

**Gilles Deleuze**

**Seminar on Foucault, 1985-1986**

**Part I: Knowledge (Historical Formations)**

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**Part 1**

What would be very bad would be if you had no questions. But it may be that you have questions, and you are keeping them for yourselves: that is very good. [*Laughter; pause*] So, there is no need to go back over things?

A student: I wonder if ... [*Inaudible*]. . . couldn't one consider the Nazi regime to be a phenomenon of . . . [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: If one could not what?

The student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: This what...

The student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Why not? I mean: but this has little to do with Foucault. Yes, it would be up to you to ask yourself whether one could consider collective phenomena as illnesses. I don't know, I don't know at all. [*Very long pause*] So, there are no problems, for the moment? I mean: no problems with respect to where we are regarding Foucault? Yes?

A student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: What you say is very interesting. Roughly, you are telling me that I am not sufficiently taking into account a development, or changes, in Foucault, or of the progress of his pursuits.

The student: [*Inaudible*] ... used the word "shift" [*déplacement*] . . .

Deleuze: ... shift [*déplacement*] . . . yes, but, well, since it's a scholarly word, "shift," yes, okay, don't be attached to the word. I can say this: when it's a matter of commenting on certain of Foucault's notions, there are two rather different tasks involved: to try to show the novelty of the notions and their interrelations, and on the other hand—and yet these must both be done at

once—to try to show the development that Foucault went through to come up with that. So, it's fairly true that for me, personally, the questions of development interest me less than the question of the coherence in a system of new concepts. That's why I find that remark entirely justified. But it doesn't seem all that difficult to me. I'll take an example: we could say that until *Archaeology of Knowledge* what predominates in Foucault is: what is knowledge [*savoir*]? What is it to know? And then with *Discipline and Punish*, and the book called, paradoxically, *The Will to Knowledge (History of Sexuality)*, we very quickly notice that Foucault sets off in fact into a new dimension. And that it's no longer exactly about knowledge [*savoir*], but it's about power. And then we notice that, here it's less tricky to tell, so explicitly does he say it, that with the last two books, *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self*, he discovers yet another dimension. In this sense, to go back to this word, there is a series of shifts. They would need to be indicated. They must be indicated.

You will notice that I insist on the following point, that is, since I began with the question 'what is knowledge?', in my view, I do not have to indicate, within that question, a fundamental development. And yet, the answer to this question is not the same in *Birth of the Clinic* as in *Archaeology of Knowledge*. If there is a shift within the question 'what is knowledge?', it is nonetheless the case that 'what is knowledge?' is a question that has a consistence, and for which there are elements of an answer in all of the books up to *Discipline and Punish*. Thereafter, there is a shift: the question becomes 'what is power?' There is indeed the discovery of a new dimension, we will see, and actually, once we will have finished all I have to say about 'what is knowledge?', we'll move on to 'what is power?' And at that point, I'll try to indicate that, in fact, there is, as you say, a shift. [*Pause*]

But here's what interests me even more: what interests me even more is that, of course, there is a new dimension, but that it is not by chance that he moves from one dimension characterized as knowledge to another dimension characterized as power. I mean, it must be that something in the dimension of knowledge forced him to move to another dimension. It must be then that the question 'what is knowledge?' ran up against another problem, ran into the problem that is found at the very heart of the question of knowledge. Such that to explain these shifts my entire method would be: what is there in a statement—when Foucault pushes his analysis of the statement as far as he can—that forces us to leave this domain of knowledge and establish ourselves in the domain of power? Moreover, this something that forces us to leave the domain of knowledge must be lodged in the heart of knowledge itself. We thus must discover, in the statement itself, something to which the statement cannot give an answer. So much so that, in this sense, what never ceases to interest me—quite a bit more, if you wish, than Foucault's development—is how the set of new concepts that he creates, how this set has a consistence. What interests me is not that Foucault follows an analysis of knowledge with an analysis of power. What interests me is: what are the anchor points that meant that, in the very domain of knowledge, the move to a problem of power had to be made?

And that, in my opinion, is already present in *History of Madness*. What is present in *History of Madness*, starting from *History of Madness*, is not what is fully present in *Archaeology of Knowledge*. It's not an analysis of power that will arise only later, but it's the need to go beyond the statement toward another case. So, it's only afterwards that we will learn that this other case is that of power. But the need to go beyond the statement toward another case is plainly posited

in *Archaeology of Knowledge*. But what this other case is, we cannot know yet. Such that, once we discover, through the analysis of power, what this other instance is, at that point, it's as if a sort of blank space in *Archaeology of Knowledge* was filled in.

So, one can certainly speak about shifts from one book to the other, but it seems to me, assuming we add that each time these shifts take place they fill a blank in the preceding period. [Pause] But for all those who find that I do not grant enough importance to a development, that seems to me very legitimate and, in fact, that is not what most interests me. What most interests me, well, I would like to say that, for me, all of Foucault's new concepts are developed along three axes, it's a thinking along three axes, that is, a thinking in space, it's not a thinking on one plane, it's a thinking in space. You have, let's say: a first 'knowledge' axis, a second 'power' axis, and a third, let's say, 'desire' axis.

[Deleuze goes to the blackboard] What I mean is that both are nevertheless true. It is true that Foucault starts at the knowledge axis. And then later reaches the power axis. Then he explores the axis of desire. It looks like there is a development from one axis to another, or in any case a shift. But for my part what most interests me, in what I want to do this year, is not that he moves from one axis to another in succession. What interests me is the whole of the three axes and how the new concepts are shared out depending on the three axes that constitute a space. So, actually, it is not hard to correct what I say all along by introducing the idea that, or by constantly reintroducing the idea that: Ah, well, but he started with knowledge to then raise this to power, and then to desire. [Deleuze returns to his seat] What I mean is that these are corrections that you make yourselves, and that can entail many modifications, but it's not desirable that you have the same reading as I do, certainly not. What I'm offering is intended to help your reading. That is, the only thing that I ask of you is that you would kindly consider what I propose to you, but not at all that you grant that I'm right. On the contrary, you must construct, you must do your own reading, your reading.

So, anyway, what we addressed the last time, is the very beginning of the question, in my view the most difficult question in the whole of Foucault's corpus, namely: 'what is a statement?' And what we said, and, on this then, I see, it seems to be very clear, since there were no questions, we saw—we must proceed very carefully—we looked at a first theme of Foucault's, namely: the statement, the statements of a period (because statements refer to historical formations, we've seen this from the start), well, the statements of a period are never hidden . . . And yet. And yet. The two must be held in tandem. And yet they are never immediately given. That's quite a complicated idea. Statements are never hidden. In fact, we saw this—I won't go back over that since that's all good—every period says all that it has to say. Every period says all that it can say. It hides nothing, or, at least, what it hides is altogether secondary, in the sense that history has never been made by state secrets. The state secret is really a tiny thing in relation to the movement of history. Roughly, we can say that a period says all that it has to say.

Okay, we saw that, we explicated it a good deal, so I suppose that you'll grant me that, or that you'll grant it to Foucault. But that would make no sense if he did not add, too: but be careful, that does not mean that statements are immediately given, that is, are immediately readable. So, now things are getting complicated. [Pause] Both non-secret, non-hidden and yet not immediately readable or visible. Not immediately readable. What does that mean? We vaguely

understand, if you will, but still very vaguely, we understand that Foucault is saying to us: statements are never hidden but be careful! You won't get there unless you ascend to the conditions that permit their extraction. But that itself produces a problem: extract them from what? I am saying, and understand this, this is why we are going very, very slowly. I am saying: statements are never hidden, but they are not immediately given because they must be extracted.

In fact: the statement will be an original notion created by Foucault. To repeat, they must be extracted. From what? Every period states all that it has to state. But if you do not ascend to the conditions for the statement in a period, you may never find them. In other words, you still have to know how to read. But what is reading, for Foucault? A period doesn't hide anything . . . Yes: for the archaeologist who knows how to read statements. The statement must be read, that is, in this case, extracted from something. Extracted from what? You've really got to be imbued with this problem. It doesn't matter whether you agree with the problem or not. It doesn't matter: that's not our question. You have to act as if you agreed for a while. Even if it means retracting your agreement. But, I mean, perhaps you have a sense that now this is starting to be interesting. To me, it was already interesting because Foucault was telling us: you know, every period says all that it has to say. It was a principle of historical study, and a very interesting one: there is nothing secret. But the "there is nothing secret" is immediately supplemented by: if you do not know how to read statements, you will never find them. They must be extracted. And archaeology will be: the extraction of the statements of a period, the extraction of the statements of an historical formation, insofar as they are never immediately given, insofar as they are never immediately readable.

But then what is immediately given? Perhaps we'll make progress if we ask: what is immediately given? Foucault's answer would be: what is immediately given are words, sentences, and, if push comes to shove, propositions—later I'll clarify this 'if push comes to shove.' But Foucault tells us: be careful, what I call 'statement,' what I feel the need to call 'statement,' can be reduced neither to words, nor to sentences, nor to propositions, nor to speech acts. And really, it's in this sense that I remind you that the concept of the statement in Foucault is so original that he could just as well have invented a new word to designate this thing. Because he does not conceal from us the fact that according to him, what he calls 'statement' does not match anything that linguists or logicians have so far been talking about. He thus invokes the radical originality of the concept of statement he offers us. And his general thesis will be: the statement is reducible neither to words, nor to sentences, nor to propositions, nor to speech acts.

Oh, okay, well, what then? At least, in our very slow advance—which I wanted to be very, very slow—this is a place to pause a bit. What can we draw from this? It does not reduce to any of these things. Okay, let's take advantage of this. It clearly means that if we stick to the words used in a given period, to the sentences said in a period, to the propositions that can be identified in a period, to the speech acts pronounced in a period, we will not grasp and we will not be able to grasp the statements. And even more! Here is where we will have the sense that statements are hidden. If you stick with the words, sentences, and speech acts, you'll say: the statements are hidden. That's not at all because statements are in fact hidden, that's because statements cannot be reduced to words, sentences, or speech acts.

Oh, really? Look! How about an example? I'm wondering about sexuality in the 19th century. You can see right away that the example I bring up is an example that Foucault will work out in his late writings. He will work it out in the first volume of his *History of Sexuality*, namely, in the book called *The Will to Knowledge* [*La Volonté de savoir*]. And he chooses a very good example in the chapter, right from the start, in the very lovely opening to *The Will to Knowledge*, the first chapter is called "We Other Victorians." The Victorian Period. And what is usually said about the Victorian Period? Why does it interest us? We are frequently told that it is a period that saw a deep repression of sexuality and that, notably, speaking about sexuality was forbidden.

Furthermore, this even frames a certain ready-made history. We are told that in the 19th century sexuality was spoken about little or not at all, and then along came Freud. Okay. . . But such a conception is dubious, after all. Along came Freud, and then what? And along came Freud and then people start talking about sexuality. He talked about sexuality, finally. So, there are problems here. Right away, if I take this proposition—it's not a statement—this proposition: Freud came along and taught us that the child, quite young, already had a sexuality. Oh? So, seriously, what bothers us? What bothers every decent soul about such a proposition? Perhaps we don't uphold it today any more, in large part thanks to Foucault. And if we no longer uphold it, that doesn't mean that the psychoanalytic manuals did not uphold it, a long time ago, things were presented to us that way.

What bothers us? What bothers us right away are things that we practically feel ashamed to talk about. We say to ourselves: but look here, weren't there wet nurses at the time? Wasn't there anyone who changed the little child? What does it mean to say they didn't know that there was an infantile sexuality, or they didn't talk about it? When one wet nurse ran into another one, didn't she talk about the phenomenon of infantile sexuality in the baby? She didn't talk to herself when she was changing the kid? That's weird, don't you think? I don't know, it's seriously very, very strange. And then, so what about the phenomena of onanism? You mean people didn't know about onanism? So, at this point, you say, well, obviously, it was known. So, it was known, and people didn't talk about it? Now this, you should sense, is pure Foucault. In what sense? One shouldn't be surprised if Foucault tells us—and we will see the importance of this for philosophy in general, here, I'm putting words in his mouth, but you do find the equivalent in Foucault -- "I give more importance to a statement from a wetnurse than from a great psychiatrist." That is, you have to choose the statements you'll address. Okay, so what does all this mean?

There is a book published at the end of the 19th century, that starts at the end of the 19th century, which became the great classic of the period, and did so independently of all of Freud's influence and of psychoanalysis. This is the huge book that remained the foundation of everything, the book by [Richard] Krafft-Ebing. Krafft-Ebing published his enormous book: *Psychopathia sexualis* [1886]. *Psychopathia sexualis*—what do you know? The title is in Latin. It's very interesting that the title is in Latin. In our enthusiasm, let's read the sub-title, as well. The [French] subtitle says: "for the use of jurists and physicians." Good. You go through the book, and you can see that it's a classification of all the existing and imaginable sexual perversions, with case reports, cases that, for the most part, in the great majority, cover the whole of the 19th century. The greatest horrors appear there: love with corpses, love for excrement . . . Genuine abominations that are all numbered, with case studies. And when one pages through these case

studies, one is struck by the fact that, from time to time, in a study—the book is in German, but it is translated into French, published by Payot—so, that, in each case study, at the point that seems the most striking, the sentence becomes Latin. [*Pause*] Is that a real way of hiding? If you take into account that at the time the least high school student . . . [*Interruption of the recording*] [30:19]

## Part 2

. . . and we'll see what part of it we'll need to draw from It is certainly significant that the subtitle is “for use by jurists and physicians” and that the statements of the book include bits of sentences in Latin. One can't forget that, one can't ignore that. Apart from that, everything is stated. It's the book from the Victorian era.

Understand: what are we in the process of seeing? If you stick to the words and sentences, you'll have the sense that something is hidden. And, sure: there are forbidden words, and that's the whole theme of the first chapter: “We Other Victorians,” there are forbidden words, there are metaphorized sentences. You will speak of this or that only by metaphor. There are repressed propositions. Foucault contests none of that. However, if you stick with words, sentences, and propositions, well, then yes, you'll say: something is hidden. That's because you've not known how to reach the true statements. Plus, how will the Victorian Era be defined? By a genuine proliferation of statements on sexuality. And it's as if words are prohibited, sentences are metaphorized, and propositions are repressed just to make statements on sexuality proliferate. And Foucault goes in search of these statements: where to look for them? Where to find them? [*Pause*]

Let's see, let's see, let's draw up the list. In the first chapter. He discovers a first site of statements on sexuality in what? In the Church and the confession [*confession*] and the techniques of avowal [*aveu*], which track down sexuality, including childhood sexuality. What priest does not know that there is a childhood sexuality? And what priest does not know that its expression, from earliest childhood, are already the sign of original sin? Any priest whatsoever knows this. Moreover, 19th century priests knew all they could know in this period about childhood sexuality. Furthermore, it will be easy for Foucault to show that this had long been the case: since the Council of Trent the Church gave itself the task of producing statements on sexuality. Good. So, that's a first site of statements.

Second site, in the 19th century, then: government. As we saw the last time, over the course of the 19th century, and already in the 18th century, at the end of the 18th century, the State strikes out into a genuine biopolitics, that is, it conceives its functions to include a genuine management of life. To manage and to control life. How do you think it could *not* take an interest in the phenomenon of sexuality, in the city and in the country, in contraceptive customs, in the development of the birth rate? So, the second site.

The third site: the school. One would really have to not consult the requisite statements—you can see that Foucault's method is taking shape here—to be blind to statements, to not know how to read, in order to believe that sexuality was not spoken of in the 19th century school. In a sense, that's all they do. And of course, that's in order to sanction it; but because it's sanctioned, it is

spoken of all the more. And the surveillance of children and the regulation of schools constantly make statements on sexuality proliferate. To be specific: take this, it's obvious, the conditions in the 19th century boarding school. You'd have to be idiotic to think that, among students as well as among monitors, a non-stop production of statements on sexuality does not take place.

And Foucault especially takes up the example of what are called 'reformist movements' in pedagogy, in 19th century Germany, notably connected to the great philanthropist of the period who was called [Johann Bernhard] Basedow, b-a-s-e-d-o-w. [Pause] And he recounts the success of 19th century sex education related to these movements: "In order to show the success of the sex education given the students, Basedow had invited all the dignitaries that Germany could muster (Goethe was one of the few to decline the invitation). Before the assembled public, one of the professors...asked the students selected questions concerning the mysteries of sex, birth, and procreation. He had them comment on engravings that depicted a pregnant woman, a couple, and a cradle. The replies were enlightened, offered without shame or embarrassment. No unseemly laughter intervened to disturb them—except from the very ranks of an adult audience more childish than the children themselves, and whom [the professor Wolke] severely reprimanded."<sup>1</sup> You'd think you were reading a report in a memorandum from 1960. We were regularly told in 1960 that in sex education courses it was in fact the parents who snickered, perturbed, and that the children listened, very soberly. Well, we need to back up. That's what was already going on in the heart of the 19th century, and Foucault says, at this point, not without a stylistic flourish, the sentence is vintage Foucault: "At the end, they all applauded these cherub-faced boys who, in front of adults, had skillfully woven the garlands of discourse and sex."<sup>2</sup> So, what matters to me about this? Let's recall, because... let's recall. Three sites for the production of statements, each quite independent of the other: the Church, with the institution of the confessional, of the confession; the policies of the State; the school. And there are plenty of others.

Whence perhaps the idea, which will astonish us less when we get to it, but that will be in quite some time—whence one of the fundamental theses we get when Foucault directly addresses the question of power, namely, one of his great theses: no, power does not repress, or it represses only secondarily. What does it do? It does something much more profound and, doubtless, more formidable than repressing: it forms, it shapes. It does not silence, it does worse: it makes speak. It disciplines, it standardizes [*normalise*]. But repression is entirely secondary in relation to the positive operations of power. Power does not repress, it disciplines, it manages, it controls, it standardizes, etcetera. It does not silence, it makes speak. It does not prevent acting, it makes act.

In other words: yes, sexuality is the secret, only here's the thing: the secret is there only so that it can be spoken about, the secret merely indicates a certain kind of statement, a certain family of statements, it does not signify a non-statement, a non-statable. It signifies a particular kind of statement. The secret is that about which one speaks. And the final sentence of the chapter I refer to in fact says: "What is peculiar to modern societies, in fact, is not that they consigned sex to a shadow existence, but that they dedicated themselves to speaking of it *ad infinitum*, while exploiting it as *the* secret."<sup>3</sup>

In other words, you see, we've just taken a considerable step forward. Yes. If you stick—and certainly the example of sexuality was a particularly striking example—if you stick to words, you see that there are prohibited words. If you stick to sentences, you see that there are sentences

that can be uttered only by way of metaphor, only metaphorized. If you stick to propositions, you see that there are repressed propositions. Plainly—but all those are secondary effects. All you can conclude from this is that statements cannot be reduced to words, phrases, propositions.

And if you have the means, if you know how to accede to statements, at that point, you see that the statements of a period proliferate and that nothing is hidden. Secrecy is there only to be betrayed. Not even to be betrayed, to betray itself. Otherwise, what is the priest's work in the confessional in relation to a little child?—we can certainly see from this that it is not to repress. For a long time, the Inquisition said, and the byword of the Inquisition always was: 'I do not repress.' I do not repress, I guide souls. However, uhm, I no longer know what I was saying, well, anyway, you can complete the thought yourselves.

It's very important because it lets us take a step forward, now we can attack the question, what is . . . Very good. We've just firmly established and confirmed this point, that indeed needed to be confirmed in the most concrete way possible: if the statement exists—we don't yet know what it is—if there are statements, do not expect to find them in sentences, words, propositions, speech acts. Where will you find them? Okay, we're starting, at this point we can now work out, or look for, what Foucault's method is.

So: today's first idea. There will be three, we may not have the time to finish them all. The first idea, the first great idea of Foucault's: what do you have to do to extract statements? Here I am, faced with sentences, words, propositions. So, what should I do with this? With respect to the problem that I set out, with respect to a given problem, I must, Foucault tells us, form a corpus. Be careful: the corpus is not a corpus of statements, since we don't know what statements are. The corpus is a corpus of words, that is, a set of words, of sentences, of propositions, and of speech acts. I must start from this sort of set called a "corpus." In fact, it is from this corpus—you see, we've made a minuscule advance here, I'm no longer saying: statements will be extracted from words, sentences and propositions, with which they are not to be confused. I'm saying something markedly different: statements will be extracted, may be extracted, from a corpus of words, sentences and propositions. My question is: what has the word 'corpus' added? Alright? The more you feel like you already understand, the farther away we'll be. That's why it's very important to go so slowly. We've only just introduced the notion of the corpus and we don't yet know what a 'corpus' is.

And yet we can easily tell that there is a good deal to talk about here. For after all, a corpus, you can tell what is expected of it. You can identify the statements of a period only if you've known how to form a corpus of words, sentences and propositions that were in fact used, in fact said, in fact pronounced in the period. It's not about forming them in your head. These sentences must have been said or written in the period. These speech acts must have been pronounced in the period. That's how you get to be historians, or much more: archaeologists.

But what is a corpus, anyway? This is very interesting because there is a whole story here. Foucault doesn't pick this term by chance. Because here, as much as he's the one who invents 'statement,' in the sense that he gives the notion, to the same degree, when it comes to 'corpus,' this is a term he borrows, and borrows from linguists. And, of course, he borrows it from linguists he never talks about, as far as I know, but it's doubtless from the linguists to whom he



is closest. This is a very interesting school, very different from that of [Ferdinand de] Saussure, a school that is called “distributionalism,” and whose great exponents are [Leonard] Bloomfield and [Zellig S.] Harris. And here’s roughly what Bloomfield and Harris have told us in founding their conception of language: they said, you can never—this is why it had such a large linguistic impact—you can never analyze language in general, not even a language, it’s not true, he said. How can one work on language or on a language? Bloomfield showed very well that all linguists have always worked like this, they just didn’t say so. Notice: they didn’t say so, but then, why did they not say so? What does the fact that they don’t say so, while they quite evidently do so, hide? Well, what every linguist does is to start from a given corpus, that is, to start from a determinate set, which can be unlimited, but is nonetheless finite in principle, a finite set of words, sentences and propositions. And one cannot study language in any other way. Ah, *this* is very interesting because . . . [*Deleuze does not finish the sentence*]

Consequently, the distributionalists, of the Bloomfield sort, are to my knowledge the only linguists explicitly to recommend a corpus. That is to say: to study a language, any language whatsoever, one must start from an historically determined or determinable corpus. And, consequently, what will object of linguistics be? To identify, in this corpus, what are the, what they call—this is the second intersection with Foucault—‘regularities.’ To identify the regularities that concern the elements of the corpus. How they conceive of these regularities is an entirely other problem. But, when Foucault will tell us, in *Archaeology of Knowledge* that discovering what a statement is is out of the question if one does not start from a determinate corpus, a corpus of words, sentences, and propositions and speech acts, and when he will tell us, the second point, that a statement is a regularity, to the degree that he will speak of an “enunciative [or statement] regularity”, it is in this respect that his double contact with distributionalism must be highlighted.

That said: two questions arise: How does Foucault conceive of a corpus? Second question: how does he conceive of a regularity, which defines the statement? To identify the regularities of a corpus is the common task set out by Bloomfield and Foucault. However, once this common task is posited, they have nothing else in common. That is, to the two questions—“how does one determine the corpus?” and “how does one define enunciative regularity?”—Foucault’s answers have strictly nothing any longer to do with those of the distributionalist linguists.

Do you understand? Okay, good, we keep coming back to this because *this* is interesting, for linguistics generally. Everyone! What is a linguist supposed to talk about if not a determinate corpus, that is, a finite set of words, sentences and propositions? Except that the linguist does not say this, or he acts like he’s not doing it. Why? This is where linguistics is twisted. This is not good! They hide the corpus that they start off from. Why? Perhaps because they have formalist aspirations. The analysis of propositions relies on a formalization; it has every interest in hiding its corpus, which is an irreducible raw material.

In other words, the analysis of propositions is above all concerned with what? To generate possible propositions, independently of the question: do they correspond to speech acts, to sentences that have in fact been formulated? Propositional analysis cannot differentiate [*ne peut pas faire de différences*] between the possible and the real. Thus, even while it begins from a real, determinate corpus, it will act as if it does not begin there. The aspiration of linguistics

aspiration to reach language and the phenomena of language itself means that it will equally obscure the corpus to which it belongs.

I would say that psychoanalysis starts from a corpus, too: the analytic corpus is the set of words and sentences in fact formulated by a determinate patient. What the patient says. But once the patient formulates a sentence, it is well known that the analyst substitutes another sentence for it. What is more, it is well known that the analyst will develop, to this end, a theory of what is called “double inscription.” That is, to a sentence inscribed in the preconscious system, there corresponds, following the laws of interpretation, another sentence inscribed in the unconscious system. This theory of double inscription is quite famous and is adopted in what is termed ‘the topical hypothesis’ in Freud. Two inscriptions, which correspond to two different sentences. Consequently, psychoanalysis, too, is compelled, although it starts from a determinate, finite, corpus, constantly to hide this corpus it starts from, because it would like to end up with sentences of an entirely other type, that is, of another level of inscription. So much so that Foucault can say, in *Archaeology of Knowledge*: all linguists constantly start from a determinate and finite corpus, but they hide this. It has seemed to us that this thesis of Foucault’s must be corrected: yes, “all” except the distributionalists. That doesn’t change much. So, if instead one must start from a corpus and one must not hide it, one will find statements only if one is able to supply the formation rules for the corpus, for constituting the corpus that is set aside.

So, you have a problem—this becomes very, very concrete if you want Foucault to be of use for you in some way in your own work. You have a problem: the method that Foucault would recommend for you is this: depending on your problem, for example whether it be “What is God?”, “What is . . .”, . . . let’s say, a smaller problem, . . . well, I don’t see a smaller problem . . . you can supply one yourselves. “What is a priest?” “What is this, what is that?” You won’t make any headway, you won’t be able to state anything, if you have not constituted your historical corpus. I’m not saying that you have to stick to that corpus, okay? We’re at stages that are extremely . . . You must constitute your corpus.

However, the corpuses that are vintage Foucault are very, very curious because even at this juncture there are all sort of things that you’ve got to have a feel for. This is not of the order of whether he is right or not. You have to have a feel for his originality, you have to know whether this originality in particular suits you or not, and if not, you go find other authors. Because there is a telltale mark of Foucault’s in the constitution of corpuses and this is what means it no longer has anything to do with Bloomfield. If I try to come up with a way to say this on the spot, I don’t have any readymade solution, but: Foucault always looks for statements—I’m going quickly here—looks for what a follower of Foucault’s, François Ewald, has called “statements without references.” I believe that the word is fairly correct if one explains his taste. It’s really striking, in Foucault’s body of work, that he has a taste, which seems almost immoderate at first glance, for very little-known authors, and even at times for authors so little known as to be nearly anonymous. It’s almost like—it’s hardly any different from: ‘In that time period, one would say.’ [*On dit à telle époque.*] ‘In that time period, one would say.’ I’m weighing my words, because we will not be able to make good use of this until later, but is it by chance that next Foucault will work out an entire theory of the “one” [*on*] as being infinitely deeper than the ‘I’ and the ‘you,’ and will oppose all ‘linguistic personology,’ of [Émile] Benveniste’s sort of personology, precisely because the third person is the only true person according to him.

Very well, so, in any case, I've taken one step too many here, you see: you've got to feel that we should not at all go too fast. So, I now retract what I said. I'm quite happy to have said it, but I retract it right away. And I'm coming back, I'm slowing myself down. And I'm slowing myself down, that means: well, okay, this corpus—what? Statements without referent, without references—what does that mean? In fact, he rather infrequently cites the great philosophers. He was very much criticized for this. It's not that he does not know them, he knows them admirably well. He does not cite them. Is that affectation? He knows them and I even suppose that his relation with the great philosophers nourishes the new concepts he forms, starting with the concept of the statement. And yet, when he constitutes a corpus, he does not address the great texts. What is more, he rarely addresses the texts by great men, whether great philosophers or others. And why?

So then, if we take the approach here of . . . since we're doing a kind of research, we have to use everything . . . There is a sociologist from the end of the 19th century called Gabriel Tarde. He does a microsociology, what he himself calls a sociology of the infinitesimal, and he presents his whole program like this: he says, what interests me are not ready-made social structures, nor is it the great ideas of great men. What interests me, he says—here, I'm quoting verbatim—“are the small ideas of small men.” Very good, okay: the small ideas of small men—what is that? Let's borrow examples from Tarde to do a sociology of the infinitesimal, what today would be called a 'micro-sociology.' He says: what interest me is how and when a local custom, a new local custom, is introduced. Or else, in which bureau [*service*] did a bureaucrat [*fonctionnaire*], a ministerial bureaucrat, one day sign with an official signature that ten years later was required throughout the ministry. He invented a new kind . . . , which bureau director invented a new kind of official signature? He says: that's what micro-sociology is. When was it that the peasants stopped hailing the landowner, and where did they stop, and when did they stop? Tarde finds this fascinating.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault will speak about small, negligible inventions and will say that they must be put into relation with the great technological inventions. For example, that after all the small, negligible invention of the prison van is worth the great, technological invention of the steam engine. Very well. A very curious text by Foucault is called “The Lives of Infamous Men” [“La vie des hommes infâmes”].<sup>4</sup> What is “The Lives of Infamous Men?” It's a project by Foucault that he did not have the time to develop, except in one instance, and he tells us very clearly what he wants. He says: infamous men are not the great men, not the great men who achieved glory through evil. Glory through evil, for example, at least in its legends, the legend of Gilles de Rais, or the legend of Sade. Infamous men are not these diabolical men of legend. And he says: for my part, what I'm interested in, says Foucault, in this very, very curious text, are the small infamous men.

You'll say: what's the difference between a great infamous man and a small infamous man? Well, it's that a small infamous man is a criminal existence, but a banal one, which is drawn into the light for a brief moment to the extent that it clashes with the powers that be. For example, a neighborhood pervert, who at one point is rendered a minor news item. The lives of infamous men—what does that mean? In the clash with the powers that be, these small infamous men felt the need to draft a little plea, a sort of small confession. Foucault tells us: I'll take that for my corpus.

Okay, he takes that for his corpus. [Pause] You see, it's almost, it's close to an anonymous murmur. Foucault is interested in the problems of sexuality. The immediate reaction: he will constitute a corpus of statements from the 19th century. We've just seen this corpus. Who will he consult? Will he consult the great thinkers of the period? No. Will he go look and see whether Freud had any precursors? No. He will look for—to the letter—what one could call “wet nurses’ texts.” Whence the theme of the archivist. He'll take a wet nurses’ advice manual. Nothing is worth a wet nurses’ advice manual if you want to know what 19th century sexuality is. Or else, he won't even take Krafft-Ebing because Krafft-Ebing, that's second-hand material. He'll go look at the texts from which Krafft-Ebing took his cases. They could be legal verdicts. They could be expert witness reports by physicians. All of that—those are not the great thinkers. Expert witness reports, wet nurses’ advice manuals, legal verdicts. Here, too, you see, I'm saying something a bit too soon. Can one say that the expert witness is the author of the statements he pronounces? Can one say that the magistrate is the author of the ruling? No. When, much later, Foucault says: but, you know, ‘author’ is a highly relative and complex notion, one should not relate sentences to an author, perhaps you start to understand what he means.

Likewise, he'll say: ‘subject,’ the subject of a proposition, the subject of an utterance, this is a very, very, very vague notion. There are a thousand ways for a statement to refer to a subject. There is not one univocal way to refer to a subject. There are a thousand ways, it all depends on the kind of statement. And in the same way, you cannot say that the judge who delivers a ruling is the author of the ruling, you'll find another term. You cannot say that the expert witness who submits a report is the author of that report, you'll find another term. But these terms will be highly important. If you write a letter, Foucault will say, in a text entitled precisely, “What is an Author?,” if you write a letter, you are not an author of the letter. What are you? You are the signatory of the letter. If you like words, you have to master all these words. When will one say “you are the author of the letter?” If you go to court, if it's an anonymous letter, if it's considered an infraction. At that point, it will be a matter of being an author in the sense of being an author of an infraction. Okay, that's to say that the words ‘author’ or ‘subject’ can have so, so many senses that, perhaps . . . Okay. In any case, you see, you form your corpus like that, with statements without references, that is, which do not refer to an author, to a determinate author, and which do not necessarily have a uniform subject.

Once again, that's why, . . . I take as key examples—even though Foucault did not take much interest in this—sentences and texts from wet nurses, speech acts from wet nurses when two wet nurses meet up and talk about the kid that they each took care of. Okay, you'll say: that's all very well, but, then what? He forms his, his . . . that presupposes that one will consult the archives, eh? Right, but . . . then one needs intuition to form the corpus? Certainly, one needs a lot of intuition. *History of Madness* is wholly made up of a corpus of statements on madness in the 17th century. Where do these statements come from? Statements that come from the police. Statements that come from the medicine of the time.

And, as Foucault says—here, at such points, he even has moments of great joy—these medical statements of the time owe very little to Descartes. It's not that Descartes was of no importance—we'll see the importance of the thinkers—but for now this importance is not at the level of the corpus. It's not Kant . . . on the contrary, Kant, he could perhaps enter into the corpus, at what point? For example, he enters very well into a 19th century corpus on marriage.

Why? At that point, through one of his least known works, namely, a work called precisely *Metaphysics of Law*. Not *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Law*, but *Metaphysics of Law*, in which he considers judicial statements current at the time.<sup>5</sup> At that point, yes, granted, he'll be a part of the corpus. But aside from that, you'd go look in, not even in the great jurists, you'd go look for all you need: the wet nurse, the expert witness, the local magistrate, all that . . . the prison warden . . . to see what statements they produce.

But, you'll say: so, it's all up to intuition? Well, no! No, there is a small methodological point. We won't be able to develop it, but it must be said, for what is to come: what's the method? You see, in order to form my corpus of sentences, of propositions, of words, it is necessary that I have a rule that does not presuppose words, sentences, and propositions—a rule that is directed to another dimension. I have no choice. Unless you find another method, that's possible. At that point, you leave Foucault behind. Foucault's idea, but it will take him some time.

Did he have it from the start? All that are problems that in the end do not seem that interesting to me . . . He had it halfway, not quite, a little, a lot . . . whatever you want. But he only managed to bring it out clearly bit by bit. What is it? In order to know to which set of sentences, statements, . . . a highly varied set—since they are sentences from wet nurses, expert witnesses, judges, pupils, teachers, etc.—in order to form a corpus for sexuality in the 19th century, well, then, you must attend to something that is neither a word, nor a sentence, none of that whatsoever. Not a statement, since what we're looking for is: what *is* a statement? Well, were I to give Foucault's answer in rough form, once he had it entirely, it would be: you must determine for yourself the sites of power [*les foyers de pouvoir*] that produce such sentences, the sites of power around which the words, sentences and propositions will be organized.

See, here he gives a very, very interesting answer. But could he have supplied it from the start? The fact is that he does not explicitly supply it in *Archaeology of Knowledge*. In *Archaeology of Knowledge*, one has the sense—one has some doubt. One has the sense that the choice of the corpus is up to intuition, even though one says, no, there *is* a method. He already has a method, but he does not say what it is. On the other hand, in *History of Sexuality* the method explodes. I'll analyze it. He asks: what are the sites of power concerned with sexuality in the 19th century? You see, what matters is that no reference is made in this question to words, sentences, propositions, or speech acts. It is thus a question that concerns sites of power. I add straightaway—since, otherwise, it would make no sense, the method would obviously be bad—sites of power *and of resistance*. What are the sites of power and of resistance to power that sexuality concerns? The answer, as we have seen, is not an exhaustive answer, perhaps there are others. We'll make do with a particular listing: the Church with respect to the confession; the government with respect to the management of the life of a population . . . [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:15:39] [*In the recording here, a sound gap occurs lasting 76 seconds*]

### Part 3

... From here on, you see, now we've really got a method. If you have determined the sites of power that a question concerns, you can form the corpus of corresponding words, sentences, propositions, and speech acts. Consequently, you will set aside [*retenir*] the statements *current* in the 19th century from the school, the political management of life, and the confession.

Thereafter, what you'll need is not to look at the great authors, but to throw yourself into the confession manuals, and if need be to go look at the treatises called those 'of casuistry,' since casuistry was largely occupied exactly by the problem of sexuality in relation to the confession: what questions should be asked in order to track down the sexuality of the penitent, of the faithful? Good, and then at that point you'll have your corpus of words, sentences and propositions. But if your problem is not sexuality, but madness, you will still need to constitute your base corpus. Foucault would say that if you have not constituted your corpus, you cannot advance, your study will not be serious. It's an odd sort of method.

Understand that this is also a method that belongs truly to him. If we reconsider the question of his development, I believe that one of the reasons for which he will move from studying the domain of knowledge to studying the domain of power is that already at the level of knowledge, and of "what is a statement?", he could methodologically constitute the corpuses he needed only by granting himself sites of power and of resistance to power. That's what pointed to the places where one had to look, the spots where one had to look for the words, sentences and propositions in use in a period. So, from here on, he has a corpus, for example, the corpus of the statements on sexuality in the 19th century. I would say: Krafft-Ebing's whole book, *Psychopathia sexualis*, is a compendium, is already a sub-corpus. It's a corpus that belongs to the larger corpus.

From this point . . . so, here we can pause, or even combine two things in one. Either you'll say—and I am entirely inclined to this—well, yes, he gave himself the means to constitute corpuses, that is, he fulfilled his program, the first phase [*degré*] of which was: how to constitute a corpus from which one can extract statements? Or else you have a reaction, and you say to yourself: no, there is something wrong here, this method is not yet sufficient. You could come up with plenty of things to think, of course. You could say to yourself: well, no, as for me, I'm positing problems independently of a corpus. That's your right: try. At that point, you'll need another method. Or else you say to yourself: yes, I agree, one needs a corpus to posit a problem, but you don't feel you agree with Foucault about the way in which he determines his corpuses. It's then up to you to rely on another method, Bloomfield's, for instance, which constitutes corpuses in a way completely different from Foucault. So. Or else, and this is something I eschew, you say to yourself: well, no, that's not Foucault at all, that's not what he says. At that point, that concerns me in particular and it distresses me too much, so I don't take it into consideration. So. Alright? Have you understood? Once again, it's . . . [*Deleuze does not complete the sentence*]

So, here, we can in fact say: we good and well grant him his corpus. To repeat: it's not a corpus of statements. Since his big thesis is: if you have constituted a corpus, then, *perhaps*, you will be able to extract them. Since you could not extract sentences, propositions, etc., treated outside of a corpus, you will perhaps be able to extract from the corpus cases that must be called cases of 'statements.' So: what is a statement? No answer to this question is possible if you have not first constituted a corpus of sentences, words, propositions, that were actually issued in a given period... [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:22:14]

... That doesn't tell you exactly how to make a corpus. Yes and no. Yes and no. When you set out to make a corpus, you can always fail at it. What do I mean? You aim for—I always return to this clear example—the corpus of sexuality in the 19th century. First thing: you've determined,

you've determined your sites of power and resistance, and the orientations of the corpus stem from those: go look into the wet nurses, go look into the priests and casuists, go look into the prefects who monitor population in the period, go look into the schools, the reformist, philanthropic movements regarding the schools, etc. But here, it goes without saying that you must be sensitive, for example, either to the emergence of new words, or to the new use of words that are already long used.

I'll give an example: you make a corpus, you're looking for a corpus for madness in the 19th century. You come upon certain texts by physicians who used the word 'paranoia.' Okay. You come upon other texts by physicians who use the word 'monomania.' There is a date for the emergence of this word, and this emergence date certainly refers to a great author who, for example, first isolated 'monomania'—in this case, this is [Jean-Étienne] Esquirol. Okay. But what interests you even more is not that it is Esquirol, but the current use of the word 'monomania' in the 19th century. Thus, you have certain key words, signal words, and then you have some types of statements . . . No, I'm not saying 'statements,' yet; you have types of *sentences*. For instance, I'll take an example in Foucault himself, in *History of Madness*. Here's a sentence, it's even a slogan, you can picture demonstrations using this slogan: "The mad to the madhouse." It's a sentence. Here we'll see beautifully that although it is a sentence, it's not a statement. We can show that it's a sentence, even though there is no verb. That's something propositional analysis can do easily.

"The mad to the madhouse." Okay, so: in what sense is it part of a corpus? In my view, it is part of at least three corpuses and three altogether different corpuses. The first corpus: "The mad to the madhouse" means: you shouldn't mix the mad with the vagabonds, since vagabonds don't deserve that. Vagabonds deserve special treatment that should distinguish them from the mad. It is shaming for vagabonds to put them in the same places as the mad. For, first of all, they are afraid, they risk having to undergo the violent episodes of the mad, etc. You see. I would say, for the sentence, "The mad to the madhouse," here is a first statement. The statement is: let's separate the mad from the vagabonds since it is unjust to put the vagabonds with the mad. So, that's the first statement.

The second statement, for that same sentence, "The mad to the madhouse," this time, means just the reverse. The mad and the vagabonds must be separated because the mad deserve special care. This time, it is in the name of the mad that the demand to separate the mad from the vagabonds is made. This is another statement.

The third case, and here, I'm getting ahead of myself—this was not imagined by Foucault, but that's not important. The third case: a reactionary demonstration of today. "The mad to the madhouse" means: let's restore the old asylums and stop the neighborhood therapy centers, let's reconstitute the old asylum. It's a proposal one could call reactionary in relation to the development of relations to madness. That is, down with sectorization, let's go back to the old asylums. That's a third statement.

We'll stick to the first two: the first separated the mad from the vagabonds because the vagabonds did not deserve to be mixed in with the mad. That's what one said already fairly commonly in the 18th century. The other statement: separate the vagabonds from the mad

because the mad deserve special care; this time, the separation is done to benefit the mad. This is a statement that appears only with the 19th century.

I would say: the two are not part of the same corpus. They do rightly belong to a corpus of madness; they do not belong to the same statement regime. The first belongs to an 18th century corpus, the other to a 19th century corpus. So, I still stress this point, you see—pay attention to in what sense I would say—Yes, of course there is a development in Foucault. Once again, to understand what he calls sites of power and of resistance, one must wait for *Discipline and Punish* and *History of Sexuality*. However, right from *Archaeology of Knowledge*, the determination of a corpus that archaeology requires can be done only if one already brings in such sites. You'll say to me: But if he already brings them in in *Archaeology*, what does he call them? Very good, what does he call them? If we find that out, we'd at least have a hypothesis about Foucault's transformations. And will the first designation in *Archaeology* thereafter retain a meaning? In my view, yes. He calls them—and he gives them a very special name, and this can only be grasped much later—he calls them 'singularities.' To constitute a corpus, one must first have determined a certain number of singularities. These singularities are what he will later discover as being the sites of power and of resistance.

Why does he call these 'singularities?' Here, I'd be at a loss, I won't examine this for the moment. We won't be able to see this until we already know what a statement is. But so, okay, I'm of course saying that it's not a matter of "applying;" you won't have corpuses by applying Foucault's rules. You have to put some inventiveness into it; it's a method of invention, they are rules for invention. So, what he proposes is that you constitute your problems, a problematic field. What will that be? Well, the first determination of a problematic field will be the constitution of a corresponding corpus. And with this, I've finished the first point. I am no longer faced with the vastness, the infinity, of what is said in a period, I find myself before specialized corpuses. At most, I am faced with the corpus of the period. No matter how large, it will in principle be a finite number of words, sentences, propositions, and speech acts.

And from this we get the second point: you see, our task is already plotted out: how will we extract statements? All we've got is: in order to have the slightest chance of extracting statements from words, sentences, and propositions, a specialized corpus still had to be constituted. Foucault's second step: this specialized corpus allows me . . . he only has three steps, so . . . and the second step, I'll tell you right away, although it interests me very much, it will seem very disappointing. But that's the thing: the more it seems disappointing, the better it is. And, so, the third step will be brilliant. The second step is this: Foucault tells us that a corpus ultimately implies a certain way of being of language as a whole.

I mean: this seems disappointing because we had the very specialized notion of corpus and we end up with considerations about language as a whole, which we thought were dispelled by the notion of a corpus. We must therefore ask what Foucault means. Foucault says: yes, well, in *Archaeology of Knowledge*—now I'm grouping passages from pages 145-148 [original French pagination]—an essential text about (one has to realize this): there is language, the 'there is' of language, language is a 'there is.' What does he mean by such a thing? In *The Order of Things*, a book published before *Archaeology*, I believe he already had the same idea, but it went by a different name; it was not the "there is" (in quotes) of language, it was "the being of language."



It's an odd expression, a being of language, this time on pages 57-59, 316-318, 395-397 [original French pagination]. How can we forget that you find an odd expression in [Edmund] Husserl and [Maurice] Merleau-Ponty: language-being [*l'être-langage*] (with a hyphen), a language-being, the being of language, the "there is" of language?

Very well: what does this mean? In the book *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault provides a precious indication. He says: just as his predecessors, according to him, failed regarding the corpus, so they failed regarding the 'there is' of language—as if the two were strictly correlated. Why did they fail regarding the 'there is' of language, or language-being? According to Foucault, his predecessors failed regarding this language-being or this 'there is' of language. Why? Because they were interested in the directions that language offers and not in the dimension in which language is given. Because they were interested in and followed one of the directions that language offers, they forgot and neglected the dimension in which a language is given—given in the form of a 'there is' of language, or in the form of a language-being. And what is a direction that language offers? Well, at one point, it is the fact that language designates, it is the relation of designation. At another point, it is the relation of signification, the fact that language signifies. At still another point, it is the fact that language is itself composed of units said to be signifying.

You see, this is very important, the signifier is a part, and is only a part, according to Foucault, of the directions that language offers. Hence, when certain linguists will define language by means of the signifier, all they do is define language by one of its directions, instead of reaching the dimension in which language offers itself. So, I can say: designation, signification, the signifier, are solely directions that language offers and not the dimension within which it shows itself in the form of a 'there is,' or in the form of a language-being.

So, what is this dimension? Here, you can once again see that he multiplies his departures from linguistics. Roughly, he can claim about all of linguistics that it has only taken account of the directions and not of the dimension. So, okay: what is the dimension, in which language gives itself in the form of and as 'there is,' a 'there is?' Here, I'm summarizing. It's up to you to consult the texts. I think this is what he means: it's that, when it comes down to it, in *The Order of Things*, he will use the expression "a gathering of language." It's rare, one should flag the word; it is surely important because Foucault is an author who long wagered on the contrary of gathering. He's an author who constantly explains that things exist only in a disparate, disseminated state. So, if he uses the word 'gathering' in this text, in these passages from *The Order of Things*, that's because there is an important reason for it. A gathering of language, language-being is a gathering of language.

What does that mean? Well, contrary to what happens in Husserl or Merleau-Ponty, language-being or the being of language is still historical, that is, language-being is always a mode of being, a way of gathering language, and a way of gathering language proper to a period, that is, proper to an historical formation. It's as though each historical formation had its way of gathering language into a 'there is language.' It is interesting because it opens up a new area of comparative study. One could distinguish the great historical formations, by, among other means, their ways of gathering [the] language. Language, the 'there is language,' the 'there is [some]

language,' will never be separable from a given mode that it assumes in a given historical formation.

You'll say: but how about some examples! Granted, always examples. *The Order of Things* examines two historical modes of being of language, of language-being, in the 17th century and at the end of the 19th and in the 20th centuries. That should provide us with an idea, that should be enough to give us an idea. And what does he tell us? Listen. We can no longer even reply that: yes, what defines the mode of being of language is linguistics. No, because we saw that linguistics was invested in the directions and not in this dimension in conformity to which language is given. Let's put things in a very vague way—since they would be analyses that would really take us . . . we'd lose track of our problem, 'what is a statement?'—I'm trying to suggest to you, it's up to you to go see if the idea pleases you.

Foucault thinks, it seems to me, that in the Classical Age, that is, the 17th century historical formation, well, during this formation, in this Classical Age, language gathers in a certain way, in a certain mode. What is more, between the two modes, the 17th century Classical mode and the modern mode, from the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century, Foucault will say—so, the theme is important to him, some of you know, we'll have the chance to return to this point, to the famed thesis of the death of Man in Foucault—Man is an existence between these two modes of being. That is, Man is a transitory existence, vacillating between two modes of being of language: the Classical mode of being from the 17th century, and the modern mode of being, from the end of the 19th and start of the 20th centuries. Man has existed between these two modes of being.

What can he mean? As always, we are not in a rush, but, well, I'll try to say, it's very . . . how the . . . assuming that each period gathers language in a way proper to it, how does the 17th century work? Foucault will say: it gathers language in representation. And here I don't have the time, the whole analysis of 17th century theory of language, which Foucault carries out in *The Order of Things*, will confirm this idea: language appears in the 17th century as the framing, the grid for representation. To the extent that it is in representation that language gathers and manifests its language-being or its 'there is language,' its 'there is [some] language.' It is representation that constitutes the dimension in conformity to which language is given, and no longer one of its directions.

And it is so true that, in fact, designation, signification, etc. will depend on representation for Classical thought. Very well. It's just a matter of giving you an inkling of things to come. What happens in the 19th century? At the end of the 19th century, this is part of the great tasks of *The Order of Things*, when he starts to talk about what happens for we who are called 'moderns.' In these texts, he invokes two authors as being fundamental for a new language-being: Nietzsche and [Stéphane] Mallarmé. This is curious, because for once he invokes great authors. He adds [Antonin] Artaud to them. So, he forms a trinity of great authors.

And what does he tell us? He tells us: 19th century linguistics dismembered language, so plainly we won't look in linguistics for language-being, that is, for the gathering of language. Linguistics dismembered language, on the one hand, into irreducible languages or into great families of irreducible languages; and on the other hand, it dismembered it along the directions of language:

designations, significations, signifiers. Thus, at no point can linguistics give us an answer. What effects the gathering of language from the 19th century onward? Foucault answers: no longer representation, but something very different: literature. That's the function of literature. And literature takes on a function that it had not had.

Of course, there was literature before then—you can see the objection right away, you have to beware of objections because it's stupid. Was there a literature in the 17th century? Yes, there was a literature, but it absolutely did not have the specificity of a power, which it took on only at the end of the 19th century. Towards the end of the 19th century, 'literature' changes sense; it is a word that changes sense. And why? Because at that point literature becomes the way to gather language 'outside' of all possible representation. And that is Mallarmé's endeavor: to gather language outside of all representation. The absence of representation being designated by Mallarmé as "sonorous inanity." The being of the word, the being of the word discovered as sonorous inanity, or, for those who know a bit of Mallarmé, designated by such splendid expressions, which Mallarmé proliferates, piles up . . . But notice that, with Mallarmé—in fact, this is the clearest case—a gathering of language outside of all representation comes about, literature becomes the non-representative power that gathers language in a wholly other way, in an opaque language-being that had no equivalent in the 17th century. For in the 17th century, it was representation that effected the gathering of literature.

And here, you can see, for those familiar with it, you can see a new Foucault-[Maurice] Blanchot encounter, since this is exactly how Blanchot will define modern literature: by its discovery of a language-being that is irreducible to designation, signification, etc. He makes of Mallarmé one of the greatest instigators of this, one of the greatest initiators. Literature gives up every requirement of representation so as to gather an opaque language, irreducible to every representation, and to put this language to work as, really, the totality of language. To gather the whole of language. If you think of authors who are the most important for us, it goes without saying that a project such as Joyce's can only be understood on the basis of a Mallarméan perspective, which claims to discover in literature, in the new function of literature, the 'there is' of language, the gathering of language that is tied to our historical formation.

So, what will we do? Grant this . . . the little I've said is just so that . . . these are not at all definitions, this is a new theme. I simply wanted you to assess the importance of this new theme. And I do mean that, in my view, the study of the types of gathering of language in Foucault remains barely sketched out, and barely sketched out in two cases: the historical formation in the 17th century, which gathers language in representation, and the historical formation from the 19th and 20th centuries, which gathers language in literature. It is thus a task that is still largely to be pursued. With the exception that perhaps Blanchot pursued it, in particular with respect to literature in its modern function. But, as for me, what interests me is the immediate conclusion that issues from this. You can see how we make progress, but at the same time, it seems disappointing, once again. We make progress because, now, we can say: once we have constituted a corpus, of greater or lesser range, but still finite, we can derive a language-being from this corpus, that is to say, a way that language gathers as a function of this corpus, or even, if you will, as a function of the whole historical formation, that is, as a function of the whole set of corpuses of a given historical formation.

You see, our first step was—it's shaping up as a method—our first step was: once you find yourself with the sentences and words of a period, you'll have nothing unless you have constituted, unless you know how to constitute, the corpus—the corpus relative to whatever problem you set out. There is no absolute corpus, every corpus is relative. The second stage: relative to this corpus, you will define: a way in which language gathers in this corpus, that is, a way of being of language, and, arguably, if you examine ever more corpuses of a period, the way in which language gathers in an historical formation, that is in a period. So: that's the second condition.

I've got a problem: if you are feeling dazed, I can continue with easy things. If you are not feeling dazed, I'll continue now with something that will require your attention. Either way is fine with me, because I plan for both your intelligence and your lapses. But you just have to tell me, because, well . . . Okay, I see that I can continue with the difficult material . . . although it's not really very difficult. It's on this basis that Foucault will draw the conclusion about this second aspect, the language-being or the gathering of language. Whether there is a dimension of language that exceeds all the linguistic dimensions? This is precisely it. Linguistics presupposes. Not only does it presuppose corpuses, but it therefore presupposes that there is language. And this is what linguistics will never be able to treat: the 'there is' of language or language-being.

Okay, so, if this is so, if there is some language, if there is a dimension irreducible to all the directions, it goes without saying that one cannot hold that language begins. There is no question of holding that language begins. You'll say: oh, well, that goes without saying. Not at all! That does not go without saying. At least, it does not go without saying in the sense that Foucault understands it. It doesn't at all go without saying, because people constantly hold that language begins. And Foucault does not *want* us to hold that language begins. All he says is: For all time, there is a language-being, that is, a way that language gathers, depending on each historical era. All we can say is that language-being varies, since it is historical, but does not begin; it has no beginning.

Here, again, he rejects every problem of origin. You'll say: that goes without saying. And my answer is: no, that does not go without saying. One should not hold that language begins. Who is he against here? Against everyone! Since, to my knowledge, there are three ways of holding that language begins. And three famed formulations correspond to these three ways. The first formulation is: I speak. When one thinks that 'I speak' tells us something essential, we hold that language begins. The second formulation—it is no less famous—is: it speaks. Who could have said such a thing? Well, at any rate, it was said. 'It speaks' is likewise a way to hold that language begins. And then there is a third way—these three ways should be paired with musical instruments; I can hear them. The third, that's the little flute, is: the world speaks. How much more modest in appearance, and how much more ambitious in reality?—but just as pernicious for Foucault. "The world speaks."

And Foucault wants none of them . . . So, what will he say? What is the formulation that corresponds to 'there is [some] language' or language-being? Foucault has got his formulation and it's up to him to show that it cannot be confused with any of the other three. For Foucault: 'one speaks,' or 'they speak,' what he calls 'the anonymous murmur.' The anonymous murmur. And he never stops referring to the anonymous murmur, he simply will ask that a place be made

for him in the anonymous murmur. And he will invoke the greatest creator of anonymous murmur, namely [Samuel] Beckett, saying that it would be too marvelous for him if his own discourse, Foucault's, came to have a place in the discourse of Beckett's characters—which everyone knows are not 'I's, are not worlds, and are not 'it's. So, good.

What's the difference? You'll say: there's no reason to fight, okay, between 'it speaks,' 'one speaks,' and 'the world speaks' . . . yes, if you don't like philosophy, it's not important. If you do philosophy, you say to yourself: maybe there are big differences between these formulations. Let's suppose they are statements. 'I speak.' What does that mean? It means that language begins with the one who says 'I.' Who is 'I'? It's the one who says it. 'I' is the one who says it. 'I' is the one who says 'I.' In other words, I is a shifter. Those of you who have done no linguistics at all, don't worry about it. Just let yourself be lulled by the words. Those who have done very little, you don't need to have done much, it's a "shifter" [in English in the session]. That is, when I say: "I is the one who says 'I,'" I have defined the primary shifter [*le premier des embrayeurs*]. 'I speak' is the shifter of language.

Language begins with what? Language begins with these shifters, this is what one calls 'a linguistic personology,' which engenders, if not language, at least the act of language, or discourse, starting with two linguistic persons—the two real linguistic persons being I and you. This is Benveniste's linguistic personology. 'I speak.' Okay? Consult Benveniste, *Problems in General Linguistics*, the chapter on shifters.<sup>6</sup> But you must have already read all this long ago . . . Oh, no! It's true: there are some "first levels" here . . . Uhm, you don't . . . no, well, it's not at all important. But Benveniste is very beautiful. There. You get that? Good. That's one way to hold that language begins. The theory of shifters is very interesting. In [Roman] Jakobson, you'll find long articles on the role of shifters.

The second proposition: 'it speaks,'—what is that? It's once again a way of holding that language begins. Why? Because this time language begins from a moment that is assignable, which no longer is the one who says 'I,' the first who says 'I.' Because, in Benveniste's case, it is indeed a matter of being the first to say 'I' since I is the one who says 'I'. If I say it before you do, it's me, you'd have to wait, because we can't all speak at once. So, there is a reason to speak very quickly when one says, 'I speak,' whereas if one says 'one speaks,' there is no need rush... [Interruption of the recording] [2:01:54]

#### Part 4

. . . gathers language-being in representation. And it's *Phèdre*, let's say.<sup>7</sup> No. That's another function of literature. Nevertheless, it's a show, yes; what he/it presents to us, it's truly language-being outside of representation. The anonymous murmur. The fantastical murmur. The 'one speaks.' But, no matter. So: 'it speaks' is a way of having language begin other than with 'I speak.' In this case, one will say: language begins with the signifier. And that's precisely what the one who has said 'it speaks' means. Language begins with the signifier and since the signifier obtains in the unconscious, and since the unconscious is signifying, the unconscious is structured like a language. Oh? [*Pause; while reflecting, Deleuze takes several deep breaths*]

And then there are those who say, ‘the world speaks,’ the third way of having language begin. It’s as if the world silently held the capacity for a mute meaning. The world has a mute meaning and it is the place of language to flush out this meaning, to garner this meaning. The *logos* is language that garners. It’s no longer a matter of the gathering of language. It’s a matter of language insofar as it gathers the mute meaning of the world. Language or *logos* as garnering the mute meaning of the things of the world. You find this theme in Husserl, and then in [Martin] Heidegger, who will work it out in a special, a very special, way, and then it is taken up and worked out in a very original way by Merleau-Ponty, in his final works, notably in *The Visible and the Invisible* [1964]. So much so that language, in a certain way, does nothing but make explicit the mute meaning already in things. Language reposes on the mute meaning of the world, it reposes on a muteness replete with meaning. Language will be the development of the world’s meaning to the extent that through language it is the world that speaks. Language starts at the boundary between the world and words. This is Merleau-Ponty’s idea.

However, these three themes—for example, in a little text by Foucault, “Discourse on Language,” [1970]—will be very violently rejected . . . no, not violently, but with great force. And Foucault will substitute for this . . . so, understand that, at this point, in fact, it’s very, very different. Because, if I translate into Foucault’s terms, the first formulation, ‘I speak,’ reduces language to one direction, the direction of shifters, that is, the direction of the subject who speaks. The second, the ‘it speaks,’ reduces language to one of its directions, the direction of the signifier. The third, ‘the world speaks,’ reduces language to one of its directions, this time, to the state of the world, or the world intended, aimed at, through language [*le monde intentionné, visé, à travers le langage*].

Well, in the name of his principle, Foucault rejects all three. What is the formulation that will correspond to the dimension of language independently of its directions, that is, to the gathering of language or the ‘there is’ of language? Once again, it can only be ‘one speaks.’ Assuming one understands that, in the ‘one speaks,’ which is the non-beginning of language, one must say that all subjects, no matter who, all the possible and imaginable ‘I’s, will find a place there. All the signifiers will therein form their chain. Everything there is to be said about the world will come to occupy it. But the ‘there is of language is not to be defined by any of these directions. It is to be defined by the dimension that is proper to ‘one speaks,’ to the anonymous murmur, that is to say: to the statement.

I summarize the two points. You will tell me: we’re dawdling, we’re not exactly going quickly . . . So much the better, we’re not exactly going quickly because, now, the question explodes, and we can’t defer any longer, and we have the means to give an answer. We can’t defer any longer, and we have the means to give an answer! Namely, the first rule: with words, sentences, proposition, you constitute a corpus, related to your problem. Second rule: you extract a ‘there is’ of the language, a gathering of the language, a language-being. Third point: all you need do now is to reach out your hand and garner the statements. The action of language-being upon the corpus will liberate statements for you.

You’ll say: that’s easily said, easily said. That’s right. And therefore our problem will be: what is a statement?—once we specify that now we can suppose, and this will have been today’s session, that we have the means to answer the question. Last time, we did not have the means to answer

the question, now we have acquired the means. I can simply say, to entice us, that . . . see, it's as if in order to discover statements, one had to not just stick to the words, sentences, and propositions, one had to break them open. One has to open words up, to break sentences open, to break propositions open, in order to extract statements. Exactly like one breaks open a shell.

So, this is where we are, but, all of a sudden, I think, ah! It is time to . . . while I have you, now, this is going to be very easy, so, it's going to be very, very easy, what is left for us to do. Can you still do more? Are you holding up? Okay, I had hoped that you would say no, but I didn't dare... If I had to, well, fine. It occurs to me, all of a sudden, but I've said this constantly from the start: you know, the statement, the statable, that's just half of knowledge for Foucault. There is the other half, there is seeing.

And I can tell very well that some of you do not agree, and that distresses me. So, I think: let's take advantage of this, because if knowledge is made of two halves, then what we've just said for statements must also have its equivalent for visibilities, in Foucault. Since, if it had no equivalent, I could no longer say: you know, Foucault attaches as much importance to seeing as to stating. And if it has an equivalent, and if one can show that it has an equivalent, at that point, I secretly prevail. Because if it has an equivalent, that means that knowledge [*savoir*] is not simply stating, and that it really is the combination of the statable and the visible.

So, let's make a small excursus: can Foucault give us an analogous and equally lovely account with respect to the visible? Why not? What would such an account amount to? It would amount to this.

First proposition: you know, visibilities are never hidden. Every period sees what it can see, every period makes seeable all that it can make seeable. Only, watch out!—while they are never hidden, visibilities are nonetheless never immediately given. Up to here, we're good, right? It's even like a kind of tracing.

Second proposition: if you stick to things or even to qualities, or even to states of things, you will never reach visibilities. You'll will never reach the visibilities of a period. Visibilities are no more reducible to things or objects, to states of things, or to sensible qualities, than statements are reducible to words, sentences, or propositions.

Third, third proposition: You must extract visibilities from a physical corpus, that is, you must break open things and objects so as to extract the visibilities from them. How, on what conditions, do you form your corpus of visibilities? [*Pause*]

Fourth proposition: There has to be a 'there is;' just as there has to be a 'there is' of language that is irreducible to all linguistic directions, so there must be a 'there is' that is irreducible to all sensible, that is, phenomenological, directions.

What is this quite simple 'there is?' It is the 'there is' upon which Goethe died. The 'there is light.' There is light and each period has a light-being [*un être-lumière*], a mode of being of light. And light gathers in each period according to a certain mode. What will define the visibilities of a period is the 'there is light,' or the light-being, which varies from one formation to another.

And when Foucault, and why does Foucault feel the need to write about paintings, from one end of his body of work to the other? What is a painting, for him? It's a regime of light, before being a set of lines and colors.

What defines a painting? It's a gathering of light. What above all distinguishes—I don't mean solely, exclusively—but what above all distinguishes [Diego] Vélasquez and [Edouard] Manet? The regime of light in Vélasquez's painting, *Las Meninas*, and the regime of light in Manet's painting, *Le bar des Folies Bergères*. The idea is that there is a light-being just as there is a language-being [*un être-langage*], and that these two beings are heterogeneous. This means that beneath the language-being at work in a corpus, in a linguistic corpus, you extract statements and visibilities. You will extract them when the light-being converges with a visible corpus. For example, a painting that forms a corpus or an element of a corpus. And visibility, what will that be?

Here, we've got to land squarely back on our feet: it cannot be a thing, quality, state of things, or object . . . Is it a fluke if Foucault's style . . . I can't say that it's a problem in Foucault, it so much goes without saying for him, it's his way of living. So, he doesn't really have much need to talk about it. He does better than talking about it, it permeates his whole style. His whole style, what's that? Only one thing in the order of the visible interests Foucault: facets, sparklings, glimmerings, reflections, flashes. That's it. What interests him are not things. In other words, the visibilities are glimmerings, sparklings, and flashes, and not reflections and not the things on which reflections form.

In other words, it seems to me, Foucault in this respect is very Goethean, in the sense of Goethe's *Theory of Colors* [1810], when Goethe discusses the effects of light. And visibilities are effects of light, just as statements are effects of the 'there is language.' And will Foucault say this explicitly? Yes, in a very important text which we will look at closely, in the book entitled *Raymond Roussel*. Foucault tells us: there are two lights—that's exactly what I need—there are two lights: a first light, he uses the word "first light" (What else are you going to say?) First light is the 'there is light,' the 'there is [some] light,' the way in which light gathers—that's the first light. And under the action of this first light there are no longer things, but things come to count for their glintings, sparklings, and reflections. And he congratulates Raymond Roussel for having built his entire oeuvre between the first light and sparklings or glintings.

So, I can say, obviously, that seeing is the second pole of knowledge [*savoir*], since seeing tells, in its way—which is irreducible to the statement's way—an analogous tale [*histoire*]. Just as one must break open words and sentences to extract statements, so one must break open things and qualities to extract visibilities. And just as, when one reaches the meeting point—the junction, the interference—between a corpus and a gathering of language, one will extract statements, so, when one reaches the interaction between a physical corpus and a gathering of light, one will discover flashes, glintings, and sparklings. Then things will fade away, leaving flashes and sparklings in their place, exactly as words and sentences faded away to leave statements in their place. And the splendor of Raymond Roussel, according to Foucault, is to have created works of both kinds: a first part of his oeuvre (an example of this type of text is "The View," ["La Vue"], in which things are broken open so as to release glintings; and for the other sort of text, *Impressions of Africa* [1909], in which words and sentences are broken open so as to release



statements. And thus Raymond Roussel, in poetry, traversed the two poles of knowledge and constituted poetry as knowledge [*savoir*].

In any event, we now find ourselves at the third point. Now that all this has been said, we have the means to extract statements, so far, so good, just as we perhaps have the means to extract visibilities. And so: what is a statement? Our answer must account for its difference from words, sentences and propositions.

This is where we are. If we get there, if we get to that, well, we will have finished ‘what is knowledge?’ We will have finished ‘what is knowledge?’ fairly quickly. Okay, are there any questions? You know, is there anything? I want you to think about all this, okay, between now and the next time, I don’t know. There’s nothing?

A student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: We’ll get to that. It implicates our whole future. For now, we must very firmly establish the difference in nature between the two, that is, why there is no common form. We’re not at that point, yet. There must certainly be something that relates them, you’re right about that.

So, if you have nothing to say to me . . . yeah?

A student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: [*Pause*] I don’t understand. Re-state that, re-state that. We are all tired, right? You’re saying: why don’t I speak about languages, right?

The student: [*Inaudible*] . . . this material appears in the world like planets . . . [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: But I think I understand . . . yes?

Another student: With respect to linguistics, I don’t understand, because there is no linguistics prior to its historical appearances. There is not one language that would be a metaphysical material . . .

Deleuze: But neither is there for light, for Foucault: there is no light that is not relative to an historical formation.

The student: But it’s still nonetheless physical?

Deleuze: No! No, no! Not for Foucault. No more than it is for Goethe. Here, if you say to me “but light is a physical reality,” you might as well also say, “it’s a thing” or “it’s a state of things,” etc. Foucault doesn’t treat light as a physicist! Okay, so you’ll say to me, “but he has no right!” . . . I don’t know. At that point, I beg you: read Goethe. He does not talk about light as a physicist. Goethe explains himself at length on this point. He talks about light and tells us: Newton talks about light as a physicist, but I apply another kind of language to light. What is this

other kind of language? Notice, um. . . Goethe will use the word ‘phenomenology.’ He does a phenomenology of light.

In any case, light is, absolutely for Foucault, is absolutely historical, since the physical being of light definable by [Isaac] Newton or definable by Aristotle is itself part of a knowledge that is a perfectly historical knowledge. And if you say: “but even before there were human beings, there was light.” Well, yes, but there were strata, there were stratifications, there was an archaeology. There were no human beings, but it was still relative to an historical formation. Yeah, in any case, he does not claim to do a physics of light for us. [Pause] Yes?

A student: [*Inaudible; no doubt concerning the French title of The Order of Things, Les Mots et les Choses (Words and Things)*]

Deleuze: No, since he always said, and here one must believe him [*a brief jump in the recording without interruption*] . . . he always said this as a way to kid around. He said: this title, he said, I quote verbatim, he said, he wrote: this title must be understood ironically. He adds: it’s obvious that ‘Words’ does not designate ‘words’ and ‘Things’ does not designate ‘things.’ You can’t say it any better than that: statements are something other than words and visibilities are something other than things. So, then, why did he call it *Words and Things*? I think he had a reason, since what it would be, to be precise, you have to understand the title as “from the angle of words and from the angle of things.” From the angle of words, there are statements that cannot be reduced to words, and from the angle of things, there are visibilities that cannot be reduced to things. [*End of the recording*] [2:26:35]

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> *History of Sexuality: Volume I*, p. 29; original p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Sexuality: Volume I*, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> *History of Sexuality: Volume I*, p. 35; original p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> “The Life of Infamous Men”, 1977, transl. Paul Foss and Meaghan Morris, in *Michel Foucault: Power, Knowledge, Truth* (Sydney: Feral Publications, 1979), p. 88; “La vie des hommes infâmes », 1977; *Dits et Écrits*, vol. IV, pp. 249-250.

<sup>5</sup> *Éléments Métaphysiques de la Doctrine du Droit* (first part of *Métaphysique des moeurs*) (1795), translated by Jules Barni (Paris: Auguste Durand, 1853).

<sup>6</sup> *Problèmes de linguistique générale* (Paris : Gallimard, 1966) ; English edition: Trans. Mary Elizabeth Meek, (Coral Gables, Florida: University of Miami Press, 1971).

<sup>7</sup> A French classical play by Jean Racine, 1677.