



For The Love Of Foucault

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1 Why Michel Foucault?

1 Because Foucault is the thinker of the subject of a certain SELF-DEARRANGEMENT. The subject leaves its traditional position. It becomes the subject of a movement of DECENTRALIZATION. The subject is the subject of a powerful self-marginalization. It is the subject of self-exceeding. It goes through the experience of being something other than a subject. This is the experience of desubjectivization.

2 Because the question of the subject is the foundation of a work which develops as the self-questioning of a SELF that does not exist.

3 Because philosophy in Foucault's sense is a PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, an act of solitude. The solitude of the subject of philosophical experience has nothing to do with pathetic or narcissistic, depressive self-enclosure. The solitude of the philosophical subject is an act of resistance. The subject resists the easiness of mere opinion. It opens itself to new experiences, the EXPERIENCE OF THE NEW SELF.

4 Because, to read Foucault is such an experience of the new.

5 Because Foucault's entire oeuvre is ruled by this WILL FOR THE REAL. Foucault himself experiences the affect of the real. Wasn't the experience of Tunisia nothing other than such an experience of real resistance of the reality of students struggling for their freedom who found themselves exposed to completely different dangers than their European counterparts in May 1968? In this definite sense, as the subject of the will to reality, Foucault is an EXISTENTIAL, and not an existentialist thinker. Foucault produces theory, but his theories come from the existential passion for the LIMITS OF THEORY. Together with Georges Bataille, Foucault is the thinker of the idea of TRANSGRESSION.

6 Because Foucault's a way of reading Anti-Oedipus as "an introduction to non-fascist living", as a BOOK OF ETHICS, conveys an essential gesture: what we need today is a new kind of ethical thinking that resists the moralist, nihilist tradition.

7 Because Foucault thinks through the ambivalence or contradictoriness of the Enlightenment. The relationship between KNOWLEDGE and POWER unsettles him in all phases of his work. The "problem of enlightenment," as he says in What Is Critique?, is the "principal problem of modern philosophy".

8 Because Foucault provides a new concept of historical experience and work. The conflict between Foucault and conventional historical scholarship is the conflict between ACTIVE, CREATIVE THINKING and passive bureaucracy and police work.

9 Because the idea of an HISTORICAL A PRIORI represents a problem that is as old as philosophy itself. Philosophy qua philosophy is nothing other than the conflict between the universal and the particular, between the idea and appearance, between structures and contingency, between words and things.

10 Because the question of the relationship between madness and reason touches the heart of the Western logos. The line of separation which distinguishes reason from non-reason passes through the LOGOS IN GENERAL like a fissure.

11 Because, together with Maurice Blanchot, Foucault provides a radical understanding of ANONYMITY to think through. It is this anonymity which distances the subject from itself. It decomposes the classical idea of authorship. The subject of anonymity is the EGO WITHOUT EGOITY, SUBJECT WITHOUT SUBJECTIVITY.



12 Because Foucault is one of the most brilliant writers of our time. His style seems to oscillate between exact analysis and a kind of fascinating HYPERBOLISM. It is as if his language moved toward the madness of silence, i.e. toward the reality of its factual overtaxing. Above all, a book such as *The History of Madness* is such a document of a BEAUTIFUL and, in the concrete sense of the word, SPECULATIVE HISTORICISM.

13 Because the DEATH OF THE HUMAN means the death of a certain figure of the subject. The new subject which survives this, its own death is the subject of constant self-derangement and constant disappearance, the dissolution of itself.

14 Because the questioning of the relationship between truth and power constitutes the sphere of a new thinking of RESPONSIBILITY. Like Nietzsche, Foucault is the thinker of an ETHICS BEYOND THE CLASSICAL CONCEPT OF TRUTH.

15 Because Foucault's entire thinking seems to prepare the emergence or coming of a NEW FORM, as Deleuze says, of a new figure of the human which is neither a human-god nor a god-human.

16 Because Foucault, in his last books, *L'Usage des plaisirs* and *Le Souci de soi*, defines life as a work of art. The self or the subject increasingly becomes an object. This SELF-OBJECTIVIZATION becomes the starting-point of a future POLITICS OF THE SELF.

2 Subject of experience

To be a subject means to experience oneself as a subject of experience. The subject is the theatre of self-experience in which it goes through its limits, the conditions of possibility of itself in order to constitute itself as a kind of feverish curve, as the subject of a certain fever, the absolute restlessness of becoming.

In an interview with Ducio Trombadori in 1978, Michel Foucault says that to write a book means to go through an experience, une expérience, a „personal experience“, as he also says. What is an experience, above all in the French sense of the word (expérience can be translated as either 'experience' or 'experiment')? It "is something from which one emerges changed". For this reason, the subject of experience is the subject of change, of becoming, of a certain happening, of an event, of a mutation which is also always disturbing.

The subject of experience is the mutant subject, the subject of mutations which seem to make something new of it in that they make it into an object of a certain desubjectivization. Foucault emphasizes that he can see this in Maurice Blanchot, among others. Experience, he says, "serves in Nietzsche, Blanchot, Bataille, to tear the subject free of itself in such a way that it is no longer itself or in such a way that it is driven into its own annihilation or dissolution". It is a subject, if one wants to continue calling it a subject, of an "extreme experience", which consists in "reaching a certain point of life that comes as close as possible to what is unliveable".²

The subject tearing itself free of the self is at first, in Foucault's description, the subject of writing, the subject of a certain production, of the production of texts and books, the bringing forth of sense. It is this as the subject of the experience of non-sense, which bears it as a subject to the limit of its being qua subject. At this "point of life", the subject begins to communicate with "what is unliveable", which is nothing other than its own, equally necessary and impossible, death, at least as long as we insist, in the horizon of this disturbing understanding of death and life, on the category of 'one's own', or, to use Heidegger's term, "my-ownness"³.

To go through the experience of one's own extreme means at first to be the subject of experience of the impossibility of 'one's own', and thus of 'subjectivity', without this experience being already a non-experience, an impossibility. Rather it is the case that experience, instead of changing over into non-



experience, has to be as such a non-experience, an experience of the not, of impossibility, impossibility ultimately of experience itself. Experience qua experience seems to imply the event of its own impossibility. It drives the subject of experience into the area of non-experience and impossibility itself. An experience only deserves the title of experience (or expérience) insofar as it starts to contradict itself, to dissolve itself and to neutralize itself in the subject of this experience.

3 Subject of freedom

To be a subject means to affirm oneself as the subject of a certain self-subversion. The subject affirms itself as the scene of a constant undermining. It is the subject of self-erection within real impotence. In erecting itself in the act of its proper becoming qua subject, it has to sanction the withdrawal, the disappearance of the ground of this self-erection, the impossibility of subjectivity in general as the condition of possibility of its concrete being as subject. There is only something akin to a subject as a subject without subjectivity.

The subject is distinguished from the non-subject by the minimum of freedom to be its self, that has the freedom to defend its self in the face of real unfreedom. A human being does not allow itself to be reduced to its mere status as an object. As Carl Schmitt says, “it knows not only birth,” the facticity of its having been cast, “but also the possibility of a rebirth,” which is, as Hölderlin says in *The Course of Life*, “the freedom to go wherever he will”.⁴ Therefore there is only one duty for the human subject: to be free in view of its freedom. The subject is the auto-affective subject of the freedom to subvert itself. In every one of its acts of its own freedom, i.e. the lack of binding subjectivity, it turns towards itself. It obliges and authorizes itself as the subject of decision and action in relation to this freedom which is minimal and also absolute, i.e. unlimited. The subject of freedom is this subject of openness, the subject of limitless reliance on itself, since the self of the subject, its subjectivity, is nothing other than this endless room for play, infinite openness, ocean or desert, dimension of absolute freedom in which it loses itself in infinite responsibility.

As we know, Sartre is the philosopher of this freedom and responsibility. Nevertheless, Sartre’s subject is perhaps still too much the Cartesian and phenomenological subject of self-knowledge — subject of substantial stability. It continues to present itself as the subject of knowledge (or non-knowledge), as consciousness and self-consciousness, instead of being the subject of radical blindness and affirmative self-subversion, the beginning of the subject, its origin, being not the light of evidence. At the subject’s beginning there persists something radically non-subjective, neither subject nor object, the pre-reflective and pre-ontological nakedness of the material fact which bears witness to the limit as well as the ground of possibility and genuine abyss of subjectivity in general. This is the absolute givenness of blind matter in which the self-affirmative blindness of the subject of freedom and responsibility remains embedded and which it, in a way, reflects.

The clash of two blindnesses, of opaque pre-reflective matter with the opaque self of a subject without subjectivity, marks the scene of birth or beginning of another, non-Cartesian subject that unites the darkness of its origin with the veiling of its horizon, a singular subject that is equally inspired as well as retarded by ineradicable blindness.

Singularities are subjects of the line. They keep to the curve of the greatest possible indeterminacy. This is the curve of becoming, the curve of deterritorialization, line of mutations, of uncontrolled movements, line of an original deviation, of a drift, a clinamen which keeps open the space of eventuation and movement of a concrete, although simultaneously indeterminate singularity. It is the life-line of a subject without subjectivity. Without identity, singularities dance on this line of indeterminacy whilst allowing themselves to be measured against neither their highest nor lowest points. Singularities are immeasurable, unfathomable, incommensurable.

The unfathomability of singularities is not the extreme. It is movement itself which thrusts them from here to there, from the depths of the origin into the open horizon and back again. The subject of the origin is the universal-European we-subject. It is the subject of discussion, of the dialogical reassurance of subjectivity,



the subject of the logos' identity in Plato. It is the subject of transcendental self-grounding, of securing the origin in Kant and Husserl. Without doubt, Heidegger's Dasein, which takes leave of the subjectivist paradigm of the modern age, is still such a subject of reflection back to its beginning, to the beginning of this beginning, to the origin of the origin which no longer belongs to the space and tradition of metaphysics.

The subject of the horizon — if we distinguish it from the horizon subject of the tradition of the logos — is the subject of the future, of what is coming. In a certain geo-ontological sense, it is the American subject. As we know, Deleuze and Guattari have conceded “a special place” to America. The conflicts subject-singularity, origin-horizon, root-rhizome, tree-grass, past-future, deceleration-acceleration... are already the conflict Europe-America. Although America “is not free of the rule of trees and the search for roots” and Europe, “with its Indians without a line of descent, its continually receding horizon, its movable and displaceable borders,” is rhizomatic.⁵

One has to take leave of bipolarity, the binary machine, in order to think bipolarities. Singularity as the subject of the line which is neither a pure line of descent nor a pure line receding to a vanishing point, is neither the European subject of depth, of the origin, of the logos' root, nor is it the American singularity of vastness, of the naked horizon, of the future of the individual or the community of pure future beings. It neither digs in the grave of a withdrawing origin in the tomb of interiority, nor does it heroize itself as the instance of fast decisions in the inhospitability of the simple exterior. The singularity which is nevertheless a subject withdraws from the European narcissism of self-experience, its lachrymosity and introspective fussiness, and equally from the self-righteous pathos of American resoluteness in order to assume its own form of movement and action genuinely outside the zone of interference and friction between America and Europe, a kind of absolute freedom. It does so by dancing.

Dance is the mobility of freedom beyond the ideologies of expression, of shameless self-realization of uninhibited 'creativity'. It thus subverts the merely narcissistic subversion of normality. It is committed to freedom as such; its unboundedness is absolute. Dance, says Badiou, “indicates thinking as the event of appropriation”.⁶ It testifies to an essential disobedience to the established ontological order. It is an absolute novelty which breaks through the horizon of expectation. The subject of dance emerges from nothingness as a chaotic “uncoerced body”⁷. It is as if eternity tore up for a moment the laws of time and space. At this moment, the subject is infinitely alone. It singularizes itself at the brink of an abyss which is the proper name of subjectivity in general. It steps outside history in order to define its life, its singularity, its destiny anew. Dance is the moment of innocent oblivion to history in which the subject loses itself in the endlessness of the eternal.

4 The subject of care (Heidegger)

In Heidegger's *Being and Time*, care is the name for the being of Dasein. Dasein is the existential-ontological term for human being. Only human beings are da, present, i.e. open to or 'unclosed' for the sense of their own being and the sense of being in general. They exist in the opening toward being. Beings that exist in the way of Dasein are thus characterized by a certain openness, by an understanding of being as distinct from beings which do not exist in the way of Dasein — beings that are merely present or at hand, like a stone or a chair, or merely living beings such as plants and animals, or abstract mathematical entities. Dasein is the being that can pose the question of being, i.e. the fundamental question concerning the meaning of being in general. It can do this because, rather than being the cogito or subject, it is being-in-the-world. The world does not stand over against it like an object. It finds itself originarily in the world; it has always already transcended itself toward world.

The three structural moments of being-in-the-world are existentiality (casting), facticity (having-been-cast or thrownness) and fallenness (being-involved-with). In these structures, the sense of the being of Dasein, the sense of care, is revealed to be temporality. In its casting, Dasein casts itself into its possibilities of being. The casting is the ecstasy of the future, literally, the standing-out into the future. In having been cast it experiences itself as factually, necessarily given. Having-been-cast or thrownness is the ecstasy of the past.



Being-involved-with means being involved with 'real' beings encountered in the world. It is the ecstasy or standing-out into the present. The unified structure of these three structural moments is care. Care is a category of ontological structure, i.e. it is ontologically prior to any ontic-existential caring-about or having cares. "As the original structural whole, care is existentially-a priori before any factual 'comportment' or 'situation' of Dasein."⁸ Dasein comports itself in the existential modes of caring for other Dasein and taking care of beings that are not in the way of Dasein. Caring-for and taking-care-of are existentials, i.e. they are transcendental ontological structures of Dasein which first enable any concrete empirical 'intersubjectivity', interexistentiality or co-existentiality and relations to 'objects'. As always, Heidegger insists on the distinction between the existential-ontological and the ontic-existential dimensions. This is the ontological difference between being and beings.

Section 42 of Being and Time cites the 220th fable of a certain Hyginus, as Heidegger says, "by way of pre-ontological evidence for the existential-ontological interpretation of Dasein as care":

"Once upon a time, when 'Care' was crossing a river, she came upon some clay-loam. Reflectively she took up some of it and began to form it. While she was pondering on what she had created, Jupiter showed up. 'Care' asked him to give spirit to the formed piece of clay. Jupiter was glad to do this, but when she wanted to give her own name to the form, Jupiter forbade this and demanded that it be given his name. While 'Care' and Jupiter were disputing over the name, Earth (Tellus) also spoke up and desired that the form be given her name since, after all, she had given it a piece of her body. The disputants chose Saturn as an arbiter and he handed down to them the following, apparently just decision: 'You, Jupiter, because you have given spirit, shall receive the spirit when it dies; you, Earth, because you have given the body, shall receive the body. But because 'Care' first formed this being, for as long as it lives, 'Care' shall possess it. And because there is dispute about the name, let it be called 'homo' because it is made of humus (earth)."⁹

The human is a compositum of spirit and earth. As long as it lives, it is the product and possession of care. To be a human in the sense of the fable of care obviously means something quite different than to possess oneself, to be the owner of oneself. The being of the human, as long as we grasp it as care, is what guides the human, keeps it breathing and alive, unsettles it and thus possesses it. The being of the human is what dispossesses the human of its possession of itself. Because of this being, so it seems, a human being does not have itself. Rather, it is had by its being; it is alienated in its being. What is the special ontic character of Dasein in Being and Time? Heidegger says, "The special ontic character of Dasein consists in it being ontological". "Dasein is a being that does not merely occur among other beings. Rather, its special ontic character is that this being in its being is concerned with its own being."¹⁰ Dasein is distinguished from beings that are not in the way of Dasein by a kind of explicit ontological self-reference and by the vectorial tension which it itself constitutes as the subject of ontological care of this care (its being). Dasein is the being that cares for itself as the ontological subject of care insofar as care is the name for the being of Dasein, the unified structure of casting, having-been-cast and being-involved-with. As the 'subject' of this care of care, Dasein comports itself towards itself; it is itself nothing other than this ontological relation in that care for itself (Dasein's self-care for its being as care), insofar as it is the care of care, is at the same time (this is essential for Heidegger) care for the sense of being in general, for the truth of being as a whole. As we know, this double or two-stage care governs the planned structure of the total project, Being and Time. The first two divisions of the first part (the only one to be published), 1 The Preparatory Fundamental Analysis of Dasein; 2 Dasein and Temporality, asked for the sense of the being of Dasein, the sense of care: temporality. The third (unpublished) division, 3 Time and Being, would have extended the care of care and its sense to the care for the sense of being in general, which is the question of being proper. This did not happen. Nevertheless it is obvious that the fundamental analytic concept of care for itself works toward the, let us say, radical ontological care for the sense of being in general. The question concerning the human or human being is therefore only a preparatory question insofar as care, the being of the human being that understands being, is only the arena for the clearing of being in general.

5 Care for the self (Foucault)

The subject is the subject of care. It is, as Foucault says, the subject of caring for itself.

Care drives the subject to the limit of what modern thinking calls the subjectivity of the subject. In order to be the subject of care, the subject must put its status as transcendental subject of the centre, which it acquired in the modern age, into question or at least bracket it off. It renounces the place of king. It is to sacrifice itself in contact with a radical exterior as the significant of the centre and as the signified of a transcendental or symbolic order. It does this in the awareness of the power of this exterior which unsettles the subject's calm, the equilibrium of its interior, "because the power of the exterior," as Deleuze says following Blanchot, "incessantly overturns and topples the diagrams,"¹¹ and in this way destabilizes the subject as a subjective power. It is called upon, through the loss of its central position, to affirm the absolute restlessness of a "knot of totalization" without identity which hides its faceless self. It has to leave itself in order to be with itself. Although the subject of care has really left the space of transcendental phenomenology and transcendental philosophy in general, it still remains the subject of this specific bracketing off, this epoché or suspension of the function of sense of transcendental egoity.

As the subject of a radical abstention from subjectivity or selfhood, the subject of care accelerates towards its future without identity. It employs the technique, phenomenological or otherwise, of abstention or bracketing off, i.e. of neutralization of its transcendental or cogito-function as sense and subject in order to contemplate another self and open itself to a "culture of the self" which in turn is connected with a technique of living (*techné tou biou*), of shaping existence and of transforming oneself whose origin Foucault discovers in the first two centuries of the history of Occidental self-contemplation. "What is characteristic for this 'culture of the self' is the fact that here the art of existing ... is governed by the principle according to which one has to 'take care of oneself'; this principle of care for oneself establishes this culture's necessity, guides its development and organizes its practices."¹²

The list of ancient voices evoked by Foucault in this connection includes names such as Apuleius, Epicure, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus and Plutarch. In the umbra of a culture of the self and care for oneself, very different motifs and forms of behaviour can be gathered such as self-respect, asceticism, naked self-affection, coming to oneself, the restitution or regaining of the self, care for the body and soul, the transformation or mutation or turning-around of the ego, self-liberation and shaping, stylizing one's own concrete existence, examining oneself, introspection, intellectual and moral examining of the self. Nevertheless there is no justification for misrecognizing care for the self as an "exercise in solitude instead of seeing in it an opening toward the sphere of the other, the dimensions of shared language, of social rules and both political and family customs. In fact it is a matter of a truly social practice".¹³ The subject of care for the self can appear as an counselling figure, as a mentor or as a kind of private philosopher whose self-contemplation yields a profit for either a larger or more intimate circle of friends, relatives or aristocratic masters. It is a "game played out between caring for oneself and helping the other" that allows the culture of the self to appear as an "intensification of social relations": "Care for oneself thus appears at least as much tied to a 'service to the soul' based on the possibility of playful exchange with the other and a system of mutual obligations."¹⁴

The subject of care is combined with therapeutic medical practice. It anticipates the figure of the philosopher physician with whom Nietzsche will later identify.¹⁵ Philosophy and medicine work to improve the state of a subject which, as the subject of a certain suffering, a passion or a physical illness, has been thrown out of equilibrium. It is thus a matter of ameliorating or eliminating a disturbance, of giving (back) the subject its proper being so that it once again gains control, freedom and responsibility in relation to itself. Thus it does not appear to be exaggerated to draw attention to the fact that the imperative of self-knowing implies a kind of repressive dictum calling on self-management.

6 Totality and consent

For Foucault, Nietzsche is the philosopher who has broken with the modern concept of philosophy, with philosophy as a movement of totalization with a universal claim. Since Nietzsche, thinking is satisfied with establishing the particular. It is itself perspectival instead of assuring itself of its origin and its plausibility or truth in the transcendental subject. The paths of thinking no longer allow themselves to be bundled and organized from a central perspective. They are dispersed into the variety of the manifold phenomena themselves. From now on, philosophy is exhausted in a diagnostic procedure. It becomes a genealogy of the present-day after it has rejected the possibility of a transcendental grounding of truth in the principle of the subject. „I therefore think that the idea of a philosophy that comprises the whole is relatively new; I think that the philosophy of the twentieth century is about to fundamentally change itself anew and that not only with respect to its limits and extent, but also in the sense of its relativization. For, what does philosophizing mean today? It does not mean creating a discourse of the totality, a discourse which takes up the world in its totality, but it means exercising quite concretely a certain activity, a certain form of activity. To put it in a somewhat truncated way, I would say that today philosophy is a form of activity which can be exercised in various areas.“¹⁶

The problem with this truncation is obvious. In order to release philosophy from its desire for the totality, it seems to be necessary to deny it in its original, in no way simply Hegelian dimension as *prote philosophia* or *prima ontologia*. A philosophy can only hope for a necessity and future for itself if it liberates itself from the claim to totality and universality. It can no longer present itself as the investigation of principles. It must renounce the study of first principles. Its narratives must open up to the beyond of the totality, to the experience of what is incommensurable. It opens up to the experience of irreducible contingency.

But was it not precisely Nietzsche who raised contingency to the status of a principle by welcoming the constancy of becoming as the eternal recurrence? Perhaps Nietzsche, without therefore necessarily being the last metaphysician, the thinker of consummating Platonism in the Heideggerian sense, is the philosopher who is distinguished by a special insistence on philosophy as the question of principles, precisely when he presents himself, as he always does, as the subject of the radical questioning of first principles. For Nietzsche, philosophy means perhaps nothing less than consent to the ontological facts. Nietzschean ethics would be nothing other than the ethics of the affirmation of recurrence. It would appeal to the subject's courage to affirm the indifference of the multiplicity of beings or of what is not the same. It would urge that this affirmation be conceived of as the origin of an ethical or aesthetic or political construction. Under no circumstances would Nietzsche have restricted philosophy to the passivity of 'diagnostic work'. He would be the philosopher of an active philosophical self-affirmation which distances the subject of thinking from the false alternatives of diagnostics of the times, mere critique and a journalistic lack of imagination.

“Consent to the object separates literature from journalism,” says Heiner Müller. This applies also to philosophy and art. “The precondition for art is consent.”¹⁷ Those who consent want to co-operate with the real in order to change it. “You cannot influence it at all if you do not consent to it.”¹⁸ Consent is affirmative without being approval of reality. It is recognition, not approval. Recognition or consent precede approving endorsement as well as negating rejection. Subjects of consent are subjects of an improbable affirmation. They say *yea* to reality as it is. This does not mean that they endorse all real events and processes. Consent does not imply any judgement. Those who consent risk a relationship with reality without value-judgement. They consent to the original valuelessness of the real because the real is at first nothing other than that which has no measure. It is that which exceeds every measure. The real precedes its order or moderation in measures of value. It is that which is quite simply incommensurable.

The consent of those who consent therefore does not aim at values. It aims at the real as it is beyond its valuation by measures of value. Consent is a more fundamental affirmation than endorsement. Endorsement is based on what is good. It already has an idea of the good. It classifies the real according to the criteria of a register. The register of the good is called morality. Morality is a discipline for judging the real. It distinguishes the good from the non-good or evil. To consent to the real therefore means not to consent to morality. Through their consent, those who consent defend the real against morality. Nietzsche's *amor fati* is



the formula for such a consent. To love destiny in Nietzsche's sense does not mean to believe in fate. On the contrary, Nietzsche's love of destiny fights against fatalism.

Fatalism is nourished by obscurantism and obscurity. The love of destiny turns the subject of this love into a subject of clarity. It is the subject of the day, subject of self-illumination. Whereas the subject of fatalism submits to its fate, the subject of consent, the subject of the love of destiny is a subject who consents to destiny, i.e. to reality as it is here and now. The love of destiny is a more encompassing and more risky affirmation than the fatalism which dominates the subject of resentment and mystic paranoia. To be the subject of fatalism means to scarcely still be a subject. It means to be the object of circumstances, that is, the victim of history or obscure powers. The subject of fatalism believes in these powers, in the 'power of fate'. It does not consent to its situation. The subject of the love of destiny loves the real like a destiny without being fatalistic. It consents to its situation and its reality.

Consent is the beginning, the condition of possibility of any effective intervention. The counter-community to the community of those who consent is the community of negative subjects. The negative subjects do not love destiny; they fit in with it, disappointed, desperate or cynical. The negative subjects, like the disappointed subjects, are fatalistic even when they have no faith, even when they are 'realists'. Realism is their faith. Their fatalism, their belief in fate is called credulity with regard to reality. It is the obscurantism of facts of subjects who believe only that they believe in nothing, while their religion has its effects in all their judgements and operations.

Far from being an arrangement with the political, social and economic situation, consent in Müller's sense means above all rejection of negativity, of cynicism, of overly hasty distancing which regulates the register of values of a nihilism that is always moralistic.

As we know, Nietzsche is the thinker of this exhaustion that has become universal. Citing Heidegger, "Nihilism is that historical process through which the 'super-sensuous' becomes frail and nullified in its domination so that beings themselves lose their value and sense".¹⁹ European nihilism is the Christian-Platonic nihilism of values. It is not as if it did not know of any values. On the contrary, the nihilistic moral system is at first a system of values. It is an enormous archive of prohibitions and instructions for action, a storehouse in which the values are stacked up in plenty. But the values of this storehouse, the traditional values, as one also says, are values that deny the value of reality, of the real. They are values of negation which insist on the worthlessness of the real world and of the subjects and their bodies who populate this reality. The nihilism of values insists on the worthlessness of everything which is. Values are ideas and ideals. They exist only as empty shells. They are imperatives which call on the subject of nihilism to give up its corporeality. They try to persuade the subject not to be real here, and instead — in view of the idea *ou agathou*, the idea of the good, as Plato says, or in view of God — to be real there.

Nietzsche fights against the nihilism of values which is essentially an idealism of values by fighting against this (priestly) persuasion of the subject to annul itself. He is concerned with erecting the subject anew, with bringing a courageous, reality-resistant subject to a stand. Nietzsche's concern is therefore not the destruction of the valuableness of the real world but the abolition of the nihilism of values which undermines this valuableness.

"Nietzsche's most general aim is this: to introduce the concepts of sense and value into philosophy," says Deleuze.²⁰ This means that Nietzsche's philosophy is a thinking that counts on the sense and value of the real. It does this by denouncing the idealistic denials of this sense and valuableness as nihilistic exertions. What is disguised as the assertion of sense and value, the Platonic-Christian denial of the body and the world, is the powerfully effective tradition of European nihilism which denies the potentiality of the human body, i.e. the subject as the subject of an elementary affirmation, of a great act of consent.

7 Autopoiesis

The subject of care is the subject of self-production; it is the autopoietic subject. Foucault recognizes in the urge for self-improvement which constitutes this subject the power to constitute itself, to constitute its self in contact with the exterior. For, care for oneself is nothing other than care for the self which is threatened with being pulverized between the violence of the exterior and the forces of mere superficial externality (of doxa, prejudices, the games of social living). It is nothing other than the care for the line of separation between these forces. It is a kind of absolute resistance which resists in two directions — against the naked pre-reflexive chaos or exterior, the space of silence, and also against the dimension of nihilistic accumulation of sense, meaning or idle talk, the social sphere. The subject has to confront itself with the banality and untruth of everyday life and also with the madness of a deeper indifference which dominates the non-sense of the pre-ontological order.

As the subject of care, it begins to erect itself as a force in the midst of other forces. It steps into the process of subjectivization. It constitutes itself as the power of autopoiesis. By paying attention to itself in making itself the object of its care, it becomes the subject of this movement of becoming a subject. Deleuze calls this Foucault's "artistic will"; "subjectivization is an artistic operation".²¹

In the space of impossible subjectivity — "There is no subject, but a production of subjectivity; subjectivity has to be produced when the time has come precisely because there is no subject."²² —, the subject constitutes itself as the process of its self-invention. Care for itself is the name for this never-ending process in which the subject tries to gain control, domination over itself. It is the name for a form of existence of the most extreme restlessness, even when it assumes the appearance of stoic composure. Subjectivity exists only in the mode of a certain agitation. The subject of autopoiesis is the subject of an absolute turbulence.

The subject of self-constitution, of freedom and emancipatory self-elevation is the subject of irreducible conflicts. It experiences itself as a conflict. There is only something resembling a subject as the limiting case of ontological self-consciousness, as the collapse of self-evidence of the traditional Cartesian, phenomenological or hermeneutic conceptions of consciousness. As the subject of self-elevation, it begins to erect itself in the midst of history, in the midst of the specificity of an historical, political, economic, cultural context. It begins to struggle against what is merely external to it, against what is merely superficial without having the value of an essential exterior, of an alterity that is part of itself. It fights in this struggle of the self against everything that makes it into an object, the product of alien expressions of the will, of factual determinations. The self-erection of the subject against itself is therefore at first connected with the relativization, qualification, restriction or neutralization of its objective components.

The subject of self-erection does not cease defending itself against its reduction to its naked status as an object. It defends itself against becoming a thing, against the reification of its being by the movements which establish sense and values in history. It has to free itself of this history without being able to leave the universal space of history to which it is compelled to belong. The subject is thus the subject of an essential contradiction, of an irreducible paradox, if you will. The question concerning how one becomes a subject, the problem of self-constitution of a subject of factual selflessness insofar as it touches upon the motif of the constitutive power, the construction of a new ontological, political and social order, the possibility of an ontology of self-liberation, as Toni Negri says²³, is articulated in the space of this paradox, in the dimension of the irresolvable contradiction which separates the subject of absolute freedom from itself as the subject of objective impotence.

8 Existence as an exercise in style

The subject must assert its existence against the forces which deny it, endanger it or make it impossible. It is the subject of this self-assertion, subject of resistance and of autopoietic styling of its existence. In his last two books, *L'usage des plaisirs* and *Le souci de soi*, Foucault made it into the arena of the crossover between the ethical and the aesthetic. Self-aestheticization seems to correspond to the proper call for ethical



self-determination. The subject gives itself its own form.

Processes of subjectivization are such processes of giving oneself existence and form. In them, the subject comports itself towards itself by casting itself toward an image of its possible self that is still unknown. It lets up from itself in order to become something different from what it is. It traverses its established identities like non-binding shells without any substance because the substance of the subject resides in nothing other than its substancelessness. Its ethics of self-determination is an ethics of indeterminacy. Because the subject does not have any transcendental or religious, i.e. substantial, determination, it also cannot miss its destination. It moves towards itself by turning away from itself, i.e. from its hypothetical substantial self. To be a subject therefore means keeping to the line of turning away from itself. The subject twists and turns itself toward an indefinite direction. It affirms this turning and twisting as its authentic form of movement. This form is authentic because it does not have any guarantee from transcendent or transcendental principles. The form hovers over the abyss of an elementary lack of essence. In the act of subjectivization, the subject relates itself to this fundamental void or openness which is the space of its freedom for responsible shaping of the self.

The subject of aesthetic self-forming is the subject of its own freedom and responsibility. The responsibility of the subject of care for itself is not based on any morality. On the contrary, it contradicts any conceivable morality. The ethicalness of care consists in resisting the temptations of morality which in any case would mean making things easier for the subject. “What is our ethics; how do we produce an artistic existence; what are our processes of subjectivization that cannot be reduced to our moral codes?”²⁴

The ethical, aesthetic self-constitution of the self or the subject is a warlike and necessarily violent act. The self interrupts itself, its ‘symbolic’, moral, socio-cultural self. It loses its self as a subject for the moment of a reinvention of its self. It traverses the zone of indeterminacy, a dimension beyond knowledge and power. But this traversal is not therefore itself without violence and power. It is violent in a pre-coded sense. It implies the sacrifice of the coded self and it sacrifices at the same time any ‘knowledge’ of its future. The self casts itself toward its unknown shadowy outline; it exhausts itself in the moment of a destructive self-constitution. It casts by performing a casting of the self to be in new, unknown modes. It produces unimagined modes of being, of living, of the self. It creates itself anew. It risks the uninhibitedness of pure becoming. It invents obscure modalities of resistance, of self-erection and presence. It practises a new concept of waging war. In bringing forth itself, it brings forth its own type of resistance, its own art of war, its own style, its own form of presence and its affirmation.

9 Irreducible subject

Care for the self tears the subject from its socio-political moorings. At the proper moment of subjectivization (in reality, this moment is manifold and in a certain way infinite), this care cuts through the social bond. The subject of care does not allow itself to be reduced to its ‘objective’ existence as the bearer of characteristics of the times. It is the subject of active self-renunciation of the systems of knowledge and power. Contrary to a widespread view that Foucault is the thinker of the reduction of the subject to its fabric and its structures — the “reduction of the human to structures to which it is tied seems to me to be characteristic for today’s thinking”, is what he says in 1967 in an interview with P. Caruso²⁵ — one should think the movement of self-constitution of the subject of care as a gesture of transgression in which the subject comports itself in the midst of its objective reality toward itself and this reality in an absolute way.

The conflict between objective and absolute reality first constitutes the bow of tension, the line of self-release which the curve of subjectivization describes. Because the subject is objectively unfree, in the act of subjectivization, it tries to free itself of its objective components. It reduces them to factual elements of its historical-cultural identity. Subjectivization puts this identity and the model of identity per se into question. It demands of the subject a kind of active indifference to its objective components. To be a subject in the sense of subjectivization therefore means to emancipate oneself from oneself as the bearer-substance of an alien determination of identity. The subject of subjectivization is the subject of emancipation.



10 Anonymity

The ocean is deathless
The islands rise and die
Quietly come, quietly go
A silent swaying breath
Agnes Martin

It is obvious that there cannot be any beginning before the beginning. So what is before it? And what name do we want to give to it? Philosophy is nothing other than this temptation of the nameless. Philosophical desire circles around a void which would be misrecognized if one named it. In order to speak out its truth, the subject of thinking must lose itself in the ocean of namelessness.

Namelessness and facelessness are part of the subject of subjectivization. It is the subject of an original anonymity. „More than one person probably writes like I do and thus ultimately no longer has any face. One should not ask me who I am and one should not say to me that I should remain the same. That is a morality of the status of the person. It dominates our papers. It should let us go when it is a matter of writing.“²⁶

To read Foucault means to go through the experience of this anonymity which maintains a kind of secret and disputed kinship with the concept of universality as related to the classical subject of the modern age. It means to be repeatedly lost for words in view of the beauty and clarity of his language, to be speechless in the face of the language and its power to touch the untouchable. Even when it starts to flicker, buckles, gives itself airs and exhausts itself senselessly, or simply explodes under the burden of what it is trying to convey, this language is dignified, scintillating, exact, incomprehensible, timeless, beautiful. Foucault has shown that the question of style, although it is so strongly tied to the concrete existence of an author, remains dependent upon the experience of what is not experienceable, of the anonymous incomprehensibility of a ‘substance’ without substantiality.

Personality, individuality, character are words whose meaning is too often exhausted in covering up a sub-subjective current — of the anonymity of an intoxication undermining identity or subjectivity, the stuttering or mumbling beneath language and its concepts. Subjectivization is the moment of actively renewed contact with the violence of this exterior, as Maurice Blanchot says, which dwells at the heart of the Western logos. For, the subject, far from being a principle of real self-evidence, swims in the middle of a stretch of water that prevents any formation of a valid island by repeatedly flooding its borders and redefining them.

Anonymity could designate the subject of this flooding, a subject without secure borders, without destination, without transcendental reality. “If there is a subject,” says Deleuze in his portrait of Foucault, “then it is a subject without identity”.²⁷ The subject whose emergence we observe in Foucault’s last books is a subject without a constitutive relationship with transcendental rules or laws which could tell it what it is or should be. It is a subject of solitude accompanying every one of its actions. It can rely on nothing but this solitude that infinitely singularizes its being. The subject of contact with the anonymity of the exterior is this absolute singularity. It is singularity instead of being a subject in the sense of Kantian thinking. It does not profit from the universal auspices of a transcendental subjectivity.

The subject is anonymous because it has to ‘live’ without subjectivity. It can only be with itself whilst losing itself in the ocean of its transcendental namelessness. It is the subject of this submersion and it is the subject of its emergence, subject of self-invention without ground or reason. For, the exterior, like the chaos of Deleuze and Guattari, is a black hole. It is unsaturated matter which endangers all the activities of the subject, its care for itself, its will to sovereignty, to self-assertion and self-attestation. The subject has to position itself against this chaos without denying it. It tries to give its truth room to play, to give it a language, a general expression. It wants to put moments of warlike chaos into words without neutralizing its powers through the reductive violence of representation and universalization. It has to risk the most extreme proximity to what threatens it most of all.

11 Contacting the exterior

The subject comports itself towards itself whilst constituting a contact zone with the exterior by entering it. „For human beings to appear or come forth it is necessary for the forces in human beings to make contact with the very special forces of the exterior.“²⁸ For subjectivization to be possible, the subject has to transgress the principle of identity, the law of ‘I think’, the power of reason. The maritime discourse on the matter that floods the ‘ego’ and the ‘I think’, however, does not bring forth any subjectless subject, any Hegelian substance. Even though it sometimes seems to be so, the thinking of the exterior is not a thinking beyond the subject. The attempt at such a kind of thinking would be in vain and would drown in the abyss of mere silence. A thinking without a subject would no longer be thinking. It would be nothing other than the unwitnessed wave-motion of nothingness.

As Deleuze and Guattari say, the subject has to lay a layer of immanence over the “oceanic chaos” which allows it to pause for a moment, to resist the pull of the “undifferentiated abyss” for a moment which they also call “the ocean of dissimilarity”. Art, science, philosophy attempt to maintain this precarious contact with chaos or the exterior, to fight against chaos or the exterior without denying or restricting its dark efficacy in order to arm themselves against another danger which emerges as a measure against absolute disorder without being much more than a movement of flight, “a kind of ‘sunshade’ as protection against chaos”.²⁹

Whereas opinion (doxa) constitutes the phantasmagoric umbrella needed to flee into reality from chaos in which one can easily recognize the Lacanian real,³⁰ the chaotides — art, science, philosophy — enter into another relation with the oceanic abyss, a relation which can equally well be called a non-relation. What distinguishes opinion from the chaotid subject is the mode of gaining distance from the real. Deleuze has tried to rigorously think this difference. For the (authentic) subject and opinion there is no common point of contact at all.

One has to learn to distinguish between a thinking of flight in the strong sense which Deleuze has given this term, and a thinking of mere refuge, a distinction which corresponds to that between ethicalness and moralism. In this question, whose political weight cannot be over-estimated, Deleuzian aristocratism brooks no contradiction. The thinking of the exterior can be recognized in this uncompromisingness. Its conflict with the principles of communication (“which potentially only works up opinions in order to create a ‘consensus’ and not concepts”³¹) is only one obvious example of this.

What is decisive is the contact. One could speak of a contact with the untouchable which attains its zenith as soon as the chaotid, i.e. the subject without subjectivity, enters the zone of indistinguishability in a panic or originary haste that allows the subject to strip off all certainties and precautions in a candid and light-headed gesture of madness at the threshold to the exterior in order to be nothing other than this feverish vector, the subject of subjectivization.

12 The art of existing

In his Leibniz lectures in the summer semester of 1928, *Metaphysical Principles of Logic*, Heidegger touches on the “question of ethics”. Fundamental ontology as developed in *Being and Time* is not the whole of metaphysics. It has to be supplemented by a metontology. Only the unity of fundamental ontology (which encompasses the analysis of existence and the analysis of the temporality of being, the question of being proper) with metontology (which Heidegger likewise connects to the question concerning the totality of beings as well as the recoil of ontology onto existence, metontology being “also the domain of the metaphysics of existence”) provides the full concept of a possible metaphysics. Being needs human being, Dasein, as the locus where it strikes. Dasein is the place where being eventuates. “There is being only when Dasein understands being.”³² Dasein’s understanding of being is the condition of possibility for being at all.

The question concerning the sense of being per se must be preceded by questioning the sense of the being of Dasein. It takes its starting-point from Dasein and it must return to this starting-point. Heidegger calls it an



“inner necessity that ontology boomerang back to where it set out from”.³³ This is the definition which Being and Time provides of philosophy as such: “Philosophy is universal phenomenological ontology proceeding from the hermeneutics of Dasein which, as the analysis of existence, has tied the end of the thread of all philosophical questioning to where it arises and to where it boomerangs back.”³⁴)

Without allowing itself to be reduced to an anthropology or an ontic Weltanschauung, fundamental ontology, including metontology, must boomerang back into concrete existence. As Heidegger will explain in the Letter on Humanism, existence is neither the “reality of the ego cogito” nor is it the “reality of the subjects who act with each other and for each other and so come to themselves”, but rather it is “ek-static dwelling close to being”.³⁵

From this proximity a certain obligation or necessity for action in a possible authenticity can be derived. “Only those who understand this art of existing, of treating what has been individually grasped as what is simply unique for their actions, and at the same time are clear about the finiteness of this action understand finite existence and can hope to attain something in this existence. The art of existing is not self-reflection, which is an uninvolved hunt to dig up motives and complexes from which one gains reassurance and a dispensation from action; rather it is solely the clarity of action itself, the hunt for genuine possibilities.”³⁶

The topic of metontology seems to imply an entire art of existing, as Heidegger says, and a theory of action, indeed, a kind of ethics which cannot be separated from the problem of a general ontology. Dasein is ethically distinguished from other beings by the fact that it always already understands being and from this understanding of being creates the possibility of explicitly accepting it and grounding it in an action or a deed. The ethicalness of Dasein which understands being is expressly characterized by Heidegger as “guardianship, that is, the care for being”.³⁷

Care for itself (we recall that Dasein is that being which “in its being is concerned with its own being”) is inseparable from the ontological care for the truth of being as a whole. “As the ek-sisting being, the human being withstands Dasein by taking the Da as the clearing of being into its ‘care’”.³⁸

13 Desubjectivization?

What is the subject in relation to the water which touches subjectivity with the violence of the sea?

What happens to the subject as soon as it turns toward the exterior, the rule of indeterminacy which it itself does not control? What happens at the moment when it loses the universal option of belonging to the transcendental we-community and an infinite pain divides or cuts the subject off from itself, releases and liberates it from its imagined origin and telos? Is it then still a matter of a subject, of the signature of a sovereign, responsible instance?

The experience of the exterior is the philosophical experience pure and simple. The subject that refuses the adventure of indistinguishability, an adventure that can only be grasped in a decisively creative perspective, only exhausts itself in spelling out the historical templates and restricts itself to varying the well-known register by causing a little dispensable confusion, pushing ahead with systematization and generating archives. As opposed to this, the movement of philosophy can only be conceived of as hyperbole or as madness, as politically momentous without itself being political in the restricted sense of the word. (Those people are called ‘apolitical’ who refuse to choose from the range of options on offer, whose resistance against recognized (there is a consensus!) ‘political’ consciousness or even consciousness that critiques ideology is uncompromising.)

The subject of the exterior is an ethical subject without being loyal to the postulates of traditional humanisms and their registers of good and evil. Even when it seems to be ‘romantic’ and threatens to activate the naïvetés and ideologies lying closest to hand (the subject protects itself in the moment of madness against what lies closest to hand just as it protects itself against opinion), there is no thinking



beyond the temptation of the exterior, of chaos and the abyss. In the shade of this certainty, contact is the self-consciousness of philosophy.

Against what does one try to protect oneself by protecting oneself against the subject and fleeing from it? Is it possible to say of this protection and the theoretical and practical strategies which it generates that it ultimately remains a subject who, having become uncanny to itself, tries to assert itself against itself by integrating the right of the other into its calculation? But what is the case if the other is only the most obvious name of subjectivity as such in its monstrous, unfathomable dimension?

One should call to mind that the history of the emancipation of the subject from itself is only a part of the history of the subject in general. Not because there is always also a pre-emancipative and post-emancipative subject that does not grasp the great wave, but because, in the history of the subject in general, an ultimate desubjectivization has not succeeded and necessarily cannot succeed, desubjectivization eventuates in the name of Dasein, of the irreducible otherness of the other or of an absolute, nomadic singularity. The product of this movement is always found to be steered as well as disoriented by subjectivity in general.

14 Acrobatics

The withdrawal of the human being has already begun. The subject in human being is accelerating on the line of departure from the human being. It draws the trace of an exertion which tries to turn the world and the self upside down by giving way to an acrobatic inclination: the desire for a momentous breakthrough of boundaries or for ecstasy in which the ambition of the acrobat can be recognized and also the shamelessness of an aggression turned against itself.

15 For the violence of non-universalist thinking

The subject of thinking is the subject of the exercise of a certain violent force. It invents its own body which obliges only the subject and in which it moves towards its objects with the necessary aggressiveness. The violence of concepts and the violence of representation in general have been rejected as the violence of objectification, or objectivation, as Heidegger says. The philosophy of modernity since Descartes, since the Enlightenment, since Kant has been put into question as such a practice of violence insofar as the concept and the demeanour of construction (for instance, of systems) and of erection (of a transcendental subject) are invariably combined with the authority of self-empowerment and a certain will to power. It is thinking itself that elevates itself to this self-authorization in order to give a structure to the superfluity of the manifold real which refers to the order of concepts itself. The human being becomes the starting-point of all knowledge and it appears simultaneously as its proper object.

„This ambiguous situation characterized the anthropological, humanistic thinking of the nineteenth century, as it could be called. It seems to me that today this thinking is in a state of dissolution and is decomposing before our eyes. And the reason for this has a great deal to do with the development of structuralism. Since we have discovered that all human knowledge, all human existence, the whole of human life and perhaps even the biological inheritance of humankind are tied into structures, that is, into a formal set of elements among which relations exist that can be described by anyone, the human being ceases, so to speak, to be its own subject for itself, that is, it is subject and object at the same time. ... This reduction of the human being to structures into which it is integrated seems to me to be characteristic for today's thinking. The ambiguous position of the human being as subject and object therefore, in my opinion, is not a fertile hypothesis today, not an area of fertile research anymore.“³⁹

In this interview from 1967, Foucault leaves no doubt about what is actually at stake in this reduction of the human being to structures. Instead of being a simple problem in the history of science in the narrow sense, in the structural revolution, if one can speak of such a thing, the “sovereignty of the subject or of consciousness” is at issue. That is the great theme of the disappearance of the human which dominates



the analyses in *The Order of Things*. A certain kind of human being begins to dissolve. It loses its authority, authorization and power of persuasion at the threshold of the investigation of anonymous, blind structures undertaken by the structuralism of the 1950s and 1960s. The violence of representation, of the transcendental subject, of universalism which represent the thinking of modernity must give way to another violence which could be called the violence of signs and structures. At least, as Foucault will emphasize, it is a matter of bracketing off or obscuring the cogito for methodological reasons in order to learn more about the structures of knowledge than seems to be possible from within the schema of subject and object. Philosophy must take leave of the tendency toward totality in order to go along the path of contingencies which this totality denies, with the aim of grasping their structure. Following Nietzsche, it is a matter of opening up new areas of phenomena and knowledge which have been neglected by the main paths of traditional philosophy. Archaeology and genealogy take the place of the metaphysical investigation of meaning and origin. One power represses the other. Philosophy only exists as the history of repression. Who or what, if it is not a subject, can assume responsibility for this?

Translated from German by Michael Eldred, Cologne

Notes:

- ¹ Michel Foucault *Dispositive der Macht. Über Sexualität, Wissen und Wahrheit* (Dispositives of Power: Sexuality, Knowledge and Truth) Berlin 1978 pp. 225ff.
- ² Michel Foucault *Der Mensch ist ein Erfahrungstier* (The Human is an Animal of Experience) Frankfurt/M. 1996 pp. 23ff.
- ³ Cf. Martin Heidegger *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time) Tübingen 1979, pp. 41f.
- ⁴ Carl Schmitt *Land und Meer. Eine weltgeschichtliche Betrachtung* (Land and Sea: A View from the Perspective of World History) Stuttgart 2001 pp. 14f.
- ⁵ Gilles Deleuze/Félix Guattari *Tausend Plateaus* (Thousand Plateaux) Berlin 1992 p. 33.
- ⁶ Alain Badiou *Kleines Handbuch zur In-Ästhetik* (Small Manual on In-Aesthetics) Vienna 2001 p.84.
- ⁷ *ibid.* p. 83.
- ⁸ Martin Heidegger *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time) p. 193.
- ⁹ *ibid.* p. 198.
- ¹⁰ *ibid.* p. 12.
- ¹¹ Gilles Deleuze *Foucault* Frankfurt/M. 1987 p. 131.
- ¹² Michel Foucault *Die Sorge um sich. Sexualität und Wahrheit 3* (Care for the Self: Sexuality and Truth 3) Frankfurt/M. 1989, p. 60. Cf. p. 62: "In the long development of the art of living under the guiding idea of care for the self, the first two centuries of the Roman Empire can be regarded as the watershed of a curve, a kind of golden age in the cultivation of the self, a phenomenon which of course concerned only relatively small social groups that were the bearers of culture and for which a *téchné tû bíou* could have meaning and reality."
- ¹³ *ibid.* p. 71.
- ¹⁴ *ibid.* p. 74.
- ¹⁵ Clément Rosset distinguishes between two different types of philosophical physicians. There are the "healer philosophers" and the "medical philosophers". "The former are full of sympathy and ineffectual, and the latter are effective and without compassion. ... The latter have the true means of healing and the only inoculation, i.e. the dispensing of truth, but this medicine is so strong that, although it occasionally helps sound natures, its second and predominant effect is to prostrate weak natures once and for all." (Clément Rosset *Das Prinzip Grausamkeit* (The Principle of Cruelty) Berlin 1994 p. 42f) Nietzsche's philosophical pharmacy is mercilessly therapeutic. It wants to be a medicine against weakness, revenge and resentful dependency. It is a *pharmakon* (medicine, antidote, drug, poison) against the Platonic healer-poison which counterposes the celebration of a reality beyond to the affirmation of the world. Plato's poison heals by obscuring the truth and by declaring the real to be a mere illusion. It is a medicine which, as Rosset explains, drives away the cruelty of reality, "just as a medication temporarily drives away pain". The Platonic medication and, as we can say with some simplification, metaphysical medications as a whole "ease the complaints of reality with an unlimited range of medications, more or less improvised according to the philosopher's intellectual potentials, which ultimately always boils down to an hallucinatory exorcism of the real". (*ibid.* p. 34f) Nietzsche's pharmacy is in a certain way the denunciation of this denunciation of the real. The Platonic illusion consists in making what is illusory, the idea, into the highest reality, and in discrediting the real as bare illusion, as mere *phantasma*. It heals the subject of reality by relieving it of the experience of reality's immanent



cruelty.

¹⁶ Michel Foucault, "Wer sind Sie, Professor Foucault?" (Gespräch mit P. Caruso, 1967) (Who are you, Professor Foucault? - Interview with P. Caruso from 1967), in: *Dits et Ecrits. Schriften*, Volume I: 1954-1969, Frankfurt/M. 2001 p. 783.

¹⁷ Heiner Müller *Krieg ohne Schlacht* (War without Battle) Cologne 1999 p. 289.

¹⁸ Alexander Kluge/Heiner Müller "Ich bin ein Landvermesser". *Gespräche mit Heiner Müller* ("I am a Land Surveyor." Discussions with Heiner Müller) Berlin 1996 p. 42.

¹⁹ Martin Heidegger *Nietzsche II* Pfullingen 1961 p. 33.

²⁰ Gilles Deleuze *Nietzsche und die Philosophie* (Nietzsche and Philosophy) Hamburg 2002 p. 5.

²¹ Gilles Deleuze *Unterhandlungen 1972-1990* (Negotiations 1972-1990) Frankfurt/M. 1993 p. 164.

²² *ibid.*

²³ Derrida has accused Negri of the misleading use of 'ontological' concepts and especially of the concept of ontology itself, in order to then ask whether Negri thus remains enclosed "in the fortress of a new ontological fatherland, of a liberated ontology, of an ontology of self-liberation, for example, in a Spinozist sense of freedom". Indeed, the concept of freedom seems to enjoy the privilege of marking the difference between deconstruction — which has always been the deconstruction of freedom, of a certain *eleutheria* and of the *naivetés* and ideologies connected with it — and Negri's political ontology, whose pathos of liberation is as constitutive of it as it is obvious. Cf. Jacques Derrida *Marx & Sons* Frankfurt/M. 2004 p. 94ff., here p. 101.

²⁴ Gilles Deleuze *Unterhandlungen 1972-1990* (Negotiations 1972-1990) Frankfurt/M. 1993 p. 165.

²⁵ Michel Foucault *Dits et Ecrits. Schriften 1* Frankfurt/M. 2001 p. 779.

²⁶ Michel Foucault *Archäologie des Wissens* (Archaeology of Knowledge) Frankfurt/M. 1981 p. 30.

²⁷ Gilles Deleuze *Unterhandlungen 1972-1990* (Negotiations 1972-1990) Frankfurt/M. 1993 p. 166.

²⁸ Gilles Deleuze *Foucault* Frankfurt/M. 1987 p. 175.

²⁹ Gilles Deleuze/Félix Guattari *Was ist Philosophie?* (What is Philosophy?) Frankfurt/M. 2000 p. 239.

³⁰ Cf. Jacques Lacan *Das Seminar Buch XI: Die vier Grundbegriffe der Psychoanalyse* (The Seminar Book XI: The Four Basic Concepts of Psychoanalysis) Weinheim/Berlin 1987, p. 66. Cf. Slavoj Žižek *Liebe deinen Nächsten? Nein danke!* (Love Thy Neighbour? No Thanks!) Berlin 1999, pp. 119ff.

³¹ Gilles Deleuze/Félix Guattari *op. cit.* p. 11.

³² Martin Heidegger *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz* (Metaphysical Principles of Logic — Leibniz) Gesamtausgabe Band. 26, Frankfurt/M. 1978 p. 199.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ Martin Heidegger *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time) Tübingen 1979, p. 38. Heidegger repeats this definition on p. 436. Cf. also Heidegger's *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (Introduction to Metaphysics) Tübingen 1987 p. 10.

³⁵ Martin Heidegger *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit. Mit einem Brief über den Humanismus* (Plato's Doctrine of Truth. With a Letter on Humanism) Bern 1954 p. 91.

³⁶ Martin Heidegger *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz* (Metaphysical Principles of Logic — Leibniz) *op. cit.* p. 201.

³⁷ Martin Heidegger *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit. Mit einem Brief über den Humanismus* (Plato's Doctrine of Truth. With a Letter on Humanism) *op. cit.* p. 91.

³⁸ *ibid.* p. 71.

³⁹ Michel Foucault *Dits et Ecrits. Schriften*, Vol. I, Frankfurt/M. 2001 pp. 778f.