

Foucault's Folds: Deleuze and the Interstices of Friendship

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Mes poésies, je ne les écris pas: elles
consistent en actions et en sentiments.
– Balzac, *Le Père Goriot*

That Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze shared a range of philosophical, social, and critical interests while also maintaining an uncommon friendship is hardly open to dispute. Given their strong intellectual and personal bonds, Deleuze preferred to discuss Foucault's concepts in depth and breadth rather than anecdotally. For Deleuze's volume on Foucault in fact covers a broad range of topics, many of which fold back into several developed with Parnet both in their 1977 *Dialogues* and in *L'Abécédaire*. How the concept of friendship emerges in Deleuze's reading along the interstices of Foucault's texts is the focus of this essay.

One might expect that in addressing this peculiar friendship I would commence with the fact that they ended up not speaking to each other for most of the final decade of Foucault's life. However, besides having already considered the nature of this distanced relationship elsewhere, I also find that their explicit estrangement is not all that different from many of the intellectual relationships among men of the 1940s–1950s generation. As Foucault told the Japanese interviewer Moriaki Watanabe, "I belong perhaps to a rather old-fashioned generation for whom friendship is something at once capital and superstitious.... Friendship for me is a kind of a secret Freemasonry, but with some visible points" (Foucault 1994, 589, my translation). Deleuze was equally drawn to this conception of friendship: already in *Dialogues* he said that while he could speak of things he and Foucault had discussed, what mattered was "really to encounter this aggregate of sounds hammered out, decisive gestures, ideas of tinder and fire, extreme attention and abrupt closure, laughter and smiles that one senses are 'dangerous' at the very moment that one receives their tenderness—this aggregate as a unique combination whose proper name would be Foucault" (Deleuze and Parnet 2002, 11, translation modified). He then says in *L'Abécédaire* that whereas there are people whom one can never understand or speak to even on the simplest matters, there are others with whom one might disagree completely, but can understand deeply and profoundly even in the most abstract things, linked through this indeterminate basis that he considers so mysterious. He admits that his relations with Foucault were of this

mysterious kind, not needing to speak in order to appreciate and understand each other (F as in Fidelity). Thus, however illuminating it might be, the direct approach—through personal biography and even through chronological review of Deleuze's writing on Foucault and reciprocally—seems of less interest than finding an oblique angle into and through their works. Hence, this search for an alternate entry to their folds of friendship seems more consonant with the form and substance of these writings and relations. To provide an illustration for this search, I submit for your consideration the peculiar drawing that appears at the end of *Foucault* in order to suggest that it constitutes perhaps the most visible, if not necessarily most immediately comprehensible, mark of friendship possible between the two philosophers. To account for this graphic as a deliberate mark of friendship, let me recall how this study itself folds backward from the 1980s and the time of Deleuze's seminar on Foucault and commences with two chapters that are significantly revised versions of essays originally published in the French journal *Critique* (1970, on *The Archaeology of Knowledge*), then five years later (1975, on *Discipline and Punish*). Again, my purpose in looking at these two essays is to find the interstices or seams along which I can trace the fold of friendship and to lead back to the graphic with which *Foucault* concludes.

One such moment comes in the first essay, "The New Archivist." In exploring the originality of Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Deleuze refers to Foucault's book on Raymond Roussel, suggesting its affinity to Foucault's confrontation with the statement and, within it, the repetition of "something else," an outside, the new domain "of power and its relation to knowledge" (Deleuze 1988, 12). Deleuze calls Foucault's orientation to these statements as creating multiplicities and claims that the *Archaeology* represents "the most decisive step yet taken in the theory-practice of multiplicities" (Deleuze 1988, 14). Deleuze likens this project to Blanchot's commitment to maintaining "the most rigorous links between the singular and the plural, the neutral and repetition" (Deleuze 1988, 14), and here Deleuze creates what I judge to be the seam, fold, or *doublure* that I seek. "Perhaps, in this archaeology," says Deleuze, "Foucault offers us less a discourse on his method than the poem of his previous works, and reaches the point where philosophy is necessarily poetry, the forceful poetry of what is said, which is also the poetry both of non-sense and of the most profound sense" (Deleuze 1988, 18, translation modified).

As a culminating, summative statement, Deleuze can offer no higher praise given that, for him, philosophy's greatest achievement is to maintain direct and active relations with non-philosophy. But as much as Deleuze's praise is its own kind of poetry, a distinct method operates

here. For as Deleuze maintains, Foucault can indeed declare that "he has never written anything but fiction for, as we have seen, statements resemble dreams and are transformed as in a kaleidoscope, depending on the corpus in question and the diagonal line being traced" (Deleuze 1988, 18, translation modified). Then, describing how multiplicities abound in Foucault's work, discursive and non-discursive, traversing diverse thresholds—scientific, aesthetic, ethical, and political—all leading to "the formation of the archaeology-poem," Deleuze lets loose with a clarion call to brothers in arms:

[What is essential] is to have discovered and surveyed that unknown land where a literary form, a scientific proposition, a common phrase, a schizophrenic piece of non-sense, and so on, are also statements, but lacking a common denominator, without any possible reduction or discursive equivalences. This is what had never before been attained by logicians, formalists or interpreters (Deleuze 1988, 20, translation modified).

What Deleuze and Foucault share, he argues, is the serial method, at once to undermine the sequential mode of envisaging history that serves to glorify the Subject (Deleuze 1988, 21) and to "traverse the different levels, and cross all thresholds, ... [in order to] form a transversal or mobile diagonal line along which the archaeologist-archivist must move" (Deleuze 1988, 22).

The following chapter, "The New Cartographer," a rigorous study of *Discipline and Punishment*, bears many substantive marks of Deleuze's ongoing collaboration with Guattari in the 1970s. But Deleuze is frank in his assessment: "Foucault is not content to say that we must rethink certain notions; he does not even say it; he just does it, and in this way proposes ... a different theory, a different praxis of struggle, a different set of strategies" (Deleuze 1988, 30). To do so, Foucault proposes the diagram, "no longer an auditory or visual archive but a map, a cartography that is coextensive with the whole social field. It is an abstract machine" (Deleuze 1988, 34). Deleuze then follows creatively the means in which the diagram and machinic assemblages manifest themselves in Foucault's reflections on the technologies of power and, indeed, how "the history of forms, the archive, is doubled by an evolution of forces, the diagram" (Deleuze 1988, 43).

Were this rigorous analysis all that Deleuze develops in the second chapter of *Foucault*, his close reading would already be a stunning expression of friendship. But the chapter's final lines produce the seam that I extend from the initial chapter. For in describing how one diagram to the next necessarily overlaps serially in the extension of a new carto-

graphy, Deleuze concludes that "there is no diagram that does not also include, besides the points which it connects up, certain relatively free or unbound points, points of creativity, change and resistance," and thus, through the "style" of the struggles in each age, "we can understand the succession of diagrams or the way in which they become linked up again above and beyond the discontinuities" (Deleuze 1988, 44). For each diagram constitutes a poem as well as a struggle and a mode of resistance, and as such, "each diagram," says Deleuze, "testifies to the twisting line of the outside spoken of by Melville, without beginning or end, an oceanic line that passed through all points of resistance, pitches diagrams against one another, and operates always as a function of the most recent diagram" (Deleuze 1988, 44, translation modified). From this explicit reference to Melville and the line of becoming, Deleuze creates the bridge between forces of resistance, an implicit poetic register, and the struggles of creativity: "And what a strange twist of the line was 1968, the line with a thousand aberrations! From this we get the triple definition of writing: to write is to struggle and resist; to write is to become; to write is to draw a map: [in Foucault's words] 'I am a cartographer'" (Deleuze 1988, 44).

The implicit poetic reference here—to "the line of a thousand aberrations"—is to Henri Michaux's text *Misérable Miracle* (in English, "Misérable Miracle: Mescaline"), a text that itself translates a particular line of becoming, the becoming-molecular in microperceptions, particle movement, emissions of haecceities, in short, the means by which descriptions of experiencing drug use reveal the inherently complex powers of perception. As Deleuze and Guattari deploy Michaux's work in *A Thousand Plateaus*, such experience would result in "[n]othing left but the world of speeds and slownesses without form, without subject, without face. Nothing left but the zigzag of a line, like 'the lash of the whip of an enraged cart driver' shredding faces and landscapes. A whole rhizomatic labor of perception, the moment when desire and perception meld" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 283). In citing this text, especially the reference to Michaux's "lash of the whip," I connect points of the seam that I pursue here—from the "archaeology-poem" to the passages on the line of Ahab and the whiplash and aberrations inherent to Foucault's cartographic enterprise. For such passages also constitute the microfine perceptions through which the new cartographer maps the diagram and thereby launches writing as resistance and becoming.

The citation to Michaux in the final lines of Chapter 2 of *Foucault* helps us move forward along this seam thanks to Deleuze's return to the same image of the whiplash at the end of Chapter 5. One way to situate this seam is with reference to the book's poetic "outside," as it were, which also is very much its inside, as we shall see. I refer again speci-

fically to Michaux's text, *Miserable Miracle: Mescaline* from which the charioteer citation is drawn. In reading this experimental account of mescaline perceptions, one also finds Michaux's drawing made in his altered states, and a few of these provide clues as to where Deleuze draws his inspiration for his own attempt in the visionary drawing at the end of *Foucault*. From many possible examples one can see the resemblances between Deleuze's figure and both the word drawings (i.e., Michaux's elongated and repetitive distortion of words into various designs) and the different series of sedimentation and striation drawings. Several of these reveal shifts towards figures that recall both the whip-lash and the fold.

Another way to situate this seam is within the context of Deleuze's reflections on the fundamental elements of creation:

To think means to experiment and to problematize. Knowledge, power and the self are the triple root of problematization of thought. In the field of knowledge as problem thinking is first of all seeing and speaking, but thinking is carried out in the space between the two, in the interstice or disjunction between seeing and speaking. On each occasion it invents the interlocking (*entrelacement*), firing an arrow from the one towards the target of the other, creating a flash of light in the midst of words, or unleashing a cry in the midst of visible things (Deleuze 1988, 116).

To this, Deleuze adds a reflection on the second stratum, in the field of power as problem. Here we find the dice-throw, that is, "thinking always com[ing] from the outside," yet with the following important qualification: "that outside ... was already engulfed in the interstice [between seeing and speaking] or ... constituted the common limit" (Deleuze 1988, 117). Deleuze already developed this reflection on the emergence of forces in Chapter 4 of *Foucault*, an emergence that "remains distinct from the history of forms, since it operates in a different dimension," and that "is an outside which is farther away than any external world and even any form of exteriority, which henceforth becomes infinitely closer" (Deleuze 1988, 86). Through the confrontation with thought and the outside, in Chapter 5, Deleuze has Foucault recognizing that "if the outside, farther than any external world, is also closer than any internal world," this is a sign "that thought affects itself" as an "auto-affection, the conversion of far and near ... constructing an *inside-space* that will be completely co-present with the outside-space on the line of the fold" (Deleuze 1988, 118). Here again we find an array of implicit citations from Michaux, at once the external closer than any internal world, and the *espace du dedans*, the title of Michaux's work, the inside-space.

Deleuze insists that this emergence of "a thinking being who problematizes himself, as an ethical subject ... [in] the meeting of self and sexuality" means that "to think is to fold, to double the outside with a coextensive inside" (Deleuze 1988, 118).

We reach an obvious connection at this point with Deleuze's study of Leibniz and the Baroque: not only do these reflections on thinking and subjectivity appear in the final section of *Foucault* entitled "Foldings, or the Inside of Thought," but Deleuze also argues for the Leibnizian status of our subjectivity since "what always matters is folding, unfolding, refolding" (Deleuze 1993, 137). The potential for unleashing "the set of forces that resist" (Deleuze 1988, 91) relates to the auto-affection to which Deleuze refers in concluding *Foucault*, and for which the final drawing provides a creative depiction. For "every inside-space is topologically in contact with the outside-space, independent of distance and on the limits of a 'living' (*un 'vivant'*); and this carnal or vital topology, far from explicating itself through space, liberates a sense of time that condenses the past within the inside, brings forth the future to the outside, and creates a confrontation of the two at the limit of the living present" (Deleuze 1988, 118–9, translation modified). The line of the outside is but the carnal or vital twist, the lash of the whip or flip of the lasso tail, that literally implicates, enfolding inward, the transformation of thought within the zone of subjectivation caught in "a double movement" (Deleuze 1988, 121). The graphic at the end of *Foucault* accompanied by Deleuze's explication carefully reveals the complication of this double movement.

There are vertical relations of thought: above "a battle, a turbulent, stormy zone where particular points and the relations of forces between these points are tossed about" (Deleuze 1988, 121). Chaos above, its particular features with "no form and ... neither bodies nor speaking persons, [but rather] ... the domain of uncertain doubles and partial deaths" (Deleuze 1988, 121); below are the strata in which are "collected and solidified the visual dust and the sonic echo of the battle raging above them" (Deleuze 1988, 121). Deleuze describes this movement, on one hand, as our immersion "from stratum to stratum, from band to band," "cross[ing] the surfaces, scenes, and curves," "follow[ing] the fissure in order to reach an interior of the world" (Deleuze 1988, 121); on the other hand, as an ascending movement "to climb above the strata in order to reach an outside, an atmospheric element, a 'non-stratified substance' that would be capable of explaining how the two forms of knowledge can embrace and intertwine on each stratum, from one edge the fissure [or fold] to the other" (Deleuze 1988, 121). In short, this first movement brings the unknown of chaos into contact with the fissure of

subjectivation around interlocking modes of seeing, speaking, and thinking.

Yet between the strata is a horizontal relation and movement, "a diagram of forces or particular features which are taken up by relations: a strategy" such that, Deleuze claims, "if strata are of the earth, then a strategy belongs to the air or to the ocean" (Deleuze 1988, 121). Let us not forget Melville's contorted line, with its threat of sweeping us out to sea, thus demanding integration and differentiation, that is, organization, through "the relations between forces [that] ignored the fissure within the strata" (Deleuze 1988, 122). Here again the particular features return on the strata, features "taken up by the relations between forces, but [also] particular features of resistance that are apt to modify and overturn these relations and to change the unstable diagram" (Deleuze 1988, 122). The vertical ascending and descending movement, then, links to the horizontal tensions and torsions at and around the core, and one needs to imagine this graphic as throbbing, pulsating, with the violence that must occur when the creative processes engage necessarily with resistance through the whiplash of thought. For at the core is located the seam to which the poetic citations refer, that "terrible line that shuffles all the diagrams, above the very raging storms" of the informal outside. Yet however terrible are the movements of Melville's line, "whose two ends remain free, which envelops every boat in its complex twists and turns," or of Michaux's line "'of a thousand aberrations' ... which is the 'whiplash of a furious charioteer,'" they constitute "a line of life that can no longer be gauged by relations between forces, one that carries man beyond terror," to the "'center of the cyclone where one can live and in fact where Life exists *par excellence*" (Deleuze 1988, 122).

This "inside space but coextensive with the whole line of the outside" (Deleuze 1988, 123) nonetheless is inherently a space of resistance insofar as it is also a space of creativity. Deleuze cites another Michaux title in calling this most distant point converted into the nearest one "*life within the folds*" [*la vie dans les plis*], "the central chamber, which one need no longer fear is empty since one fills it with oneself" (Deleuze 1988, 123). This process of auto-affection, of the production of "*major and perfect accords*," is what Deleuze ascribes to Leibniz, in *The Fold*, as an integration "in a pleasure that can be continued, prolonged, renewed, multiplied [and] that can proliferate, be reflexive and attractive for other accords, that give us the force to go further and further" (Deleuze 1993, 131). This pleasure, Deleuze concludes, is "a 'felicity' specific to the soul; it is harmonic *par excellence*, and can even be felt in the midst of the worst sufferings, such as in the joy of martyrs" (Deleuze 1993, 131).

The two models in *Foucault* and in *The Fold*—the "sonic echo of the battle raging above" the strata surrounding subjectivation in the former,

the monad straddling several worlds and now open to world forces in the latter—become the struggle with chaos in *What Is Philosophy?* in which the scientist, the artist, and the philosopher must engage each in his or her own way, casting planes over the chaos, but also to defeat chaos only at the price of “tear[ing] open the firmament and plung[ing] into the chaos” (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 202). This struggle is waged in philosophical thought by bringing together its concepts in friendship “traversed by a fissure that leads [concepts] back to hatred or disperses them in the coexisting chaos where it is necessary to take them up again, to seek them out, to make a leap” (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 203). This is the locus at which thought, creativity, and resistance are conjoined, poets and artists “tear[ing] open the firmament itself, to let in a bit of free and windy chaos and to frame in a sudden light a vision that appears through the rent” (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 203), a process to which science and philosophy correspond in their own ways: “what would *thinking* be,” Deleuze and Guattari ask, “if it did not constantly confront chaos?” (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 208).

Thus, in *Foucault*, Deleuze attempts to situate the confrontations of inside and outside, of creativity and resistance, within the relatively more accessible framework of his friend's philosophical project, to map the confrontation in a work that is not just a tribute to a friend but also a “book of philosophy ... [in which] I was claiming that [Foucault] never turned into a historian but always remained a great philosopher” (Deleuze 1995, 162). To Foucault's “archaeology-poem,” Deleuze responds with his own “diagram-poem,” and identifies it directly with his friend since, in the French edition (omitted from the English translation), the caption under his graphic reads “Diagramme de Foucault”—at once Foucault's diagram and a diagram of Foucault. The nexus of subjectivity and thought developed by Deleuze's “diagramme de Foucault” conjoins friendship and intercessors to creativity, forces of creativity to resistance, and resistance itself to thinking.

To those who might object that Deleuze does violence to Foucault's thought in such a creative reading, let us recall that for Deleuze, “the question of friendship [is] intrinsic to philosophy, because the philosopher isn't a sage, but a ‘friend’.... Is that what friendship is, a harmony embracing even dissonance?” (Deleuze 1995, 162–3). But as regards Foucault himself, Deleuze was unequivocal about the importance of his friend's work, describing its impact in the strongest possible terms: “The fact that Foucault existed, with such a strong and mysterious personality, the fact he wrote such wonderful books, with such style, never caused me to feel anything but joy.... Using [Foucault's] definition, my relation to him was some sort of passion” (Deleuze 1995, 85, translation modified). Deleuze's “diagram-poem” is explained, then, as a song of joyful

passions, the highest pursuit possible, since "following Foucault ... is not just a question of intellectual understanding or agreement, but one of intensity, resonance, and musical harmony" (Deleuze 1995, 86, translation modified). The "diagramme de Foucault," then, would constitute not just the map of this understanding, intensity, and resonance, but above all, the score that renders the note of this harmony, embracing even dissonance.

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