

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

PATNA UNIVERSITY

POSTMODERNISM NOTES

Deleuze and Guattari: A Thousand plateaus

Some major points

- Gilles Deleuze, a French philosopher, and Félix Guattari, a French psychoanalyst and political activist, wrote a number of works together.
- Their conjoint works were Capitalism and Schizophrenia, Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature, and What is Philosophy?
- A two volume work, consisting of Anti-Oedipus (1972) and A Thousand Plateaus (1980), Capitalism and Schizophrenia was an influential success.
- A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia is a 1980 book.
- It is the second and final volume of their collaborative work Capitalism and Schizophrenia.
- The book is written in a non-linear, allusive fashion. The reader is explicitly warned not to set down roots and read A Thousand Plateaus in order, but to choose a new "plateau" or page and begin again "from ground zero" at each plateau, as long as they read the introduction first and the conclusion last.
- The book starts with an introduction titled "Rhizome" that explains rhizomatic philosophy (addressing not just the book itself but all books as rhizomes), and ends with a conclusion, "Concrete Rules and Abstract Machines", that makes the abstract/concrete binary clear.

- A "plateau", borrowed from ideas in Gregory Bateson's research on Balinese culture, is "a continuous, self-vibrating region of intensities".
- Deleuze and Guattari in that latter work describe a conflict between two modes of social organization that coincide with two models of reality.
- • One is arboresque and favors order and hierarchy. The other is rhizomatic and favors an undoing of all such orders and hierarchies. • Deleuze and Guattari discuss concepts such as the rhizome and performativity in language.
- Rhizome is the type of root of a plant that travels laterally underground and proliferates unpredictably.
- Territorialization : fixity of power!
- Deterritorialization : undoing / moments of chaos!
- History alternates between moments of fixity and power that can be called Territorialization and moments of Deterritorialization or undoing when fixed order fall apart and are transformed.
- **Characteristics of Rhizomes**
 1. Principle of connection
 2. Principle of heterogeneity
 3. Principle of multiplicity
 4. Principle of asignifying rupture
- The rhizome is an acentered, nonhierarchical, non signifying system without a General and without an organizing memory or central automaton, defined solely by a circulation of states. Sources.
- A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, inter-being, intermezzo. The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance.
- History is always written from the sedentary point of view and in the name of a unitary State apparatus.
- History has never comprehended nomadism, the book has never comprehended the outside. The State as the model for the book and

for thought has a long history: logos, the philosopher-king, the transcendence of the Idea, the interiority of the concept, the republic of minds, the court of reason, the functionaries of thought, man as legislator and subject.

Sources

Rivkin and Ryan

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Wikipedia