

## ***The Logic of the Production Process: the Anti-Oedipus and the Struggle for the Reconstitution of a Materialist Position in Philosophy***

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### **Abstract**

In this contribution we try to analyze the theses of Deleuze and Guattari - especially in *Anti-Oedipus* - on the concept of production process. We assume these as constituting the basis for a critical resumption of Marxist-Leninist philosophy and for a materialist logic of processes. Thus, the *Anti-Oedipus* could be interpreted as the resolution of one of the greatest theoretical problems of Marxist-Leninist philosophy: the configuration of a materialist dialectic, capable of breaking with all conceptual forms inherited from Hegelianism.

### **1.**

The practice of reading is not, like any other social practice, a transhistorical activity. It does not operate with the same methods and does not have the same results in all situations. The practice of reading is always determined in its operation by the semantic universe of the ideological formation in which it takes place, as well as by the theoretical means that it mobilizes in its process. That is why every reading always produces a singular result: it is the reading of a singular text, in a singular situation and through determined theoretical means. And this even though we must defend, from our position, that it is always possible, and even necessary, a reading practice that produces more or less true results insofar as it mobilizes *scientific* theoretical means<sup>1</sup>.

In this sense, the reading of a text – and, of course, that of a political philosophy text – must vary according to the concrete situation in which it is operated. This concrete situation, we Marxist-Leninists call it *conjuncture*. Evidently, *Anti-Oedipus* is a text marked by the conjuncture to which it responds, namely the French May 1968. There we witness the mark of the parallel rise of proletarian and student struggles, of the blockade that the French Communist Party – by then already openly a revisionist Party – tries to impose on

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<sup>1</sup> See on this point, the theory of reading defended by Althusser 2005: 17-18. We think that it is in this same sense that Deleuze points to the scientific character of Martial Guérault's reading method in the history of philosophy. Cf. Deleuze 2002: 216.

the communication of these struggles, of the mass struggles against the welfare state of Europe's postwar period<sup>2</sup>.

In the same way, reading *Anti-Oedipus* in the current context is an operation that is not without theoretical effects on the meaning produced from its text, effects that are determined precisely by the concrete situation in which this reading is carried out. Now, we think it is fair to present the following work hypothesis: the event that organizes the entire current historical series in the Brazilian social formation, *an event to which all the movements for restructuring the capitalist State in Brazil in recent years respond in part*, are the June 2013 protests. Once again, the parallel rise of youth struggles in the streets *and* proletarian struggles<sup>3</sup>, the blockade that reformism tried to impose on these struggles, even participating actively in the construction of "anti-terrorist" laws, mass struggles against the repression apparatus of the Brazilian police state, as well as the ideological operation of deformation of what happened in this event, mainly on the part of the then-governing reformism that sought and continues to seek to legitimize the "democratic" facade of this same police state – this whole sequence is fundamental for the formation of our conjuncture, not only that of our historical conjuncture, but also that of our theoretical conjuncture.

And this because the event that was the mass struggles of 2013 necessarily imposed the need for a rupture with all the political imaginary built by the "leftists" – real or fantastic – in the last decades of the Brazilian social formation. On the one hand, the 2013 cycle of struggles made clear the alignment of the reformist "lefts" with the capitalist State apparatuses, including and above all its repressive apparatus (Cf. Oliveira 2018), making evident the need to fight for the reconstruction of a mass revolutionary political position. On the other hand, practice has demonstrated – and has been demonstrating since 2013 – the inability of both anarchist and dogmatic communist positions to make this reconstruction effective and combat the fascistization of the capitalist State in Brazil, a fascistization of which the Bolsonarista movement is the open expression.

For us the only political and theoretical way out of this impasse, then, was to reassess Marxism-Leninism from a position that was not only anti-revisionist, but also anti-dogmatic, operating an internal critique of its theoretical position and a consistent assessment of its victories and defeats throughout the historical series of the 20th century. This reassessment should always be posed – as it was by the very few who took on the task – primarily in terms of an intervention in social practices and mass struggles. But it simultaneously demanded that the *theoretical* problem of a broad critical evaluation of the legacy of Marxism-Leninism is posed. And this not only due to the need to reactivate it in a new context, but, above all, the need to analyze its impasses and the reason why it

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<sup>2</sup> (Cf. Sibertin-Blanc 2010: 9; Badiou 2009: 31-38). Our work owes much to the masterful works of Sibertin-Blanc, which we believe to be the starting point for any Marxist-Leninist analysis of Deleuze's texts.

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the year 2013 recorded the highest number of strikes in the historical series of the previous 30 years. (Cf. Departamento Intersindical de Estatísticas e Estudos Socioeconômicos 2015).

could be defeated *from within* by the development of revisionist and bureaucratic positions in its historical development (Cf. Rodrigues 2008).

Now, on this theoretical front there is, of course, a philosophical struggle to be waged, insofar as it is also the Marxist-Leninist philosophy that must be analyzed and taken up again in all its implications. As Althusser pointed out, it is not a question of assuming the frankly idealist position according to which all historical deviations and impasses of Marxism-Leninism would be the direct result of its theses in philosophy; nor, on the other hand, to assume the opposite – and equally idealistic – thesis that Marxism-Leninism can persist in an inviolable way in its first formulation since these same deviations and impasses do not concern its theoretical formulations, which would remain in a doctrinal purity completely indifferent to its practical developments (Cf. Althusser 1998: 271). Marxist-Leninist philosophy is necessarily implicated in all political practices that can claim it with any consistency in such a way that it is not without political effects on these practices and neither are these practices without theoretical effects on it.

Which is just another way of stating that theoretical practice, although specific, cannot be understood without its determination by social and political practice, especially communist theoretical practice. The last cycle of this struggle for the theoretical reassessment of Marxist-Leninist philosophy was undoubtedly led by the works of Louis Althusser. Althusser's work, however, remained inconclusive on a number of points. This was certainly partly due to his personal tragedies, but also because his theoretical practice was still linked, in one way or another, to the devices and forms of the same cycle of struggles that had already found its exhaustion in the 1970s<sup>4</sup>. With regard to Marxist-Leninist philosophy, even though Althusser established a series of absolutely necessary theses – the elaboration of a new concept of historical time, the critique of humanism and economism, the indication of philosophy as “class struggle in the theory”, the analysis of the development of a new practice of philosophy by Lenin, etc. (Cf. Althusser 2005: 274-288; Althusser 1978: 60-64; Althusser 2011: 240-247; Althusser 1998: 134-136)–, his work is still limited to an initiatory and descriptive value on one of the fundamental questions: the meaning of the *materialist dialectics*.

This limitation is not unimportant. The issue of materialist dialectics is central to the problematic of the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin, having important theoretical effects on their theory of history, but also on their theory of the State – although, in many senses, this remains absent in the work of Marx with the exception of some crucial indications on the problem of class dictatorship. As we shall see, the issue of materialist dialectics is implicated in a series of practical impasses faced by the communist movement.

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<sup>4</sup> It is worth noting that despite his frankly anti-revisionist positions, especially regarding the defense 1. of the centrality of the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat, against its integration into the institutions and forms of bourgeois politics, and 2. of the scientific form of historical materialism, against the reduction of Marxism to a humanist “philosophy of conscience”, Althusser continues to locate himself until the end within the organizational constellation of the already openly revisionist Communist Party of France (PCF).

For example, the enigma of philosophy, and in particular that of dialectics, about which Marx was silent after some formulas too schematic to be taken literally, and too equivocal to be thinkable. It's about the relationship between dialectics in Marx and dialectics in Hegel. Under very abstract appearances and under philosophical references, the question was important: its stakes were the conception of necessity in history and its forms (does history have a meaning and an end? Is the end of capitalism a fatality? Etc.), and the conception of class struggle and revolutionary action. Marx's silence and the difficulty of reconstituting his philosophical positions from his work opened – with few exceptions (Lenin, Gramsci) – the path to positivism and evolutionism, of which Stalin's chapter on *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* set and consolidated the formulas for thirty years. (Althusser 1998: 276)

It is true that since his articles “Contradiction and Overdetermination” and “On Materialist Dialectics”, written in the 1960s and republished in *For Marx*, Althusser advances a series of points on the issue of materialist dialectics, starting from a summary analysis of the Hegelian dialectics and pointing to some notable traits of the logical structures of Marxist dialectics (the complexity of contradictions, the inequality between the terms of a contradiction, a multilinear conception of time, etc.). However, beyond the absolutely fundamental thesis that the process of sensible differentiation of dialectical structures determines the very mode of operation of these structures – a process that Althusser designates, borrowing the term of “overdetermination” from psychoanalysis – the analyzes of *For Marx* assume mainly a critical sense and do not advance in the elaboration of these same logical structures.

At this point we think it's possible for us to assume a hypothesis that has been fundamental in the development of our own theoretical practice: *Deleuze's works*, and in particular the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, are fundamental intercessors to rethink a materialist dialectics. This statement at first may seem startling. Didn't Deleuze denounced the dialectic as a thought of the negative, of reactive forces, which remains, as such, necessarily idealist? Didn't he already find in dialectics, and even in dialectics such as mobilized by Marx, a logic that results from an insufficient theoretical criticism and that allows the traditional values of morality and religion to subsist within the form of self-consciousness (Deleuze 2010: 9-10, 111)? The Marx of *The German Ideology* could thus appear, in Deleuze's first texts, as the final limit of the Hegelian dialectic, inverting it only insofar as he subordinates it to a final figure, the proletariat (Deleuze 2010: 186).

These initial theses on dialectics must, however, be placed in their immediate theoretical context and compared with his later theoretical developments. They contain, it is true, an important part of the truth. By presenting these criticisms in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, in 1962, Deleuze takes Marx's youth writings as a theoretical object: his

doctoral thesis on the *Difference Between the Philosophy of Nature of Democritus and that of Epicurus* and, above all, *The German Ideology*.

But as the articles gathered by Althusser in *For Marx*, published in 1965, will demonstrate, these texts are precisely those that are situated before or in the initial moments of the *epistemological break* in which Marx and Engels settle accounts “with their previous philosophical conscience”, breaking procedurally with the themes and structures of Hegelianism and the philosophies of history. It should be remembered that this break, beyond the caricatural versions in which it was tried to be framed, is a *continuous process* that will have no end either in Marx's work or in the development of Marxism-Leninism (Cf. Althusser 2005: 69-73; Althusser 1998: 164-165). Precisely in this sense, it is legitimate to indicate that in the initial stages of the process, everything passes as if the Marxist dialectic was limited to the forms of the idealist dialectic.

However, to affirm that the process of the epistemological break will never end is, at the same time, to affirm that the survivals of Hegelian idealism never end in Marx's work. And this is because the class struggle itself is present in the development of Marx's theoretical practice – as, indeed, in any theoretical practice. The fight against the logical structures of idealism is, within each philosophy, a continuous struggle that takes up in its own forms the class struggle that is objectively developed within capitalist social formations. As Althusser remarked, the survival of Hegelian logical structures will be dramatically present even within *Capital* (Althusser 1998: 250-260). However, the famous *Preface* of the second Russian edition of *Capital* already establishes the conceptual frameworks by which it could be possible to theoretically reconstruct the structures of the materialist dialectic.

My dialectical method, *in its fundamentals*, is not only different from the Hegelian method, but *its exact opposite* [*ihr direktes Gegenteil*, “is directly opposed to it”]. For Hegel, the thought process that he, under the name of Idea, even manages to transform into an autonomous subject, is the demiurge of the actual process, which is only an external manifestation of the first. *For me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing more than the material transposed and translated in man's head.*

[...] The mystification that dialectics suffers at the hands of Hegel does not at all prevent him from being the first to expose, *in a wide and conscious way, its general forms of movement*. In him, it is turned upside down. *It is necessary to turn it around in order to discover the rational core within the mystical envelope.*

In its *mystified form* [*mystifizierten Form*], dialectics was in vogue in Germany because it seemed to glorify the existing. In its rational configuration [*ihrer rationalen Gestalt*, “in its rational form”], it constitutes a scandal and a horror for the bourgeoisie and its doctrinal spokesmen, since in the positive intellection of the existing [*Bestehenden*] it includes, *at the same time*, the intellection of its negation, of its necessary perishing. Furthermore, it apprehends every form developed in the flow of movement, therefore

including its transitory side; because it is not intimidated by anything and is, by essence, critical and revolutionary. (Marx 2013: 90-91)<sup>5</sup>

It is not without reason that Marx insists on the problem of the “mystified form” of the Hegelian dialectics, to which he opposes a “rational configuration” of dialectics. What Marx claims, as we see, is that *within* the “mystified form” of the Hegelian dialectics are found “the general forms of movement” that a “rational configuration” of dialectics must have. And this in such a way that these “general forms” are, by the very fact of their subordination to the “mystified form”, *deformed* by Hegelianism. As Althusser showed, for the Marx of *Capital*, the inversion dialectics is only the initial moment from which a true extraction and transformation of the “general forms” must be carried out and in which a “rational form” dialectic must be constituted (Althusser 2005: 89-92)<sup>6</sup>.

What constitutes the “rational core” of Hegel's dialectic, as Marx understands it, are the following theses: 1. that in the “positive intellection of the existing [dialectics] includes, at the same time, the intellection of its negation, of their necessary perishing”; 2. that the dialectic “apprehends every developed form in the flow of movement, therefore including its transitory side”. From this point of view, Althusser once again is correct when he says that one of Marx's great lessons from reading Hegel is the idea of a «*logic of a process*, of which the Hegelian dialectic offers him an abstract and “pure” model» (Althusser 2005: 82).

It is true that the elaboration of this materialist logic of process is elaborated by Marx in a too summarily, and that its formulation is the result of a long theoretical struggle against the survivals of an idealist logic of process that runs, as we have seen, not only in Marx's works but also in the whole history of the communist movement.

It's precisely regarding the problem of the constitution of this logic of the processes of production that we believe that Deleuze's philosophy assumes a crucial importance for the development of Marxism-Leninism. One should not, on this point, raise the objection that Deleuze's philosophy assumes the position of a “generalized anti-Hegelianism”. Rather, it is also precisely for this reason that Deleuze's philosophy occupies such an important role. Thus, it seems to us a mistake to point to the possibility that, from a certain moment in his work – let's say, with the end of *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression* – he abandons the fight against Hegelianism<sup>7</sup>. On this we think that all of Deleuze's work *has Kant and Hegel as its main theoretical enemies*, that it is a war machine set up against the central theses of modern idealism.

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<sup>5</sup> Emphasis, insertions from the original German and alternative translations to the current Brazilian one are ours.

<sup>6</sup> It is not surprising, moreover, that these “general forms” can be found within Hegelianism, since the entire second book of the *Science of Logic*, central to Marx and Engels, develops a strange kind of absorption of Spinozism, already conceived by Hegel as a philosophy of the process of production of the real, and of its subordination to the idealist category of Subject. For an analysis of this problem, see our Introduction to the Brazilian edition of Marx's *Spinozist Notebooks*, in press, and Hegel 2016a: 173-228.

<sup>7</sup> For this position, see Hardt 1996: 10-18. Despite this disagreement, Hardt's book seems to us of great importance.

Contrary to what could be said, Deleuze's rejection of dialectics is not reduced to a vague terminological clash. Rather, Deleuze precisely determines the logical structures he struggles against in the Hegelian dialectics.

A relationship, even an essential one, between the same and the other [*l'un et l'autre*] is not enough to form a dialectic: everything depends on the role of the negative in this relationship. Nietzsche even says that a force has another force as an object. More precisely, it is with other forces that a force enters into a relationship. It is with *another kind* of life that life comes into conflict. Pluralism occasionally has dialectical appearances; he is its fiercest enemy, its only deep enemy. [...] In Nietzsche, the essential relation of one force to another is never conceived as a negative element in essence. In its relationship with the other, the force that makes itself obey does not deny the other or what it is not, it affirms its own difference and enjoys this difference. The negative is not present in essence as that from which force derives its activity: on the contrary, it results from this activity, from the existence of an active force and from the affirmation of its difference. The negative is a product of existence itself: the aggressiveness necessarily linked to an active existence, the aggressiveness of an affirmation. (Deleuze 2010: 9-10)

We see that what Deleuze refuses in dialectics is not the idea of a logic of process, central to his philosophy. It's rather the thesis that *the negative is the logical operator capable of reproducing real movement*. It's this thesis, absolutely central to Hegelian philosophy (Hegel 2015: 30, 60, 88-89, 103-140 and Hegel 2016a: 88-89), that will be refused by Deleuze. The negative and, therefore, Hegelian dialectics would then be only capable of generating a false movement (Cf. Deleuze 2012:37-38). And this because in Hegel the negative is, in fact, the logical operator necessary to *extract difference from identity* in such a way that it is through its self-negation that the identity becomes capable of producing a difference. This, in effect, is the entire theoretical movement by which Hegel seeks to construct the *Science of Logic* as a philosophy of the identity of identity and difference.

As Gérard Lebrun shows, the role of the negative in Hegel is not that of a simple opposition or determination, as would be the case in the early Kant or Spinoza, «understood as the reciprocal exclusion of coexisting positive contents». In these cases, in which the example of the relation of forces in Nietzsche is also inserted, the «contents are simultaneously unified and distinct, simultaneously dependent and independent. Simultaneously, but above all not “at the same moment” or “from the same point of view” [...] There is, therefore, union and difference, but not union in difference» (Lebrun 2000: 267-268).

On the other hand, the Hegelian negation presents itself as a logical self-negation, but a self-negation operated in such a way that its result is not just the suppression of the initial term, but its cumulative development or its enrichment, insofar as, containing and

subordinating to itself its Other, the Same constitutes its own temporality (Cf. Lebrun 2000: 299-306) - this is, after all, the identity of identity and difference.

It is noteworthy that Marx's formulation eschews this conceptual construction. Not only is movement presented as external to forms, as its condition, but the inclusion of its transience is affirmed as a consequence of this productive movement. Thus, the intellection of the negation of a given form, of "its necessary perishing", is operated simultaneously [*zugleich*, "at the same time"] with the positive intellection of an existing form not as its self-negation, but as the real opposition of two positive forces<sup>8</sup>.

At this point, we must draw attention to the fact that since *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze identified the transcendental logic to be constructed by a philosophy of difference as a *dialectics* (Deleuze 2011a: 22, 39, 83, 104 and 205) freed from the figures of the negative – and, for that very reason, from the primacy of identity. In this sense Deleuze states that

Dialectics is the art of problems and questions, combinatorics, the calculation of problems as such. But dialectics loses its own power – and then begins the story of its long denaturation, which makes it fall under the power of the negative – when it is content to trace problems from propositions. (Deleuze 2011a: 204)

In the same sense, in *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze states that

Dialectics is precisely this science of incorporeal events as they are expressed in propositions and of the liens of events as they are expressed in relations between propositions. Dialectics is in fact the art of conjugation (cf. the *confatalia* or series of events that depend on each other). (Deleuze 2005: 18)

Now it is precisely the elaboration of this "new logic", which is not to be confused with that of the structures of Hegelian logic, which Althusser affirms to be the necessary task of Marxists in philosophy, a logic that is none other than the materialist dialectics (Althusser et alii 2008: 88). We should not be surprised, therefore, that in one of his unpublished notes on this new logic of the process Althusser writes:

The world is henceforth an unpredictable flux. If you want to give it an image, you have to go back to Heraclitus (we don't step in the same river twice), or Epicurus (the primacy of emptiness over atomic corpuscles). If one wants to give a closer image, following that of Deleuze [...], it is no longer necessary to represent the world in the manner of Descartes, as a hierarchical tree, but rather, as a rhizome. (Quoted in Mascaro; Morfino 2020:65)

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<sup>8</sup> For an extensive analysis of this problem and the need to constitute the proletariat as a positive force beyond the capitalist mode of production, see Tronti 1976: 209-222. For the centrality of the complex in materialist dialectics, as opposed to Hegel's identity-negation schema, see Althusser 2005: 198-204.



## 2.

The further development of this new logic of process is perhaps one of the main theoretical achievements of the two books *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Already in *Anti-Oedipus* this logic is presented as a *logic of the production process*. The concept of process was already essential in the first formulation of Marxist theory<sup>9</sup>. Marx states in a note to the French edition of *Capital* that «the word ‘process’ expresses a *development considered in the set of its real conditions*» (Quoted in Althusser 1989: 95).

However, the materialist concept of process is essentially different from that with which Hegelian dialectics operated. In Hegelian dialectics, as Althusser saw, the process is always the process *of a subject*, insofar as it is the development of the same origin and, for that very reason, is necessarily subordinated to an end. In Hegel every process finds its truth and purpose in the constitution of a subject capable of attributing the process to itself – that is in the constitution of an identity capable of attributing the concrete process of differentiation to itself (Cf. Hegel 2016b: 14-18). All of Marx's specifically philosophical trajectory consists, in a certain sense, in the transition from the concept of the process of a subject to the concept of a *process without a subject*<sup>10</sup>.

When this becomes clear, the question of the “subject” of history disappears. History is an immense “*natural-human*” system in motion, whose motor is the class struggle. The question of how “*man* makes history” disappears altogether; Marxist theory definitively rejects it in its birthplace: bourgeois ideology. [...] One thing is certain: one cannot *start* from man, because that would be starting from a bourgeois idea of “man” [...]. This idea of “man”, from which one must “start” as an absolute starting point, is the background of all bourgeois ideology, it is the soul even of the great classical political economy. (Althusser 1978: 29-30)

What is at stake in the concept of process as the process of a subject is the very core of bourgeois ideology, insofar as it is constituted around the pair humanism/economism. Myths about history as “*man's self-transcendence*” and those about history as “the development of productive forces and the satisfaction of needs” are the two necessary faces of the same class position.

It is with all this conceptual framework that *Anti-Oedipus* breaks. By taking the psychic process of the schizophrenic as the logical form of process, Deleuze takes up and re-elaborates one of his initial theses, already presented in his work on empiricism: by

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<sup>9</sup> As the entire text of *Capital* bears witness, since all its theoretical problems are posed in terms of the analysis of processes.

<sup>10</sup> So that when Althusser states that Marx's main Hegelian heritage is the concept of a process without a subject, what is being said is that Marx's main Hegelian heritage is *the transformation that Marx operates in Hegel*. (Cf. Althusser 1989: 95).

stating that “the bottom of the spirit is delirium” what is affirmed is that mental activity is *de jure* a “movement of ideas”, a “set of their actions and reactions” that is composed as a collection of singular and at the same time indistinct elements (Deleuze 2011b: 11).

This collection, which is already the first model of an intensive multiplicity, does not group its elements according to internal rules of constancy or uniformity. Although these necessarily present themselves, the necessity of unification is more external than internal. Unification is not what the spirit develops, but what *supervenes* on it. The same can be said of the distinction between the elements of the process. This logical form, in surprising parallelism with the function of self-consciousness in Hegelian logic and in its transposition to objective logic, is also the *form* of the process of material production.

What the schizophrenic experiences specifically, generically is by no means a specific pole of nature, but nature as a production process. What does process mean here? At one level, nature is likely to be distinguished from industry: on the one hand industry opposes nature, on the other it absorbs materials from nature; on the other hand, it restores to them their residues, etc. This distinctive relationship man-nature, nature-industry, society-nature, conditions, in society itself, the distinction of relatively autonomous spheres, which we will call “production”, “distribution”, “consumption”. But this level of general distinction, considered in its developed formal structure, presupposes (as Marx showed) not only capital and the division of labor, but also the false consciousness that the capitalist being has in essence of himself and of the elements crystallized in the set of a process. (Deleuze; Guattari 2011: 14)

Deleuze and Guattari resume Marx's developments in the famous *Introduction to the Method of Political Economy*, from 1857, on the relationship between production, distribution, exchange and consumption as supposedly different moments of political economy. This distinction is all the more important for Marx's understanding of the new logic since they're directly opposed to the moments of development of the categories of the syllogism in the Science of Logic. Thus, for classical political economy, the logical development of economic activities follows the following order: 1. Production, as a starting point, socially creates objects corresponding to human needs (universality); 2. The distribution distributes these objects according to social laws (particularity A1); 3. The exchange prolongs this distribution movement (particularity A2); 4. Consumption causes objects to leave society to be used and satisfy the needs of individuals (singularity) (Cf. Marx 2011: 44).

Marx points out that if these moments are by no means identical, they are not separated. Rather, they are differences within a same process, differences that determine each other immediately and reciprocally: production is also consumption, as productive consumption (consumption creates need as an internal object of production), it is also distribution, as distribution of the factor of production (production presupposes a certain distribution of means of production and producers). In the same way, each of these

moments is also implicated in the process of production. Thus, production “superimposes itself on other moments”, as the activity that establishes the conditions for the whole process (Marx 2011: 53). Which is the same as saying that the production process is thought of, within the field of materialist philosophy, as a *process of immanent differentiation* that does not refer to any *principle of identity*.

Keeping on the comparative analysis of the speculative theory of syllogism in the *Science of Logic*, what it is affirmed is not only that throughout the process of logical development universality is progressively determined as particularity and later as singularity, to discover itself in the end as the identity of the universal and the singular. *Universality itself is already immediately determined by singularity and particularity*, and finds its presuppositions in them. In other words, if there is a universal logical form, this is precisely the form of an “unpredictable flow” since the universal is nothing other than the universality of singularity, in such a way that the materialist dialectic is nothing other than a “science of events”.

One of the most important theoretical effects of this development in *Anti-Oedipus* is correctly analyzed by Guillaume Sibertin-Blanc in the Althusserian terms of a critique of the “spontaneous philosophy of psychoanalysis” (Sibertin-Blanc 2010: 22)<sup>11</sup>. Departing from the Freudian discovery of the productivity of desire, Deleuze and Guattari point out that this discovery remains limited by theses that block its development. After all, in the same theoretical movement that he discovers that desire must be comprehended in the terms of an unconscious process of production «Freud compromises his concept by referring him directly to the idea of a work focused on 'unconscious representations' and maintaining the assumption according to which the being of desire consists in its representation *by a subject or in a subject*» (Sibertin-Blanc 2010: 22).

In a certain sense, everything happens as if, through the critique of the idealistic elements of Freud's thought, Deleuze and Guattari aimed not only at the idealism of Plato and Kant, but also pursued a silent critique of Hegel. Desire appears, then, as the process of a subject precisely to the extent that it is brought back to the model of representation and is assumed as a potential for the realization of subjective representations in the face of an objective lack. Thus, on the one hand, a distinction is reaffirmed between different moments of the process, the internal and the external, fantasy and reality. On the other hand, the objective lack could even be affirmed as resulting from the activity of desire itself, as its projection, even if it does not fail in this way to distinguish itself from the positive moment that constitutes it. Desire would thus find its satisfaction through the

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<sup>11</sup> From this point of view, it is worth remembering that Althusser, in *Philosophy and Spontaneous Philosophy of Scientists*, denounced the tendency of the sciences, when developed within a class society, to be pressured by the dominant ideologies, thus developing a “spontaneous philosophy” that interprets its own scientific results through an idealistic lens. Against this, one of the roles of Marxist philosophy would be to rectify this deformation, shifting the sciences to the field of materialism. In this sense, *Anti-Oedipus* contains a critique of the “spontaneous philosophy” of psychoanalysis, see king to place its theoretical conquests in the field of a materialist psychiatry.

motor of the negative precisely in the act of consuming itself, in the same way that in Hegelian logic the universal becomes concrete with the *Aufhebung* of the singular.

*Anti-Oedipus* will then affirm, against this idealist thesis, the materialist thesis of the *univocity of desire's process of production* (Sibertin-Blanc 2010: 26). The final meaning of this thesis is to attribute an *immediate* objectivity to desire in such a way that not only is the distinction between the subjective and objective regimes overcome (but not their differentiation), but also the activity of desire is directly singularized in the forms of its material objects in their social and historical coordinates.

What is stated at this point is that the production process is not subordinated to a norm that is transcendent to it, whether this transcendence is absolute or relative. There is no instance of universality that does not find, from the outset, its conditions and its form in singularity itself. This is exactly the logical model to which Althusser pointed in *For Marx* by taking the concept of *overdetermination* from psychoanalysis, and by making structural causality a causality that is always modified by the operation of its singular effects (Althusser 2005: 100-115). By the way, it is also explained, then, that Althusser and Deleuze can find themselves in the field of Spinozism, since this new logic is nothing other than the unfolding of Spinoza's theses on *immanent causality*.

As a process of immanent singularization, the production process is immediately a process of singularization. In this sense,

If desire produces, its product is the real. If desire is productive, it can only be so in the real world and can produce only reality. Desire is this set of *passive syntheses* that engineers partial objects, flows and bodies, and that function as production units. The real results from this, it is the result of the passive syntheses of desire as a self-production of the unconscious. Desire lacks nothing, it does not lack its object. It is *the subject*, above all, that desire lacks, or it is desire that lacks a fixed subject; there is only a subject fixed by repression. Desire and its object constitute one and the same thing: the machine, as a machine of a machines. [...] The objective being of desire is the Real in itself. (Deleuze; Guattari 2011: 43)

What are these syntheses that operate as singular production units and that constitute the Real? We think it is legitimate to say that for the materialist these productive syntheses are the minimum determinations of the concrete. They link, in each case, two different processes, so that one operates a transformation in the other in order to extract a product from the first.

The productive synthesis, the production of production, has a connective form: "and", "and afterwards"... It is because there is always a machine that produces a flow, and another one that is connected to it, operating a cut, an extraction of flow (the breast – the mouth). And since the first, in turn, is connected to another relative to which it behaves like a cut or an extraction, the binary series is linear in all directions. Desire never stops coupling continuous flows and essentially fragmentary and fragmented

partial objects. [...] Bladder and kidney stones; flow of hair, flow of drool, flow of sperm, shit or urine produced by partial objects that, in turn, produce other flows also cut by other partial objects. Every “object” supposes the continuity of a flow, and every flow supposes the fragmentation of the object. (Deleuze; Guattari 2011: 16)

The thesis that the fundamental concept of a logic of process is this synthesis that brings together two disparate singularities in the same process is not, moreover, new to Deleuze's philosophy. This is none other, after all, than the concept of *becoming* that was affirmed, at least, since the *Logic of Sense*<sup>12</sup>. As such, becoming is the reality of paradox. If we raise this point, it is to point out that the binary character of the productive syntheses, which simultaneously affirms the terms of a positive disparity in the same process and which forms the logical nucleus of the new dialectics, is directly opposed to the concept that constitutes the logical nucleus of Hegelian dialectics, the concept of *contradiction*.

The Hegelian contradiction is not so much an assertion of disparity as an assertion of unity. It is true that in Hegel the concept of contradiction is intended to express a becoming, but only insofar as it is a question of the becoming *of identity*. As a logical figure what defines the Hegelian contradiction is that the terms it relates are constituted by the negation of its other, not only in the form of its reciprocal limitation, but especially in the form of their self-suppression: since each of the terms exists only insofar as it relates to its opposite term, the suppression of its own opposite is also the suppression of itself. Thus the mouth does not just deny the breast, in the sense that it limits or determines it, but in the sense that it seeks to suppress it and, by suppressing it, suppresses itself.

In this sense the contradiction contains within itself the means of its resolution, a resolution towards which it is guided by an internal necessity. The self-negation of each of the terms of a contradiction, implied by their ultimate relationality and the negation of their other, abolishes the subsistence of each of these terms in such a way that the contradiction is suppressed in the reciprocal negation of the terms related. This reciprocal negation results in «a unity that is for itself and, in reality, self-subsistent» (Hegel 2016a: 60-61).

Thus if Hegel can enunciate the speculative proposition that «All things are, in themselves, contradictory» and claim that contradiction «is the negative in its essential determination, the principle of all self-movement, self-movement that consists of nothing

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<sup>12</sup> «When I say 'Alice grows' I mean that she becomes bigger than she was. But for that very reason she becomes smaller than she is now. Certainly is not at the same time that she is greater and lesser. But it is at the same time that she becomes itself. She is bigger now, she was smaller before. But it is at the same time, in the same act, that we become bigger than we were and become smaller than we are. This is the simultaneity of a becoming whose property is to avoid the present. While it avoids the present, becoming does not support the separation or distinction between before and after, past and future. It belongs to the essence of becoming to go, to point in both directions at the same time: Alice does not grow without shrinking, and vice versa. Common sense is the assertion that, in all things, there is a determinable sense; but the paradox is the affirmation of both meanings simultaneously». (Deleuze 2005: 9).

but of contradiction», that it is «the root of all movement and all vitality» (Hegel 2016a: 60-61), it is only to the extent that, through the mediation of reciprocal negation, the contradiction directs all processes towards the constitution of a unity that suppresses and integrates in itself the opposites from which it was generated.

This self-suppression of the disparity of becoming in a higher unity is inadmissible for the materialist logic of processes. Singularities not only persists in their disparity, but this disparity can only feed a new process of singularization. In other words, the result of process of production is never a unit that totalizes the previous moments – and, precisely to that extent, negates them or suppresses their position – but a new partial product that, in turn, begins a new moment in the process of production.

The new logic does not find “the root of all movement and all vitality” in contradiction, but rather in paradox. Becoming is not the self-negation of difference, the discovery of the identity of identity and difference, but the affirmation of difference as difference, in such a way that the process of production is not subordinated to a necessary and internal unification. We thus return to Althusser's thesis about the world as an unpredictable flux. The only necessary norm for the process of its contingency – «first of all, universal history is that of contingencies, not that of necessity; is that of cuts and limits, not continuity» (Deleuze; Guattari 2011: 185).

The assertion of the *Anti-Oedipus* that the Real is the result of these productive syntheses can be better understood at this point. The Real is not a uniform totality as the universal logical condition presupposed by the singular and capable of integrating all singularities into an organic unit as a unilinear and teleological natural or historical process. The Real is a result precisely because it is constituted by the conjunction of these singular production processes. The global is not what unifies local determinations, but what is constituted by their connection. It is in this sense that we asserted that the universal immediately has the form of the singular.

Also, the concept of Real is no longer defined as universal negation opposed to the subjective power of desire. Its universality is that of power of production in immanence with all its singular determinations. The syntheses of the process of production – which form, as it were, its units of production – are connections of determined singularities. Now, for the materialist, the Real is immediately concrete. The multiplicity of the Real can only be logically understood as the result of a process of differentiating synthesis. «The concrete is concrete because it is the synthesis of multiple determinations, therefore, unity of diversity. For this reason, the concrete appears in thought as a process of synthesis, as a result, not as a starting point, despite being the effective starting point» (Marx 2011: 54). The concrete is, then, a global synthesis of these local syntheses, a synthesis of syntheses.

This is exactly the dialectics that Marx had already presented to us since *Capital*, when he refused the reality of universal laws of operation for all social formations and all historical periods. That is why he endorses one of his Russian critics when he asserts that,

according to the logic of *Capital*, «one and the same phenomenon is governed by completely different laws as a result of the different general structure [of social formations], the differentiation of some of its organs, the diversity of the conditions under which they function etc. » (Marx 2013: 90).

As Marx writes in response to the controversy raised in Russia about the unilinearity or plurality of historical routes (must all societies repeat the same process of economic development, going through the same stages?),

Events of striking similarity, but occurring at different historical periods, led to entirely different results. Studying each of these developments separately and then comparing them, we will easily find the key to this phenomenon, but we would never arrive at it with the generic [*passe-partout*] solution of a general historical-philosophical theory, whose supreme virtue consists in being supra- historical. (Quoted in Fernandes 1982: 168)

If Marx did not further elaborate this new materialist logic of processes in his lifetime, it was certainly because the theoretical obstacles raised by the logical structures inherited from idealism only became explicit over time, insofar as their practical effects were shown in the development of the proletarian practice of class struggles. It took this development time for the obstacle to begin to show itself, a development time much longer than the lifetimes of Marx and Engels. It was necessary that, under the guise of Marxism, the revisionism of the Second International elaborated the so-called “theory of productive forces”, it was necessary the weight of bureaucratism in the Soviet experience, it was necessary the development of modern revisionism both in the USSR and in China and, beyond them, in the international communist movement as a whole.

When Althusser finally poses the problem in the years 1960-1980, it is already in the development of the crisis of Marxism-Leninism. The hiatus imposed on Althusser's theoretical task confuses itself, in many ways, with the decomposition of the Marxist-Leninist field. Today, when the imminent crises of capitalism, the return of fascism on a world scale and the destruction of the relative stability of the biosphere generated by capitalist development put the struggle for the theoretical and practical reconstruction of Marxism-Leninism back on the agenda, it is this unfinished task that imposes itself, along with many other practical and theoretical tasks. The elaboration and development of this new materialist logic of processes and its articulation with the Marxist-Leninist ideology is one of the theoretical struggles that must be fought. From our position, that Deleuze and Guattari are intercessors of first importance in this line of struggle is not a coincidence. It is a consequence of the ideological alignment and the theoretical program of their philosophy and the political objectives it sets to itself. By stating that minority, as a process of socialization, is the becoming of the whole world capable of producing an antagonistic position in relation to the State and capitalism, the second book of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* already establishes these political objectives clearly.

The power of minority, of particularity, finds its figure or its universal consciousness in the proletariat. But while the working class defines itself by an acquired status or even by a theoretically conquered State, it appears only as 'capital', part of capital (variable capital) and does not leave the plane of capital. At most the plan becomes bureaucratic. On the other hand, it is by leaving the plane of capital, not ceasing to leave it, that a mass must ceaselessly revolutionize and destroy the dominant equilibrium of countable groups. [...] In the same way, the issue of minorities is rather to overthrow capitalism, redefine socialism, constitute a war machine capable of responding to the world war machine with other means. (Deleuze; Guattari 2012: 189)

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