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'The Language of Space':

'Le langage de l'espace. '*Dits et écrits*. Vol I, 407–12. This piece originally appeared in the journal *Critique* in 1964.

'The Force of Flight':

'La force de fuir. '*Dits et écrits*. Vol. II, 401–5. This was originally published in March 1973 in *Derrière le miroir*, No. 202, 1–8 to accompany a series of paintings by Paul Rebeyrolle (1926–2005) known as *Dogs*.

Some Questions from Michel Foucault to *Hérodote*
Translated by Stuart Elden

These are not questions that I pose to you from any knowledge that I might have. They are inquiries that I am asking myself, that I address to you, thinking that you are without doubt more advanced than me on this path.

1. The notion of strategy is essential if one wants to make an analysis of knowledge [*savoir*] and its relations with power. Does it necessarily imply that through the knowledge in question one wages war? Does strategy not allow the analysis of relations of power as techniques of *domination*? Or must we say that domination is only a continued form of war? Or alternatively, what scope would you give to the notion of *strategy*?

2. If I understand you correctly, you are aiming to constitute a knowledge of spaces [*un savoir des espaces*]. Is it important for you to constitute it as a science? Or do you find it acceptable to say that the break which marks the threshold of science is only a means of disqualifying certain knowledges [*savoirs*], or to make them evade examination. Is the division between science and non-scientific knowledge [*savoir*] an effect of power linked to the institutionalization of knowledges [*connaissances*] in the University, research centres, etc.?

3. It seems to me that you link the analysis of space or of spaces less to production and to 'resources' than to the exercise of power. Could you outline what you understand by power? (Through relation to the State and its apparatuses, through relation to class domination.) Or do you consider that the analysis of power, of its mechanisms, of its field of action, is still at the outset and that it is too soon to give general definitions? In particular, do you think one can reply to the question: who has power?

4. Do you think it is possible to undertake a geography – or a range of geographies – of medicine (not of illnesses, but of medical establishments along with their zone of intervention and their modality of action)?

The Incorporation of the Hospital into Modern Technology
Translated by Edgar Knowlton Jr., William J. King, and Stuart Elden

When did the hospital come to be considered as a therapeutic instrument, as an instrument of intervention of illness for the patient, an instrument capable either along or through its effects, of curing?

The hospital as a therapeutic instrument is a relatively modern concept, dating from the end of the eighteenth century. Around 1760 the idea that the hospital can and ought to be an instrument destined to cure the patient appears and is reflected in a new practice: the investigation and systematic and comparative observation of hospitals.

In Europe a series of investigations begin. Among these were the trips of the Englishman [John] Howard, who went to hospitals, prisons, and poor houses of the continent in the period of 1775–1780,[1] and that of the Frenchman [Jacques] Tenon, at the request of the Academy of Sciences when the problem of the reconstruction of the 'Hotel Dieu 'of Paris was being posed.[2]

Those investigations had several characteristics:

1. Their purpose consisted in defining, based on the inquiry, a program of reform or reconstruction of hospitals. When in France the Academy of Sciences decided to send Tenon to different countries in Europe to do research about the situation of hospitals, he expressed an important statement: 'It is the currently existing hospitals that enable the judging of the merits and defects of the new hospitals.'

No medical theory is sufficient by itself to define a hospital program. Moreover no abstract architectural plan can offer a formula for a good hospital. One is dealing with a complex problem of which the effect and consequences are not well known, which acts on illnesses and is capable of aggravating them, multiplying them, or by contrast attenuating them. Only an empirical investigation of that new object, the hospital, integrated and isolated in a similarly new manner, will be capable of offering a new program of construction of hospitals. The hospital then is no longer a simple architectural figure and comes to form part of a medical-hospital complex that must be studied the same way one studies climate, illness, etc.

2. These fact-finding missions afforded few details on the external aspect of the hospital and the general structure of the building. No longer were they descriptions of monuments, like those which were made by the classical travellers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but functional descriptions. Howard and Tenon gave an account of the number of the patients per hospital, the number of beds, the useful space of the institution, the length and height of the rooms, the cubic units of air which each patient used, and the rate of mortality and cure.

They also tried to determine the relations that might exist between pathological phenomena and the state of cleanliness of each establishment. For example, Tenon investigated under what special conditions those hospitalised because of wounds were better cured and what were the most dangerous circumstances. Thus, he established a correlation between the growing rate of mortality among the wounded and the proximity to the patients with a malign fever, as it was called at that time. He also explained that the rate of mortality of those that were giving birth increased if they were located in a room situated above that of the wounded. As a consequence the wounded should not be placed below the rooms where those in labour were.

Tenon likewise studied journeys, dislocations and movements within the hospital, particularly in the room that the clean linen, sheets, dirty linen, rags utilised to treat the wounded, etc., were located. He tried to determine who transported that material and where it was taken, washed and distributed. According to him that route would explain several pathological facts interior to hospitals.

He analysed why trephination, one of the operations practiced most frequently at this time,[3] had more satisfactory results in the English hospital of Bethlehem [Bedlam] than in the Hotel Dieu of Paris. Might there be internal factors of the hospital structure and distribution of patients to explain that circumstance?

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[1] John Howard (1726–1790), author of *State of the Prisons in England and Wales*. Warrington: 1778, and *An Account of the Principal Lazarettos in Europe*. Warrington: William Eyres, 1789. The Howard League for Penal Reform is named after him.

[2] Jacques Tenon (1724–1816) author of *Mémoires sur les hôpitaux de Paris* (1788), facsimile edition. Paris: AP-HP/Doin, 1998. A major Parisian hospital is named after him.

[3] A surgical opening of the skull.

The problem is posed as a function of the interrelation of the location of the room, its ventilation and the transfer of dirty linen.

3. The authors of these functional descriptions of the medico-spatial organisations of the hospital were, however, not architects. Tenon was a doctor, and it was as such that the Academy of Sciences instructed him to visit hospitals; Howard was not a doctor, but rather a precursor of philanthropists and possessed an almost socio- medical competency.

There thus arises a new way of viewing the hospital, considered as a mechanism to cure, and of which the pathological affects it causes must be corrected. One might suggest that this is not new, since hospitals dedicated to curing patients have existed for millennia; that the only thing which perhaps may be affirmed is that in the seventeenth century it was discovered that hospitals do not cure as much as they ought; and that it is merely a question of refining the classically formulated requirements of the hospital as instrument.

I should like to express a series of objections to that hypothesis. The hospital which functioned in Europe from the Middle Ages on was not by any means a means of cure nor had it been conceived as such.

In the history of the care of the patient in the West, there were two distinct categories which did not overlap, which were sometimes paired but differed fundamentally: medicine and the hospital.

The hospital, as an important and even essential institution for urban life in the West from the Middle Ages on, is not a medical institution. At this time medicine is not a hospital profession. It is necessary to keep this situation in mind to understand the innovation that the introduction of hospital-medicine, or the medical-therapeutic hospital, represents in the eighteenth century. I shall try to show the divergences of those two categories in order to situate this innovation.

Before the eighteenth century the hospital was essentially the institution of assistance of the poor. It was at the same time an institution of separation and exclusion. The poor, as such, required assistance and as a patient, he was the carrier of disease and risked spreading them. In sum, he was dangerous. Hence the necessity of the existence of the hospital, as much to keep him apart as to protect others from the dangers he represented. Until the eighteenth century the ideal person of the hospital was not the patient, there to be cured, but the poor person on the point of death. It is a question of a person who needs help, material and spiritual, who has to receive final care and the last rites. This was the essential function of the hospital.

One used to say in those times — and with reason — that the hospital was the place where one went to die. The hospital personnel were not attempting the cure of the sick, but rather of attaining their salvation. It was the charitable personnel (comprised of religious or lay people) who were to perform works or mercy which would guarantee that person eternal salvation. As a consequence the institution served to save the soul of the poor in the moment of death and also save the soul of the staff members taking caring of him. He exercised a function in the transition of life to death, in the spiritual salvation more than the material one, all within the function of separating out the dangerous individual for the general health of the population.

For the study of the general significance of a hospital in the Middle Ages and Renaissance one must consider the text entitled *The Book of Active Life of the Hotel Dieu* written by a parliamentarian who was an administrator of the Hotel Dieu in a language full or metaphors — a type of *Roman de la Rose* of hospitalisation — which reflects clearly the mixture of functions of assistance and spiritual transformation which were incumbent upon the hospital.[4]

These were the characteristics of the hospital until the beginning of the eighteenth century. The General Hospital, a place of internment where the sick, the mad, prostitutes, etc., are jumbled and mixed up is still a place of the seventeenth century, a type of diverse instrument of exclusion, assistance, and spiritual transformation from which the medical function is absent.

As far as medical practice is concerned, none of the elements that it integrated and served as its scientific justification predestined it to be a hospital medicine. Medieval medicine and that of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were profoundly individualistic. Individualist on the part of the doctor who recognised this condition after an initiation guaranteed by the medical corporation itself, which comprised knowledge of texts and the more or less secret transmission of remedies. The hospital experience was not included in the ritual training of the doctor at that time. What authorised him was the transmission of remedies rather the experiences he would have assimilated and integrated.

The intervention of the doctor in the disease turned around the concept of ‘crisis’. The doctor was to observe the patient and the disease from the appearance of the first symptoms to determine the moment

[4] Jehan Henri (1480) *Le livre de vie active des religieuses de l’Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*. Paris.

at which the crisis was to occur. The crisis represented the moment in which the patient and disease confronted each other; the doctor was to observe the signs, to predict the evolution and to support, as far as possible, the triumph of health and nature over the disease. In the cure, nature, the disease and the doctor came into play. In this struggle, the doctor fulfilled a function of prediction, arbitrator and ally of nature against the disease. The type of battle whose cure took this form could only proceed through an individual relation between the doctor and the patient. The idea of a vast series of observations, collected within a hospital, which would have made it possible to raise the general characteristics of a disease and its particular elements, etc., did not form part of the medical practice.

Thus there was nothing in the medical practice of this period that permitted the organisation of hospital knowledge, nor did the organisation of the hospital permit the intervention of medicine. In consequence, up until the middle of the eighteenth century the hospital and medicine continued being two separated domains. How did the transformation occur, that is, how did the hospital become medicalised and how was hospital medicine achieved?

The principal factor in the transformation was not the search for a positive action of the hospital on the patient or the illness but simply the annulment of the negative effects of the hospital. It was not first a question of medicalising the hospital but purifying it of its harmful effects, of the disorder that it created. And in this case one understands by disorder the illnesses which that institution might create in the interned people and propagate in the city in which it was located. It was thus that the hospital was a perpetual focal point of the economic and social disorder.

This hypothesis of the medicalisation of the hospital through the elimination of disorder it produced is confirmed by the fact that the first great hospital organisation of Europe is found in the seventeenth century, essentially in maritime and military hospitals. The point of departure of the hospital reform was not the civil hospital but the maritime one, which was a place of economic disorder. Through it one trafficked merchandise, precious objects, rare materials, spices, etc., proceeding from the colonies. The trafficker feigned illness and when he disembarked they would take him to the hospital. There he could distribute these goods avoiding the economic control of customs. The great hospitals of London, Marseilles and La Rochelle thus became places of an enormous traffic, against which the fiscal authorities protested.

Thus then the first regulation of the hospital that appears in the seventeenth century refers to the inspection of the coffers which the sailors, doctors and apothecaries retained in the hospital. From that moment on one could inspect the coffers and record their contents; if they found merchandise destined to be contraband their owners would be punished. Thus in this regulation appears an initial economic inquiry.

Moreover, another problem appears in these maritime and military hospitals: that of quarantine, that is to say the epidemic illnesses that can be carried by people disembarking ships. The lazarettos established in Marseilles and La Rochelle constitute a kind of perfect hospital. But it is essentially a type of hospitalisation which does not conceive of the hospital as an instrument of cure, but rather as a means of preventing its constituting a focus of economic and medical disorder.

If military and maritime hospitals became a model as a point of departure for hospital reorganisation, it is because with mercantilism economic regulations became stricter. But it is also because the value of a man increased more and more. It was in effect precisely in that period that the training of the individual, his capability and his aptitude began to have a value for society.

Let us examine the example of the army. Until the second half of the seventeenth century there was no difficulty in recruiting soldiers; it was sufficient to have financial means. Throughout the whole of Europe there were unemployed people, vagabonds, wretches ready to enter the army of any power, nationality or religion. At the end of the seventeenth century with the introduction of the rifle the army becomes more technical, subtle, and costly. To learn to wield a rifle exercise, manoeuvres, and training are required. This is how the price of a soldier exceeded that of a simple labourer and the cost of an army is converted into a budget entry for every country. Once trained, a soldier could not be permitted to die. If he dies, it has to be in a battle, as a soldier, not because of an illness. One must not forget that in the seventeenth century the index of mortality of a soldier was very high. For example, an Austrian army that left Vienna for Italy lost five sixths of the men before arriving at the field of combat. The losses because of illnesses, epidemic or desertion constituted relatively common phenomena.

From this technical transformation of the army on, the military hospital became an important technical and military matter. (1) It was necessary to oversee [*surveiller*] men in the military hospital so they did not desert because they had been trained at a considerable cost. (2) It was necessary to cure them so

they did not die from illness. (3) It was necessary to ensure that having recovered they did not still pretend to be ill and remain in bed.

In consequence, an administrative and political reorganisation, a new control of authority in the environs of the military hospital. And the same thing occurs in the maritime hospital, from the moment when the maritime technique become more complex and where similarly the person trained at a considerable cost also may not be lost.

How did this reorganisation come to be carried out? The reorganisation of the maritime and military hospitals did not stem from a medical technique but essentially from a technology which might be called political, namely discipline.

Discipline is a technique of exercising power, which was not so much invented but rather elaborated in its fundamental principles during the seventeenth century. It had existed throughout history, for example in the Middle Ages, and even in antiquity. For example, the monasteries constitute an example of a place of power of which a disciplinary system was at the heart. Slavery and the great slave companies existing in the Spanish, English, French, and Dutch colonies were also models of disciplinary mechanisms. We can go back to the Roman legion and in it we would similarly find an example of discipline.

Thus disciplinary mechanisms date from ancient times but in an isolated, fragmented manner, until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when disciplinary power is perfected in a new technique with the management of men. We frequently speak of the technical inventions of the seventeenth century — chemical, metallurgical technology — yet we do not mention the technical invention of this new form of governing man, controlling his multiplicity, utilising him to the maximum, and improving the useful products of his labour, of his activities thanks to a system of power which permits controlling them. In the great workshops which begin to appear, in the army, in schools, when we see throughout Europe great progress in literacy there also appear these new techniques of power which constitute the great inventions of the seventeenth century.

On the basis of the example of the army and school, what is it that arises in this period?

An art of spatial distribution of individuals. In the army of the seventeenth century individuals were herded together forming a conglomeration, with the stronger and most capable at the front. And those who did not know how to fight, the more cowardly or those who desired to flee, were at the flanks and at the middle. The power of a military body was rooted in the effect of the density of this human mass.

In the eighteenth century, on the contrary, beginning at the moment when a soldier receives a rifle, it is necessary to study the distribution of individuals and place them as they ought to be so their efficacy might reach the maximum. Military discipline begins at the moment when one teaches the soldier to locate himself and be at the place that is required.

In the same way, in the schools of the seventeenth century the students were grouped together. The teacher used to call one of them and for a few minutes gave him some instruction and then sent him back to his seat continuing the same operation with another, and so on in succession. Collective teaching works with all students and simultaneously demands a spatial distribution of the class.

Discipline is, above all, analysis of space; it is individualisation through space, the placing of bodies in an individualised space that permits classification and combinations.

Discipline does not exercise its control on the results of an action but on its development. In the workshops of the corporate type of the seventeenth century what was required of the worker or master was the fabrication of a product of a determined quality. The mode of fabrication depended upon what was transmitted from one generation to another. The control did not affect the mode of production. In the same way one taught the soldier how to fight, to be stronger than the adversary in the individual fight or on the battlefield.

Beginning in the eighteenth century an art of the human body developed. Movements that are made begin to be observed, in order to determine which are the most efficacious, rapid and best adjusted. Thus the famous and sinister character of the supervisor or foreman appears in workshops, charged not with observing if the work was being done but how it would be done more quickly and with better-adapted movements. In the army appears the non-commissioned officer and with him the army exercises, manoeuvres and the breaking down of movements in time. The famous regulation of infantry that assured the victories of Frederick of Prussia comprises a series of mechanisms of the direction of the movement of the body.

Discipline is a technique of power, which contains a constant and perpetual surveillance of individuals. It is not sufficient to observe them occasionally or see if they work to the rules. It is necessary to keep them under surveillance to ensure activity takes place all the time and submit them to a perpetual pyramid of surveillance. There thus emerge a series of ranks in the army that go, without interruption, from the commander-in-chief to the simple soldier, as well as systems of inspection, reviews, parades, marches, etc., which permit each individual to be observed in a permanent manner.

Discipline supposes a continuous registration: annotations of the individual, relation of events, disciplinary elements, and communication of the information to the higher ranks, so that no detail escapes the top of the hierarchy.

In the classical system the exercise of power was confused and global and discontinuous. It was a question of the power of the sovereign over groups, integrated by families, cities, and parishes, that is by global units, not by the power which acted continuously on the individual.

Discipline is the collection of techniques by virtue of which systems of power have as their objective and result the singularisation of individuals. It is the power of individualisation whose basic instrument rests in the examination. The examination is permanent, classificatory surveillance, which permits the distribution of individuals, judging them, measuring or evaluating them and placing them so they can be utilised to the maximum. Through the examination, the individual is converted into an element for the exercise of power.

The introduction of the disciplinary mechanisms into the disorganised space of the hospital allowed its medicalisation. Everything which has been set out, explains why the hospital is disciplined. Economic reasons, the value attributed to the individual, the desire to avoid the propagation of epidemics explains the disciplinary control to which the hospitals are subjected. But if this discipline acquires a medical character, if this disciplinary power is entrusted to the doctor, it is due to a transformation of medical knowledge. The formation of a hospital medicine has to be attributed, on one hand, to the introduction of discipline into hospital space, and on the other hand, to the transformation that the practice of medicine in that period was undergoing.

In the epistemological systems of eighteenth century, the great marvel of the intelligibility of illnesses is botany, the classification of [Carl von] Linné.[5] This means the necessity of understanding illnesses as a natural phenomenon. As in plants, in diseases there will be different species, observable characteristics, and courses of evolution. Disease is nature, but a nature due to a particular action of the environment on the individual. The healthy person, when he has submitted to certain actions of the environment, serves as a support to the disease, a phenomenon limited by nature. Water, air, food, and the general regimen constitute the bases on which the different types of diseases are developed in individuals.

In this perspective the cure is directed by a medical intervention which is no longer directed toward the disease itself, as in the medicine of crises, but precisely to the intersection of the disease and the organism, as it is in the surrounding environment: air, water, temperature, the regimen, food, etc. It is a medicine of the environment, which is being constituted, to the extent to which the disease can be conceived as a natural phenomenon that obeys natural laws.

In consequence it is in the articulation of those two processes — the displacing of medical intervention and the application of discipline to the space of the hospital — that one finds the origin of the medical hospital. Those two phenomena, of different origin, were going to be adjusted to the hospital discipline whose function would consist in guaranteeing the inquiry, surveillance, and application of disciplines into the disorganised world of the patients and of illness and in transforming the conditions of the environment which surrounds the patients. Likewise patients would be individualised and distributed in a space where one could oversee them and record the events that took place; one could also modify the air they breathed, the temperature of the environment, the water to drink, the regimen, so that the hospital panorama imposed by the introduction of discipline had a therapeutic function.

If one accepts the hypothesis that the hospital is born from techniques of disciplinary power and from the medicine of interventions on the environment, we can understand several characteristics possessed by that institution.

1. The localisation of the hospital and the internal distribution of space. The question of the hospital at the end of the eighteenth century was fundamentally a question of space. In the first place it is a matter

[5] Carl von Linné or Carl Linneaus (1707–1778), founder of modern taxonomy, especially in biology, is discussed by Foucault in *The Order of Things*.

of knowing where to situate a hospital so that it does not continue to be a dark, obscure and confused place in the heart of the city where a person would arrive at the hour of death and spread dangerous miasma, contaminated air, dirty water, etc. It was necessary that the place in which the hospital was located conformed to the sanitary control of the city. The location of the hospital had to be determined within the overall medicine of urban space.

In the second place, one also had to calculate the internal distribution of the space of the hospital as a function of certain criteria: if it was certain that an action practiced in the environment would cure diseases, it would be necessary to create about each patient a small individualised space environment, specific to them and modifiable according to the patient, the disease, and its evolution. It is necessary to obtain a functional and medical autonomy of the space for survival of the patient. In this way the principle that beds should not be occupied by more than one patient is established, and thus ends the bed dormitory that at times would be filled by up to six people.

It would also be necessary to create around the patient a manageable environment, to allow the temperature to be increased, to cool the air, and to direct it toward a single patient. Because of this studies on the individualisation of living space and the respiration of the patients would be undertaken, including in the collective wards. Thus for example, there was a project of isolating the bed of each patient employing screens at the sides and on the top that would permit the circulation of air but would block the propagation of miasmas.

All of this shows how, in a particular structure, the hospital constitutes a means of intervention on the patient. The architecture of the hospital must be the agent and instrument of cure. The hospital where patients were sent to die must cease to exist. Hospital architecture becomes an instrument of cure in the same category as a dietary regime, bleeding or other medical actions. The space of the hospital is medicalised in its purpose and its effects. This is the first characteristic of the transformation of the hospital at the end of the eighteenth century.

2. Transformation of a system of power in the heart of the hospital. Up to the middle of the seventeenth century religious personnel exercised power and rarely lay people. They were in charge of the daily life of the hospital, the salvation, and the feeding of interned persons. One called the doctor to attend to the most seriously ill, and rather than real action it was a question of a guarantee, a justification. The medical visit was a very irregular ritual, in principle it was performed once a day and for hundreds of patients. In addition, the doctor depended administratively on the religious personnel, who could even dismiss the doctor.

From the moment when the hospital was conceived as an instrument of cure and the distribution of space becomes a therapeutic means, the doctor assumes the main responsibility for the hospital organisation. He is consulted as to how the hospital should be constructed and organised; for this reason Tenon realised the previously mentioned mission. Laws prohibited the cloister form of a religious community which had been employed to organise the hospital up to this point. Moreover, if the food regime, the ventilation, the frequency of beverages, were to be instruments of cure, the doctor, upon controlling the regime of the patient, takes charge to a certain point of the economic functioning the hospital, which up to then had been a privilege of the religious order.

At the same time, the presence of the doctor in the hospital is reaffirmed and intensified. The visits increase in an ever more accelerated rhythm during the eighteenth century. In 1680 at the Hotel Dieu of Paris the doctor would visit once a day; on the other hand in the eighteenth century several rules were established, which specify successively that there must be another visit at night for the more serious patients; that each visit should last two hours; and finally in about 1770, that a doctor must reside in the hospital to whom one could go at any hour of the day or night if necessary.

Thus appears the character of the doctor that did not exist before. Until the seventeenth century the great doctors did not appear in the hospital, there were doctors for private consultation that had acquired prestige thanks to a number of spectacular cures. The doctors to whom the religious community resorted for visits to the hospital were generally the worst ones in the profession. The great hospital doctor, the most competent with the greatest experience in those institutions is an invention of the end of the eighteenth

century. Tenon, for example, was a hospital doctor, and the work achieved by [Philippe] Pinel at Bicêtre was possible thanks to his practice in the hospital.[6]

This inversion of the hierarchical order of the hospital with the exercise of power by the doctor is reflected in the ritual of the visit: the almost religious procession headed by the doctor, of the whole hierarchy of the hospital: assistants, students, nurses, etc., at the foot of the bed of each patient. This codified ritual of the visit, which signals the place of medical power, is found in the regulations of hospitals in the eighteenth century. It indicates the location of each person, and that the presence of the doctor must be announced by a bell, that the nurse must be at the door with a notebook in hand and accompany the doctor when he enters the room, etc.

3. The organisation of a permanent and as far as possible complete records system, which registers whatever occurs. In the first place we must refer to the methods of identification of the patient. A small label will be tied to the wrist of each patient that will allow them to be distinguished if they live, but also if they die. In the upper part of the bed one will place an index card with the name of the patient and what they suffer from. Likewise one begins to utilise a series of records which gather together and transmit information: the general records of admissions and discharges in which the name of the patient is written, the diagnosis of the doctor who admitted them, the ward in which they are located, and if they died or were given a discharge; the registry of each room prepared by the head nurse; the registry of the pharmacy in which are stated the prescriptions and for what patients they were issued; the records of what the doctor ordered during the visit, the prescriptions and the treatment prescribed, the diagnosis, etc.

Finally, it implanted the obligation of the doctor to confront their experiments and their records — at least once a month, in accord with the regulation of the Hotel Dieu in 1785 — to determine the different treatments administered, those that have turned out most satisfactory, the doctors that have the most success, or if epidemic illnesses are passing from one room to another, etc. Thus a collection of documents is formed in the heart of the hospital, and thus is constituted not only a place of cure but also a place of record and the acquisition of knowledge. Medical knowledge, which up until the eighteenth century was located in books, a type of medical jurisprudence concentrated in the great classical treatises of medicine, therefore begins to occupy a place which is not a text, but a hospital. It is no longer what was written and printed, but what every day was recorded in living, active and current actions which the hospital represents.

It is for these reasons that it can be asserted that the normative formation of the doctor in the hospital occurs in the period of 1780–1790. This institution, besides being a place of cure, is a place of medical training. The clinic appears as an essential dimension of the hospital. I understand by 'clinic '[*la clinique*] the organisation of the hospital as a place of formation and transmission of knowledge [*savoir*]. But it happens also that, with an introduction of the discipline of the hospital space, it permits curing as well as the recording, capacitating and accumulating of knowledge [*connaissance*]. Medicine offers an immense field as an object of observation, limited on one side by the individual themselves and on the other by the population as a whole.

With the application of the discipline of medical space, and by the fact that it is possible to isolate each individual, install him in a bed, prescribe for him a regimen, etc., one is led toward an individualising medicine. In effect it is the individual who will be observed, surveyed, known and cured. The individual thus appears as an object of medical knowledge and practice.

At the same time, through the same system of disciplined hospital space, one can observe a great number of individuals. The records obtained daily, when compared among hospitals and in diverse regions, permit the study of pathological phenomena common to the whole population.

Thanks to hospital technology, the individual and the population present themselves at the same time as objects of knowledge and medical intervention. The redistribution of those two medicines will be a phenomenon of the nineteenth century. The medicine that is formed in the course of the eighteenth century is simultaneously a medicine of the individual and the population.

[6] Philippe Pinel's (1745–1826) work at Bicêtre is a key element in the founding of modern psychiatry. Foucault discusses his work extensively in *The History of Madness*.

The Meshes of Power
Translated by Gerald Moore

We are going to try to conduct an analysis of the notion of power. I am not the first, far from it, to try to bypass the Freudian schema that opposes instinct to repression, instinct and culture. A whole school of psychoanalysts tried, a few decades ago, to modify, to elaborate on this Freudian schema of instinct *versus* culture and of instinct *versus* repression — I refer to psychoanalysts in the English language as well as the French language, like Melanie Klein, [Donald] Winnicott and Lacan, who tried to show that repression, far from being a secondary, ulterior, delayed mechanism that would try to control any given game of instinct, is by nature part of a mechanism of instinct or, at least, of a process through which sexual instinct develops, unfurls and constitutes itself as drive [*pulsion*].

The Freudian notion of *Trieb* should not be interpreted as a simple natural given, a natural biological mechanism on which repression would come to lay its law of prohibition, but, according to psychoanalysts, as something that is already deeply penetrated by repression. Need, castration, lack, prohibition, the law are already elements through which desire constitutes itself as sexual desire, which therefore implies a transformation of the primitive notion of sexual instinct, such as Freud had conceived it at the end of the 19th century. We must therefore think instinct not as a natural given, but already as a whole development, a wholly complex game between the body and the law, between the body and the cultural mechanisms that ensure the control of the people.

I believe thus that psychoanalysts have considerably displaced the problem by bringing a new notion of instinct to the fore, or rather a new conception of instinct, of the drive, of desire. Nonetheless, what disturbs me, or at least what seems to me insufficient, is that, in this elaboration proposed by psychoanalysts, they perhaps change the conception of desire, but they nonetheless absolutely do not change the conception of power.

In these circles, they still continue to consider that the signified of power, the central point, that in which power consists, is still prohibition, the law, the fact of saying no, once again the form, the formula 'you must not'. Power is essentially what says 'you must not'. It seems to me that this is — and I will speak more of it presently — a totally insufficient conception of power, a juridical conception, a formal conception of power and that it is necessary to elaborate another conception of power that would allow us without doubt better to understand the relations that have established themselves between power and sexuality in Western societies.

I am going to try to develop, or better, to show in which direction one could better develop an analysis of power that would not simply be a negative, juridical conception of power, but a conception of a technology of power.

We frequently find amongst psychoanalysts, psychologists and sociologists this conception according to which power is essentially rule, the law, prohibition, that which marks the limit between what is permitted and what is forbidden. I believe that this conception of power was incisively formulated and broadly developed by ethnology at the end of the 19th century. Ethnology has always tried to detect systems of power, in societies different from our own, as systems of rules. And we, when we try to reflect on our society, on the way in which power exercises itself there, we do so essentially from a juridical conception: where power is, who holds power, what the rules are that govern power, what the system of laws is that power establishes over the social body.

We are thus always doing a juridical sociology of power for our society and, when we study societies different from our own, we do an ethnology that is essentially an ethnology of rules, an ethnology of prohibition. See, for example, in ethnological studies from Durkheim to Lévi-Strauss, what was the problem that would always reappear, perpetually re-worked: a problem of prohibition, essentially the prohibition of incest. And, from this matrix, from this core that is the prohibition of incest, we have tried to understand the general functioning of the system. And it was necessary to wait until more recent years to see new points of view on power appear, be they strictly Marxist or a point of view more distanced from classical Marxism. Anyway, from there we see appear, with the work of Clastres,[7] for example, a whole new conception of

[7] Reference to the works of Pierre Clastres collected in *La société contre l'État: Recherches d'anthropologie politique*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, coll. 'Critique', 1974. [*Society Against the State*. Translated by Robert Hurley and Abe Stein. Oxford: Blackwell, 1977.]

power as technology, which tries to break free from the primitive, from this privileging of rules and prohibition that had basically reigned over ethnology from Durkheim to Lévi-Strauss.

In any case, the question that I would like to pose is as follows: how is it that our society, Western society in general, has conceived power in such a restricted, such a poor and such a negative way? Why do we always conceive power as law and as prohibition, why this privileging? We can obviously say that it is due to the influence of Kant, to the idea according to which, in the last instance, the moral law, the 'you must not', the opposition 'you must'/'you must not 'is at bottom the matrix of all regulation of human conduct. But, to speak truthfully, this explanation through the influence of Kant is obviously totally insufficient. The problem is of knowing whether Kant had such an influence and why it was so strong. Why was Durkheim, a philosopher of vague socialist leanings at the beginning of the French Third Republic, able to rely in this way on Kant when it came to doing an analysis of the mechanism of power in a society?

I believe that we can roughly analyse the reason for this in the following terms: basically, in the West, the great systems established since the Middle Ages developed through the intermediary of the growth of monarchic power at the expense of feudal power, or better, feudal powers. Now, in this struggle between feudal powers and monarchic power, law had always been the instrument of monarchic power against institutions, mores, regulations, the forms of bondage and belonging characteristic of feudal society. I will give you two straightforward examples of this. On one hand monarchic power developed in the West by relying on judicial institutions and by developing these institutions; through civil war, it came to replace the old solution of private litigations by a system of tribunals, with laws, which in fact gave monarchic power the possibility of resolving disputes between individuals itself. In the same way, Roman law, which reappeared in the West in the 13th and 14th centuries, was a formidable instrument in the hands of the monarchy for coming to define the forms and mechanisms of its own power, at the expense of feudal powers. In other words, the growth of the State in Europe has been partly assured by, or in any case, utilised as an instrument, the development of juridical thought. Monarchic power, the power of the State, is essentially represented in law.

Yet it was found that the bourgeoisie, at the same time as broadly profiting from the development of royal power and the weakening, the regression of feudal systems, had every interest in developing this system of law that had allowed it, on the other hand, to shape the economic exchanges that assured its own social development. In such a way that the vocabulary, the form of law has been the system of representation of power common to the bourgeoisie and the monarchy. The bourgeoisie and the monarchy succeeded little by little in establishing, from the end of the Middle Ages up until the 18th century, a form of power that represented itself, that gave itself as a discourse, as a language, the vocabulary of law. And, when the bourgeoisie finally rid itself of monarchic power, it did so precisely by using this juridical discourse — which was nonetheless that of the monarchy — which it turned against the monarchy itself.

To give just one example: when Rousseau came up with his theory of the State, he tried to show how a sovereign, moreover a collective sovereign, a sovereign as social body or, better, a social body as sovereign, is born of the ceding of individual rights, their alienation and the formulation of laws of prohibition that each individual is obliged to recognise because it is he who has imposed the law on himself, to the extent that he is a member of the sovereign, to the extent that he is himself the sovereign. Consequently, this theoretical mechanism, through which the institution of the monarchy has been criticised, has been the instrument of law, which had been established by the monarchy itself. In other words, the West never had a system for the representation, the formulation and the analysis of power other than law and the system of law. And I believe that this is the reason for which, when it comes down to it, we have not had, until recently, other possibilities of analysing power besides utilising these elementary, fundamental, etc., notions that are those of law, of rules, of the sovereign, of the delegation of power, etc. I believe that it is this juridical conception of power, this conception of power derived from law and the sovereign, from rule and prohibition, of which we must now rid ourselves if we want to proceed to an analysis not just of the representation of power, but of the real functioning of power.

How could we try to analyse power in its positive mechanisms? It seems to me that we can find, in a certain number of texts, the fundamental elements for an analysis of this type. We can maybe find them in Bentham, an English philosopher from the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, who was ultimately the great theoretician of bourgeois power, and we can obviously also find them in Marx, essentially in Volume II of *Capital*. It is there, I think, that we can find several elements on which I can draw for the analysis of power in its positive mechanisms.

In sum, what we can find in Volume II of *Capital* is, in the first place, that there exists no *single* power, but several powers.[8] Powers, which means to say forms of domination, forms of subjection, which function locally, for example in the workshop, in the army, in slave-ownership or in a property where there are servile relations. All these are local, regional forms of power, which have their own way of functioning, their own procedure and technique. All these forms of power are heterogeneous. We cannot therefore speak of power, if we want to do an analysis of power, but we must speak of powers and try to localise them in their historical and geographical specificity.

A society is not a unitary body in which one power and one power only exercises itself, but in reality it is a juxtaposition, a liaising, a coordination, a hierarchy, too, of different powers which nonetheless retain their specificity. Marx continually insists, for example, on the simultaneously specific and relatively autonomous, in some way impermeable, character of the *de facto* power that the employer exerts in a workshop, in relation to the juridical type of power that exists in the rest of society. Thus the existence of regions of power. Society is an archipelago of different powers.

Secondly, it seems that these powers cannot and must not be understood simply as the derivation, the consequence of what would be a primordial, central type of power. The schema of jurists, be it that of Grotius, of Pufendorf or of Rousseau, consists in saying: 'In the beginning, there was no society, and then society appeared from the moment that there appeared a central point of sovereignty that organised the social body, and which then enabled a whole series of local and regional powers'; Marx, implicitly, does not recognise this schema. He shows on the contrary how, from the initial and primitive existence of these small regions of power — such as property, slavery, the workshop and also the army — great State apparatuses could form, bit by bit. The unity of the State is essentially secondary in relation to these specific and regional powers, which come in the first place.

Thirdly, these specific, regional powers absolutely do not function primordially to prohibit, to prevent, to say 'you must not'. The primitive, essential and permanent function of these local and regional powers is, in reality, to be producers of an efficiency, an aptitude, producers of a product. Marx gave, for example, superb analyses of the problem of discipline in the army and in the workshops. The analysis that I will make of discipline in the army is not to be found in Marx, but no matter. What happened in the army, from the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century until practically the end of the 18th century? A whole enormous transformation meant that, in the army, which up to this time had essentially been made up of relatively interchangeable small units of individuals, organised around a leader, these units were replaced by a great pyramidal unity, with a whole range of intermediary leaders, sub-officers, technicians too, essentially because of a technical discovery: the relatively quick-fire and aimable rifle.

From this moment on, the army could no longer be treated — it was dangerous to make it function in this way — in the form of small isolated units, composed of interchangeable elements. For the army to be efficient, it was necessary that these rifles be employed in the best possible way, that each individual be trained to occupy a determinate position in an extended front, to place himself simultaneously in harmony with a line that must not be broken, etc. A whole problem of discipline implied a new technique of power with sub-officers, subordinate and superior officers. And it is thus that the army could be treated as a very complex hierarchical unity, by ensuring its maximal performance through the unity of the whole in accordance with the specificity of the position and role of each individual.

Military performance was highly superior on account of a new procedure of power, whose function was absolutely not that of prohibiting anything. Of course, this led to prohibiting one thing or another, the goal was nonetheless absolutely not to say 'you must not', but essentially to obtain a better performance, a better production, a better productivity from the army. The army as the production of deaths — this is what has been perfected or, better, what has been ensured by this new technique of power. This was absolutely not prohibition. We can say the same thing about discipline in the workshops, which began to establish itself around the 17th and 18th centuries, when the replacement of small corporative-style workshops by great workshops with a whole series of workers — hundreds of workers — made it necessary simultaneously to oversee and coordinate their movements with one another through the division of labour. The division of labour was, at the same time, the reason for which this new workshop discipline had to be invented; but

[8] Karl Marx, *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, Buch II: 'Der Zirkulationsprozess des Kapitals. 'Hamburg: O. Meissner, 1867. [*Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Volume Two. Translated by David Fernbach. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978.]

inversely we can say that this workshop discipline was the condition for the division of labour being able to take hold. Without this workshop discipline, which is to say without the hierarchy, without the overseeing, without the supervisors, without the chronometric control of movements, it would not have been possible to obtain the division of labour.

Finally, a fourth important idea: these mechanisms of power, these procedures of power, must be considered as techniques, which is to say procedures that have been invented, perfected and which are endlessly developed. There exists a veritable technology of power or, better, powers, which have their own history. Here, once again, one can easily find between the lines of Volume II of *Capital* an analysis, or at least the sketch of an analysis, which would be the history of the technology of power as it has been exercised in the workshops and in the factories. I will therefore follow these essential indications and I will try, where sexuality is concerned, not to envisage power from a juridical point of view, but from a technological one.

It seems to me, in fact, that if we analyse power by privileging the State apparatus, if we analyse power by considering it as a mechanism of conservation, if we consider power as a juridical superstructure, we basically do no more than return to the classical theme of bourgeois thought, when it essentially envisaged power as a juridical fact. To privilege the State apparatus, the function of conservation, the juridical superstructure, is to 'Rousseau-ise 'Marx. It is to reinscribe it in the bourgeois and juridical theory of power. It is not surprising that this supposedly Marxist conception of power as State apparatus, as agent of conservation, as juridical superstructure, finds itself in the European social democracy of the end of the 19th century, when the problem was precisely that of knowing how to make Marx function on the inside of the juridical system of the bourgeoisie. So, what I would like to do in revisiting that which is found in Volume II of *Capital*, and in distancing from it everything that has subsequently been added to it and rewritten on the privileges of State apparatus, the function of the reproduction of power, the character of the juridical superstructure, would be to try to see how it is possible to do a history of powers in the West, and essentially of the powers that have been invested in sexuality.

From this methodological principle, how then would we be able to do a history of the mechanisms of power in relation to sexuality? I believe that, in a very schematic way, we would be able to say the following: the system of power that the monarchy had succeeded in organising since the end of the Middle Ages presented two major disadvantages for the development of capitalism. Firstly, political power, such as it was exercised in the social body, was a very discontinuous power. The mesh of the net was too large, an almost infinite number of things, elements, conducts and processes escaped the control of power. If we take for example a precise point: in the importance of contraband across Europe until the end of the 18th century, we note a very important economic flow, a flow almost as important as any other, a flow that entirely escaped power. It was, moreover, one of the conditions of the existence of people; if there had been no maritime piracy, commerce would not have been able to function, and people would not have been able to live. In other words, illegality was one of the conditions of life, but at the same time it signified that there were certain things that escaped power, and over which power had no control. Consequently, economic processes that after a fashion remained out of control required the establishment of a continuous power, to be precise, of a certain atomistic manner; to pass from lacunary, global power to a continuous, atomistic and individualising power: that each one, every individual himself, in his body, in his movements, could be controlled, in the place of global and mass controls.

The second great disadvantage of the mechanisms of power as they functioned in the monarchy, is that they were excessively onerous. And they were onerous precisely because the function of power — that in which power consisted — was essentially the power of taking away, of having the right and the force to perceive something — a tax, or a tithe, when it came to the clergy – in what had been harvested: the obligatory perception of such and such a percentage for the master, for royal power, for the clergy. Power was thus essentially perceiver and predator. To this extent, it always operated an economic subtraction and, as a consequence, far from favouring and stimulating economic flows, it was perpetually an obstacle, a break on them. Whence this second preoccupation, this second necessity: to find a mechanism of power that, at the same time as controlling things and people up to the finest detail, is neither onerous nor essentially predatory on society, that exercises itself in the very sense of the economic process.

With these two objectives, I believe that we can roughly understand the great mutation of technological power in the West. We have the habit — once again conforming to a more or less primary spirit of Marxism — of saying that the great invention, as everybody knows, was the steam engine, or some other invention of this type. It is true that this was very important, but there was a whole other series of

technological inventions equally important as this and which, in the last instance, were the condition of the functioning of others. This was the case with political technology; there was a glut of invention at the level of forms of power right across the 17th and 18th centuries. As a consequence, we must undertake not only a history of industrial techniques, but also of political techniques, and I believe that we can group the inventions of political technology into two large chapters, for which we must credit the 17th and 18th centuries foremost. I would group them into two chapters because it seems to me that they developed in two different directions. On one hand, there is this technology that I would call 'discipline'. Discipline is basically the mechanism of power through which we come to control the social body in its finest elements, through which we arrive at the very atoms of society, which is to say individuals. Techniques of the individualisation of power. How to oversee someone, how to control their conduct, their behaviour, their aptitudes, how to intensify their performance, multiply their capacities, how to put them in the place where they will be most useful: this is what discipline is, in my sense.

I just cited you an example of discipline in the army. It is an important example, because it has truly been the point at which the great discovery of discipline was made and developed almost in the first place. One moreover linked to that other invention of technico-industrial order, namely the relatively quick-fire rifle. From this moment on we can basically say the following: that the soldier ceased to be interchangeable, ceased to be purely and simply flesh with a gun and a simple individual capable of hitting. To be a good soldier, it was necessary to know how to shoot, it was therefore necessary to have passed through a process of apprenticeship. It was necessary that the soldier knew equally how to move, how to coordinate his movements with those of the other soldiers, in sum: the soldier becomes something of skill, and therefore valuable. And the more valuable he was, the more it was necessary to preserve him; the more it was necessary to preserve him, the more it became necessary to teach him the techniques capable of saving his life in battle; and the more he was taught techniques, the longer his apprenticeship, the more valuable he was. And suddenly you have a sort of take-off of the military techniques of dressage that culminated in the famous Prussian army of Frederick II, which spent the most part of its time doing drills. The Prussian army, the model of Prussian discipline, is precisely the perfection, the maximal intensity of this corporal discipline of the soldier, which was, up to a point, the model for other disciplines.

Another point through which we see this new disciplinary technology appear is education. It is initially in the schools and then in the primary schools that we see appear these new disciplinary methods through which the multiplicity of individuals are individualised. The school brings together tens, hundreds and sometimes thousands of schoolchildren, students and it is as such a question of exercising over them a power that is precisely much less onerous than the power of the private tutor, one which could only exist between the pupil and the master. There we have a master for dozens of disciples; it is therefore necessary, despite this multiplicity of pupils, that there is an individualisation of power, a permanent control, an overseeing of every moment. Whence the appearance of this person known to all those who have studied in school, namely the invigilator, who, in the pyramid, corresponds to an army sub-officer; equally the appearance of quantitative marking, the appearance of exams, the appearance of competitions, the possibility, consequently, of classing individuals in such a way that each one is exactly in their place, under the eyes of the master, or even in the qualification and in the judgment that we hold over them.

See for example how you sit in a row before me. It is a position that perhaps appears natural to you, but it is worth recalling however that it is relatively recent in the history of civilisation, and that it is still possible at the beginning of the 19th century to find schools where the pupils present themselves standing upright in a group, around a teacher who gives them a lesson. And that implies, obviously, that the teacher cannot really and individually oversee them: there is a group of pupils and then the teacher. Nowadays, you are placed like this in a row, the gaze of the professor can individualise each one, can call them to know that they are present, what they do, if they dream, if they yawn... There are trivialities there, nonetheless very important futilities, because in the end, at the level of a whole series of exercises of power, it is these little techniques that these new mechanisms of power could invest in and were able to make work. What happened in the army and in the schools could equally be seen in the workshops throughout the 19th century. What I will call the individualising technology of power, a power that basically targets individuals right up to their bodies, in their behaviour; it is *grosso modo* a type of political anatomy, an anatomy that targets individuals to the point of anatomising them.

This is one family of technologies of power that appeared in the 17th and 18th centuries; we have another family of technologies of power that appeared a bit later, in the second half of the 18th century, and

which was developed (it must be said that the first, to the shame of France, was developed primarily in France and in Germany) primarily in England: technologies that did not target individuals as individuals, but which on the contrary targeted the population. In other words, the 18th century discovered this principal thing: that power is not simply exercised over subjects; this was the fundamental thesis of the monarchy, according to which there is the sovereign and then subjects. We discover that that on which power is exercised is the population. And what does population mean? It does not simply mean to say a numerous group of humans, but living beings, traversed, commanded, ruled by processes and biological laws. A population has a birth rate, a rate of mortality, a population has an age curve, a generation pyramid, a life-expectancy, a state of health, a population can perish or, on the contrary, grow.

Now all this began to be discovered in the 18th century. We see, consequently, that the relation of power to the subject or, better, to the individual must not simply be this form of subjection that permits power to take from the subject goods, riches and eventually its body and blood, but that power must be exercised on individuals insofar as they constitute a species of biological entity that must be taken into consideration, if we want precisely to utilise this population as a machine for producing, producing riches, goods, producing other individuals. The discovery of population is, alongside the discovery of the individual and the body amenable to dressage, the other great technological core around which the political procedures of the West transformed themselves. At this moment, what I will call 'bio-politics', in opposition to the anatomo-politics I mentioned a moment ago, was invented. It is at this moment that we see appear problems like those of housing, of the conditions of life in the city, of public hygiene, of the modification of the relation between birth and mortality. It is at this moment that there appeared the problem of knowing how we can bring people to have more children, or at any rate how we can regulate population flux, how we can equally regulate migrations and the growth rate of a population. And, from this, a whole series of techniques of observation, including statistics, obviously, but also all the great administrative, economic and political organisms, are charged with this regulation of the population. There were two great revolutions in the technology of power: the discovery of discipline and the discovery of the regulation and perfection of an anatomo-politics and the perfection of a bio-politics.

Life has now become, from the 18th century onwards, an object of power. Life and the body. Once, there were only subjects, juridical subjects from whom one could take goods, life too, moreover. Now, there are bodies and populations. Power has become materialist. It ceases to be essentially juridical. It must deal with these real things that are bodies and life. Life enters into the domain of power: a crucial mutation, without doubt one of the most important in the history of human societies; and it is evident that one can see how sex was able to become from this moment, which is to say beginning precisely in the 18th century, an absolutely crucial theatre; for, basically, sex is very exactly placed at the point of articulation between individual disciplines of the body and regulations of the population. Sex is that point from which the overseeing of individuals can be ensured, and we understand how, in the 18th century, and precisely in schools, the sexuality of adolescents became a medical problem, a moral problem, almost a political problem of the highest order, because through — and under the pretext of — this control of sexuality, schoolgoers and adolescents, could be overseen throughout their lives, at every instant, even during sleep. Sex thus goes on to become an instrument of 'disciplinarisation', it comes to be one of the essential elements of this anatomo-politics of which I have spoken; but, on the other hand, it is sex that ensures the reproduction of populations, it is with sex, with the politics of sex that we can change the relation between birth and death; in any case, the politics of sex comes to be integrated into the interior of this whole politics of life, which will become so important in the 19th century. Sex is the hinge between anatomo-politics and bio-politics, it is at the intersection of disciplines and regulations, and it is in this function that it has become, at the end of the 19th century, a political drama of first importance for making society a machine of production.

The Language of Space
Translated by Gerald Moore

Writing, over the centuries, has been coordinated with time. Narrative, be it fictional or real, was not the only form of this belonging [to time], nor the one that is most essential to it; it is even probable that it has concealed the depths and law of writing in the movement that seemed best to exhibit them. At the point of liberating writing from narrative, from its linear order, from the great syntactical game of the concordance of times, it was believed that the act of writing was relieved of its old obedience to time. In fact the rigour of time did not exercise itself over writing through the leanings of what it wrote, but in its dense layering, in that which constituted its singular being — incorporeal. Whether or not addressing itself to the past, submitting to the order of chronologies, or applying itself to unravelling them, writing was caught in the fundamental curve of the Homeric return; but also that of the accomplishment of Jewish Prophecies. Alexandria, which is our birthplace, had prescribed this circle to all Western language: to write was to make return, it was to return to the origin, to re-capture oneself in the primal moment; it was to be new every morning. From this the mythical function, up until the present, of literature; from this the relation of literature to the ancient; from this the privilege that literature accorded to analogy, to the same, to all the marvels of identity. From this, above all, a structure of repetition that designates its being.

The 20th century is perhaps the era when such kinships were undone. The Nietzschean return closed once and for all the curve of Platonic memory, and Joyce closed that of the Homeric narrative. This does not condemn us to space as the only other possibility, for too long neglected, but reveals that language is (or, perhaps, became) a thing of space. That it might describe or pass through space is no longer what is essential here. And if space is, in today's language, the most obsessive of metaphors, it is not that it henceforth offers the only recourse; but it is in space that, from the outset, language unfurls, slips on itself, determines its choices, draws its figures and translations. It is in space that it transports itself, that its very being 'metaphorises 'itself.

The gap, distance, the intermediary, dispersion, fracture and difference are not the themes of literature today; but in which language is now given and comes to us: what makes it speak. Language has not, like the verbal model, removed these dimensions from things in order to reinstate something analogous. These dimensions are common to things and to language itself: the blind spot where things and words come to us in the moment where they go toward their meeting point. This paradoxical 'curve', so different from the Homeric return or from the fulfilment of the Promise, is without doubt for the moment the unthinkable of Literature. Which is to say that which makes it possible in the texts where we can read it today.

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La Veille, by Roger Laporte,[9] *clings tightly* to this simultaneously pallid and awesome 'region'. It is designated here as an ordeal: a danger and probation, an opening that instantiates but remains gaping, an approach and a distancing. What imposes its imminence in this way, but also immediately turns away, is not language. But a neutral subject, a faceless '*it* 'through which all language is possible. Writing is given only if it does not withdraw in the absolute of distance; but writing becomes impossible when it threatens with the full weight of its extreme proximity. In this gap that is full of perils, there can be neither Midst, nor Law, nor Measure (no more so than in Hölderlin's *Empedokles*[10]). For nothing is given but distance and the night watch [*la veille*] of the lookout who opens his eyes on the day that is not yet there. In an enlightened but absolutely reserved way, this *it* states the excessive, unmeasured measure of the distance that keeps vigil, where language speaks. The experience recounted by Laporte as the past of an ordeal is exactly where the language that recounts it is given; it is the fold where language redoubles the empty distance from where it comes to us and separates itself from itself in the approach of this distance over which it is proper to language, and to language alone, to keep watch.

In this sense, the work of Laporte, in proximity to Blanchot, thinks the unthought of Literature and approaches its being through the transparency of a language that seeks not so much to join with it as to receive and host it.

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[9] Roger Laporte (1963) *La Veille*. Paris: Gallimard, collection 'Le Chemin'. The title means 'eve', 'sleeplessness', 'keeping wake 'or 'night watch'.

[10] Friedrich Hölderlin (1798) *Der Tod des Empedokles*. The German text and English translation can be found in *Hölderlin: Selected Verse*. Edited and translated by Michael Hamburger. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961, 40–65.

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An Adamite novel, *Le Procès-Verbal*,[11] is also a watch [*une veille*], but in the full light of day. Stretched out across 'the diagonal of the sky', Adam Pollo is at the point where the aspects of time fold in on one another. At the beginning of the novel, he is perhaps an escapee of the prison in which he will be enclosed at its end; perhaps he comes from the hospital whose black paint, metal and mother-of-pearl shell he finds in the final pages. And the breathless old woman who climbs toward him with the whole world as a halo around her head is undoubtedly, in the discourse of madness, the young girl who, at the beginning of the text, climbs up to his abandoned house. And in this refolding of time an empty space is born, an as yet unnamed distance where language precipitates. This distance is steepness itself and at its summit Adam Pollo is like Zarathustra: he descends toward the world, the sea, the town. And when he climbs back up to his den, it is not the solar circle, the inseparable enemies of the eagle and the serpent, who await him; but only the dirty white rat that he tears apart with a knife, and which he sends to rot on a sun of thorns. Adam Pollo is a prophet in a singular sense; he does not announce Time; he speaks of this distance that separates him from the world (from the world that 'came to him from his head by dint of being watched'), and, by the tide of his discourse contradicts; when the world flows back to him, like a big fish swimming against the current he will swallow it and hold it closed for an indefinite and immobile time in the quartered bedroom of an asylum. Closed in on itself, time now redistributes itself on this chessboard of bars and the sun. A grid that is perhaps the puzzle of language.

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The entire work of Claude Ollier is an investigation of the space that is common to language and things; in appearance, an exercise for adjusting long and patient sentences, undone, resumed and fastened in the movements of a simple gaze or a stroll, to the complex spaces of towns and countrysides. To speak truthfully, the first novel of Ollier, *La Mise en scène*,[12] already revealed a deeper relation between language and space than that of a description or a sublimation: in the blank circle of an unmapped region, narrative had given birth to a precise space peopled and furrowed by events in which he who described them (in giving birth to them) found himself immersed, as if lost; because the narrator had a 'double 'who, himself inexistent in this same inexistent place, had been killed by a sequence of factual events identical to those that wove around the narrator: so much so that this hitherto undescribed space had been named, recounted and measured up only at the cost of a murderous redoubling; space acceded to language by a 'stuttering 'that abolished time. Space and language were born together, in *Le Maintien de l'ordre*,[13] of an oscillation between a gaze that saw itself being overseen and an obstinate and mute double gaze that oversaw it and surprised the overseer with a game of constant retrospection.

Été indien[14] obeys an octagonal structure. The axis of abscissa is the car that, from the tip of its hood, cuts the expanse of the landscape in two; it is the stroll on foot or by car through the city; it is tramways and trains. On the vertical axis of coordinates, there is the climb up the side of the pyramid, the elevator in the sky-scraper, the panoramic view that hangs over the city. And in the space opened up by these perpendiculars, every composite movement unfurls: the gaze that turns, the one that plunges over the expanse of the city as if studying a plan; the curve of the air train that propels itself beyond the bay and then descends again toward the suburbs. What is more, some of these movements are prolonged, reverberated, sent back or forth or fixed by photos, fixed points of view and fragments of film. But all are redoubled by the eye that follows them, relates them or completes these movements itself. For the gaze is never neutral; it gives the impression of leaving things there where they are; in fact, it 'removes 'them, virtually detaching them from their depths and layers, in order to enter them into the composition of a film that is yet to exist and whose screenplay has not been determined. These are the 'views 'that are not decided upon, but 'under option', and which, between the things that are no longer and the film that is yet to be, form with language the weaving plot of the book.

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[11] J.-M.G. Le Clézio (1963) *Le Procès-Verbal*. Paris: Gallimard, collection 'Le Chemin'. *The Statement*, literally 'the trial of the Word', it can also mean a transcript of a discussion.

[12] Claude Ollier (1958) *La Mise en scène*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit. *The Staging*, or *Direction*, literally 'the putting in place'.

[13] Claude Ollier (1961) *Le Maintien de l'ordre*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit. *The Maintenance of Order*.

[14] Claude Ollier (1963) *Été indien*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit. *Indian Summer*.

In this new place, that which is perceived abandons its consistency, detaches itself from itself, floats in a space and in accordance with improbable combinations, acquires the gaze that detaches them and knots them, so much that it enters inside them, creeps into this strange impalpable distance that separates and unites their place of birth and their screen grand finale. Entering the aircraft that leads them back toward the reality of film (producers and authors) as if he had entered into this slender space, the narrator disappears with it — with the fragile distance established by his gaze: the plane falls into a tide that closes in on all the things seen in this 'removed 'space, leaving only the red flowers 'under no gaze 'beyond the now-calm perfect surface, and this text that we read — the floating language of a space that has devoured itself along with its creator, but which still and forever remains present in all these words that no longer have a voice to pronounce them.

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Such is the power of language: that which is woven of space elicits space, gives itself space through an originary opening and removes space to take it back into language. But again it is devoted to space: where else could it float and posit itself, if not on this place that is the page, with its lines and its surfaces, if not in this *volume* that is the book? Michel Butor has, on several occasions, formulated the laws and paradoxes of this space so visible that language ordinarily encompasses it without protest. *The Description de San Marco*[15] does not seek to restore in language the architectural model of that which the gaze can traverse. But it systematically, and of its own accord, makes use of all the spaces of language that are subsidiary to the edifice of stones: anterior spaces that language recovers (the sacred texts illustrated by the frescos), spaces immediately and materially superimposed on painted surfaces (inscriptions and legends), ulterior spaces that analyse and describe elements of the Church (commentaries in books and guides), neighbouring and correlative spaces that grasp at us somewhat accidentally, caught up in words (the reflections of watching tourists), nearby spaces whose gazes are turned elsewhere (fragments of dialogues). These spaces have their own proper place of inscription: rolls of manuscripts, the surfaces of walls, books, magnetic tapes that one cuts with scissors. And this three-fold game (the basilica, verbal spaces, and the place of their writing) distributes its elements in accordance with a double system: the usual route (which is itself the entangled outcome of the space of the basilica, the strolling of the walker and the movement of his gaze), and that which is prescribed by the great white pages on which Butor had his text printed, where strips of words are cut up by no more than the law of margins, some laid out in verse and others in columns. And this organisation perhaps brings us back to yet another space, which is that of photography... An immense architecture along the lines of the basilica, but differing absolutely from its space of stones and paintings — directed toward it, clinging to it, traversing its walls, opening the trove of words buried inside it, bringing back to it the whole murmur of that which escapes it or turns away from it, making the games of verbal space, in its grappling with things, surge up with methodological rigour.

'Description 'here is not a reproduction, but more a deciphering: the meticulous undertaking for untangling this mess of the diverse languages that are things, in order to restore each to its natural place and make the book a white place where everything, after de-scription, can find a universal place of inscription. And this, without doubt, is the being of the book, the object and place of literature.

[15] Michel Butor (1963) *Description de San Marco*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 'Collection blanche'.

The Force of Flight
Translated by Gerald Moore

You have entered. Here you are surrounded by ten paintings, which run the length of a room whose every window has been carefully closed.

Are you not, in turn, in prison, like the dogs you see priming themselves and pushing up against the bars?

Unlike the Birds from the Cuban sky, the *Dogs* belong to neither a determinate time nor a specific place.[16] It is not about the prisons of Spain, of Greece, of the USSR, of Brazil or Saigon; it is about prison. But prison — Jackson has given testimony to this[17] — is today a political place, which is to say a place where forces are born or become manifest, a place where history is formed and where time surges up.

The *Dogs* are not as such a variation on a form, on colours, a movement like the *Frogs* were. They form an irreversible series, an interruption that cannot be mastered. Do not say: a history appears thanks to the juxtaposition of canvases; but rather: the movement that initially trembles, then breaks free from the canvas, really passes beyond its limits to inscribe itself, to continue itself in the following canvas and to make all the canvases shudder with a great movement that ends up escaping them and leaving them there in front of you. The series of paintings, instead of recounting what has happened, gives rise to a force whose history can be recounted as the ripple of its flight and its freedom. Painting has at least this much in common with discourse: when it gives rise to a force that creates history, it is political.

Observe: the windows are white, so much so that enclosure reigns. Neither sky nor light: nothing of the interior can be glimpsed; nothing risks penetrating it anymore. Rather than an exterior, there is pure outside, neutral, inaccessible and without form. These white squares do not indicate a sky and an earth that one could see from afar, they denote that one is here and nowhere else. In classical painting, windows allow an interior to be re-placed in an external world; these unseeing eyes fix, nail and anchor shadows to walls that would otherwise know only night. Emblems of stark impotence.

Power, obstinate and immobile power, rigid power: such are the woods in the paintings of Rebeyrolle. Woods superimposed on canvas, glued to it by the strongest glue that one could find ('one cannot uproot them without uprooting the canvas'), they are simultaneously in the painting and outside its surface. In the middle of these hourless nights, in this darkness without direction, fragments of truncheons are like clockhands, but which mark height and depth: a timepiece of verticality. When the dogs are at rest, the batons hang straight; they are the immobile guards of *The Jail*, the single watchman of the sleeping *Condemned*, the pikes of *Torture*; but when the dog is primed, the wood lengthens and becomes a bar; it is the formidable lockdown of the *The Cooler*; against whose door *The Enraged* presses up; against the window of the *Prisoners*, still and always the horizontal baton of power.

In the world of prisons, as in the world of dogs ('lying down 'and 'upright'), the vertical is not one of the dimensions of space, it is the dimension of power.

It dominates, rises up, threatens and flattens; an enormous pyramid of buildings, above and below; orders barked out from up high and down low; you are forbidden to sleep by day, to be up at night, stood up straight in front of the guards, to attention in front of the governor; crumpled by blows in the dungeon, or strapped to the restraining bed for having not wanted to go to sleep in front of the warders; and, finally, hanging oneself with a clear conscience, the only means of escaping the full length of one's enclosure, the only way of dying upright.

The window and the baton oppose one another yet form a couple, as power and impotence. The baton, which is external to the painting, which, with its miserable straightness has come to be stuck to the painting, breaks the darkness and the body until bloody. The represented window, by contrast, with the limited means of painting, is incapable of opening onto any space. The straightness of the one bears on and underlines the powerlessness of the other: they intertwine in the bars. And, by these three elements (bars-

[16] *Birds*, *Frogs* and *Guerrillas* are previous series of Rebeyrolle's paintings. The other titles are those of individual paintings in the *Dogs* series.

[17] Foucault is referring to Bruce Jackson, and his book *In the Life: Versions of the Criminal Experience*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1972. Foucault wrote a preface for the French edition, *Leurs prisons: Autobiographie de prisonniers et d'ex-détenus américains*. Paris: Plon 1975, reprinted in *Dits et écrits*, Vol. II, 687–91.

window-baton), the splendour of this painting is wilfully pulled back from the aesthetics and forces of enchantment and onto politics — the struggle of forces and power.

When the white surface of the window shines out against an immense blue, it is the decisive moment. The canvas whereupon this mutation takes effect has the title *Inside*: the division takes place and the inside begins to open itself, despite itself, to the birth of a space. The wall splits from top to bottom: one would say divided by a great blue sword. The vertical, which, in the foreground of the baton, once marked power, now digs for freedom. The vertical batons that hold up the grill do not prevent the wall beside them from cracking. A muzzle and paws throw themselves into opening it with an intense joy, an frisson of electricity. In the world of men, nothing big has ever happened through these windows, but everything, always, through the triumphant bringing down of these walls.

The futile window has anyhow disappeared in the subsequent canvas (*The Enclosure*): pulled up against the ledge of a wall, the dog, erect but already somewhat drawn into himself, pulled back to pounce, looks out on the blue and infinite surface in front of him, from which only two driven in stakes and a half-battered grill separate him.

One leap and the surface swings around. Inside outside. From an inside that had no exterior to an outside that leaves no interior standing. Field and reverse angle [*champ et contrechamp*]. The white window is obscured and the blue that lay before us becomes a white wall that one leaves behind. This leap, this irruption of force (which is not represented on the canvas, but which produces itself unspeakably *between* two canvases, in the lightening-burst of their proximity) was enough for all signs and values to be inverted.

The abolition of verticals: henceforth everything takes flight in accordance with rapid horizontals. In *The Beautiful* (the most 'abstract 'of the series: because it is pure force, the night rising up from the night and carving itself out as a vibrant form in the light of day), the impotent baton this time designates a forced portico. Surging forth from the obscure, which still seems to impregnate it and form a body with it, a beast takes flight, feet first, penis raised.

And the grand finale, the great last canvas unfurls and spreads out a new space, hitherto absent from the whole series. It is the charting of transversality; it is divided by halves between the black fortress of the past and the clouds of future colour. But, across its whole length, the traces of a gallop —' the sign of an escapee'. It seems that the truth comes softly, in the steps of a dove. Force, too, leaves on the earth the claw-marks, the signature of its flight.

There were, in Rebeyrolle, three grand series of animals: first the trout and the frogs; then the birds; and here the dogs. Each one corresponds not only to a distinct technique, but to a different act of painting. The frogs and the trout weave in and out of weeds, pebbles and swirling streams. Movement is achieved through reciprocal displacements: the colours slip over their original forms and constitute, beside them, a bit further on, floating and liberated flecks; the forms displace one another under colours and cause the line of a nervous twitch or behaviour to rise up between two immobile surfaces. In such a way that it produces a leaping in some green, a darting amid the transparent, a furtive burst of speed through blue reflections. Animals from down below, animals of the water, of earth, the humid earth, formed within water and earth and broken down in them (a bit like Aristotle's rats), frogs and trout can only be painted as linked to and dispersed through them. They carry with them the world that eludes them. The painter apprehends them where they hide themselves only in order to liberate them and make them disappear in the movement that traces them.

The bird, like power, comes from on high. It beats down against the force that also comes from on high, and which it wants to *master*. But, in the moment it approaches this terrestrial force, yet livelier and more burning than the sun, it breaks down and falls, dislocated. In the series of *Guerillas*, birds-helicopters-parachutists swing toward the sun, head first, already struck by death, which they sew around them in a final somersault. In Bruegel, a miniscule Icarus falls, struck by the sun: this happens amidst the indifference of a working and everyday countryside. The bird in the green beret, in Rebeyrolle, falls in an enormous clatter from which beaks, claws, blood and feathers fly out. It is tangled up in the soldier into whom it clatters, but who kills it; red fists and arms thrown out. The contours from which the frogs and the trout furtively free themselves are rediscovered here, but in fragments, and on the periphery of a struggle where the violence of colour crushes forms. The act of painting is beaten back onto the canvas where it will thrash out for a long time yet.

The dogs, like the frogs, are animals from down below. But animals of force that rage. Form, here, is entirely reconstructed; despite the gloomy colours and overtone, the silhouettes carve themselves out with

precision. However, the contour is not obtained by a line that runs neatly the length of the body; but by thousands of perpendicular strokes, blades of straw that form a general bristling, a gloomy electric presence in the night. It is less a question of form than of energy; less of a presence than an intensity, less of a movement and a behaviour than an agitation, a trembling contained only with difficulty. Mistrustful of language, Spinoza feared that in the word 'dog 'one might confuse 'barking animal 'and 'celestial constellation'.[18] The dog of Rebeyrolle is resolutely both barking animal and terrestrial constellation.

Here, the painting of form and the unleashing of force come together. Rebeyrolle has found, in a single movement, the means of bringing out the force of painting in the vibrancy of the painting. Form is no longer charged with representing force in its distortions; the latter no longer has to jostle with form to realize itself. The same force passes directly from painter to canvas, and from one canvas to the next; from trembling dejection and supported grief to the glimmering of hope, to the leap, to the endless flight of this dog, who, turning right around you, has left you alone in the prison where you find yourself now enclosed, high on the passing of this force which is now already far from you and whose traces you no longer see before you — the traces of one who 'saves oneself'.

[18] Le Grand/Petit Chien or The Great/Little Dog are star constellations, also known as *Canis Major* and *Canis Minor*.