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Seminar on Anti-Oedipus, 1972-1973

Lecture 03, 14 May 1973

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... one would be engaging in a flattening operation. We're starting from a point where what happens in a completely private way to an alcoholic or a drug user, or what happens to an army in an operation of conquest, or what happens to a historically assignable State, to social formations – we are going to consider all of that as if it were spread out on a plane of equivalence. From one plane to another, relations and networks are then woven, so that we better understand the difference between these planes. Thus, we can proceed by treating everything on the same plane: a guy in the process of [*missing phrase*], a nomad setting out to conquer something ... No reason not to put that on the same screen, if there's a point to it – because it's certainly not the same thing – but in order to see what fabric can be woven between all that.

Why is this linked to the problem of the production of statements?

Last time, I attempted to distinguish the kinds of strata which were produced on the body without organs and which inhibited, and which were even made to inhibit, the functioning of the body without organs.¹ I would like to start again from there. Everything happens as if the body without organs, once given, was prevented from functioning. All the same we have some ideas on how it functions. The body without organs can be anything: it can be a living body, it can be a place, it can be a land, anything you like. The body without organs designates a use.

A body without organs being assumed, it always *undergoes*, that is why it is never given. What I call body without organs is a kind of limit that, in a logic of desire, we must land on, or one must approach to it. Yes, the best we can do is to approach it, because maybe if we did more than approach it or reach for it, then the body without organs would reverse itself and would brandish its death-face to us. It takes a lot of prudence to make oneself a body without organs; it takes a lot of prudence not to get blown up, patience is needed. In any case, all the more so, if it is a limit to approach prudently, that's because in order to approach it, things have to be blown up.

We know that it is precisely through lines of flight that we manage to approach the body without organs. Flight from what? What are we running from? We're starting to have ideas about that; and on the other hand, not all lines of flight are equally valid. And yet, once again, I will consider them at the beginning as equivalents: the drugged line of flight, the revolutionary line of flight, which, however, are completely different from each other. For the moment I'm not looking for how they are different, even if that ultimately becomes the problem: how they can both plug into each other and how they can be completely different. They do not put the same machines into play.

What prevents the body without organs from functioning, and what makes it so that, for us, the body without organs is always to be fabricated, is that it undergoes all sorts of inhibitions. It is never given except through inhibitions that need to be blasted away. Everything happens as if it were caught in a triple bandage, and I would like to try to clearly situate the notions that correspond to this triple inhibitory bandage.

These bandages, we can just as well call them strata. As opposed to what? The stratum is almost like a kind of formation on the body without organs that will cause it to fall back on itself, to refold itself, to form one-to-one relationships. The body without organs taken in a stratum is folded, refolded, forms a falling back that produces one-to-one relationships, and it is these one-to-one relationships which prevent the functioning of the BwO (body without organs), because the BwO, if it manages to function, functions in the form of a regime of polyvocal connections. So that crimping it, imposing techniques which push it back down, so that it no longer functions through polyvocal relations – that is already to take away all chances from it. In other words, everything happens on the body without organs, both its inhibitions and its formation, its constitution, its fabrication.

And so the three strata are rules through which the body without organs does not function, does not succeed in freeing itself. I think that they are opposed – I'm attempting to throw out a whole series of words here to see what sticks and what doesn't – that they should be opposed to the body without organs itself, which is not stratified. And it is not stratified because it is the plane of consistency, or what comes down to the same thing, the field of immanence of desire. That means desire in its positivity, desire as process, and desire as process precisely can only be defined negatively on the basis of what betrays it.

And we saw on previous occasions that the three great betrayals, the three maledictions on desire are: to relate desire to lack; to relate desire to pleasure, or to the orgasm – see [Wilhelm] Reich, fatal error; or to relate desire to enjoyment [*jouissance*]. The three theses are connected. To put lack into desire is to completely misrecognize the process. Once you have put lack into desire, you will only be able to measure the apparent fulfilments of desire with pleasure. Therefore, the reference to pleasure follows directly from desire-lack; and you can only relate it to a transcendence which is that of impossible enjoyment referring to castration and the split subject. That is to say that these three propositions form the same soiling of desire, the same way of cursing desire.

On the other hand, desire and the body without organs at the limit are the same thing, for the simple reason that the body without organs is the plane of consistency, the field of immanence of desire taken as process. This plane of consistency is beaten back down, prevented from functioning by the strata. Hence terminologically, I oppose – but once again if you can find better words, I'm not attached to these –, I oppose plane of consistency and the strata which precisely prevent desire from discovering its plane of consistency, and which will proceed to orient desire around lack, pleasure, and enjoyment, that is to say, they will form the repressive mystification of desire.

So, if I continue to spread everything out on the same plane, I say let's look for examples where desire does indeed appear as a process unfolding itself on the body without organs taken as field of immanence or of consistency of desire. And here we could place the ancient Chinese warrior; and again, it is we Westerners who interpret the sexual practices of the ancient Chinese and Taoist Chinese, in any case, as a delay of enjoyment. You have to be a filthy European to understand Taoist techniques like that. It is, on the contrary, the extraction

of desire from its pseudo-finality of pleasure in order to discover the immanence proper to desire in its belonging to a field of consistency. It is not at all to delay enjoyment.

But I could just as well point to, in our civilizations – look at those who have studied masochism – certain maso techniques, for example. The Chinese Tao, the Western maso, that too gets interpreted as bringing into operation phenomena of delay of enjoyment, whereas its operation is to discover a process immanent to desire, such that desire no longer relates to pleasure. The whole problem is precisely what, in Taoist China, appears as the absence of all perversion, as a desiring activity without perversion, the field of perversions being completely external to that. In our societies, at least in the case of the maso, the equivalent can only appear as perversion. It is obvious that the general economy of desire is not the same.

So there you have it, I start from this first great opposition: plane of consistency of desire of the body without organs and the strata which bind the body without organs. These strata, last time, I saw three of them.

The first stratum is that of organization. The stratum of organization is very simple: it consists in making the body without organs into an organism. And I use the word ‘make’ as in making a child²: one makes him an organism; one organizes him according to the principle of the yield of useful energies, of energies of work. One imposes on what happens on the BwO. What happens is very variable; the job is not over with the fabrication of a body without organs. On the contrary, it is not a scene, nor a place; the BwO is like a mastery, starting from which something will happen because something will be produced. The stratum of organization is entirely made to take what is on the point of happening, to take what is already happening on the body without organs, into a system which will direct all that in a completely different direction. It will divert it.

And this system, which will precisely extract the useful energies – called useful as a function of social production, to inhibit so-called useless energies – well, this system is the articulatory relation or the double organic organization. And this double organic organization, which is truly at the basis of the constitution of the organism ... the best example is muscle tone. You have to look at the theory of muscle tone found among biologists, and I’m thinking of an interesting theory proposed by [*indistinct name*], which shows that muscle tone is a statistical given.³ And it’s interesting, because the way in which the fabrication of the organism proceeds, when one makes an organism out of the body without organs, comes down to saying that all the molecular phenomena which happen on the body without organs will be taken up into large ensembles known as statistical. And this is even the first level of the double articulation; they will be caught up in crowd [*foules*] phenomena, and this is going to be the first stage of the passage from the molecular dimension belonging to the body without organs – and the BwO is nothing other than a giant molecule.

And these molecular phenomena will be organized into large organic molar ensembles of the skeleton type, and there, contemporary biologists show very well the extent to which the organism is a statistical given, that is to say implying a microbiology, namely implying the reduction of molecular, microbiological phenomena, to large statistical ensembles, or else, as for muscle tone – and this is related – the role of the nervous system in the molar constitution of organisms endowed with such a system.

But then this role of the nervous system also explains something else to us, namely that the organism in its relations with the external world is endowed with this strange faculty of *representation*, by which it annexes to itself a portion of the external world: the organism is not constituted as a form – what defines the form being precisely the double articulation – without apprehending external reality as a form which corresponds, not by resemblance, but according to relationships that biologists have tried to determine, namely [*indistinct words*]. And there is a whole derivation between the organic form itself, which we can call Form I, based on the double articulation, and the organization of the perceived world of representation, where the external world is grasped through the relay of the nervous system under the species of a form of another type, Form II: that's [Raymond] Ruyer's direction of research on the passage from the organic Form I to the Form II of perception.⁴ So all that's to do with the first stratum.

And I say 'first' because one has to start somewhere; above all, one should not interpret it as chronologically first. Already the formation of the organism is very much connected to social pressures, and when I said it was in accordance with the principle of useful energy, that indeed calls upon a whole world of social production. So, I retain, for this first stratum of organization, a certain number of concepts which seem to me key: useful or useless energy, the articulatory relation or double organic articulation, muscle tone and the nervous system, and representation. We can call that the volume of organization.

And then the second stratum will be the stratum of signification. And the stratum of signification, we could just as well say that it follows from the first, as that the first supposes it. And this time, we will no longer speak of the volume of the organism, but for reasons that we will see presently, we will speak of the angle of significance. It is this second stratum which prevents the body without organs as much from functioning as from being attained. And this time, its difference with the first is that the stratum of organization resulted in a world of representation distinct from reality, so that the great break which corresponded to the stratum of organization was – first rupture, the rupture of double articulation – and then it was just as much the rupture *representation-real* – [but now] the stratum of signification passes to the interior of representation and it also consists ... this time, it's a rupture that happens on the inside of representation, between what we will call the Signifier and the Signified. Therefore, this break is of a completely different type, and it consists in what? It consists first of all in a phenomenon of double articulation. This phenomenon of double articulation does not coincide with signifier-signified. Double articulation is constitutive of the signifier. It includes a first level which is also a certain way of forcing the molecular phenomena which occur on the BwO to enter into the large ensembles, large ensembles corresponding to statistical laws.

Only, this time, these molecular phenomena, they are what? At the level of representation, it's what can be called, for convenience, *figures of expression*. And so at a first level of this articulation which is made within the framework of representation, the figures of expression are taken up into ensembles that constitute distinctive units. Distinctive units, among linguists, in their theory of representation in its relationship to speech, among linguists, these are called *phonemes*, or even more simply, one can call them *letters*, although this not the same thing.

So, the first level of representation which takes molecular phenomena into statistical ensembles is: the figures of expression are taken up into statistical units, units not yet significant but distinctive, that is to say which enter into relations of distinction with each

other and which are called phonemes. The double articulation comes about because what are called phonemes (distinctive units) are in turn taken up into the statistical units of another type, this time significant or signifying units that one calls *morphemes*. There, the double articulation does not correspond to the duality signifier-signified; it is wholly at the basis of the constitution of the signifier. It is the signifier as such which implies double articulation, this time the double articulation of representation and no longer of the organism. There would already be here a whole problem consisting in seeing what the relationship is between the organic double articulation and the double articulation of representation.

Thus the figures of expression as molecular phenomena are organized into these two successive types of statistical units which constitute the signifier, that is to say, they are translated into phonemes and morphemes.

And that's why what seems to me very important in a linguist like [Louis] Hjelmslev is the way in which he goes beyond both the domain of morphemes and the domain of phonemes, in order to tell us a little something about the figures of expression in the free state, taken below what he himself calls the conditions of identity of phonemes. And he is perhaps the only one to have attained a kind of molecular linguistics, a micro-linguistics, and it's very important and sad – but maybe that will improve – that Hjelmslev was as if crushed by the other currents of linguistics.⁵

Once you have this constitutive double articulation of the signifier, from that moment there is no longer much difficulty in generating the signified as the correlate of the signifier. So the double articulation bears on the engendering of the signifier and not on signifier-signified relations. The signified will be, roughly, the set of icons (notion of C.S. Peirce) which correspond to the signifying elements such as they are formed by the double articulation, the icons being images. And on the side of the signified-icons, just as earlier the signifier implied a double articulation imposed on the figures of expression, on the side of the signified, the icons here also suppose a kind of system in which are caught up, this time, not figures of expression, but *figures of content*. The imprisonment of figures of content in icons, in the signified, and the statistical treatment of figures of content so as to form icons, that is to say the set of images that correspond to the signifying elements, and then the parallel operation at the level of the figures of expression taken up into the double articulation phonemes-morphemes, all that combines very well.

Simply, to finish with this level, with this second stratum, if I establish the signifier-signified line, therefore, with at one end the capture of figures of expression, at the other end the capture of figures of content, with the two poles I mentioned last time ... For example, to be a bit less obscure here, it represents, if you like, at the level of the nursery school, the way in which one teaches children to draw, or when one teaches them to write; or, at the other pole, the nursery school lesson about things, in the forms of drawing or in the forms of graphism that one imposes on them – the figures of expression that are taken up into an imposed form, those which will function as the signifier; and the others as the signified, that is to say, the set of lessons of things, this is the signified which refers to the set of graphisms; that's how it works in the classic nursery school.

Therefore, in my line, I can say that the set of figures of expression led back to the signifier, caught in the net of the signifier, and which I represent by a sort of circle around the signifier – the set of figures of expression is thus reduced to a slavery, caught up in these units which impose upon them so that they no longer play freely, no longer enter into free connections.

On the other side, I can make the circle of the signified where, this time, it will be the set of figures of content taken up in the system of lessons about things, equally enslaved and prevented from entering into free connections. We assume that these two circles have an intersection, and this intersection which is the very articulation signifier-signified, the articulation graphic form-lesson about things, it is this intersection of the two circles, the circle of the signifier and the circle of the signified, which constitutes what I called for convenience the *dominant real*.

While the first stratum led to a representation-real break, the second stratum opens onto something quite different: a break interior to representation with a new phenomenon of double articulation which culminates with a duality which is no longer that of representation and the real but is what in the representation of the dominant real differs from what will have to be called a *masked real*. The masked real is what continues to work under the net of the signifier and under the net of the signified, namely the free connections between figures of expression and figures of content, treated in molecular manner, that is to say insofar as they are not taken up in systems of enslavement.

And then, the third and last stratum – they follow from one another, but it would not be difficult to do the inverse procedure, of showing that III is already presupposed by II. And here, at the meeting point of the intersection, I would say the third stratum can be defined, namely the stratum of *subjectivation*, to which corresponds more precisely the point of subjectivation.⁶

The point of subjectivation is very curious, it must be very important, but I don't quite yet see how. I would say that there is no dominant real without a point of subjectivation, and this point is not at all the point where the subject emerges. It is the point from which the angle of significance and the variable opening of this angle are organized. It is always starting from a point of subjectivation that the cut [*découpage*] of the dominant real is made, and it is always starting from the point of subjectivation that the machine of signification will come into play, and all the more, the machine of organization.

There is always – and it is in this sense that this third stratum is presupposed by the other two – there is no organization of an organism, there is no significance of significations, there is no determination of a dominant real, without a point of subjectivation which corresponds to it. It's not at all that it's the point of subjectivation which makes the dominant real. Strictly speaking, it measures it, it fixes its variable limits. Why variable? Because each of us evidently has several points of subjectivation; but the point of subjectivation is not what will fabricate the dominant real. It is what will permeate it, allowing us to rediscover ourselves there, to fix ourselves to such and such a place in the dominant real and to maintain ourselves, and to organize almost all our understanding and our resignation to the dominant real. Starting from the point of subjectivation, one has the impression that one understands everything, and that what belongs to the dominant real is there for eternity.

If I take someone, their points of subjectivation are very numerous and, ultimately, I ask myself – that would make things easier – if the point of subjectivation isn't a new function. And it is through this that the third stratum flows from the second, if it is not a new function of the signified itself, that is to say, of icons. Last time, I said: we see how, once the dominant real has been assigned for someone, the dominant real, for example, let's suppose, of a worker, this is where one can see the angle of significance of a resigned worker: it's the factory, the job, the family. And then he will say: it's always been like that, there will always

be bosses, machines everywhere; all that is organized in a dominant real. The masked real is what is masked by the dominant real, namely the trafficking of the bosses, or the force or non-force of revolutionary groups who propose to blow up the dominant real, etc.

But the guy who is caught up in the dominant real, in the first case, he submits to it. That means that, in a certain way, he must fuse with the impression of understanding this dominant real. Now, I say that this is indeed the role of the point of subjectivation, which is not at all in him; the point of subjectivation is what will constitute him, as a subject fixed in such and such a place, but it is not the point of his subjectivity. The point of subjectivation is the point from which the angle of significance of the dominant real will narrow and will vary its opening, for example when the guy passes from his work to his family. The point of subjectivation assumes the “Get on, the boss said so”; the boss functions as an icon in a very special sense, that is to say, a point of subjectivation starting from which the description or assignation of a dominant real is made.

And then, he gets home from work, he finds his wife, and I guess it’s not marvellous, he gives her his wages. His wife acts as another point of subjectivation. If he is a fetishist, his wife, as a global person, acts as a point of subjectivation sketching another dominant real in the dominant real. It’s not the same angle, but it overlaps. And then comes the moment of love, and he is a fetishist, so he loves his wife’s dress even more than his wife ... a woman’s dress, or a woman’s shoe also forms a point of subjectivation. We pass our time jumping from one point of subjectivation to other points of subjectivation. But there is always a masked real.

Typical case of a point of subjectivation: the chief.⁷ The chief has said this: long live Hitler. There is the dominant real of Nazism and then the great icon, the figure of the chief who intervenes as a point of subjectivation starting from which each Nazi properly fuses with the dominant real which imposes some particular place on him in the corresponding society.

What function do these three strata serve? It seems to me that this is where social formations function, namely the three great social orders are: you will be organized or otherwise you will be deprived; the second is: you will signify and you will be signified, you will interpret and you will be interpreted, or otherwise you will be a dangerous deviant; and you will be subjectivated, that is to say fixed, your place assigned, and you will only move if the point of subjectivation tells you to move, otherwise you will be a dangerous nomad. There is a dominant reality of work, there is a dominant real of labor; this dominant real does not have an invariable opening, it has a variable angle. This is what one will call the mobility of manpower. The mobility of manpower is brought about starting from a point of subjectivation specific to the capitalist formation, and which is the mobility of capital.

And starting from the 19th century, one of the essential problems for political economy had been the comparative mobility of manpower, the mobility of the workforce in relation to the mobility of capital: how to make it so that there is no mobility of labor that would exceed the mobility of capital or which would be carried off in other directions. That would produce nomads. And how to make it so that the workers agree to go where the mobility of capital, that is to say, capitalist investment, goes? I would say that, under this aspect, capital taken in its mobility is the mobility of the point of subjectivation on which depends the mobility of a subject in the dominant real.

To the first stratum correspond the exclusions of the depraved, that is to say, those who make their organism function according to a principle of useless energies, that is to say, those who are not socially productive. And already, this depravity is a certain way in which someone has blown up the organism or the organization of the body in order to rediscover something of a body without organs, the BwO being essentially a captor of so-called useless energies. To the second stratum corresponds the exclusion of the experimenter, the experimenter being precisely the one who traces a domain of non-significance. And to the third stratum, correspond the exclusions of the nomad.

We must continue to spread everything out on the same plane, this whole system is connected, and this is the reason I'm fascinated by the text by [Antonin] Artaud, 'To Have Done with the Judgment of God', where he only describes the first stratum, namely how one makes the body into an organism, how one forces the body to take the form of an organism. Hence Artaud's cries: "My body has been stolen"⁸, that is to say: where I had a body as a living body, I have been made into an organism. Now in fact, it is this triple system of the three strata together which forms the judgment of God, that is to say the theological system. And what is profoundly connected there are the activity of organization, the activity of interpretation which corresponds to the stratum of signification, and the activity of subjectivation.

And one can find them at all levels, that is to say, all regimes of organization imply this: once again, you will be organized and you will organize, you will be interpreted and you will interpret, you will be subjectivated and you will move as soon as someone tells you to. We find that everywhere, and we can even call the system of the judgment of God, or the despotic system, the totality of these three strata; or the imperial system. It is simply the forms that differ: in every system – and once again, for the moment, it is a matter of putting everything on the same plane – ... Fascism: the problem would be: what is the type of organization, including the organization of properly fascist bodies, what is the properly fascist machine of interpretation and what are the points of subjectivation of fascism? And it will be necessary to seek that for every imperial formation.

The conjugal apparatus is similar. We must consider it in the same way. The conjugal relationship indeed implies a kind of organization of bodies which even has a whole jurisdiction, namely the belonging of bodies between spouses; a certain principle of useful energy, namely desire related to the lack; an angle of significance which constitutes the properly conjugal machine of interpretation with its dominant real: ah, my kitchen, ah, my children. This is the dominant real, and the point of subjectivation, which is often very variable, the point of subjectivation can be the husband, the husband as chief: my husband, that's what he likes, I'm going to make him the dinner he likes this evening. There we have a point of subjectivation from which the dominant real is cut out. Or else it's the kid who takes the role of the little boss [*petit chef*]; or maybe it's the vacuum cleaner. You have infinite points of subjectivation, they form little constellations.

We should carry out inquiries into households; we would take several households, and we would fix their three strata: the organization of the body of the husband on the collective body, or its non-organization; then the stratum of significance; and then the stratum of subjectivation and the variations of points of subjectivation. One could analyze the imperial machine in these terms, or the [psycho-]analytic machine. From the moment there is a despotic formation, you always find the three strata that prevent the formation of a field of immanence of desire. This is why, at this level of analysis, I can consider everything,

formally, structurally, everything as equivalent: whether it is the Nazi despotic machine, whether it is the conjugal machine, or whether it is the psychoanalytic machine. For the moment, it doesn't matter about the differences.

In the case of the psychoanalytic machine, we can push the analysis further. First, what plays the role of the body without organs? There are always several bodies without organs nested one inside the others; there is never just one. What plays the role of a body without organs is first of all the cabinet of the analyst. Then the analyst, insofar as he does not listen or talk, is made to function as a body without organs. But it is a BwO which is necessarily trapped since it only functions as BwO in order to prevent the functioning of the body without organs, that is to say, in order to trace on the BwO strata which will allow phenomena from the body without organs to enter into the disciplinary units of the organization of signification and subjectivation.

First question then: what is the analogue of a body without organs in psychoanalysis? Second question: how does the organization of strata get made in psychoanalysis, or in conjugality, or in fascism? There is also a fundamental organization, an organization of bodies which happens in psychoanalysis. Then we would have to look into – because it is very variable – we would have to interrogate the whole domain of the psychosomatic; or else it would vary with the types of illness, for example, in the case of hysteria. It is obvious that there is a very precise corporeal organization; and then – and this is the essential – in line with the formation of the different strata, it is now this or now that stratum that will have a privilege over the others.

In the psychoanalytic machine, the stratum which devours almost everything, at the limit, is the stratum of signification, that is to say, its norms of signification: whatever you do, it means something. Notice that that corresponds especially with the conjugal relation. It perhaps refers even more to the contemporary conjugal relationship than to the facts of childhood ... [*indistinct remarks*]. In the conjugal relationship you have this interpretation machine: 'What did he do?' What does that mean, 'What did he do?', this machine where everything means something: 'Wait, he does not like his soup today, what's happened?' That's the exclusion of all right to a-signification. Everything has a signification, and we can no longer do anything a-signifying. That's the interpretation machine; it's no one's fault, that's what the thing is made for.

And then there are points of subjectivation. There was the point of subjectivation of the childhood type: it was starting from childhood that the dominant real was determined, such as it was traced through the cabinet of the analyst, and that helps explain why this thing is truly a drug. How does analysis become, literally, their dominant real? Why do they end up organizing their entire schedule from one session to the next, so that everything depends on the next session? What's going to happen next time? What will happen in the next session? What happened in the last session? ... It's really like any despotic machine, the alignment of a dominant reality in which one is subjectivated.

So, childhood was for a long time the psychoanalytical point of subjectivation, but now, with guys like [Serge] Leclair or [*indistinct name*], there's no longer even any need for childhood. They discover an even more artificial, even more perverse, point of subjectivation, no longer the childhood scene, but the analytic scene in the closed cabinet of the analyst.⁹ It is a displacement of the point of psychoanalytic subjectivation that is very important: the psychoanalyst is no longer valid as the representative of the father and the mother, but is

valid through himself, like a master of an axiomatic or of an accounting of desire, the truth of desire no longer referring to a childhood reality, but referring to what happens in the cabinet.

So, with regard to the whole system, we can do this analysis to show how a body without organs is there as a field of immanence of desire, and at the same time is completely prevented from functioning by the organization of strata, that is to say, by the organization of the volume of the organism, of the angle of significance and the points of subjectivation.

That is the first point that I wanted to take up. All the same, that gives us a set of concepts that leads to an evident conclusion: in our enterprise of seeking the body without organs, in a certain way, I can say that it is always there, whether you make it or not, it is always there. It's simply that if you don't take the trouble to take it into your own hands and to make it yourself, it is done to you, and it is done to you in accordance with the strata that prevent it from functioning. At that moment, you are taken up into the system of organization, of significance and subjectivation. In any case, it is there.

So, what to do? To make oneself a body without organs, what can that mean, since in any case, there already is one.¹⁰ It means something very simple: to make one which is destratified. To make one which functions. And to make one which functions, what does that mean? It means, by all the evidence, to make one that has broken its triple bandage, its triple link, its three strata, that is to say, to make one which, in a certain manner, has broken with the organization of the organism; which, in another way, has broken with the angle of significance; and which, in yet another way, is desubjectivated, that is to say, a body which is discretely – I'll explain later what I mean by 'discretely' –, the most discrete, the most depraved, or the most disorganized, a-signifying and desubjectivated.

All that obviously refers to what happens on the body without organs, and this time, I'm only defining it negatively. These are very practical tasks: kill the interpretation in yourself. The machine of interpretation is the manipulation of the angle of significance. When I say that it is necessary to be prudent, that comes down to saying that the constant danger, at the limit – I'm dramatizing a little – is death. It's because of that that the psychoanalysts, for example, do not abandon the death instinct. In their incapacity to understand that the body without organs is the life of desire in the raw state, in the pure state, it is desire in its plane of consistency, in its field of immanence, because they have identified life with this artificial pseudo-life of organization, signification and subjectivation; and in the face of any attempt to blow up these three strata, they will say: this is the death drive; and in fact, it can be that.

At random, I'll take the examples we've got: the drugged body.¹¹ It's quite obvious that, in a certain way, it is a body that rediscovers itself as a body without organs; that is to say that it – in one way or another, depending on the type of drug, it will not be in the same way – blows up the stratum of organization. The maso: that's the key perversion, because a perversion, like fetishism, seems to me to be completely inscribed in the domain of strata. There is something very cunning in fetishism, it's that there is such a mobility to the point of subjectivation, or such a derision, where the point of subjectivation being taken as a partial object, the fetishist makes use of the point of subjectivation in such a cunning manner, that his way of using it amounts to a way of suppressing it, even if he still passes through the point of subjectivation. But take as examples the drugged body or the maso body: these are ways of blowing up – even if, as you say, only for a certain time and artificially –, the organization of the organism in order to rediscover a body without organs.

The second completely complementary attempt is no longer to blow up the organism for a certain time and artificially, but to kill in oneself (and if possible in others) the machine of interpretation: which is experimentation. To kill the interpretation machine; otherwise, you're fucked, you're already caught up in a despotic regime of the sign where sign eternally refers to sign, and where you can no longer have done with anything. Psychoanalysis is only the most perfect of the interpretation machines in the capitalist system. But there are others, and better known ones: religions, for example, in other social formations, are great machines of significance or of interpretation; and there is even a religious use of drugs. It should be said that we are never saved by anything.

There are even two dangers, that's why I say patience and prudence are always necessary. After all and once again, according to the principle of experimentation, nobody ever knows in advance what is suitable for him; it takes a really long time to know. So fine, a guy can throw himself into drugs, and then it turns out it's not his thing, but he thinks it is his thing. A guy can throw himself into drugs in such a way that he gets completely wasted. Well, that's death, it's the death drive like the psychoanalysts say.

To arrive at no longer interpreting, to arrive at what is so moving ... For example, the machine of interpretation in the conjugal relationship is constantly nourished in the love relationship, because when I say conjugal relationship, it is not a question of husband and wife. It is not enough to not be married to not have conjugal relations. The MLF [Mouvement de Libération des Femmes] is full of conjugal relationships; the FHAR [Front homosexuel d'action révolutionnaire] is full of conjugal relationships; free communities secrete the conjugal relationship. I use 'conjugal relationships' exactly as a synonym for the relation of interpretation or the signifying relation where each asks themselves about the other: "He just said that, what do I think that he thinks that I think? etc.": at the end of the day, exactly what Laing nicely called 'knots'.¹² From the moment there is a knot, there is an angle of significance, something to interpret. "You're in a bad mood, you've got that pinched look at the corner of your mouth, why are you in a bad mood?" "No, no, I'm not in a bad mood ..."

Once again, the peak of interpretation is when the psychoanalyst does not say a word. This is the very height of interpretation. The guy leaves saying: "what a great session today." Someone told me that there are subjects like that in analysis who go for a month, sixth months, two years, without the analyst saying a word, and it's obviously because the synthesis of signification is empty, he does not need to add anything to what he synthesizes. It is an empty synthesis, a formal synthesis where the sign, instead of coupling with the thing and working on a thing, the sign refers to another sign. No need to say anything; at the limit, in the conjugal relationship, everything can be done by glances.

There are two kinds of people who are wrong: those who say that the real battle is on the outside; the people who say that are the traditional Marxists: in order to change man, let's change the external world. And then there are the priests or the moralists who say: the real battle is on the inside: let us change man. Bizarrely, in a completely different way, certain Maoist depositions have taken up certain themes of this need to change man. What does that mean: let's change man first of all, the struggle must be interior first of all? Many Americans have said that as well. What they mean when they are fully moralists and fully priests, is: the battle on the outside is not necessary; the battle on the inside is the deepest, and the battle on the inside is not the same as the pseudo-battle on the outside, which must be given up. The battle on the inside is against our egoism, against our vices; it is against our temptations, that is to say, it makes the three strata function.

For my part, I would like to say something completely different. I mean: the battle on the inside, I understand very well what that means; anyway I think so. It should just be said that the battle on the inside and the battle on the outside concern the same things. Institutions crystallized on the inside and internal secretions within me: these are the same things. So that a battle is indeed necessary, but a perpetual battle, a constant combat over the fact ... [indistinct sentences] ... The conjugal relationship is crystallized in institutions that have a certain power, but at the same time it is an internal secretion. Even if you don't get married, you participate in conjugality from the moment you make interpretations, from the moment you make signification.

We have to constantly defeat this kind of gland which is in us and which produces interpretation in correspondence with the significations crystallized on the outside. It is at the same time that there is a whole system, a whole code of the signifier on the outside, and a whole gland of interpretation inside us. The battle against jealousy, for example. Some might well say – and they are partly right – “Well, I don't feel jealous”. It doesn't stop us saying at some kink in the path, “Woah, shit, how do I feel about that?” We had a gland which, in a less abundant form than others, had spread and confected jealousy. We weren't aware of it, and then, at some moment, it's too late: we were doing nothing but that.

The Oedipus complex is an objective institution crystallized in society in the form of human sex acts and rules of marriage; and it also completely governs the parent-child relationship. But it is also completely a gland of internal secretion; Oedipus is part of the conjugal relationship: think of conjugal relationships without children, the obscure sadness; there is always one member of the couple who becomes the other's child, who is mothered by the other.

It is exactly the same revolutionary fight we have to engage with on the outside and on the inside. Once again, how many revolutionaries think it's enough ... – I insist on this because this is how I save myself from moralism; I am not saying there's a battle on the inside which is of a different nature to the battle on the outside, I'm saying there is a single and same battle. It is strictly the same because fascism, that too is outside us and inside us – how many revolutionary militants are there who treat their wife as not even a bourgeois has ever treated his wife? How many are there who secrete conjugality to the point of shame? How many are there even among the most courageous militants of the MLF, who secrete mothering and interpretation, making the MLF the opposite of what a revolutionary group must be, that is to say, instead of being a group for experimentation, it has become a group for interpretation.

I will take an example which seems quite fascinating to me, the possibility of a political struggle against the conjugal relationship, against the Oedipal relationship, and I say each time, since it is a question of detonating the strata which prevent us from acceding to the field of immanence, to the plane of consistency of desire – once again, it is necessary to proceed with caution: look at the difference between a drug user who gets completely wasted and a drug user who knows how to handle his stuff. That seems to me to be the art of experimentation. Experimentation implies prudence; the risk is obviously the opposite of destratifying, the risk of suicide. That comes partly from treating the battle solely as a battle against the outside. If we don't know that Oedipus, fascism, the little chief, is also in us – and again, we see revolutionaries who are right little bosses at the very moment they are leading the external battle against the little bosses, against the factory foremen –, there once again you have a slippage. They don't lead the way in internal experimentation in the same way as

they lead the way in external experimentation. Here I believe it's truly a single and same battle, which we can't get out of, whichever stratum we want to detonate.

And the most dangerous, the most deadly, are attempts to undo something of the experimentation of the body, of the organization of the body into the organism. To become disorganized, meticulously to [*word not clear*] ... literally a higher life, or what Nietzsche called the great Health, to undo signification and interpretations, not in order to become some kind of moron, but in order to conduct real experimentation, that is to say to become an experimenter, and finally to become a nomad even in the place one is, that is to say to undo the points of subjectivation; all that is extremely difficult. It is not enough to get the hell out to become nomadic; it is not enough to cease to interpret in order to become an experimenter; and above all it is not enough to disorganize the organism to become a body without organs with things happening on it. Every time, it can be death, above all when you are no longer supported by the strata. And the strata function as bandages, in a certain sense; they prevent you from breaking up.

What always fascinates me is the coexistence of the two, of the types, the way in which the types rub shoulders the whole time – the possible breaking up and then the experimentation. So that if one does not tread very carefully – see Castaneda ... And in all these attempts, there is a fear, and there is every reason to have fear, not only at the most obvious level of disorganization, but even at the level of desubjectivation. It's because the anchoring points from the point of subjectivation are very precious to you; when there are no longer any anchoring points a kind of anxiety starts up; there are all sorts of formations of anxiety which correspond to defection from the strata.¹³

There, I've talked about a whole bunch of notions, and I would like you to complete them.

A student: I had the impression that you conceived the drugged body as something external; in fact, I think that, by definition, every body is drugged from the beginning. It would be necessary to look at the different kinds of drugs ...

Deleuze: If you give that extension to the word drugs, there are two kinds of drug use: the machine of interpretation, psychoanalysis, that's a drug; the conjugal relationship is a drug; and these are drugs whose use is specifically in conformity with stratifications ...

[*Interruption of the recording*]

Richard [Pinhas]: You didn't dwell that much on what constituted the masked real, and I was wondering if, in relation to the dominant real, at the level of the productive assemblages of statements, one could not propose the hypothesis that, corresponding to this double approach *dominant real – masked real*, there might be at the level of statements also a double approach. Namely: already constituted statements which are always the repetition of structures, or of relays, of networks which are those, roughly speaking, of domination, of signifying effects which reproduce the law, the law in the sense of domination; and on the other side, at the other pole, points, event-based particles that one could call enunciations, as opposed to statements already in place, already constituted and bringing repetition; enunciations which, by virtue of nothing other than their innovative nature, experimental if you like, already explode, just by their presence, certain relays, certain networks of already constituted statements.

Deleuze: Okay, yes, okay; I haven't yet spoken of the masked real, because the masked real is precisely what happens on the body without organs when it is destratified. The dominant real is what masks the masked real, exactly in the same way as it takes up phenomena proper to the body without organs into statistical ensembles.

What interested me was a study on muscle tone, a study of the tonus as biological given. Or do you see other strata, then? For my part, I don't see any others; very broadly speaking, it seemed to me that there are the three great ones, and they are linked together: I will make you an organism, I will make you an interpreter, and I will subjectivate you. That is the theological system. What remains for us to see is what happens on the body without organs, underneath the strata, and each time, it will be necessary to show how it is the inverse side of the strata.

So, at the same time as the body without organs destratifies itself, things happen on it, it's contemporary. What order of things, and how are they opposed to strata? I am just going to make a kind of list of things which happen on the body without organs. First, distributions of intensities; the body without organs from this point of view is truly intensity = 0, but taken as matrix of all intensities or the principle of all productions of intensities.¹⁴ So that what happens on the body without organs is a distribution of intensities, and in this sense, the BwO is not only matrix of production of intensities, it is also a map of distribution of intensities.

And yet 'map of distribution' is poorly put, and the less poorly put it is, the better it works, because *map*, that indicates something spatial, and the body without organs is not space, it belongs to matter insofar as it fills space according to such and such a degree of intensity, that is to say, according to the degree of the intensities which pass on it. Here there is already a whole domain: the intensities distributed on the body without organs. Now, the intensities are opposed, in the stratum of the organism, they are opposed to the world of representation. Intensities are fundamentally non-representative, they represent nothing, and it is in this sense that they will be a fundamental element in the machine of experimentation, as opposed to the machine of interpretation. I am restituting intensities as fundamental.

The second thing that transpires, and it is perhaps the same thing, is multiplicities. I say that it is perhaps the same thing because these multiplicities which are produced on the body without organs are precisely intensive multiplicities, and multiplicity belongs fundamentally to intensity. In what sense? In a very precise sense, namely that it is necessary to call intensive quantity any multiplicity that is apprehended in the instant. From the moment there is a multiplicity apprehended as multiplicity in an instant, there is intensive quantity. In the domain of extension, it is the opposite. What is apprehended in an instant is thereby posited as unity, and multiplicity can only be apprehended successively.

If it is true that intensities are opposed to the world of representation at the level of the strata, multiplicities are slightly different. They are opposed to extensive quantities or to qualitative forms which also in turn make up part of the strata at several levels, as much of the stratum of organization as of the stratum of signification. We have seen that one type of fundamental intensive multiplicity was a multiplicity that one could call a pack, as opposed to the extensive multiplicities of mass. The extensive multiplicities of mass are rather on the side of the strata, and the intensive multiplicities of packs are rather on the side of the body without organs and of its liberation with regard to the strata.

Third thing which happens on the body without organs: these are the flows. And again, this is another way of saying the same thing; why? Flows are not the same thing as intensive quantities, but intensive quantities are always measures of flow. And it is not surprising because intensive quantities, being themselves multiplicities, multiplicities being themselves intensive quantities, intensities being themselves multiplicities, an intensity, that does not mean anything by itself, it does not mean anything. An intensity can only signify a difference of intensity, a difference between a maximum and a minimum, between a higher intensity and a lower intensity, beyond the putting in relation of two intensities under the conditions of their being put in relation.

And there, that's a whole problem, to know under what physical, aetiological conditions intensities enter into a relation, because supposing that the intensities enter into relation on the basis of a constitutive inequality, because they are completely unequal, and it is relations of inequality that define the difference of intensities, something happens, something flows which is precisely a flow from one intensity to the other, and the direction of the flow is determined by the passage from the highest to the lowest, or can be determined as being either in the direction of entropy, or in the direction of negentropy.

Fourth determination – but you have to sense that it's the same thing; all that, it's aspects of the same thing – free machinic connections, the whole domain of machinic connections, in opposing free connections to two kinds of other connections or relations: mechanical relations or finalist relations. For mechanical relations and relations of finality are constitutive of the organism. On the contrary, the domain of machinic connections, when two things make machines out of each other ... One could pose this problem: under what conditions can two things, two beings or any two things whatever be said to form a machinic connection: what is necessary and under which circumstances are such connections formed? – but that's not a part of the problems that remain to us. In any case, these machinic connections which are assumed to happen on the body without organs constitute precisely the whole domain of machines it is necessary to call *a-signifying*: they do not mean anything; they are defined uniquely by their use, their functioning, that's all; they are not the object of interpretations, any more than intensities are objects of interpretation. The fourth domain is that of a-signifying machines.

These a-signifying machines are particularly connected to a regime that I called for convenience sake the *sign-particle* regime, and this is opposed to the strata since the strata, at least the second one, the stratum of significance, implies a completely different regime of sign, the regime of the sign under the signifier, and from the beginning I have attempted to oppose the regime of the sign-particle to the regime where sign refers to sign to infinity, under a signifier which constitutes the machine of interpretation. On the contrary, the machine of experimentation on the body without organs is the sign-particle couple.

Sixth possible determination of what happens on the body without organs, as opposed to the strata: it would be necessary to say that the strata define territories or processes of reterritorialization. What happens on the BwO, and this is why the BwO as intensive matrix is a desert, the desert not being at all something empty and depopulated, but being precisely the place inhabited by intensive multiplicities, by a pack, it is the place of packs ... What happens on the BwO at this level, as opposed to the territorialities, are lines of deterritorialization. [*End of the recording and of the session*]

Notes

¹ The session referred to was presumably not recorded.

² *Faire un enfant* is a common French expression for ‘to have a baby’, or ‘to have a child’.

³ Although the identity of the biologist and the study in question are unknown, the topic is framed here in a way that is consistent with the ideas from Raymond Ruyer, who is mentioned by name at the end of this section on the ‘stratum of organization’ (see footnote 4). Ruyer developed a distinction between ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ (or statistical) sciences in his *Éléments de psycho-biologie* [*Elements of Psycho-Biology*] (Paris: PUF, 1946), cf. Introduction, pp. 1-20. In *The Genesis of Living Forms* (translated by Jon Roffe and Nicholas B. de Weydenthal, London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020 [1958]), there is a brief discussion of how the “contractile properties of molecules” play a role in “muscular contraction” (p. 42). Nevertheless, the unidentified study on the *tonus musculaire* is clearly by a different author.

⁴ See Raymond Ruyer, *The Genesis of Living Forms*, Chapter 11, ‘Forms I, II and III’, pp. 147-156.

⁵ See Louis Hjelmslev, *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language*, translated by Francis J. Whitfield, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969 [1943]. For discussions by Deleuze and Guattari of Hjelmslev’s linguistics, see *Anti-Oedipus* (translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983 [1972]), pp. 242-243, and *A Thousand Plateaus* (translated by Brian Massumi, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988 [1980]), pp. 43-45, 99, 108, 528 n. 46.

⁶ See *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 129-132, where this concept is introduced.

⁷ On the chief or leader, see Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (translated by James Strachey, *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Hogarth Press, 1955 [1921], Vol. 18), Chapter V, ‘Two Artificial Groups: The Church and the Army.’

⁸ The phrase *On a volé mon corps* [“My body has been stolen”] does not occur in *Pour en finir avec la jugement de Dieu* [‘To Have Done with the Judgment of God’ (1947)], but Artaud does talk of *la suffocation/ en moi/ de l’idée de corps* [“the suffocation in me of the idea of the body”], ‘To Have Done with the Judgment of God’, in Antonin Artaud, *Selected Writings* (edited by Susan Sontag, translated by Helen Weaver, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 567 (translation modified). Artaud’s use of the phrase *corps sans organes* [the body without organs] can be found on p. 571. Cf. the discussions of Artaud in *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 150, 163.

⁹ Cf. Serge Leclaire, *Psychoanalyzing* (translated by Peggy Kamuf, Stanford: Stanford University, 1998 [1968], chapter 1.

¹⁰ The plateau of *A Thousand Plateaus* addressed to this problem, ‘November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Organs?’, was first published in *Minuit*, 10, September 1974.

¹¹ In this regard, see pp. 150-154 in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

¹² R.D. Laing, *Knots* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971 [1970]).

¹³ On Castaneda with regard to experimentation, see Sessions 1 and 2 of this Seminar, and *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 227-228.

¹⁴ See the discussion in *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 189.