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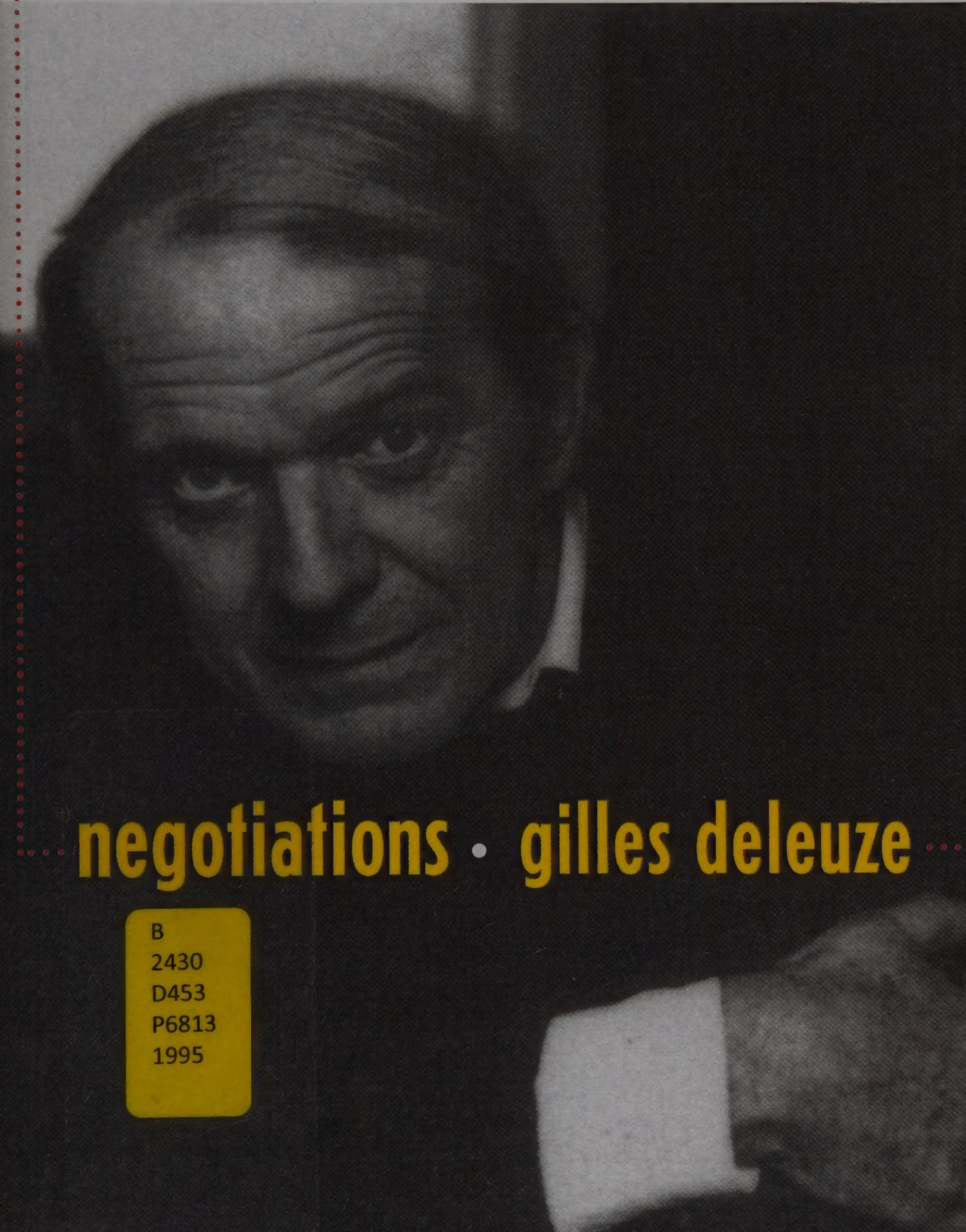
“ century will be known as Deleuzian.”
—Michel Foucault



negotiations · gilles deleuze

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TRANSLATED BY
MARTIN JOUGHIN

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Why bring together the texts of conversations stretching over nearly twenty years? Negotiations sometimes last so long you don't know whether they're still part of the war or the beginning of peace. And philosophy's always caught between an anger with the way things are and the serenity it brings. But Philosophy isn't a Power. Religions, states, capitalism, science, the law, public opinion, and television are powers, but not philosophy. Philosophy may have its great internal battles (between idealism and realism, and so on), but they're mock battles. Not being a power, philosophy can't battle with the powers that be, but it fights a war without battles, a guerrilla campaign against them. And it can't converse with them, it's got nothing to tell them, nothing to communicate, and can only negotiate. Since the powers aren't just external things, but permeate each of us, philosophy throws us all into constant negotiations with, and a guerrilla campaign against, ourselves.

G.D.

negotiations • 1972–1990

part one • FROM *ANTI-OEDIPUS* TO *A THOUSAND PLATEAUS*

LETTER TO A HARSH CRITIC

You're charming, clever, mischievous, even vicious sometimes. You might try to be a bit nicer . . . because the letter you've sent me, turning sometimes on what *people* say, sometimes on what you yourself think, or a mixture of the two, is basically a sort of celebration of my supposedly sorry predicament. You tell me, on the one hand, that I'm trapped, completely trapped—in my life, my teaching, politically—that I've become a lousy celebrity, but not for long, and there's nothing I can do about it all. You tell me, also, that I've always just tagged along behind you, the real experimenters or heroes, sucking your blood, savoring your poisons, but keeping at a safe distance to watch and capitalize on what you're doing. That's not how I see it at all. Real and pretend schizophrenics are giving me such a hard time that I'm starting to see the attractions of paranoia. Long live paranoia. What's your letter supposed to inspire, apart from a bit of *ressentiment* (you're trapped, you're trapped, "admit it" . . .) and a bit of guilt (you've got no self-respect, you're just tagging along . . .); if that's all you've got to say, why bother? You're getting your own back for having written a book about me. Your letter's full of false sympathy and a real thirst for revenge.

In the first place, though, you might remember it wasn't my idea, this book. You say you did it "for a laugh, for no good reason, for money, for social advancement." I'm not sure it's the best way to get all that. Then again, that's your business, and I told you from the start that your book was nothing to do with me, that I wasn't going to read it, or I would read it when it came out, as saying something about you. You came to see me asking for something or other you could put in it. And really just to be nice to you, I suggested an exchange of letters—as simpler and less tedious than a taped interview. On the understanding that the letters would be printed quite separately from your book, as a sort of appendix. You're already taking advantage of me by distorting our agreement somewhat, and complaining that I've behaved like some old Duchesse de Guermantes saying "You will hear from me," like an oracle telling you to use the mail, or like Rilke refusing to give any advice to a young poet. Oh, patience.

Being kind isn't, it must be said, your strong point. If I ever stopped liking and admiring people and (some) things, I'd feel dead, deadened. But you lot, you seem to have been born thoroughly bitter, you sneer at everything: "Nobody fools me . . . I'm doing a book about you, but you'll see . . . " Of all possible interpretations you generally choose the most base or spiteful. Example number one: I like and admire Foucault. I wrote an article about him. And he wrote one about me, from which you quote the remark: "Maybe one day we'll see the century as Deleuzian." Your version of this is that we're trading compliments. It doesn't seem to cross your mind that I might really admire Foucault, or that his little remark's a joke meant to make people who like us laugh, and make everyone else livid. There's a piece you know that explains this innate spitefulness of people who come from the militant left: "If you like big ideas, then try talking about kindness and fraternity at a leftist meeting. They specialize in all forms of carefully calculated animosity, in greeting anybody, present or absent, friend or foe, and anything they say, with aggressiveness and put-downs. They don't want to understand people, but to check them over."* You're checking me over very carefully in your letter. I remember a guy from Gay Lib once saying in a meeting that it was just as well they were around to be our guilty conscience . . . Weird ambition, bit like a cop, to be someone's guilty conscience. And you too, it's as though you think doing a book about (or against) me gives you some power over me. No way. The idea of feel-

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*Adapted from "Les Culs énergumènes," *Recherches* (March 1973), pp. 142–43.[1]

ing guilty is, for me, just as repugnant as being someone else's guilty conscience.

Example number two: my fingernails, which are long because I don't cut them. At the end of your letter you say my worker's jacket (it's actually a peasant's jacket) is like Marilyn Monroe's pleated bodice and my fingernails are like Greta Garbo's dark glasses. And you shower me with ironic and spiteful advice. As you mention them several times, my fingernails, let's consider them. One might say that my mother used to cut them for me and it's to do with the Oedipus complex and castration (a ridiculous interpretation but a psychoanalytical one). One might also note, looking at my fingertips, that I haven't got the normal protective whorls, so that touching anything, especially fabric, causes such irritation that I need long nails to protect them (a teratological, selectionist interpretation). Or one might say, and it's true, that I dream of being, not invisible, but imperceptible, and the closest I can get to the dream is having fingernails I can keep in my pockets, so I find nothing more disconcerting than somebody looking at them (a social psychologist's interpretation). One might, finally, say: "You mustn't bite your fingernails, because they're part of you; if you like fingernails, bite other people's if you want to and get the chance" (a Darien-style[2] political interpretation). But you, you choose the shabbiest interpretation of all: he wants to be different, wants to do a Garbo. It's strange, anyway, how none of my friends have ever commented on my nails, finding them perfectly natural, as though they'd just landed there like specks blown in the wind that nobody bothers mentioning.

I'll come, now, to your first criticism, where you find all sorts of different ways of saying: You're stuck, you're trapped, *admit it.* The public prosecutor. I'm not admitting anything. Since what's at issue, through no fault of mine, is a book about me, I'd like to explain how I see what I've written. I belong to a generation, one of the last generations, that was more or less bludgeoned to death with the history of philosophy. The history of philosophy plays a patently repressive role in philosophy, it's philosophy's own version of the Oedipus complex: "You can't seriously consider saying what you yourself think until you've read this and that, and that on this, and this on that." Many members of my generation never broke free of this; others did, by inventing their own particular methods and new rules, a new approach. I myself "did" history of philosophy for a long time, read books on this or that author. But I compensated in various ways: by concentrating, in the first place, on authors who challenged the rationalist tradition in this history (and I see a secret link between Lucretius, Hume, Spinoza, and Nietzsche, constituted by their critique of negativity, their cultivation of joy, the hatred of interiority, the externality of forces and relations, the denunciation of power . . . and so on). What I most detested was Hegelianism and dialectics. My book on Kant's different; I like it, I did it as a book about an enemy that tries to show how his system works, its various cogs—the tribunal of Reason, the legitimate exercise of the faculties (our subjection to these made all the more hypocritical by our being characterized as legislators). But I suppose the main way I coped with it at the time was to see the history of philosophy as a sort of buggery or (it comes to the same thing) immaculate conception. I saw myself as taking an author from behind and giving him a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous. It was really important for it to be his own child, because the author had to actually say all I had him saying. But the child was bound to be monstrous too, because it resulted from all sorts of shifting, slipping, dislocations, and hidden emissions that I really enjoyed. I think my book on Bergson's a good example. And there are people these days who laugh at me simply for having written about Bergson at all. It simply shows they don't know enough history. They've no idea how much hatred Bergson managed to stir up in the French university system at the outset and how he became a focus for all sorts of crazy and unconventional[3] people right across the social spectrum. And it's irrelevant whether that's what he actually intended.

It was Nietzsche, who I read only later, who extricated me from all this. Because you just can't deal with him in the same sort of way. He gets up to all sorts of things behind *your* back.[4] He gives you a perverse taste—certainly something neither Marx nor Freud ever gave anyone—for saying simple things in your own way, in affects, intensities, experiences, experiments. It's a strange business, speaking for yourself, in your own name, because it doesn't at all come with seeing yourself as an ego or a person or a subject. Individuals find a real name for themselves, rather, only through the harshest exercise in depersonalization, by opening themselves up to the multiplicities everywhere within them, to the intensities running through them. A name as the direct awareness of such intensive multiplicity is the opposite of the depersonalization effected by the history of philosophy; it's depersonalization through love rather than subjection. What one says comes from the depths of one's ignorance, the depths of one's own underdevelopment. One becomes a set of liberated singularities, words, names, fingernails, things, animals, little events: quite the reverse of a celebrity. So anyway, I got to work on two books along these meandering lines, *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense.* I know well enough that they're still full of academic elements, they're heavy going, but they're an attempt to jolt, set in motion, something inside me, to treat writing as a flow, not a code. And I like some passages in *Difference and Repetition*, those on tiredness and contemplation, for instance, because in spite of appearances they're living experiences. That's as far as it went, but it was a beginning.

And then there was my meeting with Félix Guattari, the way we understood and complemented, depersonalized and singularized—in short, loved—one another. Out of that came *Anti-Oedipus*, and it takes things a step further. I've wondered whether one general reason for some of the hostility toward the book is simply the fact that there are two writers, because people want you to disagree about things, and take different positions. So they try to disentangle inseparable elements and identify who did what. But since each of us, like anyone else, is already various people, it gets rather crowded. And we wouldn't of course claim that *Anti-Oedipus* is completely free of any scholarly apparatus: it's still pretty academic, fairly serious, and it's not the Pop Philosophy or Pop Analysis we dreamed of. But I'm struck by the way it's the people who've read lots of other books, and psychoanalytic books in particular, who find our book really difficult. They say: What exactly *is* a body without organs? What exactly do you *mean* by "desiring machines"?[5] Those, on the other hand, who don't know much, who haven't been addled by psychoanalysis, have less of a problem and happily pass over what they don't understand. That's why we said that, in principle at least, the book was written for fifteen- to twenty-year-olds. There are, you see, two ways of reading a book: you either see it as a box with something inside and start looking for what it signifies, and then if you're even more perverse or depraved you set off after signifiers. And you treat the next book like a box contained in the first or containing it. And you annotate and interpret and question, and write a book about the book, and so on and on. Or there's the other way: you see the book as a little non-signifying machine, and the only question is "Does it work, and how does it work?" How does it work for you? If it doesn't work, if nothing comes through, you try another book. This second way of reading's intensive: something comes through or it doesn't. There's nothing to explain, nothing to understand, nothing to interpret. It's like plugging into an electric circuit. I know people who've read nothing who immediately saw what bodies without organs were, given their own "habits," their own way of being one. This second way of reading's quite different from the first, because it relates a book directly to what's Outside. A book is a little cog in much more complicated external machinery. Writing is one flow among others, with no special place in relation to the others, that comes into relations of current, countercurrent, and eddy with other flows—flows of shit, sperm, words, action, eroticism, money, politics, and so on. Take Bloom, writing in the sand with one hand and masturbating with the other: what's the relation between those two flows? Our outside, at least one of our outsides, was a particular mass of people (especially young people) who are fed up with psychoanalysis. They're "trapped," to use your expression, because they generally continue in analysis even after they've started to question psychoanalysis—but in psychoanalytic terms. (On a personal note, for example, how can boys from Gay Lib, and girls from Women's Lib, and plenty others like them, go into analysis? Doesn't it embarrass them? Do they believe in it? What on earth are they doing on a couch?) The fact that this current is there made *Anti-Oedipus* possible. And if psychoanalysts, ranging from the most stupid to the most intelligent ones, have as a whole greeted the book with hostility, but defensively rather than aggressively, that's obviously not just because of its content but because of this growing current of people getting fed up listening to themselves saying "daddy, mommy, Oedipus, castration, regression" and seeing themselves presented with a really inane image of sexuality in general and of their own sexuality in particular. Psychoanalysts are going to have to take account, in the old phrase, of the "masses," of little masses. We get wonderful letters about this from a psychoanalytic lumpenproletariat that are much better than critics' reviews.

This intensive way of reading, in contact with what's outside the book, as a flow meeting other flows, one machine among others, as a series of experiments for each reader in the midst of events that have nothing to do with books, as tearing the book into pieces, getting it to interact with other things, absolutely anything . . . is reading with love. That's exactly how you read the book. And the bit I like in your letter, the bit I think is rather wonderful in fact, is where you say how you read the book, what you yourself did with it. Why, oh why, do you then have to rush straight back into the attack: "There's no way out, we'll be waiting for your second volume, and we'll spot what you're up to straight away . . . ?" No, you're quite wrong, we've already seen where to go next. We'll do the sequel because we like working together. Except it won't be anything like a sequel. With a bit of help from outside, it will be something so different in its language and thinking that anyone "waiting" for us will have to say we've gone completely crazy, or we're frauds, or we couldn't take it any further. It's a real pleasure to confound people. Not that we just want to play at being mad, but we'll go mad in our own way and in our own time, we won't be pushed into it. We're well aware that the first volume of *Anti-Oedipus* is still full of compromises, too full of things that are still scholarly and rather like concepts. So we'll change, we already have, it's all going wonderfully. Some people think we're going to continue along the same lines, some even thought we were going to set up a fifth psychoanalytic group.[6] Yuck. Our minds are on other things that are less public and more fun. We're going to stop compromising, because we don't need to any more. And we'll always find the allies we want, or who want us.

I'm trapped, am I? It's not true: neither Félix nor I have turned into little leaders of a little school. And we couldn't care less what people do with *Anti-Oedipus*, because we've already moved on. You see me as trapped politically, reduced to signing manifestos and petitions, "a glorified social worker": it's not true, and Foucault's to be praised, among all sorts of other things, for being someone, the first person, who's disrupted the machinery of recuperation and freed intellectuals from the intellectual's classic political predicament. You, all you can think of is provocation, publication, questionnaires, public confessions ("admit it, admit it . . . "). I, on the other hand, sense that we're rapidly approaching an era of half-voluntary and half-enforced secrecy, the dawn of a desire that is, among other things, political. You see me as trapped professionally, because I went on talking for two years at Vincennes and now, you-say-they-say, I'm no longer doing anything there. You think that by continuing to talk I was in a contradictory position, "refusing to play the professor, but stuck in teaching, still chugging along after everyone else had gone off the rails." I don't see any contradiction, I'm not some beautiful soul[7] living out my tragic predicament; I went on talking because I really wanted to, and I was encouraged, attacked, interrupted by militants, people acting crazy and people who really were, idiots and really intelligent characters . . . Vincennes was a sort of ongoing party. It went on like that for two years, which is long enough, it couldn't go on indefinitely. And now that I'm not talking in that context any more, you say or report people saying I'm doing nothing, that I'm impotent, a big old sterile queen bee. That's not true either: I've gone into hiding, and I'm still doing my own thing, with as few people as possible—and you, instead of helping me not to become a celebrity, you're there confronting me with the choice between impotence and contradiction. You see me, finally, as personally, domestically trapped. It's not your most subtle point. You explain I've got a wife, and a daughter who plays with dolls and potters around the house. And you think that in the light of *Anti-Oedipus* this is a huge joke. You might have added I've got a son who's almost old enough to go into analysis. If you think it's dolls that produce the Oedipus complex, or the mere fact of being married, that's pretty weird. The Oedipus complex is nothing to do with dolls, it's an internal secretion, a gland, and you can't fight oedipal secretions except by fighting yourself, by experimenting on yourself, by opening yourself up to love and desire (rather than the whining need to be loved that leads everyone to the psychoanalyst). Non-oedipal love is pretty hard work. And you should know that it's not enough just to be unmarried, not to have kids, to be gay, or belong to this or that group, in order to get round the Oedipus complex—given all the group complexes, oedipal gays, oedipized women's libbers, and so on. Just look at the piece called "Us and the Arabs,"* which is even more oedipal than my daughter.

So there's nothing to "admit." The relative success of *Anti-Oedipus* doesn't compromise Félix or me; in a way it's nothing to do with us, because we're working on other things. So I'll move on to your other

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**Recherches* (March 1973).

more cruel and hurtful criticism, when you say I'm someone who's always just tagged along behind, taking it easy, capitalizing upon other people's experiments, on gays, drug-users, alcoholics, masochists, lunatics, and so on, vaguely savoring their transports and poisons without ever taking any risks. You turn against me a piece I wrote where I ask how we can avoid becoming professional lecturers on Artaud or fashionable admirers of Fitzgerald. But what do you know about me, given that I believe in secrecy, that is, in the power of falsity, rather than in representing things in a way that manifests a lamentable faith in accuracy and truth? If I stick where I am, if I don't travel around, like anyone else I make my inner journeys that I can only measure by my emotions, and express very obliquely and circuitously in what I write. And what do my relations with gays, alcoholics, and drug-users matter, if I can obtain similar effects by different means? What's interesting isn't whether I'm capitalizing on anything, but whether there are people doing something or other in their little corner, and me in mine, and whether there might be any points of contact, chance encounters and coincidences rather than alignments and rallying-points (all that crap where everyone's supposed to be everyone else's guilty conscience and judge). I owe you lot nothing, nothing more than you owe me. I don't need to join you in your ghettos, because I've got my own. The question's nothing to do with the character of this or that exclusive group, it's to do with the transversal relations that ensure that any effects produced in some particular way (through homosexuality, drugs, and so on) *can always be produced by other means.* We have to counter people who think "I'm this, I'm that," and who do so, moreover, in *psychoanalytic* terms (relating everything to their childhood or fate), by thinking in strange, fluid, unusual terms: I don't know what I am—I'd have to investigate and experiment with so many things in a non-narcissistic, non-oedipal way—no gay can ever definitively say "I'm gay." It's not a question of being this or that sort of human, but of becoming inhuman, of a universal animal becoming[8]—not seeing yourself as some dumb animal, but unraveling your body's human organization, exploring this or that zone of bodily intensity, with everyone discovering their own particular zones, and the groups, populations, species that inhabit them. Who's to say I can't talk about medicine unless I'm a doctor, if I talk about it like a dog? What's to stop me talking about drugs without being an addict, if I talk about them like a little bird? And why shouldn't I invent some way, however fantastic and contrived, of talking about something, without someone having to ask whether I'm qualified to talk like that? Drugs can produce *délire*, so why can't I get into a *délire* about drugs? Why does your particular version of "reality" have to come into it? You're a pretty unimaginative realist. And why do you bother reading me, if that's how you feel? Arguments from one's own privileged experience are bad and reactionary arguments. My favorite sentence in *Anti-Oedipus* is: "No, we've never seen a schizophrenic."

What, in sum, does your letter contain? Nothing about you, except the one bit I like. Lots of gossip, "things people say," where you deftly confuse what they're saying and what you're saying. And maybe that's what you set out to produce, a sort of self-contained jumble of echoes. It's a mannered letter, rather disdainful. You ask me for something you can publish, then say nasty things about me. My letter, given yours, seems like a self-justification. Wonderful. You're not an Arab, you're a jackal. You're doing all you can to turn me into what you complain I'm becoming, a little celebrity, ra ra ra. I can do without your help, but I do like you—to put an end to the gossip.

Printed in Michel Cressole's *Deleuze* (1973)

GILLES DELEUZE AND FÉLIX GUATTARI ON *ANTI-OEDIPUS*

One of you is a psychoanalyst, the other's a philosopher; your book sets out to question both psychoanalysis and philosophy, and to introduce something different: schizoanalysis. So what's the overall frame of the book? How did you conceive this project, and how has it affected each of you?

GILLES DELEUZE: I suppose I should tell you a story, like a little girl: first of all we met each other, then such and such happened . . . Two and a half years ago I met Félix. He thought I'd gone further than he had and he could learn something from me. I'd neither a psychoanalyst's feeling of responsibility nor an analysand's conditioning, no feelings of guilt, that is. I'd no particular place in the institution, so I didn't have to take it too seriously and found it rather funny that psychoanalysis was such a sad business. But I was working solely with concepts, rather timidly in fact. Félix had talked to me about what he was already calling "desiring machines": he had a whole theoretical and practical conception of the unconscious as a machine, of the schizophrenic unconscious. So I myself thought he'd gone further than I had. But for all his unconscious machinery, he was still talking in terms of structures, signifiers, the phallus, and so on. That was hardly surprising, since he owed so much to Lacan (just as I did). But I felt it would all work even better if one found the right concepts, instead of using notions that didn't even come from Lacan's creative side but from an orthodoxy built up round him. Lacan himself says "I'm not getting much help." We thought we'd give him some schizophrenic help. And there's no question that we're all the more indebted to Lacan, once we've dropped notions like structure, the symbolic, or the signifier, which are thoroughly misguided, and which Lacan himself has always managed to turn on their head to bring out their limitations.

So Félix and I decided to work together. It started off with letters. And then we began to meet from time to time to listen to what the other had to say. It was great fun. But it could be really tedious too. One of us always talked too much. Often one of us would put forward some notion, and the other just didn't see it, wouldn't be able to make anything of it until months later, in a different context. And then we read a lot, not whole books, but bits and pieces. Sometimes we found quite ridiculous things that confirmed for us the damage wrought by Oedipus and the awful misery of psychoanalysis. Sometimes we found things we thought were wonderful, that we wanted to use. And then we wrote a lot. Félix sees writing as a schizoid flow drawing in all sorts of things. I'm interested in the way a page of writing flies off in all directions and at the same time closes right up on itself like an egg. And in the reticences, the resonances, the lurches, and all the larvae you can find in a book. Then we really started writing together, it wasn't any problem. We took turns at rewriting things.

FELIX GUATTARI: As for me, I had too many "backgrounds," four at least. I'd come from the Communist Path, and then the Left Opposition. Up to May 68 there was a lot of activism, a bit of writing—the "Nine Theses of the Left Opposition," for example. And then I'd been involved with the La Borde clinic at Cour-Cheverny from the time it was set up by Jean Oury in 1953 as an extension of Tosquelles's experiment:[1] we were trying to establish the theoretical and practical basis for institutional psychotherapy (I myself was working with notions like "transversality" and "group phantasm"). And then there were Lacan's seminars too, which I followed from the start. Last, I had a sort of schizoid background or discourse, I'd always liked schizophrenics, been drawn to them. You have to live with them to understand this. Schizophrenics do at least, unlike neurotics, have real problems. My first work as a psychotherapist was with a schizophrenic, using a tape recorder.

Now these four backgrounds, these four discourses, weren't just backgrounds or discourses but ways of life, and of course I was to some extent torn between them. May 68 came as a shock to Gilles and me, as to so many others: we didn't know each other, but this book, now, is nevertheless a result of May. I felt a need, not to integrate, but to make some connections between these four ways I was living. I had some guidelines, how neurosis, for instance, had to be interpreted in terms of schizophrenia. But I didn't have the logic I needed to make the connections. I'd written a piece in *Recherches*, "From One Sign to the Other," full of Lacan, but no longer invoking the signifier. But I was still stuck in a kind of dialectics. What I was after in the work with Gilles were things like the body without organs, multiplicities, the possibility of a logic of multiplicities connected with the body without organs. In our book, logical operations are physical operations too. And what we were both looking for was a discourse that was at once political and psychiatric, without reducing either dimension to the other.

You're constantly contrasting a schizoanalytic unconscious made up of desiring machines and a psychoanalytic unconscious you criticize in all sorts of ways. You relate everything to schizophrenia. But can one really say Freud took no account of the whole area of machines, or of apparatuses at least? And that he failed to understand the whole area of psychosis?

FG: It's complicated. In some ways Freud was well aware that his real clinical material, his clinical base, came from psychosis, from the work of Bleuler and Jung. It's always been like that: everything new that's come into psychoanalysis, from Melanie Klein to Lacan, has come from psychosis. But then there's the Tausk affair: maybe Freud was worried whether analytic concepts could deal with psychosis. In his account of the Schreber case you get all sorts of evasions. And you get the feeling Freud really doesn't like schizophrenics at all, he says terrible things about them, really nasty things . . . Now, when you say Freud did take some account of desire's machines, that's true. Indeed, that's what psychoanalysis discovered, desire, machineries of desire. They're constantly whirring, grinding away, churning stuff out, in any analysis. And analysts are always starting up machines, or restarting them, on a schizophrenic basis. But they may be doing or setting in motion things they're not fully aware of. What they do in practice may involve working with sketchy ideas of processes that aren't fully explained in their theory. There's no question that psychoanalysis has shaken up the whole area of mental health, it's been like a bomb smuggled inside. The way it's been compromised from the start doesn't really matter, it's shaken things up, it's forced people to organize things differently, it's uncovered desire. You yourself cite Freud's analysis of psychical apparatuses: there's the whole aspect of machinery, the production of desire, production lines. But then there's the other aspect, of personifying these apparatuses (as Superego, Ego, and Id), a theatrical *mise-en-scène* that substitutes merely representative tokens for the true productive forces of the unconscious. So desire's machines become more and more like stage machinery: the superego, the death instinct, becomes a deus ex machina. They come to work more and more behind the scene, in the wings. Or like machines for creating illusions, special effects. All desiring production is crippled. What we're saying is that Freud at once discovers desire as libido, as productive desire, and is constantly forcing the libido back into a domestic representation within the Oedipus complex. The same thing happens in psychoanalysis as Marx saw happening in economics: Adam Smith and Ricardo discovered the essence of wealth in productive labor but constantly forced it back into representations of ownership. It's the way it projects desire back onto the domestic stage that accounts for the failure of psychoanalysis to understand psychosis, for its coming to feel at home only with neurosis, and understanding neurosis itself in a way that misrepresents unconscious forces.

Is that what you mean when you talk about psychoanalysis taking "an idealist turn" with the Oedipus complex, and when you try to contrast a new materialism with idealism in psychiatry? What form does the distinction between materialism and idealism take in the field of psychoanalysis?

GD: What we're attacking isn't some supposed ideology behind psychoanalysis. It's the practice and theory of psychoanalysis itself. That said, there's no contradiction between saying it's a wonderful thing and saying that it's been going wrong from the start. The idealist turn is there from the start. There's no contradiction: magnificent flowers, even though the rot set in right at the start. What we call idealism in psychoanalysis is a whole system of projections, of reductions, in analytic theory and practice: the reduction of desiring production to a system of so-called unconscious representations, and to corresponding forms of causation and expression or explanation; the reduction of the factories of the unconscious to a piece of theater, Oedipus or Hamlet; the reduction of the social investments[2] of libido to domestic investments, and the projection of desire back onto domestic coordinates, Oedipus again. We're not saying psychoanalysis invented the Oedipus complex. It gives people what they want, they bring their Oedipus complex along with them. Psychoanalysis simply turns the complex back on itself, oedipizes transference, oedipizes the complex itself on the couch, its mucky little kingdom. But whether in its domestic or analytic form, the Oedipus complex is basically an apparatus for repressing desiring machines, and in no sense a formation of the unconscious itself. We're not saying the complex, or some equivalent, varies from one form of society to another. We'd say rather, like the structuralists, that it's an invariant. It's what's invariant in any diversion of unconscious forces. So we're not attacking the Oedipus complex from the standpoint of some society free from it, but as it operates in the society that best exemplifies it, our capitalist society. We're not attacking it from the standpoint of some supposed ideals beyond sexuality, but from the standpoint of sexuality itself, which can't be reduced to a "dirty little family secret." And we don't make any distinction between hypothetical variants of the Oedipus complex and the structural invariant, because however you approach it, you reach the same impasse, the same crippling of desiring machines. What psychoanalysis calls the resolution or dissolution of the Oedipus complex is a complete joke, it's precisely the way an endless debt is inherited, the analysis never ends, Oedipus infects everyone, passed on from father to child. It's crazy how much nonsense has been spawned by the Oedipus complex, particularly in relation to children.

A materialist psychiatry is one that brings production into desire on the one hand and desire into production on the other. *Délire* turns not on the father, nor even "the name of the father," but on names in History.[3] It's as it were the immanence of desiring machines in great social machines. What psychoanalysis sees in psychosis is the line of "paranoia" that leads into the Oedipus complex, castration, and so on, all the repressive apparatuses planted in the unconscious. But it can make nothing at all of the schizophrenic basis of *délire*, the line of "schizophrenia" tracing out its undomesticated pattern. Foucault said psychoanalysis remains deaf to the voice of unreason. Indeed, it neuroticizes everything, and through this neuroticization contributes not only to producing neurotics whose treatment never ends but also psychotics in the form of anyone resisting oedipization. It has no way at all of approaching schizophrenia directly. And in its idealism, its domestic and theatrical idealism, it completely misses the unconscious character of sexuality.

Your book has a psychiatric and psychoanalytic side but also a political, economic side. How do you yourselves see the unity of these two sides? Are you in a way taking up Reich's approach? You talk about fascist investments, both in relation to desire and to the social field. That's certainly one thing that relates to both politics and psychoanalysis. But it's difficult to see how you propose to counter fascist investments. What is there to stop fascism? So it's not just a question of the book's unity but of its practical implications too: and these are of huge importance, because if nothing can prevent "fascist investments," if no force can contain them, if all one can do is recognize *they're there, where do your political reflections get you, and what are you actually doing to change anything?*

FG: Yes, like lots of other people, we're signaling the rise of a comprehensive fascism. We can see nothing, no reason, to stop it spreading. Or rather: either a revolutionary machine that can harness desire and the phenomena of desire will take shape, or desire will go on being manipulated by the forces of oppression, of repression, and so threaten, even from within, any revolutionary machine. We distinguish between two ways the social field's invested: preconsciously invested by interests and unconsciously invested by desire. The way interests are invested can be truly revolutionary, while at the same time leaving in place unconscious investments of desire that aren't revolutionary, that may even be fascistic. In a way, the ideal starting point for the schizoanalysis we're proposing would be in groups, militant groups: that's where you get the most direct access to extradomestic elements and where the sometimes contradictory play of investments comes out. Schizoanalysis is militant libidino-economic, libidino-political analysis. By contrasting the two different types of social investment, we're not contrasting desire, as some romantic luxury, with interests that are merely economic and political. We think, rather, that interests are always found and articulated at points predetermined by desire. So there can't be any revolution that serves the interests of oppressed classes until desire itself takes on a revolutionary orientation that actually brings into play unconscious formations. Because however you look at it, desire is part of the infrastructure (we don't have any time for concepts like ideology, which are really no help at all: there are no such things as ideologies). The constant threat to revolutionary apparatuses comes from taking a puritanical view of interests, so the only people who ever gain anything are a small section of the oppressed class, and this section then just produces one more thoroughly oppressive caste and hierarchy. The higher you go up a hierarchy, even a pseudo-revolutionary one, the less scope there is for the expression of desire (but you always find it, however distorted, at the basic level of organization). We set against this fascism of power active, positive lines of flight, because these lines open up desire, desire's machines, and the organization of a social field of desire: it's not a matter of escaping "personally," from oneself, but of allowing something to escape, like bursting a pipe or a boil. Opening up flows beneath the social codes that seek to channel and block them. Desire never resists oppression, however local and tiny the resistance, without the challenge being communicated to the capitalist system as a whole, and playing its part in bursting it open. One thing we reject is all talk of a conflict between man and machine, of men being alienated by machines, and so on. Those in power, supported by pseudo-left-wing organizations, tried from the start of May 68 to convince people it was just a load of spoilt children attacking consumer society, while real workers knew well enough where their real interests lay, and so on. Nobody was ever attacking consumer society, that idiotic notion. What we say, in fact, is that there's never anything like enough consumption, never anything like enough contrivance: people's interests will never turn in favor of revolution until lines of desire reach the point where desire and machine become indistinguishable, where desire and contrivance are the same thing, turning against the so-called natural principles of, for example, capitalist society. Now, this point is both terribly easy to reach, because it's there in even the tiniest desire, and terribly difficult to reach, because it brings into play all our unconscious investments.

GD: From this point of view there's no problem about the book's unity. It does indeed have two sides: it's both a criticism of the Oedipus complex and psychoanalysis, and a study of capitalism and the relations between capitalism and schizophrenia. But the first aspect is entirely dependent on the second. We attack psychoanalysis on the following points, which relate to its practice as well as its theory: its cult of Oedipus, the way it reduces everything to the libido and domestic investments, even when these are transposed and generalized into structuralist or symbolic forms. We're saying the libido becomes unconsciously invested in ways that are distinct from the ways interests are preconsciously invested but that impinge on the social field no less than invested interests. And then there's *délire*: people have asked us if we've ever seen a schizophrenic; we might ask psychoanalysts whether they've ever listened to *délire*. *Délire* is world-historical, nothing to do with the family. It fastens on the Chinese, the Germans, Joan of Arc and the Great Mogul, Aryans and Jews, money, power, and production, not on mommy and daddy at all. Or rather, the tired old family drama depends entirely on the unconscious social investments that come out in *délire*, rather than the other way round. We try to show how this is true even for children. We're proposing schizoanalysis as opposed to psychoanalysis: just look at the two things psychoanalysis can't deal with: it never gets through to anyone's desiring machines, because it's stuck in oedipal figures or structures; it never gets through to the social investments of the libido, because it's stuck in its domestic investments. This comes out very well in the classic test-tube psychoanalysis of President Schreber. We're interested in something that's of no interest to psychoanalysts: What are your desiring machines like? How does your *délire* invest the social field? The unity of our book comes from the way we see the deficiencies of psychoanalysis as equally linked to its deep roots in capitalist society and its failure to grasp its own schizophrenic basis. Psychoanalysis is like capitalism: although it tends toward the limit of schizophrenia, it's constantly evading this limit, and trying to get round it.

There are lots of references in your book, texts cheerfully pressed into service both in and out of context; but it is nonetheless a book rooted in a very specific "intellectual culture." Within that culture, though, you attach great importance to ethnology, and not much to linguistics; great importance to certain English and American novelists, but hardly any to contemporary theories of writing. Why, in particular, do you attack the notion of signifier, and what are your reasons for rejecting that approach?

FG: We've no use for signifiers. We're not the only people, or the first, to reject all that. Look at Foucault, or Lyotard's recent book [*Discours, figure,* 1971]. If our criticism of the signifier isn't terribly clear, it's because the signifier's a sort of catch-all that projects everything back onto an obsolete writing-machine. The all-embracing but narrow opposition of signifier and signified is permeated by the imperialism of the Signifier that emerges with the writing-machine. Everything comes to turn on the letter. That's the very principle of despotic overcoding. What we're suggesting is this: it's the sign of the great Despot (in the age of writing) that, as it withdraws, leaves in its wake a uniform expanse that can be broken down into minimal elements and ordered relations between those elements. The suggestion does at least account for the tyrannical, terrorizing, castrating character of the signifier. It's an enormous archaism that harks back to the great empires. We're not even convinced they tell us much about language, these signifiers. That's why we turned to Hjelmslev: quite some time ago he worked out a sort of Spinozist theory of language in which the flows of content and expression don't depend on signifiers: language as a system of continuous flows of content and expression, intersected by machinic arrangements[4] of discrete discontinuous figures. One thing we didn't pursue in the book was a conception of collective agents of utterance that would supersede the distinction between the uttering subject and the subject of an utterance.[5] We're strict functionalists: what we're interested in is how something works, functions—finding the machine. But the signifier's still stuck in the question "What does it mean?"—indeed it's this very question in a blocked form.[6] But for us, the unconscious doesn't *mean* anything, nor does language. Functionalism has only failed when people have tried to introduce it where it doesn't belong, into great structured wholes that can't themselves come about, be produced, in the same way they function. Functionalism does rule, however, in the world of micro-multiplicities, micro-machines, desiring machines, molecular formations. On this level there isn't this or that kind of machine, a linguistic machine, say, but linguistic elements along with other elements in all the machines. The unconscious is a micro-unconscious, it's molecular, and schizoanalysis is micro-analysis. The only question is how anything works, with its intensities, flows, processes, partial objects—none of which *mean* anything.

GD: We feel the same way about our book. What matters is whether it works, and how it works, and who it works for. It's a machine too. It's not a matter of reading it over and over again, you have to do something else with it. It's a book we enjoyed producing. We're not writing for people who think psychoanalysis is doing fine and sees the unconscious for what it is. We're writing for people who think it's pretty dull and sad as it burbles on about Oedipus, castration, the death instinct, and so on. We're writing for unconsciousnesses that have had enough. We're looking for allies. We need allies. And we think these allies are already out there, that they've gone ahead without us, that there are lots of people who've had enough and are thinking, feeling, and working in similar directions: it's not a question of fashion but of a deeper "spirit of the age" informing converging projects in a wide range of fields. In ethnology, for instance. In psychiatry. Or what Foucault's doing: our method's not the same, but we seem to meet him on all sorts of points that seem basic, on paths he's already mapped out. And then it's true we've read a lot. But as the fancy took us, rather randomly. What we're after certainly isn't any return to Freud or return to Marx. Nor any theory of reading. What we look for in a book is the way it transmits something that resists coding: flows, revolutionary active lines of flight, lines of absolute decoding rather than any intellectual culture. Even in books there are oedipal structures, oedipal codes and strictures that are all the more insidious for being abstract, nonfigurative. What we find in great English and American novelists is a gift, rare among the French, for intensities, flows, machine-books, tool-books, schizo-books. All we've got in France is Artaud and half of Beckett. People may criticize our book for being too literary, but we're sure such criticism will come from teachers of literature. Is it our fault that Lawrence, Miller, Kerouac, Burroughs, Artaud, and Beckett know more about schizophrenia than psychiatrists and psychoanalysts?

Aren't you open to a more serious criticism? The schizoanalysis you're advocating is effectively de-analyzing. People might say your celebration of schizophrenia is romantic and irresponsible. Even that you tend to confuse revolutionaries and schizophrenics. How would you respond to these potential criticisms?

GD-FG: Hmm . . . a school for schizophrenia, that's quite an idea. Freeing flows, going further and further into contrivance: a schizophrenic is someone who's been decoded, deterritorialized. We're not responsible for misinterpretations, though. There are always people around who'll intentionally misinterpret you (look at the attacks on Laing and antipsychiatry). There was an article in the *Nouvel Observateur* recently whose psychiatrist author was saying: I'm pretty daring, challenging modern developments in both psychiatry *and* antipsychiatry. Nothing of the sort. He'd chosen the precise moment that a *political reaction* against any attempt to change anything at all in psychiatric hospitals and the pharmaceutical industry was gaining ground. There's always a political motive behind any misinterpretation. We're considering a very simple problem, like Burroughs with drugs: can you harness the power of drugs without them taking over, without turning into a dazed zombie? It's the same with schizophrenia. We make a distinction between schizophrenia as a process and the way schizophrenics are produced as clinical cases that need hospitalizing: it's almost the same thing in reverse. The schizophrenics in hospitals are people who've tried to do something and failed, cracked up. We're not saying revolutionaries are schizophrenics. We're saying there's a schizoid process, of decoding and deterritorializing, which only revolutionary activity can stop turning into the production of schizophrenia. We're considering a problem to do with the close link between capitalism and psychoanalysis on the one hand, and between revolutionary movements and schizoanalysis on the other. We can talk in terms of capitalist paranoia and revolutionary schizophrenia, because we're not setting out from a psychiatric understanding of these words but rather from their social and political determinations, from which their psychiatric application follows only in specific circumstances. Schizoanalysis has one single aim—to get revolutionary, artistic, and analytic machines working as parts, cogs, of one another. Again, if you take *délire*, we see it as having two poles, a fascist paranoid pole and a schizo-revolutionary pole. That's what we're interested in: revolutionary schisis[7] as opposed to the despotic signifier. But anyway, there's no more point complaining in advance about misinterpretations, since you can't predict them, than fighting against them once they're made. It's better to get on with something else, to work with people going in the same direction. As for being responsible or irresponsible, we don't recognize those notions, they're for policemen and courtroom psychiatrists.

Conversation with Catherine Backès-Clément
L'Arc 49 (1972)

ON *A THOUSAND PLATEAUS*

CHRISTIAN DESCAMPS: *So how are your* Thousand Plateaus *arranged? It's not just a book for specialists; it seems to be composed in various modes, in the musical sense of the term. It's not organized in chapters that each unfold the essence of something. Look at the table of contents, it's full of things happening. 1914 is the war, but the Wolf-Man's analysis too, 1947 is the point where Artaud comes upon the body without organs, 1847 is the point where Barbey d'Aurevilly produces a theory of the novel, 1227 is the death of Genghis Khan, 1837 Schumann's . . . The dates here are events, marks, freed from any one-way chronological progression. Your plateaus are highly "accidented"*[1] . . .

GILLES DELEUZE: It's like a set of split rings. You can fit any one of them into any other. Each ring, or each plateau, ought to have its own climate, its own tone or timbre. It's a book of concepts. Philosophy has always dealt with concepts, and doing philosophy is trying to invent or create concepts. But there are various ways of looking at concepts. For ages people have used them to determine what something is (its essence). We, though, are interested in the circumstances in which things happen: in what situations, where and when does a particular thing happen, how does it happen, and so on? A concept, as we see it, should express an event rather than an essence. This allows us to introduce elementary novelistic methods into philosophy. A concept like the ritornello, for example, should tell us in what situations we feel like humming a tune. Or take the face: we think faces have to be made, and not all societies make faces, but some need to. In what situations does this happen, and why? Thus each ring or plateau has to map out a range of circumstances; that's why each has a date—an imaginary date—and an illustration, an image too. It's an illustrated book. What we're interested in, you see, are modes of individuation beyond those of things, persons, or subjects: the individuation, say, of a time of day, of a region, a climate, a river or a wind, of an event. And maybe it's a mistake to believe in the existence of things, persons, or subjects. The title *A Thousand Plateaus* refers to these individuations that don't individuate persons or things.

CD: *These days, books in general—and philosophy books in particular—are in an odd position. On the one hand there's a cult of celebrity trumpeting spurious books concocted from current fashions; on the other hand we see a sort of refusal to analyze people's work, based on some hazy notion of expression. Jean-Luc Godard suggests, for his part, that what counts isn't so much expression, but impressions. A philosophy book's at once a difficult sort of book, yet something anyone can use, an amazingly open toolbox, as long as they have some use for it, want to use it, in some particular situation.* A Thousand Plateaus *offers us knowledge-effects; but how can we present it without turning it into an opinion-effect, a star-effect, amidst all the chattering that each week "discovers" some important new work? The way the opinion-makers talk, you'd think we didn't need any concepts at all. That we could get by just as well with some vague subculture of magazines and reviews. Philosophy as an institution is under threat. Vincennes, that wonderful laboratory, has been carted away.*[2] *But this book, full of scientific, literary, musical, and ethological ritornellos, sets out to work with concepts. It actually embodies—with great force—a gamble that philosophy can resurface as a Gay Science . . .*

It's a complicated question. In the first place, philosophy isn't just the preserve of philosophy teachers. You're a philosopher by becoming one, that is, by engaging in a very special form of creation, in the realm of concepts. Guattari's an amazing philosopher, particularly when he's talking about politics, or about music. But you want me to talk about the possible place or role of this sort of book these days. More generally, you want me to talk about what's happening in the field of books these days. We've been going through a period of reaction in all fields for several years. There's no reason for it not to have affected books. People are setting up a literary space, along with a legal space, and an economic and political space, that's completely reactionary, artificial, and crippling. I think it's a systematic process, which *Libération* should have investigated. The media play an essential part in the process, but they're not the only factor. It's fascinating. How can we resist the establishment of this European literary space? What part can philosophy play in resisting a terrible new conformism? Sartre played an outstanding part, and his death's a sad event in all sorts of ways. After Sartre, the generation to which I belong was, I think, a strong one (with Foucault, Althusser, Derrida, Lyotard, Serres, Faye, Châtelet, and others). What now seems problematic is the situation in which young philosophers, but also all young writers who're involved in creating something, find themselves. They face the threat of being stifled from the outset. It's become very difficult to do any work, because a whole system of "acculturation" and anticreativity specific to the developed nations is taking shape. It's far worse than censorship. Censorship produces a ferment beneath the surface, but reaction seeks to make everything impossible. This sterile phase won't necessarily go on indefinitely. For the moment just about all one can do is set up networks to counter it. So the question that interests us in relation to *A Thousand Plateaus* is whether there are any resonances, common ground, with what other writers, musicians, painters, philosophers, and sociologists are doing or trying to do, from which we can all derive greater strength or confidence. Someone, at any rate, should do a sociological analysis of what's happening in the field of journalism, and its political implications. Maybe someone like Bourdieu could do it . . .

ROBERT MAGGIORI: *Some people might be surprised by the prominence given in* A Thousand Plateaus *to linguistics, and might even wonder whether it's not playing the central role reserved in* Anti-Oedipus *for psychoanalysis. For in the chapters devoted to it ("Postulates of Linguistics', "On Several Regimes of Signs"*[3]*) you develop concepts like* collective arrangements of utterance[4] *that in a way cut across all the other "plateaus." One might, furthermore, easily enough see the work you do on the theories of Chomsky, Labov, Hjelmslev, and Benveniste as a contribution, albeit critical, to linguistics. And yet one gets the impression that what you're trying to do isn't to chart* *within language zones of scientificity that might be semantically, syntactically, phonematically, or otherwise-ically delimited, but rather to condemn linguistics'* pretensions *to "close up language within itself," to explain utterances in terms of signifiers, and utterance in terms of subjects. So how should we take the importance ascribed to linguistics? Should we see it as a continuation of the battle begun in* Anti-Oedipus *against a Lacan-style dictatorship of the signifier, against structuralism, indeed? Or are you just very peculiar linguists who are only interested in what's "outside" linguistics?*

I don't personally think the linguistics is fundamental. Maybe Félix, if he were here, would disagree. But then Félix has traced a development that points toward a transformation of linguistics: initially it was phonological, then it was semantic and syntactic, but it's turning more and more into a pragmatics. Pragmatics (dealing with the circumstances of language use, with events and acts) was long considered the "rubbish dump" of linguistics, but it's now becoming more and more important: language is coming to be seen as an activity, so the abstract units and constants of language-use are becoming less and less important. It's a good thing, this current direction of research, precisely because it makes possible convergences and collaborations between novelists, linguists, philosophers, "vocalists" . . . and so on ("vocalists" are what I call anyone doing research into sound or the voice in fields as varied as theater, song, cinema, audiovisual media . . .). The potential here is enormous. I'd like to cite some recent examples. First of all, the path taken by Roland Barthes: he worked on phonology, then on syntax and semantics, but he began more and more to frame his own pragmatics, the pragmatics of an intimate language permeated by circumstances, by events and actions. Another example: Nathalie Sarraute has written a very fine book that one might see as a *mise-en-scène* of a number of "propositions," a case of philosophy and novel-writing becoming quite indistinguishable; the same year, a linguist like Ducrot produces, in a different sort of book, a linguistic study of the *mise-en-scène*, the strategic aspects, the pragmatics of propositions. A fine case of convergence. Yet another example: the American linguist Labov's research in pragmatics, his opposition to Chomsky, the way he draws on the language of ghettos and specific districts. I don't think we, for our part, are particularly competent to pronounce on linguistics. But then competence is itself a rather unclear notion in linguistics. We're just addressing a number of points that we ourselves consider fundamental: first, the part played in language by precepts;[5] second, the importance of indirect discourse[6] (and the recognition of metaphor as something that just confuses matters and has no real importance); third, a criticism of linguistic constants, and even linguistic variables, that emphasizes ranges of continuous variation. But music and the relations between music and the voice play a greater part than linguistics in *A Thousand Plateaus.*

CD: *You emphatically reject metaphors, analogies too. But you use the notion of "black holes," borrowed from contemporary physics, to describe spaces you can't escape from once you're drawn in; they're linked to your notion of white walls. You see a face as a white wall with black holes in it, and proceed to articulate faciality on that basis. And then, earlier on in the book, you're always talking about fuzzy sets and open systems. These links with very contemporary science lead one to wonder what scientists might make of a work like this. Aren't they likely to see it as full of metaphors?*

A Thousand Plateaus does indeed use a number of concepts with a scientific resonance, or correlate even: black holes, fuzzy sets, neighborhoods, Riemannian spaces . . . I'd like to reply by saying there are two sorts of scientific notions, even though they get mixed up in particular cases. There are notions that are exact in nature, quantitative, defined by equations, and whose very meaning lies in their exactness: a philosopher or writer can use these only metaphorically, and that's quite wrong, because they belong to exact science. But there are also essentially inexact yet completely rigorous notions that scientists can't do without, which belong equally to scientists, philosophers, and artists. They have to be made rigorous in a way that's not directly scientific, so that when a scientist manages to do this he becomes a philosopher, an artist, too. This sort of concept's not unspecific because something's missing but because of its nature and content. Take a current example, from a book that's attracted a lot of interest, Prigogine and Stengers's *Order Out of Chaos.* One of the many concepts created in the book is that of a region of bifurcation. Prigogine draws it out from the foundations of his own field of thermodynamics, but it's a good example of a concept that's irreducibly philosophical, scientific, and artistic too. Conversely, it's not impossible for a philosopher to create concepts that can be used in science. This has often happened. To cite only one fairly recent but forgotten example, Bergson profoundly influenced psychiatry, and what's more, his work was closely linked to Riemannian spaces in mathematics and physics. It's nothing to do with setting up some specious unity of no particular interest to anyone. Here once more, it's to do with the way someone's own work can lead to unexpected convergences, and new implications, new directions, in other people's work. And no special status should be assigned to any particular field, whether philosophy, science, art, or literature.

DIDIER ERIBON: *Although you draw on the work of historians, on Braudel in particular (but then we know how interested he is in landscape), you don't, to say the very least, give history any decisive role. You're happier doing geography, you make space fundamental, and say we should map out a "cartography" of becomings. But isn't history one way of getting from one plateau to another?*

History's certainly very important. But if you take any line of research, for part of its course, at certain points, it's historical; but it's also ahistorical, transhistorical . . . "Becomings" are much more important than history in *A Thousand Plateaus.*[7] They're two quite different things. We attempt, for instance, to construct a concept of war machines;[8] they involve, above all, a certain type of space, a conjunction of very specific sorts of men with other technological and affective components (like arms, jewels . . .). Such arrangements enter into history only indirectly, by coming into all sorts of different relations with state apparatuses. As for state apparatuses themselves, we relate them to factors like territory, terrain, and deterritorialization:[9] you get a state apparatus when territories are no longer exploited sequentially but compared simultaneously (as land or terrain) and so drawn, from that point on, into a movement of deterritorialization. This corresponds to a long historical process. But we can find the same complex of notions differently articulated in completely different contexts: take animals' territories for instance, and the way they're sometimes related to an external center that defines, so to speak, a terrain. Or lieder, say, where there's a territory, but also a land or homeland,[10] and then an opening onto something else too, leaving it all behind for something cosmic. From this viewpoint, I think the section on ritornellos in *A Thousand Plateaus* is the converse of the section on state apparatuses, though they deal with two different things. That's how one "plateau" is linked to another. To take another example: we try to define a very specific system of signs that we call "passionate." It corresponds to a series of trials. Now you find this system in certain historical processes (typified by crossing a desert), but you find it in other contexts too, in the *délires* studied by psychiatry, in literary works (in Kafka, for instance). It's not a matter of bringing all sorts of things together under one concept but rather of relating each concept to variables that explain its mutations.

RM: *The "exploded" form of* A Thousand Plateaus, *its nonchronological yet dated organization, the multiplicity and multivocity of its references, the interplay of conceptual schemes taken from the most varied and seemingly disparate types and fields of theory, do at least allow one to see it as an* anti-system. A Thousand Plateaus *don't make a mountain, but they spawn a thousand paths that, unlike Heidegger's, lead everywhere.*[11] A Thousand Plateaus *as ultimate anti-system, as patchwork, absolute dispersion. But I see it quite differently. In the first place, because* A Thousand Plateaus, *as you yourself told* L'Arc *(number 49, in the new edition of 1980) is a purely philosophical enterprise, "philosophy in the traditional sense of the term"; furthermore, because in spite of the way it's set out, which certainly isn't systematic, it does all the same convey a certain "worldview," gives one a vision, or a glimpse, of a "reality" that's not actually so dissimilar from the reality current scientific theories are describing or trying to articulate. Is it in fact such a paradox to see* A Thousand Plateaus *as a philosophical system?*

No, not at all. It's become a commonplace these days to talk about the breakdown of systems, the impossibility of constructing a system now that knowledge has become so fragmented ("we're no longer in the nineteenth century . . . "). There are two problems with this idea: people can't imagine doing any serious work except on very restricted and specific little series; worse still, any broader approach is left to the spurious work of visionaries, with anyone saying whatever comes into their head. Systems have in fact lost absolutely none of their power. All the groundwork for a theory of so-called open systems is in place in current science and logic, systems based on interactions, rejecting only linear forms of causality, and transforming the notion of time. I admire Maurice Blanchot: his work isn't just a mass of little bits and pieces and aphorisms, but an open system that built up in advance a "literary space" in which to confront what's happening today. What I and Guattari call a rhizome is precisely one example of an open system. Let's return to the question: What is philosophy? Because one ought to give a very simple answer. Everyone knows that philosophy deals with concepts. A system's a set of concepts. And it's an open system when the concepts relate to circumstances rather than essences. But concepts don't, first of all, turn up ready-made, they don't preexist: you have to invent, create concepts, and this involves just as much creation and invention as you find in art and science. Philosophy's job has always been to create new concepts, with their own necessity. Because they're not just whatever generalities happen to be in fashion, either. They're singularities, rather, acting on the flows of everyday thought: it's perfectly easy to think without concepts, but as soon as there are concepts, there's genuine philosophy. It's got nothing to do with ideology. A concept's full of a critical, political force of freedom. It's precisely their power as a system that brings out what's good or bad, what is or isn't new, what is or isn't alive in a group of concepts. Nothing's good in itself, it all depends on careful systematic use. In *A Thousand Plateaus* we're trying to say you can never guarantee a good outcome (it's not enough just to have a *smooth space*, for example, to overcome striations and coercion, or a *body without organs* to overcome organizations). People sometimes criticize us for using complicated words "to be trendy." That's not just malicious, it's stupid. A concept sometimes needs a new word to express it, sometimes it uses an everyday word that it gives a singular sense.

I think, anyway, that philosophical thinking has never been more important than it is today, because there's a whole system taking shape, not just in politics but in culture and journalism too, that's an insult to all thinking. Once again, *Libération* should look at this problem.

DE: *There are a number of points to which I'd like to return:*

1. *We talked earlier about the importance you attach to events; then about how you emphasize geography rather than history. What, then, is the place of events in the "cartography" you want to develop?*

2. *And if we're talking about space, we should also return to the problem of the State, which you link to territory.*
3. *If state apparatuses introduce coercive "striated space," war machines try to establish a "smooth space" along lines of flight.*
4. *But you warn us that smooth space alone won't save us. Lines of flight aren't necessarily liberating.*

What we call a "map," or sometimes a "diagram," is a set of various interacting lines (thus the lines in a hand are a map). There are of course many different kinds of lines, both in art and in a society or a person. Some lines represent something, others are abstract. Some lines have various segments, others don't. Some weave through a space, others go in a certain direction. Some lines, no matter whether or not they're abstract, trace an outline, others don't. The most beautiful ones do. We think lines are the basic components of things and events. So everything has its geography, its cartography, its diagram. What's interesting, even in a person, are the lines that make them up, or they make up, or take, or create. Why make lines more fundamental than planes or volumes? We don't, though. There are various spaces correlated with different lines, and vice versa (here again, one might bring in scientific notions like Mandelbrot's fractals). Different sorts of line involve different configurations of space and volume.

This leads into your second point: we define "war machines" as linear arrangements constructed along lines of flight. Thus understood, the aim of war machines isn't war at all but a very special kind of space, *smooth space*, which they establish, occupy, and extend. *Nomadism* is precisely this combination of war-machine and smooth space. We try to show how and in what circumstances war-machines aim at war (when state apparatuses take over a war-machine that's initially no part of them). War-machines tend much more to be revolutionary, or artistic, rather than military.

But your third point emphasizes the fact that we can't be sure in advance how things will go. We can define different kinds of line, but that won't tell us one's good and another bad. We can't assume that lines of flight are necessarily creative, that smooth spaces are always better than segmented or striated ones: as Virilio demonstrates, nuclear submarines establish a smooth space devoted to war and terror. Cartography can only map out pathways and moves, along with their coefficients of probability and danger. That's what we call "schizoanalysis," this analysis of lines, spaces, becomings. It seems at once very similar, and very different, to problems of history.

DE: *Lines, becomings, events . . . Perhaps this takes us back to the opening question about dates. There's a date in the title for each plateau: "7000 B.C.—Capture Apparatus," "Year Zero—Faciality" . . . imaginary dates, you said, but they do refer things to the order of events, circumstances, and may perhaps provide the basis for the cartography we've been discussing?*

The fact that each plateau's dated, given an imaginary date, is no more important than the fact it's illustrated or includes proper names.

But the telegraphic style of the titles has a force that goes beyond mere abruptness. Consider a sentence like "Jules to come 5 P.M." Nobody would want to write like that. But it's interesting how the words actually convey a sense of imminence, of something about to happen or something that's just happened behind our back. Proper names belong primarily to forces, events, motions and sources of movement, winds, typhoons, diseases, places and moments, rather than people. Infinitives express becomings or events that transcend mood and tense.[12] The dates don't refer to some single uniform calendar; each refers to a different space-time . . . Together, these elements produce arrangements of utterance: "Werewolves swarming 1730" . . . and so on.

Conversation with Christian Descamps, Didier Eribon, and Robert Maggiori
Libération, October 23, 1980

part two • CINEMAS

Three Questions on *Six Times Two*

Cahiers du Cinéma *has asked you for an interview, because you're a "philosopher" and we wanted to do something philosophical, but more specifically because you like and admire Godard's work. What do you think of his recent* TV *programs?*

Like many people, I was moved, and it's a lasting emotion. Maybe I should explain my image of Godard. As someone who works a great deal, he must be a very solitary figure. But it's not just any solitude, it's an extraordinarily animated solitude. Full, not of dreams, fantasies, and projects, but of acts, things, people even. A multiple, creative solitude. From the depths of this solitude Godard constitutes a force in his own right but also gets others to work as a team. He can deal as an equal with anyone, with official powers or organizations, as well as a cleaning lady, a worker, mad people. In the TV programs, Godard's questions always engage people directly. They disorient us, the viewers, but not whoever he's talking to. He talks to crazy people in a way that's no more that of a psychiatrist than of another madman, or of someone "playing the fool." He talks with workers not as a boss, or another worker, or an intellectual, or a director talking with actors. It's nothing to do with adopting their tone, in a wily sort of way, it's because his solitude gives him a great capacity, is so full. It's as though, in a way, he's always stammering. Not stammering in his words, but stammering in language itself. You can normally only be a foreigner in another language. But here it's a case of being a foreigner in one's own language. Proust said that fine books have to be written in a sort of foreign language. It's the same with Godard's programs; he's even perfected his Swiss accent to precisely this effect. It's this creative stammering, this solitude, which makes Godard a force.

Because, as you know better than I do, he's always been alone. Godard's never had any popular success with his films, as those who say "he's changed, from such and such a point onward it's no good" would have us believe. They're often the very people who initially hated him. Godard was ahead of, and influenced, everyone, but not by being a success, rather by following his own line, a line of active flight, a constantly shifting line zigzagging beneath the surface. Anyway, in cinema, they more or less managed to lock him into his solitude. They pinned him down. And now he's used the opportunity presented by the holidays, and a vague demand for creativity, to take over the TV for six times two programs. It may be the sole case of someone not being duped by TV. You've usually lost from the outset. People wouldn't have minded him promoting his films, but they can't forgive him for making this series that changes so many things at the heart of TV (questioning people, making them talk, showing images from a variety of sources, and so on). Even now it's over, even if it's been stifled. Many groups and associations were bound to get annoyed: the statement from the Union of Photographic Journalists and Cameramen is a good example. Godard has at the very least stirred up hatred. But he's also shown that a differently "animated" TV is possible.

You haven't answered our question. Say you had to give a "course" on these programs . . . What ideas did you see, or sense in them? How would you try to explain your enthusiasm? We can always talk about everything else afterward, even if it's what's most important.

OK, but ideas, having an idea, isn't about ideology, it's a practical matter. Godard has a nice saying: not a just image, just an image.[1] Philosophers ought also to say "not the just ideas, just ideas" and bear this out in their activity. Because the just ideas are always those that conform to accepted meanings or established precepts, they're always ideas that confirm something, even if it's something in the future, even if it's the future of the revolution. While "just ideas" is a becoming-present, a stammering of ideas, and can only be expressed in the form of questions that tend to confound any answers. Or you can present some simple thing that disrupts all the arguments.

There are two ideas in Godard's programs that work this way, constantly encroaching on one another, getting mixed up and teased apart bit by bit. This is one reason why each program has two parts: as at primary school there are the two elements of learning about things and learning about language. The first idea is to do with work. I think Godard's constantly bringing into question a vaguely Marxist scheme that has spread everywhere: there's supposed to be something pretty abstract called "labor" that one can buy or sell, in situations that either mark a basic social injustice or establish a little more social justice. But Godard asks very concrete questions, he presents images touching on what exactly is being bought and sold. What are some people prepared to buy, and others to sell, these not necessarily being the same thing? A young welder is prepared to sell his work as a welder, but not his sexuality by becoming an old woman's lover. A cleaning lady's happy to sell the time she spends cleaning but won't sell the moment she spends singing a bit of the "Internationale"—why? Because she can't sing? But what, then, if one were to pay her for talking about not being able to sing? A specialist clockmaker, on the other hand, wants to get paid for his clockmaking efforts, but refuses to be paid for his work as an amateur filmmaker, which he calls his "hobby"; but the images show that the movements he makes in the two activities, the clockmaking sequence and the editing sequence, are so remarkably similar that you can mistake one for the other. But no, says the clockmaker, there's a great difference of love and warmth in these movements, I don't want to be paid for my filmmaking. But then what about filmmakers and photographers who do get paid? What, furthermore, is a photographer himself prepared to pay for? He's sometimes prepared to pay his model. Sometimes the model pays him. But when he photographs torture or an execution, he pays neither the victim nor the executioner. And when he photographs children who are sick, wounded, or hungry, why doesn't he pay them? Guattari once suggested at a psychoanalytical congress that analysands should be paid as well as analysts, since the analyst isn't exactly providing a "service," it's more like a division of labor, two distinct kinds of work going on: there's the analyst's work of listening and sifting, but the analysand's unconscious is at work too. Nobody seems to have taken much notice of Guattari's suggestion. Godard's saying the same thing: why not pay the people who watch television, instead of making them pay, because they're engaged in real work and are themselves providing a public service? The social division of labor means it's not only work on the shop floor that gets paid but work in offices and research laboratories too. Otherwise we'd have to think about the workers themselves having to pay the people who design the things they make. I think all these questions and many others, all these images and many others, tear apart the notion of labor. In the first place, the very notion of labor arbitrarily sets one area of activity apart, cuts work off from its relation to love, to creativity, to production even. It makes work a kind of maintenance, the opposite of creating anything, because on this notion it's a matter of reproducing goods that are consumed and reproducing its own productive force, within a closed system of exchange. From this viewpoint it doesn't much matter whether the exchange is fair or unfair, because there's always selective violence in an act of payment, and there's mystification in the very principle of talking in terms of labor. It's to the extent that work might be distinguished from the productive pseudoforce of labor that very different flows of production, of many disparate kinds, might be brought into direct relation with flows of money, independently of any mediation by an abstract force. I'm even more confused than Godard. Just as I should be, since the key thing is the questions Godard asks and the images he presents and a chance of the spectator feeling that the notion of labor isn't innocent, isn't at all obvious—even, and particularly, from the viewpoint of social criticism. It's this, quite as much as the more obvious things, that explains the reactions of the Communist Party and some unions to Godard's programs: he's dared to question that sacrosanct notion of labor . . .

And then there's the second idea, to do with information. Because here again, language is presented to us as basically informative, and information as basically an exchange. Once again, information is measured in abstract units. But it's doubtful whether the schoolmistress, explaining how something works or teaching spelling, is transmitting information. She's instructing, she's really delivering precepts. And children are supplied with syntax like workers being given tools, in order to produce utterances conforming to accepted meanings. We should take him quite literally when Godard says children are political prisoners. Language is a system of instructions rather than a means of conveying information. TV tells us: "Now we'll have a bit of entertainment, then the news . . . " We ought in fact to invert the scheme of information theory. The theory assumes a theoretical maximum of information, with pure noise, interference, at the other extreme; and in between there's redundancy, which reduces the information but allows it to overcome noise. But we should actually start with redundancy as the transmission and relaying of orders or instructions; next, there's information—always the minimum needed for the satisfactory reception of orders; then what? Well, then there's something like silence, or like stammering, or screaming, something slipping through underneath the redundancies and information, letting language slip through, and making itself heard, in spite of everything. To talk, even about yourself, is always to take the place of someone else in whose place you're claiming to speak and who's been denied the right to speak. Orders and precepts stream from Séguy's open mouth.[2] But the woman with the dead child is open-mouthed too. An image gets represented by a sound, like a worker by his representative. A sound takes over a series of images. So how can we manage to speak without giving orders, without claiming to represent something or someone, how can we get people without the right to speak, to speak; and how can we restore to sounds their part in the struggle against power? I suppose that's what it means to be like a foreigner in one's own language, to trace a sort of line of flight for words.

That's "just" two ideas, but two ideas is a lot, it's massive, includes loads of things and other ideas. So Godard brings into question two everyday notions, those of labor and information. He doesn't say we should give *true* information, nor that labor should be *well* paid (those would be the just ideas). He says these notions are very suspect. He writes FALSE beside them. He's been saying for ages that he'd like to be a production company rather than an *auteur*, and to run the television news rather than make films. He didn't of course mean he wanted to produce his own films, like Verneuil, or take over TV. But that he wanted to produce a mosaic of different work rather than measuring it all against some abstract productive force, and wanted to produce a sub-informational juxtaposition of all the open mouths instead of relating them all to some abstract information taken as a precept.

If those are Godard's two ideas, do they correspond to the theme of "sounds and images" that constantly recurs in the programs? Images—learning from things—relating to work, and sounds—learning the language—relating to information?

No, there's only a partial correspondence: there's always information in images, and something at work in sounds. Any set of terms can and should be divided up in various ways that correspond only partially. To try and articulate the relation between sounds and images as Godard understands it you'd have to tell a very abstract story, in several episodes, and then finally see that this abstract story corresponds to a single episode of something terribly simple and concrete.

1. There are images, things are themselves images, because images aren't in our head, in our brain. The brain's just one image among others. Images are constantly acting and reacting on each other, producing and consuming. There's no difference at all between *images, things,* and *motion.*

2. But images also have an *inside* or certain images have an inside and are experienced from inside. They're subjects (cf. Godard's remarks on *Two or Three Things I Know About Her* in *Godard on Godard,* pp. 239–42). And there's a *gap* between actions upon these images and the reactions they produce. It's this gap that enables them to store up other images, that is to perceive. But what they store is only what in other images relates to them: perceiving is subtracting from an image what is unrelated to us, there's always *less* in our perception. We're so full of images we no longer see those outside us for what they are.

3. There are also aural images, which don't seem to have any priority. Yet these aural images, or some of them, have an *other side* you can call whatever you like, ideas, meaning, language, expressive aspects, and so on. Aural images are thus able to contract or capture other images or a series of other images. A voice takes over a set of images (the voice of Hitler, say). Ideas, acting as precepts, are embodied in aural images or sound waves and say what we should relate to

other images: they dictate our perception. There's always a central "rubber stamp" normalizing images, subtracting what we're not supposed to see. So, given the earlier gap, we can trace out as it were two converse currents: one going from external images to perceptions, the other going from prevailing ideas to perceptions.

4. So we're caught in a chain of images, each of us in our own particular place, each ourself an image, and also in a network of ideas acting as precepts. And so what Godard's doing with his "words and images" goes in two directions at once. On the one hand he's restoring their fullness to external images, so we don't perceive something less, making perception equal to the image, giving back to images all that belongs to them—which is in itself a way of challenging this or that power and its rubber stamps. On the other hand, he's undoing the way language takes power, he's making it stammer in sound waves, taking apart any set of ideas purporting to be just ones and extracting from it just some ideas. These are perhaps two reasons among others why Godard makes such novel use of the *static shot.*[3] It's rather like what some contemporary musicians do by introducing a fixed aural plane so that *everything* in music is heard. And when Godard puts a blackboard on the screen and writes on it, he's not making it something he can film but making the blackboard and writing into a new televisual resource, a sort of expressive material with its own particular current in relation to the other currents on the screen.

This whole abstract story in four episodes sounds a bit like science fiction. But it's our social reality these days. The strange thing is that the story corresponds in various ways to what Bergson said in the first chapter of *Matter and Memory.* Bergson's seen as a sedate old philosopher who's no longer of any interest. It would be good if cinema or television revived interest in him (he should be on the IDHEC[4] syllabus, maybe he is). The first chapter of *Matter and Memory* develops an amazing conception of the relations between photography and cinematic motion, and things: "photography, if there is such a thing as photography, is caught from the outset in, drawn from the start right into the interior of things, and this at every point in space," and so on. That's not to say Godard's a Bergsonian. It's more the other way around; Godard's not even reviving Bergson, but finding bits of Bergson along his way as he revivifies television.

But why does everything in Godard come in twos? You need two to get three . . . Fine, but what are these twos and threes all about?

Oh, come on, you know better than anyone it's not like that. Godard's not a dialectician. What counts with him isn't two or three or however many, it's AND, the conjunction AND. The key thing is Godard's use of AND. This is important, because all our thought's modeled, rather, on the verb "to be," IS.[5] Philosophy's weighed down with discussions about attributive judgments (the sky is blue) and existential judgments (God is) and the possibility or impossibility of reducing one to the other. But they all turn on the verb "to be." Even conjunctions are dealt with in terms of the verb "to be"—look at syllogisms. The English and the Americans are just about the only people who've set conjunctions free, by thinking about relations. But when you see relational judgments as autonomous, you realize that they creep in everywhere, they invade and ruin everything: AND isn't even a specific conjunction or relation, it brings in all relations, there are as many relations as ANDS, AND doesn't just upset all relations, it upsets being, the verb . . . and so on. AND, "and . . . and . . . and . . . " is precisely a creative stammering, a foreign use of language, as opposed to a conformist and dominant use based on the verb "to be."

AND is of course diversity, multiplicity, the destruction of identities. It's not the same factory gate when I go in, and when I come out, and then when I go past unemployed. A convicted man's wife isn't the same before and after the conviction. But diversity and multiplicity are nothing to do with aesthetic wholes (in the sense of "one more," "one more woman" . . .) or dialectical schemas (in the sense of "one produces two, which then produces three"). Because in those cases it's still Unity, and thus being, that's primary, and that supposedly becomes multiple. When Godard says everything has two parts, that in a day there's morning *and* evening, he's not saying it's one or the other, or that one becomes the other, becomes two. Because multiplicity is never in the terms, however many, nor in all the terms together, the whole. Multiplicity is precisely in the "and," which is different in nature from elementary components and collections of them.

Neither a component nor a collection, what is this AND? I think Godard's force lies in living and thinking and presenting this AND in a very novel way, and in making it work actively. AND is neither one thing nor the other, it's always in-between, between two things; it's the borderline, there's always a border, a line of flight or flow, only we don't see it, because it's the least perceptible of things. And yet it's along this line of flight that things come to pass, becomings evolve, revolutions take shape. "The strong people aren't the ones on one side or the other, power lies on the border." Giscard d'Estaing made a sad observation in the lecture on military geography he recently gave the army: the more that things become balanced at the level of the largest groups, between West and East, U.S. and USSR, with planetary consensus, link-ups in space, global policing, and so on, the more they become "destabilized" between North and South—Giscard cites Angola, the Near East, the Palestinian resistance, but also all the unrest that produces "a regional destabilization of security," airplane hijacking, Corsica . . . Between North and South we'll keep on finding lines that derail the big groups, an AND, AND, AND which each time marks a new threshold, a new direction of the zigzagging line, a new course for the border. Godard's trying to "see borders," that is, to show the imperceptible. The convict *and* his wife. The mother *and* child. But also images *and* sounds. And the clockmaker's movements when he's in his clockmaking sequence *and* when he's at his editing table: an imperceptible border separates them, belonging to neither but carrying both forward in their disparate development, in a flight or in a flow where we no longer know which is the guiding thread, nor where it's going. A whole micropolitics of borders, countering the macropolitics of large groups. At least we know that's where things come to pass, on the border between images and sounds, where images become too full and sounds too strident. That's what Godard's done in *Six Times Two*: made this active and creative line pass six times between them, made it visible, as it carries television forward.

Cahiers du Cinéma 271 (November 1976)

ON *THE MOVEMENT-IMAGE*

Your book's presented, not as a history of cinema, but as a classification of images and signs, a taxonomy. In this respect it follows on from some of your earlier works: for instance, you made a classification of signs when writing about Proust. But with The Movement-Image *you've decided for the first time to tackle, not a philosophical problem or a particular body of work (that of Spinoza, Kafka, Bacon, or Proust, say), but the whole of a particular field, in this case cinema. And also, although you rule out producing a history of cinema, you deal with it historically.*

Well yes, in a way it's a history of cinema, but a "natural history." It aims to classify types of images and the corresponding signs, as one classifies animals. The main genres, the western, crime, period films, comedy, and so on, tell us nothing about different types of images or their intrinsic characteristics. The different sorts of shot, on the other hand—close-up, long shot, and so on—do amount to different types of image, but there are lots of other factors, lighting, sound, time, which come in too. If I consider the field of cinema as a whole, it's because it's all built upon the movement-image. That's how it's able to reveal or create a maximum of different images, and above all to combine them with one another through *montage*.[1] There are perception-images, action-images, affection-images, along with many other types. And in each case there are internal signs that characterize these images, from both genetic and compositional viewpoints. They're not linguistic signs, even when they're aural or even vocal. The significance of a logician like Peirce is to have worked out an extremely rich classification of signs, relatively independent of the linguistic model. It was particularly tempting to see whether the moving matter[2] introduced by cinema was going to require a new understanding of images and signs. In this sense, I've tried to produce a book on logic, a logic of cinema.

It seems you also want to set right a kind of injustice done to cinema by philosophy. You criticize phenomenology, in particular, for having misunderstood cinema, for having minimized its significance by comparing and contrasting it with natural perception. And you think Bergson had everything he needed to understand it, had anticipated it even, but couldn't or wouldn't see the parallel between his own conceptions and cinema. As though he were sort of running away from the art. Thus in Matter and Memory, *without knowing anything about cinema, he works out the basic concept of movement-image, with its three main forms—perception-image, action-image, affection-image—which heralds the very novelty of film. But later, in* Creative Evolution, *and this time actually confronting cinema, he objects to it, but in a quite different way from the phenomenologists: he sees in it,* in the same way as in natural perception, *the perpetuation of a very old illusion, that of believing that motion can be reconstructed from static slices of time.*

It's very odd. I have the feeling that modern philosophical conceptions of the imagination take no account of cinema: they either stress movement but lose sight of the image, or they stick to the image while losing sight of its movement. It's odd that Sartre, in *The Psychology of Imagination,* takes into account every type of image except the cinematic image. Merleau-Ponty was interested in cinema, but only in relation to the general principles of perception and behavior. Bergson's position, in *Matter and Memory,* is unique. Or *Matter and Memory,* rather, is a unique, extraordinary book among Bergson's work. He no longer puts motion in the realm of duration, but on the one hand posits an absolute identity of motion-matter-image, and on the other hand discovers a Time that's the coexistence of all levels of duration (matter being only the lowest level). Fellini recently said we're in infancy, old age, and middle age all at once: that's thoroughly Bergsonian. So there's a marriage in *Matter and Memory* of pure spiritualism and radical materialism. At once Vertov and Dreyer, if you like, both directions. But Bergson didn't continue along this path. He relinquished these two basic advances touching the movement-image and the time-image. Why? I think it's because Bergson was here working out new philosophical concepts relating to the theory of relativity: he thought relativity involved a conception of time which it didn't itself bring out, but which it was up to philosophy to construct. Only what happened was that people thought Bergson was attacking relativity, that he was criticizing the physical theory itself. Bergson considered the misunderstanding too basic to dispel. So he went back to a simpler conception. Still, in *Matter and Memory* (1896) he'd traced out a movement-image and a time-image that he could, subsequently, have applied to cinema.

Isn't this just what you get in a filmmaker like Dreyer, who inspires some very fine passages in your book? I recently saw Gertrud *again, which is going to be re-released after twenty years. It's a wonderful film, where the modulation between different levels of time reaches a subtlety only, sometimes, equalled in Mizogushi's films (with the appearance and disappearance of the potter's wife, dead and alive, at the end of* Ugetsu Monogatari, *for instance). And Dreyer, in his essays, is constantly saying we should get rid of the third dimension, depth, and produce flat images, setting them in direct relation to a fourth and fifth dimension, to Time and Spirit.*[3] *When he discusses* The Word, *for example, what's so intriguing is his explanation that it's not a story about ghosts or madness, it's about a "profound relation between exact science and intuitive religion." And he invokes Einstein. I quote: "Recent science, following upon Einstein's relativity, has brought proofs of the existence—outside the world of three dimensions which is that of our senses—of a fourth dimension, that of time, and a fifth, the psychical. It has been shown that it is possible to experience events which have not yet taken place. New perspectives have been opened up which make us recognize a profound relation between exact science and intuitive religion." . . . But let's return to the question of "the history of cinema." You introduce an order of succession, you say a certain type of image appears at a certain moment, for instance after the war. So you're not just producing an abstract classification or even a natural history. You want to account for a historical development too.*

In the first place, the various types of image don't already exist, they have to be created. A flat image or, conversely, depth of field, always has to be created or re-created—signs, if you like, always imply a signature. So an analysis of images and signs has to include monographs on major *auteurs.* To take an example: I think expressionism conceives light in relation to darkness, and their relation is one of struggle. In the prewar French school it's quite different: there's no struggle, but alternation; not only is light itself motion, but there are two alternating lights, solar and lunar. It's very similar to the painter Delaunay. It's anti-expressionism. If an *auteur* like Rivette belongs these days to the French school, it's because he's rediscovered and completely reworked this theme of two kinds of light. He's done wonders with it. He's not only like Delaunay, but like Nerval in literature. He's the most Nervalian, the only Nervalian, filmmaker. There are of course historical and geographical factors in all this, running through cinema, bringing it into relation with other arts, subjecting it to influences and allowing it to exert them. There's a whole history. But this history of images doesn't seem to me to be developmental. I think all images combine the same elements, the same signs, differently. But not just any combination's possible at just any moment: a particular element can only be developed given certain conditions, without which it will remain atrophied, or secondary. So there are different levels of development, each of them perfectly coherent, rather than lines of descent or filiation. That's why one should talk of natural history rather than historical history.

Still, your classification's an evaluation. It implies value judgments about the auteurs *you deal with, and so about those you hardly notice, or don't mention. The book does, to be sure, point toward a sequel, leaving us on the threshold of a time-image that goes beyond the movement-image. But in this first volume you describe the breakdown of the action-image at the end of, and just after, the Second World War (Italian neorealism, then the French New Wave . . .). Aren't some of the features by which you characterize the cinema of this crisis (a taking into account of reality as fragmentary and dispersive, a feeling that everything's become a cliché, constant permutations of what's central and peripheral, new articulations of sequences, a breakdown of the simple link between a given situation and a character's action) . . . isn't all that already* *there in two prewar films,* The Rules of the Game *and* Citizen Kane, *generally considered to be founding works of modern cinema, which you don't mention?*

I don't, first of all, claim to have discovered anyone, and all the *auteurs* I cite are well-known people I really admire. For example, on the monographic side, I consider Losey's world: I try to define it as a great sheer cliff dotted with huge birds, helicopters, and disturbing sculptures, towering over a little Victorian city at its foot. It's Losey's own way of recreating the naturalist framework. A framework of which you get different versions in Stroheim, in Buñuel. I take someone's work as a whole, I don't think there's anything bad in a great body of work: in Losey's case *The Trout* was disparaged, even by *Cahiers*, because people didn't take enough account of its place in his work as a whole: it's a reworking of *Eva.* Then you say there are gaps, Welles, Renoir, tremendously important *auteurs.* That's because I can't in this volume deal with their work as a whole. Renoir's work seems to me dominated by a certain relation between theater and life or, more precisely, between actual and virtual images. I think Welles was the first to construct a direct Time-image, a Time-image that's no longer just derived from movement. It's an amazing advance, later taken up by Resnais. But I couldn't discuss these things in the first volume, whereas I could discuss Naturalism as a whole. Even with neorealism and the New Wave, I only touch on their most superficial aspects, right at the very end.

One gets the impression, all the same, that what really interests you is naturalism and spiritualism (say Buñuel, Stroheim, and Losey on the one hand, Bresson and Dreyer on the other), that is, naturalism's descent and degradation, and the élan, the ascent of Spirit, the fourth dimension. They're vertical motions. You don't seem so interested in horizontal motion, in the linking of actions, in American cinema for example. And when you come to neorealism and the New Wave, you talk sometimes about the action-image breaking down, and sometimes about the movement-image in general breaking down. Are you saying that at that point it's the movement-image as a whole that begins to break down, producing a situation where another type of image that goes beyond movement can appear, or just the action-image, leaving in place, or *even reinforcing, the other two aspects of the movement-image: pure perceptions and affections?*

It's not enough just to say that modern cinema breaks with narrative. That's only an effect whose cause lies elsewhere. The cinema of action depicts sensory-motor situations: there are characters, in a certain situation, who act, perhaps very violently, according to how they perceive the situation. Actions are linked to perceptions and perceptions develop into actions. Now, suppose a character finds himself in a situation, however ordinary or extraordinary, that's beyond any possible action, or to which he can't react. It's too powerful, or too painful, too beautiful. The sensory-motor link's broken. He's no longer in a sensory-motor situation, but in a purely optical and aural situation. There's a new type of image. Take the foreign woman in Rosselini's *Stromboli*: she goes through the tuna-fishing, the tuna's agony, then the volcano's eruption. She doesn't know how to react, can't respond, it's too intense: "I've had it, I'm afraid, it's so strange, so beautiful, God . . . " Or the posh lady, seeing the factory in *Europa 51*: "They looked like convicts . . . " That, I think, is neorealism's great innovation: we no longer have much faith in being able to act upon situations or react to situations, but it doesn't make us at all passive, it allows us to catch or reveal something intolerable, unbearable, even in the most everyday things. It's a Visionary cinema. As Robbe-Grillet says, descriptions replace objects. Now, when we find ourselves in these purely optical and aural situations, not only does action and thus narrative break down, but the nature of perceptions and affections changes, because they enter a completely different system from the sensory-motor system of "classic" cinema. What's more, we're no longer in the same type of space: space, having lost its motor connections, becomes a disconnected or vacant space. Modern cinema constructs extraordinary spaces; sensory-motor signs have given way to "opsigns" and "sonsigns." There's still movement, of course. But the movement-image as a whole comes into question. And here again, obviously, the new optical and aural image involves external factors resulting from the war, if only half-demolished or derelict spaces, all the forms of "wandering"[4] that take the place of action, and the rise, everywhere, of what is intolerable.

An image never stands alone. The key thing's the relation between images. So when perception becomes purely optical and aural, with what does it come into relation, if not with action? An actual image, cut off from its motor development, comes into relation with a virtual image, a mental or mirror image. I saw the factory, and they looked like convicts . . . Instead of a linear development, we get a circuit in which the two images are constantly chasing one another round a point where real and imaginary become indistinguishable. The actual image and its virtual image crystallize, so to speak. It's a crystal-image, always double or duplicated, which we find already in Renoir, but in Ophuls too, and which reappears in a different form in Fellini. There are many ways images can crystallize, and many crystalline signs. But you always see something in the crystal. In the first place, you see Time, layers of time, a direct time-image. Not that movement's ceased, but the relation between movement and time's been inverted. Time no longer derives from the combination of movement-images (from *montage*), it's the other way round, movement now follows from time. *Montage* doesn't necessarily vanish, but it plays a different role, becomes what Lapoujade calls "*montrage.*"[5] Second, the image bears a new relation to its optical and aural elements: you might say that in its visionary aspect it becomes more "legible" than visible. So a whole pedagogy of the image, like Godard's, becomes possible. Finally, image becomes thought, is able to catch the mechanisms of thought, while the camera takes on various functions strictly comparable to propositional functions. It's in these three respects, I think, that we get beyond the movement-image. One might talk, in a classification, of "chronosigns," "lectosigns," and "noosigns."

You're very critical of linguistics, and of theories of cinema inspired by that discipline. Yet you talk of images becoming "legible" rather than "visible." Now, the term legible *as applied to cinema was all the rage when linguistics dominated film theory ("reading a film," "readings" of films . . .). Isn't there a risk of confusion in your use of this word? Does your term* legible image *convey something different from that linguistic conception, or does it bring you back to it?*

No, I think not. It's catastrophic to try and apply linguistics to cinema. Of course, thinkers like Metz, or Pasolini, have done very important critical work. But their application of a linguistic model always ends up showing that cinema is something different, and that if it's a language, it's an analogical one, a language of modulation. This might lead one to think that applying a linguistic model is a detour that's better avoided. Among Bazin's finest pieces there's one where he explains that photography's a mold, a molding (you might say that, in a different way, language too is a mold), whereas cinema is modulation through and through.[6] Not just the voices but sounds, lights, and movements are being constantly modulated. These parameters of the image are subjected to variations, repetitions, alternations, recycling, and so on. Any recent advances relative to what we call classic cinema, which already went so far in this direction, have two aspects, evident in electronic images: an increasing number of parameters, and the generation of divergent series, where the classic image tended toward convergent series. This corresponds to a transition from visibility to legibility. The legibility of images relates to the independence of their parameters and the divergence of series. There's another aspect, too, which takes us back to an earlier remark. It's the question of verticality. Our visual world's determined in part by our vertical posture. An American critic, Leo Steinberg, explained that modern painting is defined less by a flat purely visual space than by ceasing to privilege the vertical: it's as though the window's replaced as a model by an opaque horizontal or tilting plane[7] on which elements are inscribed. That's the sense of legibility, which doesn't imply a language but something like a diagram. As Beckett says, it's better to be sitting than standing, and better to be lying down than sitting.[8] Modern ballet brings this out really well: sometimes the most dynamic movements take place on the ground, while upright the dancers stick to each other and give the impression they'd collapse if they moved apart. Maybe in cinema the screen retains only a purely nominal verticality and functions like a horizontal or tilting plane. Michael Snow has seriously questioned the dominance of verticality and has even constructed special equipment to explore the question. Cinema's great *auteurs* work like Varèse in music: they have to work with what they've got, but they call forth new equipment, new instruments. These instruments produce nothing in the hands of second-rate *auteurs*, providing only a substitute for ideas. It's the ideas of great *auteurs*, rather, that call them forth. That's why I don't think cinema will die, and be replaced by TV or video. Great *auteurs* can adapt any new resource.

Verticality may well be one of the great questions of modern cinema: it's at the heart of Glauber Rocha's latest film, The Age of the Earth, *for example—a marvelous film containing unbelievable shots that really defy verticality. And yet, by considering cinema only from this "geometric," spatial angle, aren't you missing an essentially dramatic dimension, which comes out for example in the problem of the* look[9] *as handled by* auteurs *like Hitchcock and Lang? You do, in relation to Hitchcock, talk about a* "démarque,"[10] *which seems implicitly to relate to the look. But the notion of the look, the very word itself, doesn't once appear in your book. Is this deliberate?*

I'm not sure the notion's absolutely necessary. The eye's already there in things, it's part of the image, the image's visibility. Bergson shows how an image itself is luminous or visible, and needs only a "dark screen" to stop it tumbling around with other images, to stop its light diffusing, spreading in all directions, to reflect and refract the light. "The light which, if it kept on spreading, would never be seen." The eye isn't the camera, it's the screen. As for the camera, with all its propositional functions, it's a sort of third eye, the mind's eye. You cite Hitchcock: he does, it's true, bring the viewer into the film, as Truffaut and Douchet have shown. But that's nothing to do with the look. It's rather because he frames the action in a whole network of relations. Say the action's a crime. Then these relations are another dimension that allows the criminal to "give" his crime to someone else, to transfer or pass it on to someone else. Rohmer and Chabrol saw this really well. The relations aren't actions but symbolic acts that have a purely mental existence (gift, exchange, and so on). And they're what the camera reveals: framing and camera movement display mental relations. If Hitchcock's so English, it's because what interests him is the problem and the paradoxes of relation. The frame for him is like a tapestry frame: it holds within it the network of relations, while the action is just a thread moving in and out of the network. What Hitchcock thus brings into cinema is, then, the mental image. It's not a matter of the look, and if the camera's an eye, it's the mind's eye. So Hitchcock has a special place in cinema: he goes beyond the action-image to something deeper, mental relations, a kind of vision. Only, instead of seeing this as a breaking-down of the action image, and of the movement-image in general, he makes it a consummation, saturation, of that image. So you might equally well say he's the last of the classic directors, or the first of the moderns.

You see Hitchcock as the prototypical filmmaker of relations, of what you call thirdness. Relations: is that what you mean by the whole*? It's a difficult bit of your book. You invoke Bergson, saying the whole isn't closed, it's rather the* Open, *something that's always open. It's particular sets of things that are closed, and one mustn't confuse the two . . .*

The Open is familiar as a key notion in Rilke's poetry. But it's a notion in Bergson's philosophy too. The key thing is to distinguish between particular sets of things and the whole. Once you confuse them, the whole makes no sense and you fall into the famous paradox of the set of all sets. A set of things may contain very diverse elements, but it's nonetheless closed, relatively closed or artificially limited. I say "artificially" because there's always some thread, however tenuous, linking the set to another larger set, to infinity. But the whole is of a different nature, it relates to time: it ranges over all sets of things, and it's precisely what stops them completely fulfilling their own tendency to become completely closed. Bergson's always saying that Time is the Open, is what changes—is constantly changing in nature—each moment. It's the whole, which isn't any set of things but the ceaseless passage from one set to another, the transformation of one set of things into another. It's very difficult to think about, this relation between time, the whole, and openness. But it's precisely cinema that makes it easier for us to do this. There are, as it were, three coexisting levels in cinematography: framing, which defines a provisional artificially limited set of things; cutting, which defines the distribution of movement or movements among the elements of the set; and then this movement reflects a change or variation in the whole, which is the realm of *montage.* The whole ranges over all sets and is precisely what stops them becoming "wholly" closed. By talking about offscreen space, we're saying on the one hand that any given set of things is part of another larger two- or three-dimensional set, but we're also saying that all sets are embedded in a whole that's different in nature, a fourth or fifth dimension, constantly changing across all the sets (however large) over which it ranges. In the first case we have spatial and material extension, but in the other, the spiritual order we find in Dreyer or Bresson. The two aspects aren't mutually exclusive but complementary, mutually supportive, and sometimes one's dominant, sometimes the other. Cinema's always played upon these coexisting levels, each great *auteur* has his own way of conceiving and using them. In a great film, as in any work of art, there's always something open. And it always turns out to be time, the whole, as these appear in every different film in very different ways.

Conversation of September 13, 1983, with Pascal Bonitzer and
Jean Narboni, as set down and amplified by the participants

Cahiers du Cinéma 352 (October 1983)

ON *THE TIME-IMAGE*

A hundred years of cinema . . . and only now does a philosopher have the idea of setting out concepts specific to cinema. What should we make of this blind spot of philosophical reflection?

It's true that philosophers haven't taken much notice of cinema, even though they go to cinemas. Yet it's an interesting coincidence that cinema appeared at the very time philosophy was trying to think motion. That might even explain why philosophy missed the importance of cinema: it was itself too involved in doing something analogous to what cinema was doing; it was trying to put motion into thought while cinema was putting it into images. The two projects developed independently before any encounter became possible. Yet cinema critics, the greatest critics anyway, became philosophers the moment they set out to formulate an aesthetics of cinema. They weren't trained as philosophers, but that's what they became. You see it already in Bazin.

How do you see the place of film criticism these days—what role should it play?

Film criticism faces twin dangers: it shouldn't just describe films but nor should it apply to them concepts taken from outside film. The job of criticism is to form concepts that aren't of course "given" in films but nonetheless relate specifically to cinema, and to some specific genre of film, to some specific film or other. Concepts specific to cinema, but which can only be formed philosophically. They're not technical notions (like tracking, continuity, false continuity,[1] depth or flatness of field, and so on), because technique only makes sense in relation to ends which it presupposes but doesn't explain.

It's these ends that constitute the concepts of cinema. Cinema sets out to produce self-movement in images, autotemporalization even: that's the key thing, and it's these two aspects I've tried to study. But what exactly does cinema thereby show us about space and time that the other arts don't show? A tracking shot and a pan give two very different spaces. A tracking shot sometimes even stops tracing out a space and plunges into time—in Visconti, for instance. I've tried to analyze the space of Kurosawa's and Mizoguchi's films: in one it's an encompassing,[2] in the other, a world-line. They're very different: what happens along a world-line isn't the same as what happens within an encompassing. Technical details are subordinate to these overall finalities. And that's the difficulty: you have to have monographs on *auteurs,* but then these have to be grafted onto differentiations, specific determinations, and reorganizations of concepts that force you to reconsider cinema as a whole.

How can you exclude, from the problematic of body and thought that runs right through your reflection, psychoanalysis and its relation to cinema? Or linguistics for that matter. That is, "concepts taken from outside film"?

It's the same problem again. The concepts philosophy introduces to deal with cinema must be specific, must relate specifically to cinema. You can of course link framing to castration, or close-ups to partial objects, but I don't see what that tells us about cinema. It's questionable whether the notion of "the imaginary," even, has any bearing on cinema; cinema produces reality. It's all very well psychoanalyzing Dreyer, but here as elsewhere it doesn't tell us much. It makes more sense to compare Dreyer and Kierkegaard; because already for Kierkegaard the problem was to "make" a movement, and he thought only "choice" could do this: then cinema's proper object becomes spiritual choice.

A comparative psychoanalysis of Kierkegaard and Dreyer won't help us with the philosophico-cinematic problem of how this spiritual dimension becomes the object of cinema. The problem returns in a very different form in Bresson, in Rohmer, and pervades their films, which aren't at all abstract but very moving, very engaging.

It's the same with linguistics: it also provides only concepts applicable to cinema from outside, the "syntagm" for instance. But that immediately reduces the cinematic image to an utterance, and its essential characteristic, its motion, is left out of consideration. Narrative in cinema is like the imaginary: it's a very indirect product of motion and time, rather than the other way around. Cinema always narrates what the image's movements and times make it narrate. If the motion's governed by a sensory-motor scheme, if it shows a character reacting to a situation, then you get a story. If, on the other hand, the sensory-motor scheme breaks down to leave disoriented and discordant movements, then you get other patterns, becomings rather than stories.

That's the whole importance, which you examine in your book, of neorealism. A crucial break, obviously connected with the war (Rossellini and Visconti in Italy, Ray in America). And yet Ozu before the war and then Welles prevent one taking too historicist an approach . . .

Yes, if the major break comes at the end of the war, with neorealism, it's precisely because neorealism registers the collapse of sensory-motor schemes: characters no longer "know" how to react to situations that are beyond them, too awful, or too beautiful, or insoluble . . . So a new type of character appears. But, more important, the possibility appears of temporalizing the cinematic image: pure time, a little bit of time in its pure form, rather than motion. This cinematic revolution may have been foreshadowed in different contexts by Welles and, long before the war, by Ozu. In Welles there's a depth of time, coexisting layers of time, which the depth of field develops on a truly temporal scale.[3] And if Ozu's famous still lifes are thoroughly cinematic, it's because they bring out the unchanging pattern of time in a world that's already lost its sensory-motor connections.

But what are the principles behind these changes? How can we assess them, aesthetically or otherwise? In short: on what basis can we assess films?

I think one particularly important principle is the biology of the brain, a micro-biology. It's going through a complete transformation, and coming up with extraordinary discoveries. It's not to psychoanalysis or linguistics but to the biology of the brain that we should look for principles, because it doesn't have the drawback, like the other two disciplines, of applying ready-made concepts. We can consider the brain as a relatively undifferentiated mass and ask what circuits, what kinds of circuit, the movement-image or time-image trace out, or invent, because the circuits aren't there to begin with.

Take Resnais's films for example: a cinema of the brain, even though, once again, they can be very entertaining or very moving. The circuits into which Resnais's characters are drawn, the waves they ride, are cerebral circuits, brain waves. The whole of cinema can be assessed in terms of the cerebral circuits it establishes, simply because it's a moving image. Cerebral doesn't mean intellectual: the brain's emotive, impassioned too . . . You have to look at the richness, the complexity, the significance of these arrangements, these connections, disjunctions, circuits and short-circuits. Because most cinematic production, with its arbitrary violence and feeble eroticism, reflects mental deficiency rather than any invention of new cerebral circuits. What happened with pop videos is pathetic: they could have become a really interesting new field of cinematic activity, but were immediately taken over by organized mindlessness. Aesthetics can't be divorced from these complementary questions of cretinization and cerebralization. Creating new circuits in art means creating them in the brain too.

Cinema seems, on the face of it, more a part of civic life than does philosophy. How can we bridge that gap, what can we do about it?

That may not be right. I don't think people like the Straubs, for example, even considered as political filmmakers, fit any more easily than philosophers into "civic life." Any creative activity has a political aspect and significance. The problem is that such activity isn't very compatible with circuits of information and communication, ready-made circuits that are compromised from the outset. All forms of creativity, including any creativity that might be possible in television, here face a common enemy. Once again it's a cerebral matter: the brain's the hidden side of all circuits, and these can allow the most basic conditioned reflexes to prevail, as well as leaving room for more creative tracings, less "probable" links.

The brain's a spatio-temporal volume: it's up to art to trace through it the new paths open to us today. You might see continuities and false continuities as cinematic synapses—you get different links, and different circuits, in Godard and Resnais, for example. The overall importance or significance of cinema seems to me to depend on this sort of problem.

Conversation with Gilbert Cabasso and Fabrice Revault d'Allonnes
Cinéma 334 (December 18, 1985)

DOUBTS ABOUT THE IMAGINARY

Questions:

1. The Movement-Image *seems to take up once more the problematic of* The Logic of Sense, *but from a very different angle. Where* The Logic of Sense *explored the consubstantial relation of paradox and language,* The Movement-Image *suggests going beyond paradox by substituting the transversal notion of an open totality for that of a paradoxical set.*

   What role does the cinematic model play in working toward a resolution that, by reading Bergson from the viewpoint of cinema, appears to lead to seeing "the universe as cinema in its purest form"?

   In other words, does cinema play the role in your work of a metaphor that helps you read a conceptual text, or of a conceptual tool you use to arrive at a new logic?
2. *Your reflection, rooted in the links between Bergson and cinema, turns on (aesthetic) categories and (philosophical) entities that you eventually characterize as Ideas in the Platonic sense of the term.*

   You also, while rejecting a semiological analysis of cinema, revive Peirce's project of a general semiology of signs.

   Do you think cinema has a special part to play in resurrecting, in a machinic version, thinking in terms of substance and universal? What, in the very notions of movement-image and time-image, are the aspects that *support this conception of cinema? And what are the relations between image and movement in the movement-image?*

3. *In your analysis of cinema you never use the term* the imaginary, *widely used in other work to characterize cinematic language.*

   What are your reasons for avoiding the term? Might not your reflections on the role of light in filmic figuration, your fascinating suggestion of a look that is already there in the image, allow you to trace out your own conception of the imaginary?
4. *More generally, does the notion of the imaginary, which varies widely from one discipline to another, have any place in philosophy? How would you characterize this place?*
5. *Might not your analysis of cinema induce you to set out the heuristic role of the imaginary in your own work—including that on cinema—and in the way you write?*

1. The idea of an open totality has a specifically cinematic sense. Because when images move, then by linking up with one another they're internalized in a whole, which is itself externalized in the linked images. Eisenstein worked out the theory of this image-whole circuit, where each term depends on the other: the whole changes as images are linked together. He invokes the dialectic. And for him, it's effectively the relation between shots and *montage.*

But cinema isn't completely defined by the model of a moving open totality. Not only can this totality be understood in a way that isn't at all dialectical (in prewar American, German, and French cinema) but postwar cinema brings the model itself into question. Perhaps because the cinematic image ceases to be a movement-image and becomes a time-image: that's what I try to show in the second volume. The model of the whole, of an open totality, presupposes that there are commensurable relations or rational cuts[1] between images, in the image itself, and between image and whole. This is the very condition for there being an open totality: here again, Eisenstein works out an explicit theory, using the golden number, and the theory's not just "dumped" on us but deeply connected with his practice, in fact with a fairly general prewar filmmaking practice. If postwar cinema breaks with this model, it's because it sets up all sorts of irrational cuts and incommensurable relations between images. False continuity becomes the rule (a dangerous rule, because one can get a false continuity just as wrong as a true one, more wrong even).

So here again we find paradoxical sets. But if irrational cuts become fundamental in this way, it's because what's fundamental is no longer the movement-image but rather the time-image. From this viewpoint the model of an open totality deriving from movement doesn't work any more: there's no totalization any more, no internalization in a whole or externalization of a whole. Images are no longer linked by rational cuts but relinked around irrational cuts (in Resnais, Godard). It's a different cinematic system, where linguistic paradoxes turn up once more. Thus talking pictures seem initially to have perpetuated the primacy of the visual image, making sound a new dimension of the visual image, a fourth dimension, often wonderful. Postwar talking pictures, on the other hand, tend toward autonomous sound, an irrational break[2] between the aural and visual (in the Straubs, Syberberg, Duras). There's no totalization any more, because time no longer derives from motion and measures it, but manifests itself directly, inducing false moves.[3]

So I don't think cinema can be reduced to the model of an open totality. That was one model, but there are and always will be as many models as cinema manages to invent. Also, no models are specific to one discipline or one field of knowledge. What interests me is resonances between different fields with their distinct rhythms, histories, developments, and transformations. At a particular point philosophy, for example, transformed the relations between motion and time; cinema may have been doing the same thing, but in a different context, along different lines. So there's a resonance between decisive events in the histories of the two fields, although the events are very dissimilar. Cinema is one type of image. Between different types of aesthetic image, scientific functions, and philosophical concepts, there are currents of mutual exchange, with no overall primacy of any one field. In Bresson you get disconnected spaces with tactile continuities, in Resnais you get probabilistic and topological spaces, which correspond to spaces in physics and mathematics, but which cinema constructs in its own way (*Je t'aime, Je t'aime*). The relation between cinema and philosophy is that between image and concept. But there's a relation to the image within the concept itself, and a relation to the concept within the image: cinema, for example, has always been trying to construct an image of thought, of the

the mechanisms of thought. And this doesn't make it abstract, quite the reverse.

2. In fact it's the principles that are sometimes realized in images, sometimes in functions and sometimes in concepts, that one might call Ideas. It's signs that realize Ideas. Images, in cinema, are signs. Signs are images seen from the viewpoint of their composition and generation. I've always been interested in the notion of a sign. Cinema has given rise to its own particular signs, whose classification is specific to cinema, but once it produces them they turn up elsewhere, and the world starts "turning cinematic."[4] If I've used Peirce, it's because in Peirce there's a profound mirroring of images and signs. If, on the other hand, a semiotics based on linguistics worries me, it's because it does away with both the image and the notion of sign. It reduces the image to an utterance, which seems very bizarre, and then of course finds in it the linguistic components of utterances—syntagms, paradigms, the signifier. It's a sleight of hand that makes us forget about movement. Cinema begins with the movement-image—not with any "relation" between image and movement even: cinema creates a self-moving image. Then, when cinema goes through its "Kantian" revolution, that's to say when it stops subordinating time to motion, when it makes motion depend on time (with false moves manifesting temporal relations), the cinematic image becomes a time-image, an autotemporalization of the image. So the question isn't whether cinema can aspire to universality. It's not a question of universality but of singularity: what are the image's singularities? The image is a figure characterized not by any way it universally represents anything but by its internal singularities, the singular points it connects: the rational cuts whose theory Eisenstein worked out for the movement-image, for example, or irrational cuts in the case of the time-image.

3, 4, 5. There's actually a real philosophical problem here: is "the imaginary" a good concept? We might begin with the terms *real* and *unreal*, defining them the way Bergson does: reality as connection according to laws, the ongoing linkage of actualities, and unreality as what appears suddenly and discontinuously to consciousness, a virtuality in the process of becoming actualized. Then there's another pair of terms, *true* and *false*. The real and the unreal are always distinct, but the distinction isn't always discernible: you get falsity when the distinction between real and unreal becomes indiscernible. But then, where there's falsity, truth itself becomes undecidable. Falsity isn't a mistake or confusion, but a power that makes truth undecidable.

The imaginary is a very complicated notion because it marks the intersection of these two pairs of terms. The imaginary isn't the unreal; it's the indiscernibility of real and unreal. The two terms don't become interchangeable, they remain distinct, but the distinction between them keeps changing round. This comes out well in three different aspects of the phenomenon of crystallization: there's an exchange between an actual image and a virtual image, virtual becoming actual and vice versa; there's also an exchange between clear and opaque, opaque becoming clear and vice versa; finally there's an exchange between seed and environment. I think the imaginary is this set of exchanges. The imaginary is the crystal image, which is the key to modern cinema: one finds it in very different forms in Ophuls, in Renoir, in Fellini, in Visconti, in Tarkovsky, in Zanussi . . .

And then there's what we see in the crystal. What we see in the crystal is falsity or, rather, the power of falsity. The power of falsity is time itself, not because time has changing contents but because the form of time as becoming brings into question any formal model of truth. This is what happens in the cinema of time, first of all in Welles, then in Resnais, in Robbe-Grillet: it's a cinema of undecidability. In short, the imaginary doesn't lead us on to a signifier but to a presentation of pure time.

This is why I don't attach much importance to the notion of the imaginary. It depends, in the first place, on a crystallization, physical, chemical, or psychical; it defines nothing, but is defined by the crystal-image as a circuit of exchanges; to imagine is to construct crystal-images, to make the image behave like a crystal. It's not the imaginary but the crystal that has a heuristic role, with its triple circuit: actual-virtual, clear-opaque, seed-environment. And in the second place, all that matters about the crystal itself is what we see in it, so the imaginary drops out of the equation. What we see in the crystal is a time that's become autonomous, independent of motion, temporal relations constantly inducing false moves. I don't believe the imaginary has any power, in dreams, fantasies . . . and so on. The imaginary is a rather indeterminate notion. It makes sense in strict conditions: its precondition is the crystal, and the unconditioned we eventually reach is time.

I don't believe the imaginary is at all specific, but that there are two systems of images: a system one might call organic, that of the movement-image, which is based on rational cuts and linkages and itself sets forth a model of truth (truth is the whole . . .). And then a crystalline system, that of the time-image, based on irrational cuts with only relinkings, and substituting for the model of truth the power of falsity as becoming. Cinema, precisely because it set images in motion, had its own resources for dealing with this problem of two different systems. But one finds these systems elsewhere, drawing on other resources: Worringer long ago brought out a confrontation in the arts between a "classic" organic system and an inorganic or crystalline system with no less vitality than the first, but a powerful nonorganic, barbaric or gothic life. These are two stylistic forms, and one can't say one is "truer" than the other, because truth as a model or as an Idea is associated with only one of the two systems. Perhaps the concept, or philosophy, also takes these two different forms. In Nietzsche one sees philosophical discourse toppling into a crystalline system, substituting the power of becoming for the model of truth, nonorganic life for the organon, "pathic" relinkings (aphorisms) for logical links. What Worringer called expressionism is a fine way of approaching nonorganic life, fully developed in cinema, that one can't adequately explain in terms of the imaginary. But expressionism is only one approach, and in no way exhausts the crystalline system: it appears in many other guises in other art-forms and in cinema itself. Might there not even be other systems than the two considered here, the crystalline and the organic? Of course. (What sort of system is there in digital electronic images—a silicon system rather than a carbon system? Here again, art, science, and philosophy interact with each other.) What I set out to do in these books on cinema was not to reflect on the imaginary but something more practical: to disseminate time crystals. It's something you can do in cinema but also in the arts, the sciences, and philosophy. It's not something imaginary, it's a system of signs. Making, I hope, further systems possible. Classifying signs is an endless business, not least because there are an endless number of different classifications. What interests me is a rather special discipline, taxonomy, a classification of classifications, which, unlike linguistics, can't do without the notion of a sign.

Hors-cadre 4 (1986)

LETTER TO SERGE DANEY: OPTIMISM, PESSIMISM, AND TRAVEL

Your previous book, *La Rampe* (1983), brought together a number of articles written for *Cahiers*. What made it a real book was the way you based the arrangement on an analysis of the different periods *Cahiers* had gone through, and more specifically, on your analysis of various functions[1] of the cinematic image. An eminent earlier analyst of the plastic arts, Riegl, distinguished three tendencies in art: the beautification of Nature, the spiritualization of Nature, and competition with Nature (and he took "beautification," "spiritualization," and "competition" as historically and logically fundamental factors). You, in the *periodization* you propose, define an initial function expressed by the question: What is there to see behind the image? And of course what there is to see behind an image appears only in succeeding images, yet acts as what takes us from the first image to the others, linking them in a powerful beautifying organic totality, even when "horror" is one element in this transition. This allows you to say the initial period has as its principle *The Secret Beyond the Door*,[2] "the desire to see more, see behind, see through," where any object whatever can play the role of a "temporary mask,"[3] and where any film is linked to others in an ideal mirroring. This first period of cinema is characterized by the art of *Montage*—culminating in great triptychs and corresponding to the beautification of Nature or the encyclopedia of the World—but also by a depth ascribed to the image taken as a harmony or consonance, by a network of obstacles and advances, by dissonances and resolutions in this depth, and by the specifically cinematic role of actors, bodies, and words in this universal scenography: the role of always furthering a supplementary vision, a "seeing more." In your new book you offer Eisenstein's library, the Cabinet of Doctor Eisenstein,[4] as a symbol of this great encyclopedia.

Now, you've pointed out that this form of cinema didn't die a natural death but was killed in the war (Eisenstein's office in Moscow, indeed, became a dead, dispossessed, derelict place). Syberberg extensively developed some remarks of Walter Benjamin's about seeing Hitler as a filmmaker . . . You yourself remark that "the great political *mises en scène,* state propaganda turning into tableaux vivants, the first mass human detentions" realized cinema's dream, in circumstances where horror penetrated everything, where "behind" the image there was nothing to be seen but concentration camps, and the only remaining bodily link was torture. Paul Virilio in his turn shows that fascism was competing from beginning to end with Hollywood. The encyclopedia of the world, the beautification of Nature, politics as "art" in Benjamin's phrase, had become pure horror. The organic whole was simply totalitarianism, and authoritarian power was no longer the sign of an *auteur* or *metteur en scène* but the materialization of Caligari and Mabuse ("the old business of directing," you said, "would never again be an innocent business"). And if cinema was to revive after the war, it would have to be based on new principles, a new function of the image, a new "politics," a new artistic finality. Resnais's work is perhaps the greatest, the most symptomatic example of this: he brings cinema back from the dead. From the outset, through to his recent *Love Unto Death,* Resnais has considered only one cinematic subject, body or actor, a man returning from the dead. Thus in this book itself you compare Resnais to Blanchot, *Writing the Disaster.*

After the war, then, a second function of the image was expressed by an altogether new question: What is there to see on the surface of the image? "No longer what there is to see behind it, but whether I can bring myself to look at what I can't help seeing—which unfolds on a single plane." This changed all the relations between cinematic images. *Montage* became secondary, giving way not only to the famous "sequence shot," but to new forms of composition and combination. Depth was condemned as "deceptive," and the image took on the flatness of a "surface without depth," or a *slight depth* rather like the oceanographer's shallows (and there's no contradiction between this and depth of field, in Welles for example, one of the masters of this new cinema, who shows everything in one vast glimpse and does away with the old kind of depth). Images were no longer linked in an unambiguous order of cuts and continuities but became subject to relinkings, constantly revised and reworked across cuts and false continuities.[5] The relation between the image and cinematic bodies and actors changed too: bodies became more Dantean, were no longer, that is, captured in actions, but in postures and the ways they're linked (this also you show in the present book, in relation to Akerman, to the Straubs, and in a striking passage where you say an actor in a drunken scene no longer has to add something to his movement and stagger around as in earlier films but rather has to adopt a posture, the posture that allows a real drunk to stay on his feet . . .). The relation between images and words, sounds, music changed too, with basic disymmetries between the aural and visual that allow the eye to read images, but also allow the ear to imagine the slightest noise. Finally, this new age of cinema, this new function of the image, was a *pedagogy of perception*, taking the place of an *encyclopedia of the world* that had fallen apart: a visionary cinema that no longer sets out in any sense to beautify nature but *spiritualizes* it in the most intense way. How can we wonder what there is to see behind an image (or following on from it . . .), when we can't even see what's in it or on the surface until we look with our mind's eye?[6] And while we can identify many high points in this new cinema, it's the same pedagogical path that leads to all of them—Rosselini's pedagogy, "a Straubian pedagogy, a Godardian pedagogy," as you said in *La Rampe*, to which you now add Antonioni's pedagogy, by analyzing the eye and ear of a jealous man as a "poetics" registering everything evanescent, everything that might disappear, a woman on the desert island in particular . . .

If you belong to any critical tradition, it's to that of Bazin and *Cahiers*, along with Bonitzer, Narboni, and Schefer. You're still looking for a fundamental link between cinema and thought, and you still see film criticism as a poetic and aesthetic activity (while many of our contemporaries have felt the need to turn to language, to a linguistic formalism, in order to preserve the seriousness of criticism). Thus you still subscribe to the grand idea of cinema's first period: cinema as a new Art and a new Thought. Only for the first filmmakers and critics, from Eisentein or Gance to Elie Faure, the idea is bound up with a metaphysical optimism, a total art for the masses. The war and what led up to it, though, generated a radical metaphysical pessimism. But you've managed to salvage a certain critical optimism: cinema for you remains linked, not to a triumphant collective thought, but to a precarious, singular thought that can be grasped and sustained only in its "powerlessness," as it returns from the dead to confront the worthlessness of most cinematic activity.

This reflects the emergence of a third period, a third function of the image, a third set of relations. The question is no longer what there is to see behind the image, nor how we can see the image itself—it's how we can find a way into it, how we can slip in, because each image now slips across other images, "the background in any image is always another image," and the vacant gaze is a contact lens. And with this, you say, things come full circle, with Syberberg we're back to Méliès, but the mourning is now endless and the provocation is pointless,[7] threatening to pitch your critical optimism into a critical pessimism. Indeed, two different factors meet in this new relation between images: on the one hand, there's the internal development of cinema as it seeks new audio-visual combinations and major pedagogical lines (not just Rosselini, Resnais, Godard, and the Straubs, but Syberberg, Duras, Oliveira . . .) and finds in television a wonderful field to explore, with wonderful resources; on the other hand, there's television's own development, as competing with cinema, as actually "perfecting" and "generalizing" it. Yet however interconnected, these two aspects are fundamentally different and *don't operate on the same level.* For if cinema looked to television and video to "relay" a new aesthetic and poetic function, television for its part (despite a few early experiments) took on an essentially *social function* that disrupted from the outset any relay, appropriated video, and substituted altogether different forces for the potential of beauty and thought.

Thus began a development reminiscent of the initial period of cinema: just as authoritarian power, culminating in fascism and major state intervention, made it impossible to continue the first form of cinema, the new social power of the postwar period, one of surveillance or control, threatened to kill the second form of cinema. Control is the name Burroughs gave to modern power. Even Mabuse changes his method and operates through television sets. Once again, cinema faced no natural death: it was at the very beginning of its new explorations and creations. But the threat this time would come, not from an image always having another image as its background, and art reaching the point of "competing with Nature," but from the way all images present the single image of my vacant gaze contacting a non-Nature, a privileged spectator allowed into the wings, in contact with the image, entering into the image. Recent surveys show that one of the most highly prized forms of entertainment is to be in the studio audience of a television show: it's nothing to do with beauty or thought, it's about being in contact with the technology, touching the machinery. The prying zoom has been taken out of Rossellini's hands to become television's standard technique; continuity, through which art beautified and spiritualized Nature, and then competed with it, has become the televisual insert. A visit to the factory, with its rigid discipline, becomes ideal entertainment (seeing how they make a program), and *edification* becomes the highest aesthetic value ("an edifying experience"). The encyclopedia of the world and the pedagogy of perception collapse to make way for a professional training of the eye, a world of controllers and controlled communing in their admiration for technology, mere technology. The contact lens everywhere. This is where your critical optimism turns into critical pessimism.

Your new book leads on from the first one. It's a question, now, of taking up this confrontation of cinema and television on its two different levels. And, although you often allude to such matters in your book, you don't inscribe the problem within some abstract comparison of the cinematic image with newer kinds of image. Your functionalism fortunately rules this out. And from your functionalist viewpoint you're of course aware that television has, potentially, just as significant an aesthetic function as any other form of expression and, conversely, that cinema has always come up against forces working within it to seriously impede any aesthetic finality. But what I find so interesting in *Ciné-Journal* is that you try to establish two "facts," along with their determinants. The first is that television, despite significant efforts, often made by great filmmakers, hasn't sought its own specific identity in an aesthetic function but in a social function, a function of control and power, the dominance of the medium shot,[8] which denies any exploration of perception, in the name of the professional eye. Thus any innovation that does occur may appear in some unexpected corner, some unusual situation: you cite Giscard producing an empty shot on TV by walking off the set, or a brand of lavatory paper reviving American comedy. The second fact, on the other hand, is that cinema, despite all the forces it has served (and even launched), has always "preserved" an aesthetic and noetic function, however fragile and misunderstood. We shouldn't, then, compare different types of images, but cinema's aesthetic function and television's social function: you say the comparison not only *is* asymmetric but *has to be* asymmetric, only makes sense in an asymmetric way.

We must, then, determine how cinema comes to embody this aesthetic function. Here, by asking yourself what it means to be a film critic, you come up with things I find very intriguing. You take the example of a film like Verneuil's *The Vultures*, which does without any press viewing, rejects criticism as thoroughly pointless, and seeks direct contact with "the social consensus" as its audience. This is perfectly reasonable, because this type of cinema doesn't need critics to fill, not only the cinemas, but the whole range of its social functions. If criticism has any point, then, it's to the extent that a film bears in it something supplementary, a sort of gap between it and a still virtual audience, so we have to play for time and preserve the traces as we wait. This notion of "supplement" seems to have various resonances; perhaps you take it from Derrida, reinterpreting it in your own way: the supplement turns out to be a film's aesthetic function, a tenuous thing that can, however, be isolated in some cases and some circumstances, with a bit of skill and thought. Thus Henri Langlois and André Bazin are for you two key figures. For one of them "was obsessed with showing that film should be preserved" and the other had "the same obsession, in reverse" to show that film preserved things, preserved everything that mattered, "a strange mirror whose silvering retains images." How can one claim that such a fragile material preserves anything? And what does it mean to preserve things, which seems a fairly humble function? It's nothing to do with the material, it's something to do with the image itself: you show that the cinematic image in itself preserves, preserves the one time in his life that a man cries, in Dreyer's *Gertrud*; preserves the wind, not great storms with their social function but moments "where the camera plays with the wind, runs ahead of it, turns back into it" in Sjöström or the Straubs; preserves or watches over whatever can be watched—children, empty houses, plane trees—as in Varda's *Vagabond*, and throughout Ozu's work; preserving, but always out of step with things, because cinematic time isn't a time that flows on but one that endures and coexists with other times. Preserving is, thus understood, no little thing; it's creating, constantly creating a supplement (that beautifies Nature, or spiritualizes it). It's in the nature of a supplement that it has to be created, and therein lies its aesthetic or noetic function, itself something supplementary. You might have developed this into an elaborate theory, but you choose to speak very concretely, keeping as close as possible to your experience as a critic, insofar as you see the critic as "keeping watch" over the supplement and thereby bringing out cinema's aesthetic function.

Why not allow television this same supplementary force of creative preservation? There's nothing in principle to stop it adapting its different resources to this same end, except that TV's social functions (seen in game shows, news) stifle its potential aesthetic function. TV is, in its present form, the ultimate consensus: it's direct social engineering, leaving no gap at all between itself and the social sphere, it's social engineering in its purest form. For how could professional training, the professional eye, leave any room for something supplementary in the way of perceptual exploration? And if I had to choose among the finest passages of your book I'd pick those where you show that the "replay," the instant replay, is television's substitute for the supplement or self-preservation, of which it is in fact the opposite; I'd pick those where you rule out any chance of *jumping* from cinema to communication, or of setting up any "relay" between one and the other, since a relay could only be set up in a form of television that had a non-communicative supplement, a supplement called Welles; I'd pick those where you explain that television's professional eye, the famous socially engineered eye through which the viewer is himself invited to look, produces an immediate and complacent perfection that's instantly controllable and controlled. For you don't take the easy path, you don't criticize television for its imperfections, but purely and simply for its perfection. It has found a way of producing a technical perfection that is the very image of its complete aesthetic and noetic emptiness (which is how a visit to the factory becomes a new form of entertainment). And you find Bergman agreeing—with considerable mirth, and considerable enthusiasm for what television might have contributed to the arts—that *Dallas* is completely empty, but a perfect piece of social engineering. In another area, one might say the same of *Apostrophes*:[9] from a literary viewpoint (aesthetically, noetically) it's empty, but technically it's perfect. To say television has no soul is to say it has no supplement, except the one you confer on it as you describe the weary critic in his hotel room, turning the TV on once more, and recognizing that all the images are equivalent, having sacrificed present, past, and future to a flowing time.

It's from cinema that there's come the most radical criticism of information, from Godard for instance, and in a different way from Syberberg (this not just in things they've said but concretely in their work); it's from television that there comes the new threat of a death of cinema. So you've thought it necessary to go and "have a close look" at this essentially uneven or asymmetric confrontation. Cinema met its first death at the hands of an authoritarian power culminating in fascism. Why does its threatened second death involve television, just as the first involved radio? Because television is the form in which the new powers of "control" become immediate and direct. To get to the heart of the confrontation you'd almost have to ask whether this control might be reversed, harnessed by the supplementary function opposed to power: whether one could develop an art of control that would be a kind of new form of resistance. Taking the battle to the heart of cinema, making cinema see it as *its* problem instead of coming upon it from outside: that's what Burroughs did in literature, by substituting the viewpoint of control and controllers for that of authors and authority. But isn't this, as you suggest, what Coppola has in his turn attempted to do in cinema, with all his hesitations and ambiguities, but really fighting for something nonetheless? And you give the apt name of *mannerism* to the tense, convulsive form of cinema that leans, as it tries to turn round, on the very system that seeks to control or replace it.[10] You'd already, in *La Rampe*, characterized the image's third phase as "mannerism": when there's nothing to see behind it, not much to see in it or on the surface, but just an image constantly slipping across preexisting, presupposed images, when "the background in any image is always another image," and so on endlessly, and that's what we have to see.

This is the stage where art no longer beautifies or spiritualizes

Nature but competes with it: the world is lost, the world itself "turns to film,"[10] any film at all, and this is what television amounts to, the world turning to any film at all, and, as you say here, "nothing happening to human beings any more, but everything happening only to images." One might also say that bodies in Nature or people in a landscape are replaced by brains in a city: the screen's no longer a window or door (behind which . . .) nor a frame or surface (in which . . .) but a computer screen on which images as "data" slip around. How, though, can we still talk of art, if the world itself is turning cinematic, becoming "just an act" directly controlled and immediately processed by a television that excludes any supplementary function? Cinema ought to stop "being cinematic," stop playacting, and set up specific relationships with video, with electronic and digital images, in order to develop a new form of resistance and combat the televisual function of surveillance and control. It's not a question of short-circuiting television—how could that be possible?—but of preventing television subverting or short-circuiting the extension of cinema into the new types of image. For, as you show, "since television has scorned, marginalized, repressed the potential of video—its only chance of taking over from postwar modern cinema . . . taking over its urge to take images apart and put them back together, its break with theater, its new way of seeing the human body, bathed in images and sounds—one has to hope the development of video art will itself threaten TV." Here we see in outline the new art of City and Brain, of competing with Nature. And one can already see in this mannerism many different directions or paths, some blocked, others leading tentatively forward, offering great hopes. A mannerism of video "previsualization" in Coppola, where images are already assembled without a camera. And then a completely different mannerism, with its strict, indeed austere, method in Syberberg, where puppetry and front-projection produce an image unfolding against a background of images. Is this the same world we see in pop videos, special effects, and footage from space? Maybe pop video, up to the point where it lost its dreamlike quality, might have played some part in the pursuit of "new associations" proposed by Syberberg, might have traced out the new cerebral circuits of a cinema of the future, if it hadn't immediately been taken over by marketing jingles, sterile patterns of mental deficiency, intricately controlled epileptic fits (rather as, in the previous period, cinema was taken over by the "then hysterical spectacle" of large-scale propaganda . . .). And maybe space footage might also have played a part in aesthetic and noetic creation, if it had managed to produce some last reason for traveling, as Burroughs suggested, if it had managed to break free from the control of a "regular guy on the Moon who didn't forget to bring along his prayer book," and better understood the endlessly rich example of *La Région centrale*, where Michael Snow devises a very austere way of making one image turn on another, and untamed nature on art, pushing cinema to the limit of a pure Spatium. And how can we tell where the experimentation with images, sounds, and music that's just beginning in the work of Resnais, Godard, the Straubs, and Duras will lead? And what new Comedy[11] will emerge from the mannerism of bodily postures? Your concept of mannerism is particularly convincing, once one understands how far all the various mannerisms are different, heterogeneous, above all how no common measure can be applied to them, the term indicating only a battlefield where art and thought launch together with cinema into a new domain, while the forces of control try to steal this domain from them, to take it over before they do, and set up a new clinic for social engineering. Mannerism is, in all these conflicting ways, the convulsive confrontation of cinema and television, where hope mingles with the worst of all possibilities.

You had to go and "have a look" at this. So you became a journalist, at *Libération*, without giving up your connection with *Cahiers*. And since one of the most compelling reasons for becoming a journalist is wanting to travel, you produced a new series of critical pieces in the form of a series of investigations, reports, and journeys. But here again, what makes this book a real book is the fact that everything is woven around the convulsive problem with which *La Rampe* closed in a rather melancholy way. Any reflection on travel hinges perhaps on four observations, one to be found in Fitzgerald, another in Toynbee, the third in Beckett, and the last in Proust. The first notes that traveling, even to remote islands or wildernesses, never amounts to a real "break," if one takes along one's Bible, one's childhood memories, and one's habits of thought. The second, that travel aspires to a nomadic ideal, but it's a ridiculous aspiration, because nomads are in fact people who don't move on, don't want to leave, who cling to the land taken from them, their *région centrale*[12] (you yourself, talking about a film by Van der Keuken, say that going south is bound to mean coming up against people who want to *stay* where they are). Because, according to the third observation, the most profound, Beckett's, "we don't travel, as far as I know, for the pleasure of travelling; we're dumb, but not that dumb."[13] So what reason is there, ultimately, except *seeing for yourself*, going to check something, some inexpressible feeling deriving from a dream or nightmare, even if it's only finding out whether the Chinese are as yellow as people say, or whether some improbable color, a green ray, some bluish, purplish air, really exists somewhere, out there. The true dreamer, said Proust, is someone who goes to see something for himself . . . And in your case, what you set out to ascertain in your travels is that the world really is turning to film, is constantly moving in that direction, and that that's just what television amounts to, the whole world turning to film:[14] so traveling amounts to seeing "what point in the history of the media" the city, or some particular city, has reached. Thus you describe São Paulo as a self-consuming city-brain. You even go to Japan to see Kurosawa and to see for yourself how the Japanese wind fills the banners in *Ran*; but as there's no wind that particular day, you find wretched wind-machines standing in for it and, miraculously, contributing to the image the indelible internal supplement, that is, the beauty or the thought that the image preserves only because they exist only in the image, because the image has created them.

Your travels, in other words, have left you with mixed feelings. Everywhere, on the one hand, you find the world turning to film, and find that this is the social function of television, its primary function of control—whence your critical pessimism, despair even. You find, on the other hand, that film itself still has endless possibilities, and that it is the ultimate journey, now that all other journeys come down to seeing what's on TV—whence your critical optimism. Where these two strands meet there's a convulsion, a manic depression you've made your own, a vertigo, a Mannerism that's the essence of art, but also a battlefield. And there sometimes seems to be an interplay between the two sides. Thus the traveler, wandering from TV set to TV set, can't help thinking, and seeing film for what it really is, extricating it from game shows and news alike: a kind of implosion that generates a little cinema in the televisual series you set up, for example, the series of three cities, or three tennis champions. And conversely, returning to cinema as a critic, you can then see all the better that the flattest of images is almost imperceptibly inflected, layered, with varying depths that force you to travel within it, but on a supplementary journey, out of control: with its three speeds, in Wajda, or more particularly, the three kinds of movement in Mizoguchi, the three scenarios you discover in Imamura, the three great circles traced out in *Fanny and Alexander*, where you once more, in Bergman, come upon the three phases, the three functions of cinema—the beautifying theater of life, the spiritual antitheater of faces, and the competitive workings of magic. Why *three* so often, in so many forms, in the analyses of your book? Perhaps because *three* sometimes serves to close everything up, taking *two* back to *one*, but sometimes, on the other hand, takes up duality and carries it far away from unity, opening it up and sustaining it. "*Three*, or Video in the Balance: Critical Optimism and Pessimism" as your next book? The battle itself takes so many forms that it can be fought on any terrain. Fought out, for example, between the speed of movement that American cinema keeps on stepping up, and the slowness of the material that Soviet cinema weighs and preserves. You say, in a fine passage, that "the Americans have taken very far the study of continuous motion, of speed and lines of flight, of a motion that empties an image of its weight, its materiality, of bodies in a state of weightlessness . . . while in Europe, even in the USSR, at the risk of marginalizing themselves to death, some people allow themselves the luxury of exploring the other aspect of movement, slowed and discontinuous. Paradjanov and Tarkovsky, like Eisentein, Dovzhenko, and Barnet before them, observe matter accumulating and piling up, a geology of bits and pieces of rubbish and treasure slowly taking shape: theirs is the cinema of the Soviet ramparts, of that immobile empire . . ." And if the Americans have actually used video to go even faster (and to control the highest speeds), how can one return video to the uncontrollable slowness that preserves things, how teach it to slow down, as Godard "recommended" to Coppola?

Preface to Serge Daney's *Ciné-Journal* (1986)

part three • MICHEL FOUCAULT

BREAKING THINGS OPEN, BREAKING WORDS OPEN[1]

When and how did you get to know Michel Foucault?

It's easier to remember a gesture or a laugh than a date. I got to know him around 1962, when he was finishing *Raymond Roussel* and *The Birth of the Clinic.* Then after '68 I joined him and Daniel Defert in the Prison Information Group they'd set up. I saw Foucault often, I've many memories that come involuntarily, so to speak, and quite throw me, because the gaiety they bring back is mixed with the pain of his being dead. I'm afraid I didn't see him in the last years of his life: after the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* he went through a general crisis, in his politics, his life, his thought. As with all great thinkers, his thought always developed through crises and abrupt shifts that were the mark of its creativity, the mark of its ultimate consistency. I got the impression that he wanted to be left alone, to go where none but his closest friends could follow him. I needed him much more than he needed me.

In the course of his life, Michel Foucault wrote several articles about you. You yourself wrote about him many times. But it's hard not to see something symbolic in the fact that now, after Foucault's death, you're publishing a Foucault. *It prompts all sorts of conjectures: should one see it as the outcome of* *a "work of mourning"? Is it a way of replying "for both of you" to the criticisms of antihumanism that have recently been coming from both left and right? A way of closing the circle and marking the end of a certain "philosophical era"? Or rather a call to carry on along the same lines? Or none of these things?*

The book is, above all, something I had to do. It's very different from the articles dealing with particular themes. Here I'm trying to see Foucault's thought as a whole. By the whole, I mean what drives him on from one level of things to another: what drives him to discover power behind knowledge, and what drives him to discover "modes of subjectification" beyond the confines of power. The logic of someone's thought is the whole set of crises through which it passes; it's more like a volcanic chain than a stable system close to equilibrium. I wouldn't have felt the need to write this book if I hadn't had the impression that people didn't really understand these transitions, this pushing forward, this logic in Foucault. Even the notion of an utterance,[2] for example—I don't think it's been understood concretely enough. But my reading may be no better than various others. As for the current objections, they're not readings at all and are quite irrelevant: they come down to criticizing vague ideas of things Foucault's said, without taking any account whatever of the problems to which they relate. "The death of man," for example. It's a familiar sight: whenever a great thinker dies, idiots feel a sense of relief and kick up an unholy row. Does this book amount to a call to carry on the work, then, in spite of all the people who now want to turn back? Maybe, but there's already a Foucault Center bringing together people working along lines or using methods similar to Foucault's. A recent book like Ewald's *L'Etat-Providence*[3] is at once profoundly original (in fact it's a new philosophy of law[4]) yet couldn't have existed without Foucault. It's not a work of mourning; non-mourning takes even more work. To characterize my book yet another way, I'd bring in one of Foucault's constant themes, that of the double. Foucault's haunted by the double and its essential otherness. I wanted to find Foucault's double, in the sense he gave the word: "a repetition, another layer,[5] the return of the same, a catching on something else, an imperceptible difference, a coming apart and ineluctable tearing open."

In the sixties and seventies you and Michel Foucault were—albeit involuntarily, and while both doing your best to avoid it—"intellectual gurus,"[6] *especially for several generations of students. Did that sometimes create a rivalry between you? Was the Foucault-Deleuze relationship—on the personal, professional, or intellectual level—like the relation between you and Guattari, or Sartre and Aron, or like Sartre's relation to Merleau-Ponty?*

It's this book, not me I'm afraid, that's trying to be Foucault's double. My relations with Guattari were necessarily quite different, because we've worked together over a long period, whereas I never worked with Foucault. But I do think there are a lot of parallels between our work and his, although they're kept apart, as it were, by their widely differing methods, and purposes even. This makes the parallel all the more important to me, invaluable; there was something more than a common purpose, there was a common cause. I'll say this: the fact Foucault existed, with such a strong and mysterious personality, the fact he wrote such wonderful books, with such style, never caused me anything but delight. In a remarkable text, which is just the record of a conversation, Foucault contrasts passion and love. By his definition, my relation to him was some sort of passion ("it has strong phases and weak phases, phases when it becomes incandescent and everything wavers for an unstable moment we cling to for obscure reasons, perhaps through inertia."). How could I feel rivalry or jealousy, since I admired him? When you admire someone you don't pick and choose; you may like this or that book better than some other one, but you nevertheless take them as a whole, because you see that some element that seems less convincing than others is an absolutely essential step in his exploration, his alchemy, and that he wouldn't have reached the new revelation you find so astonishing if he hadn't followed the path on which you hadn't initially seen the need for this or that detour. I dislike people who say of someone's work that "up to that point it's OK, but from there on it's not much good, though it gets better again later on." You have to take the work as a whole, to try and follow rather than judge it, see where it branches out in different directions, where it gets bogged down, moves forward, makes a breakthrough; you have to accept it, welcome it, as a whole. Otherwise you just won't understand it at all. Does following Foucault through the problems he confronts, the shifts and detours he has to make, before presuming to pronounce on his solutions, amount to taking him as an "intellectual guru?" You talk as though that notion's self-explanatory, generally accepted. I find it suspect and puerile. When people follow Foucault, when they're fascinated by him, it's because they're doing something with him, in their own work, in their own independent lives. It's not just a question of intellectual understanding or agreement, but of intensity, resonance, musical harmony.[7] Good lectures, after all, are more like a concert than a sermon, like a soloist "accompanied" by everyone else. And Foucault gave wonderful lectures.

In his Chronique des idées perdues,[8] *François Châtelet, describing his very long friendship with you, with Guattari, Schérer, and Lyotard, writes that you were all "on the same side" and all had—perhaps the sign of true complicity—the "same enemies." Would you say the same of Michel Foucault? Were you on the same side?*

I think so. Châtelet had a strong sense of all that. Being on the same side also means laughing at the same things, or sharing a silence, not needing to "explain." It was so nice not having to explain things. Perhaps we all had the same conception of philosophy too. We had no taste for abstractions, Unity, Totality, Reason, Subject. We set ourselves the task of analyzing mixed forms, arrangements, what Foucault called apparatuses.[9] We set out to follow and disentangle lines rather than work back to points: a cartography, involving microanalysis (what Foucault called the microphysics of power, and Guattari the micropolitics of desire). We looked for foci of unification, nodes of totalization, and processes of subjectification in arrangements, and they were always relative, they could always be dismantled in order to follow some restless line still further. We weren't looking for origins, even lost or deleted[10] ones, but setting out to catch things where they were at work, in the middle:[11] breaking things open, breaking words open. We weren't looking for something timeless, not even the timelessness of time, but for new things being formed, the emergence of what Foucault calls "actuality." Perhaps actuality or novelty is *energeia*, almost Aristotelian, but closer still to Nietzsche (even though Nietzsche called it the untimely).[12]

Isn't it also a way of working with "surfaces"? You used to like Valéry's maxim that "there's nothing deeper than skin" . . .

Yes, it's a wonderful saying. Dermatologists should inscribe it on their doors. Philosophy as a general dermatology or art of surfaces (I tried to describe such surfaces in *The Logic of Sense*). The new forms of image give the problem a new impetus. It's in Foucault himself that surfaces become essentially surfaces on which things are inscribed: this is what utterances being "neither visible nor hidden" is all about. Archaeology amounts to constituting a surface on which things are inscribed. If you don't constitute a surface on which things are inscribed, what's not hidden will remain invisible. Surface isn't opposed to depth (from which one resurfaces) but to interpretation. Foucault's method was always opposed to any interpretative method. Never interpret; experience, experiment[13] . . . The theme of folds and enfolding, so important in Foucault, takes us back to the skin.

You once told Michel Foucault: "You were the first to teach us something quite basic: the indignity of speaking for others." It was in 1972, when May 68 was still in the air (May 68, of which, by the way, you say in your book that "to read some analyses, you'd think it all happened only in the heads of Parisian intellectuals"). I think you feel this dignity of not speaking for others should be part of what it means to be an intellectual. Would you still today characterize intellectuals—who the papers say have gone silent—in those same terms?

Yes, it's natural that modern philosophy, which has gone so far in criticizing representation, should challenge any attempt at speaking in place of others. Whenever we hear the words "nobody can deny . . . ," "everyone would agree that . . . ," we know a lie or slogan's about to follow. Even after '68 it was normal, in a TV program about prisons, for example, to get the views of everyone, judges, prison warders, visiting wives, men in the street, everyone except prisoners or former prisoners. It's become more difficult to do that now, and that's one positive result of '68: letting people speak for themselves. This applies to intellectuals too: Foucault said intellectuals had stopped being universal and become specific; that is, they were no longer spokesmen for universal values but for their own particular expertise and situation (Foucault fixed the change at the point where physicists spoke out against the atom bomb). When doctors no longer have the right to speak on behalf of patients, and when they also have a duty to speak as doctors about political, legal, industrial, and ecological problems, then you need the sort of groups envisaged in '68, bringing together for example doctors, patients, and nurses. They're multivocal groups. The Prison Information Group, as organized by Foucault and Defert, was one such group: it embodied what Guattari called "transversality" as opposed to the hierarchical groups in which one person speaks on behalf of everyone else. Defert set up this sort of group for AIDS, organizing at once support, information, and struggle. Now, what does it mean to speak for oneself rather than for others? It's not of course a matter of everyone finding their moment of truth in memoirs or psychoanalysis; it's not just a matter of speaking in the first person. But of identifying the impersonal physical and mental forces you confront and fight as soon as you try to do something, not knowing what you're trying to do until you begin to fight. Being itself is in this sense political. I'm not, in this book, trying to speak for Foucault, but trying to trace a transversal, diagonal line running from him to me (there's no other option), and saying something about what he was trying to do and what he was fighting, as I saw it.

"A bolt of lightning has struck, that will bear Deleuze's name.[14] *A new kind of thinking is possible, thinking is possible anew. Here it is, in Deleuze's texts, leaping, dancing before us, among us . . . One day, perhaps, the century will be seen as Deleuzian." Michel Foucault wrote those lines. I don't think you've ever commented on them.*

I don't know what Foucault meant, I never asked him. He was a terrible joker. He may perhaps have meant that I was the most naive philosopher of our generation. In all of us you find themes like multiplicity, difference, repetition. But I put forward almost raw concepts of these, while others work with more mediations. I've never worried about going beyond metaphysics or the death of philosophy, and I never made a big thing about giving up Totality, Unity, the Subject. I've never renounced a kind of empiricism, which sets out to present concepts directly. I haven't approached things through structure, or linguistics or psychoanalysis, through science or even through history, because I think philosophy has its own raw material that allows it to enter into more fundamental external relations with these other disciplines. Maybe that's what Foucault meant: I wasn't better than the others, but more naive, producing a kind of *art brut*,[15] so to speak; not the most profound but the most innocent (the one who felt the least guilt about "doing philosophy").

It isn't possible here—articles have already been written about this, and more work is doubtless on the way—to try to tabulate all the points of convergence between Foucault's philosophy and your own (there are many, running from your common Anti-Hegelianism to your microphysics or micrologic) and all the points at which they diverge. So let me take a few shortcuts. You once said, in these very columns, that the particular job of the philosopher was to fashion concepts. Which of the concepts produced by Foucault has been most useful in your own elaboration of philosophy, and which Foucaldian concept do you find most foreign to your work? Which, conversely, are the main concepts that Foucault may, as you see it, have taken from your philosophy?

Difference and Repetition may have influenced him, but he'd already produced a very fine analysis of those themes in *Raymond Roussel*. Perhaps also the concept of arrangement, put forward by Felix and myself, may have helped him with his own analysis of "apparatuses." But he thoroughly transformed everything he used. The concept of an utterance, as he framed it, really struck me, because it implied a pragmatics of language that opened up a new direction for linguistics. It's interesting, incidentally, how Barthes and Foucault come to place more and more emphasis on a generalized pragmatics, one taking a rather Epicurean approach, the other a rather Stoic one. And then there's his conception of the play of forces, as going beyond mere violence: it comes from Nietzsche, but extends Nietzsche's conception, goes even further than he did. In all Foucault's work there's a certain relation between forms and forces that's influenced my work and was basic to his conception of politics, and of epistemology and aesthetics too. It sometimes happens that a "little" concept has a great resonance: the notion of the "infamous man" is as fine as the "last man" in Nietzsche and shows how much fun philosophical analysis can be. The article on *The Life of Infamous Men* is a masterpiece. I often turn to that text, because although it's one of Foucault's minor pieces, it's inexhaustible, potent, and really works, giving you a feel for the way his thought works on you.

There's been much talk, especially in Italy, of the "Nietzsche Renaissance" for which Foucault and you yourself are taken, among others, to be . . . responsible. Along with the directly linked problems of difference and nihilism ("active" nihilism and its "affirmative" transvaluation). One might wonder, incidentally, about the differences and similarities between "your" Nietzsche and Foucault's. But I'll restrict myself to the following question: Why did Foucault's (very Nietzschean) talk of the "death of man" generate so much misunderstanding, with people complaining that he had no regard for man and human rights, and hardly ever crediting him with the "philosophical optimism" or faith in the forces of life that's often said to characterize your own philosophy?

Misunderstandings are often reactions of malicious stupidity. There are some who can only feel intelligent by discovering "contradictions" in a great thinker. People acted as though Foucault was talking about the death of existing men (and they said "that's going a bit far") or as though, on the other hand, he was just noting a change in the concept of man ("that's all he's saying"). But he wasn't saying either of these things. He was talking about a play of forces, and a dominant form emerging from it. Take the human forces of imagining, conceiving, wanting . . . and so on: with what other forces do they come into play at some particular period, and what composite form emerges? It may happen that human forces enter as components into a form that isn't human but animal, or divine. In the classic period,[16] for example, human forces come into play with infinitary forces, "orders of infinity," with the result that man is formed in the image of God and his finitude is merely a limitation of infinity. The form of Man emerges in the nineteenth century, when human forces combine with other finitary forces discovered in life, work, language. Then these days it's often said that man is confronting new forces: silicon and no longer just carbon, the cosmos rather than the world . . . What reason is there to think that the resulting composite form is still

Man? And as for human rights, Ewald shows that it's precisely legal transformations that mark this change of form. Foucault returns to Nietzsche by reviving the question of the death of man. And, if man has been a way of imprisoning life, mustn't the liberation of life in man himself take a different form? In this connection, you wonder whether I'm not reading into Foucault a vitalism that's hardly to be found in his work. On at least two essential points I think there is indeed a vitalism in Foucault, irrespective of any "optimism." In the first place, the play of forces operates along a line of life and death that is always folding and unfolding, tracing out the very limit of thought. And if Foucault sees Bichat as a great writer, it may be because Bichat wrote the first great modern book on death, ramifying partial deaths and taking death as a force coextensive with life: "a vitalism rooted in mortalism," as Foucault puts it. Second, when Foucault finally introduces the theme of "subjectification," it amounts essentially to inventing new possibilities of life, as Nietzsche would say, to establishing what one may truly call styles of life: here it's a vitalism rooted in aesthetics.

It will come as no surprise that you give such an important place in your book to Foucault's analyses of power. You particularly emphasize the notion of diagram that appears in Discipline and Punish, *a diagram that's no longer the archive of* The Archaeology of Knowledge, *but the map, the mapping, the setting out of the interplay of forces that constitutes power. Yet Foucault, in his "Afterword" to Dreyfus and Rabinow's book* Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*—a remarkable work that you frequently cite—wrote that the overall theme of his researches hadn't been power but the subject, the ways that human being had been subjectified. Was Foucault the cartographer making* cartes . . . d'identité,[17] *which you say "lack any identity, rather than identifying anything"? Doesn't understanding Foucault come down, in other words, to understanding the "passage" from* Discipline and Punish *to* The Care of the Self *and the question "Who am I?"*

It's difficult, all the same, to call Foucault's philosophy a philosophy of the subject. The most one can say is that that's what it "came to be" when Foucault came upon subjectivity as a third dimension. The thing is, his thought consists of tracing out and exploring one dimension after another in a way that has its own creative necessity, but no one dimension is contained in any other. It's like a zigzagging line whose various orientations reflect unforeseeable, unexpected events (Foucault was always "surprising" his readers). Thus Power delineates a second dimension that's irreducible to the dimension of Knowledge, even though they together produce concretely indivisible composites; but knowledge relates to forms, the Visible, the Utterable, in short to the archive, while power relates to forces, the play of forces, diagrams. You can say why he passes from knowledge to power, as long as you see that he's not passing from one to the other as from some overall theme to some other theme, but moving from his novel conception of knowledge to an equally inventive new conception of power. This applies still more to the "subject': it takes him years of silence to get, in his last books, to this third dimension. You're right to say that what we must understand is the "passage." If Foucault needs a third dimension, it's because he feels he's getting locked into the play of forces, that he's reached the end of the line or can't manage to "cross" it, there's no line of flight open to him. He says as much, brilliantly, in *The Life of Infamous Men.* It's all very well invoking foci of resistance, but where are such foci to be found? And it takes him a long time to find a solution because he actually has to create one. Can we say, then, that this new dimension's that of the subject? Foucault doesn't use the word *subject* as though he's talking about a person or a form of identity, but talks about "subjectification" as a process, and "Self" as a relation (a relation to oneself). And what's he talking about? About a relation of force to itself (whereas power was a relation of a force to other forces), about a "fold" of force. About establishing different ways of existing, depending on how you fold the line of forces, or inventing possibilities of life that depend on death too, on our relations to death: existing not as a subject but as a work of art. He's talking about inventing ways of existing, through optional rules, that can both resist power and elude knowledge, even if knowledge tries to penetrate them and power to appropriate them. But ways of existing or possibilities of life are constantly being recreated, new ones emerge, and while it's true that this dimension was invented by the Greeks, we're not going back to the Greeks when we try to discern those taking shape today, to discern in ourselves an artistic will irreducible to knowledge and to power. There's no more any return to in Foucault than there's a return to the Greeks. To imagine that Foucault rediscovered, came back to the subjectivity he'd initially rejected, is as fundamental a misunderstanding as the one about "the death of man." Indeed, I think subjectification has little to do with any subject. It's to do, rather, with an electric or magnetic field, an individuation taking place through intensities (weak as well as strong ones), it's to do with individuated fields, not persons or identities. It's what Foucault, elsewhere, calls "passion." This idea of subjectification in Foucault is no less original than those of power and knowledge: the three together constitute a way of living, a strange three-dimensional figure, as well as the greatest of modern philosophies (and I say this without joking).

Conversation with Robert Maggiori
Libération 2–3 (September 1986)

LIFE AS A WORK OF ART[1]

You've already written a lot about Foucault's work. Why this book, two years after his death?

It marks an inner need of mine, my admiration for him, how I was moved by his death, by that unfinished work. Yes, earlier I'd done articles on particular points (utterances, power). But here I'm trying to find the logic of this thought, which I see as one of the greatest of modern philosophies. A thought's logic isn't a stable rational system. Foucault, unlike the linguists, thought that even language was a highly unstable system. A thought's logic is like a wind blowing us on, a series of gusts and jolts. You think you've got to port, but then find yourself thrown back out onto the open sea, as Leibniz put it. That's particularly true in Foucault's case. His thought's constantly developing new dimensions that are never contained in what came before. So what is it that drives him to launch off in some direction, to trace out some—always unexpected—path? Any great thinker goes through crises; they set the rhythm of his thought.

You consider him above all a philosopher, while many people place the emphasis on his historical researches.

History's certainly part of his method. But Foucault never became a historian. Foucault's a philosopher who invents a completely different relation to history than what you find in philosophers of history. History, according to Foucault, circumscribes us and sets limits, it doesn't determine what we are, but what we're in the process of differing from; it doesn't fix our identity, but disperses it into our essential otherness. That's why Foucault deals with recent short historical series (from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries). And even when, in his last books, he deals with a long-term series, down from the Greeks and Christians, it's in order to find in what way we're not Greeks, not Christians, but becoming something else. History, in short, is what separates us from ourselves and what we have to go through and beyond in order to think what we are. As Paul Veyne says, our actuality's something distinct from both time and eternity. Foucault is the most "actual"[2] of contemporary philosophers, the one who's most radically broken away from the nineteenth century (which is why he's able to think the twentieth century). Actuality is what interests Foucault, though it's what Nietzsche called the inactual or the untimely; it's what is *in actu*, philosophy as the act of thinking.

Is this what leads you to say that what's basic for Foucault is the question: What is it to think?[3]

Yes, thinking—as a perilous act, he says. It's definitely Foucault, along with Heidegger but in a quite different way, who's most profoundly transformed the image of thought. And this image has various levels, corresponding to the successive layers or areas of Foucault's philosophy. Thinking is in the first place seeing and talking, but only once the eye goes beyond things to "visibilities," and language goes beyond words or sentences to utterances. That's thought as archive. And then thinking's a capacity,[4] a capacity to set forces in play, once one understands that the play of forces doesn't just come down to violence but is to do with acting upon actions, with acts like "inciting, inducing, preventing, facilitating or obstructing, extending or restricting, making more or less likely . . . " That's thought as strategy. Finally, in the last books, there's the discovery of thought as a "process of subjectification": it's stupid to see this as a return to the subject; it's to do with establishing ways of existing or, as Nietzsche put it, inventing new possibilities of life. Existing not as a subject but as a work of art—and this last phase presents thought as artistry. The key thing, obviously, is to show how one's forced to pass from one of these determinations to the next: the transitions aren't there ready and waiting, they correspond to the paths Foucault traces out, and the areas he reaches that weren't there before he reached them, and the jolts he himself precipitates as well as experiences.

Let's take these areas in order. What's the "archive"? You say that for Foucault the archive is "audiovisual"?

Archaeology, genealogy, is also a geology. Archaeology doesn't have to dig into the past, there's an archaeology of the present—in a way it's always working in the present. Archaeology is to do with archives, and an archive has two aspects, it's audio-visual. A language lesson and an object lesson. It's not a matter of words and things (the title of Foucault's book[5] is meant ironically). We have to take things and find visibilities in them. And what is visible at a given period corresponds to its system of lighting and the scintillations, shimmerings, flashes produced by the contact of light and things. We have to break open words or sentences, too, and find what's uttered in them. And what can be uttered at a given period corresponds to its system of language and the inherent variations it's constantly undergoing, jumping from one homogeneous scheme to another (language is always unstable). Foucault's key historical principle is that any historical formation says all it can say and sees all it can see. Take madness in the seventeenth century, for instance: in what light can it be seen, and in what utterances can it be talked of? And take us today: what are we able to say today, what are we able to see? For most philosophers, their philosophy's like a personality they haven't chosen, a third person. What struck people who met Foucault were his eyes, his voice, and an erect bearing that went with them. Flashes, scintillations, utterances wresting themselves from his words—even Foucault's laugh was an utterance. And if there's a dislocation between seeing and saying, if there's a gap between them, an irreducible distance, it only means you can't solve the problem of knowledge (or rather, of "knowledges"[6]) by invoking a correspondence or conformity of terms. You have to look elsewhere for what links and weaves them together. It's as though the archive's riven by a great fault dividing visible form on one side from the form of what can be uttered on the other, each irreducible to the other. And the thread that knits them together and runs between them lies outside these forms, in another dimension.

Aren't there some similarities to Maurice Blanchot here, an influence even?

Foucault always acknowledged a debt to Blanchot. This, perhaps, in three respects. First of all, "talking isn't seeing . . . ," a difference that means that by saying what one can't see, one's taking language to its ultimate limit, raising it to the power of the unspeakable. Then there's the primacy of the third person, the "he" or neuter, the impersonal "one," relative to the first two persons—there's the refusal of any linguistic personology. Lastly, there's the theme of the Outside: the relation, and indeed "nonrelation," to an Outside that's further from us than any external world, and thereby closer than any inner world. And it doesn't diminish the importance of these links to emphasize how Foucault takes the themes and develops them independently of Blanchot: the dislocation between seeing and talking, most fully developed in the book on Raymond Roussel and the piece on Magritte, leads him to a new determination of the visible and the utterable; the "one speaks" organizes his theory of utterance; the interplay of near and far along the line Outside, as a life-and-death experiment, leads to specifically Foucaldian acts of thought, to folding and unfolding (which take him a long way from Heidegger too), and eventually becomes the basis of the process of subjectification.

After the archive or the analysis of knowledge, Foucault discovers power, and then subjectivity. What's the relation between knowledge and power,[7] *and between power and subjectivity?*

Power's precisely the nonformal element running between or beneath different forms of knowledge. That's why one talks about a microphysics of power. It's force, and the play of forces, not form. And the way Foucault conceives the play of forces, developing Nietzsche's approach, is one of the most important aspects of his thought.

It's a different dimension from that of knowledge, although power and knowledge form concretely indivisible composites. But the fundamental question is why Foucault needs yet another dimension, why he goes on to discover subjectification as distinct from both knowledge and power. And people say: Foucault's going back to the subject, rediscovering the notion of subject that he'd always rejected. It's not that at all. His thought underwent a crisis in all sorts of ways, but it was a creative crisis, not a recantation. What Foucault felt more and more, after the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, was that he was getting locked in power relations. And it was all very well to invoke points of resistance as "counterparts" of foci of power, but where was such resistance to come from? Foucault wonders how he can cross the line, go beyond the play of forces in its turn. Or are we condemned to conversing with Power, irrespective of whether we're wielding it or being subjected to it? He confronts the question in one of his most violent texts, one of the funniest too, on "infamous men." And it takes him a long time to come up with an answer. Crossing the line of force, going beyond power, involves as it were bending force, making it impinge on itself rather than on other forces: a "fold," in Foucault's terms, force playing on itself. It's a question of "doubling" the play of forces, of a self-relation[8] that allows us to resist, to elude power, to turn life or death against power. This, according to Foucault, is something the Greeks invented. It's no longer a matter of determinate forms, as with knowledge, or of constraining rules, as with power: it's a matter of *optional rules* that make existence a work of art, rules at once ethical and aesthetic that constitute ways of existing or styles of life (including even suicide). It's what Nietzsche discovered as the will to power operating artistically, inventing new "possibilities of life." One should, for all sorts of reasons, avoid all talk of a return to the subject, because these processes of subjectification vary enormously from one period to another and operate through very disparate rules. What increases their variability is that power's always taking over any new process and subordinating it to the play of forces, although it can always then recover by inventing new ways of existing, and this can go on indefinitely. So there's no return to the Greeks, either. A process of subjectification, that is, the production of a way of existing, can't be equated with a subject, unless we divest the subject of any interiority and even any identity. Subjectification isn't even anything to do with a "person": it's a specific or collective individuation relating to an event (a time of day, a river, a wind, a life . . .). It's a mode[9] of intensity, not a personal subject. It's a specific dimension without which we can't go beyond knowledge or resist power. Foucault goes on to analyze Greek and Christian ways of existing, how they enter into forms of knowledge, how they make compromises with power. But they are themselves different in nature from knowledge and power. For example, the Church as pastoral power was constantly trying to take control of Christian ways of existing, but these were constantly bringing into question the power of the Church, even before the Reformation. And Foucault, true to his method, isn't basically interested in returning to the Greeks, but in *us today*: what are our ways of existing, our possibilities of life or our processes of subjectification; are there ways for us to constitute ourselves as a "self," and (as Nietzsche would put it) sufficiently "artistic" ways, beyond knowledge and power? And are we up to it, because in a way it's a matter of life and death?

Foucault had earlier developed the theme of the death of man, *which caused such a stir. Is it compatible with the idea of creative human existence?*

The "death of man" is even worse than all the fuss about the subject; misinterpretations of Foucault's thought really thrived on it. But misinterpretations are never innocent, they're mixtures of stupidity and malevolence; people would rather find contradictions in a thinker than understand him. So they wonder how Foucault could get involved in political struggles when he didn't believe in man and therefore in human rights . . . The death of man is in fact a very simple and precise theme, which Foucault takes over from Nietzsche but develops in a very original way. It's a question of form and forces. Forces are always interacting with other forces. Given human forces (like having an understanding, a will . . .), what other forces do they come into play with, and what's the resulting "composite" form? In *The Order of Things*, Foucault shows that man, in the classic period, isn't thought of as man, but "in the image" of God, precisely because his forces enter into combination with infinitary forces. It's in the nineteenth century, rather, that human forces confront purely finitary forces—life, production, language—in such a way that the resulting composite is a form of Man. And, just as this form wasn't there previously, there's no reason it should survive once human forces come into play with new forces: the new composite will be a new kind of form, neither God nor man. Nineteenth-century man, for example, confronts life and combines with it as the force of carbon. But what happens when human forces combine with those of silicon, and what new forms begin to appear? Foucault has two models here, Nietzsche and Rimbaud, and adds his own brilliant analysis to theirs: What new relations do we have with life, with language? What new struggles with Power? When he comes to consider modes of subjectification, it's a way of pursuing the same problem.

In what you call "ways of existing" and Foucault called "styles of life" there is, as you've pointed out, an aesthetics of life: life as a work of art. But there's an ethics too!

Yes, establishing ways of existing or styles of life isn't just an aesthetic matter, it's what Foucault called ethics, as opposed to morality. The difference is that morality presents us with a set of constraining rules of a special sort, ones that judge actions and intentions by considering them in relation to transcendent values (this is good, that's bad . . .); ethics is a set of optional rules that assess what we do, what we say, in relation to the ways of existing involved. We say this, do that: what way of existing does it involve? There are things one can only do or say through mean-spiritedness, a life based on hatred, or bitterness toward life. Sometimes it takes just one gesture or word. It's the styles of life involved in everything that make us this or that. You get this already in Spinoza's idea of "modes." And is it not present in Foucault's philosophy from the outset: What are we "capable" of seeing, and saying (in the sense of uttering)? But if there's a whole ethics in this, there's an aesthetics too. Style, in a great writer, is always a style of life too, not anything at all personal, but inventing a possibility of life, a way of existing. It's strange how people sometimes say that philosophers have no style, or that they write badly. It can only be because they don't read them. In France alone, Descartes, Malebranche, Maine de Biran, Bergson, even Auguste Comte in his Balzacian aspect, are stylists. And Foucault also belongs to this tradition, he's a great stylist. Concepts take on with him a rhythmic quality, or, as in the strange dialogues with himself with which he closes some of his books, a contrapuntal one. His syntax builds up the shimmerings and scintillations of the visible but also twists like a whip, folding up and unfolding, or cracking to the rhythm of its utterances. And then, in his last books, the style tends toward a kind of calm, seeking an ever more austere, an ever purer line . . .

Conversation with Didier Eribon
Le Nouvel Observateur, August 23, 1986

A PORTRAIT OF FOUCAULT

What are you doing in this book? Is it a homage to Michel Foucault? Do you reckon his thought isn't properly understood? Are you analyzing the similarities and differences between his work and yours and what you reckon you owe to him? Or are you, rather, trying to present a mental portrait of Foucault?

I felt a real need to write this book. When someone that you like and admire dies, you sometimes need to draw their picture. Not to glorify them, still less to defend them, not to remember, but rather to produce a final likeness you can find only in death, that makes you realize "that's who they were." A mask, or what he himself called a double, an overlay.[1] Different people will find different likenesses or overlays. But in the end he's most like himself in becoming so different from the rest of us. It's not a question of points I thought we had in common, or on which we differed. What we shared was bound to be rather indefinite, a sort of background that allowed me to talk with him. I still think he's the greatest thinker of our time. You can do the portrait of a thought just as you can do the portrait of a man. I've tried to do a portrait of his philosophy. The lines or touches are of course mine, but they succeed only if he himself comes to haunt the picture.

You wrote in Dialogues: *"I can talk about Foucault, say he told me this or that, explain how I see him. That's irrelevant, unless I've actually come to terms with the set of chiseled sounds, compelling gestures, ideas that are all tinder and fire, extreme concentration and abrupt conclusions, laughs and smiles that seem dangerous the very moment one feels their tenderness . . . " Is there something "dangerous" in Foucault's thought that also explains the passion it continues to arouse?*

Dangerous, yes, because there's a violence in Foucault. An intense violence, mastered, controlled, and turned into courage. He was trembling with violence on some demonstrations. He saw what was intolerable in things. This may be something he shared with Genet. He was a man of passion, and he himself gave the word "passion" a very precise sense. One can't but think of his death as a violent death that came and interrupted his work. And his style, at least up to the last books that attained a kind of serenity, is like a lash, it's a whip twisting and relaxing. Paul Veyne paints a portrait of Foucault as a warrior. Foucault always evokes the dust or murmur of battle, and he saw thought itself as a sort of war machine. Because once one steps outside what's been thought before, once one ventures outside what's familiar and reassuring, once one has to invent new concepts for unknown lands, then methods and moral systems break down and thinking becomes, as Foucault puts it, a "perilous act," a violence whose first victim is oneself. The objections people make, even the questions they pose, always come from safe ashore, and they're like lifebelts flung out, not to help you, but to knock you down and stop you getting anywhere: objections always come from lazy, mediocre people, as Foucault knew better than anyone. Melville said: "For the sake of the argument, let us call him a fool,—then had I rather be a fool than a wise man.—I love all men who *dive.* Any fish can swim near the surface, but it takes a great whale to go down stairs five miles or more . . . Thought-divers . . . have been diving and coming up again with bloodshot eyes since the world began."[2] People are well aware that strenuous physical exercise is dangerous, but thought too is a strenuous and unusual exercise. Once you start thinking, you're bound to enter a line of thought where life and death, reason and madness, are at stake, and the line draws you on. You can think only on this magical line. You needn't necessarily lose, you don't have to end up mad or dead. But that's something that always fascinated Foucault, toppling into the confusion of nearest and furthest in madness or death.

Was everything already implicit in Madness and Civilization, *or are there rather successive advances, crises, changes of direction?*

The question of madness runs right through Foucault's work. Though of course he criticized *Madness and Civilization* for still giving too much weight to an "experience of madness." He shifted from a phenomenology to an epistemology where madness is trapped in a "knowledge" varying from one historical formation to another. Foucault always used history like this, he saw it as a way of avoiding madness. But the experience of thinking is essentially bound up with this zigzagging line running through the different figures of knowledge. To think about madness is to experience not madness but thought: it becomes madness only when it breaks down. This said, does *Madness and Civilization* already contain in principle everything else, for example the conceptions Foucault came to form of discourse, knowledge, and power? Certainly not. There's something great writers often go through: they're congratulated on a book, the book's admired, but they aren't themselves happy with it, because they know how far they still are from what they're trying to do, what they're seeking, of which they still have only an obscure idea. That's why they've so little time to waste on polemics, objections, discussions. I think Foucault's thought is a thought that didn't evolve but *went from one crisis to another.* I don't believe thinkers can avoid crises, they're too seismic. There's a wonderful remark in Leibniz: "Having established these things, I thought I was coming into port, but when I started to meditate upon the union of the soul with the body, I was as it were thrown back onto the open sea." Indeed, this ability to switch the line of thought, to change direction, to find themselves on the open sea, and so discover, invent, is what gives them their fundamental coherence. *Madness and Civilization* was of course itself the result of a crisis. Out of it came a whole conception of knowledge, fully elaborated in the *Archaeology* of 1969—that is, in his theory of utterance—but leading into a new criinto a new crisis, that of '68. For Foucault it was a great period of energy and exhilaration, of creative gaiety: *Discipline and Punish* bears its mark, and that's where he moves from knowledge to power. He moves into this new area to which he'd earlier drawn attention, which he'd marked out but not explored. And of course it's a radicalization: '68 stripped bare all power relations wherever they were operating, that is, everywhere. Previously, Foucault had primarily analyzed forms, and now he moved on to the play of forces underpinning those forms. He leaps into something formless, into the element of what he himself calls "microphysics." And this takes him right through to the first volume of *The History of Sexuality.* But after that book there's yet another, very different, crisis—more internal, perhaps more depressive, more secret, the feeling of facing an impasse? There were lots of interconnected reasons, and maybe we'll come back to this point, but I got the impression that Foucault wanted to be left alone, to be on his own with a few close friends, to take a distance without even moving away, to reach a point where relations broke down. That was my impression, anyway; maybe it was quite wrong.

He seemed to still be working on the history of sexuality; but he was taking a completely different line, he was discovering long-term historical formations (down from the Greeks), whereas up to that point he'd restricted himself to short-term formations (in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries); he was reorienting all his research in terms of what he called modes of subjectification. It was nothing to do with returning to the subject, he was creating something new, breaking out along a new line, a new exploration no longer concerned with knowledge and power in the same way. Another radicalization, if you like. Even his style changed, no longer scintillating, with sudden flashes of brilliance, but taking on an ever more austere, ever purer linearity, almost calm. It wasn't all just theory, you see. Thinking's never just a theoretical matter. It was to do with vital problems. To do with life itself. It was Foucault's way of coming through this new crisis: he was tracing the line that would take him through, and into new relations with knowledge and power. Even if it killed him. That seems a silly thing to say: it wasn't the discovery of subjectification that killed him. And yet . . . "some opening, or I'll suffocate . . . " There's one key thing that runs right through Foucault's work: he was always dealing with historical formations (either short-term short-term or, toward the end, long-term ones), but always in relation to us today. He didn't have to make this explicit in his books, it was quite obvious, and he left the business of making it still clearer to interviews in newspapers. That's why Foucault's interviews are an integral part of his work. *Discipline and Punish* deals with the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but can in no way be divorced from today's prisons and the Information Group set up by Foucault and Defert after '68. Historical formations interest him only because they mark where we come from, what circumscribes us, what we're in the process of breaking out of to discover new relations in which to find expression. What he's really interested in is our present-day relation to madness, our relation to punishment, our relation to power, to sexuality. Not the Greeks, but our relation to subjectification, our ways of constituting ourselves as subjects. Thinking is always experiencing, experimenting,[3] not interpreting but experimenting, and what we experience, experiment with, is always actuality,[4] what's coming into being, what's new, what's taking shape. History isn't experimentation, it's only the set of conditions, negative conditions almost, that make it possible to experience, experiment with, something beyond history. Without history the experiments would remain indeterminate, divorced from any particular conditions, but the experimentation itself is philosophical rather than historical. Foucault's the most twentieth-century of philosphers, perhaps the only really twentieth-century philosopher: he's completely escaped from the nineteenth century, which is why he can talk about it so well. That's what it meant for Foucault to put his life into his thought: his relation to power, and then the relation to oneself, was a matter of life or death, of madness or a new sanity. Subjectification wasn't for Foucault a theoretical return to the subject but a practical search for another way of life, a new style. That's not something you do in your head: but then where, these days, are the seeds of a new way of existing, communally or individually, beginning to appear; and are there any of these seeds in me? We must, of course, examine the Greeks; but only because, according to Foucault, it was they who invented this notion, this practice, of a way of life . . . There was a Greek experience,[5] Christian experiences, and so on, but it's not the Greeks or Christians who are going to experience things for us these days.

Is it so very tragic, Foucault's thought? Isn't it shot through with humor too?

In all great writers you find a humorous or comic level along with the other levels, not just seriousness, but something shocking even. There's a general outlandishness in Foucault: not only outlandish punishments, which produce the great comic passages in *Discipline and Punish,* but the outlandishness of things, and of words. There was a lot of laughter in Foucault, in his life as well as his books. He particularly liked Roussel and Brisset, who at the close of the nineteenth century invented strange "procedures" for manipulating words and phrases. And Foucault's book of 1963 on Roussel is already, so to speak, the poetic and comic version of the theory of utterance set out in the *Archaeology* of 1969. Roussel takes two phrases that have very disparate senses but differ only minimally (*les bandes du vieux pillard* and *les bandes du vieux billard*[6]) and proceeds to conjure up visual scenes, extraordinary spectacles to connect the two phrases, twist one into the other. Working along other lines, with a crazy etymology, Brisset conjures up scenes corresponding to the way he takes a word apart. Foucault finds here already a whole conception of the relations between the visible and the utterable. And the reader's struck by the way Foucault seems to come upon themes reminiscent of Heidegger or Merleau-Ponty: "A visibility beyond the gaze . . . The eye lets things be seen by grace of their being." It's as though, implicitly, he's taking Roussel as a precursor of Heidegger. And it's true that in Heidegger too there's a whole etymological procedure bordering on madness. I really liked Foucault's pages on Roussel, because I got a more vague sense of a certain similarity between Heidegger and another author rather like Roussel in some ways, Jarry. Jarry defines pataphysics etymologically as going beyond metaphysics, and explicitly bases it on the visible or the being of phenomena. But what do you get by transposing things from Heidegger to Roussel (or Jarry)? Foucault gets a complete transformation of the relations between the visible and utterable seen in the light of the "procedures" mentioned: rather than any agreement or homology (any consonance), you get an endless struggle between what we see and what we say, brief clutchings, tussles, captures, because we never say what we see and never see what we say. The visible emerges between two propositions, and an utterance emerges between two things. Intentionality gives way to a whole theater, an endless interplay between the visible and the utterable. Each breaks open the other. Foucault's criticism of phenomenology is there, unannounced, in *Raymond Roussel.*

And then there's the emphasis on "one," in Foucault as in Blanchot: you have to begin by analyzing the third person. One speaks, one sees, one dies. There are still subjects, of course—but they're specks dancing in the dust of the visible and permutations in an anonymous babble. The subject's always something derivative. It comes into being and vanishes in the fabric of what one says, what one sees. Foucault draws from this a very intriguing conception of "infamous men," a conception imbued with a quiet gaiety. It's the opposite of Bataille: the infamous man isn't defined by excessive evil but etymologically, as an ordinary man, anyone at all, suddenly drawn into the spotlight by some minor circumstance, neighbors complaining, a police summons, a trial . . . It's a man confronting Power, summoned to appear and speak. He's more like something out of Chekhov than Kafka. In Chekhov there's a story about a little maid who strangles a baby because she hasn't being able to get any sleep for nights and nights, and one about a peasant who's taken to court for unbolting railway lines to get weights for his fishing rod. The infamous man is *Dasein.* The infamous man's a particle caught in a shaft of light and a wave of sound. Maybe "fame" works the same way: being taken over by a power, an instance of power that makes us appear and speak. There was a point where Foucault got tired of been famous: whatever he said, people were just waiting to praise or criticize it, they didn't even attempt to understand it. How could he ever again produce something unexpected? You can't work without the unexpected. To be an infamous man was a sort of dream for Foucault, his comic dream, his way of laughing: am I infamous? His essay on *The Life of Infamous Men* is a masterpiece.

Would you say that article also expresses a crisis?

Absolutely, yes, the article has various levels. The fact is that Foucault, after the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* in 1976, didn't publish any books for eight years: he suspended work on the rest of *The History of Sexuality,* even though the contents had already been announced.

It was fascinating material, "the children's crusade" and so on, on which he must have completed most of the research. What happened at this point, and during those years? There was a real crisis, and it must have involved many very different interacting factors: disappointment, perhaps, about the way things were going elsewhere, with the eventual failure of the prison movement; on another level, the collapse of more recent hopes, Iran, Poland; the way Foucault became ever more dissatisfied with French social and cultural life; in his work, the feeling of growing misunderstandings about the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* and of what he was trying to do in the *History*; and finally, the most personal element perhaps, a feeling that he had himself reached an impasse, that he needed solitude and strength to deal with something relating not only to his thought but also to his life. If he'd reached an impasse, what did it come down to? Foucault had up to that point analyzed formations of knowledge and apparatuses of power; he'd reached the composites of power and knowledge in which we live and speak. And that was still the viewpoint of the *History*'s first volume: establishing the corpus of utterances relating to sexuality in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and ascertaining around which foci of powers these utterances take shape, either normalizing or, conversely, challenging those powers. The first volume thus remains within the method Foucault had earlier managed to establish. But I think he must have come up against the question of whether there was anything "beyond" power—whether he was getting trapped in a sort of impasse within power relations. He was, you might say, mesmerized by and trapped in something he hated. And it was no use telling himself that coming up against power relations was the lot of modern (that is, infamous) man, that it's power that makes us speak and see, it wasn't enough, he needed "some opening" . . . He couldn't stay locked in what he'd discovered. The first volume did of course identify points of resistance to power; it's just that their character, their origin, their production were still vague. Perhaps Foucault had the feeling that he must at all costs cross that line, get to the other side, go still further than knowledge and power. Even if it meant reconsidering the whole project of the *History of Sexuality*. And that's just what he's telling himself in the very fine piece on infamous men: "Always the same inability to cross the line, to get to the other side . . . always the same choice, on the side of power, of what it says or has people say . . ." It's nothing to do with him repudiating his earlier work. It's all his earlier work, rather, that pushes him into this new confrontation. Only readers who've "accompanied" Foucault in his research can understand this. That's why it's so stupid to say that "he saw he'd made a mistake, and had to reintroduce the subject." He never reintroduced the subject, and never *had* to do anything but what his work demanded: he left behind composites of knowledge and power and entered into a final line of research, like Leibniz "thrown back onto the open sea." There was no other option but to pursue this new discovery, or stop writing.

What is this "line," or this relation that's no longer a power relation? Isn't it foreshadowed earlier on?

It's difficult to talk about. It's a line that's not abstract, though it has no particular shape. It's no more in thought than in things, but it's everywhere thought confronts some thing like madness, and life some thing like death. Miller used to say you find it in any molecule, in nerve fibers, in the threads of a spider's web. It's the fearsome whaling line, which Melville says (in *Moby-Dick*) can carry us off or strangle us as it flies out. For Michaux it's the line of drugs, "headlong acceleration," the "whiplash of a frenzied coachman." It may be a painter's line, like Kandinsky's, or the one leading to Van Gogh's death. I think we ride such lines whenever we think bewilderingly enough or live forcefully enough. They're lines that go beyond knowledge (how could they be "known"?), and it's our relations to these lines that go beyond power relations (as Nietzsche says, who could call it "a will to control"?). Are you saying they're already there in all Foucault's work? That's true, it's the line Outside. The Outside, in Foucault as in Blanchot from whom he takes the word, is something more distant than any external world. But it's also something closer than any inner world. So you get a constant confusion between closeness and distance. Thinking doesn't come from within, but nor is it something that happens in the external world. It comes from this Outside, and returns to it, it amounts to confronting it. The line outside is our double, with all the double's otherness. Foucault was always talking about it, in *Raymond Roussel*, in a homage to Blanchot, in *The Order of Things*.

In *The Birth of the Clinic* there's a whole passage on Bichat that seems to me a model of Foucault's method or procedure: he's analyzing Bichat's conception of death epistemologically, and it's the most thorough, the most brilliant analysis imaginable. But you get the feeling that there's something more to the text, that there's a passion there that goes beyond summarizing some long-dead author. The thing is, Bichat put forward what's probably the first general modern conception of death, presenting it as violent, plural, and coextensive with life. Instead of taking it, like classical thinkers, as a point, he takes it as a line that we're constantly confronting, and can cross in either direction until the point where it ends. That's what it means to confront the line Outside. Passionate men die like Captain Ahab, or like the Parsee rather, chasing their whale. They cross the line. There's something of that in Foucault's death. Beyond knowledge and power, there's a third side, the third element of the "system" . . . An acceleration, one might almost say, that makes it impossible to distinguish death and suicide.

This line, if it's so "fearsome," how can we make it endurable? Is this what the fold *is all about: the need to fold the line?*

Yes, this line's deadly, too violent and fast, carrying us into breathless regions. It destroys all thinking, like the drugs Michaux had to stop using. It's nothing but *délire* and madness, like Captain Ahab's "monomania." We need both to cross the line, and make it endurable, workable, thinkable. To find in it as far as possible, and as long as possible, an art of living. How can we protect ourselves, survive, while still confronting this line? Here a frequent theme of Foucault's comes in: we have to manage to fold the line and establish an endurable zone in which to install ourselves, confront things, take hold, breathe—in short, think. Bending the line so we manage to live upon it, with it: a matter of life and death. The line itself is constantly unfolding at crazy speeds as we're trying to fold it to produce "the slow beings that we are," to get (as Michaux says) to "the eye of the hurricane": both things are happening at once. This idea of folding (and unfolding) always haunted Foucault: not only is his style, his syntax, shaped by folding and unfolding, so is the way language works in the book on

Roussel ("folding words"), the way thought works in *The Order of Things*, and above all the way what Foucault discovers in his last books as an art of living (subjectification) works.

The fold and unfolding is something familiar to readers of Heidegger. It's arguably the key to the whole of Heidegger's philosophy ("to approach Thought is to be on the way to the Fold of Being and beings"). In Heidegger we find the Open, the fold of Being and beings as the condition for any visibility of phenomena, and human reality[7] as the being of distance. In Foucault we find the outside, the folding of the line Outside, and human reality as the being of the Outside. Maybe that's why Foucault in his last interviews compares his approach with Heidegger's. And yet taken as a whole, these two ways of thinking are so different, the problems addressed are so different, that the similarity remains very external: in Foucault there's no such thing as experience in the phenomenological sense, but there are always knowledges and powers already in place, which both reach their limit and vanish in the line Outside. Foucault seems to me closer to Michaux, sometimes even to Cocteau: he brings out the relation between them in terms of a problem of living, breathing (just as he transposed a Heideggerian theme into Roussel so as to transform it). The Cocteau who, in a posthumous book called precisely *The Difficulty of Being*, explains that dreaming works at amazing speeds, unfolding "the folding whose intervention makes eternity endurable," but that waking life has to fold the world so we can endure it, so that everything doesn't confront us at once. Or more specifically, the Michaux whose very titles and subtitles might have inspired Foucault: *The Space Within, The Distant Interior, Life Among Folds, Locked In* (subtitled *Poetic Capacities, Slices of Knowledge* . . .). It's in *The Space Within* that Michaux writes: "Children are born with twenty-two folds. These have to be unfolded. Then a man's life is complete. And he dies. There are no more folds to undo. Men hardly ever die without still having a few more folds to undo. But it has happened." You can't get much closer to Foucault than that. You get just the same sense of folding and unfolding. Only in Foucault there are four primary folds instead of twenty-two: the folding of our body (if we're Greeks, or our flesh, if we're Christians—so there are many possible variations for each fold), the folding of a force impinging on itself rather than other forces, truth enfolded in relation to us, and finally the ultimate folding of the line outside, to produce an "expectant interiority." But it's always the same question, running from Roussel through to Michaux, that produces this poetic philosophy: how far can we unfold the line without falling into a breathless void, into death, and how can we fold it, but without losing touch with it, to produce an inside copresent with the outside, corresponding to the outside? It's a matter of "practices." Rather than talking of a more or less hidden influence of Heidegger on Foucault, I think one should talk of a convergence of Hölderlin-Heidegger on the one hand, and Roussel- or Michaux-Foucault on the other. But they're working along very different paths.

Is this what "subjectification" is all about? Why that word?

Yes, this folding of the line is precisely what Foucault eventually comes to call the "process of subjectification," when he begins to examine it directly. It's easier to understand when you see why, in his two last books, he attributes it to the Greeks. The tribute's more Nietzschean than Heideggerian and is, in particular, a very clear and original view of the Greeks: in politics (and elsewhere) the Greeks invented a power relation between free men, it's free men who govern free men. Given that, it's not enough for force to be exerted on other forces or to suffer the effects of other forces, it has to be exerted upon itself too: the man fit to govern others is the man who's completely mastered himself. By bending force back on itself, by setting force in a relation to itself, the Greeks invent subjectification. We're no longer in the domain of codified rules of knowledge (relations between forms), and constraining rules of power (the relation of force to other forces), but in one of rules that are in some sense *optional* (self-relation): the best thing is to exert power over yourself. The Greeks invent an aesthetic way of existing. That's what subjectification is about: bringing a curve into the line, making it turn back on itself, or making force impinge on itself. So we get ways of living with what would otherwise be unendurable. What Foucault says is that we can only avoid death and madness if we make existing into a "way," an "art." It's idiotic to say Foucault discovers or reintroduces a hidden subject after having rejected it. There's no subject, but a production of subjectivity: subjectivity has to be produced, when its time arrives, precisely because there is no subject. The time comes once we've worked through knowledge and power; it's that work that forces us to frame the new question, it couldn't have been framed before. Subjectivity is in no sense a knowledge formation or power function that Foucault hadn't previously recognized; subjectification is an artistic activity distinct from, and lying outside, knowledge and power. In this respect Foucault's a Nietzschean, discovering an artistic will out on the final line. Subjectification, that's to say the process of folding the line outside, mustn't be seen as just a way of protecting oneself, taking shelter. It's rather the only way of confronting the line, riding it: you may be heading for death, suicide, but as Foucault says in a strange conversation with Schroeter, suicide then becomes an art it takes a lifetime to learn.

Isn't that a return to the Greeks, though? And "subjectification," isn't it an equivocal word that does *actually reintroduce a subject?*

No, there's definitely no return to the Greeks. Foucault hated returning anywhere. He only ever talked about what he himself was living through; and mastering oneself, or rather the production of self, speaks for itself in Foucault. What he says is that the Greeks "invented" subjectification, and did so because their social system, the rivalry between free men, made this possible (in games, oratory, love . . . and so on). But processes of subjectification are extraordinarily varied: Christian ways are altogether different from the Greek way, and not just after the Reformation, but from primitive Christianity onward, the production of individual or collective subjectivity takes all sorts of paths. We should remember the passages in Renan about the Christians' new aesthetics of existence: an aesthetic way of existing to which Nero, in his own way, contributes, and which goes on to find its highest expression in Francis of Assisi. A confrontation with death, with madness. The key thing, for Foucault, is that subjectification isn't to do with morality, with any moral code: it's ethical and aesthetic, as opposed to morality, which partakes of knowledge and power. So there's a Christian morality but also a Christian ethics/aesthetics, and all sorts of conflicts and compromises between the two. We might say the same these days: what is our ethics, how do we produce an artistic existence, what are our processes of subjectification, irreducible to our moral codes? Where and how are new subjectivities being produced? What can we look for in present-day communities? Foucault may well go right back to the Greeks, but what interests him in *The Use of Pleasure*, as in his other books, is what's happening, what we are and what we're doing, today: whether recent or distant, a historical formation is analyzed only as it differs from us, and in order to trace out that difference.

How can anyone see a contradiction between the theme of "the death of man" and that of artistic subjectifications? Or between rejecting morality and discovering ethics? The problem changes, and something new is created. The simple fact that subjectivity is produced, that it's a "way," should be enough to convince one the word should be treated very carefully. Foucault says "an art of oneself that's the exact opposite of oneself . . . " If there's a subject, it's a subject without any identity. Subjectification as a process is personal or collective individuation, individuation one by one or group by group. Now, there are many types of individuation. There are subject-type individuations ("that's you . . . ," "that's me . . . "), but there are also event-type individuations where there's no subject: a wind, an atmosphere, a time of day, a battle . . . One can't assume that a life, or a work of art, is individuated as a subject; quite the reverse. Take Foucault himself: you weren't aware of him as a person exactly. Even in trivial situations, say when he came into a room, it was more like a changed atmosphere, a sort of event, an electric or magnetic field or something. That didn't in the least rule out warmth or make you feel uncomfortable, but it wasn't like a person. It was a set of intensities. It sometimes annoyed him to be like that, or to have that effect. But at the same time all his work fed upon it. The visible is for him shimmerings, scintillations, flashes, lighting effects. Language is a huge "there is,"[8] in the third person—as opposed to any particular person, that's to say—an intensive language, which constitutes his style. In the conversation with Schroeter, once again, he develops an opposition between "love" and "passion," and presents himself as a creature of passion rather than love. It's an extraordinary text; since it's only an informal conversation, Foucault doesn't try to provide any philosophical basis for the distinction. He talks about it on an immediate, vital level. The distinction is nothing to do with constancy or inconstancy. Nor is it one between homosexuality and heterosexuality, though that's discussed in the text. It's a distinction between two kinds of individuation: one, love, through persons, and the other through intensity, as though passion dissolved persons not into something undifferentiated but into a field of various persisting and mutually interdependent intensities ("a constantly shifting state, but not tending toward any given point, with strong phases and weak phases, phases when it becomes incandescent and everything wavers for an unstable moment we cling to for obscure reasons, perhaps through inertia; it seeks, ultimately, to persist and to disappear . . . being oneself no longer makes any sense . . ."). Love's a state of, and a relation between, persons, subjects. But passion is a subpersonal event that may last as long as a lifetime ("I've been living for eighteen years in a state of passion about someone, for someone"), a field of intensities that individuates independently of any subject. Tristan and Isolde, that may be love. But someone, referring to this Foucault text, said to me: Catherine and Heathcliff, in *Wuthering Heights*, is passion, pure passion, not love. A fearsome kinship of souls, in fact, something not altogether human (who is he? A wolf . . .). It's very difficult to express, to convey—a new distinction between affective states. Here we come up against the unfinished character of Foucault's work. He might perhaps have given this distinction a philosophical range as wide as life. It should teach us, at least, to be very careful about what he calls a "mode of subjectification." For such modes involve subjectless individuations. That may be their main feature. And perhaps passion, the state of passion, is actually what folding the line outside, making it endurable, knowing how to breathe, is about. All those who are so saddened by Foucault's death may perhaps rejoice in the way that such a monumental body of work breaks off with an appeal to passion.

In Foucault as in Nietzsche we find a critique of truth. In each of them there's a world of captures, clutchings, struggles. But everything in Foucault seems colder, more metallic, like the great descriptive clinical tableaux . . .

Foucault does draw on Nietzsche. To take one specific instance: Nietzsche prided himself on being the first to produce a psychology of priests and to analyze the nature of their power (priests treat the community as a "flock," which they control by infecting it with *ressentiment* and guilty conscience). Foucault rediscovers the theme of "pastoral" power, but his analysis takes a different direction: he defines this power as "individuative," that is, as an attempt to take over the mechanisms individuating members of the flock. In *Discipline and Punish* he'd shown how in the eighteenth century political power became individuative through "disciplines"; but he eventually discovered pastoral power at the root of that tendency. You're right, the fundamental link between Foucault and Nietzsche is a criticism of truth, framed by asking what "will" to truth is implied by a "true" discourse, a will the discourse can only conceal. Truth, in other words, doesn't imply some method for discovering it but procedures, proceedings, and processes for willing it. We always get the truths we deserve, depending on the procedures of knowledge (linguistic procedures in particular), the proceedings of power, and the processes of subjectification or individuation available to us. So to get at the will to truth directly, we have to consider untrue discourses, which become confused with the procedures that produce them, like those of Roussel or Brisset: their untruth can also be seen as truth in the wild state.

Foucault and Nietzsche have three main things in common. The first is their conception of force. Power in Foucault, like power[9] in Nietzsche, isn't just violence, isn't just the relation of a force to a being or an object, but corresponds to the relation of a force to the other forces it affects, or even to forces that affect it (inciting, exciting, inducing, seducing, and so on, are affects). Secondly, there's the relation between forces and form: any form is a combination of forces. This already comes out in Foucault's great descriptive tableaux. But more particularly in all the stuff about the death of man and the way it relates to Nietzsche's superman. The point is that human forces aren't on their own enough to establish a dominant form in which man can install himself. Human forces (having an understanding, a will, an imagination, and so on) have to combine with other forces: an overall form arises from this combination, but everything depends on the nature of the other forces with which the human forces become linked. So the resulting form won't necessarily be a human form, it might be an animal form of which man is only an avatar, a divine form he mirrors, the form of a single God of which man is just a limitation (thus, in the seventeenth century, human understanding appears as the limitation of an infinite understanding). A Man-form, then, appears only in very special and precarious conditions: that's what Foucault analyses in *The Order of Things* as the nineteenth century's project, in terms of the new forces with which man was then combining. Now, everyone says man's coming into relation these days with still other forces (the cosmos in space, the particles in matter, the silicon in machines . . .): a new form is coming out of this, and it's already ceased to be human . . . Nothing excites so many stupid reactions as this simple, precise, and grand theme in Nietzsche and Foucault. The third common point, finally, has to do with processes of subjectification: once again, this is nothing to do with constituting a subject, it's about creating ways of existing, what Nietzsche called inventing new possibilities of life, already seeing its origin in the Greeks. Nietzsche saw this as the highest dimension of the will to power, artistic will. Foucault would eventually characterize this dimension by the way force impinges on or inflects itself, and would himself take up the history of the Greeks and Christians, orienting it along these lines. The key thing, as Nietzsche said, is that thinkers are always, so to speak, shooting arrows into the air, and other thinkers pick them up and shoot them in another direction. That's what happens with Foucault. Whatever he takes up he thoroughly transforms. He's always creating. You say he's more metallic than Nietzsche. Maybe he even changed what the arrow was made of. You have to compare them in musical terms, in terms of their respective instruments (procedures, proceedings, and processes): Nietzsche went through a Wagnerian phase but came out of it. Foucault went through Webern, but he's perhaps closest to Varèse, yes, metallic and strident, calling for the instruments of our "actuality."

Conversation with Claire Parnet, 1986

part four • PHILOSOPHY

MEDIATORS

If things aren't going too well in contemporary thought, it's because there's a return under the name of "modernism" to abstractions, back to the problem of origins, all that sort of thing . . . Any analysis in terms of movements, vectors, is blocked. We're in a very weak phase, a period of reaction. Yet philosophy thought it had done with the problem of origins. It was no longer a question of starting or finishing. The question was rather, what happens "in between"? And the same applies to physical movements.

The kind of movements you find in sports and habits are changing. We got by for a long time with an energetic conception of motion, where there's a point of contact, or we are the source of movement. Running, putting the shot, and so on: effort, resistance, with a starting point, a lever. But nowadays we see movement defined less and less in relation to a point of leverage. All the new sports—surfing, windsurfing, hang-gliding—take the form of entering into an existing wave. There's no longer an origin as starting point, but a sort of putting-into-orbit. The key thing is how to get taken up in the motion of a big wave, a column of rising air, to "get into something" instead of being the origin of an effort.

And yet in philosophy we're coming back to eternal values, to the idea of the intellectual as custodian of eternal values. We're back to Benda complaining that Bergson was a traitor to his own class, the clerical class, in trying to think motion. These days it's the rights of man that provide our eternal values. It's the constitutional state[1] and other notions everyone recognizes as very abstract. And it's in the name of all this that thinking's fettered, that any analysis in terms of movements is blocked. But if we're so oppressed, it's because our movement's being restricted, not because our eternal values are being violated. In barren times philosophy retreats to reflecting "on" things. If it's not itself creating anything, what can it do but reflect on something? So it reflects on eternal or historical things, but can itself no longer make any move.

Philosophers Aren't Reflective, but Creative

What we should in fact do, is stop allowing philosophers to reflect "on" things. The philosopher creates, he doesn't reflect.

I'm criticized for going back to Bergson's analyses. Actually, to distinguish as Bergson did between perception, affection, and action as three kinds of motion is a very novel approach. It remains novel because I don't think it's ever been quite absorbed; it's one of the most difficult, and finest, bits of Bergson's thought. But this analysis applies automatically to cinema: cinema was invented while Bergson's thought was taking shape. Motion was brought into concepts at precisely the same time it was brought into images. Bergson presents one of the first cases of self-moving thought. Because it's not enough simply to say concepts possess movement; you also have to construct intellectually mobile concepts. Just as it's not enough to make moving shadows on the wall, you have to construct images that can move by themselves.

In my first book on cinema I considered the cinematic image as this image that becomes self-moving. In the second book I consider the cinematic image as it takes on its own temporality. So I'm in no sense taking cinema as something to reflect upon, I'm rather taking a field in which what interests me actually takes place: What are the conditions for self-movement or auto-temporality in images, and how have these two factors evolved since the end of the nineteenth century? For once there's a cinema based on time rather than motion, the image obviously has a different nature than it had in its initial period. And cinema alone can provide the laboratory in which to explore this, precisely because in cinema, motion and time become constituents of the image itself.

The first phase of cinema, then, is the self-moving image. This happened to take the form of a cinema of narration. But it didn't have to. There's a paper by Noël Burch that makes the basic point that narration was not part of cinema from the outset. What led movement-images—that is, the self-moving image—to produce narration, was the sensory-motor schema. Cinema is not by its very nature narrative: it becomes narrative when it takes as its object the sensory-motor schema. That's to say, someone on the screen perceives, feels, reacts. It takes some believing: the hero, in a given situation, reacts; the hero always knows how to react. And it implies a particular conception of cinema. Why did it become American, Hollywoodian? For the simple reason that the schema was American property. This all came to an end with the Second World War. Suddenly people no longer really believed it was possible to react to situations. The postwar situation was beyond them. So we get Italian neorealism presenting people placed in situations that cannot advance through reactions, through actions. No possible reactions—does that mean everything becomes lifeless? No, not at all. We get purely optical and aural situations, which give rise to completely novel ways of understanding and resisting. We get neorealism, the New Wave, an American cinema breaking with Hollywood.

There's still movement in images, of course, but with the appearance of purely optical and aural situations, yielding time-images, that's no longer what matters, it's only an index of something else. Time-images are nothing to do with before and after, with succession. Succession was there from the start as the law of narration. Time-images are not things happening in time, but new forms of coexistence, ordering, transformation . . .

The "Baker's Transformation"

What I'm interested in are the relations between the arts, science, and philosophy. There's no order of priority among these disciplines. Each is creative. The true object of science is to create functions, the true object of art is to create sensory aggregates, and the object of philosophy is to create concepts. From this viewpoint, given these general heads, however sketchy, of function, aggregate, and concept, we can pose the question of echoes and resonances between them. How is it possible—in their completely different lines of development, with quite different rhythms and movements of production—how is it possible for a concept, an aggregate, and a function to interact?

An initial example: in mathematics there's a kind of space called Riemannian. Mathematically very well defined, in terms of functions, this sort of space involves setting up little neighboring portions that can be joined up in an infinite number of ways, and it made possible, among other things, the theory of relativity. Now, if I take modern cinema, I see that after the war a new kind of space based on neighborhoods appears, the connections between one little portion and another being made in an infinite number of possible ways and not being predetermined. A sort of disconnected space. If I say the cinematic space is Riemannian, it seems facile, and yet in a way it's quite true. I'm not saying that cinema's doing what Riemann did. But if one takes a space defined simply as neighborhoods joined up in an infinite number of possible ways, with visual and aural neighborhoods joined in a tactile way, then it's Bresson's space. Bresson isn't Riemann, of course, but what he does in cinema is the same as what happened in mathematics, and echoes it.

Another example: in physics there's something that interests me a lot, which has been analysed by Prigogine and Stengers, called the "baker's transformation." You take a square, pull it out into a rectangle, cut the rectangle in half, stick one bit back on top of the other, and go on repeatedly altering the square by pulling it out into a rectangle again, as though you were kneading it. After a certain number of transformations any two points, however close they may have been in the original square, are bound to end up in two different halves. This leads to a whole theory, to which Prigogine attaches great importance in relation to his probabilistic physics.

On, now, to Resnais. In his film *Je t'aime, je t'aime* we see a hero taken back to one moment in his life, and the moment is then set in a series of different contexts. Like layers that are constantly shifted around, altered, rearranged so that what is close in one layer becomes very distant in another. It's a very striking conception of time, very intriguing cinematically, and it echoes the "baker's transformation." So I don't feel it's outrageous to say that Resnais comes close to Prigogine, or that Godard, for different reasons, comes close to Thom. I'm not saying that Resnais and Prigogine, or Godard and Thom, are doing the same thing. I'm pointing out, rather, that there are remarkable similarities between scientific creators of functions and cinematic creators of images. And the same goes for philosophical concepts, since there are also concepts of these spaces.

Thus philosophy, art, and science come into relations of mutual resonance and exchange, but always for internal reasons. The way they impinge on one another depends on their own evolution. So in this sense we really have to see philosophy, art, and science as sorts of separate melodic lines in constant interplay with one another. With philosophy having in this no reflective pseudoprimacy nor, equally, any creative inferiority. Creating concepts is no less difficult than creating new visual or aural combinations, or creating scientific functions. What we have to recognize is that the interplay between the different lines isn't a matter of one monitoring or reflecting another. A discipline that set out to follow a creative movement coming from outside would itself relinquish any creative role. You'll get nowhere by latching onto some parallel movement, you have to make a move yourself. If nobody makes a move, nobody gets anywhere. Nor is interplay an exchange: it all turns on giving or taking.

Mediators are fundamental. Creation's all about mediators. Without them nothing happens. They can be people—for a philosopher, artists or scientists; for a scientist, philosophers or artists—but things too, even plants or animals, as in Castaneda. Whether they're real or imaginary, animate or inanimate, you have to form your mediators. It's a series. If you're not in some series, even a completely imaginary one, you're lost. I need my mediators to express myself, and they'd never express themselves without me: you're always working in a group, even when you seem to be on your own. And still more when it's apparent: Félix Guattari and I are one another's mediators.

The formation of mediators in a community is well seen in the work of the Canadian filmmaker Pierre Perrault: having found mediators I can say what I have to say. Perrault thinks that if he speaks on his own, even in a fictional framework, he's bound to come out with an intellectual's discourse, he won't get away from a "master's or colonist's discourse," an established discourse. What we have to do is catch someone else "telling tales," "caught in the act of telling tales." Then a minority discourse, with one or many speakers, takes shape. We here come upon what Bergson calls "fabulation" . . . To catch someone in the act of telling tales is to catch the movement of constitution of a people. A people isn't something already there. A people, in a way, is what's missing, as Paul Klee used to say. Was there ever a Palestinian people? Israel says no. Of course there was, but that's not the point. The thing is, that once the Palestinians have been thrown out of their territory, then to the extent that they resist they enter the process of constituting a people. It corresponds exactly to what Perrault calls being caught in the act of telling tales. It's how any people is constituted. So, to the established fictions that are always rooted in a colonist's discourse, we oppose a minority discourse, with mediators.

This idea that truth isn't something already out there we have to discover, but has to created in every domain, is obvious in the sciences, for instance. Even in physics, there's no truth that doesn't presuppose a system of symbols, be they only coordinates. There's no truth that doesn't "falsify" established ideas. To say that "truth is created" implies that the production of truth involves a series of operations that amount to working on a material—strictly speaking, a series of falsifications. When I work with Guattari each of us falsifies the other, which is to say that each of us understands in his own way notions put forward by the other. A reflective series with two terms takes shape. And there can be series with several terms, or complicated branching series. These capacities of falsity to produce truth, that's what mediators are about . . .

The Left Needs Mediators

A political digression. Many people expected a new kind of discourse from a socialist government. A discourse very close to real movements, and so capable of reconciling those movements, by establishing arrangements compatible with them. Take New Caledonia, for example.[2] When Pisani said, "Whatever happens, there'll be independence," that in itself was a new kind of discourse. It meant: instead of pretending to be unaware of the real movements in order to negotiate about them, we're going to recognize the outcome right away, and negotiations will take place in the light of this outcome set in advance. We'll negotiate ways and means, the speed of change. So there were complaints from the Right who thought, in line with the old way of doing things, that there should above all be no talk of independence, even if we knew it was unavoidable, because it had to be made to depend on very hard bargaining. I don't think that people on the Right are deluded, they're no more stupid than anyone else, but their method is to oppose movement. It's the same as the opposition to Bergson in philosophy, it's all the same thing. Embracing movement, or blocking it: politically, two completely different methods of negotiation. For the Left, this means a new way of talking. It's not so much a matter of winning arguments as of being open about things. Being open is setting out the "facts," not only of a situation but of a problem. Making visible things that would otherwise remain hidden. On the Caledonian problem we're told that from a certain point onward the territory was regarded as a settler colony, so the Kanaks became a minority in their own territory. When did this start? How did it develop? Who was responsible? The Right refuses these questions. If they're valid questions, then by establishing the facts we state a problem that the Right wants to hide. Because once the problem has been set out, we can no longer get away from it, and the Right itself has to talk in a different way. So the job of the Left, whether in or out of power, is to uncover the sort of problem that the Right wants at all costs to hide.

It seems, I'm afraid, that one may speak in this connection of a real inability to get at the facts. The Left can certainly be excused a great deal by the fact that, as a body, civil servants and those in charge have in France always been on the Right. So that even in good faith, even playing by the rules, they can't change the way they think or behave.

The socialists didn't have people who would provide, let alone assemble information for them, who would set out problems their way. They should have established parallel, supplementary channels. They should have had intellectuals as mediators. But all that happened along these lines were vague friendly contacts. We weren't given basic information about things. To take three very different examples: land ownership in New Caledonia may be recorded in specialist journals, but it wasn't divulged to the general public. On the question of education, we're led to believe that the private sector is Catholic education; I've never been able to find out what proportion of private education is secular. Another example: since the Right took back a large number of town halls, funding for all sorts of cultural activities has been cut off—some prominent, but some very small and local—and it's the numerous small ones that are particularly interesting; but there's no way of getting a detailed list. The Right doesn't face this kind of problem because they've got direct mediators already in place, working directly for them. But the Left needs indirect or free mediators, a different style, if only the Left makes it possible. The Left really needs what, thanks to the Communist Party, has been debased under the ridiculous name of "fellow-travelers," because it really needs people to think.

The Conspiracy of Imitators

How can we define the crisis in contemporary literature? The system of bestsellers is a system of rapid turnover. Many bookshops are already becoming like the record shops that only stock things that make it into the charts. This is what *Apostrophes* is all about.[3] Fast turnover necessarily means selling people what they expect: even what's "daring," "scandalous," strange, and so on falls into the market's predictable forms. The conditions for literary creation, which emerge only unpredictably, with a slow turnover and progressive recognition, are fragile. Future Becketts or Kafkas, who will of course be unlike Beckett or Kafka, may well not find a publisher, and if they don't nobody (of course) will notice. As Lindon says,[4] "You don't notice when people *don't* make it." The USSR lost its literature without anyone noticing, for example. We may congratulate ourselves on the quantitative increase in books, and larger print runs—but young writers will end up molded in a literary space that leaves them no possibility of creating anything. We'll be faced with the monstrosity of a standard novel, imitations of Balzac, Stendhal, Céline, Beckett, or Duras, it hardly matters which. Or rather, Balzac himself is inimitable, Céline's inimitable: they're new syntaxes, the "unexpected." What gets imitated is always itself a copy. Imitators imitate one another, and that's how they proliferate and give the impression that they're improving on their model, because they know how it's done, they know the answers.

It's awful, what they do on *Apostrophes.*[3] Technically, the program's very well done, the way it's put together, the shots. And yet it's the zero-state of literary criticism, literature as light entertainment. Pivot's never hidden the fact that what he really likes is football and food. Literature becomes a game show. The real problem with TV programs is their invasion by games. It's rather worrying that there's an enthusiastic audience that thinks it's watching some cultural activity when it sees two men competing to make a word with nine letters. There are strange things going on, summed up by the filmmaker Rossellini. Listen carefully: "The world today is too pointlessly cruel. Cruelty is crushing someone else's personality, reducing someone to the state where they'll make a total confession of anything. If there was some point in getting the confession, I could accept it, but if it's all done by a voyeur, someone sick, then we have to call it cruelty. I strongly believe that cruelty is always an expression of infantilism. All art these days is becoming daily more infantile. Everyone has the crazy desire to become as childish as possible. Not naive, but childish . . . Art these days is either plaintive or cruel. There's nothing else around, either you complain or you commit some absolutely pointless act of petty cruelty. Look, for example, at all this speculation (for that's what we have to call it) on incommunicability, alienation—I see in it no sentiment whatever, just gross indulgence. And that, as I said, has made me give up cinema." And it's an even better reason for giving up interviews. Cruelty and infantilism test the strength even of those who indulge them, and they force themselves even on those who try to evade them.

The Couple Overfloweth

We sometimes go on as though people can't express themselves. In fact they're always expressing themselves. The sorriest couples are those where the woman can't be preoccupied or tired without the man saying "What's wrong? Say something . . . ," or the man, without the woman saying . . . , and so on. Radio and television have spread this spirit everywhere, and we're riddled with pointless talk, insane quantities of words and images. Stupidity's never blind or mute. So it's not a problem of getting people to express themselves but of providing little gaps of solitude and silence in which they might eventually find something to say. Repressive forces don't stop people expressing themselves but rather force them to express themselves. What a relief to have nothing to say, the right to say nothing, because only then is there a chance of framing the rare, and ever rarer, thing that might be worth saying. What we're plagued by these days isn't any blocking of communication, but pointless statements. But what we call the meaning of a statement is its point. That's the only definition of meaning, and it comes to the same thing as a statement's novelty. You can listen to people for hours, but what's the point? . . . That's why arguments are such a strain, why there's never any point arguing. You can't just tell someone what they're saying is pointless. So you tell them it's wrong. But what someone says is never wrong, the problem isn't that some things are wrong, but that they're stupid or irrelevant. That they've already been said a thousand times. The notions of relevance, necessity, the point of something, are a thousand times more significant than the notion of truth. Not as substitutes for truth, but as the measure of the truth of what I'm saying. It's the same in mathematics: Poincaré used to say that many mathematical theories are completely irrelevant, pointless. He didn't say they were wrong—that wouldn't have been so bad.

Oedipus in the Colonies

Maybe journalists are partly responsible for this crisis in literature. Journalists have of course always written books. But they used, when writing books, to adopt a form different from newspaper journalism, they became writers. The situation has changed, because journalists have become convinced that the book form is theirs by right and that it takes no special effort to use this form. In one fell swoop and en masse, journalists have taken over literature. And the result is one variant of the standard novel, a sort of *Oedipus in the Colonies*,[5] a reporter's travels, arranged around his pursuit of women, or the search for a father. The situation affects all writers: any writer has to make himself and his work journalistic. In the extreme case everything takes place between a journalist author and a journalist critic, the book being only a link between them and hardly needing to exist. Because books become accounts of activities, experiences, purposes, and ends that unfold elsewhere. They become nothing but a record. So everyone seems, and seems to themselves, to have a book in them, simply by virtue of having a particular job, or a family even, a sick parent, a rude boss. A novel for everyone in the family, or the business . . . It's forgotten that for anyone, literature involves a special sort of exploration and effort, a specific creative purpose that can be pursued only within literature itself, whose job is in no way to register the immediate results of very different activities and purposes. Books become "secondary" when marketing takes over.

If Literature Dies, It Will Be Murder

People who haven't properly read or understood McLuhan may think it's only natural for audiovisual media to replace books, since they actually contain all the creative possibilities of the literature or other modes of expression they supersede. It's not true. For if audiovisual media ever replace literature, it won't be as competing means of expression, but as a monopoly of structures that also stifle the creative possibilities in those media themselves. If literature dies, it will be a violent death, a political assassination (as in the USSR, even if nobody notices). It's not a matter of comparing different sorts of medium. The choice isn't between written literature and audiovisual media. It's between creative forces (in audiovisual media as well as literature) and domesticating forces. It's highly unlikely that audiovisual media will find the conditions for creation once they've been lost in literature. Different modes of expression may have different creative possibilities, but they're all related insofar as they must counter the introduction of a cultural space of markets and conformity—that is, a space of "producing for the market"—together.

The Proletariat in Tennis

Style is a literary notion: a syntax. And yet one speaks of style in the sciences, where there's no syntax. One speaks of style in sport. Very detailed studies have been done on style in sport, but I'm no expert on this; I think perhaps they show that style amounts to innovation. Sports do of course have their quantitative scale of records that depend on improvements in equipment, shoes, vaulting-poles . . . But there are also qualitative transformations, ideas, which are to do with style: how we went from the scissors jump to the belly roll and the Fosbury flop; how hurdles stopped being obstacles, coming to correspond simply to a longer stride. Why not start here, why do we have to go through a whole history of quantitative advances? Each new style amounts not so much to a new "trick" as to a linked sequence of postures—the equivalent, that is, of a syntax, based on an earlier style but breaking with it. Technical advances play their part only by being taken up and incorporated in a new style. That's why sport's "inventors" are so important; they're qualitative mediators. In tennis for instance: when did the kind of return of serve where the returning ball lands at your opponent's feet as he runs to the net first appear? I think it was a great Australian player, Bromwich, before the war, but I'm not sure. Borg obviously invented a new style that opened up tennis to a sort of proletariat. There are inventors in tennis, just as elsewhere: McEnroe's an inventor, that is, a stylist—he's brought into tennis Egyptian postures (in his serve) and Dostoyevskian reflexes ("if you insist on banging your head on the wall all the time, life becomes impossible"). And you then get imitators who can beat the inventors at their own game: they're sport's bestsellers. Borg produced a race of obscure proletarians, and McEnroe gets beaten by a quantitative champion. You could say the copiers get their results by capitalizing on moves made by others and that sporting bodies show remarkable ingratitude toward the inventors who allow them to survive and prosper. Never mind: the history of sport runs through these inventors, each of whom amounts to something unforeseen, a new syntax, a transformation, and without them the purely technological advances would have remained quantitative, irrelevant, and pointless.

AIDS and Global Strategy

One very important problem in medicine is the evolution of diseases. Of course you get new external factors, new forms of microbe or virus, new social conditions. But you have to look at symptomatology, the grouping of symptoms, too: over a very short timescale symptoms stop being grouped the same way, and diseases are isolated that were previously split into various different aspects. Parkinson's disease, Roger's disease, and others present major changes in the grouping of symptoms (one might speak of a syntax of medicine). The history of medicine's made up of these groupings, these isolations, these regroupings that, here again, become possible with technological advances, but aren't determined by those advances. What's happened since the war in this context? The discovery of "stress" illnesses, in which the disorder's no longer produced by a hostile agent but by nonspecific defensive reactions that get out of hand, or exhausted. Medical journals after the war were full of discussions of stress in modern societies, and new ways of grouping various illnesses in relation to it. More recently there was the discovery of autoimmune diseases, diseases of the self: defense mechanisms no longer recognizing the cells of the organism they're supposed to protect, or external agents making these cells impossible to distinguish from others. AIDS comes somewhere between these two poles of stress and autoimmunity. Perhaps we're heading toward diseases without doctors and patients, as Dagognet says in his analysis of contemporary medicine: diseases with images rather than symptoms, and carriers rather than sufferers. That's a problem for the welfare system, but it's worrying in other ways too. It's striking how this new style of disease resembles global politics or strategy. They tell us the risk of war comes not only from specific external potential aggressors but from our defensive reactions going out of control or breaking down (which is why we need a properly controlled atomic weapons system . . .). Contemporary diseases fit the same pattern—or nuclear policy corresponds to our diseases. Homosexuals are in danger of playing the part of some biological aggressor, just as minorities or refugees will fill the role of an enemy. It's one more reason to insist on a socialist government that rejects this twin image of disease and society.

We have to see creation as tracing a path between impossibilities . . . Kafka explained how it was impossible for a Jewish writer to speak in German, impossible for him to speak in Czech, and impossible not to speak. Pierre Perrault comes up against the same problem: the impossibility of not speaking, of speaking in English, of speaking in French. Creation takes place in bottlenecks. Even in some particular language, even in French for example, a new syntax is a foreign language within the language. A creator who isn't grabbed around the throat by a set of impossibilities is no creator. A creator's someone who creates their own impossibilities, and thereby creates possibilities. As with McEnroe, it's by banging your head on the wall that you find a way through. You have to work on the wall, because without a set of impossibilities, you won't have the line of flight, the exit that is creation, the power of falsity that is truth. Your writing has to be liquid or gaseous simply because normal perception and opinion are solid, geometric. It's what Bergson did in philosophy, what Virginia Woolf or Henry James did with the novel, what Renoir did in cinema (and what experimental cinema, which has gone a long way exploring the states of matter, does). Not becoming unearthly. But becoming all the more earthly by inventing laws of liquids and gases on which the earth depends. So style requires a lot of silence and work to make a whirlpool at some point, then flies out like the matches children follow along the water in a gutter. Because you don't get a style just by putting words together, combining phrases, using ideas. You have to open up words, break things open, to free earth's vectors. All writers, all creators, are shadows. How can anyone write a biography of Proust or Kafka? Once you start writing, shadows are more substantial than bodies. Truth is producing existence. It's not something in your head but something existing. Writers generate real bodies. In Pessoa they're imaginary people—but not so very imaginary, because he gives them each a way of writing, operating. But the key thing is that it's not Pessoa who's doing what they're doing. You don't get very far in literature with the system "I've seen a lot and been lots of places," where the author first does things and then tells us about them. Narcissism in authors is awful, because shadows can't be narcissistic. No more interviews, then. What's really terrible isn't having to cross a desert once you're old and patient enough, but for young writers to be born in a desert, because they're then in danger of seeing their efforts come to nothing before they even get going. And yet, and yet, it's impossible for the new race of writers, already preparing their work and their styles, not to be born.

Conversation with Antoine Dulaure and Claire Parnet
L'Autre Journal 8 (October 1985)

On Philosophy

You're publishing a new book, The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque. *Can you retrace the path that, setting out from your study of Hume (*Empiricism and Subjectivity, *1953), brings you now to Leibniz? Taking your books chronologically, one might say that after an initial phase devoted to work on the history of philosophy, culminating perhaps in the* Nietzsche *of 1962, you worked out in* Difference and Repetition *(1969) and then in the two volumes of* Capitalism and Schizophrenia *(1972–1980), written with Félix Guattari, your own philosophy, whose style is anything but academic. You now, having written on painting (*Bacon, *1981) and* Cinema *[1983–1985], seem to be returning to a more traditional approach to philosophy. Do you recognize yourself in such a progression? Should we take your work as a whole, as unitary? Or do you see in it, rather, breaks, transformations?*

Three periods, not bad going. Yes, I did begin with books on the history of philosophy, but all the authors I dealt with had for me something in common. And it all tended toward the great Spinoza-Nietzsche equation.

The history of philosophy isn't a particularly reflective discipline. It's rather like portraiture in painting. Producing mental, conceptual portraits. As in painting, you have to create a likeness, but in a different material: the likeness is something you have to produce, rather than a way of reproducing anything (which comes down to just repeating what a philosopher says). Philosophers introduce new concepts, they explain them, but they don't tell us, not completely anyway, the problems to which those concepts are a response. Hume, for example, sets out a novel concept of belief, but he doesn't tell us how and why the problem of knowledge presents itself in such a way that knowledge is seen as a particular kind of belief. The history of philosophy, rather than repeating what a philosopher says, has to say what he must have taken for granted, what he didn't say but is nonetheless present in what he did say.

Philosophy is always a matter of inventing concepts. I've never been worried about going beyond metaphysics or any death of philosophy. The function of philosophy, still thoroughly relevant, is to create concepts. Nobody else can take over that function. Philosophy has of course always had its rivals, from Plato's "rivals" through to Zarathustra's clown. These days, information technology, communications, and advertising are taking over the words "concept" and "creative," and these "conceptualists" constitute an arrogant breed that reveals the activity of selling to be capitalism's supreme thought, the *cogito* of the marketplace. Philosophy feels small and lonely confronting such forces, but the only way it's going to die is by choking with laughter.

Philosophy's no more communicative than it's contemplative or reflective: it is by nature creative or even revolutionary, because it's always creating new concepts. The only constraint is that these should have a necessity, as well as an unfamiliarity, and they have both to the extent they're a response to real problems. Concepts are what stops thought being a mere opinion, a view, an exchange of views, gossip. Any concept is bound to be a paradox. A philosophy is what Félix Guattari and I tried to produce in *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, especially in *A Thousand Plateaus*, which is a long book putting forward many concepts. We weren't collaborating, we just did one book and then we did another, each "a" book not in the sense of a unity, but of an indefinite article. We each had a past and earlier work behind us: his was in psychiatry, politics, and philosophy, already crammed with concepts, and mine was *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*. But we didn't collaborate like two different people. We were more like two streams coming together to make "a" third stream, which I suppose was us. One of the questions about "philosophy," after all, has always been what to make of the *philos*. *A* philosophy amounted for me, then, to a sort of second period that would never have begun or got anywhere without Félix.

Then let's suppose there's a third period when I worked on painting and cinema: images, on the face of it. But I was writing philosophy books. You see, I think concepts involve two other dimensions, percepts and affects. That's what interests me, not images. Percepts aren't perceptions, they're packets of sensations and relations that live on independently of whoever experiences them. Affects aren't feelings, they're becomings that spill over beyond whoever lives through them (thereby becoming someone else). The great English and American novelists often write in percepts, and Kleist and Kafka in affects. Affects, percepts, and concepts are three inseparable forces, running from art into philosophy and from philosophy into art. The trickiest case, obviously, is music; an analysis is sketched out in *A Thousand Plateaus*: the ritornello[1] involves all three forces. We tried to make the ritornello one of our main concepts, relating it to territory and Earth, the little and the great ritornello. Ultimately all these periods lead into one another and get mixed up, as I now see better with this book on Leibniz or the Fold. It would be better to talk about what I want to do next.

We've got plenty of time. Can't we first talk about your life? Isn't there some relation between bibliography and biography?

Academics' lives are seldom interesting. They travel of course, but they travel by hot air, by taking part in things like conferences and discussions, by talking, endlessly talking. Intellectuals are wonderfully cultivated, they have views on everything. I'm not an intellectual, because I can't supply views like that, I've got no stock of views to draw on. What I know, I know only from something I'm actually working on, and if I come back to something a few years later, I have to learn everything all over again. It's really good not having any view or idea about this or that point. We don't suffer these days from any lack of communication, but rather from all the forces making us say things when we've nothing much to say. Traveling is going somewhere else to say something and coming back to say something here. Unless one doesn't come back, and settles down in the other place. So I'm not very keen on traveling; you shouldn't move around too much, or you'll stifle becomings. I was struck by a sentence of Toynbee's: "The nomads are the ones who don't move on, they become nomads because they refuse to disappear."

If you want to apply bio-bibliographical criteria to me, I confess I wrote my first book fairly early on, and then produced nothing more for eight years. I know what I was doing, where and how I lived during those years, but I know it only abstractly, rather as if someone else was relating memories that I believe but don't really have. It's like a hole in my life, an eight-year hole. That's what I find interesting in people's lives, the holes, the gaps, sometimes dramatic, but sometimes not dramatic at all. There are catalepsies, or a kind of sleepwalking through a number of years, in most lives. Maybe it's in these holes that movement takes place. Because the real question is how to make a move, how to get through the wall, so you don't keep on banging your head against it. Maybe by not moving around too much, not talking too much, avoiding false moves, staying in places devoid of memory. There's a fine short story by Fitzgerald, in which someone's walking around a town with a ten-year hole. There's the opposite too: not holes, but an excess of memory, extraneous floating memories you can no longer place or identify (that did happen, but when?). You don't know what do with that kind of memory, it gets in your way. Was I seven, fourteen, forty? Those are the two interesting things in someone's life, amnesias and hypermnesias.

This criticism of talking is one you direct against television in particular. You've expressed your feelings about this in the preface you wrote for Serge Daney's book, Ciné-Journal. *But how do philosophers communicate, how should they communicate? Philosophers since Plato have written books, expressed themselves in books. They still do, but these days one sees a difference emerging between two sorts of people we call, or who call themselves, philosophers: there are the ones that teach, who go on teaching, have chairs in universities, and think that's important. And there are the ones that don't teach, perhaps even refuse to teach, but try to make their mark in the media: the "new philosophers." We have to put you, it seems, in the first category—you've even produced a "tract" against the "new philosophers." What does giving courses mean to you? What's so special about it?*

Giving courses has been a major part of my life, in which I've been passionately involved. It's not like giving individual lectures, because courses have to be carried on over a long period with a relatively fixed audience, sometimes for a number of years. It's like a research laboratory: you give courses on what you're investigating, not on what you know. It takes a lot of preparatory work to get a few minutes of inspiration. I was ready to stop when I saw it was taking more and more preparation to get a more taxing inspiration. And the future's bleak because it's becoming more and more difficult to do research in French universities.

A course is a kind of *Sprechgesang*, closer to music than to theater. Indeed there's nothing in principle to stop courses being a bit like a rock concert. It must be said that Vincennes (and it was the same after we'd been forcibly transferred to Saint-Denis) provided exceptional conditions. In philosophy, we rejected the principle of "building up knowledge" progressively: there were the same courses for first-year and nth-year students, for students and nonstudents, philosophers and nonphilosophers, young and old, and many different nationalities. There were always young painters and musicians there, filmmakers, architects, who showed great rigor in their thinking. They were long sessions, nobody took in everything, but everyone took what they needed or wanted, what they could use, even if it was far removed from their own discipline. There was a period marked by abrupt interventions, often schizophrenic, from those present, then there was the taping phase, with everyone watching their cassettes, but even then there were interventions from one week to the next in the form of little notes I got, sometimes anonymously.

I never told that audience what they meant to me, what they gave me. Nothing could have been more unlike a discussion, and philosophy has absolutely nothing to do with discussing things, it's difficult enough just understanding the problem someone's framing and how they're framing it, all you should ever do is explore it, play around with the terms, add something, relate it to something else, never discuss it.[2] It was like an echo chamber, a feedback loop, in which an idea reappeared after going, as it were, through various filters. It was there that I realized how much philosophy needs not only a philosophical understanding, through concepts, but a nonphilosophical understanding, rooted in percepts and affects. You need both. Philosophy has an essential and positive relation to nonphilosophy: it speaks directly to nonphilosophers. Take the most remarkable case, Spinoza: the absolute philosopher, whose *Ethics* is the foremost book on concepts. But this purest of philosophers also speaks to everyone: anyone can read the *Ethics* if they're prepared to be swept up in its wind, its fire. Or take Nietzsche. You can, on the other hand, get too much knowledge taking all the life out of philosophy. Nonphilosophical understanding isn't inadequate or provisional, it's one of philosophy's two sides, one of its two wings.

In the preface to Difference and Repetition*, you say: "The time is approaching when it will hardly be possible to write a philosophy book in the way people have for so long written them." You add that the search for these new means of philosophical expression, begun by Nietzsche, should be pursued in conjunction with the development of "certain other arts," like theater or film. You cite Borges as a model for your approach to the history of philosophy (a model Foucault had already invoked for his own project in the introduction to* The Order of Things*). Twelve years later, you say of the fifteen "plateaus" of* A Thousand Plateaus *that one can read them more or less independently of each other, except that the conclusion should be read at the end—the conclusion throughout which you stick the numbers of the preceding plateaus in a crazy carousel. As though you felt you had to embrace both order and disorder without surrendering either. How do you see this question of philosophical style these days, this question of the architecture, the composition, of a philosophy book? And what, from that perspective, does it mean to write a book with someone else? Writing with someone else is something very unusual in the history of philosophy, especially when it's not a dialogue. How, why, do you do it? How did you go about it? What made you do it? And who's the author of these books? Do they even have an author?*

Great philosophers are great stylists too. Style in philosophy is the movement of concepts. This movement's only present, of course, in the sentences, but the sole point of the sentences is to give it life, a life of its own. Style is a set of variations in language, a modulation, and a straining of one's whole language toward something outside it. Philosophy's like a novel: you have to ask "What's going to happen?," "What's happened?" Except the characters are concepts, and the settings, the scenes, are space-times. One's always writing to bring something to life, to free life from where it's trapped, to trace lines of flight. The language for doing that can't be a homogeneous system, it's something unstable, always heterogeneous, in which style carves differences of potential between which things can pass,[3] come to pass, a spark can flash and break out of language itself, to make us see and think what was lying in the shadow around the words, things we were hardly aware existed. Two things work against style: homogeneous language or, conversely, a heterogeneity so great that it becomes indifferent, gratuitous, and nothing definite passes between its poles. Between a main and a subordinate clause there should be a tension, a kind of zigzagging, even—particularly—when the sentence seems quite straightforward. There's style when the words produce sparks leaping between them, even over great distances.

Given that, writing with someone else presents no particular problem, quite the reverse. There'd be a problem if we were precisely two persons, each with his own life, his own views, setting out to collaborate with each other and discuss things. When I said Félix and I were rather like two streams, what I meant was that individuation doesn't have to be personal. We're not at all sure we're persons: a draft, a wind, a day, a time of day, a stream, a place, a battle, an illness all have a nonpersonal individuality. They have proper names. We call them "hecceities." They combine like two streams, two rivers. They express themselves in language, carving differences in it, but language gives each its own individual life and gets things passing between them. If you speak like most people on the level of opinions, you say "me, I'm a person," just as you say "the sun's rising." But we're not convinced that's definitely the right concept. Félix and I, and many others like us, don't feel we're persons exactly. Our individuality is rather that of events, which isn't making any grand claim, given that hecceities can be modest and microscopic. I've tried in all my books to discover the nature of events; it's a philosophical concept, the only one capable of ousting the verb "to be" and attributes. From this viewpoint, writing with someone else becomes completely natural. It's just a question of something passing through you, a current, which alone has a proper name. Even when you think you're writing on your own, you're always doing it with someone else you can't always name.

In *The Logic of Sense* I attempted a kind of serial composition. But *A*

Thousand Plateaus is more complex: "plateau" isn't a metaphor, you see, they're zones of continuous variation, or like watchtowers surveying or scanning their own particular areas, and signaling to each other. A sort of Indian or Genoese pattern.[4] This is the nearest we come to a style, that is, to a polytonality.

Literature is everywhere present in your work, running parallel, almost, to the philosophy: the essay on Sacher-Masoch, the little book on Proust (which got bigger and bigger), a large part of The Logic of Sense, *both in the body of the work (on Lewis Carroll) and the supplementary material (on Klossowski, Michel Tournier, Zola), the book on Kafka written with Guattari and following on from* Anti-Oedipus, *a chapter of your* Dialogues *with Claire Parnet (on the "superiority of Anglo-American literature"), considerable fragments of* A Thousand Plateaus. *It's a long list. And yet this doesn't lead to anything comparable to what we find principally in your books on cinema, but also in* The Logic of Sensation*: the ordering, rationalizing, of an art form, of a medium of expression. Is that because literature's too close to philosophy, to the very form of its expression, so it can only inflect and accompany the movement of your thought as a whole? Or are there other reasons?*

I don't know, I don't recognize that difference. I've dreamed about bringing together a series of studies under the general title "Essays Critical and Clinical." That's not to say that great authors, great artists, are all ill, however sublimely, or that one's looking for a sign of neurosis or psychosis like a secret in their work, the hidden code of their work. They're not ill; on the contrary, they're a rather special kind of doctor. Why has Masoch given his name to a perversion as old as the world? Not because he "suffered" from it, but because he transformed the symptoms, he set out a novel picture of it by making the contract its primary sign and also by linking masochistic practices to the place of ethnic minorities in society and the role of women in those minorities: masochism becomes an act of resistance, inseparable from a minority sense of humor. Masoch's a great symptomatologist. In Proust it's not memory he's exploring, it's all the different kinds of signs, whose natures have to be discovered by looking at their setting, the way they're emitted, their matter, their system. The *Recherche* is a general semiology, a symptomatology of different worlds. Kafka's work is a diagnosis of all the diabolical powers around us. As Nietzsche said, artists and philosophers are civilization's doctors. It's hardly surprising that, if they consider it at all, they're not particularly interested in psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is so reductive in the secrets it pursues, so misunderstands signs and symptoms; everything comes down to what Lawrence called "the dirty little secret."

It's not just a matter of diagnosis. Signs imply ways of living, possibilities of existence, they're the symptoms of life gushing forth or draining away. But a drained life or a personal life isn't enough for an artist. You don't write with your ego, your memory, and your illnesses. In the act of writing there's an attempt to make life something more than personal, to free life from what imprisons it. The artist or philosopher often has slender, frail health, a weak constitution, a shaky hold on things: look at Spinoza, Nietzsche, Lawrence. Yet it's not death that breaks them, but seeing, experiencing, thinking too much life. Life overwhelms them, yet it's in them that "the sign is at hand"—at the close of *Zarathustra*, in the fifth book of the *Ethics*. You write with a view to an unborn people that doesn't yet have a language. Creating isn't communicating but resisting. There's a profound link between signs, events, life, and vitalism: the power of nonorganic life that can be found in a line that's drawn, a line of writing, a line of music. It's organisms that die, not life. Any work of art points a way through for life, finds a way through the cracks. Everything I've written is vitalistic, at least I hope it is, and amounts to a theory of signs and events. I don't think the problem takes a different form in literature than in the other arts, it's just that I haven't had the chance to do the book I'd like to have done about literature.

Psychoanalysis still runs through, underpins, albeit in a strange way, Difference and Repetition *and* The Logic of Sense. *From* Anti-Oedipus, *the first volume of* Capitalism and Schizophrenia, *onward, it patently becomes an enemy to be toppled. But on a still deeper level it remains from that point on the prime outlook we have to get rid of if we're to think something new, to think anew, almost. How did this come about? And why was* Anti-Oedipus *the first major philosophy book to come out of what happened in May 68, perhaps its first real philosophical manifesto? For the book says, right at the start, that the future doesn't lie in some Freudo-Marxist synthesis. It frees us from*

Freud (from Lacan and his structures), rather as some people thought the "new philosophers" would soon free us from Marx (and the Revolution). How do you see what thus seems a striking analogy?

Oddly enough, it wasn't me who rescued Félix from psychoanalysis; he rescued me. In my study on Masoch, and then in *The Logic of Sense,* I thought I'd discovered things about the specious unity of sadism and masochism, or about events, that contradicted psychoanalysis but could be reconciled with it. Félix, on the other hand, had been and was still a psychoanalyst, a student of Lacan's but like a "son" who already knew that reconciliation was impossible. *Anti-Oedipus* marks a break that followed directly from two principles: the unconscious isn't a theater but a factory, a productive machine, and the unconscious isn't playing around all the time with mummy and daddy but with races, tribes, continents, history, and geography, always some social frame. We were trying to find an immanent conception, an immanent way of working with the syntheses of the unconscious, a productivism or constructivism of the unconscious. And we came to see that psychoanalysis had no understanding at all of the meaning of indefinite articles ("a" child . . .), becomings (becoming-animal, our relation to animals), desires, utterances. Our last piece on psychoanalysis was something we wrote about the Wolf-Man in *A Thousand Plateaus,* showing how psychoanalysis is unable to think plurality or multiplicity, a pack rather than a lone wolf, a pile of bones rather than a single bone.

We saw psychoanalysis as a fantastic project to lead desire up blind alleys and stop people saying what they wanted to say. A project directed against life, a song of death, law, and castration, a thirsting after transcendence, a priesthood, a psychology (all psychology being priestly). If our book was significant, coming after '68, it's because it broke with attempts at Freudo-Marxism: we weren't trying to articulate or reconcile different dimensions but trying rather to find a single basis for a production that was at once social and desiring in a logic of flows. *Délire* was at work in reality, we saw only reality all around us, taking the imaginary and the symbolic to be illusory categories.

Anti-Oedipus was about the univocity of the real, a sort of Spinozism of the unconscious. And I think '68 was this discovery itself. The people who hate '68, or say it was a mistake, see it as something symbolic or imaginary. But that's precisely what it wasn't, it was pure reality breaking through. I don't, at any rate, see the slightest analogy between what *Anti-Oedipus* did with Freud and what the "new philosophers" have been doing with Marx. I find the very suggestion shocking. If *Anti-Oedipus* seeks to criticize psychoanalysis, it's in terms of a conception of the unconscious that, whether right or wrong, is set out in the book. Whereas the new philosophers, denouncing Marx, don't begin to present any new analysis of capital, which mysteriously drops out of consideration in their work; they just denounce the Stalinist political and ethical consequences they take to follow from Marx. They're more like the people who attributed immoral consequences to Freud's work: it's nothing to do with philosophy.

You're always invoking immanence: what seems most characteristic in your thought is that it doesn't depend on lack or negation, systematically banishing any appeal to transcendence, in whatever form. One wants to ask: Is that really true, and how can it be? Particularly since, despite this generalized immanence, your concepts always remain partial and local. From The Logic of Sense *on, it seems you've always been at pains to produce a whole battery of concepts for each new book. One does of course notice concepts migrating, intersecting. But, on the whole, the vocabulary of the books on cinema isn't that of* The Logic of Sensation, *which is different again from that of* Capitalism and Schizophrenia, *and so on. As though, rather than being reworked as they're explained, refined, ramified, and consolidated in relation to one another, so to speak, your concepts had each time to form a distinct grouping, a specific plane of invention. Does that imply they're not amenable to being brought together into any overall scheme? Or is it just a question of opening things up as far as possible, without presupposing anything? And how does that fit in with immanence?*

Setting out a plane of immanence, tracing out a field of immanence, is something all the authors I've worked on have done (even Kant—by denouncing any transcendent application of the syntheses of the imagination, although he sticks to possible experience rather than real experimentation). Abstractions explain nothing, they themselves have to be explained: there are no such things as universals, there's nothing transcendent, no Unity, subject (or object), Reason; there are only processes, sometimes unifying, subjectifying, rationalizing, but just processes all the same. These processes are at work in concrete "multiplicities," multiplicity is the real element in which things happen. It's multiplicities that fill the field of immanence, rather as tribes fill the desert without it ceasing to be a desert. And the plane of immanence has to be constructed, immanence is constructivism, any given multiplicity is like one area of the plane. All processes take place on the plane of immanence, and within a given multiplicity: unifications, subjectifications, rationalizations, centralizations have no special status; they often amount to an impasse or closing off that prevents the multiplicity's growth, the extension and unfolding of its lines, the production of something new.

When you invoke something transcendent you arrest movement, introducing interpretations instead of experimenting. Bellour has shown very well how this happens in cinema, in the flow of images. And interpretation is in fact always carried out with reference to something that's supposed to be missing. Unity is precisely what's missing from multiplicity, just as the subject's what's missing from events ("it's raining"). Of course, things *are* sometimes missing, but it's only ever abstractions, a transcendent viewpoint, perhaps just the Self, that prevents one constructing a plane of immanence. Processes are becomings, and aren't to be judged by some final result but by the way they proceed and their power to continue, as with animal becomings, or nonsubjective individuations. That's why we contrasted rhizomes with trees—trees, or rather arborescent processes, being temporary limits that block rhizomes and their transformations for a while. There are no universals, only singularities. Concepts aren't universals but sets of singularities that each extend into the neighborhood of one of the other singularities.

Let's go back to the ritornello as an example of a concept: it's related to territory. You get ritornellos in any territory, marking it out; and then others when you're trying to find your way back to it, afraid at night; and still others to do with leaving: "Farewell . . . " That already differentiates three stances, so to speak. And the ritornello thus expresses the tension between a territory and something deeper, the Earth. But then the Earth is the Deterritorialized, it can't be separated from a process of deterritorialization that is its aberrant motion. Take any set of singularities leading on from one another, and you have a concept directly related to an event: a *Lied.* A song rises, approaches, or fades away. That's what it's like on the plane of immanence: multiplicities fill it, singularities connect with one another, processes or becomings unfold, intensities rise and fall.

I see philosophy as a logic of multiplicities (I feel, on this point, close to Michel Serres). Creating concepts is constructing some area in the plane, adding a new area to existing ones, exploring a new area, filling in what's missing. Concepts are composites, amalgams of lines, curves. If new concepts have to be brought in all the time, it's just because the plane of immanence has to be constructed area by area, constructed locally, going from one point to the next. That's why it comes in bursts: in *A Thousand Plateaus* each plateau was supposed to be that sort of burst. But that doesn't mean they can't be taken up again and treated systematically. Quite the reverse: a concept's power comes from the way it's repeated, as one area links up with another. And this linkage is an essential, ceaseless activity: the world as a patchwork. So your twin impression of a single plane of immanence, and concepts on the other hand that are always local, is quite right.

What for me takes the place of reflection is constructionism. And what takes the place of communication is a kind of expressionism. Expressionism in philosophy finds its high point in Spinoza and Leibniz. I think I've found a concept of the Other, by defining it as neither an object nor a subject (an other subject) but the expression of a possible world. Someone with a toothache, and a Japanese man walking in the road, express possible worlds. Then they start talking: someone tells me about Japan, it might even be the Japanese man who tells me about Japan, he might even be speaking Japanese: language thus confers reality on the possible world as such, the reality of the possible as something possible (if I go to Japan, on the other hand, then it's no longer something possible). Including possible worlds in the plane of immanence, even in this very sketchy way, makes expressionism the counterpart of constructionism.

But why this need to create new concepts? Is there any "progress" in philosophy? How would you define what it needs to do, why we need it, and even its "program" these days?

I think there's an image of thought that changes a lot, that's changed a lot through history. By the image of thought I don't mean its method but something deeper that's always taken for granted, a system of coordinates, dynamics, orientations: what it means to think, and to "orient oneself in thought."[5] However one sees it, we're on the plane of immanence; but should we go around erecting vertical axes and trying to stand up straight or, rather, stretch out, run out along the horizon,[6] keep pushing the plane further out? And what sort of verticality do we want, one that gives us something to contemplate or one that makes us reflect or communicate? Or should we just get rid of all verticality as transcendent and lie down hugging the earth, without looking, without reflecting, cut off from communication? And then, have we got a friend with us, or are we all alone, Me = Me, or are we lovers, or something else again, and what are the risks of betraying oneself, being betrayed, or betraying someone else? Doesn't there come a time to distrust even one's friend? How should we understand the *philos* in philosophy? Does it mean different things in Plato and in Blanchot's book *L'Amitié*, even though it relates to thinking in both cases? From Empedocles on, there's a whole dramaturgy of thought.

The image of thought is what philosophy as it were presupposes; it precedes philosophy, not a nonphilosophical understanding this time but a prephilosophical understanding. There are lots of people for whom thinking's just "a bit of discussion." OK, it's a stupid image, but even stupid people have an image of thought, and it's only by bringing out these images that we can determine philosophy's preconditions. Do we, for instance, have the same image of thought that Plato, or even Descartes or Kant, had? Doesn't the image change in response to overriding constraints that express, of course, extrinsic determinants, but above all express a becoming of thought? Can we, flailing around in confusion, still claim to be seeking truth?

It's the image of thought that guides the creation of concepts. It cries out, so to speak, whereas concepts are like songs. On the question of progress in philosophy, you have to say the sort of thing Robbe-Grillet says about the novel: there's no point at all doing philosophy the way Plato did, not because we've superseded Plato but because you can't supersede Plato, and it makes no sense to have another go at what he's done for all time. There's only one choice: doing the history of philosophy, or transplanting bits of Plato into problems that are no longer Platonic ones.

One might call this study of images of thought "noology" and see it as the prolegomena to philosophy. It's what *Difference and Repetition* is really about, the nature of the postulates of the image of thought. And the question runs right through *The Logic of Sense*, where height, depth, and surface are taken as the coordinates of thinking; I come back to it in *Proust and Signs*, because Proust confronts the Greek image with all the power of signs; then I come to it again, with Félix, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, because the rhizome's the image of thought that spreads out beneath the tree image. We've got no model for dealing with this question, no guide even, but there is something to which we can constantly refer and relate it: what we know about the brain.

There's a special relation between philosophy and neurology, which comes out in the associationists, in Schopenhauer, in Bergson. Our current inspiration doesn't come from computers but from the microbiology of the brain: the brain's organized like a rhizome, more like grass than a tree, "an uncertain system,"[7] with probabilistic, semi-aleatory, quantum mechanisms. It's not that our thinking starts from what we know about the brain but that any new thought traces uncharted channels directly through its matter, twisting, folding, fissuring it. It's amazing how Michaux does this. New connections, new pathways, new synapses, that's what philosophy calls into play as it creates concepts, but this whole image is something of which the biology of the brain, in its own way, is discovering an objective material likeness, or the material working.

Something that's interested me in cinema is the way the screen can work as a brain, as in Resnais's films, or Syberberg's. Cinema doesn't just operate by linking things through rational cuts, but by relinking them through irrational cuts too: this gives two different images of thought. What was interesting about pop videos at the outset was the sense you got that some were using connections and breaks that didn't belong to the waking world, but not to dream either, or even nightmare. For a moment they bordered on something connected with thought. This is all I'm saying: there's a hidden image of thought that, as it unfolds, branches out, and mutates, inspires a need to keep on creating new concepts, not through any external determinism but through a becoming that carries the problems themselves along with it.

Your last book was devoted to Foucault. Were you doing history of philosophy? Why Foucault? What are the relations between your two philosophies? You already introduced the notion of the fold in the Foucault book. Is there some relation between Foucault and Leibniz?

Foucault's a great philosopher, an amazing stylist too. He mapped out knowledge and power in a new way and traced specific relations between them. Philosophy takes on, in him, a new sense. Then he introduced processes of subjectification as a third dimension of his "apparatuses," as a third distinct term that provides a new approach to forms of knowledge and articulates powers in a new way, thereby opening up a whole theory and history of ways of existing: Greek subjectification, Christian subjectifications . . . his method rejects universals to discover the processes, always singular, at work in multiplicities. What's influenced me most is his theory of utterance, because it involves conceiving language as a heterogeneous and unstable aggregate and allows one to think about how new types of utterance come to be formed in all fields. The importance of his "literary" work, his literary and artistic criticism, will come out only when all his articles are collected; his text on *The Life of Infamous Men*, for example, is a beautiful comic masterpiece; there is in Foucault something close to Chekhov.

The book I did wasn't about the history of philosophy, it's something I wanted to do with him, with the idea I have of him and my admiration for him. If there was any poetry in the book, one might see it as what poets call a *tombeau.*[8] I differed from him only on very minor things: what he called an apparatus, and what Félix and I called arrangements, have different coordinates, because he was establishing novel historical sequences, while we put more emphasis on geographical elements, territoriality and movements of deterritorialization. We were always rather keen on universal history, which he detested. But being able to follow what he was doing provided me with essential corroboration. He was often misunderstood, which didn't get in his way but did worry him. People were afraid of him, that's to say his mere existence was enough to stop idiots braying. Foucault fulfilled the function of philosophy as defined by Nietzsche: being bad for stupidity. Thinking, with him, is like diving down and always bringing something back up to the surface. A thought that folds this way and that, then suddenly bursts open like a spring. I don't in fact think he was particularly influenced by Leibniz. Although there's a remark in Leibniz that applies particularly well to him: "I thought I'd reached port, but found myself thrown back onto the open sea." Thinkers like Foucault advance by lurching from one crisis to another, there's something seismic about them.

The last approach opened up by Foucault is particularly rich: processes of subjectification are nothing to do with "private lives" but characterize the way individuals and communities are constituted as subjects on the margins of established forms of knowledge and instituted powers, even if they thereby open the way for new kinds of knowledge and power. Subjectification thus appears as a middle term between knowledge and power, a perpetual "dislocation," a sort of fold, a folding or enfolding. Foucault finds the initial movement of subjectification, in the West at least, with the Greeks, at the point where free men imagine they have to "master themselves" if they want to be able to govern others. But subjectification takes many different forms, which explains Foucault's interest in a Christianity permeated by these processes on an individual and collective level (hermits, religious orders and communities), not to mention heresies and reforms, with self-mastery no longer the guiding principle. One might even say that in many social formations it's not the masters but rather those excluded from society who constitute foci of subjectification: the freed slave, for example, who complains he's lost any social role in the established order, and opens the way for new kinds of power. Plaintive voices are very important, not just poetically but historically and socially, because they express a movement of subjectification ("poor me . . . "): there's a whole order of elegiac subjectivity. Subjects are born quite as much from misery as from triumph. Foucault was fascinated by the movements of subjectification taking shape in our present-day societies: what modern processes are currently at work producing subjectivity? Thus, when people talk about Foucault returning to the subject, they're completely missing the problem he's addressing. Here again, there's no point arguing with them.

One does indeed find scraps of universal history in Anti-Oedipus, *with the distinction between coded societies, overcoding States, and capitalism decod-*

ing flows. You then return to this theme in A Thousand Plateaus, *introducing an opposition between nomadic war machines and sedentary states: you set out a "nomadology." But do any political stances follow from this? You belonged, with Foucault, to the Prison Information Group; you sponsored Coluche's standing for president;*[9] *you came out in support of the Palestinians. But since the aftermath of '68 you seem, especially compared with Guattari, to have fallen rather "silent." You've taken no part in the human rights movement, or philosophical debate about the constitutional state.*[10] *Is this a matter of choice, or reticence, or disillusion? Doesn't the philosopher have a role to play in society?*

If you're talking about establishing new forms of transcendence, new universals, restoring a reflective subject as the bearer of rights, or setting up a communicative intersubjectivity, then it's not much of a philosophical advance. People want to produce "consensus," but consensus is an ideal that guides opinion, and has nothing to do with philosophy. A sort of philosophy-as-marketing, often directed against the USSR. Ewald's shown that you need more than just a legally constituted subject to have human rights, that you have to confront juridical problems that are in themselves very interesting. And in many cases the states that trample on human rights are so much outgrowths or dependencies of the ones that trumpet them that it seems like two complementary activities.

One can't think about the state except in relation to the higher level of the single world market, and the lower levels of minorities, becomings, "people." Beyond the state it's money that rules, money that communicates, and what we need these days definitely isn't any critique of Marxism, but a modern theory of money as good as Marx's that goes on from where he left off (bankers would be better placed than economists to sketch its outlines, although the economist Bernard Schmitt has made some progress in this area). And below the state are becomings that can't be controlled, minorities constantly coming to life and standing up to it. Becomings are something quite distinct from history: even structural history generally thinks in terms of past, present, and future. We're told revolutions go wrong, or produce monsters in their wake: it's an old idea, no need to wait for Stalin, it was already true of Napoleon, of Cromwell. To say revolutions turn out badly is to say nothing about people's revolutionary becoming.[11] If we've been so interested in nomads, it's because they're a becoming and aren't part of history; they're excluded from it, but they transmute and reappear in different, unexpected forms in the lines of flight of some social field. That's one difference, in fact, between ourselves and Foucault: he saw social fields as criss-crossed with strategies; we see them as fleeing all over the place. May 68 was a becoming breaking through into history, and that's why history found it so hard to understand, and why historical society found it so hard to come to terms with.

People talk about the future of Europe, and the need to harmonize banking, insurance, internal markets, companies, police forces: *consensus, consensus, consensus,* but what about people's becoming? Is Europe leading us into strange becomings like new versions of '68? What's going to become of people? It's a question full of surprises, not the question of the future, but of actuality, the untimely. The Palestinians are what's untimely in the Middle East, taking the question of territory to its limit. In unconstitutional states it's the nature of the necessarily nomadic processes of liberation that counts. And in constitutional states, it's not established and codified constitutional rights that count but everything that's legally problematic and constantly threatens to bring what's been established back into question that counts. There's no shortage of such problems these days; the whole Civil Code's strained to breaking-point, and the Penal Code is in as great a mess as the prison system. Rights aren't created by codes and pronouncements but by jurisprudence. Jurisprudence is the philosophy of law, and deals with singularities, it advances by working out from singularities. All this may of course involve taking particular positions to make some particular point. But it's not enough these days to "take a position," however concretely. You need some sort of control over how it's presented. Otherwise you'll quickly find yourself on television replying to stupid questions or face to face, back to back, with someone, "discussing things." What if we were to get involved in producing the program? But how? It's a specialized business, we're not even the customers any more; television's real customers are the advertisers, those well-known liberals. It would be pretty sad to see philosophers being sponsored, with company logos all over their outfits, but maybe it's happening already. People talk about intellectuals abdicating their responsibility, but how are they supposed to express themselves in some all-purpose medium that's an offense to all thinking? I think there's a public for philosophy and ways of reaching it, but it's a clandestine sort of thinking, a sort of nomadic thinking. The only form of communication one can envisage as perfectly adapted to the modern world is Adorno's model of a message in a bottle, or the Nietzschean model of an arrow shot by one thinker and picked up by another.

The Fold, *devoted to Leibniz (even though his name appears only in the subtitle, coupled with a theme: "Leibniz and the Baroque"), seems to hark back to the long series of books you devoted to particular philosophers: Kant, Bergson, Nietzsche, Spinoza. And yet one feels it's much more a book* of *than a book* on *a philosopher. Or rather that to an amazing extent it's at once about both Leibniz and the whole of your thought, here more than ever before present as a whole. What's your view of this dual aspect? One might say that by drawing on Leibnizian concepts, the book combines series of concepts from your other books, somewhat reworking all the earlier results in a very ingenious way to arrive at a new and more comprehensive result.*

Leibniz is fascinating because perhaps no other philosopher created so much. They're at first sight extremely odd notions, almost crazy. They seem to have only an abstract unity, along the lines of "Every predicate is contained in its subject," except the predicate's not an attribute, it's an event, and the subject isn't a subject, it's an envelope. His concepts do however have a concrete unity in the way they're constructed or operate that's reflected on the level of the Fold, the folds of the earth, the folds of organisms, folds in the soul. Everything folds, unfolds, enfolds in Leibniz; it's in the folds of things that one perceives, and the world is enfolded in each soul, which unfolds this or that region of it according to the order of space and time (whence the overall harmony). So we can take the nonphilosophical situation implicit in Leibniz as something like a "windowless and doorless" baroque chapel that has only an inside, or the baroque music that finds the harmony in any melody. The baroque carries folding to infinity, as in El Greco's paintings and Bernini's sculptures, and so opens the way to a nonphilosophical understanding through percepts and affects.

I see this book as both a recapitulation and a continuation. One has to follow in Leibniz's footsteps (he's probably had more creative followers than any other philosopher) but also in those of artists who echo his work, even unknowingly—Mallarmé, Proust, Michaux, Hantaï, Boulez—anyone who fashions a world out of folding and unfolding. The whole thing is a crossroads, a multiple connectedness. We're still a long way from exhausting all the potential of the fold, it's a good philosophical concept. That's why I wrote this book, and it leaves me in a position to do what I now want to do. I want to write a book on "What Is Philosophy?" As long as it's a short one. Also, Guattari and I want to get back to our joint work and produce a sort of philosophy of Nature, now that any distinction between nature and artifice is becoming blurred. Such projects are all one needs for a happy old age.

Conversation with Raymond Bellour and François Ewald
Magazine Littéraire 257 (September 1988)

ON LEIBNIZ

You've always said that doing philosophy is working on concepts as one works on a piece of wood and constantly producing new ones that can be used to tackle real problems. The concept of fold *seems particularly useful, since it allows one, by starting from Leibniz's philosophy, to characterize the baroque and provides a way into the work of Michaux or Borges, of Maurice Leblanc, Gombrowicz, Joyce, or into the territory of artists. One's very tempted to ask whether a concept that works so well, and takes one so far, isn't in danger of losing its value by a sort of inflation and inviting the criticisms people used to make of systems that explained everything?*

One does indeed find folds everywhere: in rocks, rivers, and woods, in organisms, in the head or brain, in souls or thought, in what we call the plastic arts . . . But that doesn't make the fold a universal. It was Lévi-Strauss, I think, who showed you had to distinguish the following two propositions: that only similar things can differ, and only different things can be similar. One proposition says similarity's primary, the other says things themselves differ, and differ above all from themselves. Straight lines are all alike, but folds vary, and all folding proceeds by differentiation. No two things are folded the same way, no two rocks, and there's no general rule saying the same thing will always fold the same way. Folds are in this sense everywhere, without the fold being a universal. It's a "differentiator," a "differential." There are two kinds of concepts, universals and singularities. The concept of fold is always something singular, and can only get anywhere by varying, branching out, taking new forms. You've only to consider or, better still, to see and touch mountains as formed by their folding, for them to lose their solidity, and for millenia to turn back into what they are, not something permanent but time in its pure state, pliability. There's nothing more unsettling than the continual movement of something that seems fixed. In Leibniz's words: a dance of particles folding back on themselves.

Your whole book shows how Leibniz's philosophy, when one works through it with the concept of fold, can be linked to nonphilosophical realities and cast light on them, how the monad relates to other people's work in the fields of painting, sculpture, architecture, and literature. But can it also cast light on our social and political world? If the social realm's become, as they say, a "dark continent," isn't it because we've been thinking about it, after Marx, in mechanical or anatomical terms rather than in terms of folds, drapery, texture?

Leibniz's most famous proposition is that every soul or subject (monad) is completely closed, windowless and doorless, and contains the whole world in its darkest depths, while also illuminating some little portion of that world, each monad a different portion. So the world is enfolded in each soul, but differently, because each illuminates only one little aspect of the overall folding. It is, at first sight, a very odd conception. But, as always in philosophy, one's dealing with a concrete situation. I try to show how the conception applies to baroque architecture, to the baroque "interior," to baroque lighting. But it's our situation as modern men as well, if we take account of the new ways things are folded. The minimalist art of Tony Smith presents us with the following situation: a car speeding along a dark motorway lit only by the car's headlamps, with the tarmac hurtling by in the windscreen. It's a modern version of the monad, with the windscreen playing the part of a small illuminated area. You wonder if we can understand this socially and politically. Certainly, and the baroque was itself linked to a political system, a new conception of politics. The move toward replacing the system of a window and a world outside with one of a computer screen in a closed room is something that's taking place in our social life: we read the world more than we see it. Not only is there a social "morphology" in which textures play their part, but the baroque plays a part in town-planning and rural development. Architecture has always been a political activity, and any new architecture depends on revolutionary forces, you can find architecture saying "We need a people," even though the architect isn't himself a revolutionary. Through its relation to the bolshevik revolution, constructivism links up with the baroque. A people is always a new wave, a new fold in the social fabric; any creative work is a new way of folding adapted to new materials.

The concept of fold leads you on quite naturally, in true Leibnizian spirit, to a certain conception of matter and living things, and an insistence upon the close relation between matter and life, organisms. But as I read your book I often wondered how what you say about matter or living organisms—and about perception or pain, for example—might be understood by a contemporary physicist, biologist, physiologist, and so on. "The model for the science of matter is origami . . . *or the art of folding paper"; "if to be alive is to have a soul, it's because proteins already present us with acts of perception, discrimination and differentiation"; "matter is textures": how are we to take propositions like these?*

Inflection still plays a central part in mathematics, or in the theory of functions. That matter isn't granular but made up of smaller and smaller folds, as Leibniz says, is a hypothesis that can be interpreted in terms of the physics of particles and forces. That an organism is the theater and principle of its endogenous folding is something that comes out at the level of molecular biology, as well as embryology: as Thom shows, morphogenesis is all about folding. The complex notion of texture has taken on a fundamental importance in all sorts of fields. The idea that there's such a thing as molecular perception has been accepted for a long time. When ethologists define the worlds of animals, they do so in a way that's very reminiscent of Leibniz, showing that an animal responds to a certain number of stimuli, sometimes very few, that amount to little glimmerings in the dark depths of a vast nature. This isn't of course to say that they're repeating what Leibniz said before them. Between seventeenth-century "preformation" and present-day genetics, folding changes in nature, function, and meaning. But then

Leibniz himself didn't invent the notion and principles of folding, which were familiar in the sciences and arts before his day. He was however the first thinker to "free" the fold, by taking it to infinity. The Baroque, similarly, was the first period in which folding went on infinitely, spilling over any limit, as in El Greco and Bernini. That's why Leibniz's great baroque principles are still so scientifically relevant, even though folding has taken on new characteristics, which illustrates its power of transformation. It's the same in art: Hantaï's folds aren't of course El Greco's, but it was the great Baroque painters who freed folds from the constraints and limits imposed on them by Romanesque, Gothic, and neoclassical art. They thus made possible all sorts of new experiments that they didn't prefigure, but of which they mark they opening phase. Mallarmé and Michaux are obsessed with folds: that doesn't make them Leibnizian, but it does mean they're somehow related to Leibniz. *Art Informel*[1] is based on two things: textures and folded shapes. That doesn't make Klee or Dubuffet baroque painters. But the *cabinet logologique*[2] is like the inside of a Leibnizian monad. Without the baroque and without Leibniz, folds wouldn't have developed the autonomy that subsequently allowed them to create so many new paths. In short, the raising to infinity or autonomization of folds in the baroque has artistic, scientific, and philosophical consequences, with their different time scales, that are far from being exhausted, and in which one keeps coming back to Leibnizian "themes."

For you to be working on a theory of events is nothing new. In The Fold, *though, the theory's more fully worked out than ever before, most particularly through the way you bring together Leibniz and Whitehead. I can hardly summarize here the elements or determinants of events as you characterize them. But simply to say that you talk in terms of extension, intensity, individuals, and prehension is enough to make clear that the events you're talking about aren't the ones journalists and the media chase after. What, then, are the media handling when they "capture events," or what would have to happen for the media to grasp what you yourself call "events"?*

I don't think the media have much capacity or inclination to grasp an event. In the first place, they often show a beginning or end, whereas even a short or instantaneous event is something going on. And then, they want something spectacular, whereas events always involve periods when nothing happens. It's not even a matter of there being such periods before and after some event, they're part of the event itself: you can't, for example, extract the instant of some terribly brutal accident from the vast empty time in which you see it coming, staring at what hasn't yet happened, waiting ages for it to happen. The most ordinary event casts us as visionaries, whereas the media turn us into mere passive onlookers, or worse still, voyeurs. Groethuysen said events always take place, so to speak, when nothing's happening. People miss the amazing *wait* in events they were least awaiting. It's art, rather than the media, that can grasp events: the films of Ozu or Antonioni, for example. But then with them, the periods in which nothing happens don't fall between two events, they're in the events themselves, giving events their depth. I have, it's true, spent a lot of time writing about this notion of event: you see, I don't believe in things. *The Fold* returns to this question from another viewpoint. My favorite sentence in the book is "There's a concert tonight." In Leibniz, in Whitehead, there are only events. What Leibniz calls a predicate is nothing to do with an attribute, but an event, "crossing the Rubicon." So they have to completely recast the notion of a subject: what becomes of the subject, if predicates are events? It's like a baroque emblem.[3]

It seems to me that The Fold, *rather than "developing" your work so far, "envelops" it, implicates rather than explicates it.*[4] *In other words, rather than taking us toward some region (a commentator's dream) of "Deleuze's philosophy summed up," it makes it circular, "joins it all up." Indeed, the concept of fold links up with your last book,* Foucault*—the folding of thought in the process of subjectification—and Leibniz links up with a "succession" of studies relating to the history of philosophy, devoted to Hume, Spinoza, Kant, Nietzsche, and Bergson.* The Fold, *in short, seems to fit in and connect with any given segment of your work so that, if you'll excuse the comparison, the whole might be likened to, say, an alarm clock that doesn't so much "tell" us something (the time!) as offer infinite possible ways of being taken apart and put back together again. Am I completely wrong?*

I hope you're right, and I think you are. The thing is, everyone has habits of thinking: I tend to think of things as sets of lines to be unraveled but also to be made to intersect. I don't like points; I think it's stupid summing things up.[5] Lines aren't things running between two points; points are where several lines intersect. Lines never run uniformly, and points are nothing but inflections of lines. More generally, it's not beginnings and ends that count, but middles. Things and thoughts advance or grow out from the middle, and that's where you have to get to work, that's where everything unfolds. So a multilinear complex can fold back on itself with intersections and inflections that interconnect philosophy, the history of philosophy, history in general, the sciences, and the arts. As though these are so many twists in the path of something moving through space like a whirlwind that can materialize at any point.

But we're not talking about just any point, we're talking about Leibniz. Everyone knows about Leibniz, but they know about him from Candide, *and Voltaire's mocking references to "the best of all possible worlds." I'm going to ask you a silly question: does it damage the way a philosopher's remembered, to be laughed at like that?*

But Voltaire's a philosopher too, and *Candide*'s a major text. The relation between Leibniz and Voltaire marks a fundamental transition in the history of thought. With Voltaire we're in the Enlightenment, a system of light, indeed, of matter and life, of Reason, quite different from the baroque system, even though Leibniz opened the way into this new period: theological reason breaks down, giving way to human reason pure and simple. The baroque itself already marks a crisis in theological reasoning—a final attempt to reconstruct a world that's falling apart. It's a bit like the way they define schizophrenia, and what we call baroque dances have often been compared to the postures assumed by schizophrenics. Now, when Leibniz says our world's the best of all possible worlds, we have to understand "the best" as replacing the classical Good, and reflecting, precisely, the collapse of the Good. Leibniz's idea is that our world's the best, not because it's governed by the Good but because it allows the production and introduction of new elements: it's a very striking idea, and one that Voltaire himself takes up. And it's a long way from Leibniz's supposed optimism. Indeed, for Leibniz, the very possibility of progress depends on his baroque conception of damnation: the best of all possible worlds rises up on the shoulders of the damned, because the damned have themselves forsaken progress and so set free infinite quantities of "progressiveness." There's a wonderful piece about this called *The Philosopher's Profession of Faith*, beautifully translated into French by Belaval. There's a song of Beelzebub's in the book, which must be the finest of all texts on evil. These days it's no longer theological reason but human reason, Enlightenment reason, that's entering a crisis and breaking down. So in our attempts to preserve some part of it or reconstruct it, we're seeing a neobaroque, which brings us closer, perhaps, to Leibniz than to Voltaire.

Along with The Fold, *you're publishing a short—luminous—piece on François Châtelet's philosophy,* Pericles and Verdi. *Should we take the way this major book on philosophy is preceded and followed by two texts devoted to Michel Foucault and François Châtelet, departed friends, as somehow significant (as relating, in particular, to the sense of* philein *in philosophy)? Are you trying to bring into philosophy and/or the writing of philosophy the "music" that Châtelet, as you'll recall, defined as "establishing human relations in aural material"?*

You talk, in the first place, about friendship. I wrote a book about Foucault, and then a little piece about Châtelet. But they're not for me just tributes to friends. The book on Foucault was very much meant as a philosophy book—and by writing a philosophy book entitled *Foucault* I was claiming that he never turned into a historian but always remained a great philosopher. François Châtelet, for his part, thought of himself more as a philosophy "producer," rather as one talks of a film producer. But then, in film, a lot of producers have wanted to establish new "modes of production," new ways of running things. What I'm trying to show, all too sketchily, is that what Châtelet saw himself doing wasn't a substitute for philosophy but involved, on the contrary, a very original and definite philosophy. And then there's the question of friendship. It's intrinsic to philosophy, because the philosopher isn't a sage, but a "friend"—of whom, what? Kojève, Blanchot, Mascolo have taken up this question of friendship, which goes to the heart of thought. You can't know what philosophy is until you confront this puzzling question and find some answer, however difficult that may be. You ask about music, too, since Châtelet was immersed in music. Music—are philosophers friends of music too? It seems clear to me that philosophy is truly an unvoiced song, with the same feel for movement that music has. That already applies to Leibniz who, paralleling baroque music, makes Harmony a basic concept. He makes philosophy the production of harmonies.[6] Is that what friendship is, a harmony embracing even dissonance? It's not a matter of setting philosophy to music, or vice versa. Rather, it's once again one thing folding into another: "fold by fold," like Boulez and Mallarmé.[7]

Conversation with Robert Maggiori
Libération (September 22, 1988)

LETTER TO REDA BENSMAÏA, ON SPINOZA

I'm struck by the extremely high quality of the articles devoted to me here, and therefore very honored by this venture of *Lendemains.* I'd like to respond by setting the whole venture under the aegis of Spinoza and telling you, if I may, about the problem that interests me in relation to him. It will be a way of so to speak "participating" in the venture.

I think great philosophers are also great stylists. And while a philosophical vocabulary is one element in a style, involving as it does the introduction of new words on the one hand, or giving an unusual sense to ordinary words on the other, style is always a matter of syntax. But syntax is a sort of straining toward something that isn't syntactic nor even linguistic (something outside language). Syntax, in philosophy, strains toward the movement of concepts. Now concepts don't move only among other concepts (in philosophical understanding), they also move among things and within us: they bring us new *percepts* and new *affects* that amount to philosophy's own nonphilosophical understanding. And philosophy requires nonphilosophical understanding just as much as it requires philosophical understanding. That's why philosophy has an essential relation to nonphilosophers, and addresses them too. They may even sometimes have a direct understanding of philosophy that doesn't depend on philosophical understanding. Style in philosophy strains toward three different poles: concepts, or new ways of thinking; percepts, or new ways of seeing and hearing; and affects, or new ways of feeling. They're the philosophical trinity, philosophy as opera: you need all three to *get things moving.*

What has this to do with Spinoza? He seems, on the face of it, to have no style at all, as we confront the very scholastic Latin of the *Ethics.* But you have to be careful with people who supposedly "have no style"; as Proust noted, they're often the greatest stylists of all. The *Ethics* appears at first to be a continuous stream of definitions, propositions, proofs, and corollaries, presenting us with a remarkable development of concepts. An irresistible, uninterrupted river, majestically serene. Yet all the while there are "parentheses" springing up in the guise of *scholia,* discontinuously, independently, referring to one another, violently erupting to form a zigzagging volcanic chain, as all the passions rumble below in a war of joys pitted against sadness. These scholia might seem to fit into the overall conceptual development, but they don't: they're more like a second *Ethics,* running parallel to the first but with a completely different rhythm, a completely different tone, echoing the movement of concepts in the full force of affects.

And then there's a third *Ethics,* too, when we come to Book Five. Because Spinoza tells us that up to that point he's been speaking from the viewpoint of concepts, but now he's going to change his style and speak directly and intuitively in pure percepts. Here too, one might imagine he's still proving things, but he's certainly not continuing the same way. The line of proof begins to leap like lightning across gaps, proceeding elliptically, implicitly, in abbreviated form, advancing in piercing, rending flashes. No longer a river, or something running below the surface, but fire. A third *Ethics* that, although it appears only at the close, is there from the start, along with the other two.

This is the style at work in Spinoza's seemingly calm Latin. He sets three languages resonating in his outwardly dormant language, a triple straining. The *Ethics* is a book of concepts (the second kind of knowledge), but of affects (the first kind) and percepts (the third kind) too. Thus the paradox in Spinoza is that he's the most philosophical of philosophers, the purest in some sense, but also the one who more than any other addresses nonphilosophers and calls forth the most intense nonphilosophical understanding. This is why absolutely anyone can read Spinoza, and be very moved, or see things quite differently afterward, even if they can hardly understand Spinoza's concepts. Conversely, a historian of philosophy who understands only Spinoza's concepts doesn't fully understand him. We need both wings, as Jaspers would say, just to carry us, philosophers and nonphilosophers, toward the same final point. And it takes all three wings, nothing less, to form a style, a bird of fire.

Lendemains 53 (1989)

part five • POLITICS

CONTROL AND BECOMING

The problem of politics seems to have always been present in your intellectual life. Your involvement in various movements (prisoners, homosexuals, Italian autonomists, Palestinians), on the one hand, and the constant problematizing of institutions, on the other, follow on from one another and interact with one another in your work, from the book on Hume through to the one on Foucault. What are the roots of this sustained concern with the question of politics, and how has it remained so persistent within your developing work? Why is the relation between movement and institution always problematic?

What I've been interested in are collective creations rather than representations. There's a whole order of movement in "institutions" that's independent of both laws and contracts. What I found in Hume was a very creative conception of institutions and law. I was initially more interested in law than politics. Even with Masoch and Sade what I liked was the thoroughly twisted conception of contracts in Masoch, and of institutions in Sade, as these come out in relation to sexuality. And in the present day, I see François Ewald's work to reestablish a philosophy of law as quite fundamental. What interests me isn't the law or laws[1] (the former being an empty notion, the latter uncritical notions), nor even law or rights, but jurisprudence. It's jurisprudence, ultimately, that creates law, and we mustn't go on leaving this to judges. Writers ought to read law reports rather than the Civil Code. People are already thinking about establishing a system of law for modern biology; but everything in modern biology and the new situations it creates, the new courses of events it makes possible, is a matter for jurisprudence. We don't need an ethical committee of supposedly well-qualified wise men, but user-groups. This is where we move from law into politics. I, for my own part, made a sort of move into politics around May 68, as I came into contact with specific problems, through Guattari, through Foucault, through Elie Sambar. *Anti-Oedipus* was from beginning to end a book of political philosophy.

You took the events of '68 to be the triumph of the Untimely, the dawn of counteractualization.[2] *Already in the years leading up to '68, in your work on Nietzsche and a bit later in* Coldness and Cruelty, *you'd given a new meaning to politics—as possibility, event, singularity. You'd found short-circuits where the future breaks through into the present, modifying institutions in its wake. But then after '68 you take a slightly different approach: nomadic thought always takes the temporal form of instantaneous counteractualization, while spatially only "minority becoming is universal." How should we understand this universality of the untimely?*

The thing is, I became more and more aware of the possibility of distinguishing between becoming and history. It was Nietzsche who said that nothing important is ever free from a "nonhistorical cloud." This isn't to oppose eternal and historical, or contemplation and action: Nietzsche is talking about the way things happen, about events themselves or becoming. What history grasps in an event is the way it's actualized in particular circumstances; the event's becoming is beyond the scope of history. History isn't experimental,[3] it's just the set of more or less negative preconditions that make it possible to experiment with something beyond history. Without history the experimentation would remain indeterminate, lacking any initial conditions, but experimentation isn't historical. In a major philosophical work, *Clio,* Péguy explained that there are two ways of considering events, one being to follow the course of the event, gathering how it comes about historically, how it's prepared and then decomposes in history, while the other way is to go back into the event, to take one's place in it as in a becoming, to grow both young and old in it at once, going through all its components or singularities. Becoming isn't part of history; history amounts only the set of preconditions, however recent, that one leaves behind in order to "become," that is, to create something new. This is precisely what Nietzsche calls the Untimely. May 68 was a demonstration, an irruption, of a becoming in its pure state. It's fashionable these days to condemn the horrors of revolution. It's nothing new; English Romanticism is permeated by reflections on Cromwell very similar to present-day reflections on Stalin.[4] They say revolutions turn out badly. But they're constantly confusing two different things, the way revolutions turn out historically and people's revolutionary becoming. These relate to two different sets of people. Men's only hope lies in a revolutionary becoming: the only way of casting off their shame or responding to what is intolerable.

A Thousand Plateaus, *which I regard as a major philosophical work, seems to me at the same time a catalogue of unsolved problems, most particularly in the field of political philosophy. Its pairs of contrasting terms—process and project, singularity and subject, composition and organization, lines of flight and apparatuses/strategies, micro and macro, and so on—all this not only remains forever open but it's constantly being reopened, through an amazing will to theorize, and with a violence reminiscent of heretical proclamations. I've nothing against such subversion, quite the reverse . . . But I seem sometimes to hear a tragic note, at points where it's not clear where the "war-machine" is going.*

I'm moved by what you say. I think Félix Guattari and I have remained Marxists, in our two different ways, perhaps, but both of us. You see, we think any political philosophy must turn on the analysis of capitalism and the ways it has developed. What we find most interesting in Marx is his analysis of capitalism as an immanent system that's constantly overcoming its own limitations, and then coming up against them once more in a broader form, because its fundamental limit is Capital itself. *A Thousand Plateaus* sets out in many different directions, but these are the three main ones: first, we think any society is defined not so much by its contradictions as by its lines of flight, it flees all over the place, and it's very interesting to try and follow the lines of flight taking shape at some particular moment or other. Look at Europe now, for instance: western politicians have spent a great deal of effort setting it all up, the technocrats have spent a lot of effort getting uniform administration and rules, but then on the one hand there may be surprises in store in the form of upsurges of young people, of women, that become possible simply because certain restrictions are removed (with "untechnocratizable" consequences); and on the other hand it's rather comic when one considers that this Europe has already been completely superseded before being inaugurated, superseded by movements coming from the East. These are major lines of flight. There's another direction in *A Thousand Plateaus*, which amounts to considering not just lines of flight rather than contradictions, but minorities rather than classes. Then finally, a third direction, which amounts to finding a characterization of "war machines" that's nothing to do with war but to do with a particular way of occupying, taking up, space-time, or inventing new space-times: revolutionary movements (people don't take enough account, for instance, of how the PLO has had to invent a space-time in the Arab world), but artistic movements too, are war-machines in this sense.

You say there's a certain tragic or melancholic tone in all this. I think I can see why. I was very struck by all the passages in Primo Levi where he explains that Nazi camps have given us "a shame at being human." Not, he says, that we're all responsible for Nazism, as some would have us believe, but that we've all been tainted by it: even the survivors of the camps had to make compromises with it, if only to survive. There's the shame of there being men who became Nazis; the shame of being unable, not seeing how, to stop it; the shame of having compromised with it; there's the whole of what Primo Levi calls this "gray area." And we can feel shame at being human in utterly trivial situations, too: in the face of too great a vulgarization of thinking, in the face of TV entertainment, of a ministerial speech, of "jolly people" gossiping. This is one of the most powerful incentives toward philosophy, and it's what makes all philosophy political. In capitalism only one thing is universal, the market. There's no universal state, precisely because there's a universal market of which states are the centers, the trading floors. But the market's not universalizing, homogenizing, it's an extraordinary generator of both wealth and misery. A concern for human rights shouldn't lead us to extol the "joys" of the liberal capitalism of which they're an integral part. There's no democratic state that's not compromised to the very core by its part in generating human misery. What's so shameful is that we've no sure way of maintaining becomings, or still more of arousing them, even within ourselves. How any group will turn out, how it will fall back into history, presents a constant "concern."[5] There's no longer any image of proletarians around of which it's just a matter of becoming conscious.

How can minority becoming be powerful? How can resistance become an insurrection? Reading you, I'm never sure how to answer such questions, even though I always find in your works an impetus that forces me to reformulate the questions theoretically and practically. And yet when I read what you've written about the imagination, or on common notions in Spinoza, or when I follow your description in The Time-Image *of the rise of revolutionary cinema in third-world countries, and with you grasp the passage from image into fabulation, into political praxis, I almost feel I've found an answer . . . Or am I mistaken? Is there then, some way for the resistance of the oppressed to become effective, and for what's intolerable to be definitively removed? Is there some way for the mass of singularities and atoms that we all are to come forward as a constitutive power, or must we rather accept the juridical paradox that constitutive power can be defined only by constituted power?*

The difference between minorities and majorities isn't their size. A minority may be bigger than a majority. What defines the majority is a model you have to conform to: the average European adult male city-dweller, for example . . . A minority, on the other hand, has no model, it's a becoming, a process. One might say the majority is nobody. Everybody's caught, one way or another, in a minority becoming that would lead them into unknown paths if they opted to follow it through. When a minority creates models for itself, it's because it wants to become a majority, and probably has to, to survive or prosper (to have a state, be recognized, establish its rights, for example). But its power comes from what it's managed to create, which to some extent goes into the model, but doesn't depend on it. A people is always a creative minority, and remains one even when it acquires a majority: it can be both at once because the two things aren't lived out on the same plane. It's the greatest artists (rather than populist artists) who invoke a people, and find they "lack a people": Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Klee, Berg. The Straubs in cinema. Artists can only invoke a people, their need for one goes to the very heart of what they're doing, it's not their job to create one, and they can't. Art is resistance: it resists death, slavery, infamy, shame. But a people can't worry about art. How is a people created, through what terrible suffering? When a people's created, it's through its own resources, but in a way that links up with something in art (Garrel says there's a mass of terrible suffering in the Louvre, too) or links up art to what it lacked. Utopia isn't the right concept: it's more a question of a "fabulation" in which a people and art both share. We ought to take up Bergson's notion of fabulation and give it a political meaning.

In your book on Foucault, and then again in your TV interview at INA,[6] *you suggest we should look in more detail at three kinds of power: sovereign power, disciplinary power, and above all the control of "communication" that's on the way to becoming hegemonic. On the one hand this third scenario relates to the most perfect form of domination, extending even to speech and imagination, but on the other hand any man, any minority, any singularity, is more than ever before potentially able to speak out and thereby recover a greater degree of freedom. In the Marxist utopia of the* Grundrisse, *communism takes precisely the form of a transversal organization of free individuals built on a technology that makes it possible. Is communism still a viable option? Maybe in a communication society it's less utopian than it used to be?*

We're definitely moving toward "control" societies that are no longer exactly disciplinary. Foucault's often taken as the theorist of disciplinary societies and of their principal technology, *confinement* (not just in hospitals and prisons, but in schools, factories, and barracks). But he was actually one of the first to say that we're moving away from disciplinary societies, we've already left them behind. We're moving toward control societies that no longer operate by confining people but through continuous control and instant communication. Burroughs was the first to address this. People are of course constantly talking about prisons, schools, hospitals: the institutions are breaking down. But they're breaking down because they're fighting a losing battle. New kinds of punishment, education, health care are being stealthily introduced. Open hospitals and teams providing home care have been around for some time. One can envisage education becoming less and less a closed site differentiated from the workspace as another closed site, but both disappearing and giving way to frightful continual training, to continual monitoring[7] of worker-schoolkids or bureaucrat-students. They try to present this as a reform of the school system, but it's really its dismantling. In a control-based system nothing's left alone for long. You yourself long ago suggested how work in Italy was being transformed by forms of part-time work done at home, which have spread since you wrote (and by new forms of circulation and distribution of products). One can of course see how each kind of society corresponds to a particular kind of machine—with simple mechanical machines corresponding to sovereign societies, thermodynamic machines to disciplinary societies, cybernetic machines and computers to control societies. But the machines don't explain anything, you have to analyze the collective arrangements of which the machines are just one component. Compared with the approaching forms of ceaseless control in open sites, we may come to see the harshest confinement as part of a wonderful happy past. The quest for "universals of communication" ought to make us shudder. It's true that, even before control societies are fully in place, forms of delinquency or resistance (two different things) are also appearing. Computer piracy and viruses, for example, will replace strikes and what the nineteenth century called "sabotage" ("clogging" the machinery).[8] You ask whether control or communication societies will lead to forms of resistance that might reopen the way for a communism understood as the "transversal organization of free individuals." Maybe, I don't know. But it would be nothing to do with minorities speaking out. Maybe speech and communication have been corrupted. They're thoroughly permeated by money—and not by accident but by their very nature. We've got to hijack speech. Creating has always been something different from communicating. The key thing may be to create vacuoles of noncommunication, circuit breakers, so we can elude control.

In Foucault *and in* The Fold, *processes of subjectification seem to be studied more closely than in some of your other works. The subject's the boundary of a* *continuous movement between an inside and outside. What are the political consequences of this conception of the subject? If the subject can't be reduced to an externalized citizenship, can it invest citizenship with force and life? Can it make possible a new militant pragmatism, at once a* pietas *toward the world and a very radical construct? What politics can carry into history the splendor of events and subjectivity? How can we conceive a community that has real force but no base, that isn't a totality but is, as in Spinoza, absolute?*

It definitely makes sense to look at the various ways individuals and groups constitute themselves as subjects through processes of subjectification: what counts in such processes is the extent to which, as they take shape, they elude both established forms of knowledge and the dominant forms of power. Even if they in turn engender new forms of power or become assimilated into new forms of knowledge. For a while, though, they have a real rebellious spontaneity. This is nothing to do with going back to "the subject," that is, to something invested with duties, power, and knowledge. One might equally well speak of new kinds of event, rather than processes of subjectification: events that can't be explained by the situations that give rise to them, or into which they lead. They appear for a moment, and it's that moment that matters, it's the chance we must seize. Or we can simply talk about the brain: the brain's precisely this boundary of a continuous two-way movement between an Inside and Outside, this membrane between them. New cerebral pathways, new ways of thinking, aren't explicable in terms of microsurgery; it's for science, rather, to try and discover what might have happened in the brain for one to start thinking this way or that. I think subjectification, events, and brains are more or less the same thing. What we most lack is a belief in the world, we've quite lost the world, it's been taken from us. If you believe in the world you precipitate events, however inconspicuous, that elude control, you engender new space-times, however small their surface or volume. It's what you call *pietas*. Our ability to resist control, or our submission to it, has to be assessed at the level of our every move. We need both creativity *and* a people.

Conversation with Toni Negri
Futur Antérieur 1 (Spring 1990)

POSTSCRIPT ON CONTROL SOCIETIES

History

Foucault associated *disciplinary societies* with the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; they reach their apogee at the beginning of the twentieth century. They operate by organizing major sites of confinement. Individuals are always going from one closed site to another, each with its own laws: first of all the family, then school ("you're not at home, you know"), then the barracks ("you're not at school, you know"), then the factory, hospital from time to time, maybe prison, the model site of confinement. Prison provides a model for the others: thus the heroine in *Europa 51*, on seeing the workers, cries out: "I thought they were convicts . . . " Foucault has thoroughly analyzed the ideal behind sites of confinement, clearly seen in the factory: bringing everything together, giving each thing its place, organizing time, setting up in this space-time a force of production greater than the sum of component forces. But Foucault also knew how short-lived this model was: it succeeded *sovereign societies* with an altogether different aim and operation (taking a cut of production instead of organizing it, condemning to death instead of ordering life); the transition took place gradually, and Napoleon seems to have effected the overall transformation from one kind of society into the other. But discipline would in its turn begin to break down as new forces moved slowly into place, then made rapid advances after the Second World War: we were no longer in disciplinary societies, we were leaving them behind.

We're in the midst of a general breakdown of all sites of confinement—prisons, hospitals, factories, schools, the family. The family is an "interior" that's breaking down like all other interiors—educational, professional, and so on. The appropriate ministers have constantly been announcing supposedly appropriate reforms. Educational reforms, industrial reforms, hospital, army, prison reforms; but everyone knows these institutions are in more or less terminal decline. It's simply a matter of nursing them through their death throes and keeping people busy until the new forces knocking at the door take over. *Control societies* are taking over from disciplinary societies. "Control" is the name proposed by Burroughs to characterize the new monster, and Foucault sees it fast approaching. Paul Virilio too is constantly analyzing the ultrarapid forms of apparently free-floating control that are taking over from the old disciplines at work within the time scales of closed systems. It's not a question of amazing pharmaceutical products, nuclear technology, and genetic engineering, even though these will play their part in the new process. It's not a question of asking whether the old or new system is harsher or more bearable, because there's a conflict in each between the ways they free and enslave us. With the breakdown of the hospital as a site of confinement, for instance, community psychiatry, day hospitals, and home care initially presented new freedoms, while at the same time contributing to mechanisms of control as rigorous as the harshest confinement. It's not a question of worrying or of hoping for the best, but of finding new weapons.

Logic

The various placements or sites of confinement through which individuals pass are independent variables: we're supposed to start all over again each time, and although all these sites have a common language, it's *analogical*. The various forms of control, on the other hand, are inseparable variations, forming a system of varying geometry whose language is *digital* (though not necessarily binary). Confinements are *molds*, different moldings, while controls are a *modulation*, like a self-transmuting[1] molding continually changing from one moment to the next, or like a sieve whose mesh varies from one point to another. This comes out well in the matter of wages: the factory was a body of men whose internal forces reached an equilibrium between the highest possible production and the lowest possible wages; but in a control society businesses take over from factories, and a business is a soul, a gas. There were of course bonus systems in factories, but businesses strive to introduce a deeper level of modulation into all wages, bringing them into a state of constant metastability punctuated by ludicrous challenges, competitions, and seminars. If the stupidest TV game shows are so successful, it's because they're a perfect reflection of the way businesses are run. Factories formed individuals into a body of men for the joint convenience of a management that could monitor each component in this mass, and trade unions that could mobilize mass resistance; but businesses are constantly introducing an inexorable rivalry presented as healthy competition, a wonderful motivation that sets individuals against one another and sets itself up in each of them, dividing each within himself. Even the state education system has been looking at the principle of "getting paid for results": in fact, just as businesses are replacing factories, *school* is being replaced by *continuing education* and exams by continuous assessment.[2] It's the surest way of turning education into a business.

In disciplinary societies you were always starting all over again (as you went from school to barracks, from barracks to factory), while in control societies you never finish anything—business, training, and military service being coexisting metastable states of a single modulation, a sort of universal transmutation. Kafka, already standing at the point of transition between the two kinds of society, described in *The Trial* their most ominous judicial expressions: *apparent acquittal* (between two confinements) in disciplinary societies, and *endless postponement* in (constantly changing) control societies are two very different ways of doing things, and if our legal system is tottering, is itself breaking down, it's because we're going from one to the other. Disciplinary societies have two poles: signatures standing for *individuals*, and numbers or places in a register standing for their position in a *mass*. Disciplines see no incompatibility at all between these two aspects, and their power both amasses and individuates, that is, it fashions those over whom it's exerted into a body of people and molds the individuality of each member of that body (Foucault saw the origin of this twin concern in the priest's pastoral power over his flock and over each separate animal, and saw civil power subsequently establishing itself by different means as a lay "pastor"). In control societies, on the other hand, the key thing is no longer a signature or number but a code: codes are *passwords*, whereas disciplinary societies are ruled (when it comes to integration or resistance) by *precepts*.[3] The digital language of control is made up of codes indicating whether access to some information should be allowed or denied. We're no longer dealing with a duality of mass and individual. Individuals become "*dividuals*," and masses become samples, data, markets, or "*banks*." Money, perhaps, best expresses the difference between the two kinds of society, since discipline was always related to molded currencies containing gold as a numerical standard, whereas control is based on floating exchange rates, modulations depending on a code setting sample percentages for various currencies. If money's old moles are the animals you get in places of confinement, then control societies have their snakes.[4] We've gone from one animal to the other, from moles to snakes, not just in the system we live under but in the way we live and in our relations with other people too. Disciplinary man produced energy in discrete amounts, while control man undulates, moving among a continuous range of different orbits. *Surfing* has taken over from all the old *sports*.

It's easy to set up a correspondence between any society and some kind of machine, which isn't to say that their machines determine different kinds of society but that they express the social forms capable of producing them and making use of them. The old sovereign societies worked with simple machines, levers, pulleys, clocks; but recent disciplinary societies were equipped with thermodynamic machines presenting the passive danger of entropy and the active danger of sabotage; control societies function with a third generation of machines, with information technology and computers, where the passive danger is noise and the active, piracy and viral contamination. This technological development is more deeply rooted in a mutation of capitalism. The mutation has been widely recognized and can be summarized as follows: nineteenth-century capitalism was concentrative, directed toward production, and proprietorial. Thus it made the factory into a site of confinement, with the capitalist owning the means of production and perhaps owning other similarly organized sites (worker's homes, schools). As for markets, they were won either through specialization, through colonization, or through reducing the costs of production. But capitalism in its present form is no longer directed toward production, which is often transferred to remote parts of the Third World, even in the case of complex operations like textile plants, steelworks, and oil refineries. It's directed toward metaproduction. It no longer buys raw materials and no longer sells finished products: it buys finished products or assembles them from parts. What it seeks to sell is services, and what it seeks to buy, activities. It's a capitalism no longer directed toward production but toward products, that is, toward sales or markets. Thus it's essentially dispersive, with factories giving way to businesses. Family, school, army, and factory are no longer so many analogous but different sites converging in an owner, whether the state or some private power, but transmutable or transformable coded configurations of a single business where the only people left are administrators. Even art has moved away from closed sites and into the open circuits of banking. Markets are won by taking control rather than by establishing a discipline, by fixing rates rather than by reducing costs, by transforming products rather than by specializing production. Corruption here takes on a new power. The sales department becomes a business' center or "soul." We're told businesses have souls, which is surely the most terrifying news in the world. Marketing is now the instrument of social control and produces the arrogant breed who are our masters. Control is short-term and rapidly shifting, but at the same time continuous and unbounded, whereas discipline was long-term, infinite, and discontinuous. A man is no longer a man confined but a man in debt. One thing, it's true, hasn't changed—capitalism still keeps three quarters of humanity in extreme poverty, too poor to have debts and too numerous to be confined: control will have to deal not only with vanishing frontiers, but with mushrooming shantytowns and ghettos.

Program

We don't have to stray into science fiction to find a control mechanism that can fix the position of any element at any given moment—an animal in a game reserve, a man in a business (electronic tagging). Félix Guattari has imagined a town where anyone can leave their flat, their street, their neighborhood, using their (dividual) electronic card that opens this or that barrier; but the card may also be rejected on a particular day, or between certain times of day; it doesn't depend on the barrier but on the computer that is making sure everyone is in a permissible place, and effecting a universal modulation.

We ought to establish the basic sociotechnological principles of control mechanisms as their age dawns, and describe in these terms what is already taking the place of the disciplinary sites of confinement that everyone says are breaking down. It may be that older means of control, borrowed from the old sovereign societies, will come back into play, adapted as necessary. The key thing is that we're at the beginning of something new. In the *prison system*: the attempt to find "alternatives" to custody, at least for minor offenses, and the use of electronic tagging to force offenders to stay at home between certain hours. In the *school system*: forms of continuous assessment, the impact of continuing education on schools, and the related move away from any research in universities, "business" being brought into education at every level. In the *hospital system*: the new medicine "without doctors or patients" that identifies potential cases and subjects at risk and is nothing to do with any progress toward individualizing treatment, which is how it's presented, but is the substitution for individual or numbered bodies of coded "dividual" matter to be controlled. In the *business system*: new ways of manipulating money, products, and men, no longer channeled through the old factory system. This is a fairly limited range of examples, but enough to convey what it means to talk of institutions breaking down: the widespread progressive introduction of a new system of domination. One of the most important questions is whether trade unions still have any role: linked throughout their history to the struggle against disciplines, in sites of confinement, can they adapt, or will they give way to new forms of resistance against control societies? Can one already glimpse the outlines of these future forms of resistance, capable of standing up to marketing's blandishments? Many young people have a strange craving to be "motivated," they're always asking for special courses and continuing education; it's their job to discover whose ends these serve, just as older people discovered, with considerable difficulty, who was benefiting from disciplines. A snake's coils are even more intricate than a mole's burrow.

L'Autre Journal 1 (May 1990)

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

LETTER TO A HARSH CRITIC

1. The journal *Recherches* was started by Guattari in 1965 as the organ of one of the many acronym-designated groups he founded over the course of his career, the FGERI (Fédération des Groupes d'Etude et de Recherches Institutionelles, "grouping of groups for the study of groups" perhaps). The FGERI went on to play a major role in the "events" of May 68, notably orchestrating the occupation of the National Theater (directed by Guattari, Godard, Julian Beck, Danny Cohn-Bendit, and others), where the principles of the "Revolution" were dramatically debated and enacted in exchanges between stage and floor that ran continuously for several days and nights. After May 68, *Recherches* became a focus for a wide range of "marginal" groups, and in 1973 Guattari was prosecuted for "an outrage to public morals" for publishing a special issue entitled "Three Billion Perverts: Grand Encyclopedia of Homosexualities." The opening list of contributors included Deleuze, his wife Fanny, Foucault, Sartre, Genet, and the twenty-four-year-old gay activist Michel Cressole (to whom the present letter is addressed). The various contributions were unsigned, but Cressole was presumably the "M, 24 years old" who directed the opening (and scandalously open) discussion of sexual experiences with Arab men, "Us and the Arabs," referred to later, and criticized as racist, fascistic, and oedipal in the second contribution (?coauthored by Deleuze, who here, alluding to Kafka's short story "Arabs and Jackals," complains "You're not an Arab, you're a jackal"), as in the closing essay, "Les Culs énergumènes" ("Fanatical Asses"—in every sense). Cressole's letter to Deleuze displays the sour coquetry and wounded pride of a spurned (and rather oedipal) courtship, and this is reflected in Deleuze's occasionally teasing tone (his closing remark may be read as "Whatever people say, I do like you").

2. Georges Adrien, known as "Darien," was an extreme-right libertarian writer and activist around the turn of the century, whose violent rejection of all repressive social institutions was reflected in his violent distortions of conventionally instituted language.

3. All sorts of *fous et marginaux*: After the failure of the student "revolution" of May 68, the prime forum of social dissent shifted from the mainstream leftist opposition of the sixties to a counterculture articulated in the margins of conventional institutions. Deleuze's teaching at the "counteruniversity" of Vincennes, set up on the margins of Paris after '68, provoked much hostility in the French academic establishment, and itself became (especially after the publication of *Anti-Oedipus* in 1972) a focus for "crazies and marginals." The use here of the word *marginaux*, only current after '68, serves to underline the fact that it was precisely the sort of people who had rallied around an embattled Bergson who were now criticizing his embattled heir for writing about Bergson—a figure who only appeared "conventional" to those who accepted the canonized and sanitized image presented by the conventional history of philosophy.

4. *Des enfants dans le dos, c'est lui qui vous en fait*: Nietzsche creeps up behind you and gives *you* strange children. In the previous paragraph Deleuze has been playing with various sexual and textual resonances of the colloquial expression for "doing things behind someone's back," *faire un enfant dans le dos*.

5. For Deleuze and Guattari, "meaning is use," and *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* may be seen as a crash immersion course in Deleuzoguattarian ("another language within the French language") that "begins in the middle" rather than with an elementary grammar and lexicon. One might, though, make the elementary grammatical point that "desiring machines," *machines désirantes*, are not *machines à désirer*, machines *for* desiring (as washing machines, *machines à laver*, are machines for washing). They are rather the free functioning of any configuration of linked components, considered as an oriented process or a processing of other configurations with which it intersects or shares components—as "desiring production." "Desire" as production line, as this intrinsic orientation of "machinery" toward the production of certain or uncertain effects, and the characterization of machines as "desiring," inverts the standard conception of machines as *instruments* employed to produce some "end" determined outside the immanent operation of the machine by a supposedly self-determining transcendent subject. The transcendent subject vanishes like a ghost into the unconscious machinery that produces (among other things) empirical subjects and their conscious ends. Desire is not rooted in a subject or its objectives or objects (not even in "missing" Lacanian subjects and objects), but subjects and objects are produced by desiring machines. In the transition from *Anti-Oedipus* to *A Thousand Plateaus*, the residual subjectivism of "desiring" machines was elim-

inated in favor of more impersonal *agencements*, "arrangements." But just as the desiring machines of *Anti-Oedipus* are not machines *for* anything, the "war machines" of *A Thousand Plateaus* are not "machines for war," but free arrangements oriented along a "line of flight" out of the repressive social machinery that configures or codifies all processes and production within the extrinsic ends of a transcendent state oriented along the single "static" line of a unitary history. In *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* the free interplay of all the machines, arrangements, flows, processes, becomings, events into which a given thing (component, variable) enters is intrinsically desiring, productive, and disruptive: creative, artistic, and revolutionary.

6. Lacan and the group around him split from the Paris Psychoanalytical Society (the French affiliate of the Freudian International Psychoanalytical Association), following his forced resignation from the presidency in 1953, to form the French Psychoanalytical Society. Following lengthy negotations, the IPA in 1963 finally refused to recognize any group dominated by Lacan, and he was "excommunicated" from his own splinter group, forming the Paris Freudian School as a splinter from the splinter the following year. His increasingly autocratic control of the new group in its turn provoked a third schism in 1969, with various dissidents, the "Lacanians without Lacan," establishing a Fourth Group (of French Freudians). The ambiguous relations between the Freudian School and the department of psychoanalysis initially set up as a section of Deleuze's philosophy department at the new "dissident" university of Vincennes at the time of this split were finally resolved in 1974 when Lacan imposed his own son-in-law as director of a reorganized independent department whose entrance, diametrically opposite the entrance to Deleuze's seminar on the same floor of the same building, was thereafter kept carefully locked. Equally symbolic (and one of several echoes of the feud between Schopenhauer and Hegel) was the fact that Deleuze's seminar was held at the same time on the same day as Lacan's, several miles away in central Paris, so that one could not attend both—although Guattari rather typically and paradoxically, and much to the son-in-law's displeasure, remained a member of the Freudian School from 1964 until its theatrical dissolution by Lacan in 1980, shortly before he died (leading to a proliferation of new groups in the 1980s).

7. Not a *belle âme*: an allusion to a tragic (or masochistic) Romantic persona analyzed by Goethe, Hegel, and others.

8. *Un devenir animal* may be read either as "an animal becoming" or "a becoming-animal": *animal* can be construed either as an adjective qualifying the verbal noun *un devenir* (an animal kind of becoming), or as a noun characterizing the end-state (animal) toward which the process of becoming-animal tends. Both resonances of the grammatically ambiguous construction are present in varying degrees in the numerous variations on the theme of "becoming" in *Negotiations* and elsewhere, but the sense here, indicated by

the position of *universel* (*un devenir universel animal* rather than *un devenir animal universel*: a universal animal becoming rather than a universal becoming-animal), reflects the Deleuzoguattarian inversion of the traditional relations of being and becoming (here, human being and animal becoming). Rather than a transition between two states of being, a line of development defined by starting point and endpoint, becoming is a free play of lines or flows whose intersections define unstable points of transitory identity (the human "beings" of subjects and their objects). Fluid becoming is opposed to static being in various contexts below as "revolutionary," "artistic," "minoritarian," and so on: this is not so much a matter of human beings becoming revolutionaries or artists or minorities (different kinds of the same human being), but of becoming itself as intrinsically transformative, creative, and marginal—and as intrinsically multiple. Becoming has "itself" no fixed identity or being, is always becoming-other, alteration rather than alternation, pure difference rather than repetition, multiple becomings rather than unitary becoming. And becomings have no "history," constantly breaking out of the repressive inscription or encoding of their multiple lines within a unitary development toward the transcendent ends or endpoints of state, morality, and religion.

ON *ANTI-OEDIPUS*

1. The Catalan-born psychiatrist François Tosquelles opened an experimental hospital in southern France in 1940, rejecting all elements of psychiatric institutions resembling the Fascist prison camp in which he had been interned during the Spanish Civil War. His celebrated experiment was the prime inspiration for the clinic opened at the Château de la Borde in the Loire valley south of Paris by Jean Oury (trained, like Guattari, by Lacan) in 1953. Oury's brother was the young Guattari's schoolteacher, and the two met in 1945 when "Félix" (born Pierre) was fifteen; by the age of twenty Guattari had adopted Oury as his mentor, and La Borde became his principal base from 1953 until his death there in 1992 (when Oury remarked that "he was exactly the same at sixty as at fifteen").

2. *Investissement* is the standard French term for Freud's *Besetzung*, for which the standard English term is "cathexis," but Deleuze and Guattari (while taking the term from psychoanalysis) hardly subscribe to a psychoanalytic interpretation and emphasize the "libidinal economy" of desire—so I have departed from Freudian orthodoxy and allowed the various resonances of "investment" to echo the multiple resonances of the Deleuzoguattarian term.

3. Etymologically, *délirer* is to leave the furrow, go "off the rails," and wander in imagination and thought: meanings, images, and so on float in a dream logic rather than calmly following one another along the familiar lines or tracks of cold reason. But for Deleuze and Guattari solid "reason" and free-floating *délire*

are simply converse articulations of a single transformational "logic of sense" that is no more anchored in a central fixed signifier—Lacan's "name of the father" or *nom du père* (with its "scriptural" resonance)—than in any supposedly fixed system of reference (of signifiers to ideas and things, including biological fathers) that Lacan's logic of signifiers supposedly supersedes. Jean-Jacques Lecercle, characterizing Deleuzoguattarian thought as a "philosophy of *délire*," argues that the term is untranslatable (*Philosophy Through the Looking-Glass* [1985], pp. 6–7), and I have nowhere attempted to translate it.

4. *Agencements*: see "Breaking Things Open," n. 9.

5. I have everywhere translated *un énoncé* as "an utterance," and *énonciation* as [an act of] "utterance" or "uttering." Massumi follows Foucault's translator Sheridan in translating these terms as "statement" and "enunciation," but this seems thoroughly misleading (and obscures the simple relations between various aspects of the same activity of *énoncer*: utterances, uttering, the utterable, etc.). Deleuze and Guattari insist that all utterances (as locutionary acts or events) correspond to "illocutionary" or "performative" moves open within a given space of available words, rules for combining them, and rules about how particular combinations of words may be used by certain individuals or groups in certain situations. They insist that such verbal acts are always essentially *directive* (normative, prescriptive *mots d'ordre*), and that apparently "constative" acts, statements that "represent" how things are (along with apparently interrogative, expressive, commissive, and other utterances) are really concealed directives to interpret things, and act, in a particular way. To call utterances "statements" might even be seen as a concealed directive to maintain the coercive system of "language as representation" that is the main target of Deleuze and Guattari's analysis.

Like Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari "begin in the middle" of words and things, taking particular linguistic moves in particular situations or contexts as prior to any unitary system of "language" projected beyond the particular historical situations of language-use. They therefore see Benveniste's distinction between "the uttered subject" marked by a term ("I") in "language" (as the abstract frame of all possible utterances), and a particular subject's use or uttering of that term in a particular situation (a particular *discours* or *parole*), as an abstraction from the group dynamics of interaction of specific texts and contexts, rather than the universal framework of all such interaction. The relation of *langue* and *discours*, *énoncé* and *énonciation*, competence and performance, is not something that can itself be articulated within a unitary system of language-use: presenting "language" as a unitary system is, rather, a discursive move by which a particular group seeks to maintain its symbolic and material power over words and things and other groups. One might see the distinction between Deleuzoguattarian and Foucaldian conceptions of "utterance" as a distinction between discursive "arrangements" and "apparatuses": see "Breaking Things Open," n. 9.

6. *C'est cette question même en tant que barrée: barré* means "barred," blocked, here "irresoluble;" but also "crossed-out", deleted—echoing the central Lacanian theme of the *barre* that formally represents the relation of signifier and signified, the "symbolic" relation of signification: "S/s" ("the signifier *S* signifies *s*"). In Lacanian theory (as perhaps in Descartes) the "subject" is formally identified in terms of a signifier that itself *marks the locus of signification*: the subject as the formal source *of* signification is so signified by a sort of "second-level" or recursive, reflexive signifier of signification itself: $\not{S}$. The dynamic of subjectivity is then articulated as the constant flight of the subject's act of signification (as uttering subject: see n. 5) from its attempt to pin itself down as signified or uttered (signifier and signified would coincide only in the formal circularity of Aristotle's self-thinking thought, or Moses' God, "I am 'I am,'" or in the identification of these figures in Christian theology: in eternity but never in time). This dynamic subject or *sujet barré*, $\not{S}$, is (as in Descartes's pivotal doubting of his doubt, which substituted the finite reflection of a human subject for the infinite Thought of a scholastic God) formally equivalent to the empty form of the *question* as marking the general place of substitution of one signifier for another ("What is . . . ?"; "What does . . . *mean*?": the formal basis of Aristotle's logic of substitution of one word for another, as of Lacan's "matheme-atical" formalism).

7. *Schize* (a gallicized form of the present participle of the Greek verb *schizein*) is a word coined by Deleuze and Guattari to characterize the *process* of splitting or rupture, of which (say) "schism" would be the *result*.

ON *A THOUSAND PLATEAUS*

1. *Vos plateaux sont pleins d'accidents* . . . : the interviewer appears to be playing on the geological sense of *accidents* (*de terrain*) as irregularities in a landscape.

2. After ten years at its original woodland site in the Bois de Vincennes at the edge of Paris, the "experimental" university of Paris VIII was moved in 1979 to a new smaller site in the industrial suburb of St. Denis. Deleuze's own seminar was moved to a noisy "temporary" construction separated from the main St. Denis site by a busy four-lane highway.

3. "*Sur quelques régimes de signes*": Deleuze makes no systematic distinction between *régime* and *système*, sometimes using the two words interchangeably, although his use of *régime* is generally restricted to coded historical systems (perhaps even the silicon *régime* he elsewhere foresees replacing carbon-based life-forms falls into this category). Since in most Deleuzian contexts the natural English equivalent for the word is usually "system" rather than the far more narrow "regime," I've usually relied on the context to reflect the cultural character of various systems characterized in French as *régimes*.

4. *Agencements collectifs d'énonciation*: see "Breaking Things Open," n. 9.

5. I have everywhere translated *mots d'ordre* (maxims, directives—literally "ordering" words or phrases) as "precepts," since this conveys their prescriptive or normative character, and contrasts them with "concepts" and "percepts." Massumi calls them "order-words," but his coinage conveys none of the everyday resonance of the phrase.

6. *Discours indirect*: normally indirect or reported speech, *oratio obliqua*, in which one utterance paraphrases the content of another "primary" utterance. But according to Deleuze and Guattari, language is *primarily* oblique. Deleuze, in *The Logic of Sense*, inverted the traditional account of metaphor that derives the indirect or figural sense of a word from a true "primary" meaning: all meaning and identification derive rather from the unstable interplay of figures, from configurations of sense (and the traditional image of verbal imagery as dependent on a fixed primary sense is simply a *false image*). In *A Thousand Plateaus* all discourse is indirect in the sense that all utterances, and the uttered subjectivities traditionally identified as the "primary speakers" conveying their initial sense, derive any identity they may fleetingly possess from the unstable interplay of words and other things in the shifting configurations that are "collective arrangements of utterance."

7. See "Letter to a Harsh Critic," n. 8.

8. See "Letter to a Harsh Critic" n. 5.

9. *Des déterminations comme celles du territoire, de la terre et de la déterritorialisation*: *terre*, cognate in French with the words for "territory" and "deterritorialization," is, so to speak, the raw space or expanse of land, soil, ground, earth, before its coding and appropriation as "territory" (the Latin *territorium* is *terra*, land, referred to some owner). The sense of the word can range, in different contexts, from some patch, even some lump, of earth to "the earth" as a whole (as the primal uncoded "body without organs," the globe). Here, as simply coordinate with territory and deterritorialization in general, it conveys rather the character of uncoded or decoded spatiality, before any delimitation as lump, patch, or Earth, and there is no really adequate English equivalent.

10. *Le territoire mais aussi la terre ou le Natal*: one's *terre natale*, or simply one's *natal*, is the land in which one was born, one's native soil.

11. Heidegger's 1950 collection of essays, *Holzwege* ("forester's tracks," but also "wrong tracks"), was translated into French as *Chemins qui ne mènent nullepart*, "Paths that lead nowhere."

12. Verbs have two "non-finite" forms, indefinite as to the time of the action they express: "infinitives" and "participles." Deleuze talks about verbal *infinitives* transcending tense and mood (indicative, imperative, subjunctive: is Jules *going* to arrive, being *told* to arrive, or *supposed* to arrive at 5 P.M.?). Activities or actualities conveyed by infinitives in French (*le devenir*, *l'être* even) are often conveyed in English by participles (becoming, being, "Jules arriving

5 P.M.," "Werewolves swarming"), but these may generally be taken as simply equivalent ways of expressing non-finite verbality (indeed the two forms are sometimes interchangeable in non-telegraphic English: "he likes to eat," "he likes eating").

THREE QUESTIONS ON *SIX TIMES TWO*

1. *Pas une image juste, juste une image:* a "just image" is an image that exactly corresponds to what it is taken to represent; but if we take images as "just images," we see them precisely as images, rather than correct or incorrect representations of anything.

2. Georges Séguy was General Secretary of the Confédération Générale du Travail (the largest trade union grouping in France, affiliated to the Communist Party) from 1967 to 1982.

3. A *plan fixe* or "static shot" frames an action in a fixed picture-plane: different types of shot are characterized in English in terms of camera position, lens, and movement; they are differentiated in French in terms of the resulting "picture-plane" or *plan.* French cinematographic vocabulary thus allows Deleuze to draw a direct analogy between the picture-plane of Godard's static shots and the *plan fixe sonore,* the "static aural plane," of some contemporary music.

4. The Institut des Hautes Etudes Cinématographiques was, before the reforms of 1986, the state school for "film art" (i.e., directing and cinematography—technicians were trained at a separate establishment).

5. The contrast between "and" (*est*) and "is" (*et*) would be accentuated in the spoken text of an interview by the homophony of the two French words.

ON *THE MOVEMENT-IMAGE*

1. I have left all Deleuze's uses of the word *montage* in French (i.e., italicized) in order to convey the general sense of a director's and editor's construction of a film as a sequence or combination of images, rather than the restricted sense of (anglicized) "montage" as the discontinuous juxtaposition of images to produce "subjective" ideas and emotions. This emphasizes Bazin's influential opposition between *montage* and *mise-en-scène* (between the subjective "external" collation of images and the internal composition of shots), echoed in much of Deleuze's analysis. *Montage* (as "putting together" a play) and *mise-en-scène* ("staging" it) are more or less synonymous in the theatrical usage from which they are taken—but then the proscenium arch amounts to a sort of single *plan fixe* or static shot.

2. *Matière:* the matter, object, or material for analysis as well the medium or substance of cinema, *and* physical "matter" in movement.

3. *Esprit* in French (like *Geist* in German) is both "spirit" and "mind," although Deleuze makes an adjectival distinction between *spirituel* (as char-

acterizing, for example, an extraspatial or meta-physical dimension of Dreyer's films) and *mentale* (he talks of a "cinema of mental relations"). I have confined *esprit* as "spirit" to contexts where there is some "otherworldly" resonance, and translated *l'oeil de l'esprit* (for example) as "the mind's eye"; but it should be borne in mind that Deleuze is here identifying an "immaterial" dimension (of *esprit*) whose interpretation as "spiritual" or "mental" reflects different perspectives on this dimension, rather than any fundamental distinction between spiritual and mental dimensions of images and the world.

4. *Ballade*: at once a wandering (normally written *balade*) from one thing or place to another with no fixed goal or direction, and a sort of recurrent musical or poetic "ballad" pattern in this otherwise arbitrary movement.

5. A term coined from the verb *montrer*, "to show"—Lapoujade's lexical transformation expressing the transformation of traditional *montage* (as the construction of cinematic sense through the interplay of images) into a sort of monstrance: the relations of images *express* a primary sense, rather than sense being a secondary construct produced by the manipulation of independently meaningful images. This "inflection" of the image transforms *visibilité* into *lisibilité*: relations become "legible" rather than "visible."

6. Deleuze's play on the common derivation of *mold* and *modulation* from the Latin *modulus* (measure, pattern, model, mold) is perhaps more evident in the French. Historically "modulation" (in, say, musical transposition into a different "mode" or—later—key) is of course associated with the pattern or measure found in a system of *variation* between fixed measures or molds (see "Postscript," n. 1).

7. *Plan*: for the cinematic resonance of "picture-plane," see "Three Questions," n. 3.

8. "Better on your arse than on your feet, / Flat on your back than either [, dead than the lot]."

9. "*Le problème du regard*": *le regard* as a key theme in postwar French philosophy has usually (in Sartre's dramatic philosophy and philosophical dramas, for example) been translated as "the gaze"; but a *regard* in general does not have the fixity or persistence of a *regard fixe*, a gaze. Indeed it may often be merely a glance. *Regarder* is simply "to look"—the attentive or perceptual activity of a subject—with the complementary sense of "to appear" *to* a subject (to look sad, wonderful . . .) subtracted. "Gaze" was presumably chosen by Sartre's translators because "look" means more than an act of looking *at* someone or something, and "a look" suggests only a single glance rather than "looking" in general.

The parallel development of the theme of the *regard* in postwar French psychoanalysis has informed a large amount of film theory and criticism turning on parallels between the "mirror-phase" in Lacan's theory of infantile psychosexual development, and the situation of a viewer (as imaginary locus of integration of filmic signifiers, or real locus of an imaginary integration, with the two interacting in the symbolic order of "film language') gazing at a screen (where his own *regard* is mirrored in the symbolic interaction of characters in the film). This and other "subjective" models largely supplanted earlier linguistic models in French film theory in the 1970s, and similarly supplanted early Metzian and Althusserian ("cinematic apparatus') models in England and America. The viewer's *regard fixe* was initially incorporated into the vocabulary of anglophone film theory as "the look," and at first glance Sartrian and Lacanian *regards* might appear to have been transposed by English translators; but the history of the term in postwar English translation has come full-circle with a recent tendency, especially among feminist film theorists, to characterize the essentially passive, narcissistic "male" *regard* of the viewer "implied" by most films as a "gaze."

10. *Démarquer* is to "unmark"—to remove identifying characteristics—or to "mark down"—to reduce in price or value (while *remarquer* is to notice or recognize something, as well as to restore identifying marks). The function of the *démarque* (in scare-quotes in the French) is thus to defamiliarize or decodify an image or thing by opening up and so questioning the network of relations and expectations that confer conventional and predictable meanings, values and significance: to "change the look of something," change how it appears to characters and viewers. But Deleuze goes on to emphasize how the changing perceptual relations between things and characters or viewers are merely one element in a system of "internal" cinematic relations between images, rather than any implicit inscription of all cinematic relations and images within some supposedly primary relation of "the" viewer to the screen.

On *The Time-Image*

1. *Raccords et faux raccords*: see "Letter to Daney," n. 6.

2. *L'englobant*: Deleuze appears to have taken this term from Jaspers, who talks of the *Umgreifende* (normally translated into French as *l'englobant* and into English as "the Encompassing') as the "limiting horizon" of all things, which is not itself any thing (cf. *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 379 and n. 46, where there is a reference to Jaspers in the context of a characterization of "the whole" as an encompassing horizon; and see also Deleuze's correlation of "the whole" and "the Open" in the previous conversation).

3. *Une épaisseur du temps, des couches de temps coexistantes, auxquelles la profondeur du champ servira de révélateur, dans un échelonnement proprement temporel*: It's difficult to bring out in English the subtle interplay here of spatial and temporal dimensions that Deleuze finds in the Wellesian image: spatial and temporal "depth" (*épaisseur du temps/profondeur du champ*), truly temporal "scaling" or "spacing" (*échelonnement*) . . . and it's equally difficult to convey the sense of depth of field "bringing out" the multiple layers of time as a pho-

tographic "developer" brings out a latent image (one specific sense of *révélateur* that I think is present in this filmic context).

DOUBTS ABOUT THE IMAGINARY

1. *Coupure* is the technical term for the "cut" at which two cinematic images or shots are spliced in the cutting-room, but it here has a more general sense of a break or transition (there may also be a resonance of the mathematician's "Dedekind cut"—the standard way of defining "rational" and "irrational" numbers).

2. *Coupure* again; see n. 1.

3. *Faux Mouvement* is the French title for Wenders's *Falsche Bewegung*, which appeared in Britain and North America as *Wrong Move* or *Wrong Movement*. I have called *faux mouvements* "false moves" to maintain the relation between various elements in what Deleuze calls "the power of falsity': see "Letter to Daney," n. 6.

4. *Le monde se met à "faire du cinéma"*: the world starts to produce cinema or to amount to cinema or to become histrionic. It begins to adopt cinematic models, the scare-quotes here marking a play on various senses of *faire du cinéma*, which can mean (the literal sense) to make films, or to make (amount to) a film, to look like or work like a film, or to playact, act as though one's in a film (make a scene, put on a show, engage in self-dramatization).

LETTER TO SERGE DANEY: OPTIMISM, PESSIMISM, AND TRAVEL

1. *Fonctions*: I have everywhere translated *fonction* as "function," although it often (as here) has the sense of a "way of functioning," a dynamic, rather than a mere function *of* producing some desired effect within some wider operation. Indeed, Deleuze throughout opposes various cinematic dynamics of the image to the televisual subordination of images to a social dynamic, to the "social functions" of television: the cinematic image opens up all sorts of questions, while the televisual image closes up its world by eliding all sorts of questions. "Function" seems the only way of marking this two-sided operation of the image analyzed in Daney's "functionalism" (which echoes the general functionalism espoused by Deleuze and Guattari in earlier conversations), but it should be remembered that the subordinate operation normally suggested by the English word corresponds only to one side of the way images work.

2. The title of a "Freudian" melodrama (1948) made by Fritz Lang in the outwardly unproductive latency period between his great wartime films and the final classics of the fifties. A *locked* door in his house functions as an image of a locked door in the protagonist's mind: this scheme might itself be taken to mark a transition from the first phase of cinema (where each door opens onto another: the action-image) to the postwar phase (where the action-image breaks down in an *impasse*).

3. *Cache temporaire*: both a "cache" of further images, and the "mask" used by early directors to hide all but one part of the image (leaving, for example, a "vignetted" face).

4. *Cabinet* (Germanized as *Kabinett*) generally has the sense of an office or study, and by extension that of a connoisseur's collection: Caligari's "cabinet" was his tent or study, and by extension his curious "exhibits," rather than the box in the tent containing one of them.

5. An allusion to Blanchot's *L'Ecriture du désastre.*

6. *Raccorder* is to make things accord with one another. As a technical term in French cinematography it means shooting and editing so that all the shots in a film present a coherent "picture" of a coherent world "behind" the images. The closest English equivalent to a *raccord* between two shots is "continuity": the man has the same clothes on when he goes out through the door as when he comes back a minute later, and cutting from a speaker's to a listener's face "reads" simply as an instantaneous switch of viewpoint on a continuous dialogue. A *raccord* is however a slightly more general "linkage" (*enchaînement*) than a continuity, since discontinuous shots in a montage sequence may "accord" with one another to produce a coherent emotion or idea. And "false continuity" is, as a technical term, rather more specific than a *faux raccord*, which is any discrepancy between shots that prevents them being read as representing related elements of a coherent world. A false continuity, as opposed to merely "bad" continuity or discontinuity, is a link between shots that *appears* to be continuous but is not: a cannon points down in one shot, and men look up in the next, but men and cannon are in fact in quite different locations: a montage link or *raccord* that presents false continuity.

Deleuze's "continuity" should therefore be understood as a sort of "French continuity," a generalization of "American continuity" that extends beyond the "objective" coherence of plot and action to the subjective coherence of the world presented in a film. And Deleuze's "false continuity" should be understood as a discontinuity that reveals that cinematic images are not coherent or incoherent representations of a coherent world but just images (that may coherently present an incoherent world—*pas une image juste, juste une image*, see "Three Questions," n. 1). What he calls below "the power of falsity" appears in the way that false continuity, as "just an image" of coherence, reveals the cinematic coherence of sometimes "discontinuous" images to be primary, and reveals the conception or image of this coherence as the attempt to represent a more fundamental coherence of a world "behind" the images to be a *misrepresentation* of images.

7. *Tant que manque l'oeil de l'esprit*: see "On *The Movement-Image*," n. 3.

8. An allusion to one of the first films ever made—Méliès's *Funeral Cortège of the Tsar* (1896)—and to Méliès's delight in exploring the provocative force of the first moving images.

8. *Plan moyen* may here have the more general sense of the "middle ground."

9. See "Mediators," n. 3.

10. The "convulsive" confrontation of cinema and TV echoes Riegl's characterization of the mannerist transition from classical to baroque art (originating in late Antiquity, and reaching its most prominent expression in the sixteenth-century transition from Renaissance to Baroque) as the "convulsive confrontation" of two competing organic "wills to form."

11. *C'est le monde lui-même qui s'est mis à faire "du" cinéma*: the whole world "makes" a film, both in the sense of producing film (as a sort of homogeneous commodity—*"du" cinéma,* rather than coherent films) and in that of itself adding up to or amounting to a film. And everything turns into playacting (or filmacting, rather), everything becomes just an act: see "Doubts," n. 4. *Faire* here means make, amount to, work like, look like, and play at (not necessarily in that order, as Godard might say).

12. Cf. the characterization of postures as "Dantean" in the third paragraph, above.

13. "The center of their world," echoing the title of Michael Snow's film—one continuous take in which a remotely controlled camera, fixed to a support that allows it to pan and tilt through 360 degrees, articulates a barren Canadian landscape in relation to a central viewpoint. Nomads don't move from one fixed identity to another, but seek to maintain the same pattern of inhabiting a landscape through which they may be forced to move.

14. *"Nous ne voyageons pas pour le plaisir de voyager, que je sache, nous sommes cons, mais pas à ce point"*: idiosyncratically transposed, in Beckett's own English version of the text (*Mercier and Camier* [1970], p. 67) as "We are not faring for the love of faring, that I know of [, said Camier]. Cunts we may be, but not to that extent."

15. *C'est ça la télévision, le faire-cinéma du monde entier*: all the world's a sound-stage; see n. 10.

BREAKING THINGS OPEN, BREAKING WORDS OPEN

1. Deleuze's title here echoes *Les Mots et les choses,* "Words and Things," translated into English as *The Order of Things.* Titles (of books, films, and so on) operate in the French text both as strings of (italicized) *words* that may be echoed in the words of the surrounding text, and as nominally interchangeable markers ("names") of things (books, films . . .). Where an English title doesn't literally translate a French title, some echoes may be lost as a translator is forced to choose some thing's English name rather than English words corresponding to the words of its French name. The problem might be seen as a limiting case of the way languages as networks of "sense" can't be made to correspond term-for-term ("literally") independently of their interplay with "the order of things," whose nominal autonomy and primacy is reflected

in the fact that translators translate a name on the title page of a French book by the name on the title page of its English translation.

2. See "On *Anti-Oedipus*," n. 5.

3. A history of the French welfare state, published in 1986.

4. *Une nouvelle philosophie du droit*: see "Control and Becoming," n. 1.

5. *Doublure*: see "A Portrait," n. 1.

6. *"Maîtres à penser"* (within scare-quotes in the French): literally "thinking masters."

7. Intellectual *agreement* and musical *harmony* are rendered in French by the same word, *accord* (concord, consonance).

8. "Chronicle of Lost Ideas," Paris 1977.

9. *Agencements*, what Foucault called *dispositifs*: Deleuze and Foucault "begin in the middle" of words and things, in the empirical or experimental interplay of figures or configurations of discourse and other orders of interaction of discursive loci (human bodies, texts . . .) with one another and with nondiscursive loci. The implications of their uses of the words *agencement* and *dispositif* to characterize the primary frame of this empirical interplay of figures of power, knowledge, and so on cannot be exactly transposed into the implications of two different words in the discursive configurations of what we call "English": English has no "identical" terms. I have chosen "arrangement" and "apparatus" as the closest parallels in English, since these convey many of the complex differences between the terms used by Deleuze and Foucault and other more or less "parallel" terms such as "structure" (which differs, for example, by suggesting some universal frame in which all empirical configurations might be considered "in principle" inscribed in terms of their ultimate analysis into a universal system of "elementary" terms), "organization" (which differs by suggesting a system of finalities, a teleology, of arrangements and apparatuses coordinate with some transcendent locus of articulation that is itself outside any particular empirical configuration) and so on. The difference between Deleuze's *agencement* and Foucault's *dispositif* might itself be taken as articulating (if not exactly organizing) various parallels and differences between the discursive *agencements/dispositifs* of the two writers' texts and worlds: each term suggests a reconfiguration of some of the elements in a particular situation, which "prepares" various new lines of interaction of those elements; but Foucault's "apparatus" seems to me (especially in its opposition to the more "human" *disposition*) more "mechanical" than Deleuze's "arrangement" (it might be noted that "assemblage," which various translators have adopted for *agencement*, conveys neither the sense of preparation or orientation toward action nor that of reconfiguration—Deleuze himself [*Critique et clinique*, p. 27] translates "arrangement" as *agencement*). As Deleuze says, the two thinkers were engaged in a common "cause," a common space of action, but with different "ends." An "organizing" finality (along with

a coordinate subjectivity) seems in Foucault simply to be one deceptive figure within the "physics" or mechanics of power: the temporal orientation of action is inscribed in the spatial "disposition" of words and things. In Deleuze this space seems ultimately to be inscribed and articulated in the primary temporal axis of becoming and life (cf. Maggiori's talk of "crediting Foucault with the 'philosophical optimism' or faith in the forces of life that's often said to characterize your philosophy," which Deleuze takes as a suggestion that he's been "reading into" Foucault his own vitalism).

10. *Raturées*: literally, "crossed out," like Heidegger's ~~Being~~, which provided various French philosophers of the 1960s and 1970s with a model for terms or textual operators whose "philosophical" grammar was to be distinguished from the apparent linguistic and ontological grammar of the word used to mark their irruption into (and disruption of) the apparent logic of a text; cf. "On *Anti-Oedipus*," n. 6.

11. *Prendre les choses là où elles poussent, par le milieu*: *pousser*, along with its primary sense of "pushing," has here a strong resonance of organic *growth*, echoed in the sense of *milieu* not only as the "middle" of something (rather than its beginning/origin or end/finality) and some thing "in the middle" of its operation, but as the medium or environment of its development, "in the midst" of everything else.

12. Nietzche's *unzeitgemäss* is normally rendered by the French *inactuel*, here contrasted with *actuel*, whose primary sense is present, current, relevant (*les actualités* are the novelties we call "the news," current affairs).

13. The single French verb *expérimenter* means at once to experience, and to experiment: I think the latter sense is here opposed to "interpretation," and coupled with the former sense by the insistence in the next sentence upon the deeply "superficial" primacy of the skin.

14. *Une fulguration s'est produite, qui portera le nom de Deleuze*: an electrical discharge, which might be an illuminating flash, or an electric shock, or both at once. I think there is also a messianic resonance—"and its name shall be called Deleuze" (cf. Isa. 9.6, Matt. 1.23)—echoed in the "among us" (cf. John 1.14). of the next sentence.

15. Literally, "raw art," but usually (as describing the work of Dubuffet and others) left in the French original.

16. *L'âge classique*: the period running from the final integration of France as a unitary state under Louis XIV to the breakdown of the Ancien Régime in the French Revolution. It might be roughly dated 1650–1800, its close being marked not only by political revolutions, but also by the linked "Industrial Revolution" in the material economy of European society, and the "romantic" revolution in European culture that displaced the "classicism" of the classic period.

17. There is a play here (signaled by the three dots) on *carte*, at once a car-

tographer's map or chart, and a card, so that *carte d'identité* has both its usual sense of the "ID" that French "subjects" are all legally required to carry on their person, as well as the literal sense of a "map of identity."

LIFE AS A WORK OF ART

1. The title echoes Burckhardt's seminal characterization of the form of life and culture typifying the Renaissance, which significantly influenced Nietzsche's "aesthetics of existence.'

2. See "Breaking Things Open," n. 12.

3. Literally, "What is called thinking?," "What is it we call thinking?': a French translation of Heidegger's question *Was heisst Denken?*, What is [the meaning of] Thought?

4. *Pouvoir*: see n. 7.

5. See "Breaking Things Open," n. 1.

6. *Le problème de la connaissance (ou plutôt du "savoir")*: The first phrase used by Deleuze is the traditional French expression for "the problem of knowledge': it makes *connaissance* or "knowledge by acquaintance" (knowing, say, a person or place) the model for all knowledge, whereas Foucault and Deleuze emphasize the primacy of *savoir*, "knowledge by description" (knowing *that* . . . , or *how to* . . .), an instituted authority or competence to produce certain utterances. Knowledge as the direct contact of mind and object is replaced by historical relations between words and things.

7. Both knowledge and power, *savoir* and *pouvoir*, have in French the grammatical form of infinitives: "to know [that . . . , or how to . . .]" and "to be able to . . . , be capable of . . . " Deleuze's exposition thus takes the grammatical form of a reflection on the forms and relations of verbal and extraverbal *acts*, and the relations between the verbal and extraverbal acts Foucault himself effected by using these terms in the context of his own life.

8. *Rapport à soi*, at once a reflexive force "playing" on *itself*, and a relation to *oneself*, where the "self" is "in effect" nothing but this relation (I have throughout translated *rapport[s] de forces* as "play of forces").

9. *Mode*, while it sometimes (as here) has resonances of the system of "modes" of substance taken over by Spinoza from Scholastic philosophy, is also the ordinary French word for "way," and although I have in a few instances translated it as "mode" ("modes of subjectification," above), I've generally used the more common English word (translating *modes d'existence* throughout as "ways of existing").

A PORTRAIT OF FOUCAULT

1. *Un double, une doublure*: a *doublure* is "primarily" the lining of a garment, a second layer—echoing both the suggestion of a death mask earlier in the same line and the use of *tirer*, to "draw" in the various senses of drawing out a resemblance with a pencil, "deriving" one, and drawing or pulling off, apart

(as one might a lining or death mask). But a *doublure* is also an actor substituted (as understudy, stand-in, stuntman, body-double) in some scene for the "primary" actor, echoing the sense of doppelgänger reinforced by Deleuze's talk of Foucault "coming to haunt" the replica (another of the proliferating senses of *double*: copy, duplicate). For Foucault (as for Benveniste and Lacan: *Anti-Oedipus*, nn. 5,6) the subject—or rather the "modern" subject, Man—is essentially "double," caught in an irreducible process of duplication or replication after the classic "original" has been lost (cf. "*On A Thousand Plateaus*, note 6). Deleuze elsewhere says that "it's the book, not me, who's attempting to be Foucault's double": as in his earlier "mental portraits" of earlier philosophers, one might see him as acting or activating a sort of "mind-double" that brings out the sense or force of a thought in its vital replicative power.

2. From a letter to Duyckink (on first hearing Emerson lecture, 1849): in Davis and Gilman, eds., *The Letters of Herman Melville* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), p. 79.

3. *Penser, c'est toujours expérimenter*: see "Breaking Things Open," n. 13.

4. *L'actuel*: see "Breaking Things Open," n. 12.

5. Or: "there was the Greek experiment" (with "ways of life").

6. Literally, "the old marauder's gangs" and "the cushions of the old billiard-table."

7. *La réalité humaine* ("human reality') is the standard French translation for Heidegger's *Dasein*.

8. There's a resonance here of Heidegger's *Es gibt*.

9. Foucault's *pouvoir* and Nietzsche's *puissance*: both are usually translated as "power," but Nietzsche's *puissance* is the power *to act*, potential, while *pouvoir* is the codified image of such "active" power in reactive "powers that be" that define and constrain what is possible. *Puissance* opens up possibilities and capacities, while *pouvoir* closes them off, regimenting passive subjects by defining their roles or formal "capacities."

MEDIATORS

1. See "On Philosophy," n. 10.

2. A French territory in the South Pacific. In the mid-1980s demands from the indigenous Melanesian population (Kanaks) for independence provoked fierce reaction from French settlers, and the resulting disturbances had repercussions within French politics recalling the Algerian crisis of the 1950s. Edgard Pisani was the Socialist minister given special responsibility for New Caledonia in 1985, and the problem was eventually resolved by an "arrangement" made by a returning Socialist government in 1988.

3. A very influential Friday-evening book program on French TV, hosted by the literary journalist Bernard Pivot from 1975 to 1990 (it was voted "best cultural program" in 1985).

4. Jérôme Lindon has from 1948 directed the influential publishing house

Editions de Minuit, founded as a clandestine press in occupied Paris, and subsequently specializing in "progressive" literature, philosophy, and social theory (with authors including Beckett and Deleuze).

5. A play on the title of Sophocles' tragedy *Oedipus at Colonnus.*

On Philosophy

1. *Ritournelle*: literally "a little return" or a little thing that returns—in music, a refrain, a theme that regularly returns, but extended by Deleuze and Guattari to a more general "little" or local recurrence or circuit within the overall harmonics of the *grande ritournelle*—to the restricted circuit of a "territory" within the overall circuit of *la Terre,* Earth, the terrestrial sphere . . . or a limited circuit inscribed within the eternal recurrence, the *Eternel Retour,* of the cosmos as a whole.

2. Or: "never debate it," "never argue about it": *discuter* has in French a polemic resonance absent from "discuss."

3. *Entre lesquelles quelquechose peut passer, se passer. passer* has the sense of both a "local" passage from one thing or place to another, and the more abstract sense of something happening, "coming to pass" in time. There is here and below a play on, or combination of, these two senses, here emphasized by the apposition of *passer* and *se passer.* the reflexive form—in which what comes to pass is both subject and object of the verb, cause and effect of the process, and so the process of "happening" itself—can "take place" only in the abstract sense, and so emphasizes this aspect of what "passes between" two terms when a difference of potential opens up between them.

4. The plateaus "communicate" like American Indians or overlap like Genoese tiling.

5. The phrase echoes the titles of Kant's 1786 contribution—*Was heisst: sich im Denken orientieren*—to a fierce controversy over Spinoza's "pantheism," and Heidegger's *Was heisst Denken.*

6. *Courir le long de la ligne d'horizon*: the principal sense of *ligne d'horizon* is the "vanishing line" on which all parallel horizontal lines in a perspectival composition would, if indefinitely extended, intersect. It is perhaps worth noting here that the "projective geometry" associated with such composition is also echoed in Deleuze's recurrent invocation of *lignes de fuite* and *points de fuite,* usually translated "lines of flight" and "points of flight': the flight or escape from some constricting frame of action or experience is also, within that frame, a sort of "immaterial" vanishing through or beyond its limits, its event horizon (and this is of course, for Deleuze, the only true "event").

7. Deleuze gives the phrase in English.

8. Within quotes in the French: literally, a "tomb," and sometimes taking the form of graveside reflections, but more generally the verbal "tomb" of an elegy on the subject's life and death.

9. The Italian-born comic actor Michel Colucci, "Coluche," extended his provocations from stage and screen to the political arena by running for president in 1981. By the time he suddenly withdrew from the race, polls were giving him up to 16 percent of the national vote.

10. *Etat de droit* translates the German *Rechtsstaat*, traditionally rendered into English as "the rule of law." But to translate the French and German terms in this way is to confuse different juridical traditions. The concept of *Rechtsstaat* was introduced by nineteenth-century German jurists (in opposition to that of a "police state") to characterize a state in which executive action was limited by the codified individual rights of subjects. In the early twentieth century the concept was extended to that of a state constituted as an ideal hierarchical unity by a complete system of laws framing all activity, public and private, within the state. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century French jurists stressed the "totalitarian" character of such conceptions: the reduction of natural rights to positive laws, and the primacy of the Penal Code as determining what was "within" and "outside" the law and state. With the failure of the nominally constitutional Third Reich, the concept, reinterpreted "negatively" as the subordination of executive to legislature, became the cornerstone of the West German constitution or Basic Law. In France it resurfaced only after 1968, as defining a *problematic* in which to analyze the joint "constitution" or constitutive relations of state and subject, law and "human rights."

11. Turn out badly: literally, "have bad futures" (and above: "their future produces monsters"). Thinking in terms of *avenirs*, futures, is here opposed to thinking in terms of *devenirs*, becomings.

ON LEIBNIZ

1. The name coined by the critic Michel Tapié for the nonfigurative and nongeometric postwar European art that paralleled Abstract Expressionism in the United States.

2. Dubuffet's "logological study" consisted of the sculpted and painted walls of an imaginary room, exhibited along with various other elements of an "impossible" house at the Centre National d'Art Contemporain in 1970 as a purely "mental space."

3. A rather elliptical allusion to the comparison, in *The Fold*, between propositions and the verbal "legends" or "devices" (*devises, concetti*) coupled in the typically baroque form of the "emblem" with their complex iconographical exposition in an accompanying dramatic image: Deleuze's own image, then, of the proposition as the script or verbal inscription (or encryption) of a scheme of action, an event.

4. *The Fold*, in French *Le Pli*, is here itself being interpreted in relation to the complex of complementary terms deriving in French from the Latin couples *implicare-explicare, involvere-evolvere* (implying-explaining, enfolding-

unfolding, involving-evolving . . .) that Deleuze had been exploring from *Proust and Signs* onward, and that he finally took as his "explicit" theme in the book on "Leibniz and the Baroque."

5. *Faire le point*: literally "making a point"—a figurative extension of the sailor's fixing of his bearings on a chart to "seeing where one's got to" in general.

6. Here, and in the next sentence, *accord*: see "Breaking Things Open," n. 7.

7. *Pli selon pli* (1957–62) is the title of Boulez's "musical portrait" of Mallarmé (one of the composer's chief inspirations).

CONTROL AND BECOMING

1. *La loi, les lois*: "the law" and "laws" correspond to a judicial system of positive laws enacted in a legal code (such as the Civil Code in France). I use "law" (without a definite article) to translate *droit*, as a system of rights (*droits*), "natural law," Latin *jus* as opposed to *lex*.

2. *Contre-effectuation*: characterized by Deleuze in *The Logic of Sense* as "counter-acting" the passive encoding of all activity in predefined roles, by playing the self-determining "actor" rather than any externally determined part in events.

3. *L'histoire n'est pas l'expérimentation*: on the twin sense of "experience" and "experiment" in the last word, see "Breaking Things Open," n. 13.

4. Reflections on Cromwell were arguably far more central to French Romanticism—whose birth as a distinct movement is traditionally dated to the publication of Victor Hugo's *Cromwell* in 1827—than to its British precursor.

5. *Souci*: a care, anxiety, worry—something one's always having to think about.

6. The Institut National d'Audiovisuel, set up by the French government in 1975 as a center for training, research, and development in audiovisual media, partly funded by the French TV networks, and producing a small number of programs for network broadcast.

7. *Contrôle continu*, literally "continuous control," is also the French term for "continuous assessment" in education; *formation permanente*, here translated as "continual training," is also the standard term for "continuing education."

8. A *sabot* was a worker's wooden clog.

POSTSCRIPT ON CONTROL SOCIETIES

1. *Une* modulation, *comme un moulage auto-déformant*: a *moule* is a mold, *moulage* the process of molding, while "modulation" as *auto-déformant* is a process of "remolding" that itself has no extrinsic pattern or mold (cf. "On *The Movement-Image*, n. 6). The French *déformation* is an essentially "neutral" reshaping or change of form, while "deformation" in English has a resonance

of departing from a true or proper form, and although it is used at one point below as equivalent to "transformation," the latter word is also used in many other contexts, and I have had to use "transmutation" here and below as the least bad alternative to render *déformation*.

2. *Contrôle continu*: literally "continuous control" (cf. "Control and Becoming," n. 7). The French verb *contrôler* also has the sense of "monitoring," "checking" (and this sense is often present at various points where I have used the word "control").

3. *Mots d'ordre* as "watchwords," maxims, universal "directives"—literally "ordering" words or phrases—are here contrasted with the *mots de passe* that regulate a system of individual moves (see also "On *A Thousand Plateaus*," n. 5).

4. A *vieille taupe*, literally an "old mole," is also a nasty old woman, an old crone or hag; the European Community/Union "Exchange Rate Mechanism," in which currencies are allowed to vary in value or "float" within limits set by their notional rate against a weighted basket of other participating currencies, was commonly called "the snake."

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