

## **Presentation**

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The texts assembled here represent part of the lectures given last year during the conference *Taking desires for reality. 50 years of Anti-Oedipus*, held in Rio de Janeiro between October 3 and 5. (The program and further information on the event can be found at <https://congressoantiedipo.wixsite.com/my-site-1>; the panels and discussions will soon be up on <https://www.youtube.com/@grupodepesquisamaterialism3411>.) The conference had in part a celebratory aspect, since the year 2022 marked the 50th anniversary of the publication of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*, the first volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Since then, the book's influence has spread across a wide range of fields, from philosophy to literary theory, anthropology, political theory, the social sciences, psychology, and psychoanalysis. At the same time, the book was very much a work of its time, written in the wake of May 1968 and amidst an explosion of social movements and demands of all kinds. Thus, the conference also intended to examine *Anti-Oedipus* according to the differences between its own time and ours, and to ask the question of how much of it remained adequate to the problems we faced today. To what extent can the project of liberating desire from social repression and psychoanalytic pacification be considered accomplished, failed, or overtaken by the transformations the world has undergone in recent decades? Do Deleuze and Guattari's theoretical and political claims in 1972 remain fully valid, or do they need to be rethought in light of a profoundly changed social reality and the very historical experience of their limits?

The first paper in this volume is by Jean-Pierre Caron. While not dealing directly with Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*, "The Vertigo of Reference" examines a recently published book by an important Brazilian philosopher, Paulo Arantes, which purports to offer an intellectual history and critique of post-structuralism as seen from the standpoint of the capitalist periphery. Caron's text proposes an immanent critique of Arantes' critique without abandoning this peripheral point of view.

The next article, titled "The Logic of the Production Process: The *Anti-Oedipus* and the Struggle for the Reconstitution of a Materialist Position in Philosophy", by Paulo Henrique Flores, analyzes Deleuze and Guattari's theses on the concept of the process of production, taking them to be a renewed version of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Indeed, following Flores, *Anti-Oedipus* could be interpreted as the resolution of one of the greatest theoretical problems of such a philosophy, namely that of establishing a materialist dialectic capable of breaking with all conceptual forms inherited from Hegelianism.

"'The Economy Is the Homeland!' Neoliberalism, Fascism and Bolsonarism", by Rodrigo Guéron, applies the theses of Deleuze and Guattari to the analysis of Brazilian politics

under the recently concluded (2019-2022) government of Brazilian far-right leader Jair Bolsonaro. Exposing the nexus between the cult of a mystified State, which is characteristic of fascism, and a mystic relation with the market, which is proper to neoliberalism, Guéron argues against those who claim that Bolsonarismo could not be described as a form of fascism.

In “To Organize Desire: What Politics After *Anti-Oedipus*?”, Rodrigo Nunes reconstructs some of the main political and ontological theses of the 1972 book so as to identify the kind of political practice that it advocates. This is done in order to show that, contrary to a common misapprehension, Deleuze and Guattari’s emphasis on the molecular and the micropolitical is not indicative of obliviousness to matters of scale in politics. On the other hand, rendering the book useful to a political practice that takes such matters seriously demands that we revise *Anti-Oedipus*’ tendency to hastily conflate molarity and fascism.

The next three essays all bear on the applicability of Deleuze and Guattari’s conceptual framework to colonial and/or non-European realities. Ulysses Pinheiro’s “Derrida’s Role in *Anti-Oedipus*: The Colonial Archi-territorialization” examines the way Derrida was pictured in *Anti-Oedipus* in order to show that the ideas of deconstruction and schizoanalysis cannot be applied without qualification to the colonial situation. The text’s central argument points to the ontological opacity of the colonies, which arises from a constitutive nothingness that prevents the emergence of becoming and difference.

In “Black readings of *Anti-Oedipus*. Critique and unconscious”, Cristina Póslleman follows the traces of Frantz Fanon’s thought in *Anti-Oedipus* with a view to showing what that book can offer to a thematization of the racialized colonial unconscious. Mixing biographical, autobiographical and academic registers, she sets out to pursue a “Black reading” of Deleuze and Guattari’s work.

Finally, John Protevi employs Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of a “regime of violence” to discuss the flight from (and fight against) enslavement in “The multiplicity of marronage”. Drawing also from James C. Scott’s work, he proposes a materialist account of maroon communities in the so-called New World that places preparation for a war at the center of their search for independence in the face of the plantation economy’s overwhelming capacities for violence.

While not discussing *Anti-Oedipus* directly, Suely Rolnik’s contribution takes the kind of micropolitical analysis first introduced by that book and applies it to the resurgence of the far right, particularly in Brazil. Her contribution, “Challenges in the Face of the Sinister”, traces the appeal of figures like Jair Bolsonaro to the unresolved traumas of colonial and racial violence, and addresses the question of how the rise of a fascistic subjectivity can be resisted at the micropolitically.

Starting from the way Deleuze and Guattari use the sex of plants to elucidate certain aspects of their theory of desiring machines, Cíntia Viera da Silva examines in “Desiring Machines and the Sex of Plants” Paul Preciado’s discussion of the molar homosexuality present in their work. Vieira’s aim is to show that Preciado’s critique does not take into

account that the relevant position for Deleuze and Guattari is situated in the domain of trans- and countersexuality, rather than in the bi-polarity between hetero- and homosexuality.

Closing this issue, Daniela Voss's essay, "On *Anti-Oedipus*: Deleuze and Guattari's Spinozism", highlights the surprisingly little remarked presence of Spinoza in the concept of a productive unconscious coextensive with the social, the political and the economic, which she identifies in three central theses of their first collective work: the unconscious' immanence to nature, the ways in which it is "machinated", and the fact that production and anti-production presuppose one another in them.

This sample offers a good sense of the breadth of approaches to *Anti-Oedipus* and Deleuze and Guattari's work more broadly that were on display at the conference in Rio (unfortunately, the papers by Anne Sauvagnargues, Brian Massumi, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and Andrew Goffey were already published or scheduled for publication elsewhere and could not be included here). This is a sign, no doubt, of that work's continued capacity to yield insight and fresh ideas – even if those may sometimes have, as some of our authors argue here, to build on the basis laid by the book in order to argue against the book itself.