Gilles Deleuze

Seminar on Spinoza: The Velocities of Thought

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Transcription, Part 1, Marc LeDannois (for Paris 8), Part 2, Cécile Fredet, Emmanuel Péhau (for Paris 8); Translation (Part 1, partial text, on Web Deleuze) by Simon Duffy, Augmented and Complete Translation by Charles J. Stivale (duration, 2:04:21)

Part 1

[*Intervention by Georges Comtesse, precedes start of the recording*]

Deleuze: This is always interesting. Already, in light of the question that you asked me the last time, you tend very quickly to stress an authentically Spinozist concept, that of the "tendency to persevere in being." I am saying this because it's interesting for the entire reading, such as yours. Someone who reads, you understand, is necessarily forced to emphasize one point or another. It's like in music, the accents are not placed within a piece. So, here we have Comtesse who already the last time, he told me, "Ok that's all very fine, but the *conatus*, that is, a term usually translated as 'the tendency to persevere in being,' what do you do with it?" And I responded: well, listen, you'll have to excuse me, for the moment I cannot introduce it because, in my reading, I am stressing other Spinozist notions, and the "tendency to persevere in being", already went without saying. In light of what I was saying, I would take it as given, whatever importance that I place on it. I will take it as given based on other notions which are, for me, the essential notions – and I'm not all saying that I am correct -- those of power of action (*puissance*) and affect.

Today, you return somewhat to the same theme. What returns and what seems interesting to me is a manner of telling me, well, so – I don't read exactly even if we agree more generally, you are telling me, in substance: "I am not reading Spinoza exactly as you do, because I am immediately emphasizing the 'tendency to persevere in being'." So, you understand that at this level, I find that there is not even a basis for a discussion. What interests me greatly, as Comtesse is saying, it's not at all a contradictory reading. He would clearly propose a different reading, that is, a differently accentuated reading, as regards the problem that you just posed. Your first [problem], what you announced as a first problem that you posed to me, concerning the reasonable man and the insane man, given the point that I have reached here, I would on this point, I was answering exactly like this:

What distinguishes the insane person and the reasonable one according to Spinoza? And conversely, at the same time in the same question, there is: what doesn't distinguish them? From which point of view can they not be distinguished? From which point of view, do they have to be distinguished? I would say, for me, for my reading, that Spinoza's response is very rigorous, even if it's one we don't understand until later. If I summarize Spinoza's response, it seems to me that this summary would be: from a certain point of view, there is no reason to create a distinction between the reasonable man and the insane person. From another point of view, there is a reason to create a distinction.

First, from the point of view of power of action, I am still not introducing "tendency to persevere in being" – no doubt, this notion appeals to me less than the others, I don't know, maybe one doesn't choose – from the point of view of power of action, there is no reason to introduce a distinction between the reasonable man and the insane man. What does that mean? Does that mean that they have the same power of action? No, it doesn't mean that they have the same power of action, but it means that each one, as much as there is in him, realizes or exercises his power of action, that is, to speak like both Spinoza and Comtesse, each one, as much as there is in him, endeavors (*s'efforce*) to persevere in his being.

Therefore, from the point of view of power of action, insofar as each, according to natural right, endeavors to persevere in his being, that is, to realize his power of action… You see, I still never follow (in parentheses) "effort" there because it is not that he or she makes an effort to persevere, it's not because [the person] is trying. In any case, he or she perseveres in his/her being as much as there is within the person. This is why I do not like the idea of *conatus,* of effort, which does not translate, it seems to me, Spinoza's thought in fact. For what he calls an effort to persevere in being is the fact that I exercise my power of action at each moment, as much as there is in me. In fact, it's not an effort, Georges; but this matters little.

But from the point of view of power of action, therefore, I can say that each person is valued the same, not at all because each person would have the same power of action. In fact, the insane man's power of action is not the same as that of the reasonable one. But what there is in common between the two is that, whatever the power of action, each realizes his own. Therefore, from this point of view, I would not say that the reasonable man is worth more than the insane one. I cannot, I have no way of saying that: each has a power of action, each realizes as much power of action as there is in him. This is natural right; this is the world of nature. Fine, from this point of view, I could not establish any difference, I could not establish any difference in quality between the reasonable man and the insane one.

But, but, but, but, but… second point: from another point of view, I know very well that the reasonable man is "better" (in quotes) than the insane one. Better, what does that mean? That means, no doubt, with more power of action, in the Spinozist sense of the word. Therefore, from a certain point of view, from another point of view, I must make and I do make a distinction between the reasonable man and the insane one. Fine, what is this other point of view? In light of what I was saying the last time, what I tried to explain the last time, my response, according to Spinoza, would be exactly this: from the point of view of power of action, you have no reason to distinguish the reasonable man and the insane one, but from the other point of view, namely that of affects, you distinguish the reasonable man and the insane one. Where does this other point of view come from? Do you remember? Power of action is always in action (*en acte*); it is always realized, fine. But what realizes it? The affects do. Affects are the realizations of power of action, that is, what I experience in actions, in passions; that's what realizes my power of action, at every moment. And so, if the reasonable man and the insane man are distinguished, it is not through power of action. Each one realizes his power of action, so it is not through power of action. It's through the affects. It's through affects, [and] the affects of the reasonable man are not the same as those of the insane one.

Hence the whole problem of reason will be converted by Spinoza into a special case of the more general problem of affects. Reason indicates a certain type of affect, and that is very new; such a conception of reason is very new. To say [that] reason is not going to be defined by ideas, of

course, it will also be defined by ideas, but there is a practical reason that consists in a certain type of affects, in a certain manner of being affected. That poses a very practical problem of reason. What does it mean to be reasonable in that case? Inevitably reason is an aggregate of affects, for the simple reason that it is precisely the forms under which power of action is realized in one condition or another.

Therefore, to the question that has just been posed by Comtesse, my response would be relatively strict, in fact: what difference is there between the reasonable man and the insane one? From a certain point of view, none; from the point of view of power of action, from another point of view, [there's an] enormous difference, from the point of view of the affects which realize power of action.

Your second question, if you please.

Comtesse: [*NB: This intervention remains in French, untranslated, in the WebDeleuze English text, completed here to the extent possible given problems of the recording's sound quality*] My second question concerns the distinctions that you made among conceptions of natural right or law. Can we say that Spinoza is a disciple of Hobbes because he defines natural right or law as a power (*puissance*) in action (*en acte*)? Because, for Spinoza, the functional pact that institutes the social state implies that this social state precisely is only good if it consolidates or increases my own power of action as expression of the power of divine life. In other words, this is to say that for Spinoza, civil right or law, the right or law of what he calls "the sovereign power (*puissance*) of the nation", well, civil right or law is that which extends, that which continues in a certain way, that which pursues natural right or law. And, precisely for Hobbes, even if the state of nature, of war, of wolves becomes a threat for the state of society, it still remains that the State, the Leviathan, is that which dispossesses possessive or devouring individuals from natural right. And precisely for Spinoza, nation's sovereign power continues natural power. There is no disposession. Here there is a problem of difference between Spinoza and Hobbes, and the liberal monarchy, the monarchy of Kant and Spinoza, the monarchy that he calls "well established", anticipates the degeneration of a tyrannical State that would guarantee neither peace, nor security, nor freedom. So, the second point was that perhaps Spinoza is not a simple disciple of Hobbes because, for him, there is no discontinuity, no rupture, but an extension of natural right and civil right.

Deleuze: My answer would be as follows: here again, this puts manners of reading into play, you understand? You note a difference between Spinoza and Hobbes, and you are completely right to note this, and you note it very precisely. If I summarize it, the difference is this: for the one as for the other, Spinoza and Hobbes, we are supposed to emerge from the state of nature through a contract. But in the case of Hobbes, this is a matter of a contract by which I give up my natural right – I am clarifying immediately because it is nonetheless more complicated than you stated it. If it is true that I give up my state of nature, my natural right, on the other hand, the sovereign himself does not also give up his. Therefore, in a certain way, the natural right is also preserved through…

Comtesse: It's constantly threatened.

Deleuze: I agree, it's preserved, but in another manner than for Spinoza. For Spinoza, on the contrary, in the contract, I do not give up my natural right, I do not give up my natural right. And there is Spinoza's famous expression given in a letter: "I preserve the natural right even in

the civil state." This famous expression of Spinoza, "I preserve the natural right even in the civil state," clearly means, for any reader of the era, that on this point, I am breaking with Hobbes who, in a certain way, also preserved natural right in the civil state, but only to the advantage of the sovereign – still what I am saying is done too quickly, but no matter.

That does not take away from what I was saying: Spinoza, on the whole, is a disciple of Hobbes. Yes, why? Because on two general but fundamental points, he entirely follows what might be called the Hobbesian revolution, and because I believe that Spinoza's political philosophy would have been impossible without the kind of strongarm move (*coup de force*) that Hobbes had introduced into political philosophy. What is this very, very important strongarm move, this double move? I tried to state this, what was the prodigious, extremely important innovation by Hobbes. It is, first innovation, to have conceived the state of nature and natural right in a way that broke entirely with the Ciceronian tradition. And, on this point, Spinoza entirely ratifies Hobbes's revolution; second point: consequently, to have substituted the idea of a pact of consent as the foundation of the civil state, to have substituted the idea of a pact of consent for the relation of competence such as it was in classical philosophy, from Plato to Saint Thomas.

And, on these two fundamental points -- the civil state can only refer to a pact of consent and not to a relation of competence where there would be a superiority of the sage, and furthermore, the whole conception of the state of nature and of natural right as power (*puissance*) and realization of power -- these two fundamental points belong to Hobbes. It is as a function of these two fundamental points that I would say: the obvious difference that Comtesse has just signaled between Spinoza and Hobbes presumes and can only be inscribed in one preliminary resemblance, a resemblance by which Spinoza follows the two fundamental principles of Hobbes. This then becomes a balancing of accounts between them within these new presuppositions introduced into political philosophy by Hobbes.

Finally, a small [comment] to fully answer: when you speak of Spinoza's political conception, I believe that we will be led to speak about this from the point of view of the research that we are undertaking this year on ontology: in what sense can ontology entail or must it entail a political philosophy? One must not forget that as concerns background, when you alluded to the liberal monarchy, don't forget there is a whole political path of Spinoza – I am stating [this] very quickly since I haven't talked about it before -- a very fascinating political path because we cannot even read one book of book of Spinoza's political philosophy without understanding what problems it poses, and what political problems he lived through. Because the Netherlands in the era of Spinoza was not simple, the political situation. All Spinoza's political writings are very connected to this situation. So, it is not by chance that Spinoza wrote two books on political philosophy, one the *Theological-Political Treatise,* the other the *Political Treatise*, and that, between the two [publications], enough events occurred in order for Spinoza to have evolved.

What occurred? The Netherlands already in that era was torn between two tendencies. There was the tendency of the House of Orange, and then there was the liberal tendency of the De Witt brothers. Now the De Witt brothers, under very obscure conditions that we shall see, had won at one moment. The House of Orange was not insignificant; I mean [that] this put into play nonetheless the entire relations of foreign policy, relations with Spain, war, war or peace. The De Witt brothers were basically pacifists; this put into play the economic structure. The House of Orange supported the great trading companies; the brothers DeWitt were very hostile to the great companies. This opposition House of Orange-brothers De Witt stirred everything up.

And the De Witt brothers were liquidated, that is, assassinated, in absolutely horrible circumstances. Spinoza felt this as really the last moment in which he could no longer write, [that] this could also happen to him. All of this was not simple, but the assassination of the De Witt brothers was a blow for him especially since it indeed seems that the De Witt brothers' entourage was protecting Spinoza. And the difference in political tone between the *Theological-Political Treatise* and the *Political Treatise* is explained because, between the two, there was the assassination, and Spinoza no longer believed in what he was saying before, at the time of the *Theological-Political Treatise;* yes, when he was still saying that a liberal monarchy was possible.

He presents his political problem in a very beautiful, still very current, way. He says that, in the end, there is only one political problem, and we would have to try to understand it: one mustn't create satire here as well. One must understand, that is, to make ethics into politics, and understand what? To understand why people really do fight for their slavery. They seem to be so content to be slaves that they will do anything to remain slaves. How does one explain such a thing? It fascinates him. Literally, how does one explain that people don't revolt? But at the same time, revolt or revolution, you will never find that in Spinoza. But why? Here, we're saying very silly things. At the same time, he made drawings; there's a reproduction of a very odd drawing of his – Spinoza's life is a very obscure thing – in which he had drawn himself during the evening like that, when he was done working for the day, he drew himself in the form of a Neapolitan revolutionary who was well-known in that era, and in which he had inserted his own head. Yes he had depicted himself as a revolutionary; it's quite strange.

But at the same time, why does he never speak about revolt or revolution? Is it because Spinoza is a moderate? Undoubtedly, he must be a moderate; yes, he had to be a moderate – although there is this story of the revolutionary drawing that is strange – but, even if we suppose that he is a moderate, at that era, even the extremists hesitated to speak of revolution, even the leftists of the era. And Collegians, all these guys who were against the Church, all these Catholics were near sufficiently what we would call today the Catholics of the extreme left – that was odd, these were some really odd groups – but why didn't these people discuss revolution? Because, in contrast to what is said, there is a stupidity that is said, even in the history handbooks of all periods, that no English revolution occurred. Everyone knows perfectly well that an English revolution took place, an impressive revolution: this was Cromwell's revolution, and Cromwell's revolution is almost the case in which everything was extremely pure. This was the revolution betrayed as soon as it was done.

When people pretend today to discover the problem of the betrayed revolution, one must not joke around, who are they trying to kid? The whole of the seventeenth century is full of reflections on this, how might a revolution not be betrayed. One must not believe that this is a new problem in 1975, concerning the rights of man, no, or with the discovery that there's a gulag in Russia.[1] Revolution was always thought by revolutionaries in these terms: how is it that such a thing as that is constantly betrayed? And the modern example, the recent example, for Spinoza's contemporaries, is Cromwell's revolution who was the most fantastic traitor to the revolution that Cromwell himself had imposed. If you take that – I am almost speaking gibberish (*n'importe quoi*), but it's to have you sense that this problem is very, very current for these people – if you take, at that time well after, what we call English Romanticism, this is not only a fantastic poetic and literary movement, but it's an intense political movement.

The whole of English Romanticism is centered on the theme of the betrayed revolution, how to live on when the revolution has been betrayed and seems destined to be betrayed. The model that obsessed the great English Romantics was the older case, since it was of the time, always Cromwell. And for the English revolutionaries, the image is at once fascinating and abject. What happened? What had this guy done? If you will, Cromwell is experienced – here I believe that I am hardly exaggerating – he's exactly experienced in that era as Stalin is today. And what happens? If Spinoza never speaks of revolution, it's because they don't speak about revolution; nobody speaks about revolution, not at all, because they do not have an equivalent in mind. I believe that it's for a very different reason because the word is absolutely… They do not at all exclude any violent actions, I believe, not at all. They won't call that revolution because the revolution is Cromwell. In the end, that's part of it; I may be exaggerating, but that's part of it.

And, at the time of the *Theological-Political Treatise*, Spinoza still believed in the chances of a liberal monarchy, on the whole. Here, what Comtesse just said at the end of the second intervention is true of the *Theological-Political Treatise,* in my view. This is no longer true about the *Political Treatise*. The De Witt brothers were assassinated; on this, compromise is no longer possible. Spinoza knows well that… He gives up publishing the *Ethics*, he knows that it's screwed. And finally, at that moment, it seems that Spinoza would have tended much more to think about the chances – about the chances, but under what concrete forms? -- of a democracy. And the theme of democracy appears much more in the *Political Treatise* than in the *Theologico-Political Treatise*, which remained in the perspective of a liberal monarchy. But what would a democracy be at the level of the Netherlands? This is precisely what was liquidated with the assassination of the De Witt brothers. So, this isn't easy, and Spinoza dies, as if symbolically, when he is at the chapter "democracy". We will never know what he would have said in that chapter.[2]

There we are, but if you will, Comtesse's comment seems to me entirely correct on the Hobbes-Spinoza difference. However, I maintain, for the reasons I've just said, that before this difference and in a deeper sense of this difference, Spinoza can indeed be treated or called on a specific point "a Hobbes disciple" since he draws upon this Hobbes revolution in his political philosophy. There's a third question? You were saying?

Comtesse: [*The start of his comments are inaudible*] … There is a difference between Hobbes and Spinoza that involves a question of climate. It seems to me that Hobbes could never have said, as Spinoza did in the *Theological-Political Treatise,* Hobbes could never had made the distinction, the factual difference of master and slave, of Christ and the subject; he could never have said that a possible line of salvation passes through the eternal son or God, that is, the Christ, insofar as being spirit and a model to imitate, a model for imitation. He could never have said that. In my view, [Deleuze: You're right!] this is another climate of violence, [Deleuze: You're right! You're completely right!] a climate of extremely great wars, of extreme violence. And Spinoza seems to do so.

Deleuze: But you know why Spinoza can say this and not Hobbes? It's because Spinoza is Jewish, and Hobbes is not. I mean, all the very, very strange pages by Spinoza on Christ in which he creates and traces the portrait of a Christ literally having become independent from the Church, from the Christian Church, the Catholic Church, this entire operation could only have been undertaken by a Jew who himself was excommunicated by the Jews. Spinoza's situation allowed him something like that. Hobbes couldn't have. If he had attempted that, he'd be tried in

court. So, there remains what you are saying of greater importance, that in fact, the violence of Hobbes's texts and the kind of, on the contrary, I won't say it's a gentleness in Spinoza. He's not a man… I don't at all have the impression that he was a gentle man, but this kind of – how to say it – what is this opposite? It's not that it lacks violence; it's a very cold violence, very… this violence. I couldn't define Spinoza's violence, anyway not now. But you are right about the complete difference. If we go back to Nietzsche's idea that philosophers express something like temperaments, or instincts of the philosopher, for Hobbes, yes, yes. It's obvious that they don't have the same temperament. But managing to define what Spinoza's was, it's a bit our purpose with the topic of modes of existence. In any case, I agree with this third comment; this isn't the same style, it's another world, yes, it's true.

Comtesse: [*The start of his comments is inaudible*] … [There's] the problem of questioning Spinoza's political function, between the rapport of the *Ethics* and ideology.

Deleuze: Yes, completely, but that belongs to our task.

Comtesse: And on this point, I wanted to ask if there wasn't always in the history of philosophy a necessary rapport between the thinkers of Being, even if Spinoza says that Being is the truth as necessary cause of the idea of the freedom of desire. But, in any case, he's still a thinker of Being. And the problem is of knowing if there isn't a necessary rapport between the entire thought of Being and the plane of organization of the State. Isn't any thinker of Being led at a certain moment to think, as Spinoza does in chapters 4 and 5 of the *Theological-Political Treatise,* where he is precisely led to construct in certain moments of his ontological thought a plane of organization of the State, thus to refer in a certain way to the State, or to a model of the State? [*Return to Web Deleuze translation*]

Deleuze: Here I would agree without somewhat less. Here's I'd say something a bit different, that there's a fundamental relation between ontology and a certain style or a certain type of politics. Here we do agree. What this relation consists of, we don't yet know. We will encounter it this year. I assume that this rapport is fundamental. But what does a political philosophy which is placed in an ontological perspective consist of? Is it defined by the problem of the state? I'd say: not especially, because the others as well, a philosophy of the One, will also pass by way of the problem of the State. The real difference would appear to be elsewhere between pure ontologies and philosophies of the One. Philosophies of the One are philosophies that fundamentally imply a hierarchy of existents, hence the principle of competence, hence the principle of emanations. The sage practically is more competent than the non-sage, from the point of view of emanations: from the One emanates Being, from Being emanates other things, etc., the hierarchies of the Neo-Platonists. Therefore, the problem of the State, they will encounter it when they encounter it at the level of this problem: the institution of a political hierarchy. There is, and think of the Neo-Platonists tradition, there is the word "hierarchy" coming up constantly. There is a celestial hierarchy, a terrestrial hierarchy, and what the Neo-Platonists call hypostases are precisely the terms in a hierarchy, in the institution of a hierarchy.

What appears to me striking in a pure ontology is the point at which it repudiates the hierarchies. And in fact, if there is no One superior to Being, if Being is said of everything that is and is said of everything that is in one and the same sense, this is the point that we have reached, this is what appeared to me to be the key ontological proposition: there is no unity superior to Being. And, consequently, Being is said about everything that is spoken of, that is, is said of everything that is, is said of all be-ings (*étant*) in one and the same sense. This is the world of immanence. This

world of ontological immanence is an essentially anti-hierarchical world to the point that perhaps -- of course, it is necessary to correct; each time I say a sentence, I have an urge to correct it, of course -- these philosophers of ontology will tell us: evidently a practical hierarchy is needed. Ontology does not lead to statements that would be those of nihilism or non-being, of the type where everything is the same (*tout se vaut*).

And yet, in certain regards, "everything is the same", from the point of view of an ontology, that is, from the point of view of Being. Any be-ing (*étant*) realizes its being as much as there is in it, full stop, that's it. This is absolute anti-hierarchical thought. At the extreme, it's a kind of anarchy. There is an anarchy of be-ings in Being. If you will, this is the basic intuition of ontology: all beings are the same (*se valent*). This is a kind of cry, well yes, after all, after all, the stone, the insane, the reasonable, the animal, from a certain point of view, from the point of view of Being, they are the same. Each "is" as much as there is in it. And Being is said in one and the same sense of the stone, of the man, of the insane, of the reasonable, etc. This is a very beautiful idea. We don't see what causes them to say this, but it's a very beautiful idea. It even implies its cruelty, its savagery. This is a very savage kind of world. Fine.

With that, obviously, they encounter the political problem. But the way in which they will approach the political problem depends precisely on this kind of intuition of equal being, of anti-hierarchical being. And the way in which they think the State is no longer the relation of somebody who commands and others who obey. And there, in fact, I again encounter Comtesse's earlier comment. In Hobbes, the political relation is the relation of somebody who commands and of somebody who obeys. This is the pure political relation.

From the point of view of an ontology, it is not that. There, Spinoza did not go along with Hobbes at all. The problem of an ontology is, consequently, a function of this: Being is said of everything that is; this is how to be free, that is, how to realize its power of action under the best conditions. And the State, even more the civil State, that is, the entire society, is thought like this: the aggregate of conditions under which man can realize his power of action in the best way. So, this is not at all a relation of obedience. Obedience will come as something more; they are not idiots. They know that obedience is included there. But obedience will have to be justified by what it inscribes in a system in which society can mean only one thing, namely the best means for man of realizing his power of action. Obedience is second compared to this requirement, whereas in a philosophy of the One, obedience is obviously primary, that is, the political relation is the relation of obedience; it is not the relation of power of action's realization.

A student: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: This isn't obvious. That depends on what you have in mind. In the political sense of the term "aristocracy", aristocracy designates a certain type of regime, a certain regime or a group of being who call themselves "aristocrats" [and] command others. So, this is a type of regime that can be distinguished from the monarchy, democracy, etc. This regime existed, there were aristocracies in Greek cities, in certain Greek cities. There were some aristocracies in certain Italian cities; a regime called aristocratic did exist. If you think of other senses of the term "aristocracy" or other uses of the term "aristocracy", for example, the use that Nietzsche makes in certain contexts concerning the aristocracy, "aristocracy" there means something completely different. I wouldn't want… Is this what you had in mind? [The same student: Yes] Yes; I don't

even dare approach the question of Nietzsche because politically that becomes very, very complicated, so different from both Hobbes and Spinoza. … What?

Another student: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes, the problem of ontology, at that level, we will find this problem again, in fact, in Nietzsche, on this level. What is it, what is equal? What is equal is quite simple: that each being, whatever it is, in every way realizes all that it can of its power of action. That makes all beings equal. Powers of action are not equal. For example, the power of action of the stone and the power of action of an animal are not the same. But each one endeavors to "persevere in its being," that is, to realize its power of action. And, from this point of view, all are equal, all beings are the same. They are all in Being and Being is equal. Being is equally said of everything that is, but everything that is, is not equal, that is, does not have the same power. But Being which is said of everything that is, that, that is equal, that is, does not have the same power of action. But Being is said of all that is, and it is equal. Understand? Good.

In this light, it doesn't prevent there being differences between beings. So, from the point of view of the difference between beings, a whole idea of aristocracy can be established, yes, namely there are some better, there are some better. It's a bit what we had seen. I mean, during the entire previous meeting, if I try to summarize, understand where we were the last time, before I consider a new topic.

The last time, we were posing a very precise problem since our whole goal for the year is ontology. So, we must not lose sight of it. The problem which finally I have dealt with until now is this: what is the status, not of Being, but of be-ing (*étant*)? That is, what is the status of that which is from the point of view of an ontology? The last time, I tried to say what was the status of the existent in Spinoza, this status of the existent constituting the correlate of ontology, specifically constituting an ethics. You see [that] ethics is the status of the existent, of the be-ing; ontology is the status of Being. And Being is said of be-ing or of the existent.

Well, my response was double: the status of be-ing in Spinoza's ontology is double. On one hand, [there's] quantitative distinction between be-ings. From what point of view? What quantity? Quantity of power of action. [*Pause*] Be-ings are each degrees of powers of action. So, [there's] quantitative distinction between be-ings from the point of view of power of action. On the other hand, and at the same time, [there's] qualitative distinction between modes of existence. From what point of view? From the point of view of affects that realize power of action. And what I had tried to show was that these two conceptions, that of the quantitative distinction between existents, and the other point of view, that of the qualitative opposition between modes of existence, far from contradicting themselves, have been interlinked with one another the whole time. I believe, that's it. If you haven't understood, that is upsetting. If you have understood that, you have understood everything. So, that has completed, if you will, the first heading. In the end, during this first trimester, we will have completed a first great heading: ontology, what does it mean, ontology, and how is it distinguished from philosophies which are not ontologies?

Second major heading: what is the status of be-ing (*étant*) from the point of view of a pure ontology like Spinoza's? There we are; if you are ready, I am passing on to a third heading.

A student: [*Inaudible comments; it concerns a question of the terms: quantity, difference, in the context of ontology*]

Deleuze: Yes, it is. You understand perfectly based on what you just said. I hope so, in any case, since you are saying, for example, you say that from the point of view of hierarchy, what is primary is difference, and one goes from difference to identity. What you are saying is quite right, but I would just add: which type of difference is it about? Response: in the end, it is always a difference between Being and something superior to Being, since the hierarchy is going to be a difference in judgment. Hierarchy implies a difference in judgment. Therefore, judgment is done in the name of a superiority of the One over Being. We can judge Being precisely because there is an authority superior to Being. Thus, hierarchy is inscribed starting from this difference since hierarchy, its very foundation, is the transcendence of the One over Being. OK? And what you call difference is exactly this transcendence of the One over Being. When you invoke Plato, difference is only primary in Plato in a very precise sense, namely the One is more than Being. So, this is a hierarchical difference. On the other hand, when you say ontology goes from identity, that's not exactly right; in any case, it goes from Being to be-ings (*étants*), that is, it goes, let's say, from the same or from Being, right, to what is and only what is different. It goes therefore from Being to the differences. It is not a hierarchical difference. All beings are equally in Being.

In the Middle Ages, -- we will see this, we will return to all this more closely -- there is a very, very important school. You know, these schools of the Middle Ages, one cannot just liquidate them by saying that it was the great era of Scholasticism. There was a school given the name the School of Chartres, and the School of Chartres, they depend on, they are very close to Duns Scotus about whom I've already spoken a bit. And they insist enormously on the Latin term "equality," equal Being. They say all the time that Being is fundamentally equal. That doesn't mean that existents or be-ings (*étants*) are equal, no. But Being is equal for all, which means, in a certain way, that all be-ings are in Being. It's here that, subsequently, whatever is the difference for which you strive, since there is a difference, there is a non-difference of Being, and there are differences between be-ings; these differences are not conceived in a hierarchical way. Or, they will be conceived in a hierarchical way very, very secondarily, to catch up with, to reconcile the things. But in the primary intuition, the difference is not hierarchical. Whereas in philosophies of the One, difference is fundamentally hierarchical. I would say much more: the difference between be-ings is quantitative and qualitative at the same time, quantitative difference of powers of action, qualitative difference of modes of existence. But it is not hierarchical.

Then, of course, they often speak as if there had been a hierarchy. They will say, fine, they will say, obviously that the reasonable man is better than the malicious one. He is better, but in what sense and why? This is not due to reasons of hierarchy. It's due to reasons of powers of action and realization of power of action. Anyway, we will see all this.

In fact, I would like to pass progressively to a third heading which is connected to the second and which would come down to saying that if ethics - I defined ethics as the two coordinates, the quantitative distinction from the point of view of power of action, the qualitative opposition from

the point of view of the modes of existence. And I tried to show last time how we passed perpetually from the one to the other. Fine. I would like to begin a third heading which is, from the point of view of ethics, so what is this situation and how does the problem of evil arise? Because, once again, we have seen that this problem arose in an acute way. Why? Because I remind you, and I won't be returning to this point, I am just recalling it, in what sense, from time immemorial, really from time immemorial, classical philosophy had set up this paradoxical proposition, knowing very well that it was a paradox, to wit: evil is nothing. And precisely, evil is nothing, I was telling you; understand that we can read it in this way and say, fine, this is a manner of speaking. But strangely, this is not one manner of speaking; there are at least two possible manners of speaking and these are not reconciled at all.

For when I say, "evil is nothing", you know – I won't return to the commentary that I made about this expression – but when I say this, "evil is nothing", I can mean a first thing: I can mean, evil is nothing because everything is good. If I say everything is good, how is "everything is good" written? It's written "t-o-u-t e-s-t B-i-e-n" [*Deleuze spells it out*]. If you write it like that with a capital G, you can comment on the expression word for word. That means, there is Being, fine; the One is superior to Being, and the superiority of the One over Being makes Being turn back towards the One as being the Good. In other words, "evil is nothing" means, inevitably, evil is nothing since it is the Good superior to being which is the cause of Being. In other words, the Good makes Being. The Good as reason for Being (*raison* d'être), the Good is the One as the reason for Being. The One is superior to Being. Everything is Good means that it is the Good that causes to be that which is.

A student: That's a bit Platonist, isn't it?

Deleuze: That's precisely right; I am discussing Plato. [*Laughter*] So that works out. If you had said it wasn't Platonist, I would have been upset because…

Another student: When you use the word "be-ing" (*étant*), are you giving it the Heideggerian sense? Are you defining the "be-ing" as which is in…

Deleuze: Yes, yes, I defined it quite well, very well, very well, briefly, but very well. I said: it is not Being; it's that which is. No, it was not in a sense… But Heidegger never said anything different. So, fine. Wait a bit. Just wait.

So, you understand, "evil is nothing" means that only the Good creates Being, and correlatively: creates action. It was Plato's argument, as we saw, the wicked one is not voluntarily wicked since what the wicked one wants is the Good; it's just any Good whatever (*un Bien quelconque*). So, I can say that "evil is nothing" in the sense that only the Good creates Being and creates action, therefore evil is nothing. In a pure Ontology where there is no One superior to Being, I say evil is nothing. Finally, there is no evil; there is Being. Okay. But that engages me with something completely new. If evil is nothing, this is because Good is nothing either. You see that this is therefore for completely opposite reasons that I can say in both cases that evil is nothing. In one case, I am saying that evil is nothing because only the Good creates being and creates action; in the other case, I am saying that evil is nothing because the Good is nothing as well, because there is only Being.

And we have seen that here as well, this negation of the Good as of evil did not prevent Spinoza from creating an ethics. How can I create an ethics if there is neither good nor evil? You see, starting from the same expression, in the same era, if you take "evil is nothing", signed by

Leibniz and signed by Spinoza, they both are using the same expression, “evil is nothing”, but it has two opposite senses. In Leibniz, he derives it from Plato, and in Spinoza, [he] creates a pure ontology. So, it becomes complicated. Hence my problem: what is the status of evil from the point of view of ethics, that is, of the whole status of be-ings, of existents, especially as there is going to be a very important problem here as practice? We really are going to enter into points in which ethics is really practical.

And, I am saying in this regard that we possess, and I had alerted you that I wanted you to read or reread it, [we possess] an exceptional text from Spinoza. This exceptional Spinoza text is an exchange of eight letters, four for each, four for each, four-four. This isn’t very long, an exchange of eight letters with a young man called Blyenbergh, a young man from the Netherlands, a young man from over there, who wrote to Spinoza. Spinoza doesn’t know him. Everything is important because there are mysteries in this correspondence immediately. The sole object of this correspondence is evil, in which Blyenbergh, the young [Willem van] Blyenbergh asks Spinoza: “could you explain something about evil?”[3]

There’s something very strange: the commentators – here as well, read the text, so you can decide yourselves – many commentators, for example, the editors of the Pléiade edition, decided – in notes, that’s always easy – that Blyenbergh is an idiot, an idiot, that he’s idiotic, stupid and confused. I read these letters, and I do not at all have the same impression. I get the impression that Blyenbergh is a strange guy, but not at all stupid nor confused. First, one thing that supports my view from the start: four letters from Spinoza is a lot. Spinoza doesn’t much like writing letters, or else he writes to friends he trusts. He especially does not like writing to strangers. He is always telling himself, what’s going to happen to me next from this? So, he writes very little. On the other hand, Spinoza detests insolence. He doesn’t at all like someone being insolent, having bad manners; he doesn’t like that at all. That’s his preference.

And, starting from the second letter, Blyenbergh begins snickering, making demands, saying to Spinoza: “Explain yourself, I summon you to… so what is this?”, inventing grotesque consequences of Spinozism, in short, being quite annoying, so, a troublemaker (*chieur*), but not at all an idiot. Irritating, he’s very irritating, very irritating. And I also notice that Spinoza doesn’t like irritating people at all; irritating people annoy him, and to whom he has to answer he doesn’t have the time. First, this is quite simple, he doesn’t like this, and Spinoza notices it from the second letter he receives. Spinoza gets very hard and tells him: Ok, Blyenbergh, what do you think you’re doing? Leave me alone. Are you going to drop this? But here is where I am saying there is something extraordinary: he continues the correspondence. And, to my knowledge, we’ve never since this in Spinoza. He received many insulting letters; we have insulting letters against Spinoza, and he doesn’t answer them, he doesn’t answer them. You’re annoying? He doesn’t answer. But what is happening? If the guy was an idiot, Spinoza wouldn’t respond to him. And why does Spinoza stand this tone that he doesn’t like at all? Why does he stand this? Why does he consent to answer all this?

I do have an answer. It’s in order to give you a kind of feeling for the importance of this excerpt. I do have an answer: it’s that Blyenbergh is the only one who engaged Spinoza on a precise problem about which Spinoza had never elsewhere provided an explanation, to wit: the problem of evil, and this subject fascinates Spinoza. Henceforth, he accepts everything that’s annoying from Blyenbergh, all this behavior as a little jerk (*petit con*), he takes it, he takes it. He will answer because for himself, he wants to clarify this matter of evil. And he is going to answer,

and he sweeps aside Blyenbergh's kinds of insolence because he feels that Blyenbergh is nonetheless quite intelligent. And in fact, Blyenbergh does not drop it. And Blyenbergh's prodigious feat, that was meant to render an homage despite everything, is that Blyenbergh forces Spinoza to say things that Spinoza would never have said and some very, very imprudent things, very imprudent – we'll see in the text – some very, very odd things, declarations, kinds of paradoxes about evil that astonish us to find written by Spinoza. And all this is thanks to Blyenbergh.

And my interpretation would solely be that Spinoza accepts this correspondence because it's a unique case in which he sees a chance to clarify himself on this problem of evil. What would confirm this is how does Spinoza cease the correspondence? Suddenly, Blyenbergh goes a bit nuts. First, he acts imprudently by going to visit Spinoza. Spinoza already couldn't stand getting letters, but visits… [*Laughter*] So, suddenly, Spinoza glimpses Blyenbergh for a short moment, and then says, that's it, so long. And following this, Blyenbergh writes to Spinoza and ruptures the implicit pact that existed between them. That is, he begins asking questions in all directions about ethics. He moves away from the problem of evil. Then, Spinoza writes back immediately; no, on the contrary, he waits to answer this last letter from Blyenbergh. It's a response with great dryness, saying: no, no more questions; you had the right only to one topic. You've left the topic, so we're done. I don't want to see you, I don't want to read you, leave me alone! So, this is very odd. Spinoza took it; he took being treated in a way that he doesn't like being treated over the course of eight letters, the time to clarify himself about this problem of evil.

Fine. So, I am saying that this problem of evil is indeed at the heart of ethics. And yet, it isn't considered in the *Ethics*. It's in this correspondence with Blyenbergh that it's explicitly addressed. I believe that it's this problem that can now allow us to make a great leap forward regarding our remaining question – I am saying this to remind you – fundamentally, what is the rapport of the existent and Being, what is the rapport of be-ing and Being? So, this is why I'd sort of like to start again very gently from this problem of evil. And I am saying that Blyenbergh, starting from his first letter, moves forward directly and says to Spinoza: "Explain to me what this means: God forbade Adam to eat the apple, the fruit, and yet Adam did it." That is, God forbade something; the man, the existent sidestepped this interdiction. "How does this happen in your own system, in your ontology?" And already at this point, Blyenbergh knows Spinoza quite poorly; he isn't familiar with the *Ethics*, necessarily so, since it wasn't a public text. So, he's not even addressing Spinoza as Spinoza; he's addressing more of a Spinoza that… [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:02:12]

Part 2

… It's a manner. We'd say something else today, but it comes down to the same thing, eh? Let's choose an example… Well… And what's important is Spinoza's answer – starting with the first letter there, it's really their attack. Spinoza answers something like, "Fine." He's already responding to Blyenbergh, almost, "Oh yes, pal, this doesn't really appeal to me, but fine, fine, for this problem, I'll give you some kind of explanation." And he answers him with a very, very odd thing then, very odd, to the point that one has to read the text several times. One wonders: "But what is he trying to tell us?"

And I am reading the text:[4] "The prohibition [to Adam] of the fruit of the tree…" – here, Spinoza is answering Blyenbergh – "The prohibition [to Adam] of the fruit of the tree consisted only in this: God revealed to Adam [*Deleuze rereads the start of this sentence*] that eating of that tree caused death, just as he also reveals to us through the natural intellect that poison is deadly to us" (XIX). Reading the text like that… If I number the paradoxes of the correspondence with Blyenbergh, I'd say this starts with a very, very odd paradox. Since Spinoza answers essentially: There you are, you are speaking in the name… In fact, when you say: "God prohibited Adam from eating of the fruit," you aren't expressing a fact; you are already giving an interpretation. It happens that this interpretation is from the Old Testament. It's an interpretation; it's not a fact. You are telling a tale, the very tale told in the Old Testament. And this tale implies a certain "code", as we'd say today. What is the code? It's the system of judgment. "You are translating a fact" – there is indeed a fact; Spinoza is going to try to discover this fact – "but when you recount: 'God prohibited Adam and Adam did it anyway," well, this is a tale, indeed, it's fine, it's interesting, it's a tale that has its code, and the code is the system of judgment.

Why is this the system of judgment? Because it implies a first judgment, a prohibitive judgment from God, "you will not do that," "you will not do that," God's first judgment. In fact, nothing has yet been done; it's from the domain of judgment. Nothing yet has been done; Adam hasn't done anything yet. And God tells him: "You will not eat of the fruit." It's a divine judgment. "Don't eat the fruit." It's a divine imperative, it's a judgment. Second thing, second judgment: Adam judges that it's fine for him to eat the fruit. It's the famous "false judgment." Third, judgment of punishment: God condemns Adam, and the sanction is he is expelled from paradise. In all this, at all the levels, at all the steps, someone has judged, that is, judgments have been substituted for facts. This is what Spinoza is in the process of telling us: "You have substituted judgments for facts."

For Spinoza, the philosophy of judgment is a catastrophe. In fact, once again, judgment implies the primacy of the One over Being. Judging Being can only happen in the name of something that is superior to Being. And all the philosophies of judgment, I believe, will precisely oppose an ontology in this regard. Fine…

So, notice Spinoza saying: "Fine, good, all that – you can keep on telling me this tale, but it belongs entirely to the system of judgment. On the other hand, if I am trying to grasp a fact in this, where is the fact?" This implies: no judgment. You eliminate judgments. What's left? What's left is the following fact: Adam ate of the fruit, and he lost perfection, that is, power of action. There's the fact. There's the assumed fact. It's a very good method, looking for the fact. Adam ate of the fruit, and in this way, loses his perfection, that is, his power of action. Notice that in the fact as I have just stated it, I have not held onto "God had prohibited", which was a judgment. We'll see if I can integrate it into the fact, God's pseudo interdiction. But we are staying here. We are still attempting to dig out this fact.

God ate of the fruit and Adam had… Ah, no, no, no! [*Laughter*] Adam ate of the fruit, and there, he lost perfection, that is, his power of action. Spinoza really doesn't hold back, eh? "Just as he also reveals to us through the natural intellect that poison is deadly to us". In other words, he explicitly says: the apple acted on Adam as a poison. Adam didn't do anything at all that was forbidden; he got poisoned… Ah yes? Ah, that changes everything! I thought he had done something forbidden, but not at all! He had what? So there, already, we're going to make a leap forward for later, but here we have to go very slowly, right?

What happened to Adam precisely? Losing his perfection, that is, his power of action, what is this? You see, it's not a sanction; a sanction implies judgment. It isn't "God punished Adam." This happens all the time in nature, these kinds of things, an animal eating something that's not good for it. Afterwards, we say that the animal died – "this is the way that we know, etc., that a poison results in death" – we say, "oh well, it's dead." Here, it's not a judgment; it's a statement of fact: "It's dead." It's no longer moving. Or else, it's sick, it's sick. Adam ate something that made him sick. Sickness is the reduction of power of action. What does it mean to be sick? It's loss of power of action.

Fine. What's the difference between health and illness? There you sense that we are beginning to grasp a problem; we're beginning to grasp a problem. Isn't it going to be the role of ethics and ontology to create a kind of conversion of values from good and evil into health/illness? Isn't ethics fundamentally going to be, fundamentally, a what? A medicine? Something other than medicine? And what kind of medication? Fine, I am coming back… For this, let's go very, very slowly. Adam ate the apple, eh? And he gets sick; he's gotten poisoned, so he falls ill. "Falling ill" means "becoming less powerful." This is well known: when I get ill, I can no longer do certain things that I could do before. Fine. In fact, this happens all the time. I am saying: animals, in fact, eat just what they shouldn't. Cats, for example, in the wild, they happen to eat things that are poisons for them. Rats don't stop eating some – no, rats are quite intelligent, contrary to cats that they [the rats] avoid. [*Laughter*] But sometimes, a rat goes down. That is, fine… And us, us all the time.

In other words, Spinoza is in the process of telling us, of slipping into our ear (and into Blyenbergh's ear): "But Adam made only one error: eating the apple; he wasn't able to do so," "he wasn't able to do so." What does that mean? Well, I'm not able to swallow arsenic either. Fine. Adam's stupidity is not to have understood that he was not capable of doing that. This is getting complicated, right? "This is the way that we know or don't know that a poison results in death."

So, it's time for me to catch up, within the fact, the interdiction – God's pseudo-interdiction. The text says formally: "God acted well," but not at all a prohibition to Adam which would be the order of judgment; "It gave him a revelation." There, you see, all the words are important: a revelation is not a judgment. A prohibition is a judgment: "don't do this." A revelation, it's letting him know. By what means? It doesn't matter here; Spinoza wasn't… It was letting him know. What was it letting him know? Well, in its immense goodness, God – fine, we can hold onto this bit of… -- let it be known to Adam that the fruit would act on him like a poison. Only, Adam didn't understand a thing. Having a weak understanding – Adam not really being terribly clever (*malin-malin*) – he understood nothing. God let him know that this fruit is a poison. That's nice, because otherwise, how are we to know that a fruit is a poison? I'm walking in the forest; I see some wonderful fruits; how can I know that it's a poison?

In three ways: I eat it, and I collapse… [*Laughter*] This is the Adam method. [*Laughter*] It's not really the best. [*Laughter*] I fall sick. First way. Second way: I observe, I observe. I am bringing – I have my cat in my pocket; [*Laughter*] I give him a piece of fruit to eat; he's overcome by convulsions and dies. [*Laughter*] I can conclude through experience that this fruit is poison, right? I'll have experimented. This implies a certain wisdom. A second possible method. It's the experimental method. Third method: the divine method. God spares me the experience and lets me know that it's a poison. It reveals to me that it's a poison. By what means? Let's read the

books of the prophets: by a sign that I interpret. That's how the prophets proceed. And Spinoza has an admirable and beautiful theory of prophetism and prophetic signs in the *Theological-Political Treatise*. But we conceive that God might, in fact, make a revelation to Adam. It indeed did so for Moses; it indeed did so for the prophets. It can make a revelation to Adam, to tell him: "This fruit is poison." Adam understands nothing. Suddenly he tells himself – this is really how he is – he tells himself, "Ah ok, what is God telling me there?"

Claire Parnet: Like Rantanplan, then?[5]

Deleuze: Yes, entirely, entirely, like Rantanplan… And he says, "Ah, what is my God telling me?" And he understands that God forbids him something. But God isn't forbidding him anything at all. Out of kindness, God sets up a poster, like that, [*Laughter*], it puts up a poster about the fruit: "poison". The other one says, "Oh la, la, God is forbidding me to eat of the fruit." Not at all. God could care less – completely, completely, completely. God just doesn't care, it doesn't care. It was warning Adam. God could really care less. And Adam tells himself: "Is God forbidding me from this? This really must be good, this fruit! It must be good." He eats the fruit.

So, the fact, what is it? Once again, the fact is this: God… Here we have our reduction to the fact… We converted the system of judgment into a simple fact, complex but unique: God revealed that the fruit was poison; Adam still at the fruit, and he fell ill. Fine. He fell ill.

Shouldn't this open some horizons for us? And I am starting… You just accept this departure point for Spinoza, and I'd already like to comment on it to the maximum, because if we grasp that… This seems a bit like a humorous proposition. When you read the text, it's up to you also to place your accents. I believe that Spinoza gets an intense thrill in extracting this supposed fact of history from judgment. He cannot not know himself what he is in the process of stirring up. He cannot not think, for example, of the state in which priests are, in reading… The priests of the era. Nowadays, they are used to it… [*Laughter*] In what state could the priests be in reading things like that? "Ah, Spinoza, Spinoza, do you know what stories he's telling about Adam?" Anyway… Delightful! Delightful!... I believe it to be a text of great philosophical humor. It's a great text, yes, of Jewish humor, of positivist humor, and in short, just humor.

Claire Parnet: [*Comments barely audible; she asks him if he doesn't think that this connects to there being two kinds of prophets, the "Averell Daltons" (the stupidest Daltons, nemesis of the hero) and the "Lucky Lucks"*] There are some [prophets] who understand everything – Jeremy and Daniel – and those who understand nothing: Adam…

Deleuze: Yes, indeed, since [Spinoza] is opposed to the whole tradition of "Adam, the perfect man". For him, it's very important that Adam cannot be the perfect man. The bit of perfection that he has, he loses it at the start, and he doesn't have great perfection. So, … Yes?

A student: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: To mix everything up, it would be Kierkegaardian: Adam would be agonized facing this interdiction about which he doesn't understand what its meaning is. But, once again, I recall that for Spinoza – and it's Spinoza that we're discussing – there is no interdiction, there is absolutely no interdiction, there are absolutely no tales, there is absolutely no agony for Adam. There is only the fact that Adam gets poisoned. And that is the only fact there is.

What I mean is… And so, that's it… Just hold on to that, but I'd already like to draw some ethical consequences to show this proposition to you: "Adam eats of the fruit and falls ill because

he is poisoned," [that] it's rather inexhaustible. Before we even try to see what it means philosophically, I believe, let's consider some consequences. Well, I believe that there are already many practical, that is, ethical consequences.

In the end, there is a rather popular expression: "to poison one's life." There are people who poison their lives. What does that mean? I mean, let's take Adam's behavior. He had the means to know if the fruit was poison or not, either from God's revelation, or by experimentation. He leaped on the fruit, and he ate it, and then he fell down – he fell ill… Isn't this to some extent, if it makes Spinoza laugh so much, isn't this to some extent what we do? And if he chooses this example, isn't it a very representative example of what we do every day? Specifically, we never stop… And perhaps morality doesn't have much to tell us about this, but perhaps ethics has lots to tell us about this. We never stop, literally, putting ourselves in impossible situations. Poisoning one's life is the art that we have of placing ourselves in impossible situations. "Impossible situations," what does that mean? [They're] situations, well, in the end, that are going to make us fall ill. And we go running into them. It's quite strange.

What does that mean? And at that point, what would the opposite be? Since there we have a phenomenon of illness; eating the fruit, he falls ill. But we never stop getting ill. We make ourselves ill. Adam made himself ill. Fine. I make myself sick all the time. What is it that we must do? What would it be "not making oneself sick"?

So, here we are in the process of outlining a new face of ethics. I was saying: ethics means there is no good (*bien*), nor evil, but be careful, there is some good (*bon*) and some bad. This is in the process of becoming, slowly, from our first move onward, [that] there is no good nor evil, but careful, there is health and illness. And in one very, very general sense, there is health and illness. I never stop putting myself in impossible situations that make me sick. "It makes me sick". What must we do? What would be the good (*le bon*)? What would ethics advise us? "Before even creating morality, act on the situations." Hey, there the ethics would become an art of action preventatively on the situation. "Above all, don't wait to be in your impossible situation; start by not getting yourself into it". Fine, that seems to be something prudent, but the more it's banal, perhaps the more it will swell into something philosophical. We are going to see where that leads us, where that could lead us.

Understand, morality is… Fine… "Given the situation, one must act for the best." Ethics will not say that. "Oh, if you are in a particular situation, whether you are a coward, or you are awful, it's required. It's required." It's not a matter of being brave in impossible situations because there, no… At first, it's hard. No, it's not a matter of throwing yourselves into that situation. So, does that mean "run away"? We'll see all that, we'll see… We have to weigh each word… We have to go very, very slowly.

So, what would ethics be? Not at all an art of withdrawing from every situation, but this would be the art of operating a kind of selection at the level of the situation itself. What does this mean, this art of selection at the level of the situation itself? What did he get wrong?... Well, it's precisely… I am getting ahead here because… This will be the first sense – I'm not saying it's the final sense – but this will indeed be the first sense of what Spinoza will call "Reason". What is the difference between the reasonable man and Adam? At what point did Adam not behave in a reasonable manner? It's that the reasonable man is the one who makes a kind of selection. He is experimenting. He is looking for what is poison and not poison in a situation. He is eliminating from the situation what is poison, or he is trying to. As much as it's in him, as much as he can,

each person makes the effort, each person will make the effort… to select the givens in the situation. There's a task that's not about morality, eh? It's ethical, still within our practical concern to distinguish an ethics and a morality.

And here, as I am saying this, I tell myself: "obviously, I'm right". Why am I right? Because, after years and years of distance, some very, very odd pages reverberate by someone who had as much humor as Spinoza – the strangest humor in the world – who wasn't openly Spinozist, and who wrote about this single point from the Spinozist pages, namely: Jean-Jacques Rousseau. And Jean-Jacques Rousseau, despite everything that's said, didn't like morality. He didn't like morality at all.

And in the *Confessions* that is, up to a certain point, up to a certain moment, the funniest book in the world, anyway, one of the funniest, most amusing books in the world… The *Confessions* is even composed in extraordinary fashion. That is, Rousseau is absolutely unleashed throughout all the first books of the *Confessions*, really relating just anything, compromising himself up to his neck. It's a really, really funny book; one cannot read it without really laughing at every page, at least at some pages, all of Rousseau's adventures, all that is delightful.

And then a kind of process occurs – so here, this is a great book on the formation of what can be called the pathological process. It makes… As he moves forward in the book, the laughter dies out, the big guffaw dies out, and this links, really, to a kind of thing… There's the theme of persecution that first emerges little by little, and there is the influence, the fall, then, into this terrible illness, into this kind of delirious paranoia. And the book becomes darker and darker and darker, but it's an admirable book through its composition. The arrow of laughter there, throughout all the first books, the kind of manner in which Rousseau never stops telling the reader, "see how completely ridiculous I am, how grotesque, but I'm going to win, in the end, I'll be the one that'll get them!" Then, more and more: "Oh no, they are in the process of getting at me, they are in the process of getting at me!" Up to the end, in which there are pages of agony that are, so… It's a tremendous book of both voluntary and involuntary composition.

But I am saying, in the *Confessions,* Rousseau explains, at one moment, that he was reflecting on a great book that he could never create, and that this great book would be called *Morality* – but be careful – *Sensitive Morality*. Sensitive morality – sensitive – or *the Materialism of the Wise Man*. You see, morality, yes, but sensitive, in opposition to morality all by itself; the wise man, yes, but materialism of the wise man. And what are these, sensitive morality or the materialism of the wise man? We are not surprised to see here a tone and a theme, literally – here I am not exaggerating; it's following the very letter of the text – a truly Spinozist tone and letter. For the entire theme of this morality that Rousseau wanted to create and that he could never do consisted in saying this: morality is not interesting. Why isn't morality interesting? Because it dwells entirely on a theme that is absolutely a false theme, that of the combat of virtue and interest, the combat of virtue and interest. And what morality never stops imitating, and what it never stops beckoning us toward, is toward this struggle of virtue and interest in which virtue is supposed to be victorious over our interest. We have to make ourselves the agents of virtue and justice, if necessary, against our interest, and that's what morality is. Rousseau says: that never worked, something like that.

And Rousseau proposes a thing that he believes in enormously and that he believes in all the more since at the beginning, it makes him laugh greatly, and then it's going to make him enormously… it's going to agonize him a lot. But at the beginning, he finds that very, very

funny. He says: “But you will be wicked, and you will be vicious as long as it’s in your interest to be vicious and wicked.” There is never any struggle of virtue and interest. Virtue follows. It adapts – that’s even what creates hypocrites. It always adapts; virtue follows interest. There is never any conflict of justice-interest, virtue-interest. This is not true. He says, “I know something about this, me, never”, Rousseau says. He says everything there, in the *Confessions*. He says very well: “However, I stood in for morality, I stood in for the moral being, I’m known for that, but I can tell it to you all the more: virtue always follow interest, and I know something about this.”

So, what do we do if virtue always follows interest? Well, he says: “here we are, we are in situations” – that’s what materialism is; it’s really being-in-situation – [*Pause*] “We are in situations. Well, in situations, there are always things, or there are always elements of the situation that give us an interest in being wicked. Sensitive morality is selecting within a situation, eliminating the elements that give us an interest in being wicked. If you have an interest in being wicked, you will be so; although you yourself will hide it, you are hiding it even from yourself, from others, from yourself; you will be cowardly and wicked. So, it’s not there that one must struggle. One must not struggle there; even, at the extreme, one must not struggle at all. One must initiate situations in which you will have no interest in being wicked or else in which you select well within the situation while eliminating the elements that cause an interest in being wicked. If you will, it’s at once an extremely flat idea, but if you understand it, it is nonetheless very, very odd, this idea, if you imagine someone who lives like that. Because what does this yield? There, that’s the first text that I’m considering, the *Confessions*. I am saying that it’s strictly Spinozist.

The second text that I’m considering [is] *The New Héloise*, Rousseau’s novel in letters. It’s a strange text. The heroine… -- Oh, la la, I should have looked at it. Really, I no longer know… Julie? It’s Julie? It’s Julie, right? I better not get this wrong, that would be catastrophic [*The students confirm this*] – It’s Julie. The heroine, Julie, loves -- falls in love with, as a young girl – falls in love with her tutor, Saint-Preux. Fine. She is forced to marry a gentleman, that she respects and regards highly, but doesn’t love deeply who is called Monsieur de Wolmar. Saint-Preux will return, again attempting a new seduction. So, there we are. But there are two very odd episodes. Monsieur de Wolmar – in fact, this is a very, very strange novel – Monsieur de Wolmar leads Julie and Saint-Preux into the grotto where they had exchanged their first kiss and leaves them there. What art! What ethical skill! [*Laughter*] Eh? And here, they both look at one another, like that. Good. On the other hand, Monsieur de Wolmar is extremely, he falls gravely ill, and Julie makes a decision as a vow, almost before a notary. She declares: “Even if my dear husband dies, I will not marry Saint-Preux.” You see?

What am I in the process of recounting? I am commenting – because I am commenting following Rousseau’s own commentary. *The New Héloise* is made of letters, an exchange of letters, but in one case, or perhaps in two cases, there is a personal note from Rousseau precisely regarding Julie’s commitment not to marry Saint-Preux even if Wolmar dies. And here, Rousseau inserts a note in his own name, and says, “This is how one must behave in life.” What does Julie do, in fact? According to Rousseau’s literal commentary – you’ll go find it in the text, I hope – Rousseau’s literal commentary: she was in a terrible situation. Everything was swirling around her; she told herself: Saint-Preux is back, etc. She changes the situation. She makes the commitment that, whatever happens, even if Wolmar dies, she will not marry Saint-Preux, even for social reasons. She cannot go back on this; everyone heard her commitment, etc. It’s a bit as

if one makes… Gamblers, what do they do, gamblers, when it's really going badly? Gamblers have themselves banned from the casino. So, they complete a document. Gamblers complete a document that they… Fine… Or else, they will be dragging themselves through a life of infamy, in which father, mother and children, etc., will no longer be able to eat, and they will waste all their family's money gambling. And this will be shameful, the degradation from one catastrophic situation to another. Or else they have themselves banned. An extraordinary energy is required; it only takes two minutes, right? They run to the casino, fill out the document requesting the banishment, self-banishment. The document is recorded; they can no longer enter any casino for the rest of their lives. Fine. This is why it exists, for this reason. It's perfect. If you have the slightest gambling tendency, even before having ever gambled, fill out your banishment document, eh? [*Laughter*] It won't happen to you.

What did they do? I'd like you to sense that we are, in the end, getting close to saying some things, some stupidities like that, we are getting close to something. We nonetheless grasp something… Through this action, it happens that, in this precise case, it's an act of will. Fine. Through this act of will – which didn't take… which isn't heroic – they changed the situation, they modified the situation, they introduced a new element into the situation. And in Rousseau, in fine form, adds a third example. – No, the gambling example is not his, but he adds nothing. – It's exactly what Julie did. By declaring publicly, "whatever happens, I will not marry [Saint-Preux],"[6] she modified the situation. And Rousseau adds an even better example, to which he is personally committed. He says, you understand, inheritance is a funny thing. "Inheritance is a strange institution," Rousseau says. Because, whatever you do, to the extent that you will inherit, you cannot, at one moment or another, you cannot be prevented from wishing for your parents' death. What heir hasn't wished, at some point, for the father's death?

And that's the situation. It's the situation, it's the situation, there, typically, according to Rousseau… Perhaps you understand, at that point, that what I am in the process of saying, this connects to many things in Rousseau's thought. Why is he such a critic of society? It's because, for him, society – it's not complicated – it's a system that, at every moment, makes being wicked in your interest. This is an objective definition of society. In society, you do not stop having an interest in being wicked, unfair, whatever you want. Tyrant, coward, everything. Fine. So that's how society is? Well, yes, according to Rousseau. That's how society is. You always have an interest in being the biggest bastard possible in society. Good, so, although with your morality you'll say, I'm noble and generous, that doesn't prevent you from behaving like everyone. Inheritance is typical. If your parents have money, well, you are required, at some moment, -- your father or your mother annoyed you, and you say: "ah la la, quick, let them die, let that one die!" Fine. You have an interest in being wicked, of wishing someone's death.

And Rousseau says: the only act of sensitive morality – materialism of the sage – is what? To renounce one's inheritance, renounce the inheritance in advance. Before a notary, I renounce my inheritance. Suddenly, oh, well, I've gotten out of a difficult situation. I'm fed up, dragging through twenty or forty or sixty years of life telling myself, "When is papa going to die?" [*Laughter*] This is not a particularly brilliant or noteworthy life. There's more to do in life. There's more to do than await one's inheritance. There are still lots of people, if you think of the history of humanity, that have lived awaiting inheritances. Well, no, it's stupid, it's a lousy life, it's a stupid life, imbecilic. So then, fine, like that, I am taking care of everything. I'm taking care of it all. I've gotten myself out of a bad situation. I renounce the inheritance before a notary.

So, I tell myself: this example from Rousseau is odd because Rousseau didn't know it, but it's exactly what Spinoza did, exactly what he did. His father had a business concern, in fruits. It was on the Spain-Portugal-Netherland route, his business concern. It did very well, it seems. Here, opinions are divided, but finally… Spinoza's detractors say that it wasn't doing well, [*Laughter*] but the Spinozists say that it did well. [*Laughter*] So, let's assume that it did well. So, fine, Spinoza was involved in it at one point. He had a brother-in-law – so he had a sister – and then he had a brother in law, so he worked with the brother in law. All of that must have annoyed him at some point… So, he said: "Fine, go on, go on", and he renounced the inheritance. He renounced it. Just like that, he had peace; he removed himself from that situation; no one was going to come tell him: "So, you live with your family". No, he went off to polish his lenses, like that. He got out of the situation. Fine, it's odd that Rousseau refers to the same… In fact, because if there is something in society that gives one an interest in being wicked, it's no doubt precisely inheritance. It's a… [*Deleuze does not finish*]

But this goes much farther. All of Rousseau's life, he constructed it, Rousseau's wisdom himself, he constructed it like that. Avoiding placing himself… He knew that – this is why the *Confessions* is so funny as a book – he knew that, in most classical situations, in most ordinary situations of society, Rousseau knew very well that he turned fully into the grotesque. He speaks of this; he speaks of this a lot. Whatever happened, he was the comic. [*Laughter*] It was a destiny; he made everyone laugh. Rousseau walked into room; he was certain to collide (*se cogner*). It was drama; drama strolled along beside him. He entered; it was certain: gaffes! Rousseau tells about all the gaffes he made; it was a marvel. As soon as he felt a bit relaxed, he'd say something to his neighbor, and fine, he had no luck: it was just the guy to whom he shouldn't have said it. [*Laughter*] So… Moreover, he had urinary incontinence, as he declared it, so that he couldn't stay five minutes in a salon without running to the bathroom. So, all that… [*Laughter*] Everyone said: "Ah, Rousseau, he's nothing." [*Laughter*] He tells himself: "I have to get out of here, I have to get out of here." He himself pretends – only, in my opinion, it's poorly understood by commentators – he himself pretends that his whole anti-social attitude came precisely from that, that he wanted to get out of these situations in which he was ridiculous. So, many commentators, especially those that don't like Rousseau, conclude that "you see, his ideas weren't serious." On the contrary, I believe that it's proof of the extent to which he was serious.

What Rousseau was living fundamentally was this: "We are not wicked by nature." That's his idea of natural goodness. "We are not wicked by nature; it's not true," he said. It's not that we are worth much more that the wicked. He didn't think that we were very good; he said, we're mostly egotistical, we adapt; we're not wicked by nature. On the other hand, a situation make us wicked, and then, we become ruthless. We become the worst bastards on the level of situations, but it's situations that make us wicked. Hence his idea, he who feels himself particularly good – "I am the best of men" – he is going to be able effectively to become what he is, namely the best of men, only if he gets out of situations, that is, if he exerts a selective action over the givens of the situation.

And understand that from this, he then draws a kind of very grandiose vision – that I call once again Spinozist – because his entire theory of the child comes from here. It's not that the child is wicked, he says. It's just that the child is simply placed, society places the child immediately in situations in which he/she has the particular interest in being wicked so that then he/she becomes so rapidly. What are these situations? Rousseau has defined them admirably – and this is the third text that I am citing, to finish with Rousseau – and he defined it admirably in *Emile* [*or On*

Education]. He says: what is the child's situation? Well, in the end, it's a situation that we can name, that we can describe. If we look for this situation, it's dependence-tyranny, dependence-tyranny, with perpetual reversal, slave-tyrant. That's the child's situation in society, from the very start. The child is a slave because he/she depends entirely on the parents, [*Pause*] and, as a repercussion, he/she becomes the tyrant of his/her own parents.

In what sense? Rousseau tells us: well, education itself states it. The child, because he/she is dependent, never stops screaming. In fact, what is screaming? It's like when a cat meows. A cat doesn't meow to say, "I want some milk"; that's an adult proposition, a human adult, "I want some milk," "a cat meowing". It's what Americans call, when they are undertaking good proposition analysis, they say: "to meow" is not an object proposition. "I want some milk" is an object proposition; "to meow" is not an object proposition, it's a relation proposition. "To meow" is about the relation of dependence. When the cat meows in an apartment, this is the relation of dependence: it's attracting the master's attention. A child screaming is not an object proposition; it's not "I want some milk." It's "Mama, ooo ooo!" "Hey, you over there, mama!" It's a proposition of dependence. Immediately, the mother brings him/her some milk. In other words, it's in the same situation that the child is made a slave and turns him/herself into a tyrant. And Rousseau says: in education, there's a bad principle the begins from the start, well before the child speaks: it's that parents never stop bringing things to the child. Bringing things to the child is already the corrupting situation. You see what there is in this, what it means to say, "a situation gives one an interest in being wicked." The little baby understands that quickly; he/she won't stop screaming so that each time someone brings something to him/her. This is diabolical, all that; it's… Fine, it's the same. It's the slave-tyrant. It's the situation of dependence-tyranny.

And, notice what Rousseau means – and here, this becomes very profound – [when] he says: in the end, this is the matrix of all social situations. The slave-tyrant is the social situation, it's the key social situation. And Rousseau proposes his great statement in *Emile*: education ought to consist in substituting for the dependency on things, [*Deleuze corrects himself immediately*] for the dependency on persons, the dependency on things. Understand: to substitute for dependency in relation to persons the dependency in relation to things. That is, never bring something to the child; bring the child to the thing. Fine… Here you already change the situation. No doubt, you bring him/her. [If] the child can't walk, ok, so you bring him/her there. But it's [the child] that will be brought there; it's not the thing that will be delivered [to him/her]. And you will turn the child more and more toward propositions that might be called object propositions and less and less toward propositions that might be called relation propositions, substituting for the dependency on persons, a dependency on things. Fine, that means changing the situation. You understand?

So, if I have made this long parenthesis, it's because this interests me enormously – at many years removed – [that] you can find in an author who takes this up within his system. I don't mean that Rousseau is Spinozist; I mean and I am saying that he is so on this point and that, in Rousseau's thought, there is a kind of Spinozist kernel that doesn't simply exist as kernel since, on Rousseau's level, this is perfectly coherent with the whole of Rousseau's thought itself, everything that I have just told you. But what matters to me is this resonance between the two authors, a truly literal resonance since, yet again, what will Spinoza call the effort of reason? The effort of reason will typically be an effort to select within situations that which is apt to give me what Spinoza calls joy and to eliminate that which is apt to give me sadness. And, this is word for word what Spinoza… Either substituting that which is apt to give me independence and

eliminate that which is apt to give me dependence. And well, this is word for word what Rousseau called "materialism of the wise man or sensitive morality," and that's what ethics is.

So, this is just a first point in my research on the status of evil. As a result, we return to the fact: Adam wasn't a wise man; he didn't have sensitive morality, otherwise he would have found the means to avoid the fruit. He wouldn't have placed himself in this situation. But there we see that he did place himself in this situation. Fine; what's going to occur? Well, he falls ill. Adam is no longer what he was. You see, I am returning to my topic: he ate of the fruit, he fell ill, that's the fact. And Spinoza can say to us very happily: "On this point, we can be told all the tales that you'd like. This still doesn't prevent them from being tales. The sole fact that can be drawn from this tale is what I am telling you: Adam fell ill after having eaten of the fruit."

And already here – I believe that this authorizes me to say that Blyenbergh is all that you wish except someone stupid. Already here then, Blyenbergh doesn't let it get by. He doesn't let it get by. And he really catches Spinoza here. He tells him: "But do you realize what you are saying there, and what that commits you to?" [*Pause, silence*] "Do you realize, eh? I don't know if you realize what you've just said to me, Spinoza, what that commits all of us to, since… Awful. Awful…" Blyenbergh is going to tell him three things; he is suddenly going to make three objections to him. And everything is unleashed. The entire correspondence is going to be justified immediately. Blyenbergh is going to answer: "But do you realize? This is just not nothing that you've said to me with Adam and the apple. This story is not nothing." And he makes three objections.

Namely, the first objection: "Well then, vice and virtue – you have pretended to have extracted a fact; ok, but then, vice and virtue are a simple matter of taste." Here, he is very forceful, Blyenbergh, because he could have let this go, not understanding all that well. But he tells him: "But you must take it all the way there, since, in the end, you are assimilating, you are assimilating 'Adam ate of the forbidden fruit' with 'Adam was poisoned, he ate some arsenic, he ate some arsenic that made him sick'. So, take it all the way; say it frankly: 'vice and virtue are a matter of taste.'" Ok, eh? I find that this is a strong objection. What is Spinoza going to answer? This is getting interesting. So that's the first objection.

Second objection, the most technical: "But knowing if something is a poison or not is a matter of experimentation. We don't know it in advance. So, not only what can that mean, 'God revealed to Adam, before the experience'? There cannot be any revelation there if it's a matter of poison. There is no revelation concerning poisons. We imagine revelations about mathematics, that God might teach me that 2+2 = 4. That's ok, that could be an object of revelation because it's a truth known as necessary. But something, that arsenic might be poison for me, that's not a necessary truth. It's what is known as a factual truth. There is no revelation concerning factual truths. Factual truths are a matter of experience. So, all morality… There is no morality; all morality becomes a matter of experience." So, that's Blyenbergh's second objection.

Blyenbergh's third objection, the most dangerous: "If it's true that, for you, vice and virtue are a matter of taste, what are you going to say about someone for whom crime has a nice taste? That is, the criminal, what are you going to say against him if he tells you, 'I like that'? Crime is perhaps poison for the one enduring it – in fact, the crime acts like arsenic – but for the one committing it, it's not a poison; on the contrary, it's something delicious, or so we assume. So, for the one doing the harm and not for the one enduring it, the crime thus becomes a virtue, necessarily." Ah, this isn't bad, not bad at all.

Here's Blyenbergh's text on this topic… 216… 200… But I have to say that it was preceded by… It's in letter XXI. Here's what Spinoza said. There, he was trying… Spinoza went far: "Someone who abstains from crime uniquely through fear of punishment does not at all act through love and does not at all possess virtue." Someone who abstains from crime through fear is not virtuous, says Spinoza. OK: a platitude. He adds: "As for myself" – as for me – "I abstain from those things, or try to, because [crime is] explicitly [repugnant] to my singular nature."[7] Bizarre… See: he isn't speaking the language of morality. He isn't saying: "because crime repulses my human essence, my human nature." He is saying, "As for myself, I abstain from those things because [crime is] explicitly [repugnant] to my singular nature," my own, Spinoza's. He says: crime doesn't interest me, no, so I abstain from it. I am not a criminal because that doesn't interest me.

Hence, Blyenbergh's answer… Here it is: "You abstain…" – In letter XXII – "You [abstain from] the things that I call vices because they are [contrary] to your singular nature and not because they [are] vices. You [abstain from] them like we [abstain from] eating food that our nature finds disgusting."[8] Here… He understood quite well. He understood completely, I find. "You abstain from them like we abstain from eating food that our nature finds disgusting." For example, I don't like cheese, so I abstain from eating cheese; good, fine. "Well then, for you, vice and virtue are the same. You abstain from them…" And here he continues: "Indeed, the person who abstains from wicked acts because his nature is disgusted by them can hardly boast about his virtue." It's not virtue, says Blyenbergh. You understand? You abstain from what is the equivalent of arsenic for you. We don't say that someone abstaining from taking arsenic is virtuous. In other words, you are negating vice and virtue. And if you are shown someone for whom crime is quite suitable, you'll say: "Well, in the end, in the end, he's right to be a criminal."

If you will, here we've really reached an extreme text in which morality is calling upon ethics to explain itself. And at once, at the same time, one says: fine, we're far from having finished with this matter. Why? Because we only have our very general outline. The apple would have acted like… like… like a way to make someone sick. Understand my problem here. I always seem to be going in all directions, but in fact, we'll see the extent to which I'm not doing so. [Acted] like… what? Up to now, I've said: like arsenic. Oh, no! Have I gotten too committed to this? Have I already… have I already said too much? Is it like arsenic that the apple acts on Adam? However, Spinoza indeed tells us "like poison." But wouldn't there be another possibility? We may need one. I am looking since we tell ourselves: we must really go slowly within texts like that. So yes, there is another possibility.

For illness, and the problem of illness – getting sick, what does that mean? – that's been posed in many, many different ways. If you are truly interested in the question of the rapport of ethics with health and illness, we'll necessarily be led to encounter these problems, evaluations of what "being sick" means. And I am not trying here to insert a grand classification of types of illness. But, as my commentary progresses, I need this, I need that, since in the background of my intention, I will have the project: did Spinoza propose a certain original idea about what "being sick" means? I am just commenting that – from time immemorial, eh, but particularly in relatively recent medical practice, not immediately recent, but anyway, already at Spinoza's era, there were glimpses of this – there was already a great distinction made between two types of illness, illnesses called "by intoxication" and illnesses called "by intolerance." Intoxication and intolerance are not the same things. Illnesses by intolerance are very quickly situated, and they

have nourished an entire category of allergies. These could be combined; there could be both intoxication and intolerance. But there can be intoxication without intolerance and, above all, intolerance without intoxication. Hay fever is a famous illness of intolerance. Many skin diseases are illnesses by intolerance, you know, right? Hey, this is helping me; everything is coming together. It's indeed because… That works because… What is the simplest way?

You know, an illness by intolerance is difficult to find. I am thinking of a truck driver, one who transported artichokes. He came down with an awful case of eczema, awful eczema, over his entire body. So, you know how they proceed: the body is divided into sectors, right? The doctor divides the body into sectors – not at Spinoza's era, but… Now, we have had to discover methods, well, in the recent past – the body was divided into segments, and tests were run. I am saying "that works". Sense that this is already selective, sensitive morality. They were attempting to select. So, the body is divided into sectors and experiments are made with all the elements in which the subject comes familiarly into contact. As this was a transporter of artichokes, obviously he was inoculated for artichokes, specifically, on a certain area of the back. Nothing, nothing. There was dust; he was inoculated for dust; -- there are inoculations for that, in order to find the source of intolerance, in cases of illnesses by intolerance or that are presumed to be so – Nothing was found. I remember this because this is an observation that really interested me and that I read in a medical review while waiting at the dentist's office. [*Laughter*] I kept it. This was a long time back that I read it and kept it because – these are always superb articles – because that showed the doctors to be so attentive, so – in fact, like we don't see them – so attentive that they didn't stop searching for what this guy was suffering from. Fine…

Up to the day that the doctor tells himself: "Ah, but careful, the artichoke stem and the artichoke leaf are not composed the same way." And he had been inoculated for the leaf. He gets inoculated for the stem, and the guy then had an intolerance, a major eczema crisis. Marvelous! Marvelous!... See: the back was sectored… He selects things. For what will the fundamental treatment… What will the medical action be in the case of "illness by intolerance"? Each time that it's possible, the key medical action will be to tell the guy, "don't go near that anymore; get yourself out of that situation!" It's obvious that it was necessary to transform the artichoke specialist into a carrot specialist. [*Laughter*] He could no longer transport artichokes. Fine… He had to pull himself out of that situation. Good.

What is this? This ought to interest us a bit because this is going to bring back our problem. What is the difference between an illness by intolerance and an illness by intoxication? No doubt the two illnesses exist, but they require… [*End of the Paris 8 recording, clearly before the end of the session*] [2:04:18]

Notes

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[1] This is no doubt a reference to the so-called "New Philosophers" against whom Deleuze wrote an article in 1977, republished in *Two Regimes of Madness* (MIT/Semiotext(e), 2007), pp. 139-147. He also speaks about this topic in *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze* (Gilles Deleuze, From A to Z) in "G as in *Gauche* [Left]".

[2] Here we have a five-minute gap in the Web Deleuze transcript and translation.

[3] Here ends the Web Deleuze transcription and translation, after the 55" marker, out of 124" total.

[4] This explanation is considered in detail in chapter III of *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy* [City Lights, 1988], devoted to the Blyenbergh correspondence. This first citation is on p. 30 in this edition (p. 45 in *Spinoza, Philosophie pratique,* Minuit, 1981), from letter XIX.

[5] Rantanplan is the name of a fictional dog appearing for the first time in the comic book, *Lucky Luck*, and having as principal trait to be completely stupid, but occasionally managed involuntarily to help other characters in the stories.
[6] Deleuze mistakenly says "Wolmar".
[7] The translation in *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy* by Robert Hurley reads: "As for myself, I abstain from those things, or try to, because they are explicitly contrary to my singular nature" (p. 31, note 1). I provide terms that correspond to Deleuze's French rendering.
[8] Hurley's translation is slightly different: "You omit the things I call vice because they are contrary to your singular nature, but not because they contain vice themselves. You omit doing them as we omit eating food that our nature finds disgusting," (p. 31)