Thanasis Lagios · University of Athens · tha_lagios@hotmail.com

Foucauldian Genealogy and Maoism

If we look at the historical and social presuppositions of Foucault's methodology, we find out that Nietzsche's work cannot be the only root of the shift from archaeology to genealogy. In fact, a whole range of political activist practices after May '68 until the dissolution of the *Groupe d'information sur les prisons* (GIP) played an important role in inciting a politicization-in-motion that clearly left its traces in Foucault's thought and work.

Contents

Concerning the origin and foundation of the method of genealogy in Foucault's work, there is an astonishingly unanimous "interpretative consensus" among Foucault scholars.[1] While there is great disagreement about many aspects of Foucault's thought and practice, it seems that there is an almost harmonious agreement regarding the emergence of genealogy in his work. The secondary literature on Foucauldian genealogy feels obliged to repeat reverently and respectfully: in the beginning was the word of Nietzsche.

Foucault himself made no secret of his intellectual affinity to Nietzsche's genealogical method. On the back cover of the French edition of *Discipline and Punish* in 1975 he posed the main question of his book in explicit Nietzschean terms by asking "could we do the genealogy of modern morality starting from a political history of the body?" [*peut-on faire la généalogie de la morale moderne à partir d'une histoire politique des corps?*] resonating deeply and sonorously Nietzsche's groundbreaking *Genealogy of Morality* of 1887. Moreover, he confessed in what was meant to be his final interview: "I am simply Nietzschean, and I try to see, on a number of points, and to the extent that it is possible, with the aid of Nietzsche's texts — but also with anti-Nietzschean theses (which are nevertheless Nietzschean!) — what can be done in this or that domain."[2]

However, if we pay attention to Nietzsche's advice concerning the "art of reading" as the *sine qua non* of the genealogical method, we should keep in mind that we should be patient and careful readers, like ruminative animals, in order to interpret the past.[3] After all, Foucault in the opening lines of "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" was explicit about this patient and ruminative attitude that should accompany every genealogical attempt to interpret: "Genealogy is gray, meticulous, and patiently documentary."[4] Thus, if we would like to attempt to historicize Foucault's thought and practice, that is, if we would like to attempt to interpret patiently and meticulously the development of his work, it might be fruitful to pay attention to his claim that there are "anti-Nietzschean theses (which are nevertheless Nietzschean!)" in his work; it might be fruitful not to seek reverently and confirm theologically the *one and only* origin and foundation of his genealogical method, but to make an effort to find the *pudenda origo* in the *history* of

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[1]   Mads Peter Karlsen and Kaspar Villadsen: Foucault, Maoism, Genealogy: The Influence of Political Militancy in Michel Foucault's Thought, in: *New Political Science: A Journal of Politics and Culture*, 37/1 (2015), pp. 91–117.

[2]   Michel Foucault: The Return of Morality [French 1984], in: Michel Foucault: *Politics, Philosophy and Culture – Interviews and Other Writings 1977–1984*, ed. by Lawrence D. Kritzman, trans. A. Sheridan & Others, New York: Routledge 1990, p. 251. This interview took place on 29 May 1984 and it was published only three days after his death.

[3]   Friedrich Nietzsche: *On the Genealogy of Morality,* ed. by Keith-Ansell Pearson, trans. C. Diethe, New York: Cambridge University Press 2006 [German 1887], Preface, §7: "you need one thing above all in order to practice the requisite art of reading, a thing which today people have been so good at forgetting — and so it will be some time before my writings are 'readable' —, you almost need to be a cow for this one thing and certainly not a 'modern man': it is *rumination*…"

[4]   Michel Foucault: Nietzsche, Genealogy, History [French 1971], in: Michel Foucault: *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984, vol. 2: Aesthetics,* ed. by James D. Faubion, trans. Robert Hurley & others, London: Penguin 1998, p. 369.

his method and not the *metaphysical origin* in the *soul* of a thinking subject.[5] It thus might be more fruitful to study the historical presuppositions and the context for the function of a discourse, that is, "a certain mode of being of discourse,"[6] than to attribute a discourse to the intellect of an author or to the pure influence coming from the past, as it is the case with traditional "intellectual history".[7]

If this is correct, then it would be beneficial to search for the historical context of genealogy's emergence in Foucauldian thinking and practice and not to seek for the origin of an exclusively *intellectual* influence or invention. For as Nietzsche put it in the very first lines of the preface of his *Genealogy of Morality*, "We are unknown to ourselves, we knowers: and with good reason. We have never looked for ourselves, — so how are we ever supposed to *find* ourselves? How right is the saying: 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also'; *our* treasure is where the hives of our knowledge are. As born winged-insects and intellectual honey-gatherers we are constantly making for them, concerned at heart with only one thing — to 'bring something home'."[8] According to Nietzsche, a self-concealment is absolutely necessary or structurally inescapable for the knowing subject, in order to attempt to know the world.[9] The knowing subjects lack the knowledge of what makes them know the way they do, just like the bees, which concentrate the honey with no self-awareness as "a symbol of patiently extracting, accumulating and concentrating, indeed committed to such accumulation and unaware of anything else."[10]

The knowing subjects, according to Nietzsche, can know what they have experienced only *afterwards* [*hinterdrein*];[11] or, to stay strictly inside the Foucauldian corpus, how can we not listen

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[5] Ibid., pp. 369–373.

[6] Michel Foucault: What is an Author? [French 1969], in: Foucault, *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984, vol. 2: Aesthetics,* p. 211.

[7] See Foucault's response to a private letter in 1967 to a critique by Michel Amiot regarding *The Order of Things*, where he explains his ambition to take a clear distance from dominant "intellectual history": "Wishing to free history – at least the history of ideas – from a well-worn schema where it's a matter of influence, advances, setbacks, discoveries, realizations, I sought to define the ensemble of transformations which serve as the rules of an empirical discontinuity," quoted in: Daniel Defert: Chronology, in: Christopher Falzon, Timothy O' Leary, Jana Sawicki (eds.): *A Companion to Foucault*, London: Wiley-Blackwell 2013, p. 35. Moreover, during the years of his involvement with GIP, Foucault emphasized his criticism of the use of the notion of influence as a cause in the history of ideas in his lectures at the *Collège de France*, where he talks about conditions of extraction and conditions of acceptability. See Michel Foucault: *The Punitive Society, Lectures at the Collège de France 1972–1973*, ed. by A. I. Davidson, trans. G. Burchell, (London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2015 [French 2013], p. 101. My thanks to Colin Koopman for pointing me to this remark.

[8] Friedrich Nietzsche: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Preface, §1.

[9] See Lawrence J. Hatab: *On Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morality*, New York: Cambridge University Press 2008, p. 25: "In addition to challenging the general idea that self-awareness provides reliable self-knowledge, Nietzsche's claim addresses high-order pursuits of knowledge (*Erkenntnis*), including philosophy. There is something within knowers that will *always* be unfamiliar to them ("unfamiliar" being another meaning of *unbekannt*)." Thus, Nietzsche concludes the first paragraph of his preface claiming that "we remain strange to ourselves out of necessity, we do not understand ourselves, we *must* confusedly mistake who we are, the motto 'everyone is furthest from himself' applies to us for ever, — we are not 'knowers' when it comes to ourselves…"

[10] David Burngham: *The Nietzsche Dictionary*, London/New York: Bloomsbury Academic 2015, p. 41.

[11] Nietzsche: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Preface, §1: "As far as the rest of life is concerned, the so-called 'experiences', — who of us ever has enough seriousness for them? or enough time? I fear we have never really been 'with it' in such matters: our heart is simply not in it – and not even our ear! On the contrary, like somebody divinely absent-minded and sunk in his own thoughts who, the twelve strokes of midday having just boomed into his ears, wakes with a start and wonders 'What hour struck?', sometimes we, too, *afterwards* rub our ears and ask, astonished, taken aback, 'What did we actually experience then?' or even, 'Who *are* we, in fact?' and afterwards, as I said, we count all twelve reverberating strokes of our experience, of our life, of our *being* – oh! and lose count . . ." We should note, at this point, that this deferred knowledge that comes only *afterwards*, is not an exclusive characteristic of historical knowledge, which has as its object facts that took place in the past. The delayed nature of

to the disquieting claim that we need history in the form of genealogy, in order to understand by looking [inevitably, *afterwards*] towards the past, that "the analysis of descent permits the dissociation of Me, its recognition and displacement as an empty synthesis, in liberating a profusion of lost events"?[12] Therefore, if we would like to know the profusion of lost events in the development of Foucault's method, we should try to *historicize* the accumulation and production of knowledge itself: "History becomes 'effective' to the degree that it introduces discontinuity into our very being – as it divides our emotions, dramatizes our instincts, multiplies our body and sets it against itself."[13] Consequently, it is time to ask simply and plainly: where are the beehives of Foucault's genealogy?

1.   Foucault, GIP, and the Question of "Who is Speaking?"

The answer to this question is usually taken to be that the beehives of Foucauldian genealogy are formed exclusively through the work of Nietzschean genealogy. It is alleged to be a byproduct of mere intellectual influence and not a constellation or an assemblage of theoretical *and* practical circumstances and experiences in a given historical conjuncture.[14] However, a closer and a more careful look should not fail to see that besides the obvious Nietzschean inspiration there is also – at least – another one, which nourished Foucault's thought and experience after the series of events called "May '68" and during the early 1970s.

Marcelo Hoffman has aptly remarked, "Foucault's engagement with the prisoner support movement in the early 1970s has received little sustained attention outside of his biographies and a handful of articles. Perhaps even more surprisingly, the bulk of this attention has not been used to reflect more explicitly on the relationship between his theories of disciplinary power and the prison, on the one hand, and his political practices concerning the prison, on the other hand."[15] Maybe even more surprisingly, there is an almost total absence of reflection on the relationship between a self-proclaimed Nietzschean thinker with the most extreme, radical and violent stream of French leftism, after "May," that is the Maoist group *Gauche Prolétarienne* (GP),

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knowledge characterizes also psychoanalysis and modern philosophy as well. Recall the Freudian and Lacanian emphasis on *Nachträglichkeit* and on *après coup* respectively (see Jean Laplance, & Jean-Bertrand Pontalis: *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, London: Karnac 2006, p. 111–112: "consciousness constitutes its own past, constantly subjecting its meaning to revision in conformity with its 'project'"); also recall the Hegelian warning in the *Philosophy of Right* regarding the deferred flight of the owl of Minerva, namely, philosophy, in the grey evening sky (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: *Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox, London/Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press 1952 [German 1820], p. 13). This common characteristic of the status of the knowing subject in history, psychoanalysis and philosophy might explain Foucault's ambivalent and ever-changing attitude towards psychoanalysis and philosophy and their relation with his own historical surveys and his — at first sight — self-contradictory characterization of himself as "Nietzschean, or Hegelian, or Kantian" at the same time. See Michel Foucault: Interview with André Berten [French 1981], in: Michel Foucault: *Wrong-Doing, Truth-Telling. The Function of Avowal in Justice*, ed. by F. Brion & B. Harcourt, trans. Stephen W. Sawyer, Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2014, p. 236.

12   Foucault, Nietzsche, Genealogy, History, p. 374.

13   Ibid., p. 380.

14   See Michel Foucault: Interview with Christian Panier and Pierre Watté [French 1981], in: Foucault: *Wrong-Doing, Truth-Telling*, p. 248: "I have always insisted that there take place within me and for me a kind of back and forth, an interference, an interconnection between practices and the theoretical or historical work I was doing. […] With regard to prisons, I began to do a certain number of things, and then I wrote *Discipline and Punish*."

15   Marcelo Hoffman: Foucault and the 'Lesson' of the Prisoner Support Movement, in: *New Political Science: A Journal of Politics and Culture*, 34/1 (2012), pp. 21–36.

with which Foucault formed an alliance concerning the prison movement that resulted in the creation of *Groupe d'information sur les prisons* (GIP), following an idea proposed by his companion Daniel Defert who was a member of GP.

Foucault had already paid attention to the very question of "who is speaking?" in *The Order of Things*: "For Nietzsche, it was not a matter of knowing what good and evil were in themselves, but of who was being designated, or rather who was speaking when one said Agathos to designate oneself and Deilos to designate others. For it is there, in the holder of the discourse and, more profoundly still, in the possessor of the word, that language is gathered together in its entirety. To the Nietzschean question: 'Who is speaking?', Mallarmé replies […]."[16] And he there attributed the question of "who is speaking?" to Nietzsche and not to Marx. In 1966, the question "who is speaking?" articulated under the auspices of Nietzsche seemed and sounded extremely anti-Marxist if we take into consideration the fierce attacks from the Left. The Nietzschean overtone of the aforementioned question was not welcomed by many people in the Left, such as the fellow-traveler of Maoism, Jean-Luc Godard, who ridiculed Foucault's great success in *La Chinoise* (1967).[17]

Foucault, himself, just a few months, after its publication, expressed clearly and plainly his doubts about his overt Nietzschean position in *The Order of Things*, saying that "if I had to recommence this book, which was finished two years ago, I would try not to give Nietzsche that ambiguous, utterly privileged, metahistorical status I had the weakness to give him. It is due to the fact that my archaeology owes more to Nietzschean genealogy than to structuralism properly so called."[18] We should notice that while Foucault tries to take this genealogical position towards Nietzsche, he lived and taught in Tunisia, where a student movement fought for reforms against Tunisian government. Foucault immersed himself in reading Trotsky, Luxemburg and the texts written by *Black Panthers*, while he offers his help to the militant students who are, in his view, "sino-castrists," to hide or print clandestine brochures in his apartment.[19]

While the question itself seems to be the same in both contexts, the conjuncture in the mid 1960s was very different than the one during the early 1970s when revolts and riots shattered the prisons in France and brought together intellectuals that otherwise seemed very far away. Take Foucault's alliance with Sartre: "a man with too much work to do to have time to read my books" as Foucault said in response to Sartre's critical remark that *The Order of Things* was "the last barrier that bourgeoisie can still erect against Marx."[20] How did the norms and conditions of

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[16]   Michel Foucault: *The Order of Things. An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, trans. A.M. Sherian Smith, London/New York: Routledge 2001 [French 1966], p. 333.

[17]   Defert: Chronology, p. 37.

[18]   Michel Foucault: On the ways of writing History [French 1967], in: Foucault, *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984, vol. 2: Aesthetics*, pp. 293–294.

[19]   David Macey: *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, New York: Vintage Press 1994, pp. 190–191. Defert claims that Foucault declared in 1968 that he was a Trotskyist, see Defert: Chronology, pp. 36–37.

[20]   Michel Foucault: "Foucault responds to Sartre [French 1968], in: Michel Foucault: *Foucault Live*, ed. by S. Lotringer, trans. J. Johnston, New York: Semiotext(e) 1989, p. 40; Jean- Paul Sartre: J.-P. Sartre responds, in: *Arc*, 30 (October 1966), quoted in:

the order of discourse change before and after May '68 so as to allow this astonishing alliance between a man who declared, in 1961, that he regards Marxism "as the untranscendable philosophy of our time"[21] and another one who asserted, in 1966, that "Marxism exists in nineteenth century thought like a fish in water: that is, it is unable to breathe anywhere else"?[22] How did Foucault move from being an enemy for the humanists of *Les Temps Modernes* and for the Maoist students[23] to a fellow-traveler of the most violent and extreme Maoist group which was considered "a greater threat to state security than any other left-wing group" by the head of the *renseignements généraux* (General Intelligence)? Indeed *Gauche Prolétarienne* (GP) was later outlawed in May 1970 due to the anticasseurs laws of April 1970.[24]

The political experience of the May '68 protesters was in many ways inspired by the Chinese Cultural Revolution and the publication of Mao Tse-Tung's texts in France between 1962 and 1968. One of these imperatives articulated by Mao in May 1930 was extremely famous and popular: "No investigation, no right to speak." Mao Tse-Tung had also tried to give an answer to the question "who is speaking?": "Unless you have investigated a problem, you will be deprived of the right to speak on it. Isn't that too harsh? Not in the least. You can't solve a problem? Well, get down and investigate the present facts and its past history! When you have investigated the problem thoroughly, you will know how to solve it. […] Investigation may be likened to the long months of pregnancy, and solving a problem to the day of birth. To investigate a problem is, indeed, to solve it."[25] This is from an essay titled *Oppose Book Worship*.

Foucault, during his first visit to Japan just before his first course at the *Collège de France* (September–October 1970), connects the right to speak with the practice of *dazibao* (a wall-mounted newspaper, a big character poster). In the context of the Cultural Revolution, this was a common practice of "reclaiming speech [*prendre la parole*]."[26] Regarding the Cultural Revolution, Foucault had written to Defert a letter, dated 31 January 1967, where he simply stated: "I am very passionate by what's happening in China [*Je suis bien passionné par ce qui se passe en*

François Dosse: *History of Structuralism, vol. 1: The Rising Sign, 1945–1966*, trans. D. Glassman, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1998, pp. 325–327.

[21]   Jean-Paul Sartre: *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, vol. 1, trans. A. Sheridan-Smith, London/New York: Verso 2004 [French 1960], p. 822.

[22]   Foucault: *The Order of Things*, p. 285.

[23]   See James Miller: *The Passion of Michel Foucault*, New York: Anchor Books 1993, p. 172: "Without qualms – indeed with apparent zeal – he served between 1965 and 1966 on a commission established by de Gaulle's minister of education, Christian Fouchet, in order to reform higher education in France"; Didier Eribon: *Michel Foucault*, trans. B. Wing, Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1991 [French 1989], p. 133: "This reform has been one of Gaullism's great projects, and especially of Prime Ministers Georges Pompidou, and it had unleashed a storm of passions for years."

[24]   Michael S. Christofferson: *French Intellectuals Against the Left. The Anti-totalitarian Moment of the 1970s*, New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books 2004, pp. 57–64.

[25]   Quoted in Julian Bourg: The Red Guards of Paris: French Student Maoism of the 1960s, in: *History of European Ideas*, 31/4 (2005), pp. 472–490. See also Julian Bourg: *From Revolution to Ethics, May 1968 and Contemporary French Thought*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 2007, pp. 51–60.

[26]   See Michel Foucault: Folie, literature, société [French 1970], in: Michel Foucault: *Dits et écrits, Tome I: 1954–1988*, ed. by D. Defert and Fr. Ewald, Paris: Quarto Gallimard 2001, p. 994. Thus, Foucault seems to clearly support the movement of Chinese in the terrain of the arch enemy of China.

Chine]."[27] To see the wider context of the course entitled *Lectures on the Will to Know*, and not just the obvious allusion to Nietzsche's thought, we should attend to the plain fact that on 8th February 1971 Foucault read in the presence of Maoist militants, hunger strikers, and journalists, in the Chapelle Saint-Bernard the Manifesto of the GIP (which was mainly written by him) and then only two days later read his manuscripts in the presence of the audience of the prestigious *Collège* concerning the distribution of the word of truth according to *dikazein* and *krinein*.[28]

In stressing the connections between Foucault's work with the GIP and the politicization of his work in the 1970s, we should not reduce his masquerade to Nietzsche and thereby omit Mao Tse-Tung.[29] We should not ignore the fact that only a month after his *Collège de France* course, the preface of the first published GIP investigation (*Préface à Enquéte dans vingt prisons*) was written by Foucault himself. It outlined the objectives of GIP's investigations, where for the first time the prisoners were speaking for themselves demanding the abolition of criminal records.[30] We should not overlook Foucault's own statement, from an interview he gave to Fons Elders on 9 September 1971,[31] the very day that the inmates of Attica Prison revolted, where he compares the importance for the question of knowledge in Western, that is, capitalist, societies, of the *limit-experience* of drugs with the *limit-experience* of Maoism: "Deep down what is the experience of drugs if not this: to erase limits, to reject divisions, to put away all prohibitions, and then ask oneself the question, what has become of knowledge? […] Well, it seems to me also that Maoism is furthermore [*également*] in a very different historical scope — also a certain way to find anew this problem [*retrouver ce problème*]. That is to say, from the moment when people will effectively be liberated from the system of constraint — not only the systems of economic constraint, but the system of political, moral, cultural constraint that capitalism has oppressed

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[27] Daniel Defert: Chronologie, in: Foucault: *Dits et écrits, Tome I: 1954–1988*, p. 39.

[28] Michel Foucault: *Lectures on the Will to Know*, ed.) by A. I. Davidson, trans. G. Burchell, London/New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2013 [French 2011], p. 101. See also Fabienne Brion's and Bernard Harcourt's comment regarding Foucault's discursive activity in front of so diverse audiences and in so different places, such as a chapel and *Collège*: "beyond his immediate audience at the *Collège de France*, and also beyond the members of the GIP, Foucault may have targeted a much larger set of interlocutors in his *Lessons on the Will to Know*: all those who want to know without wanting to know about their own desire to know; all those who, under pretext of truth, avoid the question of desire that holds them in its clutch" (Fabienne Brion & Bernard Harcourt: The Louvain Lectures in context, in: Foucault: *Wrong-Doing, Truth-Telling*, p. 279). For a more detailed discussion concerning the connection between the *Lectures On the Will to Knowledge* and the political practice regarding GIP, see Colin Koopman: Conduct and Power: Foucault's methodological expansions in 1971, in: Perry Zurn & Andrew Dilts (eds.): *Active Intolerance. Michel Foucault, The Prisons Information Group, and the Future of Abolition*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2015, pp. 59–74.

[29] Mao is mentioned and discussed by Foucault even 10 years later in the 1979–80 lectures entitled *On the Government of the Living* — even though he is omitted from the Name Index compiled by the editors. See the fifth lecture (6 February 1980), where Foucault discusses the three matrices of moral thought in West: the models of two ways, the fall, and the stain. In the penultimate paragraph of the lecture (p. 108), he states clearly that "after all, with Marxism it's the same thing. You have the model of the fall, alienation and dis-alienation. You have the model of the two ways: Mao Zedong. And you have, of course, the problem of the stain of those who are originally soiled and must be purified: Stalinism. Marx, Mao, Stalin; the three models, of the two ways, the fall, and the stain." Marx's and Stalin's names were equally omitted from the Name Index, while R. Luxemburg's name is not. See: Michel Foucault: *On the Government of the Living, Lectures at the Collège de France 1979–1980*, ed. by A. I. Davidson, trans. G. Burchell, (London/New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2014 [2012].

[30] Michel Foucault: Préface à Enquéte dans vingt prisons [French 1971], in: Foucault: *Dits et écrits, Tome I: 1954–1988*, p. 1065.

[31] See Michel Foucault & Fons Elders: Foucault — the Lost interview (28 November 1971), URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzoOhhh4aJg.The user, named Lionel Claris, who uploaded the video makes the following comment: "This until now rarely seen 15-minute footage is of an interview that was conducted by the Dutch philosopher Fons Elders in preparation for the debate between Noam Chomsky and Michel Foucault, which was broadcasted on Dutch television on Sunday, Nov. 28, 1971. The whole interview was essentially lost for decades and was published in the winter of 2012 for the first time. It is now available as a book under the title of 'Freedom and Knowledge'."

man with for centuries — from the moment that liberation will have been achieved, then what kind of knowledge will be possible?"[32] Similar comments regarding the experience of drugs and Maoism in reference with the genealogical question of knowledge are repeated two months later (November 1971) in a discussion between Foucault and militant young lycée students.[33]

The whole question regarding "who is speaking?" was crucial from early 1960s inside universities not only for students, but also for young lower-ranking instructors, since in France there was a noteworthy increase in the numbers of university professors.[34] There were also crucial gender dimensions to the question of "who is speaking?," as in France "only 6 percent of students were female in 1906, jumping to 33 percent in 1950, 42 percent in 1962, and nearly 50 percent in 1965–66."[35] Foucault, playing the Nietzschean role of the bee that accumulates the honey of knowledge, ignored the significant political and social repercussions of this historical development, and in January 1968, after a meeting he had with students at the University of Nanterre, the bastion of the forthcoming eruption of student's movement, he commented to Defert that it was strange "how these students speak about their relations with their professors in terms of class struggle."[36] On the other hand, Foucault was trying hard to remove the glued honey from his fingers and his privileged position as a knowing subject by being not only ready but also eager to experience and know things anew through "inventing forms of speech in public spaces"; being "an enduring critic of his own thought."[37] Foucault sought to become what he later called "a specific intellectual" and not a "spokesman of Truth and Justice" in the form of a universal Intellectual like Zola or Sartre.[38]

Foucault was clear about the significance of two events in his life and work at this time. Concerning Tunisia, he stated a decade later that "I was deeply impressed by those young women and men, who exposed themselves to fearful risks by drafting a leaflet, distributing it, or calling for a strike. It was a real political experience for me."[39] Concerning May '68, he explicitly admitted that "May '68 was extremely important, without any doubt. It's certain that without May '68 I

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[32]   Ibid.

[33]   Michel Foucault: "Revolutionary Action: Until Now [French 1971], in: Michel Foucault: *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice — Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. by D. F. Bouchard, trans. D. F. Bouchard & S. Simon, Ithaca/New York: Cornell University Press 1977, p. 226.

[34]   Michael Seidman: *The Imaginary Revolution, Parisian Students and Workers in 1968*, New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books 2004, p. 19: "The 200 teachers employed in the French universities in 1808 increased to 2,000 at the end of World War II and 22,000 in 1967. Most of the expansion of university teaching in the 1960s took place among lower-ranking instructors (*maîtres assistants* and *assistants*), who permitted the French University to become a mass university. Their percentage of the university teaching staff rose from 44 percent in 1956–1957 to 72 percent in 1967–1968. The assistants were generationally and politically close to their students. The growing disparity between the increasing numbers of junior faculty compared to the relative stability of senior faculty posts deepened tensions between younger and older teachers."

[35]   Ibid.

[36]   Defert: Chronology, p. 38.

[37]   Philippe Artières: Foucault and Audiography, in: Michel Foucault: *Speech Begins after Death. In Conversation with Claude Bonnefoy*, ed. by. Philippe Artières, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2013 [French 2011], pp. 1–22, here p. 2.

[38]   Michel Foucault: Truth and Power, in: Michel Foucault: *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. by C. Gordon, trans C. Gordon, L. Marshall, J. Mepham, K. Soper, New York: Pantheon Books 1980, p. 126–128.

[39]   Michel Foucault: Interview with Michel Foucault [Italian 1980], in: Michel Foucault: *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984, vol. 3: Power*, ed. by James D. Faubion, trans. R. Hurley & others, London: Penguin Books 2000, p. 279.

wouldn't have afterward done the work I did in regard to prison, delinquency, and sexuality. In the pre-68 climate, that wasn't possible."[40] That is, without the historical conjuncture of the revolts in Tunisia and in Paris, without the revolts in French prisons, Foucault could not turn the way he did to his genealogical works and projects concerning the power/knowledge nexus, crime or sexuality, and he could not return *afterwards* to his previous archaeological works under a new perspective: "It was only from that moment [after May '68] that necessary analyses could be proposed. Working with the GIP on the problem of prisoners, I attempted to initiate and carry through an experience. At the same time, it also gave a kind of occasion for me to revisit what I had been concerned with in works like *Madness and Civilization* or *The Birth of The Clinic* and to reflect on what I had just experienced in Tunisia."[41]

For all of these reasons a genealogy of the Foucauldian genealogy is absolutely necessary and a genealogy of Foucault's *expérience* (experience/experiment) with genealogy is *sine qua non* if we do not want to attribute a meta-historical position and influence to the figure of Nietzsche. Perhaps then we can locate to what extent and under which historical circumstances the French version of Maoism served in the early 1970s not only as Borges' infamous "*Chinese encyclopedia*," where China was seen as an heterotopia,[42] but also as the Zabriskie point for Foucault's attempt to shatter the limits of his own thinking and practice by a limit-experience.[43]

2.   Foucault and Maoism

Though the relation between Foucauldian militant experience and his theories on disciplinary societies is underestimated in secondary literature, as Hoffman rightly contents, and more particularly the relation between genealogy as method and Maoism as practice has been equally overlooked, there is a growing chorus of precedent for my argument. In a recent article from 2014 the scholars Mads Peter Karlsen and Kaspar Villadsen wrote of a threefold project: "First, to bring attention to largely neglected sources of inspiration for Foucault's genealogical approach, which complement those represented by Nietzsche. Second, it seeks to obtain a better understanding of Foucault's relationship to Marxism, a relationship often portrayed as unambiguously negative. And third, the goal is to demonstrate how principles developed in Maoist political activism are not only realized in Foucault's activities within the GIP, but also in his lecture-hall

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[40]   Ibid., p. 282.

[41]   Ibid., p. 281.

[42]   Foucault: *The Order of Things*, p. xix: "*Heterotopias* are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they make it impossible to name this *and* that, because they shatter or tangle common names, because they destroy 'syntax' in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct sentences but also that less apparent syntax which causes words and things (next to and also opposite one another) to 'hold together'. This is why utopias permit fables and discourse: they run with the very grain of language and are part of the fundamental dimension of the *fabula*; heterotopias (such as those to be found so often in Borges) desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contest the very possibility of grammar at its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilize the lyricism of our sentences."

[43]   For more information — though the interpretation is controversial — regarding Foucault's trip to Death Valley in 1975 see Miller: *The Passion of Michel Foucault*, pp. 245–252.

formulations of genealogy, power, and critique."[44] Concerning the first goal, the authors discuss the fact that the French Maoists' practice of "investigation" [*enquête*] constituted a key source of inspiration for Foucault and the main practice of GIP. Regarding the relationship between Foucault and Marxism, the writers focus on the Foucauldian experience of the student protests during his stay in Tunisia, an experience that substituted for Foucault's absence from France during "May." Lastly, the third goal is accomplished through a reading of Foucault's reflections on genealogy in his 1975–76 lectures entitled *Society Must be Defended*. Since, I share their wish "to shed light on Foucault's so far comparatively underresearched 'Maoist moment', politically and intellectually, in the first half of the 1970s," I would like to discuss further some historical *and* philosophical questions, which arise in relation to their interpretation. I shall do so by using their threefold goal as an axis.

Concerning the Maoist practices, one should note that besides investigation (*enquête*), two other types of activities, foreign to the traditional Leninist, were central to GP: the active participation of students or intellectuals in the factory or farm work (*établissement*) and the attempt to establish popular justice in the form of "people's courts" (*tribunal populaire*).

Already in March of 1971, in Buffalo, Foucault is concerned with Oedipus and *enquête*, and in the 1971–72 lectures entitled *Penal Theories and Institutions* he refers to *enquête* as "a transition from a system of revenge to that of punishment."[45] Moreover, in those lectures Foucault focused on the peasant uprisings, a favorite Maoist theme, as Stuart Elden has remarked.[46] In addition, as Danielle Rancière notes, the idea to use *enquête* was proposed in the first meeting of GIP, as it was a well-known method of work in GP used in order to "liberate the worker's speech."[47] Therefore, a major theme for research should be to see whether and how *enquête* is connected with genealogy. Furthermore, is Foucault's engagement with the militant and Maoist version of Marxism still reflected in 1975–76 lectures or had he already started taking some distance from Marxism and Maoism?

Phillipe Artières has aptly remarked that for Foucault "speaking meant continuously reinventing a new political theater." And he evokes Foucault's subversion of two traditional practices, the interview and the press conference, in order to document his interpretation. The subversion of

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[44] Karlsen & Villadsen, Foucault, Maoism, Genealogy. The Influence of Political Militancy in Michel Foucault's Thought, p. 91.

[45] Michel Foucault: Penal theories and institutions [1971–72], in: Michel Foucault: *Subjectivity and Truth Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984, vol. 1: Ethics*, ed. by Paul Rabinow, trans. R. Hurley & others, (New York: Penguin, 1997), p. 18.

[46] Stuart Elden: Peasant Revolts, Germanic Law and the Medieval Inquiry, in: *berfrois* (2 June 2015), URL: http://www.berfrois.com/2015/06/foucaults-politics-of-truth-stuart-elden/.

[47] Danièlle Rancière: Militer Ensemble, in: Ph. Artières, J.-F. Bert, F. Gros et J. Revel (eds.): *Cahier Foucault*, Paris: L' Herne, 2011, p. 54. I would like to thank Marcelo Hoffman for giving me information concerning this interview. See Marcelo Hoffman: Investigations from Marx to Foucault, in: Zurn & Dilts (eds.): *Active Intolerance, Michel Foucault*, pp. 169–185. Moreover, from a Marxist perspective the issue of worker's inquiry in France was opened by the journal *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, formed around Castoriadis and Lefort in March 1949, as in its 11th issue (November–December 1952) "did address the question of workers' inquiry in a leading article (not signed, which leads one to suppose that there was a consensus on this point, or a compromise) entitled 'Proletarian Experience'. But, if this article spoke about inquiry, it was not to privilege this method of understanding what the proletariat really is, but, on the contrary, to rule in favor of these 'narrative accounts'." (see Henri Simon: Workers' Inquiry in Socialisme ou Barbarie, in: *Viewpoint Magazine*, 3 (26 September 2013), URL: https://viewpointmag.com/2013/09/26/workers-inquiry-in-socialisme-ou-barbarie/.

press conferences took place during the years 1971–72, while Foucault was politically active with the GIP. Firstly, on 8 February 1971, at the inaugural appearance of GIP, Foucault "attended the press-conference not to appropriate or co-opt it, but to prolong it. He did not use it as an exhibition space, or a space in which to make a statement, but as an opportunity to draw attention. He stated that an investigation had been launched in the prisons to determine what has happened, who was there, and so on. […] The person speaking did not state any truth, he questioned the evidence." Secondly, on 21 June 1971, during a press conference regarding the Jaubert Affair, Foucault and the other speakers, Claude Mauriac, Denis Langlois, and Gilles Deleuze, spoke as witnesses of the incident, in order to counter, through a collective speech, the misinformation campaign launched by police and French Government. Finally, on 17 February 1972, during a press conference that was held at the ministry of Justice on the Place Vendôme in Paris, Foucault spoke, in order to read "aloud from a text written by the inmates of Melun prison. In other words, in the very space where the law is decreed, the ministry of justice, the philosopher gave a voice to those who until then had been deprived of the power of the speech. He did not speak on their behalf or for them, he served as a transmitter."[48]

Regarding *établissement*, according to Donald Reid's narration of its Maoist application: "In the fall of 1967, militants' summer experiences in France and China led Robert Linhart as leader of the UJCML to launch an attack on 'bourgeois intellectuals' through the strategy of *établissement* (settling down), a move in line with what Althusser would the following year identify as the 'long, sad, difficult reeducation' intellectuals required, 'the struggle without end, exterior and interior', to overcome their petty-bourgeois class instincts. UJCML militants (with an exemption for leaders like Linhart) were encouraged to leave the classroom and go to work in industry or, in some cases, with poor peasants. The UJCML took inspiration from a speech Mao had made in March 1957, in the wake of the 'Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom' campaign."[49] Moreover, one should take into consideration the fact that this practice was not introduced into France through China or the Chinese version of Marxism. On the contrary, an intellectual that had no relation with China or Maoism, namely, Simone Weil was the most famous French intellectual-turned-worker, as she worked in a factory in 1934–35. Also, after WWII an increasing number of priests worked in

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[48] Phillipe Artières: Introduction, pp. 11–15. Concerning the subversion of interviews, maybe the most known examples of that period are the interview with militant young lycée students in November 1971 (see fn. 36) and the debate he had with Gilles Deleuze on 4 March 1972 in the kitchen of Deleuze's apartment. Michel Foucault & Gilles Deleuze: Intellectuals and Power [French 1972], in: Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, pp. 205–217. For any doubts concerning the necessity or the legitimacy of the present mixture of genres (books, interviews, press conferences, practices, letters) in this attempt for a genealogy of the Foucauldian genealogy, it should be reminded what Deleuze said about the importance of Foucault's interviews for the interpretation of his thought: See Gilles Deleuze: Michel Foucault's Main Concepts [French 1985], in: Gilles Deleuze: *Two Regimes of Madness, Texts and Interviews 1975–95*, ed. by D. Lapoujade, trans. A. Hodges & M. Taormina, New York: Semiotext(e), 2007, p. 255: "Foucault's interviews are a full part of his work, because each one is a topological operation that involves us in our current problems." Moreover, Foucault and Deleuze had followed the same method, that is, they refused to make a distinction between edited and not edited passages, while they were editing the publication of Nietzsche's oeuvre. See, Michel Foucault (avec Gilles Deleuze): Introduction générale [French 1967], in: Foucault: *Dits et écrits, Tome I: 1954–1988*, p. 592: "Nous souhaitons que le jour nouveau, apporté par les inédits, soit celui du retour à Nietzsche. Nous souhaitons que les notes qu'il a pu laisser, avec leurs plans multiples, dégagent aux yeux du lecteur toutes ces possibilités de combinaison, de permutation, qui contiennent maintenant pour toujours, en matière nietzschéenne, l'état inachevé du 'livre à venir '."

[49] Donald Reid: Etablissement: Working in the Factory to make revolution in France, in: *Radical History Review*, 88 (2004), pp. 83–111.

factories and were related with the working class.[50] Given that GIP was created due to the fact that GP militants were already — though involuntarily — *établis* inside prisons as inmates due to the proscription of GP by ministerial decree in May 1970, it is commonly accepted that there was no need to exercise the practice of *établissement*.[51]

David Macey claims that when Foucault was at the head of the department of philosophy in Vincennes, he "did not subscribe to the mythology of the *établi*, and spoke disapprovingly to Defert about the move into the factories, arguing that May would have had much farther-reaching effects in the sphere of knowledge if the struggle had been concentrated on the universities. He had no interest in arcane interpretations of Lenin. Nor did he share the contemporary enthusiasm for studying the 'Mao Tse-Tung thought', an activity which he regarded as quite meaningless."[52] However, we should notice that in the case of GIP a different kind of *établissement* was needed, since Foucault insisted that a different move was essential in order to form an alliance between the Maoists and prisoners. Namely, it was absolutely crucial that the militants not only continue their struggle aiming only at the recognition and the acquisition of the status of "political prisoner" as distinct from "common criminals," but also at blurring the distinction between good and evil and putting into question the very act of punishment. For, according to Foucault, the main political problem was not the recognition of the division between political and common crimes, but "the definition of the implicit systems in which we find ourselves prisoners; what I would like to grasp is the system of limits and exclusion which we practice without knowing it; I would like to make the cultural unconscious apparent."[53] Thus, Maoist militants, Foucault claimed, should acknowledge, analyze and criticize the limits of their analytical tools that were based on the dominant and bourgeois cultural unconscious, which predicates the clear-cut and easily recognizable distinction between "political prisoners" and "common criminals."[54]

In this conjuncture and in this context, traditional leftist practices were met with almost unavoidable obstacles and a new strategy and tactics, that is, a new political thinking and practice was necessary.[55] Foucault claimed in a conversation with lycée students that "the ultimate goal

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[50]   Ibid., pp. 87–88.

[51]   John K. Simon: A conversation with Michel Foucault, in: *Partisan Review*, 38/2 (1971), pp. 192–201.

[52]   Macey: *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, p. 219.

[53]   John K. Simon: A conversation with Michel Foucault, pp. 192–201.

[54]   For positive references to plebs and for the reluctance of traditional Marxism to analyze the phenomenon and to make an alliance with the marginalized social strata, see Michel Foucault: Le grand enfermement [German 1972] & Table ronde [French 1974–75], in: Foucault: *Dits et écrits, Tome I: 1954–1988*, p. 1174 & p. 1202. Also, concerning the irony of the Maoist's participation in inquiries concerning plebeian elements or their involuntarily establishment in prisons, see Albert Toscano: The Intolerable-Inquiry: The Documents of the Groupe d'information sur les prisons, in: *Viewpoint Magazine,* 3 (25 September, 2013), URL: https://viewpointmag.com/2013/09/25/the-intolerable-inquiry-the-documents-of-the-groupe-dinformation-sur-les-prisons.

[55]   Defert described very well the dead-end of the traditional methods of thought and practice in a context that was totally unknown for the militants that participated as students in May '68: "May 68 had bypassed the prisons — and Parliament, as it happens — as though such places did not symbolize forms of power. I remember that I later read the diary of a prisoner in La Santé in Paris. The entry for one of the most turbulent days of May '68 was simply: 'Saw a rat today.' There was worse news to come: some prisoners told us that they had been afraid, or that the guards — the 'screws' as the GIP now referred to them in the media — had made them afraid, that the revolutionaries would win, and thus confirmed the old Marxist prejudice against the

of its [GIP] interventions was not to extend the visiting rights of prisoners to thirty minutes or to procure flush toilets for the cells, but to question the social and moral distinction between the innocent and the guilty."[56] Consequently, Maoist militants should re-examine their faith and their unconscious attachment to the dominant criteria of social and moral distinction between good and evil. As he asserted more openly after his visit to Attica Prison in the U.S., "when Maoists were jailed, we should say, that they began to react in a similar way with the traditional political groups […]. This was, I think, a political error that was quickly perceived; there were discussions on the subject, and at this very moment our group was founded; the Maoists soon realized that in the end the exclusion imposed by prison to the common law prisoners are a part of the political system of elimination of which they were victims themselves." He continued remarking that a real cultural revolution — alluding to the Chinese Cultural Revolution — should make no distinction between "political" and "common criminals" and concluded thusly: "I believe that in this occasion their perception of things was much refined, as they discovered that deep down not only the ensemble of the penal system but also the ensemble of the moral system are products of a power relation established by the bourgeoisie and constituted the tools of its exercise and maintenance of power."[57] Hence, Foucault hints at the very first line of *GIP*'s manifesto: "None of us is sure to escape prison. Today less than ever. Police control [*quadrillage*] over day-to-day life is tightening."[58]

If none of us can definitely escape prison, if police control is tightening constantly, then there is no need for *établissement* of an outsider revolutionary somewhere inside where class consciousness is latent; if we are living in an emerging disciplinary society, in a carceral archipelago where "the body is the surface of the description of events," there is no *outside* or *inside*, but a thought on the historical, namely, social and political, constitution of the outside and its *relation* to the inside is needed. A genealogical thought of our knowledge is needed, "situated within the articulation of the body and history,"[59] to upset the distinction between the class consciousness of the militants and the docile bodies of the inmates. A new thought of outside, a new thought of the historical and social forces that constitute our own body, individual and social, and its *relation* to our consciousness, seems to be the critical tool that the GIP invented in deviation from the Maoist orthodoxy.

Lumpenproletariat that still structured some political discourse" (Daniel Defert: The Emergence of a new Front: Prisons, in: Alex Farquharson (ed.): *The Impossible Prison / A Foucault Reader*, Nottingham: Nottingham Contemporary 2008, p. 40).

[56] Foucault: Revolutionary Action: Until Now, p. 227.

[57] Michel Foucault: À propos de la prison d'Attica [French 1974], in: Foucault: *Dits et écrits, Tome I: 1954–1988*, pp. 1401–1402.

[58] Jean-Marie Domenach, Michel Foucault, Pierre Vidal-Naquet: Manifeste du G.I.P. [French 1971], in: Foucault, *Dits et écrits, Tome I: 1954–1988*, pp. 1042–3. Here, I make use of Stuart Elden's translation in English, published online at URL: http://progressivegeographies.com/2013/08/02/manifesto-of-the-groupe-dinformation-sur-les-prisons-a-full-translation/. Thus, Bernard Harcourt aptly remarks that the issue in 1973 lectures entitled *The Punitive Society* is the study of prison as a social — not only as an architectural —form that produces truth not only on the body of delinquent but also on the body of proletarian through *inseparably* both wage-form and prison-form. See Bernard Harcourt: Course context, in: Foucault: *The Punitive Society*, pp. 265–271.

[59] Foucault: Nietzsche, Genealogy, History, pp. 375–376.

This tool enabled the GIP to contest the very same historical and social process of division — therefore it instituted a new practice of *établissement*, no longer based *a priori* on the dichotomy between revolutionary and the masses, between political and common criminals, but rather on the *critical analysis* of the historical and social continuity between them. Thus, given that this historical and social continuity is a relation constantly and immanently constituted historically, a few years later, on 22 May 1980, Foucault tried to take a distance from his previous analysis regarding sub-proletariat commenting on the changes and transformations that were taking place in modern capitalist societies during the 1970s: "The tension between the so-called proletariat and the so-called sub-proletariat clearly characterized the end of the nineteenth century. I am not sure that the proletariat or the sub-proletariat exist. […] But I think that this opposition is currently eroding. What separated the proletariat from the sub-proletariat is that some were working and others were not. This boundary is threatened with extinction by the expansion of unemployment. This is probably why these somewhat marginal, quasi folkloric themes like sexuality have become more general problems."[60]

Regarding the practice of popular tribunals, by describing the deviation from the Maoist position concerning the status of political prisoners, Foucault may have the historical fact in mind that GIP was created after it deviated from the GP policy of creating Inquiring Committees on the model of the popular tribunal, which was put in practice by Sartre playing the role of persecutor at Toul trying to find out what caused and who was responsible for the mining accident in December 1970. As Defert recalls, Foucault in order to form GIP, "completely changes the strategy, removing any appearance of a tribunal, in order to make it into a social movement. He launches what he calls 'intolerability inquiries' in which it's a matter of both collecting information about, and revealing, what is intolerable, but also of provoking this intolerability."[61] Foucault also alludes to the ongoing conflict with the strong workerist tendency inside GP, which had as its aim to set free the real and oppressed proletarian consciousness in the souls of working subjects.[62] This conflict never ended, but was rather an ongoing process as the debate on popular justice (5 February 1972) between Foucault and the gépistes B.H. Lévy & André Glucksmann illustrated vividly.

Certainly the most impressive moment in this debate is when Foucault asked what Lévy understood by the "ideology of proletariat," only to receive the predictable answer "Mao Tse-Tung's thought." Foucault did not hesitate to reply harshly: "But you will grant me that what is thought by the mass of the French proletariat is not the thought of Mao Tse-Tung and it is not necessari-

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[60]   Michel Foucault: Interview with Jean François and John De Witt, p. 262.

[61]   Defert: Chronology, p. 46.

[62]   As Macey describes in *The Lives of Michel Foucault*, p. 264: "when Robert Linhart, with support from Foucault, proposed devoting a special issue of *La Cause du Peuple* to the prison mutiny that broke out at Toul in December 1971, more workerists comrades like Christian Jambet and Pierre Victor argued that not all forms of revolt were 'politically correct' and that workers at Renault – the Maoists political touchstone – would not understand support for such causes. Linhart and Foucault won the argument. The possibility of manipulation by the *Gauche Prolétarienne* was, however, always present, and Danièlle Rancière recalls Foucault having to insist again and again: 'This is the *GIP*, not *Secours Rouge*, and not *GP*'."

ly a revolutionary ideology."[63] The basis of the mutual incomprehension between the leaders of GP and GIP is the latter's insistence that the historical function of a court is that of a social and political apparatus and not that of an ideological mechanism. As Foucault maintained, forecasting his analysis of the diagrams of power in *Discipline and Punish* and beginning to take a distance from Chinese Revolution, "are you certain that it is merely the *form* of the court that is involved here? I do not know how these things are done in China, but look a bit more closely at the meaning of the spatial arrangement of the court, the arrangement of the people who are part of or before a court. The very least that can be said is that this implies an ideology. What is this arrangement? A table, and behind this table, which distances them from the two litigants, the 'third party', that is, the judges."[64]

At this point we should turn our attention to the second and third of Karlsen & Villadsen's announced project, that is, to the relation between Foucault and Marxism, and to the reflection of the principles developed in Maoist activism in the 1975–76 Lectures. We should note that the aforementioned Foucauldian dismissal of ideology is a crucial element if we want to understand the complex and multifaceted relation between Foucault and Maoism or Marxism in general. As he put it in his Rio de Janeiro Lectures entitled *Truth and Juridical Forms* in May 1973, only a few months after the dissolution of GIP, "[c]urrently when one does history — the history of ideas, of knowledge, or simply history — one sticks to this subject of knowledge, to this subject of representation as the point of origin from which knowledge is possible and truth appears. It would be interesting to try to see how a subject came to be constituted that is not definitely given, that is not the thing on the basis of which truth happens to history — rather, a subject that constitutes itself within history and is constantly established and reestablished by history. It is toward that radical critique of the human subject by history that we should direct our efforts. A certain university or academic tradition of Marxism has not yet given up the traditional philosophical conception of the subject."[65]

It is difficult not to see here a certain allusion to the failure of Althusserianism to renovate Marxism, for it remained faithful to a sharp distinction between science and ideology, between truth and error. As he declared in more clear and unambiguous terms in an interview concerning geography in the summer of 1976: "I'm not sure that one doesn't find a similar temptation at work in certain kinds of 'renovated' Marxism, one which consists in saying, 'Marxism, as the science of sciences, can provide the theory of science and draw the boundary between science and ideol-

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[63] Michel Foucault: On Popular Justice: A Discussion with Maoists [French 1972], in: Foucault: *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, p. 26.

[64] Ibid., p. 8.

[65] Michel Foucault: Truth and Juridical Forms [French 1973], in: Foucault: *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984, vol. 3: Power*, p. 3. Even earlier, on 21st February 1973 in his lecture at Collège Foucault undermines and criticizes the Marxist/leftist rhetoric concerning the revolutionary subject of politics and history claiming plainly: "Now I am not sure I am right in using the term 'seditious mobs' (*plebeséditieuse*). Actually it seems to me that the mechanism that brought about the formation of the punitive system is, in a sense, deeper and broader than that of the simple control of the seditious mobs. […] It seems to me that until the end of the eighteenth century a certain lower-class illegalism was not only compatible with, but useful to the development of the bourgeois economy; a point arrived when this illegalism functionally enmeshed in the development of the economy, became incompatible with'" (Foucault: *The Punitive Society, Lectures at the Collège de France 1972–1973*, pp. 140–141).

ogy'. Now this role of referee, judge and universal witness is one which I absolutely refuse to adopt, because it seems to me to be tied up with philosophy as a university institution."[66] Or even more explicitly and despite what Karlsen and Villadsen claim regarding the relation between Maoism and the concept of genealogy in 1975–76 Lectures: "But alongside this crumbling and the astonishing efficacy of discontinuous, particular, and local critiques, the facts were also revealing something that could not, perhaps, have been foreseen from the outset: what might be called the inhibiting effect specific to totalitarian theories, or at least — what I mean is — all-encompassing and global theories.

Not that all-encompassing and global theories haven't, in fairly constant fashion, provided — and don't continue to provide — tools that can be used at the local level; Marxism and psychoanalysis are living proof that they can."[67] Foucault even gave to this anti-Marxist or anti-Althusserian conception of ideology the status of a methodological precaution in his 1975–76 lectures: "But I do not think that it is ideologies that are shaped at the base, at the point where the networks of power culminate. It is much less and much more than that. It is the actual instruments that form and accumulate knowledge, the observational methods, the recording techniques, the investigative research procedures, the verification mechanisms. That is, the delicate mechanisms of power cannot function unless knowledge, or rather knowledge apparatuses, are formed, organized, and put into circulation, and those apparatuses are not ideological trimmings or edifices."[68]

3. An Anti-Nietzschean Nietzschean?

What a remarkable *détournement* of what Foucault himself was expecting from Althusserianism in the summer of 1967, when he was speaking of "the quite remarkable critique and analysis of the notion of history developed by Louis Althusser at the beginning of *Reading Capital*" and

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[66] Michel Foucault: Questions on Geography [French 1976], in: Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, p. 65.

[67] Michel Foucault: *Society Must be Defended, Lectures at the Collège de France 1975–76*, ed. by A. I. Davidson, trans. D. Macey, New York: Picador 2003 [French 1997], p. 6. Or in pp. 9–10: "To put it in more specific terms, or at least in terms that might mean more to you, let me say this: you know how many people have been asking themselves whether or not Marxism is a science for many years now, probably for more than a century. One might say that the same question has been asked, and is still being asked, of psychoanalysis or, worse still, of the semiology of literary texts. Genealogies' or genealogists' answer to the question 'Is it a science or not?' is: 'Turning Marxism, or psychoanalysis, or whatever else it is, into a science is precisely what we are criticizing you for. And if there is one objection to be made against Marxism, it ' s that it might well be a science' ." Or, during a discussion after a lecture he delivered in 1976 at Brazil, Foucault attacks again to the academic version of Marxism, but he recognizes Marx as someone that cannot be reduced to Marxism: "Once again, here a particular version of academic Marxism frequently uses the opposition of dominant class versus dominated class, the dominant discourse versus the dominated discourse. And yet we will never find this dualism in Marx; however, it can be found in reactionary and racist thinkers like Gobineau, who maintains that, within society, there are always two classes, a dominated and another who dominates. You can find this in many places, but never in Marx, because, in fact, Marx is too cunning to maintain something like this; he knew perfectly well that what strengthens relationships of power is that they never stop; there is not some single relationship of power here, and many over there; they course throughout everything: the working class retransmits relationships of power; it makes use of relationships of power." See, Michel Foucault: The Mesh of Power [Portuguese 1981–82], trans. C. Chitty, in: *Viewpoint Magazine*, 2, (September 12, 2012), URL: https://viewpointmag.com/2012/09/12/the-mesh-of-power/.

[68] Foucault: *Society Must be Defended*, pp. 33–34. See also, Harcourt: Course context, p. 272.

inciting his readers to "open the books of Althusser and see what he says"![69] Recall that Althusser was accused of wanting to inflect the PCF's line from within in a Maoist direction as early as 1963, and that on 1st February 1965, his students (Miller, Milner, Rancière, and Linhart) published the first issue of *Les Cahiers marxistes-léninistes*, where in the November–December 1966 issue he published an article unsigned and entitled *On the Cultural Revolution*.[70]

Is it really possible, as Karlsen & Villadsen wish to argue, to discern a Maoist influence on genealogy in the 1975–76 Lectures when Foucault has already attacked the very premises of Maoism in February 1974 in a discussion with K. S. Karol, a journalist imprisoned in Soviet camps: "This ideology represented by Mao Tse-tung. But the failure of Lin Piao, his liquidation, do they not mean the failure of this policy of unification by ideology? What is happening now is not it the sanction of that? … Should we re-estimate the importance of ideology if we could see that it was not able to restore unity?"[71] Is it possible to discern a Maoist influence on genealogy in *Society Must be Defended* even while Foucault remained convinced that the Maoist practice of popular tribunals was inherently erroneous and that popular tribunals are translating the *historical and political* desire of the masses for vengeance into a *philosophical and juridical* need for social order?[72] Foucault characterizes from the very first lecture the notion of "class justice" — the central and basic concept of Maoists — as "general and fairly dubious".[73]

Moreover, he analyzes how, in the history of the West, the discourse of war, during the eighteenth century, was conceived as a war of races and played a constitutive and not a destructive role in the process of the formation of the modern state and its mechanisms.[74] Foucault also there characterizes forms of socialism that stress the problem of struggle (namely, Blanquism, Commune and anarchism) as "the most racist forms of socialism."[75] Lastly, Foucault there asserts that war has been displaced from the field of *history* to that of *biology*, and that the role of

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[69]   Foucault: On the ways of Writing History, p. 281. As Brion and Harcourt remark: "This was evidently a return to Nietzsche: besides truth, the challenge was to do a history of the subject presupposed by the discourse of science; to do a genealogy of this event that is consciousness; and to reveal (contra Althusser) the historicity of what makes and divides a subject – the historicity of what the subject remembers and forgets, of what the subject is conscious of, and unconscious," in: Brion & Harcourt: The Louvain Lectures in context, p. 285.

[70]   Luis Althusser: *Future Lasts Forever. A Memoir*, trans. Richard Veasey, New York: The New Press, p. 233 & Anonymous (attributed to Louis Althusser): On the Cultural Revolution, in: *Décalages*, 1/1 (2010), pp. 1–18.

[71]   See Foucault: La Seconde Révolution chinoise [French 1974], in: Foucault: *Dits et écrits, Tome I: 1954–1988*, p. 1384.

[72]   See, Foucault: *Society Must be Defended,* third lecture, where it is argued that in the West a certain "philosophical-juridical discourse" was replaced by a "historico-political discourse." Moreover, see Foucault: Interview with Jean François and John De Witt, p. 264: "That's why I critiqued the idea of a popular tribunal. In these emotionally intense movements that require a strong intervention on the part of people, there is no need for justice; there is a need for vengeance. These people want to fight. Those against whom they hold something, they are their enemies. There is a background of social war that is still very present when, spontaneously, people want to lynch someone, sometimes someone who has done nothing more than steal. He is perceived as a social enemy, and he is to be done away with as such. People who wish to establish popular tribunals on what is in fact a war are doubly wrong. Either they do not do what people want and they don't make war, or they do what people want and they do not perform justice. I'll even say this more crudely. You know perfectly well that if we created juries that were entirely popular, the death penalty would be applied to everyone, even the most minor thieves. So there is this background of social warfare: he who steals wages war; he who is robbed fights the one who stole. This should not be forgotten. So it is necessary to have the courage to say that justice serves to prevent this rather than to translate it. The popular tribunal translates it."

[73]   Foucault: *Society Must Be Defended*, p. 5.

[74]   See Stuart Elden: The War of Races and the Constitution of the State: Foucault's 'Il faut défendre la société ' and the Politics of Calculation, in: *boundary 2*, 29/1 (2002), pp. 125–151.

[75]   Foucault: *Society Must be Defended*, p. 262.

the State has been transformed, since instead of being the instrument of one social group against the other it is the protector of the race — shortly, that the modern capitalist societies are "characterized by the fact that the theme of historical war — with its battles, its invasions, its looting, its victories, and its defeats – will be replaced by the postevolutionist theme of the struggle for existence"?[76]

Thus, Karslen's and Villadsen's aim to demonstrate how the principles developed in Maoist political activism are not only realized in Foucault's activities within the GIP, but also in his lecture-hall formulations of genealogy, power, and critique, should be relocated chronologically much earlier than 1976. Even Defert admits that *Discipline and Punish*, completed in August 1974, seemed "too Nietzschean."[77] For no leftist is willing to countersign the warning that "the man described for us, whom we are invited to free, is already in himself the effect of a subjection much more profound than himself. A 'soul' inhabits him and brings him to existence, which is itself a factor in the mastery that power exercises over the body. The soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body."[78] The resonance with Nietzsche is unmistakable: "First, one has the difficulty of emancipating oneself from one's chains; and, ultimately, one has to emancipate oneself from this emancipation too! Each of us has to suffer, though in greatly differing ways, from the chain sickness, even after he has broken the chains."[79] For no leftist is willing to countersign the methodological precaution, articulated in the 1975–76 lectures, that demands an ascending analysis of power, according to which, "the notion of 'bourgeoisie' and of the 'interests of bourgeoisie' have no content." And Foucault continues provocatively: "The bourgeoisie is not interested in the mad, but it is interested in power over the mad; the bourgeoisie is not interested in the sexuality of children, but it is interested in the system of power that controls the sexuality of children. The bourgeoisie does not give a damn about delinquents, or about how they are punished or rehabilitated, as that is of no great economic interest. On the other hand, the set of mechanisms whereby delinquents are controlled, kept track of, punished, and reformed does generate a bourgeois interest that functions within the economicopolitical system as a whole."[80] What made this diversion possible? Maybe a genealogical answer is hiding under Seidman's description of the historical development of

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[76] Ibid., pp. 80–81: "It is no longer a battle in the sense that a warrior would understand the term, but a struggle in the biological sense: the differentiation of species, natural selection, and the survival of the fittest species. Similarly, the theme of the binary society which is divided into two races or two groups with different languages, laws, and soon will be replaced by that of a society that is, in contrast, biologically monist. Its only problem is this: it is threatened by a certain number of heterogeneous elements which are not essential to it, which do not divide the social body, or the living body of society, into two parts, and which are in a sense accidental. Hence the idea that foreigners have infiltrated this society, the theme of the deviants who are this society's by products. The theme of the counter history of races was, finally, that the State was necessarily unjust. It is now inverted into its opposite: the State is no longer an instrument that one race uses against another: the State is, and must be, the protector of the integrity, the superiority, and the purity of the race. The idea of racial purity, with all its monistic, Statist, and biological implications: that is what replaces the idea of race struggle."

[77] Miller: *The Passion of Michel Foucault*, p. 436, fn. 97.

[78] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish, The Birth of the Prison*, trans. A. Sheridan, London: Penguin 1991 [French 1975], p. 30.

[79] Friedrich Nietzsche: *Selected Letters*, ed. by C. Middleton, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett 1996, letter 102 (letter to Lou Salomé, end of August 1882).

[80] Foucault: *Society Must be Defended*, pp. 31–33.

the social and political beehives of knowledge in France, where the tides of class struggle began to turn.[81]

My argument is that Foucault began to turn to genealogy and widen methodologically his archaeology[82] when the Maoist students of Lacan and Althusser, who despite their differences had made an attempt since 1963–64 to renovate — in theory — Marx and Freud through structuralism and to renovate PCF — in practice — through Maoism,[83] asked him questions concerning what they called, as early as 1968, the "Genealogy of Sciences." This was the title of the 9th issue of *Cahiers pour Analyse*, published just after May (summer 1968). In the editorial, they reproached Foucauldian archaeology for being the "*opposite of sciences*" and declared that "*Genealogy* here serves as a reminder of this forgotten lineage, in keeping with an inscription that is sufficiently neutral so as to annul the difference between the archaeologist and the historian."[84] Foucault published an answer, which is a sketch of ideas that later became the introduction to *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969).

In this text Foucault seems to move methodologically, as he moves politically, towards an analysis not of discourse as a linguistic entity, but to discourse as an *event*: "In short, it is a matter of the discourse in the system of its institutionalization. I shall call an *archive*, not the totality of texts that have been preserved by a civilization or the set of traces that could be salvaged from its downfall, but the series of rules which determine in a culture the appearance and disappearance of statements, their retention and their destruction, their paradoxical existence as *events* and *things*. To analyze the facts of discourse in the general element of the archive is to consider them, not at all as *documents* (of a concealed significance or a rule of construction), but as *monuments*."[85] As Colin Koopman aptly suggests, "if we can keep our ear to his methodology, as well as his subject matter," we could "attune ourselves to the jolting reverberations of politicization-in-motion."[86] This text is, perhaps, Foucault's first unmediated contact and exchange with the ascending Parisian version of Maoism, after his return from Tunisia. This is, probably, his first implicit discussion of the idea of a history of knowledge, construed as a "project of a *pure de-*

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[81]   Seidman: *The Imaginary Revolution*, p. 277: "Economic vitality bolstered conservative control. From 1968 to 1974 the French economy experienced one of its greatest historical booms. A post-May climate of business confidence and an upsurge in demand were largely responsible. Under Pompidou and his successors, the Fifth Republic continued to promote the development of the seductive forces. Gross disposable household income increased 7 percent per year from 1960 to 1974, when it declined to almost 3 percent annually. Automobile purchases expanded at a phenomenal pace: 4.7 million in 1960 to 11.9 million in 1970. In 1967 only 27 percent used an automobile to commute to work; by 1974, 42 percent did. Almost 50 percent of working-class families owned their own homes or apartments. Residences had more space, and almost all were equipped with televisions, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, and washing machines."

[82]   Koopman: Conduct and Power: Foucault's methodological expansions in 1971, p. 63.

[83]   See Luis Althusser: Freud and Lacan [1969], in: Luis Althusser: *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. B. Brewster, New York/London: Monthly Review Press 1971 and Elisabeth Roudinesco: *Jacques Lacan. An Outline of a Life and a History of a System of Thought*, trans. B. Bray, New York: Columbia University Press 1997, pp. 293–351.

[84]   See Unsigned Introduction: Position de la généalogie des sciences, in: *Cahiers pour Analyse*, 9 (1968), URL: http://cahiers.kingston.ac.uk/vol09/. At this point, it should be noted that the Maoist students of Althusser and Lacan, who were the editors of the journal, shared with Foucault another major theoretical reference: Georges Canguilhem (see Dosse: *History of Structuralism*, pp. 281–283).

[85]   Michel Foucault: On the Archaeology of the Sciences: Response to the Epistemology Circle [French 1968], in Foucault: *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984, vol. 2: Aesthetics*, pp. 309–310 (see Foucault, *Dits et écrits, Tome I: 1954–1988*, p. 724–759).

[86]   Koopman: Conduct and Power, p. 62.

scription of the facts of discourse."[87] He found the exact and faithful name for this project, only a few months later in January 1969, with his tribute "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", which he dedicated to his master Jean Hyppolite, whose widow had sent him Hyppolite's collection of Beckett's works. Then a month later he reiterates Beckett's question "who is speaking?," which was also of course GIP's question. In 1983, a year before Foucault's death, Beckett wrote in *Worstward Ho*: "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better,"[88] reiterating Mao Tse-Tung's dictum from 1957: "Fight, fail, fight again, fail again, fail again, fight again…"[89]

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[87] Michel Foucault: On the Archaeology of the Sciences, p. 306.

[88] Samuel Beckett: *Nohow On, Company, Ill seen ill said, Worstward Ho*, London: John Calder 1989, p. 101. See also, Alain Badiou: *On Beckett*, ed. by A. Toscano & N. Power, Manchester: Clinamen Press 2003, p. 80. For a detailed discussion of *Worstward Ho* in relation to Deleuze's interpretation of the Foucauldian concept of Outside, see Garin Dowd: *Abstract Machines. Samuel Beckett and Philosophy after Deleuze and Guattari*, Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi 2007, pp. 201–223. Furthermore, under the perspective of Foucault's rejection of the dichotomy of inside/outside and the present perspective of capitalist globalization, where the "chinazation" of Western societies is being perceived as a forthcoming reality, it might be a very interesting genealogical question to see why China should not be perceived as a heterotopia or as the *par excellence* Other of the West.

[89] Mao Tse-Tung: On the Correct Handling of Contradictions, in: *Quotations from Chairman Mao*, (Peking: Foreign Language Press 1966, p. 68.