

Gilles Deleuze

Seminar on Foucault, 1985-1986

Part III: Power

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Part 1

... Yes. This succession of three forms: god-form, human-form, overman-form—we ought to recognize that it isn't an exhaustive list. I mean, it occupies a very restricted and localized timeframe; since we discussed the 17th-18th centuries as classical thought, the thought of the 18th-19th centuries in conjunction with the form "human," and then the form "over-man" at the end of the 19th into the 20th, let's go ahead and add uh... the 21st century. And all that covers a very narrow and localized, European timeline. But what does this timeline demonstrate, as confined as it is? It shows us what these forms depend on, what we could call an archaeology, or perhaps better still, a geology of thought.

These forms, in effect, depend on certain operations of thought, and what remains for us to do is to try and define these geological movements of thought. This is what I'd like to focus on today, because last time we did a relatively good job of identifying these geological movements of thought, which produce the forms I just enumerated. I said in a certain way that the form "God" is the product of an archaeological or geological movement of thought we can call the *unfold*. The unfold.

And the form "man," if you followed me last time, is the product of an archeological or geological movement of thought we can call the fold. And you won't be surprised, reading Foucault, to see the extent to which the un-fold and the fold constitute two patterns, even at the level of style. I'd say that *The Order of Things* is a sort of often lyrical song, founded on these two operations, the movement of unfolding and the movement of folding, of refolding. And what I tried to show the last two sessions is simply how the form "God" depends on a generalized un-fold, how the form "man" depends on a generalized re-fold. It's as though thought found something essential about these exercises, in unfolding, or in folding something. We're missing the third archaeological movement, a third geological movement on which the form "over-man" would depend.

If the term is missing in Foucault, it hardly matters: we can always invent one for our purposes, and what naturally should correspond to the over-man, and which is neither the fold nor the un-fold, is the over-fold [*le surpli*]. Then we would have our conceptual trinity of geological movements: to unfold, to fold, to fold over; the unfolding, the fold, the over-fold. But this wouldn't constitute a totality but comprise the geological movements which correspond to three

periods within an, again, short and localized timeframe. So much so that the issue I would like to emphasize today, finally, is precisely the death of man and the over-man, granted that these aren't anything to fear; this business about the death of man and the over-man is much simpler than people make it out to be.¹

Moreover, what does Foucault mean, then, in the text, "What is an author?" when he says: "let's hold back our tears"?² The death of man is nothing to cry about. There isn't anything to cry about; save your tears. I mean, this is central to Foucault's thought, since recently, after his death, there are so many idiots saying, oh, he said he believed in the death of man, so he didn't believe in anything, etc. ... We must not exaggerate, because the first thing to consider with the death of man, understood as the disappearance of the form "man" to the benefit of another form—well, we ought to ask ourselves whether the form "man" was all that good. In the end, the form "God," the form "man," are substantial forms, but even in terms of good and evil, is the form "God" really all that good, for thought and for the way of thinking about what exists? Was the form "man" really all that good? All we can hope for in the form "over-man," if there is a new form emerging, is that it at least not be worse than its two predecessors, the form "God" and the form "man." And there is every chance that it will be no worse than the preceding ones; it will have its drawbacks and so on, but we have to keep a cool head as we approach it.

So, I come back to our general principle. Why this succession of forms and corresponding geological operations? I'd like to spend most of our session today trying to get a handle on the movements of the over-fold—i.e. the movement which forms the over-man, as distinct—and of the un-fold and the fold. But as I was saying, let's return to our general principle. Our general principle is that every form, whatever it may be, is a composite of forces. If we don't understand that, we won't understand anything. Every form is a composite of forces, or if you prefer, a composite of force relations. Forces are extrinsic, i.e. a force has no interiority, it is related to the outside by other forces, so force relations are extrinsic.

As a result, I can say: we should consider, in the case of the succession, God – man – over-man, we should consider the composite of forces within man, on the one hand, of forces *within* man on the one hand and, on the other hand, outside forces.

If I say, this is the general proposition, two problems arise. For each period considered -- the first problem -- with what outside forces do the forces within man enter into relation? Second question: what form results when outside forces relate to the forces within man at a certain moment? It won't necessarily be the form "man." I'm trying to better respond to the objection one of you made; last time, his question—one of you said that "forces within man" already assumes man. It presupposes a form, 'man.'" No. No. If I understand "forces" in the proper sense of the term, I can talk, for example, about forces within the animal. What would that mean, "forces within the animal"?

Well, I'm selecting some actual remarks. In the 19th century, for example, they said that the animal is defined by motility, the force of self-movement, and by irritability, the force of being stimulated. If I say forces within the animal are self-movement and irritability, I haven't yet provided the form of any animal. I can talk about "forces within the animal"—"within the

animal” meaning what? Only a region of existence, i.e., the forces’ place, the forces’ point of application. I would say motility and irritability are forces that find their point of application in the animal, i.e., in a region of existence, [but] I haven’t presupposed any form. See, there isn’t any; it isn’t question-begging to refer to “forces within the animal” or “forces within man” before we have any animal forms or human forms. Thus, just as I say the forces within the animal are, for example, mobility, motility, irritability, *etc.*, I can talk about the forces within man: the force of conception, the force of imagination... [*Interruption of the recording*] [11:14]

Part 2

... Any problems? No problems, good. Any questions? Very well. So, what we saw—I won’t start over, I’ll summarize—what we saw is what happened, if you will, during the history of the 17th century, during the historical formation we call classical. And the scheme that we thought we detected in Foucault, is: the forces within man, in the sense I just described, which do not presuppose a form, enter into a relation with outside forces. I propose we call these outside forces: forces of raising to infinity. That assumes quite a bit... it poses many problems with unclear solutions. As to why the forces of raising to infinity—a first problem—are external forces, external to the forces within man, the response is simple: it is because man is a finite creature; if he discovers a force of raising to infinity within himself, it cannot come from him. Note that what I’m recounting here is literally one of the proofs for God’s existence. One of the proofs for God’s existence famous in the 17th century: [because] man has the power to conceive the infinitely perfect, i.e., to raise to infinity, he cannot himself account for this power since he is finite, thus there is an infinite being. This proof, which is lovely, which is unanimously... completely accepted, but which depends precisely on this: if it is true that there is a force of raising to infinity, man cannot account for it; it is an outside force, and thus God exists.

Why -- the other problem -- So, I just explained very quickly how the forces of raising to infinity could not be counted among the forces belonging to man, that they are in fact outside forces... The second problem: why the plural? Why *forces*? Because I said that if we must characterize classical thought, well I believe we should characterize it as that which never stopped trying to distinguish orders of infinity. Classicism is like thought’s great struggle with the infinite, and the only way for thought to think the infinite is to put in order and distinguish orders of infinity. Well, I won’t go back over that.

What exactly will these orders of infinity be based on? It’s that, following 17th century thought, everything is a mix of reality and limitation. In other words, all reality equals perfection. It is a mix of perfection and limitation. All perfection can be raised to infinity. All perfection, as perfection, can be raised to infinity. But, according to the nature of the limitation that confines it, not everything can be raised to the same order of infinity. Hence, again, the distinction between orders of infinity: infinite through itself, infinite through its cause, infinite between limits, *etc.*, *etc.*, but those three being the big three orders of infinity that the 17th century distinguishes.

So: what will it be? To think will be to raise something to the appropriate infinite. It is a response to the question, “What is thinking?”—one of the best responses, even. It is a grandiose response which grounds the philosophy of the 17th century: to think is to raise something to the infinity appropriate to it, so that thinking God is to think the infinitely perfect or infinity through itself, but to think the world is to think infinity through its cause, thinking things is to think infinity within limits. It is a beautiful conception of thought.

And you’ll notice that, if we come back to the problem equally from the 17th century, the proofs for the existence of God multiply, you cannot be surprised that there are so many proofs, since we can guess in advance that a proof for the existence of God will correspond to each order of infinity. There is a proof, the most famous and noblest, the highest, which is called the “ontological proof”, and which proceeds according to infinity through itself. I conceive an infinitely perfect being, thus this being exists. That is a proof which proceeds according to infinity through itself. But you also have a so-called “cosmological” proof which climbs, this time, from the world to God. This is a proof which depends on infinity through its cause. You have a proof which is traditionally called “physico-teleological,” a proof that depends on a bounded infinite.

At every order of infinity there corresponds a proof for the existence of God. According to a conception of thought where thinking means raising to infinity, the movement or the geology of thought is the unfold. To raise to infinity is to develop—it’s to develop, to unfold. One of the great precursors of classical thought was named Nicolas of Cusa, a cardinal. And the cardinal of Cusa says, in a very classical, very, very common formulation: God is universal explication. God is universal explication; this expression can only be understood – Nicolas of Cusa spoke Latin – this expression can only be understood if you take seriously, i.e., literally, the word *explication*. To *explicate* is to unfold. If I unroll a mat, I explicate the mat; that is, I unfold it. It is a thought of unfolding.³

And that is why—here I’ve caught up with Foucault’s text, which is interested in the last order of infinity, i.e. the infinity of created things, the infinity of creatures—there you have the reason why 17th century thought, as he shows us in *The Order of Things*, proceeds by drawing up tables along continua, continuum being precisely the last order of infinity. There will be a table of wealth for the continuum of wealth. With the table of living things, the continuum of natural history. Series at the level of the creature will be a form of thinking by continuum and by series. The series of wealth and the table of circulation. The series of living things. the series of roots regarding language. Everywhere tables will be developed, unfolded. Therefore, it is not a matter of saying that, in this historical formation.... it is really not a matter of saying that man does not exist. It’s more that we went from forces existing within man, the force of conceiving, of imagining, etc., to ones that corresponded to orders of infinity. There is an infinity of the imagination which is not the same as the infinity of the understanding. Only the infinity of the understanding is an infinity through itself.

And so, in all that, we cannot start over. It is not a matter of saying that man does not exist; it is that, in the 17th century, in the classical period, the forces within man engage with forces of

raising to infinity, under or along the archeological or geological movement of the unfold, of development. Problem: what is the form which results from this composite of forces? The forces within man are put together with the forces of raising to infinity, so what form results? What form results from this precise composite? The response, we saw, is not the form “man”; there is no form “man.” And that is one aspect of Foucault’s thesis: in the classical age, there is no form “man.” Obviously, man exists but there is no form “man.” Why? Because the composite form that results from the relation of the forces within man with outside forces of raising to infinity is, of course, the form “God,” and man will only be posited as the restriction of God, infinite understanding. And man’s finite understanding is only the restriction of infinite understanding. The infinite is always primary with regard to the finite, as in Descartes’s formula. Thus, what follows from the composite of forces is the form “God.”

All this amounts to saying that the supreme task of 17th century thought is to unfold, to develop. Supreme development, or, as Cusa puts it, universal ex-plication, universal unfolding, is—it’s God. God never stops unfolding. God doesn’t tolerate folds. Why doesn’t he tolerate folds? God is the most tremendous flattening. He doesn’t tolerate folds because they shelter the wicked. Underneath folds there are always Cain. God unfolds; it’s his way of pursuing the wicked. He probes. To probe. Probes. To probe is to develop.

And in another book... it really haunts Foucault, this idea of unfolding as the geological movement of classical thought, in a book which precedes *The Order of Things*, you constantly find the theme: the clinic, as an invention of the classical age, in the history of medicine: what does the clinic do? It unfolds symptoms onto two-dimensional ranges. God made the clinic. Under God’s gaze, we are unfolded. So that’s what a classic is. That is how you recognize a classic.

So, you perhaps understand that Foucault’s history of archaeological sites. A thought can be very near to us and very, very modern -- I mean, I’m thinking of Pascal -- and as close as it may be, as modern as it may be, the question “What archaeological site does it belong to?” can only be settled, I believe, to the extent that one demonstrates in what sense it belongs to the classical age. And indeed, it always seems imprudent to me, for example, to make Pascal into some sort of modern... If he is close to us, it is by dint of the classical age and because the classical age has something to tell us and continues to have something to tell us. But it’s very imprudent, in the name, for example, of a sort of Pascalian anguish, to make him out to be modern. Since, once again, Pascal’s anguish is an anguish over the infinite, which is strictly opposed to modern forms of anguish. It is an anguish over the infinite, or better it’s an anguish over the orders of infinity. If there is a classical thinker in the sense of the distinction between orders of infinity, it is Pascal and, truly, the anguished effort, the terrified effort to cope and find a path in the orders of infinity—it’s Pascal. As a result, if we define classical thought like that, we are apt to understand, for example, that far from being a thought of measure, it is a thought whose strict inverse, whose complement, would be the baroque. One is strictly the inverse of the other and they both belong to the same archaeological site.

So, we saw last time what changed on the way to the 19th century. Again, understand that it would be stupid to ask, “Well, which is the best?” There is never anything which is best. What do you want—it’s pointless to talk like that. It’s just that thinking changes direction; it’s no longer the same movement. Thought is very curious, beginning with the 19th century, and it’s what I tried to develop last time; I hope it tells you something that I insist on it. It is as though thought was folding all along. They are going to fold. The great thinkers of the 19th century never stop folding and refolding. What does that mean? You will find it in Foucault’s style as well. Every time he mentions the fold, he equally invokes thickness, thickening. To think is to thicken, to make thick. Or else, he tells us, the word that reflects... “thickness” comes up all the time in *The Order of Things*, but in the context of the 19th century. The 19th century, Foucault tells us, discovers the thickness of life, the thickness of language. To think is to constitute thickness, it is no longer to flatten, no longer to develop, unfold; it is folding, folding, giving birth to a depth. And just as he constantly uses the word “thickness,” he will employ almost synonymously the word “hollow,” “hollow.”

There is a thickness to language, there a hollowness to language, and thickness and the thick and the hollow work synonymously in Foucault—why? They are two results of the fold. To fold is to thicken. It’s very simple, you see, I fold, there, like that [*Deleuze folds a sheet of paper*], and there you go: I think [*Laughter*]. Note that I also think, think in the admirable style of the classics, when I go... [*Deleuze unfolds the paper*] ... and there, you don’t realize it, but I just proved the existence of God [*Laughter*]. So, uh... okay. The 19th century is thus going to be a thought, fundamentally, about the fold and the re-fold. What does that mean? We saw it: the forces within man... And that’s the mutation. The change occurs when the forces within man engage with new outside forces. Then you say there is a change of archeological sites, there is a mutation.

Well, instead of relating to forces of raising to infinity, in the course of... around the mid-18th century, and with the 19th century, the forces within man no longer engage with forces of raising to infinity, but with forces of finitude. It’s a new composite. And, once again, of course, forces of finitude existed in the 17th century, but they were understood in 17th century thought as simple forces of limitation. But the forces of limitation by no means prevented infinite deployment or raising to infinity. Whereas now there’s an encounter with the forces of finitude that can no longer be understood as simple limits, but which are veritable forces of obstinate, thick opposition. No longer limitation; they are oppositions.

It’s the discovery of real opposition in place of logical limitation. In the words of a young Kant, it is the discovery of negative magnitudes or negative quantities, the forces of finitude. And just as there were orders of infinity in the 17th century, there are different forces of finitude with which the forces within man will combine.

We saw that there are three fundamental forces of finitude: life, labor, language. And so, then, I can say that the forces within man, instead of unfolding in being raised to infinity, through being raised to infinity, instead of being developed to infinity, they are enveloped; they are folded under the forces of finitude. And so, being combined with forces of finitude, the forces within

man will follow a fold, they will constitute a sort of helix around the forces of finitude and according to the forces of finitude will settle into horrible marriages which replace the marriage with God. Now man will be wed to labor in his finitude, to language in his finitude, to life in his finitude. And everywhere, everywhere it is only a matter of folding. How—I said with regard to [David] Ricardo and Marx—how labor is folded onto capital, is refolded onto capital or inversely, how capital is folded and refolded onto extorted labor. And I insisted last time, remember, because it seemed to me evident that the biology emerging in the 17th century—Foucault is right on this point—that if you look at the birth of biology starting with Cuvier, at the end of the 18th and the 19th centuries, what precisely is in question?

It's always a question, regarding life, it is a question of possible or impossible folds, a matter of folding operations. And, if I take—again, I have perhaps not said it enough—if I take a polemic which accompanies the beginning of biology: it's whether or not you can pass from one living thing to another, from one organization to another by folding. And some will say: no, you cannot proceed by uh... folding. Others will say yes, it's possible; you can pass from one animal form to another by folding. It is a great reflection on folding. Things are always refolded, things are folded. To think is to fold.

And, once again, it's there where Foucault is totally right. Why do Cuvier and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire belong to the same archeological site? Because one of them will say -- Cuvier's fundamental proposition is: there are body-plans of life⁴ irreducible to each other such that you cannot pass from one plan to another -- why? Because each plan is defined by an irreducible form of folding. And Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire will say: you can always pass from one plan to another to the extent that that there is one and the same plan of composition throughout all body-plans, because, through folding, you can always pass [between plans], and the polemic culminates... Like all polemics it has very serious and then totally amusing sides, we cannot explore a century without falling into things which are really funny, relatively funny.

I'm telling you, there is a very extraordinary book, if you have the chance to find it at a library, *Philosophy*... uh... what... *Geological Philosophy*, by Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, which brings together his entire polemic with Cuvier. It's a matter of knowing whether we can pass, if we can proceed in thought from the vertebrate, which has one body-plan, to the cephalopod, which has another body-plan. Examples of cephalopods, so that you'll see the complexity of the problem, are the cuttlefish or the octopus. The octopus is a very beautiful cephalopod! It's one of the most beautiful. The cuttlefish is great, too. [Laughter]

Well, at first glance, it's not easy, and that's when Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire offers his folding account... You see what follows... what problem this question entails. It's... yes, if you define the vertebrate by body-plan, the great concept of vital organization which appears in the 19th century, if you define the vertebrate by body-plan, and the cephalopod by another body-plan, are these body-plans irreducible or not? Can I speak of a single plan of living composition or, on the contrary, is life fragmented into irreducible body-plans?

Then Geoffroy shows us how folding can bring us from the vertebrate to the cephalopod. And there is a text by Cuvier which seems to me one of the most comical in the history of biology,

where Cuvier says: I tried it, it's not true, he's lying! He's lying! His account doesn't bring us [from one to the other] at all... So Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, though he's annoyed, says: yes, it doesn't actually happen, but it happens in principle. And why doesn't it actually happen? There, he says that it's because one must distinguish, beyond life's body-plans, one must distinguish degrees of development. It's because the octopus and the vertebrate don't have the same degree of development that we can't proceed by folding. Thus, he recognizes that his folding doesn't work, but he maintains that his folding works if the degrees of development are the same on two body-plans. It is very complicated, but very interesting. It is a method of folding.

And I'll say the same thing: political economy is the great, it's the refolding of wealth onto labor. Wealth will cease to constitute an infinite table, a wealth continuum, as in the 17th century, and instead be refolded onto the source of its finitude and the earth, the earth itself—Foucault demonstrates very well in a beautiful page on Ricardo—the earth itself, which was, for the 17th century, an order of infinity, a clearly derived order, an infinity through its cause, which was an order of infinity, is defined on the contrary by its radical finitude, its avarice. The earth wasn't plentiful; it became avarice. Hence Ricardo's pessimism, hence the pessimism of all political economics.

And therefore, you see, I don't want to repeat all of our analysis from last time, I'm just saying that I'd like to see it corroborated here and there, so hang onto this, namely uh... the 19th century formulation: yeah, now the forces within man no longer engage forces of raising to infinity—for example, the three infinities of the 17th century—but engage the three forces of finitude: life, labor and language. The operation which composes the forces with one another is no longer the unfold but the fold, man is folded under the forces of finitude. What form results from this new composite? The answer, we saw last time, and the only answer, is the form “man.” The form “man,” therefore, is born and appears when the forces within man enter into composition with forces of finitude, and no longer with forces of raising to infinity. This is why the 19th century thinks man and, ultimately, it thinks everything under the form “man.”

Going forward, I said, and I want to go back very briefly, I said: you understand, then, that it is no longer a simple formula—at this point, if you've followed our analysis—it's no longer a simple or gratuitous formula, that, well, for the 17th century, to think is to unfold and, for the 19th century, to think is to fold.

As a result, once again, what interests me—now I come back to Foucault—in my opinion folding and unfolding are... the words, or concepts, do I mean them as “metaphors”? No, they are to be taken literally; they are not exactly metaphors, for example, when it is a matter of knowing whether we can pass by folding from the vertebrate to the cephalopod, it is not a metaphor.

The unfold and the fold will have metaphorical use, notably in Foucault's style. It's invoked there all the time. Already in *The Order of Things*, that explodes all the time, the fold, the unfold, the fold with the development of thicknesses or the discovery of hollows; that's a whole metaphorical register for Foucault [which is] very... it's much more than metaphors, but in what way? Once again, they are operations... they are geological movements, archaeological movements. Just like you'll talk about the folds of a mountain range. —You're making some poor

kid cough with your smoking... – Yes, we talk about folding all the time, but geology isn't content with folding; it unfolds as well. Plateaus, the unfolding of plateaus, the folding of chains. So, there is a geology of thought...

Well, this explodes in *The Order of Things*, this treatment of the fold and the unfold, the obsessive recurrence of these two themes in Foucault. But what's interesting, then, is to look back. Already in *The Birth of the Clinic*, you'll find the activity of folding and unfolding in full form, unfolding on the side of the clinic, the medical art of the 19th century, and folding with the constitution of a morbid thickness, a sickly volume, a hollow of illness—the fold will be on the side of what succeeds the clinic, namely the pathological anatomy of the 19th century. You'll find, already in *Birth of the clinic*, this whole interplay between fold and unfold.

As a result, I want to insist on this point again: I believe that this fold-unfold theme never ceased to haunt Foucault, but there was another philosopher who preceded Foucault and who, himself, seemed to have been obsessed by this theme of folding and unfolding, and it was Heidegger. Only Heidegger is obsessed with a sort of fold-unfold doublet in a whole other context, a whole other way. We will see when we discuss it, when we try to draw a parallel between Foucault and Heidegger; we will see where this comes from in Heidegger, but it doesn't at all come from the same ground. In Foucault, I'll say that it stems essentially from an archaeological conception of the movements of thought such that they are distributed in a history of thought, this history of thought going back to the classical age for the unfold and the period of the 19th century for the fold.

As a result, when we bring them face-to-face, it will already be -- and now I won't reiterate this point -- it will already be with an ulterior motive that Foucault employs the notions of fold and unfold, as he's coming from another horizon than that of Heidegger. And I would like to show why. It's that the fold and the unfold, we just saw, depend on combinations of forces, are both dependent on combinations of forces. In Heidegger, the fold and the unfold are inseparable from a position of being. In Foucault, they are inseparable from a combinatory of forces. In other words, Foucault traces the fold and unfold back to Nietzsche who, however, doesn't talk about them... but [Foucault] inscribes them in a combinatory of forces which is absolutely foreign to Heidegger.

On the other hand, it isn't foreign to Nietzsche. And, in fact, it's inscribed in a combinatory of forces, since the unfold is the operation whereby the forces within man engage forces of raising to infinity and the fold is the operation according to which the forces within man engage forces of finitude. Thus, fold and unfold come back to a combinatory of forces. Second difference: while I can say in broad strokes, in a very rudimentary way because Heidegger isn't our problem for the moment, I can say: the fold and unfold in Heidegger have the function of grounding beings [*êtres*], grounding beings [*étants*], in Foucault they have a completely different function which is to give beings a form.⁵

And note that both go together, because the fold and the unfold are born from and come back to a combinatory of forces, as a result, their function is not to ground beings, but simply to give them a form: the form "God" in the case of the unfold; the form "man" in the case of the fold. We

must further add that it gives them a precarious form since, in fact, every form is precarious; every form is precarious to the extent that it only lasts as long as the combination of forces from which it derives. If the inter-related forces change, if there is a mutation, there will be another form. Every form is precarious. So that, in *The Order of Things*, you find a passage on p. 291 which I find very interesting. I'll read it, slowly, p. 291.⁶ "There is being because there is life." "There is only being because there is life. The experience of life is thus posited as the most general law of beings, the revelation of that primitive force on the basis of which they are."

"Ontology discloses not so much what gives beings their foundation as what bears them for an instant towards a precarious form." "Ontology discloses not so much what gives beings their foundation as what bears them for an instant towards a precarious form." There is a lot to say about such a passage, and we'd have to manage to say them at once. If the context is taken at face value, you think—we must not exaggerate; this is a passage about Cuvier, a passage that appears at the end of the analysis of Cuvier, so, at face value, it applies to the biology of the 19th century, or at least to Cuvier's biology.

And nevertheless... it's true, there's no denying it, but at the same time, a passage can have multiple layers, as in this case. How can you not sense the wink, in this passage, as if Foucault was telling us: pay attention, I'm explaining my difference from Heidegger. Because it's no accident that he employs words that elicit in the reader a direct comparison with Heidegger. "There is being only because there is life, and in that fundamental movement that dooms them to death, the scattered beings, stable for an instant, are formed, halt, hold life immobile. ... The experience of life is thus posited as the most general law of beings, but this ontology discloses not so much what gives beings their foundation."

It isn't Cuvier for whom ontology reveals the foundation of beings; it's a summary expression of Heidegger's philosophy. Ontology reveals the foundation of beings. But this ontology discloses not so much what gives beings their foundation as what bears them for an instant towards a precarious form. And well beyond Cuvier, it's Foucault's very thought, it's Foucault's very thought, namely: there is an ontology, but in a bizarre way, I strongly believe that there is, in Foucault—underlying, barely perceptible and yet perceptible in many respects—there is, in Foucault, a sort of vitalism. There is a sort of vitalism in Foucault, and we'll see that this vitalism is very strange. And, once again, the formula for vitalism, if it applies to Foucault, would be very simple: every form is a composite of forces. "Every form is a composite of forces" is a energetist or vitalist expression. It amounts to saying that really, life is the law of beings. So, it's a whole shift in perspective, proving that he is not at all Heideggerian. Therefore, I believe in a vitalism of force in... And you see that it follows immediately: there is an ontology, but the ontology, the meaning of ontology is not at all... it's not at all a matter of grounding beings; it's determining the precarious form to which they're lifted momentarily, uncovering the precarious form to which they are lifted momentarily.

Why is the form precarious? Because it depends on a combination of forces in perpetual mutation. It's enough that the forces change for the preceding form to vanish and for a new form to emerge; the form will be precarious since the combination of forces will itself be variable.

Does that make sense? Every form is precarious. The form “God” is precarious—the existence of God himself, of course, is not precarious, he is eternal—but the form “God” is very precarious; it doesn’t last long in the West. So why should the form “man” be any less precarious? There is no reason why not. I mentioned those who still want to quell that [line of thinking]. For example, historians of the 19th century, the historians of thought... [*Interruption of the recording*] [58:37]

Part 3

... If the form “man” appeared after the disappearance of the form “God” because the composite of forces had changed, that’s another way of saying that the form “man” implies, or envelops, the death of God. But there—we saw last time; it bears repeating—but just considering the form “man” is enough to show that it envelops itself, in its folds, the death of man envelops itself. The form “man” is all the more precarious because it lies between two deaths: the death of God and the death of man. I said that it was obvious; why is it obvious? Again, it is a very bad historical schema, from the perspective of intellectual history, to talk about the death of God and then the emergence of man, replacing the form “man” with the form “God” ... the form “God”... no, sorry, the other way around! You’ll correct this yourself.

As I was saying, if there’s anything obvious about Nietzsche, it’s that he isn’t the thinker of God’s death. Why? But, again, I’m asking those reading Nietzsche to think about it—not agree with me, necessarily, bear uh... at least consider what I’m saying. It’s clear: when Nietzsche was writing, the death of God... it was old news. It’s a given; it’s a given; it’s a commonplace. And we ought to trust thinkers: they don’t really trade in commonplace ideas.

The one who came up with the idea of the death of God and his replacement by man, i.e. the one who substituted their forms, is [Ludwig] Feuerbach. But Hegel had already paved the way. It’s the Hegelian left that substitutes the form “man” for the form “God” and, in Feuerbach, if I were to summarize Feuerbach’s book, *The Essence of Christianity*—not in his own words, of course, but it will at least speak to his thought—I would say that Feuerbach’s thesis, in *The Essence of Christianity*, is that, because God unfolded man, it is time for man to fold or refold God. It is time for the form “man”; it is time for man to restore his own forces that he had raised to infinity in the form “God”; it is time for him to reclaim them in the context of his own finitude, i.e. the substitution of a form “man” for the form “God.”

But Nietzsche, if I can put it crudely, doesn’t give a shit about that. The death of God, you see... literally—I suspect I’m right—it makes him laugh. He finds it laughable, which is why he gives us comical versions of it. The older a fact is, the more variable it becomes, the more variations you can have of it. A legend has different versions because it happened so long ago. You want a different version? You want another one? You want another? You’ll have it. That’s exactly how it is for Nietzsche with the death of God: you want other versions? Well, I’ll tell you one, then. You want to know how he died? One, two, three, four, five... a dozen versions of God’s death—there, it’s settled, end of story! Why is Nietzsche like that?

It's a fundamental historical and philosophical mistake to portray Nietzsche as the thinker of God's death. By contrast, it's fair to say that—and I believe it's what makes him great—he is the first to have announced the death of man. Why? Because, for Nietzsche, the death of God was not an event or, at least, it was an old event, so old that we shouldn't even talk about it. However, what's still alive, for Nietzsche, is the inevitable way in which God's death ought to be thought together with the death of man, in one and the same consequential event. Nietzsche doesn't think the death of God; he thinks God's death in conjunction with a death of man which is still underway, in a single event with consequences for the future. And what are these future consequences?

It is—we started to see it last time—it is the emergence, the advent, of the third form: namely, no longer the form “God,” nor the form “man,” but the form “over-man.”⁷ Now, if you follow what I'm saying, understand that the form “over-man,” again, is not a beast, a non-human animal; it's simply the product of a new combination of forces within man with new outside forces. That is why the over-man is nothing to fuss about. It's very simple; the over-man is a very simple idea. And not everything about the over-man is good. There are weeds, too... we'll see why it isn't settled. But in the same way that, in the form “God,” you saw the forces within man which combined with the forces of raising to infinity, and in the same way that, in the form “man,” you saw the forces within man combine with forces of finitude, in the form “over-man” you see the forces within man combined with a third type of outside forces, in such a way that they result in the form “over-man.”

And I come back to the question why—yes, why—why does the form “man” already entail man's death? Well. For three reasons. For three reasons. One, first... I'm looking for a passage—first, it appears very clearly in Nietzsche, in the posthumous work especially, and [Pierre] Klossowski drew it out in his book, *Nietzsche or the Vicious Circle*.⁸ It essentially says that the principle of identity cannot function independently of a guarantee or grounding, which is God. I'm glossing Klossowski's text and the way he registers it in Nietzsche's thought. The principle of identity depends on a grounding, on a guarantor of identity, which is God. The death of God implies the collapse of the principle of identity. In other words, God dies, and man loses all identity. It's an interesting theme; I believe that, indeed, this relation between God and identity runs deep in Nietzsche. And the loss of identity with the death of God is a theme which... well, I won't develop it; you'll find it all there in Klossowski.

There is a second reason why the form “man” inscribes death within man himself. It's what I tried to say several times and, here, I'll try explaining it again, hoping that you revisited a great text, a great 19th century text. Of course, the 17th century, the classical age, I was saying, didn't ignore death and man's relation to death, but what form did this question, of death *in* man, take in the classical age? I believe they understood it, at that time, from a perspective of essence: man is mortal, and, in terms of existence, I claimed, they conceptualized this mortality in terms of death's sort of indivisible, unbreakable, instantaneous power. Death belonged to man's essence under the form, “man is mortal,” and comes to exist at an unbreakable, indivisible, instantaneous point. That was the conception of death. And it's why the 17th century was still teeming with something pervasive in the Greco-Roman age: consolations for death. If death only exists as an

unbreakable, indivisible moment, then death is concealed from thought to the extent that, so long as one is not dead, it's ok, and once one dies... fine. But between the two, the moment of death is precisely ungraspable, in what sense?

A phrase such as Malraux's, which Sartre really liked, which Sartre took up—again, this isn't at all criticism — “death is what transforms life into destiny,” in my view, or as Foucault would have it, typically belongs to the archaeological site of the 17th century. It's curious because while it struck a chord with the moderns, I feel that it totally captures the classical concept of death. Death an indivisible, unbreakable instant which, once it arrives, brings about a transmutation, a qualitative transformation of life into destiny. It's completely... already with the Greeks, even, there's a theme of *consolation*. We're told that you can't call a man happy before his death. Why? Because, up until his death, it can all change, it can all change... he's happy, but something might come up which rewrites the past and makes his life into nothing but a mistake, a precipitation toward one last misfortune. You can... and you can only say that a life was happy after death has taken place. In other words, it transforms life into destiny. Okay.

And I'm tempted to say that it's a question of... I find... a first observation. In *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault analyzes the thought of a great doctor of the 19th century, Bichat. Something I just said about Cuvier's text also applies to Bichat's treatment in *The Birth of the Clinic*. It comes across like an epistemological text; Foucault lays out the concept of death and life in Bichat but, if you are sensitive to tone and style, nothing prevents us from sensing that something else is happening, under the pretext of discussing Bichat, and that Foucault is doing more than discussing Bichat, but is speaking for himself. Why? If I, in turn, am both discussing Foucault and speaking for myself, then I'd say, personally, that Bichat's book, *Physiological Research on Life and Death*, is the first modern book on death.

Once again, I'm not saying that “modern” is better than “classical,” but that it's not the same. It's truly the first major statement... as a book of philosophy and not merely a book of medicine, it's the first major statement expressing a profound change in the medical and philosophical conception of death. You'll find a modern death in Bichat, in this astonishing book. But what does he say there? It would take me an entire class session to discuss Bichat's book. I'll highlight only a few points.

He tells us that life has two sides: the first key point. Life has two sides, organic life and animal life. And he defines both... I hope some of you are interested in checking this book out; there are formulations which, indeed, announce our age. How does he distinguish between organic life and animal life? In a straightforward way, he says, basically: organic life consists in internal existence or, if you prefer, in inhabiting a place—something common to both animals and plants. In my organic life, I inhabit a place and I exist within myself. What about my animal life, properly speaking? I inhabit the world—I'm quoting Bichat, here—“inhabit the world” and no longer “inhabit a place”; I inhabit the world and I exist outside of myself. The center of animal life is the nervous system. So, that's the first key point.

Second key point: organic life is endowed with continuity—funny, because I'm almost tempted to say that, above all, organic life is what the classical age understood. Organic life is endowed

with continuity, it is continuous. But animal life is strangely intermittent. And Bichat has some splendid pages that prefigure much later discoveries about... sleep's multiplicity, on particular sleeps [*sommeils partiels*].⁹ What we call sleep is the result of particular sleeps, but there are all sorts of sleeps that traverse the animal. Its sleep, properly speaking, is a result of all these particular sleeps. In other words, animal life is completely intermittent, traversed by sleeps and, in sleep, we return to one and the same organic life.

Third point: we must distinguish between two types of death, and this time it's not organic death and animal death; it gets complicated. The third point is... the two types of death that we must distinguish are natural death and violent death. As far as I know, he's the first author who differentiates between deaths and who places man under the banner of violent death, which is very, very interesting. Because there is a passage in Bichat, which I do not understand. In this splendid book, there is a passage that I don't understand. He says... I assure you that I've read it over, it's a book I like... I read it, I re-read it, and I can't manage to make sense of it... and it's so big... He tells us that animals most often...their death is a natural death, from old age. I don't understand—like everyone, I want to respond that no, animals are devoured, they're constantly devoured; farm animals are slaughtered by man, but it's not really any better in nature, so what can he mean?

At the same time, I'm ashamed to present that as an objection, since that would amount to saying that Bichat is really an idiot, not having thought of it. If it goes without saying that animals eat each other, what led him to say, "in a way that doesn't matter—animal deaths are natural deaths"? It's very, very bizarre; I don't understand. Except one aspect—a very nice idea. The idea is ultimately... it's stunning, it is that society is to blame. Death, violent death, is society.

And why is it society? He doesn't fall into the easy explanations of the "insecurity" type... It's not that. He means: you know, society wears down our animal life, it wears our animal life enormously, because it solicits it so much, it nudges us so much, it flanks us with back-to-back excitations, even worse than in nature: in nature, animal life can endure, at least in principle, much longer... Again, I have my doubts—when we see a poor rabbit, even when it pauses, takes a moment to rest, it's always on high alert: is this truly rest?

At any rate, I tell myself, he's not wrong, either... he didn't know it, himself, but uh... assault, social assault, is terrible, people who talk too much... people who talk too much, that's an assault. – if someone wants to rest... -- Neon lights, neon lights... Bichat didn't know about them, but neon lights are an ocular assault all the same. TV is an assault, a pure assault. You'll say... well... yes, anyway. It's true that society wears on my animal life. He won't portray it as a supplementary sphere of life; Bichat is too clever for that—he says that society is the acceleration of all the functions of animal life. But animal life is, on the contrary, a life which really needs intermittence, really needs rest, really needs its particular sleeps. But we, as we know, have one big sleep, and yet, unhealthy, we no longer have these particular sleeps. We still have to... our sense organs are engaged with something or other all the time. That's what he means. Then, as our animal life is so worn out by such high-tempo rhythm, then our form of death tends more and more to become violent death. It's the introduction of modern death into

intellectual history. Don't walk by Hôpital Bichat without a warm thought for such a great thinker.

And then, I add one last key point, he'll explain how—since there are two sorts of death, natural death and violent death—in both cases animal life and organic life don't vanish, or don't disappear in the same way. It's a double grid, if I were to extract a logical structure: the distinction between organic life and animal life and, on the other hand, the distinction between violent death and natural death, and thus, with the two deaths, violent and natural, organic life and animal neither end in the same way nor in the same relation. And therefore, without being able to develop it fully... maybe I will if we finish Foucault, I'll come back to Foucault and Heidegger, Foucault and Bichat, etc., this will be perfect. Foucault and Nietzsche... well.

And okay, a final point on Bichat's very strong thesis, henceforth, how does he completely reverse the conception... How does he reverse the classical conception of death? He does so in three ways. The first way: the idea that, just as with particular sleeps, the animal never ceases, the human animal never ceases to pass through particular deaths. Here is a pluralism of death which is totally opposed to the idea of death as an unbreakable instant, as an ultimate instant. Death's pluralism. And the whole end of Bichat's book consists in studying, in violent deaths, the three types of death: pulmonary death, cardiac death, cerebral death—which do not exhaust the list of deaths, the list of different deaths, but those are the three big mortal centers: lungs, heart, brain. That, then, is the first aspect: this sort of parceling out of death.

Second point: death will be a result of these particular deaths. It's on that basis he can posit a—as Foucault says when he analyzes Bichat—a coextensivity of life and death, and offer his grand definition of death which makes the classics laugh at Bichat. Just because they can't understand the definition; they don't belong to the same world. *Life is the set of functions which resist death.* It's nonsense for a classic. Since death can only be defined in relation to a living thing, you won't define life in relation to death. Everyone thinks that it's a stupid formulation. It ceases to be a stupid formulation if you think of death not in terms of an instant which ends life, but in terms of forces coextensive with life. Hence Foucault's commentary on Bichat: it's vitalism, a vitalism based on mortalism.

Thus, a multiplicity of deaths – first principle. Second principle: death's coextensivity with life. And third principle: the model of violent death and dismissal of the model of natural death, violent death being defined as, in simplest terms, according to Bichat, what goes from the center to the periphery. You know that nails continue to grow after death, hair too, the processes of excretion and digestion continue to function etc. Violent death goes from the center to the periphery. Whereas natural death goes from the periphery to the center. Lastly, you'll find all that... Therefore, I can say, I don't need more convincing, that yes... Strangely, Foucault, in his account of Bichat, in *The Birth of the Clinic*, isn't so interested in uh... I don't even know if he flags it... uh... this very stunning schema whereby violent death becomes death's model...

On the other hand, he very much insists on the coextensivity of life and death and on the plural character of deaths in Bichat; but really, I believe that if Foucault speaks so highly of Bichat, it's because he recognizes in him—even if he doesn't say it—he recognizes him as the first... the

emergence in medical and philosophical literature of a new conception of death. So, here again, when we encounter in Foucault the perpetual theme I've roughly translated with the phrase, "the living, being for death," I believe that, historically, to the extent that it's developed out of self-interest, historically it would be wrong to tether Foucault to Heidegger, or even to Blanchot. I think the source of this idea of the living, as a being for death, is in a connection, in Foucault's own concept of death being founded on a sort of deep affinity with Bichat. Well, okay.

And I'm saying, third point, before our break, the third reason death is inscribed in man with the appearance of the form "man," [is that] what makes the form "man" is fundamentally precarious. I would even say, if pressed, it's not even that it's transformed, destroyed from without—it's worked over by a fundamental, essential, internal precariousness. It's that, as we saw last time, the form "man" could only have emerged in the dispersion of languages from a linguistic point of view, the spread of living things and their body-plans from a biological point of view, the disparity of modes of production from the perspective of political economy. And in *The Order of Things*, in the chapters on man, Foucault insists a great deal on this point, which is indeed fundamental.

I'd say that this point has no equivalent in Nietzsche; it's very particular to Foucault, to have shown that the form "man," in the 19th century, was only constituted in relation to a triple dispersal. Dispersal of languages, dispersal of living things, dispersal of modes of production. And linguistics is only presented as a science, that is to say... recall, linguistics only takes language for its object because there is a dispersal of languages. Biology only takes life for its object because there is a dispersal of living body-plans. Political economy only reflects on labor as its object because there is a dispersal of modes of production. Everywhere, the dispersal of formations is the condition for new scientific objectivities.

Hence, Foucault tells us, then... I'm back to *The Order of Things*, pages 303-304, still the same page which struck me as so beautiful and so unusual. "The critique of knowledge is the ontology of the annihilation of beings." "The critique of knowledge is the ontology of the annihilation of beings." Foucault's exact wording on pages 303-304 is: "The ontology of the annihilation of beings assumes therefore validity as a critique of knowledge." You see why? With the constitution of the positive sciences in the 19th century, the reasoning is very clear. The constitution of positive sciences in the 19th century, linguistics, biology, political economy, the positive study of man... the constitution, if you will, generally, of the human sciences, could only have discovered its object through a fundamental dispersal. Dispersal of language, dispersal of modes of production, modes of the production of languages—without which language could never have been treated as an object; dispersal of life plans without which life never could have been treated as a scientific object; dispersal of modes of production without which labor never could have been treated as a scientific object.

So why is the only reflection on knowledge, at the same, an ontology of the annihilation of beings? Entire parts and entire forms of life had to disappear. Languages had to die... They had to, according to this fundamental dispersal as the condition for science. Languages had to disappear. Living things had to give way, be annihilated. Modes of production had to be buried.

Hence archeology, paleontology, and even, we might add, ethnology live under this prophecy: the critique of knowledge is an ontology of the annihilation of beings. The disappearance of living things, of which nothing remains but fossils—this is the great age of Cuvier. The disappearance of languages, of which nothing remains but indices of root words. Not only dead languages, but worse than dead—lost languages. Ethnology: the discovery of genocides like the Indian genocide. You don't have to go as far as fossils.

Everywhere you look, the human sciences were constituted as a kind of knowledge implying the dispersal and the disappearance of body-plans, of civilizations, of languages, etc. To the extent that the only critique of knowledge is the ontology of this disappearance of beings, the ontology of annihilation. Here again, it's part of a clearly vitalist perspective, totally opposed to Heidegger; it's no longer a matter of founding beings or existence. It's a whole other task, one of revealing forms in their precarity, in their dissemination and, from there, the only ontology is the ontology of the annihilation of beings. What's more, to come back to the question, the form "man," in three ways—the loss of its identity, its inscription in violent death, its dispersal—in these three ways, the form "man" was precarious, and fundamentally precarious. Again, should we cry about it? We can always maintain it, we can always make do, but, increasingly, things no longer happen that way. Is it something we should mourn?

Once again, let's consider whether it was good, in Nietzsche's sense of the word, when he tells us that *beyond good and evil* doesn't mean *beyond good and bad*. There is good and there is bad. And the form "God" ... Before mourning the death of God, assuming that God is dead—which is still doubtful but, in any case, the form is dead, you know, it's not about God, it's not about man, it's about the form "God," the form "man"—and before mourning, we have to wonder if it was all that good. The form "God" wasn't fun and games! When people mourn the death of God, well, yes, anyway...

And the form "man"? Which raises the question: was the form "man," for life... Let's add, was it a liberation of life, labor, and language? Or was the form "man" a way of imprisoning life, labor, and language? If the form "man" is a way of imprisoning life, labor, and language, there won't be anything to mourn in proposing another form. Was the form "man" at least able to protect existing man from violent death?

Well, existing men never died violent deaths to the extent they did under the form "man." So, we have to admit: okay, sure, the rights of man, but at the end of the day... it was a period, rather... Upon hearing of a new form, a new form of thought, whatever it might be, we tend to think it's the end of the world. Asking [whether the form "man" was imprisoning or liberating] amounts to saying: if it's true that the form "man" fostered the violent deaths suffered by existing man, if it's true that the form "man" imprisoned life, labor, and language, is there another—however faintly—is another form possible which would liberate life, labor, and language *within* man—I stress again—which would protect man, existing man, from all violent death... or from some violent death?

And, at this point, and this is the last point I want to address, or re-address, because I believe it's clearer this time... you get what I meant earlier by the *over-fold*. After the age of the un-fold, the

form “God,” and the age of the fold, the form “man,” there is what we call the age of the over-fold, on which the form “over-man” depends. And here, obviously, if we don’t want to lapse into a discussion of comic books -- we brush against it, but if we don’t want to fall in, we must be very, very discreet. We must be discreet because—what would we like to do? Foucault tells us on pages 420-421 of *The Order of Things*: well, you know, it’s not all that easy; we have to settle for clues. Well, what happens? Uh, what happens with the death of man? Foucault says, of course, these are questions we can’t possibly answer. Nietzsche didn’t say a ton on the over-man. We have to leave these questions hanging, for now, keeping in mind only that the possibility of posing them doubtless clears up room for future thought. In other words, we can only give rough sketches and non-functional sketches, exactly as in embryology. An embryological draft is not yet functional. At an embryonic stage it isn’t yet functional. Well, then, we have to push on, take risks.

So, what... what would the over-fold be? That is, again—and we had gotten pretty far last time, but I would like to go a little further. It means three things. With what new outside forces do the forces within man engage? Second, how does this new relation of forces, or this new composite, refer to a third geological movement which we could call the over-fold? Third, how does this new form, which Nietzsche calls “over-man,” result? What is meant by the form “over-man” is actually extremely simple—very, very simple—though we can’t say it’s popular... Simply put, there won’t be any potentiality which wasn’t in the form “man.” It’s obvious today that there are potentialities which aren’t included in the form “man.” Well, that’s what we’re going to consider... [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:43:55]

Part 4

... First, two comments: for those who intend to read Bichat, as I hope you do, a new edition has come out from Gauthier-Villars, which is a publishing house specializing in medicine, among other things, 55 Quai des Grands Augustins. There was a reprint, I believe... there was a reprint in 1955. *Physiological Investigations* – I got it right, for once – *Physiological Investigations on Life and Death*, by Xavier Bichat. [?]

Second comment: it hasn’t escaped your attention that we left, following Foucault who hated universal history, we left... We only covered a tiny slice for our three forms because, for example, what about Asian formations? Is... What is it? Is there a form and what is it? And then there are multiple Asian formations. What about American formations? What about ancient, Greek, Latin formations, and so on? Thus it’s... Hypotheses emerge: could the forces within man be combined with vegetal forces, animal forces? Personally, I’m inclined to say so: strange combinations, unusual combinations between the forces within man and animal forces, in India for example.

But in the end, let’s honor Foucault; I think Foucault... rightly or wrongly, he never thought himself competent enough to talk about oriental formations, beyond very brief allusions to erotic art in Asia, and always refused to discuss that since he didn’t consider himself competent. But in the end, for us... even the Renaissance, even the Renaissance, what is the “Renaissance” formation, before the classical age? That could go on forever. We shouldn’t take all that—the

form “God,” the form “man,” the form “over-man”—as... it’s a brief succession, a brief sequence in a tiny sliver of history.

But let’s pursue this tiny sliver. We’re getting close to the problem... I’m trying to determine it as Foucault does. The form “man” implies the dispersal of living things, of labor, and of languages. The form “man” implies the dispersal of life, labor and language. This dispersal is like the mark of finitude for the three forces, life, labor, language. In other words, man comes together as a form when life, labor, and language are dispersed. It’s very simple, it’s... uh... the form of Foucault’s thought, here, is very hardened, but, fortunately, he himself hardened it in this form. *The Order of Things*, p. 421, where he says: sure, man was brought together when life, labor and language were dispersed.

Hence the question of the over-man is: what... or it *should* be:¹⁰ what happens when, and if, life is reunited, if language is reunited, if labor is reunited? So, man is dispersed. Note: I call it a hardened expression, but it’s up to us understand the problem. If man comes together when life is dispersed, when labor is dispersed, when language is dispersed, then it would be normal for man to be dispersed if life comes together, if labor comes together, if language comes together. And he says as much, explicitly. I’ll read p. 421 slowly. “What happens if language emerges with greater and greater insistence in a unity that we ought to think but cannot as yet do so?” And he goes on: “Since man was constituted...” that is, the form “man” appeared. “Since man was constituted at a time when language was doomed to dispersion, will he not be dispersed when language regains its unity?”

You see, it’s, to my knowledge, the first and perhaps the only indication that Foucault gives us concerning the appearance of a new form. “When language regains its unity...” why is that so curious? What does he mean? There is so much to say about this sort of passage. The commentary would be endless. Because, in fact, this passage poses two problems. It says that when language comes together—the form “man” was constituted when language was dispersed and on the condition of a dispersal of languages. Thus, if language comes together, there will be another form. Two questions. First, where today does he see signs that language is coming together in a new force, a new capacity. That would be the first question. And the second question: why does he say this about language and not the other two forms of finitude? Why does he say, look, today language is starting to unify, and we don’t even know yet how to think.... He says that today language is starting to unify in a still unthinkable way, points to a form other than the form “man,” and then doesn’t go on to say that today life is coming together or unifying, and that we don’t yet know how to think about it, and that today labor is unifying in a way we still don’t know how to think about. He grants a sudden privilege, a very troubling privilege to language. Which is very troubling—which is very troubling because, in a certain way, all of Foucault’s thought amounted to—there in his theory of statements—amounted to depriving language of its privilege. It’s very troubling for us. I don’t know if you sense it, but it’s going to get better. Fine.

So, we have to take up the first aspect: what does “today” mean, as opposed to the 19th century, “language is starting to come together” whereas it was dispersed into the multiplicity of

languages such as linguistics... such as linguistics... required? Once again linguistics could only take language as its object through the dispersal of languages. "Today language is starting to come together" -- what does that mean?

And Foucault's theme is striking; it concerns all of us, to some degree. Because, in effect, this is his theme. It's true that linguistics could only be constituted as a science by presupposing the dispersal of languages, by granting the dispersal of languages. But, he adds, once linguistics reduced language to the dispersal of languages, this resulted in certain compensations [*suscitait des compensations*];¹¹ at this point, let's say "repercussions," dispersal of languages. Linguistics was compensated for, not by linguistics itself, but by a whole other discipline which compensated for linguistics and the demands of linguistics. He gives the name of this discipline: literature, modern literature. And, in some of the most interesting pages at the end of *The Order of Things*, he outlines the following theme; there at the very end, it's full of intuitions, of... He says to reject any agreement or complementarity between modern linguistics and modern literature. Which means... we know very plainly what he means: don't start shoving the signifier into literature. The signifier concerns linguistics, while literature has an entirely other process. The signifier has nothing to do with modern literature. That's rather good news.

So, he's saying: modern literature is not the correlate of linguistics, it's the... it's the compensation for linguistics. In what way does modern literature compensate for the demands of linguistics? Linguistics requires the dispersal of languages; modern literature, as a repercussion, will restore language's ability to unite [*puissance de rassemblement*].¹² The formula of modern literature is: *united language*. What does that signify? Language... things get interesting. How is it possible to define modern literature as *united language*? Well, he asks, what is modern literature concerned with? It isn't concerned with what words designate. It isn't concerned with what words signify. No more than it is concerned with what constitutes the signifier in language. It is solely concerned—here you see the theme we already developed in Foucault—it is solely concerned with the fact that there is language, that, beyond what it means, modern literature is not preoccupied with what language means. What is more, he goes so far to say that it isn't concerned with how language sounds.

What reunites language? It is the act of writing. The act of writing, and language's ability to unite, against linguistics. It's a very curious idea. This is how literature compensates for linguistics. While linguistics requires the dispersal of languages, literature requires the union of language in the act of writing. The discovery of a "there is language." "There is language." The being of language. "There is language" is vague. That's going to be at the very end of *The Order of Things*. The discovery of a "there is language," this new power that we could name "modern literature." In other words, modern literature has the function of circulating the anonymous murmur in which every author plays their part.

Remember, we went through all that when we discussed the statement; I don't have the time to go over it again, because it was rather to the point and... alright. But what does that mean, exactly? The act of writing doesn't happen in conformity with linguistics, but in complementing... but in compensating for linguistics. Why? The act of writing unites language

in a “there is,” in a being of language. And he says that in literature, the only thing left for language, since language doesn’t matter anymore, nor does its designation, nor does its signifieds, nor does its signifiers—all that is left for language is to turn over in perpetual self-reflection. Here is modern literature’s formula, on page 327 of *The Order of Things*. The only thing for language to do is to turn over in a perpetual return upon itself.¹³ Alright. Uh... The only thing for it... No, not “turn over”—*bend back*. The only thing for language to do is to bend back in a perpetual self-reflection. Alright.

You sense, foresee that we’re beginning to get uh... a foundation for what I initially wanted to call the “over-fold”. Everything happens as if language were now folded over. It bends back in a perpetual self-reflection. Foucault’s passages are on page 323:¹⁴ what is the compensation—I’ll continue—from page 323 [we asked:] what is the compensation for linguistics and the dispersal of languages? An answer on page 327: the compensation is modern literature, in the act of writing, as the discovery of language’s being or language’s ‘there is.’ A language without sounds—he says on page 327—“nor interlocutors, where language has nothing else to say but itself, nothing else to do but to flicker in the radiance of its being.”

Pages 332-335, he discovers two... how to put it... two principal inspirations for this reunion of language and for the new age that he’ll distinguish in defining modern literature: Mallarmé and Nietzsche. In the 19th century—pages 322-333— “the being of language was fragmented in the 19th century. ... But, with Nietzsche, with Mallarmé, thought was driven back, and violently, toward language itself, to its unique and difficult being. Our thought becomes engrossed in the question: What is language? How to get around it to make it appear in itself and in all its fullness?” Good.

It goes further on pages 417-419, and he says—his is the last time that he’s going to define modern literature, this time with a more detailed list—the being of language or language’s reunion comes about when language tends toward its own limit, toward the edge of what limits it. And what limits it? 418: “In that region where death prowls, where thought is extinguished, where the promise of the origin interminably recedes[.] [T]his new mode of being of literature...”¹⁵ Literature’s new mode of being would be language’s reunion, insofar as every language, in its own way, under literature’s influence, would tend toward the limit of language, and the limit of language—he says cryptically, but in a way where we recognize his affinity with a number of authors—is there where death, the extinction of thought, [and] the receding origin lurk.

This new mode of being of literature—thus, this “tensor” which opens language toward its own limit—[Page 418]: “It was inevitable that this new mode of being of literature should have been revealed in works like those of Artaud or Roussel, and by men like them”; in Artaud’s work, language, having been rejected as discourse and re-apprehended in the plastic violence of the shock, is referred back to the cry, to the tortured body, to the materiality of thought, to the flesh.”] It’s a case of language’s tension toward its own limit; what does this mean for Artaud? The inability to think death, the materiality of flesh... however you want to put it. “In Roussel, language, having been reduced to powder by a systematically fabricated chance, recounts

interminably the repetition of death and the enigma of divided [*déoublées*] origins. And as if this experience in language were unbearable or as if it were inadequate, it manifests itself within madness"... Alright. Etc. Etc.

As for discovering... here... language... here we have a better, stricter definition... language, the unity of language, is the tension of language toward, I quote "that formless, mute, unsignifying region where language can find its freedom,"¹⁶ "that formless, mute, unsignifying region where language can find its freedom. And it is indeed in this space thus revealed that literature, first with surrealism (though still in a very much disguised form)" — which shows that he only half-likes surrealism — "(though still in a very much disguised form), then, more and more purely, with Kafka, Bataille, and Blanchot, is posited as experience."¹⁷ Language's unifying [*rassemblement*], when it nears the limit of language, i.e. that "formless, mute, unsignifying region," will take the form of a triple experience: the experience of death (think of Blanchot), the experience of unthinkable thought (think of Artaud), the experience of repetition (he has Roussel in mind here, but we could add others), the experience of finitude in the open. That won't be important since it's finitude under a new guise, "in the open"—we're going to see what this means.

So, at the same time I find these passages splendid, splendid, and... uh... and, in a way, too... he ends—he ends *The Order of Things* as if to call out to us, "follow me." This reunion of language which inaugurates the third age, the age of the over-man, comes about in modern literature insofar as modern literature puts language under tension, leads it to its own limit, "that formless, mute, unsignifying region," and I'm trying to... I tell myself: well, okay, that's true. Let's try to say truly, to make it more concrete, if it isn't yet concrete enough. So, he has this list. He made his list. But I wonder, what do several authors have in common? ... If these aren't your authors, well, everyone has their own.

He's certainly right: what is one of the foundational acts of modern literature? It's Mallarmé's book—I mean the book Mallarmé proposed, explained, began uh... explained how it should function etc. and that, in a way, he never wrote. Now, you'll find a published version based on Mallarmé's existing texts, the one put together by Jacques Scherer at Gallimard, *Mallarmé's Book*,¹⁸ which is an essential text—you must read it, you should have read it—which is a very, very beautiful text, and with a lovely introduction, a very good analysis from Scherer; I won't start again, but I recommend it. I'll only note that the book is literally folded in every sense of the word.

In other words, Mallarmé's book is a combinatory; every reading refers to other readings. Every reading carries out a folding of the book. Hence the enormous importance that Mallarmé attributes in his reflection on the book to the idea of volume. I speak for everyone when I say that it's... If I consider Mallarmé's book to be the coexistence of combinations, how far do these combinations go? What is the limit of these multiple combinations? I'm trying to give a little more... if you want something a little more concrete from Foucault. Alright.

I'll move on to other authors. If it's true that Surrealism really disguised things, on the other hand, there was a very powerful movement, uh... that we deeply admire, which was cut down by

surrealism, called *Dada*. Now, what did *Dada* do? *Dada*'s literary activity is also to put literature to death, i.e., the tension of language toward its own limit, *Dada* being the magic name that demonstrates language's limit, i.e., the name which has no meaning (we could just as well say something besides *Dada*, but *Dada* is perfect). All language, the being of language—language unites in approaching *Dada*.

What does that mean? But, when Artaud says, "I write for the aphasics," what does he mean, if not that the being of language and language unites in approaching the limit of aphasia? Mallarmé says "mutism," to lead language toward mutism, toward aphasia, toward stuttering, toward... well. Maybe it's starting... And how does *Dada*, to make language approach *Dada*, how is it brought there, this union of language? One of the preferred methods, which surrealism will inherit but—God, it won't invent it, since you'll look in vain for what surrealism was able to invent—but it first of all borrowed a method of collage, and collage seems to me to be almost a simple form of folding. And collage didn't start with painting; it started simultaneously in painting and, most often, using pieces of newspaper, i.e. written text, and in literature. Collage was a collecting [*rassemblement*]... Dadaist collage was, indeed, if we recall Foucault's terms, uniting language [*un rassemblement du langage*] to bring it to the limit that was *Dada*. Fine.

We won't have any difficulty switching to a very great American author whom everyone knows, Burroughs. In Burroughs... To what end does his work reunite language? To free language. Free language from what? It interests us because it comes back to the problem of power but, in the end, Mallarmé's book was already presented as having a political dimension. *Dada* collages were presented as an active struggle against power. Language's union in Burroughs takes place in the name of a struggle against terrible new powers of control. And what are the two fundamental methods invoked by Burroughs? The basic methods, alright—I'm not saying that they're enough... what he himself calls the *cut-up* and the *fold-in*, the more complicated form. The simple form: the *cut-up*; the elaborate, complex form: the *fold-in*.¹⁹

Now, you're certainly wondering, what is the "*fold-in*"? It's, it's the fold onto itself, the... literally it's the over-fold. That language is recovered, folding the pages of the text, cutting the pages of the text, eliciting new relations, uniting language in terms of... uh... of cuts, *cut-up*, and of folds, *fold-in*. You can see how happy I am to find a word like this; it's proof that I'm not making things up. Write it down: F-O-L-D-hyphen-I-N. It's the over-fold. To bring about language, to bring about the over-fold in language. Now language is united and approaches its own limit, its own limit as defined by Foucault: the region, which is mute, unsignifying, aphasic, etc., etc.

But what else is there, in the meantime? There are all the other figures. There is, if we stick to Foucault's authors, [Raymond] Roussel and his infinite proliferation of sentences. We saw Roussel's stunning procedure of inserting parentheses... where he inserts a parenthesis into a sentence, into a parenthesis, another parenthesis into both... with double brackets, within these double brackets, a third parenthesis in triple brackets. He will make the sentence proliferate on itself by always inserting a parenthesis within preceding parentheses, so that the clamped sentence withdraws into the system of parentheses just as it advances in the system outside

parentheses. Uniting all language so that it nears its own limit, namely, the infinite flight of parentheses.

Sure, you'll say, but those are all strange processes. Yes, they're strange processes but uh... the authors we're given went through these strange processes, and when they didn't have processes as clear and discernible as these, their more sober procedures still ensured the same result, since Roussel... [Jean-Pierre] Brisset, who Foucault liked so much. Now [with Brisset] it's no longer a method of proliferating parentheses... the sentence in parentheses. It's a method of derivation, where each stage of a word's decomposition corresponds to a visual scene. Here it is truly audiovisual. *What is that?* Or "saloperie" as we saw: "salle aux prix," etc., etc. Brisset's derivations are also ways of uniting language around key words, in such a way that language approaches what, exactly? Its way of saying *Dada*. Brisset's *Dada* is *croak croak*, since the ancestor is the frog, and everything derives from the frog.²⁰

Well, it's an interesting attempt... I mean... you know, you never know who will be the craziest. Because one of the maddest in the growing series of great madmen of language, is Mallarmé... if you read a sentence of Mallarmé, it's... We assimilated Mallarmé, thank god, but if you get into the mindset of Mallarmé's contemporaries and read a sentence of Mallarmé, it's such a new syntax! Here we have a great author who unites language, its definition; he creates a syntax. It's easy to create words, you know—terminology isn't much of a problem—but creating constructions, once you agree that there's no such thing as an incorrect construction. That's what it means to be a genius in literature: making a new syntax. And those who define a great writer as a guardian of syntax clearly only measure their own mediocrity. There is no great writer who didn't create a syntax, starting with Mallarmé.

And I said that the craziest, you know, are those we do not recognize as completely crazy. With Brisset, with Roussel, it shows; with Mallarmé it almost shows. But take someone like [Charles] Péguy; he's on my list. I would put him high on this list.²¹ The madness of language represented by the system—Péguy's creation, the system of repetition—where what normally, for a normal reader, should only take a sentence to say, will be said in seventy sentences back to back, each with a tiny variation—what is going on here? What is this? What is this style, which has never had an equivalent? Which never will, because Roussel's proliferation, in my opinion, is much, much less demented than the sort of repetition, of... way of making language walk, uh... these kinds of... of iterations, Péguy's crazy iterations and, here again, this repetition of the sentence, what limit do these iterations approach? You see, when Foucault says that "to make language approach a limit is to reunite it," it's obvious that repeating the sentence makes language approach a limit.

Alright, can we cite other examples of those whose style qualifies them as among the greats of modern literature? Clearly, the case of [Louis-Ferdinand] Céline is extremely striking. What is the tension in Céline? How does Céline unite language? Céline starts with two novels... you know, it doesn't happen all at once, right? Look at his syntax, it's...it doesn't happen in one go. Céline starts with two genius novels: *Journey to the End of the Night* and *Death on the Installment Plan*. Already, the syntax is extraordinary. Morons claim that this syntax consists in

having recovered the virtues of spoken language. That really made Céline laugh. He thought that recovering the virtues of spoken language... uh... he didn't see why he'd take so much time and go to so much trouble creating a syntax, if it was already done in spoken language... Wouldn't it be great, if all you had to do was plug in a machine to have some Céline? But it turns out that it isn't so simple, and in the two first novels, we see that he's searching for something. But we don't know what he's looking for. Who could say, besides him? And he couldn't say. Enter Céline's third great novel: *Guignol's band*. He found it. And then he won't change his formula. Discovering something in the order of syntax is already so tiring—he explained that well—that he can't make a second discovery... he was too tired afterward. And then it erupts, and now we see what he had been looking for.

What do we find in *Guignol's band*? You'll understand immediately, if you're not very familiar [with Céline], or not at all. I'll read it to you, but you need a special type of reading for Céline that I can't pull off. So, it won't come through... I'll read and just indicate the signs of this syntax. He describes, in succession... he'll describe a little girl who dances, little girls who dance in the streets of London. And then, by contrast, he had a simple idea about children: he always said there was hope, with children, that children were alright because there was still hope that they'd be less rotten than their parents—there wasn't much hope, but one has to make the most of it. And then there's the atmosphere of shifty people, men... thus a dancing girl, and some men, and then this passage moves on to... we have [*Deleuze every detail of the punctuation as he underscores reads*]:

“Pert brisk little girl with golden muscles!... Keener health!... whimsical leap from one end of our troubles to the other! At the beginning of the world the fairies must have been young enough to have ordained only extravagance... The world at the time all whimsical marvels and peopled with children, all games and trifles and whirls and gewgaws! A spray of giggles!... Happy dances!... carried off in the ring!

I remember their pranks as if it were yesterday... their impish farandolas along the streets of sorrow those days of pain and hunger...

Glory be to their memory! Cute little monkey-faces! Imps of the pale sun! Misery! You will always well up for me, in gentle whirls, laughing angels in the gloom of the age, as in your alleyes in times gone-by, no sooner shall I close my eyes... the cowardly moment when everything dims... Thus Death, still, thanks to you, dancing a bit... expiring music of the heart!... Lavender Street!... Daffodil Place!... Grumble Avenue!... dank alleys of despair... The weather never really fine, the round and the farandola of the fog pits between Poplar and Leeds Barking... Little elves of the sun, light shock-headed band, fluttering from shadow to shadow!... crystal facets of your laughter... sparkling all around, and your cheeky teasing... from one danger to another!... Startled faces right in front of the huge drays!... Champing dray horses grinding the echo!... Enormous hairy pasterns... belong to Guinness and Co., one fright to another!... Little dream girls!... lively as larks on the wing!... soar!... flutter o'er the lanes”.²²

Etc., I can't keep it up. Okay, uh. The whole book is like that; at the same time, it's a very, very entertaining novel. Uh. Here, he describes a crowd lined up at the doors of the consulate. So, the

consulates are all gathered in the same district; it's like that in every city: "There're at least a dozen consulates...of all countries...around the trees!... all around the square... like a merry-go-round! against one another!... that one there! the Russian! the biggest! [...] The crowd's milling in front of the door... I bear down... I dig in!... I'm pushed back!... I succumb!... I collapse in the mob of Russians!... They're fuming!... they spit!... they call me names!... I'm at a standstill!... a stricken meteor!"²³ "Stricken meteor," that's great—all of a sudden: "stricken meteor." Understand that... here is what I mean... I'll stop with "stricken meteor," because it works well as an example.

You get that it seems to unravel all syntax—to what end? A juxtaposition. There is no longer syntax; there is no longer a verb, [but] a juxtaposition of nouns and adjectives. But the decision to have the adjective coexist with a noun applies for an entire syntax. "Stricken meteor," all at once. It's astonishing, as a stylistic effect. "I'm at a standstill!... a stricken meteor!... I collapse on the spot!..."²⁴ In other words, what is the limit toward which he'll tend? That is, in what form will language be reunited? The unity of language in the "juxtaposition of interjections." "Juxtaposition of interjections": each interjection being separated by three dots, the magic sign: exclamation point, three dots. And it is within the juxtaposition, inside each interjection, of an adjective and noun, that a syntactic line will be born, exactly like I said about music: you sometimes have a melodic line which emerges from two notes. Here, the syntactic line will emerge from two atoms. Any cretin who claims that Céline works with spoken language, then, is clearly hopeless... [*Interruption of the recording*] [2 :31 :07]

Part 5

... And in e.e. cummings, he highlights what they call, in linguistics, ungrammatical forms, i.e. grammatically incorrect forms, or those which don't conform to the rules of grammar. Ungrammatical forms. I'll give you an example. In a poem by Cummings, you find the formulation—pardon my pronunciation; a splendid poem, by the way— "he danced his did." In the poem, it becomes, it becomes... it's brilliant. Suddenly you read that, very beautiful poem, and then. It's that, on the other hand, everything stretches toward the emergence of this, which you'll recognize is an ungrammatical form, "he danced his did". It doesn't exist in any language, least of all in English and American English, it can't exist. There cannot be such a construction, DID with the possessive pronoun "his".

Alright, not possible. [Nicolas] Ruwet shows very well that you can have grammatically correct constructions of the sort: "he did his dance", *il fit sa dance*, if you render it word for word. Or a second correct formulation: "he danced", *il dansait*, "his dance", *il dansait sa dance*. Third correct formulation according to Ruwet: "he danced what he did", if I understand it, *il danse tel qu'il fit*. Okay, there are these three correct formulations: if you line them up, you'll see that one includes "did," "he did his dance," there is one that includes "danced," and there is another which also includes "did." You line them up; as you superimpose them, you stretch them to a limit and end up with a sort of barbarism, the ungrammatical form: "he danced his did".

I'd claim that in the case of Cummings's poem, the ungrammatical form has exactly the same role as the interjection in Céline. It's the way in which you organize a language system, you reunite it in stretching it to a limit, a limit... I won't say, as Foucault did, the limit of death, but a limit which would be the ungrammatical formulation, the stuttering formulation, the aphasic formulation, which is truly the limit of language. I ask you to reflect on all that for next time.

Can we — I'll end on a simple question — can we, I'm not saying that it's the only possible definition, can we define modern literature like this—it's fine, I think it corresponds to Foucault's hypothesis—can modern literature defined as an operation which at every turn reunites language in order to stretch it to a limit, like the “invention of a syntax in approaching the ungrammatical form.”

So, I've completed the first part of my task. In what sense does Foucault speak of language's new mode of being in modern literature? But we stumble over the following problem: why does he reserve that for language, and why doesn't he also say that the modern age, the age after man, is constituted by a similar reunion of life and of labor? Why does he say that only language is reunited? Perhaps there is just as much reason to say: language is reuniting, but life is also reuniting, and labor is reuniting, as well. Why doesn't Foucault want to go there? And do we have reasons for wanting to? Alright, I believe it's getting clearer. If there's something we need to come back to next time... [*End of the recording*] [2:36:44]

Notes

¹ We should note that the title of Deleuze's appendix to his *Foucault* is titled “On the Death of Man and Superman”, the substance of which Deleuze already developed in the two preceding sessions.

² Most translations of Foucault's text exclude the q&a that follows the communication in which Foucault's famous “retenons nos larmes” (let's hold back our tears) is located, at the end of his response to Lucien Goldmann's lengthy intervention.

³ Deleuze refers often to Nicolas of Cusa; see the first Leibniz seminar, sessions 1 and 4, April 15 and May 6, 1980; sessions 2, 3, 8, and 11 in the Spinoza seminar, December 2 and 9, 1980, and January 27 and February 17 1981; session 24 of the Foucault seminar, May 20, 1986; and session 17 of the seminar on Leibniz and the Baroque, May 12, 1987.

⁴ While the convention is to translate *plan d'organisation* as “plane of organization,” considering that this is an account of Cuvier and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, it's important to use the English equivalent of this term as it is used in biology. Translations of Cuvier, Geoffroy, their debate, and translations of the relevant secondary literature have it as “structural plan,” “organizational plan,” and “Bauplan,” in addition to “body plan.” I've chosen to hyphenate the term to stress it as a technical biological concept and to emphasize that the compatibility or incompatibility is that between *plans* and not between *bodies*.

⁵ Both *êtres* and *étants* appear to refer to Heidegger's *Seiendes*; since Deleuze seems to use them interchangeably, and since English lacks French's distinction between *êtres* and *étants*, these are combined as “beings” in English.

⁶ For the sake of Foucault's readers, I reproduced the English translation found in the Routledge edition, Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 303.

⁷ I chose “over-man” to flag its correlation with *surpli*. Moreover, “to fold something over” for “superfold” seems to be more natural, hence the choice to carry the “over” into the translation of “surhomme.”

⁸ Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (London: Athlone Press, 1997; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

⁹ While the French “sommeils partiels” would lead one to say “partial sleeps” or “partial slumbers,” the choice of “particular” does a better job of establishing sleep’s parallel with death—in addition to the organism’s “general” death, the heart, lungs, and brain have their own particular deaths, as Deleuze discusses below.

¹⁰ Deleuze says that it *should* be a “Qu’est-ce qui...” question because this verbiage does not, in fact, exist on page 397 (of *Les Mots et les choses*). Where relevant, I’ve followed page 421 of the English translation, with some modification to accommodate Deleuze’s wording.

¹¹ I preserve “compensation” since this is the language of *Les Mots et les choses* (309-313) and *The Order of Things* (323-326). A phrase like “suscitait des compensations” is strange in English and any paraphrase I could find to make the wording more natural meant sacrificing “compensation.”

¹² “Unite” is a risky translation of *rassembler*; “gather” and “collect” are other options, but phrases like *le langage rassemblé* lost some of their force when rendered as “gathered” or “collected language.” Putting it in terms of union provides more consistency across different phrases and more faithfully communicates the idea that literature reconstitutes or consolidates language in the wake of linguistics having pulverized it in the “dispersal of languages.” Let us note that in the Séan Hand translation of *Foucault* (p. 131), he chooses to render *rassembler* as “to regroup.”

¹³ The choice here, again, is to follow *The Order of Things*’s translation. The wording of “return upon itself” is arguably too literal and would ideally be swapped out for something like “self-reflection.”

¹⁴ Deleuze’s pagination is imprecise as he is likely casually gesturing toward the pages and passages relevant to his summary, rather than quoting or referring to any one particular passage, hence the adjustments made in the text to accommodate these imprecisions.

¹⁵ The translation of *The Order of Things*, as well as the transcript’s punctuation, are slightly altered to conform with *Les Mots et les choses*.

¹⁶ The translation from *The Order of Things*, p. 418, is followed here.

¹⁷ A slight departure from *The Order of Things* translation, p. 418. The translator there has: “posited itself as experience.”

¹⁸ Jacques Scherer, *Le “Livre” de Mallarmé* (Paris : Gallimard, 1957). On the « Livre » and the Combinatory, see session 9 of the seminar on Leibniz and the Baroque, February 3, 1987.

¹⁹ Deleuze uses “cut up” and “fold in” in English. He also returns to Burroughs in the three following Foucault seminars 17, 18 and 19.

²⁰ Jean-Pierre Brisset famously argued that humans descended from frogs and speculated on connections between the French and frog languages. Deleuze refers to Brisset several times in earlier Foucault seminar sessions, notably in session 1 (October 22, 1985) and session 9 (January 7, 1986).

²¹ Deleuze refers frequently to Péguy during the Cinema seminars 2 (especially sessions 7, 19, and 22), 3, and 4, as well as in session 15 of the seminar on Leibniz and the Baroque, April 28, 1987. See also *The Time-Image*, p. 297 note 3, and at the end of chapter IV of *What Is Philosophy?*

²² The relevant passage is in the English translation of Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *Guignol’s Band*, trans. Bernard Frechtman and Jack T. Nile (New York: New Directions, 1954), 33.

²³ Céline, pp. 223-224.

²⁴ Céline, p. 224.