"To Do Justice to Freud": The History of Madness in the Age of Psychoanalysis

Jacques Derrida

Translated by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas

When Elisabeth Roudinesco and René Major did me the honor and kindness of inviting me to a commemoration that would also be a reflection, to one of these genuine tributes where thought is plied to fidelity and fidelity honed by thought, I did not hesitate for one moment.

First of all, because I love memory. This is nothing original, of course, and yet how else can one love? Indeed, thirty years ago, this great book of Foucault was an event whose repercussions were so intense and multiple that I will not even try to identify much less measure them deep down inside me. Next, because I love friendship, and the trusting affection that Foucault showed me thirty years ago, and that was to last for many years, was all the more precious in that, being shared, it corresponded to my professed admiration. Then, after 1972, what came to obscure this friendship, without, however, affecting my admiration, was not, in fact, alien to this book, and to a certain debate that ensued—or at least to its distant, delayed, and indirect effects. There was in all of this a sort of dramatic chain of events, a compulsive and repeated precipitation that I do not wish to describe here because I do not wish to be alone, to be the only one to speak of this after the death of Michel Foucault—except to say that this shadow that made us invisible to one another, that made us not associate with one another for close to ten years (until 1

On 23 November 1991, the Ninth Colloquium of the International Society for the History of Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis devoted a conference to Foucault's *Histoire de la folie* to mark the thirtieth anniversary of its publication. This essay, which was given as a talk at that conference, was published in French in *Penser la folie: Essais sur Michel Foucault* (Paris, 1992).

Critical Inquiry 20 (Winter 1994)

English translation ©1994 by Éditions Galilée. Used with permission.

January 1982 when I returned from a Czech prison), is still part of a story that I also love like life itself. It is part of a story or history that is related, and that thus relates me by the same token, to the book whose great event we are commemorating here, to something like its postface, one of its postfaces, since the drama I just alluded to also arose out of a certain postface, and even out of a sort of postscript added by Foucault to a postface in 1972.

While accepting wholeheartedly this generous invitation, I nonetheless declined the suggestion that came along with it to return to the discussion that began some twenty-eight years ago. I declined for numerous reasons, the first being the one I just mentioned: one does not carry on a stormy discussion after the other has departed. Second, because this whole thing is more than just overdetermined (so many difficult and intersecting texts, Descartes's, Foucault's, so many objections and responses, from me but also from all those, in France and elsewhere, who later came to act as arbiters); it has become too distant from me, and perhaps because of the drama just alluded to I no longer wished to return to it. In the end, the debate is archived and those who might be interested in it can analyze as much as they want and decide for themselves. By rereading all the texts of this discussion, right up to the last word, and especially the last word, one will be better able to understand, I imagine, why I prefer not to give it a new impetus today. There is no privileged witness for such a situation—which, moreover, only ever has the chance of forming, and this from the very origin, with the possible disappearance of the witness. This is perhaps one of the meanings of any history of madness, one of the problems for any project or discourse concerning a history of madness, or even a history of sexuality: is there any witnessing to madness? Who can witness? Does witnessing mean seeing? Is it to provide a reason [*rendre raison*]? Does it have an object? Is there any

---

Jacques Derrida is Directeur d'Études at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris and professor of French, University of California, Irvine. His most recent contribution to *Critical Inquiry* is "Given Time: The Time of the King" (Winter 1992). **Pascale-Anne Brault** is assistant professor of French at DePaul University. She has written articles on contemporary French literature and drama and is currently working on a book on the revisioning of female identity in classical Greek literature. **Michael Naas** is assistant professor of philosophy at DePaul University. He has written articles on contemporary French thought and is the author of *Turning: From Persuasion to Philosophy* (1993). He is currently working on a book on the thought of Jacques Derrida. Brault and Naas have previously translated two books by Derrida: *The Other Heading* (1992) and *Memoirs of the Blind* (1993).

object? Is there a possible third that might provide a reason without objectifying, or even identifying, that is to say, without examining [*arraisoner*]?

Though I have decided not to return to what was debated close to thirty years ago, it would nevertheless be absurd, obsessional to the point of pathological, to say nothing of impossible, to give in to a sort of fetishistic denial and to think that I can protect myself from any contact with the place or meaning of this discussion. Although I intend to speak today of something else altogether, starting from a very recent rereading of *The History of Madness in the Classical Age,* I am not surprised, and you will probably not be either, to see the silhouette of certain questions reemerge: not their content, of course, to which I will in no way return, but their abstract type, the schema or specter of an analogous problematic. For example, if I speak not of Descartes but of Freud, if I thus avoid a figure who seems central to this book and who, because he is decisive as far as its center or centering of perspective is concerned, emerges right from the early pages on, right from the first border or approach,[1] if I thus avoid this Cartesian reference in order to move toward another (psychoanalysis, Freudian or some other) that is evoked only on the edges of the book and is named only right near the end, or ends, on the other border, this will perhaps be once again in order to pose a question that will resemble the one that imposed itself upon me thirty years ago, namely, that of the very possibility of a history of madness. The question will be, in the end, just about the same, though it will be posed from another border, and it still imposes itself upon me as the first tribute owed such a book. If this book was possible, if it had from the beginning and retains today a certain monumental value, the presence and undeniable

1. See Michel Foucault, *Folie et déraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (Paris, 1961), pp. 53–57; hereafter abbreviated *F.* Derrida refers here and throughout to the original edition of this work. The book was reprinted with different pagination in 1972 and included as an appendix "Mon corps, ce papier, ce feu," Foucault's response to Derrida's "Cogito et histoire de la folie," a lecture first given in 1963 and reprinted in 1967 in Derrida, *L'Écriture et la différence* (Paris, 1967). A much abridged version of *Histoire de la folie* was published in 1964 and was translated into English by Richard Howard under the title *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York, 1965); hereafter abbreviated *M.*

Since Derrida refers to the unabridged text of 1961 and works with the original title throughout, we have referred to this work as *The History of Madness* (or in some cases, *The History of Madness in the Classical Age*). This is in keeping with "Cogito and the History of Madness," *Writing and Difference,* trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, 1978), pp. 31–63. For the reader who wishes to follow Derrida's itinerary through *Folie et déraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique,* we have given all references to the 1961 French version along with references to the English translation when they exist in the abridged version. Since all the other texts of Foucault cited by Derrida have been translated in their entirety, we have in each case given the French followed by the English page references. Translations have been slightly modified in several instances to fit the context of Derrida's argument.—TRANS.

necessity of a *monument,* that is, of what imposes itself by recalling and cautioning, it must tell us, teach us, or ask us something about its own possibility.

About its own possibility *today:* yes, we are saying *today,* a certain today. Whatever else one may think of this book, whatever questions or reservations it might inspire in those who come at it from some other point of view, its pathbreaking force seems incontestable. Just as incontestable, in fact, as the law according to which all pathbreaking opens the way only at a certain price, that is, by bolting shut other passages, by ligaturing, stitching up, or compressing, indeed repressing, at least provisionally, other veins. And so today, like yesterday, I mean in March of 1963, it is this question of the *today* that is important to me, the question such as I had tried to formulate it yesterday. I ask you to pardon me this once, then, since I will not make a habit of it, for citing a few lines that then defined, in its general form, a task that seems to me still necessary, on the side of [*du côté de*] Freud this time rather than on the side of Descartes. By saying "on the side of Freud" rather than "on the side of Descartes," let us not give in too quickly to the naivete that would precipitate us into believing that we are closer to a today with Freud than with Descartes, though this is the opinion of most historians.

Here, then, is the question of yesterday, of the today of yesterday, such as I would like to translate it today, on the side of Freud, transporting it in this way into the today of today:

> Therefore, if Foucault's book, despite all the acknowledged impossibilities and difficulties [acknowledged by him, of course], was capable of being written, we have the right to ask what, in the last resort, supports this language without recourse or support ["without recourse" and "without support" are expressions of Foucault that I had just cited]: who enunciates the possibility of nonrecourse? Who wrote and who is to understand, in what language and from what historical situation of logos, who wrote and who is to understand this history of madness? For it is not by chance that such a project could take shape today. Without forgetting, *quite to the contrary,* the audacity of Foucault's act in the *History of Madness,* we must assume that a certain liberation of madness has gotten underway, that psychiatry has opened itself up, however minimally [and, in the end, I would be tempted simply to replace *psychiatry* by *psychoanalysis* in order to translate the today of yesterday into the today of my question of today], and that the concept of madness as unreason, if it ever had a unity, has been dislocated. And that a project such as Foucault's can find its historical origin and passageway in the opening produced by this dislocation.
>
> If Foucault, more than anyone else, is attentive and sensitive to these kinds of questions, it nevertheless appears that he does not

acknowledge their quality of being prerequisite methodological or philosophical considerations.[2]

If this type of question made any sense or had any legitimacy, if the point was then to question that which, today, in this time that is ours, this time in which Foucault's *History of Madness* was written, made possible the event of such a discourse, it would have been more appropriate for me to elaborate this problematic on the side of modernity, *a parte subjecti,* in some sense, on the side where the book was written, thus on the side, for example, of what must have happened to the modern psychiatry mentioned in the passage I just read. To modern psychiatry or, indeed, to psychoanalysis or rather to psychoanalyses or psychoanalysts, since the passage to the plural will be precisely what is at stake in this discussion. It would have thus been more imperative to insist on modern psychiatry or psychoanalysis than to direct the same question toward Descartes. To study the place and role of psychoanalysis in the Foucauldian project of a history of madness, as I am now going to try to do, might thus consist in correcting an oversight or in confronting more directly a problematic that I had left in a preliminary stage, as a general, programmatic frame, in the introduction to my lecture of 1963. That lecture made only one allusion to psychoanalysis. It is true, however, that it inscribed it from the very opening. In a protocol that laid out certain reading positions, I spoke of the way in which philosophical language is rooted in nonphilosophical language, and I recalled a rule of hermeneutical method that still seems to me valid for the historian of philosophy as well as for the psychoanalyst, namely, the necessity of first ascertaining a surface or manifest meaning and, thus, of speaking the language of the patient to whom one is listening: the necessity of gaining a good understanding, in a quasi-scholastic way, philologically and grammatically, by taking into account the dominant and stable conventions, of what Descartes *meant* on the already so difficult surface of his text, such as it is interpretable according to classical norms of reading; the necessity of gaining this understanding *before* submitting the first reading to a symptomatic and historical interpretation regulated by other axioms or protocols, *before and in order to* destabilize, wherever this is possible and if it is necessary, the authority of canonical interpretations. Whatever one ends up doing with it, one must begin by listening to the canon. It is in this context that I recalled Ferenczi's remark cited by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* ("Every language has its own dream language") and Lagache's observations concerning polyglotism in analysis.[3]

In its general and historical form, my question concerned the *site*

2. Derrida, "Cogito et histoire de la folie," p. 61; "Cogito and the History of Madness," p. 38.

3. See ibid., p. 53; p. 307.—TRANS.

that *today* gives rise to a history of madness and thereby makes it possible. Such a question should have led me, it is true, toward the situation of psychiatry and psychoanalysis rather than toward a questioning of a reading of Descartes. This logic would have seemed more natural and the consequence more immediate. But if, in so strictly delimiting the field, I substituted Descartes for Freud, it was perhaps not only because of the significant and strategic place that Foucault confers upon the Cartesian moment in the interpretation of the *Great Confinement* and of the *Classical Age,* that is to say, in the layout of the very object of the book; it was already, at least implicitly, because of the role that the reference to a certain Descartes played in the thought of that time, in the early sixties, as close as possible to psychoanalysis, in the very element, in truth, of a certain psychoanalysis and Lacanian theory. This theory developed around the question of the subject and the subject of science. Whether it was a question of anticipated certainty and logical time (1945, in *Écrits*) or, some years later (1965–1966), of the role of the cogito and—precisely—of the deceitful God in "La Science et la vérité," Lacan returned time and again to a certain unsurpassability of Descartes.[4] In 1945, Lacan associated Descartes with Freud in his "Propos sur la causalité psychique" and concluded by saying that "neither Socrates, nor Descartes, nor Marx, nor Freud, can be 'surpassed' insofar as they led their research with this passion for unveiling whose object is the truth."[5]

The title I have proposed for the few reflections I will risk today, "The History of Madness in the Age of Psychoanalysis," clearly indicates a change—a change in tense, in mode or in voice. It is no longer a question of the age *described* by a *History of Madness.* It is no longer a question of an epoch or period, such as the classical age, that would, inasmuch as it is its very object, stand before the history of madness such as Foucault writes it. It is a question today of the age to which the book itself belongs, the age from out of which it takes place, the age that provides it its situation; it is a question of the age that is *describing* rather than the age that is *described.* In my title, it would be necessary to put "the history of madness" in quotation marks since the title designates the age of the book, *The History* (*historia rerum gestarum*) *of Madness*—as a book—in the age of psychoanalysis and not the history (*res gestae*) of madness, of madness itself, in the age of psychoanalysis, even though, as we will see, Foucault regularly attempts to objectify psychoanalysis and to reduce it to that of which he speaks rather than to that from out of which he speaks. What will interest me will thus be rather the time and historical conditions in which the book is rooted, those that it takes as its point of departure, and

4. See Jacques Lacan, "Propos sur la causalité psychique" and "La Science et la vérité," *Écrits* (Paris, 1966), p. 209, pp. 219–44. The latter was translated by Bruce Fink under the title "Science and Truth," *Newsletter of the Freudian Field* 3, nos. 1–2 (1989):4–29.—TRANS.

5. Lacan, "Propos sur la causalité psychique," p. 193.

not so much the time or historical conditions that it recounts and tries in a certain sense to objectify. Were one to trust too readily in the opposition between subject and object, as well as in the category of objectification (something that I here believe to be neither possible nor just, and hardly faithful to Foucault's own intention), one would say for the sake of convenience that it is a question of considering the history of madness *a parte subjecti,* that is, from the side where it is written or inscribed and not from the side of what it describes.

Now, from the side where this history is written, there is, of course, a certain state of psychiatry—as well as psychoanalysis. Would Foucault's project have been possible without psychoanalysis, with which it is contemporary and of which it speaks little and in such an equivocal or ambivalent manner in the book? Does the project owe psychoanalysis anything? What? Would the debt, if it had been contracted, be essential? Or would it, on the contrary, define the very thing from which the project had to detach itself, and in a critical fashion, in order to take shape? In a word, what is the situation of psychoanalysis at the moment of, and with respect to, Foucault's book? And how does this book situate its project with respect to psychoanalysis?

Let us put our trust for a moment in this common name, psychoanalysis. And let us delay a bit the arrival of proper names, for example Freud or Lacan, and provisionally assume that there is indeed a psychoanalysis that is a single whole: as if it were not, already in Freud, sufficiently divided to make its localization and identification more than problematic. Yet the very thing whose coming due we are here trying to delay will no doubt form the very horizon, in any case the provisional conclusion, of this talk.

As you well know, Foucault speaks rather little of Freud in this book. This may seem justified, on the whole, by the very delimitation that a historian of madness in the classical age must impose upon himself. If one accepts the great caesura of this layout (even though this raises a question, or swarm of questions, that I prudently, and by economy, decide not to approach in order to get a better grasp on what Foucault *means* by Freud, situating myself, therefore, within the thesis or hypothesis of the partition between a classical and a postclassical age), then Freud does not have to be treated. He can and must be located at the very most on the borderline. The borderline is never a secure place, it never forms an indivisible line, and it is always on the border that the most disconcerting problems of topology get posed. Where, in fact, would a problem of topology get posed if not *on the border?* Would one ever have to worry about the border if it formed an indivisible line? A borderline is, moreover, not a place per se. It is always risky, particularly for the historian, to assign to whatever happens on the borderline, to whatever happens between sites, the taking-place of a determinable event.

Now, Foucault *does and does not want* to situate Freud in a historical

place that is stabilizable, identifiable, and open to a univocal understanding. The interpretation or topography that he presents us of the Freudian moment is always uncertain, divided, mobile, some would say ambiguous, others ambivalent, confused, or contradictory. Sometimes he wants to credit Freud, sometimes discredit him, unless he is actually doing both indiscernibly and at the same time. One will always have the choice of attributing this ambivalence to either Foucault or Freud; it can characterize a motivation, the gesture of the interpreter and a certain state of his work, but it can also, or in the first place, refer simply to the interpreter or historian's taking account of a structural duplicity that his work reflects from the thing itself, namely, from the event of psychoanalysis. The motivation would thus be *justly* motivated, it would be *just that*—motivated; it would be called for and justified by the very thing that is in question. For the ambiguity of which we are going to speak could indeed be on the side of psychoanalysis, on the side of the event of this invention named psychoanalysis.

To begin, let us indicate a few telling signs. If most of the explicit references to Freud are grouped in the conclusions of the book (at the end of "The Birth of the Asylum" and in the beginning of "The Anthropological Circle"),[6] what I would here call a *charnière,* a *hinge,* comes earlier on, right in the middle of the volume, to divide at once the book and the book's relation to Freud.

Why a *charnière?* This word can be taken in the technical or anatomical sense of a central or cardinal articulation, a hinge pin (*cardo*) or pivot. A *charnière* or hinge is an axial device that enables the circuit, the trope, or the movement of rotation. But one might also dream a bit in the vicinity of its homonym, that is, in line with this other *artifact* that the code of falconry also calles a *charnière,* the place where the hunter attracts the bird by laying out the flesh of a lure.

This double articulation, this double movement or alternation between opening and closing that is assured by the workings of a hinge, this coming and going, indeed this *fort/da* of a pendulum [*pendule*] or balance [*balancier*]—that is what Freud means to Foucault. And this technico-historical hinge also remains the place of a possible simulacrum or lure—for both the body and the flesh. Taken at this level of generality, things will never change for Foucault. There will always be this interminable alternating movement that successively opens and closes, draws near and distances, rejects and accepts, excludes and includes, disqualifies and legitimates, masters and liberates. The Freudian place is not only the technico-historical apparatus, the *artifact* called *charnière* or hinge. Freud himself will in fact take on the ambiguous figure of a doorman or doorkeeper [*huissier*]. Ushering in a new epoch of madness, our epoch, the

6. This final chapter of *Histoire de la folie* is not included in *Madness and Civilization.*—TRANS.

one out of which is written *The History of Madness* (the book bearing this title), Freud also represents the best guardian of an epoch that comes to a close with him, the history of madness such as it is recounted by the book bearing this title.

Freud as the doorman of the today, the holder of the keys, of those that open as well as those that close the door, that is, the *huis:* onto the today [*l'aujourd'hui*] or onto madness. He [*Lui*], Freud, is the double figure of the door and the doorkeeper. He stands guard and ushers in. Alternatively or simultaneously, he closes one epoch and opens another. And as we will see, this double possibility is not alien to an institution, to what is called the analytic situation as a scene behind closed doors [*huis clos*]. That is why—and this would be the paradox of a serial law—Freud does and does not belong to the different series in which Foucault inscribes him. What is outstanding, outside the series [*hors-série*], turns out to be regularly reinscribed within different series. I am not now going to get involved in formal questions concerning a quasi-transcendental law of seriality that could be illustrated in an analogous way by so many other examples, each time, in fact, that the transcendental condition of a series is also, paradoxically, a part of that series, creating aporias for the constitution of any set or whole [*ensemble*], particularly, of any historical configuration (age, *episteme,* paradigm, *themata,* epoch, and so on). These aporias are anything but accidental impasses that one should try to force at all costs into received theoretical models. The putting to the test of these aporias is also the chance of thinking.

To keep to the contract of this conference, I will restrict myself to a single example.

The first sign comes right in the middle of the book (*F,* pp. 410–11; *M,* pp. 197–98). It comes at the end of the second part, in the chapter entitled "Doctors and Patients." We have there a sort of epilogue, less than a page and a half long. Separated from the conclusion by asterisks,[7] the epilogue also signals the truth of a transition and the meaning of a passage. It seems to be firmly structured by two unequivocal statements:

1. Psychology does not exist in the classical age. It does *not yet* exist. Foucault says this without hesitation right at the beginning of the epilogue: "In the classical age, it is futile to try to distinguish physical therapeutics from psychological medications, for the simple reason that psychology did not exist."

2. But as for the psychology that was to be born after the classical age, psychoanalysis would not be a part, it would *no longer* be a part. Foucault writes: "It is not psychology that is involved in psychoanalysis."

In other words, if in the classical age there is *not yet* psychology, there is, in psychoanalysis, *already no more* psychology. But in order to affirm this, it is necessary, *on the one hand,* to resist a prejudice or a temptation,

7. This is the case for the French versions but not for the English.—TRANS.

to resist that which continues to urge so many interpreters of good sense (and sometimes, in part, Foucault among them) to take psychoanalysis for a psychology (however original or new it may be). Foucault is going to show signs of this resistance, as we will see. But it is also necessary, *on the other hand,* to accept, within this historical schema, the hypothesis of a return: not the *return to Freud* but the *return of Freud* to—.

What return? Return to what? *Return* is Foucault's word, an underscored word. If psychoanalysis is already *no longer* a psychology, does it not, at least in this respect, seem to suggest a certain return to the time when psychology was *not yet?* Beyond eighteenth-century psychology and, very broadly, beyond the psychologistic modernity of the nineteenth century, beyond the positivist institution of psychology, does it not seem as if Freud were joining back up with a certain classical age or, at least, with whatever in this age does not determine madness as a psychical illness but as unreason, that is, as something that has to do with reason? In the classical age, if such a thing exists (an hypothesis of Foucault that I take here, in this context, as such, as if it were not debatable), unreason is no doubt reduced to silence; one does not speak with it. One interrupts or forbids dialogue; and this suspension or interdiction would have received from the Cartesian cogito the violent form of a sentence. For Freud *too* madness would be unreason (and in this sense, at least, there would be a neo-Cartesian logic at work in psychoanalysis). But this time one should resume speaking with it: one would reestablish a dialogue with unreason and lift the Cartesian interdiction. Like the word *return,* the expression "dialogue with unreason" is a quotation. The two expressions scan a final paragraph of this epilogue, in the middle of the book, that begins with the phrase with which I entitled this talk: "We must do justice to Freud" (*F,* p. 411; *M,* p. 198).

When one says, "one must do justice," "one has to be fair" ["*il faut être juste*"], it is often with the intention of correcting an impulse or reversing the direction of a tendency; one is also recommending resisting a temptation. Foucault had to have felt this temptation, the temptation to do an injustice to Freud, to be unfair to him, that is, in this case, to write him into the age of the psychopathological institution (which we will define in a moment). He must have felt it outside or within himself. Indeed, such a temptation must still be threatening and liable to reemerge since it is still necessary to call for vigilance and greater justice.

Here, then, is the paragraph, which I read in extenso, since its internal tension determines, it seems to me, the matrix of all future statements about psychoanalysis; it determines them in the very oscillation of their movement back and forth. It is like scales of justice [*la balance d'une justice*] that not even the death sentence [*arrêt de mort*] would ever be able to stop [*arrêterait*] in their even or just [*juste*] stability. It is as if justice were to remain its own movement:

> This is why we must do justice to Freud. Between Freud's *Five Case Histories* and Janet's scrupulous investigations of *Psychological Healing,* there is more than the density of a *discovery;* there is the sovereign violence of a *return.* Janet enumerated the elements of a division, drew up his inventory, annexed here and there, perhaps conquered. Freud went back to madness at the level of its *language,* reconstituted one of the essential elements of an experience reduced to silence by positivism; he did not make a major addition to the list of psychological treatments for madness; he restored, in medical thought, the possibility of a dialogue with unreason. Let us not be surprised that the most "psychological" of medications has so quickly encountered its converse and its organic confirmations. It is not psychology that is involved in psychoanalysis: but precisely an experience of unreason that it has been psychology's meaning, in the modern world, to mask. [*F,* p. 411; *M,* p. 198][8]

"To mask": positivist psychology would thus have masked the experience of unreason: an imposition of the mask, a violent dissimulation of the face, of truth or of visibility. Such violence would have consisted in disrupting a certain unity, that which corresponded precisely [*justement*] to the presumed unity of the classical age: from then on, there would be, on the one hand, illness of an organic nature and, on the other, unreason, an unreason often tempered by this modernity under its "epithetic" form: the *unreasonable,* whose discursive manifestations will become the object of a psychology.[9] This psychology then loses all relation to a certain truth of madness, that is, to a certain truth of unreason. Psychoanalysis, on the contrary, breaks with psychology *by speaking with the Unreason* that speaks within madness and, thus, by returning through this exchange of words not to the classical age itself—which also determined madness as

8. One will note in passing that we have here, along with very brief allusions to the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis,* and a couple of individual cases in *Mental Illness and Psychology,* and a reference just as brief to *Totem and Taboo* in *The Order of Things,* one of the few times that Foucault mentions a work of Freud; beyond this, he does not, to my knowledge, cite or analyze any text of Freud, or of any other psychoanalyst, not even those of contemporary French psychoanalysts. Each time, only the proper name is pronounced—Freud, or the common name—psychoanalysis. See Michel Foucault, *Maladie mentale et psychologie* (Paris, 1962), hereafter abbreviated *MM,* trans. Alan Sheridan, under the title *Mental Illness and Psychology* (Berkeley, 1987), p. 31, hereafter abbreviated *MI;* and *Les Mots et les choses: Une Archéologie des sciences humaines* (Paris, 1966), hereafter abbreviated *MC,* trans. pub., under the title *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York, 1973), p. 379, hereafter abbreviated *OT.*

Discovery is underscored by Foucault, along with *return* and *language.* Freud is the event of a *discovery*—the unconscious and psychoanalysis as a movement of *return*—and what relates the discovery to the return is language, the possibility of speaking with madness, "the possibility of a dialogue with unreason."

9. Foucault had earlier noted this in *F,* p. 195.

unreason, but, unlike psychology, did so only in order to exclude or confine it—but toward this eve of the classical age that still haunted it.

While this schema is firmly established by the page just cited, I was struck in rereading *The History of Madness* by a paradox in the form of a chiasm. I had not, in my first reading, given it the attention it deserves. What is the schema of this paradox? By reason of what we have just heard, in order to do "justice" to Freud we ought to give him credit—and this is what happens—for finding a place in the gallery of all those who, from one end of the book to the other, announce, like heralds of good tidings, the very possibility of the book: Nietzsche above all and, most frequently, Nietzsche and Artaud, who are often associated in the same sentence, Nietzsche, Artaud, Van Gogh, sometimes Nerval, and Hölderlin from time to time. Their excess, "the madness in which the work of art is engulfed," is the gulf or abyss out of which opens "the space of our enterprise" (*F,* p. 643; *M,* p. 288).

It is *before* this madness, in the fleeting moment when it is joined to the work, that we are *responsible.* We are far from being able to arraign it or make it appear, for it is we who must appear *before* it. Let us recognize, then, that we are responsible before it rather than being authorized to examine it [*arraisonner*], to objectify and demand an explanation from it. At the end of the last page, after having spent a good deal of time speaking of Nietzsche and after having mentioned Van Gogh, Foucault writes: "The moment when, together, the work of art and madness are born and fulfilled is the beginning of the time when the world finds itself arraigned by that work of art and responsible before it for what it is" (*F,* p. 643; *M,* p. 289). This is what *The History of Madness,* in responding to the summons, takes note of and assumes responsibility for. It assumes responsibility before that which is named by the names of Nietzsche and all these others who, as everyone knows, were deemed crazy by society (Artaud, and before him Van Gogh, and before him Nerval, and before him Hölderlin).

But what about Freud? Why is he, in the same book, sometimes associated with and sometimes opposed to these great witnesses of madness and excess, these great witnesses who are also great judges, our judges, those who judge us? Must we be arraigned before Freud? And why do things then get complicated?

I would see the chiasm of which I just spoke appearing in a place where Freud is in fact found near Nietzsche, on the same side as he, that is, on our side, on the side of what Foucault calls "contemporary man": this enigmatic "we" for whom a history of madness opens today, for whom the door of today [*l'huis d'aujourd'hui*] is cracked open so that its possibility may be glimpsed. Foucault has just described the loss of unreason, the background against which the classical age determined madness. It is the moment when unreason degenerates or disappears into the unreasonable; it is the tendency to pathologize, so to speak, madness. And there

again, it is through a return to unreason, this time without exclusion, that Nietzsche and Freud reopen the dialogue with madness *itself* (assuming, along with Foucault, that one can here say "itself"). This dialogue had, in a sense, been *broken off* twice, and in two different ways: the second time, by a psychological positivism that no longer conceived of madness as unreason, and the first time, already by the classical age, which, while excluding madness and breaking off the dialogue with it, still determined it as unreason, and excluded it precisely because of this—but excluded it as close as possible to itself, as its other and its adversary: this is the Cartesian moment, such as it is determined, at least, in the three pages that were the object of our debate nearly thirty years ago.

I will underscore everything that marks the today, the present, the now, the contemporary, this time that is proper and common to us, the time of this fragile and divided "we" from which is decided the possibility of a book like *The History of Madness,* decided while scarcely being sketched out, while promising itself, in short, rather than giving itself over. Nietzsche *and* Freud are here conjoined, conjugated, like a couple, Nietzsche *and* Freud, and the conjunction of their coupling is also the copula-hinge or, if you prefer, the middle term of the modern proposition:

> If *contemporary* man, since Nietzsche and Freud, finds deep within himself the site for contesting all truth, being able to read, in what he *now* knows of himself, the signs of fragility through which unreason threatens, seventeenth-century man, on the contrary, discovers, in the immediate presence of his thought to itself, the certainty in which reason in its pure form is announced. [*F,* pp. 195–96]

Why did I speak of a chiasm? And why would we be fascinated by the multiple chiasm that organizes this entire interpretative scene?

It is because, in the three pages devoted to Descartes at the beginning of the second chapter "The Great Confinement," Foucault spoke of an *exclusion.* He described it, posed it, declared it unequivocally and firmly ("madness is excluded by the subject who doubts"). This exclusion was the result of a "decision," the result (and these are all his words) of a "strange act of force" that was going to "reduce to silence" the excluded madness and trace a very strict "line of division." In the part of the *Meditations* that he cited and focused on, Foucault left out all mention of the Evil Genius. It was thus in recalling the hyperbolic raising of the stakes in the fiction of the Evil Genius that I had then confessed my perplexity and proposed other questions. When Foucault responds to me nine years later in the afterward to the 1972 Gallimard edition of *The History of Madness,* he still firmly contests the way I used this Cartesian fiction of the Evil Genius and this hyperbolic moment of doubt. He accuses me of erasing "everything that shows that the episode of the evil genius is an exercise that is voluntary, controlled, mastered and carried out from start

to finish by a meditating subject who never lets himself be surprised";[10] (*F*, p. 601; such a reproach was indeed unfair, unjust, since I had stressed that this methodical mastery of the voluntary subject is "almost always" at work and that Foucault, therefore, like Descartes, is "almost always right [*a . . . raison*]," and almost always wins out over [*a raison de*] the Evil Genius.[11] But that is not what is at issue here, and I said that I would not reopen the debate.) And by accusing me of erasing this methodical neutralization of the Evil Genius, Foucault—once again in his response of 1972—confirms the claims of the three pages in question and maintains that "if the evil genius again takes on the powers of *madness,* this is only after the exercise of meditation has excluded the risk of *being mad.*"[12] One might be tempted to respond that if the Evil Genius can *again take on* these powers of madness, if he once "again takes them on" afterwards, after the fact, it is because the exclusion of the risk of being mad makes way for an *after.* The narrative is thus not interrupted during the exclusion alleged by Foucault, an exclusion that is, up to a certain point at least, attested to and incontestable (and I never in fact contested this exclusion in this regard, quite the contrary); neither the narrative nor the exercise of the meditation that it retraces are any more interrupted than the order of reasons is definitively stopped by this same exclusion. But let us move on. As I said earlier, I am not invoking this difficulty in order to return to an old discussion. I am doing it because Freud is going to be, as I will try to show, doubly situated, *twice* implicated in the chiasm that interests me: *on the one hand,* in the sentence that I cited a moment ago (where Freud was immediately associated with Nietzsche, the only one to be associated with him, on the "good" side, so to speak, on the side where "we" contemporaries reopen the dialogue with unreason that was twice interrupted); this sentence is followed by a few references to the Evil Genius that complicate, as I myself had tried to do, the reading of the scene of Cartesian doubt as the moment of the great confinement; but also, and *on the other hand,* since I will later try, in a more indirect way—and this would be in the end the essence of my talk today—to recall the necessity of taking into account a certain Evil Genius *of* Freud, namely, the presence of the demonic, the devil, the devil's advocate, the limping devil, and so on in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* where psychoanaysis finds, it seems to me, its greatest speculative power but also the place of greatest resistance to psychoanalysis (death drive, repetition compulsion, and so on, and *fort/da!*).

10. Foucault, "My Body, This Paper, This Fire," trans. Geoff Bennington, *Oxford Literary Review* 4 (Autumn 1979): 26; trans. mod.; "Mon corps, ce papier, ce feu" was first published in *Paideia* (Sept. 1971) and was reissued as the appendix to the 1972 edition of *Histoire de la folie.*

11. Derrida, "Cogito et histoire de la folie," p. 91; "Cogito and the History of Madness," p. 58.

12. Foucault, "My Body, This Paper, This Fire," p. 26.

Thus, just after having spoken of "contemporary man, since Nietzsche and Freud," Foucault offers a development *on the subject of the Evil Genius.* The logic of this sequence seems to me guided by a "One must not forget" that I would be tempted to relate to the "One must do justice" of a moment ago. What must one not forget? The Evil Genius, of course [*justement*]. And especially, I emphasize, the fact that the Evil Genius is *anterior* to the cogito, such that its threat remains *perpetual.*

This might contradict (as I had attempted to do) the thesis argued 150 pages earlier on the subject of the Cartesian cogito as the simple exclusion of madness. This could have, as a result, indeed this should have, spared us a long and dramatic debate. But it is too late now. Foucault reaffirms all the same, despite the recognized anteriority of the Evil Genius, that the cogito is the absolute beginning, even if, in this absolute beginning, "one must not forget" what has, in short, been forgotten or omitted in the discourse on the exclusion of madness by the cogito. The question thus still remains what a methodically absolute beginning would be that does not let us forget this anterior—and moreover perpetual—threat, nor the haunting backdrop that first lets it appear. As always, I prefer to cite, even though it is a long passage. Here is what Foucault says immediately after having evoked the "contemporary man" who, "since Nietzsche and Freud," meets in "what he now knows of himself" that "through which unreason threatens." He says, in effect, that what is called contemporary had already begun in the classical age and with the Evil Genius, which clearly, to my eyes at least, cannot leave intact the historical categories of reference and the presumed identity of something like the classical age (for example).

> But this does not mean that classical man was, in his experience of the truth, more distanced from unreason than we ourselves might be. It is true that the cogito is the absolute beginning [this statement thus confirms the thesis of *F,* pp. 54–57] *but one must not forget* [my emphasis] that the evil genius is anterior to it. And the evil genius is not the symbol in which are summed up and systematized all the dangers of such psychological events as dream images and sensory errors. Between God and man, the evil genius has an absolute meaning: he is in all his rigor the possibility of unreason and the totality of its powers. He is more than the refraction of human finitude; well beyond man, he signals the danger that could prevent man once and for all from gaining access to the truth: he is the main obstacle, not of such a spirit but of such reason. And it is not because the truth that gets illuminated in the cogito ends up entirely masking the shadow of the evil genius that one *ought to forget* its perpetually threatening power [my emphasis: Foucault had earlier said that *one must not forget* that the evil genius is anterior to the cogito, and he now says that *one must not forget* its perpetually threatening power, even after the passage, the moment, the experience, the certainty of

> the cogito, and the exclusion of madness that this brings about]: this danger will hover over Descartes' reflections right up until the establishment of the existence and truth of the external world. [*F*, p. 196]

One would have to ask, though we will not have the time and this is not the place, about the effects that the category of the "perpetual threat" (and this is Foucault's term) can have on indications of presence, positive markings, the determinations made by means of signs or statements, in short, the whole criteriology and symptomatology that can give assurance to a historical knowledge concerning a figure, an *episteme,* an age, an epoch, a paradigm, once all these determinations are found to be in effect [*justement*] threatened by a perpetual haunting. For, in principle, all these determinations are, for the historian, either presences or absences; as such, they thus exclude haunting; they allow themselves to be located by means of signs, one would almost say on a table of absences and presences; they come out of the logic of opposition, in this case, the logic of inclusion *or* exclusion, of the alternative between the inside and the outside, and so on. The perpetual threat, that is, the shadow of haunting (and haunting is, like the phantom or fiction of an Evil Genius, neither present nor absent, neither positive nor negative, neither inside nor outside) does not challenge only one thing or another; it threatens the logic that distinguishes between one thing and another, the very logic of exclusion or foreclosure, as well as the history that is founded upon this logic and its alternatives. What is excluded is, of course, never simply excluded, not by the cogito nor by anything else, without this eventually returning—and that is what a certain psychoanalysis will have also helped us to understand. Let me leave undeveloped this general problem, however, in order to return to a certain regulated functioning in the references to psychoanalysis and to the name of Freud in *The History of Madness in the Classical Age.*

Let us consider the couple Nietzsche/Freud, this *odd couple* about which there is so much else to say (I have attempted this elsewhere, especially in *The Post Card,* and precisely [*justement*] in relationship to *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*). The affiliation or filiation of this couple reappears elsewhere. It is again at a filial limit, in the introduction to the third and final part, when the "delirium" of *Rameau's Nephew* sets the tone or gives the key, just as the Cartesian cogito had, for a new arrangement or division [*partition*]. For the "delirium" of *Rameau's Nephew* "announces Freud and Nietzsche." Let us set aside all the questions that the concept of "announcing" might pose for the historian. It is not by accident that they resemble those raised a moment ago by the concept of *haunting.* As soon as that which *announces* already no longer completely belongs to a present configuration and already belongs to the future of another, its place, the taking-place of its event, calls for another logic; it disrupts, in any case,

the axiomatics of a history that places too much trust in the opposition between absence and presence, outside and inside, inclusion and exclusion. Let us read, then, this sentence and note the recurring and thus all the more striking association of this *announcement* with the figure of the Evil Genius, but, this time, with the figure of "another evil genius":

> The delirium of Rameau's Nephew is a tragic confrontation of need and illusion in an oneiric mode, one that announces Freud and Nietzsche [the order of names is this time reversed]; it is also the ironic repetition of the world, its destructive reconstitution in the theater of illusion. [*F*, p. 422]

An Evil Genius then immediately reappears. And who will see this inevitable repetition as a coincidence? But it is not the same Evil Genius. It is another figure of the evil genius. There would thus be a recurring function of the Evil Genius, a function that, in making reference to a Platonic *hyperbole,* I had called hyperbolic in "Cogito and the History of Madness." This function had been fulfilled by the Evil Genius, under the guise as well as under the name that it takes on in Descartes. But another Evil Genius, which is also the same one, can reappear without this name and under a different guise, for example, in the vicinity or lineage of Rameau's Nephew: a different Evil Genius, certainly, but bearing enough of a resemblance because of its recurring function that the historian, here Foucault, allows himself a metonymy that is legitimate enough in his eyes to continue calling it Evil Genius. This reappearance occurs after the second passage of Freud-and-Nietzsche, as they are furtively announced by *Rameau's Nephew,* whose laugh "prefigures in advance and reduces the whole movement of nineteenth-century anthropology" (*F*, p. 424). This time of prefiguration and announcement, this delay between the anticipatory lightning flash and the event of what is foreseen, is explained by the very structure of an experience of unreason, if there is any, namely, an experience in which one cannot maintain oneself and out of which one cannot but fall after having approached it. All this thus forbids us from making this history into a properly successive and sequential history of events. This is formulated in Foucault's question: "Why is it not possible to maintain oneself in the difference of unreason?" (*F*, p. 425).

> But in this vertigo where the truth of the world is maintained only on the inside of an absolute void, man also encounters the ironic perversion of his own truth, at the moment when it moves from the dreams of interiority to the forms of exchange. Unreason then takes on the figure of *another evil genius* [my emphasis]—no longer the one who exiles man from the truth of the world, but the one who at once mystifies and demystifies, enchants to the point of extreme disenchantment, this truth of man that man had entrusted to his hands, to his face, to his speech; an evil genius who no longer operates when

> man wants to accede to the truth but when he wants to restitute to the world a truth that is his own, when, thrown into the intoxication of the sensible realm where he is lost, he finally remains "immobile, stupid, astonished." It is no longer in *perception* that the possibility of the evil genius resides [that is, as in Descartes] but in *expression.* [*F,* p. 423]

But immediately after this appearance or arraignment of Freud next to Nietzsche and all the Evil Geniuses, the pendulum of the *fort/da* is put back in motion; from this point on, it will not cease to convoke and dismiss Freud from the two sides of the dividing line, both inside and outside of the series from out of which the history of madness is signed. For it is here, in the following pages, that we find Freud separated from the lineage in which are gathered all those worthy heirs of Rameau's Nephew. The name of the one who was not crazy, not crazy enough in any case, the name of Freud, is dissociated from that of Nietzsche. It is regularly passed over in silence when, according to another filiation, Höderlin, Nerval, Nietzsche, Van Gogh, Roussel, and Artaud are at several reprieves named and renamed—renowned—within the same "family."

From this point on, things are going to deteriorate. "To do justice to Freud" will more and more come to mean putting on trial a psychoanalysis that will have participated, in its own way, however original that may be, in the order of the immemorial figures of the Father and the Judge, of Family and Law, in the order of Order, of Authority and Punishment, whose immemorial figures must, as Philippe Pinel had noted, be brought into play by the doctor, in order to cure (see *F,* p. 607; *M,* p. 272). There was already a disturbing sign of this long before the chapter on "The Birth of the Asylum" that will so strictly inscribe psychoanalysis into the tradition of Tuke and Pinel and will go so far as to say that "all nineteenth-century psychiatry really converges on Freud" (*F,* p. 611; *M,* p. 277). For the latter had already appeared in another chain, the chain of those who, since the nineteenth century, know that madness, like its counterpart reason, has a history. These will have been led astray by a sort of historicism of reason and madness, a risk that is avoided by those who, "from Sade to Hölderlin, to Nerval and to Nietzsche," are given over to a "repeated poetic and philosophical experience" and plunge into a language "that abolishes history." As a cultural historian of madness, like others are of reason, Freud thus appears between Janet and Brunschvicg (*F,* p. 456).

While accumulating the two errors, the rationalist historian of this cultural phenomenon called madness nonetheless continues to pay tribute to myth, magic, and thaumaturgy. Indeed *thaumaturgy* will be the word chosen by Foucault himself for the verdict. There is nothing surprising in this collusion of reason and a certain occultism. Montaigne and Pascal would have perhaps called it mystical authority; the history of rea-

son and reason within history would exercise essentially the same violence, the same obscure, irrational, dictatorial violence, serving the same interests in the name of the same fictional allegation, as psychoanalysis does when it confers all powers to the doctor's speech. Freud would free the patient interned in the asylum only in order to reconstitute him "in his essential character" at the heart of the analytic situation. There is a continuity from Pinel and Tuke to psychoanalysis. There is an inevitable movement, right up to Freud, a persistence of what Foucault calls "the myth of Pinel, like that of Tuke" (*F,* p. 577). This same insistence is always concentrated in the figure of the doctor; it is, in the eyes of the patient who is always an accomplice, the becoming-thaumaturge of the doctor, of a doctor who is not even supposed to know. *Homo medicus* does not exercise his authority in the name of science but, as Pinel himself seems to recognize and to claim, in the name of order, law, and morality, specifically, by "relying upon that prestige that envelops the *secrets* of the Family, of Authority, of Punishment, and of Love; . . . by wearing the mask of Father and of Judge" (*F,* pp. 607–8; *M,* p. 273; my emphasis).

And when the walls of the asylum give way to psychoanalysis, it is in effect a certain concept of the *secret* that assures the tradition from Pinel to Freud. It would be necessary to follow throughout these pages all the ins and outs of the value—itself barely visible—of a secret, of a certain secrecy value. This value would come down, in the end, to a *technique* of the secret, and of the secret without knowledge. Wherever knowledge can only be supposed, wherever, as a result, one knows that supposition cannot give rise to knowledge, wherever no knowledge could ever be disputed, there is the production of a *secrecy effect,* of what we might be able to call a *speculation on the capital secret or on the capital of the secret.* The calculated and yet finally incalculable production of this secrecy effect relies on a simulacrum. This simulacrum recalls, from another point of view, the situation described at the opening of *Raymond Roussel:* the risk of "being deceived less by a secret than by the awareness that there is a secret."[13]

What persists from Pinel to Freud, in spite of all the differences, is the figure of the doctor as a man not of knowledge but of order. In this figure all *secret, magic, esoteric, thaumaturgical* powers are brought together—and these are all Foucault's words. The scientific objectivity that is claimed by this tradition is only a magical reification:

> If we wanted to analyze the profound structures of objectivity in the knowledge and practice of nineteenth-century psychiatry from Pinel to Freud [this is the definitive divorce between Nietzsche and Freud, the second coupling for the latter], we should have to show in fact that such objectivity was from the start a reification of a magical na-

13. Foucault, *Raymond Roussel* (Paris, 1963), p. 10; trans. Charles Ruas, under the title *Death and the Labyrinth: The World of Raymond Roussel* (New York, 1986), p. 3.

> ture, which could only be accomplished with the complicity of the patient himself, and beginning from a transparent and clear moral practice, gradually forgotten as positivism imposed its myths of scientific objectivity. [*F,* p. 610; *M,* p. 276]

In the name of Freud, one can read the call for a note. At the bottom of the page, Foucault persists, dates and signs, but the note introduces a slight precaution; it is indeed a note of prudence, but Foucault insists nonetheless and speaks of persistence: "These structures still persist in non-psychoanalytic psychiatry, and in many aspects or on many sides [*par bien des côtés*] of psychoanalysis itself" (*F,* p. 610; *M,* p. 299).

Though too discreetly marked, there is indeed a limit to what persists "on many sides." The always divisible line of this limit situates, in its form, the totality of the stakes. More precisely, the stakes are nothing other than those of totality, and of the procedures of totalization: what does it mean to say psychoanalysis "itself"? What does one thereby identify in such a global way? Is it psychoanalysis "*itself,*" as Foucault says, that inherits from Pinel? What is psychoanalysis *itself*? And are the aspects or sides through which it inherits the essential and irreducible aspects or sides of psychoanalysis itself or the residual "asides" that it can win out over [*avoir raison de*]? or even, that it must, that it should, win out over?

If the answer to this last question still seems up in the air in this note, it is soon going to come in a more determined and less equivocal form: no, psychoanalysis will never free itself of the psychiatric heritage. Its essential historical situation is linked to what is called the "*analytic situation,*" that is, to the thaumaturgical mystification of the couple doctor-patient, regulated this time by institutional protocols. Before citing word for word a conclusion that will remain, I believe, without appeal not only in *The History of Madness* but in Foucault's entire oeuvre—and right up to its awful interruption—I will once again risk wearing out your patience in order to look for a moment at the way in which Foucault describes the thaumaturgical play whose *techne* Pinel would have passed down to Freud, a *techne* that would be at once art and technique, the secret, the secret of the secret, the secret that consists in knowing how to make one suppose knowledge and believe in the secret. It is worth pausing here in order to point out another paradoxical effect of the chiasm—one of the most significant for what concerns us here, namely, a certain diabolical repetition and the recurrence of the various figures of the Evil Genius. What does Foucault say? That in the couple doctor-patient "the doctor becomes a thaumaturge" (*F,* p. 609; *M,* p. 275). Now, to describe this thaumaturgy, Foucault does not hesitate to speak of the demonic and satanic, as if the Evil Genius resided this time not on the side of unreason, of absolute disorder and madness (to say it quickly and with a bit of a smile, using all the necessary quotation marks, "on the good side"), but

on the side of order, on the side of a subtly authoritative violence, the side of the Father, the Judge, the Law, and so on:

> It was thought, and by the patient first of all, that it was in the esotericism of his knowledge, in some *almost* daemonic secret of knowledge [I emphasize "almost": Foucault will later say—his relation to Freud surely being anything but simple—that the philistine representation of mental illness in the nineteenth century would last "right up to Freud—or almost"] that the doctor had found the power to unravel insanity; and increasingly the patient would accept this self-surrender to a doctor both divine and satanic, beyond human measure in any case. [*F,* p. 609; *M,* p. 275]

Two pages later, it is said that Freud "amplified the thaumaturgical virtues" of the "medical personage," "preparing for his omnipotence a quasi-divine status." And Foucault continues:

> He focussed upon this single presence—concealed behind the patient and above him, in an absence that is also a total presence—all the powers that had been distributed in the collective existence of the asylum; he transformed this into an absolute Observation, a pure and circumspect Silence, a Judge who punishes and rewards in a judgment that does not even condescend to language; he made it the mirror in which madness, in an almost motionless movement, clings to and casts off itself.
>
> To the doctor, Freud transferred all the structures Pinel and Tuke had set up within confinement. [*F,* p. 611; *M,* pp. 277–78]

Fictive omnipotence and a divine, or rather "quasi-divine," power, divine by simulacrum, at once divine and satanic—these are the very traits of an Evil Genius that are now being attributed to the figure of the doctor. The doctor suddenly begins to resemble in a troubling way the figure of unreason that continued to haunt what is called the classical age after the *act of force* [*coup de force*] of the *cogito.* And like the authority of the laws whose "mystical foundation" is recalled by Montaigne and Pascal,[14] the

14. "And so laws keep up their good standing, not because they are just, but because they are laws: that is the mystical foundation of their authority, they have no other. . . . Anyone who obeys them because they are just is not obeying them the way he ought to" (quoted in Derrida, "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority,'" trans. Mary Quaintance, *Cardozo Law Review* 11 [July/Aug. 1990]: 939; Derrida's French text appears on facing pages). Elsewhere, Montaigne had mentioned the "legitimate fictions" on which "our law" "founds the truth of its justice" (ibid.). And Pascal cites Montaigne without naming him when he recalls both the principle of justice and the fact that it should not be traced back to its source unless one wants to ruin it. What is he himself doing, then, when he speaks of "the mystical foundation of its authority," adding in the same breath, "Whoever traces it to its source annihilates it" (ibid.)? Is he re-founding or ruining that of which he speaks? Will one ever know? Must one know?

Power, authority, knowledge and non-knowledge, law, judgment, fiction, good stand-

authority of the psychoanalyst-doctor is the result of a fiction; it is the result, by transfer, of the credit given to a fiction; and this fiction appears analogous to that which provisionally confers all powers—and even more than knowledge—to the Evil Genius.

At the conclusion of "The Birth of the Asylum," Foucault is going to dismiss without appeal this bad genius of the thaumaturgical doctor in the figure of the psychoanalyst; he is going to do this—I believe one can say without stretching the paradox—*against Descartes,* against a certain Cartesian subject still represented in the filiation that runs from Descartes to Pinel to Freud. But he is also going to do this, more or less willingly, *as Descartes,* or, at least, as the Descartes whom he had accused of excluding madness by excluding, mastering, or dismissing—since these all come down to the same thing—the powers of the Evil Genius. Against Freud, this descendant of Descartes, against Descartes, it is still the Cartesian exclusion that is repeated in a deadly and devilish way, like a heritage inscribed within a diabolical and almost all-powerful program that one should admit one never gets rid of or frees oneself from without remainder.

To substantiate what I have just said, I will cite the conclusion of this chapter. It describes the transfer from Pinel to Freud (stroke of genius, "masterful short-circuit"—it is a question of Freud's genius, the good like the bad, the good as bad)—and it implacably judges psychoanalysis *in the past, in the present, and even in the future.* For psychoanalysis is condemned in advance. No future is promised that might allow it to escape its destiny once it has been determined both within the institutional (and supposedly inflexible) structure of what is called the *analytic situation* and in the figure of the doctor as *subject:*

> To the doctor, Freud transferred all the structures Pinel and Tuke had set up within confinement. He did deliver the patient from the existence of the asylum within which his "liberators" had alienated him; but he did not deliver him from what was essential in this existence; he regrouped its powers, extended them to the maximum by uniting them in the doctor's hands; he created the psychoanalytical situation where, by a masterful short-circuit [*court-circuit génial;* I underscore this allusion to the stroke of genius (*coup de génie*), which, as soon as it confirms the evil of confinement and of the interior asylum, is diabolical and properly evil (*malin*); and as we will see, for more than twenty years Foucault never stopped seeing in Freud—and quite literally so—sometimes a good and sometimes a bad or evil

---

ing or credit, transfer: from Montaigne to Pascal onto others, we recognize the same network of a critical problematic, an active, vigilant, hypercritical problematization. It is difficult to be sure that the "classical age" did not thematize, reflect, and also deploy the concepts of its symptoms: the concepts that one will later direct toward the symptoms that it will one day be believed can be assigned to it.

(*mauvais*) genius], alienation becomes disalienating because, in the doctor, it becomes a subject.

The doctor, as an alienating figure, remains the key to psychoanalysis. It is perhaps because it did not suppress this ultimate structure, and because it referred all the others to it, that psychoanalysis has not been able, *will not be able* [I thus emphasize this future; it announces the invariability of this verdict in Foucault's subsequent work], to hear the voices of unreason, nor to decipher in themselves the signs of the madman. Psychoanalysis can unravel some of the forms of madness; it remains a stranger to the sovereign enterprise of unreason. It can neither liberate nor transcribe, nor most certainly explain, what is essential in this enterprise. [*F,* pp. 611–12; *M,* p. 278]

And here, just after, are the very last lines of the chapter; we are far from the couple Nietzsche/Freud. They are now separated on both sides of what Foucault calls "moral imprisonment," and it will be difficult to say, in certain situations, who is to be found on the *inside* and who on the *outside*—and sometimes outside but inside. As opposed to Nietzsche and a few other great madmen, Freud no longer belongs to the space *from out of* which *The History of Madness* could be written. He belongs, rather, to this history of madness that the book in turn makes its *object:*

Since the end of the eighteenth century, the life of unreason no longer manifests itself except in the lightning-flash of works such as those of Hölderlin, of Nerval, of Nietzsche, or of Artaud—forever irreducible to those alienations that can be cured, resisting by their own strength that gigantic moral imprisonment which we are in the habit of calling, doubtless by antiphrasis, the liberation of the insane [*aliénés*] by Pinel and Tuke. [*F,* p. 612; *M,* p. 278]

This diagnosis, which is also a verdict, is confirmed in the last chapter of the book, "The Anthropological Circle." This chapter fixes the new distribution of names and places into the great series that form the grid of the book. When it is a question of showing that since the end of the eighteenth century the liberation of the mad has been replaced by an objectification of the concept of their freedom (within such categories as desire and will, determinism and responsibility, the automatic and the spontaneous) and that "one will now untiringly recount the trials and tribulations of freedom," which is also to say, of a certain humanization as anthropologization, Freud is then regularly included among the exemplary figures of this anthropologism of freedom. Foucault says, page after page: "From Esquirol to Janet, as from Reil to Freud or from Tuke to Jackson" (*F,* p. 616), or again, "From Esquirol to Freud" (*F,* p. 617), or again "since Esquirol and Broussais right up to Janet, Bleuler, and Freud" (*F,* p. 624). A slight yet troubling reservation comes just after to mitigate all these regroupings. Concerning general paralysis and neuro-

syphilis, philistinism is everywhere, "right up to Freud—or almost" (*F*, p. 626)

The chiasmatic effects multiply. Some two hundred pages earlier, what had inscribed both Freud *and* Nietzsche, like two accomplices of the same age, was the reopening of the dialogue with unreason, the lifting of the interdiction against *language*, the *return* to a proximity with madness. Yet it is precisely this or, rather, the silent double and hypocritical simulacrum of this, the mask of this language, the same freedom now objectified, that separates Freud from Nietzsche. It is this that now makes them unable to associate or to be associated with one another from the two sides of a wall that is all the more unsurmountable insofar as it consists of an asylum's partition, an invisible, interior, but eloquent partition, that of truth itself as the truth of man and his alienation. Foucault was able, much earlier, to say that Freudian psychoanalysis, to which one must be fair or "*do justice*," is not a psychology as soon as it takes language into account. Now it is language itself that brings psychoanalysis back down to the status of a psycho-anthropology of alienation, "this language wherein man appears in madness as being other than himself," this "alterity," "a dialectic that is always begun anew between the *Same* and the *Other*," revealing to man his truth "in the babbling movement of *alienation* or *madness*" (*F*, p. 631).

Concerning dialectic and alienation or madness—concerning everything, in fact, that happens in the circulation of this "anthropological circle" wherein psychoanalysis is caught up or held—one should, and I myself would have liked to have done this given more time, pause a bit longer than Foucault did on a passage from Hegel's *Encyclopedia*. I am referring to the Remark of §408 in which Hegel situates and deduces madness as a contradiction of the subject between the particular determination of self-feeling and the network of mediations that is called consciousness. Hegel makes in passing a spirited praise of Pinel (I do not understand why Foucault, in quickly citing this passage, replaces this praise for Pinel by an ellipsis). More important, perhaps, is the fact that Hegel also interprets madness as the taking control of a certain Evil Genius (*der böse Genius*) in man. Foucault elliptically cites a short phrase in translation ("méchant génie") without remarking on it and without linking these few extraordinary pages of Hegel to the great dramaturgy of the Evil Genius that concerns us here.

Let me be absolutely clear about this: my intention here is not at all to accuse or criticize Foucault, to say, for example, that he was wrong to confine *Freud himself* (*in general*) or *psychoanalysis itself* (*in general*) to this role and place; on the subject of Freud or psychoanalysis *themselves and in general*, I have in this form and place almost nothing to say or think, except perhaps that Foucault has some good arguments and that others would have some pretty good ones as well to oppose to his. It is also not my intention, in spite of what it may look like, to suggest that Foucault

contradicts himself when he so firmly places the same Freud (in general) or the same psychoanalysis (in general) sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other of the dividing line, *and always on the side of the Evil Genius*—who is found sometimes on the side of madness, sometimes on the side of its exclusion-reappropriation, on the side of its confinement to the outside or the inside, with or without asylum walls. The contradiction is no doubt in the things themselves, so to speak. And we are in a region where the wrong (the *being-wrong* or the *doing-someone-wrong*) would want to be more than ever on the side of a certain reason, on the side of what is called *raison garder*—that is, on the side of keeping one's cool, keeping one's head—on the side, precisely, where one is right [*a raison*], and where *being right* [*avoir raison*] is to *win out over* or *prove someone wrong* [*avoir raison de*], with a violence whose subtlety, whose hyperdialectic and hyperchiasmatic resources, cannot be completely formalized, that is, can no longer be dominated by a metalanguage. Which means that we are always caught in the knots that are woven, before us and beyond us, by this powerful—all too powerful—logic. The history of reason embedded in all these turbulent idioms (*to prove someone wrong* [*donner tort*] or *to prove them right* [*donner raison*], *to be right* [*avoir raison*], *to be wrong* [*avoir tort*], *to win out over* [*avoir raison de*], *to do someone wrong* [*faire tort*], and so on) is also the history of madness that Foucault wished to recount to us. The fact that he was caught up, caught up even before setting out, in the snares of this logic—which he sometimes thematizes as having to do with a "system of contradictions" and "antinomies" whose "coherence" remains "hidden"—cannot be reduced to a fault or wrong on his part (*F*, p. 624). This does not mean, however, that we, without ever finding him to be radically wrong or at fault, have to subscribe a priori to all his statements. One would be able to master this entire problematic, assuming this were possible, only after having satisfactorily answered a few questions, questions as innocent—or as hardly innocent—as, What is reason? for example, or more narrowly, What is the principle of reason? What does it mean to be right [*avoir raison*]? What does it mean to be right or to prove someone right [*avoir ou donner raison*]? To be wrong, to prove someone wrong, or to do them wrong [*avoir, donner ou faire tort*]? You will forgive me here, I hope, for leaving these enigmas as they are.

I will restrict myself to a modest and more accessible question. The distribution of statements, such as it appears to be set out before us, should lead us to think two apparently incompatible things: the book entitled *The History of Madness*, as the history of madness itself, is and is not the same age as Freudian psychoanalysis. The project of this book thus does and does not belong to the age of psychoanalysis; it already belongs to it and already no longer belongs to it. This division without division would put us back on the track of another logic of division, one that would urge us to think the internal partitions of wholes, partitions that would make such things as madness, reason, history, and age—espe-

cially the whole we call age—but also psychoanalysis, Freud, and so on, into rather dubious identities, sufficiently divided from within to threaten in advance all our statements and all our references with parasitism: it would be a bit as if a virus were introduced into the matrix of language, the way such things are today introduced into computer software, the difference being that we are—and for a very good reason—very far from having at our disposal any of these diagnostic and remedial antiviral programs that are available on the market today, even though these same programs—and for a very good reason—have a hard time keeping pace with the industrial production of these viruses, which are themselves sometimes produced by those who produce the intercepting programs. A maddening situation for any discourse, certainly, but a certain mad panic is not necessarily the worst thing that can happen to a discourse on madness as soon as it does not go all out to confine or exclude its object, that is, in the sense Foucault gives to this word, to *objectify* it.

Does one have the right to stop here and be content with this as an internal reading of Foucault's great book? Is an *internal* reading possible? Is it legitimate to privilege to this extent its relation to something like an "age" of psychoanalysis "itself"? The reservations that such presumptions of identity might arouse (the unity of an "age," the indivisibility of psychoanalysis "itself," and so on—and I've made more than one allusion to them—would be enough to make us question this.

One would be able to justify a response to this question, in any case, only by continuing to read and to analyze, by continuing to take into account particularly Foucault's corpus, his archive, what this archive says on the subject of the archive. Without limiting ourselves to this, think in particular of the problems posed some five to eight years later: (1) by *The Order of Things* concerning something that has always seemed enigmatic to me and that Foucault calls for a time *episteme* (there where it is said, "We think in that place" [*MC,* p. 396; *DT,* p. 384]); a place that, and I will return to this in a moment, encompasses or comprehends the psychoanalysis that does not comprehend it, or more precisely, that comprehends it without comprehending it and without acceding to it; (2) by *The Archaeology of Knowledge* concerning "The Historical *a priori* and the Archive" (this is the title of the central chapter) and archaeology in its relation to the history of ideas.

It is out of the question to get involved here, in so short a time, in such difficult readings. I will thus be content to conclude, if you will still allow me, with a few indications (two at the most) along one of the paths I would have wanted to follow on the basis of these readings.

1. On the one hand, I would have tried to identify the signs of an imperturbable constancy in this movement of the pendulum or balance. The oscillation *regularly* leads from one topological assignation to the other: as if psychoanalysis had *two places* or took place *two times.* Yet it seems to me that the law of this displacement operates without the struc-

tural possibility of an event or a place being analyzed for itself, and without the consequences being drawn with regard to the identity of all the concepts at work in this history that does not want to be a history of ideas and representations.

This constancy in the oscillation of the pendulum is first marked, of course, in books that are more or less contemporary with *The History of Madness. Maladie mentale et psychologie* [*Mental Illness and Psychology*] (1962) intersects and coincides at many points with *The History of Madness.* In the history of mental illness, Freud appears as "the first to open up once again the possibility for reason and unreason to communicate in the danger of a common language, ever ready to break down and disintegrate into the inaccessible" (*MM,* p. 82; *MI,* p. 69). In truth, though profoundly in accord with the movement and logic of *The History of Madness,* this book of 1962 is, in the end, a bit more precise and differentiated in its references to Freud, although *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* is never mentioned. Foucault speaks both of Freud's "stroke of genius" (and this is indeed his word) and of the dividing line that runs down his work. Freud's "stroke of genius" was to have escaped the evolutionist horizon of John Hughlings Jackson (*MM,* p. 37; *MI,* p. 31), whose model can nevertheless be found in the description of the evolutive forms of neurosis and the history of libidinal stages,[15] the libido being mythological (a myth to destroy, often a biopsychological myth that is abandoned, Foucault then thinks, by psychoanalysts), just as mythological as Janet's "'psychic force,'" with which Foucault associates it more than once (*MM,* p. 29; *MI,* p. 24).[16]

If the assignation of Freud is thus double, it is because his work is

15. Insofar as, and to the extent that, it follows Jackson's model (for the "stroke of genius" also consists in escaping from this), psychoanalysis is *credulous,* it *will have been* credulous, for it is in this that it is outdated, a credulous presumption: "it believed that it could," "Freud believed." After having cited Jackson's *The Factors of Insanities,* Foucault in fact adds (I emphasize the verb and tense of *to believe*):

> Jackson's entire work tended to give right of place to evolutionism in neuro- and psycho-pathology. Since the *Croonian Lectures* (1874), it has no longer been possible to omit the regressive aspects of illness; evolution is now one of the dimensions by which one gains access to the pathological fact.
>
> A whole side of Freud's work consists of a commentary on the evolutive forms of neurosis. The history of the libido, of its development, of its successive fixations, resembles a collection of the pathological possibilities of the individual: each type of neurosis is a return to a libidinal stage of evolution. And psychoanalysis *believed that it could* write a psychology of the child by carrying out a pathology of the adult. . . . This is the celebrated Oedipus complex, in which Freud *believed* that he could read the enigma of man and the key to his destiny, in which one must find the most comprehensive analysis of the conflicts experienced by the child in his relations with his parents and the point at which many neuroses became fixated.
>
> In short, every libidinal stage is a potential pathological structure. Neurosis is a spontaneous archeology of the libido. [*MM,* pp. 23–26; *MI,* pp. 19–21]

16. For example: "It is not a question of invalidating the analyses of pathological regression; all that is required is to free them of the myths that neither Janet nor Freud succeeded in separating from them" (*MM,* p. 31; *MI,* p. 26).

divided: "In psychoanalysis, it is always possible," says Foucault, "to separate that which pertains to a psychology of evolution (as in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*) and that which belongs to a psychology of individual history (as in *Five Psychoanalyses* and the accompanying texts)" (*MM,* p. 37; *MI,* p. 31).

Despite this consideration for the "stroke of genius," Foucault is indeed speaking here of an analytic psychology. This is what he calls it. Insofar as it remains a psychology, it remains speechless before the language of madness. Indeed, "there is a very good reason why psychology can never master madness; it is because psychology became possible in our world only when madness had already been mastered and excluded from the drama" (*MM,* p. 104; *MI,* p. 87—a few lines before the end of the book).

In other words, the logic at work in this conclusion, the consequences—the ruinous consequences—of which one would ceaselessly have to take into account, is that what has already been mastered can no longer be mastered, and that too much mastery (in the form of exclusion but also of objectification) deprives one of mastery (in the form of access, knowledge, competence). The concept of mastery is an impossible concept to manipulate, as we know: the more there is, the less there is, and vice versa. The conclusion drawn in the few lines I just cited thus excludes *both* Freud's "stroke of genius" *and* psychology, be it analytic or some other. Freudian man remains a *homo psychologicus*. Freud is once again passed over in silence, cut out of both the lineage and the work of mad geniuses. He is given over to a forgetfulness where one can then accuse him of silence and forgetting.

> And when, in lightning flashes and cries, madness reappears, as in Nerval or Artaud, Nietzsche or Roussel, it is psychology that remains silent, *speechless,* before this language that borrows a meaning of its own from that *tragic split* [I emphasize this phrase; this is a tragic and romantic discourse on the essence of madness and the birth of tragedy, a discourse just as close, literally, to that of a certain Novalis as to that of Hölderlin], from that freedom, that, for contemporary man, only the existence of "psychologists" allows him to forget. [*MM,* p. 104; *MI,* pp. 87–88][17]

And yet. Still according to the interminable and inexhaustible *fort/da* that we have been following for some time now, the same *Freudian man* is reinscribed into the noble lineage at the end of *Naissance de la clinique* [*The*

17. A literally identical schema was at work a few pages earlier: "Psychology can never tell the truth about madness because it is madness that holds the truth of psychology." It is again a tragic vision, a tragic discourse on the tragic. Hölderlin, Nerval, Roussel, and Artaud are again named through their works as witnesses of a "tragic confrontation with madness" free of all psychology (*MM,* p. 89; *MI,* pp. 74, 75). No reconciliation is possible between psychology, even if analytic, and tragedy.

Birth of the Clinic] (a book published in 1963 but clearly written during the same creative period). Why single out this occurrence of the reinscription rather than another? Because it might give us (and this is, in fact, the hypothesis that interests me) a rule for reading this *fort/da;* it might provide us with a criterion for interpreting this untiring exclusion/inclusion. It is a question of another divide, within psychoanalysis, or, in any case, a divide that seems somewhat different than the one I spoke of a moment ago between Freud, the psychologist of evolution, and Freud, the psychologist of individual history. I say "seems somewhat different" because the one perhaps leads back to the other.

The line of this second divide is, quite simply—if one can say this—death. The Freud who breaks with psychology, with evolutionism and biologism, the tragic Freud, really, who shows himself *hospitable* to madness (and I take the risk of this word) because he is foreign to the space of the hospital, the tragic Freud who deserves hospitality in the great lineage of mad geniuses, is the Freud who talks it out with death. This would especially be the Freud, then, of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* although Foucault never, to my knowledge, mentions this work and makes only a very ambiguous allusion in *Mental Illness and Psychology* to what he calls a death instinct, the one by which Freud wished to explain the war, although "it was war that was dreamed in this shift in Freud's thinking" (*MM,* p. 99; *MI,* p. 83).

Death alone, along with war, introduces the power of the negative into psychology and into its evolutionist optimism. On the basis of this experience of death, on the basis of what is called in the final pages of *The Birth of the Clinic* "originary finitude"[18] (a vocabulary and theme that then take over Foucault's text and that always seemed to me difficult to dissociate from Heidegger, who as you know is practically never evoked, nor even named, by Foucault),[19] Freud is reintegrated into this modernity from out of which *The History of Madness* is written and from which he had been banished at regular intervals. It is by taking account of death as

18. Foucault, *Naissance de la clinique: Une Archéologie du regard médical* (Paris, 1963), p. 199; hereafter abbreviated *N;* trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith, under the title *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archeology of Medical Perception* (New York, 1975), p. 197; hereafter abbreviated *B.*

19. Except perhaps in passing in *Les Mots et les choses:* "the experience of Hölderlin, Nietzsche, and Heidegger, in which the return is posited only in the extreme recession of the origin" (*MC,* p. 345; *OT,* p. 334).

This ponderous silence would last, I believe, right up until an interview that he gave not long before his death. Faithful to the Foucauldian style of interpretation, one might say that the spacing of this omission, of this blank silence—like the silence that reigns over the name of Lacan, whom one can associate with Heidegger up to a certain point, and thus with a few others who never stopped, in France and elsewhere, to dialogue with these two—is anything but the empty and inoperative sign of an absence. It *gives rise* or *gives the place* [*donne lieu*], on the contrary, it marks out the place and the age. The dotted lines of a suspended writing *situate* with a formidable precision. No attention to the age or to the problem of the age should lose sight of this.

"the concrete a priori of medical experience" that "the beginning of that fundamental relation that binds modern man to his originary finitude" comes about (*N,* pp. 198, 199; *B,* pp. 196, 197). This modern man is also a "Freudian man":

> the experience of individuality in modern culture is bound up with that of death: from Hölderlin's Empedocles to Nietzsche's Zarathustra, and on to Freudian man, an obstinate relation to death prescribes to the universal its singular face, and lends to each individual the power of being heard forever. [*N,* p. 199; *B,* p. 197]

Originary finitude is a finitude that no longer arises out of the infinity of a divine presence. It now unfolds "in the void left by the absence of the gods" (*N,* p. 200; *B,* p. 198). What we have here, then, is, in the name of death, so to speak, a reinscription of Freudian man into a "modern" grouping or whole from which he was sometimes excluded.

One can then follow *two* new but equally ambiguous consequences. *On the one hand,* the grouping in question is going to be restructured. One should not be surprised to see reappear, as on the very last page of *The Birth of the Clinic,* the name of Jackson—and, before him, Bichat, whose *Traité des membranes* (1827) and *Recherches physiologiques* would have allowed death to be seen and thought. This vitalism would have arisen against the backdrop of "'mortalism'" (*N,* p. 147; *B,* p. 145). It would be a characteristic of the entire European nineteenth century, and it could be attested to just as well by Goya, Géricault, Delacroix, or Baudelaire, to name just a few: "The importance of Bichat, Jackson, and Freud in European culture does not prove that they were philosophers as well as doctors, but that, in this culture, medical thought is fully engaged in the philosophical status of man" (*N,* p. 200; *B,* p. 198).

But there is a second ambiguous consequence of this relation to death as originary finitude. And so, *on the other hand,* the figure or face that is then fixed, and in which one believes one recognizes the traits of "Freudian man," comes to occupy a rather singular place with respect to what Foucault calls the analytic of finitude and the modern *episteme* at the end of *Les Mots et les choses* [*The Order of Things*] (1966). From the standpoint of a certain epistemological trihedron (life, work, and language, or biology, economy, and philology), the human sciences are seen to be at once *inclusive* and *exclusive;* these are Foucault's words (see *MC,* p. 358; *OT,* p. 347).

As for this inclusive exclusion, Freud's work, to which Foucault unwaveringly assigns a model that is more philological than biological, still occupies the place of the *hinge;* Foucault in fact speaks about the place and workings of a *"pivot"*: "all this knowledge, within which Western culture had given itself in one century a certain image of man, pivots on the work of Freud, though without, for all that, leaving its fundamental arrangement" (*MC,* p. 372; *OT,* p. 361).

"Though without, for all that, leaving its fundamental arrangement": that is how everything turns round the event or the invention of psychoanalysis. It turns in circles and in place, endlessly returning to the same. It is a revolution that changes nothing. Hence this is not, as Foucault adds at this point, "the most decisive importance of psychoanalysis."

In what, then, does this "most decisive importance of psychoanalysis" consist? In exceeding both consciousness and representation—and, as a result, the human sciences, which do not go beyond the realm of the representable. It is in this respect that psychoanalysis, like ethnology in fact, does not belong to the field of the human sciences. It "relates the knowledge of man to the finitude that gives man its foundation" (*MC,* p. 392; *OT,* p. 381). We are far from its earlier determination as an analytic psychology. And this same excessive character leads psychoanalysis toward the very forms of finitude that Foucault writes in capital letters, that is, toward Death, Desire, Law or Law-Language (see *MC,* p. 386; *OT,* p. 375). It would be necessary to devote a more detailed and more probing reading to these few pages, something I cannot do here. To keep to the surest schema, let us simply say that, from this point of view and to this degree at least, psychoanalysis, as an analytic of finitude, is now granted an intimacy with the madness that it had sometimes been conceded but had most often been emphatically denied in *The History of Madness.* And this intimacy is a sort of complicity with the madness of the day, the madness of today, "madness in its present form, madness as it is posited in the modern experience, as its truth and its alterity" (*MC,* p. 387; *OT,* p. 375).

But let us not oversimplify things. What Foucault generously grants psychoanalytic experience is now nothing other than what is denied it; more precisely, it is the being able to see what is denied it. Indeed, the only privilege that is here granted to psychoanalysis is that of the experience *that accedes to that to which it can never accede.* If Foucault here mentions, under the name of madness, only schizophrenia and psychosis, it is because psychoanalysis most often approaches these only in order to acknowledge its own limit: a forbidden or impossible access. *This limit defines psychoanalysis.* Its intimacy with madness par excellence is an intimacy with the least intimate, a nonintimacy that relates it to what is most heterogenous, to that which in no way lets itself be interiorized, nor even subjectified: neither alienated, I would say, nor inalienable.

> This is why psychoanalysis finds in that madness *par excellence* ["madness *par excellence*" is also the title given by Blanchot many years earlier to a text on Hölderlin, and Foucault is no doubt echoing this without saying so]—which psychiatrists term schizophrenia—its intimate, its most invincible torture: for, given in this form of madness, in an absolutely manifest and absolutely withdrawn form [this absolute identity of the manifest and the withdrawn, of the open and the

> secret, is no doubt the key to this double gesture of interpretation and evaluation], are the forms of finitude towards which it usually advances unceasingly (and interminably) from the starting-point of that which is voluntarily-involuntarily offered to it in the patient's language. So psychoanalysis 'recognizes itself' when it is confronted with those very psychoses to which, nevertheless (or rather, for that very reason), it has scarcely any means of access: as if the psychosis were displaying in a savage illumination, and offering in a mode not too distant but precisely too close, that towards which analysis must make its laborious way. [*MC,* p. 387; *OT,* pp. 375–76]

This displacement, as ambiguous as it is, leads Foucault to adopt the exact opposite position of certain theses of *The History of Madness* and *Mental Illness and Psychology* concerning the couple patient-doctor, concerning transference or alienation. This time, psychoanalysis not only has nothing to do with a psychology but it constitutes neither a general theory of man—since it is above all else a knowledge linked to a practice—nor an anthropology (see *MC,* pp. 388, 390; *OT,* pp. 376, 378–79). Even better: in the movement where he clearly affirms this, Foucault challenges the very thing of which he had unequivocally accused psychoanalysis, namely, of being a mythology and a thaumaturgy. He now wants to explain why psychologists and philosophers were so quick, and so naive, to denounce a Freudian mythology there where that which exceeds representation and consciousness must have in fact *resembled,* but only resembled, something mythological (see *MC,* p. 386; *OT,* p. 374). As for the thaumaturgy of transference, the logic of alienation, and the subtly or sublimely asylumlike violence of the analytic situation, they are no longer, Foucault now says, essential to psychoanalysis, no longer "constitutive" of it. It is not that all violence is absent from this rehabilitated psychoanalysis, but it is, I hardly dare say it, a good violence, or in any case what Foucault calls a "calm" violence, one that, in the singular experience of singularity, allows access to "the concrete figures of finitude":

> neither hypnosis, nor the patient's alienation within the fantasmatic character of the doctor, is constitutive of psychoanalysis; . . . the latter can be deployed only in the calm violence of a particular relationship and the transference it produces. . . . Psychoanalysis makes use of the particular relation of the transference in order to reveal, on the outer confines of representation, Desire, Law, and Death, which outline, at the extremity of analytic language and practice, the concrete figures of finitude. [*MC,* pp. 388–89; *OT,* pp. 377–78]

Things have indeed changed—or so it appears—between *The History of Madness* and *The Order of Things.*

From where does the theme of finitude that seems to govern this new displacement of the pendulum come? To what philosophical event is this analytic of finitude to be attributed—this analytic in which is inscribed the trihedron of knowledges or models of the modern *episteme,* with its nonsciences, the "'human sciences,'" according to Foucault (*MC,* p. 378; *OT,* p. 366), and its "'counter-sciences,'" which Foucault says psychoanalysis and ethnology also are (*MC,* p. 391; *OT,* p. 379)?

As a project, the analytic of finitude would belong to the tradition of the Kantian critique. Foucault insists on this Kantian filiation by specifying, to cite it once again: "We think in that place." Here is again and for a time, according to Foucault, *our* age, *our* contemporaneity. It is true that if originary finitude obviously makes us think of Kant, it would be unable to do so alone, that is—to summarize an enormous venture in a word, in a name—without the active interpretation of the Heideggerian repetition and all its repercussions, particularly, since this is our topic today, in the discourse of French philosophy and psychoanalysis, and especially, Lacanian psychoanalysis; and when I say Lacanian, I am also referring to all the debates *with* Lacan during the past few decades. This would have perhaps deserved some mention here on the part of Foucault, especially when he speaks of originary finitude. For Kantian finitude is precisely not "originary," as is, on the contrary, the one to which the Heideggerian interpretation leads. Finitude in Kant's sense is instead derived, as is the intuition bearing the same name. But let us leave all this aside, since it would, as we say, take us a bit too far afield.

The "we" who is saying "we think in that place" is evidently, tautologically, the "we" from out of which the signatory of these lines, the author of *The History of Madness* and *The Order of Things,* speaks, writes, and thinks. But this "we" never stops dividing, and the places of its signature are displaced in being divided up. A certain untimeliness always disturbs the contemporary who reassures him or herself in a "we." This "we," our "we," is not its own contemporary. The self-identity of its age, or of any age, appears as divided, and thus problematic, *problematizable* (I underscore this word for a reason that will perhaps become apparent in a moment), as the age of madness or an age of psychoanalysis—as well as, in fact, all the historical or archeological categories that promise us the determinable stability of a configurable whole. In fact, from the moment a couple separates, from the moment, for example, just to locate here a symptom or a simple indication, the couple Freud/Nietzsche forms and then unforms, this decoupling fissures the identity of the epoch, of the age, of the *episteme* or the paradigm of which one or the other, or both together, might have been the significant representatives. This is even more true when this decoupling comes to fissure the self-identity of some individual, or some presumed individuality, for example, of Freud. What

allows one to presume the non–self-difference of Freud, for example? And of psychoanalysis? These decouplings and self-differences no doubt introduce a good deal of disorder into the unity of any configuration, whole, epoch, or historical age. Such disturbances make the historians' work rather difficult, even and especially the work of the most original and refined among them. This self-difference, this difference *to self* [*à soi*], and not simply *with self,* makes life hard if not impossible for historical science. But inversely, would there be any history, would anything ever *happen,* without this principle of disturbance? Would there ever be any event without this disturbance of the principality?

At the point where we are, the age of finitude is being de-identified for at least one reason, from which I can here abstract only the general schema: the thought of finitude, as the thought of finite man, speaks *both* of the tradition, the memory of the Kantian critique or of the knowledges rooted in it, *and* of the end [*fin*] of this finite man, this man who is "nearing its end," as Foucault's most famous sentence would have it in this final wager, placed on the edge of a promise that has yet to take shape, in the final lines of *The Order of Things:* "then one can certainly wager that man would be effaced, like a face drawn in sand at the edge or limit of the sea" (*MC,* p. 398; *OT,* p. 387). The *trait* (the trait of the face, the line or the limit) that then runs the risk of being effaced in the sand would perhaps also be the one that separates an end from itself, thereby multiplying it endlessly and making it, once again, into a limit: the self-relation of a limit at once erases and multiplies the limit; it cannot but divide it in inventing it. The limit only comes to be effaced—it only comes to efface itself—as soon as it is inscribed.

2. I'm finished with this point, and so I should really finish it up right here. Assuming that I haven't already worn out your patience, I will conclude with a second indication as a sort of *postscript*—and even more schematically—in order to point once again in the direction of psychoanalysis and to put these hypotheses to the test of *The History of Sexuality* (1976–1984).[20]

If one is still willing to follow this figure of the pendulum [*balancier*] making a scene before psychoanalysis, then one will observe that the *fort/da* here gives a new impetus to the movement, a movement with the same rhythm but with a greater amplitude and range than ever before. Psychoanalysis is here reduced, more than it ever was, to a very circumscribed and dependent moment in a history of the "strategies of knowledge and power" (juridical, familial, psychiatric) (*VS,* p. 210; *HS,* p. 159). Psycho-

20. *Histoire de la sexualité* is the name given by Foucault to his entire project on sexuality, of which three volumes have now been published: *La Volonté de savoir* (Paris, 1976), hereafter abbreviated *VS,* trans. Robert Hurley, under the title *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (New York, 1978), hereafter abbreviated *HS; L'Usage des plaisirs* (Paris, 1984), trans. Hurley, under the title *The Use of Pleasure* (New York, 1985); and *Le Souci de soi* (Paris, 1984), trans. Hurley, under the title *The Care of the Self* (New York, 1986).

analysis is taken by and interested in these strategies, but it does not think them through. The praises of Freud fall decisively and irreversibly: one hears, for example, of "how wonderfully effective he was—worthy of the greatest spiritual fathers and directors of the classical period—in giving a new impetus to the secular injunction to study sex and transform it into discourse" (*VS,* p. 210; *HS,* p. 159). This time, in other words, in reinscribing the invention of psychoanalysis into the history of a disciplinary dynamic, one no longer indicts only the ruses of objectivization and psychiatric alienation, as in *The History of Madness,* and no longer only the stratagems that would have allowed the *confinement without confinement* of the patient in the invisible asylum of the analytic situation. This time, it is a question of going much further back, and more radically than the "repressive hypothesis" ever did, towards the harsh ruses of the monarchy of sex and the agencies of power that support it. These latter invest in and take charge of sexuality, so that there is no need to oppose, as one so often and naively believes, power and pleasure.

And since we have been following for so long now the obsessive avatars of the Evil Genius, the irresistible, demonic, and metamorphic returns of this quasi-God, of God's second in command, this metempsychotic Satan, we here find Freud himself once again, Freud, to whom Foucault leaves a choice between only two roles: the bad genius and the good one. And what we have here is another chiasm: in the rhetoric of the few lines that I will read in a moment, one will not be surprised to see that the accused, the one who is the most directly targeted by the indictment—for no amount of denying will make us forget that we are dealing here with a trial and a verdict—is the "good genius of Freud" and not his "bad genius." Why so? In the final pages of the first volume of *The History of Sexuality,* the accusation of pansexualism that was often leveled against psychoanalysis naturally comes up. Those most blind in this regard, says Foucault, were not those who denounced pansexualism out of prudishness. Their only error was to have attributed "solely to the *bad genius* [*mauvais génie*] of Freud what had already gone through a long stage of preparation" (*VS,* p. 210; *HS,* p. 159; my emphasis). The opposite error, the symmetrical lure, corresponds to a more serious mystification. It is the illusion that could be called emancipatory, the aberration of the Enlightenment, the misguided notion on the part of those who believed that Freud, the *"good genius"* of Freud, had finally freed sex from its repression by power. These

> were mistaken concerning the nature of the process; they believed that Freud had at last, through a sudden reversal, restored to sex the rightful share which it had been denied for so long; they had not seen how the *good genius* of Freud had placed it at one of the critical points marked out for it since the eighteenth century by the strategies of knowledge and power, how wonderfully effective he was . . .

> in giving a new impetus to the secular injunction to study sex and transform it into discourse. [*VS*, p. 210; *HS*, p. 159; my emphasis][21]

The "good genius" of Freud would thus be worse than the bad one. It would have consisted in getting itself well placed, in spotting the best place in an old strategy of knowledge and power.

Whatever questions it might leave unanswered—and I will speak in just a moment of one of those it suscitates in me—this project appears nonetheless exciting, necessary, and courageous. And I would not want any particular reservation on my part to be too quickly classified among the reactions of those who hastened to defend the threatened privilege of the pure invention of psychoanalysis, that is, of an invention that would be *pure*, of a psychoanalysis that one might still dream would have innocently sprung forth already outfitted, helmeted, armed, in short, outside all history, after the epistemological cutting of the cord, as one used to say, indeed, after the unraveling of the navel of the dream. Foucault himself during an interview seemed to be ready for some sort of compromise on this issue, readily and good-spiritedly acknowledging the "impasses" (this was his word) of his concept of *episteme* and the difficulties into which this new project had led him.[22] But only those who work, only those who

21. It is perhaps appropriate to recall here the lines immediately following this, the last in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*. They unequivocally describe this sort of Christian teleology or, more precisely, modern Christianity (as opposed to "an old Christianity") whose completion would, in some sense, be marked by psychoanalysis:

> the secular injunction to study sex and transform it into discourse. We are often reminded of the countless procedures which an old Christianity once employed to make us detest the body; but let us ponder all the ruses that were employed for centuries to make us love sex, to make the knowledge of it desirable and everything said about it precious. Let us consider the stratagems by which we were induced to apply all our skills to discovering its secrets, by which we were attached to the obligation to draw out its truth, and made guilty for having failed to recognize it for so long. These devices are what ought to make us wonder today. Moreover, we need to consider the possibility that one day, perhaps, in a different economy of bodies and pleasures, people will no longer quite understand how the ruses of sexuality, and the power that sustains its organization, were able to subject us to that austere monarchy of sex, so that we became dedicated to the endless task of forcing its secret, of exacting the truest of confessions from a shadow.
>
> The irony of this deployment is in having us believe that our "liberation" is in the balance. [*VS*, pp. 210–11; *HS*, p. 159]

Some might be tempted to relate this conclusion to that of *The Order of Things*, to everything that is said there about the *end* and about its *tomorrow*, about man "nearing his end" right up to this "day" when, as *The History of Sexuality* says, "in a different economy of bodies and pleasures, people will no longer quite understand how," and so on. It is difficult not to hear in the rhetoric and tonality of such a call, in the apocalyptic and eschatological tone of this promise (even if "we can at the moment do no more than sense the possibility [of this event]—without knowing either what its form will be or what it promises" [*MC*, p. 398; *OT*, p. 387]), a certain resonance with the Christianity and Christian humanism whose end is being announced.

22. See "Le Jeu de Michel Foucault," *Ornicar?* 10 (July 1977): 62–93; ed. Alain Grosrichard, under the title "The Confessions of the Flesh," *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews*

take risks in working, encounter difficulties. One only ever thinks and takes responsibility—if indeed one ever does—in the testing of the aporia; without this, one is content to follow an inclination or apply a program. And it would not be very generous, indeed it would be especially naive and imprudent, to take advantage of these avowals, to take them literally, and to forget what Foucault himself tells us about the confessional scene.

The question that I would have liked to formulate would thus not aim to protect psychoanalysis against some new attack, nor even to cast the slightest doubt upon the importance, necessity, and legitimacy of Foucault's extremely interesting project concerning this great history of sexuality. My question would only seek—and this would be, in sum, a sort of modest contribution—to complicate somewhat an axiomatic and, on the basis of this perhaps, certain discursive or conceptual procedures, particularly regarding the way in which this axiomatic is inscribed in its age, in the historical field that serves as a point of departure, and in its reference to psychoanalysis. In a word, without compromising in the least the necessity of reinscribing almost "all" psychoanalysis (assuming one could seriously say such a thing, which I do not believe one can: psychoanalysis *itself, all* psychoanalysis, *the whole truth about all* psychoanalysis) into a history that precedes and exceeds it, it would be a question of becoming interested in certain gestures, in certain works, in certain moments of certain works of psychoanalysis, Freudian and post-Freudian (for one cannot, especially in France, seriously treat this subject by limiting oneself to a strictly Freudian discourse and apparatus), in certain traits of a consequently nonglobalizable psychoanalysis, one that is divided and multiple (like the powers that Foucault ceaselessly reminds us are essentially dispersed). It would then be a question of admitting that these necessarily fragmentary or disjointed movements say and do, provide resources for saying and doing, what *The History of Sexuality* (*The Will to Knowledge*) wishes to say, what it *means* [*veut dire*], and what it wishes to do (to know and to make known) with regard to psychoanalysis. In other words, if one still wanted to speak in terms of age—something that I would only ever do in the form of citation—at this point, here on this line, concerning some trait that is on the side from out of which the history of sexuality is written rather than on the side of what it describes or objectifies, one would have to say that Foucault's project belongs too much to "the age of psychoanalysis" in its possibility for it, when claiming to thematize psychoanalysis, to do anything other than let psychoanalysis continue to speak obliquely of itself and to mark one of its folds in a scene that I will not call self-referential or specular but whose structural complication I will not here try to describe (I have tried to do this else-

---

and Other Writings, 1972–77, trans. Colin Gordon et al., ed. Gordon (New York, 1980), esp. pp. 196–97.

where). This is not only because of what withdraws this history from the regime of representation (because of what already inscribes the possibility of this history in and since the age of Freud and Heidegger—to use these names as mere indications for the sake of convenience). It is also for a reason that interests us here more directly: what Foucault announces and denounces about the relation between pleasure and power, in what he calls the "double impetus: pleasure and power" (*VS,* p. 62; *HS,* p. 45), would find, already in Freud, to say nothing of those who followed, discussed, transformed, and displaced him, the very resources for the objection leveled against the "good genius," the so very bad "good genius," of the father of psychoanalysis. I will situate this with just a word in order to conclude.

Foucault had clearly cautioned us: this history of sexuality was not to be a historian's history. A "genealogy of desiring man" was to be neither a history of representations nor a history of behaviors or sexual practices. This would lead one to think that sexuality cannot become an object of history without seriously affecting the historian's practice and the concept of history. Moreover, Foucault puts quotation marks around the word *sexuality:* "the quotation marks have a certain importance," he adds.[23] We are thus also dealing here with the history of a word, with its usages starting in the nineteenth century and the reformulation of the vocabulary in relation to a large number of other phenomena, from biological mechanisms to traditional and new norms, to the institutions that support these, be they religious, juridical, pedagogical, or medical (for example, psychoanalytic). This history of the uses of a word is neither nominalist nor essentialist. It concerns procedures and, more precisely, zones of "problematization." It is a "history of truth" as a history of *problematizations,* and even as an "archeology of problematizations," "through which being offers itself as something that can and must be thought."[24] The point is to analyze not simply behaviors, ideas, or ideologies but, first of all, these *problematizations* in which a thought of being intersects "practices" and "practices of the self," a "genealogy of practices of the self" through which these problematizations are formed. With its reflexive vigilance and care in thinking itself in its rigorous specificity, such an analysis thus calls for the *problematization of its own problematization.* This latter must *itself* also question itself, and with the same archaeological and genealogical care, the same care that it itself methodically prescribes.

When confronted with a historical problematization of such scope and thematic richness, one should not be satisfied with a mere survey, nor with asking in just a few minutes an overarching question so as to insure some sort of synoptic mastery. What we can and must try to do in such a situation is to pay tribute to a work that is this great and this un-

23. Foucault, *L'Usage des plaisirs,* p. 9; *The Use of Pleasure,* p. 3.
24. Ibid., pp. 17–19; pp. 11–13.

certain by means of a question that it itself raises, by means of a question that it carries within itself, that it keeps in reserve in its unlimited potential, one of the questions that can thus be deciphered within it, a question that keeps it in suspense, holding its breath [*tient . . . en haleine*]—and, thus, keeps it alive.

One of these questions, for me, for example, would be the one I had tried to formulate a few years ago during a conference honoring Foucault at New York University.[25] It was developed by means of a problematization of the concept of power and of the theme of what Foucault calls the *spiral* in the duality power/pleasure. Leaving aside the huge question of the concept of power and of what gives it its alleged unity under the essential dispersion rightly recalled by Foucault himself, I will pull out only a thread: it would lead to that which, in a certain Freud and at the center of a certain—let's say for the sake of convenience—French heritage of Freud, would not only not let itself be objectified by the Foucauldian problematization but would actually contribute to it in the most determinate and efficient way, thereby deserving to be inscribed on the thematizing rather than on the thematized border of this history of sexuality. I thus have to wonder what Foucault would have said, in this perspective and were he to have taken this into account, not of "Freud" or of psychoanalysis "itself" *in general*—which does not exist any more than power does as one big central and homogeneous corpus—but, for example, since this is only one example, about an undertaking like *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* about something in its lineage or between its filial connections—along with everything that has been inherited, repeated, or discussed from it since then. In following one of these threads or filial connections, one of the most discreet, in following the abyssal, unassignable, and unmasterable strategy of this text, a strategy that is finally without strategy, one begins to see that this text not only opens up the horizon of a beyond of the pleasure principle (the hypothesis of such a beyond never really seeming to be of interest to Foucault) against which the whole economy of pleasure needs to be rethought, complicated, pursued in its most unrecognizable ruses and detours. By means of one of these filiations—another one unwinding the spool of the *fort/da* that continues to interest us—this text also problematizes, in its greatest radicality, the agency of power and mastery. In a discreet and difficult passage, an original drive for power or drive for mastery (*Bemächtigungstrieb*) is mentioned. It is very difficult to know if this drive for power is still dependent upon the pleasure principle, indeed, upon sexuality as such, upon the austere monarchy of sex that Foucault speaks of on the last page of his book.

How would Foucault have situated this drive for mastery in his dis-

25. The following analysis thus intersects a much longer treatment of the subject in an unpublished paper entitled "Beyond the Power Principle" that I presented during this conference at New York University, organized by Thomas Bishop, in April 1986.

course on power or on irreducibly plural powers? How would he have read this drive, had he read it, in this extremely enigmatic text of Freud? How would he have interpreted the recurring references to the demonic from someone who then makes himself, according to his own terms, the "devil's advocate" and who becomes interested in the hypothesis of a late or derived appearance of sex and sexual pleasure? In the whole problematization whose history he describes, how would Foucault have inscribed this passage from *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* and this concept and these questions (with all the debates to which this book of Freud either directly or indirectly gave rise, in a sort of critical capitalization, particularly in the France of our age, beginning with everything in Lacan that takes its point of departure in the repetition compulsion [*Wiederholungszwang*])? Would he have inscribed this problematic matrix *within* the whole whose history he describes? Or would he have put it on the other side, on the side of what allows one on the contrary to delimit the whole, indeed to problematize it? And thus on a side that no longer belongs to the whole, nor, as I would be tempted to think, to any whole, such that the very idea of a gathering of problematization or procedure, to say nothing any longer of age, *episteme,* paradigm, or epoch, would make for so many problematic names, just as problematic as the very idea of problematization?

This is one of the questions that I would have liked to ask him. I am trying, since this is, unfortunately, the only recourse left us in the solitude of questioning, to imagine the principle of the reply. It would perhaps be something like this: what one must stop believing in is principality or principleness, in the problematic of the principle, in the principled unity of pleasure and power, or of some drive that is thought to be more originary than the other. The theme of the *spiral* would be that of a drive duality (power/pleasure) that is *without principle.*

It is *the spirit of this spiral* that keeps one in suspense, holding one's breath—and, thus, keeps one alive.

The question would thus once again be given a new impetus: is not the duality in question, this spiralled duality, what Freud tried to oppose to all monisms by speaking of a dual drive and of a death drive, of a death drive that was no doubt not alien to the drive for mastery? And, thus, to what is most alive in life, to its very living on [*survivance*]?

I am still trying to imagine Foucault's response. I can't quite do it. I would need him to take it on himself.

But in this place where no one can answer for him, in the absolute silence where we remain nonetheless turned toward him, I would venture to bet that, in a sentence that I will not construct for him, he would have associated and yet also dissociated, he would have placed back to back, mastery and death, that is, the same—death *and* the master, death *as* the master.