



GILLES DELEUZE

Foucault

SEMINAR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS,
VINCENNES-ST. DENIS, 1985-1986

LECTURE 10 14 JANUARY 1986

TRANSCRIBED BY ANNABELLE DUFOURCQ
TRANSLATED BY CHRISTOPHER PENFIELD

I

So then, right where we left off, Georges Comtesse would like to make an intervention. So let's let him, since I think it will be closely related to the point where we are, and then I will continue afterward. There you have it.

Georges Comtesse: (barely audible). [??] starting with a fragment from a text by Foucault, which is the text from [??] the preface of the book on Bentham's panopticism [??] called "The Eye of Power". And it seemed to me that this preface [??] brings together the three problems that have been posed here, which is to say, the problem of the relation of power to the principle of visibility, [??] secondly, the relation of power to violence, and thirdly, [??] the relation of power to the question of multiplicity, which was broached here based on the distinction, the differentiation between three dualisms: strict dualism, provisional dualism, and preparatory dualism [??]. [??] Concerning the first point, that is, the relation of power to visibility, what is interesting is that [??] speaks of visibility in the *ancien régime*, that is, to what he will later call [??] the power of sovereignty as power of interdiction, by contrast to [??] the power of normalization. But precisely in the *ancien régime*, it's not power that matters in the first instance. It is not power that, in some way, is directly in relation to visibility.

And why not? Because there is a force [*puissance*] anterior to power [*pouvoir*], the force of [??], the force of God, [??] a force of light that is transmitted to the power of sovereignty and that thus founded what Foucault calls in his preface the principle of visibility [??] of sovereignty. It is thus light that assured the visibility of the body of the king, of the power of sovereignty and [??] the castle, the palace, the church became monuments of visibility, manifestations of visibility. Thus, without the brilliant force of light, of luminous life, without light, no visibility, no reflection, no manifestation of visibility. The force of life was the identity of light and speech as the foundation of the principle of visibility. There is light. This affirmation that there is light is an affirmation of the *ancien régime*, the affirmation of the life of God that presupposed, like every affirmation of life, a difference; there is no affirmation of life without difference, and [??] a sacred difference between the light, clear speech, and the night, obscure speech.

Hence, precisely the transformation, and that is the crux of Foucault's preface. Starting from the eighteenth century, the problem posed is no longer exactly that of a center of visibility – royal visibility, for example – a center of visibility as the radiance of a force [*puissance*] of light that would be diffused [??] throughout the space of the kingdom as a natural space, a ground and [??] with certain borders. What is wanted is for luminous force to radiate everywhere, for



visibility to be able to extend to all of society instead of being concentrated in a center. What is wanted is thus a general, widened visibility, spread out, also [???]; starting from before the French revolution, there manifested a hatred, a critical distrust of the castle, the convent, the hospital, the stronghold. And this hatred is the same thing as fear. The fear of what? The fear of what Foucault will call dark space, that is, the fear of nocturnal spaces or what he again calls the fragments of night. What is fearsome, according to Foucault, is the darkness and the silence of spaces that constitute so many obstacles to the radiance of light, to the entire visibility of people, things, truths. We are afraid of dark spaces, of blackened rooms, [???] darkness and silence.

In addition, two directions follow from this: critique is not simply a kind of criticism; it can literally dissolve, remove, eliminate all the dark spaces, for what circulates in these spaces is precisely the unbearable, that is, the language of darkness, the language of silence, of evil, a language which deviates from the luminous speech that remains, despite everything, the model. In these spaces, of which Foucault gives five or six examples, the tyrants and the priests hatch their dark plans, political arbitrariness [???], religious superstitions are re-enforced, illusions of ignorance are confirmed and nurtured, schools of vice and crime broaden, bodies deteriorate, epidemics spread. The century of the Enlightenment therefore seeks to dissolve the dark spaces that haunt it, which is to say, one seeks at any price not only to eliminate the dark spaces, but especially, especially, to erase the grey areas, the opaque zones of man, and to render man as transparent as society. One seeks to return, as they say, man and society to their transparent visibility or to their essential transparency.

One seeks, therefore, a man with no twilight zones, a society with no dark spaces. The dark spaces of society realize the grey areas, the opacity of man, and intensify the silent obscurity of nocturnal force, understood as the power to do evil. And this is the second point, the relation between [??] and violence. In effect, the difference of the identity of speech and light need not be annulled for the force of evil to be able to return as the force of a mobile violence. The difference of life need not be annulled for the silence of time to be able to return as [???] of eternity. It is to avert the relation between violence and power, to ward off the moment of violence, mobile violence, that power is exercised. Power is not violence, but this is because the former never ceases to ward off, contain, detain, prevent, inhibit, and restrict the latter, to shatter at any cost the movement of its force. And in order to prevent the movement of its force, [???] of the violence at first immobile and which speaks, finding its language in precisely the dark space, in order to prevent the movement of its force as force of time, prepares in the dark space the voice of control of the established order [???] and at first ineffective.

What is necessary first and foremost, before the voice of control, is to impose the gaze of surveillance, the gaze of surveillance that will thus reduce the opacity of man, re-establish his visibility or his transparency, that is, to cut off the force of time from its movement [???], to master force by inhibiting its movement. This is why Bentham [???] writes that to be placed under the gaze of surveillance is to lose the power to do evil and nearly, he says, the idea to want to. An essential link between the gaze of surveillance and the inhibition of the movement of force. The power of the gaze is what prevents the movement of force, what masters or dominates force, what converts it into an intention the exhaustion of which is sought, into a will which exhausts itself and which will perhaps be able to go as far as the good will of a rational being. It is by this effect of power that visibility is assured. Or again: by visibility, power is assured in its effect.

Bentham's obsession, as Foucault puts it, is thus an all-seeing gaze, and it is based on this obsession that Bentham ponders visibility. He conceives a visibility, as Foucault says, entirely organized around a dominating gaze of supervisors. It is thus no longer the voice of



domination and not yet the voice of control. [??] The dominant gaze of surveillance that [??] to produce a new visibility, a visibility warding off violence [??], a visibility inhibiting the movement of force, a visibility that we could call a visibility of immobilization, this obsession with the gaze precedes and institutes the invention of the panoptic apparatus as technology of power. The obsession with the warding-off gaze will bring about its technological effectuation, will pass by way of the optical apparatus or procedure, and it is by means of this apparatus that the gaze preceding panopticism will, at that moment, become inscribed in the social space, that the institution will, at that moment, become what Foucault calls the effect and support of a new type of gaze. The panoptic apparatus is thus the technological response to the problem of all-seeing power, to the problem of power that surveils the immobilization of the movement of force. It is an apparatus, as Foucault says, of subjection by means of light, an apparatus [??] of visibility and light, an apparatus that thus constitutes the site of power's exercise that is at the same time the place of recording for a form of knowledge.

Third point: the relation between power and multiplicity. The whole strategy of the panoptic apparatus becomes, at that moment, the strategy of what Foucault calls the centralized gaze, that is, the gaze of the supervisor from the central tower, this gaze that seeks the entire visibility of bodies, of individuals, [??], of activities. And this strategy is precisely a strategy of immobilization of force [??], it is by means of the exercise of power proper to the optical apparatus that the force of mobile violence is conjured away. This is why [to cut??] the movement of its force, to immobilize, is also to isolate individuals, to separate them from each other, to serialize them. The optical apparatus of *conjunction* immobilizes and separates individuals. The principle of the gaze of surveillance, which assures a surveillance, as Foucault puts it, at once global and individualizing, is thus now no longer the principle of visibility as the classical principle of sovereign power, but, with a new power [??] and [??] a new technology of power, it thus becomes the principle of this new power; it becomes, as Foucault puts it, the principle of isolating visibility.

One thus exits from the terrifying dark space [??] and passes into a space that is enclosed, isolated, separated; and in this enclosed space, that is, this cell where a prisoner, a madman, a patient, a worker, a schoolchild is confined, light returns precisely through the new isolating, serial visibility. Each person, isolated from others, separated from them, without contact with them, becomes visible once more by means of the gaze of surveillance. And the obsession, at that moment, of this centralized gaze, of power, is not at all to open itself to a multiplicity, but rather – and this is an essential point – it is to concentrate the multiplicity in the very exercise of power. That is why it was necessary, as Foucault says, at the end of the eighteenth century [??] for effects of power to circulate to the point of everyday activities, to the point of bodies and individuals. It was necessary, as he says – and this is my last point – for power, even with a multiplicity of men to rule over, to be as efficient as if it were being exercised over a single man.

Deleuze: Perfect, perfect. In effect you have drawn out a difference in the regimes of visibility of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This history is complicated because we will have to see – we have not yet done this – we would have to see at the level of painting, because... If you want, we must maintain, in any case, the principle that we have already seen at the level of statements. I mean that we especially must not reintroduce a principle of progress, of improvement, for one epoch does not improve upon another; I mean that there is no regime of visibility that is better than another. You must not believe... some of you might have come to think, for example, that in the eighteenth century the shadows were driven out; this is clearly not what is meant by [??] a redistribution of shadows and light..., the status of shadow in each historical formation is clearly different. These are qualitative regimes of visibility that are quite different. What is very important, then, if you will, from where we are



at present, is the idea that power is what makes see and what makes speak. As if power relations summoned us to see and to speak. But taken by themselves, as we will see, power relations are mute and blind. It is very curious. So what does it mean that they make see and make speak, even though in themselves, if it is meaningful to speak of them “in themselves,” they are mute and blind? ... But in any case, this intervention went very well.

Now, where were we? Last time was our first session on this new element that was no longer the element of knowledge but that of power. And I began one part, which I have nearly finished, that we could entitle: the questions of principle. To isolate questions of principle is already arbitrary, but it is for the purpose of clarity; and understand that these questions of principle, this discussion around principles, has not so much to do with explicit principles that you would find in this or that theory of power. It is rather a matter of implicit postulates that traverse the set of theories of power, the bourgeois theories of power as much as Marxist theory. So we must not take these principles as theses, but rather as postulates that Foucault felt the need to call into question.

Implicit postulates that are subjacent to most theories of power. And of these postulates that Foucault takes to task, we examined five last time. There was thus the postulate of property, according to which power would belong to a class, for example, or to some equivalent of a class, let us say: to a class. Is this Marxist? No, it's not Marxist; long ago a Marxist [??] showed that this conception of power as property of a class typically appeared in the bourgeois conception of power, notably in Guizot from the nineteenth century. The bourgeois class as proprietor of a power of law. Okay, so it's not especially Marxist. Second postulate..., the postulate of localization: power localized in the State apparatus. The third postulate is the postulate of subordination: power subordinated to a mode of production as infrastructure. Fourth postulate, postulate of the essence or attribute: power would be the attribute of the dominant, in opposition to the dominated. Fifth postulate, postulate of modality: power would act by means of violence or ideology.

And we still had one last postulate, which I said was very important because, no doubt, it is one of Foucault's most original points when it comes to this discussion of principles. If you reflect on the five denounced postulates, what is the basis of their denunciation? It is that, in order to understand what power is, one must not begin with, one must not first give oneself what might be called big entities. Or, if you prefer, let us employ a more technical term, molar entities. Why do I introduce molar entities here? Precisely because I am taking care to comment on the “microphysics” of power. Foucault announces a microphysics of power. Or, if you prefer, let us say: a molecular conception of power. I thus say, quite naturally, that there is within such a conception a denunciation of the large molar entities that the majority of theories give to themselves ready made in their conception of power.

And if we remain at the level of molar entities, it goes without saying that we will conceive power in terms of opposition. The big entities are organized according to molar oppositions. What will these oppositions be? In all senses, if you take our postulates back up, infrastructure-superstructure, dominant-dominated, class oppositions, etc. What does Foucault want to do? It goes without saying that a microphysics aims to go beyond molar oppositions; toward what? Toward molecular complementarities. Only this will pose for us another problem. You understand, this is the difficult point. I mean the point that we must pay attention to from now on. In other words, it is a matter of passing from a macroscopic dimension to a basically microscopic dimension. It is a matter of massing from the macro to the micro. “Microphysics” of power.

Now, what is the difference between the macro and the micro? Obviously if it were a matter of a simple miniaturization, it would hold no interest at all. If it were a matter of saying that we must think in small terms what we are used to thinking in large terms, there would be



no interest. If it were a matter of saying that in the State there are a thousand tiny States, no interest. The passage from the macro to the micro must therefore not be a miniaturization.

See page 100 of *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, where Foucault says very hastily, very quickly... that the micro is not a difference in size. Thus, it is a difference in kind. Take the following macrophysical proposition: power belongs to the dominant and is exercised over the dominated. We have seen that this is a macrophysical proposition. Take the microphysical proposition: power is a relation that passes by way of the dominated no less than the dominant. I will say, so that you really understand the problem, that in the two propositions, “dominant” and “dominated” cannot have the same meaning. Even if I use the same word, the terms have changed when I pass from the macro to the micro, when I pass from the macrophysical to the microphysical; otherwise it would not make sense.

Whence the importance... Do you understand this? It’s quite obscure for the moment, perhaps because it is very abstract. Because it is a task for us. It will be especially essential that we do not fall into the trap of a simple miniaturization, you understand, it is not a question of simply expanding. It is, once again, not a question of multiplying small states, there must really be a difference in kind between the microphysical and macrophysical domains. And this, then, is what we see in particular when it comes to the last postulate that I left to the side last time, which was the postulate of legality. For, in the majority of theories of power, power is conceived as a function of law, of the law as molar authority. And, therefore, the corresponding molar opposition is: law-illegality.

Just as there is a molar opposition between dominant and dominated, so is there a molar opposition, a big opposition, a relation of exclusion between law and illegality. And the fact that we conceived power on the basis of law is doubtless the sign that the law is an excellent molar concept for thinking power. Since when? According to Foucault, this would be the very fundamental deed of monarchy. Strangely, it’s not the republic; the republic will only confirm. It is the monarchy that introduces the form of the law. How? In its reaction against feudalism. The king will rise and will be something other than a suzerain insofar as he reclaims juridical right and the law as the form of right. So the republic, with the French Revolution, will be able to reproach the king and the monarchy for having not accomplished this program of the law, but will maintain the idea of the law and of the rule of law [*état de droit*]. The idea of the rule of law is monarchical before being republican, and in this regard the republic is tied to the monarchy. It is a property of the seventeenth century European monarchy, then of the republic, to conceive power in terms of law and to found the notion of a rule of law. Therefore, the law as molar authority is defined at the level of a macrophysics as that which does away with or prohibits illegality. Opposition law-illegality.

What does it mean for Foucault “to do a microphysics of power”? As always, it is to discover something underneath, namely, beneath the macroscopic body and molar opposition, it will be necessary to discover something, which will be what? A differential relation or, if you prefer, a molecular complementarity. Now, it goes without saying, when I pass from molar opposition to molecular complementarity, when I pass from macro-entity to differential relation, these will not be the same terms even if they are the same words. It is the condition under which a microphysics succeeds or does not succeed. Avoid miniaturization. What will the substitute for the big opposition law-illegality? He will substitute a typically molecular complementarity law... And, as if he sensed the danger, namely, that he employs the same word in two senses, sometimes at the macro level and sometimes at the micro level, he will explicitly introduce there

name: no longer illegality, but illegalism.

He will say that, for the big opposition law-illegality, we must substitute a fine complementarity, a micro-complementarity law-illegalism. And illegalism, which seems to me



a very new concept, is the object of a chapter in *Discipline and Punish*, a very interesting chapter that consists in telling us what? Precisely that at the microphysical level, we can very well see that the law is not opposed to illegality. Far from being opposed to illegality, it is like a result of illegalisms. Understand that it is there that he does microphysics, because if I say “the law is the result of illegalisms in a social formation,” one will immediately want to object and tell me: “but that does not mean anything! Illegality, even if we use this strange word, illegality rather than illegality, illegality already presupposes the law. How would the law be the result of something that presupposes it?”

But well, no. It is true that illegality already presupposes the law at the macrophysical level. At the microphysical level, not at all. Why? What does that mean? Well, it means that illegality is not an accident in relation to the law. Illegality is not at all an accident. If the law was made for prohibiting it, it would be curious all the same that it fails at that point. It is a simple remark: yes, it is true, if the law was made for prohibiting, nevertheless, it would leave us dazed, this history that would be nothing but the eternal history of its failure. This gives us the idea that perhaps, after all, the law is not exactly made for prohibiting. And yet, macrophysically, it is indeed made for prohibiting, but in the micro, is it made for prohibiting? So you see: if I say “in the macro, it is made for prohibiting, but in the micro, it is not made for prohibiting, but for something else,” it is not exactly the same law. I must change terms in changing domains. Which amounts to saying what?

...Let us continue the analogy with physics. It is clear that a corpuscle, or even a molecule, is not a miniaturized body. It is another world, another element. You do not have the same elements, you do not have the same kinds of terms in microphysics and in macrophysics. If you conceive the atom as a small thing or as a thing in miniature, it is the only way to not understand the atom. So perhaps, in fact, the law is not especially made for prohibiting. What would it be made for? It would not be made for preventing this or that behavior. If it were a question of preventing crimes, theft, swindling...

Well, I believe that we must look for other means. The law has never prevented anything. So it is not made... Let us suppose that it is not made for preventing; then what would it be made for? For differentiating ways of getting around it. In a certain manner, you can say: everyone knows what Foucault teaches you. Yes, yes. Everyone knows that the law is inseparable from the way of getting around it, that the law, with great indulgence even, shows us the ways of getting around it. As soon as we have some issues, we will see a lawyer to learn the ways of getting around the law. And the ways of getting around the law are not outside-the-law, they are in the law. Take the laws governing commercial societies. It's astounding. What does it mean “to speak to us about the law”? The law, in effect, is a fiction, but a good fiction; it is perhaps a fiction that refers back precisely to the monarchic and republican regimes. Which refers first to the monarchic regime and, even more so, to the republican regime that will extract the pure form of the law. And this is what Rousseau's *Social Contract* will tell you: the law goes from each to all.

Now, everyone knows that it isn't like that. Everyone knows that there is not *the* law, but that there are laws. And there is always a law that gives me the possibility of getting around another law. The multiplicity of laws is at the same time the way in which, far from preventing a behavior, it says under what conditions a behavior is permitted. If you are a society: how to not pay your debts. To know how to not pay your debts, the law being to pay debts, to know how to not pay your debts if you are a society, it is child's play, one of the simplest means being to put you in compulsory liquidation. So there is an entire system of laws, and what is included in the plurality of laws? We see very well that it is much less a question of prohibiting an action... “You will not kill,” well yes, but there is the legitimate defense. The legitimate defense says under what condition I can legally kill. Good. All that is blatantly obvious,...



everyone knows it. But no one made use of it the way Foucault did. I mean: it is always like that with philosophical ideas. They rely on what is blatantly obvious to draw out something improbable or unexpected... I beseech you, do not smoke. Today you don't smoke, you go outside if you want to smoke, and you return when you ... Because... Yes.

Thus, it is a question of differentiating the ways of getting around the law; and you cannot define the law at the microscopic level, the microphysical level, the micrological level... except as an administration of illegalisms, a distribution of illegalisms in a social field and, as Foucault says, there are illegalisms that are tolerated, tolerated as what? As compensation for the dominated classes. There are illegalisms that are permitted as the privilege of the dominant position. There is an entire scale of illegalisms. Everyone knows that what is prohibited by law is tolerated. Is tolerated how? Simply tolerated in such and such conditions and in the shadow of another law. So that the law could be defined as a function of the illegalisms that characterize a social field. That is to say, what changes radically from one social field to another are the illegalisms and the distribution of illegalisms. The law is nothing but this very distribution. What explains, for example, the radical opposition of the Vendée to the French Revolution? It is not simply that the Vendée is more excessive, more reactionary, more pious than the other regions of France, but rather that monarchical right benefited the peasants, and notably the peasants of the west, with a certain number of exceptions to the law that the revolution no longer permits them. Which is to say: the illegalism that had been tolerated by the monarchy ceases to be tolerable to the republic. Good. And Foucault shows very well how, from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, the nature of the illegalisms changes. Subsequently, the law will change as the distribution of illegalisms into illegalisms that are defended, tolerated, allowed, etc. In fact, where does the increase in new illegalisms come from? A change in the nature of crimes, namely, more and more crimes against property, the rise and politicization of an urban proletariat before and during the revolution. This will define all manner of new illegalisms and a new kind of...

I am heading toward this molar entity, the purest expression of which culminates in Rousseau's formulation: "the law is what goes from each to all." This is the pure law, the pure form of the law: the "you ought". By contrast, from the perspective of a microphysics of law: it is a point of view where the law is inseparable from what? It is inseparable from its decrees of application, from its cases of interpretation. ... There is no law that does not give rise to the problem of interpretation. We will call "jurisprudence" the interpretation of the law. It may be that, from a macrophysical point of view, the law can be thought independently of jurisprudence. It goes without saying that from a microphysical point of view, law is inseparable from jurisprudence. A law being given, to what cases is it applied? However clearly the law spells out the case to which it is applied, you will always find cases where the application of the law is problematic. It is within these margins of application that the complementarity law-illegalisms plays a role.

And just as a law is nothing without jurisprudence, that is, without the determination of cases of application, so, too, it is nothing without the decrees of application, that is, the determination of conditions under which... You see, jurisprudence is the determination of the cases in which it is applied; the decrees are the determination of the conditions under which it is applied. Now, if you consider the law as inseparable from these conditions and these cases, that is, from its administration and jurisprudence, then from that moment, you will see that a molecular complementarity law-illegalisms is substituted for the great molar opposition law-illegality. It is not the same law that you speak of in the two cases. Hence, read the chapter on illegalisms in *Discipline and Punish*, where you will find all sorts of concrete analyses. So there you have it... Okay, we are finished with this first part on power which was only the discussion of principles. Therefore we can... Everything okay? There are no problems? All of this will



become clearer little by little... What I wanted to insist upon was the necessity of a difference in kind between microphysics and macrophysics.

So, if it's okay, we can move on to the second part, which is this time, roughly, what? If, as we have just seen, power is fundamentally relational, how will we define what type of relation it is? What relation? And well, Foucault's reply is very simple. The power relation is a relation of forces. We will write "power relation" in the singular and "relation of forces" in the plural. Power is relational, and the power relation is a relation of forces. Once again, "power is a relation of forces" is an unintelligible proposition, or at least a quite banal one, if you have not specified power in its essence. Its sole essence is to be relational. That is to say, power is not an attribute. It is a molar attribute, but it is a molecular relation. Thus, what does it mean to say that "power is a relation of forces, and every relation of forces is power"? What does that mean? It is the first thing that we have to seek out a little bit. And already, I sense that when I say "power is a relation of forces," there is something I am not saying and that I exclude, namely: power is not a form. And the power relation is not a relation between forms. Power is not a form. There is certainly a "State" form. The State-form.

But just as we have seen, the microphysics of power penetrates beneath the great body that is the State. In other words, power is informal. It does not pass through a form, and the power relation is not a relation between forms. This interests us greatly: a relation of forces means something other than a relation of forms. This interests us greatly, this should interest us greatly because we are seeking something that differs in kind from knowledge, and you recall that based on our prior analysis, knowledge is a relation of forms. Fortunately, then, power is not a relation of forms and cannot be one, for it is a relation of forces. And what does "relation of forces" mean? It only means something if the essence of force is to be in relation. And with what is force essentially in relation? With another force. That is, force does not exist in the singular. There is no force in the singular. All force is in relation with another force. Oh really? This means that force is fundamentally the element of a multiplicity. And that force cannot be thought outside the multiple, for there is no one force. It is even in this sense that force takes no other object nor subject than force. This does not mean that force is its own object and its own subject, but that force has for its object another force, or, what amounts to the same, a force has for its subject another force.

Now, all this seems so simple, and it is so, so delicate. Force can only be conceived as the element of the multiple. In other words, force is already a multiplicity. Force is the relation of a force with another force. The thought of force was always the only way to challenge the One. The thought of force is the thought of the multiple. Is there anything else than force that is of such a nature that the thing in question would be fundamentally in relation with another thing? Doubtless not. We can always try. What was the most beautiful attempt of ancient atomism? The very beautiful attempt of Democritus, Epicurus, and Lucretius was to form the concept of the atom in order to account for a fundamental multiplicity. Namely: the very idea of a sole atom is a senseless notion, for the atom is fundamentally in relation with another atom. And what was the relation of the atom with the other atom? It is well known, what the Epicureans and what Lucretius referred to as the declination of the atom. The atom does not fall through the void along a vertical axis; there is a declination of the atom, that is, it falls along an oblique line, and the oblique is precisely the path by which each atom encounters other atoms, that is, comes into relation with other atoms. Good.

But who does not see that this was a way of lending force to matter, and that atomism was the attempt to localize force in matter? In fact, what one lent to the atom was what belongs to force. What sets into relation with the other, in its very essence and according to its essence, is force. We will have to move very quickly here, but the one who took this the furthest is Nietzsche. The philosophy of force in Nietzsche is very simple in a sense, consisting in saying:



atomism has always been the mask of a dynamism of a different nature, and force is precisely what, in its essence, is related to another force. In other words, there is an essential plurality of force, and this essential plurality will bear witness to the Nietzschean notion of distance. To wit: force is inseparable from the distance to another force. And what will Nietzsche call “will”? Here, it must be said, is such a strange conception of the will. But you can perhaps sense that it is a rich and profound conception. And well, if force is essentially in relation with force, the will will be the differential element of forces. If force is in relation with force, essentially, then force cannot be conceived outside of a difference between forces. Distance is the difference between forces. This distance, or the difference between forces, is what one calls “will.”

But who does not see that this was a way of lending force to matter, and that atomism was the attempt to localize force in matter? In fact, what one lent to the atom was what belongs to force. What sets into relation with the other, in its very essence and according to its essence, is force. We will have to move very quickly here, but the one who took this the furthest is Nietzsche. The philosophy of force in Nietzsche is very simple in a sense, consisting in saying: atomism has always been the mask of a dynamism of a different nature, and force is precisely what, in its essence, is related to another force. In other words, there is an essential plurality of force, and this essential plurality will bear witness to the Nietzschean notion of distance. To wit: force is inseparable from the distance to another force. And what will Nietzsche call “will”? Here, it must be said, is such a strange conception of the will. But you can perhaps sense that it is a rich and profound conception. And well, if force is essentially in relation with force, the will will be the differential element of forces. If force is in relation with force, essentially, then force cannot be conceived outside of a difference between forces. Distance is the difference between forces. This distance, or the difference between forces, is what one calls “will”.

This is the very story of Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer rises all the way to the idea of the unity of the will through all its manifestations. Unity of the will through the one who commands and the one who obeys. Unity of the will through the executioner and the victim. But if there is a unity of the will through the executioner and the victim, the will must necessarily be denied and suppressed. In what form? In the form of pity. The will of the executioner, when he apprehends the unity of his will with the victim, is necessarily suppressed in pity. And this will be the entire movement of the philosophy of pity in Schopenhauer and the suppression of the will in asceticism.

But look, Nietzsche takes Schopenhauer down, saying: you could only fall into pity and asceticism since you had posited the unity of the will. You could only deny the will since you had posited its unity through all its manifestations. In other words, we can only understand what “will” means if we take it as an irreducible multiplicity of forces, such that the will can never be anything except the differential element of the forces present. That is to say, ...the will is the relation of a force with another force, either to obey or to command. Or rather: either to command or to obey. For we obey with our will, no less than we command with our will. Why do I recount all this? If you understand this point, it is very simple, ...the Nietzschean conception of force and will. It is no doubt so that, from this moment on, you are prevented from stupid misunderstandings about ... Nietzsche and fascism, for example. But, further, see how Nietzschean Foucault is. If he goes so quickly through his theory of power on this precise point, it is because he figures that Nietzsche has said what is essential, namely: in what sense force is not violence. What is violence? No doubt violence is related to force. We will even say: violence is the effect of a force on something or someone. In a certain way this amounts to saying that there is only molar violence. It is the effect of force on something or someone... Like when it is hot... [???] It is the effect...



But we are not looking for the effect of force on something or someone; rather, we seek the relation of force with force. Violence states nothing about the relation of force with force. And perhaps one will say: force is inseparable from violence, which would mean that force is inseparable from the effect it has on something or someone. But the relation of force with something or someone, that is, the relation of force with a body or a soul, is not the same thing as the relation of force with force. What defines microphysics is the relation of force with force. What defines macrophysics is what results, that is, the relation of forces with something or someone. In other words, force cannot be defined by violence [???]; it is a force on a force, or, if you prefer, an action on an action. Violence is an action on something. On something: why? It will be said that violence is the action of deforming. How can a force be deformed, since it has no form?

I mean that on all these points, Foucault can go very quickly, which is to say, the only text where he explains himself on what has just been said is precisely an interview, an interview appearing in Dreyfus and Rabinow's book on Foucault, but the text itself is by Foucault. On page 340, what does Foucault say? Here, I will read slowly: "what defines a relationship of power [which is to say, a relation of forces, I would say just as well: what defines a relation of forces] is that it is a mode of action that does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on possible or actual future or present actions."¹ [1] An action upon an action, this is what constitutes a relation of forces or of power. "A relationship of violence acts upon a body or upon things; it forces, it bends, it breaks, it destroys," and all of this presupposes a form. "[I]t closes off all possibilities. Its opposite pole can only be passivity... A power relationship, on the other hand, can only be articulated on the basis of two elements that are indispensable if it is really to be a power relationship: that 'the other' is recognized and maintained to the very end as a subject who acts; and that, faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible inventions may open up.

"The exercise of power can ... pile up the dead and shelter itself behind whatever threats it can imagine. In itself, the exercise of power is not a violence that sometimes hides... It is a set of actions on possible actions; it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; it releases or contrives, makes more probable or less..."² This last point interests me, if you have understood everything, because Foucault proposes an initial list of what we can subsequently call categories of power. To repeat: it induces, seduces, makes easier or more difficult, releases or contrives, makes more probable or less; here is a list that appears a bit bizarre. What is interesting about it? We have no choice but to follow the letter of the text, for it is the statement of relations of forces, the relation of force with force. Foucault tells us: be careful, the relation of force with force does not consist of violence, but rather of incitation; a force cannot do violence to another force, but instead it can incite another force, induce another force, make it easier or more difficult for another force, make other forces or the exercise of other forces more probable or less. Hence a list of categories of power.

Thus, the relation of forces is an action upon an action, that is, a very particular kind of action. It is not just any action that is exercised upon an action. We will call "action of power" the actions that are not exercised without being exercised upon eventual or real actions. You understand? Thus you have an entire group [?] relations of forces – essential multiplicity of the relation of forces – to command/to obey as a character of the will, differential element of forces in relation, exclusion of violence, and therefore the list of categories of power, namely,

¹ Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Power: Essential Works of Foucault, Volume 3*, 340.

² Ibid, 340-341.



all the cases of relations of forces and this initial list that Foucault proposes. Yes, the relation of force with force is presented in the form... well, not in the form, but rather is presented according to the types: incite, induce, divert, make easier or more difficult, make more probable or less. For the moment, I am assuming that we understand halfway, we do not understand very well, but... There you are, sense that we are in the process of discovering that the categories of power are, in fact, of a different nature than the categories of knowledge. To induce, incite, divert... these are not categories of knowledge.

How is Foucault Nietzschean? We have partially responded: he develops a rigorously Nietzschean conception of force. Even more: if there were, in Foucault, a theory of the will, at this level, it would be absolutely Nietzschean, namely, it would consist in saying: to will is to set one force into relation with another force, whether to command or to obey. This is what Foucault, for his part, will designate by a word that is not Nietzschean: a complex strategic situation. It is a beautiful term, a “complex strategic situation”; for Foucault, there is no will except in a complex strategic situation. “Complex” does not mean “complicated”, but rather “multiple”. And Foucault loves complex strategic situations. Every strategic situation is complex. I can only will within a complex strategic situation. What is a strategic situation... We are advancing, taking some giant steps. What is a strategic situation? A strategic situation is a multiplicity of forces. The entire multiplicity of forces in relation, that is, according to their distance or their will – the will that distributes them as obedience and command – all this is defined from within a complex strategic situation.

Good, this opens up a horizon for us, which we will have to keep following. The strategy of power: power is fundamentally an affair of strategy, where strategy refers in effect to the field of a multiplicity of forces in relation to one another. In relation... as always, followed by: whether to command or to obey. Complex situation. Irreducible to unity. Schopenhauer’s error is to have reduced it to the One, and therefore he could not but make the will disappear in pity. Strategy of power... So let us be guided by the words. We will see what must be drawn from them, as opposed to their differences with what? As opposed to their differences with the strata of knowledge. Knowledge is fundamentally stratified, which is to say, formed. As for power, it is strategic. Oh really, power is strategic? But then I must set into opposition the stratified and the strategic. The strategic is the manipulation [*maniement*] of the non-stratified. Power is the non-stratified element. Knowledge is stratified; power is strategic.

In fact, you cannot conceive of a stratified microphysics. Why? Because strata are like alluvia, a set of results; there are no molecular strata, only molar. The molecular is strategic. Between the particles there is a strategy, from one particle to another, from one electron to another there is a strategy. There is no stratigraphical formation, no stratified formation. Power is the non-stratified. We will have to repeat this often before understanding it, understanding what Foucault meant. Does he say it? He says it... he does not need... at any rate he says, clearly he says it. Power is the non-stratified because, clearly, it is the strategic. That is, it is the manipulation of multiplicities of forces. Whereas strata are the stacking up of forms. Power has no form. Good.

What interests me greatly, then, is this initial list of the categories of power. It is as if Foucault was telling us: here you are, a list of the categories of some kind of power [?s], which is important, you understand, because it will prevent you from believing that force can be defined by violence. Force is never defined by violence, but by its differential relation with other forces. And once again, never does a force do violence to another force. These are very simple things, but it is purely Nietzschean, and it seems to me to be what grounds Foucault in Nietzsche; it is on this point that he is Nietzschean. Even so, we will make use of something even more convincing than this initial list, and it is obvious that this list – incite, induce, divert, make easier or more difficult, make more probable or less... – he begins it like this, but it



seems so... Might there be, in Foucault's oeuvre, a second list, another list of the categories of power that would be more justified, better explained?

Yes, in *Discipline and Punish* – it will be up to you to follow the chapter closely. The first chapter of the third part, pages 135-169. And since I have talked about it, I can take it up again rather quickly. This time we find ourselves before a list that states the categories of relations between forces, relations of force with force; and as we saw quite briefly the last time, I believe, I'll go back over it here: “to distribute in space” is the heading of the first great category of force, with the corresponding categories “to enclose, to partition, to order, and to place in a series.” Enclose, partition, order, place in a series. These are the relations of force with my force. See how the relation of force with force takes place by way of a third party, space-time; and, in fact, why? Because the relation of force with force acts at a distance. Thus, the multiplicity of force, the inseparable multiplicity of force is constitutive of a space-time. And power is force set in relation to space-time, not in relation to an object or a being.

Thus, the first great kind of category: distribute in space, with the corresponding subcategories. Second great heading: order time. In this case, the subcategories will be: subdivide time (a force is required to subdivide time), program action, decompose movement. As always, you see that it is a force that is exercised on other forces. Where does this take place in particular? We may not yet know, but you may well sense that this ordering of time, this ordering of forces in time, takes place above all in the workshop, in the factory. It is the beginning of the division of labor. Third great category heading of power: compose in space-time. What is the strict definition of composition? You remember that one speaks, in elementary physics, of the composition of forces. Well, what does the composition of forces mean? What is it to compose forces? To compose forces in space-time is to constitute a productive force, the effect of which must be greater than the sum of the elementary forces that compose it. To constitute a productive force, the effect of which must be greater than the sum of elementary forces that compose it.

Now, it is in extricating these categories of power that Foucault will ask himself: what happens at school? What happens in the prison? What happens in the workshop? What happens in the hospital? That is, what are the categories of power mobilized by such and such authority, by such and such macrophysical body? But if I consider the microphysical categories of power in themselves, in their pure state, I will only say and will only be able to take into account: forces (in the plural) and space-time. As we will see more clearly later, I will not have the right to presuppose any form, any finality, any quality. I shall have to define everything in terms of forces, with neither subject nor object, since the sole subject of force is force and the sole object of force is force. I will thus be able to define the categories of power only in terms of force and space-time. If I say anything more, I am already outside the categories of power. I can thus say: to enclose, to partition, to order, to place in a series, because these are all relations of force with force.

But I can say nothing else. I cannot yet add “at school” because the school is a form. For the moment, I know nothing at all of the “school” form, the “State” form, etc. I know nothing but the elements of a microphysics, the forces set in relation and space-time. Given that space-time is the relation of forces. Space-time is the will, which is the relation of forces. Thus, to return to our story about postulates from a short time ago, you understand why, in the first instance, power is not essentially repressive, which is to say that it does not proceed by means of violence. It is not the subject of a property. Why? Because it has no form. It is not possessed... it would have to have a form in order to be possessed. One is always possessed in a form. Power is exercised without being possessed. And, finally, it is essentially relational and not an attribute, since it passes by way of the dominated no less than the dominant. It



passes by way of the dominated no less than the dominant since the relation of forces sets into relation precisely a force that obeys and a force that commands, or several forces, etc.

Now, if you understand that, just before taking a break, because all this is exhausting, I will move to a second point, which will hold by itself; but what a surprise! What a surprise this second point should have in store for you! If force is in fundamental relation with another force... we start again at zero, we must not get tired. If force is in fundamental relation with another force and exists only in this way, then it must be said that every force has two powers and is defined by two powers. Force is in relation with another force and does not exist independently of that relation. Therefore every force has two powers: the power to affect other forces and the power to be affected by other forces. You understand. There, it is like a kind of pure deduction; here, too, there is no longer a choice. If force is inseparable from its relation with another force, then it is presented under the double, um ... I always stumble, under the double non-form um... power to affect another force, power to be affected by another force. And a force is nothing other than this, its power to affect other forces, its power to be affected by other forces.

But my God, my God, I say to myself! What to call this, if not: receptivity of force and spontaneity of force. Force as the power to be affected by other forces is the receptivity of force. Force as the power to affect other forces is the spontaneity of force. And now: we have seen that spontaneity and receptivity were applied quite well to the two forms of knowledge. Light was like a form of receptivity and language was like a form of spontaneity, according to Foucault. And now, we see that spontaneity and receptivity apply as well to the relation of forces, to power. Spontaneity of force: the power to affect others; receptivity of force: the power to be affected by others. We know simply, and we are sure in advance, that the words “receptivity” and “affectivity”... um... “receptivity” and “spontaneity” do not have the same sense in the two cases, since in one case, it is a matter of forms, whereas in the other, it is not a matter of forms. It is no longer a matter of forms, and so, what is it a matter of? The moment has come to say it. If the relation of force with other forces defines a power to affect and a power to be affected, we will say that the relation of forces, in any case, determines affects. Determines affects. The relation of forces does not pass by way of forms, it passes by way of affects. And for the moment, it must be said that there are two sorts of affects. To return to the terminology of Nietzsche, we will speak of an active affect when it is related to the force that affects another force. We will speak of a reactive affect when it is related to the force that is affected.

And the relations of forces are differential relations that determine singularities. There you have it. Good, all of this is very clear. Therefore, by opposition to knowledge that establishes relations between two forms, force can only ever establish relations between two points, and microphysics knows no forms, but simply differential relations between singularities, between singular points. There is a site, there is a node, there is a turning point, there is... etc. All that is the language of forces. That should clarify things for you a little bit. To induce, to seduce, to render difficult, to render easy, etc. Okay, the most difficult part remains for us. What is most difficult is that we must continue. We must continue. Power to be affected, power to affect... I would say: the power to be affected is necessarily a receptivity of force. The power to affect is necessarily a spontaneity of force. Now I have come to the third remark, which is to say that force has a materiality that is proper to it, a matter that is already force; a pure matter. What is it? It is the power to be affected. The materiality of force is its power to be affected. And it has a function. The function of force is its power to affect other forces. And well, here is where we must pay close attention; you must, for the last time today, make an effort, but a crucial effort, for you see, here we touch on the essential. Because



in knowledge... Give me a sign if you have had enough..., you can take a break otherwise... are you tired? Here I need all your vigilance.

So then, it is here that we must pay close attention. Why? Why must we pay such close attention that I require all of your intelligence? Because we are returning to knowledge, such as it is distributed in strata. And well, knowledge, such as it is distributed in strata, presents matters and functions. I would even say that it presents visible matters and enunciable functions. Here it is very precise, ... you must weigh each word. Only, in the strata, these are formed matters and formalized functions. These are formed matters and formalized functions. The strata, I would say, before we even understand what it means, the strata are constituted from formed matter and formalized functions.

What is a formed matter? A formed matter is what one calls a substance. For example, I would say that the schoolchild is a substance, a formed matter. The prisoner is a substance, that is, a formed matter. A matter formed by what form? Well, it is a matter formed by the “prison” form. The worker is a substance formed by the “workshop” or “factory” form. On the strata, you only have formed matters. On the strata, you never have a matter that could be called, following the scholastic tradition or even the Aristotelian tradition, a prime matter, a completely bare matter. In fact, everything is stratified, you do not have bare matter, you have only, as it was said, clothed matters [*matières vêtues*]. It is lovely terminology that distinguishes bare matter and clothed matter in the Middle Ages, no? To take up these terms, which are convenient, I would say: there are only formed matters at the level of knowledge. There is knowledge of bare matter. And, on the strata, there are certainly functions, but formalized functions. What are formalized functions? These are actions taken in relation to their end. To form, to formalize a function is to finalize it. A formalized function is an action set in relation to its ends, to its means, to the obstacles that it encounters, etc.

Well, I am saying something very simple: on the strata, you have only... All the enunciable functions are formalized and finalized functions; all the visible matters are matters that have been already formed, or if you prefer, organized. If you have understood this, you have understood everything. There you have it, a list of categories: to educate, to punish, to set to work, to treat. Voila. But my question is: are these categories of power? Answer: no. At least, I assume: no. Why not? Because to educate, to punish, to treat all imply formed matters and formalized functions. One educates children at school. The child at school is a formed matter. It’s not the same as the child in the family. The child in the family is another formed matter. It’s not the same. As a child, I go to school and I, I... go to school and I am part of my family, I literally change form. I change form. And while I was wise and disciplined in school, here I am all full of energy and crying in my family. Or the opposite. I am a matter that passes from one form to another. I have barely finished school before I do my military service. This is another formed matter, I change forms again. I borrow the form: soldier. In a precise place, which is the barracks.

Good, any questions about all this? You will note that I can say: to educate, to set to work, to punish, to treat... imply forms of knowledge and are inseparable from knowledge. I will define knowledge by, and as, the art of treating – this is a definition that I could not give when we were focusing on knowledge because, as you can sense, this definition emerges by contradistinction to what power is – knowledge is the art of handling formed matters or even the art of forming matters and formalizing functions. The authority [*instance*] that formalizes functions is the statement. The authority that forms matters is the visibility. Thus, all this works quite well. Yet when it comes to power, it is completely different. Take the list: when Foucault says “you want categories of power? Well, it is to induce, to incite etc.”, why does he not say “to educate, to care for,” which we might have expected? He does not say that for a very simple reason: because what is power? Power is the relation between non-formed



materials or bare matters and non-formalized functions. What does that mean, then? Concretely, it means: if you want to define a category of power, it does not matter which objects or beings it applies to. The object or the being is a formed matter. It matters little to the category of power which objects and beings it is applied to, since the category of power in itself is the relation of force with other forces and not with objects or beings. If I want to define a category of power, then, I should not specify whether it is exercised over schoolchildren, soldiers, prisoners, or workers. That is, I should not take into account social forms or social qualifications. The category of power is transqualitative. It cuts across qualities, retaining only a non-formed, non-qualified matter. A non-qualified matter can be a child just as well as a soldier, a prisoner, or a patient.

You see? And the category of power concerns a function, yes, but a non-formalized function; thus, it cannot be “to educate, to treat, etc.,” which are formalized functions that, as such, refer to forms of knowledge. So, what will the formula be...? Here I am in no hurry; I do not know if there are other categories of power, but what will be a privileged example of a category of power? I will state it this way: to impose some task on some multiplicity. I can rightfully add: on some human multiplicity. It is a question of a social field. To impose some task on some human multiplicity – you see that I am saying nothing about the quality of the matter, be it children or soldiers. I know nothing about it, and I don’t need to. And I am saying nothing about the aims and the means of action that would make it possible to educate or to accomplish other aims. I am considering the action as non-finalized; in other words, microphysics is a physics of abstract action. To impose some task on some human multiplicity: there you have a pure category of power. You will tell me: but isn’t this inseparable from categories of knowledge? Clearly, we know this at all times, but this isn’t what interests us; we know quite well that power and knowledge form a concrete ensemble. What interests us currently is something altogether different, namely, the possibility of defining *in abstracto* – that is Latin, *in abstracto* – of defining *in abstracto* the category of power as such. Good.

This point, then, will be very important for us: to impose some task on some human multiplicity. Once again, I put to the side the ends, the means, and the substances (schoolchild substance, soldier substance, etc.). I have retained a bare matter, a non-qualified matter, some human multiplicity, and a non-formalized and non-finalized function: to impose some task. This is the relation of force with force in its pure state. To impose some task on some human multiplicity. The material of force is a bare matter, some human multiplicity. The function of force is a non-formalized function: to impose some task. I would say: power is the physics of any action. Consequently, you should be able to understand a very strange text, to which I attach great importance, in *Discipline and Punish*, page 205, where Foucault tells us... What does he tell us?

Here, I’ll read it... “The Panopticon...,” which he has just been speaking about, “the Panopticon,” this very curious system of surveillance. “The Panopticon must not be understood as a dream building: it is the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form”. You will consent to remove the word “form,” eh, Foucault having no reason to apply the distinction that I have just marked; here, he is employing “form” in a totally different sense, as aspect... “It is the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form; its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle, resistance or friction, must be represented as a pure architectural and optical system”. Take note: the Panopticon can be represented as an architectural and optical system. Two points. “It is in fact a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use.” If there is a passage that proves my case, it is this one. It is a figure... you see exactly what he means, what he says exactly. One can define the Panopticon as an architectural and optical system, but it is not a sufficient definition.



It is in fact a figure of political technology that one can and must detach from any specific use. What does this mean? You remember what the Panopticon is. I will remind you briefly: it is, in appearance, an architectural organization that consists in organizing space in such a manner that, from the point of view of a center, one can see everything without being seen. This architecture will be realized particularly in the prisons where, in accordance with a central tower, one can see everything in the peripheral cells, the circular cells, whereas the prisoners placed in the circular cells do not see. Thus, to see everything without being seen, in relation to these beings that are seen without seeing. That is what the Panopticon is, which etymologically means: the all-seeing system. Good. I am saying that the Panopticon has three definitions, three successive definitions that become more and more profound. Tied to the prison, it can be defined as a space of confinement, a space of confinement where one sees the prisoners. You see that, in this definition, the Panopticon is tied to a formed matter, the prisoners, and has a formalized function, to punish. Second definition: I am saying the Panopticon is the system where one sees everything without being seen. I no longer refer to the prison, and in fact this was Bentham's idea, that it could be suitable for everything, for all visible matters.

It is suitable for all visible matters, for all formed matters, whether this be the school, the factory, the barracks, the prison. It is suitable to varying degrees for all of this. The Panopticon becomes a model. It is then defined as, to re-use Foucault's expression, architecture ... I am defining it as "an architectural and optical system" that can be realized in the school or etc. It is a further degree of abstraction. It is not yet sufficient. Third definition. Foucault has just said to us on page 205: take note, it is not only an architectural and optical system, is a pure functioning, a pure functioning of power. Under this form, what will it be? The Panopticon is the organization of space-time in which... or the circumscription of a space-time in which one imposes some task on some human multiplicity. You see that, here, there is no longer reference to vision, there is no longer reference to visibility; it doesn't matter, I have crossed over to a greater degree of abstraction. Non-formalized function for a non-formed matter.

It is for this that we reserve the name "diagram". The diagram, following this text by Foucault, who, alas, uses the word only once..., I can at least draw from this text that what Foucault calls "diagram" is the relation between a non-formed matter and a non-formalized function. That is to say, it is the exposition of some action, the exposition of an abstract action. To impose some task on some multiplicity. Moreover, or rather, even better, I can give – if I attach importance to this word "diagram," all while recognizing that it appears only once in Foucault – I can give three definitions of the diagram according to Foucault, up to this point. Three definitions from which I will be able to conclude: the diagram is power.

Ah, the diagram is power, but this will ... enable reclassifications. These three definitions are the following. I will say: we call "diagram" the exposition of a relation of forces or a set of relations of forces. This is the first definition of the diagram, taking into account everything we have seen previously, which I will not go back over. Second definition of the diagram: we call "diagram" every distribution of the power to affect and the power to be affected, that is, every emission of singularities. In this sense, the diagram goes from one point to another. It goes from some point to some other point, these points being determinable as singularities. There you have the second definition of the diagram. Third definition of the diagram: we call "diagram" the swirling, which is an oceanic word, [?] perfect. We call "diagram," yes, the figure that swirls together, the swirling of non-formed matter and non-formalized functions. A practical exercise: how do the three definitions perfectly complete each other, that is, how can each be derived from the one before it? I am not going to do it now, but I tried to do it. Good.

Thereupon, the principle is made. Once again, if you have not understood this point, I will start everything over, for it is essential. I will unpack the consequences before asking you,



with passion, with supplication, if you are sure you have well understood, since perhaps the consequences, the small terminological consequences, will help bring about your understanding. From what is the diagram distinguished? Well, the diagram is distinguished from the archive. And how is the diagram distinguished from the archive? Every archive is an archive of knowledge. Every diagram is a diagram of power. Good, what are the fundamental differences between the diagram and the archive? Well, I can say in any case “diagram-archive,” but I could express this distinction, this fundamental difference in other terms. I could say: strategies-strata. Every diagram is strategic. Every archive is stratified. I could say: it is the micro-macro distinction, every diagram is microphysical or differential, which amounts to the same. This amounts to the same... from our point of view. Every archive is macrophysical.

I always circle back to the following: every diagram is power, every archive is knowledge. Strategies-strata. In other words, power, once again, does not pass through forms; it concerns non-formed matters, non-formalized functions. Last week, one of you said to me: “but why not call this ‘micro-structure?’” Yes. We could call it “micro-structure,” with one danger. If we referred to it as a micro-structure, we would have to show that, at the microphysical level, there is a difference in kind between micro-structures and macro-structures. But we can call it “micro-structure” if we posit a difference in kind between the micro and the macro. So it is perhaps more convenient to do away with the word “structure” and to say: in effect, in microphysics, there are no structures. The time is over [??] when one represented an atom as a structure, with a nucleus and electrons. No, that’s no longer it. Today we think about an atom as a field of forces, that is, as a structuring activity, a structuring activity that runs through all the stable structures corresponding to it, with a plurality of potential structures that are possible. For example, if we speak of the tetravalence of carbon, Bachelard showed long ago that in modern chemistry, the structuralism of valences has been replaced by dynamism, the dynamic of bonds. Good, the dynamic of bonds rather than the structure of valences: this means something very specific, that the atom is inseparable from a structuring activity, or in other words, that we can only think in terms of a field of forces. Therefore the word “structures” is not necessary.

Alright, all that is what you must understand. Good. Hence the text with which I began at the start of the year, but now, as we will rediscover several times, this text... Hence the text that will be perhaps the passage best expressing Foucault’s passion... and this passage that expresses so well Foucault’s passion, we will see that it perhaps isn’t the only one, but a great literary text... Perhaps we are now capable, in returning to it, of understanding more. It is a passage taken from a great novel by Herman Melville, *Pierre: or, The Ambiguities*. And I will read this passage slowly. So, good, we will return to it periodically. There is no need to impassion Foucault, he has plenty of passion in all of his texts, but Foucault’s passions strangely echo some great literary texts. In *Pierre: or, The Ambiguities*, one of the most beautiful novels in the world,

Herman Melville writes the following: “Not yet had he dropped his angle into the well of his childhood, to find what fish might be there; for who dreams to find fish in a well? the running stream of the outer world, there doubtless swim the golden perch and the pickerel! Ten million things were as yet uncovered to Pierre. The old mummy lies buried in cloth on cloth”. The old mummy lies buried in cloth on cloth. “It takes time to unwrap this Egyptian king. Yet now, forsooth, because Pierre began to see through the first superficiality of the world, he fondly weens he has come to the unlayered substance [*matière non-stratifiée*].” Yet now, forsooth, because Pierre began to see through the first superficiality of the world, he fondly weens he has come to the unlayered substance. “But, far as any geologist has yet gone down into the world, it is found to consist of nothing but surface stratified on surface. To its axis,



the world being nothing but superinduced superficialities. By vast pains we mine into the pyramid; by horrible gropings we come to the central room; with joy we espy the sarcophagus; but we lift the lid—and no body is there!—appallingly vacant as vast is the soul of a man!” There you are.

You understand: if literature has meaning and justifies life, it is based upon passages like this one. There are not enough of them. And well, what does this passage have to do with Foucault? We begin again. It concerns Foucault personally. It matters little if Foucault knew it, though he surely knew it; he certainly liked Melville, but... In what way do we, who read this text independently of Foucault, say to ourselves that this text concerns Foucault? It is as though this passage winks at Foucault. “The old mummy lies buried in cloth on cloth; it takes time to unwrap this Egyptian king”: that is the archive. It is the archive. “But, far as any geologist has yet gone down into the world, it is found to consist of nothing but surface stratified on surface”: one finds only historical formation on historical formation, stratum upon stratum, strip of cloth upon strip of cloth, and this situation of the archive or the archaeologist – Melville says “geologist,” but there is little difference – the geologist-archaeologist goes from stratum to stratum. To its axis, the world being nothing but superinduced superficialities. Only, there you go, we do not go from stratum to stratum without also being carried along by two movements.

I will try to say what these two movements are. One movement to descend, to descend deeper than any stratum, to come to the center of the earth. There, what kind of jam, eh, that there is at the center of the earth. Good, you know that at the center of the earth, there is a kind of glue, and you have to go that far, you would have to go that far. You would have to go to this non-stratified. The non-stratified of the inside. And we are going there, we are going there. And by dint of removing the strips of cloth... what does that mean regarding Foucault? To descend, but how to descend? You remember that the strata are divided by a central fissure, the great fissure that separates light on one side and language on the other. The strata are fractured. I have only to descend to the in-between. Between light and language, in this kind of fissure, the well. The well. Who dreams to find fish in a well? And yet I find a fish in the well. I descend into the fissure between the two halves of the strata, in the hope of finding what? The central room. The central room that the surfaces of the pyramid hide. The surfaces of the pyramid are the surfaces, the strata. And me, I descend there toward the well, seeking the central room. And Foucault, from the beginning, in his own way, will ceaselessly seek the central room, but over a long time, horrible gropings, horrible gropings...

Nothing was easy for Foucault, you know. Horrible gropings, going from stratum to stratum. It is not so much theory, nor is it history, when he spoke about the general hospital in the seventeenth century; it was the strata that he was traversing. Or about the prison from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries... And well: he seeks the central room. And for a long time, for a long time, he lifts the lid, he knocks on the door of the central room, and what does he find? The void. “Appallingly vacant as vast is the soul of a man!” [*L’âme de l’homme est un vide immense et terrifiant*: “The soul of man is a vast and terrifying void.”] There is no central room, there is only the fissure that continues and grows. And it is very late, very late that Foucault will change his mind, that he will say to himself that perhaps there is something in the central room; so much the better, so much the easier that it is something we put there. That, in the central room, there is something: yes, what we have put there. And this will be the discovery of Foucault’s last books, there was something in the central room.

That is to say that we do not yet have the means... But at the same time as this movement that passes through the void, eventually to discover that there is perhaps something in the empty room, there is another movement. This time no longer to descend to seek a non-stratified inside, but to exit the strata to discover a non-stratified outside. This is what Melville



alludes to, for there are two aspects as well in Melville. To descend into the strata, on the inside of the strata, and to exit outside the strata. When Melville says: “the running stream of the outer world, there doubtless swim the golden perch and the pickerel!” Notice that in the running stream of the outer world, which is an ocean, swims not only the golden perch and the pickerel but also the terrible Moby Dick, the white whale and... good. To exit the strata to come to the non-stratified substance.

What is this? Here, we are surer of ourselves. Since, as far as the history of the central room, we do not yet know, we do not yet have the means to know what it was for Foucault; we can only do so by progressing, but now, now we have at least an idea about the outside of the strata. Yes, the outside of the strata is the oceanic diagram. The oceanic diagram that does not cease to swirl together the relations between forces. That is the outside of the strata, the non-stratified element: it is the global strategic element. Global strategy in the sense that it is not only human beings who have a strategy; things also have a strategy. It does not matter which things: particles, electrons, all that, all the fields of forces. What defines a strategy is a field of forces, whether it be human or not.

Thus, you see the three movements of Foucault: to go from stratum to stratum along well-designated, well-delimited durations. To descend eventually into the fissure between the strata, in the search for a central room, with the despair that entails: there is nothing in the central room. And, third movement, to leave the strata to come to the element that is properly oceanic, non-terrestrial, the non-stratified element, the strategic element. It is true that every strategy is oceanic. Look at Virilio. So then... There you have it. You understand? Good. ... We asked for two axes: knowledge-power. Whereas, and this is not the first time in our analysis that we have had one too many, we have three. There is the history of the room [of the inside?] that we are leaving to the side for the moment, but we fall back on our two knowledge-power axes. And the difference in kind between power and its diagram, on the one hand, and knowledge and its archives, on the other. There is no archive of the sea, there are only port archives. Power is of the sea. Um... well, I'm taking the plunge. What is it? It is molecular. Water is molecular. Good.

And so... There you have it. Hence my appeal: this must all be clear. If it isn't clear, I will start all over. It's all the same to me. If it is crystal clear, ... well, I will continue a little bit, but perhaps we have had enough... No problem? That is nevertheless surprising to me because all of this is very difficult. All the same, I have a suspicion... Okay. Let's accept it. You will always surprise me.

We went through lists of examples, the first example of which we borrowed from an interview with Foucault: to induce, to provoke, etc. These were just a few unsituated examples. The second, more serious series of examples was defined as a function of space-time: to distribute in space, to order time, to compose space-time. And you see that this was correct, that these really are definitions of categories of power. Why? Since I did not take account of forms, neither at the level of matters... I took account neither of formed matters, nor of formalized functions. I only took account of forces and space-time. I said: to order, but why to order? To serialize, why to serialize? And where? Is it at the school or in the workshop? [?] didn't say, it was thus... it was part of the diagram.

And then, when I tried to give an even more general definition, I said: to impose some task on some multiplicity. You understand, the difficulty is this: my diagram must nevertheless be varied. Yet how can we reconcile variety and abstraction? Since it is a physics of abstract action, how can it be variegated? The answer is relatively simple: variation cannot stem from any form, therefore variation can only stem from space and time. It is the manner in which abstract action will be in an abstract space-time that explains how the figures of the diagram will be able to vary. So that I conceive that in a diagram, there are always several figures, that



is, several relations of forces. Several relations of forces. That is why, regarding this problem of detail, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1* marks a significant development from *Discipline and Punish*; for, in my view, *Discipline and Punish* only studies one type of abstract action: to impose some task on some human multiplicity, in which kind of space-time? In a limited space-time. In a well-defined space-time, a closed space-time. Which implied that the multiplicity be not too numerous.

For all this I have remained in the abstract, thus I could conclude: to impose some task on some human multiplicity, on the condition that this be in a closed space-time and for a multiplicity that is not too numerous. This was my category of power. You may remember, as we saw in the first trimester, that *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1* introduces a second abstract action: to manage life in a large multiplicity and in an open space. This is effectively another type of abstract action. But *Discipline and Punish* does not take into consideration this other type of abstract action; *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1* is the first to include it. And Foucault will tell us, in fact, that there is a political anatomy, which is the first aspect, but there is also a biopolitics: to manage life in large multiplicities and in open spaces. And disciplinary societies were defined... or at least, power in disciplinary societies – which is to say, according to Foucault, our societies since roughly the middle of the eighteenth century – power in disciplinary societies was defined by these two..., I will call them “diagrammatic traits,” by these two diagrammatic traits: to impose some task on some multiplicity that is not too numerous in a closed space-time; and to manage life in a large multiplicity and an open space, to control life, the biopolitics of populations.

In one case, the multiplicity is the number of those who are gathered together in a closed space; in the other case, it is a population distributed in an open space or in a large space. Thus, I would say: this is how the diagram that we could call the “disciplinary diagram” is defined, the diagram of power proper to disciplinary societies. In effect, these are two ways of being in space-time that are very different from one another. It would be very interesting to seek out the differences between the two space-times, the open space of large multiplicities ... - why? – and the closed space of small multiplicities. It would be very interesting because we could give precise meaning to the words that Foucault seemed to use vaguely.

“To make probable,” when Foucault gives this as an example of a relation of forces: biopolitics does not cease to make probable. For example, it purports to make increases in the birth rate probable; it purports to supervise [*surveiller*], this is a kind of management..., biopolitics implies a management of probabilistic phenomena, births, deaths, marriages, etc. For example, to make probable an increase in marriage is to provide tax incentives for marriage. There you are. For our governments, in their wisdom, will go that far. No, not in their wisdom ... well, it is delicate. Good. ... We could conduct a comparative study of the two spaces, the space of large multiplicities and the space of small multiplicities. In my view, these are two spaces that differ in kind. These are two spaces that differ in kind.

I am thinking of a distinction made by Boulez, which Foucault knew well. So this will be a parenthesis. He distinguishes, for music, between a space that he calls striated space and a space that he calls smooth space. Striated space, he says, is a space that must be counted in order to occupy it. One must count in order to occupy. It is a space defined by size and measure. What is this in music? It is the pulse, which is a bass unit, and the tempo, which is a certain number of units. You see, pulse and tempo define a striated space. The occupation of striated space is a matter of speed and slowness. There is always a speed index in striated space. Very important for music. Smooth space is not like that; it is an open space that has no unit of measure, no tempo, no pulse. Boulez will call it a non-pulsed space-time. There is no speed index, there is no measure. There is an occupation index. It's not that there is no number. There is a number, there are numbers in smooth space, that is what is very important;



but in striated space, the number... there are numbers, and the numbers are subordinated to the measures. In smooth space, by contrast, the numbers measure the sizes, they measure the lengths. In smooth space, musically, you have this in modern music, you have plenty of smooth spaces. Messiaen makes smooth spaces. It is a space in which probabilistic phenomena are distributed. You see, it is an index of density or rarity. It is not a speed index. It is, says Boulez, an occupation index, not a speed index. Smooth space is more or less occupied, but in any case, it is occupied without counting, that is, without measure. The number, there, is the number that measures the probability of events emerging in space-time, it is a probabilistic space. Good.

It is the space – I am returning to Foucault – it is the space of biopolitics. I would say that open space is a type of smooth space. It is a space consisting of degrees of density and rarity: density of population, density and rarity of marriage, etc. It is a space defined by indices of density and rarity, quite different from the other, which is a measurable space defined by indices of speed. You see, I would say: in the one case, you have the striated space of small multiplicities with well-defined space-time, striated space-time; in the other case, you have smooth space-time for large multiplicities that are distributed in themselves [*se répartissent en lui*]. In the one case, you distribute the space according to given elements. In the other case, you distribute elements in an open space. There will be a whole game of nature [*jeu de nature*] between the two types of space. Good, but... this would be to say: these are two different diagrammatic traits. But then: new small difficulty, but we will stop because... But here it is only a matter of small difficulties, really nothing at all. One is quite often left with the impression that Foucault... On the one hand, he uses the word “diagram” only once, ...but well, it’s like that, and then there you are. ... On the other hand, there is the thing everywhere, it seems to me, but one has the impression that this status of power relations or relations of forces, such as the diagram expresses them, is reserved for our modern societies, namely, disciplinary societies.

Thus, the question becomes: is this reference to a diagram of power unique to our modern societies, or does it apply to every society? Our societies of discipline were formed both based on and against the societies, [??] remember it quite well, the societies that Foucault terms “of sovereignty.” And well, one of two things must be true. Either it must be said that in societies of sovereignty there is no diagram because the sovereign filled in for it, or it must be said that in societies of sovereignty there is perfectly well a diagram, that there is a diagram of sovereignty different from the disciplinary diagram. Here one must choose, it being said that Foucault provides us with no answer and does not pose this problem. We ourselves do not have much ... hesitation, we can say: clearly every social formation refers to a diagram of power.

Only, it is not the same, and there is nothing suprsing about this since one of the fundamental characteristics of the diagram is its fluid, fluctuating character. The diagram is always unstable. By definition, relations of forces are unstable, there is never an equilibrium of relations of forces. What is in equilibrium are the strata. The strata, yes, are in equilibrium. Relations of forces, strategy is never in equilibrium. The diagram is fundamentally unstable, so it is clear that the diagram is not reserved for our societies. Only, the diagram never stops going through [*traverse*] mutations. The diagram is fundamentally mutant, and Foucault will several times spell this out, speaking of a site of mutation; we will see this, we will see it later on. I would go so far as to say that, in fact, the diagram will be completely different. What will the diagram of societies of sovereignty be? Let’s try to find out, going quickly by contrasting it with [?] point by point. We saw that the first diagrammatic trait of discipline was what?

To construct a productive force greater than its composite forces, that is, to combine forces, to compose forces. That is what a diagram of discipline is: to divide the labor in order



to increase the output, for example. And well, the diagram of sovereignty will no longer be that. Action upon an action: what is the action upon an action within a formation of sovereignty? It is levying [*prélever*]. A force that levies on another force is an action upon action, no less than in the case of discipline, but it is an action of sovereignty, an economy of levying, a diagram of levying and no longer a composition of forces. A force that levies on other forces: that is the diagram of sovereignty. It will levy, for example, on the product when it comes to taxes, or on production when it comes to the *corvées*. Levying everywhere. Instead of composition. This will be the first diagrammatic trait of societies of sovereignty, of the diagram of sovereignty.

Another trait: it is not a matter of managing life, which was the other trait of discipline, but of deciding death. A force that decides death instead of supervising life – here, too, is implied a completely different space-time –, this is also a diagrammatic trait of societies of sovereignty. Second remark, therefore, I am moving forward in my answer: yes, societies of sovereignty also refer to a diagram. The diagram is not at all unique to societies of discipline. Second remark: the diagram is so unstable that, in the end, it is in perpetual mutation, in a state of perpetual transformation. This is why it can never be restricted to any one formation. It should almost be said: it is always intermediate between two formations. The diagram is always intermediary, it is always unstable, thus intermediate between two social formations. This is why it is non-stratified. It is always inter-stratigraphical. Between two strata. Foucault explicitly gives an example of this in *Discipline and Punish*, page 141, Napoleon. There is a Napoleonic diagram. The Napoleonic diagram is characteristically intermediate between the old sovereignty and the emergent discipline. It is a diagram of both sovereignty and discipline. Moreover, it is Napoleon who invents the disciplinary diagram. You will see this passage, very interesting.

Third little remark. These are exercises, fanciful exercises.... Are we, today, still in a disciplinary diagram? Can we say, for example, following the tenants of postmodernism, that... it would amount to saying that information technology and the related disciplines have changed, ...representing a mutation of the diagram and propelling us into another type of society that is already no longer disciplinary, though it is no less cruel and no less harsh, but that the relations of forces no longer pass through the disciplinary diagram. Think it over... it does not seem very interesting to me, but, well, just because. Okay, it would have to be seen whether current methods of control still borrow from the old model of the disciplines or borrow instead from completely new models, and which new models?

And next, final remark, equally insignificant. We ventured in the other direction the last time, if you recall, and I will summarize that here. Namely: there is indeed a diagram corresponding to so-called primitive societies. Here, too, a problem that is absolutely not broached by Foucault, but I tried to say, last time, that if you consider what we call primitive societies, there is a diagram that is irreducible to a molar structure. There is a molecular diagram, which is what? Which is constituted by the relations of forces in these societies, and the relations of forces constitute the network of alliances ... insofar as this network of alliances forms a microphysics of primitive societies, insofar as it cannot be deduced from lines of filiation. The alliances between two lines of filiation cannot be deduced from these same lines, but mobilize a different dimension, a transversal dimension opposed to... distinct from the verticals of filiation. And I can say that a network of alliances in primitive societies really constitutes the microstructure, if you like, or rather the strategy of these societies. Whereas their lines of filiation constitute their kinship structure. But you will never deduce the network of alliances from the kinship structure. Now, is it a coincidence if the relations of forces pass through the network of alliances?



There you are, then, we have a system... I would add... ah yes, final point... At the limit, it would have to be said, I believe, if it's not a misinterpretation of Foucault's thought, that there are as many diagrams as you like. It all depends on where you situate the strata. In any case, there are diagrams as soon as there is a new strategy. And, to take an example, in interviews, especially at the end of his life, Foucault insists on what he calls the importance of pastoral power, saying: this is a very curious power because it is a power that was invented. Thus, here too there is... it is a relation of forces, but an invented one, a new relation of forces that appears with the Catholic church. Pastoral power. "We the shepherds!"

The model will be Platonic. It will not be the first time that Christianity will have borrowed from Plato; Plato's great text on power and the pastoral is *The Statesman*. When the statesman is confronted by the person who shepherds the sheep, the flock. To shepherd a flock: ...well, there you are, a diagrammatic trait. To shepherd some flock or herd, whether these be cows, sheep, or men: that is a beautiful diagram. And, well, so it is that we are told: men, you are a flock, you are the flock of the good God, therefore a natural power is exercised over you by the shepherd of the flock, that is, by the man of God or the priest. With regard to Nietzsche's question "what new power does the priest invent?", Foucault replies: he invents pastoral power. A reply that Nietzsche had not foreseen. As for Nietzsche, he gives another answer. The priest will invent this extraordinary thing: pastoral power.

What is so extraordinary about pastoral power? But think it over. Flock, flock... okay. Yet it is an individualizing power. What is specific to the shepherd? He does not count. The man who counts is the man of striated spaces. It will be necessary to wait for the eighteenth century for power to pass through calculation and measurement. No, the shepherd does not count. But what does he do? His quantitative appreciation of the flock nevertheless enables him to individualize his subjects. And if, in the herd of goats, Sweetheart goes missing, he will notice at first glance. And if the cow Blanchette goes missing from the herd of cows, he will notice at first glance and he will say: the fox ate it. In other words, pastoral power is a power that is exercised over a multiplicity assimilated into a flock or herd... You see, it is a very original diagrammatic trait, which can be reduced neither to the small multiplicities from earlier, nor to the large multiplicities from earlier, but is something else. ...assimilated to a flock, a flock within which power produces individualizations, which is to say, it is a power of detail. To know that Blanchette is well-groomed, ... a power of detail, of care, of daily care. But take into account that in the same period, the sovereign completely could not care less about daily care. The daily care of his subjects: that's crazy talk!

What can that do for him. What he is asking for comes from levying. He asks only that his subjects be in good enough health for there to be something to levy. But that they be well-groomed, that they have trimmed fingernails, the sovereign couldn't care less about any of that. But the shepherd, quite the contrary. It is necessary that in his individual... individualizing appreciation of each member of the flock or herd, the horn of the cow not imperil the eye, so it must be filed down in time. For that is an abominable image, right? But what do you want the cow to do, she only has to wait, she only has to await the most horrible death. If the shepherd does not manage to... does not file down the horn. Or else how many, many sheep have died from not being able to get up, since these stupid beasts do not know how to stand up! Thus, if you want to kill a sheep, you approach stealthily like a wolf [*à pas de loup*], literally "a wolf," from behind, you scare it, it topples, this dumb brute finds itself on its back, and you know that it is incapable of standing back up.

So it dies if the shepherd does not come by, it dies from hunger, it will stay there until dying, if the shepherd does not come by to stand it upright. The other sheep do not care about the first sheep and do not try to stand it upright. Even the lambs. Good. And all that shows you what a shepherd is. "I will take care of you in the flock, up to the smallest detail." What



terrifying power, that of the priest. Terrifying, yes. It is a very new type of power. The sovereign does not propose this, again, it is the priest who proposes it. The pastoral power of the Church. And it will therefore be necessary for me to examine my conscience and every detail of my conscience in order to report it to my shepherd and say: “you see, I am your sheep.” And he will say to me: “yes, yes, you are such a good sheep” or “not a good sheep”. Um, I would say: “I am not a good sheep.” And he will say to me: “it does not matter since the door to the flock is open, but you will not continue to be a bad sheep,” etc. A stunning power, pastoral power.

Now, the marvel is when Foucault will show how one of the great diagrammatic originalities of pastoral power is thus the individualization of subjects, a power that individualizes, and then it will be necessary to await the disciplinary power of societies, of secular societies, in order for them to borrow from the pastoral Church this diabolical project: to individualize the citizens. And at this moment one of the aspects of pastoral power will become the object of State power, and State power will propose individualizing its citizens. In what form? In the form of the disciplines. The disciplines must bear on detail, which schoolchildren know something about. Alright then, all of this to say – here I am just concluding, at the juncture where we are – that as for me, I believe the question must be answered thusly: yes, every social formation refers to a diagram for a simple reason... or to several diagrams for the simply reason that all diagrams are unstable and fluid, whereas the social formations are in relative equilibrium, and there is no society that does not refer to a microphysics of power. Thus there are diagrams everywhere between the strata.