



GILLES DELEUZE

Foucault

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I

What we have tried to clarify, once again, took place over a very short period – given that Foucault only considers short historical periods – over a very short period, consisting of the succession of three forms. The ‘God’ form, corresponding to the classical age, the ‘Man’ form, corresponding to the end of the 18th to the 19th century, and a form that, for convenience sake and because of Foucault’s allusions, we name with reference to Nietzsche, the form ‘Overman’, or the form of a near future. And you recall our theme: it is that, for once, this story of the overman is not at all as grotesque, nor as complicated as it has been presented, it means something quite precise. Namely that, in every way, the forms of God, man, overman, etc., are the expression of determinable relations of forces. When the forces ... So that our general title could have been: when the forces in man enter into relation ...

Three small points. ‘Three small points’ because the three points will have one variable. When the forces of man, in man, enter into relation with forces coming from the outside, depending on the nature of the forces from outside, the composite of forces will be the form ‘God’. The composite of forces always being a form. The composite of forces will be, in one case, the form ‘God’, in another case the form ‘man’, in another case what one can call the form ‘overman’. And the last time we attempted to specify this form ‘overman’ as form of the future and we arrived at the idea that the form ‘overman’ flows from a particular relation of forces. It arises when the forces in man – you see, the overman is not a monster – when the forces in man liberate a being of life, a being of language, a being of labour *in man himself*. I don’t want to return to it beyond that, we have already attempted to say how in certain way there is a being of labour in silicon; how in a certain way there is a being of language in what we call ‘literature’ in the modern sense of the word, and how in a certain way there is a being of life in what one calls the genetic code, with a wholly novel conception of biology and of life itself. Good. It is clear that there is more to say on these points, you yourself have said so, I would like to, I’m ready ... but now is not the time to return to them.

I quickly made allusion to a text by Rimbaud, a great text of Rimbaud which in a way strongly chimes with great texts by Nietzsche in this regard: when Rimbaud sketches the man of the future in the great letter to Demeny, usually called the ‘Letter of the Seer’ [‘La lettre du voyant’]. A beautiful word, that, ‘voyant’. What does the letter of the seer tell us? There is a paragraph, you will find it, for example in any edition of Rimbaud’s letters, there is a paragraph which interests me particularly since Rimbaud’s paragraph develops three ideas, three points. He tells us that this man of the future is man, just as I say ... that this be the same for the



overman: it concerns forces in man and the question of the power [*puissance*] to which the forces in man can be raised. Understand, that means: the ‘Man’ form does not exhaust the forces in man. The ‘Man’ form corresponds uniquely to a certain degree of power of the forces of man. If, for whatever reason, the forces in man attain another degree of power, you will have another form than the form ‘man’. All this is not complicated, it appears very simple to me, very clear, this history of the overman. It is not at all complicated, it is violently poetic; but it equally involves a very rigorous and precise concept, all this goes together. I’m saying that you will easily see that the relevant paragraph of the ‘Letter of the Seer’ is really constructed around three points. The man of the future is presented, as I said before, and this is Rimbaud’s exact expression, as ‘charged with [or responsible for] the animals themselves.’ He is charged with the animals themselves. That is the first point. I would say: it is man insofar as he has liberated a being of life.

Second point: he is charged with the formless [*l’informe*], says Rimbaud; that is to say, he is charged with the inorganic; it is that I called, for convenience sake, the revenge of silicon on carbon. He is charged with the rocks themselves. The rock, this is where silicon reigns, this is the reign of the inorganic. And here I would point out that under conditions that neither Rimbaud nor Nietzsche could have predicted, today it is true that everything we hear about machines of the third kind can be marvelled at as a revenge of silicon in relation to organic carbon. And that interests me a lot, so much so that at some point, maybe even this year, we are going to have to do a session on the relations *silicon-carbon* – for you recall that as a matter of fact the most interesting biologists, or the cosmobiologists, already posed the question long ago: why did life pass through carbon? Why not something else? That is a problem that gripped chemistry. If you do chemistry, this might well be what most interests you: why carbon? If you like, this is where philosophy rejoins science. To the question ‘why’ [*pourquoi*], when it is said that there is no reason [*pas de pourquoi*], this is not true. And why? Why? Well, that is a problem of sufficient reason. Why did life pass through carbon rather than through something else, why couldn’t it work otherwise? This puts into play all sorts of questions: the contingency of life; why this specific material?

And [?] we can always say (obviously it is complicated as you know) we are told that silicon, chains of silicon, would not have been stable. But that remains to be seen [?]; it depends on what conditions; what defines the stability of a chain? Good, but today, it is fantastic because ... you see how the problem of the relations between life and machines can be posed ... At the level of modern machines in particular it is what one calls the chips [*puces*] that are the fundamental element of machines of the third kind, and the chips are made of silicon. The machines of the third kind represent a veritable revenge of silicon on carbon. And now it is silicon that presents the incontestable advantages. One can conceive machines of the third kind on carbon. It has even already been announced, for the computers of the future, the machines of the future to come, will return to carbon. We are indeed told that the true robots will be organic robots. There will be ... this is a bit of a detour, it would be beautiful to give it a figure, we are in full prophecy mode. You see: you have the machines of the third kind, the modern machines which represent ... founded on silicon, they represent the great revenge of silicon. There is a war of chemical elements. Carbon had stifled everything else at the level of organic chemistry. Everything passes through carbon; but the other elements protest. Protestation of the other elements. There is a stirring of the other elements deep in the night of the world, and then ... revenge, silicon’s revenge, through the intermediary of our technology. The robot, the feedback machine, the computer, all this is the revenge of silicon. And then we are told that the true robots of the future will involve a return to carbon; they will be organised robots.



And all this is to say: this is the reign of the formless, it is the promotion of the formless, it is the man who liberates the forces of the formless, the forces of silicon. Well, the overman, it is rather complicated, and [?] don't say to me that I am reducing it to scientism, the story of the overman ... No! Because the relation with silicon is incarnated in certain technologies, but it overflows technology a great deal. The histories of the use of silicon, etc., infinitely overflows science since it will animate forms of art, it will animate all sorts of things, everything that puts in play the whole of the human condition, or the post-human, suprahuman or overhuman condition ... whatever you want to call it. Therefore it interests me a great deal that after having said 'man charged with the animals themselves', Rimbaud adds, 'man charged by the formless'; and I think 'formless [*informe*]' must be taken to the letter: inorganic, the rock.

And finally he adds 'charged with language'. He says: a new universal language. Why does he say 'a new universal language'? Because this is not a return to the universal language of the 17th century. A new universal language, which will be what? He specifies: "soul on soul" [*l'âme sur l'âme*].¹ 'Soul on soul' is curious because it is an expression so close to what Artaud will use, 'a language which goes from the soul to the soul' [*un langage qui va de l'âme à l'âme*], and which we saw – I don't want to come back to that – that in a certain manner, it could define modern literature. Good. And in order to group the three notions together – 'charged with animals themselves', 'charged with the formless', and 'charged with a new language' – Rimbaud has an admirable expression: "thought latching on to thought and pulling" [*la pensée accrochant la pensée et tirant*]: this will be the formula of a kind of latch [*croc*] of thought. It is beautiful, "thought latching on to thought and pulling", the latcher [*crocheteur*] of thought. The overman as latcher of thought with three arms: the formless or being of labour, literature or the being of language, the animals themselves or the being of life. Refer yourselves to the letter of Rimbaud. So that's where we had got to. Any questions? Everything limp? All okay? Good. Then we continue.

I note that we have wandered far afield. You understand. We must then return to more modest things, before finishing with all that. I would like to say, good, let us be more modest, and fall back on a less lyrical domain, less ... we will fall back [*se rebattre*] because it seems to me that this also exists in Foucault and that one will discover, displaced, a similar analysis at the level of what we could call 'three juridical formations'. And this is what interests me today. Three juridical formations, or maybe we could discover the succession of three forms under another aspect: the 'God' form, 'man' form, form of something to come. This will be as three states of right [*droit*]. So it is on that .. Yes? Question in the audience?

Student: Inaudible.

Deleuze: I understand the first question. For me ... er. The second question is not very clear for me. Say the second question again.

Student: Inaudible.

Deleuze: Mm, no. No, but it is interesting. Yes, one could say that, one could put it like that. Good, then what was the first question? That was the second question, and the first question was?

Student: ?

Deleuze: You quite rightly say that every epoch, whatever it is, has a certain concept of man. Yes, true enough, that does not mean that one thinks by relating the totality of concepts to the form 'man'. We will therefore distinguish the concept and the form by saying, I suppose: *concepts*, you will always have them in every epoch, you have for example a concept

¹ Translator's note: In the letter to Demeny, Rimbaud says 'Cette langue sera de l'âme pour l'âme', translated by Oliver Bernard as 'This language would be of the soul, for the soul' (Rimbaud, *Collected Poems*, London: Penguin, 1962, 13).]



of man, a concept of animal, etc., but the *form* is that to which the totality of concepts is related as their condition for being thought. Okay?

Therefore in every epoch, there is a concept of man. For example, in the Greeks, you even find several concepts of man: man as rational animal, man as political animal, etc. Going very quickly, I note that the 17th century, the classical age, breaks with this type of concept of man, it claims to substitute another kind of concept. For example, Descartes explicitly refuses to define man as rational animal. This is moreover very interesting in Descartes, for he says: it means nothing to call an animal rational, because it would be necessary to already know what it means to say *animal* and what it means to say *rational*. That won't work, it is to give oneself too many presuppositions. It is necessary to define man otherwise. So there are concepts of man which change, no problem. Good.

But, I say: in the classical age, the concept of man, whatever it is, relates itself to a form which, necessarily, cannot be the form 'man', that is to say, the form that allows for concepts to be thinkable cannot be the form 'man'. The form which allows for concepts to be thinkable is the form 'God'. But this is not simply ... What you are adding is too abstract, if you like. You say, and it is true, that it is the form 'God' that allows for the thinkability of concepts in the classical age, because knowledge has for model things such as they are known by God. This is not false. This is not false, but it is abstract. That does not take account of what is living in a thought or in a circle. I believe that one could in fact assign a deeper reason from which yours could only follow. The deeper reason is this: it is not even that the classical age thinks starting from the infinite. Starting from the infinite, you could say that the theology of the Middle Ages already did that. What is truly new in the classical age, and is what, I think, makes that the classical thinkers incomparable, is that they throw themselves into an attempt which, really, belongs to them. It is not insofar as they think the infinite or start from the infinite, it is something rather different, to distinguish ... because again to think the infinite starting from the infinite, you can say, that is already in Saint Thomas, ... or there are already many currents in the Middle Ages.

What appears incomparable to me ... here I am talking a little on my own account, because this is not the aspect that interests Foucault. But I say to myself: a further reason, which justifies him in every way is a very bizarre project, it is that the 17th century does not cease to distinguish orders of the infinite, and it is that which is ... [?]. And think how original this is – at first sight, when one says the infinite, one says the infinite, there, it is not simple but ... – that there are distinct orders of the infinite and one has to disentangle the orders of the infinite ... I would say that for classical man, all is infinite, but all is not infinite in the same sense and in the same fashion. This is a rather mad task, the putting of order into the infinite. It is because of that that I would say to you that, for me, the great 17th century texts, those which are signed 17th century – and it is through this that they remain eternally modern – are those which try to distinguish the orders of the infinite: do not confuse this infinite with that infinite. And they all mobilise theology, mathematics, physics, all the sciences, the arts, in order to introduce an order into the infinities. To distinguish the orders of the infinite. And all the anxiety of the 17th century, it is not simply about the fear of losing oneself in the infinite. The anxiety of the 17th century is the fear of being submerged by the infinities into which order could not be put.

So you can see that the situation of man in the 17th century is, I would say to you, that man has lost all centre; one sees it very well in Pascal. If it appears in Pascal in particular, it is by virtue of the Pascalian genius, but it is the same for everybody. One no longer has a centre. The whole beginning of Descartes, the whole beginning of Descartes' *Meditations*, is: where is it that I can find a centre? Thus, they will be able to find it to the extent that they order the infinities. There is an order in the infinities, a first infinite, a second infinite, a third infinite, etc. Perhaps one will be able to recognise oneself there, and recognise man, in all these infinities.



So that man will be thought, but he will evidently be thought in his relation with the infinites, that is to say, in relation with the form 'God', since all the orders of the infinite must indeed flow from the form 'God'. All the orders of the infinite flow diversely from the form 'God'. For example, the infinity of the world, it is obvious that the infinity of the world would not exist, would not be, if the world had not been created by God. It is therefore an infinity undone [*défait*]. Whilst the infinity of God himself is an infinity through itself. God is infinite through himself, while the world is infinite through its cause (which is God), it is not the same infinite, there are already two orders of the infinite. Thus what is the situation of man [?]? Man, he is in the world, he participates to the infinite of the world, but he is in the image of God. It will be necessary to discover the place of man in these orders of the infinite. And to think man will be: to assign the place or places he has as a function of the form 'God'.

With the result that what is thought is in effect the form 'God'. There is no form 'man'. There is no form 'man', why? For the simple reason that the form 'man' is just the limitation in certain aspects of the form 'God'. It must simply be said that in order to have the form 'man', it is enough to say: which aspects of God happen to be limited in order to constitute the form 'man'? Descartes' response is famous: the forces in man are the understanding and the will. And the astonishing response of Descartes is: the will in man is infinite, as much as in God. Therefore, at the level of the will, there is no difference. The will does not tolerate finitude, bizarrely enough, in Descartes. It doesn't matter why, but in return man only has a finite understanding. God has an infinite understanding. In other words man will be defined by the finite understanding, the finite understanding being a simple limitation of the infinite understanding. From that moment what is thought is the form 'God', the infinite understanding. Thus at the level of the infinite understanding, you are right: it is there that the problem 'to know the things as they are' appears. It seems to me that that deals with the first question.

The second question: what happens? At the level of the discovery of finitude which will be the condition of constitution of a 'Man' form. You see, the form 'man' connects up very well. When does it emerge? Starting from the moment where the finite is no longer apprehended as a simple limitation of the infinite, but seized as a positive force in itself, or a force of opposition. Now, for the 17th century, it is true that the finite is limitation and not opposition. The finite is a limitation of the infinite, it is not opposed to the infinite. In order for the form 'man' to emerge and destitute the form 'God', it is necessary that finitude should be seized as positive force, as positive force irreducible to a simple limitation.

At the level ... Let us take up a logical discussion. The principle of identity, A is A. It is an old principle, it is a very old principle, the principle of identity, but it is very interesting. And it was already well known by the Greeks. Then we make leap as we do not have time to examine each historical formation. (It would be necessary to ask: in the formation of the Greeks, what is the principle of identity?) I jump to the classical thinkers, to the classical formation of the 17th century. Obviously, they have a very original way of making use of the principle of identity. ... I think that in a certain manner they carried the principle of identity up to the infinite, right up into the infinite, which is completely foreign to the Greeks. To carry the principle of identity up to the infinite ... this is really a bizarre idea! You will find the purest expression of it in Leibniz. It is an astonishing *coup de force*. To carry A is A into the infinite, that is to dream, it is a beautiful enterprise, a great and beautiful enterprise.

Question: [?] They have made a guarantee of ...

Deleuze: Of the infinite? Yes, or the inverse.

Student: They need a guarantee because that does not hold ...

Deleuze: Yes, they need a kind of foundation, which they will only find in the infinite, for the principle of identity itself. Which makes possible an astonishing philosophy, again, which



is the philosophy of Leibniz. Fine, but so what? What produces the 19th century, or what appears starting with Kant? A complete veering off [*déportment*] of the principle of identity, which is expressed how? A recusation of the very formula of the principle of identity ... that has the air of nothing, all that, but it is so important! All the forms of thought pass ... Formula of the principle of identity, this was, if you like, A is A. A is A. Well, starting from a certain period, one can no longer say A is A. And why can one no longer say A is A? There are a thousand ways of no longer saying that A is A. You know, all that is complicated. Because here we have men. God is dead and men arrive, and when men arrive, they say, they say amongst each other: we can no longer say A is A. And why can men no longer say A is A? Follow me closely here. Men can no longer say A is A, because they cannot know if there is a A. Who could tell them that there is an A? God. If God is dead, if the form 'God' gives way, A gives way. A is A, if there is A. So the principle of identity receives a little complement which will ruin it, which will ruin its formulation. A is A? Yes, of course: on condition that there be A. That is not the same as saying: 'if A exists', but 'if there is something to think, if a concept exists.' What proves to me that a concept exists? Yes. If there is A, then A is A. Good? In effect they have inherited the principle of identity from the time this principle depended on the form 'God'.

Therefore, if the form 'God' vacillates, the principle of identity becomes hypothetical. If there is A, then A is A. Good. The principle of identity has lost its value ... as is said in philosophy, where it is an indispensable piece of terminology, what is called an *apodictic* value in logic or in philosophy ... the principle of identity has lost its apodictic value, that is to say, its logical necessity. It no longer has anything more than a hypothetical value. If there is A, then A is A. Hence the necessity that the principle of identity should be latched onto another categorical principle, another apodictic principle, an apodictic principle that can no longer be supplied by the form 'God'. Again, what you just said is quite right: it was God, the guarantor of identities; it was God, the guarantor of identities [Deleuze repeats]. But there is no guarantor anymore. Where to find a guarantor? That would be another guarantor.

Well, a wholly different guarantor is known. Starting with Kant, what is it? The guarantor of the principle of identity 'A is A', is 'self equals self' [*moi égale moi*]. This is the 'I think'. Self equals self. Every identity finds its guarantor in the identity of the consciousness of self [*conscience de soi*]. This is because, me [*moi*], I think that A equals A, if there is a me. But 'me, I think' is not referred to a hypothesis. 'Me, I think' is the new apodictic principle. And if A equals A it is because the 'I think' accompanies every concept. 'Me equals me' [or 'self equals self'] accompanies every A. This is what Kant will say: the 'I think' accompanies all my representations. The 'I think' accompanies each of my representations, in other words every A refers to 'me equal to me'. You will say: but 'me equals me', what interest is there in all that? 'Me equals me', this is the position of the finite self. It is the identity of the finite self which now guarantees the identity of the principle of identity. This is constitutive finitude and this is the form 'man'. That is the form 'man', it is the identity of the finite self. And the post-Kantians will say it explicitly: if A is A – for example these are the formulas that you will find explicit in Fichte – if A is A, it is because me equals me. You see: the self is not an A among others. Self equals self, this is the position of the finite consciousness which will guarantee the identity of everything that is thought. The form 'man' replaces the form 'God'.

So in this history of constitutive finitude, once again, which starts with Kant, Heidegger is only one terminus of the distance covered. It traverses all the ... It is the synthesis of the finite self. If you like, to sum it up, the synthesis of the finite self replaces the analysis of the infinite God. This will be the great Kantian reversal, the passage from the form 'God' to the form 'man'. But I draw your attention to it ... if you like, there is always The two are legitimate ... When you try to characterise something, it is necessary to maintain both. The abstract



formula – for example, if you want to abstractly define the theory of knowledge in the 17th century, it is not enough, you must arrive at the discovery of the problem, the lived problem, the problem which, even if it is a completely intellectual problem, affects everyone. Once again, in the 17th century, they no longer knew where they were. They absolutely no longer knew where they were, because everything is infinite and the latter is made of infinities of diverse orders. And this is their concrete problem. To find techniques, for example ... Then, for example, the concrete problem becomes ... You can convoke all the disciplines around it, when you grasp the concrete problem that stretches out in an epoch, which appears, which seeps throughout an epoch, and you can better understand how things refer to each other.

Good. Well then all the mathematicians ask themselves how they will dominate, how they will come up with an instrument capable of bearing, not upon the infinite, but upon an order of the infinite which will be the mathematical infinite. Thus the proliferation of methods around the infinitesimal calculus. But, in painting, it is a completely different problem: you have a discovery, you have the transformations of perspective, you have discoveries about light, light independent of the contour of objects, which here also refer back to a very particular order of the infinite. And, in the great theological texts, you have the attempt to distinguish the orders of the infinite: ‘Attention! The infinite is not’ etc. And everywhere a kind of anxiety: where to find a centre for man?

Hence the Pascalian theme: man does not have a centre, man no longer has a centre. And the last hope: can Christ be considered as the centre of man? You understand, when one says ‘can Christ be considered as the centre of man?’, that certainly still interests many people today, but it appears all the same as a problem no longer completely adapted to our concerns. Not in any vital sense. It is a concern, as Nietzsche would say, for the last Pope, but it is no longer such a concern for us. And nevertheless, if you replace ... For example, if you re-read Pascal’s texts, you understand it [?] to say: but can Christ perhaps considered as the centre of man? That means what? That means: man, in the language of the 17th century, no longer has any kind of centre at all. Why? Because the universe is infinite. Thus here one understands how Pascal can remain absolutely modern. This is of an absolute modernity because ... Obviously it is not for the same reasons that the man of the 17th century no longer has a centre and that we ourselves don’t have one, it is not for the same reasons, but after all that gives us something to talk about with the authors of the 17th century, it at least makes for a dialogue. They are groaning down there, in the depths of their 17th century: ‘We have lost the centre!’ And we can reply to them: “Ah well, that’s okay, because we have too!” But we will see in what different manners. And then leads one to say to oneself: ah, but was there ever anyone who really had a centre? If yes, then what went wrong for them, if they had a centre? It is no longer holding. But what is it to have a centre? Perhaps they groaned under their centre. It was perhaps no good any longer, all that. There was never anything very good about it. But that allows ... that nourishes the conversations across the centuries, and, above all, allows you to see that Pascal has lost nothing of his greatness and his power. There. Does that work, have I replied? Yes? Too much even! (Laughter).

So now let us return, more modestly still this time. The ages of right. ... Yes, and I add something because I would like certain among you to reflect on it [?] ... Again I would say Foucault has never taken on (and this is his rigour) anything but short, well-determined periods, except, as we see, at the end, right at the end, where he considers rather long periods, but that will be a mystery for us: what persuaded him that he had to consider long periods at the end? But up to then, again you can see for yourself the extent to which his books cover short periods, short durations, the largest being from the 17th century to the onset of the 20th century. But I would point out that if you accept the method he confides to us, as we have understood it up to this point – namely, the relations of forces being given in a historical



period, to seek the form that flows from it – for my part, I think it is a method one can apply to completely different periods and I would say that evidently Foucault always forbade himself from talking about (except for some allusions) the historical formations of Asia, the historical formations of Africa, the historical formations of ...; he kept to Western Europe and to certain very determined segments of Western Europe, and he wanted above all not to leave them.

And, once again, what we can affirm in all confidence is that the form ‘God’, the form ‘man’ and the form ‘overman’ absolutely exhaust nothing, they do not exhaust the universe of forces and, certainly, there are other relations of forces between the forces in man and the forces of the outside that give a place to wholly different forms which are neither God, nor man, nor over-man. For example, it would appear very interesting to look a little into what the Indian forms are, what the Chinese forms are, the Asiatic forms more generally, the African forms. But for myself, I believe that there will be, that one could find, forms which in effect will be no longer God, nor man, nor the superman, but which will be extraordinary vegetal or animal forms, the forms of the garden, the man-garden ... finally, there I stop because ...! The man-garden or indeed the forms man-animal ... the man-animal ... I’m not really thinking of the histories of totemism. I am not thinking of totemism, totemism is a concept. This is much better than that. I want to say relations of forces will be thought in relation with vegetal forms, with animal forms. Not existing animals, of course, this would rather be an affair of relations of forces, and animal forms would take account of these relations of forces. This is to say that this will be a very, very rich domain. For my part, it is India that interests me above all in this regard. It would be necessary to take it up again ... There is a very important author on this called Haudricourt, who was a specialist on agronomy and who discussed the role of the forms of garden in Asia and of the vegetal forms in India and in animal forms. He makes of India a kind of intermediary between the Occident and the Orient; what he says is very curious. There would be much to look into. ... Perhaps there is the equivalent of Foucault did to be done at the level of non-European civilizations. Little matter ... this is just to say.

Student: There is a question which returns every time for me, it is: in the relations of forces [?], [Foucault has] selected three types of vecteurs [?]. But is it that there will no other forces, other systems [?]. But what allows for the selection, on the basis of what criteria does one choose [?] as centre [?].

Deleuze: Yes, the question is very well founded. But we gave a response to it when you were not there. But as I do not know if everyone has taken account of our response, I seize on the occasion in order to ... there is no fixed formula in Foucault, everything depends on the period. You have raised ‘life, labour, language’. Why does this ‘life, labour, language’ arise and when? It arises uniquely for the form ‘man’, so there is no invariable formula. It is not ... One does not interrogate life, labour and language in every formation. And why is it that, at the level of the form ‘man’, it is ‘life, labour, language’ that counts? For the simple reason – one can think that Foucault is not justified, one can think that he is justified – that for Foucault it is the triple root of finitude. And it is because ‘life, labour, language’ are the three forces of finitude that the form ‘man’ will be thought in relation with life, labour, language, since the form ‘man’ appears when the forces in man confront the forces of finitude. Now, the three forces of finitude, these are ‘life, labour, language’, according to Foucault. With regard to that, in fact, everything is open, one can reflect, one can say to oneself: has that convinced me? But there is no place for dispute in my opinion. We can all say to ourselves: look, what does that mean, ‘life, labour, language’ are the roots of finitude?’ Is it that there are no others? Is it this? Is it that? [?] The fact is this is Foucault’s schema. But in the classical age the forces of finitude are not concerned, therefore it does not concern life, labour and language. It concerns, I say, orders of the infinite. In the classical age, the forces in man are not referred back to the forces of finitude; the forces of finitude are not recognised. Labour is recognised, language is



recognised, life is recognised, but they are not set up as positive forces. They are set up as figures of limitation.

Therefore the forces in man in the classical age are not at all confronted with 'life, labour, language' as forces of finitude, rather the forces in man in the classical age are confronted with orders of infinity, that is to say, of that which can be raised to the infinite. And what can be raised to the infinite? It is not labour. You see how labour, for Foucault, is a force of finitude: it precisely cannot be raised to the infinite. Will this not be so by definition in all the senses of labour? If you take the physical sense of labour as a force, an infinite labour strictly has no meaning, it is a non-sense, it is like an infinite speed. 'Infinite speed', this is an expression devoid of meaning. Then so is 'infinite labour'. So is an infinite life. None of that has any meaning. To make up for it, the classical age will therefore recognise what? What can be raised to the infinite, namely, not labour, but wealth. You say to me: wealth cannot be raised to the infinite ... Yes. In the conditions where the 17th century thinks wealth, in relation with the land, supposed to have an inexhaustible power by right, wealth can be raised to the infinite. Hence Foucault's idea: in the 17th century, there is no political economy, because political economy is founded on labour and on the finitude of labour, and to make up for it, there is an analysis of wealth. In the same way, there is no biology because biology supposes the finitude of life. But there is a natural history that can be raised to the infinite. In the same way there is a universal grammar, there is no linguistics. And in the third age, the age of the overman, there are yet more novel forces. For, in fact, I have tried to show that even if one keeps the same words, 'life, labour, language', labour in the sense of the labour of machines of the third kind no longer has anything to do with the labour of energetic machines or human labour. Therefore different forces intervene every time, there is not at all a stereotyped formula in Foucault where each formation would be confronted with the same forces of the outside. Every time, moreover, in order that a form can change, it is necessary that it enters into the play of new forces of the outside. There. Yes?

Question: [?]

Deleuze: I would reply as follows: at the point where we are, these are questions that slightly get in my way because ... I'm replying in a slightly disordered way. I will reply on two essential points in your questions. On the one hand, dialectics, on the other the principle of identity. Dialectics, the principle of identity: at the point where we are, I would rather not give a general response; if I focus on the point where we are in our analysis, these are empty notions insofar as it is not said what formation you are considering; there is no univocal principle of identity. Just as there is no univocal dialectic. If I interest myself in formations that employ the word 'dialectical', I can see that this is a word that appears in the Greek formation; and which then has a long history in the mediaeval formation. I do not believe I am exaggerating in saying that it disappears from the classical formation. Even if one can find it here or there, it is not a strong element. It reappeared in a triumphal form, but wholly different, in the 19th century formation. So I just say: if you say to me 'what is the place of the dialectic?', I say: in which formation?

Question: [?]

Deleuze: Then I would say: in the Hegelian formation ... in the 19th century formation, the Hegelian dialectic appears to me typically as an operation belonging fully to the 19th century, through which the synthesis of the finite self, which the dialectic supposes – and it is though that that the Hegelian dialectic is absolutely different from the Greek dialectic – the Hegelian dialectic is post-Kantian, that is to say, it presupposes the finite self as foundation and it operates ... what is proper to the Hegelian dialectic is the claim to reconcile the finite self with the infinite. This is an impassioned endeavour, it is a grandiose endeavour, but it implies the determination of the new foundation as being the finite self, ie. it implies the



Kantian position of departure that Hegel never rejected. What Hegel wants to show through the dialectic he constitutes is how the moments of the finite self go on to be a veritable reappropriation of the infinite. This is what he does. It goes without saying that when Plato talks of dialectic, it concerns something totally different that belongs to the Greek formation. That would lead to a problem: why the same word? No doubt there are relations. To be sure, something is passed from Hegel to Plato, Hegel reactivates something Platonic.

But at the point where we are, I can't go into the dialectic in general. I can enquire into the respect in which Hegelian dialectic fits into the 19th century formation. If you ask me this question, I reply: obviously yes, since Hegel always recognised that the principle of identity refers back to the finite self. This is even why he claims to transcend the principle of identity, in order to reconquer the infinite. Now how will he transcend it? Well, he will transcend it in a manner which seems very beautiful to me and which will precisely always show finitude as force of position. Finally, he will say: it is not identity which counts, it is the principle of contradiction. That is the Hegelian originality that will reconcile the infinite and the finite, it is to displace the principle of identity towards the principle of contradiction.

Listen to me carefully in this regard, because it is not complicated, all that. The principle of non-contradiction is *A is not not-A*, the principle of identity is *A is A*. The principle of non-contradiction has been known for a long time, and any logician worth his salt has always said: yes, the principle of non-contradiction flows from the principle of identity: if *A is A*, *A is not not-A*. What does Hegel do? You would have to be an imbecile ... I don't mean anyone personally, because certainly nobody has fallen into such an error ... You would have to be an imbecile to believe that, as one says ... no! As nobody *could* say it, ever! ..., to believe that Hegel reverses the principle of contradiction and believes that things contradict themselves. It is truly necessary to be an imbecile. One would have to be feeble-minded. For, what does Hegel do? Imagine a not particularly bright child who has badly understood Hegel; he would say: this Mr. Hegel is a joke philosopher, who says *A is not-A*. One can always say whatever one likes, but it would be a joke of an idea to say *A is not-A*. The interest in doing this would be very little, first of all, then it would be idiotic, it would be truly idiotic. Anyway, he is not on this level, Hegel. What does he say, Hegel? Like everyone else, he says 'A is not not-A': only he is the first to take it seriously. The others say, *A is not not-A*, but they do not know what they are saying. They believe that they have contented themselves with saying *A is A* in another manner. Then Hegel arrives. It is quite astonishing, the story of Hegel. Because he arrives at the heart of it, he risks being understood as saying *A is not-A*. Hegel turns up and says: you have noticed nothing when you say: *A is not not-A*. Why do you say *A is not not-A*? You are justified in saying *A is not not-A*, but if you start from the principle of identity, you will never generate the principle of non-contradiction, there is a frontier from one to the other. From *A is A*, you cannot conclude *A is not not-A*, and nevertheless one must say: *A is not not-A*. Why? What appears that is new in *A is not not-A*?

Well, what appears that is new is that there are two negations. When I say *A is A*, 'the triangle is a triangle', fine, that is something. But when I say: *the triangle is not the non-triangle*, then why the devil I am introducing two negations? And the triumphant remark of Hegel is that identity is only a result. Namely, in order to posit its own identity, it is necessary that the thing is opposed to what denies it: two negations. In order to posit its own identity, it necessary that the thing is opposed to what denies it, *A is not not-A*. A is not (opposes itself to) not-A (to what denies it). Therefore identity is only a result of the principle of non-contradiction. It is necessary that the thing confronts what is opposed to it and denies what is opposed to it in order to posit its identity. Good. One can say that he introduces the negative as a force in thought; the negative is no longer a negation, as in the 17th century, the negative is a force. The power [*puissance*] of the negative. With the result that, far from saying *A is not-A*, Hegel is



the one who says A is A , but in order to say A is A , it was necessary for you to say A is *not not-A*. It is the principle of non-contradiction that is first in relation to the principle of the identity. Understand that an idea as simple as that – even if nobody had ever had this idea – an idea as simple as that, that is what makes a great philosopher. But then, if you imagine someone who says ‘Hegel, he’s the one who says A is *not-A*’, you can see that, on the one hand, he destroys everything that is interesting in the idea, and moreover he no longer understands anything of anything. I say: Hegel, he is not the one who denies the principle of non-contradiction, he is on the contrary the first to take this principle seriously, to the point of positing it as first in relation to the principle of identity. And he goes on to derive his whole conception of the dialectic from it: you cannot posit the identity of the thing unless you have traversed a speculative adventure through which it confronts its opposite, that is to say, it confronts what denies it and itself denies what denies it. And this will be the Hegelian dialectic, which has nothing to do with the Platonic dialectic. You understand? Then I hope to have vaguely replied to your question.

Question: Was this not already due to the introduction, in the preceding century, of negative magnitudes, what Kant will call the negative magnitudes?

Deleuze: Yes indeed. That is why it is Kantian. That assumes two things: it assumes the discovery that the negative is not a limitation, is not a negative of limitation, but a force; and that supposes the finite self. That is to say that in fact the text from which, in this regard, everything flows, is Kant’s text, when he says: a negative magnitude, a negative quantity, – 2 for example, is not a limitation. It is a positive force oriented opposite the force + 2. With the result that, even here, there is a very simple arithmetic armature: negative numbers, just as in the 17th century, there was the differential calculus. But it is not at all that mathematics inspires philosophy, it is rather that what is a problem in mathematics has its corresponding problem in philosophy and inversely.

There. Shall we go on? So we fold ourselves back onto ... But that will not be the same thing. We will try to separate out three juridical forms, and it will confirm to us that each of the three forms we have seen, God, man, overman, is never pure and one can never say that it is perfect. I insist on this because I have some concerns ... Do not believe that ... that when we become overmen, with our silicon, our animals and our literature, everything will go well. No. It would be even necessary, I think ... Nevertheless, it is complicated, you know, when one writes, it is very difficult because, in order to make oneself understood, it is necessary to make simplifications, even Nietzsche ... When Nietzsche talks of the overman, one has the impression that it a radiant dawn. But it is not necessary to understand it like that. It is justified; sometimes it is necessary to go quickly; but it does not happen like that. What happens is very different. When the ‘God’ form reigns, everything did not go well then either. One was under the ‘God’ form, but what did man have to endure under the ‘God’ form? What he had to endure, the existing man! The crusades and the wars of religion ... all that. And with the ‘Man’ form, the great humanist form, none of that is interrupted. At the moment of the ‘Man’ form, there is still what Nietzsche calls the Last Pope; the Last Pope labours under the form ‘man’. And for those who know Nietzsche, I think that one must periodize the fourth book of *Zarathustra* in particular: the Last Pope works over the form ‘man’, but the form ‘overman’ will be worked over by what Nietzsche calls (even if this jars slightly with the text, it is necessary to introduce this periodisation), by those Nietzsche admirably calls the Last Men. The Last Men take part in the form ‘overman’ in their bustling way. So one can see that each form continues to be the place, to talk like Foucault, of a combat, or of multiple combats; or a strategic place, strategic places where the combats continue.

Here is my theme, if you like, my general theme: following the path of Foucault’s research, can one sketch out the juridical formations corresponding to the form ‘God’, the form ‘man’,



and the form ‘over-man’. I think you can if you proceed to take up Foucault’s texts in other books apart from *The Order of Things*, the great texts concerning right [*le droit*]. And here again, there is a very localised evolution, why? Because Foucault insists a great deal on the juridical model, the juridical taste, of Western Europe, from the Middle Ages to the 20th century. And this juridical taste is very proper all the same to Western societies. So here again one finds the short period studied by Foucault. But if I take Foucault’s books to the letter, two books in particular, how should I put it? *Discipline and Punish* presents us with two juridical formations, one form that is called ‘sovereignty’, proceeding roughly up to the threshold of the 18th century, up to Napoleon; and following that, the disciplinary formation, of course in preparation before Napoleon, but which breaks out after Napoleon.

III

The following book, *The Will to Knowledge*, marks an advance; this advance, if I take it to the letter, consists in saying: the disciplinary formations do not consist only in a discipline of the body. Beyond that, is joined to it something about which *Discipline and Punish* doesn’t say a word. Something is joined to it that is very different from the discipline of the body, namely, a biopolitics of populations which both appears and is developed in the current of the 19th century, although it has been prepared from the end of the 18th century. And this biopolitics of populations, I quickly indicate (since it is not his project) that Foucault pursues it up to our own period, making numerous allusions to fascism and to the importance of a biopolitics of populations from the point of view of race in fascism. So it seems to me that in Foucault’s texts as he has left them – I am not saying that it is necessary to select one – many factors made possible the distinction between three formations and not simply two. There would be ... I will try to be clear, for in fact the rise of the biopolitics of juridical populations appears to me as historically posterior to the rise of the disciplining of bodies. Therefore, even if there is an overlapping, using Foucault’s texts as a basis one cannot rule out the ensuing hypothesis of three (and not two) juridical formations.

First: the formation of sovereignty, with the French Revolution as termination, broadly corresponding to the Middle Ages in part and the classical age. Absolute monarchy.

The second formation: the disciplinary formation of the post-revolutionary period, Napoleon and the 19th century. And, of course, in the process of being unlocked already at this period, the apparition of the third formation, founded this time on a biopolitics of populations, sketched out in the 19th century and bursting forth in the 20th. You see where I want to get to: corresponding to these three formations, there would be three very different subjects of right, three very different juridical formations. How to name the third, if one manages to isolate it? One will say, to use the word that the American author I spoke to you about with regard to literature, Burroughs, makes use of, this is a formation of the power of control. One would therefore have: power of sovereignty, disciplinary power or power of discipline, and power of control. What is the terrible power of control of which Burroughs has made a portrait? I am saying this, I authorise myself in saying this, because of his admiration for and his knowledge of him; Foucault’s admiration for Burroughs – despite the fact that, to my knowledge, he never mentioned him in his writings – was very great, and the analyses Burroughs had made of social control in modern societies after the war had particularly struck Foucault.

Let us try to characterise these formations. In the case of the formation of sovereignty, I will go rather quickly: Foucault gives it two interesting characteristics. These are the operations of deduction [*prélèvement*]: there is a power consisting in deducting from man on the one hand,



and on the other hand, deciding death. This is the right of the sovereign. Good. I do not want to say more on that, it would involve too much. I say this: you can agree that one could say: this is, in pure right, the God-form. The subject of right is God. That is to say, the sovereign. Identity of the sovereign with God, why? God is on the one hand he who deducts – the deducting is God's share [*la part de Dieu*], sacrifice is God's share, it is the economy of deduction, the economy of sovereignty. And on the other hand, it is he who decides on death. It is the judge.

What happens when one passes to the disciplinary societies? In disciplinary societies, as we have seen, so I can go relatively quickly, there is a little regrouping. Maybe you recall how Foucault defined discipline. To discipline was to subject a small human multiplicity, taken within assignable limits, to a series of determinate operations. It was to discipline it: precisely, to impose tasks. To discipline for Foucault was to impose tasks on small human multiplicities, taken within assignable limits. And he responded: what appears in the 19th century is the formation of great milieux of confinement: prisons, schools, barracks, factories, etc. You see. I say this is discipline. You can see what this opposes, it no longer involves deducting, it involves the composition of forces. Why the composition of forces? It involves the composition of forces in order to produce an effect greater than they would have produced if they had remained isolated. To compose forces as a function of obtaining a useful effect. It no longer concerns deducting, it concerns composing, it is a completely different goal. It no longer involves deciding on death, it concerns the disciplining of bodies. I think that, according to Foucault's analyses, one can say that it is in this disciplinary formation that the notion of man, that the juridical form 'man', is constituted. And what counts in such a formation, in effect is not the relation of man with the sovereign, it is the relation of man with man in order to derive a maximum of effects. The subject of right is no longer the sovereign, the subject of right is man.

Then, looking at the options, you will say: either the third period almost comes down to the same as the second; or it is a complication of the second formation ... But for myself I believe it would perhaps be interesting to stretch things and to say: this is truly a third formation. What is it? The third age of right, at the level of the biopolitics of populations. What is the biopolitics of populations? How is it distinguished from the training of bodies, from the discipline of bodies? It is absolutely distinguished because this time it concerns what? The biopolitics of populations appears when right sets about administering life, says Foucault, administering life in any open multiplicities whatever. You see the importance of the difference between discipline and biopolitics. The one is in an open space, with large multiplicities to which limits are not assignable. They can only be treated by the calculus of probabilities, hence the development of the calculus of probabilities and the meaning [*sens*] of the social control of probabilities, the probabilities of marriage in a nation, the probabilities of mortality, probabilities of natality. Natality, nuptiality, mortality ... I am looking for others: planning [*planification*], expansion of cereals, the uprooting of vineyards. Vineyards, cereals: these are populations also, it is not only men who are populations. What is involved is truly administering populations, in open spaces. It is necessary to reduce the cows? That is what administration [*gestion*] does. It is more than discipline, it is more than the disciplinary society, so what is it?

This is why the word 'control' ... There is a social power of control that is very different from disciplinary power. Maybe the power of control took root, sketched itself out, at the same time as disciplinary power was consolidating itself. But it is not the same juridical formation, it seems to me. And it is not the same subject of right. Why is it not the same subject of right? We have seen that the subject of right of the formations of sovereignty is in the last instance the sovereign, that is to say, God. The subject of right of discipline is man.



The disciplined man. Discipline has the function of forming man as subject of right. And man as subject of right is man in relation with man, in such a way that the maximum of useful effects arises from their composition. Note that the form, from that moment on I would say, the subject of right is no longer God, it is the person. In the humanist age, the subject of right is the person and rights [*droits*] are the rights of the person, and what is the person? It is man as a disciplined being.

This is what Nietzsche will say so admirably: man is a being capable of keeping promises. This is the subject of right [*droit*]. The disciplined man or, as Nietzsche will say more pugnaciously, the domestic man, giving his ultimate definition in the marvellous pages of the genre 'how to train man ...' – this will be the Nietzschean version of Foucault – how to train man to keep his promises? There is a training of man which makes of him a subject of right, that is to say, which makes of him a person. And the relation of person to person, the whole of the right of the person in the 19th century, is the contract. The contract is the relation of person with person in such a way that from this conjunction of persons arises the maximum of goods. All of that might make you dream of far off times. As it is an old thought. As you must already be anticipating, right no longer thinks of the person. Nevertheless, these are the notions that seemed sacred. So that is what happened in a time that is now distant. But now I say we are in the age of the biopolitics of populations. The population can be equally cereals, sheep, vineyard, men; all of that is included in populations, that is to say, the numerous multiplicities without any assignable limit except for the limits of probability. The scales of probability replace the assignable limits of confinement. That is to say, the zones, the zones of probability. You have zones of probability for how many French go on vacation in Spain, etc. There are no more limits: you have no limits, you have no need to have any limits.

You understand why this is not confinement? The third age can no longer be that of confinement. Confinement, one no longer has anything to do with it, since the assignable limits are replaced by the zones of frequency. It is the zone of frequency that counts. Why do you need to confine people since probability certifies to you that you will find them all on the highway [*autoroute*] on such and such a day at such and such an hour? It goes without saying that confinement is absolutely useless, in this regard it even becomes costly, it becomes stupid, it becomes socially irrational. The calculus of probabilities is much better than the walls of a prison. So this is a power of control and no longer a disciplinary power. For my part, I think it is necessary to say it; and all the elements are in Foucault for one to be able to say it. The disciplinary power he analyses in *Discipline and Punish* is a finite power. The proof is that Foucault, at the end of *Discipline and Punish*, examines the question: why has prison stopped being such a pregnant form today?

You say to me: why should one say that? It is necessary to have the eye of a sociologist, and Foucault is obviously justified. Prison will survive, for years, decades, and will harden. But when things harden, it is a sign we are dealing with survivals. Everyone knows at the end of the day that the penitentiary regime is, with regard to our modern societies, an absolutely maladapted regime, which is no longer sustainable since there are too many people to put in prison, so it is no longer necessary to find disciplinary forms, it is necessary to find forms of control. And everything happening today, I would say it's the same thing: the army explodes in the barracks, the students explode in their schools, what else ... the workers in their factories. This is why everyone has to listen very carefully to all the stories about a return to working from home, to part work; questions of the arrangement of labour time are questions that are absolutely fundamental today.

Again, we can agree that this does not mean that we are moving to better times, because the strategy continues at the level of formations of control. But all the evidence shows that prison is no longer adapted to punishments, the factory is no longer adapted to labour, school



is no longer adapted to teaching; that is to say that it is the end of the disciplinary milieux which were milieux of confinement for arithmetical multiplicities. What is necessary for us are milieux of control, open onto probabilistic multiplicities. Now, they will be found, it is not necessary to make them, it is not necessary to make them [Deleuze repeats], the misfortune is on its way, but evidently there are still some people ... but, you know, the types who say 'make the prisons harder', they do not even believe it, they know very well that the regime is completely screwed, that prison is finished, but their discourse nevertheless retains a meaning, which is that this could go on for 30 or 40 years; there could be another 30 or 40 years of this hardening. So yes, before control has fully shown itself, it will be necessary to assign ... There are problems, you understand, when one assigns placements for working prisoners; the whole village does not want it, they say 'why are they screwing us over?', and all that. Planting a psychiatric clinic in a village creates problems; the people say: oh, we do not want all these mad people hanging out in cafes because All that creates problems, because ...

And then one must in effect set up radars of control, that is to say, the ... It is necessary to see the zones of frequency. All this takes a long time, but finally, it becomes obvious. You know it as well as me. So in order to be vigilant about what is going on currently, I'm finding that very interesting: the whole debate in France on the arrangement of labour time, and in relation to that, if you see what I mean, the sad character who ends up saying: me, I'm in favour of the re-establishment of the death penalty ... it is funny, but ... at the end of the day it's not funny for everyone, but that doesn't stop it ... It is not fully serious, it is not reasonable, all that. To make up for it, what is reasonable in the most terrible and coldest sense of the word 'reasonable' are these new forms, which will be forms of control and not disciplinary forms. The age of discipline is over, I believe that. It's finished.

What does that mean, 'the age of discipline is over?' Well, to the benefit of the age of control. Think about the history of maps, for instance, it is astonishing. That is not discipline, maps, that is control. The unification of maps, the magnetic map, that is a product of control. It's interesting. That is not the old discipline. The walls of the school ... Now this is very ambiguous because it is true that the most active parts of the left are right to struggle for the abolition of prisons, for the abolition of the psychiatric hospital, for abolition, etc. But one must see that their enemies are not the old ones. It is not crude types acting like buffoons and saying: 'Yeah, psychiatric hospital, yeah, prison!' Their enemies are the controllers who are absolutely in agreement with them, who say: Yes! Why yes! No prison! Wonderful idea! The battle never happens where one thinks. Strategy never happens where one thinks. As Foucault will say, it happens elsewhere ... Strategy occurs between the abolitionists of the death penalty. The true struggle happens between the abolitionists of the death penalty, it does not happen between the preservers of the death penalty and the abolitionists. It passes between those who say 'the education system is screwed.' Well obviously, everyone knows that the education system is screwed, it is not enough to teach kids spelling over and over again for school to work. It is screwed because there is no longer a disciplinary procedure that counts, so when parents say in front of their kids: 'oh, it's so difficult, there's no discipline anymore!', even with the best-behaved, one says to oneself: yes, obviously there is no discipline anymore, but how controlled they are! They are controlled, but they are controlled: again, probability. So obviously, one does not occupy oneself in a precise way with every particular case, because in such a zone of frequency, it's 'off you go', one sends them into an open milieu. All the milieux are open, there will just be no man's lands between milieux, things like that ... Control by magnetic card. *No, you must not enter this zone!* ... What does all that mean?

Well, that already allows us to settle or to come back to a question that is very important in the context of Foucault's work as a whole. This is a certain ambiguity, a little ambiguity, that had existed and for which Foucault was, in my opinion, half responsible and only half



responsible. It concerns the way Foucault has been understood – we have already mentioned it, but now I'm more interested to return to this point – the way Foucault has been understood as a thinker of confinement. And I would say to you, to me, that already seems absolutely false. He had been thought of as a thinker of confinement, as a great thinker of confinement, and as having defined our modern societies through confinement. But nothing is more imprecise. For it is true that Foucault is occupied, and in a masterly way, with the milieux of confinement. Namely, notably, the asylum for madness, prison for delinquency. Fine, that's true. But note the historical formation to which it is attached. That seems essential to me. The asylum for madness is attached to the classical historical formation, the general hospital to the 19th century, leading to the evolution of the psychiatric hospital; and for the prison, the 18th, 19th century, etc., I remind you that *Discipline and Punish* ends on the announcement that punishment, the system of punishment, no longer has need of prison; prison will no longer be needed.

So I can tell you it slightly surprised me when a philosopher as perpicacious and excellent as Virilio attacked Foucault by saying: no, he hasn't grasped modern societies. For what was Virilio's argument? A very interesting argument. He said that the problem is not one of confinement. If you prefer, it is not the couple discipline-confinement. And in all his books, Virilio opposes it to another couple, directed directly against Foucault, the couple he himself rather nicely calls highway-control [voirie-control]. 'Highway' means that the problem concerns the free highway and not of milieux of confinement. The police, he tells us, have always had more to do with the highway, that is to say, the road, than with the prison. The true element of the police is the highway, it is the road. And to the police of the 18th century are assigned the tasks of the highway. Good: highway-control and not confinement-discipline. Good. And in fact here one sees all of Virilio's themes at work: speed, nuclear strategy and all that (those who know a bit about Virilio's impassioned books can complete that). However, there has never been such a great If it often participates in the current misunderstandings, it participates in current misunderstandings because ... but that has no importance since Virilio has something to say. That he is wrong about what Foucault said has no importance, what is important is what Virilio says to us.

But it can induce a misinterpretation in us, for it is obvious that Virilio's critique, like all critiques made of anyone, does not hold. For the accord *Foucault-Virilio*, ... I don't imagine that these two have a great accord of humour, of temperament, but the accord *Virilio-Foucault* should be obvious, obvious. Because for Foucault as well, what he defines as a 'biopolitics of populations' exceeds confinement in every way, which only concerns the discipline of bodies. Moreover, I point out to you that in *Discipline and Punish*, in a passage in which he is studying the milieux of confinement, namely, the hospital as milieu of confinement it is the same thing (parenthesis: when I say the hospital, it is the same thing when one says 'the school, it is cracking up', etc. Everyone knows the hospital is cracking up), so there are multiplied ... And what is interesting today? It doesn't mean that this is particularly progressive, as one says, social-liberal, it could come from anywhere, it is not the left in particular who say this. When you consider day hospitals, the night hospitals, care teams at home, sectorization, what does that mean? It no longer passes through a milieu of confinement, it passes through controls. Control of need, control in the home. But I do not want to say that this is worse. You understand that with things like that, it is not about knowing whether it is better or less good, it is about knowing why and against what you struggle, and at what moment. So it is necessary not to lose too much time struggling against the death penalty, again, even if someone tries to re-establish it. It would be better to pay attention to the processes of control that come to replace it. Finally, it is necessary at all times above all to



retain as much gaiety as possible for the [?] because [?] So I said, you understand ... What have you understood?

In *Discipline and Punish*, while he is in the process of explaining the sense in which the hospital functioned in the 19th century as a milieu of confinement, he says: look at this, there is this curious thing that is the naval hospital, and he has some very beautiful pages on it, two very beautiful, very rapid pages; one feels he could have written twenty, forty, fifty, but that it wasn't his problem at that point. This is pages 145-46 [143-44] of *Discipline and Punish*, on the naval hospital as precisely irreducible to the hospital as confinement. For he says that the naval hospital, because of its very special functions and its very special situation, functions like a kind of crossroads, a flyover intersection, and as a means of control, a means of controls of all kinds: of drugs, of medicines, epidemics, along with all the sailors who bring back diseases and all that; AIDS. And right in the middle of the 19th century, the naval hospital is already an institution that prefigures the future formations of the 20th century, that is to say, an open formation of control, as opposed to a closed disciplinary milieu. These pages on the naval hospital really struck me, because here you see the point at which what is concerned is no longer confinement at all.

We saw in the preceding semester, or even in the first semester, that in Foucault the function of confinement is always subordinated to his more profound theme, that is to say, the invocation of an outside. Confinement always, even when confinement exists, fulfills a function of the outside, namely, it is in the service of another function, which itself is a function of exteriority. Previously a function of exile, this is how Foucault puts it explicitly in *The History of Madness*: the general hospital is modeled on exile, it confines, it confines the mad, the unemployed, etc., but in the mode of the exile. Now exile is a function of exteriorization, it is not a function of confinement. Confinement serves a function that transcends it, and which is a function of exteriority, namely [?]. And the other case, prison, does not have exile for a model, it has the grid [*quadrillage*] for a model. Confinement is always at the service of a deeper function, a function that is a function of exteriority. Foucault, far from being ...well, this is all the more reason why there is no longer confinement, but the formation of a power of control.

So on this point I would like just to conclude that it seems to me that it is a real misinterpretation to make Foucault into a thinker who would have privileged confinement. On the contrary, sometimes he subordinates confinement to a deeper function of exteriority, and sometimes he announces the end of confinement, to the advantage of a function of control that is of a completely different nature, involving open functions and not closed functions. With regard to my three ages, well, at the level of formations of control, the subject of right is again completely different. The subject of right is wholly different. What will it be? Well, perhaps you have a presentiment of what it is, and it shouldn't be surprising if you have already followed our whole preceding story of God, man and the overman. The subject of right will be what? [?] The brute response will be: the living being [*le vivant*] and no longer man nor the person. Let us be more precise: the subject of right will be the living being in man. Whereas in the formations of sovereignty, the subject of right was God in man and in the disciplinary formations, the subject of right was the person in man. It will be the living being in man and no longer the person. This evolution of right was very important. How to summarise it in one word from the point of view of the history of right? It is the passage that is made at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of 20th century, the passage from a right called civil to a right called social. Right [*le droit*], the expression 'civil right' nicely preserved it; but right is no longer a civil right, right has more and more become a social right. How to define social right? Well, there are indeed ways of defining it. We have seen that civil



right has for subject of right the person in man, and found its purest juridical expression in the contract, the relation of person with person.

And you know that, starting from the 19th century, from the end of the 19th century up to the 20th, the contract no longer works. Here again, everyone knows it, the contract ... One can always keep ... contracts, but no, it no longer works, the contract. Nothing can any longer pass through the contract, and why is that? Well, for a very simple reason, it is because the contract is a relation of person to person, it is not a relation at the level of a population. How are you going to have contractual relations between members of a population? This idea is not reasonable. There can be conventions between members of a population, there cannot be contractual relations, it is absolutely impossible. What does that mean? What does that mean, that? Well, I'll take an example, in that case, what does one witness? Now things have gone a bit beyond that, but there was a nice moment when the contractual exigencies of disciplinary right, of civil right, and the nascent demands of social right brought about amusing juridical contradictions. From the point of view of contract, or of civil right, the contract is a relation which unites person to person. The person in man. Immediate consequence: the contract is not, as one says in law, opposable to the third. 'The contract is not opposable to the third' means: the contract does not engage anyone who has not validated the contractual relation. The contract obliges the partners of the contract and it is not opposable to the third, that is to say, to someone who has not validated the contract. Good. I'll take a certain number of phenomena which have taken on a singular importance in the 19th century in order to show in what sense one can talk of a contract only by reference to a fiction. So strikes break out. Workers' strikes. In the whole of the 19th century, does that lead to a rupture of the contract? God knows, in the anti-strike movements, the jurists denounced the strike as rupture of contract! There was a rear-guard combat there as well. It couldn't work. For what is a strike? It is obvious that it is a social phenomenon that cannot be translated into the terms of contract, so it is the rupture of contract. Why? Because, fundamentally it is opposable to the third, it is opposable to the third [Deleuze repeats], as we know today since by nature it above all bothers the third, that is to say, the customers [usagers]. A strike in the metro doesn't irritate the managers, it irritates the customers, which means 'it is opposable to the third'. You see? Another sweeter example: is the deputy's mandate a contract between the electors and the deputy? The deputies talk as if there is a contract that unites them to the electors, but it is a polite formula, they know very well that it is not a contract, why? Well, because they are fundamentally opposable to the third. A deputy represents those who have voted for him – that would be a contract – but equally represents those who did not for him or those who cannot vote; children, those with learning difficulties, all that. What are these phenomena, the strike ...? Take social security, it's hilarious, the beginnings of social security, it has now been made ... Think about it: why, above all at the beginning – now there are arrangements, with *conventionnements* [State payments to doctors for public health provision] – but at the beginning, the client himself paid (and often still does today); the client himself paid the doctor and the social security re-imbursed the patient.

IV

Every time a patient goes to see a doctor, a contractual relation is constituted between the sick person [*malade*] and the doctor. Pure 19th century. They keep to it. They totally keep to that. They stick to it, it goes without saying, for reasons that are sometimes the most noble and sometimes the most shameful, and sometimes a confused mixture of shame and nobility. So social security is a third, it is typically a third. And what is the third anyway, the third *par*



excellence? It is society. Society is the third to every person. Society is the third *par excellence*. And where social security paid for care, it was the third paying. Do you follow? It's not difficult. Juridical problem: this is a conflict. It is a conflict between a civil right that is in the process of dying and a social right that is in the process of being born. How can one settle this conflict, given that the liberal doctors represent an important social force? Answer: well, this is why right is so interesting, it is always necessary to find the loopholes [astuces]. Understand this: right is crazy. It was necessary to find something to satisfy both the rising powers of social right and the descending powers of liberal medicine. And what was found was particularly tortuous. It consists in saying to the sick person: well, you go and pay the doctor from your pocket (liberal relation; the contract is saved), but to make up for it, the doctor writes up a document for you, which he gives to you in his contractual relation. He does not want know what that becomes. He gives you a little piece of paper which is an acquisition of payment. And by means of this little piece of paper, you send it back to the third who will reimburse you. You see that this kind of decomposition of the operation which would have been much more simple if the doctor had been paid directly, is solely due to the confronting of two conceptions of right that are strictly, qualitatively different. In other words, the medical relation, to the extent that social right increases and is developed, no longer flows in the contractual relation or, if you prefer, no longer holds the person as subject of right. The sick one [*malade*] had ceased to be a person. Put like this, it's a bit disturbing because ... the most reactionary types [*reaux*] you can find say: ah yes, in social medicine, sick people are no longer persons. But it is true to the letter. There is no disputing it. They are obviously no longer persons. All that one can say is that the time when the sick people were persons was not so great, because being a person never prevented one from being treated as a dog ... a personal dog [*chien personnel*], but ... It is obvious: now, the sick are no longer persons.

What is that, the invalid [*le malade*]? He has become a living being. He has become a living being. The subject of right is no longer the person in man. There is no longer person in the man. The subject of right has become the living in man. You say to me: that does not stop there being different rights from those of a dog. Okay, there are different rights because the living being in man is not the same thing as the living being in God. But it is not in the name of the person, it is in the name of a quality of life, which is completely different. Social right rests on the living being and no longer on the person; while civil right rested on the person. And in this regard, it is obvious and I'm not saying anything that makes any advance. Look at what happens today in struggles concerning right. The struggles concerning right are all situated at the level of the living being and no longer at all at the level of the person. What does that mean? Life in man, that is the problem of right today. Life in man, why 'life in man'? Well, I'm thinking of a case where reactionaries and progressives again use the same language, except that those who add to the discussion want to make out that they are more stupid than they are. But if not you have same language, which is that of social right. I mean, take the history of abortion. The worst enemies of abortion, what do they invoke? It is crazy [*la marrade*]. At any rate they do not invoke ... the idea, they no longer dare ... that would be the last [straw?], the foetus as person. They dare not say that the foetus is a person. They sense that this does not work, that if one says to people 'the foetus is a person', everyone laughs. So what do they say? Well, the associations hostile to abortion, their banner is 'let them live'. 'Let them live', that is to say, they explicitly invoke a perfectly modern right, a right of the living, a right to life. And thus they artfully mirror what had been the motivating justification for abortion, that is to say, women's right to life. The women who demanded the right to choose their life and the quality of their life for themselves. So the reactionaries mirror this ... in saying that if one denies to them that the foetus is a person, one at least cannot deny that the foetus is a living being and that it is good, for the foetus, to let it live.



Well then, that becomes very interesting. And it is necessary to let the foetus live? That is a problem for Nietzsche, but in fact Nietzsche would rather have said yes, because, seen from his state of health ... actually, no matter. But you understand, you understand. It is because of this that one must say: those who want to prohibit abortion and those who militate for abortion are indeed, to talk like Foucault (and this is always his approach), on the same archaeological soil, that of social right, where the subject of right is the living being and no longer the person at all. And Foucault will say, and I have already commented on these texts, so I will only return to this very quickly ... If you recall the beautiful texts from *The Will to Knowledge*, which I read to you and which you have perhaps read yourselves, Foucault says to us: how to explain that it is the same epoch that has tended towards the abolition of the death penalty, and which has carried out the greatest genocides in history? And here too, he wanted to show that the two tendencies, the tendency to the abolition of the death penalty in all countries, and the existence of genocides, the universal existence of genocides in the 20th century, belong to the same archaeological soil, although that would not be in the same sense. Why? Because, the abolition of the death penalty finds its foundation in social right starting from the moment that the subject of right is the living being. At this moment, right can no longer be a right to kill. The right to kill is the old right of sovereignty. Disciplinary right already put the death penalty in question, so with all the more reason, a right that proposes the administration of life from the point of view of populations, cannot preserve the death penalty.

But the ... lost the word ... the genocides ... why have genocides have taken on such importance in the 20th century? Take the theme ... What were the first irruptions of the power of modern control? That is to say of a power which is no longer one of sovereignty, nor of discipline? It is fascism. It is fascism that corresponds exactly to Foucault's definition: the biopolitics of populations. Racial biopolitics, the theme of *Lebensraum*, then denunciation ... racial biopolitics. Here, it seems to me, is the trinity of fascism: racial biopolitics ... reclaiming living space, that is to say, an open space, a space of expansion; denunciation of the enemy not as another person, but as a dangerous biological agent, that is to say, capable of contaminating the race or civilization, culture, etc. The enemy as infectious agent. It seems to me that that is it ... one can surely add to it, but it is the tri[ple] ... Now genocide happens as a function of the conditions of survival of the population that commits it. It involves disburdening oneself, we are told, of the infectious agent. And it is in the name of life in man and of survival in man that genocide is carried out. So here I find again the conclusion that, truly, the third age of right is no more valuable than the two others, but this is not the question. What appears in this third age of right are new strategies, new struggles: there is struggling against the new forms just as there is to the promoting of new forms. And in effect, it is with fascism that the great power of control begins. Under what form does the great power of control begin?

It has been said a thousand times in the great texts of Walter Benjamin Under the form of the great mass demonstrations. The great mass demonstrations in open space are inseparable from fascism, at least of from fascism such as it existed, which is the birth ... I cannot say that this would be the power of control in its fullest expression because this is obvious ... The analyses of Burroughs reveal how the power of control operates today. But the prefiguration of power, if you will, fascism, had been the turning point: just as Foucault makes of Napoleon the turning point of the shift from the power of sovereignty to disciplinary power, Hitler and Mussolini were already the turning point of the shift from disciplinary power to the power of control. A turning point that is made twice, once by radio, once by television. Television being the modern form. In fact, if we wanted to refine this (but we no longer have time), one could draw up a classification of images corresponding to the three powers. Look,



we'll do it next time. If you remember, remind me. It would not be difficult, one could make a classification of means of expression of images corresponding to the three periods. We would distinguish three stages like we already did. Well, that would be great; we would distinguish three stages of the cinema. We will return to the cinema ... perfect. Now, to finish up ...

You see, because of smoking you Well, no, it is not you ... it is us, it is a shame [someone coughs and splutters in the room] and I mean, I did insist on that earlier. What? Open the windows? Yes, good one, then we'll all fall out. Yes, the hour is come! Open the windows, yes! Again! Again! It does not open down there? There's someone with a cold, he doesn't want it, because ...

So I'm going to finish because you can do no more, I can feel it. This passage from civil right to social right is surely one of the most important moments in the history of right, but I draw your attention, because it is a very beautiful book, to the fact there is precisely a disciple, a disciple of Foucault, who has published a very important book on this point, a large book called *L'Etat providence [The Welfare State]*. It is Francois Ewald, who was Foucault's assistant at the College de France. And this book is very, very good. And for his part, he has the merit at the very least, contrary to the contemporary upholders of the rights of man, of knowing something about the evolution of right. And what he shows is something fundamental. It is how the passage from civil right to social right is made not uniformly, but, amongst other factors in the current of the 19th century, in relation with a specific issue, workplace accidents and the development of insurance. The development of insurance and accidents in the workplace [*accident de travail*]. So there's a study, very worthy of Foucault, very much in Foucault's method, on the whole history of accidents in the workplace in the formation of the 19th century, with very interesting ideas, and in order to confirm it, I will read a bit out ... Ewald, E W A L D, and it was published by Grasset some months ago, two months ago.

I will just read this to you, because it absolutely confirms everything that we have just said: 'In the order of social rights ...' – I want to make this our conclusion today, it is pages 24-25 – 'In the order of social rights, the subject acquires juridical competence by the sole fact of being a living being. If in fact social rights are indefinite in principle, they are never anything but expressions of a fundamental right to life. To say that civil right, that is to say, the old right, does not know the right to life might be surprising ...' He makes an objection to himself: in fact, everyone knows that from the point of view of civil right, the right to preserve life holds well; to preserve life is an inalienable right to the point that, for civil right, the right to the preservation of life, of one's own life, is a right that is called 'natural'. It is an inalienable natural right to the point that the prisoner is in its ... all the jurists always said it in the 19th century: a prisoner is strictly within his rights when he attempts to escape by any means. One cannot pursue him for having escaped, it is very interesting that. An escaped person has the natural right to attempt ... a prisoner has the natural right to preserve his life, and thus to escape. One simply pursues him for having broken a lock.

But it is very interesting, because right is like that: one will not pursue someone for having escaped; but for having clubbed a jailer, for ...etc. etc. But precisely, you can see that this is a confirmation: civil right recognises the right to preserve one's own life by whatever means, except those which are prescribed by the law, but nevertheless one has the right to preserve one's life, only it is not a civil right, it is a natural right. Thus to say that civil right does not know the right to life might be surprising, because doesn't the right to self-preservation in fact figure among the natural rights? Ewald continues: 'but precisely, it is not capable of being guaranteed as such through a positive right. No positive right can guarantee it. Positive right only protects the subject within the framework of an exchange, that is to say, within a contractual relation. For the liberal ...'



Think of Reagan today. He is not liberal to the letter..., or of Giscard ... 'For the liberal, living gives no rights': that is the position of civil right. 'Living gives us no rights, right only protects what one makes of one's life.' 'Living gives us no rights, right only protects what one makes of one's life.' [Deleuze repeats]. 'On the contrary, the idea of social right assumes that the very fact of living gives you positive rights.' Here there is truly a mutation of right. 'The very fact of living gives you positive rights, but rights which can only obey a completely different regime to those of civil rights. They are not in fact opposable to an other, but to this new subject of right that is the totality of subjects, society.' In other words, the contract is opposable to another, the other person who made a contract with you, whilst social right is not opposable to another person; it is opposable to society. 'Society, you owe me labour. Society, you owe me the means of living and surviving. Society, you owe me labour ... the right of bringing up a family, etc.' Everything one calls, and everything the liberals denounce as being the Welfare State, signifies what? It signifies this new regime where even the liberals can only make cuts in extreme cases ... You can see, for example, that in order to slash insurance, it would be necessary to slash automobiles; this is why the 'liberal' is ... it is such a level of hypocrisy and stupidity in thought, it is unimaginable ... you see what I mean, everything they say, it is truly nothing, it means something, but it does not mean what they claim ... It is obvious that the regime of insurance itself is a kind of social right, it is typically ... What is guaranteed is life, the very fact of living, and it is opposable to the third, the third being the whole society, which is the paying third. And well, the liberals can reduce social security, but again it is not easy. They can diminish it, etc. but they will not eliminate automobile insurance. Now, automobile insurance is as anti-liberal as possible, it participates in the new kind of right; and all this goes without saying.

Well, what more should I say? Read pages 23, 24, 25. Yes. It finishes there: 'Social rights support themselves on the basis of a new principle of evaluation. The fundamental value is now not so much liberty as the value of values, as [?] the person [he might also be saying: the fundamental value is no longer in the person] as life, everything which is living, everything it produces, its potentialities which it must actualise.' And Foucault would say to us ... what is it that he says to us in *The Will to Knowledge*? Let us make Foucault interlock with Ewald's book ... Page 191 [145]: 'It was life more than the law that became the issue of political struggles, even if the latter were formulated through affirmations concerning rights' – meaning the new social rights – 'The 'right' to life, to one's body, to health, to happiness, to the satisfaction of needs, and beyond all the oppressions or 'alienations,' the 'right' to rediscover what one is and all that one can be, this 'right' which the classical juridical system was utterly incapable of comprehending was the political response to all these new procedures of power which did not derive, either, from the traditional right of sovereignty.' I mean the interlocking is right there, that is the text on which Ewald will found his whole elaboration of the rise of insurance in the 19th century and the transformation of right that passes from the state of civil right into social right. So, in a word, what is that? The third subject of right is therefore no longer the person in man, but life in man, once again for better and for worse, for worse and for better. What I wanted to show you today, I ask you to reflect on it for next time, as we are reaching our destination ... Next time I will have finished with all that, which is at the juridical level, at the very modest juridical level. But we have found a confirmation of the distinction between the three forms: the form of sovereignty, the form of the training of man and the form 'the living being in man', something new, a new form.

Notes



[\[1\]](#) [Translator's note: In the letter to Demyen, Rimbaud says 'Cette langue sera de l'âme pour l'âme', translated by Oliver Bernard as 'This language would be of the soul, for the soul' (Rimbaud, *Collected Poems*, London: Penguin, 1962, 13).]