

gilles
felix **DELEUZE**
GUATTARI

a thousand plateaus
capitalism and schizophrenia

translation and
foreword by

brian massumi



A Thousand Plateaus

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A THOUSAND PLATEAUS

Capitalism and Schizophrenia

Gilles Deleuze
Félix Guattari

Translation and Foreword by Brian Massumi



University of Minnesota Press
Minneapolis
London

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Translator's Foreword: Pleasures of Philosophy

Brian Massumi

This is a book that speaks of many things, of ticks and quilts and fuzzy subsets and noology and political economy. It is difficult to know how to approach it. What do you do with a book that dedicates an entire chapter to music and animal behavior—and then claims that it isn't a chapter? That presents itself as a network of “plateaus” that are precisely dated, but can be read in any order? That deploys a complex technical vocabulary drawn from a wide range of disciplines in the sciences, mathematics, and the humanities, but whose authors recommend that you read it as you would listen to a record?¹

“Philosophy, nothing but philosophy.”² Of a bastard line.

The annals of official philosophy are populated by “bureaucrats of pure reason” who speak in “the shadow of the despot” and are in historical complicity with the State.³ They invent “a properly spiritual . . . absolute State that . . . effectively functions in the mind.” Theirs is the discourse of sovereign judgment, of stable subjectivity legislated by “good” sense, of rocklike identity, “universal” truth, and (white male) justice. “Thus the exercise of their thought is in conformity with the aims of the real State, with the dominant significations, and with the requirements of the established order.”⁴

Gilles Deleuze was schooled in that philosophy. The titles of his earliest

books read like a Who's Who of philosophical giants. "What got me by during that period was conceiving of the history of philosophy as a kind of ass-fuck, or, what amounts to the same thing, an immaculate conception. I imagined myself approaching an author from behind and giving him a child that would indeed be his but would nonetheless be monstrous."⁵ Hegel is absent, being too despicable to merit even a mutant offspring.⁶ To Kant he dedicated an affectionate study of "an enemy." Yet much of positive value came of Deleuze's flirtation with the greats. He discovered an orphan line of thinkers who were tied by no direct descendants but were united in their opposition to the State philosophy that would nevertheless accord them minor positions in its canon. Between Lucretius, Hume, Spinoza, Nietzsche, and Bergson there exists a "secret link constituted by the critique of negativity, the cultivation of joy, the hatred of interiority, the exteriority of forces and relations, the denunciation of power."⁷ Deleuze's first major statements written in his own voice, *Différence et répétition* (1968) and *Logique du sens* (1969), cross-fertilized that line of "nomad" thought with contemporary theory. The ferment of the student-worker revolt of May 1968 and the reassessment it prompted of the role of the intellectual in society⁸ led him to disclaim the "ponderous academic apparatus"⁹ still in evidence in those works. However, many elements of the "philosophy of difference" they elaborated were transfused into a continuing collaboration, of which *A Thousand Plateaus* is the most recent product.

Félix Guattari is a practicing psychoanalyst and lifelong political activist. He has worked since the mid-1950s at La Borde, an experimental psychiatric clinic founded by Lacanian analyst Jean Oury. Guattari himself was among Lacan's earliest trainees, and although he never severed his ties with Lacan's Freudian School the group therapy practiced at La Borde took him in a very different direction. The aim at La Borde was to abolish the hierarchy between doctor and patient in favor of an interactive group dynamic that would bring the experiences of both to full expression in such a way as to produce a collective critique of the power relations in society as a whole. "The central perspective is . . . to promote human relations that do not automatically fall into roles or stereotypes but open onto fundamental relations of a metaphysical kind that *bring out* the most radical and basic alienations of madness or neurosis"¹⁰ and channel them into revolutionary practice. Guattari collaborated beginning in 1960 on group projects dedicated to developing this radical "institutional psychotherapy,"¹¹ and later entered an uneasy alliance with the international antipsychiatry movement spearheaded by R.D. Laing in England and Franco Basaglia in Italy.¹² As Lacanian schools of psychoanalysis gained ground against psychiatry, the contractual Oedipal relationship between the analyst and the transference-bound analysand became as much of a target for Guattari as the legal

bondage of the institutionalized patient in the conventional State hospital. He came to occupy the same position in relation to psychoanalysis as he had all along in relation to the parties of the left: an ultra-opposition within the opposition. His antihierarchical leanings made him a precursor to the events of May 1968 and an early partisan of the social movements that grew from them, including feminism and the gay rights movement.¹³ *Anti-Oedipus* (1972),¹⁴ his first book with Deleuze, gave philosophical weight to his convictions and created one of the intellectual sensations of postwar France with its spirited polemics against State-happy or pro-party versions of Marxism and school-building strains of psychoanalysis, which separately and in various combinations represented the dominant intellectual currents of the time (in spite of the fundamentally anarchist nature of the spontaneous popular uprisings that had shaken the world in 1968). “The most tangible result of *Anti-Oedipus* was that it short-circuited the connection between psychoanalysis and the far left parties,” in which he and Deleuze saw the potential for a powerful new bureaucracy of analytic reason.¹⁵

For many French intellectuals, the hyperactivism of post-May gave way to a mid-seventies slump, then a return to religion (*Tel Quel*) or political conservatism (the Nouveaux Philosophes) in a foreshadowing of the Reagan eighties. Deleuze and Guattari never recanted. Nor did they simply revive the polemics. *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), written over a seven-year period, was billed as a sequel to *Anti-Oedipus* and shares its subtitle, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. But it constitutes a very different project. It is less a critique than a positive exercise in the affirmative “nomad” thought called for in *Anti-Oedipus*.

“State philosophy” is another word for the representational thinking that has characterized Western metaphysics since Plato, but has suffered an at least momentary setback during the last quarter century at the hands of Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and poststructuralist theory generally. As described by Deleuze,¹⁶ it reposes on a double identity: of the thinking subject, and of the concepts it creates and to which it lends its own presumed attributes of sameness and constancy. The subject, its concepts, and also the objects in the world to which the concepts are applied have a shared, internal essence: the self-resemblance at the basis of identity. Representational thought is analogical; its concern is to establish a correspondence between these symmetrically structured domains. The faculty of judgment is the policeman of analogy, assuring that each of the three terms is honestly itself, and that the proper correspondences obtain. In thought its end is truth, in action justice. The weapons it wields in their pursuit are limitative distribution (the determination of the exclusive set of properties possessed by each term in contradistinction to the others: *logos*, law) and

hierarchical ranking (the measurement of the degree of perfection of a term's self-resemblance in relation to a supreme standard, man, god, or gold: value, morality). The modus operandi is negation: $x = x = \text{not } y$. Identity, resemblance, truth, justice, and negation. The rational foundation for order. The established order, of course: philosophers have traditionally been employees of the State. The collusion between philosophy and the State was most explicitly enacted in the first decade of the nineteenth century with the foundation of the University of Berlin, which was to become the model for higher learning throughout Europe and in the United States. The goal laid out for it by Wilhelm von Humboldt (based on proposals by Fichte and Schleiermacher) was the "spiritual and moral training of the nation," to be achieved by "deriving everything from an original principle" (truth), by "relating everything to an ideal" (justice), and by "unifying this principle and this ideal in a single Idea" (the State). The end product would be "a fully legitimated subject of knowledge and society"¹⁷—each mind an analogously organized mini-State morally unified in the supermind of the State. Prussian mind-meld.¹⁸ More insidious than the well-known practical cooperation between university and government (the burgeoning military funding of research) is its philosophical role in the propagation of the form of representational thinking itself, that "properly spiritual absolute State" endlessly reproduced and disseminated at every level of the social fabric. Deconstruction-influenced feminists such as Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray have attacked it under the name "phallogocentrism" (what the most privileged model of rocklike identity is goes without saying). In the introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari describe it as the "arborescent model" of thought (the proudly erect tree under whose spreading boughs latter-day Platos conduct their class).

"Nomad thought" does not immure itself in the edifice of an ordered interiority; it moves freely in an element of exteriority. It does not repose on identity; it rides difference. It does not respect the artificial division between the three domains of representation, subject, concept, and being; it replaces restrictive analogy with a conductivity that knows no bounds. The concepts it creates do not merely reflect the eternal form of a legislating subject, but are defined by a communicable force in relation to which their subject, to the extent that they can be said to have one, is only secondary. They do not reflect upon the world but are immersed in a changing state of things. A concept is a brick. It can be used to build the courthouse of reason. Or it can be thrown through the window. What is the subject of the brick? The arm that throws it? The body connected to the arm? The brain encased in the body? The situation that brought brain and body to such a juncture? All and none of the above. What is its object? The window? The edifice? The laws the edifice shelters? The class and other power relations

encrusted in the laws? All and none of the above. “What interests us are the circumstances.”¹⁹ Because the concept in its unrestrained usage *is* a set of circumstances, at a volatile juncture. It is a vector: the point of application of a force moving through a space at a given velocity in a given direction. The concept has no subject or object other than itself. It is an act. Nomad thought replaces the closed equation of representation, $x = x = \text{not } y$ ($I = I = \text{not you}$) with an open equation: $\dots + y + z + a + \dots (\dots + \text{arm} + \text{brick} + \text{window} + \dots)$. Rather than analyzing the world into discrete components, reducing their manyness to the One of identity, and ordering them by rank, it sums up a set of disparate circumstances in a shattering blow. It synthesizes a multiplicity of elements without effacing their heterogeneity or hindering their potential for future rearranging (to the contrary). The modus operandi of nomad thought is affirmation, even when its apparent object is negative. Force is not to be confused with power. Force arrives from outside to break constraints and open new vistas. Power builds walls.

The space of nomad thought is qualitatively different from State space. Air against earth. State space is “striated,” or gridded. Movement in it is confined as by gravity to a horizontal plane, and limited by the order of that plane to preset paths between fixed and identifiable points. Nomad space is “smooth,” or open-ended. One can rise up at any point and move to any other. Its mode of distribution is the *nomos*: arraying oneself in an open space (hold the street), as opposed to the *logos* of entrenching oneself in a closed space (hold the fort).

A Thousand Plateaus is an effort to construct a smooth space of thought. It is not the first such attempt. Like State philosophy, nomad thought goes by many names. Spinoza called it “ethics.” Nietzsche called it the “gay science.” Artaud called it “crowned anarchy.” To Maurice Blanchot, it is the “space of literature.” To Foucault, “outside thought.”²⁰ In this book, Deleuze and Guattari employ the terms “pragmatics” and “schizoanalysis,” and in the introduction describe a rhizome network strangling the roots of the infamous tree. One of the points of the book is that nomad thought is not confined to philosophy. Or that the kind of philosophy it comes in many forms. Filmmakers and painters are philosophical thinkers to the extent that they explore the potentials of their respective mediums and break away from the beaten paths.²¹ On a strictly formal level, it is mathematics and music that create the smoothest of the smooth spaces.²² In fact, Deleuze and Guattari would probably be more inclined to call philosophy music with content than music a rarefied form of philosophy.

Which returns to our opening question. How should *A Thousand Plateaus* be played? When you buy a record there are always cuts that leave you cold. You skip them. You don’t approach a record as a closed book that you

have to take or leave. Other cuts you may listen to over and over again. They follow you. You find yourself humming them under your breath as you go about your daily business.

A Thousand Plateaus is conceived as an open system.²³ It does not pretend to have the final word. The authors' hope, however, is that elements of it will stay with a certain number of its readers and will weave into the melody of their everyday lives.

Each "plateau" is an orchestration of crashing bricks extracted from a variety of disciplinary edifices. They carry traces of their former emplacement, which give them a spin defining the arc of their vector. The vectors are meant to converge at a volatile juncture, but one that is sustained, as an open equilibrium of moving parts each with its own trajectory. The word "plateau" comes from an essay by Gregory Bateson on Balinese culture, in which he found a libidinal economy quite different from the West's orgasmic orientation.²⁴ In Deleuze and Guattari, a plateau is reached when circumstances combine to bring an activity to a pitch of intensity that is not automatically dissipated in a climax. The heightening of energies is sustained long enough to leave a kind of afterimage of its dynamism that can be reactivated or injected into other activities, creating a fabric of intensive states between which any number of connecting routes could exist. Each section of *A Thousand Plateaus* tries to combine conceptual bricks in such a way as to construct this kind of intensive state in thought. The way the combination is made is an example of what Deleuze and Guattari call consistency—not in the sense of a homogeneity, but as a holding together of disparate elements (also known as a "style").²⁵ A style in this sense, as a dynamic holding together or mode of composition, is not something limited to writing. Filmmakers, painters, and musicians have their styles, mathematicians have theirs, rocks have style, and so do tools, and technologies, and historical periods, even—especially—punctual events. Each section is dated, because each tries to reconstitute a dynamism that has existed in other mediums at other times. The date corresponds to the point at which that particular dynamism found its purest incarnation in matter, the point at which it was freest from interference from other modes and rose to its highest degree of intensity. That never lasts more than a flash, because the world rarely leaves room for uncommon intensity, being in large measure an entropic trashbin of outworn modes that refuse to die. Section 12, for example, the "Treatise on Nomadology," is dated 1227 A.D. because that is when the nomad war machine existed for a moment in its pure form on the vacant smooth spaces of the steppes of Inner Asia.

The reader is invited to follow each section to the plateau that rises from the smooth space of its composition, and to move from one plateau to the next at pleasure. But it is just as good to ignore the heights. You can take a

concept that is particularly to your liking and jump with it to its next appearance. They tend to cycle back. Some might call that repetitious. Deleuze and Guattari call it a refrain.

Most of all, the reader is invited to lift a dynamism out of the book entirely, and incarnate it in a foreign medium, whether it be painting or politics. The authors steal from other disciplines with glee, but they are more than happy to return the favor. Deleuze's own image for a concept is not a brick, but a "tool box."²⁶ He calls his kind of philosophy "pragmatics" because its goal is the invention of concepts that do not add up to a system of belief or an architecture of propositions that you either enter or you don't, but instead pack a potential in the way a crowbar in a willing hand envelops an energy of prying.

The best way of all to approach the book is to read it as a challenge: to pry open the vacant spaces that would enable you to build your life and those of the people around you into a plateau of intensity that would leave afterimages of its dynamism that could be reinjected into still other lives, creating a fabric of heightened states between which any number, the greatest number, of connecting routes would exist. Some might call that promiscuous. Deleuze and Guattari call it revolution.

The question is not: is it true? But: does it work? What new thoughts does it make it possible to think? What new emotions does it make it possible to feel? What new sensations and perceptions does it open in the body?

The answer for some readers, perhaps most, will be "none." If that happens, it's not your tune. No problem. But you would have been better off buying a record.

Notes on the Translation and Acknowledgments

AFFECT/AFFECTION. Neither word denotes a personal feeling (*sentiment* in Deleuze and Guattari). *L'affect* (Spinoza's *affectus*) is an ability to affect and be affected. It is a prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act. *L'affection* (Spinoza's *affectio*) is each such state considered as an encounter between the affected body and a second, affecting, body (with body taken in its broadest possible sense to include "mental" or ideal bodies).

DRAW. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, to draw is an act of creation. What is drawn (the Body without Organs, the plane of consistency, a line of flight) does not preexist the act of drawing. The French word *tracer* captures this better: It has all the graphic connotations of "to draw" in English, but can also mean to blaze a trail or open a road. "To trace" (*décalquer*), on the other hand, is to copy something from a model.

FLIGHT/ESCAPE. Both words translate *fuite*, which has a different range of meanings than either of the English terms. *Fuite* covers not only the act of fleeing or eluding but also flowing, leaking, and disappearing into the distance (the vanishing point in a painting is a *point de fuite*). It has no relation to flying.

MILIEU. In French, *milieu* means “surroundings,” “medium” (as in chemistry), and “middle.” In the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, “milieu” should be read as a technical term combining all three meanings.

PLANE. The word *plan* designates both a “plane” in the geometrical sense and a “plan.” The authors use it primarily in the first sense. Where both meanings seem to be present (as in discussions of the *plan d'organisaton*) “plan(e)” has been used in the translation.

POWER. Two words for “power” exist in French, *puissance* and *pouvoir*. In Deleuze and Guattari, they are associated with very different concepts (although the terminological distinction is not consistently observed). *Puissance* refers to a range of potential. It has been defined by Deleuze as a “capacity for existence,” “a capacity to affect or be affected,” a capacity to multiply connections that may be realized by a given “body” to varying degrees in different situations. It may be thought of as a scale of intensity or fullness of existence (or a degree on such a scale), analogous to the capacity of a number to be raised to a higher “power.” It is used in the French translation of Nietzsche’s term “will to power.” Like its English counterpart, it has an additional mathematical usage, designating the number of elements in a finite or infinite set. Here, *puissance* pertains to the virtual (the plane of consistency), *pouvoir* to the actual (the plane of organization). The authors use *pouvoir* in a sense very close to Foucault’s, as an instituted and reproducible relation of force, a selective concretization of potential. Both *puissance* and *pouvoir* have been translated here as “power,” since the distinction between the concepts is usually clear from the context. The French terms have been added in parentheses where confusion might arise, and in occasional passages where *puissance* is rendered as “potential.”

PROCESS/PROCEEDING. The authors employ two words normally translated as “process.” *Processus* in their usage is the more general of the two, covering both the stratified and destratified dimensions of an occurrence. *Procès* pertains only to the stratification. In standard French, *procès* also means “trial” (as in the title of the Kafka novel). Deleuze and Guattari exploit this polysemy as a way of emphasizing the role of organizations of social power and regimes of signs in operations constitutive of the subject, or *procès de subjectivation*. *Procès* is usually (once again, there is slippage in their usage) translated as “proceeding,” despite the occasional awkwardness this produces in English, in an attempt to preserve both associations: a process, or way of proceeding, and a legal proceeding, or trial. *Processus* is always “process.”

SELF. Both *Moi* and *Soi* have usually been translated as “Self,” with the French in brackets. *Soi* is the self in its broadest sense, but as a neuter third-person pronoun implies an impersonality at the basis of the self. *Moi* is a

more restricted concept: the “me” as subject of enunciation for the “I” (*je*) as subject of the statement. It is also the French term for the Freudian ego.

SIGNIFIANCE/INTERPRETANCE. I have followed the increasingly common practice of importing *signifiance* and *interprétance* into English without modification. In Deleuze and Guattari these terms refer respectively to the syntagmatic and paradigmatic processes of language as a “signifying regime of signs.” They are borrowed from Benveniste (“signifying capacity” and “interpretative capacity” are the English translations used in Benveniste’s work).

STATEMENT. *Enoncé* (often “utterance”) has been translated here as “statement,” in keeping with the choice of the English translators of Foucault, to whose conception Deleuze and Guattari’s is closest. “Enunciation” is used for *énonciation*.

TRAIT. The word *trait* has a range of meanings not covered by any single word in English. Literally, it refers to a graphic drawing, and to the act of drawing a line. Abstractly, it is the purely graphic element. Figuratively, it is an identifying mark (a feature, or trait in the English sense), or any act constituting a mark or sign. In linguistics, “distinctive features” (*traits distinctifs* or *traits pertinents*) are the elementary units of language that combine to form a phoneme. *Trait* also refers to a projectile, especially an arrow, and to the act of throwing a projectile. Here, “trait” has been retained in all but narrowly linguistic contexts.

GENDER-BIASED USAGE has been largely eliminated through pluralization or the use of male and female pronouns. However, where Deleuze and Guattari seem deliberately to be using “man” to designate a socially constructed, patriarchal standard of human behavior applied to both men and women, the masculine generic has been retained.

* * *

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pp. 49-71); “Rhizome” (final version), trans. John Johnston in Deleuze and Guattari, *On the Line* (New York: Semiotext[e], 1983); “One or Several Wolves?” (first version), trans. Mark Seem, *Semiotext(e)*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 137-147 (1977); “How to Make Yourself a Body without Organs” (first version, abridged), trans. Suzanne Guerlac, *Semiotext(e)* vol. 4, no. 1 (1981), pp. 265-270.

Portions of this translation have appeared previously. “Treatise on Nomadology” was published as a separate book entitled *Nomad Machine* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1986). Extracts from “Becoming-Intense . . .” appeared under the title “Becoming-Woman” in *Subjects/Objects*, no. 3 (Spring 1985), pp. 24-32, and from “The Smooth and the Striated” under the title “Nomad Art” in *Art and Text*, no. 19 (Oct.-Nov. 1985), pp. 16-23.

Authors' Note

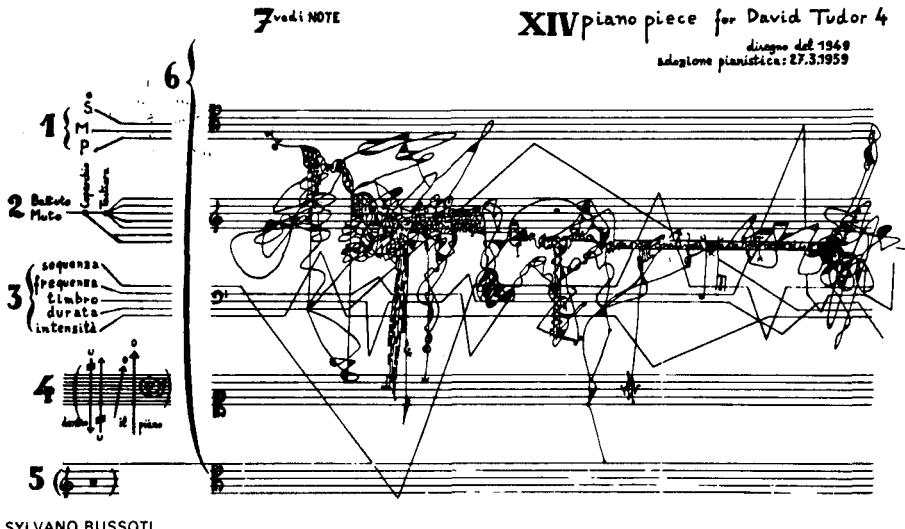
This book is the companion volume to *Anti-Oedipus* (paperback ed., University of Minnesota Press, 1983). Together they make up *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.

It is composed not of chapters but of “plateaus.” We will try to explain why later on (and also why the texts are dated). To a certain extent, these plateaus may be read independently of one another, except the conclusion, which should be read at the end.

A Thousand Plateaus

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1. Introduction: Rhizome



SYLVANO BUSSOTTI

The two of us wrote *Anti-Oedipus* together. Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd. Here we have made use of everything that came within range, what was closest as well as farthest away. We have assigned clever pseudonyms to prevent recognition. Why have we kept our own names? Out of habit, purely out of habit. To make ourselves unrecognizable in turn. To render imperceptible, not ourselves, but what makes us act, feel, and think. Also because it's nice to talk like everybody else, to say the sun rises, when everybody knows it's only a manner of speaking. To reach, not the point where one no longer says I, but the point where it is no longer of any importance whether one says I. We are no longer ourselves. Each will know his own. We have been aided, inspired, multiplied.

A book has neither object nor subject; it is made of variously formed matters, and very different dates and speeds. To attribute the book to a subject is to overlook this working of matters, and the exteriority of their relations. It is to fabricate a beneficent God to explain geological movements. In a book, as in all things, there are lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification. Comparative rates of flow on

these lines produce phenomena of relative slowness and viscosity, or, on the contrary, of acceleration and rupture. All this, lines and measurable speeds, constitutes an *assemblage*. A book is an assemblage of this kind, and as such is unattributable. It is a multiplicity—but we don't know yet what the multiple entails when it is no longer attributed, that is, after it has been elevated to the status of a substantive. One side of a machinic assemblage faces the strata, which doubtless make it a kind of organism, or signifying totality, or determination attributable to a subject; it also has a side facing a *body without organs*, which is continually dismantling the organism, causing asignifying particles or pure intensities to pass or circulate, and attributing to itself subjects that it leaves with nothing more than a name as the trace of an intensity. What is the body without organs of a book? There are several, depending on the nature of the lines considered, their particular grade or density, and the possibility of their converging on a “plane of consistency” assuring their selection. Here, as elsewhere, the units of measure are what is essential: *quantify writing*. There is no difference between what a book talks about and how it is made. Therefore a book also has no object. As an assemblage, a book has only itself, in connection with other assemblages and in relation to other bodies without organs. We will never ask what a book means, as signified or signifier; we will not look for anything to understand in it. We will ask what it functions with, in connection with what other things it does or does not transmit intensities, in which other multiplicities its own are inserted and metamorphosed, and with what bodies without organs it makes its own converge. A book exists only through the outside and on the outside. A book itself is a little machine; what is the relation (also measurable) of this literary machine to a war machine, love machine, revolutionary machine, etc.—and an *abstract machine* that sweeps them along? We have been criticized for overquoting literary authors. But when one writes, the only question is which other machine the literary machine can be plugged into, must be plugged into in order to work. Kleist and a mad war machine, Kafka and a most extraordinary bureaucratic machine . . . (What if one became animal or plant *through literature*, which certainly does not mean literarily? Is it not first through the voice that one becomes animal?) Literature is an assemblage. It has nothing to do with ideology. There is no ideology and never has been.

All we talk about are multiplicities, lines, strata and segmentarities, lines of flight and intensities, machinic assemblages and their various types, bodies without organs and their construction and selection, the plane of consistency, and in each case the units of measure. *Stratometers*, *deleometers*, *BwO units of density*, *BwO units of convergence*: Not only do these constitute a quantification of writing, but they define writing as always the measure of something else. Writing has nothing to do with

signifying. It has to do with surveying, mapping, even realms that are yet to come.

A first type of book is the root-book. The tree is already the image of the world, or the root the image of the world-tree. This is the classical book, as noble, signifying, and subjective organic interiority (the strata of the book). The book imitates the world, as art imitates nature: by procedures specific to it that accomplish what nature cannot or can no longer do. The law of the book is the law of reflection, the One that becomes two. How could the law of the book reside in nature, when it is what presides over the very division between world and book, nature and art? One becomes two: whenever we encounter this formula, even stated strategically by Mao or understood in the most “dialectical” way possible, what we have before us is the most classical and well reflected, oldest, and weariest kind of thought. Nature doesn’t work that way: in nature, roots are taproots with a more multiple, lateral, and circular system of ramification, rather than a dichotomous one. Thought lags behind nature. Even the book as a natural reality is a taproot, with its pivotal spine and surrounding leaves. But the book as a spiritual reality, the Tree or Root as an image, endlessly develops the law of the One that becomes two, then of the two that become four . . . Binary logic is the spiritual reality of the root-tree. Even a discipline as “advanced” as linguistics retains the root-tree as its fundamental image, and thus remains wedded to classical reflection (for example, Chomsky and his grammatical trees, which begin at a point S and proceed by dichotomy). This is as much as to say that this system of thought has never reached an understanding of multiplicity: in order to arrive at two following a spiritual method it must assume a strong principal unity. On the side of the object, it is no doubt possible, following the natural method, to go directly from One to three, four, or five, but only if there is a strong principal unity available, that of the pivotal taproot supporting the secondary roots. That doesn’t get us very far. The binary logic of dichotomy has simply been replaced by biunivocal relationships between successive circles. The pivotal taproot provides no better understanding of multiplicity than the dichotomous root. One operates in the object, the other in the subject. Binary logic and biunivocal relationships still dominate psychoanalysis (the tree of delusion in the Freudian interpretation of Schreber’s case), linguistics, structuralism, and even information science.

The radicle-system, or fascicular root, is the second figure of the book, to which our modernity pays willing allegiance. This time, the principal root has aborted, or its tip has been destroyed; an immediate, indefinite multiplicity of secondary roots grafts onto it and undergoes a flourishing development. This time, natural reality is what aborts the principal root, but the root’s unity subsists, as past or yet to come, as possible. We must ask

if reflexive, spiritual reality does not compensate for this state of things by demanding an even more comprehensive secret unity, or a more extensive totality. Take William Burroughs's cut-up method: the folding of one text onto another, which constitutes multiple and even adventitious roots (like a cutting), implies a supplementary dimension to that of the texts under consideration. In this supplementary dimension of folding, unity continues its spiritual labor. That is why the most resolutely fragmented work can also be presented as the Total Work or Magnum Opus. Most modern methods for making series proliferate or a multiplicity grow are perfectly valid in one direction, for example, a linear direction, whereas a unity of totalization asserts itself even more firmly in another, circular or cyclic, dimension. Whenever a multiplicity is taken up in a structure, its growth is offset by a reduction in its laws of combination. The abortionists of unity are indeed angel makers, *doctores angelici*, because they affirm a properly angelic and superior unity. Joyce's words, accurately described as having "multiple roots," shatter the linear unity of the word, even of language, only to posit a cyclic unity of the sentence, text, or knowledge. Nietzsche's aphorisms shatter the linear unity of knowledge, only to invoke the cyclic unity of the eternal return, present as the nonknown in thought. This is as much as to say that the fascicular system does not really break with dualism, with the complementarity between a subject and an object, a natural reality and a spiritual reality: unity is consistently thwarted and obstructed in the object, while a new type of unity triumphs in the subject. The world has lost its pivot; the subject can no longer even dichotomize, but accedes to a higher unity, of ambivalence or overdetermination, in an always supplementary dimension to that of its object. The world has become chaos, but the book remains the image of the world: radicle-chaosmos rather than root-cosmos. A strange mystification: a book all the more total for being fragmented. At any rate, what a vapid idea, the book as the image of the world. In truth, it is not enough to say, "Long live the multiple," difficult as it is to raise that cry. No typographical, lexical, or even syntactical cleverness is enough to make it heard. The multiple *must be made*, not by always adding a higher dimension, but rather in the simplest of ways, by dint of sobriety, with the number of dimensions one already has available—always $n - 1$ (the only way the one belongs to the multiple: always subtracted). Subtract the unique from the multiplicity to be constituted; write at $n - 1$ dimensions. A system of this kind could be called a rhizome. A rhizome as subterranean stem is absolutely different from roots and radicles. Bulbs and tubers are rhizomes. Plants with roots or radicles may be rhizomorphic in other respects altogether: the question is whether plant life in its specificity is not entirely rhizomatic. Even some animals are, in their pack form. Rats are rhizomes. Burrows are too, in all of their func-

tions of shelter, supply, movement, evasion, and breakout. The rhizome itself assumes very diverse forms, from ramified surface extension in all directions to concretion into bulbs and tubers. When rats swarm over each other. The rhizome includes the best and the worst: potato and couchgrass, or the weed. Animal and plant, couchgrass is crabgrass. We get the distinct feeling that we will convince no one unless we enumerate certain approximate characteristics of the rhizome.

1 and 2. Principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order. The linguistic tree on the Chomsky model still begins at a point S and proceeds by dichotomy. On the contrary, not every trait in a rhizome is necessarily linked to a linguistic feature: semiotic chains of every nature are connected to very diverse modes of coding (biological, political, economic, etc.) that bring into play not only different regimes of signs but also states of things of differing status. *Collective assemblages of enunciation* function directly within *machinic assemblages*; it is not impossible to make a radical break between regimes of signs and their objects. Even when linguistics claims to confine itself to what is explicit and to make no presuppositions about language, it is still in the sphere of a discourse implying particular modes of assemblage and types of social power. Chomsky's grammaticality, the categorical S symbol that dominates every sentence, is more fundamentally a marker of power than a syntactic marker: you will construct grammatically correct sentences, you will divide each statement into a noun phrase and a verb phrase (first dichotomy . . .). Our criticism of these linguistic models is not that they are too abstract but, on the contrary, that they are not abstract enough, that they do not reach the *abstract machine* that connects a language to the semantic and pragmatic contents of statements, to collective assemblages of enunciation, to a whole micropolitics of the social field. A rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles. A semiotic chain is like a tuber agglomerating very diverse acts, not only linguistic, but also perceptive, mimetic, gestural, and cognitive: there is no language in itself, nor are there any linguistic universals, only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs, and specialized languages. There is no ideal speaker-listener, any more than there is a homogeneous linguistic community. Language is, in Weinreich's words, "an essentially heterogeneous reality."¹ There is no mother tongue, only a power takeover by a dominant language within a political multiplicity. Language stabilizes around a parish, a bishopric, a capital. It forms a bulb. It evolves by subterranean stems and flows, along river valleys or train tracks; it spreads like a patch of oil.² It is always possible to break a language

down into internal structural elements, an undertaking not fundamentally different from a search for roots. There is always something genealogical about a tree. It is not a method for the people. A method of the rhizome type, on the contrary, can analyze language only by decentering it onto other dimensions and other registers. A language is never closed upon itself, except as a function of impotence.

3. Principle of multiplicity: it is only when the multiple is effectively treated as a substantive, “multiplicity,” that it ceases to have any relation to the One as subject or object, natural or spiritual reality, image and world. Multiplicities are rhizomatic, and expose arborescent pseudomultiplicities for what they are. There is no unity to serve as a pivot in the object, or to divide in the subject. There is not even the unity to abort in the object or “return” in the subject. A multiplicity has neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature (the laws of combination therefore increase in number as the multiplicity grows). Puppet strings, as a rhizome or multiplicity, are tied not to the supposed will of an artist or puppeteer but to a multiplicity of nerve fibers, which form another puppet in other dimensions connected to the first: “Call the strings or rods that move the puppet the weave. It might be objected that *its multiplicity* resides in the person of the actor, who projects it into the text. Granted; but the actor’s nerve fibers in turn form a weave. And they fall through the gray matter, the grid, into the undifferentiated. . . . The interplay approximates the pure activity of weavers attributed in myth to the Fates or Norns.”³ An assemblage is precisely this increase in the dimensions of a multiplicity that necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections. There are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. There are only lines. When Glenn Gould speeds up the performance of a piece, he is not just displaying virtuosity, he is transforming the musical points into lines, he is making the whole piece proliferate. The number is no longer a universal concept measuring elements according to their emplacement in a given dimension, but has itself become a multiplicity that varies according to the dimensions considered (the primacy of the domain over a complex of numbers attached to that domain). We do not have units (*unités*) of measure, only multiplicities or varieties of measurement. The notion of unity (*unité*) appears only when there is a power takeover in the multiplicity by the signifier or a corresponding subjectification proceeding: This is the case for a pivot-unity forming the basis for a set of biunivocal relationships between objective elements or points, or for the One that divides following the law of a binary logic of differentiation in the subject. Unity always operates in an empty dimension supplementary to that of the system considered (overcoding).

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The point is that a rhizome or multiplicity never allows itself to be overcoded, never has available a supplementary dimension over and above its number of lines, that is, over and above the multiplicity of numbers attached to those lines. All multiplicities are flat, in the sense that they fill or occupy all of their dimensions: we will therefore speak of a *plane of consistency* of multiplicities, even though the dimensions of this “plane” increase with the number of connections that are made on it. Multiplicities are defined by the outside: by the abstract line, the line of flight or deterritorialization according to which they change in nature and connect with other multiplicities. The plane of consistency (grid) is the outside of all multiplicities. The line of flight marks: the reality of a finite number of dimensions that the multiplicity effectively fills; the impossibility of a supplementary dimension, unless the multiplicity is transformed by the line of flight; the possibility and necessity of flattening all of the multiplicities on a single plane of consistency or exteriority, regardless of their number of dimensions. The ideal for a book would be to lay everything out on a plane of exteriority of this kind, on a single page, the same sheet: lived events, historical determinations, concepts, individuals, groups, social formations. Kleist invented a writing of this type, a broken chain of affects and variable speeds, with accelerations and transformations, always in a relation with the outside. Open rings. His texts, therefore, are opposed in every way to the classical or romantic book constituted by the interiority of a substance or subject. The war machine-book against the State apparatus-book. *Flat multiplicities of n dimensions* are asignifying and asubjective. They are designated by indefinite articles, or rather by partitives (*some* couchgrass, *some* of a rhizome . . .).

4. Principle of asignifying rupture: against the oversignifying breaks separating structures or cutting across a single structure. A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines. You can never get rid of ants because they form an animal rhizome that can rebound time and again after most of it has been destroyed. Every rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which it is stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., as well as lines of deterritorialization down which it constantly flees. There is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight, but the line of flight is part of the rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another. That is why one can never posit a dualism or a dichotomy, even in the rudimentary form of the good and the bad. You may make a rupture, draw a line of flight, yet there is still a danger that you will reencounter organizations that restratify everything, formations that restore power to a signifier, attributions that reconstitute a subject—anything you like, from Oedipal resurgences to fascist concretions. Groups

and individuals contain microfascisms just waiting to crystallize. Yes, couchgrass is also a rhizome. Good and bad are only the products of an active and temporary selection, which must be renewed.

How could movements of deterritorialization and processes of reterritorialization not be relative, always connected, caught up in one another? The orchid deterritorializes by forming an image, a tracing of a wasp; but the wasp reterritorializes on that image. The wasp is nevertheless deterritorialized, becoming a piece in the orchid's reproductive apparatus. But it reterritorializes the orchid by transporting its pollen. Wasp and orchid, as heterogeneous elements, form a rhizome. It could be said that the orchid imitates the wasp, reproducing its image in a signifying fashion (mimesis, mimicry, lure, etc.). But this is true only on the level of the strata—a parallelism between two strata such that a plant organization on one imitates an animal organization on the other. At the same time, something else entirely is going on: not imitation at all but a capture of code, surplus value of code, an increase in valence, a veritable becoming, a becoming-wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp. Each of these becomings brings about the deterritorialization of one term and the reterritorialization of the other; the two becomings interlink and form relays in a circulation of intensities pushing the deterritorialization ever further. There is neither imitation nor resemblance, only an exploding of two heterogeneous series on the line of flight composed by a common rhizome that can no longer be attributed to or subjugated by anything signifying. Rémy Chauvin expresses it well: “the *aparallel evolution* of two beings that have absolutely nothing to do with each other.”⁴ More generally, evolutionary schemas may be forced to abandon the old model of the tree and descent. Under certain conditions, a virus can connect to germ cells and transmit itself as the cellular gene of a complex species; moreover, it can take flight, move into the cells of an entirely different species, but not without bringing with it “genetic information” from the first host (for example, Benveniste and Todaro’s current research on a type C virus, with its double connection to baboon DNA and the DNA of certain kinds of domestic cats). Evolutionary schemas would no longer follow models of arborescent descent going from the least to the most differentiated, but instead a rhizome operating immediately in the heterogeneous and jumping from one already differentiated line to another.⁵ Once again, there is *aparallel evolution*, of the baboon and the cat; it is obvious that they are not models or copies of each other (a becoming-baboon in the cat does not mean that the cat “plays” baboon). We form a rhizome with our viruses, or rather our viruses cause us to form a rhizome with other animals. As François Jacob says, transfers of genetic material by viruses or through other procedures, fusions of cells originating in different species, have results analogous to

those of “the abominable couplings dear to antiquity and the Middle Ages.”⁶ Transversal communications between different lines scramble the genealogical trees. Always look for the molecular, or even submolecular, particle with which we are allied. We evolve and die more from our polymorphous and rhizomatic flus than from hereditary diseases, or diseases that have their own line of descent. The rhizome is an anti-genealogy.

The same applies to the book and the world: contrary to a deeply rooted belief, the book is not an image of the world. It forms a rhizome with the world, there is an aparallel evolution of the book and the world; the book assures the deterritorialization of the world, but the world effects a reterritorialization of the book, which in turn deterritorializes itself in the world (if it is capable, if it can). Mimicry is a very bad concept, since it relies on binary logic to describe phenomena of an entirely different nature. The crocodile does not reproduce a tree trunk, any more than the chameleon reproduces the colors of its surroundings. The Pink Panther imitates nothing, it reproduces nothing, it paints the world its color, pink on pink; this is its becoming-world, carried out in such a way that it becomes imperceptible itself, asignifying, makes its rupture, its own line of flight, follows its “aparallel evolution” through to the end. The wisdom of the plants: even when they have roots, there is always an outside where they form a rhizome with something else—with the wind, an animal, human beings (and there is also an aspect under which animals themselves form rhizomes, as do people, etc.). “Drunkenness as a triumphant irruption of the plant in us.” Always follow the rhizome by rupture; lengthen, prolong, and relay the line of flight; make it vary, until you have produced the most abstract and tortuous of lines of n dimensions and broken directions. Conjugate deterritorialized flows. Follow the plants: you start by delimiting a first line consisting of circles of convergence around successive singularities; then you see whether inside that line new circles of convergence establish themselves, with new points located outside the limits and in other directions. Write, form a rhizome, increase your territory by deterritorialization, extend the line of flight to the point where it becomes an abstract machine covering the entire plane of consistency. “Go first to your old plant and watch carefully the watercourse made by the rain. By now the rain must have carried the seeds far away. Watch the crevices made by the runoff, and from them determine the direction of the flow. Then find the plant that is growing at the farthest point from your plant. All the devil’s weed plants that are growing in between are yours. Later . . . you can extend the size of your territory by following the watercourse from each point along the way.”⁷ Music has always sent out lines of flight, like so many “transformational multiplicities,” even overturning the very codes that structure or

arborify it; that is why musical form, right down to its ruptures and proliferations, is comparable to a weed, a rhizome.⁸

5 and 6. Principle of cartography and decalcomania: a rhizome is not amenable to any structural or generative model. It is a stranger to any idea of genetic axis or deep structure. A genetic axis is like an objective pivotal unity upon which successive stages are organized; a deep structure is more like a base sequence that can be broken down into immediate constituents, while the unity of the product passes into another, transformational and subjective, dimension. This does not constitute a departure from the representative model of the tree, or root—pivotal taproot or fascicles (for example, Chomsky's “tree” is associated with a base sequence and represents the process of its own generation in terms of binary logic). A variation on the oldest form of thought. It is our view that genetic axis and profound structure are above all infinitely reproducible principles of *tracing*. All of tree logic is a logic of tracing and reproduction. In linguistics as in psychoanalysis, its object is an unconscious that is itself representative, crystallized into codified complexes, laid out along a genetic axis and distributed within a syntagmatic structure. Its goal is to describe a de facto state, to maintain balance in intersubjective relations, or to explore an unconscious that is already there from the start, lurking in the dark recesses of memory and language. It consists of tracing, on the basis of an overcoding structure or supporting axis, something that comes ready-made. The tree articulates and hierarchizes tracings; tracings are like the leaves of a tree.

The rhizome is altogether different, a *map and not a tracing*. Make a map, not a tracing. The orchid does not reproduce the tracing of the wasp; it forms a map with the wasp, in a rhizome. What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious. It fosters connections between fields, the removal of blockages on bodies without organs, the maximum opening of bodies without organs onto a plane of consistency. It is itself a part of the rhizome. The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation. Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that it always has multiple entryways; in this sense, the burrow is an animal rhizome, and sometimes maintains a clear distinction between the line of flight as passageway and storage or living strata (cf. the muskrat). A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back “to the same.” The map has to do with performance, whereas the trac-

ing always involves an alleged “competence.” Unlike psychoanalysis, psychoanalytic competence (which confines every desire and statement to a genetic axis or overcoding structure, and makes infinite, monotonous tracings of the stages on that axis or the constituents of that structure), schizoanalysis rejects any idea of pretraced destiny, whatever name is given to it—divine, anagogic, historical, economic, structural, hereditary, or syntagmatic. (It is obvious that Melanie Klein has no understanding of the cartography of one of her child patients, Little Richard, and is content to make ready-made tracings—Oedipus, the good daddy and the bad daddy, the bad mommy and the good mommy—while the child makes a desperate attempt to carry out a performance that the psychoanalyst totally misconstrues.)⁹ Drives and part-objects are neither stages on a genetic axis nor positions in a deep structure; they are political options for problems, they are entryways and exits, impasses the child lives out politically, in other words, with all the force of his or her desire.

Have we not, however, reverted to a simple dualism by contrasting maps to tracings, as good and bad sides? Is it not of the essence of the map to be traceable? Is it not of the essence of the rhizome to intersect roots and sometimes merge with them? Does not a map contain phenomena of redundancy that are already like tracings of its own? Does not a multiplicity have strata upon which unifications and totalizations, massifications, mimetic mechanisms, signifying power takeovers, and subjective attributions take root? Do not even lines of flight, due to their eventual divergence, reproduce the very formations their function it was to dismantle or outflank? But the opposite is also true. It is a question of method: *the tracing should always be put back on the map*. This operation and the previous one are not at all symmetrical. For it is inaccurate to say that a tracing reproduces the map. It is instead like a photograph or X ray that begins by selecting or isolating, by artificial means such as colorations or other restrictive procedures, what it intends to reproduce. The imitator always creates the model, and attracts it. The tracing has already translated the map into an image; it has already transformed the rhizome into roots and radicles. It has organized, stabilized, neutralized the multiplicities according to the axes of significance and subjectification belonging to it. It has generated, structuralized the rhizome, and when it thinks it is reproducing something else it is in fact only reproducing itself. That is why the tracing is so dangerous. It injects redundancies and propagates them. What the tracing reproduces of the map or rhizome are only the impasses, blockages, incipient taproots, or points of structuration. Take a look at psychoanalysis and linguistics: all the former has ever made are tracings or photos of the unconscious, and the latter of language, with all the betrayals that implies (it's not surprising that psychoanalysis tied its fate to that of linguistics).

Look at what happened to Little Hans already, an example of child psychoanalysis at its purest: they kept on BREAKING HIS RHIZOME and BLOTTING HIS MAP, setting it straight for him, blocking his every way out, until he began to desire his own shame and guilt, until they had rooted shame and guilt in him, PHOBIA (they barred him from the rhizome of the building, then from the rhizome of the street, they rooted him in his parents' bed, they radicled him to his own body, they fixated him on Professor Freud). Freud explicitly takes Little Hans's cartography into account, but always and only in order to project it back onto the family photo. And look what Melanie Klein did to Little Richard's geopolitical maps: she developed photos from them, made tracings of them. Strike the pose or follow the axis, genetic stage or structural destiny—one way or the other, your rhizome will be broken. You will be allowed to live and speak, but only after every outlet has been obstructed. Once a rhizome has been obstructed, arborified, it's all over, no desire stirs; for it is always by rhizome that desire moves and produces. Whenever desire climbs a tree, internal repercussions trip it up and it falls to its death; the rhizome, on the other hand, acts on desire by external, productive outgrowths.

That is why it is so important to try the other, reverse but nonsymmetrical, operation. Plug the tracings back into the map, connect the roots or trees back up with a rhizome. In the case of Little Hans, studying the unconscious would be to show how he tries to build a rhizome, with the family house but also with the line of flight of the building, the street, etc.; how these lines are blocked, how the child is made to take root in the family, be photographed under the father, be traced onto the mother's bed; then how Professor Freud's intervention assures a power takeover by the signifier, a subjectification of affects; how the only escape route left to the child is a becoming-animal perceived as shameful and guilty (the becoming-horse of Little Hans, a truly political option). But these impasses must always be resituated on the map, thereby opening them up to possible lines of flight. The same applies to the group map: show at what point in the rhizome there form phenomena of massification, bureaucracy, leadership, fascization, etc., which lines nevertheless survive, if only underground, continuing to make rhizome in the shadows. Deligny's method: map the gestures and movements of an autistic child, combine several maps for the same child, for several different children.¹⁰ If it is true that it is of the essence of the map or rhizome to have multiple entryways, then it is plausible that one could even enter them through tracings or the root-tree, assuming the necessary precautions are taken (once again, one must avoid any Manichaean dualism). For example, one will often be forced to take dead ends, to work with signifying powers and subjective affections, to find a foothold in formations that are Oedipal or paranoid or even worse,

rigidified territorialities that open the way for other transformational operations. It is even possible for psychoanalysis to serve as a foothold, in spite of itself. In other cases, on the contrary, one will bolster oneself directly on a line of flight enabling one to blow apart strata, cut roots, and make new connections. Thus, there are very diverse map-tracing, rhizome-root assemblages, with variable coefficients of deterritorialization. There exist tree or root structures in rhizomes; conversely, a tree branch or root division may begin to burgeon into a rhizome. The coordinates are determined not by theoretical analyses implying universals but by a pragmatics composing multiplicities or aggregates of intensities. A new rhizome may form in the heart of a tree, the hollow of a root, the crook of a branch. Or else it is a microscopic element of the root-tree, a radicle, that gets rhizome production going. Accounting and bureaucracy proceed by tracings: they can begin to burgeon nonetheless, throwing out rhizome stems, as in a Kafka novel. An intensive trait starts working for itself, a hallucinatory perception, synesthesia, perverse mutation, or play of images shakes loose, challenging the hegemony of the signifier. In the case of the child, gestural, mimetic, ludic, and other semiotic systems regain their freedom and extricate themselves from the “tracing,” that is, from the dominant competence of the teacher’s language—a microscopic event upsets the local balance of power. Similarly, generative trees constructed according to Chomsky’s syntagmatic model can open up in all directions, and in turn form a rhizome.¹¹ To be rhizomorphous is to produce stems and filaments that seem to be roots, or better yet connect with them by penetrating the trunk, but put them to strange new uses. We’re tired of trees. We should stop believing in trees, roots, and radicles. They’ve made us suffer too much. All of arborescent culture is founded on them, from biology to linguistics. Nothing is beautiful or loving or political aside from underground stems and aerial roots, adventitious growths and rhizomes. Amsterdam, a city entirely without roots, a rhizome-city with its stem-canals, where utility connects with the greatest folly in relation to a commercial war machine.

Thought is not arborescent, and the brain is not a rooted or ramified matter. What are wrongly called “dendrites” do not assure the connection of neurons in a continuous fabric. The discontinuity between cells, the role of the axons, the functioning of the synapses, the existence of synaptic microfissures, the leap each message makes across these fissures, make the brain a multiplicity immersed in its plane of consistency or neuroglia, a whole uncertain, probabilistic system (“the uncertain nervous system”). Many people have a tree growing in their heads, but the brain itself is much more a grass than a tree. “The axon and the dendrite twist around each other like bindweed around brambles, with synapses at each of the thorns.”¹² The same goes for memory. Neurologists and psychophysiolo-

gists distinguish between long-term memory and short-term memory (on the order of a minute). The difference between them is not simply quantitative: short-term memory is of the rhizome or diagram type, and long-term memory is arborescent and centralized (imprint, engram, tracing, or photograph). Short-term memory is in no way subject to a law of contiguity or immediacy to its object; it can act at a distance, come or return a long time after, but always under conditions of discontinuity, rupture, and multiplicity. Furthermore, the difference between the two kinds of memory is not that of two temporal modes of apprehending the same thing; they do not grasp the same thing, memory, or idea. The splendor of the short-term Idea: one writes using short-term memory, and thus short-term ideas, even if one reads or rereads using long-term memory of long-term concepts. Short-term memory includes forgetting as a process; it merges not with the instant but instead with the nervous, temporal, and collective rhizome. Long-term memory (family, race, society, or civilization) traces and translates, but what it translates continues to act in it, from a distance, off beat, in an “untimely” way, not instantaneously.

The tree and root inspire a sad image of thought that is forever imitating the multiple on the basis of a centered or segmented higher unity. If we consider the set, branches-roots, the trunk plays the role of *opposed segment* for one of the subsets running from bottom to top: this kind of segment is a “link dipole,” in contrast to the “unit dipoles” formed by spokes radiating from a single center.¹³ Even if the links themselves proliferate, as in the radicle system, one can never get beyond the One-Two, and fake multiplicities. Regenerations, reproductions, returns, hydras, and medusas do not get us any further. Arborescent systems are hierarchical systems with centers of significance and subjectification, central automata like organized memories. In the corresponding models, an element only receives information from a higher unit, and only receives a subjective affection along preestablished paths. This is evident in current problems in information science and computer science, which still cling to the oldest modes of thought in that they grant all power to a memory or central organ. Pierre Rosenstiehl and Jean Petitot, in a fine article denouncing “the imagery of command trees” (centered systems or hierarchical structures), note that “accepting the primacy of hierarchical structures amounts to giving arborescent structures privileged status. . . . The arborescent form admits of topological explanation. . . . In a hierarchical system, an individual has only one active neighbor, his or her hierarchical superior. . . . The channels of transmission are preestablished: the arborescent system preexists the individual, who is integrated into it at an allotted place” (significance and subjectification). The authors point out that even when one thinks one has reached a multiplicity, it may be a false one—of what we call the radicle

type—because its ostensibly nonhierarchical presentation or statement in fact only admits of a totally hierarchical solution. An example is the famous *friendship theorem*: “If any two given individuals in a society have precisely one mutual friend, then there exists an individual who is the friend of all the others.” (Rosenstiehl and Petitot ask who that mutual friend is. Who is “the universal friend in this society of couples: the master, the confessor, the doctor? These ideas are curiously far removed from the initial axioms.” Who is this friend of humankind? Is it the *philo-sopher* as he appears in classical thought, even if he is an aborted unity that makes itself felt only through its absence or subjectivity, saying all the while, I know nothing, I am nothing?) Thus the authors speak of dictatorship theorems. Such is indeed the principle of roots-trees, or their outcome: the radicle solution, the structure of Power.¹⁴

To these centered systems, the authors contrast acentered systems, finite networks of automata in which communication runs from any neighbor to any other, the stems or channels do not preexist, and all individuals are interchangeable, defined only by their *state* at a given moment—such that the local operations are coordinated and the final, global result synchronized without a central agency. Transduction of intensive states replaces topology, and “the graph regulating the circulation of information is in a way the opposite of the hierarchical graph. . . . There is no reason for the graph to be a tree” (we have been calling this kind of graph a map). The problem of the war machine, or the firing squad: is a general necessary for n individuals to manage to fire in unison? The solution without a General is to be found in an acentered multiplicity possessing a finite number of states with signals to indicate corresponding speeds, from a war rhizome or guerrilla logic point of view, without any tracing, without any copying of a central order. The authors even demonstrate that this kind of machinic multiplicity, assemblage, or society rejects any centralizing or unifying automaton as an “asocial intrusion.”¹⁵ Under these conditions, n is in fact always $n - 1$. Rosenstiehl and Petitot emphasize that the opposition, centered-acentered, is valid less as a designation for things than as a mode of calculation applied to things. Trees may correspond to the rhizome, or they may burgeon into a rhizome. It is true that the same thing is generally susceptible to both modes of calculation or both types of regulation, but not without undergoing a change in state. Take psychoanalysis as an example again: it subjects the unconscious to arborescent structures, hierarchical graphs, recapitulatory memories, central organs, the phallus, the phallus-tree—not only in its theory but also in its practice of calculation and treatment. Psychoanalysis cannot change its method in this regard: it bases its own dictatorial power upon a dictatorial conception of the unconscious. Psychoanalysis’s margin of maneuverability is therefore very

limited. In both psychoanalysis and its object, there is always a general, always a leader (General Freud). Schizoanalysis, on the other hand, treats the unconscious as an acentered system, in other words, as a machinic network of finite automata (a rhizome), and thus arrives at an entirely different state of the unconscious. These same remarks apply to linguistics; Rosenstiehl and Petitot are right to bring up the possibility of an “acentered organization of a society of words.” For both statements and desires, the issue is never to reduce the unconscious or to interpret it or to make it signify according to a tree model. The issue is to *produce the unconscious*, and with it new statements, different desires: the rhizome is precisely this production of the unconscious.

It is odd how the tree has dominated Western reality and all of Western thought, from botany to biology and anatomy, but also gnosiology, theology, ontology, all of philosophy . . . : the root-foundation, *Grund, racine, fondement*. The West has a special relation to the forest, and deforestation; the fields carved from the forest are populated with seed plants produced by cultivation based on species lineages of the arborescent type; animal raising, carried out on fallow fields, selects lineages forming an entire animal arborescence. The East presents a different figure: a relation to the steppe and the garden (or in some cases, the desert and the oasis), rather than forest and field; cultivation of tubers by fragmentation of the individual; a casting aside or bracketing of animal raising, which is confined to closed spaces or pushed out onto the steppes of the nomads. The West: agriculture based on a chosen lineage containing a large number of variable individuals. The East: horticulture based on a small number of individuals derived from a wide range of “clones.” Does not the East, Oceania in particular, offer something like a rhizomatic model opposed in every respect to the Western model of the tree? André Haudricourt even sees this as the basis for the opposition between the moralities or philosophies of transcendence dear to the West and the immanent ones of the East: the God who sows and reaps, as opposed to the God who replants and unearths (replanting of offshoots versus sowing of seeds).¹⁶ Transcendence: a specifically European disease. Neither is music the same, the music of the earth is different, as is sexuality: seed plants, even those with two sexes in the same plant, subjugate sexuality to the reproductive model; the rhizome, on the other hand, is a liberation of sexuality not only from reproduction but also from genitality. Here in the West, the tree has implanted itself in our bodies, rigidifying and stratifying even the sexes. We have lost the rhizome, or the grass. Henry Miller: “China is the weed in the human cabbage patch. . . . The weed is the Nemesis of human endeavor. . . . Of all the imaginary existences we attribute to plant, beast and star the weed leads the most satisfactory life of all. True, the weed produces no lilies, no battleships, no Ser-

mons on the Mount. . . . Eventually the weed gets the upper hand. Eventually things fall back into a state of China. This condition is usually referred to by historians as the Dark Age. Grass is the only way out. . . . The weed exists only to fill the waste spaces left by cultivated areas. *It grows between*, among other things. The lily is beautiful, the cabbage is provender, the poppy is maddening—but the weed is rank growth . . . : it points a moral.¹⁷ Which China is Miller talking about? The old China, the new, an imaginary one, or yet another located on a shifting map?

America is a special case. Of course it is not immune from domination by trees or the search for roots. This is evident even in the literature, in the quest for a national identity and even for a European ancestry or genealogy (Kerouac going off in search of his ancestors). Nevertheless, everything important that has happened or is happening takes the route of the American rhizome: the beatniks, the underground, bands and gangs, successive lateral offshoots in immediate connection with an outside. American books are different from European books, even when the American sets off in pursuit of trees. The conception of the book is different. *Leaves of Grass*. And directions in America are different: the search for arborescence and the return to the Old World occur in the East. But there is the rhizomatic West, with its Indians without ancestry, its ever-receding limit, its shifting and displaced frontiers. There is a whole American “map” in the West, where even the trees form rhizomes. America reversed the directions: it put its Orient in the West, as if it were precisely in America that the earth came full circle; its West is the edge of the East.¹⁸ (India is not the intermediary between the Occident and the Orient, as Haudricourt believed: America is the pivot point and mechanism of reversal.) The American singer Patti Smith sings the bible of the American dentist: Don’t go for the root, follow the canal . . .

Are there not also two kinds of bureaucracy, or even three (or still more)? Western bureaucracy: its agrarian, cadastral origins; roots and fields; trees and their role as frontiers; the great census of William the Conqueror; feudalism; the policies of the kings of France; making property the basis of the State; negotiating land through warfare, litigation, and marriages. The kings of France chose the lily because it is a plant with deep roots that clings to slopes. Is bureaucracy the same in the Orient? Of course it is all too easy to depict an Orient of rhizomes and immanence; yet it is true that in the Orient the State does not act following a schema of arborescence corresponding to preestablished, arborified, and rooted classes; its bureaucracy is one of channels, for example, the much-discussed case of hydraulic power with “weak property,” in which the State engenders channeled and channelizing classes (cf. the aspects of Wittfogel’s work that have not been refuted).¹⁹ The despot acts as a river, not as a fountainhead, which is still a

point, a tree-point or root; he flows with the current rather than sitting under a tree; Buddha's tree itself becomes a rhizome; Mao's river and Louis's tree. Has not America acted as an intermediary here as well? For it proceeds both by internal exterminations and liquidations (not only the Indians but also the farmers, etc.), and by successive waves of immigration from the outside. The flow of capital produces an immense channel, a quantification of power with immediate "quanta," where each person profits from the passage of the money flow in his or her own way (hence the reality-myth of the poor man who strikes it rich and then falls into poverty again): in America everything comes together, tree and channel, root and rhizome. There is no universal capitalism, there is no capitalism in itself; capitalism is at the crossroads of all kinds of formations, it is neocapitalism by nature. It invents its eastern face and western face, and reshapes them both—all for the worst.

At the same time, we are on the wrong track with all these geographical distributions. An impasse. So much the better. If it is a question of showing that rhizomes also have their own, even more rigid, despotism and hierarchy, then fine and good: for there is no dualism, no ontological dualism between here and there, no axiological dualism between good and bad, no blend or American synthesis. There are knots of arborescence in rhizomes, and rhizomatic offshoots in roots. Moreover, there are despotic formations of immanence and channelization specific to rhizomes, just as there are anarchic deformations in the transcendent system of trees, aerial roots, and subterranean stems. The important point is that the root-tree and canal-rhizome are not two opposed models: the first operates as a transcendent model and tracing, even if it engenders its own escapes; the second operates as an immanent process that overturns the model and outlines a map, even if it constitutes its own hierarchies, even if it gives rise to a despotic channel. It is not a question of this or that place on earth, or of a given moment in history, still less of this or that category of thought. It is a question of a model that is perpetually in construction or collapsing, and of a process that is perpetually prolonging itself, breaking off and starting up again. No, this is not a new or different dualism. The problem of writing: in order to designate something exactly, anexact expressions are utterly unavoidable. Not at all because it is a necessary step, or because one can only advance by approximations: anexactitude is in no way an approximation; on the contrary, it is the exact passage of that which is under way. We invoke one dualism only in order to challenge another. We employ a dualism of models only in order to arrive at a process that challenges all models. Each time, mental correctives are necessary to undo the dualisms we had no wish to construct but through which we pass. Arrive at the magic formula we all seek—PLURALISM = MONISM—via all the dualisms that are

the enemy, an entirely necessary enemy, the furniture we are forever rearranging.

Let us summarize the principal characteristics of a rhizome: unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states. The rhizome is reducible neither to the One nor the multiple. It is not the One that becomes Two or even directly three, four, five, etc. It is not a multiple derived from the One, or to which One is added ($n + 1$). It is composed not of units but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (*milieu*) from which it grows and which it overspills. It constitutes linear multiplicities with n dimensions having neither subject nor object, which can be laid out on a plane of consistency, and from which the One is always subtracted ($n - 1$). When a multiplicity of this kind changes dimension, it necessarily changes in nature as well, undergoes a metamorphosis. Unlike a structure, which is defined by a set of points and positions, with binary relations between the points and biunivocal relationships between the positions, the rhizome is made only of lines: lines of segmentarity and stratification as its dimensions, and the line of flight or deterritorialization as the maximum dimension after which the multiplicity undergoes metamorphosis, changes in nature. These lines, or lineaments, should not be confused with lineages of the arborescent type, which are merely localizable linkages between points and positions. Unlike the tree, the rhizome is not the object of reproduction: neither external reproduction as image-tree nor internal reproduction as tree-structure. The rhizome is an antigenealogy. It is a short-term memory, or antimemory. The rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots. Unlike the graphic arts, drawing, or photography, unlike tracings, the rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight. It is tracings that must be put on the map, not the opposite. In contrast to centered (even polycentric) systems with hierarchical modes of communication and preestablished paths, the rhizome is an acentered, nonhierarchical, nonsignifying system without a General and without an organizing memory or central automaton, defined solely by a circulation of states. What is at question in the rhizome is a relation to sexuality—but also to the animal, the vegetal, the world, politics, the book, things natural and artificial—that is totally different from the arborescent relation: all manner of “becomings.”

A plateau is always in the middle, not at the beginning or the end. A rhizome is made of plateaus. Gregory Bateson uses the word “plateau” to

designate something very special: a continuous, self-vibrating region of intensities whose development avoids any orientation toward a culmination point or external end. Bateson cites Balinese culture as an example: mother-child sexual games, and even quarrels among men, undergo this bizarre intensive stabilization. "Some sort of continuing plateau of intensity is substituted for [sexual] climax," war, or a culmination point. It is a regrettable characteristic of the Western mind to relate expressions and actions to exterior or transcendent ends, instead of evaluating them on a plane of consistency on the basis of their intrinsic value.²⁰ For example, a book composed of chapters has culmination and termination points. What takes place in a book composed instead of plateaus that communicate with one another across microfissures, as in a brain? We call a "plateau" any multiplicity connected to other multiplicities by superficial underground stems in such a way as to form or extend a rhizome. We are writing this book as a rhizome. It is composed of plateaus. We have given it a circular form, but only for laughs. Each morning we would wake up, and each of us would ask himself what plateau he was going to tackle, writing five lines here, ten there. We had hallucinatory experiences, we watched lines leave one plateau and proceed to another like columns of tiny ants. We made circles of convergence. Each plateau can be read starting anywhere and can be related to any other plateau. To attain the multiple, one must have a method that effectively constructs it; no typographical cleverness, no lexical agility, no blending or creation of words, no syntactical boldness, can substitute for it. In fact, these are more often than not merely mimetic procedures used to disseminate or disperse a unity that is retained in a different dimension for an image-book. Technonarcissism. Typographical, lexical, or syntactic creations are necessary only when they no longer belong to the form of expression of a hidden unity, becoming themselves dimensions of the multiplicity under consideration; we only know of rare successes in this.²¹ We ourselves were unable to do it. We just used words that in turn function for us as plateaus. RHIZOMATICS = SCHIZOANALYSIS = STRATOANALYSIS = PRAGMATICS = MICROPOLITICS. These words are concepts, but concepts are lines, which is to say, number systems attached to a particular dimension of the multiplicities (strata, molecular chains, lines of flight or rupture, circles of convergence, etc.). Nowhere do we claim for our concepts the title of a science. We are no more familiar with scientificity than we are with ideology; all we know are assemblages. And the only assemblages are machinic assemblages of desire and collective assemblages of enunciation. No significance, no subjectification: writing to the *n*th power (all individuated enunciation remains trapped within the dominant significations, all signifying desire is associated with dominated subjects). An assemblage, in its multiplicity, necessarily acts on semiotic flows,

material flows, and social flows simultaneously (independently of any recapitulation that may be made of it in a scientific or theoretical corpus). There is no longer a tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author). Rather, an assemblage establishes connections between certain multiplicities drawn from each of these orders, so that a book has no sequel nor the world as its object nor one or several authors as its subject. In short, we think that one cannot write sufficiently in the name of an outside. The outside has no image, no signification, no subjectivity. The book as assemblage with the outside, against the book as image of the world. A rhizome-book, not a dichotomous, pivotal, or fascicular book. Never send down roots, or plant them, however difficult it may be to avoid reverting to the old procedures. “Those things which occur to me, occur to me not from the root up but rather only from somewhere about their middle. Let someone then attempt to seize them, let someone attempt to seize a blade of grass and hold fast to it when it begins to grow only from the middle.”²² Why is this so difficult? The question is directly one of perceptual semiotics. It’s not easy to see things in the middle, rather than looking down on them from above or up at them from below, or from left to right or right to left: try it, you’ll see that everything changes. It’s not easy to see the grass in things and in words (similarly, Nietzsche said that an aphorism had to be “ruminated”; never is a plateau separable from the cows that populate it, which are also the clouds in the sky).

History is always written from the sedentary point of view and in the name of a unitary State apparatus, at least a possible one, even when the topic is nomads. What is lacking is a Nomadology, the opposite of a history. There are rare successes in this also, for example, on the subject of the Children’s Crusades: Marcel Schwob’s book multiplies narratives like so many plateaus with variable numbers of dimensions. Then there is Andrzejewski’s book, *Les portes du paradis* (The gates of paradise), composed of a single uninterrupted sentence; a flow of children; a flow of walking with pauses, straggling, and forward rushes; the semiotic flow of the confessions of all the children who go up to the old monk at the head of the procession to make their declarations; a flow of desire and sexuality, each child having left out of love and more or less directly led by the dark posthumous pederastic desire of the count of Vendôme; all this with circles of convergence. What is important is not whether the flows are “One or multiple”—we’re past that point: there is a collective assemblage of enunciation, a machinic assemblage of desire, one inside the other and both plugged into an immense outside that is a multiplicity in any case. A more recent example is Armand Farrachi’s book on the Fourth Crusade, *La dislocation*, in which the sentences space themselves out and disperse, or else

jostle together and coexist, and in which the letters, the typography begin to dance as the crusade grows more delirious.²³ These are models of nomadic and rhizomatic writing. Writing weds a war machine and lines of flight, abandoning the strata, segmentarities, sedentariness, the State apparatus. But why is a model still necessary? Aren't these books still "images" of the Crusades? Don't they still retain a unity, in Schwob's case a pivotal unity, in Farrachi's an aborted unity, and in the most beautiful example, *Les portes du paradis*, the unity of the funereal count? Is there a need for a more profound nomadism than that of the Crusades, a nomadism of true nomads, or of those who no longer even move or imitate anything? The nomadism of those who only assemble (*agencent*). How can the book find an adequate outside with which to assemble in heterogeneity, rather than a world to reproduce? The cultural book is necessarily a tracing: already a tracing of itself, a tracing of the previous book by the same author, a tracing of other books however different they may be, an endless tracing of established concepts and words, a tracing of the world present, past, and future. Even the anticultural book may still be burdened by too heavy a cultural load: but it will use it actively, for forgetting instead of remembering, for underdevelopment instead of progress toward development, in nomadism rather than sedentariness, to make a map instead of a tracing. RHIZOMATICS = POP ANALYSIS, even if the people have other things to do besides read it, even if the blocks of academic culture or pseudoscience in it are still too painful or ponderous. For science would go completely mad if left to its own devices. Look at mathematics: it's not a science, it's a monster slang, it's nomadic. Even in the realm of theory, especially in the realm of theory, any precarious and pragmatic framework is better than tracing concepts, with their breaks and progress changing nothing. Imperceptible rupture, not signifying break. The nomads invented a war machine in opposition to the State apparatus. History has never comprehended nomadism, the book has never comprehended the outside. The State as the model for the book and for thought has a long history: logos, the philosopher-king, the transcendence of the Idea, the interiority of the concept, the republic of minds, the court of reason, the functionaries of thought, man as legislator and subject. The State's pretension to be a world order, and to root man. The war machine's relation to an outside is not another "model"; it is an assemblage that makes thought itself nomadic, and the book a working part in every mobile machine, a stem for a rhizome (Kleist and Kafka against Goethe).

Write to the *n*th power, the *n* – 1 power, write with slogans: Make rhizomes, not roots, never plant! Don't sow, grow offshoots! Don't be one or multiple, be multiplicities! Run lines, never plot a point! Speed turns the point into a line!²⁴ Be quick, even when standing still! Line of chance, line

of hips, line of flight. Don't bring out the General in you! Don't have just ideas, just have an idea (Godard). Have short-term ideas. Make maps, not photos or drawings. Be the Pink Panther and your loves will be like the wasp and the orchid, the cat and the baboon. As they say about old man river:

He don't plant 'tatos
Don't plant cotton
Them that plants them is soon forgotten
But old man river he just keeps rollin' along

A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*. The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb "to be," but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, "and . . . and . . . and . . ." This conjunction carries enough force to shake and uproot the verb "to be." Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you heading for? These are totally useless questions. Making a clean slate, starting or beginning again from ground zero, seeking a beginning or a foundation—all imply a false conception of voyage and movement (a conception that is methodical, pedagogical, initiatory, symbolic . . .). But Kleist, Lenz, and Büchner have another way of traveling and moving: proceeding from the middle, through the middle, coming and going rather than starting and finishing.²⁵ American literature, and already English literature, manifest this rhizomatic direction to an even greater extent; they know how to move between things, establish a logic of the AND, overthrow ontology, do away with foundations, nullify endings and beginnings. They know how to practice pragmatics. The middle is by no means an average; on the contrary, it is where things pick up speed. *Between* things does not designate a localizable relation going from one thing to the other and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one *and* the other away, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle.

2. 1914: One or Several Wolves?



Field of Tracks, or Wolf Line

That day, the Wolf-Man rose from the couch particularly tired. He knew that Freud had a genius for brushing up against the truth and passing it by, then filling the void with associations. He knew that Freud knew nothing about wolves, or anuses for that matter. The only thing Freud understood was what a dog is, and a dog's tail. It wasn't enough. It wouldn't be enough. The Wolf-Man knew that Freud would soon declare him cured, but that it was not at all the case and his treatment would continue for all eternity under Brunswick, Lacan, Leclaire. Finally, he knew that he was in the process of acquiring a veritable proper name, the Wolf-Man, a name more properly his than his own, since it attained the highest degree of singularity

in the instantaneous apprehension of a generic multiplicity: wolves. He knew that this new and true proper name would be disfigured and misspelled, retranscribed as a patronymic.

Freud, for his part, would go on to write some extraordinary pages. Entirely practical pages: his article of 1915 on "The Unconscious," which deals with the difference between neurosis and psychosis. Freud says that hysterics or obsessives are people capable of making a global comparison between a sock and a vagina, a scar and castration, etc. Doubtless, it is at one and the same time that they apprehend the object globally and perceive it as lost. Yet it would never occur to a neurotic to grasp the skin erotically as a multiplicity of pores, little spots, little scars or black holes, or to grasp the sock erotically as a multiplicity of stitches. The psychotic can: "we should expect the multiplicity of these little cavities to prevent him from using them as substitutes for the female genital."¹ Comparing a sock to a vagina is OK, it's done all the time, but you'd have to be insane to compare a pure aggregate of stitches to a field of vaginas: that's what Freud says. This represents an important clinical discovery: a whole difference in style between neurosis and psychosis. For example, Salvador Dali, in attempting to reproduce his delusions, may go on at length about THE rhinoceros horn; he has not for all of that left neurotic discourse behind. But when he starts comparing goosebumps to a field of tiny rhinoceros horns, we get the feeling that the atmosphere has changed and that we are now in the presence of madness. Is it still a question of a comparison at all? It is, rather, a pure multiplicity that changes elements, or *becomes*. On the micrological level, the little bumps "become" horns, and the horns, little penises.

No sooner does Freud discover the greatest art of the unconscious, this art of molecular multiplicities, than we find him tirelessly at work bringing back molar unities, reverting to his familiar themes of *the father*, *the penis*, *the vagina*, Castration with a capital C . . . (On the verge of discovering a rhizome, Freud always returns to mere roots.) The reductive procedure of the 1915 article is quite interesting: he says that the comparisons and identifications of the neurotic are guided by representations of things, whereas all the psychotic has left are representations of words (for example, the word "hole"). "What has dictated the substitution is not the resemblance between the things denoted but the sameness of the words used to express them" (p. 201). Thus, when there is no unity in the thing, there is at least unity and identity in the word. It will be noted that names are taken in their extensive usage, in other words, function as common nouns ensuring the unification of an aggregate they subsume. The proper name can be nothing more than an extreme case of the common noun, containing its already domesticated multiplicity within itself and linking it to a being or object posited as unique. This jeopardizes, on the side of words and things both,

the relation of the proper name as an *intensity* to the multiplicity it instantaneously apprehends. For Freud, when the thing splinters and loses its identity, the word is still there to restore that identity or invent a new one. Freud counted on the word to reestablish a unity no longer found in things. Are we not witnessing the first stirrings of a subsequent adventure, that of *the Signifier*, the devious despotic agency that substitutes itself for asignifying proper names and replaces multiplicities with the dismal unity of an object declared lost?

We're not far from wolves. For the Wolf-Man, in his second so-called psychotic episode, kept constant watch over the variations or changing path of the little holes or scars on the skin of his nose. During the first episode, which Freud declares neurotic, he recounted a dream he had about six or seven wolves in a tree, and drew five. Who is ignorant of the fact that wolves travel in packs? Only Freud. Every child knows it. Not Freud. With false scruples he asks, How are we to explain the fact that there are five, six, or seven wolves in this dream? He has decided that this is neurosis, so he uses the other reductive procedure: free association on the level of the representation of things, rather than verbal subsumption on the level of the representation of words. The result is the same, since it is always a question of bringing back the unity or identity of the person or allegedly lost object. The wolves will have to be purged of their multiplicity. This operation is accomplished by associating the dream with the tale, "The Wolf and the Seven Kid-Goats" (only six of which get eaten). We witness Freud's reductive glee; we literally see multiplicity leave the wolves to take the shape of goats that have absolutely nothing to do with the story. Seven wolves that are only kid-goats. Six wolves: the seventh goat (the Wolf-Man himself) is hiding in the clock. Five wolves: he may have seen his parents make love at five o'clock, and the roman numeral V is associated with the erotic spreading of a woman's legs. Three wolves: the parents may have made love three times. Two wolves: the first coupling the child may have seen was the two parents *more ferarum*, or perhaps even two dogs. One wolf: the wolf is the father, as we all knew from the start. Zero wolves: he lost his tail, he is not just a castrater but also castrated. Who is Freud trying to fool? The wolves never had a chance to get away and save their pack: it was already decided from the very beginning that animals could serve only to represent coitus between parents, or, conversely, be represented by coitus between parents. Freud obviously knows nothing about the fascination exerted by wolves and the meaning of their silent call, the call to become-wolf. Wolves watch, intently watch, the dreaming child; it is so much more reassuring to tell oneself that the dream produced a reversal and that it is really the child who sees dogs or parents in the act of making love. Freud only knows the

Oedipalized wolf or dog, the castrated-castrating daddy-wolf, the dog in the kennel, the analyst's bow-wow.

Franny is listening to a program on wolves. I say to her, Would you like to be a wolf? She answers haughtily, How stupid, you can't be one wolf, you're always eight or nine, six or seven. Not six or seven wolves all by yourself all at once, but one wolf among others, with five or six others. In becoming-wolf, the important thing is the position of the mass, and above all the position of the subject itself in relation to the pack or wolf-multiplicity: how the subject joins or does not join the pack, how far away it stays, how it does or does not hold to the multiplicity. To soften the harshness of her response, Franny recounts a dream: "There is a desert. Again, it wouldn't make any sense to say that I am *in* the desert. It's a panoramic vision of the desert, and it's not a tragic or uninhabited desert. It's only a desert because of its ocher color and its blazing, shadowless sun. There is a teeming crowd in it, a swarm of bees, a rumble of soccer players, or a group of Tuareg. *I am on the edge of the crowd, at the periphery; but I belong to it, I am attached to it by one of my extremities, a hand or foot.* I know that the periphery is the only place I can be, that I would die if I let myself be drawn into the center of the fray, but just as certainly if I let go of the crowd. This is not an easy position to stay in, it is even very difficult to hold, for these beings are in constant motion and their movements are unpredictable and follow no rhythm. They swirl, go north, then suddenly east; none of the individuals in the crowd remains in the same place in relation to the others. So I too am in perpetual motion; all this demands a high level of tension, but it gives me a feeling of violent, almost vertiginous, happiness." A very good schizo dream. To be fully a part of the crowd and at the same time completely outside it, removed from it: to be on the edge, to take a walk like Virginia Woolf (never again will I say, "*I am this, I am that*").²

Problems of peopling in the unconscious: all that passes through the pores of the schizo, the veins of the drug addict, swarming, teeming, ferment, intensities, races and tribes. This tale of white skin prickling with bumps and pustules, and of dwarfish black heads emerging from pores grimacing and abominable, needing to be shaved off every morning—is it a tale by Jean Ray, who knew how to bring terror to phenomena of micromultiplicity? And how about the "Lilliputian hallucinations" on ether? One schizo, two schizos, three: "There are babies growing in my every pore"—"With me, it's not in the pores, it's in my veins, little iron rods growing in my veins"—"I don't want them to give me any shots, except with camphorated alcohol. Otherwise breasts grow in my every pore." Freud tried to approach crowd phenomena from the point of view of the unconscious, but he did not see clearly, he did not see that the unconscious itself was fundamentally a crowd. He was myopic and hard of

hearing; he mistook crowds for a single person. Schizos, on the other hand, have sharp eyes and ears. They don't mistake the buzz and shove of the crowd for daddy's voice. Once Jung had a dream about bones and skulls. A bone or a skull is never alone. Bones are a multiplicity. But Freud wants the dream to signify the death of *someone*. "Jung was surprised and pointed out that there were several skulls, not just one. Yet Freud still . . ."³

A multiplicity of pores, or blackheads, of little scars or stitches. Breasts, babies, and rods. A multiplicity of bees, soccer players, or Tuareg. A multiplicity of wolves or jackals . . . All of these things are irreducible but bring us to a certain status of the formations of the unconscious. Let us try to define the factors involved: first, something plays the role of the full body—the body without organs. In the preceding dream it was the desert. In the Wolf-Man's dream it is the denuded tree upon which the wolves are perched. It is also the skin as envelope or ring, and the sock as reversible surface. It can be a house or part of a house, any number of things, anything. Whenever someone makes love, really makes love, that person constitutes a body without organs, alone and with the other person or people. A body without organs is not an empty body stripped of organs, but a body upon which that which serves as organs (wolves, wolf eyes, wolf jaws?) is distributed according to crowd phenomena, in Brownian motion, in the form of molecular multiplicities. The desert is populous. Thus the body without organs is opposed less to organs as such than to the organization of the organs insofar as it composes an organism. The body without organs is not a dead body but a living body all the more alive and teeming once it has blown apart the organism and its organization. Lice hopping on the beach. Skin colonies. The full body without organs is a body populated by multiplicities. The problem of the unconscious has most certainly nothing to do with generation but rather peopling, population. It is an affair of worldwide population on the full body of the earth, not organic familial generation. "I love to invent peoples, tribes, racial origins . . . I return from my tribes. As of today, I am the adoptive son of fifteen tribes, no more, no less. And they in turn are my adopted tribes, for I love each of them more than if I had been born into it." People say, After all, schizophrenics have a mother and a father, don't they? Sorry, no, none as such. They only have a desert with tribes inhabiting it, a full body clinging with multiplicities.

This brings us to the second factor, the nature of these multiplicities and their elements. RHIZOME. One of the essential characteristics of the dream of multiplicity is that each element ceaselessly varies and alters its distance in relation to the others. On the Wolf-Man's nose, the elements, determined as pores in the skin, little scars in the pores, little ruts in the scar tissue, ceaselessly dance, grow, and diminish. These variable distances are not extensive quantities divisible by each other; rather, each is indivisible,

or “relatively indivisible,” in other words, they are not divisible below or above a certain threshold, they cannot increase or diminish *without their elements changing in nature*. A swarm of bees: here they come as a rumble of soccer players in striped jerseys, or a band of Tuareg. Or: the wolf clan doubles up with a swarm of bees against the gang of Deulhs, under the direction of Mowgli, who runs on the edge (yes, Kipling understood the call of the wolves, their libidinal meaning, better than Freud; and in the Wolf-Man’s case the story about wolves is followed by one about wasps and butterflies, we go from wolves to wasps). What is the significance of these indivisible distances that are ceaselessly transformed, and cannot be divided or transformed without their elements changing in nature each time? Is it not the intensive character of this kind of multiplicity’s elements and the relations between them? Exactly like a speed or a temperature, which is not composed of other speeds and temperatures but rather is enveloped in or envelops others, each of which marks a change in nature. The metrical principle of these multiplicities is not to be found in a homogeneous milieu but resides elsewhere, in forces at work within them, in physical phenomena inhabiting them, precisely in the libido, which constitutes them from within, and in constituting them necessarily divides into distinct qualitative and variable flows. Freud himself recognizes the multiplicity of libidinal “currents” that coexist in the Wolf-Man. That makes it all the more surprising that he treats the multiplicities of the unconscious the way he does. For him, there will always be a reduction to the One: the little scars, the little holes, become subdivisions of the great scar or supreme hole named castration; the wolves become substitutes for a single Father who turns up everywhere, or wherever they put him. (As Ruth Mack Brunswick says, Let’s go all the way, the wolves are “*all the fathers and doctors*” in the world; but the Wolf-Man thinks, “You trying to tell me my ass isn’t a wolf?”)

What should have been done is the opposite, all of this should be understood in intensity: the Wolf is the pack, in other words, the multiplicity instantaneously apprehended as such insofar as it approaches or moves away from zero, each distance being nondecomposable. Zero is the body without organs of the Wolf-Man. If the unconscious knows nothing of negation, it is because there is nothing negative in the unconscious, only indefinite moves toward and away from zero, which does not at all express lack but rather the positivity of the full body as support and prop (“for an afflux is necessary simply to signify the absence of intensity”). The wolves designate an intensity, a band of intensity, a threshold of intensity on the Wolf-Man’s body without organs. A dentist told the Wolf-Man that he “would soon lose all his teeth because of the violence of his bite”—and that his gums were pocked with pustules and little holes.⁴ Jaw as high intensity,

teeth as low intensity, and pustular gums as approach to zero. The wolf, as the instantaneous apprehension of a multiplicity in a given region, is not a representative, a substitute, but an *I feel*. I feel myself becoming a wolf, one wolf among others, on the edge of the pack. A cry of anguish, the only one Freud hears: Help me not become wolf (or the opposite, Help me not fail in this becoming). It is not a question of representation: don't think for a minute that it has to do with believing oneself a wolf, representing oneself as a wolf. The wolf, wolves, are intensities, speeds, temperatures, nondecomposable variable distances. A swarming, a wolfling. Who could ever believe that the anal machine bears no relation to the wolf machine, or that the two are only linked by an Oedipal apparatus, by the all-too-human figure of the Father? For in the end the anus also expresses an intensity, in this case the approach to zero of a distance that cannot be decomposed without its elements changing in nature. *A field of anuses, just like a pack of wolves.* Does not the child, on the periphery, hold onto the wolves by his anus? The jaw descends to the anus. Hold onto those wolves by your jaw and your anus. The jaw is not a wolf jaw, it's not that simple; jaw and wolf form a multiplicity that is transformed into eye and wolf, anus and wolf, as a function of other distances, at other speeds, with other multiplicities, between thresholds. Lines of flight or of deterritorialization, becoming-wolf, becoming-inhuman, deterritorialized intensities: that is what multiplicity is. To become wolf or to become hole is to deterritorialize oneself following distinct but entangled lines. A hole is no more negative than a wolf. Castration, lack, substitution: a tale told by an overconscious idiot who has no understanding of multiplicities as formations of the unconscious. A wolf is a hole, they are both particles of the unconscious, nothing but particles, productions of particles, particulate paths, as elements of molecular multiplicities. It is not even sufficient to say that intense and moving particles pass through holes; a hole is just as much a particle as what passes through it. Physicists say that holes are not the absence of particles but particles traveling faster than the speed of light. Flying anuses, speeding vaginas, there is no castration.

Let us return to the story of *multiplicity*, for the creation of this substantive marks a very important moment. It was created precisely in order to escape the abstract opposition between the multiple and the one, to escape dialectics, to succeed in conceiving the multiple in the pure state, to cease treating it as a numerical fragment of a lost Unity or Totality or as the organic element of a Unity or Totality yet to come, and instead distinguish between different types of multiplicity. Thus we find in the work of the mathematician and physicist Riemann a distinction between discreet multiplicities and continuous multiplicities (the metrical principle of the second kind of multiplicity resides solely in forces at work within them). Then

in Meinong and Russell we find a distinction between multiplicities of magnitude or divisibility, which are extensive, and multiplicities of distance, which are closer to the intensive. And in Bergson there is a distinction between numerical or extended multiplicities and qualitative or durational multiplicities. We are doing approximately the same thing when we distinguish between arborescent multiplicities and rhizomatic multiplicities. Between macro- and micromultiplicities. On the one hand, multiplicities that are extensive, divisible, and molar; unifiable, totalizable, organizable; conscious or preconscious—and on the other hand, libidinal, unconscious, molecular, intensive multiplicities composed of particles that do not divide without changing in nature, and distances that do not vary without entering another multiplicity and that constantly construct and dismantle themselves in the course of their communications, as they cross over into each other at, beyond, or before a certain threshold. The elements of this second kind of multiplicity are particles; their relations are distances; their movements are Brownian; their quantities are intensities, differences in intensity.

This only provides the logical foundation. Elias Canetti distinguishes between two types of multiplicity that are sometimes opposed but at other times interpenetrate: mass ("crowd") multiplicities and pack multiplicities. Among the characteristics of a mass, in Canetti's sense, we should note large quantity, divisibility and equality of the members, concentration, sociability of the aggregate as a whole, one-way hierarchy, organization of territoriality or territorialization, and emission of signs. Among the characteristics of a pack are small or restricted numbers, dispersion, nondecomposable variable distances, qualitative metamorphoses, inequalities as remainders or crossings, impossibility of a fixed totalization or hierarchization, a Brownian variability in directions, lines of deterritorialization, and projection of particles.⁵ Doubtless, there is no more equality or any less hierarchy in packs than in masses, but they are of a different kind. The leader of the pack or the band plays move by move, must wager everything every hand, whereas the group or mass leader consolidates or capitalizes on past gains. The pack, even on its own turf, is constituted by a line of flight or of deterritorialization that is a component part of it, and to which it accredits a high positive value, whereas masses only integrate these lines in order to segment them, obstruct them, ascribe them a negative sign. Canetti notes that in a pack each member is alone even in the company of others (for example, wolves on the hunt); each takes care of himself at the same time as participating in the band. "In the changing constellation of the pack, in its dances and expeditions, he will again and again find himself at its edge. He may be in the center, and then, immediately afterwards, at the edge again; at the edge and then back in the center. When

the pack forms a ring around the fire, each man will have neighbors to the right and left, but no one behind him; his back is naked and exposed to the wilderness.”⁶ We recognize this as the schizo position, being on the periphery, holding on by a hand or a foot . . . As opposed to the paranoid position of the mass subject, with all the identifications of the individual with the group, the group with the leader, and the leader with the group; he securely embedded in the mass, get close to the center, never be at the edge except in the line of duty. Why assume (as does Konrad Lorenz, for example) that bands and their type of companionship represent a more rudimentary evolutionary state than group societies or societies of conjugality? Not only do there exist bands of humans, but there are particularly refined examples: “high-society life” differs from “sociality” in that it is closer to the pack. Social persons have a certain envious and erroneous image of the high-society person because they are ignorant of high-society positions and hierarchies, the relations of force, the very particular ambitions and projects. High-society relations are never coextensive with social relations, they do not coincide. Even “mannerisms” (all bands have them) are specific to micromultiplicities and distinct from social manners or customs.

There is no question, however, of establishing a dualist opposition between the two types of multiplicities, molecular machines and molar machines; that would be no better than the dualism between the One and the multiple. There are only multiplicities of multiplicities forming a single *assemblage*, operating in the same *assemblage*: packs in masses and masses in packs. Trees have rhizome lines, and the rhizome points of arborescence. How could mad particles be produced with anything but a gigantic cyclotron? How could lines of deterritorialization be assignable outside of circuits of territoriality? Where else but in wide expanses, and in major upheavals in those expanses, could a tiny rivulet of new intensity suddenly start to flow? What do you not have to do in order to produce a new sound? Becoming-animal, becoming-molecular, becoming-inhuman, each involves a molar extension, a human hyperconcentration, or prepares the way for them. In Kafka, it is impossible to separate the erection of a great paranoid bureaucratic machine from the installation of little schizo machines of becoming-dog or becoming-beetle. In the case of the Wolf-Man, it is impossible to separate the becoming-wolf of his dream from the military and religious organization of his obsessions. A military man does a wolf; a military man does a dog. There are not two multiplicities or two machines; one and the same machinic assemblage produces and distributes the whole, in other words, the set of statements corresponding to the “complex.” What does psychoanalysis have to say about all of this? Oedipus, nothing but Oedipus, because it hears nothing and listens to nobody. It flattens everything, masses and packs, molecular and molar machines,

multiplicities of every variety. Take the Wolf-Man's second dream during his so-called psychotic episode: in the street, a wall with a closed door, to the left an empty dresser; in front of the dresser, the patient, and a big woman with a little scar who seems to want to skirt around the wall; behind the wall, wolves, rushing for the door. Even Brunswick can't go wrong: although she recognizes herself in the big woman, she does see that this time the wolves are Bolsheviks, the revolutionary mass that had emptied the dresser and confiscated the Wolf-Man's fortune. *The wolves, in a metastable state, have gone over to a large-scale social machine.* But psychoanalysis has nothing to say about all of these points—except what Freud already said: it all leads back to daddy (what do you know, he was one of the leaders of the liberal party in Russia, but that's hardly important; all that needs to be said is that the revolution "assuaged the patient's feelings of guilt"). You'd think that the investments and counterinvestments of the libido had nothing to do with mass disturbances, pack movements, collective signs, and particles of desire.

Thus it does not suffice to attribute molar multiplicities and mass machines to the preconscious, reserving another kind of machine or multiplicity for the unconscious. For it is the assemblage of both of these that is the province of the unconscious, the way in which the former condition the latter, and the latter prepare the way for the former, or elude them or return to them: the libido suffuses everything. Keep everything in sight at the same time—that a social machine or an organized mass has a molecular unconscious that marks not only its tendency to decompose but also the current components of its very operation and organization; that any individual caught up in a mass has his/her own pack unconscious, which does not necessarily resemble the packs of the mass to which that individual belongs; that an individual or mass will live out in its unconscious the masses and packs of another mass or another individual. What does it mean to love somebody? It is always to seize that person in a mass, extract him or her from a group, however small, in which he or she participates, whether it be through the family only or through something else; then to find that person's own packs, the multiplicities he or she encloses within himself or herself which may be of an entirely different nature. To join them to mine, to make them penetrate mine, and for me to penetrate the other person's. Heavenly nuptials, multiplicities of multiplicities. Every love is an exercise in depersonalization on a body without organs yet to be formed, and it is at the highest point of this depersonalization that someone can be *named*, receives his or her family name or first name, acquires the most intense discernibility in the instantaneous apprehension of the multiplicities belonging to him or her, and to which he or she belongs. A pack of freckles on a face, a pack of boys speaking through the voice of a

woman, a clutch of girls in Charlus's voice, a horde of wolves in somebody's throat, a multiplicity of anuses in the anus, mouth, or eye one is intent upon. We each go through so many bodies in each other. Albertine is slowly extracted from a group of girls with its own number, organization, code, and hierarchy; and not only is this group or restricted mass suffused by an unconscious, but Albertine has her own multiplicities that the narrator, once he has isolated her, discovers on her body and in her lies—until the end of their love returns her to the indiscernible.

Above all, it should not be thought that it suffices to distinguish the masses and exterior groups someone belongs to or participates in from the internal aggregates that person envelops in himself or herself. The distinction to be made is not at all between exterior and interior, which are always relative, changing, and reversible, but between different types of multiplicities that coexist, interpenetrate, and change places—machines, cogs, motors, and elements that are set in motion at a given moment, forming an assemblage productive of statements: "I love you" (or whatever). For Kafka, Felice is inseparable from a certain social machine, and, as a representative of the firm that manufactures them, from parlograph machines; how could she not belong to that organization in the eyes of Kafka, a man fascinated by commerce and bureaucracy? But at the same time, Felice's teeth, her big carnivorous teeth, send her racing down other lines, into the molecular multiplicities of a becoming-dog, a becoming-jackal . . . Felice is inseparable from the sign of the modern social machines belonging to her, from those belonging to Kafka (not the same ones), and from the particles, the little molecular machines, the whole strange becoming or journey Kafka will make and have her make through his perverse writing apparatus.

There are no individual statements, only statement-producing machinic assemblages. We say that the assemblage is fundamentally libidinal and unconscious. It is the unconscious in person. For the moment, we will note that assemblages have elements (or multiplicities) of several kinds: human, social, and technical machines, organized molar machines; molecular machines with their particles of becoming-inhuman; Oedipal apparatuses (*yes, of course there are Oedipal statements, many of them*); and counter-Oedipal apparatuses, variable in aspect and functioning. We will go into it later. We can no longer even speak of distinct machines, only of types of interpenetrating multiplicities that at any given moment form a single machinic assemblage, the faceless figure of the libido. Each of us is caught up in an assemblage of this kind, and we reproduce its statements when we think we are speaking in our own name; or rather we speak in our own name when we produce its statement. And what bizarre statements they are; truly, the talk of lunatics. We mentioned Kafka, but we could just

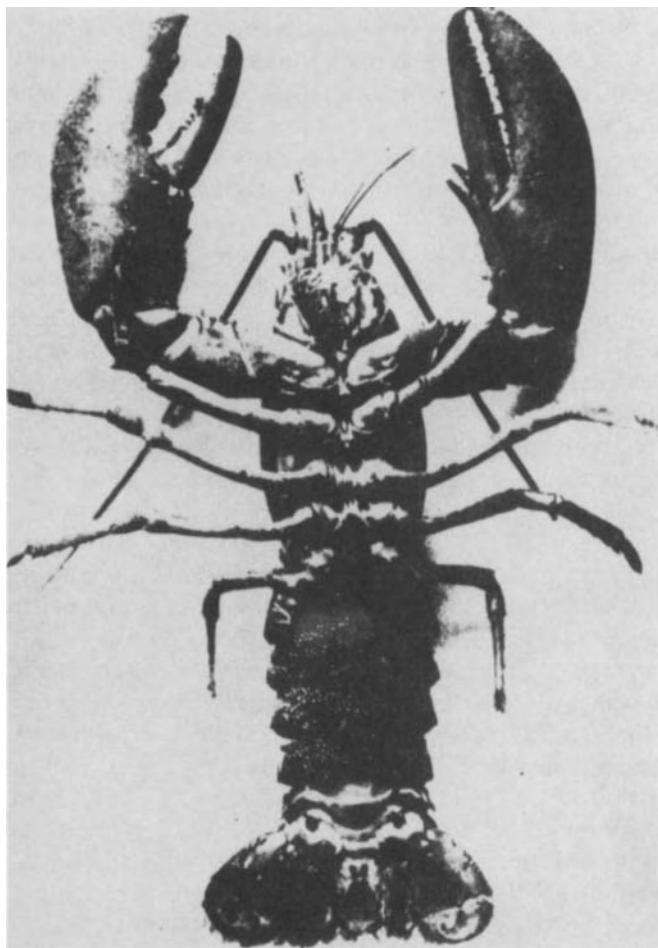
as well have said the Wolf-Man: a religious-military machine that Freud attributes to obsessional neurosis; an anal pack machine, an anal becoming-wolf or -wasp or -butterfly machine, which Freud attributes to the hysterical character; an Oedipal apparatus, which Freud considers the sole motor, the immobile motor that must be found everywhere; and a counter-Oedipal apparatus—incest with the sister, schizo-incest, or love with “people of inferior station”; and anality, homosexuality?—all that Freud sees only as Oedipal substitutes, regressions, and derivatives. In truth, Freud sees nothing and understands nothing. He has no idea what a libidinal assemblage is, with all the machineries it brings into play, all the multiple loves.

Of course, there are Oedipal statements. For example, Kafka’s story, “Jackals and Arabs,” is easy to read in that way: you can always do it, you can’t lose, it works every time, even if you understand nothing. The Arabs are clearly associated with the father and the jackals with the mother; between the two, there is a whole story of castration represented by the rusty scissors. But it so happens that the Arabs are an extensive, armed, organized mass stretching across the entire desert; and the jackals are an intense pack forever launching into the desert following lines of flight or deterritorialization (“they are madmen, veritable madmen”); between the two, at the edge, the Man of the North, the jackal-man. And aren’t those big scissors the Arab sign that guides or releases jackal-particles, both to accelerate their mad race by detaching them from the mass and to bring them back to the mass, to tame them and whip them, to bring them around? Dead camel: Oedipal food apparatus. Counter-Oedipal carrion apparatus: kill animals to eat, or eat to clean up carrion. The jackals formulate the problem well: it is not that of castration but of “cleanliness” (*propreté*, also “ownness”), the test of desert-desire. Which will prevail, mass territoriality or pack deterritorialization? The libido suffuses the entire desert, the body without organs on which the drama is played out.

There are no individual statements, there never are. Every statement is the product of a machinic assemblage, in other words, of collective agents of enunciation (take “collective agents” to mean not peoples or societies but multiplicities). The proper name (*nom propre*) does not designate an individual: it is on the contrary when the individual opens up to the multiplicities pervading him or her, at the outcome of the most severe operation of depersonalization, that he or she acquires his or her true proper name. The proper name is the instantaneous apprehension of a multiplicity. The proper name is the subject of a pure infinitive comprehended as such in a field of intensity. What Proust said about the first name: when I said Gilberte’s name, I had the impression that I was holding her entire body naked in my mouth. The Wolf-Man, a true proper name, an intimate first

name linked to the becomings, infinitives, and intensities of a multiplied and depersonalized individual. What does psychoanalysis know about multiplication? The desert hour when the dromedary becomes a thousand dromedaries snickering in the sky. The evening hour when a thousand holes appear on the surface of the earth. Castration! Castration! cries the psychoanalytic scarecrow, who never saw more than a hole, a father or a dog where wolves are, a domesticated individual where there are wild multiplicities. We are not just criticizing psychoanalysis for having selected Oedipal statements exclusively. For such statements are to a certain extent part of a machinic assemblage, for which they could serve as correctional indexes, as in a calculation of errors. We are criticizing psychoanalysis for having used Oedipal enunciation to make patients believe they would produce individual, personal statements, and would finally speak in their own name. The trap was set from the start: never will the Wolf-Man speak. Talk as he might about wolves, howl as he might like a wolf, Freud does not even listen; he glances at his dog and answers, "It's daddy." For as long as that lasts, Freud calls it neurosis; when it cracks, it's psychosis. The Wolf-Man will receive the psychoanalytic medal of honor for services rendered to the cause, and even disabled veterans' benefits. He could have spoken in his own name only if the machinic assemblage that was producing particular statements in him had been brought to light. But there is no question of that in psychoanalysis: at the very moment the subject is persuaded that he or she will be uttering the most individual of statements, he or she is deprived of all basis for enunciation. Silence people, prevent them from speaking, and above all, when they do speak, pretend they haven't said a thing: the famous psychoanalytic neutrality. The Wolf-Man keeps howling: Six wolves! Seven wolves! Freud says, How's that? Goats, you say? How interesting. Take away the goats and all you have left is a wolf, so it's your father . . . That is why the Wolf-Man feels so fatigued: he's left lying there with all his wolves in his throat, all those little holes on his nose, and all those libidinal values on his body without organs. The war will come, the wolves will become Bolsheviks, and the Wolf-Man will remain suffocated by all he had to say. All we will be told is that he became well behaved, polite, and resigned again, "honest and scrupulous." In short, cured. He gets back by pointing out that psychoanalysis lacks a truly zoological vision: "Nothing can be more valuable for a young person than the love of nature and a comprehension of the natural sciences, in particular zoology."⁷

3. 10,000 B.C.: The Geology of Morals (Who Does the Earth Think It Is?)



Double Articulation

The same Professor Challenger who made the Earth scream with his pain machine, as described by Arthur Conan Doyle, gave a lecture after mixing several textbooks on geology and biology in a fashion befitting his simian disposition. He explained that the Earth—the Deterritorialized, the Glacial, the giant Molecule—is a body without organs. This body without organs is permeated by unformed, unstable matters, by flows in all directions, by free intensities or nomadic singularities, by mad or transitory particles. That, however, was not the question at hand. For there simultaneously occurs upon the earth a very important, inevitable phenomenon that is beneficial in many respects and unfortunate in many others: stratification. Strata are Layers, Belts. They consist of giving form to matters, of imprisoning intensities or locking singularities into systems of resonance and redundancy, of producing upon the body of the earth molecules large and small and organizing them into molar aggregates. Strata are acts of capture, they are like “black holes” or occlusions striving to seize whatever comes within their reach.¹ They operate by coding and territorialization upon the earth; they proceed simultaneously by code and by territoriality. The strata are judgments of God; stratification in general is the entire system of the judgment of God (but the earth, or the body without organs, constantly eludes that judgment, flees and becomes destratified, decoded, deterritorialized).

Challenger quoted a sentence he said he came across in a geology textbook. He said we needed to learn it by heart because we would only be in a position to understand it later on: “A surface of stratification is a more compact plane of consistency lying between two layers.” The layers are the strata. They come at least in pairs, one serving as *substratum* for the other. The surface of stratification is a machinic assemblage distinct from the strata. The assemblage is between two layers, between two strata; on one side it faces the strata (in this direction, the assemblage is an *interstratum*), but the other side faces something else, the body without organs or plane of consistency (here, it is a *metastratum*). In effect, the body without organs is itself the plane of consistency, which becomes compact or thickens at the level of the strata.

God is a Lobster, or a double pincer, a double bind. Not only do strata come at least in pairs, but in a different way each stratum is double (it itself has several layers). Each stratum exhibits phenomena constitutive of *double articulation*. Articulate twice, B-A, BA. This is not at all to say that the strata speak or are language based. Double articulation is so extremely variable that we cannot begin with a general model, only a relatively simple case. The first articulation chooses or deducts, from unstable particle-flows, metastable molecular or quasi-molecular units (*substances*) upon which it imposes a statistical order of connections and successions (*forms*).

The second articulation establishes functional, compact, stable structures (*forms*), and constructs the molar compounds in which these structures are simultaneously actualized (*substances*). In a geological stratum, for example, the first articulation is the process of “sedimentation,” which deposits units of cyclic sediment according to a statistical order: flysch, with its succession of sandstone and schist. The second articulation is the “folding” that sets up a stable functional structure and effects the passage from sediment to sedimentary rock.

It is clear that the distinction between the two articulations is not between substances and forms. Substances are nothing other than formed matters. Forms imply a code, modes of coding and decoding. Substances as formed matters refer to territorialities and degrees of territorialization and deterritorialization. But each articulation has a code *and* a territoriality; therefore each possesses both form and substance. For now, all we can say is that each articulation has a corresponding type of segmentarity or multiplicity: one type is supple, more molecular, and merely ordered; the other is more rigid, molar, and organized. Although the first articulation is not lacking in systematic interactions, it is in the second articulation in particular that phenomena constituting an overcoding are produced, phenomena of centering, unification, totalization, integration, hierarchization, and finalization. Both articulations establish binary relations between their respective segments. But between the segments of one articulation and the segments of the other there are biunivocal relationships obeying far more complex laws. The word “structure” may be used to designate the sum of these relations and relationships, but it is an illusion to believe that structure is the earth’s last word. Moreover, it cannot be taken for granted that the distinction between the two articulations is always that of the molecular and the molar.

He skipped over the immense diversity of the energetic, physico-chemical, and geological strata. He went straight to the organic strata, or the existence of a great organic stratification. The problem of the organism—*how to “make” the body an organism*—is once again a problem of articulation, of the articulatory relation. The Dogons, well known to the professor, formulate the problem as follows: an organism befalls the body of the smith, by virtue of a machine or machinic assemblage that stratifies it. “The shock of the hammer and the anvil broke his arms and legs at the elbows and knees, which until that moment he had not possessed. In this way, he received the articulations specific to the new human form that was to spread across the earth, a form dedicated to work. . . . His arm became folded with a view to work.”² It is obviously only a manner of speaking to limit the articulatory relation to the bones. The entire organism must be considered in relation to a double articulation, and on different levels.

First, on the level of morphogenesis: on the one hand, realities of the molecular type with aleatory relations are caught up in crowd phenomena or statistical aggregates determining an order (the protein fiber and its sequence or segmentarity); on the other hand, these aggregates themselves are taken up into stable structures that “elect” stereoscopic compounds, form organs, functions, and regulations, organize molar mechanisms, and even distribute centers capable of overflying crowds, overseeing mechanisms, utilizing and repairing tools, “overcoding” the aggregate (the folding back on itself of the fiber to form a compact structure; a second kind of segmentarity).³ Sedimentation and folding, fiber and infolding.

On a different level, the cellular chemistry presiding over the constitution of proteins also operates by double articulation. This double articulation is internal to the molecular, it is the articulation between small and large molecules, a segmentarity by successive modifications and polymerization. “First, the elements taken from the medium are combined through a series of transformations. . . . All this activity involves hundreds of chemical reactions. But ultimately, it produces a limited number of small compounds, a few dozen at most. In the second stage of cellular chemistry, the small molecules are assembled to produce larger ones. It is the polymerization of units linked end-to-end that forms the characteristic chains of macromolecules. . . . The two stages of cellular chemistry, therefore, differ in their function, products and nature. The first carves out chemical motifs; the second assembles them. The first forms compounds that exist only temporarily, for they are intermediaries on the path of biosynthesis; the second constructs stable products. The first operates by a series of different reactions; the second by repeating the same reaction.”⁴ There is, moreover, a third level, upon which cellular chemistry itself depends. It is the genetic code, which is in turn inseparable from a double segmentarity or a double articulation, this time between two types of independent molecules: the sequence of protein units and the sequence of nucleic units, with binary relations between units of the same type and biunivocal relationships between units of different types. Thus there are always two articulations, two segmentarities, two kinds of multiplicity, each of which brings into play both forms and substances. But the distribution of these two articulations is not constant, even within the same stratum.

The audience rather sulkily denounced the numerous misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and even misappropriations in the professor’s presentation, despite the authorities he had appealed to, calling them his “friends.” Even the Dogons . . . And things would presently get worse. The professor cynically congratulated himself on taking his pleasure from behind, but the offspring always turned out to be runts and wens, bits and pieces, if not stupid vulgarizations. Besides, the professor was not a geolo-

gist or a biologist, he was not even a linguist, ethnologist, or psychoanalyst; what his specialty had been was long since forgotten. In fact, Professor Challenger was double, articulated twice, and that did not make things any easier; people never knew which of him was present. He (?) claimed to have invented a discipline he referred to by various names: rhizomatics, stratoanalysis, schizoanalysis, nomadology, micropolitics, pragmatics, the science of multiplicities. Yet no one clearly understood what the goals, method, or principles of this discipline were. Young Professor Alasca, Challenger's pet student, tried hypocritically to defend him by explaining that on a given stratum the passage from one articulation to the other was easily verified because it was always accompanied by a loss of water, in genetics as in geology, and even in linguistics, where the importance of the "lost saliva" phenomenon is measured. Challenger took offense, preferring to cite his friend, as he called him, the Danish Spinozist geologist, Hjelmslev, that dark prince descended from Hamlet who also made language his concern, precisely in order to analyze its "stratification." Hjelmslev was able to weave a net out of the notions of *matter, content* and *expression, form* and *substance*. These were the strata, said Hjelmslev. Now this net had the advantage of breaking with the form-content duality, since there was a form of content no less than a form of expression. Hjelmslev's enemies saw this merely as a way of rebaptizing the discredited notions of the signified and signifier, but something quite different was actually going on. Despite what Hjelmslev himself may have said, the net is not linguistic in scope or origin (the same must be said of double articulation: if language has a specificity of its own, as it most certainly does, that specificity consists neither in double articulation nor in Hjelmslev's net, which are general characteristics of strata).

He used the term *matter* for the plane of consistency or Body without Organs, in other words, the unformed, unorganized, nonstratified, or destratified body and all its flows: subatomic and submolecular particles, pure intensities, prevital and prephysical free singularities. He used the term *content* for formed matters, which would now have to be considered from two points of view: substance, insofar as these matters are "chosen," and form, insofar as they are chosen in a certain order (*substance and form of content*). He used the term *expression* for functional structures, which would also have to be considered from two points of view: the organization of their own specific form, and substances insofar as they form compounds (*form and content of expression*). A stratum always has a dimension of the expressible or of expression serving as the basis for a relative invariance; for example, nucleic sequences are inseparable from a relatively invariant expression by means of which they determine the compounds, organs, and functions of the organism.⁵ To express is always to sing the glory of God.

Every stratum is a judgment of God; not only do plants and animals, orchids and wasps, sing or express themselves, but so do rocks and even rivers, every stratified thing on earth. *The first articulation concerns content, the second expression.* The distinction between the two articulations is not between forms and substances but between content and expression, expression having just as much substance as content and content just as much form as expression. The double articulation sometimes coincides with the molecular and the molar, and sometimes not; this is because content and expression are sometimes divided along those lines and sometimes along different lines. There is never correspondence or conformity between content and expression, only isomorphism with reciprocal presupposition. The distinction between content and expression is *always real*, in various ways, but it cannot be said that the terms preexist their double articulation. It is the double articulation that distributes them according to the line it draws in each stratum; it is what constitutes their real distinction. (On the other hand, there is no real distinction between form and substance, only a mental or modal distinction: since substances are nothing other than formed matters, formless substances are inconceivable, although it is possible in certain instances to conceive of substanceless forms.)

Even though there is a real distinction between them, content and expression are relative terms (“first” and “second” articulation should also be understood in an entirely relative fashion). Even though it is capable of invariance, expression is just as much a variable as content. Content and expression are two variables of a function of stratification. They not only vary from one stratum to another, but intermingle, and within the same stratum multiply and divide ad infinitum. Since every articulation is double, there is not an articulation of content *and* an articulation of expression—the articulation of content is double in its own right and constitutes a relative expression within content; the articulation of expression is also double and constitutes a relative content within expression. For this reason, there exist *intermediate states* between content and expression, expression and content: the levels, equilibriums, and exchanges through which a stratified system passes. In short, we find forms and substances of content that play the role of expression in relation to other forms and substances, and conversely for expression. These new distinctions do not, therefore, coincide with the distinction between forms and substances within each articulation; instead, they show that each articulation is already, or still, double. This can be seen on the organic stratum: proteins of content have two forms, one of which (the infolded fiber) plays the role of functional expression in relation to the other. The same goes for the nucleic acids of expression: double articulations cause certain formal and

substantial elements to play the role of content in relation to others; not only does the half of the chain that is reproduced become a content, but the reconstituted chain itself becomes a content in relation to the “messenger.” There are double pincers everywhere on a stratum; everywhere and in all directions there are double binds and lobsters, a multiplicity of double articulations affecting both expression and content. Through all of this, Hjelmslev’s warning should not be forgotten: “The terms expression plane and content plane . . . are chosen in conformity with established notions and are quite arbitrary. Their functional definition provides no justification for calling one, and not the other, of these entities *expression*, or one, and not the other, *content*. They are defined only by their mutual solidarity, and neither of them can be identified otherwise. They are defined only oppositively and relatively, as mutually opposed functives of one and the same function.”⁶ We must combine all the resources of real distinction, reciprocal presupposition, and general relativism.

The question we must ask is what on a given stratum varies and what does not. What accounts for the unity and diversity of a stratum? Matter, the pure matter of the plane of consistency (or inconsistency) lies outside the strata. The molecular materials borrowed from the substrata may be the same throughout a stratum, but that does not mean that the molecules will be the same. The substantial elements may be the same throughout the stratum without the substances being the same. The formal relations or bonds may be the same without the forms being the same. In biochemistry, there is a *unity of composition* of the organic stratum defined at the level of materials and energy, substantial elements or radicals, bonds and reactions. But there is a variety of different molecules, substances, and forms.

Should we not sing the praise of Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire? For in the nineteenth century he developed a grandiose conception of stratification. He said that matter, considered from the standpoint of its greatest divisibility, consists in particles of decreasing size, flows or elastic fluids that “deploy themselves” by radiating through space. Combustion is the process of this escape or infinite division on the plane of consistency. Electrification is the opposite process, constitutive of strata; it is the process whereby similar particles group together to form atoms and molecules, similar molecules to form bigger molecules, and the biggest molecules to form molar aggregates: “the attraction of like by like,” as in a double pincer or double articulation. Thus there is no vital matter specific to the organic stratum, matter is the same on all the strata. But the organic stratum does have a specific unity of composition, a single abstract Animal, a single machine embedded in the stratum, and presents everywhere the same molecular materials, the same elements or anatomical components of organs, the same formal connec-

tions. Organic forms are nevertheless different from one another, as are organs, compound substances, and molecules. It is of little or no importance that Geoffroy chose anatomical elements as the substantial units rather than protein and nucleic acid radicals. At any rate, he already invoked a whole interplay of molecules. The important thing is the principle of the simultaneous unity and variety of the stratum: isomorphism of forms but no correspondence; identity of elements or components but no identity of compound substances.

This is where the dialogue, or rather violent debate, with Cuvier came in. To keep the last of the audience from leaving, Challenger imagined a particularly epistemological dialogue of the dead, in puppet theater style. Geoffroy called forth Monsters, Cuvier laid out all the Fossils in order, Baer flourished flasks filled with embryos, Vialleton put on a tetrapod's belt, Perrier mimed the dramatic battle between the Mouth and the Brain, and so on. *Geoffroy*: The proof that there is isomorphism is that you can always get from one form on the organic stratum to another, however different they may be, by means of "folding." To go from the Vertebrate to the Cephalopod, bring the two sides of the Vertebrate's backbone together, bend its head down to its feet and its pelvis up to the nape of its neck . . . *Cuvier* (angrily): That's just not true! You go from an Elephant to a Medusa; I know, I tried. There are irreducible axes, types, branches. There are resemblances between organs and analogies between forms, nothing more. You're a falsifier, a metaphysician. *Vialleton* (a disciple of Cuvier and Baer): Even if folding gave good results, who could endure it? It's not by chance that Geoffroy only considers anatomical elements. No muscle or ligament would survive it. *Geoffroy*: I said that there was isomorphism but not correspondence. You have to bring "degrees of development or perfection" into the picture. It is not everywhere on a stratum that materials reach the degree at which they form a given aggregate. Anatomical elements may be arrested or inhibited in certain places by molecular clashes, the influence of the milieu, or pressure from neighbors to such an extent that they compose different organs. The same formal relations or connections are then effectuated in entirely different forms and arrangements. It is still the same abstract Animal that is realized throughout the stratum, only to varying degrees, in varying modes. Each time, it is as perfect as its surroundings or milieu allows it to be (it is obviously not yet a question of evolution: neither folding nor degrees imply descent or derivation, only autonomous realizations of the same abstract relations). This is where Geoffroy invoked Monsters: human monsters are embryos that were retarded at a certain degree of development, the human in them is only a straitjacket for inhuman forms and substances. Yes, the Heteradelph is a crustacean. *Baer* (an ally of Cuvier and contemporary of Darwin, about

whom he had reservations, in addition to being an enemy of Geoffroy): That's not true, you can't confuse degrees of development with types of forms. A single type has several degrees, a single degree is found in several types, but never will you make types out of degrees. An embryo of one type cannot display another type; at most, it can be of the same degree as an embryo of the second type. *Vialleton* (a disciple of Baer's who took both Darwin and Geoffroy one further): And then there are things that only an embryo can do or endure. It can do or endure these things precisely because of its type, not because it can go from one type to another according to degrees of development. Admire the Tortoise. Its neck requires that a certain number of protovertebrae change position, and its front limbs must slide 180 degrees in relation to that of a bird. You can never draw conclusions about phylogenesis on the basis of embryogenesis. Folding does not make it possible to go from one type to another; quite the contrary, the types testify to the irreducibility of the forms of folding . . . (Thus Vialleton presented two kinds of interconnected arguments in the service of the same cause, saying first that there are things no animal can do by reason of its substance, and then that there are things that only an embryo can do by reason of its form. Two strong arguments.)⁷

We're a little lost now. There is so much going on in these retorts. So many endlessly proliferating distinctions. So much getting even, for epistemology is not innocent. The sweet and subtle Geoffroy and the violent and serious Cuvier do battle around Napoleon. Cuvier, the rigid specialist, is pitted against Geoffroy, always ready to switch specialities. Cuvier hates Geoffroy, he can't stomach Geoffroy's lighthearted formulas, his humor (yes, Hens do indeed have teeth, the Lobster has skin on its bones, etc.). Cuvier is a man of Power and Terrain, and he won't let Geoffroy forget it; Geoffroy, on the other hand, prefigures the nomadic man of speed. Cuvier reflects a Euclidean space, whereas Geoffroy thinks topologically. Today let us invoke the folds of the cortex with all their paradoxes. Strata are topological, and Geoffroy is a great artist of the fold, a formidable artist; as such, he already has a presentiment of a certain kind of animal rhizome with aberrant paths of communication—Monsters. Cuvier reacts in terms of discontinuous photographs, and casts of fossils. But we're a little lost, because distinctions have proliferated in all directions.

We have not even taken Darwin, evolutionism, or neoevolutionism into account yet. This, however, is where a decisive phenomenon occurs: our puppet theater becomes more and more nebulous, in other words, collective and differential. Earlier, we invoked two factors, and their uncertain relations, in order to explain the diversity within a stratum—degrees of development or perfection and types of forms. They now undergo a profound transformation. There is a double tendency for types of forms to be

understood increasingly in terms of populations, packs and colonies, collectivities or multiplicities; and degrees of development in terms of speeds, rates, coefficients, and differential relations. A double deepening. This, Darwinism's fundamental contribution, implies a new coupling of individuals and milieus on the stratum.⁸

First, if we assume the presence of an elementary or even molecular population in a given milieu, the forms do not preexist the population, they are more like statistical results. The more a population assumes divergent forms, the more its multiplicity divides into multiplicities of different nature, the more its elements form distinct compounds or matters—the more efficiently it distributes itself in the milieu, or divides up the milieu. Thus the relationship between embryogenesis and phylogenesis is reversed: the embryo does not testify to an absolute form preestablished in a closed milieu; rather, the phylogenesis of populations has at its disposal, in an open milieu, an entire range of relative forms to choose from, none of which is preestablished. In embryogenesis, "It is possible to tell from the parents, anticipating the outcome of the process, whether a pigeon or a wolf is developing. . . . But here the points of reference themselves are in motion: there are only fixed points for convenience of expression. At the level of universal evolution, it is impossible to discern that kind of reference point. . . . Life on earth appears as a sum of relatively independent species of flora and fauna with sometimes shifting or porous boundaries between them. Geographical areas can only harbor a sort of chaos, or, at best, extrinsic harmonies of an ecological order, temporary equilibriums between populations."⁹

Second, simultaneously and under the same conditions, the degrees are not degrees of preexistent development or perfection but are instead global and relative equilibriums: they enter into play as a function of the advantage they give particular elements, then a particular multiplicity in the milieu, and as a function of a particular variation in the milieu. Degrees are no longer measured in terms of increasing perfection or a differentiation and increase in the complexity of the parts, but in terms of differential relations and coefficients such as selective pressure, catalytic action, speed of propagation, rate of growth, evolution, mutation, etc. Relative progress, then, can occur by formal and quantitative simplification rather than by complication, by a loss of components and syntheses rather than by acquisition (it is a question of speed, and speed is a differential). It is through populations that one is formed, assumes forms, and through loss that one progresses and picks up speed. Darwinism's two fundamental contributions move in the direction of a science of multiplicities: the substitution of populations for types, and the substitution of rates or differential relations for degrees.¹⁰ These are nomadic contributions with shifting boundaries

determined by populations or variations of multiplicities, and with differential coefficients or variations of relations. Contemporary biochemistry, or “molecular Darwinism” as Monod calls it, confirms, on the level of a single statistical and global individual, or a simple sample, the decisive importance of molecular populations and microbiological rates (for example, the endlessness of the sequence composing a chain, and the chance variation of a single segment in the sequence).

Challenger admitted having digressed at length but added that there was no possible way to distinguish between the digressive and the nondigressive. The point was to arrive at several conclusions concerning the unity and diversity of a single stratum, in this case the organic stratum.

To begin with, a stratum does indeed have a unity of composition, which is what allows it to be called *a* stratum: molecular materials, substantial elements, and formal relations or traits. Materials are not the same as the unformed matter of the plane of consistency; they are already stratified, and come from “substrata.” But of course substrata should not be thought of only as substrata: in particular, their organization is no less complex than, nor is it inferior to, that of the strata; we should be on our guard against any kind of ridiculous cosmic evolutionism. The materials furnished by a substratum are no doubt simpler than the compounds of a stratum, but their level of organization in the substratum is no lower than that of the stratum itself. The difference between materials and substantial elements is one of organization; there is a change in organization, not an augmentation. The materials furnished by the substratum constitute an *exterior milieu* for the elements and compounds of the stratum under consideration, but they are not exterior *to* the stratum. The elements and compounds constitute an interior of the stratum, just as the materials constitute an exterior *of* the stratum; both belong to the stratum, the latter because they are materials that have been furnished to the stratum and selected for it, the former because they are formed from the materials. Once again, this exterior and interior are relative; they exist only through their exchanges and therefore only by virtue of the stratum responsible for the relation between them. For example, on a crystalline stratum, the amorphous milieu, or medium, is exterior to the seed before the crystal has formed; the crystal forms by interiorizing and incorporating masses of amorphous material. Conversely, the interiority of the seed of the crystal must move out to the system’s exterior, where the amorphous medium can crystallize (the aptitude to switch over to the other form of organization). To the point that the seed itself comes from the outside. In short, both exterior and interior are interior to the stratum. The same applies to the organic stratum: the materials furnished by the substrata are an exterior medium constituting the famous prebiotic soup, and catalysts play the role of seed

in the formation of interior substantial elements or even compounds. These elements and compounds both appropriate materials and exteriorize themselves through replication, even in the conditions of the primordial soup itself. Once again, interior and exterior exchange places, and both are interior to the organic stratum. The limit between them is the membrane that regulates the exchanges and transformation in organization (in other words, the distributions interior to the stratum) and that defines all of the stratum's formal relations or traits (even though the situation and role of the limit vary widely depending on the stratum, for example, the limit of the crystal as compared to the cellular membrane). We may therefore use the term central layer, or central ring, for the following aggregate comprising the unity of composition of a stratum: exterior molecular materials, interior substantial elements, and the limit or membrane conveying the formal relations. There is a single *abstract machine* that is enveloped by the stratum and constitutes its unity. This is the Ecumenon, as opposed to the Planomenon of the plane of consistency.

It would be a mistake to believe that it is possible to isolate this unitary, central layer of the stratum, or to grasp it in itself, by regression. In the first place, a stratum necessarily goes from layer to layer, and from the very beginning. It already has several layers. It goes from a center to a periphery, at the same time as the periphery reacts back upon the center to form a new center in relation to a new periphery. Flows constantly radiate outward, then turn back. There is an outgrowth and multiplication of intermediate states, and this process is one of the local conditions of the central ring (different concentrations, variations that are tolerated below a certain threshold of identity). These intermediate states present new figures of milieus or materials, as well as of elements and compounds. They are intermediaries between the exterior milieu and the interior element, substantial elements and their compounds, compounds and substances, and between the different formed substances (substances of content and substances of expression). We will use the term *epistrata* for these intermediaries and superpositions, these outgrowths, these levels. Returning to our two examples, on the crystalline stratum there are many intermediaries between the exterior milieu or material and the interior seed: a multiplicity of perfectly discontinuous states of metastability constituting so many hierarchical degrees. Neither is the organic stratum separable from so-called interior milieus that are interior elements in relation to exterior materials but also exterior elements in relation to interior substances.¹¹ These internal organic milieus are known to regulate the degree of complexity or differentiation of the parts of an organism. A stratum, considered from the standpoint of its unity of composition, therefore exists only in its substantial epistrata, which shatter its continuity, fragment its ring, and break it down

into gradations. The central ring does not exist independently of a periphery that forms a new center, reacts back upon the first center, and in turn gives forth discontinuous epistrata.

That is not all. In addition to this new or second-degree relativity of interior and exterior, there is a whole history on the level of the membrane or limit. To the extent that elements and compounds incorporate or appropriate materials, the corresponding organisms are forced to turn to other “more foreign and less convenient” materials that they take from still intact masses or other organisms. The milieu assumes a third figure here: it is no longer an interior or exterior milieu, even a relative one, nor an intermediate milieu, but instead an *annexed or associated milieu*. Associated milieus imply sources of energy different from alimentary materials. Before these sources are obtained, the organism can be said to nourish itself but not to breathe: it is in a state of suffocation.¹² Obtaining an energy source permits an increase in the number of materials that can be transformed into elements and compounds. The associated milieu is thus defined by the capture of energy sources (respiration in the most general sense), by the discernment of materials, the sensing of their presence or absence (perception), and by the fabrication or nonfabrication of the corresponding compounds (response, reaction). That there are molecular perceptions no less than molecular reactions can be seen in the economy of the cell and the property of regulatory agents to “recognize” only one or two kinds of chemicals in a very diverse milieu of exteriority. The development of the associated milieus culminates in the animal worlds described by von Uexküll, with all their active, perceptive, and energetic characteristics. The unforgettable associated world of the Tick, defined by its gravitational energy of falling, its olfactory characteristic of perceiving sweat, and its active characteristic of latching on: the tick climbs a branch and drops onto a passing mammal it has recognized by smell, then latches onto its skin (an associated world composed of three factors, and no more). Active and perceptive characteristics are themselves something of a double pincer, a double articulation.¹³

Here, the associated milieus are closely related to organic forms. An organic form is not a simple structure but a structuration, the constitution of an associated milieu. An animal milieu, such as the spider web, is no less “morphogenetic” than the form of the organism. One certainly cannot say that the milieu determines the form; but to complicate things, this does not make the relation between form and milieu any less decisive. Since the form depends on an autonomous code, it can only be constituted in an associated milieu that interlaces active, perceptive, and energetic characteristics in a complex fashion, in conformity with the code’s requirements; and the form can develop only through intermediary milieus that regulate

the speeds and rates of its substances; and it can experience itself only in a milieu of exteriority that measures the comparative advantages of the associated milieus and the differential relations of the intermediary milieus. Milieus always act, through selection, on entire organisms, the forms of which depend on codes those milieus sanction indirectly. Associated milieus divide a single milieu of exteriority among themselves as a function of different forms, just as intermediate milieus divide a milieu of exteriority among themselves as a function of the rates or degrees of a single form. But the dividing is done differently in the two cases. In relation to the central belt of the stratum, the intermediate strata or milieus constitute “epistrata” piled one atop the other, and form new centers for the new peripheries. We will apply the term “parastrata” to the second way in which the central belt fragments into sides and “besides,” and the irreducible forms and milieus associated with them. This time, it is at the level of the limit or membrane of the central belt that the formal relations or traits common to all of the strata necessarily assume entirely different forms or types of forms corresponding to the parastrata. A stratum exists only in its epistrata and parastrata, so that in the final analysis these must be considered strata in their own right. The ideally continuous belt or ring of the stratum—the Ecumenon defined by the identity of molecular materials, substantial elements, and formal relations—exists only as shattered, fragmented into epistrata and parastrata that imply concrete machines and their respective indexes, and constitute different molecules, specific substances, and irreducible forms.¹⁴

We may now return to the two fundamental contributions of Darwinism and answer the question of why forms or types of forms in the parastrata must be understood in relation to populations, and degrees of development in the epistrata as rates or differential relations. First, parastrata envelop the very codes upon which the forms depend, and these codes necessarily apply to populations. There must already be an entire molecular population to be coded, and the effects of the code, or a change in the code, are evaluated in relation to a more or less molar population, depending on the code’s ability to propagate in the milieu or create for itself a new associated milieu within which the modification will be popularizable. Yes, we must always think in terms of packs and multiplicities: a code does or does not take hold because the coded individual belongs to a certain population, “the population inhabiting test tubes, a flask full of water, or a mammal’s intestine.” What does it mean to say that new forms and associated milieus potentially result from a change in the code, a modification of the code, or a variation in the parastratum? The change is obviously not due to a passage from one preestablished form to another, in other words, a translation from one code to another. As long as the problem was formulated in that

fashion, it remained insoluble, and one would have to agree with Cuvier and Baer that established types of forms are irreducible and therefore do not admit of translation or transformation. But as soon as it is recognized that a code is inseparable from a process of decoding that is inherent to it, the problem receives a new formulation. There is no genetics without “genetic drift.” The modern theory of mutations has clearly demonstrated that a code, which necessarily relates to a population, has an essential margin of decoding: not only does every code have supplements capable of free variation, but a single segment may be copied twice, the second copy left free for variation. In addition, fragments of code may be transferred from the cells of one species to those of another, Man and Mouse, Monkey and Cat, by viruses or through other procedures. This involves not translation between codes (viruses are not translators) but a singular phenomenon we call surplus value of code, or side-communication.¹⁵ We will have occasion to discuss this further, for it is essential to all becomings-animal. Every code is affected by a margin of decoding due to these supplements and surplus values—supplements in the order of a multiplicity, surplus values in the order of a rhizome. Forms in the parastrata, the parastrata themselves, far from lying immobile and frozen upon the strata, are part of a machinic interlock: they relate to populations, populations imply codes, and codes fundamentally include phenomena of relative decoding that are all the more usable, composable, and addable by virtue of being relative, always “beside.”

Forms relate to codes and processes of coding and decoding in the parastrata; substances, being formed matters, relate to territorialities and movements of deterritorialization and reterritorialization on the epistrata. In truth, the epistrata are just as inseparable from the movements that constitute them as the parastrata are from their processes. Nomadic waves or flows of deterritorialization go from the central layer to the periphery, then from the new center to the new periphery, falling back to the old center and launching forth to the new.¹⁶ The organization of the epistrata moves in the direction of increasing deterritorialization. Physical particles and chemical substances cross thresholds of deterritorialization on their own stratum and between strata; these thresholds correspond to more or less stable intermediate states, to more or less transitory valences and existences, to engagements with this or that other body, to densities of proximity, to more or less localizable connections. Not only are physical particles characterized by speeds of deterritorialization—Joycean tachyons, particles-holes, and quarks recalling the fundamental idea of the “soup”—but a single chemical substance (sulfur or carbon, for example) has a number of more and less deterritorialized states. The more interior milieus an organism has on its own stratum, assuring its autonomy and

bringing it into a set of aleatory relations with the exterior, the more deterritorialized it is. That is why degrees of development must be understood relatively, and as a function of differential speeds, relations, and rates. Deterritorialization must be thought of as a perfectly positive power that has degrees and thresholds (*epistrata*), is always relative, and has reterritorialization as its flipside or complement. An organism that is deterritorialized in relation to the exterior necessarily reterritorializes on its interior milieus. A given presumed fragment of embryo is deterritorialized when it changes thresholds or gradients, but is assigned a new role by the new surroundings. Local movements are alterations. Cellular migration, stretching, invagination, folding are examples of this. Every voyage is intensive, and occurs in relation to thresholds of intensity between which it evolves or that it crosses. One travels by intensity; displacements and spatial figures depend on intensive thresholds of nomadic deterritorialization (and thus on differential relations) that simultaneously define complementary, sedentary reterritorializations. Every stratum operates this way: by grasping in its pincers a maximum number of intensities or intensive particles over which it spreads its forms and substances, constituting determinate gradients and thresholds of resonance (deterritorialization on a stratum always occurs in relation to a complementary reterritorialization).¹⁷

As long as preestablished forms were compared to predetermined degrees, all one could do was affirm their irreducibility, and there was no way of judging possible communication between the two factors. But we see now that forms depend on codes in the parastrata and plunge into processes of decoding or drift and that degrees themselves are caught up in movements of intensive territorialization and reterritorialization. There is no simple correspondence between codes and territorialities on the one hand and decodings and deterritorialization on the other: on the contrary, a code may be a deterritorialization and a reterritorialization a decoding. Wide gaps separate code and territoriality. The two factors nevertheless have the same “subject” in a stratum: it is populations that are deterritorialized and reterritorialized, and also coded and decoded. In addition, these factors communicate or interlace in the milieus.

On the one hand, modifications of a code have an aleatory cause in the milieu of exteriority, and it is their effects on the interior milieus, their compatibility with them, that decide whether they will be popularized. Deterritorializations and reterritorializations do not bring about the modifications; they do, however, strictly determine their selection. On the other hand, every modification has an associated milieu that in turn entails a certain deterritorialization in relation to the milieu of exteriority and a certain reterritorialization on intermediate or interior milieus. Perceptions

and actions in an associated milieu, even those on a molecular level, construct or produce *territorial signs* (indexes). This is especially true of an animal world, which is constituted, marked off by signs that divide it into zones (of shelter, hunting, neutrality, etc.), mobilize special organs, and correspond to fragments of code; this is so even at the margin of decoding inherent in the code. Even the domain of learning is defined by the code, or prescribed by it. But indexes or territorial signs are inseparable from a double movement. Since the associated milieu always confronts a milieu of exteriority with which the animal is engaged and in which it takes necessary risks, a *line of flight* must be preserved to enable the animal to regain its associated milieu when danger appears (for example, the bull's line of flight in the arena, which it uses to regain the turf it has chosen).¹⁸ A second kind of line of flight arises when the associated milieu is rocked by blows from the exterior, forcing the animal to abandon it and strike up an association with new portions of exteriority, this time leaning on its interior milieus like fragile crutches. When the seas dried, the primitive Fish left its associated milieu to explore land, forced to "stand on its own legs," now carrying water only on the inside, in the amniotic membranes protecting the embryo. In one way or the other, the animal is more a fleer than a fighter, but its flights are also conquests, creations. Territorialities, then, are shot through with lines of flight testifying to the presence within them of movements of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. In a certain sense, they are secondary. They would be nothing without these movements that deposit them. In short, the epistrata and parastrata are continually moving, sliding, shifting, and changing on the Ecumenon or unity of composition of a stratum; some are swept away by lines of flight and movements of deterritorialization, others by processes of decoding or drift, but they all communicate at the intersection of the milieus. The strata are continually being shaken by phenomena of cracking and rupture, either at the level of the substrata that furnish the materials (a prebiotic soup, a prechemical soup . . .), at the level of the accumulating epistrata, or at the level of the abutting parastrata: everywhere there arise simultaneous accelerations and blockages, comparative speeds, differences in deterritorialization creating relative fields of reterritorialization.

These relative movements should most assuredly not be confused with the possibility of absolute deterritorialization, an absolute line of flight, absolute drift. The former are stratic or interstratic, whereas the latter concern the plane of consistency and its destratification (its "combustion," as Geoffroy would say). There is no doubt that mad physical particles crash through the strata as they accelerate, leaving minimal trace of their passage, escaping spatiotemporal and even existential coordinates as they tend toward a state of absolute deterritorialization, the state of unformed

matter on the plane of consistency. In a certain sense, the acceleration of relative deterritorializations reaches the sound barrier: if the particles bounce off this wall, or allow themselves to be captured by black holes, they fall back onto the strata, into the strata's relations and milieus; but if they cross the barrier they reach the unformed, destratified element of the plane of consistency. *We may even say the abstract machines that emit and combine particles have two very different modes of existence: the Ecumenon and the Planomenon.* Either the abstract machines remain prisoner to stratifications, are enveloped in a certain specific stratum whose program or unity of composition they define (the abstract Animal, the abstract chemical Body, Energy in itself) and whose movements of relative deterritorialization they regulate, Or, on the contrary, the abstract machine cuts across all stratifications, develops alone and in its own right on the plane of consistency whose diagram it constitutes, the same machine at work in astrophysics and in microphysics, in the natural and in the artificial, piloting flows of absolute deterritorialization (in no sense, of course, is unformed matter chaos of any kind). But this presentation is still too simplified.

First, one does not go from the relative to the absolute simply by acceleration, even though increases in speed tend to have this comparative and global result. Absolute deterritorialization is not defined as a giant accelerator; its absoluteness does not hinge on how fast it goes. It is actually possible to reach the absolute by way of phenomena of relative slowness or delay. Retarded development is an example. What qualifies a deterritorialization is not its speed (some are very slow) but its nature, whether it constitutes epistrata and parastrata and proceeds by articulated segments or, on the contrary, jumps from one singularity to another following a nondecomposable, nonsegmentary line drawing a metastratum of the plane of consistency. Second, under no circumstances must it be thought that absolute deterritorialization comes suddenly of afterward, is in excess or beyond. That would preclude any understanding of why the strata themselves are animated by movements of relative deterritorialization and decoding that are not like accidents occurring on them. In fact, what is primary is an absolute deterritorialization an absolute line of flight, however complex or multiple—that of the plane of consistency or body without organs (the Earth, the absolutely deterritorialized). This absolute deterritorialization becomes relative only after stratification occurs on that plane or body: It is the strata that are always residue, not the opposite. The question is not how something manages to leave the strata by how things get into them in the first place. There is a perpetual immanence of absolute deterritorialization within relative deterritorialization; and the machinic assemblages between strata that regulate the differential relations and relative

movements also have cutting edges of deterritorialization oriented toward the absolute. The plane of consistency is always immanent to the strata; the two states of the abstract machine always coexist as two different states of intensities.

Most of the audience had left (the first to go were the Marinetians with their double articulation, followed by the Hjelmslevians with their content and expression, and the biologists with their proteins and nucleic acids). The only ones left were the mathematicians, accustomed to other follies, along with a few astrologers, archaeologists, and scattered individuals. Challenger, moreover, had changed since the beginning of his talk. His voice had become hoarser, broken occasionally by an apish cough. His dream was not so much to give a lecture to humans as to provide a program for pure computers. Or else he was dreaming of an axiomatic, for axiomatics deals essentially with stratification. Challenger was addressing himself to memory only. Now that we had discussed what was constant and what varied in a stratum from the standpoint of substances and forms, the question remaining to be answered was what varied between strata from the standpoint of content and expression. For if it is true that there is always a real distinction constitutive of double articulation, a reciprocal presupposition of content and expression, then what varies from one stratum to another is the nature of this real distinction, and the nature and respective positions of the terms distinguished. Let us start with a certain group of strata that can be characterized summarily as follows: on these strata, content (form and substance) is molecular, and expression (form and substance) is molar. The difference between the two is primarily one of order of magnitude or scale. Resonance, or the communication occurring between the two independent orders, is what institutes the stratified system. The molecular content of that system has its own form corresponding to the distribution of elemental masses and the action of one molecule upon another; similarly, expression has a form manifesting the statistical aggregate and state of equilibrium existing on the macroscopic level. Expression is like an “operation of amplifying structuration carrying the active properties of the originally microphysical discontinuity to the macrophysical level.”

We took as our point of departure cases of this kind on the geological stratum, the crystalline stratum, and physicochemical strata, wherever the molar can be said to express microscopic molecular interactions (“the crystal is the macroscopic expression of a microscopic structure”; the “crystalline form expresses certain atomic or molecular characteristics of the constituent chemical categories”). Of course, this still leaves numerous possibilities, depending on the number and nature of the intermediate

states, and also on the impact of exterior forces on the formation of expression. There may be a greater or lesser number of intermediate states between the molecular and the molar; there may be a greater or lesser number of exterior forces or organizing centers participating in the molar form. Doubtless, these two factors are in an inverse relation to each other and indicate limit-cases. For example, the molar form of expression may be of the "mold" type, mobilizing a maximum of exterior forces; or it may be of the "modulation" type, bringing into play only a minimum number of them. Even in the case of the mold, however, there are nearly instantaneous, interior intermediate states between the molecular content that assumes its own specific forms and the determinate molar expression of the outside by the form of the mold. Conversely, even when the multiplication and temporalization of the intermediate states testify to the endogenous character of the molar form (as with crystals), a minimum of exterior forces still intervene in each of the stages.¹⁹ We must therefore say that the relative independence of content and expression, the real distinction between molecular content and molar expression with their respective forms, has a special status enjoying a certain amount of latitude between the limit-cases.

Since strata are judgments of God, one should not hesitate to apply all the subtleties of medieval Scholasticism and theology. There is a real distinction between content and expression because the corresponding forms are effectively distinct in the "thing" itself, and not only in the mind of the observer. But this real distinction is quite special; it is only *formal* since the two forms compose or shape a single thing, a single stratified subject. Various examples of formal distinction can be cited: between scales or orders of magnitude (as between a map and its model; or, in a different fashion, between the micro- and macrophysical levels, as in the parable of Eddington's two offices); between the various states or formal reasons through which a thing passes; between the thing in one form, and as affected by a possibly exterior causality giving it a different form; and so forth. (There is a proliferation of distinct forms because, in addition to content and expression each having its own forms, intermediate states introduce forms of expression proper to content and forms of content proper to expression.)

As diverse and real as formal distinctions are, on the organic stratum the very nature of the distinction changes. As a result, the entire distribution between content and expression is different. The organic stratum nevertheless preserves, and even amplifies, the relation between the molecular and the molar, with all kinds of intermediate states. We saw this in the case of morphogenesis, where double articulation is inseparable from a communication between two orders of magnitude. The same thing applies to

cellular chemistry. But the organic stratum has a unique character that must account for the amplifications. In a preceding discussion, expression was dependent upon the expressed molecular content in all directions and in every dimension and had independence only to the extent that it appealed to a higher order of magnitude and to exterior forces: The real distinction was between forms, but forms belonging to the same aggregate, the same thing or subject. *Now, however, expression becomes independent in its own right, in other words, autonomous.* Before, the coding of a stratum was coextensive with that stratum; on the organic stratum, on the other hand, it takes place on an autonomous and independent line that detaches as much as possible from the second and third dimensions. Expression ceases to be voluminous or superficial, becoming linear, unidimensional (even in its segmentarity). The essential thing is *the linearity of the nucleic sequence.*²⁰ The real distinction between content and expression, therefore, is not simply formal. It is strictly speaking real, and passes into the molecular, without regard to order of magnitude. It is between two classes of molecules, nucleic acids of expression and proteins of content, nucleic elements or nucleotides and protein elements or amino acids. Both expression and content are now molecular *and molar*. The distinction no longer concerns a single aggregate or subject; linearity takes us further in the direction of flat multiplicities, rather than unity. Expression involves nucleotides and nucleic acids as well as molecules that, in their substance and form, are entirely independent not only of molecules of content but of any directed action in the exterior milieu. Thus invariance is a characteristic of certain molecules and is not found exclusively on the molar scale. Conversely, proteins, in their substance and form of content, are equally independent of nucleotides: the only thing univocally determined is that one amino acid rather than another corresponds to a sequence of three nucleotides.²¹ What the linear form of expression determines is therefore a derivative form of expression, one that is relative to content and that, through a folding back upon itself of the protein sequence of the amino acids, finally yields the characteristic three-dimensional structures. In short, what is specific to the organic stratum is *this alignment of expression, this exhaustion or detachment of a line of expression*, this reduction of form and substance of expression to a unidimensional line, guaranteeing their reciprocal independence from content without having to account for orders of magnitude.

This has many consequences. The new configuration of expression and content conditions not only the organism's power to reproduce but also its power to deterritorialize or accelerate deterritorialization. The alignment of the code or linearity of the nucleic sequence in fact marks a threshold of deterritorialization of the "sign" that gives it a new ability to be copied and makes the organism more deterritorialized than a crystal: only something

deterritorialized is capable of reproducing itself. When content and expression are divided along the lines of the molecular and the molar, substances move from state to state, from the preceding state to the following state, or from layer to layer, from an already constituted layer to a layer in the process of forming, while forms install themselves at the limit between the last layer or last state and the exterior milieu. Thus the stratum develops into epistrata and parastrata; this is accomplished through a set of *inductions* from layer to layer and state to state, or at the limit. A crystal displays this process in its pure state, since its form expands in all directions, but always as a function of the surface layer of the substance, which can be emptied of most of its interior without interfering with the growth. It is the crystal's subjugation to three-dimensionality, in other words its index of territoriality, that makes the structure incapable of formally reproducing and expressing itself; only the accessible surface can reproduce itself, since it is the only deterritorializable part. On the contrary, the detachment of a pure line of expression on the organic stratum makes it possible for the organism to attain a much higher threshold of deterritorialization, gives it a mechanism of reproduction covering all the details of its complex spatial structure, and enables it to put all of its interior layers "topologically in contact" with the exterior, or rather with the polarized limit (hence the special role of the living membrane). The development of the stratum into epistrata and parastrata occurs not through simple inductions but through *transductions* that account for the amplification of the resonance between the molecular and the molar, independently of order of magnitude; for the functional efficacy of the interior substances, independently of distance; and for the possibility of a proliferation and even interlacing of forms, independently of codes (surplus values of code or phenomena of trans-coding or aparallel evolution).²²

There is a third major grouping of strata, defined less by a human essence than, once again, by a new distribution of content and expression. Form of content becomes "alloplastic" rather than "homoplastic"; in other words, it brings about modifications in the external world. Form of expression becomes linguistic rather than genetic; in other words, it operates with symbols that are comprehensible, transmittable, and modifiable from outside. What some call the properties of human beings—technology and language, tool and symbol, free hand and supple larynx, "gesture and speech"—are in fact properties of this new distribution. It would be difficult to maintain that the emergence of human beings marked the absolute origin of this distribution. Leroi-Gourhan's analyses give us an understanding of how contents came to be linked with the hand-tool couple and expressions with the face-language couple.²³ In this context, the hand must not be thought of simply as an organ but instead as a coding (the digital

code), a dynamic structuration, a dynamic formation (the manual form, or manual formal traits). The hand as a general form of content is extended in tools, which are themselves active forms implying substances, or formed matters; finally, products are formed matters, or substances, which in turn serve as tools. Whereas manual formal traits constitute the unity of composition of the stratum, the forms and substances of tools and products are organized into parastrata and epistrata that themselves function as veritable strata and mark discontinuities, breakages, communications and diffusions, nomadisms and sedentarities, multiple thresholds and speeds of relative deterritorialization in human populations. For with the hand as a formal trait or general form of content a major threshold of deterritorialization is reached and opens, an accelerator that in itself permits a shifting interplay of comparative deterritorializations and reterritorializations—what makes this acceleration possible is, precisely, phenomena of “retarded development” in the organic substrata. Not only is the hand a deterritorialized front paw; the hand thus freed is itself deterritorialized in relation to the grasping and locomotive hand of the monkey. The synergistic deterritorializations of other organs (for example, the foot) must be taken into account. So must correlative deterritorializations of the milieu: the steppe as an associated milieu more deterritorialized than the forest, exerting a selective pressure of deterritorialization upon the body and technology (it was on the steppe, not in the forest, that the hand was able to appear as a free form, and fire as a technologically formable matter). Finally, complementary reterritorializations must be taken into account (the foot as a compensatory reterritorialization for the hand, also occurring on the steppe). Maps should be made of these things, organic, ecological, and technological maps one can lay out on the plane of consistency.

On the other hand, language becomes the new form of expression, or rather the set of formal traits defining the new expression in operation throughout the stratum. Just as manual traits exist only in forms and formed matters that shatter their continuity and determine the distribution of their effects, formal traits of expression exist only in a diversity of formal languages and imply one or several formable substances. The substance involved is fundamentally vocal substance, which brings into play various organic elements: not only the larynx, but the mouth and lips, and the overall motricity of the face. Once again, a whole intensive map must be accounted for: the mouth as a deterritorialization of the snout (the whole “conflict between the mouth and the brain,” as Perrier called it); the lips as a deterritorialization of the mouth (only humans have lips, in other words, an outward curling of the interior mucous membranes; only human females have breasts, in other words, deterritorialized mammary glands:

the extended nursing period advantageous for language learning is accompanied by a complementary reterritorialization of the lips on the breasts, and the breasts on the lips). What a curious deterritorialization, filling one's mouth with words instead of food and noises. The steppe, once more, seems to have exerted strong pressures of selection: the "supple larynx" is a development corresponding to the free hand and could have arisen only in a deforested milieu where it is no longer necessary to have gigantic laryngeal sacks in order for one's cries to be heard above the constant din of the forest. To articulate, to speak, is to speak softly. Everyone knows that lumberjacks rarely talk.²⁴ Physiological, acoustic, and vocal substance are not the only things that undergo all these deterritorializations. The form of expression, as language, also crosses a threshold.

Vocal signs have temporal linearity, and it is this superlinearity that constitutes their specific deterritorialization and differentiates them from genetic linearity. Genetic linearity is above all spatial, even though its segments are constructed and reproduced in succession; thus at this level it does not require effective overcoding of any kind, only phenomena of end-to-end connection, local regulations, and partial interactions (overcoding takes place only at the level of integrations implying different orders of magnitude). That is why Jacob is reluctant to compare the genetic code to a language; in fact, the genetic code has neither emitter, receiver, comprehension, nor translation, only redundancies and surplus values.²⁵ The temporal linearity of language expression relates not only to a succession but to a formal synthesis of succession in which time constitutes a process of linear overcoding and engenders a phenomenon unknown on the other strata: *translation*, translatability, as opposed to the previous inductions and transductions. Translation should not be understood simply as the ability of one language to "represent" in some way the givens of another language, but beyond that as the ability of language, with its own givens on its own stratum, to represent all the other strata and thus achieve a scientific conception of the world. The scientific world (*Welt*, as opposed to the *Umwelt* of the animal) is the translation of all of the flows, particles, codes, and territorialities of the other strata into a sufficiently deterritorialized system of signs, in other words, into an overcoding specific to language. This property of *overcoding* or *superlinearity* explains why, in language, not only is expression independent of content, but form of expression is independent of substance: translation is possible because the same form can pass from one substance to another, which is not the case for the genetic code, for example, between RNA and DNA chains. We will see later on how this situation gives rise to certain imperialist pretensions on behalf of language, which are naively expressed in such formulas as: "Every semiology of a nonlinguistic system must use the medium of language. . . . Language is the

interpreter of all the other systems, linguistic and nonlinguistic." This amounts to defining an abstract character of language and then saying that the other strata can share in that character only by being spoken in language. That is stating the obvious. More positively, it must be noted that the immanence within language of universal translation means that its epistrata and parastrata, with respect to superpositions, diffusions, communications, and abutments, operate in an entirely different manner than those of other strata: all human movements, even the most violent, imply translations.

We have to hurry, Challenger said, we're being rushed by the line of time on this third stratum. So we have a new organization of content and expression, each with its own forms and substances: technological content, semiotic or symbolic expression. Content should be understood not simply as the hand and tools but as a technical social machine that preexists them and constitutes states of force or formations of power. Expression should be understood not simply as the face and language, or individual languages, but as a semiotic collective machine that preexists them and constitutes regimes of signs. A formation of power is much more than a tool; a regime of signs is much more than a language. Rather, they act as determining and selective agents, as much in the constitution of languages and tools as in their usages and mutual or respective diffusions and communications. The third stratum sees the emergence of Machines that are fully a part of that stratum but at the same time rear up and stretch their pincers out in all directions at all the other strata. *Is this not like an intermediate state between the two states of the abstract Machine?*—the state in which it remains enveloped in a corresponding stratum (ecumenon), and the state in which it develops in its own right on the destratified plane of consistency (planomenon). The abstract machine begins to unfold, to stand to full height, producing an illusion exceeding all strata, even though the machine itself still belongs to a determinate stratum. This is, obviously, the illusion constitutive of man (who does man think he is?). This illusion derives from the overcoding immanent to language itself. But what is not illusory are the new distributions between content and expression: technological content characterized by the hand-tool relation and, at a deeper level, tied to a social Machine and formations of power; symbolic expression characterized by face-language relations and, at a deeper level, tied to a semiotic Machine and regimes of signs. On both sides, the epistrata and parastrata, the superposed degrees and abutting forms, attain more than ever before the status of autonomous strata in their own right. In cases where we can discern two different regimes of signs or two different formations of power, we shall say that they are in fact two different strata in human populations.

What precisely is the relation now between content and expression, and what type of distinction is there between them? It's all in the head. Yet never was a distinction more real. What we are trying to say is that there is indeed one exterior milieu for the entire stratum, permeating the entire stratum: the cerebral-nervous milieu. It comes from the organic substratum, but of course that substratum does not merely play the role of a substratum or passive support. It is no less complex in organization. Rather, it constitutes the prehuman soup immersing us. Our hands and faces are immersed in it. The brain is a population, a set of tribes tending toward two poles. In Leroi-Gourhan's analyses of the constitution of these two poles in the soup—one of which depends on the actions of the face, the other on the hand—their correlation or relativity does not preclude a real distinction between them; quite the contrary, it entails one, as the reciprocal presupposition of two articulations, the manual articulation of content and the facial articulation of expression. And the distinction is not simply real, as between molecules, things, or subjects; it has become *essential* (as they used to say in the Middle Ages), as between attributes, genres of being, or irreducible categories: things and words. Yet we find that the most general of movements, the one by which each of the distinct articulations is already double in its own right, carries over onto this level; certain formal elements of content play the role of expression in relation to content proper, and certain formal elements of expression play the role of content in relation to expression proper. In the first case, Leroi-Gourhan shows how the hand creates a whole world of symbols, a whole pluridimensional language, not to be confused with unilinear verbal language, which constitutes a radiating expression specific to content (he sees this as the origin of writing).²⁶ The second case is clearly displayed in the double articulation specific to language itself, since phonemes form a radiating content specific to the expression of monemes as linear significant segments (it is only under these conditions that double articulation as a general characteristic of strata has the linguistic meaning Martinet attributes to it). Our discussion of the relations between content and expression, the real distinction between them, and the variations of those relations and that distinction on the major types of strata, is now provisionally complete.

Challenger wanted to go faster and faster. No one was left, but he went on anyway. The change in his voice, and in his appearance, was growing more and more pronounced. Something animalistic in him had begun to speak when he started talking about human beings. You still couldn't put your finger on it, but Challenger seemed to be deterritorializing on the spot. He still had three problems he wanted to discuss. The first seemed primarily terminological: Under what circumstances may we speak of signs? Should we say they are everywhere on all the strata and that there is a sign when-

ever there is a form of expression? We may summarily distinguish three kinds of signs: *indexes (territorial signs)*, *symbols (deterritorialized signs)*, and *icons (signs of reterritorialization)*. Should we say that there are signs on all the strata, under the pretext that every stratum includes territorialities and movements of deterritorialization and reterritorialization? This kind of expansive method is very dangerous, because it lays the groundwork for or reinforces the imperialism of language, if only by relying on its function as universal translator or interpreter. It is obvious that there is no system of signs common to all strata, not even in the form of a semiotic “chora” theoretically prior to symbolization.²⁷ It would appear that we may accurately speak of signs only when there is a distinction between forms of expression and forms of content that is not only real but also categorical. Under these conditions, there is a semiotic system on the corresponding stratum because the abstract machine has precisely that fully erect posture that permits it to “write,” in other words, to treat language and extract a *regime* of signs from it. But before it reaches that point, in so-called natural codings, the abstract machine remains enveloped in the strata: It does not write in any way and has no margin of latitude allowing it to recognize something as a sign (except in the strictly territorial sense of animal signs). After that point, the abstract machine develops on the plane of consistency and no longer has any way of making a categorical distinction between signs and particles; for example, it writes, but flush with the real, it inscribes directly upon the plane of consistency. It therefore seems reasonable to reserve the word “sign” in the strict sense for the last group of strata. This terminological discussion would be entirely without interest if it did not bring us to yet another danger: not the imperialism of language affecting all of the strata, but the imperialism of the signifier affecting language itself, affecting all regimes of signs and the entire expanse of the strata upon which they are located. The question here is not whether there are signs on every stratum but whether all signs are signifiers, whether all signs are endowed with signification, whether the semiotic of signs is necessarily linked to a semiology of the signifier. Those who take this route may even be led to forgo the notion of the sign, for the primacy of the signifier over language guarantees the primacy of language over all of the strata even more effectively than the simple expansion of the sign in all directions. What we are saying is that the illusion specific to *this* posture of the abstract Machine, the illusion that one can grasp and shuffle all the strata between one’s pincers, can be better secured through the erection of the signifier than through the extension of the sign (thanks to signification, language can claim to be in direct contact with the strata without having to go through the supposed signs on each one). But we’re still going in the same circle, we’re still spreading the same canker.

The linguistic relation between the signifier and signified has, of course, been conceived in many different ways. It has been said that they are arbitrary; that they are as necessary to each other as the two sides of the same leaf; that they correspond term by term, or else globally; and that they are so ambivalent as to be indistinguishable. In any event, the signified is thought not to exist outside of its relationship with signifier, and the ultimate signified is the very existence of the signifier, extrapolated beyond the sign. There is only one thing that can be said about the signifier: it is Redundancy, it is the Redundant. Hence its incredible despotism, and its success. Theories of arbitrariness, necessity, term-by-term or global correspondence, and ambivalence serve the same cause: the reduction of expression to the signifier. Yet forms of content and forms of expression are highly relative, always in a state of reciprocal presupposition. The relations between their respective segments are biunivocal, exterior, and “deformed.” There is never conformity between the two, or from one to the other. There is always real independence and a real distinction; even to fit the forms together, and to determine the relations between them, requires a specific, variable assemblage. None of these characteristics applies to the signifier-signified relation, even though some seem to coincide with it partially and accidentally. Overall, these characteristics stand in radical opposition to the scenario of the signifier. A form of content is not a signified, any more than a form of expression is a signifier.²⁸ This is true for all the strata, including those on which language plays a role.

Signifier enthusiasts take an oversimplified situation as their implicit model: word and thing. From the word they extract the signifier, and from the thing a signified in conformity with the word, and therefore subjugated to the signifier. They operate in a sphere interior to and homogeneous with language. Let us follow Foucault in his exemplary analysis, which, though it seems not to be, is eminently concerned with linguistics. Take a thing like the prison: the prison is a form, the “prison-form”; it is a form of content on a stratum and is related to other forms of content (school, barracks, hospital, factory). This thing or form does not refer back to the word “prison” but to entirely different words and concepts, such as “delinquent” and “delinquency,” which express a new way of classifying, stating, translating, and even committing criminal acts. “Delinquency” is the form of expression in reciprocal presupposition with the form of content “prison.” Delinquency is in no way a signifier, even a juridical signifier, the signified of which would be the prison. That would flatten the entire analysis. Moreover, the form of expression is reducible not to words but to a set of statements arising in the social field considered as a stratum (that is what a regime of signs is). The form of content is reducible not to a thing but to a complex state of things as a formation of power (architecture, regimenta-

tion, etc.). We could say that there are two constantly intersecting multiplicities, “discursive multiplicities” of expression and “nondiscursive multiplicities” of content. It is even more complex than that because the prison as a form of content has a relative expression all its own; there are all kinds of statements specific to it that do not necessarily coincide with the statements of delinquency. Conversely, delinquency as a form of expression has an autonomous content all its own, since delinquency expresses not only a new way of evaluating crimes but a new way of committing them. Form of content and form of expression, prison and delinquency: each has its own history, microhistory, segments. At most, along with other contents and expressions, they imply a shared state of the abstract Machine acting not at all as a signifier but as a kind of diagram (a single abstract machine for the prison and the school and the barracks and the hospital and the factory . . .). Fitting the two types of forms together, segments of content and segments of expression, requires a whole double-pincer, or rather double-headed, concrete assemblage taking their real distinction into account. It requires a whole organization articulating formations of power and regimes of signs, and operating on the molecular level (societies characterized by what Foucault calls disciplinary power).²⁹ In short, we should never oppose words to things that supposedly correspond to them, nor signifiers to signifieds that are supposedly in conformity with them. What should be opposed are distinct formalizations, in a state of unstable equilibrium or reciprocal presupposition. *“It is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say.”*³⁰ As in school: there is not just one writing lesson, that of the great redundant Signifier for any and all signifieds. There are two distinct formalizations in reciprocal presupposition and constituting a double-pincer: the formalization of expression in the reading and writing lesson (with its own relative contents), and the formalization of content in the lesson of things (with their own relative expressions). We are never signifier or signified. We are stratified.

The preferred method would be severely restrictive, as opposed to the expansive method that places signs on all strata or signifier in all signs (although at the limit it may forgo signs entirely). First, there exist forms of expression without signs (for example, the genetic code has nothing to do with a language). It is only under certain conditions that strata can be said to include signs; signs cannot be equated with language in general but are defined by regimes of statements that are so many real usages or functions of language. Then why retain the word *sign* for these regimes, which formalize an expression without designating or signifying the simultaneous contents, which are formalized in a different way? Signs are not signs of a thing; they are signs of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, they mark a certain threshold crossed in the course of these movements, and it is for

this reason that the word should be retained (as we have seen, this applies even to animal “signs”).

Next, if we consider regimes of signs using this restrictive definition, we see that they are not, or not necessarily, signifiers. Just as signs designate only a certain formalization of expression in a determinate group of strata, significance itself designates only one specific regime among a number of regimes existing in that particular formalization. Just as there are asemiotic expressions, or expressions without signs, there are asemiological regimes of signs, asignifying signs, both on the strata and on the plane of consistency. The most that can be said of significance is that it characterizes *one* regime, which is not even the most interesting or modern or contemporary one, but is perhaps only more pernicious, cancerous, and despotic than the others, and more steeped in illusion than they.

In any case, content and expression are never reducible to signified-signifier. And (this is the second problem) neither are they reducible to base-superstructure. One can no more posit a primacy of content as the determining factor than a primacy of expression as a signifying system. Expression can never be made into a form reflecting content, even if one endows it with a “certain” amount of independence and a certain potential for reacting, if only because so-called economic content already has a form and even forms of expression that are specific to it. Form of content and form of expression involve two parallel formalizations in presupposition: it is obvious that their segments constantly intertwine, embed themselves in one another; but this is accomplished by the abstract machine from which the two forms derive, and by machinic assemblages that regulate their relations. If this parallelism is replaced by a pyramidal image, then content (including its form) becomes an economic base of production displaying all of the characteristics of the Abstract; the assemblages become the first story of a superstructure that, as such, is necessarily situated within a State apparatus; the regimes of signs and forms of expression become the second story of the superstructure, defined by ideology. It isn’t altogether clear where language should go, since the great Despot decided that it should be reserved a special place, as the common good of the nation and the vehicle for information. Thus one misconstrues the nature of language, which exists only in heterogeneous regimes of signs, and rather than circulating information distributes contradictory orders. It misconstrues the nature of regimes of signs, which express organizations of power or assemblages and have nothing to do with ideology as the supposed expression of a content (ideology is a most execrable concept obscuring all of the effectively operating social machines). It misconstrues the nature of organizations of power, which are in no way located within a State apparatus but rather are everywhere, effecting formalizations of content and expres-

sion, the segments of which they intertwine. Finally, it misconstrues the nature of content, which is in no way economic “in the last instance,” since there are as many directly economic signs or expressions as there are noneconomic contents. Nor can the status of social formations be analyzed by throwing some signifier into the base, or vice versa, or a bit of phallus or castration into political economy, or a bit of economics or politics into psychoanalysis.

There is a third problem. It is difficult to elucidate the system of the strata without seeming to introduce a kind of cosmic or even spiritual evolution from one to the other, as if they were arranged in stages and ascended degrees of perfection. Nothing of the sort. The different figures of content and expression are not stages. There is no biosphere or noosphere, but everywhere the same Mechanosphere. If one begins by considering the strata in themselves, it cannot be said that one is less organized than another. This even applies to a stratum serving as a substratum: there is no fixed order, and one stratum can serve directly as a substratum for another without the intermediaries one would expect there to be from the standpoint of stages and degrees (for example, microphysical sectors can serve as an immediate substratum for organic phenomena). Or the apparent order can be reversed, with cultural or technical phenomena providing a fertile soil, a good soup, for the development of insects, bacteria, germs, or even particles. The industrial age defined as the age of insects . . . It’s even worse nowadays: you can’t even tell in advance which stratum is going to communicate with which other, or in what direction. Above all, there is no lesser, no higher or lower, organization; the substratum is an integral part of the stratum, is bound up with it as the milieu in which change occurs, and not an increase in organization.³¹ Furthermore, if we consider the plane of consistency we note that the most disparate of things and signs move upon it: a semiotic fragment rubs shoulders with a chemical interaction, an electron crashes into a language, a black hole captures a genetic message, a crystallization produces a passion, the wasp and the orchid cross a letter . . . There is no “like” here, we are not saying “like an electron,” “like an interaction,” etc. The plane of consistency is the abolition of all metaphor; all that consists is Real. These are electrons in person, veritable black holes, actual organites, authentic sign sequences. It’s just that they have been uprooted from their strata, destratified, decoded, deterritorialized, and that is what makes their proximity and interpenetration in the plane of consistency possible. A silent dance. *The plane of consistency knows nothing of differences in level, orders of magnitude, or distances. It knows nothing of the difference between the artificial and the natural. It knows nothing of the distinction between contents and expressions, or that between forms and*

formed substances; these things exist only by means of and in relation to the strata.

But how can one still identify and name things if they have lost the strata that qualified them, if they have gone into absolute deterritorialization? Eyes are black holes, but what are black holes and eyes outside their strata and territorialities? What it comes down to is that we cannot content ourselves with a dualism or summary opposition between the strata and the destratified plane of consistency. The strata themselves are animated and defined by relative speeds of deterritorialization; moreover, absolute deterritorialization is there from the beginning, and the strata are spin-offs, thickenings on a plane of consistency that is everywhere, always primary and always immanent. In addition, the plane of consistency is occupied, drawn by the abstract Machine; the abstract Machine exists *simultaneously* developed on the destratified plane it draws, and enveloped in each stratum whose unity of composition it defines, and even half-erected in certain strata whose form of prehension it defines. That which races or dances upon the plane of consistency thus carries with it the aura of its stratum, an undulation, a memory or tension. The plane of consistency retains just enough of the strata to extract from them variables that operate in the plane of consistency as its own functions. The plane of consistency, or planomenon, is in no way an undifferentiated aggregate of unformed matters, but neither is it a chaos of formed matters of every kind. It is true that on the plane of consistency there are no longer forms or substances, content or expression, respective and relative deterritorializations. But beneath the forms and substances of the strata the plane of consistency (or the abstract machine) *constructs continuums of intensity*: it creates continuity for intensities that it extracts from distinct forms and substances. Beneath contents and expressions the plane of consistency (or the abstract machine) *emits and combines particles-signs* that set the most asinforming of signs to functioning in the most deterritorialized of particles. Beneath relative movements the plane of consistency (or the abstract machine) *performs conjunctions of flows of deterritorialization* that transform the respective indexes into absolute values. The only intensities known to the strata are discontinuous, bound up in forms and substances; the only particles are divided into particles of content and articles of expression; the only deterritorialized flows are disjointed and reterritorialized. Continuum of intensities, combined emission of particles or signs-particles, conjunction of deterritorialized flows: these are the three factors proper to the plane of consistency; they are brought about by the abstract machine and are constitutive of destratification. Now there is no hint in all of this of a chaotic white night or an undifferentiated black night. There are rules, rules of “plan(n)ing,” of diagramming, as we will see later on, or elsewhere. The

abstract machine is not random; the continuities, emissions and combinations, and conjunctions do not occur in just any fashion.

A final distinction must now be noted. Not only does the abstract machine have different simultaneous states accounting for the complexity of what takes place on the plane of consistency, but the abstract machine should not be confused with what we call a concrete machinic assemblage. The *abstract machine* sometimes develops upon the plane of consistency, whose continuums, emissions, and conjugations it constructs, and sometimes remains enveloped in a stratum whose unity of composition and force of attraction or prehension it defines. The *machinic assemblage* is something entirely different from the abstract machine, even though it is very closely connected with it. First, on a stratum, it performs the coadaptations of content and expression, ensures biunivocal relationships between segments of content and segments of expression, and guides the division of the stratum into epistrata and parastrata. Next, between strata, it ensures the relation to whatever serves as a substratum and brings about the corresponding changes in organization. Finally, it is in touch with the plane of consistency because it necessarily effectuates the abstract machine on a particular stratum, between strata, and in the relation between the strata and the plane. An assemblage (for example, the smith's anvil among the Dogons) is necessary for the articulations of the organic stratum to come about. An assemblage is necessary for the relation between two strata to come about. And an assemblage is necessary for organisms to be caught within and permeated by a social field that utilizes them: Must not the Amazons amputate a breast to adapt the organic stratum to a warlike technological stratum, as though at the behest of a fearsome woman-bow-steppe assemblage? Assemblages are necessary for states of force and regimes of signs to intertwine their relations. Assemblages are necessary in order for the unity of composition enveloped in a stratum, the relations between a given stratum and the others, and the relation between these strata and the plane of consistency to be organized rather than random. In every respect, machinic assemblages *effectuate* the abstract machine insofar as it is developed on the plane of consistency or enveloped in a stratum. The most important problem of all: given a certain machinic assemblage, what is its relation of effectuation with the abstract machine? How does it effectuate it, with what adequation? Classify assemblages. What we call the mechanosphere is the set of all abstract machines and machinic assemblages outside the strata, on the strata, or between strata.

The system of the strata thus has nothing to do with signifier and signified, base and superstructure, mind and matter. All of these are ways of reducing the strata to a single stratum, or of closing the system in on itself

by cutting it off from the plane of consistency as destratification. We had to summarize before we lost our voice. Challenger was finishing up. His voice had become unbearably shrill. He was suffocating. His hands were becoming elongated pincers that had become incapable of grasping anything but could still vaguely point to things. Some kind of matter seemed to be pouring out from the double mask, the two heads; it was impossible to tell whether it was getting thicker or more watery. Some of the audience had returned, but only shadows and prowlers. "You hear that? It's an animal's voice." So the summary would have to be quick, the terminology would have to be set down as well as possible, for no good reason. There was a first group of notions: the Body without Organs or the destratified Plane of Consistency; the Matter of the Plane, that which occurs on the body or plane (singular, nonsegmented multiplicities composed of intensive continuums, emissions of particles-signs, conjunctions of flows); and the abstract Machine, or abstract Machines, insofar as they construct that body or draw that plane or "diagram" what occurs (lines of flight, or absolute deterritorializations).

Then there was the system of the strata. On the intensive continuum, the strata fashion forms and form matters into substances. In combined emissions, they make the distinction between expressions and contents, units of expression and units of content, for example, signs and particles. In conjunctions, they separate flows, assigning them relative movements and diverse territorialities, relative deterritorializations and complementary reterritorializations. Thus the strata set up everywhere double articulations animated by movements: forms and substances of content and forms and substances of expression constituting segmentary multiplicities with relations that are determinable in every case. Such are the *strata*. Each stratum is a double articulation of content and expression, both of which are really distinct and in a state of reciprocal presupposition. Content and expression intermingle, and it is two-headed machinic assemblages that place their segments in relation. What varies from stratum to stratum is the nature of the real distinction between content and expression, the nature of the substances as formed matters, and the nature of the relative movements. We may make a summary distinction between three major types of real distinction: the real-formal distinction between orders of magnitude, with the establishment of a resonance of expression (induction); the real-real distinction between different subjects, with the establishment of a linearity of expression (transduction); and the real-essential distinction between different attributes or categories, with the establishment of a superlinearity of expression (translation).

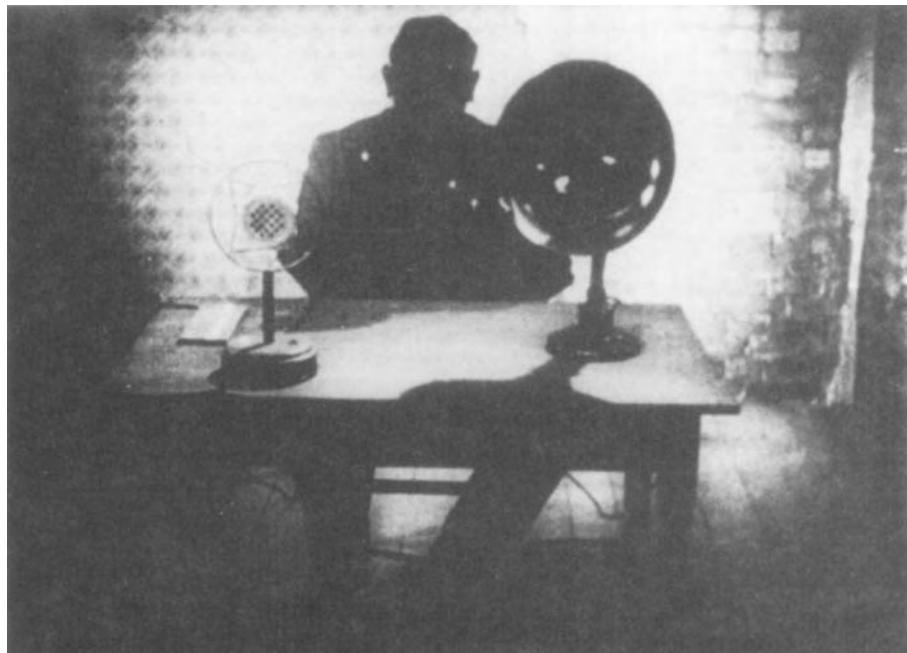
Each stratum serves as the substratum for another stratum. Each stratum has a unity of composition defined by its milieu, substantial elements,

and formal traits (Ecumenon). But it divides into *parastrata* according to its irreducible forms and associated milieus, and into *epistrata* according to its layers of formed substances and intermediary milieus. Epistrata and parastrata must themselves be thought of as strata. A machinic assemblage is an *interstratum* insofar as it regulates the relations between strata, as well as the relations between contents and expressions on each stratum, in conformity with the preceding divisions. A single assemblage can borrow from different strata, and with a certain amount of apparent disorder; conversely, a stratum or element of a stratum can join others in functioning in a different assemblage. Finally, the machinic assemblage is a *metastratum* because it is also in touch with the plane of consistency and necessarily effectuates the abstract machine. The abstract machine exists enveloped in each stratum, whose Ecumenon or unity of composition it defines, and developed on the plane of consistency, whose destratification it performs (the Planomenon). Thus when the assemblages fit together the variables of a stratum as a function of its unity, they also bring about a specific effectuation of the abstract machine as it exists outside the strata. Machinic assemblages are simultaneously located at the intersection of the contents and expression on each stratum, and at the intersection of all of the strata with the plane of consistency. They rotate in all directions, like beacons.

It was over. Only later on would all of this take on concrete meaning. The double-articulated mask had come undone, and so had the gloves and the tunic, from which liquids escaped. As they streamed away they seemed to eat at the strata of the lecture hall, which was filled with fumes of olibanum and “hung with strangely figured arras.” Disarticulated, deterritorialized, Challenger muttered that he was taking the earth with him, that he was leaving for the mysterious world, his poison garden. He whispered something else: it is by headlong flight that things progress and signs proliferate. Panic is creation. A young woman cried out, her face “convulsed with a wilder, deeper, and more hideous epilepsy of stark panic than they had seen on human countenance before.” No one had heard the summary, and no one tried to keep Challenger from leaving. Challenger, or what remained of him, slowly hurried toward the *plane of consistency*, following a bizarre trajectory with nothing relative left about it. He tried to slip into an assemblage serving as a drum-gate, the particle Clock with its intensive clicking and conjugated rhythms hammering out the absolute: “The figure slumped oddly into a posture scarcely human, and began a curious, fascinated sort of shuffle toward the coffin-shaped clock. . . . The figure had now reached the abnormal clock, and the watchers saw through the dense fumes a blurred black claw fumbling with the tall, hieroglyphed door. The fumbling made a queer, clicking sound. Then the figure entered the coffin-shaped

case and pulled the door shut after it. . . . The abnormal clicking went on, beating out the dark, cosmic rhythm which underlies all mystical gate-openings”³²—the Mechanosphere, or rhizosphere.

4. November 20, 1923—Postulates of Linguistics



The Order-word Assemblage

I. “Language Is Informational and Communicational”

When the schoolmistress instructs her students on a rule of grammar or arithmetic, she is not informing them, any more than she is informing herself when she questions a student. She does not so much instruct as “insign,” give orders or commands. A teacher’s commands are not external or additional to what he or she teaches us. They do not flow from primary significations or result from information: an order always and already concerns prior orders, which is why ordering is redundancy. The compulsory education machine does not communicate information; it imposes upon the child semiotic coordinates possessing all of the dual foundations of

grammar (masculine-feminine, singular-plural, noun-verb, subject of the statement-subject of enunciation, etc.). The elementary unit of language—the statement—is the order-word.¹ Rather than common sense, a faculty for the centralization of information, we must define an abominable faculty consisting in emitting, receiving, and transmitting order-words. Language is made not to be believed but to be obeyed, and to compel obedience. “The baroness has not the slightest intention of convincing me of her sincerity; she is simply indicating that she prefers to see me pretend to agree.”² We see this in police or government announcements, which often have little plausibility or truthfulness, but say very clearly what should be observed and retained. The indifference to any kind of credibility exhibited by these announcements often verges on provocation. This is proof that the issue lies elsewhere. Let people say . . . : that is all language demands. Spengler notes that the fundamental forms of speech are not the statement of a judgment or the expression of a feeling, but “the command, the expression of obedience, the assertion, the question, the affirmation or negation,” very short phrases that command life and are inseparable from enterprises and large-scale projects: “Ready?” “Yes.” “Go ahead.”³ Words are not tools, but we give children language, pens, and notebooks as we give workers shovels and pickaxes. A rule of grammar is a power marker before it is a syntactical marker. The order does not refer to prior significations or to a prior organization of distinctive units. Quite the opposite. Information is only the strict minimum necessary for the emission, transmission, and observation of orders as commands. One must be just informed enough not to confuse “Fire!” with “Fore!” or to avoid the unfortunate situation of the teacher and the student as described by Lewis Carroll (the teacher, at the top of the stairs, asks a question that is passed on by servants, who distort it at each step of the way, and the student, below in the courtyard, returns an answer that is also distorted at each stage of the trip back). Language is not life; it gives life orders. Life does not speak; it listens and waits.⁴ Every order-word, even a father’s to his son, carries a little death sentence—a Judgment, as Kafka put it.

The hard part is to specify the status and scope of the order-word. It is not a question of the origin of language, since the order-word is only a language-function, a function coextensive with language. If language always seems to presuppose itself, if we cannot assign it a nonlinguistic point of departure, it is because language does not operate between something seen (or felt) and something said, but always goes from saying to saying. We believe that narrative consists not in communicating what one has seen but in transmitting what one has heard, what someone else said to you. Hearsay. It does not even suffice to invoke a vision distorted by passion. The “first” language, or rather the first determination of language, is

not the trope or metaphor but *indirect discourse*. The importance some have accorded metaphor and metonymy proves disastrous for the study of language. Metaphors and metonymies are merely effects; they are a part of language only when they presuppose indirect discourse. There are many passions in a passion, all manner of voices in a voice, murmurings, speaking in tongues: that is why all discourse is indirect, and the translatable movement proper to language is that of indirect discourse.⁵ Benveniste denies that the bee has language, even though it has an organic coding process and *even uses tropes*. It has no language because it can communicate what it has seen but not transmit what has been communicated to it. A bee that has seen a food source can communicate the message to bees that did not see it, but a bee that has not seen it cannot transmit the message to others that did not see it.⁶ Language is not content to go from a first party to a second party, from one who has seen to one who has not, but necessarily goes from a second party to a third party, neither of whom has seen. It is in this sense that language is the transmission of the word as order-word, not the communication of a sign as information. Language is a map, not a tracing. But how can the order-word be a function coextensive with language when the order, the command, seems tied to a restricted type of explicit proposition marked by the imperative?

Austin's famous theses clearly demonstrate that the various extrinsic relations between action and speech by which a statement can describe an action in an indicative mode or incite it in an imperative mode, etc., are not all there is. There are also intrinsic relations between speech and certain actions that are accomplished by *saying* them (the performative: I swear by saying "I swear"), and more generally between speech and certain actions that are accomplished in speaking (the illocutionary: I ask a question by saying "Is . . . ?" I make a promise by saying "I love you . . ."; I give a command by using the imperative, etc.). These acts internal to speech, these immanent relations between statements and acts, have been termed *implicit or nondiscursive presuppositions*, as opposed to the potentially explicit assumptions by which a statement refers to other statements or an external action (Ducrot). The theory of the performative sphere, and the broader sphere of the illocutionary, has had three important and immediate consequences: (1) It has made it impossible to conceive of language as a code, since a code is the condition of possibility for all explanation. It has also made it impossible to conceive of speech as the communication of information: to order, question, promise, or affirm is not to inform someone about a command, doubt, engagement, or assertion but to effectuate these specific, immanent, and necessarily implicit acts. (2) It has made it impossible to define semantics, syntactics, or even phonematics as scientific zones of language independent of *pragmatics*. Pragmatics ceases to be

a "trash heap," pragmatic determinations cease to be subject to the alternative: fall outside language, or answer to explicit conditions that syntacticize and semanticize pragmatic determinations. Instead, pragmatics becomes the presupposition behind all of the other dimensions and insinuates itself into everything. (3) It makes it impossible to maintain the distinction between language and speech because speech can no longer be defined simply as the extrinsic and individual use of a primary signification, or the variable application of a preexisting syntax. Quite the opposite, the meaning and syntax of language can no longer be defined independently of the speech acts they presuppose.⁷

It is true that it is still difficult to see how speech acts or implicit presuppositions can be considered a function coextensive with language. It is all the more difficult if one starts with the performative (that which one does by saying it) and moves by extension to the illocutionary (that which one does in speaking). For it is always possible to thwart that move. The performative can be walled in by explaining it by specific syntactic and semantic characteristics avoiding any recourse to a generalized pragmatics. According to Benveniste, for example, the performative relates not to acts but instead to a property of *self-referentiality* of terms (the true personal pronouns, I, YOU . . . , defined as shifters). By this account, a preexistent structure of subjectivity, or intersubjectivity, in language, rather than presupposing speech acts, is adequate to account for them.⁸ Benveniste thus defines language as communicational rather than informational; this properly linguistic intersubjectivity, or subjectification, explains all the rest, in other words, everything that is brought into being by saying it. The question is whether subjective communication is any better a linguistic notion than ideal information. Oswald Ducrot has set forth the reasons that have led him to reverse Benveniste's schema: The phenomenon of self-referentiality cannot account for the performative. The opposite is the case; it is "the fact that certain statements are socially devoted to the accomplishment of certain actions" that explains self-referentiality. The performative itself is explained by the illocutionary, not the opposite. It is the illocutionary that constitutes the nondiscursive or implicit presuppositions. And the illocutionary is in turn explained by collective assemblages of enunciation, by juridical acts or equivalents of juridical acts, which, far from depending on subjectification proceedings or assignations of subjects in language, in fact determine their distribution. Communication is no better a concept than information; intersubjectivity gets us no further than significance in accounting for these "statements-acts" assemblages that in each language delimit the role and range of subjective morphemes.⁹ (We will see that the analysis of indirect discourse confirms this

point of view since it shows that subjectifications are not primary but result from a complex assemblage.)

We call *order-words*, not a particular category of explicit statements (for example, in the imperative), but the relation of every word or every statement to implicit presuppositions, in other words, to speech acts that are, and can only be, accomplished in the statement. Order-words do not concern commands only, but every act that is linked to statements by a "social obligation." Every statement displays this link, directly or indirectly. Questions, promises, are order-words. The only possible definition of language is the set of all order-words, implicit presuppositions, or speech acts current in a language at a given moment.

The relation between the statement and the act is internal, immanent, but it is not one of identity. Rather, it is a relation of *redundancy*. The order-word itself is the redundancy of the act and the statement. Newspapers, news, proceed by redundancy, in that they tell us what we "must" think, retain, expect, etc. Language is neither informational nor communicational. It is not the communication of information but something quite different: the transmission of order-words, either from one statement to another or within each statement, insofar as each statement accomplishes an act and the act is accomplished in the statement. The most general schema of information science posits in principle an ideal state of maximum information and makes redundancy merely a limitative condition serving to decrease this theoretical maximum in order to prevent it from being drowned out by noise. We are saying that the redundancy of the order-word is instead primary and that information is only the minimal condition for the transmission of order-words (which is why the opposition to be made is not between noise and information but between all the indisciplines at work in language, and the order-word as discipline or "grammaticality"). Redundancy has two forms, *frequency* and *resonance*; the first concerns the signification of information, the second ($I = I$) concerns the subjectivity of communication. It becomes apparent that information and communication, and even signification and subjectification, are subordinate to redundancy. A distinction is sometimes made between information and communication; some authors envision an abstract signification of information and an abstract subjectification of communication. None of this, however, yields an implicit or primary form of language. There is no signification independent of dominant significations, nor is there subjectification independent of an established order of subjection. Both depend on the nature and transmission of order-words in a given social field.

There is no individual enunciation. There is not even a subject of enunciation. Yet relatively few linguists have analyzed the necessarily social

character of enunciation.¹⁰ The problem is that it is not enough to establish that enunciation has this social character, since it could be extrinsic; therefore too much or too little is said about it. The social character of enunciation is intrinsically founded only if one succeeds in demonstrating how enunciation in itself implies *collective assemblages*. It then becomes clear that the statement is individuated, and enunciation subjectified, only to the extent that an impersonal collective assemblage requires it and determines it to be so. It is for this reason that indirect discourse, especially "free" indirect discourse, is of exemplary value: there are no clear, distinctive contours; what comes first is not an insertion of variously individuated statements, or an interlocking of different subjects of enunciation, but a collective assemblage resulting in the determination of relative subjectification proceedings, or assignations of individuality and their shifting distributions within discourse. Indirect discourse is not explained by the distinction between subjects; rather, it is the assemblage, as it freely appears in this discourse, that explains all the voices present within a single voice, the glimmer of girls in a monologue by Charlus, the languages in a language, the order-words in a word. The American murderer "Son of Sam" killed on the prompting of an ancestral voice, itself transmitted through the voice of a dog. The notion of collective assemblage of enunciation takes on primary importance since it is what must account for the social character. We can no doubt define the collective assemblage as the redundant complex of the act and the statement that necessarily accomplishes it. But this is still only a nominal definition; it does not even enable us to justify our previous position that redundancy is irreducible to a simple identity (or that there is no simple identity between the statement and the act). If we wish to move to a real definition of the collective assemblage, we must ask of what consist these acts immanent to language that are in redundancy with statements or constitute order-words.

These acts seem to be defined as the set of all *incorporeal transformations* current in a given society and *attributed* to the bodies of that society. We may take the word "body" in its broadest sense (there are mental bodies, souls are bodies, etc.). We must, however, distinguish between the actions and passions affecting those bodies, and acts, which are only noncorporeal attributes or the "expressed" of a statement. When Ducrot asks what an act consists of, he turns precisely to the juridical assemblage, taking the example of the judge's sentence that transforms the accused into a convict. In effect, what takes place beforehand (the crime of which someone is accused), and what takes place after (the carrying out of the penalty), are actions-passions affecting bodies (the body of the property, the body of the victim, the body of the convict, the body of the prison); but the transformation of the accused into a convict is a pure instantaneous act or incorpo-

real attribute that is the expressed of the judge's sentence.¹¹ Peace and war are states or interminglings of very different kinds of bodies, but the declaration of a general mobilization expresses an instantaneous and incorporeal transformation of bodies. Bodies have an age, they mature and grow old; but majority, retirement, any given age category, are incorporeal transformations that are immediately attributed to bodies in particular societies. "You are no longer a child": this statement concerns an incorporeal transformation, even if it applies to bodies and inserts itself into their actions and passions. The incorporeal transformation is recognizable by its instantaneousness, its immediacy, by the simultaneity of the statement expressing the transformation and the effect the transformation produces; that is why order-words are precisely dated, to the hour, minute, and second, and take effect the moment they are dated. Love is an intermingling of bodies that can be represented by a heart with an arrow through it, by a union of souls, etc., but the declaration "I love you" expresses a noncorporeal attribute of bodies, the lover's as well as that of the loved one. Eating bread and drinking wine are interminglings of bodies; communing with Christ is also an intermingling of bodies, properly spiritual bodies that are no less "real" for being spiritual. But the transformation of the body of the bread and the wine into the body and blood of Christ is the pure expressed of a statement attributed to the bodies. In an airplane hijacking, the threat of a hijacker brandishing a revolver is obviously an action; so is the execution of the hostages, if it occurs. But the transformation of the passengers into hostages, and of the plane-body into a prison-body, is an instantaneous incorporeal transformation, a "mass media act" in the sense in which the English speak of "speech acts." The order-words or assemblages of enunciation in a given society (in short, the illocutionary) designate this instantaneous relation between statements and the incorporeal transformations or noncorporeal attributes they express.

The instantaneousness of the order-word, which can be projected to infinity, placed at the origin of society, is quite strange; for Rousseau, for example, the passage from the state of nature to the social state is like a leap in place, an incorporeal transformation occurring at zero hour. Real history undoubtedly recounts the actions and passions of the bodies that develop in a social field; it communicates them in a certain fashion; but it also transmits order-words, in other words, pure acts intercalated into that development. History will never be rid of dates. Perhaps economics or financial analysis best demonstrates the presence and instantaneousness of these decisive acts in an overall process (that is why statements definitely do not belong to ideology, but are already at work in what is supposedly the domain of the economic base). The galloping inflation in Germany after 1918 was a crisis affecting the monetary body, and many

other bodies besides; but the sum of the “circumstances” suddenly made possible a semiotic transformation that, although indexed to the body of the earth and material assets, was still a pure act or incorporeal transformation—*November 20, 1923 . . .*¹²

The assemblages are in constant variation, are themselves constantly subject to transformations. First, the circumstances must be taken into account: Benveniste clearly demonstrates that a performative statement is nothing outside of the circumstances that make it performative. Anybody can shout, “I declare a general mobilization,” but in the absence of an effectuated variable giving that person the right to make such a statement it is an act of peurility or insanity, not an act of enunciation. This is also true of “I love you,” which has neither meaning nor subject nor addressee outside of circumstances that not only give it credibility but make it a veritable assemblage, a power marker, even in the case of an unhappy love (it is still by a will to power that one obeys . . .). The general term “circumstances” should not leave the impression that it is a question only of external circumstances. “I swear” is not the same when said in the family, at school, in a love affair, in a secret society, or in court: it is not the same thing, and neither is it the same statement; it is not the same bodily situation, and neither is it the same incorporeal transformation. The transformation applies to bodies but is itself incorporeal, internal to enunciation. There are variables of expression that establish a relation between language and the outside, but precisely because they are immanent to language. As long as linguistics confines itself to constants, whether syntactical, morphological, or phonological, it ties the statement to a signifier and enunciation to a subject and accordingly botches the assemblage; it consigns circumstances to the exterior, closes language in on itself, and makes pragmatics a residue. Pragmatics, on the other hand, does not simply appeal to external circumstances: it brings to light variables of expression or of enunciation that are so many internal reasons for language not to close itself off. As Volosinov [Bakhtin] says, as long as linguistics extracts constants, it is incapable of helping us understand how a single word can be a complete enunciation; there must be “an extra something” that “remains outside of the scope of the entire set of linguistic categories and definitions,” even though it is still entirely within the purview of the theory of enunciation or language.¹³ The order-word is precisely that variable that makes the word as such an enunciation. The instantaneousness of the order-word, its immediacy, gives it a power of variation in relation to the bodies to which the transformation is attributed.

Pragmatics is a politics of language. A study such as Jean-Pierre Faye’s on the constitution of Nazi statements in the German social field is in this respect exemplary (and cannot be directly transferred to the constitution of Fascist statements in Italy). Transformational research of this kind is

concerned with the variation of the order-words and noncorporeal attributes linked to social bodies and effectuating immanent acts. We may take as another example, under different conditions, the formation of a properly Leninist type of statement in Soviet Russia, basing ourselves on a text by Lenin entitled "On Slogans" (1917). This text constituted an incorporeal transformation that extracted from the masses a proletarian class as an assemblage of enunciation *before* the conditions were present for the proletariat to exist as a body. A stroke of genius from the First Marxist International, which "invented" a new type of class: Workers of the world, unite!¹⁴ Taking advantage of the break with the Social Democrats, Lenin invented or decreed yet another incorporeal transformation that extracted from the proletarian class a vanguard as an assemblage of enunciation and was attributed to the "Party," a new type of party as a distinct body, at the risk of falling into a properly bureaucratic system of redundancy. The Leninist wager, an act of audacity? Lenin declared that the slogan (*mot d'ordre*) "All power to the Soviets" was valid only from the 27th of February to the 4th of July for the peacetime development of the Revolution, and no longer held in the state of war; the passage from peace to war implied this transformation, not just from the masses to a guiding proletariat, but from the proletariat to a directing vanguard. *July 4 exactly* the power of the Soviets came to an end. All of the external circumstances can be assigned: the war as well as the insurrection that forced Lenin to flee to Finland. But the fact remains that the incorporeal transformation was uttered on the 4th of July, prior to the organization of the body to which it would be attributed, namely, the Party itself. "Every particular slogan must be deduced from the totality of the specific features of a definite political situation."¹⁵ If the objection is leveled that these specific features pertain to politics and not linguistics, it must be observed how thoroughly politics works language from within, causing not only the vocabulary but also the structure and all of the phrasal elements to vary as the order-words change. A type of statement can be evaluated only as a function of its pragmatic implications, in other words, in relation to the implicit presuppositions, immanent acts, or incorporeal transformations it expresses and which introduce new configurations of bodies. True intuition is not a judgment of grammaticality but an evaluation of internal variables of enunciation in relation to the aggregate of the circumstances.

We have gone from explicit commands to order-words as implicit presuppositions; from order-words to the immanent acts or incorporeal transformations they express; and from there to the assemblages of enunciation whose variables they are. To the extent these variables enter at a given moment into determinable relations, the assemblages combine in *a regime of signs or a semiotic machine*. It is obvious that a society is plied by several

semiotics, that its regimes are in fact mixed. Moreover, at a later time there will arise new order-words that will modify the variables and will not yet be part of a known regime. Thus the order-word is redundancy in several ways: as a function of the process of transmission essential to it, and in itself, from the time it is emitted, in its "immediate" relation with the act or transformation it effectuates. The order-word is already redundancy even when it is in rupture with a particular semiotic. That is why every statement of a collective assemblage of enunciation belongs to indirect discourse. Indirect discourse is the presence of a reported statement within the reporting statement, the presence of an order-word within the word. Language in its entirety is indirect discourse. Indirect discourse in no way supposes direct discourse; rather, the latter is extracted from the former, to the extent that the operations of signification and proceedings of subjectification in an assemblage are distributed, attributed, and assigned, or that the variables of the assemblage enter into constant relations, however temporarily. Direct discourse is a detached fragment of a mass and is born of the dismemberment of the collective assemblage; but the collective assemblage is always like the murmur from which I take my proper name, the constellation of voices, concordant or not, from which I draw my voice. I always depend on a molecular assemblage of enunciation that is not given in my conscious mind, any more than it depends solely on my apparent social determinations, which combine many heterogeneous regimes of signs. Speaking in tongues. To write is perhaps to bring this assemblage of the unconscious to the light of day, to select the whispering voices, to gather the tribes and secret idioms from which I extract something I call my Self (*Moi*). *I* is an order-word. A schizophrenic said: "I heard voices say: *he is conscious of life.*"¹⁶ In this sense, there is indeed a schizophrenic cogito, but it is a cogito that makes self-consciousness the incorporeal transformation of an order-word, or a result of indirect discourse. My direct discourse is still the free indirect discourse running through me, coming from other worlds or other planets. That is why so many artists and writers have been tempted by the séance table. When we ask what faculty is specific to the order-word, we must indeed attribute to it some strange characteristics: a kind of instantaneousness in the emission, perception, and transmission of order-words; a wide variability, and a power of forgetting permitting one to feel absolved of the order-words one has followed and then abandoned in order to welcome others; a properly ideal or ghostly capacity for the apprehension of incorporeal transformations; an aptitude for grasping language as an immense indirect discourse.¹⁷ The faculty of the cuer and the cued, of the song that always holds a tune within a tune in a relation of redundancy; a faculty that is in truth mediumistic, glossolalic, or xenoglossic.

Let us return to the question of how this defines a language-function, a

function coextensive with language. It is evident that order-words, collective assemblages, or regimes of signs cannot be equated with language. But they effectuate its condition of possibility (*the superlinearity of expression*), they fulfill in each instance this condition of possibility; without them, language would remain a pure virtuality (the superlinear character of indirect discourse). Doubtless, the assemblages vary, undergo transformation. But they do not necessarily vary by language, they do not correspond to the various languages. A language seems to be defined by the syntactical, semantic, phonological constants in its statements; the collective assemblage, on the contrary, concerns the usage of these constants in relation to variables internal to enunciation itself (variables of expression, immanent acts, or incorporeal transformations). Different constants, different languages, may have the same usage; the same constants in a given language may have different usages, successively or even simultaneously. We cannot content ourselves with a duality between constants as linguistic factors that are explicit or potentially explicit, and variables as extrinsic, nonlinguistic factors. For the pragmatic variables of usage are internal to enunciation and constitute the implicit presuppositions of language. Thus if the collective assemblage is in each instance coextensive with the linguistic system considered, and to language as a whole, it is because it expresses the set of incorporeal transformations that effectuate the condition of possibility of language and utilize the elements of the linguistic system. The language-function thus defined is neither informational nor communicational; it has to do neither with signifying information nor with intersubjective communication. And it is useless to abstract a significance outside information, or a subjectivity outside communication. For the subjectification proceedings and movement of significance relate to regimes of signs, or collective assemblages. The language-function is the transmission of order-words, and order-words relate to assemblages, just as assemblages relate to the incorporeal transformations constituting the variables of the function. Linguistics is nothing without a pragmatics (semiotic or political) to define the effectuation of the *condition of possibility* of language and the *usage* of linguistic elements.

II. “There Is an Abstract Machine of Language That Does Not Appeal to Any ‘Extrinsic’ Factor”

If in a social field we distinguish the set of corporeal modifications and the set of incorporeal transformations, we are presented, despite the variety in each of the sets, with two formalizations, one of *content*, the other of *expression*. For content is not opposed to form but has its own formalization: the hand-tool pole, or the lesson of things. It is, however, opposed

to expression, inasmuch as expression also has its own formalization: the face-language pole, the lesson of signs. Precisely because content, like expression, has a form of its own, one can never assign the form of expression the function of simply representing, describing, or averring a corresponding content: there is neither correspondence nor conformity. The two formalizations are not of the same nature; they are independent, heterogeneous. The Stoicks were the first to theorize this independence: they distinguished between the actions and passions of bodies (using the word "body" in the broadest sense, as applying to any formed content) and incorporeal acts (the "expressed" of the statements). The form of expression is constituted by the warp of expresseds, and the form of content by the woof of bodies. When knife cuts flesh, when food or poison spreads through the body, when a drop of wine falls into water, there is an *intermingling of bodies*; but the statements, "The knife is cutting the flesh," "I am eating," "The water is turning red," express *incorporeal transformations* of an entirely different nature (events).¹⁸ The genius of the Stoicks was to have taken this paradox as far as it could go, up to the point of insanity and cynicism, and to have grounded it in the most serious of principles: their reward was to be the first to develop a philosophy of language.

The paradox gets us nowhere unless, like the Stoicks, we add that incorporeal transformations, incorporeal attributes, apply to bodies, and only to bodies. They are the expressed of statements but are *attributed* to bodies. The purpose is not to describe or represent bodies; bodies already have proper qualities, actions and passions, souls, in short forms, which are themselves bodies. Representations are bodies too! If noncorporeal attributes apply to bodies, if there are good grounds for making a distinction between the incorporeal expressed "to become red" and the corporeal quality "red," etc., it has nothing to do with representation. We cannot even say that the body or state of things is the "referent" of the sign. In expressing the noncorporeal attribute, and by that token attributing it to the body, one is not representing or referring but *intervening* in a way; it is a speech act. The independence of the two kinds of forms, forms of expression and forms of content, is not contradicted but confirmed by the fact that the expressions or expresseds are inserted into or intervene in contents, not to represent them but to anticipate them or move them back, slow them down or speed them up, separate or combine them, delimit them in a different way. The warp of the instantaneous transformations is always inserted into the woof of the continuous modifications. (Hence the significance of dates for the Stoicks. From what moment can it be said that someone is bald? In what sense does a statement of the type "There will be a naval battle tomorrow" constitute a date or order-word?) The night of August 4, July 4, 1917, November 20, 1923: What incorporeal transformation is expressed by

these dates, incorporeal yet attributed to bodies, inserted into them? The independence of the form of expression and the form of content is not the basis for a parallelism between them or a representation of one by the other, but on the contrary a parceling of the two, a manner in which expressions are inserted into contents, in which we ceaselessly jump from one register to another, in which signs are at work in things themselves just as things extend into or are deployed through signs. An assemblage of enunciation does not speak "of" things; it speaks *on the same level as* states of things and states of content. So that the same *x*, the same particle, may function either as a body that acts and undergoes actions or as a sign constituting an act or order-word, depending on which form it is taken up by (for example, the theoretico-experimental aggregate of physics). In short, the functional independence of the two forms is only the form of their reciprocal presupposition, and of the continual passage from one to the other. We are never presented with an interlinkage of order-words and a causality of contents each in its own right; nor do we see one represent the other, with the second serving as referent. On the contrary, the independence of the two lines is distributive, such that a segment of one always forms a relay with a segment of the other, slips into, introduces itself into the other. We constantly pass from order-words to the "silent order" of things, as Foucault puts it, and vice versa.

But when we use a word as vague as "intervene," when we say that expressions intervene or insert themselves into contents, are we not still prey to a kind of idealism in which the order-word instantaneously falls from the sky? What we must determine is not an origin but points of intervention or insertion in the framework of the reciprocal presupposition of the two forms. Both forms of content and forms of expression are inseparable from a movement of deterritorialization that carries them away. Both expression and content are more or less deterritorialized, relatively deterritorialized, according to the particular state of their form. In this respect, one cannot posit a primacy of expression over content, or content over expression. Sometimes the semiotic components are more deterritorialized than the material components, and sometimes the reverse. For example, a mathematical complex of signs may be more deterritorialized than a set of particles; conversely, the particles may have experimental effects that deterritorialize the semiotic system. A criminal action may be deterritorializing in relation to the existing regime of signs (the earth cries for revenge and crumbles beneath my feet, my offense is too great); but the sign that expresses the act of condemnation may in turn be deterritorializing in relation to all actions and reactions ("a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth" [Gen. 4:12], you cannot even be killed). In short, there are degrees of deterritorialization that quantify the

respective forms and according to which contents and expression are conjugated, feed into each other, accelerate each other, or on the contrary become stabilized and perform a reterritorialization. What we call circumstances or variables are these degrees themselves. There are *variables of content*, or proportions in the interminglings or aggregations of bodies, and there are *variables of expression*, factors internal to enunciation. Germany, toward November 20, 1923: on the one hand, the deterritorializing inflation of the monetary body and, on the other, in response to the inflation, a semiotic transformation of the reichsmark into the rentenmark, making possible a reterritorialization. Russia, toward July 4, 1917: on the one hand proportions of a state of "bodies" Soviets-provisional government, and on the other the elaboration of a Bolshevik incorporeal semiotic, accelerating things and contributing to the action of the detonating body of the Party. In short, the way an expression relates to a content is not by uncovering or representing it. Rather, forms of expression and forms of content communicate through a conjunction of their quanta of relative deterritorialization, each intervening, operating in the other.

We may draw some general conclusions on the nature of Assemblages from this. On a first, horizontal, axis, an assemblage comprises two segments, one of content, the other of expression. On the one hand it is a *machinic assemblage* of bodies, of actions and passions, an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another; on the other hand it is a *collective assemblage of enunciation*, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies. Then on a vertical axis, the assemblage has both *territorial sides*, or reterritorialized sides, which stabilize it, and *cutting edges of deterritorialization*, which carry it away. No one is better than Kafka at differentiating the two axes of the assemblage and making them function together. On the one hand, the ship-machine, the hotel-machine, the circus-machine, the castle-machine, the court-machine, each with its own intermingled pieces, gears, processes, and bodies contained in one another or bursting out of containment (see the head bursting through the roof).¹⁹ On the other hand, the regime of signs or of enunciation: each regime with its incorporeal transformations, acts, death sentences and judgments, proceedings, "law." It is obvious that statements do not represent machines: the Stoker's discourse does not describe stoking as a body; it has its own form, and a development without resemblance.²⁰ Yet it is attributed to bodies, to the whole ship as a body. A discourse of submission to order-words; a discourse of discussion, claims, accusation, and defense. On the second axis, what is compared or combined of the two aspects, what always inserts one into the other, are the sequenced or conjugated degrees of deterritorialization, and the operations of reterritorialization that stabilize the aggregate at a given moment. K., the K.-function, designates the

line of flight or deterritorialization that carries away all of the assemblages but also undergoes all kinds of reterritorializations and redundancies—redundancies of childhood, village-life, love, bureaucracy, etc.

The tetravalance of the assemblage. Taking the feudal assemblage as an example, we would have to consider the interminglings of bodies defining feudalism: the body of the earth and the social body; the body of the overlord, vassal, and serf; the body of the knight and the horse and their new relation to the stirrup; the weapons and tools assuring a symbiosis of bodies—a whole machinic assemblage. We would also have to consider statements, expressions, the juridical regime of heraldry, all of the incorporeal transformations, in particular, oaths and their variables (the oath of obedience, but also the oath of love, etc.): the collective assemblage of enunciation. On the other axis, we would have to consider the feudal territorialities and reterritorializations, and at the same time the line of deterritorialization that carries away both the knight and his mount, statements and acts. We would have to consider how all this combines in the Crusades.

It would be an error to believe that content determines expression by causal action, even if expression is accorded the power not only to “reflect” content but to react upon it in an active way. This kind of ideological conception of the statement, which subordinates it to a primary economic content, runs into all kinds of difficulties inherent to dialectics. First, although it may be possible to conceive of a causal action moving from content to expression, the same cannot be said for the respective *forms*, the form of content and the form of expression. We must recognize that expression is independent and that this is precisely what enables it to react upon contents. This independence, however, has been poorly conceived. If contents are said to be economic, the form of content cannot be said to be economic and is reduced to a pure abstraction, namely, the production of goods and the means of that production considered in themselves. Similarly, if expressions are said to be ideological, the form of expression is not said to be ideological and is reduced to language as abstraction, as the availability of a good shared by all. Those who take this approach claim to characterize contents and expressions by all the struggles and conflicts pervading them in two different forms, but these forms themselves are exempt from struggle and conflict, and the relation between them remains entirely indeterminate.²¹ The only way to define the relation is to revamp the theory of ideology by saying that expressions and statements intervene directly in productivity, in the form of a production of meaning or sign-value. The category of production doubtless has the advantage of breaking with schemas of representation, information, and communication. But is it any more adequate than these schemas? Its application to language is very

ambiguous in that it appeals to an ongoing dialectical miracle of the transformation of matter into meaning, content into expression, the social process into a signifying system.

We think the material or machinic aspect of an assemblage relates not to the production of goods but rather to a precise state of intermingling of bodies in a society, including all the attractions and repulsions, sympathies and antipathies, alterations, amalgamations, penetrations, and expansions that affect bodies of all kinds in their relations to one another. What regulates the obligatory, necessary, or permitted interminglings of bodies is above all an alimentary regime and a sexual regime. Even technology makes the mistake of considering tools in isolation: tools exist only in relation to the interminglings they make possible or that make them possible. The stirrup entails a new man-horse symbiosis that at the same time entails new weapons and new instruments. Tools are inseparable from symbioses or amalgamations defining a Nature-Society machinic assemblage. They presuppose a social machine that selects them and takes them into its "phylum": a society is defined by its amalgamations, not by its tools. Similarly, the semiotic or collective aspect of an assemblage relates not to a productivity of language but to regimes of signs, to a machine of expression whose variables determine the usage of language elements. These elements do not stand on their own any more than tools do. There is a primacy of the machinic assemblage of bodies over tools and goods, a primacy of the collective assemblage of enunciation over language and words. The articulation of the two aspects of the assemblage is effected by the movements of deterritorialization that quantify their forms. That is why a social field is defined less by its conflicts and contradictions than by the lines of flight running through it. An assemblage has neither base nor superstructure, neither deep structure nor superficial structure; it flattens all of its dimensions onto a single plane of consistency upon which reciprocal presuppositions and mutual insertions play themselves out.

The other mistake (which is combined with the first as needed) is to believe in the adequacy of the form of expression as a linguistic system. This system may be conceived as a signifying phonological structure, or as a deep syntactical structure. In either case, it is credited with engendering semantics, therefore of fulfilling expression, whereas contents are relegated to the arbitrariness of a simple "reference" and pragmatics to the exteriority of nonlinguistic factors. What all of these undertakings have in common is to erect an *abstract machine of language*, but as a synchronic set of constants. We will not object that the machine thus conceived is too abstract. On the contrary, it is not abstract enough, it remains "linear." It remains on an intermediate level of abstraction allowing it to consider linguistic factors in themselves, independently of nonlinguistic factors, and

to treat those linguistic factors as constants. But if the abstraction is taken further, one necessarily reaches a level where the pseudoconstants of language are superseded by variables of expression internal to enunciation itself; these variables of expression are then no longer separable from the variables of content with which they are in perpetual interaction. *If the external pragmatics of nonlinguistic factors must be taken into consideration, it is because linguistics itself is inseparable from an internal pragmatics involving its own factors.* It is not enough to take into account the signified, or even the referent, because the very notions of signification and reference are bound up with a supposedly autonomous and constant structure. There is no use constructing a semantics, or even recognizing a certain validity to pragmatics, if they are still pretreated by a phonological or syntactical machine. For a true abstract machine pertains to an assemblage in its entirety: it is defined as the diagram of that assemblage. It is not language based but diagrammatic and superlinear. Content is not a signified nor expression a signifier; rather, both are variables of the assemblage. We get nowhere until the pragmatic, but also semantic, syntactical, and phonological determinations are directly linked to the assemblages of enunciation upon which they depend. Chomsky's abstract machine retains an arborescent model and a linear ordering of linguistic elements in sentences and sentence combinations. But as soon as pragmatic values or internal variables are taken into account, in particular with respect to indirect discourse, one is obliged to bring "hypersentences" into play or to construct "abstract objects" (incorporeal transformations). This implies superlinearity, in other words, a plane whose elements no longer have a fixed linear order: the rhizome model.²² From this standpoint, the interpenetration of language and the social field and political problems lies at the deepest level of the abstract machine, not at the surface. The abstract machine as it relates to the diagram of the assemblage is never purely a matter of language, except for lack of sufficient abstraction. It is language that depends on the abstract machine, not the reverse. At most, we may distinguish in the abstract machine two states of the diagram, one in which variables of content and expression are distributed according to their heterogeneous forms in reciprocal presupposition on a plane of consistency, and another in which it is no longer even possible to distinguish between variables of content and expression because the variability of that same plane has prevailed over the duality of forms, rendering them "indiscernible." (The first state relates to still relative movements of deterritorialization; in the second, an absolute threshold of deterritorialization has been reached.)

III. "There Are Constants or Universals of Language That Enable Us to Define It as a Homogeneous System"

The question of structural invariants—and the very idea of structure is inseparable from invariants, whether atomic or relational—is essential to linguistics. It is what allows linguistics to claim a basis in pure scientificity, to be nothing but science . . . safe from any supposedly external or pragmatic factor. The question of invariants assumes several closely connected forms: (1) the constants of a language (phonological, by commutativity; syntactical, by transformativity; semantic, by generativity); (2) the universals of language (by decomposition of the phoneme into distinctive features; of syntax into fundamental constituents; of signification into minimal semantic elements); (3) trees linking constants to one another, with binary relations between trees (see Chomsky's linear arborescent method); (4) competence, in principle coextensive with language and defined by judgments of grammaticality; (5) homogeneity, bearing on elements and relations as well as intuitive judgments; (6) synchrony, which erects an "in-itself" and a "for-itself" of language, perpetually moving from the objective system to the subjective consciousness that apprehends its principle (that of the linguist himself or herself).

One can juggle all of these factors, subtract some or even add new ones. They go together, however, because the essentials of all of them are present on the level of any one. For example, the distinction between speech and language is recapitulated in the distinction between competence and performance, but at the level of grammaticality. If it is objected that the distinction between competence and performance is entirely relative (a linguistic competence can be economic, religious, political, or aesthetic, etc.; the teaching competence of a grade school teacher may be only a performance in relation to the judgment of an inspector or government regulations), linguists respond that they are willing to multiply levels of competence, and even to introduce pragmatic values into the system. Brekle, for example, proposes adding an "idiosyncratic performatory competence" factor tied to a whole constellation of linguistic, psychological, or sociological factors. But what use is this injection of pragmatics if pragmatics is in turn considered to have constants or universals of its own? And in what way are expressions like "I," "promise," "know" more universal than "greet," "name," or "condemn"?²³ Similarly, when efforts are made to make Chomsky's trees bud and to shatter linear order, as long as the pragmatic components marking the ruptures are placed above the tree or effaced from the derivation nothing has really been accomplished, one has failed to constitute a rhizome.²⁴ In truth, the nature of the abstract machine is the most general problem: there is no reason to tie the abstract

to the universal or the constant, or to efface the singularity of abstract machines insofar as they are built around variables and variations.

The debate between Chomsky and Labov will give us a better understanding of what the issue is. Every language is an essentially heterogeneous reality; linguists know this and say so. But this is a *factual* remark. Chomsky asks only that one carve from this aggregate a homogeneous or standard system as a basis for abstraction or idealization, making possible a scientific study of *principles*. Limiting oneself to standard English is thus not the issue, for even a linguist who studies Black English or the English of the ghettos is obliged to extract a standard system guaranteeing the constancy and homogeneity of the object under study (no science can operate any other way, they say). Thus Chomsky pretends to believe that by asserting his interest in the variable features of language, Labov is situating himself in a *de facto* pragmatics external to linguistics.²⁵ Labov, however, has other ambitions. When he brings to light lines of *inherent variation*, he does not see them simply as “free variants” pertaining to pronunciation, style, or nonpertinent features that lie outside the system and leave the homogeneity of the system intact; neither does he see them as a *de facto* mix between two systems, each homogeneous in its own right, as if the speaker moved from one to the other. He refuses the alternative linguistics set up for itself: assigning variants to different systems, or relegating them to a place outside the structure. It is the variation itself that is systematic, in the sense in which musicians say that “the theme is the variation.” Labov sees variation as a *de jure* component affecting each system from within, sending it cascading or leaping on its own power and forbidding one to close it off, to make it homogeneous in principle. Labov does consider variables of all kinds, phonetic, phonological, syntactical, semantic, stylistic. Yet it would seem difficult to accuse him of missing the distinction between the *de jure* and the *de facto*—or between linguistics and stylistics, or synchrony and diachrony, or pertinent and nonpertinent features, or competence and performance, or the grammaticality of language and the agrammaticality of speech. Although this may be hardening his positions, we would say rather that Labov proposes a different distribution of the *de facto* and the *de jure*, and especially a different conception of the *de jure* itself and of abstraction. He takes the example of a young black person who, in a very short series of phrases, seems to pass from the Black English system to the standard system eighteen times. Is it not the abstract distinction between the two systems that proves arbitrary and insufficient? For the majority of the forms belongs to one or the other only by virtue of the fortuities of a given sequence. Must it not be admitted that every system is in variation and is defined not by its constants and homogeneity but on the

contrary by a variability whose characteristics are immanent, continuous, and regulated in a very specific mode (*variable or optional rules*)?²⁶

How can we conceptualize this continuous variation at work within a language, even if it means overstepping the limits Labov sets for himself as well as the conditions of scientificity invoked by linguistics? In the course of a single day, an individual repeatedly passes from language to language. He successively speaks as "father to son" and as a boss; to his lover, he speaks an infantilized language; while sleeping he is plunged into an oniric discourse, then abruptly returns to a professional language when the telephone rings. It will be objected that these variations are extrinsic, that it is still the same language. But that is to prejudge the question. First, it is not certain that the phonology is the same, nor the syntax, nor the semantics. Second, the whole question is whether this supposedly identical language is defined by invariants or, on the contrary, by the line of continuous variation running through it. Some linguists have suggested that linguistic change occurs less by systemic rupture than by a gradual modification of frequency, by a coexistence and continuity of different usages. Take as an example the statement, "I swear!" It is a different statement depending on whether it is said by a child to his or her father, by a man in love to his loved one, or by a witness before the court. These are like three sequences. (Or Messiaen's four "amen"s stretched over seven sequences.) Once again, there is no reason to say that the variables are merely situational, and that the statement remains constant in principle. Not only are there as many statements as there are effectuations, but all of the statements are present in the effectuation of one among them, so that the line of variation is virtual, in other words, real without being actual, and consequently continuous regardless of the leaps the statement makes. To place the statement in continuous variation is to send it through all the prosodic, semantic, syntactical, and phonological variables that can affect it in the shortest moment of time (the smallest interval). Build the *continuum* of "I swear!" with the corresponding transformations. This is the standpoint of pragmatics, but a pragmatics internal to language, immanent, including variations of linguistic elements of all kinds. For example, Kafka's line of the three proceedings: the father's proceedings in the family; the engagement proceedings at the hotel; and the court proceedings. There is a constant tendency to seek a "reduction": everything is explained by the situation of the child in relation to its father, or of the man in relation to castration, or of the citizen in relation to the law. But this is to content oneself with extracting a pseudoconstant of content, which is no better than extracting a pseudoconstant of expression. Placing-in-variation allows us to avoid these dangers, because it builds a continuum or medium without beginning or end. Continuous variation should not be confused with the

continuous or discontinuous character of the variable itself: the order-word, a continuous variation for a discontinuous variable . . . A variable can be continuous over a portion of its trajectory, then leap or skip, without that affecting its continuous variation; what this does is impose an absent development as an “alternative continuity” that is virtual yet real.

A constant or invariant is defined less by its permanence and duration than by its function as a center, if only relative. In the tonal or diatonic system of music, laws of resonance and attraction determine centers valid for all modes and endowed with stability and attractive power (*pouvoir*). These centers therefore organize distinct, distinctive, forms that are clearly established for a certain amount of time: a linear, codified, centered system of the arborescent type. It is true that the minor “mode” gives tonal music a decentered, runaway, fugitive character due to the nature of its intervals and the lesser stability of its chords. This mode thus has the ambiguity of undergoing operations that align it to a major model or standard at the same time as it continues to display a certain modal power (*puissance*) irreducible to tonality, as though music set out on a journey and garnered all resurgences, phantoms of the Orient, imaginary lands, traditions from all over. But temperament, tempered chromaticism has an even greater ambiguity: stretching the action of the center to the most distant tones, but also preparing the disaggregation of the central principle, replacing the centered forms of continuous development with a form that constantly dissolves and transforms itself. When development subordinates form and spans the whole, as in Beethoven, variation begins to free itself and becomes identified with creation. But when chromaticism is unleashed, becomes a generalized chromaticism, turns back against temperament, affecting not only pitches but all sound components—durations, intensities, timbre, attacks—it becomes impossible to speak of a sound form organizing matter; it is no longer even possible to speak of a continuous development of form. Rather, it is a question of a highly complex and elaborate material making audible nonsonorous forces. The couple matter-form is replaced by the coupling material-forces. The synthesizer has taken the place of the old “*a priori synthetic judgment*,” and all functions change accordingly. By placing all its components in continuous variation, music itself becomes a superlinear system, a rhizome instead of a tree, and enters the service of a virtual cosmic continuum of which even holes, silences, ruptures, and breaks are a part. Thus the important thing is certainly not to establish a pseudobreak between the tonal system and atonal music; the latter, on the contrary, in breaking away from the tonal system, only carried temperament to its ultimate conclusion (although no Viennese stopped there). The essential thing is almost the opposite movement: the ferment in the tonal system itself (during much of the nineteenth and twentieth cen-

turies) that dissolved temperament and widened chromaticism while preserving a relative tonality, which reinvented new modalities, brought a new amalgamation of major and minor, and in each instance conquered realms of continuous variation for this variable or that. This ferment came to the forefront and made itself heard in its own right; and, through the molecular material thus wrought, it made audible the nonsonorous forces of the cosmos that have always agitated music—a bit of Time in the pure state,²⁷ a grain of absolute Intensity . . . The words “tonal,” “modal,” “atonal” do not mean much. Music is not alone in being art as cosmos and in drawing the virtual lines of an infinite variation.

Once again, the objection will be raised that music is not a language, that the components of sound are not pertinent features of language, that there is no correspondence between the two. We are not suggesting any correspondence. We keep asking that the issue be left open, that any presupposed distinction be rejected. This especially applies to the language-speech distinction, which is used to relegate all kinds of variables at work within expression and enunciation to a position outside language. The Voice-Music relation proposed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, on the other hand, could have taken not only phonetics and prosody but all of linguistics in a different direction. The voice in music has always been a privileged axis of experimentation, playing simultaneously on language and sound. Music has linked the voice to instruments in various ways; but as long as the voice is song, its main role is to “hold” sound, it functions as a constant circumscribed on a note and *accompanied* by the instrument. Only when the voice is tied to timbre does it reveal a tessitura that renders it heterogeneous to itself and gives it a power of continuous variation: it is then no longer accompanied, but truly “machined,” it belongs to a musical machine that prolongs or superposes on a single plane parts that are spoken, sung, achieved by special effects, instrumental, or perhaps electronically generated. This is the sound plane of a generalized “glissando” implying the constitution of a statistical space in which each variable has, not an average value, but a probability of frequency that places it in continuous variation with the other variables.²⁸ Luciano Berio’s *Visage* (Face) and Dieter Schnebel’s *Glossolalie* (Speaking in tongues) are typical examples of this. And despite what Berio himself says, it is less a matter of using pseudoconstants to produce a simulacrum of language or a metaphor for the voice than of attaining that secret neuter language without constants and entirely in indirect discourse where the synthesizer and the instrument speak no less than the voice, and the voice plays no less than the instrument. It should not be thought that music has forgotten how to sing in a now mechanical and atomized world; rather, an immense coefficient of variation is affecting and carrying away all of the phatic, aphatic, linguistic,

poetic, instrumental, or musical parts of a single sound assemblage—"a simple scream suffusing all degrees" (Thomas Mann). There are many procedures for placing the voice in variation, not only *Sprechgesang* (speech-song), which constantly leaves pitch behind by descent or ascent, but also circular breathing techniques and zones of resonance in which several voices seem to issue from the same mouth. Secret languages are very significant in this connection, in learned as well as popular music. Certain ethnomusicologists have found extraordinary cases (in Dahomey, for example) where a first, diatonic, vocal part is superseded by a chromatic descent into a secret language that slips from one sound to the next in a continuous fashion, modulating a sound continuum into smaller and smaller intervals until it becomes a "parlando" all of the intervals of which blur together—and then the diatonic part is itself transposed according to the chromatic levels of a terraced architecture, the song sometimes interrupted by a parlando, by a simple conversation lacking definite pitch.²⁹ It is perhaps characteristic of secret languages, slangs, jargons, professional languages, nursery rhymes, merchants' cries to stand out less for their lexical inventions or rhetorical figures than for the way in which they effect continuous variations of the common elements of language. They are chromatic languages, close to a musical notation. A secret language does not merely have a hidden cipher or code still operating by constants and forming a subsystem; *it places the public language's system of variables in a state of variation.*

This is what we are getting at: a generalized chromaticism. Placing elements of any nature in continuous variation is an operation that will perhaps give rise to new distinctions, but takes none as final and has none in advance. On the contrary, this operation in principle bears on the voice, speech, language, and music simultaneously. There is no reason to make prior, principled distinctions. Linguistics in general is still in a kind of major mode, still has a sort of diatonic scale and a strange taste for dominants, constants, and universals. All languages, in the meantime, are in immanent continuous variation: neither synchrony nor diachrony, but asynchrony, chromaticism as a variable and continuous state of language. For a chromatic linguistics according pragmatism its intensities and values.

What is called a style can be the most natural thing in the world; it is nothing other than the procedure of a continuous variation. Of the dualisms established by linguistics, there are few with a more shaky foundation than the separation between linguistics and stylistics: Because a style is not an individual psychological creation but an assemblage of enunciation, it unavoidably produces a language within a language. Take an arbitrary list of authors we are fond of: Kafka once again, Beckett, Ghérasim Luca, Jean-

Luc Godard. It will be noted that they are all more or less in a bilingual situation: Kafka, the Czechoslovakian Jew writing in German; Beckett, the Irishman writing in English and French; Luca, originally from Romania; Godard and his will to be Swiss. But this is only circumstantial, an opportunity, and the opportunity can be found elsewhere. It will also be noted that many of them are not only or not primarily writers (Beckett and theater and television, Godard and film and television, Luca and his audiovisual machines). The reason for this is that when one submits linguistic elements to a treatment producing continuous variation, when one introduces an internal pragmatics into language, one is necessarily led to treat nonlinguistic elements such as gestures and instruments in the same fashion, as if the two aspects of pragmatics joined on the same line of variation, in the same continuum. Moreover, the idea perhaps comes first from outside, with language following only later, as with the necessarily exterior sources of a style. But the essential thing is that each of these authors has his own procedure of variation, his own widened chromaticism, his own mad production of speeds and intervals. The creative stammering of Ghérasim Luca, in the poem "Passionnément" (Passionately).³⁰ Godard's is another kind of stammering. In theater: Robert Wilson's whispering, without definite pitch, and Carmelo Bene's ascending and descending variations.³¹ It's easy to stammer, but making language itself stammer is a different affair; it involves placing all linguistic, and even nonlinguistic, elements in variation, both variables of expression and variables of content. A new form of redundancy. AND . . . AND . . . AND . . . There has always been a struggle in language between the verb *être* (to be) and the conjunction *et* (and) between *est* and *et* (is and and [which in French are identical in pronunciation—Trans.]) It is only in appearance that these two terms are in accord and combine, for the first acts in language as a constant and forms the diatonic scale of language, while the second places everything in variation, constituting the lines of a generalized chromaticism. From one to the other, everything shifts. Writers in British or American English have been more conscious than the French of this struggle and the stakes involved, and of the valence of the "and."³² It was Proust who said that "masterpieces are written in a kind of foreign language." That is the same as stammering, making language stammer rather than stammering in speech. To be a foreigner, but in one's own tongue, not only when speaking a language other than one's own. To be bilingual, multilingual, but in one and the same language, without even a dialect or patois. To be a bastard, a half-breed, but through a purification of race. That is when style becomes a language. That is when language becomes intensive, a pure continuum of values and intensities. That is when all of language becomes secret, yet has nothing to hide, as opposed to when one carves out a secret subsystem within language. One

attains this result only by sobriety, creative subtraction. Continuous variation has only ascetic lines, a touch of herb and pure water.

It is possible to take any linguistic variable and place it in variation following a necessarily virtual continuous line between two of its states. We are no longer in the situation of linguists who expect the constants of language to experience a kind of mutation or undergo the effects of changes accumulated in speech alone. Lines of change or creation are fully and directly a part of the abstract machine. Hjelmslev remarked that a language necessarily includes unexploited possibilities or potentialities and that the abstract machine must include these possibilities or potentialities.³³ “Potential” and “virtual” are not at all in opposition to “real”; on the contrary, the reality of the creative, or the placing-in-continuous variation of variables, is in opposition only to the actual determination of their constant relations. Each time we draw a line of variation, the variables are of a particular nature (phonological, syntactical or grammatical, semantic, and so on), but the line itself is apertinent, asyntactic or agrammatical, asemantic. Agrammaticality, for example, is no longer a contingent characteristic of speech opposed to the grammaticality of language; rather, it is the ideal characteristic of a line placing grammatical variables in a state of continuous variation. Let us take Nicolas Ruwet’s examples of certain singular expressions of Cummings’s: “he danced his did,” or “they went their came.” It is possible to reconstitute the variations through which the grammatical variables pass in virtuality in order to end up as agrammatical expressions of this kind (“he did his dance,” “he danced his dance,” “he danced what he did,” . . . ; “they went as they came,” “they went their way,” . . .).³⁴ In spite of Ruwet’s structural interpretation, we should avoid taking the view that the atypical expression is produced by the successive correct forms. It is instead the atypical expression that produces the placing-in-variation of the correct forms, uprooting them from their state as constants. The atypical expression constitutes a cutting edge of deterritorialization of language, it plays the role of *tensor*; in other words, it causes language to tend toward the limit of its elements, forms, or notions, toward a near side or a beyond of language. The tensor effects a kind of transitivization of the phrase, causing the last term to react upon the preceding term, back through the entire chain. It assures an intensive and chromatic treatment of language. An expression as simple as AND . . . can play the role of tensor for all of language. In this sense, AND is less a conjunction than the atypical expression of all of the possible conjunctions it places in continuous variation. The tensor, therefore, is not reducible either to a constant or a variable, but assures the variation of the variable by subtracting in each instance the value of the constant ($n - 1$). Tensors coincide with no linguistic category; nevertheless they are pragmatic

values essential to both assemblages of enunciation and indirect discourses.³⁵

Some believe that these variations do not express the usual labor of creation in language and remain marginal, confined to poets, children, and lunatics. That is because they wish to define the abstract machine by constants that can be modified only secondarily, by a cumulative effect or syntagmatic mutation. But the abstract machine of language is not universal, or even general, but singular; it is not actual, but virtual-real; it has, not invariable or obligatory rules, but optional rules that ceaselessly vary with the variation itself, as in a game in which each move changes the rules. That is why abstract machines and assemblages of enunciation are complementary, and present in each other. The abstract machine is like the diagram of an assemblage. It draws lines of continuous variation, while the concrete assemblage treats variables and organized their highly diverse relations as a function of those lines. The assemblage negotiates variables at this or that level of variation, according to this or that degree of deterritorialization, and determines which variables will enter into constant relations or obey obligatory rules and which will serve instead as a fluid matter for variation. We should not conclude from this that the assemblage brings only a certain resistance or inertia to bear against the abstract machine; for even "constants" are essential to the determination of the virtualities through which the variation passes, they are themselves optionally chosen. There is indeed braking and resistance at a certain level, but at another level of the assemblage there is nothing but a come-and-go between different types of variables, and corridors of passage traveled in both directions: the variables effectuate the machine in unison, in the sum of their relations. There is therefore no basis for a distinction between a constant and collective language, and variable and individual speech acts. The abstract machine is always singular, designated by the proper mane of a group or individual, while the assemblage of enunciation is always collective, in the individual as in the group. The Lenin abstract machine, and the Bolshevik collective assemblage . . . The same goes for literature, for music. There is no primacy of the individual; there is instead an indissolubility of a singular Abstract and a collective Concrete. The abstract machine does not exist independently of the assemblage, any more than the assemblage functions independently of the machine.

IV. "Language Can Be Scientifically Studied Only under the Conditions of a Standard or Major Language"

Since everybody knows that language is a heterogeneous, variable reality, what is the meaning of the linguists' insistence on carving out a homoge-

neous system in order to make a scientific study possible? It is a question of extracting a set of constants from the variables, or of determining constant relations between variables (this is already evident in the phonologists' concept of commutativity). But the scientific model taking language as an object of study is one with the political model by which language is homogenized, centralized, standardized, becoming a language of power, a major or dominant language. Linguistics can claim all it wants to be science, nothing but pure science—it wouldn't be the first time that the order of pure science was used to secure the requirements of another order. What is grammaticality, and the sign S, the categorical symbol that dominates statements? It is a power marker before it is a syntactical marker, and Chomsky's trees establish constant relations between power variables. Forming grammatically correct sentences is for the normal individual the prerequisite for any submission to social laws. No one is supposed to be ignorant of grammaticality; those who are belong in special institutions. The unity of language is fundamentally political. There is no mother tongue, only a power takeover by a dominant language that at times advances along a broad front, and at times swoops down on diverse centers simultaneously. We can conceive of several ways for a language to homogenize, centralize: the republican way is not necessarily the same as the royal way, and is not the least harsh.³⁶ The scientific enterprise of extracting constants and constant relations is always coupled with the political enterprise of imposing them on speakers and transmitting order-words.

Speak white and loud
yes what a wonderful language
for hiring
giving orders
appointing the hour of death in the works
and of the break that refreshes . . .

Must a distinction then be made between two kinds of languages, "high" and "low," major and minor? The first would be defined precisely by the power (*pouvoir*) of constants, the second by the power (*puissance*) of variation. We do not simply wish to make an opposition between the unity of a major language and the multiplicity of dialects. Rather, each dialect has a zone of transition and variation; or better, each minor language has a properly dialectical zone of variation. According to Malmberg, it is rare to find clear boundaries on dialect maps; instead, there are transitional and limitrophe zones, zones of indiscernibility. It is also said that "the Québécois language is so rich in modulations and variations of regional accents and in games with tonic accents that it sometimes seems, with no exaggeration, that it would be better preserved by musical notation than by

any system of spelling.”³⁷ The very notion of dialect is quite questionable. Moreover, it is relative because one needs to know in relation to what major language it exercises its function: for example, the Québécois language must be evaluated not only in relation to standard French but also in relation to major English, from which it borrows all kinds of phonetic and syntactical elements, in order to set them in variation. The Bantu dialects must be evaluated not only in relation to the mother tongue but also in relation to Afrikaans as a major language, and English as a counter-major language preferred by blacks.³⁸ In short, the notion of dialect does not elucidate that of minor language, but the other way around; it is the minor language that defines dialects through its own possibilities for variation. Should we identify major and minor languages on the basis of regional situations of bilingualism or multilingualism including at least one dominant language and one dominated language, or a world situation giving certain languages an imperialist power over others (for example, the role of American English today)?

At least two things prevent us from adopting this point of view. As Chomsky notes, a dialect, ghetto language, or minor language is not immune to the kind of treatment that draws a homogeneous system from it and extracts constants: Black English has its own grammar, which is not defined by a sum of mistakes or infractions against standard English; but that grammar can be studied only by applying to it the same rules of study that are applied to standard English. In this sense, the notions of major and minor seem to have no linguistic relevance. When French lost its worldwide major function it lost nothing of its constancy and homogeneity, its centralization. Conversely, Afrikaans attained homogeneity when it was a locally minor language struggling against English. Even politically, especially politically, it is difficult to see how the upholders of a minor language can operate if not by giving it (if only by writing in it) a constancy and homogeneity making it a locally major language capable of forcing official recognition (hence the political role of writers who assert the rights of a minor language). But the opposite argument seems more compelling: the more a language has or acquires the characteristics of a major language, the more it is affected by continuous variations that transpose it into a “minor” language. It is futile to criticize the worldwide imperialism of a language by denouncing the corruptions it introduces into other languages (for example, the purists’ criticisms of English influences in French, the petit-bourgeois or academic denunciation of “Franglais”). For if a language such as British English or American English is major on a world scale, it is necessarily worked upon by all the minorities of the world, using very diverse procedures of variation. Take the way Gaelic and Irish English set English in variation. Or the way Black English and any number of

“ghetto languages” set American English in variation, to the point that New York is virtually a city without a language. (Furthermore, American English could not have *constituted* itself without this linguistic labor of the minorities.) Or the linguistic situation in the old Austrian empire: German was a major language in relation to the minorities, but as such it could not avoid being treated by those minorities in a way that made it a minor language in relation to the German of the Germans. There is no language that does not have intralinguistic, endogenous, internal minorities. So at the most general level of linguistics, Chomsky’s and Labov’s positions are constantly passing and converting into each other. Chomsky can say that even a minor, dialectical, or ghetto language cannot be studied unless invariants are extracted from it and “extrinsic or mixed” variables are eliminated; and Labov can respond that even a standard or major language cannot be studied independently of “inherent” variations, which are precisely neither mixed nor extrinsic. *You will never find a homogeneous system that is not still or already affected by a regulated, continuous, immanent process of variation* (why does Chomsky pretend not to understand this?).

There are not, therefore, two kinds of languages but two possible treatments of the same language. Either the variables are treated in such a way as to extract from them constants and constant relations or in such a way as to place them in continuous variation. We were wrong to give the impression at times that constants existed alongside variables, linguistic constants alongside variables of enunciation: that was only for convenience of presentation. For it is obvious that the constants are drawn from the variables themselves; universals in linguistics have no more existence in themselves than they do in economics and are always concluded from a universalization or a rendering-uniform involving variables. *Constant is not opposed to variable*; it is a treatment of the variable opposed to the other kind of treatment, or continuous variation. So-called obligatory rules correspond to the first kind of treatment, whereas optional rules concern the construction of a continuum of variation. Moreover, there are a certain number of categories or distinctions that cannot be invoked, that are inapplicable and useless as a basis for objections because they presuppose the first treatment and are entirely subordinated to the quest for constants: for example, language as opposed to speech; synchrony as opposed to diachrony; competence as opposed to performance; distinctive features as opposed to nondistinctive (or secondarily distinctive) features. For nondistinctive features, whether prosodic, stylistic, or pragmatic, are not only omnipresent variables, in contrast to the presence or absence of a constant; they are not only superlinear and “suprasegmental” elements, in contrast to linear segmental elements; their very characteristics give them the power to place all the elements of language in a state of continuous

variation—for example, the impact of tone on phonemes, accent on morphemes, or intonation on syntax. These are not secondary features but another treatment of language that no longer operates according to the preceding categories.

"Major" and "minor" do not qualify two different languages but rather two usages or functions of language. Bilingualism, of course, provides a good example, but once again we use it simply for the sake of convenience. Doubtless, in the Austrian empire Czech was a minor language in relation to German; but the German of Prague already functioned as a potentially minor language in relation to the German of Vienna or Berlin; and Kafka, a Czechoslovakian Jew writing in German, submits German to creative treatment as a minor language, constructing a continuum of variation, negotiating all of the variables both to constrict the constants and to expand the variables: make language stammer, or make it "wail," stretch tensors through all of language, even written language, and draw from it cries, shouts, pitches, durations, timbres, accents, intensities. Two conjoined tendencies in so-called minor languages have often been noted: an impoverishment, a shedding of syntactical and lexical forms; but simultaneously a strange proliferation of shifting effects, a taste for overload and paraphrase. This applies to the German of Prague, Black English, and Québécois. But with rare exceptions, the interpretation of the linguists has been rather malevolent, invoking a consubstantial poverty and preciousity. The alleged poverty is in fact a restriction of constants and the overload an extension of variations functioning to deploy a continuum sweeping up all components. The poverty is not a lack but a void or ellipsis allowing one to sidestep a constant instead of tackling it head on, or to approach it from above or below instead of positioning oneself within it. And the overload is not a rhetorical figure, a metaphor, or symbolic structure; it is a mobile paraphrase bearing witness to the unlocalized presence of an indirect discourse at the heart of every statement. From both sides we see a rejection of reference points, a dissolution of constant form in favor of differences in dynamic. The closer a language gets to this state, the closer it comes not only to a system of musical notation, but also to music itself.³⁹

Subtract and place in variation, remove and place in variation: a single operation. Minor languages are characterized not by overload and poverty in relation to a standard or major language, but by a sobriety and variation that are like a minor treatment of the standard language, a becoming-minor of the major language. The problem is not the distinction between major and minor language; it is one of a becoming. It is a question not of reterritorializing oneself on a dialect or a patois but of deterritorializing the major language. Black Americans do not oppose Black to English, they transform the American English that is their own language into Black

English. Minor languages do not exist in themselves: they exist only in relation to a major language and are also investments of that language for the purpose of making it minor. One must find the minor language, the dialect or rather idiolect, on the basis of which one can make one's own major language minor. That is the strength of authors termed "minor," who are in fact the greatest, the only greats: having to conquer one's own language, in other words, to attain that sobriety in the use of a major language, in order to place it in a state of continuous variation (the opposite of regionalism). It is in one's own language that one is bilingual or multilingual. Conquer the major language in order to delineate in it as yet unknown minor languages. Use the minor language to *send the major language racing*. Minor authors are foreigners in their own tongue. If they are bastards, if they experience themselves as bastards, it is due not to a mixing or intermingling of languages but rather to a subtraction and variation of their own language achieved by stretching tensors through it.

The notion of *minority* is very complex, with musical, literary, linguistic, as well as juridical and political, references. The opposition between minority and majority is not simply quantitative. Majority implies a constant, of expression or content, serving as a standard measure by which to evaluate it. Let us suppose that the constant or standard is the average adult-white-heterosexual-European-male-speaking a standard language (Joyce's or Ezra Pound's *Ulysses*). It is obvious that "man" holds the majority, even if he is less numerous than mosquitoes, children, women, blacks, peasants, homosexuals, etc. That is because he appears twice, once in the constant and again in the variable from which the constant is extracted. Majority assumes a state of power and domination, not the other way around. It assumes the standard measure, not the other way around. Even Marxism "has almost always translated hegemony from the point of view of the national worker, qualified, male and over thirty-five."⁴⁰ A determination different from that of the constant will therefore be considered minoritarian, by nature and regardless of number, in other words, a subsystem or an outsystem. This is evident in all the operations, electoral or otherwise, where you are given a choice, but on the condition that your choice conform to the limits of the constant ("you mustn't choose to change society . . ."). But at this point, everything is reversed. For the majority, insofar as it is analytically included in the abstract standard, is never anybody, it is always Nobody—*Ulysses*—whereas the minority is the becoming of everybody, one's potential becoming to the extent that one deviates from the model. There is a majoritarian "fact," but it is the analytic fact of Nobody, as opposed to the becoming-minoritarian of everybody. That is why we must distinguish between: the majoritarian as a constant and homogeneous system; minorities as subsystems; and the

minoritarian as a potential, creative and created, becoming. The problem is never to acquire the majority, even in order to install a new constant. There is no becoming-majoritarian; majority is never becoming. All becoming is minoritarian. Women, regardless of their numbers, are a minority, definable as a state or subset; but they create only by making possible a becoming over which they do not have ownership, into which they themselves must enter; this is a becoming-woman affecting all of humankind, men and women both. The same goes for minor languages: they are not simply sublanguages, idiolects or dialects, but potential agents of the major language's entering into a becoming-minoritarian of all of its dimensions and elements. We should distinguish between minor languages, the major language, and the becoming-minor of the major language. Minorities, of course, are objectively definable states, states of language, ethnicity, or sex with their own ghetto territorialities, but they must also be thought of as seeds, crystals of becoming whose value is to trigger uncontrollable movements and deterritorializations of the mean or majority. That is why Pasolini demonstrated that the essential thing, precisely in free indirect discourse, is to be found neither in language A, nor in language B, but "in language X, which is none other than language A in the actual process of becoming language B."⁴¹ There is a universal figure of minoritarian consciousness as the becoming of everybody, and that becoming is creation. One does not attain it by acquiring the majority. The figure to which we are referring is continuous variation, as an amplitude that continually oversteps the representative threshold of the majoritarian standard, by excess or default. In erecting the figure of a universal minoritarian consciousness, one addresses powers (*puissances*) of becoming that belong to a different realm from that of Power (*Pouvoir*) and Domination. Continuous variation constitutes the becoming-minoritarian of everybody, as opposed to the majoritarian Fact of Nobody. Becoming-minoritarian as the universal figure of consciousness is called autonomy. It is certainly not by using a minor language as a dialect, by regionalizing or ghettoizing, that one becomes revolutionary; rather, by using a number of minority elements, by connecting, conjugating them, one invents a specific, unforeseen, autonomous becoming.⁴²

The major and minor mode are two different treatments of language, one of which consists in extracting constants from it, the other in placing it in continuous variation. The order-word is the variable of enunciation that effectuates the condition of possibility of language and defines the usage of its elements according to one of the two treatments; we must therefore return to it as the only "metalanguage" capable of accounting for this double direction, this double treatment of variables. The problem of the functions of language is in general poorly formulated because this order-word

variable, which subsumes all possible functions, is overlooked. Following Canetti's suggestions, we may begin from the following pragmatic situation: the order-word is a death sentence; it always implies a death sentence, even if it has been considerably softened, becoming symbolic, initiatory, temporary, etc. Order-words bring immediate death to those who receive the order, or potential death if they do not obey, or a death they must themselves inflict, take elsewhere. A father's orders to his son, "You will do this," "You will not do that," cannot be separated from the little death sentence the son experiences on a point of his person. Death, death; it is the only judgment, and it is what makes judgment a system. The verdict. *But the order-word is also something else*, inseparably connected: it is like a warning cry or a message to flee. It would be oversimplifying to say that flight is a reaction against the order-word; rather, it is included in it, as its other face in a complex assemblage, its other component. Canetti is right to invoke the lion's roar, which enunciates flight and death simultaneously.⁴³ The order-word has two tones. The prophet receives order-words just as much in taking flight as in longing for death: Jewish prophetism fused the wish to be dead and the flight impulse with the divine order-word.

Now if we consider the first aspect of the order-word, in other words, death as the expressed of the statement, it clearly meets the preceding requirements: even though death essentially concerns bodies, is attributed to bodies, its immediacy, its instantaneousness, lends it the authentic character of an incorporeal transformation. What precedes and follows it may be an extensive system of actions and passions, a slow labor of bodies; in itself, it is neither action nor passion, but a pure act, a pure transformation that enunciation fuses with the statement, the sentence. That man is dead . . . You are already dead when you receive the order-word . . . In effect, death is everywhere, as that ideal, uncrossable boundary separating bodies, their forms, and states, and as the condition, even initiatory, even symbolic, through which a subject must pass in order to change its form or state. This is the sense in which Canetti speaks of "enantiomorphosis":⁴⁴ a regime that involves a hieratic and immutable Master who at every moment legislates by constants, prohibiting or strictly limiting metamorphoses, giving figures clear and stable contours, setting forms in opposition two by two and requiring subjects to die in order to pass from one form to the other. It is always by means of something incorporeal that a body separates and distinguishes itself from another. The figure, insofar as it is the extremity of a body, is the noncorporeal attribute that limits and completes that body: death is the Figure. It is through death that a body reaches completion not only in time but in space, and it is through death that its lines form or outline a shape. There are dead spaces just as there are dead times. "If [enantiomorphosis is] practiced often the whole world shrivels. . . .

Social prohibitions against metamorphosis are perhaps the most important of all. . . . Death itself, the strictest of all boundaries, is what is interposed between classes.”⁴⁵ In a regime of this kind, any new body requires the erection of an opposable form, as well as the formation of distinct subjects; death is the general incorporeal transformation attributed to all bodies from the standpoint of their forms and substances (for example, the body of the Party cannot come into its own without an operation of enantiomorphosis, and without the formation of new activists, which assumes the elimination of the first generation).

It is true that we are bringing in considerations of content as well as expression. For even at the moment when the two planes are most distinct, as the regime of bodies and the regime of signs in an assemblage, they are still in reciprocal presupposition. The incorporeal transformation is the expressed of order-words, but also the attribute of bodies. Not only do linguistic variables of expression enter into relations of formal opposition or distinction favorable to the extraction of constants; nonlinguistic variables of content do also. As Hjelmslev notes, an expression is divided, for example, into phonic units in the same way a content is divided into social, zoological, or physical units (“calf” divides into young-bovine-male).⁴⁶ The network of binarities, or arborescences, is applicable to both sides. There is, however, no analytic resemblance, correspondence, or conformity between the two planes. But their independence does not preclude isomorphism, in other words, the existence of the same kind of constant relations on both sides. It is by virtue of this type of relations that linguistic and nonlinguistic elements are inseparable from the start, despite their absence of correspondence. The elements of content give the interminglings of bodies clear contours at the same time as the elements of expression give the noncorporeal expresseds a power of sentencing or judgment. These elements are all abstract or deterritorialized to different degrees, but in each instance they effect a reterritorialization of the overall assemblage on certain order-words and contours. Indeed, the significance of the doctrine of synthetic judgment is to have demonstrated that there is an a priori link (isomorphism) between Sentence and Figure, form of expression and form of content.

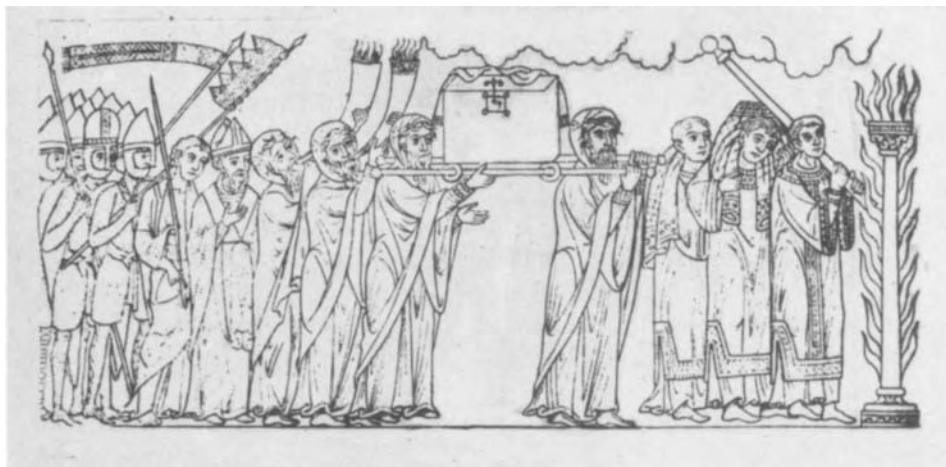
If we consider the other aspect of the order-word, flight rather than death, it appears that variables are in a new state, that of continuous variation. An incorporeal transformation is still attributed to bodies, but it is now a passage to the limit: that is the only way, not to eliminate death, but to reduce it or make it a variation itself. This movement pushes language to its own limits, while bodies are simultaneously caught up in a movement of metamorphosis of their contents or a process of exhaustion causing them to reach or overstep the limit of their figures. This is an appropriate place to

bring up the opposition between minor sciences and major sciences: for example, the tendency of the broken line to become a curve, a whole operative geometry of the trait and movement, a pragmatic science of placings-in-variation that operates in a different manner than the royal or major science of Euclid's invariants and travels a long history of suspicion and even repression (we will return to this question later).⁴⁷ The smallest interval is always diabolical: the master of metamorphoses is opposed to the invariant hieratic king. It is as though an intense matter or a continuum of variation were freed, here in the internal tensors of language, there in the internal tensions of content. The idea of the smallest interval does not apply to figures of the same nature; it implies at least a curve and a straight line, a circle and a tangent. We witness a transformation of substances and a dissolution of forms, a passage to the limit or flight from contours in favor of fluid forces, flows, air, light, and matter, such that a body or a word does not end at a precise point. We witness the incorporeal power of that intense matter, the material power of that language. A matter more immediate, more fluid, and more ardent than bodies or words. In continuous variation the relevant distinction is no longer between a form of expression and a form of content but between two inseparable planes in reciprocal presupposition. The relativity of the distinction between them is now fully realized on the plane of consistency, where the assemblage is swept up by a now absolute deterritorialization. Absolute, however, does not mean undifferentiated: differences, now "infinitely small," are constituted in a single matter serving both for expression as incorporeal power and for content as limitless corporeality. The relation of presupposition between variables of content and expression no longer requires two forms: the placing-in-variation of the variables instead draws the two forms together and effects the conjunction of cutting edges of deterritorialization on both sides; this occurs on the plane of a single liberated matter that contains no figures, is deliberately unformed, and retains in expression and in content only those cutting edges, tensors, and tensions. Gestures and things, voices and sounds, are caught up in the same "opera," swept away by the same shifting effects of stammering, vibrato, tremolo, and overspilling. A synthesizer places all of the parameters in continuous variation, gradually making "fundamentally heterogeneous elements end up turning into each other in some way." The moment this conjunction occurs there is a common matter. It is only at this point that one reaches the abstract machine, or the diagram of the assemblage. The synthesizer has replaced judgment, and matter has replaced the figure or formed substance. It is no longer even appropriate to group biological, physicochemical, and energetic intensities on the one hand, and mathematical, aesthetic, linguistic, informational, semiotic intensities, etc., on the other. The multiplicity of systems

of intensities conjugates or forms a rhizome throughout the entire assemblage the moment the assemblage is swept up by these vectors or tensions of flight. For the question was not how to elude the order-word but how to elude the death sentence it envelops, how to develop its power of escape, how to prevent escape from veering into the imaginary or falling into a black hole, how to maintain or draw out the revolutionary potentiality of the order-word. Hofmannsthal adopts the order-word, "Germany, Germany!", or the need to reterritorialize, even in a "melancholy mirror." But beneath this order-word he hears another, as if the old German "figures" were mere constants that were then effaced to uncover a relation with nature and life all the more profound for being variable. When should this relation to life be a hardening, when submission? At what moment is rebellion called for and at what moment surrender or impassibility? When is dry speech necessary and when exuberance or amusement?⁴⁸ Whatever the breaks and ruptures, only continuous variation brings forth this virtual line, this virtual continuum of life, "the essential element of the real beneath the everyday." There is a splendid statement in one of Herzog's films. The main character asks himself a question and then says, Who will answer this answer? Actually, there is no question, answers are all one ever answers. To the answer already contained in a question (cross-examination, competition, plebiscite, etc.) one should respond with questions from another answer. One should bring forth the order-word of the order-word. In the order-word, life must answer the answer of death, not by fleeing, but by making flight act and create. There are pass-words beneath order-words. Words that pass, words that are components of passage, whereas order-words mark stoppages or organized, stratified compositions. A single thing or word undoubtedly has this twofold nature: it is necessary to extract one from the other—to transform the compositions of order into components of passage.

5. 587 B.C.-A.D. 70: On Several Regimes of Signs

The Order of the Ark of the Israelites



A New Regime

We call any specific formalization of expression a regime of signs, at least when the expression is linguistic. A regime of signs constitutes a semiotic system. But it appears difficult to analyze semiotic systems in themselves: there is always a form of content that is simultaneously inseparable from and independent of the form of expression, and the two forms pertain to assemblages that are not principally linguistic. However, one can proceed as though the formalization of expression were autonomous and self-sufficient. Even if that is done, there is such diversity in the forms of expression, such a mixture of these forms, that it is impossible to attach any particular privilege to the form or regime of the "signifier." If we call the signifying semiotic system semiology, then semiology is only one regime of signs among others, and not the most important one. Hence the necessity of a return to pragmatics, in which language never has universality in itself, self-sufficient formalization, a general semiology, or a meta-

language. Thus it is the study of the signifying regime that first testifies to the inadequacy of linguistic presuppositions, and in the very name of regimes of signs.

There is a simple general formula for the signifying regime of the sign (the signifying sign): every sign refers to another sign, and only to another sign, ad infinitum. That is why, at the limit, one can forgo the notion of the sign, for what is retained is not principally the sign's relation to a state of things it designates, or to an entity it signifies, but only the formal relation of sign to sign insofar as it defines a so-called signifying chain. The limitlessness of signification replaces the sign. When denotation (here, designation and signification taken together) is assumed to be part of connotation, one is wholly within this signifying regime of the sign. Not much attention is paid to *indexes*, in other words, the territorial states of things constituting the designatable. Not much attention is paid to *icons*, that is, operations of reterritorialization constituting the signifiable. Thus the sign has already attained a high degree of relative deterritorialization; it is thought of as a *symbol* in a constant movement of referral from sign to sign. The signifier is the sign in redundancy with the sign. All signs are signs of signs. The question is not yet what a given sign signifies but to which other signs it refers, or which signs add themselves to it to form a network without beginning or end that projects its shadow onto an amorphous atmospheric continuum. It is this amorphous continuum that for the moment plays the role of the "signified," but it continually glides beneath the signifier, for which it serves only as a medium or wall: the specific forms of all contents dissolve in it. The atmospherization or mundanization of contents. Contents are abstracted. This is the situation Lévi-Strauss describes: the world begins to signify before anyone knows *what* it signifies; the signified is given without being known.¹ Your wife looked at you with a funny expression. And this morning the mailman handed you a letter from the IRS and crossed his fingers. Then you stepped in a pile of dog shit. You saw two sticks on the sidewalk positioned like the hands of a watch. They were whispering behind your back when you arrived at the office. It doesn't matter what it means, it's still signifying. The sign that refers to other signs is struck with a strange impotence and uncertainty, but mighty is the signifier that constitutes the chain. The paranoid shares this impotence of the deterritorialized sign assailing him from every direction in the gliding atmosphere, but that only gives him better access to the superpower of the signifier, through the royal feeling of wrath, as master of the network spreading through the atmosphere. The paranoid despotic regime: they are attacking me and making me suffer, but I can guess what they're up to, I'm one step ahead of them, I've always known, I have power even in my impotence. "I'll get them."

Nothing is ever over and done with in a regime of this kind. It's made for that, it's the tragic regime of infinite debt, to which one is simultaneously debtor and creditor. A sign refers to another sign, into which it passes and which carries it into still other signs. "To the point that it returns in a circular fashion . . ." Not only do signs form an infinite network, but the network of signs is infinitely circular. The statement survives its object, the name survives its owner. Whether it passes into other signs or is kept in reserve for a time, the sign survives both its state of things and its signified; it leaps like an animal or a dead person to regain its place in the chain and invest a new state, a new signified, from which it will in turn extricate itself.² A hint of the eternal return. There is a whole regime of roving, floating statements, suspended names, signs lying in wait to return and be propelled by the chain. The signifier as the self-redundancy of the deterritorialized sign, a funereal world of terror.

But what counts is less this circularity of signs than the multiplicity of the circles or chains. The sign refers not only to other signs in the same circle, but to signs in other circles or spirals as well. Robert Lowie describes how Crow and Hopi men react differently when their wives cheat on them (the Crow are nomadic hunters and the Hopi sedentaries with an imperial tradition): "A Crow Indian whose wife has cheated on him slashes her face, whereas the Hopi who has fallen victim to the same misfortune, without losing his calm, withdraws and prays for drought and famine to descend on the village." It is easy to see where the paranoia resides, the despotic element or signifying regime, or again, as Lévi-Strauss says, "the bigotry": "In effect, for a Hopi everything is connected: a social disturbance or a domestic incident calls into question the system of the universe, the levels of which are united by multiple correspondences; a disruption on one plane is only intelligible, and morally tolerable, as a projection of other disruptions involving other levels."³ The Hopi jump from one circle to another, or from one sign to another on a different spiral. One leaves the village or the city, only to return. The jumps may be regulated not only by presignifying rituals but also by a whole imperial bureaucracy passing judgment on their legitimacy. The jumps are not made at random, they are not without rules. Not only are they regulated, but some are prohibited: Do not overstep the outermost circle, do not approach the innermost circle . . . There is a distinction between circles because, although all signs refer to each other only to the extent that they are deterritorialized, oriented toward the same center of signification, distributed throughout an amorphous continuum, they have different speeds of deterritorialization attesting to a place of origin (temple, palace, house, street, village, bush, etc.), and they have differential relations maintaining the distinction between circles or constituting thresholds in the atmosphere of the continuum (private and public, family

incident and social disorder). Moreover, the distribution of these thresholds and circles changes according to the case. Deception is fundamental to the system. Jumping from circle to circle, always moving the scene, playing it out somewhere else: such is the hysterical operation of the deceiver as subject, answering to the paranoid operation of the despot installed in his center of signification.

There is one other aspect: the signifying regime is not simply faced with the task of organizing into circles signs emitted from every direction; it must constantly assure the expansion of the circles or spiral, it must provide the center with more signifier to overcome the entropy inherent in the system and to make new circles blossom or replenish the old. Thus a secondary mechanism in the service of signification is necessary: interpretation or interpretation. This time the signifier assumes a new figure: it is no longer the amorphous continuum that is given without being known and across which the network of signs is strung. A portion of signified is made to correspond to a sign or group of signs for which that signified has been deemed suitable, thus making it knowable. To the syntagmatic axis of the sign referring to other signs is added a paradigmatic axis on which the sign, thus formalized, fashions for itself a suitable signified (once again there is abstraction of the content, but in a new way). The interpretive priest, the seer, is one of the despot-god's bureaucrats. A new aspect of deception arises, the deception of the priest: interpretation is carried to infinity and never encounters anything to interpret that is not already itself an interpretation. The signified constantly reimparts signifier, recharges it or produces more of it. The form always comes from the signifier. The ultimate signified is therefore the signifier itself, in its redundancy or "excess." It is perfectly futile to claim to transcend interpretation or even communication through the production of signifier, because communication and interpretation are what always serve to reproduce and produce signifier. That is certainly not the way to revive the notion of production. The discovery of the psychoanalyst-priests (a discovery every kind of priest or seer made in their time) was that interpretation had to be subordinated to signification, to the point that the signifier would impart no signified without the signified reimpacting signifier in its turn. Actually, there is no longer even any need to interpret, but that is because the best interpretation, the weightiest and most radical one, is an eminently significant silence. It is well known that although psychoanalysts have ceased to speak, they interpret even more, or better yet, fuel interpretation on the part of the subject, who jumps from one circle of hell to the next. In truth, signification and interpretosis are the two diseases of the earth or the skin, in other words, humankind's fundamental neurosis.

There is not much to say about the center of signification, or the Signifier

in person, because it is a pure abstraction no less than a pure principle; in other words, it is nothing. Lack or excess, it hardly matters. It comes to the same thing to say that the sign refers to other signs ad infinitum and that the infinite set of all signs refers to a supreme signifier. At any rate, this pure formal redundancy of the signifier could not even be conceptualized if it did not have its own substance of expression, for which we must find a name: *faciality*. Not only is language always accompanied by faciality traits, but the face crystallizes all redundancies, it emits and receives, releases and recaptures signifying signs. It is a whole body unto itself: it is like the body of the center of signification to which all of the deterritorialized signs affix themselves, and it marks the limit of their deterritorialization. The voice emanates from the face; that is why, however fundamentally important the writing machine is in the imperial bureaucracy, what is written retains an oral or nonbook character. The face is the Icon proper to the signifying regime, the reterritorialization internal to the system. The signifier reterritorializes on the face. The face is what gives the signifier substance; it is what fuels interpretation, and it is what changes, changes traits, when interpretation reimparts signifier to its substance. Look, his expression changed. The signifier is always facialized. Faciality reigns materially over that whole constellation of significances and interpretations (psychologists have written extensively on the baby's relations to the mother's face, and sociologists on the role of the face in mass media and advertising). The despot-god has never hidden his face, far from it: he makes himself one, or even several. The mask does not hide the face, it *is* the face. The priest administers the face of the god. With the despot, everything is public, and everything that is public is so by virtue of the face. Lies and deception may be a fundamental part of the signifying regime, but secrecy is not.⁴ Conversely, when the face is effaced, when the faciality traits disappear, we can be sure that we have entered another regime, other zones infinitely muter and more imperceptible where subterranean becomings-animal occur, becomings-molecular, nocturnal deterritorializations over-spilling the limits of the signifying system. The despot or god brandishes the solar face that is his entire body, as the body of the signifier. He looked at me queerly, he knitted his brow, what did I do to make him change expression? I have her picture in front of me, it's as if she were watching me . . . Surveillance by the face, as Strindberg said. Overcoding by the signifier, irradiation in all directions, unlocalized omnipresence.

Finally, the face or body of the despot or god has something like a counterbody: the body of the tortured, or better, of the excluded. There is no question that these two bodies communicate, for the body of the despot is sometimes subjected to trials of humiliation or even torture, or of exile and exclusion. "At the opposite pole one might imagine placing the body of

the condemned man; he, too, has his legal status; he gives rise to his own ceremonial . . . not in order to ground the surplus power possessed by the person of the sovereign, but in order to code the lack of power with which those subjected to punishment are marked. In the darkest region of the political field the condemned man outlines the symmetrical, inverted figure of the king.⁵ The one who is tortured is fundamentally one who loses his or her face, entering into a becoming-animal, a becoming-molecular the ashes of which are thrown to the wind. But it appears that the one who is tortured is not at all the final term, but rather the first step before exclusion. Oedipus, at least, understood that. He tortured himself, gouged out his own eyes, then went away. The rite, the becoming-animal of the scapegoat clearly illustrates this: a first expiatory animal is sacrificed, but a second is driven away, sent out into the desert wilderness. In the signifying regime, the scapegoat represents a new form of increasing entropy in the system of signs: it is charged with everything that was "bad" in a given period, that is, everything that resisted signifying signs, everything that eluded the referral from sign to sign through the different circles; it also assumes everything that was unable to recharge the signifier at its center and carries off everything that spills beyond the outermost circle. Finally, and especially, it incarnates that line of flight the signifying regime cannot tolerate, in other words, an absolute deterritorialization; the regime must block a line of this kind or define it in an entirely negative fashion precisely because it exceeds the degree of deterritorialization of the signifying sign, however high it may be. The line of flight is like a tangent to the circles of significance and the center of the signifier. It is under a curse. The goat's anus stands opposite the face of the despot or god. Anything that threatens to put the system to flight will be killed or put to flight itself. Anything that exceeds the excess of the signifier or passes beneath it will be marked with a negative value. Your only choice will be between a goat's ass and the face of the god, between sorcerers and priests. The complete system, then, consists of the paranoid face or body of the despot-god in the signifying center of the temple; the interpreting priests who continually recharge the signified in the temple, transforming it into signifier; the hysterical crowd of people outside, clumped in tight circles, who jump from one circle to another; the faceless, depressive scapegoat emanating from the center, chosen, treated, and adorned by the priests, cutting across the circles in its headlong flight into the desert. This excessively hasty overview is applicable not only to the imperial despotic regime but to all subjected, arborescent, hierarchical, centered groups: political parties, literary movements, psychoanalytic associations, families, conjugal units, etc. The photo, faciality, redundancy, significance, and interpretation are at work everywhere. The dreary world of the signifier; its archaism with an always contemporary function;

its essential deception, connoting all of its aspects; its profound antics. The signifier reigns over every domestic squabble, and in every State apparatus.

The signifying regime of the sign is defined by eight aspects or principles: (1) the sign refers to another sign, *ad infinitum* (the limitlessness of signiance, which deterritorializes the sign); (2) the sign is brought back by other signs and never ceases to return (the circularity of the deterritorialized sign); (3) the sign jumps from circle to circle and constantly displaces the center at the same time as it ties into it (the metaphor or hysteria of signs); (4) the expansion of the circles is assured by interpretations that impart signified and reimpart signifier (the interpretosis of the priest); (5) the infinite set of signs refers to a supreme signifier presenting itself as both lack and excess (the despotic signifier, the limit of the system's deterritorialization); (6) the form of the signifier has a substance, or the signifier has a body, namely, the Face (the principle of faciality traits, which constitute a reterritorialization); (7) the system's line of flight is assigned a negative value, condemned as that which exceeds the signifying regime's power of deterritorialization (the principle of the scapegoat); (8) the regime is one of universal deception, in its jumps, in the regulated circles, in the seer's regulation of interpretations, in the publicness of the facialized center, and in the treatment of the line of flight.

Not only is this semiotic system not the first, but we see no reason to accord it any particular privilege from the standpoint of an abstract evolutionism. We would like to indicate very briefly certain characteristics of the other two semiotic systems. First, the so-called primitive, *presignifying semiotic*, which is much closer to "natural" codings operating without signs. There is no reduction to faciality as the sole substance of expression: there is no elimination of forms of content through abstraction of the signified. To the extent that there is still abstraction of content from a strictly semiotic point of view, it fosters a pluralism or polyvocality of forms of expression that prevents any power takeover by the signifier and preserves expressive forms particular to content; thus forms of corporeality, gesturality, rhythm, dance, and rite coexist heterogeneously with the vocal form.⁶ A variety of forms and substances of expression intersect and form relays. It is a segmentary but plurilinear, multidimensional semiotic that wards off any kind of signifying circularity. Segmentarity is the law of the lineages. Here, the sign owes its degree of relative deterritorialization not to a perpetual referral to other signs but rather to a confrontation between the territorialities and compared segments from which each sign is extracted (the camp, the bush, the moving of the camp). Not only is the polyvocality of statements preserved, but it is possible to finish with a statement: A name that has been used up is abolished, a situation quite

unlike the placing in reserve or transformation occurring in the signifying semiotic. The meaning of cannibalism in a presignifying regime is precisely this: eating the name, a semiography that is fully a part of a semiotic in spite of its relation to content (the relation is an expressive one).⁷ It should not be thought that a semiotic of this kind functions by ignorance, repression, or foreclosure of the signifier. On the contrary, it is animated by a keen presentiment of what is to come. It does not need to understand it to fight against it. It is wholly destined by its very segmentarity and polyvocality to avert the already-present threat: universalizing abstraction, erection of the signifier, circularity of statements, and their correlates, the State apparatus, the instatement of the despot, the priestly caste, the scapegoat, etc. Every time they eat a dead man, they can say: one more the State won't get.

There is another semiotic, the *countersignifying* semiotic (whose most notable representatives are the fearsome, warlike, and animal-raising nomads, as opposed to hunter nomads, who belong to the previous semiotic). This time, the semiotic proceeds less by segmentarity than by arithmetic and numeration. Of course, the number already played a role of great importance in the division and union of segmentary lineages; it also had a function of decisive importance in the signifying imperial bureaucracy. But that was a kind of number that represented or signified, a number "incited, produced, caused by something other than itself." On the contrary, a numerical sign that is not produced by something outside the system of marking it institutes, which marks a mobile and plural distribution, which itself determines functions and relations, which arrives at arrangements rather than totals, distributions rather than collections, which operates more by breaks, transitions, migration, and accumulation than by combining units—a sign of this kind would appear to belong to the semiotic of a nomad war machine directed against the State apparatus. The numbering number.⁸ Its numerical organization into tens, fifties, hundreds, thousands, etc., and the associated spatial organization were obviously adopted by State armies, but basically bear witness to a military system specific to the great nomads of the steppes, from the Hyksos to the Mongols. They were superposed upon the principle of lineage. Secrecy and spying are important elements of the war machine's semiotic of Numbers. The role of Numbers in the Bible is not unrelated to the nomads, since Moses got the idea from his father-in-law, Jethro the Kenite: he used it as an organizational principle for the march and migration, and applied it himself to the military domain. In this countersignifying regime, the imperial despotic line of flight is replaced by a line of abolition that turns back against the great empires, cuts across them and destroys them, or else conquers them and integrates with them to form a mixed semiotic.

We would like to go into greater detail on a fourth regime of signs, the *postsignifying* regime, which has different characteristics opposing it to significance and is defined by a unique procedure, that of “subjectification.”

There are many regimes of signs. Our own list is arbitrarily limited. There is no reason to identify a regime or a semiotic system with a people or historical moment. There is such mixture within the same period or the same people that we can say no more than that a given people, language, or period assures the relative dominance of a certain regime. Perhaps all semiotics are mixed and not only combine with various forms of content but also combine different regimes of signs. Presignifying elements are always active in the signifying regime; countersignifying elements are always present and at work within it; and postsignifying elements are already there. Even that is to mark too much temporality. The semiotics and their mixtures may appear in a history of confrontation and intermingling of peoples, but also in languages in which there are several competing functions, or in a psychiatric hospital in which different forms of insanity coexist among the patients or even combine in a single patient; or in an ordinary conversation in which people are speaking the same tongue but different languages (all of a sudden a fragment of an unexpected semiotic surfaces). We are not suggesting an evolutionism, we are not even doing history. Semiotic systems depend on assemblages, and it is the assemblages that determine that a given people, period, or language, and even a given style, fashion, pathology, or minuscule event in a limited situation, can assure the predominance of one semiotic or another. We are trying to make maps of regimes of signs: we can turn them around or retain selected coordinates or dimensions, and depending on the case we will be dealing with a social formation, a pathological delusion (*délire*), a historical event, etc. We will see this on another occasion when we deal with a dated social system, “courtly love,” and then switch to a private enterprise called “masochism.” We can also combine maps or separate them. To make the distinction between two types of semiotics (for example, the postsignifying regime and the signifying regime), we must consider very diverse domains simultaneously.

In the first years of the twentieth century, psychiatry, at the height of its clinical skills, confronted the problem of nonhallucinatory delusions in which mental integrity is retained without “intellectual diminishment.” There was a first major grouping, paranoid or interpretive delusions, which already subsumed various aspects. But the question of the possible independence of another group was prefigured in Esquirol’s monomania and Kraepelin’s querulous delusion, and later defined by Sérieux and Capgras as grievance delusion, and by Clémambault as passionnal delusion

(“querulousness or seeking redress, jealousy, erotomania”). Basing ourselves on very fine studies of Sérieux and Capgras on the one hand, and Clérambault on the other (the latter took the distinction furthest), we will contrast a paranoid-interpretive ideal regime of signifiance with a passionnal, postsignifying subjective regime. The first regime is defined by an insidious onset and a hidden center bearing witness to endogenous forces organized around an idea; by the development of a network stretching across an amorphous continuum, a gliding atmosphere into which the slightest incident may be carried; by an organization of radiating circles expanding by circular irradiation in all directions, and in which the individual jumps from one point to another, one circle to another, approaches the center then moves away, operates prospectively and retrospectively; and by a transformation of the atmosphere, as a function of variable traits or secondary centers clustered around a principal nucleus. The second regime, on the contrary, is defined by a decisive external occurrence, by a relation with the outside that is expressed more as an emotion than an idea, and more as effort or action than imagination (“active delusion rather than ideational delusion”); by a limited constellation operating in a single sector; by a “postulate” or “concise formula” serving as the point of departure for a linear series or proceeding that runs its course, at which point a new proceeding begins. In short, it operates *by the linear and temporal succession of finite proceedings, rather than by the simultaneity of circles in unlimited expansion.*⁹

This story of two kinds of delusions without intellectual diminishment is of great importance. For it is not a disruption of a preexisting discipline of psychiatry; it lies at the heart of the constitution of the psychiatrist in the nineteenth century and explains why he or she was from the start what he or she has been ever since: the psychiatrist was born cornered, caught between legal, police, humanitarian demands, accused of not being a true doctor, suspected of mistaking the sane for mad and the mad for sane, prey to quandaries of conscience, the last Hegelian *belle âme*. If we consider the two types of intact delusions, we can say that people in the first group seem to be completely mad, but aren’t: President Schreber developed his radiating paranoia and relations with God in every direction, but he was not mad in that he remained capable of managing his wealth wisely and distinguishing between circles. At the other pole are those who do not seem mad in any way, but are, as borne out by their sudden actions, such as quarrels, arsons, murders (Esquirol’s four great monomanias, erotic, intellectual, arson, and homicidal, already belong in this category). In short, psychiatry was not at all constituted in relation to the concept of madness, or even as a modification of that concept, but rather by *its split in these two opposite directions*. And is it not our own double image, all of ours, that psychiatry

thus reveals: seeming mad without being it, then being it without seeming it? (This twofold assertion is also psychoanalysis's point of departure, its way of linking into psychiatry: we seem to be mad but aren't, observe the dream; we are mad but don't seem to be, observe everyday life.) Thus psychiatrists were alternately in the position of on the one hand pleading for tolerance and understanding, underscoring the uselessness of confinement, appealing for open-door asylums; and on the other arguing for stepped-up surveillance and special high-security asylums, stricter measures necessitated by the fact that the mad seemed not to be.¹⁰ Is it by chance that the distinction between the two major kinds of delusions, ideational and active, in many ways recapitulates the distinction between the classes (paranoiacs do not particularly need to be committed, they are usually bourgeois, whereas monomaniacs, passionnal redress-seekers, are most often from the working and rural classes, or are marginal, as in the case of political assassins).¹¹ A class with radiant, irradiating ideas (but of course!) against a class reduced to linear, sporadic, partial, local actions . . . All paranoiacs are not bourgeois, all passionnals or monomaniacs are not proletarian. But God and his psychiatrists are charged with recognizing, among these de facto mixes, those who preserve, even in delusion, the class-based social order, and those who sow disorder, even strictly localized, such as haystack fires, parental murders, déclassé love and aggression.

We are trying, then, to make a distinction between a paranoid, signifying, despotic regime of signs and a passionnal or subjective, postsignifying, authoritarian regime. Authoritarian is assuredly not the same as despotic, passionnal is not the same as paranoid, and subjective is not the same as signifying. What happens in the second regime, by comparison with the signifying regime as we have already defined it? In the first place, *a sign or packet of signs detaches from the irradiating circular network* and sets to work on its own account, starts running a straight line, as though swept into a narrow, open passage. Already the signifying system drew a line of flight or deterritorialization exceeding the specific index of its deterritorialized signs, but the system gave that line a negative value and sent the scapegoat fleeing down it. Here, it seems that the line receives a positive sign, as though it were effectively occupied and followed by a people who find in it their reason for being or destiny. Once again, we are not, of course, doing history: we are not saying that a people invents this regime of signs, only that at a given moment a people effectuates the assemblage that assures the relative dominance of that regime under certain historical conditions (and that regime, that dominance, that assemblage may be assured under other conditions, for example, pathological, literary, romantic, or entirely mundane). We are not saying that a people is possessed by a given type of delusion but that the map of a delusion, its coordinates considered, may

coincide with the map of a people, its coordinates considered. The paranoid Pharaoh and the passionnal Hebrew? In the case of the Jewish people, a group of signs detaches from the Egyptian imperial network of which it was a part and sets off down a line of flight into the desert, pitting the most authoritarian of subjectivities against despotic signification, the most passionnal and least interpretive of delusions against interpretationnal paranoid delusion, in short, a linear “proceeding and grievance” against the irradiating circular network. *Your grievance, your proceeding:* that is Moses’ word to his people, and the proceedings come one after the other along a line of Passion.¹² From this Kafka derives his own conception of querulousness or the proceeding, and the succession of linear segments: the father-proceeding, hotel-proceeding, ship-proceeding, court-proceeding . . .

We cannot overlook the most fundamental or extensive event in the history of the Jewish people: the destruction of the Temple, in two stages (587 B.C. and A.D. 70). The whole history of the Temple—the mobility and fragility of the ark, then the construction of a House by Solomon, its reconstruction under Darius, etc.—has meaning only in relation to renewed proceedings of destruction, the two supreme moments of which came with Nebuchadnezzar and Titus. A temple, mobile, fragile, or destroyed: the ark is no more than a little portable packet of signs. An entirely negative line of flight occupied by the animal or scapegoat laden with all the dangers threatening the signifier has become an impossibility. Let misfortune befall us: this formula punctuates Jewish history. It is we who must follow the most deterritorialized line, the line of the scapegoat, but we will change its sign, we will turn it into the positive line of our subjectivity, our Passion, our proceeding or grievance. We will be our own scapegoat. We will be the lamb: “The God who, like a lion, was given blood sacrifice must be shoved into the background, and the sacrificed god must occupy the foreground. . . . God became the animal that was slain, instead of the animal that does the slaying.”¹³ We will follow, we will wed the tangent separating the land from the waters, we will separate the circular network from the gliding continuum, we will make the line of separation our own, in order to forge our path along it and dissociate the elements of the signifier (the dove of the ark). A narrow line of march, an in-between that is not a mean but a slender line. There is a Jewish specificity, immediately affirmed in a semiotic system. This semiotic, however, is no less mixed than any other. On the one hand, it is intimately related to the countersignifying regime of the nomads (the Hebrews had a nomadic past, a continuing relationship with the nomadic numerical organization that inspired them, and their own particular becoming-nomad; their line of deterritorialization owed much to the military line of nomadic destruction).¹⁴ On the other hand, it

has an essential relation to the signifying semiotic itself, for which the Hebrews and their God would always be nostalgic: reestablish an imperial society and integrate with it, enthrone a king like everybody else (Samuel), rebuild a temple that would finally be solid (David and Solomon, Zachariah), erect the spiral of the Tower of Babel and find the face of God again; not just bring the wandering to a halt, but overcome the diaspora, which itself exists only as a function of an ideal regathering. We only have space to indicate what, in this mixed semiotic, bears witness to the new postsignifying subjective or passionnal regime.

Faciality undergoes a profound transformation. The god averts his face, which must be seen by no one; and the subject, gripped by a veritable fear of the god, averts his or her face in turn. The averted faces, in profile, replace the frontal view of the radiant face. It is this double turning away that draws the positive line of flight. The prophet is the main figure in this assemblage; he needs a sign to guarantee the word of God, he is himself marked by a sign indicating the special regime to which he belongs. It is Spinoza who has elaborated the profoundest theory of prophetism, taking into account the semiotic proper to it. Cain, who turns away from the God who turns away from him, already follows the line of deterritorialization, protected by a sign allowing him to escape death. The mark of Cain. A punishment worse than imperial death? The Jewish God invented the reprieve, existence in reprieve, *indefinite postponement*.¹⁵ But He also invented the positivity of alliance, or the covenant, as the new relation with the deity, since the subject remains alive. Abel, whose name is vanity, is nothing; Cain is the true man. This is very different from the system of rigging or deception animating the face of the signifier, the interpretation of the seer and the displacements of the subject. It is the regime of betrayal, universal betrayal, in which the true man never ceases to betray God just as God betrays man, with the wrath of God defining the new positivity. Before his death, Moses receives the words of the great song of betrayal. Even the prophet, unlike the seer-priest, is fundamentally a traitor and thus fulfills God's order better than anyone who remained faithful could. God calls upon Jonah to go to Nineveh to entreat the inhabitants, who had repeatedly betrayed God, to mend their ways. But Jonah's first act is to take off in the opposite direction; he also betrays God, fleeing "far from the face of Adonai."¹⁶ He takes a ship for Tarshish and sleeps, like a righteous man. The tempest sent by God causes him to be thrown into the sea, where he is swallowed by the great fish and vomited out at the boundary between land and water, the limit of separation or line of flight earlier occupied by the dove of the Ark (Jonah, precisely, is the word for dove). But Jonah, in fleeing from the face of God, did exactly what God had wanted: he took the evil of Nineveh upon himself; he did it even more effectively than God had wanted, he

anticipated God. That is why he slept like a righteous man. God let him live, temporarily protected by the tree of Cain, but then made the tree die because Jonah had renewed the covenant by occupying the line of flight.¹⁷ Jesus universalizes the system of betrayal: he betrays the God of the Jews, he betrays the Jews, he is betrayed by God (“Why hast thou forsaken me?” [Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34—Trans.]), he is betrayed by Judas, the true man. He took evil upon himself, but the Jews who kill him also take it upon themselves. Jesus is asked for a sign of his divine descent: he invokes the sign of Jonah [Luke 11:29—Trans.]. Cain, Jonah, and Jesus constitute three great linear proceedings along which signs rush and form relays. There are many others. Everywhere a double turning away on a line of flight.

When a prophet declines the burden God entrusts to him (Moses, Jeremiah, Isaiah, etc.), it is not because the burden would have been too heavy, as with an imperial oracle or seer who refuses a dangerous mission. It is instead a case like Jonah's, who by hiding and fleeing and betraying anticipates the will of God more effectively than if he had obeyed. The prophet is always being forced by God, literally violated by him, much more than inspired by him. The prophet is not a priest. The prophet does not know how to talk, God puts the words in his mouth: word-ingestion, a new form of semiophagy. Unlike the seer, the prophet interprets nothing: *his delusion is active rather than ideational or imaginative*, his relation to God is passionnal and authoritative rather than despotic and signifying; he anticipates and detects the powers (*puissances*) of the future rather than applying past and present powers (*pouvoirs*). Faciality traits no longer function to prevent the formation of a line of flight, or to form a body of significance controlling that line and sending only a faceless goat down it. Rather, it is faciality itself that organizes the line of flight, in the face-off between two countenances that become gaunt and turn away in profile. Betrayal has become an idée fixe, the main obsession, replacing the deceit of the paranoid and the hysterical. The “persecutor-persecuted” relation has no relevance whatsoever: its meaning is altogether different in the authoritarian passionnal regime than in the despotic paranoid regime.

Something is still bothering us: the story of Oedipus. Oedipus is almost unique in the Greek world. The whole first part is imperial, despotic, paranoid, interpretive, divinatory. But the whole second part is Oedipus's wandering, his line of flight, the double turning away of his own face and that of God. Rather than very precise limits to be crossed in order, or which one does not have the right to cross (*hybris*), there is a concealed limit toward which Oedipus is swept. Rather than interpretive signifying irradiation, there is a subjective linear proceeding permitting Oedipus to keep a secret, but only as a residue capable of starting a new linear proceeding. Oedipus,

his name is *atheos*: he invents something worse than death or exile, he wanders and survives on a strangely positive line of separation or deterritorialization. Hölderlin and Heidegger see this as the birth of the *double turning away*, the change of face, and also the birth of modern tragedy, for which they bizarrely credit the Greeks: the outcome is no longer murder or sudden death but survival under reprieve, unlimited postponement.¹⁸ Nietzsche suggests that Oedipus, as opposed to Prometheus, was the Semitic myth of the Greeks, the glorification of Passion or passivity.¹⁹ Oedipus: Greek Cain. Let us return to psychoanalysis. It was not by chance that Freud pounced upon Oedipus. Psychoanalysis is a definite case of a mixed semiotic: a despotic regime of signifiance and interpretation, with irradiation of the face, but also an authoritarian regime of subjectification and prophetism, with a turning away of the face (the positioning of the psychoanalyst behind the patient suddenly assumes its full significance). Recent efforts to explain that a “signifier represents the subject for another signifier” are typically syncretic: a linear proceeding of subjectivity along with a circular development of the signifier and interpretation. Two absolutely different regimes of signs in a mix. But the worst, most underhanded of powers are founded on it.

One more remark on the story of authoritarian passionnal betrayal, as opposed to despotic paranoid deception. Everything is infamy, but Borges botched his history of universal infamy.²⁰ He should have distinguished between the great realm of deceptions and the great realm of betrayals. And also between the various figures of betrayal. There is, in effect, a second figure of betrayal that springs up at certain places at certain times, but always as a function of a variable assemblage with new components. Christianity is a particularly important case of a mixed semiotic, with its signifying imperial combination together with its postsignifying Jewish subjectivity. It transforms both the ideal signifying system and the postsignifying passionnal system. It invents a new assemblage. Heresies are still a part of deception, just as orthodoxy is a part of signifiance. But there are heresies that are more than heresies and profess pure treason, for example, the Buggers; it is not by chance that the Bulgars played a special role.²¹ Beware the Bulgars, as Monsieur Plume would say. The problem is one of territorialities in relation to deep movements of deterritorialization. England, another territoriality or another deterritorialization: Cromwell, everywhere a traitor, a straight line of passionnal subjectification opposed to the royal center of signifiance and the intermediary circles: the dictator against the despot. Richard III, the deformed, the twisted, whose ideal is to betray everything: he confronts Lady Anne in a face-off in which the two countenances turn away, but each knows she or he is the other's, destined for the other. This is unlike Shakespeare's other historical dramas, in which kings

and assassins deceive in order to take power but then become good kings. That kind are men of the State. Richard III comes from elsewhere: his ventures, including those with women, derive more from a war machine than from a State apparatus. He is the traitor, springing from the great nomads and their secrecy. He says so from the beginning, when he mentions a secret project infinitely surpassing the conquest of power. He wants to return the war machine both to the fragile State and pacified couples. The only one to guess is Lady Anne, fascinated, terrified, consenting. Elizabethan theater is full of these traitorous characters who aspire to be absolute traitors, in opposition to the deceptions of the man of the court or even of the State.

How many betrayals accompanied the great discoveries of Christendom, the discovery of new lands and continents! Lines of deterritorialization on which small groups betray everything, their companions, the king, the indigenous peoples, the neighboring explorer, in the mad hope of founding, with a woman of their family, a race that would finally be pure and represent a new beginning. Herzog's film, *Aguirre*, is very Shakespearean. Aguirre asks, How can one be a traitor everywhere and in everything? I'm the only traitor here. No more deception, it's time for betrayal. What a grandiose dream! I will be the last traitor, the total traitor, and therefore the last man.

Then there was the Reformation: the extraordinary figure of Luther, as traitor to all things and all people; his personal relation with the Devil resulting in betrayal, through good deeds as well as bad.

These new figures of betrayal always return to the Old Testament: I am the wrath of God. But betrayal has become humanist, it does not fall between God and his own men; it relies on God, but falls between the men of God and the others, denounced as deceivers. In the end, there is only one man of God or of the wrath of God, a single betrayer against all deceivers. But every deceiver is mixed, and which does not take him- or herself to be the one? And what betrayer does not say to him- or herself at some point that he or she was nothing but a deceiver after all? (See the strange case of Maurice Sachs.)

It is clear that the book, or what takes its place, has a different meaning in the signifying paranoid regime than in the postsignifying passionnal regime. In the first case, there is an emission of the despotic signifier, and its interpretation by scribes and priests, which fixes the signified and reimparts signifier; but there is also, from sign to sign, a movement from one territory to another, a circulation assuring a certain speed of deterritorialization (for example, the circulation of an epic, or the rivalry between several cities for the birth of a hero, or, once again, the role of scribe-priests in exchanges of territorialities and genealogies).²² What takes the place of the book always has an external model, a referent, face,

family, or territory that preserves the book's oral character. On the contrary, in the passional regime the book seems to be internalized, and to internalize everything: it becomes the sacred written Book. It takes the place of the face and God, who hides his face and gives Moses the inscribed stone tablets. God manifests himself through trumpets and the Voice, but what is heard in sound is the nonface, just as what is seen in the book are words. *The book has become the body of passion*, just as the face was the body of the signifier. It is now the book, the most deterritorialized of things, that fixes territories and genealogies. The latter are what the book says, and the former the place at which the book is said. The function of interpretation has totally changed. Or it disappears entirely in favor of a pure and literal recitation forbidding the slightest change, addition, or commentary (the famous "stultify yourself" of the Christians belongs to this passionnal line; the Koran goes the furthest in this direction). Or else interpretation survives but becomes internal to the book itself, which loses its circulatory function for outside elements: for example, the different types of coded interpretation are fixed according to axes internal to the book; interpretation is organized according to correspondences between two books, such as the Old and New Testaments, and may even induce a third book suffused by the same element of interiority.²³ Finally, interpretation may reject all intermediaries or specialists and become direct, since the book is written both in itself and in the heart, once as a point of subjectification and again in the subject (the Reformation conception of the book). In any case, this is the point of departure for the delusional passion of the book as origin and finality of the world. The unique book, the total work, all possible combinations *inside* the book, the tree-book, the cosmos-book: all of these platitudes so dear to the avant-gardes, which cut the book off from its relations with the outside, are even worse than the chant of the signifier. Of course, they are entirely bound up with a mixed semiotic. But in truth they have a particularly pious origin. Wagner, Mallarmé, and Joyce, Marx and Freud: still Bibles. If passional delusion is profoundly monomaniacal, monomania for its part found a fundamental element of its assemblage in monotheism and the Book. The strangest cult.

This is how things are in the passional regime, or the regime of subjectification. There is no longer a center of signification connected to expanding circles or an expanding spiral, but a point of subjectification constituting the point of departure of the line. There is no longer a signifier-signified relation, but a subject of enunciation issuing from the point of subjectification and a subject of the statement in a determinable relation to the first subject. There is no longer sign-to-sign circularity, but a linear proceeding into which the sign is swept via subjects. We may consider these three diverse realms.

1. *The Jews as opposed to the empires.* God withdraws his face, becoming a point of subjectification for the drawing of a line of flight or deterritorialization; Moses is the subject of enunciation, constituted on the basis of the tablets of God that replace the face; the Jewish people constitute the subject of the statement, for betrayal as well as for a new land, and enter an ever-renewed covenant or linear “proceeding” rather than a circular expansion.

2. *So-called modern, or Christian, philosophy:* Descartes as opposed to ancient philosophy. There is a primacy of the idea of the infinite as an absolutely necessary point of subjectification. The Cogito, consciousness, the “I think” is the subject of enunciation that reflects its own use and conceives of itself following a line of deterritorialization represented by methodical doubt. The subject of the statement is the union of the soul and the body, or feeling, guaranteed in a complex way by the cogito, and performs the necessary reterritorializations. The cogito is a proceeding that must always be recommenced, haunted by the possibility of betrayal, a deceitful God, and an evil Genius. When Descartes says, I can infer “I think therefore I am” but not “I walk therefore I am,” he is initiating the distinction between the two subjects (what still-Cartesian contemporary linguists call a shifter, even though they find traces of the second subject in the first).

3. *Nineteenth-century psychiatry:* monomania distinguished from mania; subjective delusion separated from ideational delusions; “possession” replacing sorcery; a slow elaboration of passionnal delusion, as distinct from paranoia . . . The schema of passionnal delusion according to Clérambault is as follows: the Postulate as the point of subjectification (*He loves me*); pride as the tonality of the subject of enunciation (delusional pursuit of the loved one); Spite, Rancor (a result of a reversion to the subject of the statement). Passionnal delusion is a veritable cogito. In the foregoing example of erotomania, as well as in jealousy and querulous delusion, Clérambault stresses that a sign must follow a segment or linear proceeding through to the end before it can begin another, whereas the signs in paranoid delusion form an endless, self-adjusting network developing in all directions. The cogito also follows a linear temporal proceeding needing to be recommenced. The history of the Jews is punctuated by catastrophes after each of which there were just enough survivors to start a new proceeding. In the course of a proceeding, while there is linear movement the plural is often used, whereas there is a return to the Singular as soon as there is a pause or stoppage marking the end of one movement before another begins.²⁴ Fundamental segmentarity: one proceeding must end (and its termination must be marked) before another begins, to enable another to begin.

The point of subjectification is the origin of the passionnal line of the postsignifying regime. The point of subjectification can be anything. It must only display the following characteristic traits of the subjective semiotic: the double turning away, betrayal, and existence under reprieve. For anorexics, food plays this role (anorexics do not confront death but save themselves by betraying food, which is equally a traitor since it is suspected of containing larvae, worms, and microbes). A dress, an article of underwear, a shoe are points of subjectification for a fetishist. So is a faciality trait for someone in love, but the meaning of faciality has changed; it is no longer the body of the signifier but has become the point of departure for a deterritorialization that puts everything else to flight. A thing, an animal, will do the trick. There are cogitos on everything. “A pair of eyes set far apart, a head hewn of quartz, a haunch that seemed to live its own life. . . . Whenever the beauty of the female becomes irresistible, it is traceable to a single quality”:²⁵ a point of subjectification in the departure of a passionnal line. Moreover, several points coexist in a given individual or group, which are always engaged in several distinct and not always compatible linear proceedings. The various forms of education or “normalization” imposed upon an individual consist in making him or her change points of subjectification, always moving toward a higher, nobler one in closer conformity with the supposed ideal. Then from the point of subjectification issues a subject of enunciation, as a function of a mental reality determined by that point. Then from the subject of enunciation issues a subject of the statement, in other words, a subject bound to statements in conformity with a dominant reality (of which the mental reality just mentioned is a part, even when it seems to oppose it). What is important, what makes the postsignifying passionnal line a line of subjectification or subjection, is the constitution, the doubling of the two subjects, and the recoiling of one into the other, of the subject of enunciation into the subject of the statement (the linguists acknowledge this when they speak of the “imprint of the process of enunciation in the statement”). Significance brought about uniformity in the substance of enunciation; now subjectivity effects an individuation, collective or particular. Substance has become subject, as they say. *The subject of enunciation recoils into the subject of the statement, to the point that the subject of the statement resupplies subject of enunciation for another proceeding.* The subject of the statement has become the “respondent” or guarantor of the subject of enunciation, through a kind of reductive echolalia, in a biunivocal relation. This relation, this recoiling, is also that of mental reality into the dominant reality. There is always an appeal to a dominant reality that functions from within (already in the Old Testament, and during the Reformation, with trade and capitalism). There is no longer even a

need for a transcendent center of power; power is instead immanent and melds with the “real,” operating through normalization. A strange invention: as if in one form the doubled subject were the *cause* of the statements of which, in its other form, it itself is a part. This is the paradox of the legislator-subject replacing the signifying despot: the more you obey the statements of the dominant reality, the more in command you are as subject of enunciation in mental reality, for in the end you are only obeying yourself! You are the one in command, in your capacity as a rational being. A new form of slavery is invented, namely, being slave to oneself, or to pure “reason,” the Cogito. Is there anything more passional than pure reason? Is there a colder, more extreme, more self-interested passion than the Cogito?

Althusser clearly brings out this constitution of social individuals as subjects: he calls it interpellation (“Hey you, over there!”) and calls the point of subjectification the Absolute Subject; he analyzes the “specular doubling” of subjects and for purposes of demonstration uses the example of God, Moses, and the Jewish people.²⁶ Linguists like Benveniste adopt a curious linguistic personology that is very close to the Cogito: the *You*, which can doubtless designate the person one is addressing, but more importantly, a point of subjectification on the basis of which each of us is constituted as a subject. The *I* as subject of enunciation, designating the person that utters and reflects its own use in the statement (“the empty nonreferential sign”); this is the *I* appearing in propositions of the type “I believe, I assume, I think . . .” Finally, the *I* as subject of the statement, indicating a state for which a *She* or *He* could always be substituted (“I suffer, I walk, I breathe, I feel . . .”).²⁷ This is not, however, a question of a linguistic operation, for a subject is never the condition of possibility of language or the cause of the statement: there is no subject, only collective assemblages of enunciation. Subjectification is simply one such assemblage and designates a formalization of expression or a regime of signs rather than a condition internal to language. Neither is it a question of a movement characteristic of ideology, as Althusser says: subjectification as a regime of signs or a form of expression is tied to an assemblage, in other words, an organization of power that is already fully functioning in the economy, rather than superposing itself upon contents or relations between contents determined as real in the last instance. Capital is a point of subjectification par excellence.

The psychoanalytic cogito: the psychoanalyst presents him- or herself as an ideal point of subjectification that brings the patient to abandon old, so-called neurotic, points. The patient is partially a subject of enunciation in all he or she says to the psychoanalyst, and under the artificial mental conditions of the session: the patient is therefore called the “analysand.”

But in everything else the patient says or does, he or she is a subject of the statement, eternally psychoanalyzed, going from one linear proceeding to another, perhaps even changing analysts, growing increasingly submissive to the normalization of a dominant reality. In this sense, psychoanalysis, with its mixed semiotic, fully participates in a line of subjectification. The psychoanalyst does not even have to speak anymore, the analysand assumes the burden of interpretation; as for the psychoanalyzed patient, the more he or she thinks about "his" or "her" next session, or the preceding one, in segments, the better a subject he or she is.

Just as the paranoid regime had two axes—one sign referring to another (making the sign a signifier), and the signifier referring to the signified—so too the passional regime, the line of subjectification, has two axes, one syntagmatic and the other paradigmatic: as we have just seen, the first axis is consciousness. Consciousness as passion is precisely that doubling of subjects, of the subject of enunciation and the subject of the statement, and the recoiling of one into the other. But the second form of subjectification is love as passion, love-passion, another type of double, of doubling and recoiling. Here again, a variable point of subjectification serves to distribute two subjects that as much conceal their faces as reveal them to each other, that wed a line of flight, a line of deterritorialization forever drawing them together and driving them apart. But everything changes: there is a celibate side to this doubled consciousness, and there is a passionnal love couple that no longer has any use for consciousness or reason. Yet it is the same regime, even in betrayal and even if the betraying is done by a third party. Adam and Eve, and Cain's wife (about whom the Bible should have said more). Richard III, the traitor, is in the end given consciousness in a dream, but only the strange face-off with Lady Anne, a meeting of two countenances that conceal themselves knowing that they have promised themselves to each other following the same line that will nonetheless separate them. The most loyal and tender, or intense, love assigns subject of enunciation and a subject of the statement that constantly switch places, wrapped in the sweetness of being a naked statement in the other's mouth, and of the other's being a naked enunciation in my own mouth. But there is always a traitor in the making. What love is not betrayed? What cogito lacks its evil genius, the traitor it will never be rid of? "*Tristan . . . Isolde . . . Isolde . . . Tristan*": the cry of the two subjects climbs the scale of intensities until it reaches the summit of a suffocating consciousness, whereas the ship follows the line of the waters, the line of death and the unconscious, betrayal, a continuous melody line. Passional love is a cogito built for two, just as the cogito is a passion for the self alone. There is a potential couple in the cogito, just as there is a doubling of a single virtual subject in love-passion. Klossowski has created the strangest figures on the basis of this

complementarity between an over intense thought and an over feverish couple. The line of subjectification is thus entirely occupied by the Double, but it has two figures since there are two kinds of doubles: the syntagmatic figure of consciousness, or the consciousness-related double, relating to form (Self = Self [*Moi = Moi*]); and the paradigmatic figure of the couple, or the passionnal double, relating to substance (Man = Woman; here, the double is immediately the difference between the sexes).

We can follow the becoming of these doubles in mixed semiotics, which are interminglings as well as degradations. On the one hand, the passionnal love double, the couple in love-passion, falls into a conjugal relation or even a “domestic squabble” situation: Which is the subject of enunciation? Which is the subject of the statement? The battle of the sexes: *You're stealing my thoughts*. The domestic squabble has always been a cogito for two, a war cogito. Strindberg took this fall of love-passion into despotic conjugality and hysterico-paranoid squabbling to its extreme (“she” says she found it all by herself when in fact she owes it all to me, echo, thought theft, O Strindberg!).²⁸ On the other hand, the consciousness-related double of pure thought, the couple of the legislating subject, falls into a bureaucratic relation and a new form of persecution in which one double takes over the role of subject of enunciation while the other is reduced to a subject of the statement; the cogito itself becomes an “office squabble,” a bureaucratic love delusion. A new form of bureaucracy replaces or conjugates with the old imperial bureaucracy, the bureaucrat says *I think* (Kafka goes the furthest in this direction, as in the example of Sortini and Sordini in *The Castle*, or the many subjectifications of Klamm).²⁹ Conjugalit is the development of the couple, and bureaucracy the development of the cogito. But one is contained in the other: amorous bureaucracy, bureaucratic couple. Too much has been written on the double, haphazardly, metaphysically, finding it everywhere, in any old mirror, without noticing the specific regime it possesses both in a mixed semiotic where it introduces new phases, and in the pure semiotic of subjectification where it inscribes itself on a line of flight and introduces very particular figures. Once again: the two figures of thought-consciousness and love-passion in the postsignifying regime; the two moments of bureaucratic consciousness and conjugal relation in the mixed fall or combination. But even in a mixed state, the original line is easily discovered by semiotic analysis.

There is a redundancy of consciousness and love that is not the same as the signifying redundancy of the other regime. In the signifying regime, redundancy is a phenomenon of objective *frequency* involving signs or elements of signs (the phonemes, letters, and groups of letters in a language): there is both a maximum frequency of the signifier in relation to each sign, and a comparative frequency of one sign in relation to another. In any case,

it could be said that this regime develops a kind of “wall” on which signs are inscribed, in relation to one another and in relation to the signifier. In the postsignifying regime, on the other hand, the redundancy is one of *subjective resonance* involving above all shifters, personal pronouns and proper names. Here again, we may distinguish between the maximum resonance of self-consciousness (Self = Self [*Moi* = *Moi*]) and a comparative resonance of names (Tristan . . . Isolde . . .). This time, however, there is no longer a wall upon which the frequency is tallied but instead a black hole attracting consciousness and passion and in which they resonate. Tristan calls Isolde, Isolde calls Tristan, both drawn toward the black hole of a self-consciousness, carried by the tide toward death. When the linguists distinguish between two forms of redundancy, frequency and resonance, they often ascribe the latter a merely derivative status.³⁰ In fact, it is a question of two semiotics that mix but retain their own distinct principles (similarly, one could define other forms of redundancy, such as rhythmic, gestural, or numerical, relating to the other regimes of signs). The most essential distinction between the signifying regime and the subjective regime and their respective redundancies is the *movement of deterritorialization* they effectuate. Since the signifying sign refers only to other signs, and the set of all signs to the signifier itself, the corresponding semiotic enjoys a high level of deterritorialization; but it is a deterritorialization that is still *relative*, expressed as frequency. In this system, the line of flight remains negative, it is assigned a negative sign. As we have seen, the subjective regime proceeds entirely differently: precisely because the sign breaks its relation of significance with other signs and sets off racing down a positive line of flight, it attains an *absolute* deterritorialization expressed in the black hole of consciousness and passion. The absolute deterritorialization of the cogito. That is why subjective redundancy seems both to graft itself onto signifying redundancy and to derive from it, as second-degree redundancy.

Things are even more complicated than we have let on. Subjectification assigns the line of flight a positive sign, it carries deterritorialization to the absolute, intensity to the highest degree, redundancy to a reflexive form, etc. But it has its own way of repudiating the positivity it frees, or of relativizing the absoluteness it attains, without, however, falling back to the preceding regime. In this redundancy of resonance, the absolute of consciousness is the absolute of impotence and the intensity of passion, the heat of the void. This is because subjectification essentially constitutes finite linear proceedings, one of which ends before the next begins: thus the cogito is always recommended, a passion or grievance is always recapitulated. Every consciousness pursues its own death, every love-passion its own end, attracted by a black hole, and all the black holes resonate together.

Thus subjectification imposes on the line of flight a segmentarity that is forever repudiating that line, and upon absolute deterritorialization a point of abolition that is forever blocking that deterritorialization or diverting it. The reason for this is simple: forms of expression and regimes of signs are still *strata* (even considered in themselves, after abstracting forms of content); subjectification is no less a stratum than signiance.

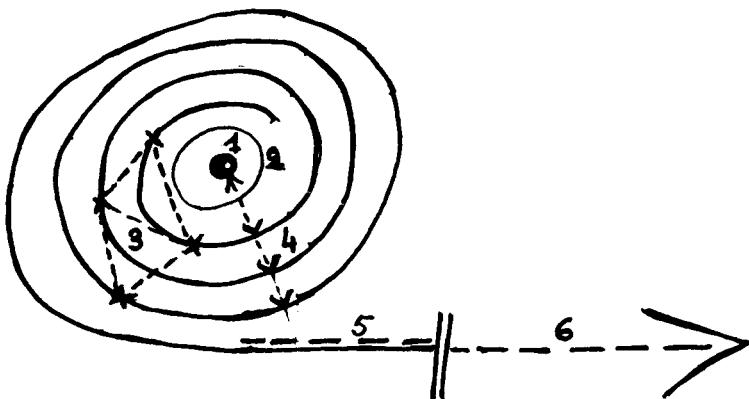
The principal strata binding human beings are the organism, signiance and interpretation, and subjectification and subjection. These strata together are what separates us from the plane of consistency and the abstract machine, where there is no longer any regime of signs, where the line of flight effectuates its own potential positivity and deterritorialization its absolute power. The problem, from this standpoint, is to tip the most favorable assemblage from its side facing the strata to its side facing the plane of consistency or the body without organs. Subjectification carries desire to such a point of excess and unloosening that it must either annihilate itself in a black hole or change planes. Destratify, open up to a new function, a *diagrammatic* function. Let consciousness cease to be its own double, and passion the double of one person for another. Make consciousness an experimentation in life, and passion a field of continuous intensities, an emission of particles-signs. Make the body without organs of consciousness and love. Use love and consciousness to abolish subjectification: "To become the great lover, the magnetizer and catalyzer . . . one has to first experience the profound wisdom of being an utter fool."³¹ Use the *I think* for a becoming-animal, and love for a becoming-woman of man. Desubjectify consciousness and passion. Are there not diagrammatic redundancies distinct from both signifying redundancies and subjective redundancies? Redundancies that would no longer be knots of arborescence but resumptions and upsurges in a rhizome? Stammer language, be a foreigner in one's own tongue:

do domi not passi do not dominate
 do not dominate your passive passions not

 do devouring not not dominate
 your rats your rations your rats rations not not . . .³²

It seems necessary to distinguish between three types of deterritorialization: the first type is relative, proper to the strata, and culminates in signiance; the second is absolute, but still negative and stratic, and appears in subjectification (*Ratio et Passio*); finally, there is the possibility of a positive absolute deterritorialization on the plane of consistency or the body without organs.

We have not, of course, managed to eliminate forms of content (for example, the role of the Temple, or the position of a dominant Reality, etc.). What we have done is to isolate, under artificial conditions, a certain number of semiotics displaying very diverse characteristics. The *presignifying semiotic*, in which the “overcoding” marking the privileged status of language operates diffusely: enunciation is collective, statements themselves are polyvocal, and substances of expression are multiple; relative deterritorialization is determined by the confrontation between the territorialities and segmentary lineages that ward off the State apparatus. The *signifying semiotic*: overcoding is fully effectuated by the signifier, and by the State apparatus that emits it; there is uniformity of enunciation, unification of the substance of expression, and control over statements in a regime of circularity; relative deterritorialization is taken as far as it can go by a redundant and perpetual referral from sign to sign. The *countersignifying semiotic*: here, overcoding is assured by the Number as form of expression or enunciation, and by the War Machine upon which it depends; deterritorialization follows a line of active destruction or abolition. The *postsignifying semiotic*, in which overcoding is assured by the redundancy of consciousness; a subjectification of enunciation occurs on a passionate line that makes the organization of power (*pouvoir*) immanent and raises deterritorialization to the absolute, although in a way that is still negative.

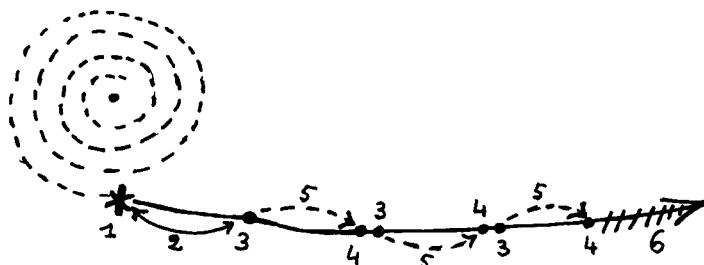


(1) The Center or the Signifier; the faciality of the god or despot. (2) The Temple or Palace, with priests and bureaucrats. (3) The organization in circles and the sign referring to other signs on the same circle or on different circles. (4) The interpretive development of signifier into signified, which then reimparts signifier. (5) The expiatory animal; the blocking of the line of flight. (6) The scapegoat, or the negative sign of the line of flight.

Yet we must consider two aspects: on the one hand, these semiotics are still concrete even after forms of content have been abstracted, but only to the extent that they are mixed, that they constitute mixed combinations. Every semiotic is mixed and only functions as such; each one necessarily captures fragments of one or more other semiotics (surplus value of code). Even from this perspective, the signifying semiotic has no privileged status to apply toward the formation of a general semiology: in particular, the way in which it combines with the passionnal semiotic of subjectification ("the signifier for the subject") implies nothing that would privilege it over other combinations, for example, the combination of the passionnal semiotic and the countersignifying semiotic, or of the countersignifying semiotic and the signifying semiotic itself (when the Nomads turn imperial), etc. There is no general semiology.

For example, without privileging one regime over another, it is possible to construct schemas of the signifying and postsignifying semiotics that clearly illustrate the possibilities for concrete mixture.

The second aspect, complementary but very different, consists in the possibility of transforming one abstract or pure semiotic into another, by virtue of the translatability ensuing from overcoding as the special characteristic of language. This time, it is no longer a question of concrete mixed semiotics but of transformations of one abstract semiotic into another (even though that transformation is not itself abstract, in other words, effectively takes place without being performed by a "translator" in the role of pure knower). All transformations taking a given semiotic into the presignifying regime may be called *analogical transformations*; those that take it into the signifying regime are *symbolic*; into the countersignifying regime, *polemical or strategic*; into the postsignifying regime, *consciousness-related or mimetic*; finally, transformations that blow apart semiotics systems or regimes of signs on the plane of consistency of a positive absolute deterritorialization are called *diagrammatic*. A transformation is not the same thing as a statement in a pure semiotic; nor even an ambiguous statement requiring a whole pragmatic analysis to determine the semiotic it belongs to; nor a statement belonging to a mixed semiotic (although the transformation may have that effect). A transformational statement marks the way in which a semiotic translates for its own purposes a statement originating elsewhere, and in so doing diverts it, leaving untransformable residues and actively resisting the inverse transformation. Furthermore, transformations are not limited to the ones we just listed. It is always through transformation that a new semiotic is created in its own right. Translations can be creative. New pure regimes of signs are formed through transformation and translation. Again, there is no general semiology but rather a transsemiotic.



(1) The point of subjectification, replacing the center of signfiance. (2) The two faces turned away from each other. (3) The subject of enunciation resulting from the point of subjectification and the turning away. (4) The subject of the statement, into which the subject of enunciation recoils. (5) The succession of finite linear proceedings accompanied by a new form of priest and a new bureaucracy. (6) The line of flight, which is freed but still segmented, remaining negative and blocked.

In analogical transformations, we often see sleep, drugs, and amorous rapture form expressions that translate into presignifying regimes the subjective or signifying regimes one wishes to impose upon the expressions, but which they resist by themselves imposing upon these regimes an unexpected segmentarity and polyvocality. Christianity underwent strange creative translations in its transmission to “barbarian” or even “savage” peoples. The introduction of monetary signs into certain commercial circuits in Africa caused those signs to undergo an analogical transformation that was very difficult to control (except when the circuits underwent a destructive transformation instead).³³ The songs of black Americans, including, especially, the words, would be a better example, since they show how the slaves “translated” the English signifier and made presignifying or even countersignifying use of the language, blending it with their own African languages just as they blended old African work songs with their new forced labor; these songs also show how, with Christianization and the abolition of slavery, the slaves underwent a proceeding of “subjectification” or even “individuation” that transformed their music, while the music simultaneously transformed the proceeding by analogy; and also how unique problems of “faciality” were posed when whites in “blackface” appropriated the words and songs and blacks responded by darkening their faces another hue, taking back their dances and songs, even transforming or translating those of the whites.³⁴ Of course, the crudest and most visible transformations were in the other direction: the symbolic translations occurring when the signifier takes power. The preceding examples concerning monetary signs and rhythmic regimes can be repeated in the opposite direction. The passage from an African dance to a white dance

often exhibits a consciousness-related or mimetic translation, accompanied by a power takeover by signification and subjectification. ("In Africa the dance is impersonal, sacred and obscene. When the phallus becomes erect and is handled like a banana it is not a 'personal hard-on' we see but a tribal erection. . . . The hoochie-koochie dancer of the big city dances alone—a fact of staggering significance. The law forbids response, forbids participation. Nothing is left of the primitive rite but the 'suggestive' movements of the body. What they suggest varies with *the individual observer.*")³⁵

It is not simply linguistic, lexical, or even syntactic transformations that determine the importance of a true semiotic translation but the opposite. Crazy talk is not enough. In each case we must judge whether what we see is an adaptation of an old semiotic, a new variety of a particular mixed semiotic, or the process of creation of an as yet unknown regime. For example, it is relatively easy to stop saying "I," but that does not mean that you have gotten away from the regime of subjectification; conversely, you can keep on saying "I," just for kicks, and already be in another regime in which personal pronouns function only as fictions. Signification and interpretation are so thick-skinned, they form such a sticky mixture with subjectification, that it is easy to believe that you are outside them when you are in fact still secreting them. People sometimes denounce interpretation yet show so signifying a face that they simultaneously impose interpretation upon the subject, which continues to nourish itself on it in order to survive. Who can really believe that psychoanalysis is capable of changing a semiotic amassing every deception? The only change there has been is a role switch. Instead of a patient who signifies and a psychoanalyst who interprets, we now have a signifying analyst and it is the patient who does all the interpreting. In the antipsychiatric experiment of Kingsley Hall, Mary Barnes, a former nurse turned "schizophrenic," embraces the new semiotic of the Voyage, only to arrogate to herself a veritable power in the community and reintroduce as a collective delusion the worst kind of psychoanalytic regime of interpretation ("She *interpreted* everything that was done for her, or for anyone else for that matter . . .").³⁶ A highly stratified semiotic is difficult to get away from. Even a presignifying, or counter-signifying, semiotic, even an assignifying diagram, harbors knots of coincidence just waiting to form virtual centers of signification and points of subjectification. Of course, an operation of translation is not easy when it is a question of destroying a dominant atmospheric semiotic. One of the things of profound interest in Castaneda's books, under the influence of drugs, or other things, and of a change of atmosphere, is precisely that they show how the Indian manages to combat the mechanisms of interpretation and instill in the disciple a presignifying semiotic, or even an assignifying

diagram: Stop! You're making me tired! Experiment, don't signify and interpret! Find your own places, territorialities, deterritorializations, regime, lines of flight! Semiotize yourself instead of rooting around in your prefab childhood and Western semiology. "Don Juan stated that in order to arrive at 'seeing' one first had to 'stop the world.' 'Stopping the world' was indeed an appropriate rendition of certain states of awareness in which the reality of everyday life is altered because the flow of interpretation, which ordinarily runs uninterruptedly, has been stopped by a set of circumstances alien to the flow."³⁷ In short, a true semiotic transformation appeals to all kinds of variables, not only external ones, but also variables implicit to language, internal to statements.

Pragmatics, then, already displays two components. The first could be called *generative* since it shows how the various abstract regimes form concrete mixed semiotics, with what variants, how they combine, and which one is predominant. The second is the *transformational* component, which shows how these regimes of signs are translated into each other, especially when there is a creation of a new regime. Generative pragmatics makes tracings of mixed semiotics; transformational pragmatics makes maps of transformations. Although a mixed semiotic does not necessarily imply effective creativity, and may content itself with combinatory possibilities without veritable transformation, it is still the transformational component that accounts for the originality of a regime as well as for the novelty of the mixes it enters at a given moment in a given domain. This second component is therefore the more profound, and it is the only means of measuring the elements of the first component.³⁸ For example, we may ask when statements of the Bolshevik type first appeared, and how Leninism, at the time of the break with the social democrats, effected a veritable transformation that created an original semiotic, even if its fall into the mixed semiotic of Stalinist organization was inevitable. In an exemplary study, Jean-Pierre Faye did a detailed analysis of the transformations that produced Nazism, viewed as a system of new statements in a given social field. At what moment is a regime of signs established, and in what domain? Throughout an entire people? In a fraction of that people? In a more or less localizable margin inside a psychiatric hospital? (For as we have seen we can find a semiotic of subjectification in the ancient history of the Jews, but also in psychiatric diagnosis in the nineteenth century, with, of course, profound variations and even veritable transformations in the corresponding semiotic.) All of these questions fall within the purview of pragmatics. There is no question that the most profound transformations and translations of our time are not occurring in Europe. Pragmatics should reject the idea of an invariant immune from transformation, even if it is the invariant of a dominant "grammaticality." For language is a political affair

before it is an affair for linguistics; even the evaluation of degrees of grammaticality is a political matter.

What is a semiotic, in other words, a regime of signs or a formalization of expression? They are simultaneously more and less than language. Language as a whole is defined by “superlinearity,” its condition of possibility; individual languages are defined by constants, elements, and relations of a phonological, syntactical, and semantic nature. Doubtless, every regime of signs effectuates the condition of possibility of language and utilizes language elements, but that is all. No regime can be identical to that condition of possibility, and no regime has the property of constants. As Foucault clearly shows, regimes of signs are only *functions of existence* of language that sometimes span a number of languages and are sometimes distributed within a single language; they coincide neither with a structure nor with units of a given order, but rather intersect them and cause them to appear in space and time. This is the sense in which regimes of signs are assemblages of enunciation, which cannot be adequately accounted for by any linguistic category: *what makes a proposition or even a single word a “statement”* pertains to implicit presuppositions that cannot be made explicit, that mobilize pragmatic variables proper to enunciation (incorporeal transformations). This precludes explaining an assemblage in terms of the signifier or the subject, because both pertain to variables of enunciation within the assemblage. It is significance and subjectification that presuppose the assemblage, not the reverse. The names we gave to the regimes of signs (“presignifying,” “signifying,” “countersignifying,” “postsignifying”) would remain evolutionist if heterogeneous functions or varieties of assemblages did not effectively correspond to them (segmentarization, significance and interpretation, numeration, subjectification). Regimes of signs are thus defined by variables that are internal to enunciation but remain external to the constants of language and irreducible to linguistic categories.

But at this point, everything turns around, and the reasons why a regime of signs is less than language also become the reasons why it is more than language. Only one side of the assemblage has to do with enunciation or formalizes expression; on its other side, inseparable from the first, it formalizes contents, it is a machinic assemblage or an assemblage of bodies. Now contents are not “signifieds” dependent upon a signifier in any way, nor are they “objects” in any kind of relation of causality with the subject. They have their own formalization and have no relation of symbolic correspondence or linear causality with the form of expression: the two forms are in reciprocal presupposition, and they can be abstracted from each other only in a very relative way because they are two sides of a single assemblage. We must therefore arrive at something in the assemblage itself

that is still more profound than these sides and can account for both of the forms in presupposition, forms of expression or regimes of signs (semiotic systems) and forms of content or regimes of bodies (physical systems). This is what we call the *abstract machine*, which constitutes and conjugates all of the assemblage's cutting edges of deterritorialization.³⁹ We must say that the abstract machine is necessarily "much more" than language. When linguists (following Chomsky) rise to the idea of a purely language-based abstract machine, our immediate objection is that their machine, far from being too abstract, is not abstract enough because it is limited to the form of expression and to alleged universals that presuppose language. Abstracting content is an operation that appears all the more relative and inadequate when seen from the viewpoint of abstraction itself. A true abstract machine has no way of making a distinction within itself between a plane of expression and a plane of content because it draws a single plane of consistency, which in turn formalizes contents and expressions according to strata and reterritorializations. The abstract machine in itself is destratified, deterritorialized; it has no form of its own (much less substance) and makes no distinction within itself between content and expression, even though outside itself it presides over that distinction and distributes it in strata, domains, and territories. An abstract machine in itself is not physical or corporeal, any more than it is semiotic; it is *diagrammatic* (it knows nothing of the distinction between the artificial and the natural either). It operates by *matter*, not by substance; by *function*, not by form. Substances and forms are of expression "or" of content. But functions are not yet "semiotically" formed, and matters are not yet "physically" formed. The abstract machine is pure Matter-Function—a diagram independent of the forms and substances, expressions and contents it will distribute.

We define the abstract machine as the aspect or moment at which nothing but functions and matters remain. A diagram has neither substance nor form, neither content nor expression.⁴⁰ Substance is a formed matter, and matter is a substance that is unformed either physically or semiotically. Whereas expression and content have distinct forms, are really distinct from each other, function has only "traits," of content and of expression, between which it establishes a connection: it is no longer even possible to tell whether it is a particle or a sign. A matter-content having only degrees of intensity, resistance, conductivity, heating, stretching, speed, or tardiness; and a function-expression having only "tensors," as in a system of mathematical, or musical, writing. Writing now functions on the same level as the real, and the real materially writes. The diagram retains the most deterritorialized content and the most deterritorialized expression, in order to conjugate them. Maximum deterritorialization sometimes starts from a trait of content and sometimes from a trait of expression; that

trait is said to be “deterritorializing” in relation to the other precisely because it diagrams it, carries it off, raises it to its own power. The most deterritorialized element causes the other element to cross a threshold enabling a conjunction of their respective deterritorializations, a shared acceleration. This is the abstract machine’s absolute, positive deterritorialization. That is why *diagrams* must be distinguished from *indexes*, which are territorial signs, but also from *icons*, which pertain to reterritorialization, and from *symbols*, which pertain to relative or negative deterritorialization.⁴¹ Defined diagrammatically in this way, an abstract machine is neither an infrastructure that is determining in the last instance nor a transcendental Idea that is determining in the supreme instance. Rather, it plays a piloting role. The diagrammatic or abstract machine does not function to represent, even something real, but rather constructs a real that is yet to come, a new type of reality. Thus when it constitutes points of creation or potentiality it does not stand outside history but is instead always “prior to” history. Everything escapes, everything creates—never alone, but through an abstract machine that produces continuums of intensity, effects conjunctions of deterritorialization, and extracts expressions and contents. This Real-Abstract is totally different from the fictitious abstraction of a supposedly pure machine of expression. It is an Absolute, but one that is neither undifferentiated nor transcendent. Abstract machines thus have proper names (as well as dates), which of course designate not persons or subjects but matters and functions. The name of a musician or scientist is used in the same way as a painter’s name designates a color, nuance, tone, or intensity: it is always a question of a conjunction of Matter and Function. The double deterritorialization of the voice and the instrument is marked by a Wagner abstract machine, a Webern abstract machine, etc. In physics and mathematics, we may speak of a Riemann abstract machine, and in algebra of a Galois abstract machine (defined precisely by an arbitrary line, called the adjunctive line, which conjugates with a body taken as a starting point), etc. There is a diagram whenever a singular abstract machine functions directly in a matter.

Strictly speaking, therefore, there are no regimes of signs on the diagrammatic level, or on the plane of consistency, because form of expression is no longer really distinct from form of content. The diagram knows only traits and cutting edges that are still elements of content insofar as they are material and of expression insofar as they are functional, but which draw one another along, form relays, and meld in a shared deterritorialization: particles-signs. There is nothing surprising in this, for the real distinction between form of expression and form of content appears only with the strata, and is different on each one. It is on the strata that the double articulation appears that formalizes traits of expression and traits of content,

each in its own right, turning matters into physically or semiotically formed substances and functions into forms of expression or content. Expression then constitutes indexes, icons, or symbols that enter regimes or semiotic systems. Content then constitutes bodies, things, or objects that enter physical systems, organisms, and organizations. The deeper movement for conjugating matter and function—absolute deterritorialization, identical to the earth itself—appears only in the form of respective territorialities, negative or relative deterritorializations, and complementary reterritorializations. All of this culminates in a language stratum that installs an abstract machine on the level of expression and takes the abstraction of content even further, tending to strip it of any form of its own (the imperialism of language, the pretensions to a general semiology). In short, the strata substantialize diagrammatic matters and separate a formed plane of content from a formed plane of expression. They hold expressions and contents, separately substantialized and formalized, in the pincers of a double articulation assuring their independence and real distinction and enthroning a dualism that endlessly reproduces and redivides. They shatter the continuums of intensity, introducing breaks between different strata and within each stratum. They prevent conjunctions of flight from forming and crush the cutting edges of deterritorialization, either by effecting reterritorializations that make these movements merely relative, or by assigning certain of the lines an entirely negative value, or again by segmenting them, blocking them, plugging them, or plunging them into a kind of black hole.

Above all, diagrammaticism should not be confused with an operation of the axiomatic type. Far from drawing creative lines of flight and conjugating traits of positive deterritorialization, axiomatics blocks all lines, subordinates them to a punctual system, and halts the geometric and algebraic writing systems that had begun to run off in all directions. This happened in relation to the question of indeterminism in physics: a “reordering” was undertaken to reconcile it with physical determinism. Mathematical writing systems were axiomatized, in other words, restratified, resemiotized, and material flows were rephysicalized. It is as much a political as a scientific affair: science must not go crazy. Hilbert and de Broglie were as much politicians as scientists: they reestablished order. An axiomatization, a semiotization, a physicalization, is not a diagram but in fact the opposite of a diagram. The program of a stratum, against the diagram of the plane of consistency. This does not, however, preclude the diagram’s heading back down the road to escape and scattering new, singular abstract machines (the mathematical creation of improbable functions was carried out in opposition to axiomatization, and the material invention of unfindable particles in opposition to physicalization). Science as

such is like everything else; madness is as intrinsic to it as reorderings. The same scientists may participate in both aspects, having their own madness, police, significances, or subjectifications, as well as their own abstract machines, all in their capacity as scientists. The phrase “the politics of science” is a good designation for these currents, which are internal to science and not simply circumstances and State factors that act upon it from the outside, leading it to make as atomic bomb here and embark upon a space program there. These political influences or determinations would not exist if science itself did not have its own poles, oscillations, strata, and destratifications, its own lines of flight and reorderings, in short, the more or less potential events of its own politics, its own particular “polemics,” its own internal war machine (of which thwarted, persecuted, or hindered scientists are historically a part). It is not enough to say that axiomatics does not take invention and creation into account: it possesses a deliberate will to halt or stabilize the diagram, to take its place by lodging itself on a level of coagulated abstraction too large for the concrete but too small for the real. We will see in what sense this is the “capitalist” level.

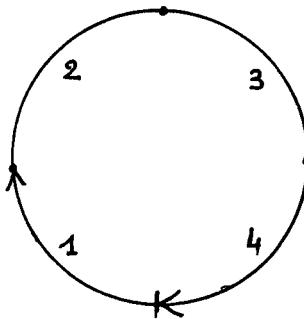
We cannot, however, content ourselves with a dualism between the plane of consistency and its diagrams and abstract machines on the one hand, and the strata and their programs and concrete assemblages on the other. Abstract machines do not exist only on the plane of consistency, upon which they develop diagrams; they are already present enveloped or “encasted” in the strata in general, or even erected on particular strata upon which they simultaneously organize a form of expression and a form of content. What is illusory in the second case is the idea of an exclusively expressive or language-based abstract machine, not the idea of an abstract machine internal to the stratum and accounting for the relativity of those two distinct forms. Thus there are two complementary movements, one by which abstract machines work the strata and are constantly setting things loose, another by which they are effectively stratified, effectively captured by the strata. *On the one hand*, strata could never organize themselves if they did not harness diagrammatic matters or functions and formalize them from the standpoint of both expression and content; every regime of signs, and even significance and subjectification, is still a diagrammatic effect (although relativized and negativized). *One the other hand*, abstract machines would never be present, even on the strata, if they did not have the power or potentiality to extract and accelerate destratified particles-signs (the passage to the absolute). Consistency is neither totalizing nor structuring; rather, it is deterritorializing (a biological stratum, for example, evolves not according to statistical phenomena but rather according to cutting edges of deterritorialization). The security, tranquillity, and homeostatic equilibrium of the strata are thus never completely guaranteed:

to regain a plane of consistency that inserts itself into the most diverse systems of stratification and jumps from one to the other, it suffices to prolong the lines of flight working the strata, to connect the dots, to conjugate the processes of deterritorialization. We have seen that significance and interpretation, consciousness and passion, can prolong themselves following these lines, and at the same time open out onto a properly diagrammatic experience. All of these states or modes of the abstract machine coexist in what we call the *machinic assemblage*. The assemblage has two poles or vectors: one vector is oriented toward the strata, upon which it distributes territorialities, relative deterritorializations, and reterritorializations; the other is oriented toward the plane of consistency or destratification, upon which it conjugates processes of deterritorialization, carrying them to the absolute of the earth. It is along its stratic vector that the assemblage differentiates a form of expression (from the standpoint of which it appears as a collective assemblage of enunciation) from a form of content (from the standpoint of which it appears as a machinic assemblage of bodies); it fits one form to the other, one manifestation to the other, placing them in reciprocal presupposition. But along its diagrammatic or destratified vector, it no longer has two sides; all it retains are traits of expression and content from which it extracts degrees of deterritorialization that add together and cutting edges that conjugate.

A regime of signs has more than just two components. It has, in fact, four of them, which form the object of Pragmatics. The first was the *generative* component, which shows how a form of expression located on the language stratum always appeals to several combined regimes, in other words, how every regime of signs or semiotic is concretely mixed. On the level of this component, one *can abstract* forms of content, most successfully if emphasis is placed on the mixture of regimes in the form of expression: one should not, however, conclude from this the predominance of a regime constituting a general semiology and unifying forms. The second, *transformational*, component, shows how one abstract regime can be translated, transformed into another, and especially how it can be created from other regimes. This second component is obviously more profound, because all mixed regimes presuppose these transformations from one regime to another, past, present, or potential (as a function of the creation of new regimes). Once again, one abstracts, or *can abstract*, content, since the analysis is limited to metamorphoses internal to the form of expression, even though the form of expression is not adequate to account for them. The third component is *diagrammatic*: it consists in taking regimes of signs or forms of expression and extracting from them particles-signs that are no longer formalized but instead constitute unformed traits capable of combining with one another. This is the height of abstraction, but also the moment at which abstraction

becomes real; everything operates through abstract-real machines (which have names and dates). One can abstract forms of content, but one must simultaneously abstract forms of expression; for what is retained of each are only unformed traits. That is why an abstract machine that would operate purely on the level of language is an absurdity. It is clear that this diagrammatic component is in turn more profound than the transformational component: the creations-transformations of a regime of signs operate by the emergence of ever-new abstract machines. Finally, the last, properly *machinic*, component is meant to show how abstract machines are effectuated in concrete assemblages; it is these assemblages that give distinct form to traits of expression, but not without doing the same for traits of content—the two forms being in reciprocal presupposition, or having a necessary, unformed relation that once again prevents the form of expression from behaving as though it were self-sufficient (although it is independent or distinct in a strictly formal way).

Thus pragmatics (or schizoanalysis) can be represented by four circular components that bud and form rhizomes.



(1) The generative component: the study of concrete mixed semiotics; their mixtures and variations. (2) The transformational component: the study of pure semiotics; their transformations-translations and the creation of new semiotics. (3) The diagrammatic component: the study of abstract machines, from the standpoint of semiotically unformed matters in relation to physically unformed matters. (4) The machinic component: the study of the assemblages that effectuate abstract machines, simultaneously semiotizing matters of expression and physicalizing matters of content.

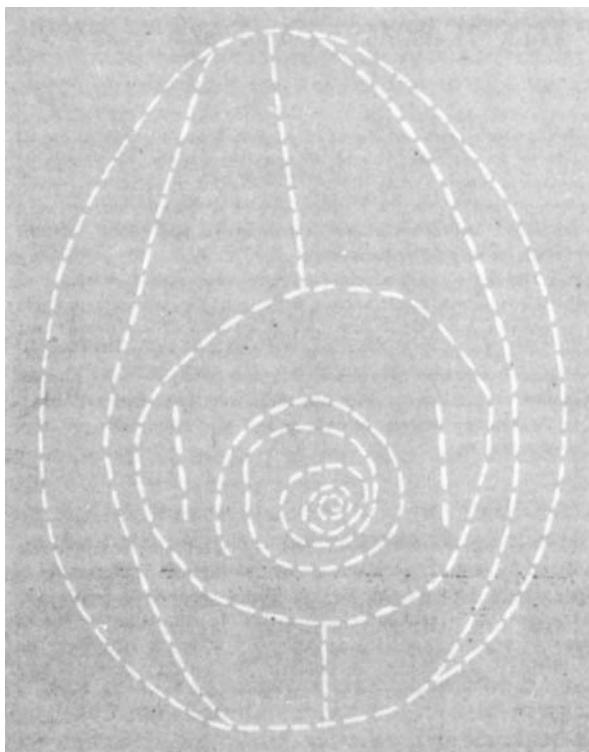
Pragmatics as a whole would consist in this: making a *tracing* of the mixed semiotics, under the generative component; making the transformational *map* of the regimes, with their possibilities for translation and creation, for budding along the lines of the tracings; making the *diagram* of the abstract machines that are in play in each case, either as potentialities or as effective emergences; outlining the *program* of the assemblages that

distribute everything and bring a circulation of movement with alternatives, jumps, and mutations.

For example, in considering a given “proposition,” in other words, a verbal aggregate defined syntactically, semantically, and logically as the expression of an individual or group (“I love you” or “I am jealous”), one would begin by asking to which “statement” this proposition corresponds in the group or individual (for the same proposition can be tied to completely different statements). This question means: What regime of signs is the proposition taken up by and without which its syntactical, semantic, and logical elements would remain totally empty universal conditions? What nonlinguistic element, or variable of enunciation, gives it consistency? There is a presignifying “I love you” of the collective type in which, as Miller says, a dance weds all the women of the tribe; there is a countersignifying “I love you” of the distributive and polemical type that has to do with war and relations of force (the “I love you” of Penthesilea and Achilles); there is an “I love you” that is addressed to a center of signification and uses interpretation to make a whole series of signifieds correspond to the signifying chain; and there is a postsignifying or passionnal “I love you” that constitutes a proceeding beginning from a point of subjectification, then another, and yet another. Similarly, the proposition “I am jealous” is clearly not the same statement in the passionnal regime of subjectification as in the paranoid regime of signification: these are two distinct delusions. Second, once it has been determined which statement the proposition corresponds to in a given group or individual at a given time, one would look into the possibilities not only of mixture but also of translation and transformation into another regime, or into statements belonging to other regimes; one would look at what passes and does not pass in such a transformation, what remains irreducible and what flows. Third, one could try to create new, as yet unknown statements for that proposition, even if the result were a patois of sensual delight, physical and semiotic systems in shreds, asubjective affects, signs without signification where syntax, semantics, and logic are in collapse. This research should go from the worst to the best since it would cover precious, metaphorical, or stultifying regimes as well as cries-whispers, feverish improvisations, becomings-animal, becomings-molecular, real transsexualities, continuums of intensity, constitutions of bodies without organs . . . These two poles are inseparable; they entertain perpetual relations of transformation, conversion, jumping, falling, and rising. This final research simultaneously brings into play, on the one hand, abstract machines, diagrams and diagrammatic functions, and, on the other hand, machinic assemblages, the formal distinctions they make between expression and content, and their investments of words and organs according to a relation of reciprocal presupposition. For example,

the “I love you” of courtly love: What is its diagram, what abstract machine emerges, and what is the new assemblage? These questions apply as much to destratification as to the organization of strata. In short, there are no syntactically, semantically, or logically definable propositions that transcend or loom above statements. All methods for the transcendentalization of language, all methods for endowing language with universals, from Russell’s logic to Chomsky’s grammar, have fallen into the worst kind of abstraction, in the sense that they validate a level that is both too abstract and not abstract enough. Regimes of signs are not based on language, and language alone does not constitute an abstract machine, whether structural or generative. The opposite is the case. It is language that is based on regimes of signs, and regimes of signs on abstract machines, diagrammatic functions, and machinic assemblages that go beyond any system of semiology, linguistics, or logic. There is no universal propositional logic, nor is there grammaticality in itself, any more than there is signifier for itself. “Behind” statements and semiotizations there are only machines, assemblages, and movements of deterritorialization that cut across the stratification of the various systems and elude both the coordinates of language and of existence. That is why pragmatics is not a complement to logic, syntax, or semantics; on the contrary, it is the fundamental element upon which all the rest depend.

6. November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Organs?



The Dogon Egg and the Distribution of Intensities

At any rate, you have one (or several). It's not so much that it preexists or comes ready-made, although in certain respects it is preexistent. At any rate, you make one, you can't desire without making one. And it awaits you; it is an inevitable exercise or experimentation, already accomplished the moment you undertake it, unaccomplished as long as you don't. This is not reassuring, because you can botch it. Or it can be terrifying, and lead you to your death. It is nondesire as well as desire. It is not at all a notion or a

concept but a practice, a set of practices. You never reach the Body without Organs, you can't reach it, you are forever attaining it, it is a limit. People ask, So what is this BwO?—But you're already on it, scurrying like a vermin, groping like a blind person, or running like a lunatic: desert traveler and nomad of the steppes. On it we sleep, live our waking lives, fight—fight and are fought—seek our place, experience untold happiness and fabulous defeats; on it we penetrate and are penetrated; on it we love. On November 28, 1947, Artaud declares war on the organs: *To be done with the judgment of God*, “for you can tie me up if you wish, but there is nothing more useless than an organ.”¹ Experimentation: not only radiophonic but also biological and political, incurring censorship and repression. Corpus and Socius, politics and experimentation. They will not let you experiment in peace.

The BwO: it is already under way the moment the body has had enough of organs and wants to slough them off, or loses them. A long procession. The *hypochondriac body*: the organs are destroyed, the damage has already been done, nothing happens anymore. “Miss X claims that she no longer has a brain or nerves or chest or stomach or guts. All she has left is the skin and bones of a disorganized body. These are her own words.”² The *paranoid body*: the organs are continually under attack by outside forces, but are also restored by outside energies. (“He lived for a long time without a stomach, without intestines, almost without lungs, with a torn oesophagus, without a bladder, and with shattered ribs, he used sometimes to swallow part of his own larynx with his food, etc. But divine miracles ('rays') always restored what had been destroyed.”)³ The *schizo body*, waging its own active internal struggle against the organs, at the price of catatonia. Then the *drugged body*, the experimental schizo: “The human body is scandalously inefficient. Instead of a mouth and an anus to get out of order why not have one all-purpose hole to eat and eliminate? We could seal up nose and mouth, fill in the stomach, make an air hole direct into the lungs where it should have been in the first place.”⁴ The *masochist body*: it is poorly understood in terms of pain; it is fundamentally a question of the BwO. It has its sadist or whore sew it up; the eyes, anus, urethra, breasts, and nose are sewn shut. It has itself strung up to stop the organs from working; flayed, as if the organs clung to the skin; sodomized, smothered, to make sure everything is sealed tight.

Why such a dreary parade of sucked-dry, catatonicized, vitrified, sewn-up bodies, when the BwO is also full of gaiety, ecstasy, and dance? So why these examples, why must we start there? Emptied bodies instead of full ones. What happened? Were you cautious enough? Not wisdom, caution. In doses. As a rule immanent to experimentation: injections of caution. Many have been defeated in this battle. Is it really so sad and dangerous to be fed up with seeing with your eyes, breathing with your

lungs, swallowing with your mouth, talking with your tongue, thinking with your brain, having an anus and larynx, head and legs? Why not walk on your head, sing with your sinuses, see through your skin, breathe with your belly: the simple Thing, the Entity, the full Body, the stationary Voyage, Anorexia, cutaneous Vision, Yoga, Krishna, Love, Experimentation. Where psychoanalysis says, “Stop, find your self again,” we should say instead, “Let’s go further still, we haven’t found our BwO yet, we haven’t sufficiently dismantled our self.” Substitute forgetting for anamnesis, experimentation for interpretation. Find your body without organs. Find out how to make it. It’s a question of life and death, youth and old age, sadness and joy. It is where everything is played out.

“Mistress, 1) You may tie me down on the table, ropes drawn tight, for ten to fifteen minutes, time enough to prepare the instruments; 2) One hundred lashes at least, a pause of several minutes; 3) You begin sewing, you sew up the hole in the glans; you sew the skin around the glans to the glans itself, preventing the top from tearing; you sew the scrotum to the skin of the thighs. You sew the breasts, securely attaching a button with four holes to each nipple. You may connect them with an elastic band with buttonholes—*Now you go on to the second phase:* 4) You can choose either to turn me over on the table so I am tied lying on my stomach, but with my legs together, or to bind me to the post with my wrists together, and my legs also, my whole body tightly bound; 5) You whip my back buttocks thighs, a hundred lashes at least; 6) You sew my buttocks together, all the way up and down the crack of my ass. Tightly, with a doubled thread, each stitch knotted. If I am on the table, now tie me to the post; 7) You give me fifty thrashes on the buttocks; 8) If you wish to intensify the torture and carry out your threat from last time, stick the pins all the way into my buttocks as far as they go; 9) Then you may tie me to the chair; you give me thirty thrashes on the breasts and stick in the smaller pins; if you wish, you may heat them red-hot beforehand, all or some. I should be tightly bound to the chair, hands behind my back so my chest sticks out. I haven’t mentioned burns, only because I have a medical exam coming up in awhile, and they take a long time to heal.” This is not a phantasy, it is a program: There is an essential difference between the psychoanalytic interpretation of the phantasy and the antipsychiatric experimentation of the program. Between the phantasy, an interpretation that must itself be interpreted, and the motor program of experimentation.⁵ The BwO is what remains when you take everything away. What you take away is precisely the phantasy, and significances and subjectifications as a whole. Psychoanalysis does the opposite: it translates everything into fantasies, it converts everything into phantasy, it retains the phantasy. It royally botches the real, because it botches the BwO.

Something will happen. Something is already happening. But what comes to pass on the BwO is not exactly the same as how you make yourself one. However, one is included in the other. Hence the two phases set forth in the preceding letter. *Why two clearly distinguished phases*, when the same thing is done in both cases—sewing and flogging? One phase is for the fabrication of the BwO, the other to make something circulate on it or pass across it; the same procedures are nevertheless used in both phases, but they must be done over, done twice. What is certain is that the masochist has made himself a BwO under such conditions that the BwO can no longer be populated by anything but intensities of pain, *pain waves*. It is false to say that the masochist is looking for pain but just as false to say that he is looking for pleasure in a particularly suspensive or roundabout way. The masochist is looking for a type of BwO that only pain can fill, or travel over, due to the very conditions under which that BwO was constituted. Pains are populations, packs, modes of king-masochist-in-the-desert that he engenders and augments. The same goes for the drugged body and intensities of cold, *refrigerator waves*. For each type of BwO, we must ask: (1) What type is it, how is it fabricated, by what procedures and means (predetermining what will come to pass)? (2) What are its modes, what comes to pass, and with what variants and what surprises, what is unexpected and what expected? In short, there is a very special relation of synthesis and analysis between a given type of BwO and what happens on it: an *a priori* synthesis by which something will necessarily be produced in a given mode (but what it will be is not known) and an infinite analysis by which what is produced on the BwO is already part of that body's production, is already included in the body, is already on it (but at the price of an infinity of passages, divisions, and secondary productions). It is a very delicate experimentation since there must not be any stagnation of the modes or slippage in type: the masochist and the drug user court these ever-present dangers that empty their BwO's instead of filling them.

You can fail twice, but it is the same failure, the same danger. Once at the level of the constitution of the BwO and again at the level of what passes or does not pass across it. You think you have made yourself a good BwO, that you chose the right Place, Power (*Puissance*), and Collectivity (there is always a collectivity, even when you are alone), and then nothing passes, nothing circulates, or something prevents things from moving. A paranoid point, a point of blockage, an outburst of delirium: it comes across clearly in *Speed*, by William Burroughs, Jr. Is it possible to locate this danger point, should the block be expelled, or should one instead “love, honor, and serve degeneracy wherever it surfaces”? To block, to be blocked, is that not still an intensity? In each case, we must define what comes to pass and what does not pass, what causes passage and prevents it. As in the meat circuit

according to Lewin, something flows through channels whose sections are delimited by doors with gatekeepers, passers-on.⁶ Door openers and trap closers, Malabars and Fierabras. The body is now nothing more than a set of valves, locks, floodgates, bowls, or communicating vessels, each with a proper name: a peopling of the BwO, a Metropolis that has to be managed with a whip. What peoples it, what passes across it, what does the blocking?

A BwO is made in such a way that it can be occupied, populated only by intensities. Only intensities pass and circulate. Still, the BwO is not a scene, a place, or even a support upon which something comes to pass. It has nothing to do with phantasy, there is nothing to interpret. The BwO causes intensities to pass; it produces and distributes them in a *spatium* that is itself intensive, lacking extension. It is not space, nor is it in space; it is matter that occupies space to a given degree—to the degree corresponding to the intensities produced. It is nonstratified, unformed, intense matter, the matrix of intensity, intensity = 0; but there is nothing negative about that zero, there are no negative or opposite intensities. Matter equals energy. Production of the real as an intensive magnitude starting at zero. That is why we treat the BwO as the full egg before the extension of the organism and the organization of the organs, before the formation of the strata; as the intense egg defined by axes and vectors, gradients and thresholds, by dynamic tendencies involving energy transformation and kinematic movements involving group displacement, by migrations: all independent of *accessory forms* because the organs appear and function here only as pure intensities.⁷ The organ changes when it crosses a threshold, when it changes gradient. “No organ is constant as regards either function or position, . . . sex organs sprout anywhere, . . . rectums open, defecate and close, . . . the entire organism changes color and consistency in split-second adjustments.”⁸ The tantric egg.

After all, is not Spinoza’s *Ethics* the great book of the BwO? The attributes are types or genuses of BwO’s, substances, powers, zero intensities as matrices of production. The modes are everything that comes to pass: waves and vibrations, migrations, thresholds and gradients, intensities produced in a given type of substance starting from a given matrix. The masochist body as an attribute or genus of substance, with its production of intensities and pain modes based on its degree 0 of being sewn up. The drugged body as a different attribute, with its production of specific intensities based on absolute Cold = 0. (“Junkies always beef about *The Cold* as they call it, turning up their black coat collars and clutching their withered necks . . . pure junk con. A junky does not want to be warm, he wants to be cool-cooler-COLD. But he wants *The Cold* like he wants His Junk—NOT OUTSIDE where it does him no good but INSIDE so he can sit around with a spine like a frozen hydraulic jack . . . his metabolism approaching Absolute

Zero.”⁹ Etc. The problem of whether there is a substance of all substances, a single substance for all attributes, becomes: *Is there a totality of all BwO's?* If the BwO is already a limit, what must we say of the totality of all BwO's? It is a problem not of the One and the Multiple but of a fusional multiplicity that effectively goes beyond any opposition between the one and the multiple. A formal multiplicity of substantial attributes that, as such, constitutes the ontological unity of substance. There is a continuum of all of the attributes or genuses of intensity under a single substance, and a continuum of the intensities of a certain genus under a single type or attribute. A continuum of all substances in intensity and of all intensities in substance. The uninterrupted continuum of the BwO. BwO, immanence, immanent limit. Drug users, masochists, schizophrenics, lovers—all BwO's pay homage to Spinoza. The BwO is the *field of immanence* of desire, the *plane of consistency* specific to desire (with desire defined as a process of production without reference to any exterior agency, whether it be a lack that hollows it out or a pleasure that fills it).

Every time desire is betrayed, cursed, uprooted from its field of immanence, a priest is behind it. The priest cast the triple curse on desire: the negative law, the extrinsic rule, and the transcendent ideal. Facing north, the priest said, Desire is lack (how could it not lack what it desires?). The priest carried out the first sacrifice, named castration, and all the men and women of the north lined up behind him, crying in cadence, “Lack, lack, it's the common law.” Then, facing south, the priest linked desire to pleasure. For there are hedonistic, even orgiastic, priests. Desire will be assuaged by pleasure; and not only will the pleasure obtained silence desire for a moment but the process of obtaining it is already a way of interrupting it, of instantly discharging it and unburdening oneself of it. Pleasure as discharge: the priest carries out the second sacrifice, named masturbation. Then, facing east, he exclaimed: *Jouissance* is impossible, but impossible *jouissance* is inscribed in desire. For that, in its very impossibility, is the Ideal, the “*manque-à-jouir* that is life.”¹⁰ The priest carried out the third sacrifice, phantasy or the thousand and one nights, the one hundred twenty days, while the men of the East chanted: Yes, we will be your phantasy, your ideal and impossibility, yours and also our own. The priest did not turn to the west. He knew that in the west lay a plane of consistency, but he thought that the way was blocked by the columns of Hercules, that it led nowhere and was uninhabited by people. But that is where desire was lurking, west was the shortest route east, as well as to the other directions, rediscovered or deterritorialized.

The most recent figure of the priest is the psychoanalyst, with his or her three principles: Pleasure, Death, and Reality. Doubtless, psychoanalysis demonstrated that desire is not subordinated to procreation, or even to

genitality. That was its modernism. But it retained the essentials; it even found new ways of inscribing in desire the negative law of lack, the external rule of pleasure, and the transcendent ideal of phantasy. Take the interpretation of masochism: when the ridiculous death instinct is not invoked, it is claimed that the masochist, like everybody else, is after pleasure but can only get it through pain and fantasied humiliations whose function is to allay or ward off deep anxiety. This is inaccurate; the masochist's suffering is the price he must pay, not to achieve pleasure, but to untie the pseudobond between desire and pleasure as an extrinsic measure. Pleasure is in no way something that can be attained only by a detour through suffering; it is something that must be delayed as long as possible because it interrupts the continuous process of positive desire. There is, in fact, a joy that is immanent to desire as though desire were filled by itself and its contemplations, a joy that implies no lack or impossibility and is not measured by pleasure since it is what distributes intensities of pleasure and prevents them from being suffused by anxiety, shame, and guilt. In short, the masochist uses suffering as a way of constituting a body without organs and bringing forth a plane of consistency of desire. That there are other ways, other procedures than masochism, and certainly better ones, is beside the point; it is enough that some find this procedure suitable for them.

Take a masochist who did not undergo psychoanalysis: "PROGRAM . . . At night, put on the bridle and attach my hands more tightly, either to the bit with the chain, or to the big belt right after returning from the bath. Put on the entire harness right away also, the reins and thumbscrews, and attach the thumbscrews to the harness. My penis should be in a metal sheath. Ride the reins for two hours during the day, and in the evening as the master wishes. Confinement for three or four days, hands still tied, the reins alternately tightened and loosened. The master will never approach her horse without the crop, and without using it. If the animal should display impatience or rebelliousness, the reins will be drawn tighter, the master will grab them and give the beast a good thrashing."¹¹ What is this masochist doing? He seems to be imitating a horse, *Equus eroticus*, but that's not it. Nor are the horse and the master-trainer or mistress images of the mother or father. Something entirely different is going on: a becoming-animal essential to masochism. It is a question of forces. The masochist presents it this way: *Training axiom—destroy the instinctive forces in order to replace them with transmitted forces*. In fact, it is less a destruction than an exchange and circulation ("what happens to a horse can also happen to me"). Horses are trained: humans impose upon the horse's instinctive forces transmitted forces that regulate the former, select, dominate, overcode them. The masochist effects an inversion of signs: the horse transmits its transmitted forces to him, so that the masochist's innate

forces will in turn be tamed. There are two series, the horse's (innate force, force transmitted by the human being), and the masochist's (force transmitted by the horse, innate force of the human being). One series explodes into the other, forms a circuit with it: an increase in power or a circuit of intensities. The "master," or rather the mistress-rider, the equestrian, ensures the conversion of forces and the inversion of signs. The masochist constructs an entire assemblage that simultaneously draws and fills the field of immanence of desire; he constitutes a body without organs or plane of consistency using himself, the horse, and the mistress. "Results to be obtained: that I am kept in continual expectancy of actions and orders, and that little by little all opposition is replaced by a *fusion* of my person with yours. . . . Thus at the mere thought of your boots, without even acknowledging it, I must feel fear. In this way, *it will no longer be women's legs that have an effect on me*, and if it pleases you to command me to receive your caresses, when you have had them and if you make me feel them, you will give me the imprint of your body as I have never had it before and never would have had it otherwise."¹² Legs are still organs, but the boots now only determine a zone of intensity as an imprint or zone on a BwO.

Similarly, or actually in a different way, it would be an error to interpret courtly love in terms of a law of lack or an ideal of transcendence. The renunciation of external pleasure, or its delay, its infinite regress, testifies on the contrary to an achieved state in which desire no longer lacks anything but fills itself and constructs its own field of immanence. Pleasure is an affection of a person or a subject; it is the only way for persons to "find themselves" in the process of desire that exceeds them; pleasures, even the most artificial, are reterritorializations. But the question is precisely whether it is necessary to find oneself. Courtly love does not love the self, any more than it loves the whole universe in a celestial or religious way. It is a question of making a body without organs upon which intensities pass, self and other—not in the name of a higher level of generality or a broader extension, but by virtue of singularities that can no longer be said to be personal, and intensities that can no longer be said to be extensive. The field of immanence is not internal to the self, but neither does it come from an external self or a nonself. Rather, it is like the absolute Outside that knows no Selves because interior and exterior are equally a part of the immanence in which they have fused. "Joy" in courtly love, the exchange of hearts, the test or "assay": everything is allowed, as long as it is not external to desire or transcendent to its plane, or else internal to persons. The slightest caress may be as strong as an orgasm; orgasm is a mere fact, a rather deplorable one, in relation to desire in pursuit of its principle. Everything is allowed: all that counts is for pleasure to be the flow of desire itself, Immanence, instead of a measure that interrupts it or delivers it to the three phantoms,

namely, internal lack, higher transcendence, and apparent exteriority.¹³ If pleasure is not the norm of desire, it is not by virtue of a lack that is impossible to fill but, on the contrary, by virtue of its positivity, in other words, the plane of consistency it draws in the course of its process.

A great Japanese compilation of Chinese Taoist treatises was made in A.D. 982-984. We see in it the formation of a circuit of intensities between female and male energy, with the woman playing the role of the innate or instinctive force (Yin) stolen by or transmitted to the man in such a way that the transmitted force of the man (Yang) in turn becomes innate, all the more innate: an augmentation of powers.¹⁴ The condition for this circulation and multiplication is that the man not ejaculate. It is not a question of experiencing desire as an internal lack, nor of delaying pleasure in order to produce a kind of externalizable surplus value, but instead of constituting an intensive body without organs, Tao, a field of immanence in which desire lacks nothing and therefore cannot be linked to any external or transcendent criterion. It is true that the whole circuit can be channeled toward procreative ends (ejaculation when the energies are right); that is how Confucianism understood it. But this is true only for one side of the assemblage of desire, the side facing the strata, organisms, State, family... It is not true for the other side, the Tao side of destratification that draws a plane of consistency proper to desire. Is the Tao masochistic? Is courtly love Taoist? These questions are largely meaningless. The field of immanence or plane of consistency must be constructed. This can take place in very different social formations through very different assemblages (perverse, artistic, scientific, mystical, political) with different types of bodies without organs. It is constructed piece by piece, and the places, conditions, and techniques are irreducible to one another. The question, rather, is whether the pieces can fit together, and at what price. Inevitably, there will be monstrous crossbreeds. The plane of consistency would be the totality of all BwO's, a pure multiplicity of immanence, one piece of which may be Chinese, another American, another medieval, another petty perverse, but all in a movement of generalized deterritorialization in which each person takes and makes what she or he can, according to tastes she or he will have succeeded in abstracting from a Self [*Moi*], according to a politics or strategy successfully abstracted from a given formation, according to a given procedure abstracted from its origin.

We distinguish between: (1) BwO's, which are different types, genuses, or substantial attributes. For example, the Cold of the drugged BwO, the Pain of the masochist BwO. Each has its degree 0 as its principle of production (*remissio*). (2) What happens on each type of BwO, in other words, the modes, the intensities that are produced, the waves that pass (*latitudo*). (3) The potential totality of all BwO's, the plane of consistency (*Omnitudo*,

sometimes called the BwO). There are a number of questions. Not only how to make oneself a BwO, and how to produce the corresponding intensities without which it would remain empty (not exactly the same question). But also how to reach the plane of consistency. How to sew up, cool down, and tie together all the BwO's. If this is possible to do, it is only by conjugating the intensities produced on each BwO, by producing a continuum of all intensive continuities. Are not assemblages necessary to fabricate each BwO, is not a great abstract Machine necessary to construct the plane of consistency? Gregory Bateson uses the term *plateau* for continuous regions of intensity constituted in such a way that they do not allow themselves to be interrupted by any external termination, any more than they allow themselves to build toward a climax; examples are certain sexual, or aggressive, processes in Balinese culture.¹⁵ A plateau is a piece of immanence. Every BwO is made up of plateaus. Every BwO is itself a plateau in communication with other plateaus on the plane of consistency. The BwO is a component of passage.

A rereading of *Héliogabale* and *Les Tarahumaras*. For Heliogabalus is Spinoza, and Spinoza is Heliogabalus revived. And the Tarahumaras are experimentation, peyote. Spinoza, Heliogabalus, and experimentation have the same formula: anarchy and unity are one and the same thing, not the unity of the One, but a much stranger unity that applies only to the multiple.¹⁶ These two books by Artaud express the multiplicity of fusion, fusionability as infinite zero, the plane of consistency, Matter where no gods go; principles as forces, essences, substances, elements, remissions, productions; manners of being or modalities as produced intensities, vibrations, breaths, Numbers. Finally, the difficulty of reaching this world of crowned Anarchy if you go no farther than the organs ("the liver that turns the skin yellow, the brain wracked by syphilis, the intestines that expel filth") and if you stay locked into the organism, or into a stratum that blocks the flows and anchors us in this, our world.

We come to the gradual realization that the BwO is not at all the opposite of the organs. The organs are not its enemies. The enemy is the organism. The BwO is opposed not to the organs but to that organization of the organs called the organism. It is true that Artaud wages a struggle against the organs, but at the same time what he is going after, what he has it in for, is the organism: *The body is the body. Alone it stands. And in no need of organs. Organism it never is. Organisms are the enemies of the body.*¹⁷ The BwO is not opposed to the organs; rather, the BwO and its "true organs," which must be composed and positioned, are opposed to the organism, the organic organization of the organs. The *judgment of God*, the system of the judgment of God, the theological system, is precisely the operation of He who makes an organism, an organization of organs called the organism,

because He cannot bear the BwO, because He pursues it and rips it apart so He can be first, and have the organism be first. The organism is already that, the judgment of God, from which medical doctors benefit and on which they base their power. The organism is not at all the body, the BwO; rather, it is a stratum on the BwO, in other words, a phenomenon of accumulation, coagulation, and sedimentation that, in order to extract useful labor from the BwO, imposes upon it forms, functions, bonds, dominant and hierarchized organizations, organized transcendencies. The strata are bonds, pincers. "Tie me up if you wish." We are continually stratified. But who is this we that is not me, for the subject no less than the organism belongs to and depends on a stratum? Now we have the answer: the BwO is that glacial reality where the alluvions, sedimentations, coagulations, foldings, and recoilings that compose an organism—and also a signification and a subject—occur. For the judgment of God weighs upon and is exercised against the BwO; it is the BwO that undergoes it. It is in the BwO that the organs enter into the relations of composition called the organism. The BwO howls: "They've made me an organism! They've wrongfully folded me! They've stolen my body!" The judgment of God uproots it from its immanence and makes it an organism, a signification, a subject. It is the BwO that is stratified. It swings between two poles, the surfaces of stratification into which it is recoiled, on which it submits to the judgment, and the plane of consistency in which it unfurls and opens to experimentation. If the BwO is a limit, if one is forever attaining it, it is because behind each stratum, encasted in it, there is always another stratum. For many a stratum, and not only an organism, is necessary to make the judgment of God. A perpetual and violent combat between the plane of consistency, which frees the BwO, cutting across and dismantling all of the strata, and the surfaces of stratification that block it or make it recoil.

Let us consider the three great strata concerning us, in other words, the ones that most directly bind us: the organism, signification, and subjectification. The surface of the organism, the angle of signification and interpretation, and the point of subjectification or subjection. You will be organized, you will be an organism, you will articulate your body—otherwise you're just depraved. You will be signifier and signified, interpreter and interpreted—otherwise you're just a deviant. You will be a subject, nailed down as one, a subject of the enunciation recoiled into a subject of the statement—otherwise you're just a tramp. To the strata as a whole, the BwO opposes disarticulation (or *n* articulations) as the property of the plane of consistency, experimentation as the operation on that plane (no signifier, never interpret!), and nomadism as the movement (keep moving, even in place, never stop moving, motionless voyage, desubjectification). What does it mean to disarticulate, to cease to be an organism? How can we

convey how easy it is, and the extent to which we do it every day? And how necessary caution is, the art of dosages, since overdose is a danger. You don't do it with a sledgehammer, you use a very fine file. You invent self-destructions that have nothing to do with the death drive. Dismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself, but rather opening the body to connections that presuppose an entire assemblage, circuits, conjunctions, levels and thresholds, passages and distributions of intensity, and territories and deterritorializations measured with the craft of a surveyor. Actually, dismantling the organism is no more difficult than dismantling the other two strata, signification and subjectification. Signification clings to the soul just as the organism clings to the body, and it is not easy to get rid of either. And how can we unhook ourselves from the points of subjectification that secure us, nail us down to a dominant reality? Tearing the conscious away from the subject in order to make it a means of exploration, tearing the unconscious away from signification and interpretation in order to make it a veritable production: this is assuredly no more or less difficult than tearing the body away from the organism. Caution is the art common to all three; if in dismantling the organism there are times one courts death, in slipping away from signification and subjection one courts falsehood, illusion and hallucination and psychic death. Artaud weighs and measures every word: the conscious "knows what is good for it and what is of no value to it: it knows which thoughts and feelings it can receive without danger and with profit, and which are harmful to the exercise of its freedom. Above all, it knows just how far its own being goes, and just how far it has not yet gone or does not have the right to go without sinking into the unreal, the illusory, the unmade, the unprepared . . . a *Plane* which normal consciousness does not reach but which *Ciguri* allows us to reach, and which is the very mystery of all poetry. But there is in human existence another plane, obscure and formless, where consciousness has not entered, and which surrounds it like an unilluminated extension or a menace, as the case may be. And which itself gives off adventurous sensations, perceptions. These are those shameless fantasies which affect an unhealthy conscious. . . . I too have had false sensations and perceptions and I have believed in them."¹⁸

You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn; and you have to keep small supplies of signification and subjectification, if only to turn them against their own systems when the circumstances demand it, when things, persons, even situations, force you to; and you have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to respond to the dominant reality. Mimic the strata. You don't reach the BwO, and its plane of consistency, by wildly destratifying. That is why we encountered the paradox of those emptied and dreary bodies at the very beginning: they

had emptied themselves of their organs instead of looking for the point at which they could patiently and momentarily dismantle the organization of the organs we call the organism. There are, in fact, several ways of botching the BwO: either one fails to produce it, or one produces it more or less, but nothing is produced on it, intensities do not pass or are blocked. This is because the BwO is always swinging between the surfaces that stratify it and the plane that sets it free. If you free it with too violent an action, if you blow apart the strata without taking precautions, then instead of drawing the plane you will be killed, plunged into a black hole, or even dragged toward catastrophe. Staying stratified—organized, signified, subjected—is not the worst that can happen; the worst that can happen is if you throw the strata into demented or suicidal collapse, which brings them back down on us heavier than ever. This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. It is through a meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bringing forth continuous intensities for a BwO. Connect, conjugate, continue: a whole “diagram,” as opposed to still signifying and subjective programs. We are in a social formation; first see how it is stratified for us and in us and at the place where we are; then descend from the strata to the deeper assemblage within which we are held; gently tip the assemblage, making it pass over to the side of the plane of consistency. It is only there that the BwO reveals itself for what it is: connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities. You have constructed your own little machine, ready when needed to be plugged into other collective machines. Castaneda describes a long process of experimentation (it makes little difference whether it is with peyote or other things): let us recall for the moment how the Indian forces him first to find a “place,” already a difficult operation, then to find “allies,” and then gradually to give up interpretation, to construct flow by flow and segment by segment lines of experimentation, becoming-animal, becoming-molecular, etc. For the BwO is all of that: necessarily a Place, necessarily a Plane, necessarily a Collectivity (assembling elements, things, plants, animals, tools, people, powers, and fragments of all of these; for it is not “my” body without organs, instead the “me” (*moi*) is on it, or what remains of me, unalterable and changing in form, crossing thresholds).

In the course of Castaneda’s books, the reader may begin to doubt the existence of the Indian Don Juan, and many other things besides. But that has no importance. So much the better if the books are a syncretism rather

than an ethnographical study, and the protocol of an experiment rather than an account of an initiation. The fourth book, *Tales of Power*, is about the living distinction between the “Tonal” and the “Nagual.” The *tonal* seems to cover many disparate things: It is the organism, and also all that is organized and organizing; but it is also signification, and all that is signifying or signified, all that is susceptible to interpretation, explanation, all that is memorizable in the form of something recalling something else; finally, it is the Self (*Moi*), the subject, the historical, social, or individual person, and the corresponding feelings. In short, the tonal is everything, including God, the judgment of God, since it “makes up the rules by which it apprehends the world. So, in a manner of speaking, it creates the world.”¹⁹ Yet the tonal is only an island. For the *nagual* is also everything. And it is the same everything, but under such conditions that the body without organs has replaced the organism and experimentation has replaced all interpretation, for which it no longer has any use. Flows of intensity, their fluids, their fibers, their continuums and conjunctions of affects, the wind, fine segmentation, microperceptions, have replaced the world of the subject. Becomings, becomings-animal, becomings-molecular, have replaced history, individual or general. In fact, the tonal is not as disparate as it seems: it includes all of the strata and everything that can be ascribed to the strata, the organization of the organism, the interpretations and explanations of the signifiable, the movements of subjectification. The nagual, on the contrary, dismantles the strata. It is no longer an organism that functions but a BwO that is constructed. No longer are there acts to explain, dreams or phantasies to interpret, childhood memories to recall, words to make signify; instead, there are colors and sounds, becomings and intensities (and when you become-dog, don’t ask if the dog you are playing with is a dream or a reality, if it is “your goddam mother” or something else entirely). There is no longer a Self [*Moi*] that feels, acts, and recalls; there is “a glowing fog, a dark yellow mist” that has affects and experiences movements, speeds.²⁰ The important thing is not to dismantle the tonal by destroying it all of a sudden. You have to diminish it, shrink it, clean it, and that only at certain moments. You have to keep it in order to survive, to ward off the assault of the nagual. For a nagual that erupts, that destroys the tonal, a body without organs that shatters all the strata, turns immediately into a body of nothingness, pure self-destruction whose only outcome is death: “The tonal must be protected at any cost.”²¹

We still have not answered the question of why there are so many dangers, and so many necessary precautions. It is not enough to set up an abstract opposition between the strata and the BwO. For the BwO already exists in the strata as well as on the destratified plane of consistency, but in a totally different manner. Take the organism as a stratum: there is indeed a

BwO that opposes the organization of the organs we call the organism, but there is also a BwO of the organism that belongs to that stratum. *Cancerous tissue*: each instant, each second, a cell becomes cancerous, mad, proliferates and loses its configuration, takes over everything; the organism must resubmit it to its rule or restratify it, not only for its own survival, but also to make possible an escape from the organism, the fabrication of the “other” BwO on the plane of consistency. Take the stratum of signification: once again, there is a cancerous tissue, this time of signification, a burgeoning body of the despot that blocks any circulation of signs, as well as preventing the birth of the asignifying sign on the “other” BwO. Or take a stifling body of subjectification, which makes a freeing all the more unlikely by forbidding any remaining distinction between subjects. Even if we consider given social formations, or a given stratic apparatus within a formation, we must say that every one of them has a BwO ready to gnaw, proliferate, cover, and invade the entire social field, entering into relations of violence and rivalry as well as alliance and complicity. A BwO of money (inflation), but also a BwO of the State, army, factory, city, Party, etc. If the strata are an affair of coagulation and sedimentation, all a stratum needs is a high sedimentation rate for it to lose its configuration and articulations, and to form its own specific kind of tumor, within itself or in a given formation or apparatus. The strata spawn their own BwO’s, totalitarian and fascist BwO’s, terrifying caricatures of the plane of consistency. It is not enough to make a distinction between full BwO’s on the plane of consistency and empty BwO’s on the debris of strata destroyed by a too-violent destratification. We must also take into account cancerous BwO’s in a stratum that has begun to proliferate. *The three-body problem*. Artaud said that outside the “plane” is another plane surrounding us with “an unilluminated extension or a menace, as the case may be.” It is a struggle and as such is never sufficiently clear. How can we fabricate a BwO for ourselves without its being the cancerous BwO of a fascist inside us, or the empty BwO of a drug addict, paranoiac, or hypochondriac? How can we tell the three Bodies apart? Artaud was constantly grappling with this problem. The extraordinary composition of *To Be Done with the Judgment of God*: he begins by cursing the cancerous body of America, the body of war and money; he denounces the strata, which he calls “caca”; to the strata he opposes the true Plane, even if it is only peyote, the little trickle of the Tarahumaras; but he also knows about the dangers of a too-sudden, careless destratification. Artaud was constantly grappling with all of that, and flowed with it. *Letter to Hitler*: “Dear Sir, In 1932 in the Ider Café in Berlin, on one of the evenings when I made your acquaintance and shortly before you took power, I showed you roadblocks on a map that was not just a map of geography, roadblocks against me, an act of force aimed in a certain

number of directions you indicated to me. Today Hitler I lift the road-blocks I set down! The Parisians need gas. Yours, A.A.—P.S. Be it understood, dear sir, that this is hardly an invitation, it is above all a warning.”²² That map that is not only a map of geography is something like a BwO intensity map, where the roadblocks designate thresholds and the gas, waves or flows. Even if Artaud did not succeed for himself, it is certain that through him something has succeeded for us all.

The BwO is the egg. But the egg is not regressive; on the contrary, it is perfectly contemporary, you always carry it with you as your own milieu of experimentation, your associated milieu. The egg is the milieu of pure intensity, spatium not extension, Zero intensity as principle of production. There is a fundamental convergence between science and myth, embryology and mythology, the biological egg and the psychic or cosmic egg: the egg always designates this intensive reality, which is not undifferentiated, but is where things and organs are distinguished solely by gradients, migrations, zones of proximity. The egg is the BwO. The BwO is not “before” the organism; it is adjacent to it and is continually in the process of constructing itself. If it is tied to childhood, it is not in the sense that the adult regresses to the child and the child to the Mother, but in the sense that the child, like the Dogon twin who takes a piece of the placenta with him, tears from the organic form of the Mother an intense and destratified matter that on the contrary constitutes his or her perpetual break with the past, his or her present experience, experimentation. The BwO is a childhood block, a becoming, the opposite of a childhood memory. It is not the child “before” the adult, or the mother “before” the child: it is the strict contemporaneity of the adult, of the adult and the child, their map of comparative densities and intensities, and all of the variations on that map. The BwO is precisely this intense germen where there are not and cannot be either parents or children (organic representation). This is what Freud failed to understand about Weissmann: the child as the germinal contemporary of its parents. Thus the BwO is never yours or mine. It is always *a* body. It is no more projective than it is regressive. It is an involution, but always a contemporary, creative involution. The organs distribute themselves on the BwO, but they distribute themselves independently of the form of the organism; forms become contingent, organs are no longer anything more than intensities that are produced, flows, thresholds, and gradients. “A” stomach, “an” eye, “a” mouth: the indefinite article does not lack anything; it is not indeterminate or undifferentiated, but expresses the pure determination of intensity, intensive difference. The indefinite article is the conductor of desire. It is not at all a question of a fragmented, splintered body, of organs without the body (OwB). The BwO is exactly the opposite. There are not organs in the sense of fragments in relation to a lost

unity, nor is there a return to the undifferentiated in relation to a differentiable totality. There is a distribution of intensive principles of organs, with their positive indefinite articles, within a collectivity or multiplicity, inside an assemblage, and according to machinic connections operating on a BwO. *Logos spermaticos*. The error of psychoanalysis was to understand BwO phenomena as regressions, projections, phantasies, in terms of an *image* of the body. As a result, it only grasps the flipside of the BwO and immediately substitutes family photos, childhood memories, and part-objects for a worldwide intensity map. It understands nothing about the egg nor about indefinite articles nor about the contemporaneousness of a continually self-constructing milieu.

The BwO is desire; it is that which one desires and by which one desires. And not only because it is the plane of consistency or the field of immanence of desire. Even when it falls into the void of too-sudden destratification, or into the proliferation of a cancerous stratum, it is still desire. Desire stretches that far: desiring one's own annihilation, or desiring the power to annihilate. Money, army, police, and State desire, fascist desire, even fascism is desire. There is desire whenever there is the constitution of a BwO under one relation or another. It is a problem not of ideology but of pure matter, a phenomenon of physical, biological, psychic, social, or cosmic matter. That is why the material problem confronting schizoanalysis is knowing whether we have it within our means to make the selection, to distinguish the BwO from its doubles: empty vitreous bodies, cancerous bodies, totalitarian and fascist. The test of desire: not denouncing false desires, but distinguishing within desire between that which pertains to stratic proliferation, or else too-violent destratification, and that which pertains to the construction of the plane of consistency (keep an eye out for all that is fascist, even inside us, and also for the suicidal and the demented). The plane of consistency is not simply that which is constituted by the sum of all BwO's. There are things it rejects; the BwO chooses, as a function of the abstract machine that draws it. Even within a BwO (the masochist body, the drugged body, etc.), we must distinguish what can be composed on the plane and what cannot. There is a fascist use of drugs, or a suicidal use, but is there also a possible use that would be in conformity with the plane of consistency? Even paranoia: Is there a possibility of using it that way in part? When we asked the question of the totality of all BwO's, considered as substantial attributes of a single substance, it should have been understood, strictly speaking, to apply only to the plane. The plane is the totality of the full BwO's that have been selected (there is no positive totality including the cancerous or empty bodies). What is the nature of this totality? Is it solely logical? Or must we say that each BwO, from a basis in its own genus, produces effects identical or analogous to the effects other

BwO's produce from a basis in their genera? Could what the drug user or masochist obtains also be obtained in a different fashion in the conditions of the plane, so it would even be possible to use drugs without using drugs, to get soused on pure water, as in Henry Miller's experimentations? Or is it a question of a real passage of substances, an intensive continuum of all the BwO's? Doubtless, anything is possible. All we are saying is that the identity of effects, the continuity of genera, the totality of all BwO's, can be obtained on the plane of consistency only by means of an abstract machine capable of covering and even creating it, by assemblages capable of plugging into desire, of effectively taking charge of desires, of assuring their continuous connections and transversal tie-ins. Otherwise, the BwO's of the plane will remain separated by genus, marginalized, reduced to means of bordering, while on the "other plane" the emptied or cancerous doubles will triumph.

7. Year Zero: Faciality



Earlier, we encountered two axes, significance and subjectification. We saw that they were two very different semiotic systems, or even two strata. Significance is never without a white wall upon which it inscribes its signs and redundancies. Subjectification is never without a black hole in which it lodges its consciousness, passion, and redundancies. Since all semiotics are mixed and strata come at least in twos, it should come as no surprise that a very special mechanism is situated at their intersection. Oddly enough, it is a face: the *white wall/black hole* system. A broad face with white cheeks, a chalk face with eyes cut in for a black hole. Clown head, white clown, moon-white mime, angel of death, Holy Shroud. The face is not an envelope exterior to the person who speaks, thinks, or feels. The form of the signifier in language, even its units, would remain indeterminate if the potential listener did not use the face of the speaker to guide his or her choices (“Hey, he seems angry . . .”; “He couldn’t say it . . .”; “You see my face when I’m talking to you . . .”; “look at me carefully . . .”). A

child, woman, mother, man, father, boss, teacher, police officer, does not speak a general language but one whose signifying traits are indexed to specific faciality traits. Faces are not basically individual; they define zones of frequency or probability, delimit a field that neutralizes in advance any expressions or connections unamenable to the appropriate significations. Similarly, the form of subjectivity, whether consciousness or passion, would remain absolutely empty if faces did not form loci of resonance that select the sensed or mental reality and make it conform in advance to a dominant reality. The face itself is redundancy. It is itself in redundancy with the redundancies of signification or frequency, and those of resonance or subjectivity. The face constructs the wall that the signifier needs in order to bounce off of; it constitutes the wall of the signifier, the frame or screen. The face digs the hole that subjectification needs in order to break through; it constitutes the black hole of subjectivity as consciousness or passion, the camera, the third eye.

Or should we say things differently? It is not exactly the face that constitutes the wall of the signifier or the hole of subjectivity. The face, at least the concrete face, vaguely begins to take shape *on* the white wall. It vaguely begins to appear *in* the black hole. In film, the close-up of the face can be said to have two poles: make the face reflect light or, on the contrary, emphasize its shadows to the point of engulfing it “in pitiless darkness.”¹ A psychologist once said that the face is a visual percept that crystallizes out of “different varieties of vague luminosity without form or dimension.” A suggestive whiteness, a hole that captures, a face. According to this account, the dimensionless black hole and formless white wall are already there to begin with. And there are already a number of possible combinations in the system: either black holes distribute themselves on the white wall, or the white wall unravels and moves toward a black hole combining all black holes, hurtling them together or making them “crest.” Sometimes faces appear on the wall, with their holes; sometimes they appear in the hole, with their linearized, rolled-up wall. A horror story, the face is a horror story. It is certain that the signifier does not construct the wall that it needs all by itself; it is certain that subjectivity does not dig its hole all alone. Concrete faces cannot be assumed to come ready-made. They are engendered by an *abstract machine of faciality* (*visagéité*), which produces them at the same time as it gives the signifier its white wall and subjectivity its black hole. Thus the black hole/white wall system is, to begin with, not a face but the abstract machine that produces faces according to the changeable combinations of its cogwheels. Do not expect the abstract machine to resemble what it produces, or will produce.

The abstract machine crops up when you least expect it, at a chance juncture when you are just falling asleep, or into a twilight state or halluci-

nating, or doing an amusing physics experiment . . . Kafka's novella, "Blumfeld":² the bachelor returns home in the evening to find two little ping-pong balls jumping around by themselves on the "wall" constituted by the floor. They bounce everywhere and even try to hit him in the face. They apparently contain other, still smaller, electric balls. Blumfeld finally manages to lock them up in the black hole of a wardrobe. The scene continues the next day when Blumfeld tries to give the balls to a small, feeble-minded boy and two grimacing little girls, and then at the office, where he encounters his two grimacing and feebled-minded assistants, who want to make off with a broom. In a wonderful ballet by Debussy and Nijinsky, a little tennis ball comes bouncing onto the stage at dusk, and at the end another ball appears in a similar fashion. This time, between the two balls, two girls and a boy who watches them develop passionnal dance and facial traits in vague luminosities (curiosity, spite, irony, ecstasy . . .).³ There is nothing to explain, nothing to interpret. It is the pure abstract machine of a twilight state. White wall/black hole? But depending on the combinations, the wall could just as well be black, and the hole white. The balls can bounce off of a wall or spin into a black hole. Even upon impact they can have the relative role of a hole in relation to the wall, just as when they are rolling straight ahead they can have the relative role of a wall in relation to the hole they are heading for. They circulate in the white wall/black hole system. Nothing in all of this resembles a face, yet throughout the system faces are distributed and faciality traits organized. Nevertheless, the abstract machine can be effectuated in other things besides faces, but not in any order, and not without the necessary foundation (*raisons*).

The face has been a major concern of American psychology, in particular the relation between the mother and the child through eye-to-eye contact. Four-eye machine? Let us recall certain stages in the research: (1) Isakower's studies on falling asleep, in which so-called proprioceptive sensations of a manual, buccal, cutaneous, or even vaguely visual nature recall the infantile mouth-breast relation. (2) Lewin's discovery of a *white screen* of the dream, which is ordinarily covered by visual contents but remains white when the only dream contents are proprioceptive sensations (this screen or white wall, once again, is the breast as it approaches, getting larger and then pressing flat). (3) Spitz's interpretation according to which the white screen, rather than being a representation of the breast itself as an object of tactile sensation or contact, is a visual percept implying a minimum of distance and upon which the mother's face appears for the child to use as a guide in finding the breast. Thus there is a combination of two very different kinds of elements: manual, buccal, or cutaneous proprioceptive sensations; and the visual perception of the face seen from the front against the white screen, with the shape of the eyes drawn in for black holes. This

visual perception very quickly assumes decisive importance for the act of eating, in relation to the breast as a volume and the mouth as a cavity, both experienced through touch.⁴

We can now propose the following distinction: the face is part of a surface-holes, holey surface, system. This system should under no circumstances be confused with the volume-cavity system proper to the (proprioceptive) body. The head is included in the body, but the face is not. The face is a surface: facial traits, lines, wrinkles; long face, square face, triangular face; the face is a map, even when it is applied to and wraps a volume, even when it surrounds and borders cavities that are now no more than holes. The head, even the human head, is not necessarily a face. The face is produced only when the head ceases to be a part of the body, when it ceases to be coded by the body, when it ceases to have a multidimensional, polyvocal corporeal code—when the body, head included, has been decoded and has to be *overcoded* by something we shall call the Face. This amounts to saying that the head, all the volume-cavity elements of the head, have to be facialized. What accomplishes this is the screen with holes, the white wall/black hole, the abstract machine producing faciality. But the operation does not end there: if the head and its elements are facialized, the entire body also can be facialized, comes to be facialized as part of an inevitable process. When the mouth and nose, but first the eyes, become a holey surface, all the other volumes and cavities of the body follow. An operation worthy of Doctor Moreau: horrible and magnificent. Hand, breast, stomach, penis and vagina, thigh, leg and foot, all come to be facialized. Fetishism, erotomania, etc., are inseparable from these processes of facialization. It is not at all a question of taking a part of the body and making it *resemble* a face, or making a dream-face dance in a cloud. No anthropomorphism here. Facialization operates not by resemblance but by an order of reasons. It is a much more unconscious and machinic operation that draws the entire body across the holey surface, and in which the role of the face is not as a model or image, but as an overcoding of all of the decoded parts. Everything remains sexual; there is no sublimation, but there are new coordinates. *It is precisely because the face depends on an abstract machine that it is not content to cover the head*, but touches all other parts of the body, and even, if necessary, other objects without resemblance. *The question then becomes what circumstances trigger the machine* that produces the face and facialization. Although the head, even the human head, is not necessarily a face, the face is produced in humanity. But it is produced by a necessity that does not apply to human beings “in general.” The face is not animal, but neither is it human in general; there is even something absolutely inhuman about the face. It would be an error to proceed as though the face became inhuman only beyond a certain threshold: close-

up, extreme magnification, recondite expression, etc. The inhuman in human beings; that is what the face is from the start. It is by nature a close-up, with its inanimate white surfaces, its shining black holes, its emptiness and boredom. Bunker-face. To the point that if human beings have a destiny, it is rather to escape the face, to dismantle the face and facializations, to become imperceptible, to become clandestine, not by returning to animality, nor even by returning to the head, but by quite spiritual and special becomings-animal, by strange true becomings that get past the wall and get out of the black holes, that make *faciality traits* themselves finally elude the organization of the face—freckles dashing toward the horizon, hair carried off by the wind, eyes you traverse instead of seeing yourself in or gazing into in those glum face-to-face encounters between signifying subjectivities. “I no longer look into the eyes of the woman I hold in my arms but I swim through, head and arms and legs, and I see that behind the sockets of the eyes there is a region unexplored, the world of futurity, and here there is no logic whatsoever. . . . I have broken the wall. . . . My eyes are useless, for they render back only the image of the known. My whole body must become a constant beam of light, moving with an ever greater rapidity, never arrested, never looking back, never dwindling. . . . *Therefore I close my ears, my eyes, my mouth.*”⁵ BwO. Yes, the face has a great future, but only if it is destroyed, dismantled. On the road to the asignifying and asubjective. But so far we have explained nothing of what we sense.

The move from the body-head system to the face system has nothing to do with an evolution or genetic stages. Nor with phenomenological positions. Nor with integrations of part-objects, or structural or structuring systems. Nor can there be any appeal to a preexisting subject, or one brought into existence, except by this machine specific to faciality. In the literature of the face, Sartre’s text on the look and Lacan’s on the mirror make the error of appealing to a form of subjectivity or humanity reflected in a phenomenological field or split in a structural field. *The gaze is but secondary in relation to the gazeless eyes, to the black hole of faciality. The mirror is but secondary in relation to the white wall of faciality.* Neither will we speak of a genetic axis, or the integration of part-objects. Any approach based on stages in ontogenesis is arbitrary: it is thought that what is fastest is primary, or even serves as a foundation or springboard for what comes next. An approach based on part-objects is even worse; it is the approach of a demented experimenter who flays, slices, and anatomizes everything in sight, and then proceeds to sew things randomly back together again. You can make any list of part-objects you want: hand, breast, mouth, eyes . . . It’s still Frankenstein. What we need to consider is not fundamentally organs without bodies, or the fragmented body; it is the body without organs, animated by various intensive movements that determine the

nature and emplacement of the organs in question and make that body an organism, or even a system of strata of which the organism is only a part. It becomes apparent that the slowest of movements, or the last to occur or arrive, is not the least intense. And the fastest may already have converged with it, connected with it, in the disequilibrium of a nonsynchronous development of strata that have different speeds and lack a sequence of stages but are nevertheless simultaneous. The question of the body is not one of part-objects but of differential speeds.

These movements are movements of deterritorialization. They are what “make” the body an animal or human organism. For example, the prehensile hand implies a *relative* deterritorialization not only of the front paw but also of the locomotor hand. It has a correlate, the use-object or tool: the club is a deterritorialized branch. The breast of the woman, with her upright posture, indicates a deterritorialization of the animal’s mammary gland; the mouth of the child, adorned with lips by an outfolding of the mucous membranes, marks a deterritorialization of the snout and mouth of the animal. Lips-breast: each serves as a correlate of the other.⁶ The human head implies a deterritorialization in relation to the animal and has as its correlate the organization of a world, in other words, a milieu that has itself been deterritorialized (the steppe is the first “world,” in contrast to the forest milieu). But the face represents a far more intense, if slower, deterritorialization. We could say that it is an *absolute* deterritorialization: it is no longer relative because it removes the head from the stratum of the organism, human or animal, and connects it to other strata, such as significance and subjectification. Now the face has a correlate of great importance: the landscape, which is not just a milieu but a deterritorialized world. There are a number of face-landscape correlations, on this “higher” level. Christian education exerts spiritual control over both faciality and landscapity (*paysagéité*): Compose them both, color them in, complete them, arrange them according to a complementarity linking landscapes to faces.⁷ Face and landscape manuals formed a pedagogy, a strict discipline, and were an inspiration to the arts as much as the arts were an inspiration to them. Architecture positions its ensembles—houses, towns or cities, monuments or factories—to function like faces in the landscape they transform. Painting takes up the same movement but also reverses it, positioning a landscape as a face, treating one like the other: “treatise on the face and the landscape.” The close-up in film treats the face primarily as a landscape; that is the definition of film, black hole and white wall, screen and camera. But the same goes for the earlier arts, architecture, painting, even the novel: close-ups animate and invent all of their correlations. So, is your mother a landscape or a face? A face or a factory? (Godard.) All faces envelop an unknown, unexplored landscape; all landscapes are populated

by a loved or dreamed-of face, develop a face to come or already past. What face has not called upon the landscapes it amalgamated, sea and hill; what landscape has not evoked the face that would have completed it, providing an unexpected complement for its lines and traits? Even when painting becomes abstract, all it does is rediscover the black hole and white wall, the great composition of the white canvas and black slash. Tearing, but also stretching of the canvas along an axis of escape (*fuite*), at a vanishing point (*point de fuite*), along a diagonal, by a knife slice, slash, or hole: the machine is already in place that always functions to produce faces and landscapes, however abstract. Titian began his paintings in black and white, not to make outlines to fill in, but as the matrix for each of the colors to come.

The novel—*A flock of geese flew which the snow had dazzled. [Perceval] saw them and heard them, for they were going away noisily because of a falcon which came drawing after them at a great rate until he found abandoned one separated from the flock, and he struck it so and bruised it that he knocked it down to earth. . . . When Perceval saw the trampled snow on which the goose had lain, and the blood which appeared around, he leaned upon his lance and looked at that image, for the blood and the snow together seemed to him like the fresh color which was on the face of his friend, and he thinks until he forgets himself; for the vermillion seated on white was on her face just the same as these three drops of blood on the white snow. . . . We have seen a knight who is dozing on his charger.* Everything is there: the redundancy specific to the face and landscape, the snowy white wall of the landscape-face, the black hole of the falcon and the three drops distributed on the wall; and, simultaneously, the silvery line of the landscape-face spinning toward the black hole of the knight deep in catatonia. Cannot the knight, at certain times and under certain conditions, push the movement further still, crossing the black hole, breaking through the white wall, dismantling the face—even if the attempt may backfire?⁸ All of this is in no way characteristic of the genre of the novel only at the end of its history; it is there from the beginning, it is an essential part of the genre. It is false to see Don Quixote as the end of the chivalric novel, invoking the hero's hallucinations, hare-brained ideas, and hypnotic or cataleptic states. It is false to see novels such as Beckett's as the end of the novel in general, invoking the black holes, the characters' line of deterritorialization, the schizophrenic promenades of Molloy or the Unnameable, their loss of their names, memory, or purpose. The novel does have an evolution, but that is surely not it. The novel has always been defined by the adventure of lost characters who no longer know their name, what they are looking for, or what they are doing, amnesiacs, ataxics, catatonics. They differentiate the genre of the novel from the genres of epic or drama (when the dramatic or epic hero is stricken with folly or forgetting, etc., it is in an entirely different way). *La princesse de*

Cleves is a novel precisely by virtue of what seemed paradoxical to the people of the time: the states of absence or “rest,” the sleep that overtakes the characters. There is always a Christian education in the novel. Molloy is the beginning of the genre of the novel. When the novel began, with Chrétien de Troyes, for example, the essential character that would accompany it over the entire course of its history was already there: The knight of the novel of courtly love spends his time forgetting his name, what he is doing, what people say to him, he doesn’t know where he is going or to whom he is speaking, he is continually drawing a line of absolute deterritorialization, but also losing his way, stopping, and falling into black holes. “He awaits chivalry and adventure.” Open Chrétien de Troyes to any page and you will find a catatonic knight seated on his steed, leaning on his lance, waiting, seeing the face of his loved one in the landscape; you have to hit him to make him respond. Lancelot, in the presence of the queen’s white face, doesn’t notice his horse plunge into the river; or he gets into a passing cart and it turns out to be the cart of disgrace. There is a face-landscape aggregate proper to the novel, in which black holes sometimes distribute themselves on a white wall, and the white line of the horizon sometimes spins toward a black hole, or both simultaneously.

Theorems of Deterritorialization, or Machinic Propositions⁹

First theorem: One never deterritorializes alone; there are always at least two terms, hand-use object, mouth-breast, face-landscape. And each of the two terms reterritorializes on the other. Reterritorialization must not be confused with a return to a primitive or older territoriality: it necessarily implies a set of artifices by which one element, itself deterritorialized, serves as a new territoriality for another, which has lost its territoriality as well. Thus there is an entire system of horizontal and complementary reterritorializations, between hand and tool, mouth and breast, face and landscape. *Second theorem:* The fastest of two elements or movements of deterritorialization is not necessarily the most intense or most deterritorialized. Intensity of deterritorialization must not be confused with speed of movement or development. The fastest can even connect its intensity to the slowest, which, as an intensity, does not come after the fastest but is simultaneously at work on a different stratum or plane (for example, the way the breast-mouth relation is guided from the start by a plane of faciality). *Third theorem:* It can even be concluded from this that the *least* deterritorialized reterritorializes on the *most* deterritorialized. This is where the second system of reterritorializations comes in, the vertical system running from bottom to top. This is the sense in which not only

the mouth but also the breast, hand, the entire body, even the tool, are “facialized.” As a general rule, relative deterritorializations (transcoding) reterritorialize on a deterritorialization that is in certain respects absolute (overcoding). We have seen that the deterritorialization of the head into a face is absolute but remains negative in that it passes from one stratum to another, from the stratum of the organism to those of signification and subjectification. The hand and breast reterritorialize on the face and in the landscape: they are facialized at the same time as they are landscapified. Even a use-object may come to be facialized: you might say that a house, utensil, or object, an article of clothing, etc., is *watching me*, not because it resembles a face, but because it is taken up in the white wall/black hole process, because it connects to the abstract machine of facialization. The close-up in film pertains as much to a knife, cup, clock, or kettle as to a face or facial element, for example, Griffith’s “the kettle is watching me.” Is it not fair to say, then, that there are close-ups in novels, as when Dickens writes the opening line of *The Cricket on the Hearth*: “The kettle began it . . .”,¹⁰ and in painting, when a utensil becomes a face-landscape from within, or when a cup on a tablecloth or a teapot is facialized, in Bonnard, Vuillard? *Fourth theorem*: The abstract machine is therefore effectuated not only in the faces that produce it but also to varying degrees in body parts, clothes, and objects that it facializes following an order of reasons (rather than an organization of resemblances).

Yet the question remains: When does the abstract machine of faciality enter into play? When is it triggered? Take some simple examples: the maternal power operating through the face during nursing; the passionnal power operating through the face of the loved one, even in caresses; the political power operating through the face of the leader (streamers, icons, and photographs), even in mass actions; the power of film operating through the face of the star and the close-up; the power of television. It is not the individuality of the face that counts but the efficacy of the ciphering it makes possible, and in what cases it makes it possible. This is an affair not of ideology but of economy and the organization of power (*pouvoir*). We are certainly not saying that the face, the power of the face (*la puissance du visage*), engenders and explains social power (*pouvoir*). *Certain assemblages of power (pouvoir) require the production of a face*, others do not. If we consider primitive societies, we see that there is very little that operates through the face: their semiotic is nonsignifying, nonsubjective, essentially collective, polyvocal, and corporeal, playing on very diverse forms and substances. This polyvocality operates through bodies, their volumes, their internal cavities, their variable exterior connections and coordinates (territorialities). A fragment from a manual semiotic, a manual sequence, may be coordinated, without subordination or unification, with an oral

sequence, or a cutaneous one, or a rhythmic one, etc. Lizot, for example, shows how “the dissociation of duty, ritual and daily life is almost total . . . it is strange, inconceivable to us”: during mourning behavior, certain people make obscene jokes while others cry; or an Indian abruptly stops crying and begins to repair his flute; or everybody goes to sleep.¹¹ The same goes for incest. There is no incest prohibition; instead, there are sequences of incest that connect with sequences of prohibition following specific coordinates. Paintings, tattoos, or marks on the skin embrace the multidimensionality of bodies. Even masks ensure the head’s belonging to the body, rather than making it a face. Doubtless, there are profound movements of deterritorialization that shake up the coordinates of the body and outline particular assemblages of power; however, they connect the body not to faciality but to becomings-animal, in particular with the help of drugs. Of course, there is no less spirituality for that, for these becomings-animal involve an animal Spirit—a jaguar-spirit, bird-spirit, ocelot-spirit, toucan-spirit—that takes possession of the body’s interior, enters its cavities, and fills its volumes instead of making a face for it. Possession expresses a direct relation between Voices and the body rather than a relation to the face. Shaman, warrior, and hunter organizations of power, fragile and precarious, are all the more spiritual by virtue of the fact that they operate through corporeality, animality, and vegetality. When we said earlier that the human head still belongs to the stratum of the organism, we obviously were not denying the existence of culture and society among these peoples; we were merely saying that these cultures’ and societies’ codes pertain to bodies, to the belonging of heads to bodies, to the ability of the body-head system to *become* and receive souls, and to receive them as friends while repulsing enemy souls. “Primitives” may have the most human of heads, the most beautiful and most spiritual, but they have no face and need none.

The reason is simple. The face is not a universal. It is not even that of the white man; it is White Man himself, with his broad white cheeks and the black hole of his eyes. The face is Christ. The face is the typical European, what Ezra Pound called the average sensual man, in short, the ordinary everyday Erotomaniac (nineteenth-century psychiatrists were right to say that erotomania, unlike nymphomania, often remains pure and chaste; this is because it operates through the face and facialization). Not a universal, but *facies totius universi*. Jesus Christ superstar: he invented the facialization of the entire body and spread it everywhere (the Passion of Joan of Arc, in close-up). Thus the face is by nature an entirely specific idea, which did not preclude its acquiring and exercising the most general of functions: the function of biunivocalization, or binarization. It has two aspects: the abstract machine of faciality, insofar as it is composed by a

black hole/white wall system, functions in two ways, one of which concerns the units or elements, the other the choices. Under the first aspect, the black hole acts as a central computer, Christ, the third eye that moves across the wall or the white screen serving as general surface of reference. Regardless of the content one gives it, the machine constitutes a facial unit, an elementary face in biunivocal relation with another: it is a man *or* a woman, a rich person *or* a poor one, an adult *or* a child, a leader *or* a subject, “*an x or a y.*” The movement of the black hole across the screen, the trajectory of the third eye over the surface of reference, constitutes so many dichotomies or arborescences, like four-eye machines made of elementary faces linked together two by two. The face of a teacher and a student, father and son, worker and boss, cop and citizen, accused and judge (“the judge had a stern expression, his eyes were horizonless . . . ”): concrete individualized faces are produced and transformed on the basis of these units, these combinations of units—like the face of a rich child in which a military calling is already discernible, that West Point chin. You don’t so much have a face as slide into one.

Under the second aspect, the abstract machine of faciality assumes a role of selective response, or choice: given a concrete face, the machine judges whether it passes or not, whether it goes or not, on the basis of the elementary facial units. This time, the binary relation is of the “yes-no” type. The empty eye or black hole absorbs or rejects, like a half-doddering despot who can still give a signal of acquiescence or refusal. The face of a given teacher is contorted by tics and bathed in an anxiety that makes it “no go.” A defendant, a subject, displays an overaffected submission that turns into insolence. Or someone is too polite to be honest. A given face is neither a man’s nor a woman’s. Or it is neither a poor person’s nor a rich person’s. Is it someone who lost his fortune? At every moment, the machine rejects faces that do not conform, or seem suspicious. But only at a given level of choice. For it is necessary to produce successive divergence-types of deviance for everything that eludes biunivocal relationships, and to establish binary relations between what is accepted on first choice and what is only tolerated on second, third choice, etc. The white wall is always expanding, and the black hole functions repeatedly. The teacher has gone mad, but madness is a face conforming to the *n*th choice (not the last, however, since there are mad faces that do not conform to what one assumes madness should be). A ha! It’s not a man and it’s not a woman, so it must be a transvestite: The binary relation is between the “no” of the first category and the “yes” of the following category, which under certain conditions may just as easily mark a tolerance as indicate an enemy to be mowed down at all costs. At any rate, you’ve been recognized, the abstract machine has you inscribed in its overall grid. It is clear that in its new role as deviance

detector, the faciality machine does not restrict itself to individual cases but operates in just as general a fashion as it did in its first role, the computation of normalities. If the face is in fact Christ, in other words, your average ordinary White Man, then the first deviances, the first divergence-types, are racial: yellow man, black man, men in the second or third category. They are also inscribed on the wall, distributed by the hole. They must be Christianized, in other words, facialized. European racism as the white man's claim has never operated by exclusion, or by the designation of someone as Other: it is instead in primitive societies that the stranger is grasped as an "other."¹² Racism operates by the determination of degrees of deviance in relation to the White-Man face, which endeavors to integrate nonconforming traits into increasingly eccentric and backward waves, sometimes tolerating them at given places under given conditions, in a given ghetto, sometimes erasing them from the wall, which never abides alterity (it's a Jew, it's an Arab, it's a Negro, it's a lunatic . . .). From the viewpoint of racism, there is no exterior, there are no people on the outside. There are only people who should be like us and whose crime it is not to be. The dividing line is not between inside and outside but rather is internal to simultaneous signifying chains and successive subjective choices. Racism never detects the particles of the other; it propagates waves of sameness until those who resist identification have been wiped out (or those who only allow themselves to be identified at a given degree of divergence). Its cruelty is equaled only by its incompetence and naïveté.

On the brighter side, painting has exploited all the resources of the Christ-face. Painting has taken the abstract white wall/black hole machine of faciality in all directions, using the face of Christ to produce every kind of facial unit and every degree of deviance. In this respect, there is an exultation in the painting of the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, like an unbridled freedom. Not only did Christ preside over the facialization of the entire body (his own) and the landscapification of all milieus (his own), but he composed all of the elementary faces and had every divergence at his disposal: Christ-athlete at the fair, Christ-Mannerist queer, Christ-Negro, or at least a Black Virgin at the edge of the wall. The most prodigious strokes of madness appear on canvas under the auspices of the Catholic code. A single example chosen from many [Giotto, *The Life of St. Francis*, scene XII, *The Transfiguration*—Trans.]: against the white background of the landscape and the black-blue hole of the sky, the crucified Christ-turned-kite-machine sends stigmata to Saint Francis by rays; the stigmata effect the facialization of the body of the saint, in the image of the body of Christ; but the rays carrying the stigmata to the saint are also the strings Francis uses to pull the divine kite. It was under the sign of the cross

that people learned to steer the face and processes of facialization in all directions.

Information theory takes as its point of departure a homogeneous set of ready-made *signifying* messages that are already functioning as elements in biunivocal relationships, or the elements of which are biunivocally organized between messages. Second, the picking of a combination depends on a certain number of *subjective* binary choices that increase proportionally to the number of elements. But the problem is that all of this biunivocalization and binarization (which is not just the result of an increase in calculating skills, as some say) assumes the deployment of a wall or screen, the installation of a central computing hole without which no message would be discernible and no choice could be implemented. The black hole/white wall system must already have gridded all of space and outlined its arborescences or dichotomies for those of signifier and subjectification even to be conceivable. The mixed semiotic of signification and subjectification has an exceptional need to be protected from any intrusion from the outside. In fact, there must not be any exterior: no nomad machine, no primitive polyvocality must spring up, with their combinations of heterogeneous substances of expression. Translatability of any kind requires a single substance of expression. One can constitute signifying chains operating with deterritorialized, digitalized, discrete elements only if there is a semiological screen available, a wall to protect them. One can make subjective choices between two chains or at each point in a chain only if no outside tempest sweeps away the chains and subjects. One can form a web of subjectivities only if one possesses a central eye, a black hole capturing everything that would exceed or transform either the assigned affects or the dominant significations. Moreover, it is absurd to believe that language as such can convey a message. A language is always embedded in the faces that announce its statements and ballast them in relation to the signifiers in progress and subjects concerned. Choices are guided by faces, elements are organized around faces: a common grammar is never separable from a facial education. The face is a veritable megaphone. Thus not only must the abstract machine of faciality provide a protective screen and a computing black hole; in addition, the faces it produces draw all kinds of arborescences and dichotomies without which the signifying and the subjective would not be able to make the arborescences and dichotomies function that fall within their purview in language. Doubtless, the binarities and biunivocalities of the face are not the same as those of language, of its elements and subjects. There is no resemblance between them. But the former subtend the latter. When the faciality machine translates formed contents of whatever kind into a single substance of expression, it already subjugates them to the exclusive form of

signifying and subjective expression. It carries out the prior gridding that makes it possible for the signifying elements to become discernible, and for the subjective choices to be implemented. The faciality machine is not an annex to the signifier and the subject; rather, it is subjacent (*connexe*) to them and is their condition of possibility. Facial biunivocalities and binarities double the others; facial redundancies are in redundancy with signifying and subjective redundancies. It is precisely because the face depends on an abstract machine that it does not assume a preexistent subject or signifier; but it is subjacent to them and provides the substance necessary to them. What chooses the faces is not a subject, as in the Szondi test; it is faces that choose their subjects. What interprets the black blotch/white hole figure, or the white page/black hole, is not a signifier, as in the Rorschach test; it is that figure which programs the signifiers.

We have made some progress toward answering the question of what triggers the abstract machine of faciality, for it is not in operation all the time or in just any social formation. *Certain* social formations need face, and also landscape.¹³ There is a whole history behind it. At very different dates, there occurred a generalized collapse of all of the heterogeneous, polyvocal, primitive semiotics in favor of a semiotic of signification and subjectification. Whatever the differences between signification and subjectification, whichever prevails over the other in this case or that, whatever the varying figures assumed by their *de facto* mixtures—they have it in common to crush all polyvocality, set up language as a form of exclusive expression, and operate by signifying biunivocalization and subjective binarization. The superlinearity proper to language is no longer coordinated with multidimensional figures: it now flattens out all volumes and subordinates all lines. Is it by chance that linguistics always, and very quickly, encounters the problem of homonymy, or ambiguous statements that it then subjects to a set of binary reductions? More generally, linguistics can tolerate no polyvocality or rhizome traits: a child who runs around, plays, dances, and draws cannot concentrate attention on language and writing, and will never be a good subject. In short, the new semiotic needs systematically to destroy the whole range of primitive semiotic systems, even if it retains some of their debris in well-defined enclosures.

However, there is more to the picture than semiotic systems waging war on one another armed only with their own weapons. *Very specific assemblages of power impose signification and subjectification* as their determinate form of expression, in reciprocal presupposition with new contents: there is no signification without a despotic assemblage, no subjectification without an authoritarian assemblage, and no mixture between the two without assemblages of power that act through signifiers and act upon souls and subjects. It is these assemblages, these despotic or authoritarian forma-

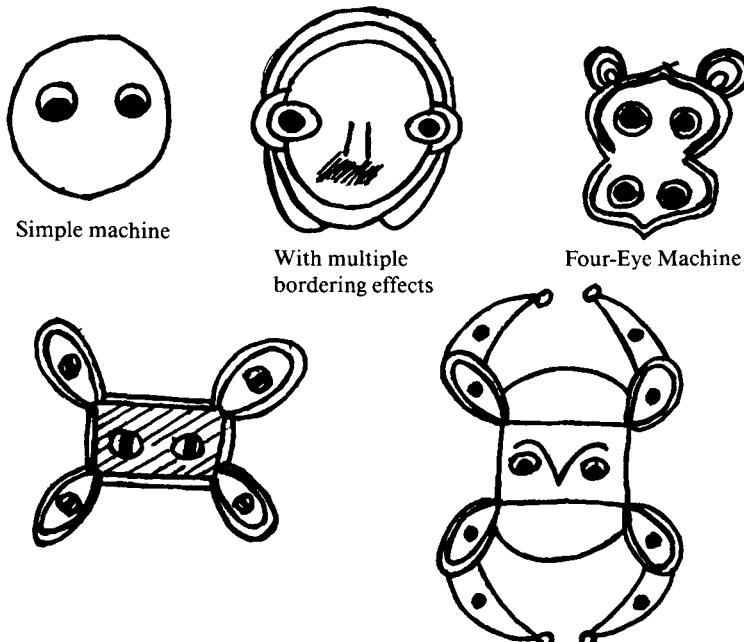
tions, that give the new semiotic system the means of its imperialism, in other words, the means both to crush the other semiotics and protect itself against any threat from outside. A concerted effort is made to do away with the body and corporeal coordinates through which the multidimensional or polyvocal semiotics operated. Bodies are disciplined, corporeality dismantled, becomings-animal hounded out, deterritorialization pushed to a new threshold—a jump is made from the organic strata to the strata of signification and subjectification. A single substance of expression is produced. The white wall/black hole system is constructed, or rather the abstract machine is triggered that must allow and ensure the almighty of the signifier as well as the autonomy of the subject. You will be pinned to the white wall and stuffed in the black hole. This machine is called the faciality machine because it is the social production of face, because it performs the facialization of the entire body and all its surroundings and objects, and the landscapification of all worlds and milieus. The deterritorialization of the body implies a reterritorialization on the face; the decoding of the body implies an overcoding by the face; the collapse of corporeal coordinates or milieus implies the constitution of a landscape. The semiotic of the signifier and the subjective never operates through bodies. It is absurd to claim to relate the signifier to the body. At any rate it can be related only to a body that has already been entirely facialized. The difference between our uniforms and clothes and primitive paintings and garb is that the former effect a facialization of the body, with buttons for black holes against the white wall of the material. Even the mask assumes a new function here, the exact opposite of its old one. For there is no unitary function of the mask, except a negative one (in no case does the mask serve to dissimulate, to hide, even while showing or revealing). Either the mask assures the head's belonging to the body, its becoming-animal, as was the case in primitive societies. Or, as is the case now, the mask assures the erection, the construction of the face, the facialization of the head and the body: the mask is now the face itself, the abstraction or operation of the face. The inhumanity of the face. Never does the face assume a prior signifier or subject. The order is totally different: despotic and authoritarian concrete assemblage of power → triggering of the abstract machine of faciality, white wall/black hole → installation of the new semiotic of signification and subjectification on that holey surface. That is why we have been addressing just two problems exclusively: the relation of the face to the abstract machine that produces it, and the relation of the face to the assemblages of power that require that social production. The face is a politics.

Of course, we have already seen that signification and subjectification are semiotic systems that are entirely distinct in their principles and have

different regimes (circular irradiation versus segmentary linearity) and different apparatuses of power (despotic generalized slavery versus authoritarian contract-proceeding). Neither begins with Christ, or the White Man as Christian universal: there are Indian, African, and Asiatic despotic formations of signification; the authoritarian process of subjectification appears most purely in the destiny of the Jewish people. But however different these semiotics are, they still form a *de facto mix*, and it is at the level of this mixture that they assert their imperialism, in other words, their common endeavor to crush all other semiotics. There is no signification that does not harbor the seeds of subjectivity; there is no subjectification that does not drag with it remnants of signifier. If the signifier bounces above all off a wall, if subjectivity spins above all toward a hole, then we must say that the wall of the signifier already includes holes and the black hole of subjectivity already carries scraps of wall. The mix, therefore, has a solid foundation in the indissociable white wall/black hole machine, and the two semiotics intermingle through intersection, splicing, and the plugging of one into the other, as with the “Hebrew and the Pharaoh.” But there is more because the nature of the mixtures may vary greatly. If it is possible to assign the faciality machine a date—the year zero of Christ and the historical development of the White Man—it is because that is when the mixture ceased to be a splicing or an intertwining, becoming a total interpenetration in which each element suffuses the other like drops of red-black wine in white water. Our semiotic of modern White Men, the semiotic of capitalism, has attained this state of mixture in which signification and subjectification effectively interpenetrate. Thus it is in this semiotic that faciality, or the white wall/black hole system, assumes its full scope. We must, however, assess the states of mixture and the varying proportions of the elements. Whether in the Christian or pre-Christian state, one element may dominate another, one may be more or less powerful than the other. We are thus led to define *limit-faces*, which are different from both the facial units and the degrees of facial divergence previously defined.

1. The black hole is on the white wall. It is not a unit, since the black hole is in constant movement on the wall and operates by binarization. Two black holes, four black holes, n black holes distribute themselves like eyes. Faciality is always a multiplicity. The landscape will be populated with eyes or black holes, as in an Ernst painting, or a drawing by Aloïse or Wölflis. Circles are drawn around a hole on the white wall; an eye can be placed in each of the circles. We can even propose the following law: the more circles there are around a hole, the more the bordering effect acts to increase the surface over which the hole slides and to give that surface a force of capture. Perhaps the purest case is to be found in popular Ethiopian scrolls representing demons: on the white surface of the parchment, two black holes are

drawn, or an outline of round or rectangular faces; but the black holes spread and reproduce, they enter into redundancy, and each time a secondary circle is drawn, a new black hole is constituted, an eye is put in it.¹⁴ An effect of capturing a surface that becomes more enclosed the more it expands. This is the signifying despotic face and the multiplication proper to it, its proliferation, its redundancy of frequency. A multiplication of eyes. The despot or his representatives are everywhere. This is the face as seen from the front, by a subject who does not so much see as get snapped up by black holes. This is a figure of destiny, *terrestrial* destiny, objective signifying destiny. The close-up in film knows this figure well: the Griffith close-up of a face, an element of a face or a facialized object, which then assumes an anticipatory temporal value (the hands of the clock foreshadow something).



Proliferation of Eyes By Multiplication of Border

Terrestrial Signifying Despotic Face

2. Now, on the contrary, the white wall has unraveled, becoming a silver thread moving toward the black hole. One black hole “crests” all the other black holes, all of the eyes and faces, while the landscape becomes a thread

whose far end coils around the hole. It is still a multiplicity but constitutes a different figure of destiny: reflexive, passionnal, subjective destiny. It is the *maritime* face or landscape: it follows the line separating the sky from the waters, or the land from the waters. This authoritarian face is in profile and spins toward the black hole. Or else there are two faces facing each other, but in profile to the observer, and their union is already marked by a limitless separation. Or else the faces turn away from each other, swept away by betrayal. Tristan, Isolde, Isolde, Tristan, in the boat carrying them to the black hole of betrayal and death. A faciality of consciousness and passion, a redundancy of resonance and coupling. This time, the effect of the close-up is no longer to expand a surface while simultaneously closing it off; its only function is to have an anticipatory temporal value. It marks the origin of a scale of intensity, or is part of that scale; the closer the faces get to the black hole as termination point, the more the close-up heats the line they follow. Eisenstein's close-ups versus Griffith's (the intensive heightening of shame, or anger, in the close-ups in *Potemkin*).¹⁵ Here again, it is clear that any combination is possible between the two limit-figures of the face. In Pabst's *Lulu*, the despotic face of the fallen Lulu is associated with the image of a bread knife, which has the anticipatory value of foreshadowing the murder; but the authoritarian face of Jack the Ripper also ascends a whole scale of intensities leading to the knife and Lulu's murder.

More generally, we may note characteristics common to the two limit-figures. First, although the white wall, the broad cheeks, is the substantial element of the signifier, and the black hole the reflexive element of subjectivity, they always go together. But in one of two modes: either the black holes distribute themselves and multiply on the white wall, or the wall, reduced to its crest or horizon thread, hurtles toward a black hole that crests them all. There is no wall without black holes, and no black hole without a wall. Second, in both cases the black hole is necessarily surrounded by a border, or even bordered more than once: the effect of this border is either to expand the surface of the wall or to intensify the line. The black hole is never in the eyes (pupil); it is always inside the border, and the eyes are always inside the hole: dead eyes, which see all the better for being in a black hole.¹⁶ These common characteristics do not preclude the existence of a limit-difference between the two figures of the face, and proportions according to which first one then the other dominates in the mixed semiotic. The terrestrial signifying despotic face, the maritime subjective passionnal authoritarian face (the desert can also be a sea of land). Two figures of destiny, two states of the faciality machine. Jean Paris has clearly shown how these poles operate in painting, the pole of the despotic Christ and that of the passionnal Christ: on the one hand, the face of Christ seen from the front, as in a Byzantine mosaic, with the black hole of the eyes

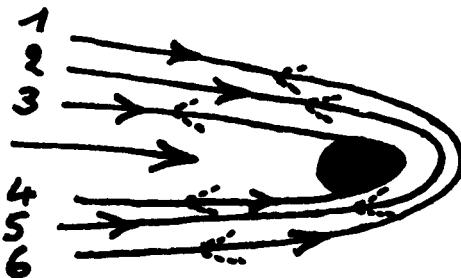
against a gold background, all depth projected forward; and on the other hand, faces that cross glances and turned away from each other, seen half-turned or in profile, as in a quattrocento painting, their sidelong glances drawing multiple lines, integrating depth into the painting itself (arbitrary examples of transition and mixture can be cited, such a Duccio's *Calling of Saint Peter and Saint Andrew*, against the background of an aquatic landscape; the second formula has already overtaken Christ and the first fisherman, while the second fisherman remains within the Byzantine code).¹⁷



Celebatory Machine



Coupled Machine



Complex Machine
 1. Musicality Line
 2. Picturality Line
 3. Landscapity Line
 4. Faciality Line
 5. Consciousness Line
 6. Passion Line
 Etc.

Maritime Subjective Authoritarian Face (after Tristan and Isolde)

Swann's Love: Proust was able to make the face, landscape, painting, music, etc., resonate together. Three moments in the story of Swann and Odette. First, a whole signifying mechanism is set up. The face of Odette with her broad white or yellow cheeks, and her eyes as black hoes. But this face continually refers back to other things, also arrayed on the wall. That is Swann's aestheticism, his amateurism: a thing must always recall something else, in a network of interpretations under the sign of the signifier. A face refers back to a landscape. A face must "recall" a painting, or a

fragment of a painting. A piece of music must let fall a little phrase that connects with Odette's face, to the point that the little phrase becomes only a signal. The white wall becomes populous, the black holes are arrayed. This entire mechanism of significance, with its referral of interpretations, prepares the way for the second, passional subjective, moment, during which Swann's jealousy, querulous delusion, and erotomania develop. Now Odette's face races down a line hurtling toward a single black hole, that of Swann's Passion. The other lines, of landscapity, picturality, and musicality, also rush toward this catatonic hole and coil around it, bordering it several times.

But in the third moment, at the end of his long passion, Swann attends a reception where he sees the faces of the servants and guests *disaggregate* into autonomous aesthetic traits, as if the line of picturality regained its independence, both beyond the wall and outside the black hole. Then Vinteuil's little phrase regains its transcendence and renews its connection with a still more intense, asignifying, and asubjective line of pure musicality. And Swann knows that he no longer loves Odette and, above all, that Odette will never again love him.

Was this salvation through art necessary? For neither Swann nor Proust was saved. Was it necessary to break through the wall and out of the hole in *this* way, by renouncing love? Was not that love rotten from the start, made of significance and jealousy? Was it possible to do anything else, considering Odette's mediocrity and Swann's aestheticism? In a way, the madeleine is the same story. The narrator munches his madeleine: redundancy, the black hole of involuntary memory. How can he get out of that? And it is, above all, something one has to get out of, escape from. Proust knows that quite well, even if his commentators do not. But the way he gets out is through art, uniquely through art.

How do you get out of the black hole? How do you break through the wall? How do you dismantle the face? Whatever genius there may be in the French novel, that is not its affair. It is too concerned with measuring the wall, or even with building it, with plumbing the depths of black holes and composing faces. The French novel is profoundly pessimistic and idealistic, "critical of life rather than creative of life." It stuffs its characters down the hole and bounces them off the wall. It can only conceive of organized voyages, and of salvation only through art, a still Catholic salvation, in other words, salvation through eternity. It spends its time plotting points instead of drawing lines, active lines of flight or of positive deterritorialization. The Anglo-American novel is totally different. "To get away. To get away, out! . . . To cross a horizon . . ."¹⁸ From Hardy to Lawrence, from Melville to Miller, the same cry rings out: Go across, get out, break through, make a beeline, don't get stuck on a point. Find the line of separation, fol-

low it or create it, to the point of treachery. That is why their relationship to other civilizations, to the Orient or South America, and also to drugs and voyages in place, is entirely different from that of the French. They know how difficult it is to get out of the black hole of subjectivity, of consciousness and memory, of the couple and conjugalit. How tempting it is to let yourself get caught, to lull yourself into it, to latch back onto a *face*. “[Being] locked away in the black hole . . . gave her a molten copperish glow, the words coming out of her mouth like lava, her flesh clutching ravenously for a hold, a perch on something solid and substantial, something in which to reintegrate and repose for a few moments. . . . At first I mistook it for passion, for ecstasy. . . . I thought I had found a living volcano, a female Vesuvius. I never thought I had found a human ship going down in an ocean of despair, in a Sargasso of impotence. Now I think of that black star gleaming through the hole in the ceiling, that fixed star which hung above our conjugal cell, more fixed, more remote than the Absolute, and I know it was her, emptied of all that was properly herself: a dead black sun without aspect.”¹⁹ A copperish glow like the face at the bottom of a black hole. The point is to get out of it, not in art, in other words, in spirit, but in life, in real life. *Don’t take away my power to love.* These English and American authors also know how hard it is to break through the wall of the signifier. Many people have tried since Christ, beginning with Christ. But Christ himself botched the crossing, the jump, he *bounced* off the wall. “As if by a great recoil, this negative backwash rolled up and stayed his death. The whole negative impulse of humanity seemed to coil up into a monstrous inert mass to create the human integer, the figure one, one and indivisible”—the Face.²⁰ Cross the wall, the Chinese perhaps, but at what price? At the price of a *becoming-animal*, a *becoming-flower or rock*, and beyond that a strange *becoming-imperceptible*, a *becoming-hard now one with loving*.²¹ It is a question of speed, even if the movement is in place. Is this also to dismantle the face, or as Miller says, no longer to look at or into the eyes but to swim through them, to close your own eyes and make your body a beam of light moving at ever-increasing speed? Of course, this requires all the resources of art, and art of the highest kind. It requires a whole line of writing, picturality, musicality . . . For it is through writing that you become animal, it is through color that you become imperceptible, it is through music that you become hard and memoryless, simultaneously animal and imperceptible: in love. But art is never an end in itself; it is only a tool for blazing life lines, in other words, all of those real becomings that are not produced only *in art*, and all of those active escapes that do not consist in fleeing *into art*, taking refuge in art, and all of those positive deterritorializations that never reterritorialize on art, but instead sweep it away with them toward the realms of the asignifying, asubjective, and faceless.

Dismantling the face is no mean affair. Madness is a definite danger: Is it by chance that schizos lose their sense of the face, their own and others', their sense of the landscape, and the sense of language and its dominant significations all at the same time? The organization of the face is a strong one. We could say that the face holds within its rectangle or circle a whole set of traits, *faciality traits*, which it subsumes and places at the service of significance and subjectification. What is a tic? It is precisely the continually refought battle between a faciality trait that tries to escape the sovereign organization of the face and the face itself, which clamps back down on the trait, takes hold of it again, blocks its line of flight, and reimposes its organization upon it. (There is a medical distinction between the clonic or convulsive tic and the tonic or spasmodic tic; perhaps we can say that in the first case the faciality trait that is trying to escape has the upper hand, whereas in the second case the facial organization that is trying to clamp back down or immobilize itself has the upper hand.) But if dismantling the face is a major affair, it is because it is not simply a question of tics, or an amateur's or aesthete's adventure. If the face is a politics, dismantling the face is also a politics involving real becomings, an entire becoming-clandestine. Dismantling the face is the same as breaking through the wall of the signifier and getting out of the black hole of subjectivity. Here, the program, the slogan, of schizoanalysis is: Find your black holes and white walls, know them, know your faces; it is the only way you will be able to dismantle them and draw your lines of flight.²²

It is time once again to multiply practical warnings. First, it is never a question of a return to ... It is not a question of "returning" to the presignifying and presubjective semiotics of primitive peoples. We will always be failures at playing African or Indian, even Chinese, and no voyage to the South Seas, however arduous, will allow us to cross the wall, get out of the hole, or lose our face. We will never succeed in making ourselves a new primitive head and body, human, spiritual, and faceless. It would only be taking more photos and bouncing off the wall again. We will always find ourselves reterritorialized again. O my little desert island, on you I am in the Closerie des Lilas again, O my deep ocean, you reflect the lake in the Bois de Boulogne, O little phrase of Vinteuil, you recall a sweet moment. These are Eastern physical and spiritual exercises, but for a couple, like a conjugal bed tucked with a Chinese sheet: you did do your exercises today, didn't you? Lawrence has only one grudge against Melville: he knew better than anyone how to get across the face, the eyes and horizon, the wall and hole, but he mistook that crossing, that creative line, for an "impossible return," a return to the savages in *Typee*, for a way of staying an artist and hating life, of maintaining a nostalgia for the Home Country. ("He ever pined for Home and Mother, the two things he had run away from as far as

ships would carry him. . . . Melville came home to face out the rest of his life. . . . He refused life. But he stuck to his ideal of perfect relationship, possible perfect love. . . . A truly perfect relationship is one in which each party leaves great tracts unknown in the other party. . . . Melville was, at the core, a mystic and an idealist. . . . And he stuck to his ideal guns. I abandon mine. I say, let the old guns rot. *Get new ones, and shoot straight.*”²³

We can’t turn back. Only neurotics, or, as Lawrence says, “renegades,” deceivers, attempt a regression. The white wall of the signifier, the black hole of subjectivity, and the facial machine are impasses, the measure of our submissions and subjections; but we are born into them, and it is there we must stand battle. Not in the sense of a necessary stage, but in the sense of a tool for which a new use must be invented. Only across the wall of the signifier can you run lines of asignificance that void all memory, all return, all possible signification and interpretation. Only in the black hole of subjective consciousness and passion do you discover the transformed, heated, captured particles you must relaunch for a nonsubjective, living love in which each party connects with unknown tracts in the other without entering or conquering them, in which the lines composed are broken lines. Only on your face and at the bottom of your black hole and upon your white wall will you be able to set faciality traits free like birds, not in order to return to a primitive head, but to invent the combinations by which those traits connect with landscapity traits that have themselves been freed from the landscape and with traits of picturality and musicality that have also been freed from their respective codes. With what joy the painters used the face of Christ himself, taking it in every sense and direction; and it was not simply the joy of a desire to paint, but the joy of all desires. Is it possible to tell, when the knight of the courtly novel is in his catatonic state, whether he is deep in his black hole or already astride the particles that will carry him out of it to begin a new journey? Lawrence, who has been compared to Lancelot, writes: “To be alone, mindless and memoryless beside the sea . . . As alone and as absent and as present as an aboriginal dark on the sand in the sun . . . Far off, far off, as if he had landed on another planet, as a man might after death . . . The landscape?—he cared not a thing about the landscape. . . . Humanity?—there was none. Thought?—fallen like a stone into the sea. The great, the glamorous past?—worn thin, frail, like a frail translucent film of shell thrown up on the shore.”²⁴ The uncertain moment at which the white wall/black hole, black point/white shore system, as on a Japanese print, itself becomes one with the act of leaving it, breaking away from and crossing through it.

We have seen that the abstract machine has two very different states: sometimes it is taken up in strata where it brings about deterritorializations that are merely relative, or deterritorializations that are absolute

but remain negative; sometimes it is developed on a plane of consistency giving it a “diagrammatic” function, a positive value of deterritorialization, the ability to form new abstract machines. Sometimes the abstract machine, as the faciality machine, forces flows into significances and subjectifications, into knots of aborescence and holes of abolition; sometimes, to the extent that it performs a veritable “defacialization,” it frees something like *probe-heads* (*têtes chercheuses*, guidance devices) that dismantle the strata in their wake, break through the walls of signification, pour out of the holes of subjectivity, fell trees in favor of veritable rhizomes, and steer the flows down lines of positive deterritorialization or creative flight. There are no more concentrically organized strata, no more black holes around which lines coil to form borders, no more walls to which dichotomies, binarities, and bipolar values cling. There is no more face to be in redundancy with a landscape, painting, or little phrase of music, each perpetually bringing the other to mind, on the unified surface of the wall or the central swirl of the black hole. Each freed faciality trait forms a rhizome with a freed trait of landscapity, picturality, or musicality. This is not a collection of part-objects but a living block, a connecting of stems by which the traits of a face enter a real multiplicity or diagram with a trait of an unknown landscape, a trait of painting or music that is thereby effectively produced, created, according to quanta of absolute, positive deterritorialization—not evoked or recalled according to systems of reterritorialization. A wasp trait and an orchid trait. Quanta marking so many mutations of abstract machines, each of which operates as a function of the other. Thus opens a rhizomatic realm of possibility effecting the potentialization of the possible, as opposed to arborescent possibility, which marks a closure, an impotence.

The face, what a horror. It is naturally a lunar landscape, with its pores, planes, matts, bright colors, whiteness, and holes: there is no need for a close-up to make it inhuman; it is naturally a close-up, and naturally inhuman, a monstrous hood. Necessarily so because it is produced by a machine and in order to meet the requirements of the special apparatus of power that triggers the machine and takes deterritorialization to the absolute while keeping it negative. Earlier, when we contrasted the primitive, spiritual, human head with the inhuman face, we were falling victim to a nostalgia for a return or regression. In truth, there are only inhumanities, humans are made exclusively of inhumanities, but very different ones, of very different natures and speeds. Primitive inhumanity, prefacial inhumanity, has all the polyvocality of a semiotic in which the head is a part of the body, a body that is already deterritorialized relatively and plugged into becomings-spiritual/animal. Beyond the face lies an altogether different inhumanity: no longer that of the primitive head, but of “probe-heads”;

here, cutting edges of deterritorialization become operative and lines of deterritorialization positive and absolute, forming strange new becomings, new polyvocalities. Become clandestine, make rhizome everywhere, for the wonder of a nonhuman life to be created. *Face, my love*, you have finally become a probe-head . . . Year zen, year omega, year ω . . . Must we leave it at that, three states, and no more: primitive heads, Christ-face, and probe-heads?

8. 1874: Three Novellas, or “What Happened?”



It is not very difficult to determine the essence of the “novella” as a literary genre: Everything is organized around the question, “What happened? Whatever could have happened?” The tale is the opposite of the novella, because it is an altogether different question that the reader asks with bated breath: What is going to happen? Something is always going to happen, come to pass. Something always happens in the novel also, but the novel integrates elements of the novella and the tale into the variation of its perpetual living present (*duration*). The detective novel is a particularly hybrid genre in this respect, since most often the something = *X* that has happened is on the order of a murder or theft, but exactly what it is that has happened remains to be discovered, and in the present determined by the model detective. Yet it would be an error to reduce these different aspects to the three dimensions of time. Something happened, something is going to happen, can designate a past so immediate, a future so near, that they are one (as Husserl would say) with retentions and protentions of the present

itself. Nevertheless, the distinction is legitimate, in view of the different movements that animate the present, are contemporaneous with it: One moves with it, another already casts it into the past *from the moment* it is present (novella), while another *simultaneously* draws it into the future (tale). We are lucky to have treatments of the same subject by a tale writer and a novella writer: two lovers, one of whom dies suddenly in the other's room. In Maupassant's tale, “Une ruse” (An artifice), everything revolves around these questions: What is going to happen? How will the survivor extricate himself from the situation? What will the third party-savior, in this case a doctor, think of? In Barbey d'Aurevilly's novella, “Le rideau cramoisi” (The crimson curtain), everything revolves around: Something happened, but what? That is the question, not only because it is really not known what the cold young woman just died from, but also because it will never be known why she gave herself to the petty officer, or how the third party-savior, here the colonel of the regiment, was able to arrange things.¹ It should not be thought that it is easier to leave things open-ended: for there to be something that has happened that we will never know about, or even several things in a row, requires no less minute attention and precision than the contrary case, when the author must invent the details of what will need to be known. You will never know what just happened, or you will always know what is going to happen: these are the reasons for the reader's two bated breaths, in the novella and the tale, respectively, and they are two ways in which the living present is divided at every instant. In the novella, we do not wait for something to happen, we expect something to have just happened. The novella is a last novella, whereas the tale is a first tale. The “presence” of the tale writer is completely different from that of the novella writer (and both are different from that of the novelist). Let us not dwell too much on the dimensions of time: the novella has little to do with a memory of the past or an act of reflection; quite to the contrary, it plays upon a fundamental forgetting. It evolves in the element of “what happened” because it places us in a relation with something unknowable and imperceptible (and not the other way around: it is not because it speaks of a past about which it can no longer provide us knowledge). It may even be that nothing has happened, but it is precisely that nothing that makes us say, Whatever could have happened to make me forget where I put my keys, or whether I mailed that letter, etc.? What little blood vessel in my brain could have ruptured? What is this nothing that makes something happen? The novella has a fundamental relation to *secrecy* (not with a secret matter or object to be discovered, but with the form of the secret, which remains impenetrable), whereas the tale has a relation to *discovery* (the form of discovery, independent of what can be discovered). The novella also enacts *postures* of the body and mind that are like folds or envelopments, whereas the tale puts

into play *attitudes or positions* that are like unfoldings and developments, however unexpected. Barbey has an evident fondness for body posture, in other words, states of the body when it is surprised by something that just happened. In the preface to the *Diaboliques*, Barbey even suggests that there is a diabolism of body postures, a sexuality, pornography, and scatology of postures quite different from those that also, and simultaneously, mark body attitudes or positions. Posture is like inverse suspense. Thus it is not a question of saying that the novella relates to the past and the tale to the future; what we should say instead is that the novella relates, in the present itself, to the formal dimension of something that has happened, even if that something is nothing or remains unknowable. Similarly, one should not try to make the distinction between the novella and the tale coincide with categories such as the fantastic, the fabulous, etc.; that is another problem, there is no reason why it should overlap. The links of the novella are: What happened? (the modality or expression), Secrecy (the form), Body Posture (the content).

Take Fitzgerald. He is a tale and novella writer of genius. He is a novella writer when he asks himself, *Whatever could have happened for things to have come to this?* He is the only one who has been able to carry this question to such a point of intensity. It is not a question of memory, reflection, old age, or fatigue, whereas the tale would deal with childhood, action, or impulse. Yet it is true that Fitzgerald only asks himself the question of the novella writer when he is personally worn-out, fatigued, sick, or even worse off. But once again, there is not necessarily a connection: it can also be a question of vigor, or love. It still is, even in desperate conditions. It is better to think of it as an affair of perception: you enter a room and perceive something as already there, as just having happened, even though it has not yet been done. Or you know that what is in the process of happening is happening for the last time, it's already over with. You hear an “I love you” you know is the last one. Perceptual semiotics. God, whatever could have happened, even though everything is and remains imperceptible, and in order for everything to be and remain imperceptible forever?

Not only is there a specificity of the novella, but there is also a specific way in which the novella treats a universal matter. For we are made of lines. We are not only referring to lines of writing. Lines of writing conjugate with other lines, life lines, lines of luck or misfortune, lines productive of the variation of the line of writing itself, lines that are *between the lines* of writing. Perhaps the novella has its own way of giving rise to and combining these lines, which nonetheless belong to everyone and every genre. Vladimir Propp has said, with great solemnity, that the folktale must be defined in terms of external and internal *movements* that it qualifies, formalizes, and combines in its own specific way.² We would like to demon-

strate that the novella is defined by living *lines*, flesh lines, about which it brings a special revelation. Marcel Arland is correct to say that the novella "is nothing but pure lines right down to the nuances, *and* nothing but the pure and conscious power of the word."³

First Novella: "In the Cage," Henry James

The heroine, a young telegrapher, leads a very clear-cut, calculated life proceeding by delimited segments: the telegrams she takes one after the other, day after day; the people to whom she sends the telegrams; their social class and the different ways they use telegraphy; the words to be counted. Moreover, her telegraphist's cage is like a contiguous segment to the grocery store next door, where her fiancé works. Contiguity of territories. And the fiancé is constantly plotting out their future, work, vacations, house. Here, as for all of us, there is a line of rigid segmentarity on which everything seems calculable and foreseen, the beginning and end of a segment, the passage from one segment to another. Our lives are made like that: Not only are the great molar aggregates segmented (States, institutions, classes), but so are people as elements of an aggregate, as are feelings as relations between people; they are segmented, not in such a way as to disturb or disperse, but on the contrary to ensure and control the identity of each agency, including personal identity. The fiancé can say to the young woman, Even though there are differences between our segments, we have the same tastes and we are alike. I am a man, you are a woman; you are a telegraphist, I am a grocer; you count words, I weigh things; our segments fit together, conjugate. Conjugality. A whole interplay of well-determined, well-planned territories. They have a future but no becoming. This is the first life line, the *molar or rigid line of segmentarity*; in no sense is it dead, for it occupies and pervades our life, and always seems to prevail in the end. It even includes much tenderness and love. It would be too easy to say, "This is a bad line," for you find it everywhere, and in all the other lines.

A rich couple comes into the post office and reveals to the young woman, or at least confirms, the existence of another life: coded, multiple telegrams, signed with pseudonyms. It is hard to tell who is who anymore, or what anything means. Instead of a rigid line composed of well-determined segments, telegraphy now forms a supple flow marked by *quanta* that are like so many little segmentations-in-progress grasped at the moment of their birth, as on a moonbeam, or on an intensive scale. Thanks to her "prodigious talent for interpretation," the young woman grasps that the man has a secret that has placed him in danger, deeper and deeper in danger, in a dangerous posture. It does not just have to do with his love relations with the woman. James has reached the stage in his work when it is no longer the

matter of the secret that interests him, even if he has succeeded in rendering it entirely banal and unimportant. Now what counts is the form of the secret; the matter no longer even has to be discovered (we never find out, there are several possibilities, there is an objective indetermination, a kind of molecularization of the secret). In relation to this man, directly with him, the young telegraphist develops a strange passionnal complicity, a whole intense molecular life that does not even enter into rivalry with the life she leads with her fiancé. What has happened, whatever could have happened? This life, however, is not in her head, it is not imaginary. Rather, we should say that there are two *politics* involved, as the young woman suggests in a remarkable conversation with her fiancé: a macropolitics and a micropolitics that do not envision classes, sexes, people, or feelings in at all the same way. Or again, there are two very different types of relations: intrinsic relations of *couples* involving well-determined aggregates or elements (social classes, men and women, this or that particular person), and less localizable relations that are always external to themselves and instead concern flows and particles eluding those classes, sexes, and persons. Why are the latter relations of *doubles* rather than of couples? "She was literally afraid of the alternate self who might be waiting outside. He might be waiting; it was he who was her alternate self, and of him she was afraid."⁴ In any case, this line is very different from the previous one; it is a *line of molecular or supple segmentation* the segments of which are like quanta of deterritorialization. It is on this line that a present is defined whose very form is the form of something that has already happened, however close you might be to it, since the ungraspable matter of that something is entirely molecularized, traveling at speeds beyond the ordinary thresholds of perception. Yet we will not say that it is necessarily better.

There is no question that the two lines are constantly interfering, reacting upon each other, introducing into each other either a current of suppleness or a point of rigidity. Nathalie Sarraute, in her essay on the novel, praises English novelists, not only for discovering (as did Proust and Dostoyevsky) the great movements, territories, and points of the unconscious that allow us to regain time or revive the past, but also for inopportunely following these molecular lines, simultaneously present and imperceptible. She shows that dialogue or conversation does indeed comply with the breaks of a fixed segmentarity, with vast movements of regulated distribution corresponding to the attitudes and positions of each of us; but also that they are run through and swept up by *micromovements*, fine segmentations distributed in an entirely different way, unfindable particles of an anonymous matter, tiny cracks and postures operating by different agencies even in the unconscious, secret lines of disorientation or

deteritorialization: as she puts it, a whole subconversation within conversation, in other words, a micropolitics of conversation.⁵

Then James's heroine reaches a sort of maximum quantum in her supple segmentarity or line of flow beyond which she cannot go (even if she wanted to, there is no going further). There is a danger that these vibrations traversing us may be aggravated beyond our endurance. What happened? The molecular relation between the telegraphist and the telegraph sender dissolved in the form of the secret—because nothing happened. Each of them is propelled toward a rigid segmentarity: he will marry the now-widowed lady, she will marry her fiancé. And yet everything has changed. She has reached something like a new line, a third type, a kind of *line of flight* that is just as real as the others even if it occurs in place: this line no longer tolerates segments; rather, it is like an exploding of the two segmentary series. She has broken through the wall, she has gotten out of the black holes. She has attained a kind of absolute deteritorialization. "She ended up knowing so much that she could no longer interpret anything. *There were no longer shadows to help her see more clearly, only glare.*"⁶ You cannot go further in life than this sentence by James. The nature of the secret has changed once again. Undoubtedly, the secret always has to do with love, and sexuality. But previously it was either only a hidden matter given in the past (the better hidden the more ordinary it was), and we did not exactly know what form to give it: See, I am bending under the burden of my secret, see what mystery resides within me. It was a way of seeming interesting, what D. H. Lawrence called "the dirty little secret," *my Oedipus*, in a way. Or else the secret became the form of something whose matter was molecularized, imperceptible, unassignable: not a given of the past but the ungivable "What happened?" But on this third line there is no longer even any form—nothing but a pure abstract line. It is because we no longer have anything to hide that we can no longer be apprehended. To become imperceptible oneself, to have dismantled love in order to become capable of loving. To have dismantled one's self in order finally to be alone and meet the true double at the other end of the line. A clandestine passenger on a motionless voyage. To become like everybody else; but this, precisely, is a becoming only for one who knows how to be nobody, to no longer be anybody. To paint oneself gray on gray. As Kierkegaard says, nothing distinguishes the knight of the faith from a bourgeois German going home or to the post office: he sends off no special telegraphic sign; he constantly produces or reproduces finite segments, yet he is already moving on a line no one even suspects.⁷ In any case, the telegraphic line is not a symbol, and it is not simple. There are at least three of them: a line of rigid and clear-cut segmentarity; a line of molecular segmentarity; and an abstract line, a line of flight no less deadly and no less

alive than the others. On the first line, there are many words and conversations, questions and answers, interminable explanations, precisions; the second is made of silences, allusions, and hasty innuendos inviting interpretation. But if the third line flashes, if the line of flight is like a train in motion, it is because one jumps linearly on it, one can finally speak "literally" of anything at all, a blade of grass, a catastrophe or sensation, calmly accepting that which occurs when it is no longer possible for anything to stand for anything else. The three lines, however, continually intermingle.

Second Novella: "The Crack-up," F. Scott Fitzgerald

What happened? This is the question Fitzgerald keeps coming back to toward the end, having remarked that "of course all life is a process of breaking down."⁸ How should we understand this "of course"? We can say, first of all, that life is always drawn into an increasingly rigid and desiccated segmentarity. For the writer Fitzgerald, voyages, with their clear-cut segments, had lost their usefulness. There was also, from segment to segment, the depression, loss of wealth, fatigue and growing old, alcoholism, the failure of conjugalitity, the rise of the cinema, the advent of fascism and Stalinism, and the loss of success and talent—at the very moment Fitzgerald would find his genius. "*The big sudden blows that come, or seem to come, from outside*" (p. 69), and proceed by oversignificant *breaks*, moving us from one term to the other according to successive binary "choices": rich/poor . . . Even when change runs in the other direction, there is nothing to compensate for the rigidification, the aging that overcodes everything that occurs. This is a line of rigid segmentarity bringing masses into play, even if it was supple to begin with.

But Fitzgerald says that there is another type of cracking, with an entirely different segmentarity. Instead of great breaks, these are micro-cracks, as in a dish; they are much more subtle and supple, and *occur when things are going well on the other side*. If there is aging on this line, it is not of the same kind: when you age on this line you don't feel it on the other line, you don't notice it on the other line until after "it" has already happened on this line. At such a moment, which does not correspond to any of the ages of the other line, you reach a degree, a quantum, an intensity beyond which you cannot go. (It's a very delicate business, these intensities: the finest intensity becomes harmful if it overtaxes your strength at a given moment; you have to be able to take it, you have to be in shape.) But what exactly happened? In truth, nothing assignable or perceptible: molecular changes, redistributions of desire such that when something occurs, the self that

awaited it is already dead, or the one that would await it has not yet arrived. This time, there are outbursts and crackings in the immanence of a rhizome, rather than great movements and breaks determined by the transcendence of a tree. The crack-up "happens almost without your knowing it but is realized suddenly indeed" (p. 69). This molecular line, more supple but no less disquieting, in fact, much more disquieting, is not simply internal or personal: it also brings everything into play, but on a different scale and in different forms, with segmentations of a different nature, rhizomatic instead of arborescent. A micropolitics.

There is, in addition, a third line, which is like a line of rupture or a "clean break" and marks the exploding of the other two, their shake-up . . . in favor of something else? "This led me to the idea that the ones who had survived had made some sort of clean break. This is a big word and is no parallel to a jailbreak when one is probably headed for a new jail or will be forced back to the old one" (p. 81). Here, Fitzgerald contrasts rupture with structural pseudobreaks in so-called signifying chains. But he also distinguishes it from more supple, more subterranean links or stems of the "voyage" type, or even from molecular conveyances. "The famous 'Escape' or 'run away from it all' is an excursion in a trap even if the trap includes the South Seas, which are only for those who want to paint them or sail them. A clean break is something you cannot come back from; that is irretrievable because it makes the past cease to exist" (p. 81). Can it be that voyages are always a return to rigid segmentarity? Is it always your daddy and mommy that you meet when you travel, even as far away as the South Seas, like Melville? Hardened muscles? Must we say that supple segmentarity itself reconstructs the great figures it claimed to escape, but under the microscope, in miniature? Beckett's unforgettable line is an indictment of all voyages: "*We don't travel for the fun of it, as far as I know; we're foolish, but not that foolish.*"

In rupture, not only has the matter of the past volitized; the form of what happened, of an imperceptible something that happened in a volatile matter, no longer even exists. One has become imperceptible and clandestine in motionless voyage. Nothing can happen, or can have happened, any longer. Nobody can do anything for or against me any longer. My territories are out of grasp, not because they are imaginary, but the opposite: because I am in the process of drawing them. Wars, big and little, are behind me. Voyages, always in tow to something else, are behind me. I no longer have any secrets, having lost my face, form, and matter. I am now no more than a line. I have become capable of loving, not with an abstract, universal love, but a love I shall choose, and that shall choose me, blindly, my double, just as selfless as I. One has been saved by and for love, by abandoning love and self. Now one is no more than an abstract line, like an arrow crossing the

void. Absolute deterritorialization. One has become like everybody/the whole world (*tout le monde*), but in a way that can become like everybody/the whole world. One has painted the world on oneself, not oneself on the world. It should not be said that the genius is an extraordinary person, *nor* that everybody has genius. The genius is someone who knows how to make everybody/the whole world a becoming (Ulysses, perhaps: Joyce's failed ambition, Pound's near-success). One has entered becomings-animal, becomings-molecular, and finally becomings-imperceptible. “I was off the dispensing end of the relief roll forever. The heady villainous feeling continued. . . . I will try to be a correct animal though, and if you throw me a bone with enough meat on it I may even lick your hand.”⁹ Why such a despairing tone? Does not the line of rupture or true flight have its own danger, one worse than the others? Time to die. In any case, Fitzgerald proposes a distinction between the three lines traversing us and composing “a life” (after Maupassant). *Break line, crack line, rupture line*. The line of rigid segmentarity with molar breaks; the line of supple segmentation with molecular cracks; the line of flight or rupture, abstract, deadly and alive, nonsegmentary.

Third Novella:

“The Story of the Abyss and the Spyglass,” Pierrette Fleutiaux¹⁰

Some segments are more or less near, and others more or less distant. The segments seem to encircle an abyss, a kind of huge black hole. On each segment there are two kinds of lookouts, near-seers and far-seers. What they watch for are the movements, outbursts, infractions, disturbances, and rebellions occurring in the abyss. But there is a major difference between the two types of lookouts. The near-seers have a simple spyglass. In the abyss, they see the outline of gigantic cells, great binary divisions, dichotomies, well-defined segments of the type “classroom, barracks, low-income housing project, or even countryside seen from an airplane.” They see branches, chains, rows, columns, dominoes, striae. Once in a while along the edges they discover a misshapen figure or a shaky contour. Then they bring out the terrible Ray Telescope. It is used not to see with but to cut with, to cut out shapes. This geometrical instrument, which emits a laser beam, assures the dominion of the great signifying break everywhere and restores the momentarily threatened molar order. The cutting telescope *overcodes* everything; it acts on flesh and blood, but itself is nothing but pure geometry, as a State affair, and the near-seers’ physics in the service of that machine. What is geometry, what is the State, and what are the near-seers? These are meaningless questions (“I am speaking literally”) because it is not so much a question of defining something as effectively drawing a

line; not a line of writing but a line of rigid segmentarity along which everyone will be judged and rectified according to his or her contours, individual or collective.

Very different is the situation of those with long-distance vision, the far-seers, with all their ambiguities. There are very few of them, at most one per segment. Their telescopes are complex and refined. But they are in no way leaders. And what they see is entirely different from what the others see. They see a whole microsegmentarity, details of details, “a roller coaster of possibilities,” tiny movements that have not reached the edge, lines or vibrations that start to form long before there are outlined shapes, “segments that move by jerks.” A whole rhizome, a molecular segmentarity that does not permit itself to be overcoded by a signifier like the cutting machine, or even to be attributed to a given figure, a given aggregate or element. This second line is inseparable from the anonymous segmentation that produces it and challenges everything all the time, without goal or reason: “What happened?” The far-seers can divine the future, but always in the form of a becoming of something that has already happened in a molecular matter; unfindable particles. The situation is the same in biology: the great cellular divisions and dichotomies, with their contours, are accompanied by migrations, invaginations, displacements, and morphogenetic impulses whose segments are marked not by localizable points but by thresholds of intensity passing underneath, mitoses that scramble everything, and molecular lines that intersect each other within the large-scale cells and between their breaks. The situation is the same in a society: rigid segments and overcutting segments are crosscut underneath by segmentations of another nature. But this is neither one nor the other, neither biology nor a society; nor is it a resemblance between the two: “I am speaking literally,” I am drawing lines, lines of writing, and life passes between the lines. A line of supple segmentarity formed and became entangled with the other, but it was a very different kind of line, shakily drawn by the micro-politics of the far-seers. It is a political affair, as worldwide in scope as the other, but on a scale and in a form that is incommensurable, nonsuperposable. It is also a perceptual affair, for perception always goes hand in hand with semiotics, practice, politics, theory. One sees, speaks and thinks on a given scale, and according to a given line that may or may not conjugate with the other’s line, even if the other is still oneself. If it does not, then you should not insist, you should not argue; you should flee, flee, even saying as you go, “Okay, okay, you win.” It’s no use talking; you first have to change telescopes, mouths, and teeth, all of the segments. Not only does one speak literally, one also lives literally, in other words, following lines, whether connectable or not, even heterogeneous ones. Sometimes it doesn’t work when they are homogeneous.¹¹

The ambiguity of the far-seers' situation is that they are able to detect the slightest microinfraction in the abyss, things the others do not see; they also observe, beneath its apparent geometrical justice, the dreadful damage caused by the Cutting Telescope. They feel as though they foresee things and are ahead of the others because they see the smallest thing as already having happened; but they know that their warnings are to no avail because the cutting telescope will set everything straight without being warned, without the need for or possibility of prediction. At times they feel that they do indeed see something the others do not, but at other times that what they see differs only in degree and serves no purpose. Although they are collaborators with the most rigid and cruelest project of control, how could they not feel a vague sympathy for the subterranean activity revealed to them? An ambiguity in the molecular line, *as if it vacillated between two sides*. One day (what will have happened?), a far-seer will abandon his or her segment and start walking across a narrow overpass above the dark abyss, will break his or her telescope and depart on a line of flight to meet a blind Double approaching from the other side.

Individual or group, we are traversed by lines, meridians, geodesics, tropics, and zones marching to different beats and differing in nature. We said that we are composed of lines, three kinds of lines. Or rather, of bundles of lines, for each kind is multiple. We may be more interested in a certain line than in the others, and perhaps there is indeed one that is, not determining, but of greater importance . . . if it is there. For some of these lines are imposed on us from outside, at least in part. Others sprout up somewhat by chance, from a trifle, why we will never know. Others can be invented, drawn, without a model and without chance: we must invent our lines of flight, if we are able, and the only way we can invent them is by effectively drawing them, in our lives. Aren't lines of flight the most difficult of all? Certain groups or people have none and never will. Certain groups or people lack a given kind of line, or have lost it. The painter Florence Julien has a special interest in lines of flight: she invented a procedure by which she extracts from photographs lines that are nearly abstract and formless. But once again, there is a bundle of very diverse lines: the line of flight of children leaving school at a run is different from that of demonstrators chased by the police, or of a prisoner breaking out. There are different animal lines of flight: each species, each individual, has its own. Fernand Deligny transcribes the lines and paths of autistic children by means of *maps*: he carefully distinguishes "lines of drift" and "customary lines." This does not only apply to walking; he also makes maps of perceptions and maps of gestures (cooking or collecting wood) showing customary gestures and gestures of drift. The same goes for language, if it is

present. Deligny opened his lines of writing to life lines. The lines are constantly crossing, intersecting for a moment, following one another. A line of drift intersects a customary line, and at that point the child does something not quite belonging to either one: he or she finds something he or she lost—what happened?—or jumps and claps his or her hands, a slight and rapid movement—and that gesture in turn emits several lines.¹² In short, *there is a line of flight, which is already complex since it has singularities; and there a customary or molar line with segments; and between the two (?), there is a molecular line with quanta that cause it to tip to one side or the other.*

As Deligny says, it should be borne in mind that these lines mean nothing. It is an affair of cartography. They compose us, as they compose our map. They transform themselves and may even cross over into one another. Rhizome. It is certain that they have nothing to do with language; it is, on the contrary, language that must follow them, it is writing that must take sustenance from them, *between* its own lines. It is certain that they have nothing to do with a signifier, the determination of a subject by the signifier; instead, the signifier arises at the most rigidified level of one of the lines, and the subject is spawned at the lowest level. It is certain that they have nothing to do with a structure, which is never occupied by anything more than points and positions, by arborescences, and which always forms a closed system, precisely in order to prevent escape. Deligny invokes a common Body upon which these lines are inscribed as so many segments, thresholds, or quanta, territorialities, deterritorializations, or retriterritorializations. The lines are inscribed on a Body without Organs, upon which everything is drawn and flees, which is itself an abstract line with neither imaginary figures nor symbolic functions: the real of the BwO. *This body is the only practical object of schizoanalysis:* What is your body without organs? What are your lines? What map are you in the process of making or rearranging? What abstract line will you draw, and at what price, for yourself and for others? What is your line of flight? What is your BwO, merged with that line? Are you cracking up? Are you going to crack up? Are you deterritorializing? Which lines are you severing, and which are you extending or resuming? Schizoanalysis does not pertain to elements or aggregates, nor to subjects, relations, or structures. It pertains only to *lineaments* running through groups as well as individuals. Schizoanalysis, as the analysis of desire, is immediately practical and political, whether it is a question of an individual, group, or society. For politics precedes being. Practice does not come after the emplacement of the terms and their relations, but actively participates in the drawing of the lines; it confronts the same dangers and the same variations as the emplacement does. Schizoanalysis is like the art of the new. Or rather, there is no problem of application: the lines it brings out could equally be the lines of a life, a work

of literature or art, or a society, depending on which system of coordinates is chosen.

Line of molar or rigid segmentarity, line of molecular or supple segmentation, line of flight—many problems arise. The first concerns the *particular character of each line*. It might be thought that rigid segments are socially determined, predetermined, overcoded by the State; there may be a tendency to construe supple segmentarity as an interior activity, something imaginary or phantasmic. As for the line of flight, would it not be entirely personal, the way in which an individual escapes on his or her own account, escapes “responsibilities,” escapes the world, takes refuge in the desert, or else in art . . . ? False impression. Supple segmentarity has nothing to do with the imaginary, and micropolitics is no less extensive or real than macropolitics. Politics on the grand scale can never administer its molar segments without also dealing with the micro-injections or infiltrations that work in its favor or present an obstacle to it; indeed, the larger the molar aggregates, the greater the molecularization of the agencies they put into play. Lines of flight, for their part, never consist in running away from the world but rather in causing runoffs, as when you drill a hole in a pipe; there is no social system that does not leak from all directions, even if it makes its segments increasingly rigid in order to seal the lines of flight. There is nothing imaginary, nothing symbolic, about a line of flight. There is nothing more active than a line of flight, among animals or humans.¹³ Even History is forced to take that route rather than proceeding by “signifying breaks.” What is escaping in a society at a given moment? It is on lines of flight that new weapons are invented, to be turned against the heavy arms of the State. “I may be running, but I’m looking for a gun as I go” (George Jackson). It was along lines of flight that the nomads swept away everything in their path and found new weapons, leaving the Pharaoh thunderstruck. It is possible for a single group, or a single individual even, to exhibit all the lines we have been discussing simultaneously. But it is most frequently the case that a single group or individual functions as a line of flight; that group or individual creates the line rather than following it, is itself the living weapon it forges rather than stealing one. Lines of flight are realities; they are very dangerous for societies, although they can get by without them, and sometimes manage to keep them to a minimum.

The second problem concerns the *respective importance of the lines*. You can begin with the rigid segmentarity, it’s the easiest, it’s pre-given; and then you can look at how and to what extent it is crosscut by a supple segmentarity, a kind of rhizome surrounding its roots. Then you can look at how the line of flight enters in. And alliances and battles. But it is also possible to begin with the line of flight: perhaps this is the primary line,

with its absolute deterritorialization. It is clear that the line of flight *does not come afterward*; it is there from the beginning, even if it awaits its hour, and waits for the others to explode. Supple segmentarity, then, is only a kind of compromise operating by relative deterritorializations and permitting reterritorializations that cause blockages and reversions to the rigid line. It is odd how supple segmentarity is caught between the two other lines, ready to tip to one side or the other; such is its ambiguity. It is also necessary to look at the various combinations: it is quite possible that one group or individual's line of flight may not work to benefit that of another group or individual; it may on the contrary block it, plug it, throw it even deeper into rigid segmentarity. It can happen in love that one person's creative line is the other's imprisonment. The composition of the lines, of one line with another, is a problem, even of two lines of the same type. There is no assurance that two lines of flight will prove compatible, compossible. There is no assurance that the body without organs will be easy to compose. There is no assurance that a love, or a political approach, will withstand it.

Third problem: there is a *mutual immanence* of the lines. And it is not easy to sort them out. No one of them is transcendent, each is at work within the others. Immanence everywhere. Lines of flight are immanent to the social field. Supple segmentarity continually dismantles the concretions of rigid segmentarity, but everything that it dismantles it reassembles on its own level: micro-Oedipuses, microformations of power, microfascisms. The line of flight blasts the two segmentary series apart; but it is capable of the worst, of bouncing off the wall, falling into a black hole, taking the path of greatest regression, and in its vagaries reconstructing the most rigid of segments. Have you sown your wild oats? That is worse than not escaping at all: See Lawrence's reproach to Melville.¹⁴ Between the matter of a dirty little secret in rigid segmentarity, the empty form of "What happened?" in supple segmentarity, and clandestinity of what can no longer happen on the line of flight, how can we fail to see the upheavals caused by a monster force, the Secret, threatening to bring everything tumbling down? Between the Couple of the first kind of segmentarity, the Double of the second, and the Clandestine of the line of flight, there are so many possible mixtures and passages.

There is one last problem, the most anguishing one, concerning the *dangers specific to each line*. There is not much to say about the danger confronting the first, for the chances are slim that its rigidification will fail. There is not much to say about the ambiguity of the second. But why is the line of flight, even aside from the danger it runs of reverting to one of the other two lines, imbued with such singular despair in spite of its message of joy, as if at the very moment things are coming to a resolution its undertak-

ing were threatened by something reaching down to its core, by a death, a demolition? Shestov said of Chekhov, a great creator of novellas: "There can be practically no doubt that Chekhov exerted himself, and something broke inside him. And the overstrain came not from hard and heavy labor; no mighty overpowering exploit broke him: he stumbled and fell, he slipped. . . . The old Chekhov of gaiety and mirth is no more. . . . Instead, a morose and overshadowed man, a 'criminal.'"¹⁵ *What happened?* Once again, this is the question facing all of Chekhov's characters. Is it not possible to exert oneself, and even break something, without falling into a black hole of bitterness and sand? But did Chekhov really fall? Is that not to judge him entirely from the outside? Was Chekhov not correct in saying that however grim his characters are, he still carries "a hundred pounds of love"? Of course, nothing is easy on the lines that compose us, and that constitute the essence of the Novella (*la Nouvelle*), and sometimes of Good News (*la Bonne Nouvelle*).

What are your couples, your doubles, your clandestines, and what are their mixes? When one person says to another, love the taste of whiskey on my lips like I love the gleam of madness in your eyes, what lines are they in the process of composing, or, on the contrary, making incompossible? Fitzgerald: "Perhaps fifty percent of our friends and relations will tell you in good faith that it was my drinking that drove Zelda mad, and the other half would assure you that it was her madness that drove me to drink. Neither of these judgments means much of anything. These two groups of friends and relations would be unanimous in saying that each of us would have been much better off without the other. The irony is that we have never been more in love with each other in all of our lives. She loves the alcohol on my lips. I cherish her most extravagant hallucinations." "In the end, nothing really had much importance. We destroyed ourselves. But in all honesty, I never thought we destroyed each other." Beautiful texts. All of the lines are there: the lines of family and friends, of all those who speak, explain, and psychoanalyze, assigning rights and wrongs, of the whole binary machine of the Couple, united or divided, in rigid segmentarity (50 percent). Then there is the line of supple segmentation, from which the alcoholic and the madwoman extract, as from a kiss on the lips and eyes, the multiplication of a double at the limit of what they can endure in their state and with the tacit understandings serving them as internal messages. Finally, there is a line of flight, all the more shared now that they are separated, or vice versa, each of them the clandestine of the other, a double all the more successful now that nothing has importance any longer, now that everything can begin anew, since they have been destroyed but not by each other. Nothing will enter memory, everything was on the lines, between the lines, in the AND that made one *and* the

other imperceptible, without disjunction or conjunction but only a line of flight forever in the process of being drawn, toward a new acceptance, the opposite of renunciation or resignation—a new happiness?

9. 1933: Micropolitics and Segmentarity



Segmentarities (Overview of the Types)

We are segmented from all around and in every direction. The human being is a segmentary animal. Segmentarity is inherent to all the strata composing us. Dwelling, getting around, working, playing: life is spatially and socially segmented. The house is segmented according to its rooms' assigned purposes; streets, according to the order of the city; the factory, according to the nature of the work and operations performed in it. We are segmented in a *binary* fashion, following the great major dualist oppositions: social classes, but also men-women, adults-children, and so on. We are segmented in a *cir-*

cular fashion, in ever larger circles, ever wider disks or coronas, like Joyce's "letter": my affairs, my neighborhood's affairs, my city's, my country's, the world's . . . We are segmented in a *linear* fashion, along a straight line or a number of straight lines, of which each segment represents an episode or "proceeding": as soon as we finish one proceeding we begin another, forever proceduring or procedured, in the family, in school, in the army, on the job. School tells us, "You're not at home anymore"; the army tells us, "You're not in school anymore" . . . Sometimes the various segments belong to different individuals or groups, and sometimes the same individual or group passes from one segment to another. But these figures of segmentarity, the binary, circular, and linear, are bound up with one another, even cross over into each other, changing according to the point of view. This is already evident among "savage" peoples: Lizot shows how the communal House is organized in circular fashion, going from interior to exterior in a series of coronas within which certain types of localizable activities take place (worship and ceremonies, followed by exchange of goods, followed by family life, followed by trash and excrement); at the same time "each of these coronas is itself transversally divided, each segment devolves upon a particular lineage and is subdivided among different kinship groups."¹ In a more general context, Lévi-Strauss shows that the dualist organization of primitive peoples has a circular form, and also takes a linear form encompassing "any number of groups" (at least three).²

Why return to the primitives, when it is a question of our own life? The fact is that the notion of segmentarity was constructed by ethnologists to account for so-called primitive societies, which have no fixed, central State apparatus and no global power mechanisms or specialized political institutions. In these societies, the social segments have a certain leeway, between the two extreme poles of fusion and scission, depending on the task and the situation; there is also considerable communicability between heterogeneous elements, so that one segment can fit with another in a number of different ways; and they have a local construction excluding the prior determination of a base domain (economic, political, juridical, artistic); they have extrinsic and situational properties, or relations irreducible to the intrinsic properties of a structure; activity is continuous, so segmentarity is not grasped as something separate from a segmentation-in-progress operating by outgrowths, detachments, and mergings. Primitive segmentarity is characterized by a polyvocal *code* based on lineages and their varying situations and relations, and an itinerant *territoriality* based on local, overlapping divisions. Codes and territories, clan lineages and tribal territorialities, form a fabric of relatively supple segmentarity.³

However, it seems to us difficult to maintain that State societies, even our modern States, are any less segmentary. The classical opposition

between segmentarity and centralization hardly seems relevant.⁴ Not only does the State exercise power over the segments it sustains or permits to survive, but it possesses, and imposes, its own segmentarity. Perhaps the opposition sociologists establish between the segmentary and the central is biological deep down: the ringed worm, and the central nervous system. But the central brain itself is a worm, even more segmented than the others, in spite of and including all of its vicarious actions. There is no opposition between the central and the segmentary. The modern political system is a global whole, unified and unifying, but is so because it implies a constellation of juxtaposed, imbricated, ordered subsystems; the analysis of decision making brings to light all kinds of compartmentalizations and partial processes that interconnect, but not without gaps and displacements. Technocracy operates by the segmentary division of labor (this applies to the international division of labor as well). Bureaucracy exists only in compartmentalized offices and functions only by “goal displacements” and the corresponding “dysfunctions.” Hierarchy is not simply pyramidal; the boss’s office is as much at the end of the hall as on top of the tower. In short, we would say that modern life has not done away with segmentarity but has on the contrary made it exceptionally rigid.

Instead of setting up an opposition between the segmentary and the centralized, we should make a distinction between two types of segmentarity, one “primitive” and supple, the other “modern” and rigid. This distinction reframes each of the figures previously discussed.

1. Binary oppositions (men/women, those on top/those on the bottom, etc.) are very strong in primitive societies, but seem to be the result of machines and assemblages that are not in themselves binary. The social binarity between men and women in a group applies rules according to which both sexes must take their respective spouses from different groups (which is why there are at least three groups). Thus Lévi-Strauss can demonstrate that dualist organization never stands on its own in this kind of society. On the contrary, it is a particularity of modern societies, or rather State societies, to bring into their own duality machines that function as such, and proceed simultaneously by biunivocal relationships and successively by binarized choices. Classes and sexes come in twos, and phenomena of tripartition result from a transposition of the dual, not the reverse. We have already encountered this, notably in the case of the Face machine, which differs in this respect from primitive head machines. It seems that modern societies elevated dual segmentarity to the level of a self-sufficient organization. The question, therefore, is not whether the status of women, or those on the bottom, is better or worse, but the type of organization from which that status results.

2. Similarly, we may note that in primitive societies circular segmen-

tarity does not necessarily imply that the circles are concentric, or have the same center. In a supple regime, centers already act as so many *knots*, *eyes*, or *black holes*; but they do not all resonate together, they do not fall on the same point, they do not converge in the same black hole. There is a multiplicity of animist eyes, each of which is assigned, for example, a particular animal spirit (snake-spirit, woodpecker-spirit, cayman-spirit . . .). Each black hole is occupied by a different animal eye. Doubtless, we see operations of rigidification and centralization take shape here and there: all of the centers must collect on a single circle, which itself has a single center. The shaman draws lines between all the points or spirits, outlines a constellation, a radiating set of roots tied to a central tree. This is the birth of a centralized power with an arborescent system to discipline the outgrowths of the primitive rhizome.⁵ Here, the tree simultaneously plays the role of a principle of dichotomy or binarity, and an axis of rotation. But the power of the shaman is still entirely localized, strictly dependent upon a particular segment, contingent upon drugs, and each point continues to emit independent sequences. The same cannot be said of modern societies, or even of States. Of course, the centralized is not opposed to the segmentary, and the circles remain distinct. But they become concentric, definitively arborified. The segmentarity becomes rigid, to the extent that all centers resonate in, and all black holes fall on, a single point of accumulation that is like a point of intersection somewhere behind the eyes. The face of the father, teacher, colonel, boss, enter into redundancy, refer back to a center of signiance that moves across the various circles and passes back over all of the segments. The supple microheads with animal facializations are replaced by a macroface whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere. There are no longer *n* eyes in the sky, or in becomings-animal and -vegetable, but a central computing eye scanning all of the radii. The central State is constituted not by the abolition of circular segmentarity but by a concentricity of distinct circles, or the organization of a resonance among centers. *There are already just as many power centers in primitive societies; or, if one prefers, there are still just as many in State societies.* The latter, however, behave as apparatuses of resonance; they organize resonance, whereas the former inhibit it.⁶

3. Finally, in the case of linear segmentarity, we would say that each segment is underscored, rectified, and homogenized in its own right, but also in relation to the others. Not only does each have its own unit of measure, but there is an equivalence and translatability between units. The central eye has as its correlate a space through which it moves, but it itself remains invariant in relation to its movements. With the Greek city-state and Cleisthenes' reform, a homogeneous and isotopic space appears that overcodes the lineal segments, at the same time as distinct focal points

begin to resonate in a center acting as their common denominator.⁷ Paul Virilio shows that after the Greek city-state, the Roman Empire imposes a geometrical or *linear reason of State* including a general outline of camps and fortifications, a universal art of “marking boundaries by lines,” a laying-out of territories, a substitution of space for places and territorialities, and a transformation of the world into the city; in short, an increasingly rigid segmentarity.⁸ The segments, once underscored or overcoded, seem to lose their ability to bud, they seem to lose their dynamic relation to segmentations-in-progress, or in the act of coming together or coming apart. If there exists a primitive “geometry” (a protogeometry), it is an operative geometry in which figures are never separable from the affectations befalling them, the lines of their becoming, the segments of their segmentation: there is “roundness,” but no circle, “alignments,” but no straight line, etc. On the contrary, State geometry, or rather the bond between the State and geometry, manifests itself in the primacy of the theorem-element, which substitutes fixed or ideal essences for supple morphological formations, properties for affects, predetermined segments for segmentations-in-progress. Geometry and arithmetic take on the power of the scalpel. Private property implies a space that has been overcoded and gridded by surveying. Not only does each line have its segments, but the segments of one line correspond to those of another; for example, the wage regime establishes a correspondence between monetary segments, production segments, and consumable-goods segments.

We may summarize the principal differences between rigid segmentarity and supple segmentarity. In the rigid mode, binary segmentarity stands on its own and is governed by great machines of direct binarization, whereas in the other mode, binarities result from “multiplicities of n dimensions.” Second, circular segmentarity tends to become concentric, in other words, causes all of its focal points to coincide in a single center that is in constant movement but remains invariant through its movements, and is part of a machine of resonance. Finally, linear segmentarity feeds into a machine of overcoding that constitutes *more geometrico* homogeneous space and extracts segments that are determinate as to their substance, form, and relations. It will be noted that this rigid segmentarity is always expressed by the Tree. The Tree is the knot of arborescence or principle of dichotomy; it is the axis of rotation guaranteeing concentricity; it is the structure or network gridding the possible. This opposition between arborified and rhizomatic segmentarity is not just meant to indicate two states of a single process, but also to isolate two different processes. For primitive societies operate essentially by codes and territorialities. It is in fact the distinction between these two elements, the tribal system of territories and the clan system of lineages, that prevents resonance.⁹ Modern, or State, societies, on the other hand,

have replaced the declining codes with a univocal overcoding, and the lost territories with a specific reterritorialization (which takes place in an overcoded geometrical space). Segmentarity is always the result of an abstract machine, but different abstract machines operate in the rigid and the supple.

It is not enough, therefore, to oppose the centralized to the segmentary. Nor is it enough to oppose two kinds of segmentarity, one supple and primitive, the other modern and rigidified. There is indeed a distinction between the two, but they are inseparable, they overlap, they are entangled. Primitive societies have nuclei of rigidity or arborification that as much anticipate the State as ward it off. Conversely, our societies are still suffused by a supple fabric without which their rigid segments would not hold. Supple segmentarity cannot be restricted to primitive peoples. It is not the vestige of the savage within us but a perfectly contemporary function, inseparable from the other. Every society, and every individual, are thus plied by both segmentarities simultaneously: one molar, the other *molecular*. If they are distinct, it is because they do not have the same terms or the same relations or the same nature or even the same type of multiplicity. If they are inseparable, it is because they coexist and cross over into each other. The configurations differ, for example, between the primitives and us, but the two segmentarities are always in presupposition. In short, everything is political, but every politics is simultaneously a *macropolitics* and a *micropolitics*. Take aggregates of the perception or feeling type: their molar organization, their rigid segmentarity, does not preclude the existence of an entire world of unconscious micropercepts, unconscious affects, fine segmentations that grasp or experience different things, are distributed and operate differently. There is a micropolitics of perception, affection, conversation, and so forth. If we consider the great binary aggregates, such as the sexes or classes, it is evident that they also cross over into molecular assemblages of a different nature, and that there is a double reciprocal dependency between them. For the two sexes imply a multiplicity of molecular combinations bringing into play not only the man in the woman and the woman in the man, but the relation of each to the animal, the plant, etc.: a thousand tiny sexes. And social classes themselves imply "masses" that do not have the same kind of movement, distribution, or objectives and do not wage the same kind of struggle. Attempts to distinguish mass from class effectively tend toward this limit: *the notion of mass is a molecular notion* operating according to a type of segmentation irreducible to the molar segmentarity of class. Yet classes are indeed fashioned from masses; they crystallize them. And masses are constantly flowing or leaking from classes. Their reciprocal presupposition, however, does not preclude a dif-

ference in viewpoint, nature, scale, and function (understood in this way, the notion of mass has entirely different connotations than Canetti's "crowd").

It is not sufficient to define bureaucracy by a rigid segmentarity with compartmentalization of contiguous offices, an office manager in each segment, and the corresponding centralization at the end of the hall or on top of the tower. For at the same time there is a whole bureaucratic segmentation, a suppleness of and communication between offices, a bureaucratic perversion, a permanent inventiveness or creativity practiced even against administrative regulations. If Kafka is the greatest theorist of bureaucracy, it is because he shows how, at a certain level (but which one? it is not localizable), the barriers between offices cease to be "a definite dividing line" and are immersed in a molecular medium (*milieu*) that dissolves them and simultaneously makes the office manager proliferate into microfigures impossible to recognize or identify, discernible only when they are centralizable: another regime, coexistent with the separation and totalization of the rigid segments.¹⁰ We would even say that fascism implies a molecular regime that is distinct both from molar segments and their centralization. Doubtless, fascism invented the concept of the totalitarian State, but there is no reason to define fascism by a concept of its own devising: there are totalitarian States, of the Stalinist or military dictatorship type, that are not fascist. The concept of the totalitarian State applies only at the macropolitical level, to a rigid segmentarity and a particular mode of totalization and centralization. But fascism is inseparable from a proliferation of molecular focuses in interaction, which skip from point to point, before beginning to resonate together in the National Socialist State. Rural fascism and city or neighborhood fascism, youth fascism and war veteran's fascism, fascism of the Left and fascism of the Right, fascism of the couple, family, school, and office: every fascism is defined by a micro-black hole that stands on its own and communicates with the others, before resonating in a great, generalized central black hole.¹¹ There is fascism when a *war machine* is installed in each hole, in every niche. Even after the National Socialist State had been established, microfascisms persisted that gave it unequaled ability to act upon the "masses." Daniel Guérin is correct to say that if Hitler took power, rather than taking over the German State administration, it was because from the beginning he had at his disposal microorganizations giving him "an unequaled, irreplaceable ability to penetrate every cell of society," in other words, a molecular and supple segmentarity, flows capable of suffusing every kind of cell. Conversely, if capitalism came to consider the fascist experience as catastrophic, if it preferred to ally itself with Stalinist totalitarianism, which from its point of view was much more sensible and manageable, it was because the

segmentarity and centralization of the latter was more classical and less fluid. What makes fascism dangerous is its molecular or micropolitical power, for it is a mass movement: a cancerous body rather than a totalitarian organism. American film has often depicted these molecular focal points; band, gang, sect, family, town, neighborhood, vehicle fascisms spare no one. Only microfascism provides an answer to the global question: Why does desire desire its own repression, how can it desire its own repression? The masses certainly do not passively submit to power; nor do they "want" to be repressed, in a kind of masochistic hysteria; nor are they tricked by an ideological lure. Desire is never separable from complex assemblages that necessarily tie into molecular levels, from microformations already shaping postures, attitudes, perceptions, expectations, semiotic systems, etc. Desire is never an undifferentiated instinctual energy, but itself results from a highly developed, engineered setup rich in interactions: a whole supple segmentarity that processes molecular energies and potentially gives desire a fascist determination. Leftist organizations will not be the last to secrete microfascisms. It's too easy to be antifascist on the molar level, and not even see the fascist inside you, the fascist you yourself sustain and nourish and cherish with molecules both personal and collective.

Four errors concerning this molecular and supple segmentarity are to be avoided. The first is axiological and consists in believing that a little suppleness is enough to make things "better." But microfascisms are what make fascism so dangerous, and fine segmentations are as harmful as the most rigid of segments. The second is psychological, as if the molecular were in the realm of the imagination and applied only to the individual and interindividual. But there is just as much social-Real on one line as on the other. Third, the two forms are not simply distinguished by size, as a small form and a large form; although it is true that the molecular works in detail and operates in small groups, this does not mean that it is any less coextensive with the entire social field than molar organization. Finally, the qualitative difference between the two lines does not preclude their boosting or cutting into each other; there is always a proportional relation between the two, directly or inversely proportional.

In the first case, the stronger the molar organization is, the more it induces a molecularization of its own elements, relations, and elementary apparatuses. When the machine becomes planetary or cosmic, there is an increasing tendency for assemblages to miniaturize, to become micro-assemblages. Following André Gorz's formula, the only remaining element of work left under world capitalism is the molecular, or molecularized, individual, in other words, the "mass" individual. The administration of a great organized molar security has as its correlate a whole micro-

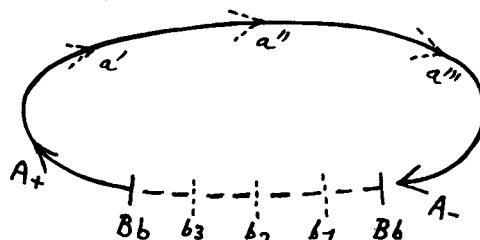
management of petty fears, a permanent molecular insecurity, to the point that the motto of domestic policymakers might be: a macropolitics of society by and for a micropolitics of insecurity.¹² However, the second case is even more important: molecular movements do not complement but rather thwart and break through the great worldwide organization. That is what French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing was saying in his military and political geography lesson: the more balanced things are between East and West, in an overcoding and overarmed dualist machine, the more "destabilized" they become along the other, North-South, line. There is always a Palestinian or Basque or Corsican to bring about a "regional destabilization of security."¹³ The two great molar aggregates of the East and West are perpetually being undermined by a molecular segmentation causing a zigzag crack, making it difficult for them to keep their own segments in line. It is as if a line of flight, perhaps only a tiny trickle to begin with, leaked between the segments, escaping their centralization, eluding their totalization. The profound movements stirring in a society present themselves in this fashion, even if they are necessarily "represented" as a confrontation between molar segments. It is wrongly said (in Marxism in particular) that a society is defined by its contradictions. That is true only on the larger scale of things. From the viewpoint of micropolitics, a society is defined by its lines of flight, which are molecular. There is always something that flows or flees, that escapes the binary organizations, the resonance apparatus, and the overcoding machine: things that are attributed to a "change in values," the youth, women, the mad, etc. May 1968 in France was molecular, making what led up to it all the more imperceptible from the viewpoint of macropolitics. It happens that people who are very limited in outlook or are very old grasp the event better than the most advanced politicians, or politicians who consider themselves advanced from the viewpoint of organization. As Gabriel Tarde said, what one needs to know is which peasants, in which areas of the south of France, stopped greeting the local landowners. A very old, outdated landowner can in this case judge things better than a modernist. It was the same with May '68: those who evaluated things in macropolitical terms understood nothing of the event because something unaccountable was escaping. The politicians, the parties, the unions, many leftists, were utterly vexed; they kept repeating over and over again that "conditions" were not ripe. It was as though they had been temporarily deprived of the entire dualism machine that made them valid spokespeople. Bizarrely, de Gaulle, and even Pompidou, understood much more than the others. A molecular flow was escaping, minuscule at first, then swelling, without, however, ceasing to be unassignable. The reverse, however, is also true: molecular escapes and movements would be nothing if they did not return to the molar orga-

nizations to reshuffle their segments, their binary distributions of sexes, classes, and parties.

The issue is that the molar and the molecular are distinguished not by size, scale, or dimension but by the nature of the system of reference envisioned. Perhaps, then, the words "line" and "segment" should be reserved for molar organization, and other, more suitable, words should be sought for molecular composition. And in fact, whenever we can identify a well-defined *segmented line*, we notice that it continues in another form, as a *quantum flow*. And in every instance, we can locate a "power center" at the border between the two, defined not by an absolute exercise of power within its domain but by the relative adaptations and conversions it effects between the line and the flow. Take a monetary flow with segments. These segments can be defined from several points of view, for example, from the viewpoint of a corporate budget (real wages, net profit, management salaries, interest on assets, reserves, investments, etc.). Now this line of payment-money is linked to another aspect, namely, the flow of financing-money, which has, not segments, but rather poles, singularities, and quanta (the poles of the flow are the creation of money and its destruction; the singularities are nominal liquid assets; the quanta are inflation, deflation, stagflation, etc.). This has led some to speak of a "mutant, convulsive, creative and circulatory flow" tied to desire and always subjacent to the solid line and its segments determining interest rates and supply and demand.¹⁴ In a balance of payment, we again encounter a binary segmentarity that distinguishes, for example, so-called autonomous operations from so-called compensatory operations. But movements of capital do not allow themselves to be segmented in this way; because they are "*the most thoroughly broken down*, according to their nature, duration, and the personality of the creditor or debtor," one "no longer has any idea where to draw the line when dealing with these flows."¹⁵ Yet there is always a correlation between the two aspects since linearization and segmentation are where flows run dry, but are also their point of departure for a new creation. When we talk about banking power, concentrated most notably in the central banks, it is indeed a question of the relative power to regulate "as much as" possible the communication, conversion, and coadaptation of the two parts of the circuit. That is why power centers are defined much more by what escapes them or by their impotence than by their zone of power. In short, the molecular, or microeconomics, micropolitics, is defined not by the smallness of its elements but by the nature of its "mass"—the quantum flow as opposed to the molar segmented line.¹⁶ The task of making the segments correspond to the quanta, of adjusting the segments to the quanta, implies hit-and-miss changes in rhythm and mode rather than any omnipotence; and something always escapes.

We could take other examples, such as the power of the Church. Church power has always been associated with a certain administration of sin possessing a strong segmentarity (the seven deadly sins), units of measure (how many times?), and rules of equivalence and atonement (confession, penance . . .). But there is also what might be called the molecular flow of sinfulness, something quite different yet complementary: it hugs close to the linear zone, as though negotiated through it, but itself has only poles (original sin-redemption or grace) and quanta ("that sin which is the default of consciousness of sin"; the sin of having a consciousness of sin; the sin of the consequence of having a consciousness of sin).¹⁷ The same could be said of a flow of criminality, in contrast to the molar line of a legal code and its divisions. Or to take another example, discussions of military power, or the power of the army, consider a segmentable line broken down into types of war corresponding exactly to the States waging war and the political goals those States assign themselves (from "limited" war to "total" war). But following Clausewitz's intuition, the war machine is very different; it is a flow of *absolute* war stretching between an offensive and a defensive pole, and is marked only by quanta (psychic and material forces that are like the nominal liquid assets of war). We may say of the pure flow that it is abstract yet real; ideal yet effective; absolute yet "differentiated." It is true that the flow and its quanta can be grasped only by virtue of indexes on the segmented line, but conversely, that line and those indexes exist only by virtue of the flow suffusing them. In every case, it is evident that the segmented line (macropolitics) is immersed in and prolonged by quantum flows (micropolitics) that continually reshuffle and stir up its segments.

- A: flow and poles
- a: quanta
- b: line and segments
- B: power center
(all of which constitutes a cycle or period)



In homage to Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904): his long-forgotten work has assumed new relevance with the influence of American sociology, in particular microsociology. It had been quashed by Durkheim and his school (in polemics similar to and as harsh as Cuvier's against Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire). Durkheim's preferred objects of study were the great collective representations, which are generally binary, resonant, and overcoded. Tarde countered that collective representations presuppose exactly what needs explaining, namely, "the similarity of millions of people." That is why Tarde was interested instead in the world of detail, or of the infini-

tesimal: the little *imitations*, *oppositions*, and *inventions* constituting an entire realm of subrepresentative matter. Tarde's best work was his analyses of a minuscule bureaucratic innovation, or a linguistic innovation, etc. The Durkheimians answered that what Tarde did was psychology or inter-psychology, not sociology. But that is true only in appearance, as a first approximation: a microimitation does seem to occur between two individuals. But at the same time, and at a deeper level, it has to do not with an individual but with a flow or a wave. *Imitation is the propagation of a flow; opposition is binarization, the making binary of flows; invention is a conjugation or connection of different flows.* What, according to Tarde, is a flow? It is belief or desire (the two aspects of every assemblage); a flow is always of belief and of desire. Beliefs and desires are the basis of every society, because they are flows and as such are "quantifiable"; they are veritable social Quantities, whereas sensations are qualitative and representations are simple resultants.¹⁸ Infinitesimal imitation, opposition, and invention are therefore like flow quanta marking a propagation, binarization, or conjugation of beliefs and desires. Hence the importance of statistics, providing it concerns itself with the cutting edges and not only with the "stationary" zone of representations. For in the end, the difference is not at all between the social and the individual (or interindividual), but between the molar realm of representations, individual or collective, and the molecular realm of beliefs and desires in which the distinction between the social and the individual loses all meaning since flows are neither attributable to individuals nor overcodable by collective signifiers. Representations already define large-scale aggregates, or determine segments on a line; beliefs and desires, on the other hand, are flows marked by quanta, flows that are created, exhausted, or transformed, added to one another, subtracted or combined. Tarde invented microsociology and took it to its full breadth and scope, denouncing in advance the misinterpretations to which it would later fall victim.

This is how you tell the difference between the segmented line and the quantum flow. A mutant flow always implies something tending to elude or escape the codes; quanta are precisely signs or degrees of deterritorialization in the decoded flow. The rigid line, on the other hand, implies an overcoding that substitutes itself for the faltering codes; its segments are like reterritorializations on the overcoding or overcoded line. Let us return to the case of original sin: it is the very act of a flow marking a decoding in relation to creation (with just one last island preserved for the Virgin), and a deterritorialization in relation to the land of Adam; but it simultaneously performs an overcoding by binary organizations and resonance (Powers, Church, empires, rich-poor, men-women, etc.) and complementary reterritorializations (on the land of Cain, on work, on reproduction, on

money . . .). Now the two systems of reference are in inverse relation to each other, in the sense that the first eludes the second, or the second arrests the first, prevents it from flowing further; but at the same time, they are strictly complementary and coexistent, because one exists only as a function of the other; yet they are different and in direct relation to each other, although corresponding term by term, because the second only effectively arrests the first on a “plane” that is not the plane specific to the first, while the momentum of the first continues on its own plane.

A social field is always animated by all kinds of movements of decoding and deterritorialization affecting “masses” and operating at different speeds and paces. These are not contradictions but escapes. At this level, everything is a question of *mass*. For example, from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries we see an acceleration of factors of decoding and deterritorialization: the masses of the last invaders swooping down from north, east, and south; military masses turned into pillaging bands; ecclesiastical masses confronted with infidels and heretics, and adopting increasingly deterritorialized objectives; peasant masses leaving the seigneurial domains; seigneurial masses forced to find means of exploitation less territorial than serfdom; urban masses breaking away from the backcountry and finding increasingly less territorialized social arrangements in the cities; women’s masses detaching themselves from the old passionnal and conjugal code; monetary masses that cease to be a hoard object and inject themselves into great commercial circuits.¹⁹ We may cite the Crusades as effecting a connection of flows, each boosting and accelerating the others (even the flow of femininity in the “faraway Princess,” even the flow of children in the Crusades of the thirteenth century). But at the same time, and inseparably, there occur overcodings and reterritorializations. The Crusades were overcoded by the pope and assigned territorial objectives. The Holy Land, the Peace of God, a new type of abbey, new figures of money, new modes of exploitation of the peasant through leasehold and the wage system (or revivals of slavery), urban reterritorializations, etc., form a complex system. At this point, we must introduce a distinction between the two notions of *connection* and *conjugation* of flows. “Connection” indicates the way in which decoded and deterritorialized flows boost one another, accelerate their shared escape, and augment or stoke their quanta; the “conjugation” of these same flows, on the other hand, indicates their relative stoppage, like a point of accumulation that plugs or seals the lines of flight, performs a general reterritorialization, and brings the flows under the dominance of a single flow capable of overcoding them. But it is precisely the most deterritorialized flow, under the first aspect, that always brings about the accumulation or conjunction of the processes, determines the overcoding, and serves as the basis for reterritorialization under the

second aspect (we have already encountered a theorem according to which it is always *on* the most deterritorialized element that reterritorialization takes place). For example, the merchant bourgeoisie of the cities conjugated or capitalized a domain of knowledge, a technology, assemblages and circuits into whose dependency the nobility, Church, artisans, and even peasants *would enter*. It is precisely because the bourgeoisie was a cutting edge of deterritorialization, a veritable particle accelerator, that it also performed an overall reterritorialization.

The task of the historian is to designate the “period” of coexistence or simultaneity of these two movements (decoding-deterritorialization and overcoding-reterritorialization). For the duration of this period, one distinguishes between the molecular aspect and the molar aspect: on the one hand, *masses or flows*, with their mutations, quanta of deterritorialization, connections, and accelerations; on the other hand, *classes or segments*, with their binary organization, resonance, conjunction or accumulation, and line of overcoding favoring one line over the others.²⁰ The difference between macrohistory and microhistory has nothing to do with the length of the durations envisioned, long or short, but rather concerns distinct systems of reference, depending on whether it is an overcoded segmented line that is under consideration or the mutant quantum flow. The rigid system does not bring the other system to a halt: the flow continues beneath the line, forever mutant, while the line totalizes. *Mass* and *class* do not have the same contours or the same dynamic, even though the same group can be assigned both signs. The bourgeoisie considered as a mass *and* as a class . . . The relations of a mass to other masses are not the same as the relations of the “corresponding” class to the other classes. Of course, there are just as many relations of force, and just as much violence, on one side as the other. The point is that the same struggle assumes two very different aspects, in relation to which the victories and defeats differ. Mass movements accelerate and feed into one another (or dim for a long while, enter long stupors), but jump from one class to another, undergo mutation, emanate or emit new quanta that then modify class relations, bring their overcoding and reterritorialization into question, and run new lines of flight in new directions. Beneath the self-reproduction of classes, there is always a variable map of masses. Politics operates by macrodecisions and binary choices, binarized interests; but the realm of the decidable remains very slim. Political decision making necessarily descends into a world of microdeterminations, attractions, and desires, which it must sound out or evaluate in a different fashion. Beneath linear conceptions and segmentary decisions, an evaluation of flows and their quanta. A curious passage by Michelet reproaches François I for having badly evaluated the flow of emigration bringing to France large numbers of people in struggle against the Church: François saw it only as an influx of

potential soldiers, instead of perceiving a mass molecular flow which France could have used to its own advantage by leading a different Reformation than the one that occurred.²¹ Problems are always like this. Good or bad, politics and its judgments are always molar, but it is the molecular and its assessment that makes it or breaks it.

Now we are in a better position to draw a map. If we return to a very general sense of the word “line,” we see that there are not just two kinds of lines but three. First, a relatively supple line of interlaced codes and territorialities; that is why we started with so-called *primitive* segmentarity, in which the social space is constituted by territorial and lineal segmentations. Second, a rigid line, which brings about a dualist organization of segments, a concentricity of circles in resonance, and generalized overcoding; here, the social space implies a *State apparatus*. This system is different from the primitive system precisely because overcoding is not a stronger code, but a specific procedure different from that of codes (similarly, reterritorialization is not an added territory, but takes place in a different space than that of territories, namely, overcoded geometrical space). Third, one or several lines of flight, marked by quanta and defined by decoding and deterritorialization (there is always something like a *war machine* functioning on these lines).

This way of presenting things still has the disadvantage of making it seem as though primitive societies came first. In truth, codes are never separable from the movement of decoding, nor are territories from the vectors of deterritorialization traversing them. And overcoding and reterritorialization do not come after. It would be more accurate to say that there is a space in which the three kinds of closely intermingled lines coexist, tribes, empires, and war machines. We could also put it this way: lines of flight are primary, *or* the already-rigid segments are, and supple segmentations swing between the two. Take a proposition like the following one by the historian Pirenne about barbarian tribes: “The Barbarians did not spontaneously hurl themselves upon the Empire. They were pushed forward by the flood of the Hunnish advance, which in this way caused the whole series of invasions.”²² On one side, we have the rigid segmentarity of the Roman Empire, with its center of resonance and periphery, its State, its *pax romana*, its geometry, its camps, its *limes* (boundary lines). Then, on the horizon, there is an entirely different kind of line, the line of the nomads who come in off the steppes, venture a fluid and active escape, sow deterritorialization everywhere, launch flows whose quanta heat up and are swept along by a Stateless war machine. The migrant barbarians are indeed between the two: they come and go, cross and recross frontiers, pillage and ransom, but also integrate themselves and reterritorialize. At times they

will subside into the empire, assigning themselves a segment of it, becoming mercenaries or confederates, settling down, occupying land or carving out their own State (the wise Visigoths). At other times, they will go over to the nomads, allying with them, becoming indiscernible (the brilliant Ostrogoths). Perhaps because they were constantly being defeated by the Huns and Visigoths, the Vandals ("zone-two Goths") drew a line of flight that made them as strong as their masters; they were the only band or mass to cross the Mediterranean. But they were also the ones who produced the most startling reterritorialization: an empire in Africa.²³ Thus it seems that the three lines do not only coexist, but transform themselves into one another, cross over into one another. Again, we have taken a summary example in which the lines are illustrated by different groups. What we have said applies all the more to cases in which all of the lines are in a single group, a single individual.

In view of this, it would be better to talk about simultaneous states of the abstract Machine. There is on the one hand an *abstract machine of overcoding*: it defines a rigid segmentarity, a macrosegmentarity, because it produces or rather reproduces segments, opposing them two by two, making all the centers resonate, and laying out a divisible, homogeneous space striated in all directions. This kind of abstract machine is linked to the State apparatus. We do not, however, equate it with the State apparatus itself. The abstract machine may be defined, for example, *more geometrico*, or under other conditions by an "axiomatic"; but the State apparatus is neither geometry nor axiomatics: it is only the assemblage of reterritorialization effectuating the overcoding machine within given limits and under given conditions. The most we can say is that the State apparatus tends increasingly to identify with the abstract machine it effectuates. This is where the notion of the totalitarian State becomes meaningful: a State becomes totalitarian when, instead of effectuating, within its own limits, the worldwide overcoding machine, it identifies with it, creating the conditions for "autarky," producing a reterritorialization by "closed vessel," in the artifice of the void (this is never an ideological operation, but rather an economic and political one).²⁴

On the other hand, at the other pole, there is an abstract machine of mutation, which operates by decoding and deterritorialization. It is what draws the lines of flight: it steers the quantum flows, assures the connection-creation of flows, and emits new quanta. It itself is in a state of flight, and erects war machines on its lines. If it constitutes another pole, it is because molar or rigid segments always seal, plug, block the lines of flight, whereas this machine is always making them flow, "between" the rigid segments and in another, submolecular, direction. But between the two poles there is also a whole realm of properly molecular negotiation, translation,

and transduction in which at times molar lines are already undermined by fissures and cracks, and at other times lines of flight are already drawn toward black holes, flow connections are already replaced by limitative conjunctions, and quanta emissions are already converted into center-points. All of this happens at the same time. It is at the same time that lines of flight connect and continue their intensities, whip particles-signs out of black holes; and also retreat into the swirl of micro-black holes or molecular conjunctions that interrupt them; or again, enter overcoded, concentricized, binarized, stable segments arrayed around a central black hole.

What is a center or focal point of power? Answering this question will illustrate the entanglement of the lines. We speak of the power of the army, Church, and school, of public and private power . . . Power centers obviously involve rigid segments. Each molar segment has one or more centers. It might be objected that the segments themselves presuppose a power center, as what distinguishes and unites them, sets them in opposition and makes them resonate. But there is no contradiction between the segmentary parts and the centralized apparatus. On the one hand, the most rigid of segmentarities does not preclude centralization: this is because the common central point is not where all the other points melt together, but instead acts as a point of resonance on the horizon, behind all the other points. The State is not a point taking all the others upon itself, but a resonance chamber for them all. Even when the State is totalitarian, its function as resonator for distinct centers and segments remains unchanged: the only difference is that it takes place under closed-vessel conditions that increase its internal reach, or couples “resonance” with a “forced movement.” On the other hand, and conversely, the strictest of centralizations does not eradicate the distinctiveness of the centers, segments, and circles. When the overcoding line is drawn, it assures the prevalence of one segment, as such, over the other (in the case of binary segmentarity), gives a certain center a power of relative resonance over the others (in the case of circular segmentarity), and underscores the dominant segment through which it itself passes (in the case of linear segmentarity). Thus centralization is always hierarchical, but hierarchy is always segmentary.

Each power center is also molecular and exercises its power on a microlological fabric in which it exists only as diffuse, dispersed, geared down, miniaturized, perpetually displaced, acting by fine segmentation, working in detail and in the details of detail. Foucault’s analysis of “disciplines” or micropowers (school, army, factory, hospital, etc.) testifies to these “focuses of instability” where groupings and accumulations confront each other, but also confront breakaways and escapes, and where inversions occur.²⁵ What we have is no longer The Schoolmaster but the monitor,

the best student, the class dunce, the janitor, etc. No longer the general, but the junior officers, the noncommissioned officers, the soldier inside me, and also the malcontent: all have their own tendencies, poles, conflicts, and relations of force. Even the warrant officer and janitor are only invoked for explanatory purposes; for they have a molar side *and* a molecular side, and make us realize that the general or the landlord also had both sides all along. We would not say that the proper name loses its power when it enters these zones of indiscernibility, but that it takes on a new kind of power. To talk like Kafka, what we have is no longer the public official Klamm, but maybe his secretary Momus, or other molecular Klamms the differences between which, and with Klamm, are all the greater for no longer being assignable. (“[The officials] don’t always stick to the same book, yet it isn’t the books they change, but their places, and [they] have to squeeze past one another when they change places, because there’s so little room.” “This official is rarely very like Klamm, and if he were sitting in his own office at his own desk with his name on the door I would have no more doubt at all,”²⁶ says Barnabas, whose dream would be a uniquely molar segmentarity, no matter how rigid and horrendous, as the only guarantee of certainty and security. But he cannot but notice that the molar segments are necessarily immersed in the molecular soup that nourishes them and makes their outlines waver.) And every power center has this microtexture. The microtextures—not masochism—are what explain how the oppressed can take an active role in oppression: the workers of the rich nations actively participate in the exploitation of the Third World, the arming of dictatorships, and the pollution of the atmosphere.

This is not surprising since the texture lies between the line of overcoding with rigid segments and the ultimate quantum line. It continually swings between the two, now channeling the quantum line back into the segmented line, now causing flows and quanta to escape from the segmented line. This is the third aspect of power centers, or their limit. For the only purpose these centers have is to translate as best they can flow quanta into line segments (only segments are totalizable, in one way or another). But this is both the principle of their power and the basis of their impotence. Far from being opposites, power and impotence complement and reinforce each other in a kind of fascinating satisfaction that is found above all in the most mediocre Statesmen, and defines their “glory.” For they extract glory from their shortsightedness, and power from their impotence, because it confirms that there is no choice. The only “great” Statesmen are those who connect with flows, like pilot-signs or particles-signs, and who emit quanta that get out of the black holes: it is not by chance that these men encounter each other only on lines of flight, in the act of drawing them, sounding them out, following them, or forging ahead of them, even

though they may make a mistake and take a fall (Moses the Hebrew, Genseric the Vandal, Genghis the Mongol, Mao the Chinese . . .). But there is no Power regulating the flows themselves. No one dominates the growth of the “monetary mass,” or money supply. If an image of the master or an idea of the State is projected outward to the limits of the universe, as if something had domination over flows as well as segments, and in the same manner, the result is a fictitious and ridiculous representation. The stock exchange gives a better image of flows and their quanta than does the State. Capitalists may be the masters of surplus value and its distribution, but they do not dominate the flows from which surplus value derives. Rather, power centers function at the points where flows are converted into segments: they are exchangers, converters, oscillators. Not that the segments themselves are governed by a decision-making power. We have seen, on the contrary, that segments (classes, for example) form at the conjunction of masses and deterritorialized flows and that the most deterritorialized flow determines the dominant segment; thus the dollar segment dominates currency, the bourgeoisie dominates capitalism, etc. Segments, then, are themselves governed by an abstract machine. But what power centers govern are the assemblages that effectuate that abstract machine, in other words, that continually adapt variations in mass and flow to the segments of the rigid line, as a function of a dominant segment and dominated segments. Much perverse invention can enter into the adaptations.

This is the sense in which we would speak, for example, of banking power (the World Bank, central banks, credit banks): if the flow of financing-money, or credit money, involves the mass of economic transactions, what banks govern is the conversion of the credit money that has been *created* into segmentary payment-money that is *appropriated*, in other words, coinage or State money for the purchase of goods that are themselves segmented (the importance of the interest rate in this respect). What banks govern is the conversion between the two kinds of money, and the conversion of the segments of the second kind into any given good.²⁷ The same could be said of every central power. Every central power has three aspects or zones: (1) its zone of power, relating to the segments of a solid rigid line; (2) its zone of indiscernibility, relating to its diffusion throughout a microphysical fabric; (3) its zone of impotence, relating to the flows and quanta it can only convert without being able to control or define. It is always from the depths of its impotence that each power center draws its power, hence their extreme maliciousness, and vanity. Better to be a tiny quantum flow than a molar converter, oscillator, or distributor! Returning to the example of money, the first zone is represented by the public central banks; the second by the “indefinite series of private relations between banks and borrowers”; the third by the desiring flow of

money, whose quanta are defined by the mass of economic transactions. It is true that the same problems are reformulated at the level of these very transactions, in relation to other power centers. But the first zone of the power center is always defined by the State apparatus, which is the assemblage that effectuates the abstract machine of molar overcoding; the second is defined in the molecular fabric immersing this assemblage; the third by the abstract machine of mutation, flows, and quanta.

We cannot say that one of these three lines is bad and another good, by nature and necessarily. The study of the dangers of each line is the object of pragmatics or schizoanalysis, to the extent that it undertakes not to represent, interpret, or symbolize, but only to make maps and draw lines, marking their mixtures as well as their distinctions. According to Nietzsche's Zarathustra and Castaneda's Indian Don Juan, there are three or even four dangers: first, Fear, then Clarity, then Power, and finally the great Disgust, the longing to kill and to die, the Passion for abolition.²⁸ We can guess what fear is. We are always afraid of losing. Our security, the great molar organization that sustains us, the arborescences we cling to, the binary machines that give us a well-defined status, the resonances we enter into, the system of overcoding that dominates us—we desire all that. "The values, morals, fatherlands, religions and private certitudes our vanity and self-complacency generously grant us are so many abodes the world furnishes for those who think on that account that they stand and rest amid stable things; they know nothing of the enormous rout they are heading for . . . *in flight from flight*."²⁹ We flee from flight, rigidify our segments, give ourselves over to binary logic; the harder they have been to us on one segment, the harder we will be on another; we reterritorialize on anything available; the only segmentarity we know is molar, at the level of the large-scale aggregates we belong to, as well as at the level of the little groups we get into, as well as at the level of what goes on in our most intimate and private recesses. Everything is involved: modes of perception, kinds of actions, ways of moving, life-styles, semiotic regimes. A man comes home and says, "Is the grub ready?", and the wife answers, "What a scowl! Are you in a bad mood?": two rigid segments in confrontation. The more rigid the segmentarity, the more reassuring it is for us. That is what fear is, and how it makes us retreat into the first line.

The second danger, Clarity, seems less obvious. Clarity, in effect, concerns the molecular. Once again, everything is involved, even perception, even the semiotic regime, but this time on the second line. Castaneda illustrates, for example, the existence of a molecular perception to which drugs give us access (but so many things can be drugs): we attain a visual and sonorous micropereception revealing spaces and voids, like holes in the

molar structure. That is precisely what clarity is: the distinctions that appear in what used to seem full, the holes in what used to be compact; and conversely, where just before we saw end points of clear-cut segments, now there are indistinct fringes, encroachments, overlappings, migrations, acts of segmentation that no longer coincide with the rigid segmentarity. Everything now appears supple, with holes in fullness, nebulas in forms, and flutter in lines. Everything has the clarity of the microscope. We think we have understood everything, and draw conclusions. We are the new knights; we even have a mission. A microphysics of the migrant has replaced the macrogeometry of the sedentary. But this suppleness and clarity do not only present dangers, they are themselves a danger. First, supple segmentarity runs the risk of reproducing in miniature the affections, the affectations, of the rigid: the family is replaced by a community, conjugality by a regime of exchange and migration; worse, micro-Oedipuses crop up, microfascisms lay down the law, the mother feels obliged to titillate her child, the father becomes a mommy. A dark light that falls from no star and emanates such sadness: this shifting segmentarity derives directly from the most rigid, for which it is indirect compensation. The more molar the aggregates become, the more molecular become their elements and the relations between their elements: molecular man for molar humanity. One deterritorializes, massifies, but only in order to knot and annul the mass movements and movements of deterritorialization, to invent all kinds of marginal reterritorializations even worse than the others. But above all, supple segmentarity brings dangers of its own that do not merely reproduce in small scale the dangers of molar segmentarity, which do not derive from them or compensate for them. As we have seen, microfascisms have a specificity of their own that can crystallize into a macrofascism, but may also float along the supple line on their own account and suffuse every little cell. A multitude of black holes may very well not become centralized, and acts instead as viruses adapting to the most varied situations, sinking voids in molecular perceptions and semiotics. Interactions without resonance. Instead of the great paranoid fear, we are trapped in a thousand little monomanias, self-evident truths, and clarities that gush from every black hole and no longer form a system, but are only rumble and buzz, blinding lights giving any and everybody the mission of self-appointed judge, dispenser of justice, policeman, neighborhood SS man. We have overcome fear, we have sailed from the shores of security, only to enter a system that is no less concentricized, no less organized: the system of petty insecurities that leads everyone to their own black hole in which to turn dangerous, possessing a clarity on their situation, role, and mission even more disturbing than the certitudes of the first line.

Power (*Pouvoir*) is the third danger, because it is on both lines simultane-

ously. It stretches from the rigid segments with their overcoding and resonance to the fine segmentations with their diffusion and interactions, and back again. Every man of power jumps from one line to the other, alternating between a petty and a lofty style, the rogue's style and the grandiloquent style, drugstore demagoguery and the imperialism of the high-ranking government man. But this whole chain and web of power is immersed in a world of mutant flows that eludes them. It is precisely its impotence that makes power so dangerous. The man of power will always want to stop the lines of flight, and to this end to trap and stabilize the mutation machine in the overcoding machine. But he can do so only by creating a void, in other words, by first stabilizing the overcoding machine itself by containing it within the local assemblage charged with effectuating it, in short, by giving the assemblage the dimensions of the machine. This is what takes place in the artificial conditions of totalitarianism or the "closed vessel."

But there is a fourth danger as well, and this is the one that interests us most, because it concerns the lines of flight themselves. We may well have presented these lines as a sort of mutation or creation drawn not only in the imagination but also in the very fabric of social reality; we may well have attributed to them the movement of the arrow and the speed of an absolute—but it would be oversimplifying to believe that the only risk they fear and confront is allowing themselves to be recaptured in the end, letting themselves be sealed in, tied up, reknotted, reterritorialized. They themselves emanate a strange despair, like an odor of death and immolation, a state of war from which one returns broken: they have their own dangers distinct from the ones previously discussed. This is exactly what led Fitzgerald to say: "I had a feeling that I was standing at twilight on a deserted range, with an empty rifle in my hands and the targets down. No problem set—simply a silence with only the sound of my own breathing. . . . My self-immolation was something sodden-dark."³⁰ Why is the line of flight a war one risks coming back from defeated, destroyed, after having destroyed everything one could? This, precisely, is the fourth danger: the line of flight crossing the wall, getting out of the black holes, but instead of connecting with other lines and each time augmenting its valence, *turning to destruction, abolition pure and simple, the passion of abolition*. Like Kleist's line of flight, and the strange war he wages; like suicide, double suicide, a way out that turns the line of flight into a line of death.

We are not invoking any kind of death drive. There are no internal drives in desire, only assemblages. Desire is always assembled; it is what the assemblage determines it to be. The assemblage that draws lines of flight is on the same level as they are, and is of the war machine type. Mutations spring from this machine, which in no way has war as its object, but rather the emission of quanta of deterritorialization, the passage of mutant

flows (in this sense, every creation is brought about by a war machine). There are many reasons to believe that the war machine is of a different origin, is a different assemblage, than the State apparatus. It is of nomadic origin and is directed against the State apparatus. One of the fundamental problems of the State is to appropriate this war machine that is foreign to it and make it a piece in its apparatus, in the form of a stable military institution; and the State has always encountered major difficulties in this. It is precisely when the war machine has reached the point that it has no other object but war, it is when it substitutes destruction for mutation, that it frees the most catastrophic charge. Mutation is in no way a transformation of war; on the contrary, war is like the fall or failure of mutation, the only object left for the war machine after it has lost its power to change. War, it must be said, is only the abominable residue of the war machine, either after it has allowed itself to be appropriated by the State apparatus, or even worse, has constructed itself a State apparatus capable only of destruction. When this happens, the war machine no longer draws mutant lines of flight, but a pure, cold line of abolition. (Later, we will propose a theory of the complex relation between the war machine and war.)³¹

This brings us back to the paradox of fascism, and the way in which fascism differs from totalitarianism. For totalitarianism is a State affair: it essentially concerns the relation between the State as a localized assemblage and the abstract machine of overcoding it effectuates. Even in the case of a military dictatorship, it is a State army, not a war machine, that takes power and elevates the State to the totalitarian stage. Totalitarianism is quintessentially conservative. Fascism, on the other hand, involves a war machine. When fascism builds itself a totalitarian State, it is not in the sense of a State army taking power, but of a war machine taking over the State. A bizarre remark by Virilio puts us on the trail: in fascism, the State is far less totalitarian than it is *suicidal*. There is in fascism a realized nihilism. Unlike the totalitarian State, which does its utmost to seal all possible lines of flight, fascism is constructed on an intense line of flight, which it transforms into a line of pure destruction and abolition. It is curious that from the very beginning the Nazis announced to Germany what they were bringing: at once wedding bells and death, including their own death, and the death of the Germans. They thought they would perish but that their undertaking would be resumed, all across Europe, all over the world, throughout the solar system. And the people cheered, not because they did not understand, but because they wanted that death through the death of others. Like a will to wager everything you have every hand, to stake your own death against the death of others, and measure everything by "deleometers." Klaus Mann's novel, *Mephisto*, gives samplings of entirely ordinary Nazi speeches and conversations: "Heroism was something that

was being ruled out of our lives. . . . In reality, we are not marching forward, we are reeling, staggering. Our beloved Führer is dragging us toward the shades of darkness and everlasting nothingness. How can we poets, we who have a special affinity for darkness and lower depths, not admire him? . . . Fires blazing on the horizon; rivers of blood in all the streets; and the frenzied dancing of the survivors, of *those who are still spared, around the bodies of the dead!*"³² Suicide is presented not as a punishment but as the crowning glory of the death of others. One can always say that it is just a matter of foggy talk and ideology, nothing but ideology. But that is not true. The insufficiency of economic and political definitions of fascism does not simply imply a need to tack on vague, so-called ideological determinations. We prefer to follow Faye's inquiry into the precise formation of Nazi statements, which are just as much in evidence in politics and economics as in the most absurd of conversations. They always contain the "stupid and repugnant" cry, *Long live death!*, even at the economic level, where the arms expansion replaces growth in consumption and where investment veers from the means of production toward the means of pure destruction. Paul Virilio's analysis strikes us as entirely correct in defining fascism not by the notion of the totalitarian State but by the notion of the suicidal State: so-called total war seems less a State undertaking than an undertaking of a war machine that appropriates the State and channels into it a flow of absolute war whose only possible outcome is the suicide of the State itself. "The triggering of a hitherto unknown material process, one that is limitless and aimless. . . . Once triggered, its mechanism cannot stop at peace, for the indirect strategy effectively places the dominant powers outside the usual categories of space and time. . . . It was in the horror of daily life and its environment that Hitler finally found his surest means of governing, the legitimization of his policies and military strategy; and it lasted right up to the end, for the ruins and horrors and crimes and chaos of total war, far from discharging the repulsive nature of its power, normally only increase its scope. Telegram 71 is the normal outcome: *If the war is lost, may the nation perish.* Here, Hitler decides to join forces with his enemies in order to complete the destruction of his own people, by obliterating the last remaining resources of its life-support system, civil reserves of every kind (potable water, fuel, provisions, etc.)."³³ It was this reversion of the line of flight into a line of destruction that already animated the molecular focuses of fascism, and made them interact in a war machine instead of resonating in a State apparatus. *A war machine that no longer had anything but war as its object* and would rather annihilate its own servants than stop the destruction. All the dangers of the other lines pale by comparison.

10. 1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible . . .



Memories of a Moviegoer. I recall the fine film *Willard* (1972, Daniel Mann). A “B” movie perhaps, but a fine unpopular film: unpopular because the heroes are rats. My memory of it is not necessarily accurate. I will recount the story in broad outline. Willard lives with his authoritarian mother in the old family house. Dreadful Oedipal atmosphere. His mother orders him to destroy a litter of rats. He spares one (or two or several). After a violent argument, the mother, who “resembles” a dog, dies. The house is coveted by a businessman, and Willard is in danger of losing it. He likes the principal rat he saved, Ben, who proves to be of prodigious intelligence. There is also a white female rat, Ben’s companion. Willard spends all his free time with them. They multiply. Willard takes the rat pack, led by Ben, to the home of the businessman, who is put to a terrible death. But he foolishly takes his two favorites to the office with him and has no choice but to let the employees kill the white rat. Ben escapes, after throwing Willard a long, hard glare. Willard then experiences a pause in his destiny, in his *becoming-rat*. He tries with all his might to remain among humans. He even responds to the advances of a young woman in the office who bears a strong “resemblance” to a rat—but it is only a resemblance. One day when he has invited the young woman over, all set to be conjugalized, reoedipalized, Ben suddenly reappears, full of hate. Willard tries to drive him away, but succeeds only in driving away the young woman: he then is lured to the basement by Ben, where a pack of countless rats is waiting to tear him to shreds. It is like a tale; it is never disturbing.

It is all there: there is a becoming-animal not content to proceed by resemblance and for which resemblance, on the contrary, would represent an obstacle or stoppage; the proliferation of rats, the pack, brings a becoming-molecular that undermines the great molar powers of family, career, and conjugality; there is a sinister choice since there is a “favorite” in the pack with which a kind of contract of alliance, a hideous pact, is made; there is the institution of an assemblage, a war machine or criminal machine, which can reach the point of self-destruction; there is a circulation of impersonal affects, an alternate current that disrupts signifying projects as well as subjective feelings, and constitutes a nonhuman sexuality; and there is an irresistible deterritorialization that forestalls attempts at professional, conjugal, or Oedipal reterritorialization. (Are there Oedipal animals with which one can “play Oedipus,” play family, my little dog, my little cat, and then other animals that by contrast draw us into an irresistible becoming? Or another hypothesis: Can the same animal be taken up by two opposing functions and movements, depending on the case?)

Memories of a Naturalist. One of the main problems of natural history was to conceptualize the relationships between animals. It is very different

in this respect from later evolutionism, which defined itself in terms of genealogy, kinship, descent, and filiation. As we know, evolutionism would arrive at the idea of an evolution that does not necessarily operate by filiation. But it was unavoidable that it begin with the genealogical motif. Darwin himself treats the evolutionist theme of kinship and the naturalist theme of the sum and value of differences or resemblances as very separate things: groups that are equally related can display highly variable degrees of difference with respect to the ancestor. Precisely because natural history is concerned primarily with the sum and value of differences, it can conceive of progressions and regressions, continuities and major breaks, but not an evolution in the strict sense, in other words, the possibility of a descent the *degrees* of modification of which depend on external conditions. Natural history can think only in terms of relationships (between A and B), not in terms of production (from A to x).

But something very important transpires at the level of relationships. For natural history conceives of the relationships between animals in two ways: series and structure. In the case of a series, I say *a* resembles *b*, *b* resembles *c*, etc.; all of these terms conform in varying degrees to a single, eminent term, perfection, or quality as the principle behind the series. This is exactly what the theologians used to call an analogy of proportion. In the case of a structure, I say *a* is to *b* as *c* is to *d*; and each of these relationships realizes after its fashion the perfection under consideration: gills are to breathing under water as lungs are to breathing air; or the heart is to gills as the absence of a heart is to tracheas [in insects] . . . This is an analogy of proportionality. In the first case, I have resemblances that differ from one another in a single series, and between series. In the second case, I have differences that resemble each other within a single structure, and between structures. The first form of analogy passes for the most sensible and popular, and requires imagination; but the kind of imagination it requires is a studious one that has to take branchings in the series into account, fill in apparent ruptures, ward off false resemblances and graduate the true ones, and take both progressions and regressions or degradations into account. The second form of analogy is considered royal because it requires instead all the resources of understanding (*entendement*), in order to define equivalent relations by discovering, on the one hand, the independent variables that can be combined to form a structure and, on the other hand, the correlates that entail one another within each structure. As different as they are, the two themes of series and structure have always coexisted in natural history; in appearance contradictory, in practice they have reached a more or less stable compromise.¹ In the same way, the two figures of analogy coexisted in the minds of the theologians in various equilibriums. This is because in both cases Nature is conceived as an enormous *mimesis*: either

in the form of a chain of beings perpetually imitating one another, progressively and regressively, and tending toward the divine higher term they all imitate by graduated resemblance, as the model for and principle behind the series; or in the form of a mirror Imitation with nothing left to imitate because it itself is the model everything else imitates, this time by ordered difference. (This mimetic or mimological vision is what made the idea of an evolution-production possible at that moment.)

This problem is in no way behind us. Ideas do not die. Not that they survive simply as archaisms. At a given moment they may reach a scientific stage, and then lose that status or emigrate to other sciences. Their application and status, even their form and content, may change; yet they retain something essential throughout the process, across the displacement, in the distribution of a new domain. Ideas are always reusable, because they have been usable before, but in the most varied of actual modes. For, on the one hand, the relationships between animals are the object not only of science but also of dreams, symbolism, art and poetry, practice and practical use. And on the other hand, the relationships between animals are bound up with the relations between man and animal, man and woman, man and child, man and the elements, man and the physical and microphysical universe. The twofold idea "series-structure" crosses a scientific threshold at a certain moment; but it did not start there and it does not stay there, or else crosses over into other sciences, animating, for example, the human sciences, serving in the study of dreams, myths, and organizations. The history of ideas should never be continuous; it should be wary of resemblances, but also of descents or filiations; it should be content to mark the thresholds through which an idea passes, the journeys it takes that change its nature or object. Yet the objective relationships between animals have been applied to certain subjective relations between man and animal, from the standpoint of a collective imagination or a faculty of social understanding.

Jung elaborated a theory of the Archetype as collective unconscious; it assigns the animal a particularly important role in dreams, myths, and human collectivities. The animal is inseparable from a *series* exhibiting the double aspect of progression-regression, in which each term plays the role of a possible transformer of the libido (metamorphosis). A whole approach to the dream follows from this; given a troubling image, it becomes a question of integrating it into its archetypal series. That series may include feminine, masculine, or infantile sequences, as well as animal, vegetable, even elementary or molecular sequences. In contrast to natural history, man is now no longer the eminent term of the series; that term may be an animal for man, the lion, crab, bird of prey, or louse, in relation to a given act or function, in accordance with a given demand of the unconscious.

Bachelard wrote a fine Jungian book when he elaborated the ramified series of Lautréamont, taking into account the speed coefficient of the metamorphoses and the degree of perfection of each term in relation to a pure aggressiveness as the principle of the series: the serpent's fang, the horn of the rhinoceros, the dog's tooth, the owl's beak; and higher up, the claw of the eagle or the vulture, the pincer of the crab, the legs of the louse, the suckers of the octopus. Throughout Jung's work a process of mimesis brings nature and culture together in its net, by means of analogies of proportion in which the series and their terms, and above all the animals occupying a middle position, assure cycles of conversion nature-culture-nature: archetypes as "analogical representations."²

Is it by chance that structuralism so strongly denounced the prestige accorded the imagination, the establishment of resemblances in a series, the imitation pervading the entire series and carrying it to its term, and the identification with this final term? Nothing is more explicit than Lévi-Strauss's famous texts on totemism: transcend external resemblances to arrive at *internal homologies*.³ It is no longer a question of instituting a serial organization of the imaginary, but instead a symbolic and structural order of understanding. It is no longer a question of graduating resemblances, ultimately arriving at an identification between Man and Animal at the heart of a mystical participation. It is a question of ordering differences to arrive at a correspondence of relations. The animal is distributed according to differential relations or distinctive oppositions between species; the same goes for human beings, according to the groups considered. When analyzing the institution of the totem, we do not say that this group of people identifies with that animal species. We say that what group A is to group B, species A' is to species B'. This method is profoundly different from the preceding one: given two human groups, each with its totem animal, we must discover the way in which the two totems entertain relations analogous to those between the two groups—the Crow is to the Falcon . . .

The method also applies to Man-child, man-woman relations, etc. If we note, for example, that the warrior has a certain astonishing relation to the young woman, we refrain from establishing an imaginary series tying the two together; instead, we look for a term effecting an equivalence of relations. Thus Vernant can say that marriage is to the woman what war is to the man. The result is a homology between the virgin who refuses marriage and the warrior who disguises himself as a woman.⁴ In short, symbolic understanding replaces the analogy of proportion with an analogy of proportionality; the serialization of resemblances with a structuration of differences; the identification of terms with an equality of relations; the metamorphoses of the imagination with conceptual metaphors; the great

continuity between nature and culture with a deep rift distributing correspondences without resemblance between the two; the imitation of a primal model with a mimesis that is itself primary and without a model. A man can never say: "I am a bull, a wolf . . ." But he can say: "I am to a woman what the bull is to a cow, I am to another man what the wolf is to the sheep." Structuralism represents a great revolution; the whole world becomes more rational. Lévi-Strauss is not content to grant the structural model all the prestige of a true classification system; he relegates the serial model to the dark domain of sacrifice, which he depicts as illusory, even devoid of good sense. The *serial theme of sacrifice* must yield to the *structural theme of the institution of the totem*, correctly understood. But here, as in natural history, many compromises are reached between archetypal series and symbolic structures.⁵

Memories of a Bergsonian. None of the preceding satisfies us, from our restricted viewpoint. We believe in the existence of very special becomings-animal traversing human beings and sweeping them away, affecting the animal no less than the human. "From 1730 to 1735, all we hear about are vampires." Structuralism clearly does not account for these becomings, since it is designed precisely to deny or at least denigrate their existence: a correspondence of relations does not add up to a becoming. When structuralism encounters becomings of this kind pervading a society, it sees them only as phenomena of degradation representing a deviation from the true order and pertaining to the adventures of diachrony. Yet in his study of myths, Lévi-Strauss is always encountering these rapid acts by which a human becomes animal at the same time as the animal becomes . . . (Becomes what? Human, or something else?). It is always possible to try to explain these *blocks of becoming* by a correspondence between two relations, but to do so most certainly impoverishes the phenomenon under study. Must it not be admitted that myth as a frame of classification is quite incapable of registering these becomings, which are more like fragments of tales? Must we not lend credence to Jean Duvignaud's hypothesis that there are "anomic" phenomena pervading societies that are not degradations of the mythic order but irreducible dynamisms drawing lines of flight and implying other forms of expression than those of myth, even if myth recapitulates them in its own terms in order to curb them?⁶ Does it not seem that alongside the two models, sacrifice and series, totem institution and structure, there is still room for something else, something more secret, more subterranean: *the sorcerer* and becomings (expressed in tales instead of myths or rites)?

A becoming is not a correspondence between relations. But neither is it a resemblance, an imitation, or, at the limit, an identification. The whole

structuralist critique of the series seems irrefutable. To become is not to progress or regress along a series. Above all, becoming does not occur in the imagination, even when the imagination reaches the highest cosmic or dynamic level, as in Jung or Bachelard. Becomings-animal are neither dreams nor fantasies. They are perfectly real. But which reality is at issue here? For if becoming animal does not consist in playing animal or imitating an animal, it is clear that the human being does not “really” become an animal any more than the animal “really” becomes something else. Becoming produces nothing other than itself. We fall into a false alternative if we say that you either imitate or you are. What is real is the becoming itself, the block of becoming, not the supposedly fixed terms through which that which becomes passes. Becoming can and should be qualified as becoming-animal even in the absence of a term that would be the animal become. The becoming-animal of the human being is real, even if the animal the human being becomes is not; and the becoming-other of the animal is real, even if that something other it becomes is not. This is the point to clarify: that a becoming lacks a subject distinct from itself; but also that it has no term, since its term in turn exists only as taken up in another becoming of which it is the subject, and which coexists, forms a block, with the first. This is the principle according to which there is a reality specific to becoming (the Bergsonian idea of a coexistence of very different “durations,” superior or inferior to “ours,” all of them in communication).

Finally, becoming is not an evolution, at least not an evolution by descent and filiation. Becoming produces nothing by filiation; all filiation is imaginary. Becoming is always of a different order than filiation. It concerns alliance. If evolution includes any veritable becomings, it is in the domain of *symbioses* that bring into play beings of totally different scales and kingdoms, with no possible filiation. There is a block of becoming that snaps up the wasp and the orchid, but from which no wasp-orchid can ever descend. There is a block of becoming that takes hold of the cat and baboon, the alliance between which is effected by a C virus. There is a block of becoming between young roots and certain microorganisms, the alliance between which is effected by the materials synthesized in the leaves (rhizosphere). If there is originality in neoevolutionism, it is attributable in part to phenomena of this kind in which evolution does not go from something less differentiated to something more differentiated, in which it ceases to be a hereditary filiative evolution, becoming communicative or contagious. Accordingly, the term we would prefer for this form of evolution between heterogeneous terms is “involution,” on the condition that involution is in no way confused with regression. Becoming is involutionary, involution is creative. To regress is to move in the direction of

something less differentiated. But to involve is to form a block that runs its own line "between" the terms in play and beneath assignable relations.

Neoevolutionism seems important for two reasons: the animal is defined not by characteristics (specific, generic, etc.) but by populations that vary from milieu to milieu or within the same milieu; movement occurs not only, or not primarily, by filiative productions but also by transversal communications between heterogeneous populations. Becoming is a rhizome, not a classificatory or genealogical tree. Becoming is certainly not imitating, or identifying with something; neither is it regressing-progressing; neither is it corresponding, establishing corresponding relations; neither is it producing, producing a filiation or producing through filiation. Becoming is a verb with a consistency all its own; it does not reduce to, or lead back to, "appearing," "being," "equaling," or "producing."

Memories of a Sorcerer, I. A becoming-animal always involves a pack, a band, a population, a peopling, in short, a multiplicity. We sorcerers have always known that. It may very well be that other agencies, moreover very different from one another, have a different appraisal of the animal. One may retain or extract from the animal certain characteristics: species and genera, forms and functions, etc. Society and the State need animal characteristics to use for classifying people; natural history and science need characteristics in order to classify the animals themselves. Serialism and structuralism either graduate characteristics according to their resemblances, or order them according to their differences. Animal characteristics can be mythic or scientific. But we are not interested in characteristics; what interests us are modes of expansion, propagation, occupation, contagion, peopling. I am legion. The Wolf-Man fascinated by several wolves watching him. What would a lone wolf be? Or a whale, a louse, a rat, a fly? Beelzebub is the Devil, but the Devil as lord of the flies. The wolf is not fundamentally a characteristic or a certain number of characteristics; it is a wolfig. The louse is a lousing, and so on. What is a cry independent of the population it appeals to or takes as its witness? Virginia Woolfs experiences herself not as a monkey or a fish but as a troop of monkeys, a school of fish, according to her variable relations of becoming with the people she approaches. We do not wish to say that certain animals live in packs. We want nothing to do with ridiculous evolutionary classifications à la Lorenz, according to which there are inferior packs and superior societies. What we are saying is that every animal is fundamentally a band, a pack. That it has pack modes, rather than characteristics, even if further distinctions within these modes are called for. It is at this point that the human being encounters the animal. We do not become animal without a fascination for the

pack, for multiplicity. A fascination for the outside? Or is the multiplicity that fascinates us already related to a multiplicity dwelling within us? In one of his masterpieces, H. P. Lovecraft recounts the story of Randolph Carter, who feels his “self” reel and who experiences a fear worse than that of annihilation: “Carters of forms both human and non-human, vertebrate and invertebrate, conscious and mindless, animal and vegetable. And more, there were Carters having nothing in common with earthly life, but moving outrageously amidst backgrounds of other planets and systems and galaxies and cosmic continua. . . . Merging with nothingness is peaceful oblivion; but to be aware of existence and yet to know that one is no longer a definite being distinguished from other beings,” nor from all of the becomings running through us, “that is the nameless summit of agony and dread.”⁷ Hofmannsthal, or rather Lord Chandos, becomes fascinated with a “people” of dying rats, and it is in him, through him, in the interstices of his disrupted self that the “soul of the animal bares its teeth at monstrous fate”:⁸ not pity, but *unnatural participation*. Then a strange imperative wells up in him: either stop writing, or write like a rat . . . If the writer is a sorcerer, it is because writing is a becoming, writing is traversed by strange becomings that are not becomings-writer, but becomings-rat, becomings-insect, becomings-wolf, etc. We will have to explain why. Many suicides by writers are explained by these unnatural participations, these unnatural nuptials. Writers are sorcerers because they experience the animal as the only population before which they are responsible in principle. The German preromantic Karl Philipp Moritz feels responsible not for the calves that die but before the calves that die and give him the incredible feeling of an unknown Nature—*affect*.⁹ For the affect is not a personal feeling, nor is it a characteristic; it is the effectuation of a power of the pack that throws the self into upheaval and makes it reel. Who has not known the violence of these animal sequences, which uproot one from humanity, if only for an instant, making one scrape at one’s bread like a rodent or giving one the yellow eyes of a feline? A fearsome involution calling us toward unheard-of becomings. These are not regressions, although fragments of regression, sequences of regression may enter in.

We must distinguish three kinds of animals. First, individuated animals, family pets, sentimental, Oedipal animals each with its own petty history, “my” cat, “my” dog. These animals invite us to regress, draw us into a narcissistic contemplation, and they are the only kind of animal psychoanalysis understands, the better to discover a daddy, a mommy, a little brother behind them (when psychoanalysis talks about animals, animals learn to laugh): *anyone who likes cats or dogs is a fool*. And then there is a second kind: animals with characteristics or attributes; genus, classification, or State animals; animals as they are treated in the great divine myths,

in such a way as to extract from them series or structures, archetypes or models (Jung is in any event profounder than Freud). Finally, there are more demonic animals, pack or affect animals that form a multiplicity, a becoming, a population, a tale . . . Or once again, cannot any animal be treated in all three ways? There is always the possibility that a given animal, a louse, a cheetah or an elephant, will be treated as a pet, my little beast. And at the other extreme, it is also possible for any animal to be treated in the mode of the pack or swarm; that is our way, fellow sorcerers. Even the cat, even the dog. And the shepherd, the animal trainer, the Devil, may have a favorite animal in the pack, although not at all in the way we were just discussing. Yes, any animal is or can be a pack, but to varying degrees of vocation that make it easier or harder to discover the multiplicity, or multiplicity-grade, an animal contains (actually or virtually according to the case). Schools, bands, herds, populations are not inferior social forms; they are affects and powers, involutions that grip every animal in a becoming just as powerful as that of the human being with the animal.

Jorge Luis Borges, an author renowned for his excess of culture, botched at least two books, only the titles of which are nice: first, *A Universal History of Infamy*, because he did not see the sorcerer's fundamental distinction between deception and treason (becomings-animal are there from the start, on the treason side); second, his *Manual de zoología fantástica*, where he not only adopts a composite and bland image of myth but also eliminates all of the problems of the pack and the corresponding becoming-animal of the human being: "We have deliberately excluded from this manual legends of transformations of the human being, the *lobizón*, the werewolf, etc."¹⁰ Borges is interested only in characteristics, even the most fantastic ones, whereas sorcerers know that werewolves are bands, and vampires too, and that bands transform themselves into one another. But what exactly does that mean, the animal as band or pack? Does a band not imply a filiation, bringing us back to the reproduction of given characteristics? How can we conceive of a peopling, a propagation, a becoming that is without filiation or hereditary production? A multiplicity without the unity of an ancestor? It is quite simple; everybody knows it, but it is discussed only in secret. We oppose epidemic to filiation, contagion to heredity, peopling by contagion to sexual reproduction, sexual production. Bands, human or animal, proliferate by contagion, epidemics, battlefields, and catastrophes. Like hybrids, which are in themselves sterile, born of a sexual union that will not reproduce itself, but which begins over again every time, gaining that much more ground. Unnatural participations or nuptials are the true Nature spanning the kingdoms of nature. Propagation by epidemic, by contagion, has nothing to do with filiation by heredity, even if the two themes intermingle and require each other. The vampire

does not filiate, it infects. The difference is that contagion, epidemic, involves terms that are entirely heterogeneous: for example, a human being, an animal, and a bacterium, a virus, a molecule, a microorganism. Or in the case of the truffle, a tree, a fly, and a pig. These combinations are neither genetic nor structural; they are interkingdoms, unnatural participations. That is the only way Nature operates—against itself. This is a far cry from filiative production or hereditary reproduction, in which the only differences retained are a simple duality between sexes within the same species, and small modifications across generations. For us, on the other hand, there are as many sexes as there are terms in symbiosis, as many differences as elements contributing to a process of contagion. We know that many beings pass between a man and a woman; they come from different worlds, are borne on the wind, form rhizomes around roots; they cannot be understood in terms of production, only in terms of becoming. The Universe does not function by filiation. All we are saying is that animals are packs, and that packs form, develop, and are transformed by contagion.

These multiplicities with heterogeneous terms, cofunctioning by contagion, enter certain *assemblages*; it is there that human beings effect their becomings-animal. But we should not confuse these dark assemblages, which stir what is deepest within us, with organizations such as the institution of the family and the State apparatus. We could cite hunting societies, war societies, secret societies, crime societies, etc. Becomings-animal are proper to them. We will not expect to find filiative regimes of the family type or modes of classification and attribution of the State or pre-State type or even serial organizations of the religious type. Despite appearances and possible confusions, this is not the site of origin or point of application for myths. These are tales, or narratives and statements of becoming. It is therefore absurd to establish a hierarchy even of animal collectivities from the standpoint of a whimsical evolutionism according to which packs are lower on the scale and are superseded by State or familial societies. On the contrary, there is a difference in nature. The origin of packs is entirely different from that of families and States; they continually work them from within and trouble them from without, with other forms of content, other forms of expression. The pack is simultaneously an animal reality, and the reality of the becoming-animal of the human being; contagion is simultaneously an animal peopling, and the propagation of the animal peopling of the human being. The hunting machine, the war machine, the crime machine entail all kinds of becomings-animal that are not articulated in myth, *still less in totemism*. Dumézil showed that becomings of this kind pertain essentially to the man of war, but only insofar as he is external to families and States, insofar as he upsets filiations and classifications. The war machine is always exterior to the State, even when the State uses it,

appropriates it. The man of war has an entire becoming that implies multiplicity, celerity, ubiquity, metamorphosis and treason, the power of affect. Wolf-men, bear-men, wildcat-men, men of every animality, secret brotherhoods, animate the battlefields. But so do the animal packs used by men in battle, or which trail the battles and take advantage of them. And together they spread contagion.¹¹ There is a complex aggregate: the becoming-animal of men, packs of animals, elephants and rats, winds and tempests, bacteria sowing contagion. A single *Furor*. War contained zoological sequences before it became bacteriological. It is in war, famine, and epidemic that werewolves and vampires proliferate. Any animal can be swept up in these packs and the corresponding becomings; cats have been seen on the battlefield, and even in armies. That is why the distinction we must make is less between kinds of animals than between the different states according to which they are integrated into family institutions, State apparatuses, war machines, etc. (and what is the relation of the writing machine and the musical machine to becomings-animal?)

Memories of a Sorcerer, II. Our first principle was: pack and contagion, the contagion of the pack, such is the path becoming-animal takes. But a second principle seemed to tell us the opposite: wherever there is multiplicity, you will also find an exceptional individual, and it is with that individual that an alliance must be made in order to become-animal. There may be no such thing as a lone wolf, but there is a leader of the pack, a master of the pack, or else the old deposed head of the pack now living alone, there is the Loner, and there is the Demon. Willard has his favorite, the rat Ben, and only becomes-rat through his relation with him, in a kind of alliance of love, then of hate. *Moby-Dick* in its entirety is one of the greatest masterpieces of becoming; Captain Ahab has an irresistible becoming-whale, but one that bypasses the pack or the school, operating directly through a monstrous alliance with the Unique, the Leviathan, Moby-Dick. There is always a pact with a demon; the demon sometimes appears as the head of the band, sometimes as the Loner on the sidelines of the pack, and sometimes as the higher Power (*Puissance*) of the band. The exceptional individual has many possible positions. Kafka, another great author of real becomings-animal, sings of mouse society; but Josephine, the mouse singer, sometimes holds a privileged position in the pack, sometimes a position outside the pack, and sometimes slips into and is lost in the anonymity of the collective statements of the pack.¹² In short, every Animal has its Anomalous. Let us clarify that: every animal swept up in its pack or multiplicity has its anomalous. It has been noted that the origin of the word *anomal* ("anomalous"), an adjective that has fallen into disuse in French, is very different from that of *anormal* ("abnormal"): *a-normal*, a Latin

adjective lacking a noun in French, refers to that which is outside rules or goes against the rules, whereas *anomalie*, a Greek noun that has lost its adjective, designates the unequal, the coarse, the rough, the cutting edge of deterritorialization.¹³ The abnormal can be defined only in terms of characteristics, specific or generic; but the anomalous is a position or set of positions in relation to a multiplicity. Sorcerers therefore use the old adjective “anomalous” to situate the positions of the exceptional individual in the pack. It is always with the Anomalous, Moby-Dick or Josephine, that one enters into alliance to become-animal.

It does seem as though there is a contradiction: between the pack and the loner; between mass contagion and preferential alliance; between pure multiplicity and the exceptional individual; between the aleatory aggregate and a predestined choice. And the contradiction is real: Ahab chooses Moby-Dick, in a choosing that exceeds him and comes from elsewhere, and in so doing breaks with the law of the whalers according to which one should first pursue the pack. Penthesilea shatters the law of the pack, the pack of women, the pack of she-dogs, by choosing Achilles as her favorite enemy. Yet it is by means of this anomalous choice that each enters into his or her becoming-animal, the becoming-dog of Penthesilea, the becoming-whale of Captain Ahab. We sorcerers know quite well that the contradictions are real but that real contradictions are not just for laughs. For the whole question is this: What exactly is the nature of the anomalous? What function does it have in relation to the band, to the pack? It is clear that the anomalous is not simply an exceptional individual; that would be to equate it with the family animal or pet, the Oedipalized animal as psychoanalysis sees it, as the image of the father, etc. Ahab’s Moby-Dick is not like the little cat or dog owned by an elderly woman who honors and cherishes it. Lawrence’s becoming-tortoise has nothing to do with a sentimental or domestic relation. Lawrence is another of the writers who leave us troubled and filled with admiration because they were able to tie their writing to real and unheard-of becomings. But the objection is raised against Lawrence: “Your tortoises aren’t real!” And he answers: Possibly, but my becoming is, my becoming is real, even and especially if you have no way of judging it, because you’re just little house dogs . . .¹⁴ The anomalous, the preferential element in the pack, has nothing to do with the preferred, domestic, and psychoanalytic individual. Nor is the anomalous the bearer of a species presenting specific or generic characteristics in their purest state; nor is it a model or unique specimen; nor is it the perfection of a type incarnate; nor is it the eminent term of a series; nor is it the basis of an absolutely harmonious correspondence. The anomalous is neither an individual nor a species; it has only affects, it has neither familiar or subjectified feelings, nor specific or significant characteristics. Human tenderness is as foreign to it

as human classifications. Lovecraft applies the term “Outsider” to this thing or entity, the Thing, which arrives and passes at the edge, which is linear yet multiple, “teeming, seething, swelling, foaming, spreading like an infectious disease, this nameless horror.”

If the anomalous is neither an individual nor a species, then what is it? It is a phenomenon, but a phenomenon of bordering. This is our hypothesis: a multiplicity is defined not by the elements that compose it in extension, not by the characteristics that compose it in comprehension, but by the lines and dimensions it encompasses in “intension.” If you change dimensions, if you add or subtract one, you change multiplicity. Thus there is a borderline for each multiplicity; it is in no way a center but rather the enveloping line or farthest dimension, as a function of which it is possible to count the others, all those lines or dimensions constitute the pack at a given moment (beyond the borderline, the multiplicity changes nature). That is what Captain Ahab says to his first mate: I have no personal history with Moby-Dick, no revenge to take, any more than I have a myth to play out; but I do have a becoming! Moby-Dick is neither an individual nor a genus; he is the borderline, and I have to strike him to get at the pack as a whole, to reach the pack as a whole and pass beyond it. The elements of the pack are only imaginary “dummies,” the characteristics of the pack are only symbolic entities; all that counts is the borderline—the anomalous. “To me, the white whale is that wall, shoved near to me.” The white wall. “Sometimes I think there is naught beyond. But ‘tis enough.”¹⁵ That the anomalous is the borderline makes it easier for us to understand the various positions it occupies in relation to the pack or the multiplicity it borders, and the various positions occupied by a fascinated Self (*Moi*). It is now even possible to establish a classification system for packs while avoiding the pitfalls of an evolutionism that sees them only as an inferior collective stage (instead of taking into consideration the particular assemblages they bring into play). In any event, the pack has a borderline, and an anomalous position, whenever in a given space an animal is on the line or in the act of drawing the line in relation to which all the other members of the pack will fall into one of two halves, left or right: a peripheral position, such that it is impossible to tell if the anomalous is still in the band, already outside the band, or at the shifting boundary of the band. Sometimes each and every animal reaches this line or occupies this dynamic position, as in a swarm of mosquitoes, where “each individual moves randomly unless it sees the rest of [the swarm] in the same half-space; then it hurries to re-enter the group. Thus stability is assured in catastrophe by a *barrier*.¹⁶ Sometimes it is a specific animal that draws and occupies the borderline, as leader of the pack. Sometimes the borderline is defined or doubled by a being of another nature that no longer belongs to the pack, or never belonged to it, and that

represents a power of another order, potentially acting as a threat as well as a trainer, outsider, etc. In any case, no band is without this phenomenon of bordering, or the anomalous. It is true that bands are also undermined by extremely varied forces that establish in them interior centers of the conjugal, familial, or State type, and that make them pass into an entirely different form of sociability, replacing pack affects with family feelings or State intelligibilities. The center, or internal black holes, assumes the principal role. This is what evolutionism sees as progress, this adventure also befalls bands of humans when they reconstitute group familialism, or even authoritarianism or pack fascism.

Sorcerers have always held the anomalous position, at the edge of the fields or woods. They haunt the fringes. They are at the borderline of the village, or *between* villages. The important thing is their affinity with alliance, with the pact, which gives them a status opposed to that of filiation. The relation with the anomalous is one of alliance. The sorcerer has a relation of alliance with the demon as the power of the anomalous. The old-time theologians drew a clear distinction between two kinds of curses against sexuality. The first concerns sexuality as a process of filiation transmitting the original sin. But the second concerns it as a power of alliance inspiring illicit unions or abominable loves. This differs significantly from the first in that it tends to prevent procreation; since the demon does not himself have the ability to procreate, he must adopt indirect means (for example, being the female succubus of a man and then becoming the male incubus of a woman, to whom he transmits the man's semen). It is true that the relations between alliance and filiation come to be regulated by laws of marriage, but even then alliance retains a dangerous and contagious power. Leach was able to demonstrate that despite all the exceptions that seemingly disprove the rule, the sorcerer belongs first of all to a group united to the group over which he or she exercises influence only by alliance: thus in a matrilineal group we look to the father's side for the sorcerer or witch. And there is an entire evolution of sorcery depending on whether the relation of alliance acquires permanence or assumes political weight.¹⁷ In order to produce werewolves in your own family it is not enough to resemble a wolf, or to live like a wolf: the pact with the Devil must be coupled with an alliance with another family, and it is the return of this alliance to the first family, the reaction of this alliance on the first family, that produces werewolves by feedback effect. A fine tale by Erckmann and Chatrian, *Hugues-le-loup*, assembles the traditions concerning this complex situation.¹⁸

The contradiction between the two themes, "contagion through the animal as pack," and "pact with the anomalous as exceptional being," is progressively fading. It is with good reason that Leach links the two concepts of

alliance and contagion, pact and epidemic. Analyzing Kachin sorcery, he writes: "Witch influence was thought to be transmitted in the food that the women prepared. . . . Kachin witchcraft is contagious rather than hereditary . . . it is associated with affinity, not filiation."¹⁹ Alliance or the pact is the form of expression for an infection or epidemic constituting the form of content. In sorcery, blood is of the order of contagion and alliance. It can be said that becoming-animal is an affair of sorcery because (1) it implies an initial relation of alliance with a demon; (2) the demon functions as the borderline of an animal pack, into which the human being passes or in which his or her becoming takes place, by contagion; (3) this becoming itself implies a second alliance, with another human group; (4) this new borderline between the two groups guides the contagion of animal and human being within the pack. There is an entire politics of becomings-animal, as well as a politics of sorcery, which is elaborated in assemblages that are neither those of the family nor of religion nor of the State. Instead, they express minoritarian groups, or groups that are oppressed, prohibited, in revolt, or always on the fringe of recognized institutions, groups all the more secret for being extrinsic, in other words, anomie. If becoming-animal takes the form of a Temptation, and of monsters aroused in the imagination by the demon, it is because it is accompanied, at its origin as in its undertaking, by a rupture with the central institutions that have established themselves or seek to become established.

Let us cite pell-mell, not as mixes to be made, but as different cases to be studied: becomings-animal in the war machine, wildmen of all kinds (the war machine indeed comes from without, it is extrinsic to the State, which treats the warrior as an anomalous power); becomings-animal in crime societies, leopard-men, crocodile-men (when the State prohibits tribal and local wars); becomings-animal in riot groups (when the Church and State are faced with peasant movements containing a sorcery component, which they repress by setting up a whole trial and legal system designed to expose pacts with the Devil); becomings-animal in asceticism groups, the grazing anchorite or wild-beast anchorite (the asceticism machine is in an anomalous position, on a line of flight, off to the side of the Church, and disputes the Church's pretension to set itself up as an imperial institution);²⁰ becomings-animal in societies practicing sexual initiation of the "sacred deflowerer" type, wolf-men, goat-men, etc. (who claim an Alliance superior and exterior to the order of families; families have to win from them the right to regulate their own alliances, to determine them according to relations of complementary lines of descent, and to domesticate this unbridled power of alliance).²¹

The politics of becomings-animal remains, of course, extremely ambiguous. For societies, even primitive societies, have always appropriated

these becomings in order to break them, reduce them to relations of totemic or symbolic correspondence. States have always appropriated the war machine in the form of national armies that strictly limit the becomings of the warrior. The Church has always burned sorcerers, or reintegrated anchorites into the toned-down image of a series of saints whose only remaining relation to animals is strangely familiar, domestic. Families have always warded off the demonic Alliance gnawing at them, in order to regulate alliances among themselves as they see fit. We have seen sorcerers serve as leaders, rally to the cause of despotism, create the countersorcery of exorcism, pass over to the side of the family and descent. But this spells the death of the sorcerer, and also the death of becoming. We have seen becoming spawn nothing more than a big domestic dog, as in Henry Miller's damnation ("it would be better to feign, to pretend to be an animal, a dog for example, and catch the bone thrown to me from time to time") or Fitzgerald's ("I will try to be a correct animal though, and if you throw me a bone with enough meat on it I may even lick your hand"). Invert Faust's formula: So that is what it was, the form of the traveling scholar? A mere poodle?²²

Memories of a Sorcerer, III. Exclusive importance should not be attached to becomings-animal. Rather, they are segments occupying a median region. On the near side, we encounter becomings-woman, becomings-child (becoming-woman, more than any other becoming, possesses a special introductory power; it is not so much that women are witches, but that sorcery proceeds by way of this becoming-woman). On the far side, we find becomings-elementary, -cellular, -molecular, and even becomings-imperceptible. Toward what void does the witch's broom lead? And where is Moby-Dick leading Ahab so silently? Lovecraft's hero encounters strange animals, but he finally reaches the ultimate regions of a Continuum inhabited by unnameable waves and unfindable particles. Science fiction has gone through a whole evolution taking it from animal, vegetable, and mineral becomings to becomings of bacteria, viruses, molecules, and things imperceptible.²³ The properly musical content of music is plied by becomings-woman, becomings-child, becomings-animal; however, it tends, under all sorts of influences, having to do also with the instruments, to become progressively more molecular in a kind of cosmic lapping through which the inaudible makes itself heard and the imperceptible appears as such: no longer the songbird, but the sound molecule.

If the experimentation with drugs has left its mark on everyone, even nonusers, it is because it changed the perceptive coordinates of space-time and introduced us to a universe of microperceptions in which becomings-molecular take over where becomings-animal leave off. Carlos Castaneda's

books clearly illustrate this evolution, or rather this involution, in which the affects of a becoming-dog, for example, are succeeded by those of a becoming-molecular, micropereceptions of water, air, etc. A man totters from one door to the next and disappears into thin air: "All I can tell you is that we are fluid, luminous beings made of fibers."²⁴ All so-called initiatory journeys include these thresholds and doors where becoming itself becomes, and where one changes becoming depending on the "hour" of the world, the circles of hell, or the stages of a journey that sets scales, forms, and cries in variation. From the howling of animals to the wailing of elements and particles.

Thus packs, or multiplicities, continually transform themselves into each other, cross over into each other. Werewolves become vampires when they die. This is not surprising, since becoming and multiplicity are the same thing. A multiplicity is defined not by its elements, nor by a center of unification or comprehension. It is defined by the number of dimensions it has; it is not divisible, it cannot lose or gain a dimension *without changing its nature*. Since its variations and dimensions are immanent to it, *it amounts to the same thing to say that each multiplicity is already composed of heterogeneous terms in symbiosis, and that a multiplicity is continually transforming itself into a string of other multiplicities, according to its thresholds and doors*. For example, the Wolf-Man's pack of wolves also becomes a swarm of bees, and a field of anuses, and a collection of small holes and tiny ulcerations (the theme of contagion): all these heterogeneous elements compose "the" multiplicity of symbiosis and becoming. If we imagined the position of a fascinated Self, it was because the multiplicity toward which it leans, stretching to the breaking point, is the continuation of another multiplicity that works it and strains it from the inside. In fact, the self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities. Each multiplicity is defined by a borderline functioning as Anomalous, but there is a string of borderlines, a continuous line of borderlines (*fiber*) following which the multiplicity changes. And at each threshold or door, a new pact? A fiber stretches from a human to an animal, from a human or an animal to molecules, from molecules to particles, and so on to the imperceptible. Every fiber is a Universe fiber. A fiber strung across borderlines constitutes a line of flight or of deterritorialization. It is evident that the Anomalous, the Outsider, has several functions: not only does it border each multiplicity, of which it determines the temporary or local stability (with the highest number of dimensions possible under the circumstances), not only is it the precondition for the alliance necessary to becoming, but it also carries the transformations of becoming or crossings of multiplicities always farther down the line of flight. Moby-Dick is the *White Wall* bordering the pack; he is also the demonic *Term of the Alliance*;

finally, he is the terrible *Fishing Line* with nothing on the other end, the line that crosses the wall and drags the captain . . . where? Into the void . . .

The error we must guard against is to believe that there is a kind of logical order to this string, these crossings or transformations. It is already going too far to postulate an order descending from the animal to the vegetable, then to molecules, to particles. Each multiplicity is symbiotic; its becoming ties together animals, plants, microorganisms, mad particles, a whole galaxy. Nor is there a preformed logical order to these heterogeneities, the Wolf-Man's wolves, bees, anuses, little scars. Of course, sorcery always codifies certain transformations of becomings. Take a novel steeped in the traditions of sorcery, Alexandre Dumas's *Meneur de loups*; in a first pact, the man of the fringes gets the Devil to agree to make his wishes come true, with the stipulation that a lock of his hair turn red each time he gets a wish. We are in the hair-multiplicity, hair is the borderline. The man himself takes a position on the wolves' borderline, as leader of the pack. Then when he no longer has a single human hair left, a second pact makes him become-wolf himself; it is an endless becoming since he is only vulnerable one day in the year. We are aware that between the hair-multiplicity and the wolf-multiplicity it is always possible to induce an order of resemblance (red like the fur of a wolf); but the resemblance remains quite secondary (the wolf of the transformation is black, with one white hair). In fact, there is a first multiplicity, of hair, taken up in a becoming-red fur; and a second multiplicity, of wolves, which in turn takes up the becoming-animal of the man. Between the two, there is threshold and fiber, symbiosis of or passage between heterogeneities. That is how we sorcerers operate. Not following a logical order, but following alogical consistencies or compatibilities. The reason is simple. It is because no one, not even God, can say in advance whether two borderlines will string together or form a fiber, whether a given multiplicity will or will not cross over into another given multiplicity, or even if given heterogeneous elements will enter symbiosis, will form a consistent, or cofunctioning, multiplicity susceptible to transformation. No one can say where the line of flight will pass: Will it let itself get bogged down and fall back to the Oedipal family animal, a mere poodle? Or will it succumb to another danger, for example, turning into a line of abolition, annihilation, self-destruction, Ahab, Ahab . . . ? We are all too familiar with the dangers of the line of flight, and with its ambiguities. The risks are ever-present, but it is always possible to have the good fortune of avoiding them. Case by case, we can tell whether the line is consistent, in other words, whether the heterogeneities effectively function in a multiplicity of symbiosis, whether the multiplicities are effectively transformed through the becomings of passage. Let us take an example as simple as: x starts practicing piano again. Is it an Oedipal return to childhood? Is it

a way of dying, in a kind of sonorous abolition? Is it a new borderline, an active line that will bring other becomings entirely different from becoming or rebecoming a pianist, that will induce a transformation of all of the preceding assemblages to which *x* was prisoner? Is it a way out? Is it a pact with the Devil? Schizoanalysis, or pragmatics, has no other meaning: Make a rhizome. But you don't know what you can make a rhizome with, you don't know which subterranean stem is effectively going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment.

That's easy to say? Although there is no preformed logical order to becomings and multiplicities, there are *criteria*, and the important thing is that they not be used after the fact, that they be applied in the course of events, that they be sufficient to guide us through the dangers. If multiplicities are defined and transformed by the borderline that determines in each instance their number of dimensions, we can conceive of the possibility of laying them out on a plane, the borderlines succeeding one another, forming a broken line. It is only in appearance that a plane of this kind "reduces" the number of dimensions; for it gathers in all the dimensions to the extent that *flat multiplicities*—which nonetheless have *an increasing or decreasing number of dimensions*—are inscribed upon it. It is in grandiose and simplified terms that Lovecraft attempted to pronounce sorcery's final word: "Then the waves increased in strength and sought to improve his understanding, reconciling him to the multiform entity of which his present fragment was an infinitesimal part. They told him that every figure of space is but the result of the intersection by a plane of some corresponding figure of one more dimension—as a square is cut from a cube, or a circle from a sphere. The cube and sphere, of three dimensions, are thus cut from corresponding forms of four dimensions, which men know only through guesses and dreams; and these in turn are cut from forms of five dimensions, and so on up to the dizzy and reachless heights of archetypal infinity."²⁵ Far from reducing the multiplicities' number of dimensions to two, the *plane of consistency* cuts across them all, intersects them in order to bring into coexistence any number of multiplicities, with any number of dimensions. The plane of consistency is the intersection of all concrete forms. Therefore all becomings are written like sorcerers' drawings on this plane of consistency, which is the ultimate Door providing a way out for them. This is the only criterion to prevent them from bogging down, or veering into the void. The only question is: Does a given becoming reach that point? Can a given multiplicity flatten and conserve all its dimensions in this way, like a pressed flower that remains just as alive dry? Lawrence, in his becoming-tortoise, moves from the most obstinate animal dynamism to the abstract, pure geometry of scales and "cleavages of division," without, however, losing any of the dynamism: he pushes becoming-tortoise all

the way to the plane of consistency.²⁶ Everything becomes imperceptible, everything is becoming-imperceptible on the plane of consistency, which is nevertheless precisely where the imperceptible is seen and heard. It is the Planomenon, or the Rhizosphere, the Criterium (and still other names, as the number of dimensions increases). At n dimensions, it is called the Hypersphere, the Mechanosphere. It is the abstract Figure, or rather, since it has no form itself, the abstract Machine of which each concrete assemblage is a multiplicity, a becoming, a segment, a vibration. And the abstract machine is the intersection of them all.

Waves are vibrations, shifting borderlines inscribed on the plane of consistency as so many abstractions. The abstract machine of the waves. In *The Waves*, Virginia Woolf—who made all of her life and work a passage, a becoming, all kinds of becomings between ages, sexes, elements, and kingdoms—intermingles seven characters, Bernard, Neville, Louis, Jinny, Rhoda, Suzanne, and Percival. But each of these characters, with his or her name, its individuality, designates a multiplicity (for example, Bernard and the school of fish). Each is simultaneously in this multiplicity and at its edge, and crosses over into the others. Percival is like the ultimate multiplicity enveloping the greatest number of dimensions. But he is not yet the plane of consistency. Although Rhoda thinks she sees him rising out of the sea, no, it is not he. “When the white arm rests upon the knee it is a triangle; now it is upright—a column; now a fountain. . . . Behind it roars the sea. It is beyond our reach.”²⁷ Each advances like a wave, but on the plane of consistency they are a single abstract Wave whose vibration propagates following a line of flight or deterritorialization traversing the entire plane (each chapter of Woolf’s novel is preceded by a meditation on an aspect of the waves, on one of their hours, on one of their becomings).

Memories of a Theologian. Theology is very strict on the following point: there are no werewolves, human beings cannot become animal. That is because there is no transformation of essential forms; they are inalienable and only entertain relations of analogy. The Devil and the witch, and the pact between them, are no less real for that, for there is in reality a *local movement* that is properly diabolical. Theology distinguishes two cases, used as models during the Inquisition: that of Ulysses’ companions, and that of Diomedes’ companions, the imaginary vision and the spell. In the first, the subject believes him- or herself to be transformed into an animal, pig, ox, or wolf, and the observers believe it too; but this is an internal local movement bringing sensible images back to the imagination and bouncing them off external meanings. In the second, the Devil “assumes” real animal bodies, even transporting the accidents and affects befalling them to other bodies (for example, a cat or a wolf that has been taken over by the

Devil can receive wounds that are relayed to an exactly corresponding part of a human body).²⁸ This is a way of saying that the human being does not become animal in reality, but that there is nevertheless a demonic reality of the becoming-animal of the human being. Therefore it is certain that the demon performs local transports of all kinds. The Devil is a transporter; he transports humors, affects, or even bodies (the Inquisition brooks no compromises on this power of the Devil: the witch's broom, or "the Devil take you"). But these transports cross neither the barrier of essential forms nor that of substances or subjects.

There is another, altogether different, problem concerning the laws of nature that has to do not with demonology but with alchemy, and above all physics. It is the problem of accidental forms, distinct from both essential forms and determined subjects. For accidental forms are susceptible to *more and less*: more or less charitable, but also more or less white, more or less warm. A degree of heat is a perfectly individuated warmth distinct from the substance or the subject that receives it. A degree of heat can enter into composition with a degree of whiteness, or with another degree of heat, to form a third unique individuality distinct from that of the subject. What is the individuality of a day, a season, an event? A shorter day and a longer day are not, strictly speaking, extensions but degrees proper to extension, just as there are degrees proper to heat, color, etc. An accidental form therefore has a "latitude" constituted by a certain number of composable individuations. A degree, an intensity, is an individual, a *Haecceity* that enters into composition with other degrees, other intensities, to form another individual. Can latitude be explained by the fact that the subject participates more or less in the accidental form? But do these degrees of participation not imply a flutter, a vibration in the form itself that is not reducible to the properties of a subject? Moreover, if intensities of heat are not composed by addition, it is because one must add their respective subjects; it is the subjects that prevent the heat of the whole from increasing. All the more reason to effect distributions of intensity, to establish latitudes that are "deformedly deformed," speeds, slownesses, and degrees of all kinds corresponding to a body or set of bodies taken as longitude: a cartography.²⁹ In short, between substantial forms and determined subjects, *between the two*, there is not only a whole operation of demonic local transports but a natural play of haecceities, degrees, intensities, events, and accidents that compose individuations totally different from those of the well-formed subjects that receive them.

Memories of a Spinozist, I. Substantial or essential forms have been critiqued in many different ways. Spinoza's approach is radical: Arrive at elements that no longer have either form or function, that are abstract in this

sense even though they are perfectly real. They are distinguished solely by movement and rest, slowness and speed. They are not atoms, in other words, finite elements still endowed with form. Nor are they indefinitely divisible. They are infinitely small, ultimate parts of an actual infinity, laid out on the same plane of consistency or composition. They are not defined by their number since they always come in infinities. However, depending on their degree of speed or the relation of movement and rest into which they enter, they belong to a given Individual, which may itself be part of another Individual governed by another, more complex, relation, and so on to infinity. There are thus smaller and larger infinities, not by virtue of their number, but by virtue of the composition of the relation into which their parts enter. Thus each individual is an infinite multiplicity, and the whole of Nature is a multiplicity of perfectly individuated multiplicities. The plane of consistency of Nature is like an immense Abstract Machine, abstract yet real and individual; its pieces are the various assemblages and individuals, each of which groups together an infinity of particles entering into an infinity of more or less interconnected relations. There is therefore a unity to the plane of nature, which applies equally to the inanimate and the animate, the artificial and the natural. This plane has nothing to do with a form or a figure, nor with a design or a function. Its unity has nothing to do with a ground buried deep within things, nor with an end or a project in the mind of God. Instead, it is a plane upon which everything is laid out, and which is like the intersection of all forms, the machine of all functions; its dimensions, however, increase with those of the multiplicities of individualities it cuts across. It is a fixed plane, upon which things are distinguished from one another only by speed and slowness. A plane of immanence or univocality opposed to analogy. The One is said with a single meaning of all the multiple. Being expresses in a single meaning all that differs. What we are talking about is not the unity of substance but the infinity of the modifications that are part of one another on this unique plane of life.

The never-ending debate between Cuvier and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire: both agree at least in denouncing resemblances, or imaginary, sensible analogies. but in Cuvier, scientific definition concerns the relations between organs, and between organs and functions. Cuvier thus takes analogy to the scientific stage, making it an analogy of proportionality. The unity of the plane, according to him, can only be a unity of analogy, therefore a transcendent unity that cannot be realized without fragmenting into distinct branches, according to irreducible, uncrossable, heterogeneous compositions. Baer would later add: according to noncommunicating types of development and differentiation. The plane is a hidden plan(e) of organization, a structure or genesis. Geoffroy has an entirely different

point of view because he goes beyond organs and functions to abstract elements he terms “anatomical,” even to particles, pure materials that enter into various combinations, forming a given organ and assuming a given function depending on their degree of speed or slowness. Speed and slowness, movement and rest, tardiness and rapidity subordinate not only the forms of structure but also the types of development. This approach later reappears in an evolutionist framework, with Perrier’s tachygenesis and differential rates of growth in allometry: species as kinematic entities that are either precocious or retarded. (Even the question of fertility is less one of form and function than speed; do the paternal chromosomes arrive early enough to be incorporated into the nuclei?) In any case, there is a pure plane of immanence, univocality, composition, upon which everything is given, upon which unformed elements and materials dance that are distinguished from one another only by their speed and that enter into this or that individuated assemblage depending on their connections, their relations of movement. A fixed plane of life upon which everything stirs, slows down or accelerates. A single abstract Animal for all the assemblages that effectuate it. A unique plane of consistency or composition for the cephalopod and the vertebrate; for the vertebrate to become an Octopus or Cuttlefish, all it would have to do is fold itself in two fast enough to fuse the elements of the halves of its back together, then bring its pelvis up to the nape of its neck and gather its limbs together into one of its extremities, like “a clown who throws his head and shoulders back and walks on his head and hands.”³⁰ *Plication.* It is no longer a question of organs and functions, and of a transcendent Plane that can preside over their organization only by means of analogical relations and types of divergent development. It is a question not of organization but of composition; not of development or differentiation but of movement and rest, speed and slowness. It is a question of elements and particles, which do or do not arrive fast enough to effect a passage, a becoming or jump on the same plane of pure immanence. And if there are in fact jumps, rifts between assemblages, it is not by virtue of their essential irreducibility but rather because there are always elements that do not arrive on time, or arrive after everything is over; thus it is necessary to pass through fog, to cross voids, to have lead times and delays, which are themselves part of the plane of immanence. Even the failures are part of the plane. We must try to conceive of this world in which a single fixed plane—which we shall call a plane of absolute immobility or absolute movement—is traversed by nonformal elements of relative speed that enter this or that individuated assemblage depending on their degrees of speed and slowness. A plane of consistency peopled by anonymous matter, by infinite bits of impalpable matter entering into varying connections.

Children are Spinozists. When Little Hans talks about a “peepee-maker,” he is referring not to an organ or an organic function but basically to a material, in other words, to an aggregate whose elements vary according to its connections, its relations of movement and rest, the different individuated assemblages it enters. Does a girl have a peepee-maker? The boy says yes, and not by analogy, nor in order to conjure away a fear of castration. It is obvious that girls have a peepee-maker because they effectively pee: a machinic functioning rather than an organic function. Quite simply, the same material has different connections, different relations of movement and rest, enters different assemblages in the case of the boy and the girl (a girl does not pee standing or into the distance). Does a locomotive have a peepee-maker? Yes, in yet another machinic assemblage. Chairs don’t have them: but that is because the elements of the chair were not able to integrate this material into their relations, or decomposed the relation with that material to the point that it yielded something else, a rung, for example. It has been noted that for children an organ has “a thousand vicissitudes,” that it is “difficult to localize, difficult to identify, it is in turn a bone, an engine, excrement, the baby, a hand, daddy’s heart . . .” This is not at all because the organ is experienced as a part-object. It is because the organ is exactly what its elements make it according to their relation of movement or rest, and the way in which this relation combines with or splits off from that of neighboring elements. This is not animism, any more than it is mechanism; rather, it is universal machinism: a plane of consistency occupied by an immense abstract machine comprising an infinite number of assemblages. Children’s questions are poorly understood if they are not seen as question-machines; that is why indefinite articles play so important a role in these questions (*a belly, a child, a horse, a chair, “how is a person made?”*). Spinozism is the becoming-child of the philosopher. We call the *longitude* of a body the particle aggregates belonging to that body in a given relation; these aggregates are part of each other depending on the composition of the relation that defines the individuated assemblage of the body.

Memories of a Spinozist, II. There is another aspect to Spinoza. To every relation of movement and rest, speed and slowness grouping together an infinity of parts, there corresponds a degree of power. To the relations composing, decomposing, or modifying an individual there correspond intensities that affect it, augmenting or diminishing its power to act; these intensities come from external parts or from the individual’s own parts. Affects are becomings. Spinoza asks: What can a body do? We call the *latitude* of a body the affects of which it is capable at a given degree of power, or rather within the limits of that degree. *Latitude is made up of intensive parts*

falling under a capacity, and longitude of extensive parts falling under a relation. In the same way that we avoided defining a body by its organs and functions, we will avoid defining it by Species or Genus characteristics; instead we will seek to count its affects. This kind of study is called ethology, and this is the sense in which Spinoza wrote a true Ethics. A race-horse is more different from a workhorse than a workhorse is from an ox. Von Uexküll, in defining animal worlds, looks for the active and passive affects of which the animal is capable in the individuated assemblage of which it is a part. For example, the Tick, attracted by the light, hoists itself up to the tip of a branch; it is sensitive to the smell of mammals, and lets itself fall when one passes beneath the branch; it digs into its skin, at the least hairy place it can find. Just three affects; the rest of the time the tick sleeps, sometimes for years on end, indifferent to all that goes on in the immense forest. Its degree of power is indeed bounded by two limits: the optimal limit of the feast after which it dies, and the pessimal limit of the fast as it waits. It will be said that the tick's three affects assume generic and specific characteristics, organs and functions, legs and snout. This is true from the standpoint of physiology, but not from the standpoint of Ethics. Quite the contrary, in Ethics the organic characteristics derive from longitude and its relations, from latitude and its degrees. We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body.

Once again, we turn to children. Note how they talk about animals, and are moved by them. They make a list of affects. Little Hans's horse is not representative but affective. It is not a member of a species but an element or individual in a machinic assemblage: draft horse-omnibus-street. It is defined by a list of active and passive affects in the context of the individuated assemblage it is part of: having eyes blocked by blinders, having a bit and a bridle, being proud, having a big peepee-maker, pulling heavy loads, being whipped, falling, making a din with its legs, biting, etc. These affects circulate and are transformed within the assemblage: what a horse "can do." They indeed have an optimal limit at the summit of horse-power, but also a pessimal threshold: a horse falls down in the street! It can't get back on its feet with that heavy load on its back, and the excessive whipping; a horse is going to die!—this was an ordinary sight in those days (Nietzsche, Dostoyevsky, Nijinsky lamented it). So just what is the becoming-horse of Little Hans? Hans is also taken up in an assemblage: his mother's bed, the paternal element, the house, the café across the street, the nearby warehouse, the street, the right to go out onto the street, the winning

of this right, the pride of winning it, but also the dangers of winning it, the fall, shame . . . These are not phantasies or subjective reveries: it is not a question of imitating a horse, “playing” horse, identifying with one, or even experiencing feelings of pity or sympathy. Neither does it have to do with an objective analogy between assemblages. The question is whether Little Hans can endow his own elements with the relations of movement and rest, the affects, that would make it become horse, forms and subjects aside. Is there an as yet unknown assemblage that would be neither Hans’s nor the horse’s, but that of the becoming-horse of Hans? An assemblage, for example, in which the horse would bare its teeth and Hans might show something else, his feet, his legs, his peepee-maker, whatever? And in what way would that ameliorate Hans’s problem, to what extent would it open a way out that had been previously blocked? When Hofmannsthal contemplates the death throes of a rat, it is in him that the animal “bares his teeth at monstrous fate.” *This is not a feeling of pity*, as he makes clear; still less an identification. It is a composition of speeds and affects involving entirely different individuals, a symbiosis; it makes the rat become a thought, a feverish thought in the man, at the same time as the man becomes a rat gnashing its teeth in its death throes. The rat and the man are in no way the same thing, but Being expresses them both in a single meaning in a language that is no longer that of words, in a matter that is no longer that of forms, in an affectability that is no longer that of subjects. *Unnatural participation*. But the plane of composition, the plane of Nature, is precisely for participations of this kind, and continually makes and unmakes their assemblages, employing every artifice.

This is not an analogy, or a product of the imagination, but a composition of speeds and affects on the plane of consistency: a plan(e), a program, or rather a diagram, a problem, a question-machine. Vladimir Slepian formulates the “problem” in a thoroughly curious text: I’m hungry, always hungry, a man should not be hungry, so I’ll have to become a dog—but how? This will not involve imitating a dog, nor an analogy of relations. I must succeed in endowing the parts of my body with relations of speed and slowness that will make it become dog, in an original assemblage proceeding neither by resemblance nor by analogy. For I cannot become dog without the dog itself becoming something else. Slepian gets the idea of using shoes to solve this problem, the artifice of the shoes. If I wear shoes on my hands, then their elements will enter into a new relation, resulting in the affect or becoming I seek. But how will I be able to tie the shoe on my second hand, once the first is already occupied? With my mouth, which in turn receives an investment in the assemblage, becoming a dog muzzle, insofar as a dog muzzle is now used to tie shoes. At each stage of the problem, what needs to be done is not to compare two organs but to place ele-

ments or materials in a relation that uproots the organ from its specificity, making it become “with” the other organ. But this becoming, which has already taken in feet, hands, and mouth, will nevertheless fail. It founders on the tail. The tail would have had to have been invested, forced to exhibit elements common to the sexual organ and the caudal appendage, so that the former would be taken up in the becoming-dog of the man at the same time as the latter were taken up in a becoming *of* the dog, in another becoming that would also be part of the assemblage. The plan(e) fails, Slepian falters on this point. The tail remains an organ of the man on the one hand and an appendage of the dog on the other; their relations do not enter into composition in the new assemblage. This is where psychoanalytic drift sets in, bringing back all the clichés about the tail, the mother, the childhood memory of the mother threading needles, all those concrete figures and symbolic analogies.³¹ But this is the way Slepian wants it in this fine text. For there is a way in which the failure of the plan(e) is part of the plan(e) itself: The plan(e) is infinite, you can start it in a thousand different ways; you will always find something that comes too late or too early, forcing you to recompose all of your relations of speed and slowness, all of your affects, and to rearrange the overall assemblage. An infinite undertaking. But there is another way in which the plan(e) fails; this time, it is because *another plan(e)* returns full force, breaking the becoming-animal, folding the animal back onto the animal and the person onto the person, recognizing only resemblances between elements and analogies between relations. Slepian confronts both dangers.

We wish to make a simple point about psychoanalysis: from the beginning, it has often encountered the question of the becomings-animal of the human being: in children, who continually undergo becomings of this kind; in fetishism and in particular masochism, which continually confront this problem. The least that can be said is that the psychoanalysts, even Jung, did not understand, or did not want to understand. They killed becoming-animal, in the adult as in the child. They saw nothing. They see the animal as a representative of drives, or a representation of the parents. They do not see the reality of a becoming-animal, that it is affect in itself, the drive in person, and represents nothing. There exist no other drives than the assemblages themselves. There are two classic texts in which Freud sees nothing but the father in the becoming-horse of Hans, and Ferenczi sees the same in the becoming-cock of Arpad. The horse’s blinders are the father’s eyeglasses, the black around its mouth is his mustache, its kicks are the parents’ “lovemaking.” Not one word about Hans’s relation to the street, on how the street was forbidden to him, on what it is for a child to see the spectacle “a horse is proud, a blinded horse pulls, a horse falls, a horse is whipped . . .” Psychoanalysis has no feeling for unnatural

participations, nor for the assemblages a child can mount in order to solve a problem from which all exits are barred him: a *plan(e)*, not a phantasy. Similarly, fewer stupidities would be uttered on the topic of pain, humiliation, and anxiety in masochism if it were understood that it is the becomings-animal that lead the masochism, not the other way around. There are always apparatuses, tools, engines involved, there are always artifices and constraints used in taking Nature to the fullest. That is because it is necessary to annul the organs, to shut them away so that their liberated elements can enter into the new relations from which the becoming-animal, and the circulation of affects within the machinic assemblage, will result. As we have seen elsewhere, this was the case for the mask, the bridle, the bit, and the penis sheath in *Equus eroticus*: paradoxically, in the becoming-horse assemblage the man subdues his own “instinctive” forces while the animal transmits to him its “acquired” forces. Reversal, unnatural participation. And the boots of the woman-master function to annul the leg as a human organ, to make the elements of the leg enter a relation suited to the overall assemblage: “In this way, it will no longer be women’s legs that have an effect on me . . .”³² But to break the becoming-animal all that is needed is to extract a segment from it, to abstract one of its moments, to fail to take into account its internal speeds and slownesses, to arrest the circulation of affects. Then nothing remains but imaginary resemblances between terms, or symbolic analogies between relations. This segment refers to the father, that relation of movement and rest refers to the primal scene, etc. It must be recognized that psychoanalysis alone is not enough to bring about this breakage. It only brings out a danger inherent in becoming. There is always the danger of finding yourself “playing” the animal, the domestic Oedipal animal, Miller going bowwow and taking a bone, Fitzgerald licking your hand, Slepian returning to his mother, or the old man playing horse or dog on an erotic postcard from 1900 (and “playing” at being a wild animal would be no better). Becomings-animal continually run these dangers.

Memories of a Haecceity. A body is not defined by the form that determines it nor as a determinate substance or subject nor by the organs it possesses or the functions it fulfills. On the plane of consistency, *a body is defined only by a longitude and a latitude*: in other words the sum total of the material elements belonging to it under given relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness (longitude); the sum total of the intensive affects it is capable of at a given power or degree of potential (latitude). Nothing but affects and local movements, differential speeds. The credit goes to Spinoza for calling attention to these two dimensions of the Body,

and for having defined the plane of Nature as pure longitude and latitude. Latitude and longitude are the two elements of a cartography.

There is a mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing, or substance. We reserve the name *haecceity* for it.³³ A season, a winter, a summer, an hour, a date have a perfect individuality lacking nothing, even though this individuality is different from that of a thing or a subject. They are *haecceities* in the sense that they consist entirely of relations of movement and rest between molecules or particles, capacities to affect and be affected. When demonology expounds upon the diabolical art of local movements and transports of affect, it also notes the importance of rain, hail, wind, pestilential air, or air polluted by noxious particles, favorable conditions for these transports. Tales must contain *haecceities* that are not simply emplacements, but concrete individuations that have a status of their own and direct the metamorphosis of things and subjects. Among types of civilizations, the Orient has many more individuations by *haecceity* than by subjectivity or substantiality: the haiku, for example, must include indicators as so many floating lines constituting a complex individual. In Charlotte Brontë, everything is in terms of *wind*, things, people, faces, loves, words. Lorca's "five in the evening," when love falls and fascism rises. That awful five in the evening! We say, "What a story!" "What heat!" "What a life!" to designate a very singular individuation. The hours of the day in Lawrence, in Faulkner. A degree of heat, an intensity of white, are perfect individualities; and a degree of heat can combine in latitude with another degree to form a new individual, as in a body that is cold here and hot there depending on its longitude. Norwegian omelette. A degree of heat can combine with an intensity of white, as in certain white skies of a hot summer. This is in no way an individuality of the instant, as opposed to the individuality of permanences or durations. A tear-off calendar has just as much time as a perpetual calendar, although the time in question is not the same. There are animals that live no longer than a day or an hour; conversely, a group of years can be as long as the most durable subject or object. We can conceive of an abstract time that is equal for *haecceities* and for subjects or things. Between the extreme slownesses and vertiginous speeds of geology and astronomy, Michel Tournier places meteorology, where meteors live at our pace: "A cloud forms in the sky like an image in my brain, the wind blows like I breathe, a rainbow spans the horizon for as long as my heart needs to reconcile itself to life, the summer passes like vacation drifts by." But is it by chance that in Tournier's novel this certitude can come only to a twin hero who is deformed and desubjectified, and has acquired a certain ubiquity?³⁴ Even when times are abstractly equal, the individuation of a life is not the same as the individuation of the subject that leads it or serves as its support. It is not the

same Plane: in the first case, it is the plane of consistency or of composition of haecceities, which knows only speeds and affects; and in the second case, it is the altogether different plane of forms, substances, and subjects. And it is not in the same time, the same temporality. *Aeon*: the indefinite time of the event, the floating line that knows only speeds and continually divides that which transpires into an already-there that is at the same time not-yet-here, a simultaneous too-late and too-early, a something that is both going to happen and has just happened. *Chronos*: the time of measure that situates things and persons, develops a form, and determines a subject.³⁵ Boulez distinguishes tempo and nontempo in music: the “pulsed time” of a formal and functional music based on values versus the “nonpulsed time” of a floating music, both floating *and* machinic, which has nothing but speeds or differences in dynamic.³⁶ In short, the difference is not at all between the ephemeral and the durable, nor even between the regular and the irregular, but between two modes of individuation, two modes of temporality.

We must avoid an oversimplified conciliation, as though there were on the one hand formed subjects, of the thing or person type, and on the other hand spatiotemporal coordinates of the haecceity type. For you will yield nothing to haecceities unless you realize that that is what you are, and that you are nothing but that. When the face becomes a haecceity: “It seemed a curious mixture that simply made do with time, weather and these people.”³⁷ You are longitude and latitude, a set of speeds and slownesses between unformed particles, a set of nonsubjectified affects. You have the individuality of a day, a season, a year, *a life* (regardless of its duration)—a climate, a wind, a fog, a swarm, a pack (regardless of its regularity). Or at least you can have it, you can reach it. A cloud of locusts carried in by the wind at five in the evening; a vampire who goes out at night, a werewolf at full moon. It should not be thought that a haecceity consists simply of a decor or backdrop that situates subjects, or of appendages that hold things and people to the ground. It is the entire assemblage in its individuated aggregate that is a haecceity; it is this assemblage that is defined by a longitude and a latitude, by speeds and affects, independently of forms and subjects, which belong to another plane. It is the wolf itself, and the horse, and the child, that cease to be subjects to become events, in assemblages that are inseparable from an hour, a season, an atmosphere, an air, a life. The street enters into composition with the horse, just as the dying rat enters into composition with the air, and the beast and the full moon enter into composition with each other. At most, we may distinguish assemblage haecceities (a body considered only as longitude and latitude) and interassemblage haecceities, which also mark the potentialities of becoming within each assemblage (the milieu of intersection of the longitudes

and latitudes). But the two are strictly inseparable. Climate, wind, season, hour are not of another nature than the things, animals, or people that populate them, follow them, sleep and awaken within them. This should be read without a pause: the animal-stalks-at-five-o'clock. The becoming-evening, becoming-night of an animal, blood nuptials. Five o'clock is this animal! This animal is this place! "The thin dog is running in the road, this dog is the road," cries Virginia Woolf. That is how we need to feel. Spatiotemporal relations, determinations, are not predicates of the thing but dimensions of multiplicities. The street is as much a part of the omnibus-horse assemblage as the Hans assemblage the becoming-horse of which it initiates. We are all five o'clock in the evening, or another hour, or rather two hours simultaneously, the optimal and the pessimal, noon-midnight, but distributed in a variable fashion. The plane of consistency contains only haecceities, along intersecting lines. Forms and subjects are not of that world. Virginia Woolf's walk through the crowd, among the taxis. Taking a walk is a haecceity; never again will Mrs. Dalloway say to herself, "I am this, I am that, he is this, he is that." And "She felt very young; at the same time unspeakably aged. She sliced like a knife through everything; at the same time was outside, looking on. . . . She always had the feeling that it was very, very dangerous to live even one day."³⁸ Haecceity, fog, glare. A haecceity has neither beginning nor end, origin nor destination; it is always in the middle. It is not made of points, only of lines. It is a rhizome.

And it is not the same language, at least not the same usage of language. For if the plane of consistency only has haecceities for content, it also has its own particular semiotic to serve as expression. A plane of content and a plane of expression. This semiotic is composed above all of proper names, verbs in the infinitive and indefinite articles or pronouns. *Indefinite article + proper name + infinitive verb* constitutes the basic chain of expression, correlative to the least formalized contents, from the standpoint of a semiotic that has freed itself from both formal significances and personal subjectifications. In the first place, the verb in the infinitive is in no way indeterminate with respect to time; it expresses the floating, nonpulsed time proper to Aeon, in other words, the time of the pure event or of becoming, which articulates relative speeds and slownesses independently of the chronometric or chronological values that time assumes in the other modes. There is good reason to oppose the infinitive as mode and tense of becoming to all of the other modes and tenses, which pertain to Chronos since they form pulsations or values of being (the verb "to be" is precisely the only one that has no infinitive, or rather the infinitive of which is only an indeterminate, empty expression, taken abstractly to designate the sum total of definite modes and tenses).³⁹ Second, the proper name is no way

the indicator of a subject; thus it seems useless to ask whether its operation resembles the nomination of a species, according to whether the subject is considered to be of another nature than that of the Form under which it is classified, or only the ultimate act of that Form, the limit of classification.⁴⁰ The proper name does not indicate a subject; nor does a noun take on the value of a proper name as a function of a form or a species. The proper name fundamentally designates something that is of the order of the event, of becoming or of the haecceity. It is the military men and meteorologists who hold the secret of proper names, when they give them to a strategic operation or a hurricane. The proper name is not the subject of a tense but the agent of an infinitive. It marks a longitude and a latitude. If Tick, Wolf, Horse, etc., are true proper names, they are so not by virtue of the specific and generic denominators that characterize them but of the speeds that compose them and the affects that fill them; it is by virtue of the event they are in themselves and in the assemblages—the becoming-horse of Little Hans, the becoming-wolf of the Were [which etymologically means “man”—Trans.], the becoming-tick of the Stoic (other proper names).

Third, the indefinite article and the indefinite pronoun are no more indeterminate than the infinitive. Or rather they are lacking a determination only insofar as they are applied to a form that is itself indeterminate, or to a determinable subject. On the other hand, they lack nothing when they introduce haecceities, events, the individuation of which does not pass into a form and is not effected by a subject. The indefinite then has maximum determination: once upon a time; a child is being beaten; a horse is falling . . . Here, the elements in play find their individuation in the assemblage of which they are a part, independent of the form of their concept and the subjectivity of their person. We have remarked several times the extent to which children use the indefinite not as something indeterminate but, on the contrary, as an individuating function within a collectivity. That is why we are dumbfounded by the efforts of psychoanalysis, which desperately wants there to be something definite hidden behind the indefinite, a possessive, a person. When the child says “*a belly*,” “*a horse*,” “*how do people grow up?*” “*someone* is beating *a child*,” the psychoanalyst hears “*my belly*,” “*the father*,” “*will I grow up to be like daddy?*” The psychoanalyst asks: Who is being beaten, and by whom?⁴¹ Even linguistics is not immune from the same prejudice, inasmuch as it is inseparable from a personology; according to linguistics, in addition to the indefinite article and the pronoun, the third-person pronoun also lacks the determination of subjectivity that is proper to the first two persons and is supposedly the necessary condition for all enunciation.⁴²

We believe on the contrary that the third person indefinite, HE, THEY,

implies no indetermination from this point of view; it ties the statement to a collective assemblage, as its necessary condition, rather than to a subject of the enunciation. Blanchot is correct in saying that ONE and HE—*one* is dying, *he* is unhappy—in no way take the place of a subject, but instead do away with any subject in favor of an assemblage of the haecceity type that carries or brings out the event insofar as it is unformed and incapable of being effectuated by persons (“something happens to them that they can only get a grip on again by letting go of their ability to say I”).⁴³ The HE does not represent a subject but rather makes a diagram of an assemblage. It does not overcode statements, it does not transcend them as do the first two persons; on the contrary, it prevents them from falling under the tyranny of subjective or signifying constellations, under the regime of empty redundancies. The contents of the chains of expression it articulates are those that can be assembled for a maximum number of occurrences and becomings. “They arrive like fate . . . where do they come from, how have they pushed this far . . . ?”⁴⁴ He or one, indefinite article, proper name, infinitive verb: A HANS TO BECOME HORSE, A PACK NAMED WOLF TO LOOK AT HE, ONE TO DIE, WASP TO MEET ORCHID, THEY ARRIVE HUNS. Classified ads, telegraphic machines on the plane of consistency (once again, we are reminded of the procedures of Chinese poetry and the rules for translation suggested by the best commentators).⁴⁵

Memories of a Plan(e) Maker. Perhaps there are two planes, or two ways of conceptualizing the plane. The plane can be a hidden principle, which makes visible what is seen and audible what is heard, etc., which at every instant causes the given to be given, in this or that state, at this or that moment. But the plane itself is not given. It is by nature hidden. It can only be inferred, induced, concluded from that to which it gives rise (simultaneously or successively, synchronically or diachronically). A plane of this kind is as much a plan(e) of organization as of development: it is structural or genetic, and both at once, structure and genesis, the structural plan(e) of formed organizations with their developments, the genetic plan(e) of evolutionary developments with their organizations. These are only nuances of this first conception of the plane. To accord these nuances too much importance would prevent us from grasping something more important; that the plan(e), conceived or made in this fashion, always concerns the development of forms and the formation of subjects. A hidden structure necessary for forms, a secret signifier necessary for subjects. It ensues that the plan(e) itself will not be given. It exists only in a supplementary dimension to that to which it gives rise ($n + 1$). This makes it a teleological plan(e), a design, a mental principle. It is a plan(e) of transcendence. It is a plan(e) of analogy, either because it assigns the eminent term of a development or

because it establishes the proportional relations of a structure. It may be in the mind of a god, or in the unconscious of life, of the soul, or of language: it is always concluded from its own effects. It is always inferred. *Even if it is said to be immanent*, it is so only by absence, analogically (metaphorically, metonymically, etc.). The tree is given in the seed, but as a function of a plan(e) that is not given. The same applies to music. The developmental or organizational principle does not appear in itself, in a direct relation with that which develops or is organized: There is a transcendent compositional principle that is not of the nature of sound, that is not “audible” by itself or for itself. This opens the way for all possible interpretations. Forms and their developments, and subjects and their formations, relate to a plan(e) that operates as a transcendent unity or hidden principle. The plan(e) can always be described, but as a part aside, as ungiven in that to which it gives rise. Is this not how even Balzac, even Proust, describe their work’s plan(e) of organization or development, as though in a metalanguage? Is not Stockhausen also obliged to describe the structure of his sound forms as existing “alongside” them, since he is unable to make it audible? Life plan(e), music plan(e), writing plan(e), it’s all the same: a plan(e) that cannot be given as such, that can only be inferred from the forms it develops and the subjects it forms, since it is *for* these forms and these subjects.

Then there is an altogether different plane, or an altogether different conception of the plane. Here, there are no longer any forms or developments of forms; nor are there subjects or the formation of subjects. There is no structure, any more than there is genesis. There are only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between unformed elements, or at least between elements that are relatively unformed, molecules and particles of all kinds. There are only haecceities, affects, subjectless individuations that constitute collective assemblages. Nothing develops, but things arrive late or early, and form this or that assemblage depending on their compositions of speed. Nothing subjectifies, but haecceities form according to compositions of nonsubjectified powers or affects. We call this plane, which knows only longitudes and latitudes, speeds and haecceities, the plane of consistency or composition (as opposed to the plan(e) of organization or development). It is necessarily a plane of immanence and univocality. We therefore call it the plane of Nature, although nature has nothing to do with it, since on this plane there is no distinction between the natural and the artificial. However many dimensions it may have, it never has a supplementary dimension to that which transpires upon it. That alone makes it natural and immanent. The same goes for the principle of contradiction: this plane could also be called the plane of noncontradiction. The plane of consistency could be called the plane of nonconsistency. It is a geometrical plane, no longer tied to a mental design

but to an abstract design. Its number of dimensions continually increases as what happens happens, but even so it loses nothing of its planitude. It is thus a plane of proliferation, peopling, contagion; but this proliferation of material has nothing to do with an evolution, the development of a form or the filiation of forms. Still less is it a regression leading back to a principle. It is on the contrary an *involution*, in which form is constantly being dissolved, freeing times and speeds. It is a fixed plane, a fixed sound plane, or visual plane, or writing plane, etc. Here, fixed does not mean immobile: it is the absolute state of movement as well as of rest, from which all relative speeds and slownesses spring, and nothing but them. Certain modern musicians oppose the transcendent plan(e) of organization, which is said to have dominated all of Western classical music, to the immanent sound plane, which is always given along with that to which it gives rise, brings the imperceptible to perception, and carries only differential speeds and slownesses in a kind of molecular lapping: *the work of art must mark seconds, tenths and hundredths of seconds.*⁴⁶ Or rather it is a question of a freeing of time, Aeon, a nonpulsed time for a floating music, as Boulez says, an electronic music in which forms are replaced by pure modifications of speed. It is undoubtedly John Cage who first and most perfectly deployed this fixed sound plane, which affirms a process against all structure and genesis, a floating time against pulsed time or tempo, experimentation against any kind of interpretation, and in which silence as sonorous rest also marks the absolute state of movement. The same could be said of the fixed visual plane: Godard, for example, effectively carries the fixed plane of cinema to this state where forms dissolve, and all that subsists are tiny variations of speed between movements in composition. Nathalie Sarraute, for her part, proposes a clear distinction between two planes of writing: a transcendent plan(e) that organizes and develops forms (genres, themes, motifs) and assigns and develops subjects (personages, characters, feelings); and an altogether different plane that liberates the particles of an anonymous matter, allowing them to communicate through the “envelope” of forms and subjects, retaining between them only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness, floating affects, so that the plane itself is perceived at the same time as it allows us to perceive the imperceptible (the microplane, the molecular plane).⁴⁷ So from the point of view of a well-founded abstraction, we can make it seem as though the two planes, the two conceptions of the plane, were in clear and absolute opposition. From this point of view, we can say, You can see the difference between the following two types of propositions: (1) forms develop and subjects form as a function of a plan(e) that can only be inferred (the plan[e] of organization-development); (2) there are only speeds and slownesses between unformed elements, and affects between nonsubjectified powers, as a func-

tion of a plane that is necessarily given at the same time as that to which it gives rise (the plane of consistency or composition).⁴⁸

Let us consider three major cases from nineteenth-century German literature, Hölderlin, Kleist, and Nietzsche. First, Hölderlin's extraordinary composition, *Hyperion*, as analyzed by Robert Rovini: the importance of haecceities of the season type. These constitute, in two different ways, the "frame of the narrative" (plan[e]) and the details of what happens within that frame (the assemblages and interassemblages).⁴⁹ He also notes how the succession of the seasons and the superposition of the same season from different years dissolves forms and persons and gives rise to movements, speeds, delays, and affects, as if as the narrative progressed something were escaping from an impalpable matter. And perhaps also the relation to a "realpolitik," to a war machine, to a musical machine of dissonance.

Kleist: everything with him, in his writing as in his life, becomes speed and slowness. A succession of catatonic freezes and extreme velocities, fainting spells and shooting arrows. Sleep on your steed, then take off at a gallop. Jump from one assemblage to another, with the aid of a faint, by crossing a void. Kleist multiplies "life plan(e)s," but his voids and failures, his leaps, earthquakes, and plagues are always included on a single plane. The plane is not a principle of organization but a means of transportation. No form develops, no subject forms; affects are displaced, becomings catapult forward and combine into blocks, like the becoming-woman of Achilles and the becoming-dog of Penthesilea. Kleist offers a wonderful explanation of how forms and persons are only appearances produced by the displacement of a center of gravity on an abstract line, and by the conjunction of these lines on a plane of immanence. He is fascinated by bears; they are impossible to fool because their cruel little eyes see through appearances to the true "soul of movement," the *Gemüt* or nonsubjective affect: the becoming-bear of Kleist. Even death can only be conceptualized as the intersection of elementary reactions of different speeds. *A skull exploding*, one of Kleist's obsessions. All of Kleist's work is traversed by a war machine invoked against the State, by a musical machine invoked against painting or the "picture." It is odd how Goethe and Hegel hated this new kind of writing. Because for them the plan(e) must indissolubly be a harmonious development of Form and a regulated formation of the Subject, personage, or character (the sentimental education, the interior and substantial solidity of the character, the harmony or analogy of the forms and continuity of development, the cult of the State, etc.). Their conception of the Plane is totally opposed to that of Kleist. The anti-Goetheism, anti-Hegelianism of Kleist, and already of Hölderlin. Goethe gets to the crux of the matter when he reproaches Kleist for simultaneously setting up a pure "stationary process" that is like the fixed plane, introducing voids

and jumps that prevent any development of a central character, and mobilizing a violence of affects that causes an extreme confusion of feelings.⁵⁰

Nietzsche does the same thing by different means. There is no longer any development of forms or formation of subjects. He criticizes Wagner for retaining too much harmonic form, and too many pedagogical personages, or “characters”: too much Hegel and Goethe. Now Bizet, on the other hand, Nietzsche says . . . It seems to us that fragmentary writing is not so much the issue in Nietzsche. It is instead speeds and slownesses: not writing slowly or rapidly, but rather writing, and everything else besides, as a production of speeds and slownesses between particles. No form will resist that, no character or subject will survive it. *Zarathustra* is only speeds and slownesses, and the eternal return, the life of the eternal return, is the first great concrete freeing of nonpulsed time. *Ecce Homo* has only individuations by haecceities. It is inevitable that the Plan(e), thus conceived, will always fail, but that the failures will be an integral part of the plan(e): See the multitude of plans for *The Will to Power*. For a given aphorism, it is always possible, even necessary, to introduce new relations of speed and slowness between its elements that truly make it change assemblages, jump from one assemblage to the next (the issue is therefore not the fragment). As Cage says, it is of the nature of the plan(e) that it fail.⁵¹ Precisely because it is not a plan(e) of organization, development, or formation, but of nonvoluntary transmutation. Or Boulez: “Program the machine so that each time a tape is played on it, it produces different time characteristics.” So the plan(e)—life plan(e), writing plan(e), music plan(e)—must necessarily fail for it is impossible to be faithful to it; but the failures are a part of the plan(e) for the plan(e) expands or shrinks along with the dimensions of that which it deploys in each instance (planitude of n dimensions). A strange machine that is simultaneously a machine of war, music, and contagion-proliferation-involution.

Why does the opposition between the two kinds of planes lead to a still more abstract hypothesis? Because one continually passes from one to the other, by unnoticeable degrees and without being aware of it, or one becomes aware of it only afterward. Because one continually reconstitutes one plane atop another, or extricates one from the other. For example, all we need to do is to sink the floating plane of immanence, bury it in the depths of Nature instead of allowing it to play freely on the surface, for it to pass to the other side and assume the role of a ground that can no longer be anything more than a principle of analogy from the standpoint of organization, and a law of continuity from the standpoint of development.⁵² The plane of organization or development effectively covers what we have called stratification: Forms and subjects, organs and functions, are “strata” or relations between strata. The plane of consistency or imma-

nence, on the other hand, implies a destratification of all of Nature, by even the most artificial of means. The plane of consistency is the body without organs. Pure relations of speed and slowness between particles imply movements of deterritorialization, just as pure affects imply an enterprise of desubjectification. Moreover, the plane of consistency does not preexist the movements of deterritorialization that unravel it, the lines of flight that draw it and cause it to rise to the surface, the becomings that compose it. The plane of organization is constantly working away at the plane of consistency, always trying to plug the lines of flight, stop or interrupt the movements of deterritorialization, weigh them down, restratify them, reconstitute forms and subjects in a dimension of depth. Conversely, the plane of consistency is constantly extricating itself from the plane of organization, causing particles to spin off the strata, scrambling forms by dint of speed or slowness, breaking down functions by means of assemblages or microassemblages. But once again, so much caution is needed to prevent the plane of consistency from becoming a pure plane of abolition or death, to prevent the involution from turning into a regression to the undifferentiated. Is it not necessary to retain a minimum of strata, a minimum of forms and functions, a minimal subject from which to extract materials, affects, and assemblages?

In fact, the opposition we should set up between the two planes is that between two abstract poles: for example, to the transcendent, organizational plane of Western music based on sound forms and their development, we oppose the immanent plane of consistency of Eastern music, composed of speeds and slownesses, movements and rest. In keeping with our concrete hypothesis, the whole becoming of Western music, all musical becoming, implies a minimum of sound forms and even of melodic and harmonic functions; speeds and slownesses are made to pass across them, and it is precisely these speeds and slownesses that reduce the forms and functions to the minimum. Beethoven produced the most astonishing polyphonic richness with relatively scanty themes of three or four notes. There is a material proliferation that goes hand in hand with a dissolution of form (involution) but is at the same time accompanied by a continuous development of form. Perhaps Schumann's genius is the most striking case of form being developed only for the relations of speed and slowness one materially and emotionally assigns it. Music has always submitted its forms and motifs to temporal transformations, augmentations or diminutions, slowdowns or accelerations, which do not occur solely according to laws of organization or even of development. Expanding and contracting microintervals are at play within coded intervals. Wagner and the post-Wagnerians free variations of speed between sound particles to an even greater extent. Ravel and Debussy retain just enough form to shatter it,

affect it, modify it through speeds and slownesses. *Bolero* is the classic example, nearly a caricature, of a machinic assemblage that preserves a minimum of form in order to take it to the bursting point. Boulez speaks of proliferations of little motifs, accumulations of little notes that proceed kinematically and affectively, sweeping away a simple form by adding indications of speed to it; this allows one to produce extremely complex dynamic relations on the basis of intrinsically simple formal relations. Even a rubato by Chopin cannot be reproduced because it will have different time characteristics at each playing.⁵³ It is as though an immense plane of consistency of variable speed were forever sweeping up forms and functions, forms and subjects, extracting from them particles and affects. A clock keeping a whole assortment of times.

What is a girl, what is a group of girls? Proust at least has shown us once and for all that their individuation, collective or singular, proceeds not by subjectivity but by haecceity, pure haecceity. "Fugitive beings." They are pure relations of speeds and slownesses, and nothing else. A girl is late on account of her speed: she did too many things, crossed too many spaces in relation to the relative time of the person waiting for her. Thus her apparent slowness is transformed into the breakneck speed of our waiting. It must be said in this connection, and for the whole of the *Recherche du temps perdu*, that Swann does not at all occupy the same position as the narrator. Swann is not a rough sketch or precursor of the narrator, except secondarily and at rare moments. They are not at all on the same *plane*. Swann is always thinking and feeling in terms of subjects, forms, resemblances between subjects, and correspondences between forms. For him, one of Odette's lies is a form whose secret subjective content must be discovered, provoking amateur detective activity. To him Vinteuil's music is a form that must evoke something else, fall back on something else, echo other forms, whether paintings, faces, or landscapes. Although the narrator may follow in Swann's footsteps, he is nonetheless in a different element, on a different plane. One of Albertine's lies is nearly devoid of content; it tends on the contrary to merge with the emission of a particle issuing from the eyes of the beloved, a particle that stands only for itself and travels too fast through the narrator's auditory or visual field. This molecular speed is unbearable because it indicates a distance, a *proximity* where Albertine would like to be, and already is.⁵⁴ So that the narrator's pose is not principally that of the investigating detective but (a very different figure) that of the jailer. How can he become master of speed, how can he stand it nervously (as a headache) and perceptually (as a flash)? How can he build a prison for Albertine? Jealousy is different in Swann and the narrator, as is the perception of music: Vinteuil gradually ceases to be apprehended in terms of forms and comparable subjects, and assumes incredible speeds and slownesses that combine

on a plane of consistency of variation, the plane of music and of the *Recherche* (just as Wagnerian motifs abandon all fixity of form and all assignation of personages). It is as though Swann's desperate efforts to reterritorialize the flow of things (to reterritorialize Odette on a secret, painting on a face, music on the Bois de Boulogne) were replaced by the sped-up movement of deterritorialization, by a linear speedup of the abstract machine, sweeping away faces and landscapes, and then love, jealousy, painting, and music itself, according to increasingly stronger coefficients that nourish the Work at risk of dissolving everything and dying. For the narrator, despite partial victories, fails in his project; that project was not at all to regain time or to force back memories, but to become master of speeds to the rhythm of his asthma. It was to face annihilation. But another outcome was possible, or was made possible by Proust.

Memories of a Molecule. Becoming-animal is only one becoming among others. A kind of order or apparent progression can be established for the segments of becoming in which we find ourselves; becoming-woman, becoming-child; becoming-animal, -vegetable, or -mineral; becomings-molecular of all kinds, becomings-particles. Fibers lead us from one to the other, transform one into the other as they pass through doors and across thresholds. Singing or composing, painting, writing have no other aim: to unleash these becomings. Especially music; music is traversed by a becoming-woman, becoming-child, and not only at the level of themes and motifs: the little refrain, children's games and dances, childhood scenes. Instrumentation and orchestration are permeated by becomings-animal, above all becomings-bird, but many others besides. The lapping, wailing of molecular discordances have always been present, even if instrumental evolution with other factors is now giving them growing importance, as the value of a new threshold for a properly musical content: the sound molecule, relations of speed and slowness between particles. Becomings-animal plunge into becomings-molecular. This raises all kinds of questions.

In a way, we must start at the end: all becomings are already molecular. That is because becoming is not to imitate or identify with something or someone. Nor is it to proportion formal relations. Neither of these two figures of analogy is applicable to becoming: neither the imitation of a subject nor the proportionality of a form. Starting from the forms one has, the subject one is, the organs one has, or the functions one fulfills, becoming is to extract particles between which one establishes the relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness that are *closest* to what one is becoming, and through which one becomes. This is the sense in which becoming is the process of desire. This principle of proximity or approximation is entirely particular and reintroduces no analogy whatsoever. It indicates as rigor-

ously as possible a *zone of proximity*⁵⁵ or *copresence* of a particle, the movement into which any particle that enters the zone is drawn. Louis Wolfson embarks upon a strange undertaking: a schizophrenic, he translates as quickly as possible each phrase in his maternal language into foreign words with similar sound and meaning; an anorexic, he rushes to the refrigerator, tears open the packages and snatches their contents, stuffing himself as quickly as possible.⁵⁶ It would be false to believe that he needs to borrow “disguised” words from foreign languages. Rather, he snatches from his own language verbal particles that can no longer belong to the form of that language, just as he snatches from food alimentary particles that no longer act as formed nutritional substances; the two kinds of particles enter into proximity. We could also put it this way: Becoming is to emit particles that take on certain relations of movement and rest because they enter a particular zone of proximity. Or, it is to emit particles that enter that zone because they take on those relations. A haecceity is inseparable from the fog and mist that depend on a molecular zone, a corpuscular space. Proximity is a notion, at once topological and quantal, that marks a belonging to the same molecule, independently of the subjects considered and the forms determined.

Schérer and Hocquenghem made this essential point in their reconsideration of the problem of wolf-children. Of course, it is not a question of a real production, as if the child “really” became an animal; nor is it a question of a resemblance, as if the child imitated animals that really raised it; nor is it a question of a symbolic metaphor, as if the autistic child that was abandoned or lost merely became the “analogue” of an animal. Schérer and Hocquenghem are right to expose this false reasoning, which is based on a culturalism or moralism upholding the irreducibility of the human order: Because the child has not been transformed into an animal, it must only have a metaphorical relation to it, induced by the child’s illness or rejection. For their own part, they appeal to an objective zone of indetermination or uncertainty, “something shared or indiscernible,” a proximity “that makes it impossible to say where the boundary between the human and animal lies,” not only in the case of autistic children, but for all children; it is as though, independent of the evolution carrying them toward adulthood, there were room in the child for other becomings, “other contemporaneous possibilities” that are not regressions but creative involutions bearing witness to “*an inhumanity immediately experienced in the body as such*,” unnatural nuptials “outside the programmed body.” There is a reality of becoming-animal, even though one does not in reality become animal. It is useless, then, to raise the objection that the dog-child only plays dog within the limits of his formal constitution, and does nothing canine that another human being could not have done if he or she had so

desired. For what needs to be explained is precisely the fact that all children, and even many adults, do it to a greater or lesser degree, and in so doing bear witness to an inhuman connivance with the animal, rather than an Oedipal symbolic community.⁵⁷ Neither should it be thought that children who graze, or eat dirt or raw flesh, are merely getting the vitamins and minerals they need. It is a question of composing a body with the animal, a body without organs defined by zones of intensity or proximity. Where does this objective indetermination or indiscernibility of which Schérer and Hocquenghem speak come from?

An example: Do not imitate a dog, but make your organism enter into composition with *something else* in such a way that the particles emitted from the aggregate thus composed will be canine as a function of the relation of movement and rest, or of molecular proximity, into which they enter. Clearly, this something else can be quite varied, and be more or less directly related to the animal in question: it can be the animal's natural food (dirt and worm), or its exterior relations with other animals (you can become-dog with cats, or become-monkey with a horse), or an apparatus or prosthesis to which a person subjects the animal (muzzle and reindeer, etc.), or something that does not even have a localizable relation to the animal in question. For this last case, we have seen how Slepian bases his attempt to become-dog on the idea of tying shoes to his hands using his mouth-muzzle. Philippe Gavi cites the performances of Lolito, an eater of bottles, earthenware, porcelains, iron, and even bicycles, who declares: "I consider myself half-animal, half-man. More animal than man. I love animals, dogs especially, I feel a bond with them. My teeth have adapted; in fact, when I don't eat glass or iron, my jaw aches like a young dog's that craves to chew a bone."⁵⁸ If we interpret the word "like" as a metaphor, or propose a structural analogy of relations (man-iron = dog-bone), we understand nothing of becoming. The word "like" is one of those words that change drastically in meaning and function when they are used in connection with haecceities, when they are made into expressions of becomings instead of signified states or signifying relations. A dog may exercise its jaw on iron, but when it does it is using its jaw as a molar organ. When Lolito eats iron, it is totally different: he makes his jaw enter into composition with the iron in such a way that he himself becomes the jaw of a molecular dog. The actor Robert De Niro walks "like" a crab in a certain film sequence; but, he says, it is not a question of his imitating a crab; it is a question of making something that has to do with the crab enter into composition with the image, with the speed of the image.⁵⁹ That is the essential point for us: you become-animal only if, by whatever means or elements, you emit corpuscles that enter the relation of movement and rest of the animal particles, or what amounts to the same thing, that enter the zone of

proximity of the animal molecule. You become animal only molecularly. You do not become a barking molar dog, but by barking, if it is done with enough feeling, with enough necessity and composition, you emit a molecular dog. Man does not become wolf, or vampire, as if he changed molar species; the vampire and werewolf are becomings of man, in other words, proximities between molecules in composition, relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between emitted particles. Of course there are werewolves and vampires, we say this with all our heart; but do not look for a resemblance or analogy to the animal, for this is becoming-animal in action, the production of the molecular animal (whereas the “real” animal is trapped in its molar form and subjectivity). It is within us that the animal bares its teeth like Hofmannsthal’s rat, or the flower opens its petals; but this is done by corpuscular emission, by molecular proximity, and not by the imitation of a subject or a proportionality of form. Albertine can always imitate a flower, but it is when she is sleeping and enters into composition with the particles of sleep that her beauty spot and the texture of her skin enter a relation of rest and movement that place her in the zone of a molecular vegetable: the becoming-plant of Albertine. And it is when she is held prisoner that she emits the particles of a bird. And it is when she flees, launches down a line of flight, that she becomes-horse, even if it is the horse of death.

Yes, all becomings are molecular: the animal, flower, or stone one becomes are molecular collectivities, haecceities, not molar subjects, objects, or form that we know from the outside and recognize from experience, through science, or by habit. If this is true, then we must say the same of things human: there is a becoming-woman, a becoming-child, that do not resemble the woman or the child as clearly distinct molar entities (although it is possible—only possible—for the woman or child to occupy privileged positions in relation to these becomings). What we term a molar entity is, for example, the woman as defined by her form, endowed with organs and functions and assigned as a subject. Becoming-woman is not imitating this entity or even transforming oneself into it. We are not, however, overlooking the importance of imitation, or moments of imitation, among certain homosexual males, much less the prodigious attempt at a real transformation on the part of certain transvestites. All we are saying is that these indissociable aspects of becoming-woman must first be understood as a function of something else: not imitating or assuming the female form, but emitting particles that enter the relation of movement and rest, or the zone of proximity, of a microfemininity, in other words, that produce in us a molecular woman, create the molecular woman. We do not mean to say that a creation of this kind is the prerogative of the man, but on the contrary that the woman as a molar entity *has to become-woman* in order that

the man also becomes- or can become-woman. It is, of course, indispensable for women to conduct a molar politics, with a view to winning back their own organism, their own history, their own subjectivity: “we as women . . .” makes its appearance as a subject of enunciation. But it is dangerous to confine oneself to such a subject, which does not function without drying up a spring or stopping a flow. The song of life is often intoned by the driest of women, moved by *ressentiment*, the will to power and cold mothering. Just as a dessicated child makes a much better child, there being no childhood flow emanating from it any longer. It is no more adequate to say that each sex contains the other and must develop the opposite pole in itself. Bisexuality is no better a concept than the separateness of the sexes. It is as deplorable to miniaturize, internalize the binary machine as it is to exacerbate it; it does not extricate us from it. It is thus necessary to conceive of a molecular women’s politics that slips into molar confrontations, and passes under or through them.

When Virginia Woolf was questioned about a specifically women’s writing, she was appalled at the idea of writing “as a woman.” Rather, writing should produce a becoming-woman as atoms of womanhood capable of crossing and impregnating an entire social field, and of contaminating men, of sweeping them up in that becoming. Very soft particles—but also very hard and obstinate, irreducible, indomitable. The rise of women in English novel writing has spared no man: even those who pass for the most virile, the most phallogocentric, such as Lawrence and Miller, in their turn continually tap into and emit particles that enter the proximity or zone of indiscernibility of women. In writing, they become-women. The question is not, or not only, that of the organism, history, and subject of enunciation that oppose masculine to feminine in the great dualism machines. The question is fundamentally that of the body—the body they *steal* from us in order to fabricate opposable organisms. This body is stolen first from the girl: Stop behaving like that, you’re not a little girl anymore, you’re not a tomboy, etc. The girl’s becoming is stolen first, in order to impose a history, or prehistory, upon her. The boy’s turn comes next, but it is by using the girl as an example, by pointing to the girl as the object of his desire, that an opposed organism, a dominant history is fabricated for him too. The girl is the first victim, but she must also serve as an example and a trap. That is why, conversely, the reconstruction of the body as a Body without Organs, the anorganism of the body, is inseparable from a becoming-woman, or the production of a molecular woman. Doubtless, the girl becomes a woman in the molar or organic sense. But conversely, becoming-woman or the molecular woman is the girl herself. The girl is certainly not defined by virginity; she is defined by a relation of movement and rest, speed and slowness, by a combination of atoms, an emission of particles: haecceity. She never ceases

to roam upon a body without organs. She is an abstract line, or a line of flight. Thus girls do not belong to an age group, sex, order, or kingdom: they slip in everywhere, between orders, acts, ages, sexes; they produce *n* molecular sexes on the line of flight in relation to the dualism machines they cross right through. The only way to get outside the dualisms is to be-between, to pass between, the intermezzo—that is what Virginia Woolf lived with all her energies, in all of her work, never ceasing to become. The girl is like the block of becoming that remains contemporaneous to each opposable term, man, woman, child, adult. It is not the girl who becomes a woman; it is becoming-woman that produces the universal girl. Trost, a mysterious author, painted a portrait of the girl, to whom he linked the fate of the revolution: her speed, her freely machinic body, her intensities, her abstract line or line of flight, her molecular production, her indifference to memory, her nonfigurative character—"the nonfigurative of desire."⁶⁰ Joan of Arc? The special role of the girl in Russian terrorism: the girl with the bomb, guardian of dynamite? It is certain that molecular politics proceeds via the girl and the child. But it is also certain that girls and children draw their strength neither from the molar status that subdues them nor from the organism and subjectivity they receive; they draw their strength from the becoming-molecular they cause to pass between sexes and ages, the becoming-child of the adult as well as of the child, the becoming-woman of the man as well as of the woman. The girl and the child do not become; it is becoming itself that is a child or a girl. The child does not become an adult any more than the girl becomes a woman; the girl is the becoming-woman of each sex, just as the child is the becoming-young of every age. Knowing how to age does not mean remaining young; it means extracting from one's age the particles, the speeds and slownesses, the flows that constitute the youth of *that* age. Knowing how to love does not mean remaining a man or a woman; it means extracting from one's sex the particles, the speeds and slownesses, the flows, the *n* sexes that constitute the girl of *that* sexuality. It is Age itself that is a becoming-child, just as Sexuality, any sexuality, is a becoming-woman, in other words, a girl. This by way of response to the stupid question, Why did Proust make Albert Albertine?

Although all becomings are already molecular, including becoming-woman, it must be said that all becomings begin with and pass through becoming-woman. It is the key to all the other becomings. When the man of war disguises himself as a woman, flees disguised as a girl, hides as a girl, it is not a shameful, transitory incident in his life. To hide, to camouflage oneself, is a warrior function, and the line of flight attracts the enemy, traverses something and puts what it traverses to flight; the warrior arises in the infinity of a line of flight. Although the femininity of the man of war is not accidental, it should not be thought of as structural, or regulated by a

correspondence of relations. It is difficult to see how the correspondence between the two relations “man-war” and “woman-marriage” could entail an equivalence between the warrior and the girl as a woman who refuses to marry.⁶¹ It is just as difficult to see how the general bisexuality, or even homosexuality, of military societies could explain this phenomenon, which is no more imitative than it is structural, representing instead an essential *anomie* of the man of war. This phenomenon can only be understood in terms of becoming. We have seen how the man of war, by virtue of his *furor* and celerity, was swept up in irresistible becomings-animal. These are becomings that have as their necessary condition the becoming-woman of the warrior, or his alliance with the girl, his contagion with her. The man of war is inseparable from the Amazons. The union of the girl and the man of war does not produce animals, but simultaneously produces the becoming-woman of the latter and the becoming-animal of the former, in a single “block” in which the warrior in turn becomes animal by contagion with the girl at the same time as the girl becomes warrior by contagion with the animal. Everything ties together in an asymmetrical block of becoming, an instantaneous zigzag. It is in the vestiges of a double war machine—that of the Greeks, soon to be supplanted by the State, and that of the Amazons, soon to be dissolved—that Achilles and Penthesilea, the last man of war and the last queen of the girls, choose one another, Achilles in a becoming-woman, Penthesilea in a becoming-dog.

The rites of transvestism or female impersonation in primitive societies in which a man becomes a woman are not explainable by a social organization that places the given relations in correspondence, or by a psychic organization that makes the woman desire to become a man just as the man desires to become a woman.⁶² Social structure and psychic identification leave too many special factors unaccounted for: the linkage, unleashing, and communication of the becomings triggered by the transvestite; the power (*puissance*) of the resultant becoming-animal; and above all the participation of these becomings in a specific war machine. The same applies for sexuality: it is badly explained by the binary organization of the sexes, and just as badly by a bisexual organization within each sex. Sexuality brings into play too great a diversity of conjugated becomings; these are like *n* sexes, an entire war machine through which love passes. This is not a return to those appalling metaphors of love and war, seduction and conquest, the battle of the sexes and the domestic squabble, or even the Strindberg-war: it is only after love is done with and sexuality has dried up that things appear this way. What counts is that love itself is a war machine endowed with strange and somewhat terrifying powers. Sexuality is the production of a thousand sexes, which are so many uncontrollable becomings. *Sexuality proceeds by way of the becoming-woman of the man and the*

becoming-animal of the human: an emission of particles. There is no need for bestialism in this, although it may arise, and many psychiatric anecdotes document it in ways that are interesting, if oversimplified and consequently off the track, too beastly. It is not a question of “playing” the dog, like an elderly gentleman on a postcard; it is not so much a question of making love with animals. Becomings-animal are basically of another power, since their reality resides not in an animal one imitates or to which one corresponds but in themselves, in that which suddenly sweeps us up and makes us become—a *proximity, an indiscernibility* that extracts a shared element from the animal far more effectively than any domestication, utilization, or imitation could: “the Beast.”

If becoming-woman is the first quantum, or molecular segment, with the becomings-animal that link up with it coming next, what are they all rushing toward? Without a doubt, toward becoming-imperceptible. The imperceptible is the immanent end of becoming, its cosmic formula. For example, Matheson’s *Shrinking Man* passes through the kingdoms of nature, slips between molecules, to become an unfindable particle in infinite meditation on the infinite. Paul Morand’s *Monsieur Zero* flees the larger countries, crosses the smallest ones, descends the scale of States, establishes an anonymous society in Lichtenstein of which he is the only member, and dies imperceptible, forming the particle 0 with his fingers: “I am a man who flees by swimming under water, and at whom all the world’s rifles fire. . . . I must no longer offer a target.” But what does becoming-imperceptible signify, coming at the end of all the molecular becomings that begin with becoming-woman? Becoming-imperceptible means many things. What is the relation between the (anorganic) imperceptible, the (asignifying) indiscernible, and the (asubjective) impersonal?

A first response would be: to be like everybody else. That is what Kierkegaard relates in his story about the “knight of the faith,” the man of becoming: to look at him, one would notice nothing, a bourgeois, nothing but a bourgeois. That is how Fitzgerald lived: after a real rupture, one succeeds . . . in being just like everybody else. To go unnoticed is by no means easy. To be a stranger, even to one’s doorman or neighbors. If it is so difficult to be “like” everybody else, it is because it is an affair of becoming. Not everybody becomes everybody [and everything: *tout le monde*—Trans.], makes a becoming of everybody/everything. This requires much asceticism, much sobriety, much creative involution: an English elegance, an English fabric, blend in with the walls, eliminate the too-perceived, the too-much-to-be-perceived. “Eliminate all that is waste, death, and superfluity,” complaint and grievance, unsatisfied desire, defense or pleading, everything that roots each of us (everybody) in ourselves, in our molarity. For everybody/everything is the molar aggregate, but *becoming everybody/*

everything is another affair, one that brings into play the cosmos with its molecular components. Becoming everybody/everything (*tout le monde*) is to world (*faire monde*), to make a world (*faire un monde*). By process of elimination, one is no longer anything more than an abstract line, or a piece in a puzzle that is itself abstract. It is by conjugating, by continuing with other lines, other pieces, that one makes a world that can overlay the first one, like a transparency. Animal elegance, the camouflage fish, the clandestine: this fish is crisscrossed by abstract lines that resemble nothing, that do not even follow its organic divisions; but thus disorganized, disarticulated, it worlds with the lines of a rock, sand, and plants, becoming imperceptible. The fish is like the Chinese poet: not imitative or structural, but cosmic. François Cheng shows that poets do not pursue resemblance, any more than they calculate “geometric proportions.” They retain, extract only the essential lines and movements of nature; they proceed only by continued or superposed “traits,” or strokes.⁶³ It is in this sense that becoming-everybody/everything, making the world a becoming, is to world, to make a world or worlds, in other words, to find one’s proximities and zones of indiscernibility. The Cosmos as an abstract machine, and each world as an assemblage effectuating it. If one reduces oneself to one or several abstract lines that will prolong itself in and conjugate with others, producing immediately, directly *a* world in which it is *the* world that becomes, then one becomes-everybody/everything. Kerouac’s dream, and already Virginia Woolf’s, was for the writing to be like the line of a Chinese poem-drawing. She says that it is necessary to “saturate every atom,” and to do that it is necessary to eliminate, to eliminate all that is resemblance and analogy, but also “to put everything into it”: eliminate everything that exceeds the moment, but put in everything that it includes—and the moment is not the instantaneous, it is the haecceity into which one slips and that slips into other haecceities by transparency.⁶⁴ To be present at the dawn of the world. Such is the link between imperceptibility, indiscernibility, and impersonality—the three virtues. To reduce oneself to an abstract line, a trait, in order to find one’s zone of indiscernibility with other traits, and in this way enter the haecceity and impersonality of the creator. One is then like grass: one has made the world, everybody/everything, into a becoming, because one has made a necessarily communicating world, because one has suppressed in oneself everything that prevents us from slipping between things and growing in the midst of things. One has combined “everything” (*le “tout”*): the indefinite article, the infinitive-becoming, and the proper name to which one is reduced. Saturate, eliminate, put everything in.

Movement has an essential relation to the imperceptible; it is by nature imperceptible. Perception can grasp movement only as the displacement

of a moving body or the development of a form. Movements, becomings, in other words, pure relations of speed and slowness, pure affects, are below and above the threshold of perception. Doubtless, thresholds of perception are relative; there is always a threshold capable of grasping what eludes another: the eagle's eye . . . But the adequate threshold can in turn operate only as a function of a perceptible form and a perceived, discerned subject. So that movement in itself *continues* to occur elsewhere: if we serialize perception, the movement always takes place above the maximum threshold and below the minimum threshold, in expanding or contracting intervals (microintervals). Like huge Japanese wrestlers whose advance is too slow and whose holds are too fast to see, so that what embraces are less the wrestlers than the infinite slowness of the wait (what is going to happen?) and the infinite speed of the result (what happened?). What we must do is reach the photographic or cinematic threshold; but in relation to the photograph, movement and affect once again took refuge above and below. When Kierkegaard adopts the marvelous motto, "I look only at the movements,"⁶⁵ he is acting astonishingly like a precursor of the cinema, multiplying versions of a love scenario (between Agnes and the merman) according to variable speeds and slownesses. He has all the more reason to say that there is no movement that is not infinite; that the movement of the infinite can occur only by means of affect, passion, love, in a becoming that is the girl, but without reference to any kind of "mediation"; and that this movement as such eludes any mediating perception because it is already effectuated at every moment, and the dancer or lover finds him- or herself already "awake and walking" the second he or she falls down, and even the instant he or she leaps.⁶⁶ Movement, like the girl as a fugitive being, cannot be perceived.

However, we are obliged to make an immediate correction: movement also "must" be perceived, it cannot but be perceived, the imperceptible is also the *percipiendum*. There is no contradiction in this. If movement is imperceptible by nature, it is so always in relation to a given threshold of perception, which is by nature relative and thus plays the role of a mediation on the plane that effects the distribution of thresholds and percepts and makes forms perceptible to perceiving subjects. It is the plane of organization and development, the plane of transcendence, that renders perceptible without itself being perceived, without being capable of being perceived. But on the *other* plane, the plane of immanence or consistency, the principle of composition itself must be perceived, cannot but be perceived at the same time as that which it composes or renders. In this case, movement is no longer tied to the mediation of a relative threshold that it eludes ad infinitum; it has reached, regardless of its speed or slowness, an absolute but differentiated threshold that is one with the construction of

this or that region of the continued plane. It could also be said that movement ceases to be the procedure of an always relative deterritorialization, becoming the process of absolute deterritorialization. The difference between the two planes accounts for the fact that what cannot be perceived on one cannot but be perceived on the other. It is in jumping from one plane to the other, or from the relative thresholds to the absolute threshold that coexists with them, that the imperceptible becomes necessarily perceived. Kierkegaard shows that the plane of the infinite, which he calls the plane of faith, must become a pure plane of immanence that continually and immediately imparts, reimparts, and regathers the finite: unlike the man of infinite resignation, the knight of the faith or man of becoming will get the girl, he will have all of the finite and perceive the imperceptible, as “heir apparent to the finite.”⁶⁷ Perception will no longer reside in the relation between a subject and an object, but rather in the movement serving as the limit of that relation, in the period associated with the subject and object. Perception will confront its own limit; it will be in the midst of things, throughout its own proximity, as the presence of one haecceity in another, the prehension of one by the other or the passage from one to the other: Look only at the movements.

It is odd that the word “faith” should be used to designate a plane that works by immanence. But if the knight is the man of becoming, then there are all kinds of knights. Are there not even knights of narcotics, in the sense that faith is a drug (in a way very different from the sense in which religion is an opiate)? These knights claim that drugs, under necessary conditions of caution and experimentation, are inseparable from the deployment of a plane. And on this plane not only are becomings-woman, becomings-animal, becomings-molecular, becomings-imperceptible conjugated, but the imperceptible itself becomes necessarily perceived at the same time as perception becomes necessarily molecular: arrive at holes, microintervals between matters, colors and sounds engulfing lines of flight, world lines, lines of transparency and intersection.⁶⁸ *Change perception*; the problem has been formulated correctly because it presents “drugs” as a pregnant whole free of secondary distinctions (hallucinatory or nonhallucinatory, hard or soft, etc.). All drugs fundamentally concern speeds, and modifications of speed. What allows us to describe an overall Drug assemblage in spite of the differences between drugs is a line of perceptive causality that makes it so that (1) the imperceptible is perceived; (2) perception is molecular; (3) desire directly invests the perception and the perceived. The Americans of the beat generation had already embarked on this path, and spoke of a molecular revolution specific to drugs. Then came Castaneda’s broad synthesis. Leslie Fiedler set forth the poles of the American Dream: cornered between two nightmares, the genocide of the Indians and the slav-

ery of the blacks, Americans constructed a psychically repressed image of the black as the force of affect, of the multiplication of affects, but a socially repressed image of the Indian as subtlety of perception, perception made increasingly keen and more finely divided, infinitely slowed or accelerated.⁶⁹ In Europe, Henri Michaux tended to be more willing to free himself of rites and civilizations, establishing admirable and minute protocols of experience, doing away with the question of causality with respect to drugs, delimiting drugs as well as possible, separating them from delirium and hallucination. But at this point everything reconnects: again, the problem is well formulated if we say that drugs eliminate forms and persons, if we bring into play the mad speeds of drugs and the extraordinary posthigh slownesses, if we clasp one to the other like wrestlers, if we confer upon perception the molecular power to grasp microperceptions, microoperations, and upon the perceived the force to emit accelerated or decelerated particles in a floating time that is no longer our time, and to emit haecceities that are no longer of this world: deterritorialization, "I was disoriented . . ." (a perception of things, thoughts, desires in which desire, thought, and the thing have invaded all of perception: the imperceptible finally perceived). Nothing left but the world of speeds and slownesses without form, without subject, without a face. Nothing left but the zigzag of a line, like "the lash of the whip of an enraged cart driver" shredding faces and landscapes.⁷⁰ A whole rhizomatic labor of perception, the moment when desire and perception meld.

This problem of specific causality is an important one. Invoking causalities that are too general or are extrinsic (psychological or sociological) is as good as saying nothing. There is a discourse on drugs current today that does no more than dredge up generalities on pleasure and misfortune, on difficulties in communication, on causes that always come from somewhere else. The more incapable people are of grasping a specific causality in extension, the more they pretend to understand the phenomenon in question. There is no doubt that an assemblage never contains a causal infrastructure. It does have, however, and to the highest degree, an abstract line of creative or specific causality, its *line of flight or of deterritorialization*; this line can be effectuated only in connection with general causalities of another nature, but is in no way explained by them. It is our belief that the issue of drugs can be understood only at the level where desire directly invests perception, and perception becomes molecular at the same time as the imperceptible is perceived. Drugs then appear as the agent of this becoming. This is where pharmacoanalysis would come in, which must be both compared and contrasted to psychoanalysis. For psychoanalysis must be taken simultaneously as a model, a contrasting approach, and a betrayal. Psychoanalysis can be taken as a model of reference because it was able,

with respect to essentially affective phenomena, to construct the schema of a specific causality divorced from ordinary social or psychological generalities. But this schema still relies on a plane of organization that can never be apprehended in itself, that is always concluded from something else, that is always inferred, concealed from the system of perception: it is called the Unconscious. Thus the plane of the Unconscious remains a plane of transcendence guaranteeing, justifying, the existence of psychoanalysis and the necessity of its interpretations. This plane of the Unconscious stands in molar opposition to the perception-consciousness system, and because desire must be *translated* onto this plane, it is itself linked to gross molarities, like the submerged part of an iceberg (the Oedipal structure, or the rock of castration). The imperceptible thus remains all the more imperceptible because it is opposed to the perceived in a dualism machine. Everything is different on the plane of consistency or immanence, which is necessarily perceived in its own right in the course of its construction: experimentation replaces interpretation, now molecular, nonfigurative, and nonsymbolic, the unconscious as such is given in microperceptions; desire directly invests the field of perception, where the imperceptible appears as the perceived object of desire itself, “the nonfigurative of desire.” The unconscious no longer designates the hidden principle of the transcendent plane of organization, but the process of the immanent plane of consistency as it appears on itself in the course of its construction. For the unconscious must be constructed, not rediscovered. There is no longer a conscious-unconscious dualism machine, because the unconscious is, or rather is produced, there where consciousness goes, carried by the plane.⁷¹ Drugs give the unconscious the immanence and plane that psychoanalysis has consistently botched (perhaps the famous cocaine episode marked a turning point that forced Freud to renounce a direct approach to the unconscious).

But if it is true that drugs are linked to this immanent, molecular perceptual causality, we are still faced with the question of whether they actually succeed in drawing the plane necessary for their action. The causal line, or the line of flight, of drugs is constantly being segmentarized under the most rigid of forms, that of dependency, the hit and the dose, the dealer. Even in its supple form, it can mobilize gradients and thresholds of perception toward becomings-animal, becomings-molecular, but even this is done in the context of a relativity of thresholds that restrict themselves to imitating a plane of consistency rather than drawing it on an absolute threshold. What good does it do to perceive as fast as a quick-flying bird if speed and movement continue to escape somewhere else? The deterritorializations remain relative, compensated for by the most abject reterritorializations, so that the imperceptible and perception continually pursue or run after

each other without ever truly coupling. Instead of holes in the world allowing the world lines themselves to run off, the lines of flight coil and start to swirl in black holes; to each addict a hole, group or individual, like a snail. Down, instead of high. The molecular microperceptions are overlaid in advance, depending on the drug, by hallucinations, delusions, false perceptions, phantasies, or paranoid outbursts; they restore forms and subjects every instant, like so many phantoms or doubles continually blocking construction of the plane. Moreover, as we saw in our enumeration of the dangers, not only is the plane of consistency in danger of being betrayed or thrown offtrack through the influence of other causalities that intervene in an assemblage of this kind, but the plane itself engenders dangers of its own, by which it is dismantled at the same time as it is constructed. We are no longer, it itself is no longer *master of speeds*. Instead of making a body without organs sufficiently rich or full for the passage of intensities, drug addicts erect a vitrified or emptied body, or a cancerous one: the causal line, creative line, or line of flight immediately turns into a line of death and abolition. The abominable vitrification of the veins, or the purulence of the nose—the glassy body of the addict. Black holes and lines of death, Artaud's and Michaux's warnings converge (they are more technical, more consistent than the informational, psychoanalytic, or sociopsychological discourse of treatment and assistance centers). Artaud: You will not avoid hallucinations, erroneous perceptions, shameless phantasies, or bad feelings, like so many black holes on the plane of consistency, because your conscious will also go in that booby-trapped direction.⁷² Michaux: You will no longer be master of your speeds, you will get stuck in a mad race between the imperceptible and perception, a race all the more circular now that everything is relative.⁷³ You will be full of yourself, you will lose control, you will be on a plane of consistency, in a body without organs, but at a place where you will always botch them, empty them, undo what you do, motionless rags. These words are so much simpler than “erroneous perceptions” (Artaud) or “bad feelings” (Michaux), but say the most technical of things: that the immanent molecular and perceptive causality of desire fails in the drug-assemblage. Drug addicts continually fall back into what they wanted to escape: a segmentarity all the more rigid for being marginal, a territorialization all the more artificial for being based on chemical substances, hallucinatory forms, and phantasy subjectifications. Drug addicts may be considered as precursors or experimenters who tirelessly blaze new paths of life, but their cautiousness lacks the foundation for caution. So they either join the legion of false heroes who follow the conformist path of a little death and a long fatigue. Or, what is worse, all they will have done is make an attempt only nonusers or former users can resume and benefit from, secondarily rectifying the always aborted plane of drugs, discovering

through drugs what drugs lack for the construction of a plane of consistency. Is the mistake drug users make always to start over again from ground zero, either going on the drug again or quitting, when what they should do is make it a stopover, to start from the “middle,” bifurcate from the middle? To succeed in getting drunk, but on pure water (Henry Miller). To succeed in getting high, but by abstention, “to take and abstain, especially abstain,” I am a drinker of water (Michaux). To reach the point where “to get high or not to get high” is no longer the question, but rather whether drugs have sufficiently changed the general conditions of space and time perception so that nonusers can succeed in passing through the holes in the world and following the lines of flight at the very place where means other than drugs become necessary. Drugs do not guarantee immanence; rather, the immanence of drugs allows one to forgo them. Is it cowardice or exploitation to wait until others have taken the risks? No, it is joining an undertaking in the middle, while changing the means. It is necessary to choose the right molecule, the water, hydrogen, or helium molecule. This has nothing to do with models, all models are molar: it is necessary to determine the molecules and particles in relation to which “proximities” (indiscernibilities, becomings) are engendered and defined. The vital assemblage, the life-assemblage, is *theoretically or logically* possible with all kinds of molecules, silicon, for example. But it so happens that this assemblage is not *machinic* possible with silicon: the abstract machine does not let it pass because it does not distribute zones of proximity that construct the plane of consistency.⁷⁴ We shall see that machinic reasons are entirely different from logical reasons or possibilities. One does not conform to a model, one straddles the right horse. Drug users have not chosen the right molecule or the right horse. Drugs are too unwieldy to grasp the imperceptible and becomings-imperceptible; drug users believed that drugs would grant them the plane, when in fact the plane must distill its own drugs, remaining master of speeds and proximities.

Memories of the Secret. The secret has a privileged, but quite variable, relation to perception and the imperceptible. The secret relates first of all to certain contents. The content is *too big* for its form . . . or else the contents themselves have a form, but that form is covered, doubled, or replaced by a simple container, envelope, or box whose role it is to suppress formal relations. These are contents it has been judged fitting to isolate or disguise for various reasons. Drawing up a list of these reasons (shame, treasure, divinity, etc.) has limited value as long as the secret is opposed to its discovery as in a binary machine having only two terms, the secret and disclosure, the secret and desecration. For on the one hand, the secret as content is superseded by a perception of the secret, which is no less secret

than the secret. It matters little what the goal is, and whether the aim of the perception is a denunciation, final divulging, or disclosure. From an anecdotal standpoint, the perception of the secret is the opposite of the secret, but from the standpoint of the concept, it is a part of it. What counts is that the perception of the secret must necessarily be secret itself: the spy, the voyeur, the blackmailer, the author of anonymous letters are no less secretive than what they are in a position to disclose, regardless of their ulterior motives. There is always a woman, a child, a bird to secretly perceive the secret. There is always a perception finer than yours, a perception of your imperceptible, of what is in your box. We can even envision a profession of secrecy for those who are in a position to perceive the secret. The protector of the secret is not necessarily in on it, but is also tied to a perception, since he or she must perceive and detect those who wish to discover the secret (counterespionage). There is thus a first direction, in which the secret moves toward an equally secretive perception, a perception that seeks to be imperceptible itself. A wide variety of very different figures may revolve around this first point. And then there is a second point, just as inseparable from the secret as its content: the way in which it imposes itself and spreads. Once again, whatever the finalities or results, the secret has a way of spreading that is in turn shrouded in secrecy. The secret as secretion. The secret must sneak, insert, or introduce itself into the arena of public forms; it must pressure them and prod known subjects into action (we are referring to influence of the "lobby" type, even if the lobby is not in itself a secret society).

In short, the secret, defined as a content that has hidden its form in favor of a simple container, is inseparable from two movements that can accidentally interrupt its course or betray it, but are nonetheless an essential part of it: something must ooze from the box, something will be perceived through the box or in the half-opened box. The secret was invented by society; it is a sociological or social notion. Every secret is a collective assemblage. The secret is not at all an immobilized or static notion. Only becomings are secrets; the secret has a becoming. The secret has its origin in the war machine; it is the war machine and its becomings-woman, becomings-child, becomings-animal that bring the secret.⁷⁵ A secret society always acts in society as a war machine. Sociologists who have studied secret societies have determined many of their laws: protection, equalization and hierarchy, silence, ritual, deindividuation, centralization, autonomy, compartmentalization, etc.⁷⁶ But perhaps they have not given enough weight to the principal laws governing the movement of content: (1) every secret society has a still more secret hindsociety, which either perceives the secret, protects it, or metes out the punishment for its disclosure (it is not at all begging the question to define the secret society by the

presence of a secret hindsociety: a society is secret when it exhibits this doubling, has this special section); (2) every secret society has its own mode of action, which is in turn secret; the secret society may act by influence, creeping, insinuation, oozing, pressure, or invisible rays; "passwords" and secret languages (there is no contradiction here; the secret society cannot live without the universal project of permeating all of society, of creeping into all of the forms of society, disrupting its hierarchy and segmentation; the secret hierarchy conjugates with a conspiracy of equals, it commands its members to swim in society as fish in water, but conversely society must be like water around fish; it needs the complicity of the entire surrounding society). This is evident in cases as diverse as the mob groups of the United States and the animal-men of Africa: on the one hand, there is the mode of influence of the secret society and its leaders on the political or public figures of its surroundings; and on the other hand, there is the secret society's mode of doubling itself with a hindsociety, which may constitute a special section of killers or guards.⁷⁷ Influence and doubling, secretion and concretion, every secret operates between two "discreets" [*discrets*: also "discrete (terms)"—Trans.] that can, moreover, link or meld in certain cases. The child's secret combines these elements to marvelous effect: the secret as a content in a box, the secret influence and propagation of the secret, the secret perception of the secret (the child's secret is not composed of miniaturized adult secrets but is necessarily accompanied by a secret perception of the adult secret). A child discovers a secret . . .

But the becoming of the secret compels it not to content itself with concealing its form in a simple container, or with swapping it for a container. The secret, as secret, must now acquire its own form. The secret is elevated from a finite content to the infinite form of secrecy. This is the point at which the secret attains absolute imperceptibility, instead of being linked to a whole interplay of relative perceptions and reactions. We go from a content that is well defined, localized, and belongs to the past, to the a priori general form of a nonlocalizable *something* that has happened. We go from the secret defined as a hysterical childhood content to secrecy defined as an eminently virile paranoid form. And this form displays the same two concomitants of the secret, the secret perception and the mode of action by secret influence; but these concomitants have become "traits" of a form they ceaselessly reconstitute, reform, recharge. On the one hand, paranoiacs denounce the international plot of those who steal their secrets, their most intimate thoughts; or they declare that they have the gift of perceiving the secrets of others before they have formed (someone with paranoid jealousy does not apprehend the other in the act of escaping; they divine or foresee the slightest intention of it). On the other hand, paranoiacs act by means of, or else suffer from, rays they emit or receive (Raymond

Roussel and Schreber). Influence by rays, and doubling by flight or echo, are what now give the secret its infinite form, in which perceptions as well as actions pass into imperceptibility. Paranoid judgment is like an anticipation of perception replacing empirical research into boxes and their contents: *guilty a priori*, and in any event! (for example, the evolution of the narrator of the *Recherche* in relation to Albertine). We can say, in summary fashion, that psychoanalysis has gone from a hysterical to an increasingly paranoid conception of the secret.⁷⁸ Interminable analysis: the Unconscious has been assigned the increasingly difficult task of itself being the infinite form of secrecy, instead of a simple box containing secrets. You will tell all, but in saying everything you will say nothing because all the “art” of psychoanalysis is required in order to measure your contents against the pure form. At this point, however, after the secret has been raised to the level of a form in this way, an inevitable adventure befalls it. When the question “What happened?” attains this infinite virile form, the answer is necessarily that nothing happened, and both form and content are destroyed. The news travels fast that the secret of men is nothing, in truth nothing at all. Oedipus, the phallus, castration, “the splinter in the flesh”—that was the secret? It is enough to make women, children, lunatics, and molecules laugh.

The more the secret is made into a structuring, organizing form, the thinner and more ubiquitous it becomes, the more its content becomes molecular, at the same time as its form dissolves. It really wasn’t much, as Jocasta says. The secret does not as a result disappear, but it does take on a more feminine status. What was behind President Schreber’s paranoid secret all along, if not a becoming-feminine, a becoming-woman? For women do not handle the secret in at all the same way as men (except when they reconstitute an inverted image of virile secrecy, a kind of secrecy of the gynæceum). Men alternately fault them for their indiscretion, their gossiping, and for their solidarity, their betrayal. Yet it is curious how a woman can be secretive while at the same time hiding nothing, by virtue of transparency, innocence, and speed. The complex assemblage of secrecy in courtly love is properly feminine and operates in the most complete transparency. Celery against gravity. The celerity of a war machine against the gravity of a State apparatus. Men adopt a grave attitude, knights of the secret: “You see what burden I bear: my seriousness, my discretion.” But they end up telling everything—and it turns out to be nothing. There are women, on the other hand, who tell everything, sometimes in appalling technical detail, but one knows no more at the end than at the beginning; they have hidden everything by celerity, by limpidity. They have no secret because they have become a secret themselves. Are they more politic than we? Iphigenia. *Innocent a priori*. That is the girl’s defense against the

judgment proffered by men: “guilty a priori” . . . This is where the secret reaches its ultimate state: its content is molecularized, it has become molecular, at the same time as its form has been dismantled, becoming a pure moving line—in the sense in which it can be said a given line is the “secret” of a painter, or a given rhythmic cell, a given sound molecule (which does not constitute a theme or form) the “secret” of a musician.

If ever there was a writer who dealt with the secret, it was Henry James. In this respect, he went through an entire evolution, like a perfecting of his art. For he began by looking for the secret in contents, even insignificant, half-opened ones, contents briefly glimpsed. Then he raised the possibility of there being an infinite form of secrecy that no longer even requires a content and that has conquered the imperceptible. But he raises this possibility only in order to ask the question, Is the secret in the content or in the form? And the answer is already apparent: *neither*.⁷⁹ James is one of those writers who is swept up in an irresistible becoming-woman. He never stopped pursuing his goal, inventing the necessary technical means. Molecularize the content of the secret and linearize its form. James explored it all, from the becoming-child of the secret (there is always a child who discovers secrets: *What Maisie Knew*) to the becoming-woman of the secret (secrecy by a transparency that is no longer anything more than a pure line that scarcely leaves any traces of its own passage; the admirable *Daisy Miller*). James is not as close to Proust as people say; it is he who raises the cry, “Innocent a priori!” (all Daisy asked for was a little respect, she would have given her love for that . . .) in opposition to the “Guilty a priori” that condemns Albertine. What counts in the secret is less its three states (child’s content, virile infinite form, pure feminine line) than the becomings attached to them, the becoming-child of the secret, its becoming-feminine, its becoming-molecular—which occur precisely at the point where the secret has lost both its content and its form, where the imperceptible, the clandestine with nothing left to hide, has finally been perceived. From the gray eminence to the gray immanence. *Oedipus passes through all three secrets*: the secret of the sphinx whose box he penetrates; the secret that weighs upon him as the infinite form of his own guilt; and finally, the secret at Colonus that makes him inaccessible and melds with the pure line of his flight and exile, he who has nothing left to hide, or, like an old No actor, has only a girl’s mask with which to cover his lack of a face. Some people can talk, hide nothing, not lie: they are secret by transparency, as impenetrable as water, in truth incomprehensible. Whereas the others have a secret that is always breached, even though they surround it with a thick wall or elevate it to an infinite form.

Memories and Becomings, Points and Blocks. Why are there so many becomings of man, but no becoming-man? First because man is majoritarian par excellence, whereas becomings are minoritarian; all becoming is a becoming-minoritarian. When we say majority, we are referring not to a greater relative quantity but to the determination of a state or standard in relation to which larger quantities, as well as the smallest, can be said to be minoritarian: white-man, adult-male, etc. Majority implies a state of domination, not the reverse. It is not a question of knowing whether there are more mosquitoes or flies than men, but of knowing how "man" constituted a standard in the universe in relation to which men necessarily (analytically) form a majority. The majority in a government presupposes the right to vote, and not only is established among those who possess that right but is exercised over those who do not, however great their numbers; similarly, the majority in the universe assumes as pre-given the right and power of man.⁸⁰ In this sense women, children, but also animals, plants, and molecules, are minoritarian. It is perhaps the special situation of women in relation to the man-standard that accounts for the fact that becomings, being minoritarian, always pass through a becoming-woman. It is important not to confuse "minoritarian," as a becoming or process, with a "minority," as an aggregate or a state. Jews, Gypsies, etc., may constitute minorities under certain conditions, but that in itself does not make them becomings. One reterritorializes, or allows oneself to be reterritorialized, on a minority as a state; but in a becoming, one is deterritorialized. Even blacks, as the Black Panthers said, must become-black. Even women must become-woman. Even Jews must become-Jewish (it certainly takes more than a state). But if this is the case, then becoming-Jewish necessarily affects the non-Jew as much as the Jew. Becoming-woman necessarily affects men as much as women. In a way, the subject in a becoming is always "man," but only when he enters a becoming-minoritarian that rends him from his major identity. As in Arthur Miller's novel, *Focus*, or Losey's film, *Mr. Klein*: it is the non-Jew who becomes Jewish, who is swept up in, carried off by, this becoming after being rent from his standard of measure. Conversely, if Jews themselves must become-Jewish, if women must become-woman, if children must become-child, if blacks must become-black, it is because only a minority is capable of serving as the active medium of becoming, but under such conditions that it ceases to be a definable aggregate in relation to the majority. Becoming-Jewish, becoming-woman, etc., therefore imply two simultaneous movements, one by which a term (the subject) is withdrawn from the majority, and another by which a term (the medium or agent) rises up from the minority. There is an asymmetrical and indissociable block of becoming, a block of alliance: the two "Mr. Kleins,"

the Jew and the non-Jew, enter into a becoming-Jewish (the same thing happens in *Focus*).

A woman has to become-woman, but in a becoming-woman of all man. A Jew becomes Jewish, but in a becoming-Jewish of the non-Jew. A becoming-minoritarian exists only by virtue of a deterritorialized medium and subject that are like its elements. There is no subject of the becoming except as a deterritorialized variable of the majority; there is no medium of becoming except as a deterritorialized variable of a minority. We can be thrown into a becoming by anything at all, by the most unexpected, most insignificant of things. You don't deviate from the majority unless there is a little detail that starts to swell and carries you off. It is because the hero of *Focus*, the average American, needs glasses that give his nose a vaguely Semitic air, it is "because of the glasses" that he is thrown into this strange adventure of the becoming-Jewish of the non-Jew. Anything at all can do the job, but it always turns out to be a political affair. Becoming-minoritarian is a political affair and necessitates a labor of power (*puissance*), an active micropolitics. This is the opposite of macropolitics, and even of History, in which it is a question of knowing how to win or obtain a majority. As Faulkner said, to avoid ending up a fascist there was no other choice but to become-black.⁸¹ Unlike history, becoming cannot be conceptualized in terms of past and future. Becoming-revolutionary remains indifferent to questions of a future and a past of the revolution; it passes between the two. Every becoming is a block of coexistence. The so-called ahistorical societies set themselves outside history, not because they are content to reproduce immutable models or are governed by a fixed structure, but because they are societies of becoming (war societies, secret societies, etc.). There is no history but of the majority, or of minorities as defined in relation to the majority. And yet "how to win the majority" is a totally secondary problem in relation to the advances of the imperceptible.

Let us try to say it another way: There is no becoming-man because man is the molar entity par excellence, whereas becomings are molecular. The faciality function showed us the form under which man constitutes the majority, or rather the standard upon which the majority is based: white, male, adult, "rational," etc., in short, the average European, the subject of enunciation. Following the law of arborescence, it is this central Point that moves across all of space or the entire screen, and at every turn nourishes a certain distinctive opposition, depending on which faciality trait is retained: male-(female), adult-(child), white-(black, yellow, or red); rational-(animal). The central point, or third eye, thus has the property of organizing binary distributions within the dualism machines, and of reproducing itself in the principal term of the opposition; the entire opposition at the same time resonates in the central point. The constitution of a

“majority” as redundancy. Man constitutes himself as a gigantic memory, through the position of the central point, its frequency (insofar as it is necessarily reproduced by each dominant point), and its resonance (insofar as all of the points tie in with it). Any line that goes from one point to another in the aggregate of the molar system, and is thus defined by points answering to these mnemonic conditions of frequency and resonance, is a part of the arborescent system.⁸²

What constitutes arborescence is the submission of the line to the point. Of course, the child, the woman, the black have memories; but the Memory that collects those memories is still a virile majoritarian agency treating them as “childhood memories,” as conjugal, or colonial memories. It is possible to operate by establishing a conjunction or collocation of contiguous points rather than a relation between distant points: you would then have phantasies rather than memories. For example, a woman can have a female point alongside a male point, and a man a male point alongside a female one. The constitution of these hybrids, however, does not take us very far in the direction of a true becoming (for example, bisexuality, as the psychoanalysts note, in no way precludes the prevalence of the masculine or the majority of the “phallus”). One does not break with the arborescent schema, one does not reach becoming or the molecular, as long as a line is connected to two distant points, or is composed of two contiguous points. A line of becoming is not defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary, it passes *between* points, it comes up through the middle, it runs perpendicular to the points first perceived, transversally to the localizable relation to distant or contiguous points.⁸³ A point is always a point of origin. But a line of becoming has neither beginning nor end, departure nor arrival, origin nor destination; to speak of the absence of an origin, to make the absence of an origin the origin, is a bad play on words. A line of becoming has only a middle. The middle is not an average; it is fast motion, it is the absolute speed of movement. A becoming is always in the middle; one can only get it by the middle. A becoming is neither one nor two, nor the relation of the two; it is the in-between, the border or line of flight or descent running perpendicular to both. If becoming is a block (a line-block), it is because it constitutes a zone of proximity and indiscernibility, a no-man’s-land, a nonlocalizable relation sweeping up the two distant or contiguous points, carrying one into the proximity of the other—and the border-proximity is indifferent to both contiguity and to distance. The line or block of becoming that unites the wasp and the orchid produces a shared deterritorialization: of the wasp, in that it becomes a liberated piece of the orchid’s reproductive system, but also of the orchid, in that it becomes the object of an orgasm in the wasp, also liberated from its own reproduction. A coexistence of two asymmetrical movements that

combine to form a block, down a line of flight that sweeps away selective pressures. The line, or the block, does not link the wasp to the orchid, any more than it conjugates or mixes them: it passes between them, carrying them away in a shared proximity in which the discernibility of points disappears. The line-system (or block-system) of becoming is opposed to the point-system of memory. Becoming is the movement by which the line frees itself from the point, and renders points indiscernible: the rhizome, the opposite of arborescence; break away from arborescence. *Becoming is an antimemory.* Doubtless, there exists a molecular memory, but as a factor of integration into a majoritarian or molar system. Memories always have a reterritorialization function. On the other hand, a vector of deterritorialization is in no way indeterminate; it is directly plugged into the molecular levels, and the more deterritorialized it is, the stronger is the contact: it is deterritorialization that makes the aggregate of the molecular components “hold together.” From this point of view, one may contrast a *childhood block*, or a becoming-child, with the *childhood memory*: “a” molecular child is produced . . . “a” child coexists with us, in a zone of proximity or a block of becoming, on a line of deterritorialization that carries us both off—as opposed to the child we once were, whom we remember or phantasize, the molar child whose future is the adult. “This will be childhood, but it must not be my childhood,” writes Virginia Woolf. (*Orlando* already does not operate by memories, but by blocks, blocks of ages, block of epochs, blocks of the kingdoms of nature, blocks of sexes, forming so many becomings between things, or so many lines of deterritorialization.)⁸⁴ Wherever we used the word “memories” in the preceding pages, we were wrong to do so; we meant to say “becoming,” we were saying becoming.

If the line is opposed to the point (or blocks to memories, becoming to the faculty of memory), it is not in an absolute way: a punctual system includes a certain utilization of lines, and the block itself assigns the point new functions. In a punctual system, a point basically refers to linear coordinates. Not only are a horizontal line and a vertical line represented, but the vertical moves parallel to itself, and the horizontal superposes other horizontals upon itself; every point is assigned in relation to the two base coordinates, but is also marked on a horizontal line of superposition and on a vertical line or plane of displacement. Finally, two points are connected when any line is drawn from one to the other. *A system is termed punctual when its lines are taken as coordinates in this way, or as localizable connections; for example, systems of arborescence, or molar and mnemonic systems in general, are punctual.* Memory has a punctual organization because every present refers simultaneously to the horizontal line of the *flow of time* (kinematics), which goes from an old present to the actual

present, and the vertical line of the *order* of time (stratigraphy), which goes from the present to the past, or to the representation of the old present. This is, of course, a basic schema that cannot be developed further without running into major complications, but it is the one found in representations of art forming a “didactic” system, in other words, a mnemotechnics. Musical representation, on the one hand, draws a horizontal, melodic line, the bass line, upon which other melodic lines are superposed; points are assigned that enter into relations of counterpoint between lines. On the other hand, it draws a vertical, harmonic line or plane, which moves along the horizontals but is no longer dependent upon them; it runs from high to low and defines a chord capable of linking up with the following chords. Pictorial representation has an analogous form, with means of its own: this is not only because the painting has a vertical and a horizontal, but because the traits and colors, each on its own account, relate to verticals of displacement and horizontals of superposition (for example, the vertical cold form, or white, light and tonality; the horizontal warm form, or black, chromatics and modality, etc.). To cite only relatively recent examples, this is evident in the didactic systems of Kandinsky, Klee, and Mondrian, which necessarily imply an encounter with music.

Let us summarize the principal characteristics of a punctual system: (1) Systems of this kind comprise two base lines, horizontal and vertical; they serve as coordinates for assigning points. (2) The horizontal line can be superposed vertically and the vertical line can be moved horizontally, in such a way that new points are produced or reproduced, under conditions of horizontal frequency and vertical resonance. (3) From one point to another, a line can (or cannot) be drawn, but if it can it takes the form of a localizable connection; diagonals thus play the role of connectors between points of different levels or moments, instituting in their turn frequencies and resonances on the basis of these points of variable horizon or verticon, contiguous or distant.⁸⁵ These systems are arborescent, mnemonic, molar, structural; they are systems of territorialization or reterritorialization. The line and the diagonal remain totally subordinated to the point because they serve as coordinates for a point or as localizable connections for two points, running from one point to another.

Opposed to the punctual system are linear, or rather multilinear, systems. Free the line, free the diagonal: every musician or painter has this intention. One elaborates a punctual system or a didactic representation, but with the aim of making it snap, of sending a tremor through it. A punctual system is most interesting when there is a musician, painter, writer, philosopher to oppose it, who even fabricates it in order to oppose it, like a springboard to jump from. History is made only by those who oppose history (not by those who insert themselves into it, or even reshape it). This is

not done for provocation but happens because the punctual system they found ready-made, or themselves invented, must have allowed this operation: free the line and the diagonal, draw the line instead of plotting a point, produce an imperceptible diagonal instead of clinging to an even elaborated or reformed vertical or horizontal. When this is done it always goes down in History but never comes from it. History may try to break its ties to memory; it may make the schemas of memory more elaborate, superpose and shift coordinates, emphasize connections, or deepen breaks. The dividing line, however, is not there. The dividing line passes not between history and memory but between punctual “history-memory” systems and diagonal or multilinear assemblages, which are in no way eternal: they have to do with becoming; they are a bit of becoming in the pure state; they are transhistorical. There is no act of creation that is not transhistorical and does not come up from behind or proceed by way of a liberated line. Nietzsche opposes history not to the eternal but to the subhistorical or superhistorical: the Untimely, which is another name for haecceity, becoming, the innocence of becoming (in other words, forgetting as opposed to memory, geography as opposed to history, the map as opposed to the tracing, the rhizome as opposed to arborescence). “The unhistorical is like an atmosphere within which alone life can germinate and with the destruction of which it must vanish. . . . What deed would man be capable of if he had not first entered into that vaporous region of the unhistorical?”⁸⁶ Creations are like mutant abstract lines that have detached themselves from the task of representing a world, precisely because they assemble a new type of reality that history can only recontain or relocate in punctual systems.

When Boulez casts himself in the role of historian of music, he does so in order to show how a great musician, in a very different manner in each case, invents a kind of diagonal running between the harmonic vertical and the melodic horizon. And in each case it is a different diagonal, a different technique, a creation. Moving along this transversal line, which is really a line of deterritorialization, there is a *sound block* that no longer has a point of origin, since it is always and already in the middle of the line; and no longer has horizontal and vertical coordinates, since it creates its own coordinates; and no longer forms a localizable connection from one point to another, since it is in “nonpulsed time”: a deterritorialized rhythmic block that has abandoned points, coordinates, and measure, like a drunken boat that melds with the line or draws a plane of consistency. Speeds and slownesses inject themselves into musical form, sometimes impelling it to proliferation, linear microproliferations, and sometimes to extinction, sonorous abolition, involution, or both at once. The musician is in the best position to say: “I hate the faculty of memory, I hate memories.” And that is

because he or she affirms the power of becoming. The Viennese school is exemplary of this kind of diagonal, this kind of line-block. But it can equally be said that the Viennese school found a new system of territorialization, of points, verticals, and horizontals that position it in History. Another attempt, another creative act, came after it. The important thing is that all musicians have always proceeded in this way: drawing their own diagonal, however fragile, outside points, outside coordinates and localizable connections, in order to float a sound block down a created, liberated line, in order to unleash in space this mobile and mutant sound block, a haecceity (for example, chromaticism, aggregates, and complex notes, but already the resources and possibilities of polyphony, etc.).⁸⁷ Some have spoken of “oblique vectors” with respect to the organ. The diagonal is often composed of extremely complex lines and spaces of sound. Is that the secret of a little phrase or a rhythmic block? Undoubtedly, the point now assumes a new and essential creative function. It is no longer simply a question of an inevitable destiny reconstituting a punctual system; on the contrary, it is now the point that is subordinated to the line, the point now marks the proliferation of the line, or its sudden deviation, its acceleration, its slowdown, its furor or agony. Mozart’s “microblocks.” The block may even be reduced to a point, as though to a single note (point-block): Berg’s B in *Wozzeck*, Schumann’s A. Homage to Schumann, the madness of Schumann: the cello wanders across the grid of the orchestration, drawing its diagonal, along which the deterritorialized sound block moves; or an extremely sober kind of refrain is “treated” by a very elaborate melodic line and polyphonic architecture.

In a multilinear system, everything happens at once: the line breaks free of the point as origin; the diagonal breaks free of the vertical and the horizontal as coordinates; and the transversal breaks free of the diagonal as a localizable connection between two points. In short, a block-line passes amid (*au milieu des*) sounds and propels itself by its own nonlocalizable middle (*milieu*). The sound block is the *intermezzo*. It is a body without organs, an antimemory pervading musical organization, and is all the more sonorous: “The Schumannian body does not stay in place. . . . The intermezzo [is] consubstantial with the entire Schumannian oeuvre. . . . At the limit, there are only intermezzi. . . . The Schumannian body knows only bifurcations; it does not construct itself, it keeps diverging according to an accumulation of interludes. . . . Schumannian beating is panic, but it is also coded . . . and it is because the panic of the blows apparently keeps within the limits of a docile language that it is ordinarily not perceived. . . . Let us imagine for tonality two contradictory (and yet concomitant) statuses. On the one hand . . . a screen, a language intended to articulate the body . . . according to a known organization. . . . On the other hand, contra-

dictorily . . . tonality becomes the ready servant of the beats within another level it claims to domesticate.”⁸⁸

Does the same thing, strictly the same thing, apply to painting? In effect, the point does not make the line; the line sweeps away the deterritorialized point, carries it off under its outside influence; the line does not go from one point to another, but runs *between points* in a different direction that renders them indiscernible. The line has become the diagonal, which has broken free from the vertical and the horizontal. But the diagonal has already become the transversal, the semidiagonal or free straight line, the broken or angular line, or the curve—always in the midst of themselves. Between the white vertical and the black horizontal lie Klee’s gray, Kandinsky’s red, Monet’s purple; each forms a block of color. This line is without origin, since it always begins off the painting, which only holds it by the middle; it is without coordinates, because it melds with a plane of consistency upon which it floats and that it creates; it is without localizable connection, because it has lost not only its representative function but any function of outlining a form of any kind—by this token, the line has become abstract, truly abstract and mutant, a visual block; and under these conditions the point assumes creative functions again, as a color-point or line-point.⁸⁹ The line is between points, in their midst, and no longer goes from one point to another. It does not outline a shape. “He did not paint things, he painted between things.” There is no falser problem in painting than depth and, in particular, perspective. For perspective is only a historical manner of occupying diagonals or transversals, lines of flight [*lignes de fuite*: here, the lines in a painting moving toward the vanishing point, or *point de fuite*—Trans.], in other words, of reterritorializing the moving visual block. We use the word “occupy” in the sense of “giving an occupation to,” fixing a memory and a code, assigning a function. But the lines of flight, the transversals, are suitable for many other functions besides this molar function. Lines of flight as perspective lines, far from being made to represent depth, themselves invent the possibility of such a representation, which occupies them only for an instant, at a given moment. Perspective, and even depth, are the reterritorialization of lines of flight, which alone created painting by carrying it farther. What is called central perspective in particular plunged the multiplicity of escapes and the dynamism of lines into a punctual black hole. Conversely, it is true that problems of perspective triggered a whole profusion of creative lines, a mass release of visual blocks, at the very moment they claimed to have gained mastery over them. Is painting, in each of its acts of creation, engaged in a becoming as intense as that of music?

Becoming-Music. We have tried to define in the case of Western music (although the other musical traditions confront an analogous problem, under different conditions, to which they find different solutions) a block of becoming at the level of expression, or a block of expression: this block of becoming rests on transversals that continually escape from the coordinates or punctual systems functioning as musical codes at a given moment. It is obvious that there is a block of content corresponding to this block of expression. It is not really a correspondence; there would be no mobile “block” if a content, itself musical (and not a subject or a theme), were not always interfering with the expression. What does music deal with, what is the content indissociable from sound expression? It is hard to say, but it is something: *a child dies, a child plays, a woman is born, a woman dies, a bird arrives, a bird flies off*. We wish to say that these are not accidental themes in music (even if it is possible to multiply examples), much less imitative exercises; they are something essential. Why a child, a woman, a bird? It is because musical expression is inseparable from a becoming-woman, a becoming-child, a becoming-animal that constitute its content. Why does the child die, or the bird fall as though pierced by an arrow? Because of the “danger” inherent in any line that escapes, in any line of flight or creative deterritorialization: the danger of veering toward destruction, toward abolition. Mélisande [in Debussy’s opera, *Pelléas et Mélisande* —Trans.], a child-woman, a secret, dies twice (“it’s the poor little dear’s turn now”). Music is never tragic, music is joy. But there are times it necessarily gives us a taste for death; not so much happiness as dying happily, being extinguished. Not as a function of a death instinct it allegedly awakens in us, but of a dimension proper to its sound assemblage, to its sound machine, the moment that must be confronted, the moment the transversal turns into a line of abolition. Peace and exasperation.⁹⁰ Music has a thirst for destruction, every kind of destruction, extinction, breakage, dislocation. Is that not its potential “fascism”? Whenever a musician writes *In Memoriam*, it is not so much a question of an inspirational motif or a memory, but on the contrary of a becoming that is only confronting its own danger, even taking a fall in order to rise again: a becoming-child, a becoming-woman, a becoming-animal, insofar as they are the content of music itself and continue to the point of death.

We would say that the *refrain* is properly musical content, the block of content proper to music. A child comforts itself in the dark or claps its hands or invents a way of walking, adapting it to the cracks in the sidewalk, or chants “Fort-Da” (psychoanalysts deal with the Fort-Da very poorly when they treat it as a phonological opposition or a symbolic component of the language-unconscious, when it is in fact a refrain). Tra la la. A woman sings to herself, “I heard her softly singing a tune to herself under her

breath." A bird launches into its refrain. All of music is pervaded by bird songs, in a thousand different ways, from Jannequin to Messiaen. Frr, Frr. Music is pervaded by childhood blocks, by blocks of femininity. Music is pervaded by every minority, and yet composes an immense power. Children's, women's, ethnic, and territorial refrains, refrains of love and destruction: the birth of rhythm. Schumann's work is made of refrains, of childhood blocks, which he treats in a very special way: his own kind of becoming-child, his own kind of becoming-woman, Clara. It would be possible to catalogue the transversal or diagonal utilizations of the refrain in the history of music, all of the children's Games and *Kinderszenen*, all of the bird songs. But such a catalogue would be useless because it would seem like a multiplication of examples of themes, subjects, and motifs, when it is in fact a question of the most essential and necessary content of music. The motif of the refrain may be anxiety, fear, joy, love, work, walking, territory . . . but the refrain itself is the content of music.

We are not at all saying that the refrain is the origin of music, or that music begins with it. It is not really known when music begins. The refrain is rather a means of preventing music, warding it off, or forgoing it. But music exists because the refrain exists also, because music takes up the refrain, lays hold of it as a content in a form of expression, because it forms a block with it in order to take it somewhere else. *The child's refrain, which is not music, forms a block with the becoming-child of music:* once again, this asymmetrical composition is necessary. "Ah, vous dirai-je maman" ("Ah, mamma, now you shall know") in Mozart, Mozart's refrains. A theme in C, followed by twelve variations; not only is each note of the theme doubled, but the theme is doubled internally. Music submits the refrain to this very special treatment of the diagonal or transversal, it uproots the refrain from its territoriality. Music is a creative, active operation that consists in deterritorializing the refrain. Whereas the refrain is essentially territorial, territorializing, or reterritorializing, music makes it a deterritorialized content for a deterritorializing form of expression. Pardon that sentence: what musicians do should be musical, it should be written in music. Instead, we will give a figurative example: Mussorgsky's "Lullaby," in *Songs and Dances of Death*, presents an exhausted mother sitting up with her sick child; she is relieved by a visitor, Death, who sings a lullaby in which each couplet ends with an obsessive, sober refrain, a repetitive rhythm with only one note, a point-block: "Shush, little child, sleep my little child" (not only does the child die, but the deterritorialization of the refrain is doubled by Death in person, who replaces the mother).

Is the situation similar for painting, and if so, how? In no way do we believe in a fine-arts system; we believe in very diverse problems whose solutions are found in heterogeneous arts. To us, Art is a false concept, a

solely nominal concept; this does not, however, preclude the possibility of a simultaneous usage of the various arts within a determinable multiplicity. The “problem” within which painting is inscribed is that of the *face-landscape*. That of music is entirely different: it is the problem of the *refrain*. Each arises at a certain moment, under certain conditions, on the line of its problem; but there is no possible structural or symbolic correspondence between the two, unless one translates them into punctual systems. We have distinguished the following three states of the landscape problem: (1) semiotic systems of corporeality, silhouettes, postures, colors, and lines (these semiotic systems are already present in profusion among animals; the head is part of the body, and the body has the milieu, the biotope as its correlate; these systems already display very pure lines as, for example, in the “grass stem” behavior); (2) an organization of the face, white wall/black holes, face/eyes, or facial profile/sideview of the eyes (this semiotic system of faciality has the landscape as its correlate: facialization of the entire body and landscapification of all the milieus, Christ as the European central point); (3) a deterritorialization of faces and landscapes, in favor of probe-heads whose lines no longer outline a form or form a contour, and whose colors no longer lay out a landscape (this is the pictorial semiotic system: Put the face and the landscape to flight. For example, what Mondrian correctly calls a “landscape”: a pure, absolutely deterritorialized landscape).

For convenience, we presented three successive and distinct states, but only provisionally. We cannot decide whether animals have painting, even though they do not paint on canvas, and even when hormones induce their colors and lines; even here, there is little foundation for a clear-cut distinction between animals and human beings. Conversely, we must say that painting does not begin with so-called abstract art but recreates the silhouettes and postures of corporeality, and is already fully in operation in the face-landscape organization (the way in which painters “work” the face of Christ, and make it leak from the religious code in all directions). The aim of painting has always been the deterritorialization of faces and landscapes, either by a reactivation of corporeality, or by a liberation of lines or colors, or both at the same time. There are many becomings-animal, becomings-woman, and becomings-child in painting.

The problem of music is different, if it is true that its problem is the refrain. Deterritorializing the refrain, inventing lines of deterritorialization for the refrain, implies procedures and constructions that have nothing to do with those of painting (outside of vague analogies of the sort painters have often tried to establish). Again, it is not certain whether we can draw a dividing line between animals and human beings: Are there not, as Messiaen believes, musician birds and nonmusician birds? Is the bird’s

refrain necessarily territorial, or is it not already used for very subtle deterritorializations, for selective lines of flight? The difference between noise and sound is definitely not a basis for a definition of music, or even for the distinction between musician birds and nonmusician birds. Rather, it is the *labor of the refrain*: Does it remain territorial and territorializing, or is it carried away in a moving block that draws a transversal across all coordinates—and all of the intermediaries between the two? Music is precisely the adventure of the refrain: the way music lapses back into a refrain (in our head, in Swann's head, in the pseudo-probe-heads on TV and radio, the music of a great musician used as a signature tune, a ditty); the way it lays hold of the refrain, makes it more and more sober, reduced to a few notes, then takes it down a creative line that is so much richer, no origin or end of which is in sight . . .

Leroi-Gourhan established a distinction and correlation between two poles, "hand-tool" and "face-language." But there it was a question of distinguishing a form of content and a form of expression. Here we are considering expressions that hold their content within themselves, so we must make a different distinction: the face with its visual correlates (eyes) concerns painting; the voice with its auditory correlates (the ear is itself a refrain, it is shaped like one) concerns music. Music is a deterritorialization of the voice, which becomes less and less tied to language, just as painting is a deterritorialization of the face. Traits of vocability can indeed be indexed to traits of faciality, as in lipreading; they are not, however, in correspondence, especially when they are carried off by the respective movements of music and painting. The voice is far ahead of the face, very far ahead. Entitling a musical work *Visage* (Face) thus seems to be the greatest of sound paradoxes.⁹¹ The only way to "line up" the two problems of painting and music is to take a criterion extrinsic to the fiction of the fine arts, to compare the forces of deterritorialization in each case. Music seems to have a much stronger deterritorializing force, at once more intense and much more collective, and the voice seems to have a much greater power of deterritorialization. Perhaps this trait explains the collective fascination exerted by music, and even the potentiality of the "fascist" danger we mentioned a little earlier: music (drums, trumpets) draws people and armies into a race that can go all the way to the abyss (much more so than banners and flags, which are paintings, means of classification and rallying). It may be that musicians are individually more reactionary than painters, more religious, less "social"; they nevertheless wield a collective force infinitely greater than that of painting: "The chorus formed by the assembly of the people is a very powerful bond . . ." It is always possible to explain this force by the material conditions of musical emission and reception, but it is preferable to take the reverse approach; these conditions are explained

by the force of deterritorialization of music. It could be said that from the standpoint of the mutant abstract machine painting and music do not correspond to the same thresholds, or that the pictorial machine and the musical machine do not have the same index. There is a “backwardness” of painting in relation to music, as Klee, the most musically of painters, observed.⁹² Maybe that is why many people prefer painting, or why aesthetics took painting as its privileged model: there is no question that it “scares” people less. Even its relations to capitalism and social formations are not at all of the same type.

Doubtless, in each case we must simultaneously consider factors of territoriality, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization. Animal and child refrains seem to be territorial: therefore they are not “music.” But when music lays hold of the refrain and deterritorializes it, and deterritorializes the voice, when it lays hold of the refrain and sends it racing off in a rhythmic sound block, when the refrain “becomes” Schumann or Debussy, it is through a system of melodic and harmonic coordinates by means of which music reterritorializes upon itself, *qua* music. Conversely, we shall see that in certain cases even the animal refrain possesses forces of deterritorialization much more intense than animal silhouettes, postures, and colors. We must therefore take a number of factors into consideration: relative territorialities, their respective deterritorializations, and their correlative reterritorializations, several types of them (for example, intrinsic reterritorializations such as musical coordinates, and extrinsic ones such as the deterioration of the refrain into a hackneyed formula, or music into a ditty). The fact that there is no deterritorialization without a special reterritorialization should prompt us to rethink the abiding correlation between the molar and the molecular: no flow, no becoming-molecular escapes from a molar formation without molar components accompanying it, forming passages or perceptible landmarks for the imperceptible processes.

The becoming-woman, the becoming-child of music are present in the problem of the machining of the voice. Machining the voice was the first musical operation. As we know, the problem was resolved in Western music in two different ways, in Italy and in England: the head voice of the countertenor, who sings “above his voice,” or whose voice operates inside the sinuses and at the back of the throat and the palate without relying on the diaphragm or passing through the bronchial tubes; and the stomach voice of the castrati, “stronger, more voluminous, more languid,” as if they gave carnal matter to the imperceptible, impalpable, and aerial. Dominique Fernandez wrote a fine book on this subject; he shows, fortunately refraining from any psychoanalytic discussion of a link between music and castration, that the musical problem of the machinery of the

voice necessarily implies the abolition of the overall dualism machine, in other words, the molar formation assigning voices to the “man or woman.”⁹³ Being a man *or* a woman no longer exists in music. It is not certain, however, that the myth of the androgyne Fernandez invokes is adequate. It is a question not of myth but of real becoming. The voice itself must attain a becoming-woman or a becoming-child. That is the prodigious content of music. It is no longer a question, as Fernandez observes, of imitating a woman or a child, even if it is a child who is singing. The musical voice itself becomes-child at the same time as the child becomes-sonorous, purely sonorous. No child could ever have done that, or if one did, it would be by becoming in addition something other than a child, a child belonging to a different, strangely sensual and celestial, world. In short, the deterritorialization is double: the voice is deterritorialized in a becoming-child, but the child it becomes is itself deterritorialized, unengendered, becoming. “The child grew wings,” said Schumann. We find the same zigzag movement in the becomings-animal of music: Marcel Moré shows that the music of Mozart is permeated by a becoming-horse, or becomings-bird. But no musician amuses himself by “playing” horse or bird. If the sound block has a becoming-animal as its content, then the animal simultaneously becomes, in sonority, something else, something absolute, night, death, joy—certainly not a generality or a simplification, but a haecceity, this death, that night. Music takes as its content a becoming-animal; but in that becoming-animal the horse, for example, takes as its expression soft kettledrum beats, winged like hooves from heaven or hell; and the birds find expression in *gruppeti*, appoggiaturas, staccato notes that transform them into so many souls.⁹⁴ It is the accents that form the diagonal in Mozart, the accents above all. If one does not follow the accents, if one does not observe them, one falls back into a relatively impoverished punctual system. The human musician is deterritorialized in the bird, but it is a bird that is itself deterritorialized, “transfigured,” a celestial bird that has just as much of a becoming as that which becomes with it. Captain Ahab is engaged in an irresistible becoming-whale with Moby-Dick; but the animal, Moby-Dick, must simultaneously become an unbearable pure whiteness, a shimmering pure white wall, a silver thread that stretches out and supples up “like” a girl, or twists like a whip, or stands like a rampart. Can it be that literature sometimes catches up with painting, and even music? And that painting catches up with music? (Moré cites Klee’s birds but on the other hand fails to understand what Messiaen says about bird song.) No art is imitative, no art can be imitative or figurative. Suppose a painter “represents” a bird; this is in fact a becoming-bird that can occur only to the extent that the bird itself is in the process of becoming something else, a pure line and pure color. Thus imitation self-destructs,

since the imitator unknowingly enters into a becoming that conjugates with the unknowing becoming of that which he or she imitates. One imitates only if one fails, when one fails. The painter and musician do not imitate the animal, they become-animal at the same time as the animal becomes what they willed, at the deepest level of their concord with Nature.⁹⁵ Becoming is always double, that which one becomes becomes no less than the one that becomes—block is formed, essentially mobile, never in equilibrium. Mondrian's is the perfect square. It balances on one corner and produces a diagonal that half-opens its closure, carrying away both sides.

Becoming is never imitating. When Hitchcock does birds, he does not reproduce bird calls, he produces an electronic sound like a field of intensities or a wave of vibrations, a continuous variation, like a terrible threat welling up inside us.⁹⁶ And this applies not only to the "arts": *Moby-Dick*'s effect also hinges the pure lived experience of double becoming, and the book would not have the same beauty otherwise. The tarantella is a strange dance that magically cures or exorcises the supposed victims of a tarantula bite. But when the victim does this dance, can he or she be said to be imitating the spider, to be identifying with it, even in an identification through an "archetypal" or "agonistic" struggle? No, because the victim, the patient, the person who is sick, becomes a dancing spider only to the extent that the spider itself is supposed to become a pure silhouette, pure color and pure sound to which the person dances.⁹⁷ One does not imitate; one constitutes a block of becoming. Imitation enters in only as an adjustment of the block, like a finishing touch, a wink, a signature. But everything of importance happens elsewhere: in the becoming-spider of the dance, which occurs on the condition that the spider itself becomes sound and color, orchestra and painting. Take the case of the local folk hero, Alexis the Trotter, who ran "like" a horse at extraordinary speed, whipped himself with a short switch, whinnied, reared, kicked, knelt, lay down on the ground in the manner of a horse, competed against them in races, and against bicycles and trains. He imitated a horse to make people laugh. But he had a deeper zone of proximity or indiscernibility. Sources tell us that he was never as much of a horse as when he played the harmonica: precisely because he no longer needed a regulating or secondary imitation. It is said that he called his harmonica his "chops-destroyer" and played the instrument twice as fast as anyone else, doubled the beat, imposed a nonhuman tempo.⁹⁸ Alexis became all the more horse when the horse's bit became a harmonica, and the horse's trot went into double time. As always, the same must be said of the animals themselves. For not only do animals have colors and sounds, but they do not wait for the painter or musician to use those colors and sounds in a painting or music, in other words, to enter into determinate becomings-

color and becomings-sounds by means of components of deterritorialization (we will return to this point later). Ethology is advanced enough to have entered this realm.

We are not at all arguing for an aesthetics of qualities, as if the pure quality (color, sound, etc.) held the secret of a becoming without measure, as in *Philebus*. Pure qualities still seem to us to be punctual systems: They are reminiscences, they are either transcendent or floating memories or seeds of phantasy. A functionalist conception, on the other hand, only considers the function a quality fulfills in a specific assemblage, or in passing from one assemblage to another. The quality must be considered from the standpoint of the becoming that grasps it, instead of becoming being considered from the standpoint of intrinsic qualities having the value of archetypes or phylogenetic memories. For example, whiteness, color, is gripped in a becoming-animal that can be that of the painter or of Captain Ahab, and at the same time in a becoming-color, a becoming-whiteness, that can be that of the animal itself. Moby-Dick's whiteness is the special index of his becoming-solidary. Colors, silhouettes, and animal refrains are indexes of becoming-conjugal or becoming-social that also imply components of deterritorialization. A quality functions only as a line of deterritorialization of an assemblage, or in going from one assemblage to another. This is why an animal-block is something other than a phylogenetic memory, and a childhood block something other than a childhood memory. In Kafka, a quality never functions for itself or as a memory, but rather rectifies an assemblage in which it is deterritorialized, and, conversely, for which it provides a line of deterritorialization; for example, the childhood steeple passes into the castle tower, takes it at the level of its zone of indiscernibility ("battlements that were irregular, broken, fumbling"), and launches down a line of flight (as if one of the tenants "had burst through the roof").⁹⁹ If things are more complicated and less sober for Proust, it is because for him qualities retain an air of reminiscence or phantasy, and yet with Proust as well these are functional blocks acting not as memories or fantasies but as a becoming-child, a becoming-woman, as components of deterritorialization passing from one assemblage to another.

To the theorems of simple deterritorialization we encountered earlier (in our discussion of the face),¹⁰⁰ we can now add others on generalized double deterritorialization. *Theorem Five:* deterritorialization is always double, because it implies the coexistence of a major variable and a minor variable in simultaneous becoming (the two terms of a becoming do not exchange places, there is no identification between them, they are instead drawn into an asymmetrical block in which both change to the same extent, and which constitutes their zone of proximity). *Theorem Six:* in non-

symmetrical double deterritorialization it is possible to assign a deterritorializing force and a deterritorialized force, even if the same force switches from one value to the other depending on the “moment” or aspect considered; furthermore, it is the least deterritorialized element that always triggers the deterritorialization of the most deterritorializing element, which then reacts back upon it in full force. *Theorem Seven*: the deterritorializing element has the relative role of expression, and the deterritorialized element the relative role of content (as evident in the arts); but not only does the content have nothing to do with an external subject or object, since it forms an asymmetrical block with the expression, but the deterritorialization carries the expression and the content to a proximity where the distinction between them ceases to be relevant, or where the deterritorialization creates their indiscernibility (example: the sound diagonal as the musical form of expression, and becomings-woman, -child, -animal as the contents proper to music, as refrains). *Theorem Eight*: one assemblage does not have the same forces or even speeds of deterritorialization as another; in each instance, the indices and coefficients must be calculated according to the block of becoming under consideration, and in relation to the mutations of an abstract machine (for example, there is a certain slowness, a certain viscosity, of painting in relation to music; but one cannot draw a symbolic boundary between the human being and animal. One can only calculate and compare powers of deterritorialization).

Fernandez demonstrates the presence of becomings-woman, becomings-child in vocal music. Then he decries the rise of instrumental and orchestral music; he is particularly critical of Verdi and Wagner for having resexualized the voice, for having restored the binary machine in response to the requirements of capitalism, which wants a man to be a man and a woman a woman, each with his or her own voice: Verdi-voices, Wagner-voices, are reterritorialized upon man *and* woman. He explains the premature disappearance of Rossini and Bellini (the retirement of the first and death of the second) by their hopeless feeling that the vocal becomings of the opera were no longer possible. However, Fernandez does not ask under what auspices, and with what new types of diagonals, this occurs. To begin with, it is true that the voice ceases to be machined for itself, with simple instrumental accompaniment; it ceases to be a stratum or a line of expression that stands on its own. But why? Music crossed a new threshold of deterritorialization, beyond which it is the instrument that machines the voice, and the voice and instrument are carried *on the same plane* in a relation that is sometimes one of confrontation, sometimes one of compensation, sometimes one of exchange and complementarity. The lied, in particular Schumann’s lieder, perhaps marks the first appearance of this pure movement that places the voice and the piano on the same plane of

consistency, makes the piano an instrument of delirium, and prepares the way for Wagnerian opera. Even a case like Verdi's: it has often been said that his opera remains lyrical and vocal in spite of its destruction of the bel canto, and in spite of the importance of orchestration in the final works; still, voices are instrumentalized and make extraordinary gains in tessitura or extension (the production of the Verdi-baritone, of the Verdi-soprano). At any rate, the issue is not a given composer, especially not Verdi, or a given genre, but the more general movement affecting music, the slow mutation of the musical machine. If the voice returns to a binary distribution of the sexes, this occurs in relation to binary groupings of instruments in orchestration. There are always molar systems in music that serve as coordinates; this dualist system of the sexes that reappears on the level of the voice, this molar and punctual distribution, serves as a foundation for new molecular flows that then intersect, conjugate, are swept up in a kind of instrumentation and orchestration that tend to be part of the creation itself. Voices may be reterritorialized on the distribution of the two sexes, but the continuous sound flow still passes between them as in a difference of potential.

This brings us to the second point: the principal problem concerning this new threshold of deterritorialization of the voice is no longer that of a properly vocal becoming-woman or becoming-child, but that of a becoming-molecular in which the voice itself is instrumentalized. Of course, becomings-woman and -child remain just as important, even take on new importance, but only to the extent that they convey another truth: what was produced was already a molecular child, a molecular woman . . . We need only think of Debussy: the becoming-child and the becoming-woman in his works are intense but are now inseparable from a molecularization of the motif, a veritable "chemistry" achieved through orchestration. The child and the woman are now inseparable from the sea and the water molecule (*Sirens*, precisely, represents one of the first complete attempts to integrate the voice with the orchestra). Already Wagner was reproached for the "elementary" character of his music, for its aquaticism, or its "atomization" of the motif, "a subdivision into infinitely small units." This becomes even clearer if we think of becoming-animal: birds are still just as important, yet the reign of birds seems to have been replaced by the age of insects, with its much more molecular vibrations, chirring, rustling, buzzing, clicking, scratching, and scraping. Birds are vocal, but insects are instrumental: drums and violins, guitars and cymbals.¹⁰¹ A becoming-insect has replaced becoming-bird, or forms a block with it. The insect is closer, better able to make audible the truth that all becomings are molecular (cf. Martenot's waves, electronic music). The molecular has the capacity to make the *elementary* communicate with the *cosmic*: precisely

because it effects a dissolution of form that connects the most diverse longitudes and latitudes, the most varied speeds and slownesses, which guarantees a continuum by stretching variation far beyond its formal limits. Rediscover Mozart, and that the “theme” was a variation from the start. Varèse explains that the sound molecule (the block) separates into elements arranged in different ways according to variable relations of speed, but also into so many waves or flows of a sonic energy irradiating the entire universe, a headlong line of flight. That is how he populated the Gobi desert with insects and stars constituting a becoming-music of the world, or a diagonal for a cosmos. Messiaen presents multiple chromatic durations in coalescence, “alternating between the longest and the shortest, in order to suggest the idea of the relations between the infinitely long durations of the stars and mountains and the infinitely short ones of the insects and atoms: a cosmic, elementary power that . . . derives above all from the labor of rhythm.”¹⁰² The same thing that leads a musician to discover the birds also leads him to discover the elementary and the cosmic. Both combine to form a block, a universe fiber, a diagonal or complex space. Music dispatches molecular flows. Of course, as Messiaen says, music is not the privilege of human beings: the universe, the cosmos, is made of refrains; the question in music is that of a power of deterritorialization permeating nature, animals, the elements, and deserts as much as human beings. The question is more what is not musical in human beings, and what already is musical in nature. Moreover, what Messiaen discovered in music is the same thing the ethologists discovered in animals: human beings are hardly at an advantage, except in the means of overcoding, of making punctual systems. That is even the opposite of having an advantage; through becomings-woman, -child, -animal, or -molecular, nature opposes its power, and the power of music, to the machines of human beings, the roar of factories and bombers. And it is necessary to reach that point, it is necessary for the nonmusical sound of the human being to form a block with the becoming-music of sound, for them to confront and embrace each other like two wrestlers who can no longer break free from each other’s grasp, and slide down a sloping line: “Let the choirs represent the survivors . . . Faintly one hears the sound of cicadas. Then the notes of a lark, followed by the mockingbird. Someone laughs . . . A woman sobs . . . From a male a great shout: WE ARE LOST! A woman’s voice: WE ARE SAVED! Staccato cries: Lost! Saved! Lost! Saved!”¹⁰³