



GILLES DELEUZE

Foucault

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TRANSCRIBED BY ANNABELLE DUFOURCQ
TRANSLATED BY CHRISTIAN KERSLAKE

I've been asked by some of you who don't know about Burroughs where you should start with this author, who is so significant for American literature, and for modern literature in general. I think that the best way in, for those who don't already know him, is to start from one of his better-known novels. It would be better to avoid ... he has produced some theoretical essays on control, on all that, but I don't think that it's the finest part of his work; it would be better to start with *The Naked Lunch*, one of the better-known novels, which has been very nicely translated by Gallimard. In *The Naked Lunch*, you will see, there is a whole confrontation between groups of control, along with a very interesting preface by Burroughs. And I also recommend, especially if it's your first contact – for those who already know him, you can ignore this – an interesting number of *L'Herne* on Burroughs, although it's not just on him, it's on Ginsberg as well, because Burroughs is one of the three greats of the Beat generation, the two others being the poet Ginsberg and Kerouac. Yes, it's on those three ... In the light of what we have already said about modern literature, Burroughs, Kerouac and Ginsberg would also be key, fundamental figures in modern literature.

You will recall that last time we had somewhat displaced our problem of the relations of forces and the forms that follow from them, and which we had posed at the level of formations, formations of right [*droit*], formations of power or of right. Or rather formations of power and of right. And so we sought to sketch out from the juridical point of view, always focusing on a brief period, since this is the period considered by Foucault, a kind of table of formations of sovereignty, of formations of discipline and formations of control. And I ended by saying: yes, we could also look at the level of the formation of images (which would link up with what we have done in previous years), the formations of the image, so as to see ... not at all in order to apply it, not at all ... but so as to gain some reference points. If I turn to the theme of regimes of images, can I find something equivalent there? So as to bring about a consolidation.

And this would have its foundations in Foucault because Foucault makes three interventions on the pictorial image. One is the famous text on Velasquez's *Las Meninas*, and which corresponds to the classical formation. Another is the manuscript on Manet he did not want to publish. And the other is the text on Magritte, to which we have often referred. Well, ... it is very vague things I have to say. From the point of view of the image – which was our concern in previous years, when we were preoccupied with cinema – is it possible to speak of regimes of images and if so, what could one bring to light? Could one find a confirmation there? I could even say, because of what we did in previous years, that there is the possibility here of defining different regimes of images. And in that case, might one be able to retrieve



something like – without forcing it too much, without wanting a coincidence on all points – something like a regime of sovereignty as a regime of images, along with a regime of discipline, a regime of control?

I am thinking of a book to which Foucault nevertheless does not refer, which is quite independent, a book by Serge Daney that is a critique of cinema from the *Cahiers*. This book is called *La Rampe*. And what interests me is that he distinguishes three, really three, regimes of images and of the cinematographic image. The first he takes to run up until the war. In effect, this is a periodization proper to the cinema. Up until the war: first regime. Now, how does he go about defining this regime? He defines it via a question. He says that the fundamental question is: ‘To what does the image refer?’, that is to say, ‘What is there behind the image?’ ‘What is there behind the image?’ [Deleuze repeats]. What does that mean? He says: Yes, in this kind of regime of images, if you like, every element of the image plays the role, or can play the role, of a mask [*cache*],¹ a temporary mask, so that it is only in the following image that one sees what lies behind it. And he says: the formula of this regime of images would be: *the secret behind the door*. And it is indeed true that in the whole of the classical cinema of the pre-war period, the door is something fundamental. Notably in the American comedy, the role of the door is ... Rohmer has done a whole course at IDHEC on the role of doors in Lubitsch. But the door is ... in effect the door is the temporary mask. So what there is behind the door, everything that is behind the image, will naturally appear in the following image. However, that implies that this regime of the image, this first regime of the image, is a regime of totalization. A film is a beautiful totality. And how does this whole present itself? It is a succession of images always tending towards something that lies behind. It is this something that lies behind that will bring about the totalization. One might put it like that.

I am also thinking of someone else, a great art critic from the 19th century called Riegl, who made periodizations out of three functions of art, or of the plastic arts in particular: to beautify nature, to spiritualise nature, to compete with nature. I would say that this first regime of the image, the secret behind the door, what there is behind the image, precisely gives the first formula: to beautify nature. To beautify nature by making a totality of images, a whole of images. Thus every image is transcended in the following image, but the set of images tends towards a whole. Fine. This is what formed the ambition of the earliest cinema: it is this regime of images, a ‘something behind the image’, that will constitute the whole of images, or that will constitute the determining center of images. Hence, at the summit of its ambition, you get great constructions in triptych. What was it that killed this kind of cinema? Note that this corresponds well with the analysis, if you recall, that Foucault made of the *Meninas*. What was that? *What is there behind the image? The king*: what Foucault calls the place of the king. The king, whom one only sees in the image in the form of a reflection in the mirror. And the whole painting is organised towards this point that is behind the image, since one does not see it; so one can see that, in the *Meninas*, everything functions as a function of masks [*caches*]. For instance, one sees the other side of the painting that the painter is in the process of creating, but one does not see the painting itself. One sees the reflection of the king in the background, but one does not see the king himself. And all the elements of the image tend towards the king who one does not see. Therefore the *Meninas* would correspond rather well to Daney’s formula: ‘what is there behind the image?’ Well, behind the image, there is the king, that is to say, the sovereign of the image.

¹ *Translator’s Note*: Deleuze’s use of the term ‘cache’ refers to André Bazin’s idea that “the screen is not a frame like that of a picture but a mask [*cache*] which allows only a part of the action to be seen” (“Theater and Cinema”, Part Two, *What is Cinema*, Volume 1, trans. Hugh Gray, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967, p. 105).



Okay, that is just in order to ... I don't wish to insist on everything here. It is interesting, this is the question ... okay, I'll return to the cinema. Why did this great cinema, this first cinema disappear? This great cinema that one could call classical cinema. It disappeared with the war, why? Well, we would have to gather together the texts we looked at more closely in previous years; just recall the texts of Walter Benjamin on the relation between what he calls the arts of reproduction and the formation of totalitarian regimes. We would have to take up the way in which a director like Syberberg is inspired by Benjamin and goes on to push things further. When Syberberg said: it is necessary to judge Hitler as a film director, what does that mean, 'judge Hitler as a film director'? It means that totalitarian regimes, and above all the Nazi regime, are presented under what form? As a kind of *mise en scène*. It cannot be reduced to that, but it is a kind of *mise en scène* of the masses. The massive direct palpations [*manutentions*] of the masses, the great *mises en scène* that end up making it ... on this point it is Virilio who connects up with Benjamin and Syberberg, when he shows that right up to the end Nazism is lived as a kind of super Hollywood, as a kind of competition with Hollywood to go the furthest in a kind of colossal *mise en scène* of State propaganda and direct palpation of the masses.

Why is it that this sounds the death-knell of cinema? Why in a certain way does this toll the bell for the ambitions of Eisenstein and Gance? It is obvious: what terminates the cinema called classical is Leni Riefenstahl. Classical cinema does not die from any mediocrity in its production, it really dies from something completely different: namely that in its deepest ambition, it is as if it is itself realised and then transcended, abominably transcended, by the great *mises en scène* of the State. So that, if cinema revives after the war, it is as a function of a completely different regime. It will no longer be the regime of sovereignty, and it will no longer involve the question 'What is there to see behind the image?' In a certain way, Nazism gave the answer to the question of what there is to see behind the image. What there is to see behind the image is the extermination camps. What is there to see behind the propaganda of the State? What is there to see behind the direct palpations of the masses? The camps. And I would say – or rather Daney shows it very well – that the whole of post-war cinema is formed as a function of this situation.

And in this regard, I think that an *oeuvre* like that of Resnais is absolutely exemplary; in this regard and in others besides. What makes Resnais important, in the second regime of the image, is that he has only ever had one subject, he has simply known how to vary it. Resnais' single and unique subject, or his single and unique preoccupation, is the man who comes back from the dead. What is this 'coming back from the dead?' One feels strongly that this is his problem. I mean, it is strange; how does it happen that something like that is someone's problem? I mean: even the physical kind of beauty I don't know, I have never seen him in person, Resnais, I'm talking about the photos, but there is a kind of zombie beauty in Resnais. The man who comes back from the dead. All his work is ... Think about his last film, which is incredible, *Love unto Death* ... The man who comes back from the dead. It is incomprehensible without taking into account one of Resnais's first films, *Night and Fog*. What was there after the camps? What was it to come back from the camps? So I would say that cinema could not reconstitute itself after the war except by changing, by a changing of the regime of images. And what will this be? The way in which Daney defines the regime of image through neo-realism and starting from neo-realism is down to the fact that one can no longer ask what there is to see behind the image, but rather what there is to be seen *in* the image and *on* the surface of the image. What there is to see in the image and on the surface of the image: start by just looking. You are incapable of seeing what there is in an image. You had been incapable of seeing that, behind the great images of State propaganda, there was the camps. Don't search for what is behind the images, start by reading an image. Start by perceiving an image. In a certain way, the first cinema proposed itself as an encyclopedia of



the world. Well, no. There is no place for a sovereign encyclopedia now. So what is there left to do? What amounts to a pedagogy of the image.

Daney uses a word ... I would call the first age the 'encyclopedia', the 'encyclopedia of the world'. Now, after the war, arrives the great moment of a pedagogy of perception. To learn to look and to read the image. This will be Rossellini's pedagogy. The work of Rossellini terminates explicitly with a pedagogical endeavour. And there will also be what Daney nicely calls Godardian pedagogy, or Straubian pedagogy ... one could make a long list. I will recall a formula from Daney: the *métier* of director had stopped being innocent, that is to say, this is what the great directors had declared. From then on, in a certain way, the cinema really has to fall back onto new bases; once again, it will no longer be 'what is there to see behind the image?', but 'What is there to see on and in the image?' And I would say that this is a pedagogical formation. One could say, without forcing things too much, that it is a disciplinary formation. A discipline of the image. The sovereignty of the image has made way – with everything that means, the 'sovereignty of the image': that there is something to see behind the image, the place of the king – for a discipline or pedagogy of the image.

And what is that? According to Daney, it is the sign that this cinema will involve the image taking on its planitude [*planitude*]. The cinematographic image assuming its planitude. To the extent that it assumes its planitude, the eye that sees the image becomes the spiritual eye; this will be the stage in which the eye spiritualises nature. The eye that sees the image must become an eye of the seer [*voyant*]. The eye of the seer is the eye that spiritualises nature. Okay, I'll make a quick parallel with painting: it is at the level of impressionism that pictorial space is presented as if before a pure optics, and as assuming its planitude. The painting assuming its planitude is usually seen as a triumph of impressionism, little matter if this is right or wrong. So that one could make all sorts of parallels here as well. I would also say, although we don't have time to go into it, that at this stage of the image, where the image assumes its own planitude in the way that you find in Dreyer and in Ozu, one might be tempted to say that it is opposed to the depth of field in Welles – but this isn't true. The depth of field in Welles is radically novel with respect to the depth of the first regime. The depth of field in Welles is a depth that gives everything up to be seen. I mean it yields up everything to be seen in the image, that is, it yields up all the interactions to be seen from one plane to another, from the background to the foreground. This is to say: it is the contrary of the depth of early cinema, the classical cinema, which was a depth in which the planes would serve to conceal some in relation to others, where the foreground is a kind of mask in relation to what is happening on other planes.

So in this sense both the depth of field in Welles and the planitude of Dreyer are fully a part of the second regime of the image – 'to see what there is to see *in* the image and *on* the surface of the image.' And then, just as Hitler was akin to the destruction or the impossibility of continuing with the first cinema, today one feels that in fact we are once more at an epochal turning point. After all, what was Hitler from the perspective we are exploring? That was radio. That was radio, everything happened through the radio. The contemporary crisis, on the other hand, well, everyone knows this and it comes up all the time: it now passes through the television. It is no longer the radio, it is the television. And, in fact, one could say that what is currently being constituted as a third regime of the image, which will no longer be the encyclopedic or sovereign regime, nor the pedagogic or disciplinary regime, but a third regime – well, Daney attempts to define it in the following manner: he says that today – and it is without doubt the same auteurs, the same modern auteurs, who straddle the two regimes – one is, in a very specific sense, in a new regime of images.

What is this new regime? It is a regime in which image always slides over image. That is to say, there is something behind the image, but it is no longer at all in the sense of the first



regime. In what sense then? It is no longer at all in the same way, because what there is behind the image is always already an image. The images slide over each other. The image refers back to a prior, pre-existing image. An image slides over an image. In the very depths of the image, there is already an image. Or, as Daney says: nothing happens to humans anymore, everything that happens, happens through the image. This is striking, and he tries to give it a name, to form a concept, arriving at the notion – and here he also borrows from painting, from the history of painting – he calls modern *mannerism*. This is a *mannerist* regime of images. But from our point of view we could equally say that it is a regime of the control of images, where image controls image. This is no longer the same thing as the pedagogic or disciplinary regime. This is a regime ... Perhaps there is an equivalent of this mannerism in contemporary cinema, where image always refers back to image, and where the image has no ground other than yet another image, as if the image does not cease to ... You can see that this is very different to the first regime where, on the contrary, with the place of the king, the images refer back to something which is not an image, even if this something cannot be given beyond images; the images in any case tend toward something that is the ‘behind of the image.’ Here there is no longer any of that, the images slide over each other in such a way that there is always another image behind the image. And here, once again, in all our categories, I always insist on this: it is neither good nor bad. It includes the most worthless and the most beautiful. Every regime has its mediocrity of production and its masterpieces.

So if I attempt to specify a little: where do we find this mannerism of images at the moment, or in this third regime, where the image controls the image? Well, we find it in television. This concerns television, not excluding its most execrable forms. With television, there is no longer any need to make cinema, since it is the world that makes cinema. It is the world that makes cinema: very nice. There is no longer any need to travel to the farthest reaches, since to travel is just to confirm how television functions over there [Laughter]. Some serious studies have dwelled upon the very important question: what kind of spectacle is most pleasing to people at the moment? And well, it would seem that ... There was an article in *Libération* that echoed this problem. It transpired that one of the most prized spectacles at the moment is participation in a transmission as spectator. Not to actively participate – to go on television to talk about and explain one’s problem, that’s legitimate enough – but to be a spectator at a show that is in the process of being made. Observe also that currently shows are increasingly integrating spectators. You might ask: is this disturbing? Is it promising? People seem to consider this the most valuable thing. Perhaps this is what is most disturbing about it, but as a spectacle, I see it as the equivalent of the visit to the factory. Now, the visit to the factory, that has never been very ... You know: one goes around touching the technology [*on touche de la technique*]. With this kind of spectacle, there is a word that takes perfect account of the nature of the spectacle: it is said that ‘it is enriching’ [*enrichissant*] [laughter]. So it is very *enriching*, ... The shows on television, you know, it is always rather interesting, you have always these groups of people about whom you think: ‘what are they doing there?’ [laughter]. And well, it seems that their point of view must be that of technical spectators. It is not at all that they find it beautiful, or intelligent, but ... they find it *enriching*. Why? Because they *see* how it happens, or they believe they see how it is constructed [*se fabrique*]. And that can be at the level where you get spectators watching a television presenter being made up before the transmission, for example. Thus the show takes place before the show. Since finally there is always an image before the image, and the image will slide over the image. And the participation and presence of spectators at the show that is in the process of being made will serve as a guarantee of this sliding of the image over the image.

Good. I also saw – I couldn’t understand it – that there was a show where there are spectators, but one does not see them. So it’s funny, there are cases where one sees the



spectators, and there are cases ... But, either way, it is necessary for the show in the process of being made to be done in front of spectators, so that the image is bottomless. So these are, let us put it this way, the 'enriching' forms, but not the most The technology [*la technique*], the contact with technology ... To touch the technology. This is a wonderful thing, to touch the technology. It is not to become a technician, that is not at all what people want No, they want to touch the technology. That makes them dream. ... It's strange because It enters into the aesthetic dimension. Take a case like Coppola. Even just technically. There is, as one says, a pre-visualization. This is a regime of images by way of pre-visualization. Previsualization. Previsualization by video. So that the film is filmed beyond the camera. In Coppola, in forms that are often very interesting, there will be a typical case of this modern mannerism where every image has pre-existing images for a basis. I don't need to go further into the issue of the technology, I'm just indicating that the new images, or as is said, the numerical images, typically have the processes themselves (or other processes) as incrustations and are typically regimes of images where the image slides over the image; where what happens, happens to the image; and where the image has always has an image for basis. But, as always there is no need for very complex technologies, such as numerical images – I do not want to say that they are of no use, numerical images, but they are typically images of control. The numerical image, as a new form of image implying a new regime of images, refers back to a regime of control in which image controls image.

But I would say, independently of that, that you also have much simpler techniques that allow for the same thing. Think of a director like Syberberg, the whole question (for those who know his work) of frontal perspectives, and the technique of frontal perspectives as it appears in Syberberg, what does it make possible? Well, to film an actor on a transparent background; the frontal perspective in Syberberg is typically an illustration of a regime of the control of the image. This all works very well, because now I can say to myself: these three regimes ... What can be found in the most important auteurs of contemporary cinema? I think that it's the passage from the second to the third, from the second to the third stage. They started like Take the New Wave. They too are on the cusp of this. They have a foot in the new regime. You can see that Godard will be exemplary in this regard. They had been the creators of the great pedagogical regime, and then But I don't really want to develop this. What I mean to say is: at this level of the regime of images, one can find an equivalent of the [historical] sequence, but displaced [*décalée*] in time – because it is not the same temporalization. One could find a kind of regime of the sovereignty of the image, of the discipline of the image, and of the control of the image. That's all I wanted to add and now we can finish with that. Good, any remarks?

Someone in the auditorium: Yes, could I say something?

Deleuze: Ah ... We have messed up the transmission, we forgot about 10 o'clock. We have spoiled the news.

Another person: [?] ... all hours.

Deleuze: All hours? Then tell me at 11 o'clock. Because if the Libyan airplanes arrive, it would be better to be *au courant*. ... Yes?

First intervention: Yes, I wanted to say something. It is that there is always a kind of ambiguity at the level of the image, since it is the same word that is used, in my opinion, for several things. It has been taken up and developed, in my opinion, notably by Sartre, who in his terrible *Imagination*, says that on the one hand, there is an vignette-image – that says clearly enough what is meant, it is the image which is *there*; and on the other hand, in the cinema, in the cinematic image, there is movement, it moves! There is always something that moves. It is different from the fact of contemplation, the gaze, and whatever else is involved in what can be called a vignette-image. So with the introduction of movement, Sartre said with some



justice: these are ultimately two different types of consciousnesses. When I watch a film, I have a certain distance in relation to the film, whatever that implies, but at the end of the day I have a distance in relation to the film; whereas with the vignette-image, most often it is an imaging consciousness that supervenes on me, and in relation to which I am in some way passive, that I receive. And this dimension disappears in the image-movement which is that of cinema. So I say it again, the first remark I wanted to make is that there is a kind of ambiguity: it is the same word image which serves simultaneously for the vignette that is immobile and for what runs off in the film, that runs off in the cinema. There is the introduction of movement, which involves difference, and which therefore provokes a different consciousness in the spectator. Sartre would say that in the imaging consciousness, there is something which supervenes on me, it is not something that I *take*, or an attitude that I control, it is something which happens to me. I'll finish with an example from ... the name escapes me, the author of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. He says that unlike in former times, in antiquity, one no longer finds people who, all of a sudden, deeply live an image (it could be a flask of water or whatever). People who are imprinted by an image and live it profoundly. That fades away ... probably precisely because of the introduction of movement. Anyway, there is this ambiguity, amongst others, of the vignette-image on the one hand, and the film-image on the other: in my opinion, it is the same word that is used for different things. I do not know if this is comprehensible or if one can draw important consequences from it. But this kind of imaging consciousness, in relation to perceptual consciousness – since the pedagogy of perception was being discussed – there was something there that leaves me a little unsatisfied and ...

Deleuze. Yeah. With regard to that, it is not exactly our problem because I was taking the image in a sense as understood [*sous-entendu*]. For myself, I am no longer satisfied by ... In fact, I understand the choice ... You are right to recall that, in Sartre, there is a certain ... Okay, but I mean the choice is not between an image where there is movement and what you are calling the vignette-image. Because take a picture, it does not move ... but nobody thinks of reducing a picture to a vignette. In a certain way, strangely enough, it does move. What movement is there in a painting? There is obviously a movement. This movement nevertheless does not involve *things* moving in the painting. Then, as you say, in the cinematographic image, there really is movement, and you ask whether this might not be a reason for why there is not as much contemplation as during the times when the image doesn't contain movement. I'm not sure. Contemplation: that has always been reserved to a minority of people. Painting was also reserved for a minority of people. What do people who love cinema find in cinema at the moment? What do I mean? Well, it seems to me to be a source of very intense contemplation. Among all the great auteurs of cinema, the factor of contemplation is intense, intense. If not how can one talk of 'the rain' in this or that auteur? The rain in Antonioni, one does not confuse that with the rain in ... er, who is another auteur of the rain?

Student: Kurosawa.

Deleuze: ... in Kurosawa. Okay, the rain is of course something that falls and moves. This does not prevent it from being the object of a fundamental contemplation, the rain. The rain has a signature. Images of rain are signed. It's true: the rain of Antonioni, I think everyone who loves Antonioni would recognise it. It moves beautifully, it is an object of an absolute contemplation. The rain falls, *voilà*. It is as signed as a painting, it is an object of contemplation just as much as a painting. One must not say, for example, that one does not contemplate in the cinema. It is an object of fantastic contemplation, the cinema. For myself, what doesn't gel with me, if you like, in what you say, is that I end up rediscovering the duality between what you call a vignette-image and the image-movement; that's much too simple. Because once again, what is it that moves? It goes without saying that the relations between colours is a movement in a painting. It is necessary to arrive at a clearer definition of what movement is



and what movement is not. The relations between colours are by all evidence a movement. When you have a relation between blue and a red, this is a movement, this is a movement and it is a movement that is in the painting. It is simply a movement ... For myself, I would say more: in the pictorial image, the movement is not extensive, but there are indeed other movements than extensive movements. In cinema, there are extensive movements, but there are also movements of another nature. But anyway, what I was just saying was on track. I was developing a line of thought on the image ... a little parallel to what ... You see ...

Question: The question is not between the image that does not move and the image which moves, but it is rather between ... between the new images, that is to say, television images and the cinema image, the latter which in my opinion belongs to the same epoch as the painting-image, on the same side, while I had the impression that the television image is ... [?]

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

Questioner: Also, I would really like a course ...

Deleuze: On the televisual image? Ah, I am incapable of that ... Yes, to be sure, yes. ... But that is partly, it seems to me, because the regime of the televisual image is typically already a regime of the control of the image.

Questioner: Yes.

Deleuze: At the bottom of the image, an image, that is to say: what happens, happens to images.

Questioner: Yes, which is not at all the case ...

Deleuze: Which is not at all the case in post-war cinema ... Good, let's move on. Let's leave that, eh?

So, we have come to the point, at last we are near – or at least we are able to believe that we are near – to having finished with our question of power, with Foucault's question concerning power. And, finally, if you wish, it seems to me that the relation – because we have done a first semester on knowledge, a second semester on power, and finally we are reaching the end, under what form? Well, it seems on three principal points. We have tried to develop, in Foucault, the necessity of the confrontation *power – knowledge*. Power is always a set of relations of well-determined forces. It is always a set of relations of forces. Remember a set of relations of forces is presented in what Foucault at one point calls a diagram. It is the diagram that is the presentation of relations of forces at a given moment. Well, I would say, first direction: we seek the relation [*rappor*] between ... or rather the relationship [*relation*] between the relations of forces and the forms that follow from them. And we have found that the forms that will be the forms of knowledge follow from relations of forces. For example, we saw recently how the God-form, the Man-form, and the Overman-form can be considered as proceeding from changing relations of forces. This is a whole first aspect that we have encountered.

Second direction: one considers the focal points [*foyers*] of power, the focal points of power presented in the diagram. This is the equivalent of relations of forces, but the accent is put on another aspect, it is no longer placed on the *relations* but on the *points* of power, once we remember that relations of forces in Foucault always go from one point to another in a social field. One considers the focal points of power and what follows from the focal points of power. What follows from them are regimes of statements or what Foucault calls the *corpus*. What follows is what we saw a while ago: to the question 'How to select the dominant statements of an epoch? How to constitute the body of statements?', Foucault answers: it is necessary first to determine the focal points of power and to see which words, which phrases, are exchanged at the level of these focuses. For example: what are the statements concerning sexuality in the 19th century or at the 18th century? Let us first determine the focal points of



power around which discourses on sexuality were formed. And it will be from these focal points of power that the dominant statements of the epoch on sexuality will follow. So what are they, these focal points? Well, it will be the confessional, it will be the school, it will be medicine, certain sectors of medicine, etc. And Foucault's method seems to us very important on this point, because in effect without it he would have no rule of method for selecting the characteristic statements of a historical formation. How to choose, how to select the statements? Well, if you have first determined the focal points of power around which discourses are exchanged. Therefore, it was no longer 'relations of forces from which forms follow', but rather: 'focal points of power from which dominant statements follow'. I do not need to indicate that this is simultaneously a different answer and that, at the same time, the two responses are absolutely related.

The third direction we have encountered, still on this problem 'what is the relation between power and knowledge?' is that power – and this was a new way of determining power – consists in a set of abstract matters, or, if you prefer, of non-formed matters and non-formalised functions. But from it ensues formed or qualified matters and formalised or finalised functions. You see that this is still the same thing. This is still the same thing as the two other cases, but a different aspect is illuminated. Starting from non-formed matters and from non-formalised functions, concrete functions ensue, that is to say, formed matters, formalised functions. What does that mean? Well, in fact, what will power be? I take up my examples again, which I will not develop further: to impose a task on any multiplicity, that is the formula of discipline, that is disciplinary power, pure disciplinary power, disciplinary power in the pure state. Go ahead and already correct yourself: there is never power in the pure state; nevertheless I can still make an abstraction. In fact, I remind you of Foucault's principle: in the concrete, everything is always a mixture of power and knowledge, there is no pure power, nor pure knowledge. But I can, through abstraction, derive a power in the abstract sense. Power in the abstract sense, disciplinary power in the abstract sense, will be: to impose any task on any multiplicity. Good, I say: any multiplicity whatever, that is what I am calling a non-formed matter. It is not specified which multiplicity. Are we talking about children? Is it men? And is it women? Is it workers? Is it soldiers? I know nothing about it. 'Any multiplicity whatever', that is to say, non-formed matter. To impose any task: I do not specify which. Is it to educate? Is to make people labour? Is it to care? Is it to carry out an exercise? I do not say. Any task whatever.

That is the pure diagram: to impose any task on any multiplicity. What ensues from it? That is to say, how is the diagram effectuated? Well, through the formalised functions and formed matters which, from that moment on, make up the entirety of the holders [*détentrices*] of knowledge. Example: the multiplicity is no longer any multiplicity whatsoever, it is a multiplicity of children. A formed matter. The child is a formed matter. And the corresponding function is no longer to impose any task whatever, it is to educate. This will be the school. If the any-multiplicity-whatever is no longer the child, but the sick, the corresponding formalised function will be: to care. And the form will no longer be the form 'school', but the form 'hospital'. If the any-multiplicity-whatever is 'young people with a sound constitution' – what age did one do one's service in the 19th century? 21 years old – in that case, 'young people with a sound constitution of 21 years of age'. Well, then the formed matter will be: soldier. And the any-task-whatever will no longer be any one whatever, it will be: to train soldiers. You see, each time I can say: what defines power or the diagram is the ensemble of non-formalised functions and non-formed matters flowing from concrete formalisable functions and concrete formable matters.

So it's as if there are three aspects, all of which come down to the same thing. With this I've summarised the object of our research on the relations *power-knowledge*, *knowledge-power*.



How power is always incarnated or actualised in historical formations, historical formations that themselves constitute knowledges. Hence the idea: all power implies knowledge, all knowledge implies power. But you see how the three different ways, Foucault's method, involves a kind of variation. But the whole is extremely rigorous and coherent. Only, at the moment when we thought we were finished – it is always like that, it's great – when we thought we had finished, we come up against what? Okay, assuming all that, then what? What is that makes diagrams change? What is it that makes one pass from one relation of forces to another relation of forces? What is it that produces change? It's already been said, it's already been indicated: there are mutations, there are mutations of diagrams, and these mutations of diagrams have been verified up to this day. Change in the regimes of images is a mutation. Change in juridical formations, we saw that last time, that is a mutation. These are mutations. Change in the relations of forces leading to the forms God, Man and Overman: it is, if one may put it like this, the diagrammatic mutations that always bring new forms with them, new social formations. Good, that's all fine, 'mutation', but it seems a bit easy. What are these mutations? The word 'mutation', okay, Foucault employs it Foucault invokes mutation, and at the level of relations of forces.

Fine, but does he just leave us with that? He abandons us, he says nothing more. How to take account of these mutations? How to explain the passage from one diagram to another diagram? And what relation is there between diagram B and diagram A? We have attempted to demonstrate all that, we have attempted to, but I believe that, to conclude, the moment has come to try to be a bit more ... Well, what we know is that every diagram is strategic, and that, in appearance at least, to the question 'what happens in a social field?' Foucault's own response, which has a great importance, will be: well, what happens in a social field is that "it strategises" [*ça stratégise*]. A social field is the place of a strategy. What defines a strategy? Well, the relation of forces presented in the diagram. The relations of forces define the strategy corresponding to the social formation under consideration. This means, in effect, that every diagram is the place of a combat. A combat of forces. And it is from the combat of forces that the forms ensue. But I go back to the question: what does combat consist in? Between what or whom does combat take place? This is what I would like to ... there is a need to be totally meticulous since this is the question we've been left with. We realise now that we were talking of mutation, about the substitution of one diagram for another, but, once again, the motor of substitution, of the replacement of one diagram by another, has been left for us to think through.

So what happens to explain the change of diagram, that is to say, the passage from one historical formation to another? One could think up a first answer as follows: who is the combat happening between, in the strategy? We have already given an answer to that during the second semester a while back. Every force has a double power, a power of affecting and power of being affected. The power of being affected should be considered to be a power no less than the power of affecting. To affect and to be affected. As what? Well, the power of being affected by another force, the power of affecting another or other forces (force is always in the plural). Okay. So I will say: there are forces; combat comes about between affecting and affected forces. Moreover, I can even say: affecting forces and affected forces, this is already the result of combat. But better, what does that mean? Every power, Foucault says to us, goes from one point to another. What is a point in the social field? He hasn't told us, and that speaks for itself; but for us, a definition must be proposed that seems to us to conform to the thought of Foucault. I would say: it seems to me that for Foucault, a point – in the sense in which he says 'every power or every relation of forces goes from one point to another' – a point is always the point of application of one force upon another. The point of application of one force upon another. And the synonym of 'point' would be 'singularity.' A singularity is



the point of application of a force upon another force. Hence the expression current in mathematics: 'singular point.' But we can see in what sense it can serve us in a theory of forces: points as singular points will be the points of application of a force upon another force. The result is that I can distinguish two sorts of points or two sorts of singularities. The points that mark or the singularities that mark the way in which a force is affected by another, and the singularities that mark the way in which one force affects others. For convenience sake, let us place what we can call 'active points' on the one side, points of application of the affecting force, and on the other what we can call 'reactive points', 'points of reaction', or 'singularities of reaction', points of application on the affected force.

Can I say that it is as if the reactive points are the 'vis-à-vis' of the active points?² That is to say, the points that express the affecting force, and the points that express the affected force. What does that mean concretely speaking? Well, we have already seen. Take the relations of forces. For example, in the disciplinary regime, in disciplinary power, you will recall, they were painstakingly examined, arranged in series, lined up, to compose a force greater than the composing forces, to put in rank. I'll focus on 'putting in rank'. Putting in ranks is a force which affects other forces, it is the affecting force. The headmaster in a school says: 'March! In file.' He is the affecting one, there is the singularity of the master. When he speaks, it is the singularity put into rank [*mise en rang*]. It is the point put into rank. In fact, he will not be the only point. I no longer remember the exact order, but it involves first putting into rank and file, then entering into the class, the boys stand up, they sit down, they get out their machines, they arrange them, they get to work. They get a smack because they have not done their work. You see, there is a succession of operations. In order to leave they put themselves in file. This is all about putting into rank and file, from the beginning to the end. Okay, but 'being in file', that is a reactive point. Active point: the master says 'In file!' The boys put themselves in file: there is a reactive point, a being-affected. Now, the one cannot be concluded from the other, it is necessary to take account of the whole ... it is a *couple* of affects. To every affecting affect there corresponds an affected affect, but the two do not resemble each other. There is a point of application; for example, one can easily envisage a point of application: think back to your childhood. The headmaster says: 'In file! You will find proof that there are points of application here. As Foucault said, this is an anatomy of the body, a political anatomy of the body. It can be that one finds oneself waiting with an almost sickly febrility for the end of the hour, for the moment when the master says 'In file!' It is not at all the same affect that is involved in the 'In file!' as in the 'Enter!'; therefore there are already two affects of rank and file. But in fact there are four affects: for there is the affecting affect of the master, also double – it is not the same at the beginning and the end, the master can be glad that it is over, or sad that it is over if he is a good master, he can be sad that the course is over. Anyway, I can thus furnish my diagram with all kinds of points. So I ask you to keep this in mind, as we will need it. It is necessary to provide points, singularities. Now, is there in any of that anything that explains how a diagram passes away to the benefit of another diagram? I have looked hard, and there isn't. No! The relations of power put all these points, or all the singularities, into relation with each other in such a way as to compose a stable whole.

What is capable of changing a diagram? You sense that there is a problem here. I hope you can sense that what needs to be retrieved here is Foucault's path, his very path of research.

² *Translator's Note.* Foucault's *La Volonté du Savoir* describes resistances as follows: "Elles sont l'autre terme, dans les relations de pouvoir; elles s'y inscrivent comme l'irréductible vis-à-vis" (127). This is translated by Robert Hurley as: "They are the odd term in relations of power; they are inscribed in the latter as an irreducible opposite" (*The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, p. 96). We retain the term 'vis-à-vis' in this translation.



He maintained the idea that diagrams change by mutation, but he could not content himself with a simple invocation of ‘mutation’. He had to ask himself: but who guarantees the transformation of a diagram? What had he maintained? He had maintained that there were affects or points between which relations of power are woven, but between these points, one does not actually come across the reason why a diagram changes. And note, this is what matters to me today, I would like to insist in particular on this story of Foucault’s evolution. What is the evolution of a great philosopher like Foucault? When I say to you ‘one has no choice’, well, he had no choice; it was necessary that he find ... something. And what will that be? At this point, we can make an attempt ... but what does that mean, to ‘make an attempt to reconstitute a history of Foucault’s thought?’ Well, we have the mapping points. Reading *Discipline and Punish*, one can see that it is already a question of the diagram, since it is there that the word appears. It is also already a question of the *mutation* of a diagram into another, since he studies two periods, two historical formations. But there is something about which he does not say a word, and which only emerges a year later, since there is one year, I believe, between the two books; yes, *Discipline and Punish* is 1975, *The Will to Knowledge* 1976. What emerges in the course of one year is the idea that a diagram also involves points of resistance. And here it is obviously necessary to pause a little. For, I believe, the notion of resistance does not yet make an appearance in *Discipline and Punish*. *Discipline and Punish* concludes in a very curious manner; it terminates abruptly, as if Foucault were laughing ... And he ends with an invocation of a combat, ‘the distant roar of battle’, he says, that is the last sentence, aside from a little note announcing the sequels to the book. It ends on the announcement of the rumbling of a battle.

And with that, a year later, *The Will to Knowledge* appears. You will say to me: the subject is not the same; but that is what interests me. *The Will to Knowledge* is the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*. My question is different: it is that in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* the question of power is largely taken up again from scratch. I’m asking: for what reasons? I mean: what are the novelties in *The Will to Knowledge* with respect to *Discipline and Punish* a year earlier? I say that there are two novelties – considerable novelties. These are: first novelty, *Discipline and Punish* in the end only considers a single form of disciplinary power, which Foucault already calls ‘the political anatomy of the body’. To discipline the body. The political anatomy of the body. This is the sole point; and he pursues this political anatomy, which consists in this: to impose any task whatever on any multiplicity whatever. And he identifies this at the levels of school, hospital, barracks, prison, factory, atelier. This is what *Discipline and Punish* does. The first great novelty of *The Will to Knowledge* is that Foucault combines this with a second function ... A disciplinary one? Maybe. Or maybe it is already something other than disciplinary, that is to say, a function of control? In any case, a function that straddles the disciplinary regime, but which also points to another regime. And this second function, he no longer calls it ‘political anatomy of the body’, but ‘biopolitics of populations’. That was not the question in *Discipline and Punish*. And the formula is no longer to impose a task on a confined multiplicity, but to administer [gérer] my life in a large, extended multiplicity. So that is the first novelty. I will not return to that, we have already commented on it, but I want to mark it as the first novelty.

Second novelty: at a fundamental level there appears the idea that in a society, in a social field, there are no longer only the points of affecting and the points of being affected, but there is a third sort of point: there are points of resistance, there are singularities of resistance. And here is a text which appears very strange to me. Listen to this carefully. It is necessary “not to misunderstand the strictly relational character of power relationships” (126/95). We have seen that force is always in relation with force. It is therefore necessary not to misrecognise the relational character of relations of power. “Their existence depends on a



multiplicity of points of resistance” (ibid). Here appears the explicit formula of points of resistance. “Their existence depends on a multiplicity of points of resistance: these play the role of adversary, target, support, or handle in power relations.” This is rather curious! You must already feel why it is curious, this text. “These play the role of adversary, target, support, or handle in power relations. These points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network. Hence there is no single locus of great Refusal” (ibid).

So he rediscovers his usual theme: there is a dissemination of the points of resistance. “Resistances are not only a reaction or rebound, forming with respect to the basic domination an underside that is

in the end always passive, doomed to perpetual defeat” (ibid, trans. modified). Therefore these points of resistance are effective. “Resistances do not derive from a few heterogeneous principles” – that complicates it, it’s not heterogeneous to power, it also passes into and through the relations of power – “but neither are they a lure or a promise that is of necessity betrayed.” They pass through relations of power, but they are something else. “They are the odd term [*l’autre terme*] in relations of power; they are inscribed in the latter as an irreducible opposite [*vis-à-vis*].” Keep hold of that. “They are the odd term in relations of power; they are inscribed in the latter as an irreducible opposite. [Deleuze repeats]. Hence they too are distributed in irregular fashion”, just like the relations of power.

“Hence they too are distributed in irregular fashion: the points, knots, focuses [*foyers*] of resistance are disseminated.” You see, let me remind you. ‘Points, knots, focuses’: this is a mathematical vocabulary through which mathematicians give a precise definition to the singular points of a curve. Therefore there is an explicit allusion to singularities. With regard to what? To the points of resistance. There are therefore singularities of resistance. What should appear extraordinary to you in this text? The thing is, if you have been following me, even slightly, one would be expecting something completely different.

Who is talking in the hall?

Deleuze: Is it 11 o’clock?

Student: 3 minutes to.

Deleuze: Pages 126-127 ... Ah, okay. Recreation. Cut!

[Continuation]

Pages 126-127 [95-6] of *The Will to Knowledge* [*The History of Sexuality*, Volume I]: two expressions give me a problem. These are: “the resistances play the role of adversary, target, support or handle in power relations” (95). And, a little further: “the resistances are inscribed in relations of power as an irreducible vis-à-vis” (96). Because, even so, one would be expecting something absolutely different. If I consider a force of affecting in a relation of power, for example, ‘to put in rank and file’, what is its ‘vis-à-vis’? Or, if you prefer, what is its adversary, its target and its support? Obviously the corresponding force of being affected. To the force of the master of putting in rank and file, corresponds, as vis-à-vis, the force of the pupil, that is, the power of the pupil, the capacity of the pupil to be put in rank and file. In other words, to the singularities or to the points of action, correspond, as vis-à-vis, the points of reaction, and there you have the relation *action-reaction*. Now, in *The Will to Knowledge*, Foucault does not tell us that. He tells us: the true vis-à-vis of power relations are points of resistance. Understand this, it is essential! It is essential, this slippage. One must understand: power relations put two vis-à-vises into relation, the force of affecting and the force of being affected, that is to say, the point of action and the point of reaction. That’s the first thing.

But more importantly there is a vis-à-vis of the relation of power, and the vis-à-vis of the relation of power involves points of resistance. This is because points of resistance are not at all the same thing as points of reaction. The point of reaction is, for example, the capacity to be put into rank and file. I put myself in file; there you have a point of reaction. I put myself



in file, in fact, when the master says 'Put yourselves in file'. There are two vis-à-vis. But the point of resistance is something completely different. That is you lot earlier, bad example I know [laughter]: I say: 'Enter, enter!' and ... nothing at all! That was a case of the resistance known as passive. A step in the other direction and you would have stampeded over me: active resistance. But whether it be passive or active, the point of resistance is absolutely different from the point of reaction. When Foucault talks about 'the vis-à-vis of the relation of power', these are points of resistance. I say: the second novelty of *The Will to Knowledge* in relation to *Discipline and Punish* is the discovery of a third sort of singularity, or the discovery of points of resistance. In other words, I can no longer say, as I was happy to do up until now, that there is a fundamentally a double power in relation, namely, a power to affect and a power to be affected. Now I must link it up with a third power: the power to resist. The power to resist is a third sort of affect, irreducible to the active affects and to reactive affects. It is a third kind of singularity.

Well, you can see that this whole text ... it fascinates me, this text, because if one turns back to a year before, it would have been completely unintelligible. The power of affecting in *Discipline and Punish* can only have a single vis-à-vis, and that is the power of being affected. That there is a power of resisting that is not to be reduced to the power of affecting, nor to the power of being affected, why does Foucault discover this? Because he absolutely has need of it. My question is: what are the consequences going to be? First: why does he absolutely need it? Let us respond to this question first. Why does he have need of it? Because it seems obvious to me that it is only by focusing on points of resistance that one can understand the mutation of a diagram; namely, why a diagram changes to the advantage of a new distribution of the relations of power. Everything happens as if [?] ... Thank you: you will understand. [He writes on the board]: There, that's nice, eh? That is a set of relations of forces, going from one point to another, point of action and point of reaction. Each time there is a line, I can write: PA, PR. I would say: that's a diagram, that's what that is. It is enough to specify the PA and the PR, the points of action and points of reaction. One specifies it by determining the focal points of power in an epoch. The focal points of power are the points where [?] specifically confront each other ... where the lines [?] points of action and points of reaction. Now, that is what I would say if I remained within the confines of *Discipline and Punish*. The points of action and points of reaction are fundamentally bound to each other.

Hence you can recognise them by the way they are joined to each other. You will ask me: [Gesturing to the board] why don't I join up that and that instead? Because there is dissemination: not every focus of power is bound to every focus of power. Sometimes it is bound, sometimes it is not bound. In any case, you have this: the set of the diagram will join the points in a certain order. But now I need to join the points of resistance to the diagram, as in some way the non-bound points, or rather – actually it's not right to say non-bound; they are indeed bound, since in fact they're not abstract. They resist existing centers of power. But, in order to indicate that they are not bound in the same manner as the preceding ones, I'll write them with dots. You follow? The points of resistance. If these points of resistance, then, which are virtually tied to points of action and reaction, join among themselves ... Imagine I've got a blue or red chalk, and I make a blue line from there to there. Suppose therefore that these points of resistance enter into relation and thus take on consistency and resonate with each other, then your diagram will collapse to the benefit of another diagram. All the relations of forces will be redistributed. How's that sound? Is it clear? Question?

Question: [Inaudible].

Deleuze: Oh, no! There's no answer to that since Foucault does not deal with other societies. But to the extent that we have seen that it can seem to us that every society has a strategy and a diagram, it would confirm it if there were societies which are thought, and



perpetually thought, under the species of a strategy. There are indeed extreme oriental varieties, societies that are strategic by nature; the Chinese never stopped thinking strategically in their social formation. So it seems to me to hold for all ... But understand the importance of these points of resistance that, precisely, will guarantee the way in which a diagram is overturned, giving place to another diagram which will be the expression of a new relation of forces, to which points of resistance will also be attached. In other words, it is at the level of the points of resistance that the diagram is fundamentally malleable, reversible, and the object of possible mutations.

Hence that text seems to me to be extremely curious, extremely important, because it explains the point of resistance, the points of resistance, literally as counter-powers. Except that this will bring with it enormous consequences for Foucault's philosophy, and even more for his political conceptions. I'll dwell on this a little before moving to the consequences: what does that mean, that these are counter-powers? Well, it means: every time power determines an object that is proper to it, or determines the object upon which it bears – and we have seen: every time there is a diagram, there is a determination of the object upon which the power bears – this object can always equally be related to a capacity for resistance which turns it back against power. Example: we have seen that in the formations of control, power and even right [*droit*] take *life* as their object. But power and even right under which form? Under the form 'to administer life, administration of populations'; or under the form of right, *social* right, namely how to 'insure life in man.' I'm using 'insure' in the proper sense of the word, in the literal sense of the word, since we saw last time that in this formation of social right, insurance played the fundamental role. But, when power and right take life for an object, it is this same life that is turned back against power and against right, and becomes the resistance of life against power and against right.

And this is what Foucault tells us, in one very beautiful page, also from *The Will to Knowledge*, pages 190-1 [144-45, translation modified] this time, and since it cannot be put any better, I am content to read it: "And against this power that was still new in the nineteenth century" – the administration of the life of populations, administering life, the biopolitics of populations – "against this power that was still new in the nineteenth century, the forces that resist ..." – you see, it is not forces that affect or that are affected – "the forces that resist relied for support on the very thing that this power invests,"³ the forces of resistance relied for support on the very thing that this power invests, and this power invests *life*. Power, the administration of the life of populations, invests life. But the forces that resist relied for support on the very thing that it invests, that is to say, on life, and man insofar as he is a living being. In other words, it is: power takes life for object, life turns against power. "Since the last century, the great struggles that have challenged the general system of power were not guided by the belief in a return to former rights, or by the age-old dream of a cycle of time or a Golden Age. One no longer aspired toward the coming of the emperor of the poor, or the kingdom of the latter days, or even the restoration of our imagined ancestral rights; what was demanded and what served as an objective was life [...]" "What was demanded and what served as an objective was life, understood as the basic needs, man's concrete essence, the accomplishment of his virtualities, a plenitude of the possible" (ibid). To my knowledge, this is very curious, because "plenitude of the possible" is such a Spinozist term, it is so ... This is a very unusual expression coming from the pen of Foucault. I have been trying to say to you from the beginning: there is a vitalism in Foucault, there is a very strange vitalism in Foucault. And I think that this vitalism comes directly from Foucault's relation with Bichat. I have attempted

³ Foucault's text reads: "les forces qui résistent ont pris appui sur cela même qu'il investit" (*Histoire de la sexualité*, Vol. I (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 190.



to say it in various ways, but if there is a vitalist text in which this vitalism of Foucault is expressed, it is this one, 190-191 [144-45]. It is life: “What was demanded and what served as an objective was life, understood as the basic needs, man's concrete essence.” This pays homage to Marx: “Man's concrete essence”, that comes from Marx. “Accomplishment of his virtualities, a plenitude of the possible”, that comes from Spinoza. This is very [?]. I don't mean that this is styled like a patchwork, it is unified in Foucault's own style, but it is as if one sees the strata of reading right there in a text like that. But still more a kind of stratum of life that is very curious. “Whether or not it was Utopia that was wanted is of little importance [in contemporary struggles].” “Whether or not it was Utopia that was wanted is of little importance; what we have seen has been a very real process of struggle. Life as a political object [...]” This is the essential text here, I'll read it slowly: “Life as a political object was in a sense taken at its word and turned back against the system that was bent on controlling it.” “Life as a political object was in a sense taken at its word and turned back against the system that was bent on controlling it [Deleuze repeats]. It was life more than the law that became the issue of political struggles, even if the latter were formulated through affirmations concerning 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.”

Fair enough, but what does that mean: power takes life for object, life turns back against power? I would say that this is a part of the contribution made by *The Will to Knowledge* that is completely different to *Discipline and Punish*. Only, if you have followed me so far, I would say: the consequences are enormous. It is very strange: these points of resistance disseminated in the diagrams, which have the power of making the diagram mutate under certain conditions: where do they come from? From where do they get their status? Do you sense that Foucault has found himself in a peculiar situation? Can he maintain that the points of resistances ... will he be able to maintain any longer that the points of resistances are the vis-à-vis of relations of power, as he said on p. 126-27? Will he be able sustain that? I've already insisted, from the outset, upon the very ambiguous character of an expression like ‘vis-à-vis’, because rigorously speaking the only vis-à-vis of a force of affecting is the force of being affected. Resistance, the power of resistance, does not have power as a property under any conditions, but under certain conditions to be determined, of being capable of overturning diagrams. Diagrams are presentations of relations of existing forces. But ‘power of resistance’ far exceeds a simple vis-à-vis. And can Foucault maintain his definition of the social field, “it strategises”; that it is constituted as strategy? I mean: is it not that, one way or another, he will end up being forced into saying (which is bizarre): the points of resistance are primary in relation to power; they are not vis-à-vis, they have to be primary. From this moment a social field must be defined by this: *it resists everywhere*.

It resists everywhere. Meaning: it resists power, and not: it strategises everywhere. It is necessary, in a certain manner, that the points of resistance should be primary in relation to power.

It is necessary that the resistance to power should be primary in relation to power itself. Is it not necessary to go that far? And that is Foucault tells us in a text published by Dreyfus and Rabinow, p. 300 of *Foucault a Parcours Philosophique* [*Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*] (but it is a text by Foucault, if it wasn't I wouldn't make use of it). This is what he tells us: “I would like to suggest another way to go further toward a new economy of power relations.” So it is a new way, different to what he has considered up to this point in his written work. This is a transcription of a conversation. This new mode of investigation “consists of taking the forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point.” “To take



the forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point” [Deleuze repeats]. Okay. “To use another metaphor, it consists of using this resistance as a chemical catalyst so as to bring to light power relations, locate their position, and find out their point of application and the methods used.” “Point of application”: in our commentary so far this has involved the power to affect and the power to be affected; it is the application of force on force.

Now he tells us: from a certain point of view, it is necessary to consider the resistances as primary. Except if you listened carefully to the text I read, he says it under very prudent conditions, because according to the letter of the text, what is concerned is a primacy solely from the point of view of knowledge [*connaissance*]. That is, he tells us in this text: perhaps in order to know the relations of power in a social formation, it is best to start by studying the points of resistance. Keeping to the letter, I would say that he says nothing more. Do we have the right to think that he is already led to say more, that it is not simply from the point of view of knowledge, but it is *in itself* that the points of resistance in a society are primary with respect to the relations of power? In this sense, the points of resistance are not once again the vis-à-vis of relations of power, they are primary. In other words, a social field *resists power*, before *strategising itself*, in the relations of power. What would make someone say that? Who might articulate that? Who might think that Foucault is turning around something like that? For myself, I would almost say, if it did not take risks with Foucault’s thought, that he knew very well that he would end up there. He knew very well that he would arrive there, it was just that at this point, it wasn’t the right moment, so he takes a very prudent position, from the point of view of knowledge.

Why is it that at one point – although they only bring it up briefly, and we too will only briefly touch on it – that in what is known as Italian Marxism (and even in other forms, already in a certain way in Lukacs, then in the evolution of Marxism), but particularly in Tronti, an Italian Marxist, T R O N T I, resistance is posited as primary in relation to what it resists? Now Foucault knew these works. So why does he hesitate? Surely because he is not satisfied with the way in which Tronti demonstrates it, and because, as far as he is concerned, he has not yet found a satisfactory way of showing in what sense resistance is primary in the social field. But I think that ... well, once again this is the case of a body of work too quickly interrupted in so many respects. At the end of his work, and certainly at the level of *The Will to Knowledge* in its difference from *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault discovers points of resistance as irreducible to relations of power, and as having the strange property of turning against power, and as being that out of which which power makes its object; that is to say, it is what power has undertaken to control. The point of resistance is something uncontrollable in the object of power. Now this something uncontrollable in the object of power is primary in relation to power.

But you can rightly sense that this will play a decisive role. A decisive role in what? If you are not too tired, I would like to continue this story [?]. What happened? What happened in Foucault? What happened in Foucault at this precise moment? Why does he think, in my opinion completely wrongly (but he lived it in this way) ... what has made him think of himself as being in a kind of state of crisis? What happened? What happened after *The Will to Knowledge*? I pose the question because this is a question that is important to us, one of development. It was a part of the development of the thought of a philosopher like Foucault. And I can mark right it there at this point, even if only from the outside – I wouldn’t allow myself to assume anything about what happened in Foucault’s head – I’m only stating how things look from outside.

The Archaeology of Knowledge is from 1969. What I can say of *The Archaeology of Knowledge*? This is a great book which is presented as a book of method, and which concludes a whole series of books that bear upon knowledge [*savoir*], the first axis of Foucault’s thought. All the



preceding books were focused upon knowledge, which is not to say upon science, since Raymond Roussel has a knowledge which forms a unity with his own poetry. You will recall (I won't go back over it beyond saying this), that knowledge is not at all the same thing as science, poetry is also knowledge. Science is knowledge and other things are indeed also knowledge. But all these books on knowledge culminate with *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1969. Of course something else was already underway. In other words, Foucault had already known for a long time that the axis of knowledge was not sufficient. In effect *The Archaeology of Knowledge* concludes and draws all its consequences at the level of a great theory of statements (the details of which we saw in the first semester), but he remains silent on how to choose the statements [énoncés] of a corpus, no doubt because the selection of statements of a corpus refers to another axis than that of knowledge. Therefore there is already another axis that puts pressure on the axis of knowledge, but Foucault was not yet at the point of studying this second axis for itself, even though this second axis had already been active within and underneath the first. Now a long reflection will be necessary for him; and not only a reflection, but a practice.

In fact, if *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is from 1969, the following book appears in 1975. Six years with no book. What does that mean? And what did he do during those six years? He engaged in the practice of struggle, that is to say, he founded – and I have often mentioned this – the Group Information – Prison, he participated in all the struggles around the prison movement; this was an epoch that was rich in struggles. So he did not have, or I do not think that Foucault had, a political practice, as some have said, before '68. The great moment of his political practice is after '68, in the Group – Information – Prison, which in my opinion was one of the successes of leftism after '68, that is to say, one of the rare groups that did not give in once again to a Stalinist form. And he delivers himself over in parallel to a theoretical reflection. Is it by chance that his practice was centered on prisons and the problem of prisons? Obviously not. In 1975 *Discipline and Punish* burst on the scene, and it is through the problem of prisons and the problem of punishment that he accedes to the second axis, the axis of power. *Discipline and Punish* is the first book on this axis of power. There, power and power relations are considered for themselves. From this moment the sense in which the formations of knowledge implied, demanded, this second axis of power, becomes clear. It will have taken six years for Foucault to clarify this changing of axis. And then, almost immediately, *The Will to Knowledge* appears, which is in effect the second book on power. You will ask me: why call it 'knowledge'? There is no problem in this regard, because if it is called 'knowledge' it is alongside a 'will to knowledge'; and 'will to knowledge' precisely designates the concrete mixture *power-knowledge*.

I have tried to show how *The Will to Knowledge* brings novelties with it, two fundamentally new themes. First theme: the relation of power and life; second theme: the specificity of the points of resistance. These are therefore two closely related books. What has happened and what is the crisis, what kind of crisis has Foucault traversed with the publication of *The Will to Knowledge*? I think that there is no doubt, because he said that he had the impression of a misunderstanding about this book, he had the impression of a misunderstanding, and peculiarly enough, this misunderstanding was painful for him. He took it to heart in a certain way ... it is quite curious because there were many misunderstandings concerning *The History of Madness*, and he took them very well to my knowledge, although I don't know ... But he finds the misunderstanding ... well, it must have been much more serious, this misunderstanding. And it was not only that, in my opinion. What else? For myself, I think that if Foucault had the impression, rightly or wrongly, of a misunderstanding, it was because there was also a kind of crisis [?] and I think that this crisis was manifested in the most noble manner in which a crisis can manifest itself, namely, as a kind of retreat.



I have to try to picture things clearly. So Foucault underwent a retreat, and he was at this moment no doubt more alone than he ever had been. I think that this sort of thing is truly a part of philosophy. But what was it all about? Well, I think that the crisis, if I were to try to explain it (without claiming to divulge the slightest secret; this is my hypothesis, a hypothesis completely from outside) ... I think that in fact he had a crisis and that he thought that, before everything else, there was not only a misunderstanding at the level of *The Will to Knowledge*, a misunderstanding between him and his readers, but that something much more serious was involved, namely, that he was in an impasse. And what was this impasse? That he had formed his system of knowledge-power with its whole variety of landscapes, with all its enormous diversity – Foucault is not one of those authors who repeat the same thing over and over again, every time it is a way of breaking away from the point of view of power. Will I be a man of power? In the end, I did well: is that because I am not yet on the side of power? And, if you wish, so as to try to make myself understood, Foucault was a man who, for example in the demonstrations of the period, possessed a kind of violence, but a contained violence; it was as if he trembled in himself, but not out of fear, he trembled in himself with violence.

And the question is: philosophically, am I no longer on the side of power? Do I have the means philosophically to think as a function of a category that would no longer be that of knowledge, since knowledge in his philosophy finds its reason, precisely, in the consecutive force-relations of power. In other words: am I able to cross the line? And finally, where is the author, whether in literature or philosophy, who doesn't live in a certain way with this question: Do I do the bad thing [*malin*] or ... am I capable of crossing the line? Although obviously 'what line?' is the question. And without doubt it varies, not everyone has the same line as everyone else. But, you know, in literature or in thought, there is no difference between literature and philosophy, what is always involved is crossing the line. And in the event that the readers applaud and say 'that is good', the author is aware that it is of course a good thing if people like it, but nevertheless, that it is still so far, so very far, from what he wanted. And for my part, I recall that Foucault says of himself [?]: the line of power, am I going to be able to cross it, or will I stay on the side of power?

Hence, the importance of this affair of the points of resistance, and, I say to you: a destiny! It is truly a destiny, a destiny must draw him to posit more and more the points of resistance as primary, because to say "the points of resistance are primary" is already to have crossed the line. But one cannot cross the line by simply saying something that arranges things in a different order – it must be necessary, it must be absolutely necessary in such a way that one cannot do otherwise. So although I have already read it, I think the time has come to re-read this fundamental text, since it persuades me that I am not in the process of delivering myself over to a grotesque interpretation, but that this is indeed what explains Foucault's silence for much of the year after the publication of *The Will to Knowledge*. This is the moment Foucault says to us: "I will be told: 'That's so like you, always with the same inability to cross the line,'"⁴ that is to say, to transcend the category of power. "That's so like you, always with the same inability to cross the line": this text is from 1977, and so after *The Will to Knowledge*, which is '76: "Always with the same inability to cross the line, to pass to the other side, to listen and to convey the language that comes from elsewhere or from below; always the same choice, on the side of power, of what it says or causes to be said." That is a kind of objection that Foucault, to the extent that he progressed, had to make to himself, and which he had to hold onto to the point that he said: no, to hell with peace, it is necessary that I ... I have to take things up all over again.

⁴ 'The Lives of Infamous Men', translated in Foucault, *Power: The Essential Works*, ed. James D. Faubion. New York: Allen Lane, 1994, p. 161.



How to cross the line? You understand? And in my opinion, this is the sole explanation of the fact that *The Will to Knowledge* is 1976, and that the next book, in which he has found an answer, will only appear in 1984 (it was ready before that, but will only appear then). That is to say, eight years later. There, he has found what he was looking for. At what cost did he find it? ... Well, what does that mean? What does all this mean: that he discovered, he found how to cross the line? I would say that in a way one can mark the precise moment in *The Will to Knowledge* at which he has not yet crossed it: this is the discovery of the points of resistance. Because, in fact, what can one say? Foucault objects to himself, and it is indeed much more than an objection, it is truly something ... it is an Affair of State. He objects to himself, he says to himself: but you are unable to cross the line, you remain on the side of power, all you are capable of doing is giving an account of the forms of knowledge through the relations of power and that's it. He discovers the points of resistance, but he does not yet have a status for these points of resistance. He cannot yet cross the line. He sees beyond the line. He sees beyond the line that there are the points of resistance, but what to do about it? Well one can always have a debate; and he debates. Recall how he debates: he says 'Okay, there, I could have...' He was fond of this method, several of his books end with a kind of dialogue with himself. Let us try to reconstitute, if we can, a kind of dialogue of Foucault with himself, at the level of this problem: *to cross the line*.

Well, I see a first possible intervention. He could say to himself: well, yes, but it's not my fault, it's the sign of the modern world, namely what has become destiny is, as others might say, politics. Politics has become destiny or, if you prefer, our destiny is always our relation with power and no matter how humble we are, the hour will always come when power, if one can say this, interpellates us. And Foucault can say to himself: it's not even my fault, it's just like that! Therefore, you see, he will accept it, he will say: well, yes, I don't cross the line, because it is uncrossable. It is uncrossable. I stay on the side of power because we are all on the side of power, that is to say, one is under it. One receives the blows and that's that. And, in fact, whether it is the most powerful or the most humble, I would say that power soon calls us and says to us 'Come here', 'Come and make accounts'. And what recourse does one have? One can with all rigour invoke a power that is against other powers, yes. 'Give an account of yourself, show yourself in the light!', or 'Come and explain yourself'. The two forms of knowledge, the visible and the statement, once again, are indeed the two branches corresponding to the injunctions of power: 'Show yourself, explain yourself.' 'Show yourself, come into the light a little', the identity photo; then 'Explain yourself, say a bit about what you did there', the inquest.

And so in 1977 Foucault writes on the theme that pursues him the whole time, the infamous man. What is an infamous man? Well, the infamous man is any man whatever, the ordinary man in so far as he comes up against power, in so far as he is interpellated by power, in so far as he must give an account to power. You have beaten your wife? This is the *lettre*, this is the man under the *lettre de cachet* or the man of voluntary investment. You have beaten our wife? Well, what happened? And the woman who is beaten, she herself makes a petition and says 'Defend me'; she invokes a power. Okay, but first answer will be: the decisive moment of our lives is always the moment at which we run up against power. Indeed. One can indeed say that. But it is a desolate answer, because there is no way in which one can cross the line. Second possible intervention: Yes, there are points of resistance, the discovery of *The Will to Knowledge*, which brings with it the mutation of diagrams, etc., which can give a meaning to political struggle. Well, okay. There is that. It is already better. Can one link up the points of resistances? Yes, one can. Can one struggle? Yes, one can struggle, from this point: one can cross the line. Yes. Answer: on condition that one does not quickly go back to the other side of the line. For, if the points of resistance enter into relation with each other, that is to say,



deliver themselves back over to operations of centralization, of reinforcement, if they transcend their dissemination – and they are indeed forced to transcend their dissemination, if not how would they prevail? – if they remould a centralism, the famous democratic centralism if they reforge a democratic centralism, in other words if they restratify, they engender a new formation. But, well, the new formation, we learn from experience that it risks being worse than what went before; or it engenders focal points of power that render resistance ever more aleatory. Fine. These are the great setbacks of revolutions. So there you are: the points of resistance.

Third intervention: so what is left? If I cannot even count on the points of resistance, because the points of resistance are good in so far as they are disseminated, in so far as they are specific in their relation to the relations of power, but from the moment that they co-aggregate, from the moment that they aggregate amongst each other, from the moment they reform the lines, they reform strata that are just as hardened as the strata they have just undone. So what would the line be, to cross the line? Is it simply to invoke a life? To turn life back against power, what is this vitalism? To cross the line, this means what? To go beyond power, no longer to be on the side of power. Is it to reclaim life? Like a poet or a great novelist can reclaim life: Lawrence, Henry Miller Yes, in a certain manner, they have not ceased to resist, their work is a resistance. Good. What is this line? Let us call it, because this will be convenient for us – to go beyond power is to cross a very bizarre line – the line of the outside. The outside of power. The line of the outside. To cross the line of the outside. This, no shadow of a doubt, is what writing tries to do, what the great writers and philosophers try to do. To attain the line of the outside or to cross it, it is the same thing: but what can it be, the line of the outside? We found this expression in both Foucault and Blanchot: the Outside! And what is that? And what is the line of the outside? What is there on the other side? The void? Death? The void, death ... After all, Foucault's vitalism, as I pointed out to you, arises in relation to Bichat, and as Foucault said with regard to Bichat, this is a vitalism on the basis of mortalism. Death for Bichat, that is to say, violent death, multiple death, plural death, all of that is the object of Bichat's book on death. So to cross the line, is that finally ...? Is it death? Or the void? It is falling into the void, it is to die. After all, these themes are close to both Foucault and Blanchot. At least, at least ... what?

Well, suppose ... suppose that the outside, the line of the outside, this beyond of power, is taken up into a movement that tears the void apart, or that overturns death. All this is words for the moment. The line of the outside that risks falling into the void or into death: suppose that it conjugates with a movement that tears the void apart and overturns death. You will say to me: easy to suppose. That doesn't matter, let us suppose it. At this precise moment, what would happen? At this moment, one would have a third axis. At this precise moment, beyond the axis of knowledge and the axis of power, there would be a third axis. In fact, if the line of the outside leads back to the void and to death, one can't say that there must be a third axis. However, if something other than the void and death is involved, there would indeed be a third axis. How could he not have seen this from the beginning? He was too immersed in the two others. He was too immersed in the two others [Deleuze repeats]. It was necessary to discover it. It was necessary to discover it as a kind of subterranean thing already working under the two others. It was present from the beginning, but one did not know that one saw it. An axis that would be neither knowledge nor power. And this axis would be what permits him to cross the line, it would itself be the crossing of the line.

So look at where we've got to. I firmly believe that, on the one hand, this third axis will only be discovered by Foucault in his final books, that is to say, in *The Use of Pleasure*. And this third axis will be discovered under exceptional conditions, completely bizarre, for even in all that I just said, this third axis is an axis of violent passion, a kind [of stake of life and death].



Foucault will put all his strength into uncovering it under neutral conditions and, in a kind of ultimate joke, he will discover it in the Greeks, although he is – I exaggerate a little – somewhat mischievous with the Greeks. Why did he need to put maximum coolness into the uncovering of this third dimension? And to make out that it concerns an ancient affair that does not concern us at a vital level, when it precisely does concern us at a vital level? There is the first question and the second question. This third dimension, this third axis that he uncovers at this moment, he ... in a certain way he had never ceased speaking about it, and almost had never talked of anything but that, only under conditions that were overlain by the problem of knowledge and by the problem of power. But what I would like to show is that in a number of books, from the beginning until the end, notably in *Raymond Roussel*, this was what was in question: to cross the line, how to cross the line? How to go beyond both knowledge and power? What axis, literally, will it be necessary to mount? In what dimension will it be necessary to approach it? This was truly his most profound, passionate problem, but which, as passionate problem, could only exist in a subterranean way in knowledge and power, so that he could only isolate it under the conditions of a feigned coolness, an extreme coolness, and under the form of a return to the Greeks. What happened amongst the Greeks? Perhaps the Greeks had invented this third axis.