

# "I am sure that you are more pessimistic than I am . . .": An Interview with Giorgio Agamben

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## *Vacarme*

Translated by Jason Smith

**Vacarme:** The specific reason we wanted to meet you was to ask you about the "flip side," so to speak, of the biopolitics you speak of. There are a certain number of movements—movements that we ourselves either come from or feel close to, such as those of the undocumented immigrants, the unemployed and those with no secure employment, the movement of people with AIDS, or even the emergent drug users' movement—that unfold in the very political space that you've identified: the zone of indistinction "of public and private, of biological body and political body, of *zoè* and *bios*," in this "state of exception that has become the rule." But you say very little about these movements, or do so only indirectly. They linger between the lines you've drawn, but more as objects (of camps, of welfare or medical power) than as subjects. You analyze with some precision the "major" biopolitics, that of the enemy whose genealogy you minutely trace, and whose center or focus would be, according to you, "*homo sacer*": naked life exposed to a sovereignty whose apparatuses, such as the camp, you also attentively examine. But you forgo the biopolitics of reappropriation or riposte, the minor biopolitics, "our" biopolitics, so to speak: the biopolitics of AC!,<sup>1</sup> the collectives for the undocumented, or that of Act Up. You do think both the possibility and the necessity of this minor biopolitics: "it is," you say, "starting from this uncertain terrain and from this opaque zone of indistinction that today we must once again the path of another politics, of another body, of another speech. I would not feel up to forgoing this indistinction of public and private, of biological body and political body, of *zoè* and *bios*, for any reason whatsoever. It is here that I must find my space once again—here or nowhere else. Only a politics that starts

1. The acronym refers to the French organization Agir ensemble contre le Chômage (Act together against Unemployment), formed in 1993, and concerned not only with a reduction of work-time combined with a guaranteed income for all, but with the analysis of new modalities of work that can no longer be characterized under the official opposition of employment and unemployment: the temporary, marginal, and "flexible" work of post-Fordism. This and all subsequent notes have been added by the translator.

from such an awareness can interest me.”<sup>2</sup> You do not, however, explore the concrete forms of struggle that already practice a politics rooted in an awareness—and experience—of the state of exception. We ask then whether there isn’t an embryonic form of this other politics you yourself call for, precisely when the unemployed stake a claim to a guaranteed income, when people with AIDS demand treatment, or when drug users demand safe drugs?

**Giorgio Agamben:** In a way, it seems the question should be turned around: it is from the actors in question that you should expect a response. That said, if the movements and the subjects you speak of “linger between the lines I’ve drawn more as objects than as subjects,” it’s because this is for me the site of a major problem: the question of the subject itself, that I can only conceive of in terms of a process of subjectivation and desubjectivation—or rather as an interval or remainder between these processes. Who is the subject of this new biopolitics, or rather of this minor biopolitics you’re speaking about? It’s a problem that is always essential in classical politics, when it’s a matter of finding who the revolutionary subject is, for example. There are people who continue to pose this problem in the old sense of the term: in terms of class, of the proletariat. These are not obsolete problems, but from the moment one positions oneself on the new terrain we are speaking of, that of biopower and of the biopolitical, the problem is difficult in a different sense. Because the modern state functions, it seems to me, as a kind of desubjectivation machine: it’s a machine that both scrambles all the classical identities and, as Foucault shows quite well, a machine (for the most part juridical) that recodes these very same dissolved identities. There is always a resubjectivation, a reidentification of these destroyed subjects, voided as they are of all identity. Today, it seems to me that the political terrain is a kind of battlefield in which two processes unfold: the destruction of all that traditional identity was (I say this, of course, with no nostalgia) and, at the same time, its immediate resubjectivation by the State—and not only by the State, but also by the subjects themselves. It’s what you evoked in your question: the decisive conflict is from now on played out—for each of its protagonists, including the new subjects you speak of—on the terrain of what I call *zoè*, biological life. And in fact, it is nothing other than this: I don’t think there can be any question of returning to the classical political oppositions which clearly separate private and public, political body and private body, etc. But this terrain is also the one that exposes us to biopower’s processes of subjection. There is therefore an ambiguity, a risk. This is what Foucault showed: the risk is that one reidentify oneself, that one invest this situation with a new identity, that one produce a new subject, if you like, but one subjected to the State; the risk that one from then on carry out again, despite oneself, this infinite process of subjectivation and subjection that precisely defines biopower. I don’t believe there is any escape from this problem.

2. See G. Agamben, *Means without End: Notes on Politics*, trans. V. Binetti and C. Casarino (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 139.

**Vacarme:** Is it a risk or an aporia? Is every subjectivation fatally and without fail a subjection, or can something like a maxim or formula of subjectivation be obtained that would allow one to escape subjection?

**Agamben:** In Foucault's last works, there is an aporia that seems very interesting to me. There is, on the one hand, all the work on the "care of self": one must care for one's self, in all the forms of the practice of self. But at the same time he often states the apparently opposite theme: the self must be let go of. He says so on many occasions: "Life is over if one questions oneself about one's identity; the art of living is to destroy identity, to destroy psychology." There is, therefore, an aporia: a care of self that should lead to a letting go of self. One way the question could be posed is: what would a practice of self be that would not be a process of subjectivation but, to the contrary, would end up only at a letting go, a practice of self that finds its identity only in a letting go of self? It is necessary to maintain or "stay," as it were, in this double movement of desubjectivation and subjectivation. Obviously, it is difficult terrain to hold. It's truly a matter of identifying this zone, this no man's land between a process of subjectivation and a process of desubjectivation, between identity and nonidentity. This terrain would have to be identified, because this would be the terrain of a new biopolitics. This is precisely what is interesting about a movement like that of people with AIDS. Why? Because it seems to me that, in this case, identification takes place only on the threshold of an absolute desubjectivation, sometimes even at the risk of death. Here, it seems that one is held right on this threshold. I have tried a little in the book on Auschwitz, with regard to testimony, to see the witness as the model of a subjectivity that would be the subject only of its own desubjectivation. The witness witnesses nothing other than its own desubjectivation. The one who survives witnesses solely for the *Muselmänner*.<sup>3</sup> In the last part of the book I was interested in really identifying a model of the subject as what remains between a subjectivation and a desubjectivation, speech and muteness. It's not a substantial space, but rather an interval between two processes. But this is only a beginning. A new structure of subjectivity is barely touched upon, but it's very complicated, it's a work that still remains entirely to be done. It's truly necessary . . . It's a practice, not a principle. I believe that one can have a general principle only if one makes sure not to relapse into a process of resubjectivation that would at the same time be a subjection—that is, of being a subject only within the framework of a strategy or tactic. This is why it's very important to see how, in the practice both of the movements and of each one of us, these possible zones get drawn out. This can be done everywhere, working with this notion of a care of self found in Foucault, while moving it into other domains: every practice of self there might be, including the everyday mysticism of intimacy, all these zones where one brushes against a zone of nonknowledge or a zone of desubjectivation, be it sexual life or whatever other aspect of bodily life. In these cases there are always figures of a subject attending its own downfall, brushing against its own

3. See G. Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. D. Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone Books, 1999). The second chapter of this text is devoted to "the Muselmann."

desubjection—these are all everyday zones, a very banal, quotidian mysticism. We should be attentive to everything offering us a zone of this kind. It's still quite vague, but this is what would offer the paradigm of a minor biopolitics.

**Vacarme:** You present identity as a risk, an error of the subject. Isn't there all the same a material thickness of identities—even if only insofar as the adversary assigns them to us, be it through the law (think, for example, of immigration laws) or through insults (i.e., homophobic insults)—which renders these identities “objective,” so to speak? In other words, how much room for desubjection do our social conditions leave us?

**Agamben:** Right now I'm working on Paul's letters.<sup>4</sup> Paul formulates the problem: “What is messianic life? What are we going to do now that we live in the messianic time? What are we going to do with regard to the State?” What's interesting to me is the double movement we find in Paul that has always been problematic. Paul says: “Remain in the social condition, be it juridical or cultural, in which you find yourself. You're a slave? Remain a slave. You're a doctor? Remain a doctor. You're a wife, a husband? Remain in the vocation for which you have been called.” But at the same time, he says: “You're a slave? Don't worry, but make use of it, take advantage of it.”<sup>5</sup> This means that it's not a matter of changing your juridical status, or changing your life, but of making use of it. He then specifies what he means through this very beautiful image: “as if not,” or “as not.” That is: “You're crying? As if you weren't crying. You're rejoicing? As if you weren't rejoicing. Are you married? As nonmarried. Have you bought something? As not bought, etc.” There is this theme of the “as not.” It's not even “as if,” it is “as not.” Literally, it's: “Crying, as not crying; married, as not married; slave, as not slave.”<sup>6</sup> It's very interesting, because we could say that what he calls “usages” are conducts of life which, on the one hand, do not directly confront power—remain in your juridical condition, your social role—but nevertheless completely transform them in the form of an “as not.” The notion of use, of usage, in this sense, interests me a great deal: it's a practice that cannot be assigned a subject. You remain a slave, but, since you make use of it in the manner of this “as not,” you are no longer a slave.

**Vacarme:** How could such a use be properly political, or take place under political conditions? It's possible to see it as a strictly individual or ethical—even religious—conversion of thought which would, in any case, be singular and “private.” How does this conversion vis-à-vis one's own status, allowing one no longer to be a subject, relate to politics? In what way does it necessitate community, struggle, conflict, and so on?

4. This book has since been published as *Il tempo che resta. Un commento alla Lettera ai Romani* (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2000), and is forthcoming in an English translation from Stanford University Press.

5. Agamben refers throughout this response to Paul's 1 Cor. 7:20-30.

6. The “as not” (*comme non*) renders the Greek syntagm “*hos mè*,” which recurs throughout this sequence. The reading of this passage is developed in detail on the “Second Day” of *Il tempo che resta*.

**Agamben:** Of course, this theme in Paul is sometimes thought of as implying an interiorization. But I don't believe that it is a matter of interiorization at all. His problem is to the contrary that of the life of the messianic community to which he addresses himself. For example, this theme of use or usage reemerges in a very powerful form—as a critique of right—in the Franciscan movement, where the problem is that of property. These orders practice an extreme poverty while refusing all property, and yet they must nevertheless make use of certain goods. There was a severe conflict with the Church over this, insofar as the Church wanted very much to allow them to refuse a right to property, be it that of the individual or the order, but it wanted them to classify their conduct as a right of usage, a right to use. This is something that still exists: usufruct, the right to use, as separate from the right to property. To the contrary, the Franciscans insisted—this is where the conflict is—by saying: “No, it's not a right to use, it is a use without right.” They call this *usus pauper*, poor usage. It's truly the idea of opening a zone of communal life that makes use, but has no right, and claims none. Moreover, the Franciscans do not critique property; they leave all property rights to the Church: “Property? We don't want any. We make use of it.” This problem could therefore be said to be purely political, or at least communal.<sup>7</sup>

**Vacarme:** All the same, is it strictly by chance that the references you invoke in thinking this alternative belong to the religious sphere? Sometimes, when reading you, one finds in the designation of this other politics and this other status of the political something like a prophetic tone. For example, you write: “For this reason—to risk advancing a prophecy here—the coming politics will no longer be a struggle to conquer or to control the state on the part of either new or old social subjects, but rather a struggle between the state and the nonstate (humanity), that is, an irresolvable disjunction between whatever singularities and the state organization.”<sup>8</sup> What role do these references and this tone play in your work?

**Agamben:** What interests me about Paul's text is not so much the domain of religion but a punctual domain that concerns religion without coinciding with it: the messianic, which is a domain very close to the political. Here, it is in fact another author who has been decisive for me, one who is not at all religious: Walter Benjamin. Benjamin thinks the messianic as paradigm of the political, or, let's say, of historical time. This is, for me, what's really in question. As a matter of fact, I think the way Benjamin introduces (in the first Thesis on the concept of history) theology as an entity that, even hidden, should help historical materialism win out over its enemies remains a very legitimate and timely gesture giving us, precisely, the means to think otherwise both time and the subject. So, you were speaking about the prophet . . . I was recently listening to recordings of Foucault's courses, notably the one where he distinguishes four figures of truth in our culture: the prophet, the sage, and the specialist, and then what he calls the *parrhesiastes*, the one who has the courage to say the truth. The prophet speaks of the future, and not in his own name, but in

7. On this *usus pauper*, see once again the “Second Day.”

8. See *Means without end*, p. 88.

the name of something else. To the contrary, the *parrhesiastes*, with whom Foucault no doubt identifies, speaks in his own name, and must say what is true now, today. Of course, he says that these are not separate figures. But I myself would claim the figure of the *parrhesiastes* rather than the prophet. Look, the prophet is obviously important, and its disappearance from our culture is even a catastrophe: the figure of the prophet was that of the political leader until fifty years ago. It has completely disappeared. But, at the same time, it seems to me that it is no longer possible to think a discourse addressing the future. It's the messianic actuality, the *kairos*, the now-time that must be thought. That said, it's a very complicated model of time, because it is neither the time to come—the eschatological future, the eternal—nor is it exactly historical or profane time: it is a bit of time taken from the profane that, all of a sudden, is transformed. Benjamin writes somewhere that Marx secularized messianic time in a classless society. This is completely true. But at the same time, with all the aporias this engenders—the transitions, etc.—it is a type of snag on which the Revolution failed. We don't have a model of time available that permits us to think this. In any case, I believe that the messianic is always profane, never religious. It is even the ultimate crisis of the religious, the folding back of the religious onto the profane. With this in mind, I am thinking of a journal that has just been published in France, by some young people I know, called *Tiqqun*. It's really a messianic journal, since *Tiqqun* [or "tikkun" —*trans.*] is, in the Luria kabbala, the very term for messianic redemption, for messianic restoration. I find this interesting, because it's an extremely critical, very political journal, assuming a very messianic tone, but in an always profane manner. They therefore call the new anonymous subject Bloom, these whatever singularities that are emptied out, open for anything, which can diffuse themselves everywhere and yet remain ungraspable, without identity but reidentifiable at each instant. The problem they pose is: "How can such a Bloom be transformed, how can this Bloom perform the leap beyond himself?"<sup>9</sup>

**Vacarme:** This is probably where we have the hardest time following you. Not so much on the messianic posture as on the "whatever singularities." How can it be put? For you, the new biopolitics taking shape involves more a flight or taking leave than resistance or conflict. On the one hand, you very clearly identify an enemy, an adversary that is very much of a piece, consistent, and coherent, whose lengthy genealogies can be traced, recurrent apparatuses mapped out, etc. On the other hand, faced with the consistency of this adversary, you seem nevertheless to plead for a politics of inconsistency, of dissolution, of evasion: rather than fabricating collective subjects, we should learn to "let go" of ourselves; rather than demand rights, we should imagine "use without right"; rather than confront the State, assume the form of a "non-State," etc. But is there always the latitude to flee? It seems to us that the power of biopolitical apparatuses (think, for example, of the politics of public health, the administration of welfare, the regulation of immigration, etc.) resides precisely in their terrible force of capture. Pardon us for saying it so brutally, but it seems quite possible that desubjectivation would be a luxury

9. The group published a short pamphlet entitled *La Théorie du Bloom* (Paris: La fabrique, 2000).

whose possibility is offered only to those who escape the apparatuses of biopower. How can one let go of oneself, evade resubjection, be a non-State, etc., when one is HIV-positive, on welfare, or a drug addict—that is, literally caught in the categories and mechanisms of biopower? Isn't one most often forced to act "as such" rather than "as not," using your own terms? In short, one can have the sentiment that you plead for mobility and evasion at the very point where the power of capture and material thickness of the enemy leave us no other choice than to confront it.

**Agamben:** The problem seems clear to me. I think everything depends on what one understands by flight. It's a motif found in Deleuze: the "line of flight," the praise of flight. But you're right to protest. The notion of flight does not imply an elsewhere one might go. No, it's a very particular flight: a flight with no elsewhere. Where, after all, would this elsewhere be? In certain cases, for example when the Berlin wall was still standing, there were obvious flights because there was a wall (but was there an elsewhere?). For me, it's a question of thinking a flight which would not imply evasion: a movement on the spot, in the situation itself. This is the only way flight might have a political signification. Then there is another problem that seems to touch upon the question you have posed. It's the problem found in Marx in his critique of Stirner. He devotes more than a hundred pages in *The German Ideology* to the theoretician of anarchy, challenging his distinction between revolt and revolution. Stirner theorizes revolt as a personal, egoistic act of subtraction. Revolution is a political act aiming at an institution, whereas revolt is an individual act that doesn't aim at destroying institutions. It's enough simply to let the State be, no longer confronting it: it will destroy itself. It's enough to subtract oneself—a flight. Marx critiques this motif quite vigorously, but the very fact that he devotes more than a hundred pages to it proves it's a serious problem. To the opposition between revolt and revolution he opposes a sort of unity: he doesn't oppose a political concept to an anarcho-individual concept; he seeks their unity. This means that the proletarian's directly political act will always be for an egoistic reason, as a form of revolt. Even if this poses other problems, I tend to think like Marx: a kind of unity of both gestures, or indeed between them, let's say. I would not be inclined to think in terms of a cut isolating flight from revolution, as one has the tendency to do; I tend to think that every act emanating from the singular need of an individual, the proletarian, who has no identity, no substance, will also be, all the same, a political act. I believe that it is not necessary to oppose political action and flight, revolt and revolution, but to try to think what's between. But this causes problems for Marx as well. It's the whole problem of class. The class has no consciousness: the proletariat exists as subject, but with no consciousness. Whence the Leninist problem of the party: something is needed that would not be different from the class, not something other than the class but would be, so to speak, the organ of its consciousness. Here too, there is an aporia. I'm not saying that there is a solution to this problem between the line of flight as gesture of revolt and a purely political line. Neither the party model, nor the model of action without party: there is a need to invent. Because afterward one falls into the problem of political organization, of the party-class that's going to produce a "we": the party is the one who makes sure that every action is political and not personal; the class, to the



contrary, is the organ of an infinite production of actions that aren't political, but individual revolts. But the problem is real.

**Vacarme:** It's also a problem posed, in practice, for those seeking to produce a collective—and at times even a “we”—outside the political parties that are no more than aggregating machines, and also without the help of a superior general principle, whether it be the Republic, Class or Humanity. If *Vacarme* feels close to the associations for the sick, the unemployed, or marginally employed, it's precisely because they invent something like a politics in the first person with new forms of organization, where the distinctions between the social and the political, the class and its consciousness, the singular and the universal, etc., are erased, and where the political signification of the acts is immanent to the acts themselves.

**Agamben:** Yes. It's necessary to invent a practice which would break the shell of these representations. Definitely not a substantial subject to be identified, but something else that it seems to me Paul discovered (I refer here once again to a work in progress). Paul was concerned with the Jewish law that divided men into Jews and non-Jews, Jews and Goyim. What does he do with this division? Paul is often presented as if he was the initiator of universalism, someone opposing a new universal principle to these divisions: Paul as father of the “Catholic”—that is, universal—Church. But when one closely examines his work, it's exactly the contrary. Confronted with this division imposed by the law (at bottom, he considered the law to be what divides Jew from non-Jew, but also citizen from noncitizen, etc.), he does not oppose, as we have the tendency to do in the epoch of the rights of man, a universal principle to an ethnic division, he does something very subtle. He divides the division itself. The law divides Jews from non-Jews? Well, I'm going to cut this division itself in two. There are many such divisions—for example, the Jew according to the flesh and Jew according to the spirit, the breath. The split between flesh and breath is going to divide the exhaustive division that shares out humanity between Jews and non-Jews. This new division will produce Jews who are not Jews, because there are Jews who are Jews according to the flesh, not the spirit, and Goyim who are Goyim according to the flesh, but not according to the spirit. He's going to produce a remnant. Paul introduces a remnant into this Jew/non-Jew division. It is a type of cut that cuts the line itself. Finally, it's a lot more interesting: it does not oppose a universal, it makes the division of the law inoperative, it introduces a remnant. Because the Jew according to the spirit is not a non-Jew, he is also a Jew—one might say that he's a kind of non-non-Jew. Everywhere, Paul works like this: instead of proposing a universal principle, he divides the division. And what remains is the new but undefinable subject, who is always left over or behind because it can be on all sides, both on the side of the non-Jews as well as the Jews.<sup>10</sup> This offers something valuable for the representation, today, of the notion of a people, and also perhaps for thinking what Deleuze said when he spoke of a minor people, of the people as *minoritaire*. It's not so much a matter of minorities as a presentation of the people as being always left over with relation to a division, something which

10. On this division of the division in Paul, see the “Third Day” of *Il tempo che resta*.



remains or resists division—not as a substance, but as an interval. One should proceed in this way, from division to division, rather than by asking oneself: “What would be the universal communal principle that would allow us to be together?” To the contrary. It is a matter, confronted with the divisions introduced by the law, of working with what disables them through resisting, through remaining—*résister*, *rester*, it’s the same root.

**Vacarme:** This is exactly what happened in France with the undocumented immigrants: a law defined the criteria, and all the work went not into the invocation of a general principle of hospitality, but in showing that all the criteria produced situations that no longer corresponded to anyone: people that can neither be expelled nor integrated, etc. Finally, the associations’ strategy was to show how the criteria could be compounded in such a way that no one corresponded exactly to the alternative between illegal and legal. A certain angle of attack formed.

**Agamben:** That’s what struck me about Paul. It’s what is found in the Bible, in the figure of the prophet: the prophet always speaks of a remnant of Israel. He addresses himself to Israel as a whole, but pronounces “only a remnant will be saved.” This is what happens in Isaiah, in Amos, in the prophetic discourse. The remnant or “remainder” here is not a numerical portion, but the figure that every people should take on in the decisive instant—in this case, salvation or election, but any other instant as well. The people should produce itself as remnant, take on the figure of this remnant. It’s always necessary to see it in a determined situation: what, in such a situation, would pose itself as remnant? This does not correspond to the majority/minority distinction. It’s something else. Every people assumes this figure if the instant is truly decisive.

**Vacarme:** Still, in a critique of the epoch that is as radical as yours is, what’s left of the “determined situations” and “decisive instants” you speak of? It seems that you focus so much more on the side of the aporia, impasse and failure—especially when you place, like Debord, the figures of totalitarianism and democracy back to back—than on the side of the opportunity, of the “shot,” the *kairos*, as you put it. In your books you evoke, for example, an “experience of absolute weakness” and “the solitude and muteness there where we expected community and language.” What are you referring to?

**Agamben:** I’ve often been reproached for (or at least attributed with) this pessimism that I am perhaps unaware of. But I don’t see it like that. There is a phrase from Marx, cited by Debord as well, that I like a lot: “the desperate situation of society in which I live fills me with hope.”<sup>11</sup> I share this vision: hope is given to the hopeless.

11. Marx, in a letter addressed to Arnold Ruge in May 1843: “*Sie werden nicht sagen, ich hielte die Gegenwart zu hoch, und wenn ich dennoch nicht an ihr verzweifle, so ist es nur ihre eigene verzweifelte Lage, die mich mit Hoffnung erfüllt*” (You won’t say that I hold the present too high, and if I do not despair of it, it is only because its desperate situation fills me with hope). See Karl Marx-Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 1 (Dietz Verlag: Berlin DDR, 1976), p. 342.

I don't see myself as pessimistic. No, in order to respond to your question, I think back to the horrible political situation of the 1980s. I also think of the Gulf war and the wars that followed, most notably in Yugoslavia. Let's say that the new figure of domination is now being sketched out well enough. It's the first time the spectacular model can be clearly seen at work. Not only in the media: it is, so to speak, put to work politically. Simone Weil says somewhere that it is wrong to consider war to be a fact concerned solely with external politics—it should also be considered a matter of internal politics. Now it seems to me that, in these wars, there is precisely an absolute indetermination, an absolute indiscernibility between internal and external politics. These days, such things have become trivial. They're heard in the mouths of experts: external and internal politics are the same thing. But I insist: there is no personal or psychological pessimism in this. It is, moreover, another manner of formulating the problem of the subject. This is, at bottom, what I like so much about Simondon: he always thinks individuation as the coexistence of an individual, personal principle and an impersonal, nonindividual principle.<sup>12</sup> In other words, a life is always made up of two phases at the same time, personal and impersonal. They are always in relation, even if they are clearly separated. The order of impersonal power that every life relates to could be called the impersonal, whereas desubjectivation would be this daily experience of brushing up against an impersonal power, something both surpassing us and giving us life. That, it seems to me, is what the question of the art of living would be: how to relate to this impersonal power? How can the subject relate to this power that doesn't belong to it, and which surpasses it? It is a problem of poetics, so to speak. The Romans called this *genius*, a fecund impersonal principle letting life be engendered. There again, a possible model. The subject would neither be the conscious subject, nor the impersonal power, but what holds itself between them. Desubjectivation does not only have a dark side. It is not simply the destruction of all subjectivity. There is also this other pole, more fecund and poetic, where the subject is only the subject of its own desubjectivation. Allow me, then, to refute your accusation: I am sure that you are more pessimistic than I am. . . .

### *Acknowledgement*

*This interview first appeared in the French journal Vacarme, no. 11, in December 1999, under the title "Une biopolitique mineure."*

12. See Gilbert Simondon and his *L'individu et sa genèse physico-biologique; l'individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d'information* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964).