the need for a new transcendental philosophy given Foucault’s analysis of the modern episteme and, more generally, of a new image of thought.³⁵ Deleuze conforms to this claim with the doctrine of transcendental empiricism and a critique of what he calls the dogmatic image of thought that is, among others, built upon the transcendentalisation of the empirical act of recognition and hence upon an empirico-transcendental reduplication.³⁶ So, in general, we could say that the Nietzscheo-Kantian theme of a critique of habits of thought and Deleuze’s alternative to that is, to a significant degree, influenced by Foucault’s analysis of the modern episteme and its specific anthropological structure of reduplication. But *The Order of Things* also plays a role in *Anti-Oedipus*, where Deleuze and Guattari reference Foucault for having analysed the pivotal role of production for the breakdown of representation in the transition from the classical to the modern episteme while also accounting for the re-establishment of repre-

³² See “The Gay Science.”

³³ Deleuze, “Desire and Pleasure,” 228.

³⁴ See Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences* [1966] (1970), 330-374, and *Difference and Repetition*, 135, 143, 144, 159, 161. Besides this theme, Deleuze also takes up Foucault’s discussion of the role of identity and resemblance for representation in the classical episteme. See Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 54-74 and *Difference and Repetition*, 262, 320. Deleuze’s account of representation – one of the mainly criticised concepts in *Difference and Repetition* – is thus also at least partly shaped by Foucault’s historical analysis.

³⁵ See Gilles Deleuze, “Humans: A Dubious Existence” [1966], in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, ed. David Lapoujade (2004) and Gilles Deleuze, “How Do We Recognize Structuralism?” [1972/1967], in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, ed. David Lapoujade (2004).

³⁶ See *Difference and Repetition*, 143-144, 133-137.

sentation through the human sciences in the course of the 19th century.³⁷ Nonetheless, it is predominantly Foucault's *History of Madness* to which Deleuze and Guattari respond as well as conform in *Anti-Oedipus*, be it either in the account of the intertwining of psychoanalysis and a certain familialism or in the diagnosis of the completion of 19th century psychiatry through contemporary psychoanalysis.³⁸

On behalf of Foucault, the influences of, adoptions of, or reactions to Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari are far more general and summary, which is probably the reason why there have been quite a few comments that estimate the role of Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari as indispensable. As for explicit references, there are mainly two points of influences in the years 1970-1975. On the one hand, we have the general acknowledgment of the importance of *Anti-Oedipus* for *Discipline and Punish* in particular and subsequently the analytics of power in general: "In any case, I could give no notion by references or quotations what this book owes to Gilles Deleuze and the work he is undertaking with Félix Guattari."³⁹ Of course, it is always somehow speculative to attribute this acknowledgement, which almost seems like a personal dedication, to a definite concept or figure of thought one could find in Deleuze or Deleuze and Guattari, but the literature usually assimilates it with the adoption of a general pluralism via the concept of multiplicity.⁴⁰ And in fact – this would be the second point – the idea of Foucault's "pluralistic conversion" under the impression of *Difference and Repetition* makes not only perfect sense in the light of the fundamental difference between the epochal and monolithic structures of *The Order of Things* and the distributed micro-physics of power in *Discipline and Punish*. It is also made plausible by Foucault's own evaluation of his relation to Deleuze:

La pensée de Deleuze est profondément pluraliste. Il a fait ses études en même temps que moi et il préparait un mémoire sur Hume. J'en faisai un sur Hegel. J'étais de l'autre côté, car, à cette époque j'étais communiste, tandis qu'il était déjà pluraliste.⁴¹

³⁷ See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* [1972] (1977), 299, 303 and *The Order of Things*, 208-211, 253-256. For the theme of representation and the classical episteme in Deleuze, see also footnote 34.

³⁸ See Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 50, 82-83, 271, 259 and Michel Foucault, *History of Madness* [1961] (2006), 489-493, 506, 511. See also Penfield, "Toward a Theory of Transversal Politics" for a detailed discussion of the relation between *History of Madness* and *Anti-Oedipus*. References to Foucault's role in this regard can also be found in Gilles Deleuze, "Capitalism and Schizophrenia" [1972], in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, ed. David Lapoujade, (2004), 234-235, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari on *Anti-Oedipus*" [1972], in *Negotiations: 1972-1990* (1995), 18, and Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues* [1977] (2007), 84.

³⁹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* [1975] (1977), 309 (note 3 on p. 24).

⁴⁰ See for example Revel, "Foucault lecteur de Deleuze," "Toward a Theory of Transversal Politics," Protevi, "Foucault's Deleuzian Methodology of the Late 1970s," or Thompson, "Foucault and the 'Image of Thought'." For Deleuze's account of multiplicity, see *Difference and Repetition* as well as Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism* [1966] (1988).

⁴¹ Michel Foucault, "La vérité et les formes juridiques" [1974/1973], in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 2: 1970-1975*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (1994), 627. The *mémoire* Foucault addresses here – as apparently the only occasion in his work – was called "La constitution d'un transcendantal historique dans la Phénoménologie de l'esprit de Hegel" (see Didier Eribon, *Michel Foucault et ses contemporains* (1994), 315) and is in

Similar to Deleuze's reception of the problem of the empirico-transcendental reduplication in the modern episteme, the pluralisation of Foucault's thought becomes apparent in his reviews of *Difference and Repetition* and *Logic of Sense*. One of the main themes of these reviews concerns philosophy's possibilities associated with the emancipation from the dogmatic image, which revolve around a thought of the intensive ("[p]enser l'intensité"⁴²) understood as pure difference or difference in itself ("[...] car l'intensité, bien avant d'être graduée par la représentation, est en elle-même une pure différence"⁴³). With the emancipation from the dogmatic image of thought comes an emancipation of difference from identity: difference becomes "un pur événement."⁴⁴ Broadly speaking, this thought of intensive difference or the event enables Foucault to change the perspective from the epochal structures of the episteme to the contingent, aleatory, and differential micro-milieus that give rise to these structures in the first place. The famous "Nietzsche, la généalogie, l'histoire" could be regarded as an early operationalisation of this Deleuzian influence that elaborates a historical adaptation of intensive difference and the event in the sense of concrete historical struggles that determine a status quo.⁴⁵

It is important to note, however, that this emerging micro-logical conception of power as an immanent complement to knowledge (power-knowledge) integrates intensity whereas Deleuze differentiates power from intensity, reserving the notion "power" ("pouvoir") for concrete instances of power in contrast to intensity as a transcendental field of force relations. Roughly speaking, we could say that Foucault has a notion of essentially productive not repressive *potestas* (pouvoir), while Deleuze has a dual conception of repressive *potestas* (pouvoir) and productive *potentia* (puissance). Nevertheless, it is Deleuze's conception of a multiplicity of intensive difference that serves as a vector of pluralisation for Foucault. The way Foucault adopts this conception indicates that it serves first and foremost as a conceptual grid, a scheme that enables the analysis of relations of power without recourse to a substance or transcendence of power (like the sovereign). There is no reason to assume that this import implies further ontological assumptions like a dimension of virtual, affective power in the Spinozistic sense. One could even go as far as to say that if there was such a "pluralistic conversion" then it leads to some sort of ironic Deleuzianism insofar as it causes the disappearance of every

possession of Foucault's family as Holden Klem learned from Jean François Bert, secretary of the *Centre Michel Foucault* in 2014 (see Holden Klem, *Hegel und Foucault*, ed. Andreas Arndt, Myriam Gerhard and Jure Zovko, (2015) 180).

⁴² Michel Foucault, "Ariane s'est pendue" [1969], in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 1: 1954-1969*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (1994), 770.

⁴³ Michel Foucault, "Theatrum philosophicum" [1970], in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 2: 1970-1975*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (1994), 89.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁴⁵ See Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, la généalogie, l'histoire" [1971], in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 2: 1970-1975*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (1994) as well as the inaugural lecture at the *Collège de France*, Michel Foucault, "The Order of Discourse" [1970], in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, ed. Robert Young (1981), which operates with Deleuzian concepts like the incorporeal event from *Logic of Sense* or the Deleuzo-Nietzschean dice-throw.

aspect of affirmation that inheres in Deleuzeo-Spinozistic conceptions of *potentia*. A multiplicity of powers means foremost a multiplicity of dominating, subjecting – not repressive, but nonetheless hardly affirmative or affirmed – powers in Foucault, so to speak, which are as such omnipresent but not omnipotent.⁴⁶

Foucault's nuanced adoption of Deleuze's concepts is also reflected in the famous conversation "Intellectuals and Power" from 1972. Though Foucault declares his obligation to *Nietzsche and Philosophy* and *Anti-Oedipus* in questions of power and struggle, the theme of power, as mentioned, is already established before 1972, as for example in "Nietzsche, la généalogie, l'histoire."⁴⁷ Deleuze's influence on Foucault's conception of power stems thus primarily from *Difference and Repetition* and less from *Anti-Oedipus*, with which it certainly converges in central aspects. "Intellectuals and Power," in contrast, is especially interesting because of the indicated points of divergence.⁴⁸ For Foucault, for example, theory is a praxis ("C'est en cela que la théorie n'exprimera pas, ne traduira pas, n'appliquera pas une pratique, elle est une pratique,")⁴⁹ while for Deleuze there is a transversal relation of potentiality or transgression between theory and praxis that is systematically distinguished throughout the conversation ("La pratique est un ensemble de relais d'un point théorique à un autre, et la théorie, un relais d'une pratique à une autre").⁵⁰ This slight difference corresponds to Foucault's claim that theory develops within a system of power in which intellectuals inescapably participate:

Eux-mêmes, intellectuels, font partie de ce système de pouvoir [...]. Le rôle de l'intellectuel n'est plus de se placer 'un peu en avant ou un peu à côté' pour dire la vérité muette de tous; c'est plutôt de lutter contre les formes de pouvoir là où il en est à la fois l'objet et l'instrument: dans l'ordre du 'savoir', de la 'vérité', de la 'conscience', du 'discours'.⁵¹

This claim is quite misinterpreted by Deleuze, who instead attributes to Foucault his own, obviously oppositional idea of a mutual exclusion of power and theory ("C'est le pouvoir qui par nature opère des totalisations, et vous, vous dites exactement: la théorie par nature est contre le pouvoir").⁵² The reason for these differences lies again in the fact that we have a dual conception of power in Deleuze (virtual-intensive fields of force re-

⁴⁶ For this last point – omnipresence vs. omnipotence – which is probably also a major difference in Deleuze's and Foucault's conceptions of power, see: Michel Foucault, C. Gordon and P. Patton, "Considerations on Marxism, Phenomenology and Power. Interview with Michel Foucault; Recorded on April 3rd, 1978" [1978], *Foucault Studies* 14 (2012), 107.

⁴⁷ See Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault, "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir," in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 2: 1970-1975*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (1994), 313, Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault, "Intellectuals and Power" [1972], in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, ed. David Lapoujade, (2004), 211 and Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* [1962] (2006). See also "Toward a Theory of Transversal Politics," 143-146.

⁴⁸ See Mathias Schönher, "Deleuze, a Split with Foucault," *Le Foucauldien* 1:1 (2015), who also emphasises the looming differences in "Intellectuals and Power."

⁴⁹ Deleuze and Foucault, "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir," 308. See also Deleuze and Foucault, "Intellectuals and Power," 207.

⁵⁰ "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir," 307. See also "Intellectuals and Power," 206.

⁵¹ "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir," 308. See also "Intellectuals and Power," 207.

⁵² "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir," 309. See also "Intellectuals and Power," 208.

lations vs. actualised instances of the exertion of power) that differentiates strictly between social production and social repression, in contrast to an integrated conception of power that is productive without being a power of activation or affirmation in the Deleuzian sense.⁵³ Theory and power can be mutually exclusive only if theory appeals to a dimension beyond power in the sense of *potestas*, namely to the purely productive potentiality of the social field. If there is no such conception of a power beyond *potestas* or if there is no such strict differentiation, then this means that theory develops and expresses within power. Nonetheless, these different conceptions share an interventionist ethos: It is still power in the sense of *potestas* that is the enemy here.⁵⁴

In sum, we have a quite active conceptual interchange between Deleuze and Foucault in the years 1965-1974, where Deleuze and Foucault employ very different applications of the other's concepts and ideas: While Deleuze adopts concrete arguments, ideas, and problems, i.e., content from Foucault, and incorporates them systematically in his respective projects, Foucault is more hesitant in this regard and rather adopts a general style, gesture, movement or type of problematisation, i.e., a certain tendency from Deleuze. This is related to the different concepts of friendship, as we shall see later.

The period until 1975/1976 is also characterised by a general sympathy and theoretical convergence, besides the looming points of divergence mentioned above, compared to the rather distanced years of 1975-1978. For Foucault, it even seems as if they, together with François Lyotard, are participating in a collective project. After a summary of *Anti-Oedipus* as a disclosure of Oedipus as a medico-psychiatric instrument of power that aims to grasp desire and the unconscious, Foucault affirms, in his Rio-de-Janeiro-lecture from 1973, an interest in the same problem:

J'avoue qu'un problème comme celui-là m'attire beaucoup et que moi aussi je me sens tenté de rechercher, derrière ce qu'on prétend qu'est l'histoire d'Œdipe, quelque chose qui a à faire non pas avec l'histoire indéfinie, toujours recommencée, de notre désir et de notre inconscient, mais avec l'histoire d'un pouvoir, un pouvoir politique.⁵⁵

This history of power, however, should not be mistaken with a research on general structures: "Ni Deleuze, ni Lyotrard, ni Guattari, ni moi, ne faisons jamais des analyses de structure, nous ne sommes absolument pas 'structuralistes.'" ⁵⁶ Instead, it consists in a series of historical self-enquiries, in "recherches de dynastie," that try to expose that which "dans l'histoire de notre culture, est resté jusqu'à maintenant le plus caché, le plus occulté, le plus profondément investi: les relations de pouvoir."⁵⁷ Thus, the collective

⁵³ For Deleuze's dual conception, see "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir," 312 ("Intellectuals and Power," 210), where Deleuze claims that the real cannot be fully captured by power and "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir," 314 ("Intellectuals and Power," 212), where power is thought to be dependent on investments of desire that shape or form concrete exertions of power. Desire demarcates here the intensive *potentia* aspect for Deleuze. For Foucault's productive *potestas*, see "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir," 310 ("Intellectuals and Power," 208-209) and Foucault's description of the generative, productive functioning of the penal system.

⁵⁴ See "Les intellectuels et le pouvoir," 311. See also "Intellectuals and Power," 210.

⁵⁵ Foucault, "La vérité et les formes juridiques," 554.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

project of a historical analysis of power relations complements Marx's analysis of economic relations: "Curieusement, les structures économiques de notre société sont mieux connues, mieux inventoriées, mieux dégagées que les structure de pouvoir politique."⁵⁸ These passages are not only additional evidence for the inspiration of Foucault's analytics of power by Deleuze, they also point out that there was at some point in Foucault's work a certain affinity to a Deleuzo-Guattarian theory of power. In an interview from 1975, two years after the Rio-lecture, it almost seems like Deleuze and Foucault – from Foucault's perspective at least – would have one and the same objective, approached in a sort of division of labour:

La 'familialisation' de la psychanalyse est une opération que Deleuze a démontrée avec beaucoup de force, une critique que lui, en tant que théoricien du désir, fait du dedans, et que moi en tant qu'historien du pouvoir ne suis capable de faire que du dehors.⁵⁹

Until 1975, in a word, everything seems quite "vrais" between Deleuze and Foucault: One's internal theory of desire is completed by the other's external history of power.

The later years: 1975–1978

As it is well-known, this concord changes quite rapidly after the publication of *The Will to Knowledge* in 1976, and Deleuze anticipates this divergence in a letter to Guattari presumably from the same year but before reading *The Will to Knowledge*:

Comme d'habitude, après mon entrain, les doutes me viennent. 1) Donc Foucault dit qu'il n'aurait pas pensé à notre prédiction, mais qu'elle le convainc. Je me demande jusqu'à quel point il rigole, mais aussi jusqu'à quel point il est sincère. Je lui dis que j'ai vu B.-H. Lévy. Là-dessus il me dit qu'il a dîné chez 'quelqu'un' avec Attali et Lévy, et que Lévy est resté timide et silencieux. Je lui dis notre souci de ne pas avoir l'air de le tirer à nous. Il répond qu'il n'y a aucune crainte à avoir... et que pour son compte il achève un petit livre pour dénoncer l'identification du pouvoir avec la loi. Sa position semble être: allez-y, on verra bien si vous faites des gaffes (une certaine solidarité plus ou moins secrète, sans cause commune).⁶⁰

So besides the question of whether Foucault actually had Deleuze and Guattari in mind when he criticised the notion of desire in *The Will to Knowledge*,⁶¹ Deleuze at least seemingly perceived it this way. And instead of waiting on Foucault's definite verdict, Deleuze goes for an active engagement with and own critique of *The Will to Knowledge*. Or at least so it seems, given the more or less immediate response the year after in the form of notes that 17 years later come to be published as *Desire and Pleasure*.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Michel Foucault, "Michel Foucault. Les réponses du philosophe" [1975], in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 2: 1970-1975*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (1994), 815.

⁶⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Lettres et autres textes*, ed. David Lapoujade (2015), 51. The "petit livre" is of course *The Will to Knowledge*.

⁶¹ See for example Foucault, *Will to Knowledge*, 81, 82, 85, 90, 157.

And yet it is not clear at all what the particular object of Deleuze's critique is: Pleasure as the antithesis to desire or rather a presumed concept of power in Foucault? It seems likely that both concepts are intended from Deleuze's perspective since he already worked on a critique of pleasure earlier.⁶² But it seems also likely that Foucault had the impression of being misunderstood since he obviously felt compelled to distance himself from the notion of pleasure in the interview with Le Bitoux a year after he received Deleuze's notes on *The Will to Knowledge* through François Ewald.⁶³

In any case, the main problem of *The Will to Knowledge* in relation to *Discipline and Punish* for Deleuze seems to be that the *dispositifs* of power are no longer normalising but constitutive, in this case of sexuality.⁶⁴ But why is this a problem? Although Deleuze acknowledges that Foucault differentiates micro and macro and explicitly refuses to conceive of *dispositif*-power as a miniaturisation of macro-power, i.e., state-power, he doubts that Foucault can actually sustain this difference given the fact that he still employs the notion of power for either kind of analytical level.⁶⁵ Deleuze thinks that Foucault's use of the notion of power discloses that he actually operates with a notion of state-power on a micro-level:

Does this difference in kind [between micro and macro, J.O.] still allow us to talk about *dispositifs* of power? The notion of the State is not applicable at the level of a micro-analysis, since, as Michel says, it is not a matter of miniaturizing the State. But is the notion of power still applicable? Is it not itself the miniaturization of a global concept?⁶⁶

This suspicion seems to be the crux of Deleuze's and Deleuze and Guattari's reservations regarding Foucault in this respect since the consequence of this suspicion would be that power, understood as repressive state-power, was constitutive of social ensembles in general, which would essentially be the same as to postulate that society is grounded by a sort of negativity, an idea obviously not acceptable for Deleuze. In other words, Deleuze conceives of Foucauldian power in general as exclusively repressive *potestas/pouvoir*, which he contrasts with an idea of productive *potentia/puissance*, itself

⁶² See Gilles Deleuze, "Dualism, monism, multiplicities (26.03.1973)," webdeleuze.com. <https://www.webdeleuze.com/textes/167> (accessed July 10, 2021). See also *Between Desire and Pleasure*, especially pp. 16-29, for a detailed study that focuses predominantly on the libidinal or sexual aspects of the desire-pleasure-problem. Though it is clear that "desire" and "pleasure" refer to different approaches to sexuality, as Beckman shows, as well as conceptions of power, the latter dimension seems to be more relevant for the purposes of this article, especially in the light of the thematic consistency of the dialogue between Deleuze and Foucault. For example, it seems plausible to assume that desire has conceptual precursors in *Difference and Repetition*, especially in the concept of the virtual multiplicity, and generally has to be understood as a virtuality. The sexual interpretation and implications would thus be instances or special cases of the more fundamental framework of virtual multiplicities that, in turn, relate to a conception of *potentia/puissance*.

⁶³ See "The Gay Science," 390.

⁶⁴ See "Desire and Pleasure," 224.

⁶⁵ See *ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

constitutive of power as *potestas/pouvoir*, that he calls desire.⁶⁷ Instead of micro-*dispositifs* characterised by power (*potestas*), we would have *agencements* circulating with desire (*potentia*).⁶⁸ Thus, there is a rough equation of *dispositif* and *agencement* and a sharp distinction between power and desire: “If I speak, with Félix, of the *agencement* of desire, it is because I am not sure that micro-*dispositifs* can be described in terms of power.”⁶⁹ Deleuze cannot allow *dispositif*-power to be constitutive, since he understands it to be essentially secondary to *agencement*-desire. But this means, of course, that *dispositifs* of power are components of *agencements* of desire; *agencements* assemble, constitute *dispositifs*.⁷⁰ So rather than an opposition, we have a subsumption of *dispositif*-power under *agencement*-desire, which would mean that Deleuze is not contesting the effectiveness of *dispositifs* but the nature of their effects: *dispositifs* are repressive, not constitutive, since there are primary, essentially multiple, and constitutive *agencements* whose manifold dimensions would be captured and unified, i.e., repressed, by *dispositifs*:

I thus have need of a certain concept of repression, not in the sense that repression would be brought to bear on a spontaneity, but because collective *agencements* would have many dimensions, and *dispositifs* of power would be only one of these dimensions.⁷¹

Dispositifs would be instances of singularisations of the manifold dimensions of *agencements*; *agencements* – more or less equivalent to desire⁷² – would inherently bring about the new and be as such the sufficient reasons for given historical situations respectively the fact of social change. The *agencement* is the reason for the appearance of a specific *dispositif* and at the same time an inexhaustible reservoir for its (potential) change: “I would say, for my part, that a society, a social field, does not contradict itself, but what is primary is that it takes flight; it first of all flees in every direction.”⁷³ The repressive character of *dispositifs* thus arises out of their subsumption under *agencements*: If there are principally multitudinous modi of constitution, then those realised by a *dispositif* are repressive inasmuch as their realisation inhibits the realisation of the remaining.

Regardless of the plausibility of Deleuze’s reading of Foucault, there is a definite distancing and even an attempt to correct what Deleuze perceives to be a mistake in Foucault’s approach. A distance that is increasingly rigorously expressed in the following years: In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari acknowledge a further dimension of power in Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* that resembles somehow the desire/*potential/puissance* aspect as explicated in *Desire and Pleasure* and acts as a sort of res-

⁶⁷ See also *ibid.*, 225.

⁶⁸ See *ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 224.

⁷⁰ See *ibid.*, 225.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 226.

⁷² “[...] desire is one and the same thing as a determined *agencement*, a co-functioning.” (*ibid.*, 225).

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 226.

ervoir for the “assemblages [*agencements*, J.O.] of power, or micropowers,”⁷⁴ i.e., *dispositifs*. It is what they call a diagram; a sort of empty, purely formal process of ordering that can be applied to any content. In *The Will to Knowledge*, this diagram is substituted by a “biopolitics of population” characterised as an “abstract machine”⁷⁵ that was not mentioned at all in *Desire and Pleasure*. However, Deleuze and Guattari continue, there are points of disagreement: On the one hand, the assemblages/*agencements* are not characterised by power – like *dispositifs* – but by desire. On the other hand, the diagram/abstract machine on which they depend is characterised by primary “lines of flight” that are purely creative and positive and thus do not equal “phenomena of resistance or counterattack.”⁷⁶ This clearly formulated divergence is re-affirmed by Deleuze in a letter to Arnaud Villani in 1982: “[...] une société ne se définit pas d’abord par ses contradictions, ni même par des centres de pouvoir et des lignes de résistance (Foucault), mais par un véritable champ de fuite, nécessairement synthétique, comme vous dites.”⁷⁷ Foucault is almost canonised by Deleuze and thereby classed with the long series of important but ultimately insufficient theories of society. Perhaps this enclosing canonisation finds its conclusion in Deleuze’s *Foucault*, intentionally or not.⁷⁸ In any case, by the time of *A Thousand Plateaus*, at the latest, we have a fully pronounced disagreement, almost a contradiction, regarding the nature of the social on behalf of Deleuze.

And on behalf of Foucault? Despite the critical notes on *The Will to Knowledge* he received from Deleuze, Foucault writes a very sympathetic preface for the English translation of *Anti-Oedipus* in 1977.⁷⁹ Besides the general praising tone, it is telling how Foucault deals with desire here. The question of desire, Foucault claims, is addressed not in terms of a why but in terms of a how:

How does one introduce desire into thought, into discourse, into action? How can and must desire deploy its forces within the political domain and grow more intense in the process of overturning the established order? *Ars erotica, ars theoretica, ars politica*.⁸⁰

Desire does not have its typical explanatory role in *Anti-Oedipus* but is infused into theory and practice with revolutionary intentions. Desire is not problematised here, like in *The Will to Knowledge*, precisely because it does not have the same meaning; it is a different concept which Foucault acknowledges.⁸¹ Nonetheless, Foucault is aware of the risk

⁷⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* [1980] (1987), note 39 on pp. 530-531. Brian Massumi translates *agencement* with *assemblage*, while Daniel W. Smith prefers to leave the notion untranslated in *Desire and Pleasure*. I follow Smith in this regard.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Deleuze, *Lettres et autres textes*, 81.

⁷⁸ See Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault* [1986] (1988).

⁷⁹ See Michel Foucault, “Preface,” in *Anti-Oedipus* (1977), xi–xiv.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, xii.

⁸¹ See also “The Gay Science,” 389-390, and *Between Desire and Pleasure*, 3, 12, 25, 28, where it is noted that Deleuze’s discussion of desire in the end remains stuck in a psychoanalytical discourse, whereas Foucault accomplishes it to broaden this historical, cultural and gender-theoretical very narrow context by reclaiming the pre-Oedipal history of the notion of pleasure. It seems as if Foucault acknowledges Deleuze and

that, despite this fundamental difference, Deleuze and Guattari are involuntarily reintroducing “some of the medico-psychological presuppositions [*prises*] that were built into desire, in its traditional sense,”⁸² which would be avoidable by the use of pleasure. But why is this so? Desire is still operating in terms of the principle of sufficient reason in Deleuze and Guattari and thus not leaving the general 19th century medico-psychological framework of explaining, for example, homosexual desire. Even if we are talking about an immanence of social and libidinal production, which is how we could understand Foucault, there is still the problem of the explanatory role of desire; the problem of the medico-psychological access to sexual behaviour through diagnostics. Similarly, Foucault invokes a slight critique at the end of his preface to *Anti-Oedipus* where he postulates that “Deleuze and Guattari care so little for power that they have tried to neutralize the effects of power linked to their own discourse.”⁸³ The problem is less that there are power-effects in Deleuze and Guattari’s own discourse than that they are unaware of them and even underestimate the necessity of power-effects for the intervention in theory and practice. The critique would thus be: Become aware of your own power-effect in order to be able to use it. So in contrast to the clear disagreement on behalf of Deleuze, there is no real divergence with Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari on behalf of Foucault but rather a sort of critical distance. Altogether, Foucault has a benevolent reception of Deleuze and Guattari even though he retains some reservations and tries to anticipate potential risks or pitfalls. Perhaps we could say that Foucault appreciates the revolution Deleuze and Guattari try to initiate in thought, political discourse, and the ethics of the intellectual, without adopting their approach fully in content.⁸⁴ As said above, it is more a general gesture, tendency or movement that Foucault is interested in when it comes to Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari in general. Coming from Foucault, we could thus say that there is a convergence in gesture or style without a convergence in content.

IV

A clear disagreement on behalf of Deleuze; a convergence in gesture and critical distance in content on behalf of Foucault in the period 1975-1978. An active interchange of concepts as well as a general sympathy, and even the idea of participation in a common project or cause in the period 1965-1975. Given this overall ambivalence and temporal dynamicity, it does not seem appropriate to categorise the relationship between Deleuze

Guattari’s attempt to subvert the psychoanalytical notion of desire while at the same time attempting to leave this discourse completely. Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of desire is thus not the real problem for Foucault, inasmuch as it subverts the psychoanalytical discourse, but it is not the real solution either, inasmuch as it remains bound to the psychoanalytical discourse.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 389.

⁸³ See Foucault, “Preface,” xiv.

⁸⁴ In this sense, we could perhaps regard Foucault’s “What is Critique” as written in the revolutionary spirit of *Anti-Oedipus*. See Michel Foucault, “What is Critique?” [1978], in *The Politics of Truth*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (1997).

and Foucault as either “faux” or “vrais”; it does not even seem appropriate to speak of a “vrais amis” until *The Will to Knowledge* that, in the end, turned out in fact to be “faux amis” given Foucault’s benevolent reservation with regard to *Anti-Oedipus* and the question of desire, for example. If we want to invoke a concept of philosophical friendship that specifically accounts for the concrete givenness of the relation between Deleuze and Foucault, it would rather be the friend as a vis-à-vis, as a dialogue partner, one that participates in a basic concern (e.g., a radical pluralistic and non-fascist form of life, a new way of thinking, a new role of the intellectual etc.), a basic gesture or style (e.g., an interventionist approach to theory and practice), or even strategy (e.g., a consideration of power relations, complementing the analytics of economic relations). A content-related consistency may be given sometimes, but this does not matter so much insofar as there is a dialogical consistency, a continuous engagement with one another that implies – as every dialogue – convergences as well as divergences while accounting for the importance of divergence or disagreement in particular: The elaboration of the concept of *agencement* in *A Thousand Plateaus* probably would have been different if it were not for *The Will to Knowledge*. Similarly, it is arguable if Foucault would have pursued the project of *The History of Sexuality* with *The Use of Pleasure* without Deleuze’s critique in *Desire and Pleasure*.⁸⁵ Such a dialogue-based friendship would, in contrast to a familiarity-based friendship, not be determined by criteria like allegiance, harmony or any other pre-given ideal, standard, or norm. It would simply conform to the course of the factual dialogue with and in all its eventual ambivalence and variability. As such it would be a continuous creation, a form of collective thought, practice, and life in the making, so to speak. And it would end when the dialogue ends.

In an interview in 1975, Foucault already expresses this dialogical tension in relation to Deleuze. In response to the question of whether he is “d’accord, au fond, avec Deleuze,” Foucault states: “Nous discordons sur quelques points, mais je suis fondamentalement d’accord avec eux.”⁸⁶ This simultaneity of distance and convergence, this ability to tolerate a fundamental ambivalence, is related to Foucault’s subtle account of friendship. In an interview in 1978, i.e., after the supposed split with Deleuze, Foucault articulates the difficulties he has with the association of political or academic affinity with friendship. Instead, “l’amitié, c’est pour moi une sorte de franc-maçonnerie secrète.”⁸⁷ Friendship cannot be identified with political or academic affinity – a common cause, an allegiance, a harmony – because it resides on a different level; because it is not a public expression of agreement but a secret freemasonry. Friendship is first of all an ethical affair for Foucault and a practice of freedom that as such implies a degree of secrecy as a sort of protection against the absorption into political or academic bonds. Friendship, subsequently, is less a question of contentual accordance than participation

⁸⁵ See Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality Volume 2* [1984] (1985), and “Faux Amis,” 73.

⁸⁶ Michel Foucault, “Asiles, Sexualité, Prisons” [1975], in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 2: 1970-1975*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (1994), 781. “Eux,” that means Deleuze and Guattari, of course.

⁸⁷ Michel Foucault, “La scène de la philosophie” [1978], in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 3: 1976-1979*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (1994), 589.

in this ethical practice of freedom. And it is, of course, not by chance that Foucault mentions Deleuze right after this account of friendship: “[...] une sorte de franc-maçonnerie secrète. Mais elle a des points visibles. Vous parliez de Deleuze qui est évidemment quelqu’un pour moi de très important, je le considère comme le plus grand philosophe français actuel.”⁸⁸ In a variation of this idea, Foucault characterises friendship in an interview from 1981 as a “mode de vie,” a way of life which expands the ethical concept to an aesthetico-ethical one inasmuch as the question is not to identify the truth about one’s desire (i.e., the recognition of one’s homosexual desire) but to invent a desirable way of life, meaning a new mode of conduct, perception, experience in general.⁸⁹ Similar to his preface to *Anti-Oedipus*, Foucault tries to substitute the explanatory role of desire with an interventionist role; it is about desirable things rather than one’s desire as the reason for one’s behaviour, and about the means that make these desirable things possible: “S’interroger sur notre rapport à l’homosexualité, c’est plus désirer un monde où ces rapports sont possibles que simplement avoir le désir d’un rapport sexuel avec une personne du même sexe, même si c’est important.”⁹⁰ In one of his last interviews, Foucault clarifies that this desirable way of life, friendship, is not only a way to make homosexual relations possible but a general historical possibility to rethink more or less every type of social relation inasmuch as it draws on and actualises historical forms of friendship up until the 18th century, where new institutions of disciplinary power blocked these ways of life.⁹¹ In short, friendship for Foucault has not so much to do with familiarity, allegiance, or harmony but rather designates a desirable way of life; desirable inasmuch as it reveals the abundance of possible relations one can have with the other.

Penfield’s reading of Foucault’s conception of friendship elaborates on this idea of an aesthetico-ethical practice of creation and emphasises the formlessness of friendship that calls for its continuous invention, leading to a shared and pleasurable becoming that is constitutive for the friends related in this movement.⁹² This constitutive in-between-space, as Penfield continues, is similar to Deleuze and Guattari’s transversal relation in *A Thousand Plateaus* as it implies a co-constitutive genesis of the relation’s terms that are precisely not given in advance.⁹³ Friendship as a transversal relation initiates dynamics of de-individualisation and becoming that displaces the sovereign self in contrast to the other. The problem is, as Penfield notes, that this co-constitutive becoming could be understood in terms of identification or strict and mutual dependency, which would erase the difference between the friends as the relation’s terms. Penfield evades this by defin-

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ See Michel Foucault, “De l’amitié comme mode de vie” [1981], in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 4: 1980-1988*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (1994), 163-165.

⁹⁰ Michel Foucault, “Entretien avec M. Foucault” [1982], in *Dits et Écrits, Tome 4: 1980-1988*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (1994), 295.

⁹¹ See “Michel Foucault, une interview.”

⁹² See “Toward a Theory of Transversal Politics,” 165.

⁹³ See *ibid.*, 166.

ing the friend's becoming as a mode of life in which difference or differentiation is the genetic principle.⁹⁴

As intriguing and pioneering as Penfield's transversal friendship is with regard to the relation between Deleuze and Foucault, the idea of differentiation as the genetic principle of a co-becoming that therefore is not equivalent to an identification of the friends seems to be at least an incomplete solution. It is incomplete inasmuch as it cannot really account for the distancing between 1975-1978 other than in terms of an exhaustion or standstill of their becoming. What is left unconsidered is the active character of the distancing, as we could see in Deleuze's disagreement, the active and deliberate dissent, and the decision to engage in different and incompatible becomings.⁹⁵ One reason for this could be that post-faux/vrais-approaches generally tend to underestimate the figural-affective aspects as well as the polemical or agonal development of the friendship between Deleuze and Foucault, which is why they usually do not operate with conceptions of friendship with respect to their philosophical relation. The "third camp" essentially conceives of this relation as a relation of concepts, be it with emphasis on conceptual tensions or agreements. But the relationship between Deleuze and Foucault amounts to more than a conceptual relation: there are also affective aspects that shape their philosophical friendship and consequentially also conceptual movements.⁹⁶ A conception of dialogical friendship would need to correspond to these figural-affective aspects (the friend as a vis-à-vis) as well as the distancing between 1975-1978 without falling behind Penfield's critique of friendship as a relation between sovereign selves. This conception thus suggests a sort of mediary position that acknowledges the constitutive transversal becoming of friends as well as the deliberate dissent that implies the relative stability of the figure of the friend. In Deleuzian terms, we could say that friends resemble metastable *agencements* that relate to each other through disjunctive syntheses.

One example for this deliberate dissent would be Foucault's self-criticism at the beginning of his 1976 lecture-course. Foucault feels trapped in a research project that "we've been working on for four or five years,"⁹⁷ hence since his earliest lectures at the *Collège de France*, and that he feels has not much progressed: "It's all repetitive, and it doesn't add up. Basically, we keep saying the same thing, and there again, perhaps we're not saying anything at all."⁹⁸ This research project concerns, of course, Foucault's genealogies or "recherches de dynastie" that he conceives, as we have said, as a collec-

⁹⁴ See *ibid.*, and *Difference and Repetition*, 207-210 for the notion of differentiation.

⁹⁵ The possibility of a break, a split, or an ending seems to be an important point of differentiation between friendship and other social relations like kinship, nationality, ethnicity etc. that cannot be suspended at all or at least not deliberately.

⁹⁶ Eleanor Kaufman invokes the related point that Deleuze and Foucault were fully aware of the publicity of their friendship. See Eleanor Kaufman, *The Delirium of Praise: Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, Klossowski* (2001), 80 and Beckman, *Gilles Deleuze*, 56. Philosophical friendships are not only enacted privately, but also publicly: a veritable "dramatisation."

⁹⁷ Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976* (2003), 3.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

tive research of power relations also pursued by Deleuze and Guattari.⁹⁹ Inasmuch as Foucault perceives a standstill in his research, we could say that Deleuze is quite correct in diagnosing an impasse in Foucault's thinking of power.¹⁰⁰ Foucault's solution, however, implies a clear break with the premises of the power-theoretical research agenda shared with Deleuze and Guattari, which would first of all concern what he calls "Nietzsche's hypothesis"¹⁰¹ or the assumption that the "basis of the power-relationships lies in a warlike clash between forces."¹⁰² Foucault tries to free himself from said impasse through the analysis of a specific thought of power that he practiced for some time alongside Deleuze and Guattari. Interestingly enough, Foucault describes this auto-analytical distancing in the same terms with which he characterises friendship: "All this quite suits the busy inertia of those who profess useless knowledge, a sort of sumptuary knowledge, the wealth of a parvenu [...]. I am talking about the great, tender, and warm freemasonry of useless erudition."¹⁰³

Deleuze, on the other hand, has a good intuition of Foucault's "franc-maçonnerie secrète" when he tells Guattari about Foucault's "solidarité plus ou moins secrète, sans cause commune"¹⁰⁴ towards them. Friendship in the narrower sense, meaning not so much as a way of life or historical possibility but as a concrete Foucauldian practice, could be very well described as a secret solidarity without the necessity of a common goal. It is almost like sitting in the same boat...¹⁰⁵ And for Deleuze? Would he agree? Probably not. Besides the concerns regarding the contentual differences to Foucault which he expresses in his letter to Guattari, his explicit thoughts on friendship have a completely different inclination. In his correspondence with Dionys Mascolo, it becomes apparent that the friend has a meaning for Deleuze only inasmuch as it is a genetic element of thought.¹⁰⁶ Deleuze is interested in the friend not as an aesthetico-ethical con-

⁹⁹ Following Claude-Olivier Doron, this equation of genealogy and "recherches de dynastie" is at least imprecise. See Doron's characterisation of the dynastic in contrast to the genealogical in Michel Foucault, *Penal Theories and Institutions: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1971-1972* (2019), footnote 16, 51-53.

¹⁰⁰ See Deleuze, *Foucault*, 96.

¹⁰¹ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 16.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

¹⁰⁴ *Lettres et autres textes*, 51.

¹⁰⁵ In this sense, Foucauldian friendship as freemasonry has significant similarities with the idea of an inverted teleology in Nietzschean Politics that Deleuze expresses with the figure of "being in the same boat." See Gilles Deleuze, "Nomadic Thought" [1975], in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, ed. David Lapoujade (2004), and William S. Burroughs, "The Limits of Control" [1975], *Semiotext(e): Schizo-Culture* 3:2 (1978).

¹⁰⁶ See Gilles Deleuze and Dionys Mascolo, "Correspondence with Dionys Mascolo" [1988], in *Two Regimes of Madness, Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, ed. David Lapoujade (2006), 327-332. Charles J. Stivale clearly shows in his *Gilles Deleuze's ABC's: The Folds of Friendship* (2008) that there are different aspects or "folds" of friendship in Deleuze which are central to his thought, as for example pedagogy, the comical, thought, encounter or the impersonal (see also *Gilles Deleuze*, 45-71, who develops this reading further). With respect to Deleuze's explicit conceptual engagement with friendship, however, there is an emphasis on the relation between thought and friendship, as in his correspondence with Mascolo or in Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 4-5, which is why the paper focuses on this aspect or "fold" under the headline of transcendental friendship. Perhaps we could also speak of at least two phases of Deleuze's thought on friendship,

cept but as a transcendental one. Throughout the course of their correspondence, Deleuze speaks from the standpoint of philosophy where Mascolo speaks from the standpoint of friendship: Deleuze takes an already established community of friends as his starting point and tries to think the genesis of thought proceeding from that, while Mascolo, probably related to his experiences in the *Résistance* and the regular, clandestine meetings of “friends,” i.e., members of the *Résistance*, at Marguerite Duras’s place during the war,¹⁰⁷ tries to think the genesis of friendship from a distress in thought.¹⁰⁸ The friend is, for Deleuze, eventually one with whom one is “going through trials [...] necessary for any thinking,”¹⁰⁹ a companion in thought, a familiar even, in contrast to Mascolo or Foucault, who insist on a conception of friendship as a way of life not least out of their experiences of resistance, marginalisation, and concrete threats of power. In contrast to this aesthetico-ethical friendship, we have an almost neo-classical actualisation of the *philos* in Deleuze as transcendental friendship. Inasmuch as the friend, in this perspective, has meaning only in relation to the process of thought, it makes no sense to speak of friendship any longer if the differences in thought between one and the other become substantial. They are no longer friends when they are not going through trials together, so to speak. In an interview from the same year as his correspondence with Mascolo, Deleuze characterises this mode of friendship, with respect to his work with Guattari, as a sort of pre-personal field:

But we didn’t collaborate like two different people. We were more like two streams coming together to make ‘a’ third stream, which I suppose was us. One of the questions about ‘philosophy’, after all, has always been what to make of the *philos*.¹¹⁰

And his take on the *philos* would be: The friend constitutes a pre-personal transcendental field, a plane of immanence, as the precondition of any thought. A plane of immanence, a plane of friendship, however, that perseveres just as long as there are no substantial differences; that perseveres as long as there is a dialogue, so to speak.

When we said that there is a difference in the employment of the other’s concept between Deleuze and Foucault, it hopefully becomes clearer in the light of the difference regarding their conceptions of friendship. The “trials of thought” imply for Deleuze the possibility to adopt concrete arguments, ideas, figures of thought etc. as long as there is a plane of immanence, a plane of friendship, while Foucault’s secret freemasonry allows

with an initial critique of philosophy’s *philia* through Proust and Nietzsche in *Difference and Repetition* and a subsequent renewed interest in “a-philiatic” forms of friendship in the context of his work with Guattari (see Stivale, *Gilles Deleuze’s ABC’s*, 1-2, who underlines Guattari’s role in this shift, and Beckman, *Gilles Deleuze*, 53, who elaborates on his complicated friendship with Guattari). The fold of the impersonal as developed throughout *Dialogues*, for example, would be a result of this second inquiry of friendship inspired by the collaboration with Guattari, just like the transcendental fold developed in his correspondence with Mascolo. These aspects or folds of friendship in the thought of Deleuze, however, have to be differentiated from the heuristic model of the dialogical friend as suggested in this paper.

¹⁰⁷ See Michael Munro, *The Communism of Thought* (2014), 52.

¹⁰⁸ See Deleuze and Mascolo, “Correspondence with Dionys Mascolo,” 329-331.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 329.

¹¹⁰ Gilles Deleuze, “On Philosophy” [1988], in *Negotiations: 1972-1990* (1995), 136, see as well 141.

for the adoption of a general aesthetico-ethical tendency or gesture, as one can see in his aesthetical reading of *Anti-Oedipus* as a new style, or *ars erotica, theoretica, politica*, while keeping his distance to the notion of desire. This being said, the conception of friendship corresponding to the philosophical relation between Deleuze and Foucault proposed above, the friend as a vis-à-vis, as a dialogue partner, would be no more than that: a sort of common ground, a grounding for a specific productive engagement – in its convergences as well as divergences – lasting for more than 15 years. Deleuze and Foucault are neither “vrais amis” nor “faux amis” but simply *amis* that practised a form of amicable relation, a philosophical friendship, out of an abundance of possible relations. Perhaps the most important aspect of this relationship, besides the collective character of large parts of their respective works, is precisely its irreducibility, its resistance to pre-given categories of friendship or any other relationship and, not least, the careful consideration of its limits.

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