split between the accused and society, which, through the judge, addresses him in correct terms'. An indiscipline that is the indiscipline of native, immediate liberty: 'He is well aware that the apprentice, the worker is a slave and that slavery is sad... This liberty, this need of movement that possesses him, he is well aware that he would no longer enjoy it in a life of ordinary order... He prefers liberty; what does he care if others see it as disorder. It is liberty, that is to say, the most spontaneous development of his individuality, a wild development and, consequently, brutal and limited, but a natural, instinctive development.' Indiscipline in family relations; it does not matter whether this lost child was abandoned or freed himself voluntarily, for 'he would have been unable to bear the slavery of education either at his parents' or with strangers'. And through all these minute disciplines it is ultimately 'civilization' as a whole that is rejected and 'wildness' that emerges: 'It is work, it is laziness, it is thoughtlessness, it is debauchery: it is everything except order; the difference in occupations and debauches aside, it is the life of the savage, living from day to day and with no tomorrow' (*La Phalange*, 15 August 1840).

No doubt the analyses of *La Phalange* cannot be regarded as representative of the discussions that took place in the workers' press at this time on crime and penalty. Nevertheless, they are situated in the context of this polemic. The lessons of *La Phalange* were not quite wasted. They found an echo when, in the second half of the nineteenth century, taking the penal apparatus as their point of attack, the anarchists posed the political problem of delinquency; when they thought to recognize in it the most militant rejection of the law; when they tried not so much to heroize the revolt of the delinquents as to disentangle delinquency from the bourgeois legality and illegality that had colonized it; when they wished to re-establish or constitute the political unity of popular illegalities.

3. The carceral

Were I to fix the date of completion of the carceral system, I would choose not 1810 and the penal code, nor even 1844, when the law laying down the principle of cellular internment was passed; I might not even choose 1838, when books on prison reform by Charles Lucas, Moreau-Christophe and Faucher were published. The date I would choose would be 22 January 1840, the date of the official opening of Mettray. Or better still, perhaps, that glorious day, unremarked and unrecorded, when a child in Mettray remarked as he lay dying: 'What a pity I left the colony so soon' (Ducpétiaux, 1832, 383). This marked the death of the first penitentiary saint. Many of the blessed no doubt went to join him, if the former inmates of the penal colonies are to be believed when, in singing the praises of the new punitive policies of the body, they remarked: 'We preferred the blows, but the cell suits us better.'

Why Mettray? Because it is the disciplinary form at its most extreme, the model in which are concentrated all the coercive technologies of behaviour. In it were to be found 'cloister, prison, school, regiment'. The small, highly hierarchized groups, into which the inmates were divided, followed simultaneously five models: that of the family (each group was a ‘family’ composed of ‘brothers’ and two ‘elder brothers’); that of the army (each family, commanded by a head, was divided into two sections, each of which had a second in command; each inmate had a number and was taught basic military exercises; there was a cleanliness inspection every day, an inspection of clothing every week; a roll-call was taken three times a day); that of the workshop, with supervisors and foremen, who were responsible for the regularity of the work and for the apprenticeship of the younger inmates; that of the school (an hour or an hour and a half of lessons every day; the teaching was given by the
the establishment of power relations; strong, skilled agricultural workers are produced; in this very work, provided it is technically supervised, submissive subjects are produced and a dependable body of knowledge built up about them. This disciplinary technique exercised upon the body had a double effect: a 'soul' to be known and a subject to be maintained. One result vindicated this work of training: in 1848, at a moment when 'the fever of revolution fired the imagination of all, when the schools at Angers, La Flèche, Alfort, even the boarding schools, rose up in rebellion, the inmates of Mettray were calmer than ever' (Ferrus).

Where Mettray was especially exemplary was in the specificity that it recognized in this operation of training. It was related to other forms of supervision, on which it was based: medicine, general education, religious direction. But it cannot not be identified absolutely with them. Nor with administration in the strict sense. Heads or deputy-heads of 'families', monitors and foremen, had to live in close proximity to the inmates; their clothes were 'almost as humble' as those of the inmates themselves; they practically never left their side, observing them day and night; they constituted among them a network of permanent observation. And, in order to train them themselves, a specialized school had been organized in the colony. The essential element of its programme was to subject the future cadres to the same apprenticeships and to the same coercions as the inmates themselves: they were 'subjected as pupils to the discipline that, later, as instructors, they would themselves impose'. They were taught the art of power relations. It was the first training college in pure discipline: the 'penitentiary' was not simply a project that sought its justification in 'humanity' or its foundations in a 'science', but a technique that was learnt, transmitted and which obeyed general norms. The practice that normalized by compulsion the conduct of the undisciplined or dangerous could, in turn, by technical elaboration and rational reflection, be 'normalized'. The disciplinary technique became a 'discipline' which also had its school.

It so happens that historians of the human sciences date the birth of scientific psychology at this time: during these same years, it seems, Weber was manipulating his little compass for the measurement of sensations. What took place at Mettray (and in other

instructor and by the deputy-heads); lastly, the judicial model (each day 'justice' was meted out in the parlour: 'The least act of disobedience is punished and the best way of avoiding serious offences is to punish the most minor offences very severely: at Mettray, a useless word is punishable'; the principal punishment inflicted was confinement to one's cell; for 'isolation is the best means of acting on the moral nature of children; it is there above all that the voice of religion, even if it has never spoken to their hearts, recovers all its emotional power' – Ducpétiaux, 1852, 377); the entire parapenal institution, which is created in order not to be a prison, culminates in the cell, on the walls of which are written in black letters: 'God sees you.'

This superimposition of different models makes it possible to indicate, in its specific features, the function of 'training'. The chiefs and their deputies at Mettray had to be not exactly judges, or teachers, or foremen, or non-commissioned officers, or 'parents', but something of all these things in a quite specific mode of intervention. They were in a sense technicians of behaviour: engineers of conduct, orthopaedists of individuality. Their task was to produce bodies that were both docile and capable; they supervised the nine or ten working hours of every day (whether in a workshop or in the fields); they directed the orderly movements of groups of inmates, physical exercises, military exercises, rising in the morning, going to bed at night, walks to the accompaniment of bugle and whistle; they taught gymnastics; they checked cleanliness, supervised bathing. Training was accompanied by permanent observation; a body of knowledge was being constantly built up from the everyday behaviour of the inmates; it was organized as an instrument of perpetual assessment: 'On entering the colony, the child is subjected to a sort of interrogation as to his origins, the position of his family, the offence for which he was brought before the courts and all the other offences that make up his short and often very sad existence. This information is written down on a board on which everything concerning each inmate is noted in turn, his stay at the colony and the place to which he is sent when he leaves' (Ducpétiaux, 1851, 61). The modelling of the body produces a knowledge of the individual, the apprenticeship of the techniques induces modes of behaviour and the acquisition of skills is inextricably linked with
European countries sooner or later) was obviously of a quite different order. It was the emergence or rather the institutional specification, the baptism as it were, of a new type of supervision — both knowledge and power — over individuals who resisted disciplinary normalization. And yet, in the formation and growth of psychology, the appearance of these professionals of discipline, normality, and subjection surely marks the beginning of a new stage. It will be said that the quantitative assessment of sensorial responses could at least derive authority from the prestige of the emerging science of physiology and that for this alone it deserves to feature in the history of the sciences. But the supervision of normality was firmly enanced in a medicine or a psychiatry that provided it with a sort of 'scientificity'; it was supported by a judicial apparatus which, directly or indirectly, gave it legal justification. Thus, in the shelter of these two considerable protectors, and, indeed, acting as a link between them, or a place of exchange, a carefully worked out technique for the supervision of norms has continued to develop right up to the present day. The specific, institutional supports of these methods have proliferated since the founding of the small school at Mettray; their apparatuses have increased in quantity and scope; their auxiliary services have increased, with hospitals, schools, public administrations and private enterprises; their agents have proliferated in number, in power, in technical qualification; the technicians of indiscipline have founded a family. In the normalization of the power of normalization, in the arrangement of a power-knowledge over individuals, Mettray and its school marked a new era.

But why choose this moment as the point of emergence of the formation of an art of punishing that is still more or less our own? Precisely because this choice is somewhat 'unjust'. Because it situates the 'end' of the process in the lower reaches of criminal law. Because Mettray was a prison, but not entirely; a prison in that it contained young delinquents condemned by the courts; and yet something else, too, because it also contained minors who had been charged, but acquitted under article 66 of the code, and boarders held, as in the eighteenth century, as an alternative to paternal correction. Mettray, a punitive model, is at the limit of strict penalty. It was the most famous of a whole series of institutions which, well beyond the frontiers of criminal law, constituted what one might call the carceral archipelago.

Yet the general principles, the great codes and subsequent legislation were quite clear on the matter: no imprisonment 'outside the law', no detention that had not been decided by a qualified judicial institution, no more of those arbitrary and yet widespread confines. Yet the very principle of extra-penal incarceration was in fact never abandoned. (A whole study remains to be done of the debates that took place during the Revolution concerning family courts, paternal correction and the right of parents to lock up their children.) And, if the apparatus of the great classical form of confinement was partly (and only partly) dismantled, it was very soon reactivated, rearranged, developed in certain directions. But what is still more important is that it was homogenized, through the mediation of the prison, on the one hand with legal punishments and, on the other, with disciplinary mechanisms. The frontiers between confinement, judicial punishment and institutions of discipline, which were already blurred in the classical age, tended to disappear and to constitute a great carceral continuum that diffused penitentiary techniques into the most innocent disciplines, transmitting disciplinary norms into the very heart of the penal system and placing over the slightest illegality, the smallest irregularity, deviation or anomaly, the threat of delinquency. A subtle, graduated carceral net, with compact institutions, but also separate and diffused methods, assumed responsibility for the arbitrary, widespread, badly integrated confinement of the classical age.

I shall not attempt here to reconstitute the whole network that formed first the immediate surroundings of the prison, then spread farther and farther outwards. However, a few references and dates should give some idea of the breadth and precocity of the phenomenon.

There were agricultural sections in the maisons centrales (the first example of which was Gaillon in 1824, followed later by Fontevraud, Les Dauaires, Le Boulard); there were colonies for poor, abandoned vagrant children (Petit-Bourg in 1840, Ostwald in 1842); there were almshouses for young female offenders who 'recoiled before the idea of entering a life of disorder', for 'poor innocent girls whose
mothers’ immorality has exposed to precocious perversity, or for poor girls found on the doorsteps of hospitals and lodging houses. There were penal colonies envisaged by the law of 1850: minors, acquitted or condemned, were to be sent to these colonies and ‘brought up in common, under strict discipline, and trained in agricultural work and in the principal industries related to it;’ later, they were to be joined by minors sentenced to hard labour for life and ‘vicious and insubordinate wards of the Public Assistance’ (on all these institutions, cf. Gaillac, 99–107). And, moving still farther away from penalty in the strict sense, the carceral circles widen and the form of the prison slowly diminishes and finally disappears altogether: the institutions for abandoned or indigent children, the orphanages (like Neuhof or Meşnil-Firmin), the establishments for apprentices (like the Bethléem de Reims or the Maison de Nancy); still farther away the factory-convents, such as La Sauvagère, Tarare and Jujurieu (where the girl workers entered about the age of thirteen, lived confined for years and were allowed out only under surveillance, received instead of wages pledged payment, which could be increased by bonuses for zeal and good behaviour, which they could use only on leaving). And then, still farther, there was a whole series of mechanisms that did not adopt the ‘compact’ prison model, but used some of the carceral methods: charitable societies, moral improvement associations, organizations that handed out assistance and also practised surveillance, workers’ estates and lodging houses – the most primitive of which still bear the all too visible marks of the penitentiary system. And, finally, this great carceral network reaches all the disciplinary mechanisms that function throughout society.

We have seen that, in penal justice, the prison transformed the punitive procedure into a penitentiary technique; the carceral archipelago transported this technique from the penal institution to the entire social body. With several important results.

1. This vast mechanism established a slow, continuous, imperceptible gradation that made it possible to pass naturally from disorder to offence and back from a transgression of the law to a slight departure from a rule, an average, a demand, a norm. In the classical period, despite a certain common reference to offence in general, the order of the crime, the order of sin and the order of bad conduct remained separate in so far as they related to separate criteria and authorities (court, penitence, confinement). Incarceration with its mechanisms of surveillance and punishment functioned, on the contrary, according to a principle of relative continuity. The continuity of the institutions themselves, which were linked to one another (public assistance with the orphanage, the reformatory, the penitentiary, the disciplinary battalion, the prison; the school with the charitable society, the workshop, the almshouse, the penitentiary convenant; the workers’ estate with the hospital and the prison). A continuity of the punitive criteria and mechanisms, which on the basis of a mere deviation gradually strengthened the rules and increased the punishment. A continuous gradation of the established, specialized and competent authorities (in the order of knowledge and in the order of power) which, without resort to arbitrariness, but strictly according to the regulations, by means of observation and assessment hierarchized, differentiated, judged, punished and moved gradually from the correction of irregularities to the punishment of crime. The ‘carceral’ with its many diffuse or compact forms, its institutions of supervision or constraint, of discreet surveillance and persistent coercion, assured the communication of punishments according to quality and quantity; it connected in series or disposed according to subtle divisions the minor and the serious penalties, the mild and the strict forms of treatment, bad marks and light sentences. You will end up in the convict-ship, the slightest indiscipline seems to say; and the harshest of prisons says to the prisoners condemned to life: I shall note the slightest irregularity in your conduct. The generality of the punitive function that the eighteenth century sought in the ‘ideological’ technique of representations and signs was not as its support the extension, the material framework, complex, dispersed, but coherent, of the various carceral mechanisms. As a result, a certain significant generality moved between the least irregularity and the greatest crime; it was no longer the offence, the attack on the common interest, it was the departure from the norm, the anomaly; it was this that haunted the school, the court, the asylum or the prison. It generalized in the sphere of meaning the function that the carceral generalized in the sphere of tactics. Replacing the adversary of the sovereign, the social enemy was transformed into a deviant, who brought with him
the multiple danger of disorder, crime and madness. The carceral network linked, through innumerable relations, the two long, multiple series of the punitive and the abnormal.

2. The carceral, with its far-reaching networks, allows the recruitment of major 'delinquents'. It organizes what might be called 'disciplinary careers' in which, through various exclusions and rejections, a whole process is set in motion. In the classical period, there opened up in the confines or interstices of society the confused, tolerant and dangerous domain of the 'outlaw' or at least of that which eluded the direct hold of power: an uncertain space that was for criminality a training ground and a region of refuge; there poverty, unemployment, pursued innocence, cunning, the struggle against the powerful, the refusal of obligations and laws, and organized crime all came together as chance and fortune would dictate; it was the domain of adventure that Gil Blas, Sheppard or Mandrin, each in his own way, inhabited. Through the play of disciplinary differentiations and divisions, the nineteenth century constructed rigorous channels which, within the system, inculcated docility and produced delinquency by the same mechanisms. There was a sort of disciplinary 'training', continuous and compelling, that had something of the pedagogical curriculum and something of the professional network. Careers emerged from it, as secure, as predictable, as those of public life: assistance associations, residential apprenticeships, penal colonies, disciplinary battalions, prisons, hospitals, almshouses. These networks were already well mapped out at the beginning of the nineteenth century: 'Our benevolent establishments present an admirably coordinated whole by means of which the indigent does not remain a moment without help from the cradle to the grave. Follow the course of the unfortunate man: you will see him born among foundlings; from there he passes to the nursery, then to an orphanage; at the age of six he goes off to primary school and later to adult schools. If he cannot work, he is placed on the list of the charity offices of his district, and if he falls ill he may choose between twelve hospitals... Lastly, when the poor Parisian reaches the end of his career, seven almshouses await his age and often their salubrious régime has prolonged his useless days well beyond those of the rich man' (Moreau de Jonnès, quoted in Touquet).

The carceral network does not cast the unassimilable into a confused hell; there is no outside. It takes back with one hand what it seems to exclude with the other. It saves everything, including what it punishes. It is unwilling to waste even what it has decided to disqualify. In this panoptic society of which incarceration is the omnipresent armature, the delinquent is not outside the law; he is, from the very outset, in the law, at the very heart of the law, or at least in the midst of those mechanisms that transfer the individual imperceptibly from discipline to the law, from deviation to offence. Although it is true that prison punishes delinquency, delinquency is for the most part produced in and by an incarceration which, ultimately, prison perpetuates in its turn. The prison is merely the natural consequence, no more than a higher degree, of that hierarchy laid down step by step. The delinquent is an institutional product. It is no use being surprised, therefore, that in a considerable proportion of cases the biography of convicts passes through all these mechanisms and establishments, whose purpose, it is widely believed, is to lead away from prison. That one should find in them what one might call the index of an irrepressibly delinquent 'character': the prisoner condemned to hard labour was meticulously produced by a childhood spent in a reformatory, according to the lines of force of the generalized carceral system. Conversely, the lyricism of marginality may find inspiration in the image of the 'outlaw', the great social nomad, who prowls on the confines of a docile, frightened order. But it is not on the fringes of society and through successive exiles that criminality is born, but by means of ever more closely placed insertions, under ever more insistent surveillance, by an accumulation of disciplinary coercion. In short, the carceral archipelago assures, in the depths of the social body, the formation of delinquency on the basis of subtle illegalities, the overlapping of the latter by the former and the establishment of a specified criminality.

3. But perhaps the most important effect of the carceral system and of its extension well beyond legal imprisonment is that it succeeds in making the power to punish natural and legitimate, in lowering at least the threshold of tolerance to penalty. It tends to efface what may be exorbitant in the exercise of punishment. It does this by playing the two registers in which it is deployed – the legal register of justice and the extra-legal register of discipline – against
one another. In effect, the great continuity of the carceral system throughout the law and its sentences gives a sort of legal sanction to the disciplinary mechanisms, to the decisions and judgments that they enforce. Throughout this network, which comprises so many 'regional' institutions, relatively autonomous and independent, is transmitted, with the 'prison-form', the model of justice itself. The regulations of the disciplinary establishments may reproduce the law, the punishments imitate the verdicts and penalties, the surveillance repeat the police model; and, above all these multiple establishments, the prison, which in relation to them is a pure form, unadulterated and unmitigated, gives them a sort of official sanction.

The carceral, with its long gradation stretching from the convictship or imprisonment with hard labour to diffuse, slight limitations, communicates a type of power that the law validates and that justice uses as its favourite weapon. How could the disciplines and the power that functions in them appear arbitrary, when they merely operate the mechanisms of justice itself, even with a view to mitigating their intensity? When, by generalizing its effects and transmitting it to every level, it makes it possible to avoid its full rigour? Carceral continuity and the fusion of the prison-form make it possible to legalize, or in any case to legitimate disciplinary power, which thus avoids any element of excess or abuse it may entail.

But, conversely, the carceral pyramid gives to the power to inflict legal punishment a context in which it appears to be free of all excess and all violence. In the subtle gradation of the apparatuses of discipline and of the successive 'embeddings' that they involve, the prison does not at all represent the unleashing of a different kind of power, but simply an additional degree in the intensity of a mechanism that has continued to operate since the earliest forms of legal punishment. Between the latest institution of 'rehabilitation', where one is taken in order to avoid prison, and the prison where one is sent after a definable offence, the difference is (and must be) scarcely perceptible. There is a strict economy that has the effect of rendering as discreet as possible the singular power to punish. There is nothing in it now that recalls the former excess of sovereign power when it revenged its authority on the tortured body of those about to be executed. Prison continues, on those who are entrusted to it, a work begun elsewhere, which the whole of society pursues on each individual through innumerable mechanisms of discipline. By means of a carceral continuum, the authority that sentences infiltrates all those other authorities that supervise, transform, correct, and improve. It might even be said that nothing really distinguishes them any more except the singularly 'dangerous' character of the delinquents, the gravity of their departures from normal behaviour and the necessary solemnity of the ritual. But, in its function, the power to punish is not essentially different from that of curing or educating. It receives from them, and from their lesser, smaller task, a sanction from below; but one that is no less important for that, since it is the sanction of technique and rationality. The carceral 'naturalizes' the legal power to punish, as it 'legalizes' the technical power to discipline. In thus homogenizing them, effacing what may be violent in one and arbitrary in the other, attenuating the effects of revolt that they may both arouse, thus depriving excess in either of any purpose, circulating the same calculated, mechanical and discreet methods from one to the other, the carceral makes it possible to carry out that great 'economy' of power whose formula the eighteenth century had sought, when the problem of the accumulation and useful administration of men first emerged.

By operating at every level of the social body and by mingling ceaselessly the art of rectifying and the right to punish, the universality of the carceral lowers the level from which it becomes natural and acceptable to be punished. The question is often posed as to how, before and after the Revolution, a new foundation was given to the right to punish. And no doubt the answer is to be found in the theory of the contract. But it is perhaps more important to ask the reverse question: how were people made to accept the power to punish, or quite simply, when punished, tolerate being so. The theory of the contract can only answer this question by the fiction of a juridical subject giving to others the power to exercise over him the right that he himself possesses over them. It is highly probable that the great carceral continuum, which provides a communication between the power of discipline and the power of the law, and extends without interruption from the smallest coercions to the longest penal detention, constituted the technical and real, immediately material counterpart of that chimera of granting the right to punish.
4. With this new economy of power, the carceral system, which is its basic instrument, permitted the emergence of a new form of ‘law’: a mixture of legality and nature, prescription and constitution, the norm. This had a whole series of effects: the internal dislocation of the judicial power or at least of its functioning; an increasing difficulty in judging, as if one were ashamed to pass sentence; a furious desire on the part of the judges to judice, diagnose, recognize the normal and abnormal and claim the honour of curing or rehabilitating. In view of this, it is useless to believe in the good or bad consciences of judges, or even of their unconscious. Their immense ‘appetite for medicine’ which is constantly manifested – from their appeal to psychiatric experts, to their attention to the chatter of criminology – expresses the major fact that the power they exercise has been ‘denatured’: that it is at a certain level governed by laws; that at another, more fundamental level it functions as a normative power; it is the economy of power that they exercise, and not that of their scruples or their humanism, that makes them pass ‘therapeutic’ sentences and recommend ‘rehabilitating’ periods of imprisonment. But, conversely, if the judges accept ever more reluctantly to condemn for the sake of condemning, the activity of judging has increased precisely to the extent that the normalizing power has spread. Borne along by the omnipresence of the mechanisms of discipline, basing itself on all the carceral apparatuses, it has become one of the major functions of our society. The judges of normality are present everywhere. We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge, the ‘social worker’-judge; it is on them that the universal reign of the normative is based; and each individual, wherever he may find himself, subjects to him his body, his gestures, his behaviour, his aptitudes, his achievements. The carceral network, in its compact or disseminated forms, with its systems of insertion, distribution, surveillance, observation, has been the greatest support, in modern society, of the normalizing power.

4. The carceral texture of society assures both the real capture of the body and its perpetual observation; it is, by its very nature, the apparatus of punishment that conforms most completely to the new economy of power and the instrument for the formation of knowledge that this very economy needs. Its panoptic functioning

enables it to play this double role. By virtue of its methods of fixing, dividing, recording, it has been one of the simplest, crudest, also most concrete, but perhaps most indispensable conditions for the development of this immense activity of examination that has objectified human behaviour. If, after the age of ‘inquisitorial’ justice, we have entered the age of ‘examinatory’ justice, if, in an even more general way, the method of examination has been able to spread so widely throughout society, and to give rise in part to the sciences of man, one of the great instruments for this has been the multiplicity and close overlapping of the various mechanisms of incarceration. I am not saying that the human sciences emerged from the prison. But, if they have been able to be formed and to produce so many profound changes in the episteme, it is because they have been conveyed by a specific and new modality of power: a certain policy of the body, a certain way of rendering the group of men docile and useful. This policy required the involvement of definite relations of knowledge in relations of power; it called for a technique of overlapping subjection and objectification; it brought with it new procedures of individualization. The carceral network constituted one of the armatures of this power-knowledge that has made the human sciences historically possible. Knowable man (soul, individuality, consciousness, conduct, whatever it is called) is the object-effect of this analytical investment, of this domination-observation.

6. This no doubt explains the extreme solidarity of the prison, that slight invention that was nevertheless decried from the outset. If it had been no more than an instrument of rejection or repression in the service of a state apparatus, it would have been easier to alter its more overt forms or to find a more acceptable substitute for it. But, rooted as it was in mechanisms and strategies of power, it could meet any attempt to transform it with a great force of inertia. One fact is characteristic: when it is a question of altering the system of imprisonment, opposition does not come from the judicial institutions alone; resistance is to be found not in the prison as penal sanction, but in the prison with all its determinations, links and extra-judicial results; in the prison as the relay in a general network of disciplines and surveillances; in the prison as it functions in a panoptic régime. This does not mean that it cannot be altered, nor that it is once and for all indispensable to our kind of society. One may, on
the contrary, site the two processes which, in the very continuity of
the processes that make the prison function, are capable of exercising
considerable restraint on its use and of transforming its internal
functioning. And no doubt these processes have already begun to a
large degree. The first is that which reduces the utility (or increases
its inconveniences) of a delinquency accommodated as a specific
illegality, locked up and supervised; thus the growth of great
national or international illegalities directly linked to the political
and economic apparatuses (financial illegalities, information services,
arms and drugs trafficking, property speculation) makes it clear that
the somewhat rustic and conspicuous work force of delinquency is
proving ineffective; or again, on a smaller scale, as soon as the
economic levy on sexual pleasure is carried out more efficiently by
the sale of contraceptives, or obliquely through publications, films
or shows, the archaic hierarchy of prostitution loses much of its
former usefulness. The second process is the growth of the disci-
plinary networks, the multiplication of their exchanges with the
penal apparatus, the ever more important powers that are given
to them, the ever more massive transference to them of judicial func-
tions; now, as medicine, psychology, education, public assistance,
'social work' assume an ever greater share of the powers of super-
vision and assessment, the penal apparatus will be able, in turn, to
become medicalized, psychologized, educationalized; and by the
same token that turning-point represented by the prison becomes
less useful when, through the gap between its penitentiary discourse
and its effect of consolidating delinquency, it articulates the penal
power and the disciplinary power. In the midst of all these mechan-
isms of normalization, which are becoming ever more rigorous in
their application, the specificity of the prison and its role as link are
losing something of their purpose.

If there is an overall political issue around the prison, it is not
therefore whether it is to be corrective or not; whether the judges,
the psychiatrists or the sociologists are to exercise more power in it
than the administrators or supervisors; it is not even whether we
should have prison or something other than prison. At present, the
problem lies rather in the steep rise in the use of these mechanisms
of normalization and the wide-ranging powers which, through the
proliferation of new disciplines, they bring with them.

In 1836, a correspondent wrote to *La Phalange*: 'Moralists,
philosophers, legislators, flatters of civilization, this is the plan of
your Paris, neatly ordered and arranged, here is the improved plan
in which all like things are gathered together. At the centre, and
within a first enclosure: hospitals for all diseases, almshouses for
all types of poverty, madhouses, prisons, convict-prisons for men,
women and children. Around the first enclosure, barracks, court-
rooms, police stations, houses for prison warders, scaffolds, houses
for the executioner and his assistants. At the four corners, the
Chamber of Deputies, the Chamber of Peers, the Institute and the
Royal Palace. Outside, there are the various services that supply
the central enclosure, commerce, with its swindlers and its bank-
ruptcies; industry and its furious struggles; the press, with its
sofistic; the gambling dens; prostitution, the people dying of
hunger or wallowing in debauchery, always ready to lend an ear
to the voice of the Genius of Revolutions; the heartless rich...’
Lastly the ruthless war of all against all' (*La Phalange*, 10 August
1836).

I shall stop with this anonymous text. We are now far away from
the country of tortures, dotted with wheels, gibbets, gallows,
pillories; we are far, too, from that dream of the reformers, less
than fifty years before: the city of punishments in which a thousand
small theatres would have provided an endless multicoloured rep-
presentation of justice in which the punishments, meticulously pro-
duced on decorative scaffolds, would have constituted the permanent
festival of the penal code. The carceral city, with its imaginary
'geo-politics', is governed by quite different principles. The extract
from *La Phalange* reminds us of some of the more important ones:
that at the centre of this city, and as if to hold it in place, there is,
not the 'centre of power', not a network of forces, but a multiple
network of diverse elements - walls, space, institution, rules, dis-
course; that the model of the carceral city is not, therefore, the body
of the king, with the powers that emanate from it, nor the contrac-
tual meeting of wills from which a body that was both individual
and collective was born, but a strategic distribution of elements of
different natures and levels. That the prison is not the daughter of
laws, codes or the judicial apparatus; that it is not subordinated to
the court and the docile or clumsy instrument of the sentences that
Prison

it hands out and of the results that it would like to achieve; that it is the court that is external and subordinate to the prison. That in the central position that it occupies, it is not alone, but linked to a whole series of 'carceral' mechanisms which seem distinct enough — since they are intended to alleviate pain, to cure, to comfort — but which all tend, like the prison, to exercise a power of normalization. That these mechanisms are applied not to transgressions against a 'central' law, but to the apparatus of production — 'commerce' and 'industry' — to a whole multiplicity of illegals, in all their diversity of nature and origin, their specific role in profit and the different ways in which they are dealt with by the punitive mechanisms. And that ultimately what presides over all these mechanisms is not the unitary functioning of an apparatus or an institution, but the necessity of combat and the rules of strategy. That, consequently, the notions of institutions of repression, rejection, exclusion, marginalization, are not adequate to describe, at the very centre of the carceral city, the formation of the insidious leniencies, unavowable petty cruelties, small acts of cunning, calculated methods, techniques, 'sciences' that permit the fabrication of the disciplinary individual. In this central and centralized humanity, the effect and instrument of complex power relations, bodies and forces subjected by multiple mechanisms of 'incarceration', objects for discourses that are in themselves elements for this strategy, we must hear the distant roar of battle.

At this point I end a book that must serve as a historical background to various studies of the power of normalization and the formation of knowledge in modern society.

Notes

PART ONE TORSURE

1 The body of the condemned

1 The public execution of traitors described by William Blackstone, Commentaries on the Laws of England, vol. 4, 1766 9, 89. Since the French translation was intended to bring out the humaneness of English legislation, in contrast with the old ordinance of 1762, the French translator adds the following note: 'In this form of execution, which is so terrifying to see, the guilty man does not suffer much pain, or for long.'

2 In any case, I could give no notion by references or quotations what this book owes to Gilles Deleuze and the work he is undertaking with Félix Guattari. I should also have quoted a number of pages from R. Castell's Psychanalyse and say how much I am indebted to Pierre Nora.

3 I shall study the birth of the prison only in the French penal system. Differences in historical developments and institutions would make a detailed comparative examination too burdensome and any attempt to describe the phenomenon as a whole too schematic.

2 The spectacle of the scaffold

1 The name given to two fortresses in old Paris, the Grand and the Petit Châtelet. The first, demolished in 1862, was situated on the right bank of the Seine. It was the seat of the criminal jurisdiction of the viscounty and provostry of Paris. The second, on the left bank, near the Hôtel-Dieu, served as a prison [Tr.].

2 In the catalogues of judicial proofs, the confession appears in about the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Bernard of Pavia does not refer to it, but it is mentioned by Hostienis. Crater's definition is characteristic: 'Aut legitime convictus aut sponte confessus.'