



The introduction by Foucault is certainly a healthy way to view this book. As a guide to leading a non-fascist life, this work condenses a great number of ideas, and attempts to dismantle/discourse on the hang-ups of would-be revolutionary groups.

I would describe the writing style as delirious. At times it is very lucid, hitting hard at ideas standing in the way of the non-fascist life and free thought. At others, the prose descends, or rather extends (explodes?) down lines of escape, off in a million directions. At these times I felt a bit lost, however it is difficult to know whether it is the cause of the writing style, or my own inexperience in the finer points of Freud, Lacan, and the state of 1970s psychoanalysis. It wasn't until about half-way through the book that the ideas about the body without organs, machines of desiring-production, deterritorialization, the despot, neurosis/psychosis, and schizophrenia began to fit together on the internal limits, boundaries and axioms of capitalism.

It seems that they are trying to say that schizophrenia is the limit that capitalism is always trying to approach, but can never attain. The nature of capitalism is to axiomatize, subjugate, repress, \"decode\" and \"detrterritorialize\" processes that exist outside or contra to the system in order to exploit and co-opt. These are processes that revolutionary movements fight against, overtly and covertly. Seeds within the movement, itself, are also moving against the movement, flowing towards axiomatization and cooptation. In this ad-hoc manner, it seems that capitalism tends toward this schiz limit, since contra/revolutionary flows are generated in a dynamic, random fashion; many small revolutionary acts become codified, and applied to the molecular, regardless of coherent applicability. In this way schizophrenia is not necessarily revolutionary, and is even tolerated by capitalism until it can be subjugated and ascribed a use value.

Contrary to many critics, I think that these ideas are quite relevant to modern revolutionary struggle- to live more freely on both the collective/social and individual levels.

- 1) Oedipus: Power is maintained by our submission to the Oedipus myth; Oedipus myth as a psychological explanation of why the masses accept a system which does not favour their own interests.
- 2) In Western Civilisation desire is conceived of as a means of acquisition rather than a means of production. This slant is important in maintaining the surplus, capitalist economy and any revolution would have to alter the perception we have of desire.

- The internal struggle of every society is to control the \"surplus\" energy (capital/linguistic direction). Oedipus/psychoanalysis is one form that has worked to do so, to mold individuals to fit a superstructure of capitalist consumer/production. In that sense, this book, as much as being a structuralist text, is also a rebellion against structuralism.
- Capitalism works as a new transcendental territory to overcode individual desires in service of the ruling economy.
- The way to analyze/uncover this deep impulse is to adopt schizoanalysis, to follow the flow of that overcoding as it works through social desiring-machines. This will reveal the core codes that form the overarching capitalist regime

which psychoanalysis has worked to keep buried

All in all, despite the heavy language and the density of concepts this is fairly straight forward exposition (when compared to 1000 plateaus).

Despite my past inability to articulate these ideas this cleanly this text has been the mainstay of my aesthetic and critical approaches for decades. This adherence speaks tons about the force of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts and presentations, that they were able to let me realize in my own way the depth of their direction, so that I can begin to resolve the paradoxes that are formed in my own unconscious... because I didn't understand this book consciously until these past two months, even if I understood the basic idea -- that socially we are structured by overcoding propositions that are adopted as natural when in fact they were in service of very artificial production engines, engines which we become absorbed under and agents for.

"The task of schizoanalysis is that of tirelessly taking apart egos and their presuppositions; liberating the prepersonal singularities they enclose and repress; mobilizing the flows they would be capable of transmitting, receiving, or intercepting; establishing always further and more sharply the schizzes and the breaks well below conditions of identity; and assembling the desiring-machines that countersect everyone and group everyone with others. For everyone is a little group (un groupuscule) and must live as such—or rather, like the Zen tea box broken in a hundred places, whose every crack is repaired with cement made of gold, or like the church tile whose every fissure is accentuated by the layers of paint or lime covering it (the contrary of castration, which is unified, molarized, hidden, scarred, unproductive). Schizoanalysis is so named because throughout its entire process of treatment it schizophrenizes, instead of neuroticizing like psychoanalysis." (362)

"From the point of view of libidinal investment, it is clear that there are few differences between a reformist, a fascist, and sometimes even certain revolutionaries, who are distinguished from one another only in a preconscious fashion, but whose unconscious investments are of the same type, even when they do not adopt the same body. We can't go along with Maud Mannoni when she sees the first historical act of antipsychiatry in the 1902 decision granting Judge Schreber his liberty and responsibility, despite the recognized continuation of his delirious ideas. There is room for doubting that the decision would have been the same if Schreber had been schizophrenic rather than paranoiac, if he had taken himself for a black or a Jew rather than a pure Aryan, if he had not proved himself so competent in the management of his wealth, and if in his delirium he had not displayed a taste for the socius of an already fascisizing libidinal investment. As machines of subjugation, the social machines give rise to incomparable loves, which are not explained by their interests, since interests derive from them instead. At the deepest level of society there is delirium, because delirium is the investment of a socius as such, beyond goals. And it is not merely the despot's body to which the paranoiac lovingly aspires, but the body of capital-money as well, or a new revolutionary body, the moment it becomes a form of power and gregariousness. To be possessed by this body as well as possessing it; to engineer subjugated groups for which one becomes so many cogs and parts; to insert oneself into the machine to find there at last the enjoyment of the mechanisms that pulverize desire—such is the paranoiac experience." (364-5)

"Except in ideology, there has never been a humane, liberal, paternal, etc., capitalism. Capitalism is defined by a cruelty having no parallel in the primitive system of cruelty, and by a terror having no parallel in the despotic regime of terror. Wage increases and improvements in the standard of living are realities, but realities that derive from a given supplementary axiom that capitalism is always capable of adding to its axiomatic in terms of an enlargement of its limits: let's create the New Deal; let's cultivate and recognize strong unions; let's promote participation, the single class; let's take a step toward Russia, which is taking so many toward us; etc. But within the enlarged reality that conditions these islands, exploitation grows constantly harsher, lack is arranged in the most scientific of ways, final solutions of the "Jewish problem" variety are prepared down to the last detail, and the Third World is organized as an integral part of capitalism. The reproduction of the interior limits of capitalism on an always wider scale has several consequences: it permits increases and improvements of standards at the center, it displaces the harshest forms of exploitation from the center to the periphery, but also multiplies enclaves of overpopulation in the center itself, and easily tolerates the so-called socialist formations. (It is not kibbutz-style socialism that troubles the Zionist state, just as it is not Russian socialism that troubles world capitalism.) There is no metaphor here: the factories are prisons, they do not resemble prisons, they are prisons." (373-374)

Anti-Oedipus, Capitalism and schizophrenia  
A Marxist attack on Freud

Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud are the two most influential intellectuals in the modern era. Yet for a long time their ideas have existed in parallel to each other, each to his sphere of either psychology or politics. It was inevitable that they will crash against each other, and it is this crash that resulted in this book.

Historical context is important to understand where the book is coming from, written in 1972 by two French Marxists. Then the cold war was still raging between the capitalist America and communist Soviet union. The Vietnam war was still ongoing and the 68 student protests were showing signs of ideological war going on around the world. Leftist intellectuals such as Chomsky and Foucault were each working in his own field to critique capitalism. The authors of this book chose the field of psychology where psychoanalysts such as Lacan were suing patients who couldn't afford to pay for their overpriced sessions.

Freud is bourgeois! This is claim that this book seeks to argue for. And the following reasons are presented:

-Freud is opposed to the feminist liberation movement because of his idea of "penis envy". Namely that women are not truly upset and revolting because they are oppressed by a social and economic patriarchal society as they claim but simply they are envious of men for having penises thus their views should be discredited.

-Freud emphasizing the traditional familial role of a masculine father and feminine mother as the only healthy way for the child to grow up to be mentally healthy.

-Freud completely denouncing homosexuality as a sexual orientation but it is rather a mental illness that requires treatment.

-The anarchists' desire to revolt against the system can be dismissed as being the death instinct and Law and order are necessary in combating it.

-The ambition of the average proletariat to improve his living conditions is in fact his Oedipus complex. "By placing the distorting mirror of incest before desire (that's what you wanted, isn't it?), desire is shamed, stupefied, it is placed in a situation without exit, it is easily persuaded to deny "itself" in the name of the more important interests of civilization"

Having showed that Freud is politically problematic for Marxists, the authors then attempt to replace all of psychoanalysis with something they call schizoanalysis. The main arguments they present for showing that psychoanalysis is invalid are the incompatibility of schizophrenia with the Oedipus complex, they present examples of the case of "Judge Schreber" and movie director "Artaud", they also argue that Freud, Jung and Adler had disagreements showing that the psychoanalytic house is not in order.

In order to present their alternative theory of human psychology, Deleuze and Guattari rely on an arsenal of philosophers and commence an analytic undertaking that is Grandiose in scale. A synthesis between Nietzsche's "Will to power" and Marx's "historical materialism" produced a concept they term "desiring machines". Many references are also made to Foucault in his concept of "power relations" and their work is clearly influenced by Hegel, Kant, Derrida and Spinoza. For this reason this work cannot be considered simply one of psychology but rather it spans the fields of philosophy, economy, politics, linguistics, critique of literature (Critical theory) and history. The last one is impressive because this work contains a detailed analysis of the rise and progress of human civilization from primordial to tribal to feudalism to capitalism that puts Freud's theory of "the primordial horde" as simplistic.

In order to challenge Capitalist ideology we need to become schizophrenics, what the authors called "deterritorialized body without organs".

Anti-Œdipus marked a moment of deep fracture in the ossified rhetoric of May 68, by attacking from within two interconnected domains of modern thought: Marxism and psychoanalysis. Being Deleuze and Guattari among the few intellectually honest leftist thinkers of their time, and therefore engaged in the critique and analysis of the (respectively) philosophical and psychoanalytical implementation of the doctrine they were supposed to rigorously stick to, it's hardly surprising to see how divergent their path became from the 'Paris brûle' brand of political orthodoxy - the bigotry of a revolution nobody wanted to define, let alone set in motion. No one was willing to pay the price of a cultural upheaval that, as far as the left itself was concerned, was neither an aim nor a means, but rather an order-word to legitimise its existence after the newly acquired parliamentary respectability of the post-WW2 and post-Algeria years.

"Anti-Œdipus" was a hand grenade thrown amidst the crowd in the teeming market place of western culture. It was divisive and revealing, nostalgic and prophetic, abstract and trivial, spellbinding and repelling, a mystery that will never truly unravel itself (woe on us if it ever did!). 48 years after its publication, this book has lost none of its devastating power. It destroys, destroys, destroys, and then expects us to create, create, create. It destroys the comfortable taboos we pretend to struggle against while actually thriving in their soft cocoon. It rips open the sticky placenta of Family's womb and performs a postmortem CT on psychoanalysis (death due to self-inflicted gunshot, severe parenchymal lesions along the bullet path. The ejected shell was never retrieved).

"Anti-Œdipus" doesn't suggest; it doesn't suppose and makes no educated guess. It undermines and sabotages the whole system instead, and then nukes the debris of the remaining structure back to a pre-cultural, pre-ideological

stone age.

It starts by redefining desire as pure machinic activity, as opposed to the anatomically embedded notion of desire as lack. The Unconscious ceases to be a frustrated child dreaming of those juicy maternal nipples he'll always be denied by society, politics, education, love and wherever he may look for them. In Deleuze and Guattari's vision, the Unconscious is a workshop whose machinery is constantly producing desire, a web of assembly lines and conveyor belts that create assemblages of desire (desiring machines) that we subsequently project onto particular subjects, who become parts of those same assemblages. Whereas our education (regardless of local cultures and traditions) has a generalised, inherent tendency to identify desire with the lack of an object, thus leaving the Unconscious writhing in a straitjacket of frustration, a padded room of non-communicational longing. That's how society controls our inner drives: by deeming all insurgent impulse anti-social and insane; by assigning pre-established objects to our cravings, in every stage of our life and adjusting them to all degrees of intensity.

Hence the title, inspired by the Greek myth of Œdipus - the man who solved the Sphinx's enigma, but whose irrevocable fate was to slain his father and then sleep with his mother. Œdipus is the symbol of a desire that is not going astray, but rather going round in circles, imprisoned in roles and pathways that the Freudian analysis/police state alliance ratified in the earliest days of the psychiatric research. The œdipalisation of the Unconscious is the annihilation of all genuine impulse toward a breakthrough of desire; it implies the complete internalisation of drives the child can and must be taught to either re-address or repress altogether.

Family as society's hangman then, the very first step in the regimentation of the child's mind, sexuality, self-consciousness; and the Unconscious as a prison cell where we can only erect and worship totems, prostrate and prostitute ourselves before the idols of Mommy and Daddy and the Judge and the Doctor - while being told this is what we truly want, these are the nipples we dream to suck on. Either we like it or not. And we'd better like it, because if we don't, the looney bin is where we belong.

Ideology is yet another tool in the hands of the system.

It's no longer a matter of left and right, of fascism and communism, not even of religion and atheism. In fact there is a leftist and atheistic bigotry as well, which stifled the revolutionary charge of Marxism and turned it into a doctrine, a mere praxis, what with the Soviet state and the monstrous Leviathan it unleashed. The catastrophic outcomes of the Russian revolution were an unpleasant memento to the European watered-down communist parties, one the hierarchies had learnt to cope with by just denying its existence.

The authors saw such tendency at work in their times, with the European red intelligentsia falling for the desecrated charm of the bourgeoisie - and the comfy drawing rooms of the salons littéraires. On the one hand, the older generation of thinkers had no interest in jeopardising their positions; on the other hand, the youth was ensnared in a consumer world in which even rebellion is but a commodity everybody can afford and then discard. The young had no more strength than the elderly; they were simply keener on the fashionable side of a revolution to be forever postponed.

The third part of the book is an analysis of the three stages of human history, as well as an in-depth study of the three models of society they engendered (or vice versa? That's the real conundrum): the primitive, despotic and capitalist regimes, with their relative and absolute standards, their latent and manifest perversions, their forms of repression and lines of flight.

For Deleuze and Guattari, capitalism is something more than the triumphant society of consumption as portrayed by Baudrillard or Debord. It's a tendency inherent to all civilisations, ever since the prehistoric society introduced a system of abstract thought that displaced its own limits beyond the structure of subsistence economy and tribal rites. Capitalism is seen as a process, parallel to the development of mankind and therefore politically and culturally self-sufficient. Russia and America, *Mein Kampf* and *Das Kapital*: capitalism wears no mask, because the mask is its real face. It's the 'hybris' the primitives tried to ward off through bloody rituals and the despotic states by constantly overcoding the land they conquered. All in vain, since capitalism was already there, waiting for the doors of history to open up once and for all.

In the fourth part, the authors deal with the problem of psychoanalysis and its failures.

Obviously enough, Guattari (a psychiatrist himself, close to R. D. Laing's *Anti-Psychiatry* and to the French Institutional Psychiatry of the 50s (the attempt to have the patients engaged in a communal rather than individual process of analysis and therapy), was bound to find the confined spaces of the Freudian/Jungian methods unbearably asphyxiating. After he joined forces with Deleuze the solution finally took the shape of Schizoanalysis: the discovery and deciphering of the patient's desiring machines, their functioning and effects, with no academic nor medical orthodoxy discerning between the sane and the insane, the lie and the truth, the real and the delusional. The schizophrenic is therefore the prototype of the non-œdipalised, non-œdipalisable subject, as opposed to the neurotic good citizen each of us was meant to be. Far from being a demeaning of the pathological state and the sufferings it entails, schizophrenia is the symbol of a new perception of the Self, free to explore the heights and depths of an

Unconscious that has now become all too conscious, bursting with energy and creativity.

"Anti-Œdipus" was, and still is, a milestone and a breaking point in modern philosophy, political theory, sociology and, of course, psychoanalysis.

Along with its 1980 companion volume "A Thousand Plateaus" (the two forming a complex work called "Capitalism and Schizophrenia") it was attacked from all sides, but also worshipped by numberless readers and imitated by all sorts of intellectuals, whose best works (especially Nick Land's) are to be seen as the ideal continuation of Deleuze and Guattari's greatest achievements.

I don't have a philosophical mind. I'm not a leftist, and I'm prejudiced against psychoanalysts and psychoanalysis. But I love this book, and I love what it does and how it does it. It's full of contradictions subverting the very meaning of its existence. It slaughters the holy cows of Family, Freudianism, Marxism, Revolution, while at the same time opening up new frontiers for them to explore. And it makes it impossible to classify the authors in terms of political, moral, cultural and ideological definitions ('Nietzschean leftists' is the closest the critic has ever got to a definition of sorts).

That's why its Socratic poison will never cease to corrupt the youth.