PART I

The Vicissitudes of Therapy
The Divided Laing

The clear-cut alternatives between good and evil, normal and pathological, sane and mad, are perhaps about to undergo a radical modification, falling short of the full understanding which could potentially be gained from such a process. We notice only that a number of judgments, which yesterday seemed self-evident, are now wavering, and that a number of roles no longer function according to the norm of common sense. Deviance has taken charge. There is now a revolutionary front for homosexuals [FHAR, *Front homosexuel d'action révolutionnaire*], a legal support group for prisoners (*Groupe d'information sur les prisonniers de droit commun*), and the "Cahiers de la folie", etc.

According to this new context, the importance of Ronald Laing, one of the originators of English anti-psychiatry, lies in this "countercultural movement which combines politics with the problematic of the university",¹ as Danièle Sabourin has said. Laing is firstly a deviant psychiatrist. For us, he was in the first place this frenzied and somewhat euphoric character, whose flare up with David Cooper had the effect of a bomb in the days of the study group Enfance Aliénée, organized in Paris in 1957 by Maud Mannoni and the journal *Recherches*.

All of psychiatry speaks of the anti-psychiatry of Laing. But does Laing himself still speak of psychiatrists? He is far, already very far from their world and their preoccupations. He has undertaken this "trip", which he recommends to schizophrenics, on his own account, and he has abandoned his activities in London in order to meditate, so some say, in a monastery in Ceylon. On the other hand, his books are surely there too. It's impossible to avoid them. They irritate and disrupt specialized gatherings. Public opinion gets mixed up with them. The French translations have succeeded one another: after *The Politics of Experience* [*La politique de l'expérience*], and *The Divided Self* [*Le Moi divisé*]; a theoretical work appeared: *Self and Others* [*Soi et les autres*]; this was followed by *Sanity, Madness and the Family* [*L'équilibre mental, la folie et la famille*]; a collection of eleven clinical monographs written in collaboration with A. Esterson, and a disconcerting, unclassifiable book entitled *Knots* [*Noeuds*], sort of a collection of logico-psychological poems.² How can we understand the public's infatuation with Laing? Since May 1968, it
seems that a public has emerged which is particularly sensitive to everything that touches upon the problems of madness. It is more than twenty years after the death of Antonin Artaud, and to pick up one of Laing’s terms, the mad are about to become the hierophants of our society. The order of things, the institutions have received such a blow that one can no longer refrain from pondering the future, and scrutinizing with apprehension every form of contestation, every protestation which considers itself exemplary – the emotion aroused by the Caro affair was, only five years ago, altogether unimaginable!

Seen in this light, one might expect that the oeuvre of Laing will find in the future an even larger readership. Is it not significant in this regard that an anti-establishment movement of urbanists, known as CRAAAK, has used a poem on childhood from Knots as an epigraph of its manifesto? Laing, Cooper, Basaglia, Gentis and several others have, in several months, done more to change opinions about madness than decades of patient and serious research carried out, for example, by the French stream of Institutional Psychotherapy which is committed to never departing from the concrete terrain of institutions of mental hygiene.

Nevertheless, it will always be necessary, in order to get to the heart of the problem, to return to the overwhelming reality of the alienation of psychiatric “populations”, and to the inextricable predicaments in which mental health workers find themselves every day.

In the last instance, it is on this terrain that the value of anti-psychiatric theories must be appreciated. Anti-psychiatry will either be renewed by a widespread, profound modification of the attitudes and the relations of force in everyday practice, or it will remain what it is by circumstance: a literary phenomenon and, as such, already largely “recuperated” by the most reformist, indeed the most reactionary, currents which never shrink from making verbal concessions.

It is necessary to admit that, up to the present, no anti-psychiatric experiment has been long-lasting. All have been only gallant last stands which have been liquidated by orthodox institutions. So far no mass movement has suggested imposing a genuine anti-psychiatry (Cooper’s experiment at Pavillon 21 in London has had no repercussions; there has not been another household like Kingsley Hall; and Basaglia had to leave Gorizia, etc.).

Anti-psychiatry lays itself open all the more to reformist “recuperations” because on the doctrinal level it has not freed itself from a personalist and humanist ideology. This is true of Laing less than others, but he is, at least a little, the leftist support for a current of thought that one has to recognize as, altogether, in frank retreat from the contributions of Marx and Freud to the understanding of social alienation and mental alienation.
Laing is in himself divided: revolutionary when he breaks with psychiatric practice, his written work gets away from him and, whether he likes it or not, is used for purposes alien to its inspiration. This is perhaps how his current Asian retreat must be interpreted.

When Laing writes that the most important new fact for about twenty years is “the more and more marked discontent which greets every theory or study of the individual that isolates him from his own context” (Soi et les autres, p. 98), this credits the most traditional forms of family psychotherapy and psychiatry of the sector. When he holds society responsible for the genesis of psychosis, one especially recalls that, for him, the remedy will have to come from an “honest confirmation between the parents” (Ibid., p. 123). We are, then, soothed by such a return to the finer feelings, and prepared to be liberated from this object-cause of desire revealed by Lacan following Freud; an object radically heterogeneous to the person, whose identity and localization escape into intersubjective coordinates and the world of significations.

In a note Laing worries about giving the reader the impression that he would underestimate “the action of the person on himself” or that he would minimize “what relates to sexuality awakened by members of the family, that is, to incest” (L’équilibre mental, p. 32). No sooner has he evoked the spectre of sexual machinism, than he reduces it to familialism and incest. His search for a ‘schizogenius’ will never escape from the personological “nexus”. His project of an existential phenomenology of madness amounts, in fact, to following “the twists and turns of the person in relation to the diverse manners in which one is more or less involved in what one does” (Soi et les autres, p. 160). It will be a matter of nothing other than “recognizing a person as an agent” (Ibid., p. 124). It is “false situations” (Ibid., 157) that are pathogenic. What must be recovered is the “true self” and “real confidence in the future” based on the “true encounter”, as Martin Buber puts it (Ibid., pp. 134 and 164).

We are not always convinced that Laing completely grasps the implications of his writings. At certain points he only commits himself with reservations to the themes which constitute the common ground of anti-psychiatry. For example, he is much more prudent than Cooper, or even Hochmann, when it comes to promoting this famous family psychotherapy which is essentially only a disguised return to techniques of readaptation, indeed, of suggestion at the scale of the small group.

It is also with some reservation that he adheres to the neo-behaviorist theory of Bateson called the “double bind” which consists of the reduction of the etiology of schizophrenia to a system of logical impasses and to an essentially deceptive personological alienation in the order of communication. Laing in particular shrinks from Bateson’s affirmation that “there will be a collapse, in any individual, of the ability to establish
a distinction between logical types each time a situation of the double bind occurs" (Soi et les autres, pp. 183 and 186).

Is it not obvious that a series of interpersonal breakdowns might not suffice to produce a psychosis, even a neurosis nor, conversely, the resolution of these breakdowns might not sufficiently modify them! One sometimes connects too quickly Laing’s phenomenological exercises with those in the work of Sartre. In actual fact Sartre never tied himself up in the mirror games which seem to fascinate Laing:

She wants him to want her
He wants her to want him
To get her to want him
He pretends he wants her

(Noeuds, p. 48)

Sartre is a man of history and real engagement. He would certainly challenge the contemplative ideal which leads Laing to declare that we can do no more than “reflect the decomposition that surrounds and is in us”.

Is it possible today, when it is a question of madness, to ignore the contributions of Freud and Lacan? Is it possible to take refuge in a personalist and mystical wisdom without becoming the unconscious prisoner of ideologies whose mission is to suppress desire in every way?

Let’s hope that Laing, who has sought to dissociate himself in an exemplary fashion from the traditional role of the psychiatrist, returns to the concrete struggle against the repression of the mentally ill and that he will be able to define more rigorously the conditions of a revolutionary psychiatric practice, that is, of a non-utopian psychiatry that is susceptible to being taken up en masse by the avant garde of mental health workers and by the mentally ill themselves.

Notes
2 The translation of the book by Mary Barnes, one of principle figures of Kingsley Hall, is forthcoming. [Mary Barnes and Joseph Berke, Two accounts of a journey through madness (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1971)]
3 Cirque Rurbain d’Animation, d’Action, d’Agitation Koultourelle.
6 At issue are the logical types of Bertrand Russell.

*Translated by Gary Genosko*
Franco Basaglia: Guerrilla Psychiatrist

A war of liberation, waged for ten years to overthrow the traditional institution is presented to us in terms of militant struggle, in a literary fortnightly containing recorded accounts, book reviews, discussions, journal extracts, personal opinions and articles. And it is done without the least bit of pedantry. There is straightaway a violent refusal of all scientific pseudo-neutrality in this domain which is, for the authors, eminently political.

It all started in 1961. Under the impetus of Dr. Basaglia, the new direction of the hospital brought about “a sudden rupture of working solidarity” among the personnel and the breaking away of an “avant garde” which refused to any longer fulfill the “mandate of the cure and of surveillance” entrusted to them by a repressive society. Step by step all services were to be opened: general meetings would be open to the institutionalized, communications, the organization of leisure, and socio-therapy would be intensified.

At first “nobody would open their mouth”; but then there was a thaw, and intense interest spread to all the departments. The hospital held over fifty meetings a week, spectacular improvements were made, and patients were sent home after 10, 15 or 20 years in the hospital.

Basaglia and Minguzzi then decided to undertake a detailed investigation into similar experiments in institutional psychotherapy in France and therapeutic communities in England (i.e. at Dingleton, under the direction of Maxwell Jones). They gradually developed their own conceptions, distancing themselves from other attempts that they considered to be too reformist, and questioning their own initial approaches.

Until then it had been the advance group – the “avant garde” – who “granted privileges” to patients. The dice were loaded. In 1965, Basaglia and his group decided to develop more thoroughly the “community culture” which, little by little, gained ground and modified the real relations of force between the personnel and the patients. Maxwell Jones’s ideas were subjected to criticism. They decided that the techniques involved in reaching a consensus were, after all, only a new method
of integrating the mentally ill into a society answering to the "ideal of the panorganization of neo-capitalist society" (Lucio Schiter, p. 149). The famous "third psychiatric revolution" would be merely, as they put it, "a belated adaptation of modalities of social control of pathological behavior to the methods of production perfected over the last forty years by sociologists and technicians of mass communication" (p. 149).

Thus, they rejected every politics of improvement and the consolidation of hospitals, a politics which in France had lead the most innovative trends in psychiatry to collaborate directly with the Minister of Health, and to elaborate, with the top-ranking civil servants, ministerial circulars for the reform of psychiatric hospitals, etc. In the long run, this experience was deceptive and bitter, and it drove certain of the best of French psychiatrists to despair. In addition, the recent psychiatric reform of teaching, finalized by Edgar Faure¹ for the departments, must have contributed to the spread of confusion among the ranks of the psychiatric opposition after May 1968. The society of institutional psychotherapy itself took cover during the May movement, certain psychiatrists estimating "that nothing happened in May", nothing in any case that could possibly concern institutional psychotherapy. Violently contradictory positions confronted one another during an international congress in Vienna in 1968, which Basaglia concluded by leaving and slamming the door behind him.

In Italy, where the state of the hospitals and the legislation is undoubtedly one of the most archaic in Europe, such illusions can hardly be dismissed — given the infamous stamp on the police record of psychiatric inmates; inmates denied their civil rights; and torture by strangulation: "a sheet, usually wet, is twisted tightly around the neck to prevent breathing: the loss of consciousness is immediate" (Basagila, p. 164). Basaglia harbors no illusions about the experiment of Gorizia: its future was doomed; at best, events would unfold as they did in Maxwell Jones’s therapeutic communities at Dingleton, that is to say, in a "didactic and therapeutic engagement pursued on the staff level, but which retreats into the particular domain of institutional interests" (p. 100).

Unlike what generally happened elsewhere, the "psychiatric revolution" of Basaglia and his group was not "for laughs." From year to year, we witness an absolute escalation which has, moreover, lead to serious difficulties for its instigators. The open door [policy], ergotherapy, socio-therapy, sectorization — all these were implemented but did not cohere in a satisfying way. Was it the context of the Italian "creeping May" that entailed this permanent refusal of all self-satisfaction? Or was it the indifference of the Italian state and its inability to promote reform which discouraged every attempt at renewal? In any case, the "avant garde" of
Gorizia was no longer there: the “common goal” became “institutional change”, the “negation of the institution”, the Italian equivalent of the anti-psychiatry of Laing and Cooper in England.²

The very honesty of this book leads us to question the desperate nature of this endeavor. Is it not secretly preoccupied by a desire to bring things to the verge of collapse? Isn’t the dialectical process on the way to transforming itself in forward flight and, in a sense, betraying itself? For anti-psychiatry, political intervention constitutes the prerequisite of all therapeutics. But doesn’t the agreement around the “negation of the institution”, which has meaning only if it is taken up by a real avant garde and securely anchored in social reality, risk serving as a springboard for a new form of social repression, this time at the level of global society and aiming at the very status of madness?

Basaglia states that with the medications that he administers “the doctor calms his own anxiety in the face of a patient with whom he does not know how to enter into contact nor find a common language” (p. 117). An ambiguous and perhaps demagogic expression: psychopharmacology is not, in itself, a reactionary science! It is the context of its use that must be called into question.

Nosography, too, is perhaps a little rashly thrown overboard. The ways of repression are sometimes subtle! Those who uphold normality at any price can become more effective than the police! With the best moral and political intentions in the world, one may come to refuse the mad the right to be mad; the claim that “society is to blame” can disguise a way of suppressing all deviance. Institutional negation would then become a denegation – Verneinung in the Freudian sense – of the singular fact of derangement. Before taking out an option on nosography, Freud devoted himself to really giving a voice to neurotics, freeing them from all the effects of suggestion. Giving up the idea of medical suggestion in order to fall into collective suggestion would only create an illusory benefit.

I think that Basaglia and his comrades might be led incisively beyond some of their current formulations and “bend” their ears to mental alienation without systematically reducing it to social alienation. Matters are relatively straightforward and rightfully violent when it is a matter of repudiating repressive institutions. Things are much more difficult when they concern our understanding of madness. Then a few formulas from Sartrean or Maoist sources will not in this case suffice.

Political causality does not completely govern the causality of madness. It is perhaps, conversely, in an unconscious signifying assemblage that madness dwells, and which predetermines the structural field in which political options, drives, and revolutionary inhibitions are deployed, beside and beyond social and economic determinisms.
Fortunately, Basaglia’s project has not fallen into a theoretical dogmatism. This book is invaluable in that it poses a thousand questions that the learned of contemporary psychiatry meticulously avoid.

Notes


In the Maspero edition Guattari added an explanatory footnote: “The final lines of this article, arbitrarily cut by *La Quinzaine*, affirmed that above all the divergences a militant solidarity is imperative. I believe this point must be reaffirmed at the moment when the problems Basaglia has with Italian repression have presented an opportunity for the medical chronicler of *Le Monde*, Madame Escoffier-Lambiotte, for an underhand attack which, through this affair, looks at various attempts at renovation and innovation in psychiatry” (p. 264).

1 Edgar Faure was named Minister of [National] Education immediately following the events of May 1968.

Mary Barnes’s “Trip”

In 1965, a community of about 20 people formed around Ronald Laing. They settled in an old building, Kingsley Hall, in a suburb of London which had been for a long time a Labour stronghold. Over the course of five years the leaders of the anti-psychiatry movement and the patients who, as they say, “made a career of schizophrenia”, collectively explored the world of madness. Not the madness of the mental hospital, but the madness that dwells in each of us, a madness they proposed to liberate in order to release inhibitions and symptoms of every kind. At Kingsley Hall they disregarded – or tried to disregard – the division of roles among patients, psychiatrists, nurses, etc. No one had the right to give or receive orders, or to issue prescriptions. Kingsley Hall became a liberated parcel of land, a base for the counter-cultural movement.

The anti-psychiatrists want to move beyond the experiments of community psychiatry: according to them, such experiments were only reformist ventures which did not truly question the repressive institution and the traditional framework of psychiatry. Maxwell Jones and David Cooper, two of the principal instigators of such experiments, actively participated in the life of Kingsley Hall. Thus, anti-psychiatry had at its disposal its own surface of inscription, a kind of body without organs in which every corner of the house – cellar, roof, kitchen, staircase, chapel – and each episode in the life of the collectivity, functioned like the gears of a big collective machine, drawing each person out of their immediate self and their own little problems, either to put themselves at the service of others, or to descend into themselves in a sometimes vertiginous process of regression.

This liberated parcel of land, Kingsley Hall, came under attack from all sides: the old world oozed through the cracks; the neighbours complained about its nighttime activities; local kids threw stones at the windows; on the slightest pretext the cops were ready to cart off any of the agitated residents to the real psychiatric hospital.

But the real threat to Kingsley Hall came from within: the residents were free from identifiable constraints but secretly continued to interiorize repression and, furthermore, they remained under the yoke of simplistic reductions to the tired triangle – father, mother, child – which
presses any situation considered to be outside the bounds of normality into the mold of Oedipal psychoanalysis.

Was it necessary to maintain a minimum of discipline at Kingsley Hall, or not? The atmosphere was poisoned by internal power struggles. Aaron Esterson, leader of the “hardline” faction— he walked around with a book by Stalin under his arm, while Laing carried Lenin—was eventually ousted and, despite this fact, it was always difficult for the community to establish its system of self-regulation. Moreover, the press, television, and “hangers-on” filtered in and out; Kingsley Hall became the object of obtrusive publicity. One of the residents, Mary Barnes, became a star of madness, which made her the focus of implacable jealousies.

Mary Barnes and her psychiatrist, Joseph Berke, wrote a book based on her experience at Kingsley Hall. It is a confession of disconcerting naïveté. It is both an exemplary exercise in the liberation of “mad desire” and neo-behaviorist dogmatism, as well as being full of brilliant discoveries and an unrepentant familialism akin to the most traditional puritanism. The “mad” Mary Barnes explains in several confessional chapters what no “anti-psychiatrist” has ever revealed: the hidden side of Anglo-Saxon anti-psychiatry.

Mary Barnes is a former nurse who was labelled schizophrenic. She might also have been classified among the hysterics. She understands literally Laing’s advice on the “trip.” Her “regression into childhood” is undertaken in the manner of a kamikaze. Her “down” periods on several occasions lead her to the verge of death by starvation. Everyone would get in a panic: should she be taken to the hospital, or not? This precipitated a “monumental crisis” in the community. But it should be said that during her “up” periods, the problems of the group did not improve: she agreed to deal only with those whom she had heavily endowed with her familialism and mysticism, which is to say above all Ronnie (Laing), whom she idolizes like a god, and Joe (Berke), who becomes simultaneously her father, mother, and spiritual lover.

In this way she establishes for herself a little oedipal territory that echoes all of the paranoaic tendencies of the institution. Her pleasure is concentrated in the painful awareness, which pitilessly torments her, of the evil she unleashes around her. She is opposed to Laing’s project; yet, it is her dearest possession. The more guilt she feels, the more she punishes herself, the worse her condition gets, unleashing reactions of panic all around her. She restores the infernal circle of familialism but, by putting more than twenty people into it, only makes matters worse!

She behaves like a baby and needs to be bottle-fed. She walks around naked, covered in shit, pissing in all the beds, breaking everything, or lets herself starve to death. She tyrannizes Joe Berke, prevents him from leaving, and harasses his wife to the extent that, one day, unable to bear
it, he hits her. Inexorably, one is tempted to resort to the well known methods of the psychiatric hospital! Joe Berke asks himself how it happens that “a group of people devoted to demystifying the social relations of disturbed families come to behave like one of them”?

Fortunately, Mary Barnes is an exceptional case. Not everyone at Kingsley Hall behaves like her! But doesn’t she present the real problems? Is it certain that understanding, love, and all the other Christian virtues, combined with a technique of mystical regression, suffice to exorcize the demons of oedipal madness?

Laing is without doubt among those who are the most deeply engaged in the attempt to demolish psychiatry. He has scaled the walls of the asylum, but gives the impression that he remains a prisoner of other walls he carries inside himself; he has not yet managed to free himself from the worst constraint, the most dangerous of double binds, that of “psychoanalysis” – to recall Robert Castel’s felicitous expression – with its delirious signifying interpretation, representations with hidden levels, and derisive abysses.

Laing thought that one could outwit neurotic alienation by centering the analysis on the family, on its internal “knots” For him, everything starts with the family. He would like, however, to break away from it. He would like to merge with the cosmos, to burst the everydayness of existence. But his mode of explanation cannot release the subject from the grip of the familialism that he wanted only as a point of departure and which reappears at every turn. He tries to resolve the problem by taking refuge in an Oriental style of meditation which could not definitively guard against the intrusion of a capitalist subjectivity with the most subtle means at its disposal. One doesn’t bargain with Oedipus: as long as this essential structure of capitalist repression is not attacked head-on, one will not be able to make any decisive changes in the economy of desire and thus, in the status of madness.

This book is filled with flows of shit, piss, milk and paint. But it is significant to note that it is practically never a question of the flow of money. It is not certain how matters stand from this perspective. Who handles the money, who decides what to buy, and who gets paid? The community seems to live on air: Mary’s brother Peter, who is without doubt much more engaged than she in a schizo process, cannot bear the bohemian style of Kingsley Hall. There is too much noise, too much chaos, and besides, what he wants is to hold onto his job.

But his sister harasses him and he has to settle in Kingsley Hall. Implacable proselytism of regression: you will discover, you will take your trip, you will be able to paint, you will see your madness through to its end. But Peter’s madness is far more disturbing. He is not very eager to embark on this sort of venture! Here, perhaps, one can under-
Mary Barnes’s “Trip”  49

stand the difference between a real schizo trip and a petit-bourgeois style of familialist regression. The schizo is not all that interested in “human warmth.” His dealings are elsewhere, on the side of the most deterritorialized fluxes: the flux of the “miraculating” cosmic signs, but also the flux of monetary signs. The schizo is not unaware of the reality of money – even if it is put to extraordinary uses – any more than he is unaware of any other reality. The schizo does not behave like a child. For him money is a reference point like any other and he needs to have at his disposal a maximum number of systems of reference, precisely to enable him to keep his distance. Exchange is, for him, a way of avoiding confusions. In short, Peter does not want to put up with these interfering stories of community which threaten his singular relation to desire.

Mary’s familial neurosis is quite another thing; she is continually establishing little familial territories; it is a kind of vampirism of “human warmth.” Mary clings to the image of the other; for example, she asked Anna Freud to analyze her – but, in her mind, this meant that Anna would move into her place, with her brother, and that they would become her children. It’s this process that she tried to begin again with Ronnie and Joe.

Familialism consists in magically denying social reality, and avoiding all connections with real fluxes. There remain only the possibilities of the dream and the infernal locked-door of the conjugal-familial system or, still, in great moments of crisis, a little ratty territory into which one can withdraw, alone. It is on this level that Mary Barnes functioned at Kingsley Hall: as a missionary of Laing’s therapy, as a militant of madness, and as a professional.

This confession teaches us more than a dozen theoretical works on anti-psychiatry. We can finally catch a glimpse of the implications of ‘psychoanalysm’ in the methods of Laing and his friends.

From Freud’s Studies on Hysteria to the structuralist analysts currently in fashion, all psychoanalytic method consists in sifting any situation through three screens [cribles]: i) Interpretation: a thing must always signify something other than itself. The truth is never to be found in the actuality of intensities and relations of force, but only through a game of signifying clues; ii) Familialism: these signifying clues are essentially reducible to familial representations. To reach them one proceeds by means of regression; one will induce the subject to “rediscover” his childhood. In point of fact, this means a “powerless” representation of childhood, a childhood of memory, myth, refuge, the negative of current intensities which have no possible relation to its positive aspects; iii) Transference: in the continuation of the interpretive sifting and familialist regression, desire is reinstalled in a cramped space, a miserable little identificatory world (the couch of the analyst, his look, his supposed
attention). The rule of the game is that everything which presents itself must be reduced by means of interpretation and images of papa–mama. All that remains is to proceed to the ultimate reduction of the signifying battery itself, which must function with only a single term: the silence of the analyst, against which all questions come up against. Psychoanalytic transference, a kind of churn used to cream off the reality of desire, leaves the subject hanging in a vertigo of abolition, a narcissistic passion, which, though less dangerous than Russian roulette, still leads – if it goes well – to an irreversible fixation on valueless subtleties which will end by taking him away from all other social investment.

We have known for a long time that these three screens operate poorly with the mad: their interpretations, their images are too distant from dominant social coordinates. Instead of giving up this method, at Kingsley Hall they tried to improve the screens in order to reinforce their effects. Thus, the silent interpretation of dual analysis was replaced by a collective – and boisterous – interpretation, a kind of communal delirious interpretation. The method did find a new efficacy: it is no longer satisfied with a mirror game between the words of the analysand and the silence of the analyst; there are also objects, gestures, and the interaction of forces. Joe Berke gets into the big game of Mary Barnes’ regression in a way that is still rare among typical psychoanalysts: he grunts, acts like a crocodile, bites and pinches her, rolls her in her bed.

We’re almost there! We are on the verge of breaking into another practice, another semiotic. We will break the shackles with the sacred principles of signifiance and interpretation. Not quite, though, since each time the psychoanalyst recovers and reinstates his familialist coordinates. He is caught in his own game: when Joe Berke wants to leave Kingsley Hall, Mary does everything to keep him there. Not only has the analysis become interminable, but the session has as well! It is only by losing his temper that Berke manages to free himself from his “patient” for a few hours in order to attend a meeting on the Vietnam war.

The interpretive contamination has become limitless. Paradoxically, it is Mary who first broke the cycle through her painting. Over the course of a few months she became a famous painter. Yet even here interpretation has not relinquished its claims: if Mary feels guilty when she takes a drawing class, it is because her mother’s hobby was painting and she would be upset if she knew that her daughter was a better painter. On the paternal side, things are scarcely better: “Now, with all these paintings, you possess the penis, the power, and your father feels threatened”

With touching industriousness, Mary tries hard to absorb all of the psychoanalytic hodgepodge. Thus, in the communal atmosphere of Kingsley Hall, Mary stands out like a sore thumb because she does not want to work with just anyone. She turns away some people because she
wants to be assured that they are completely immersed in Ronnie’s thought: “When I got the idea of a breast, a safe breast, Joe’s breast, a breast I could suck without being stolen from myself, nothing could hold me back. When Joe put his finger in my mouth he was saying to me, ‘Look, I can come into you without controlling you, possessing, stealing you.’”

Even the psychoanalyst ends up being overwhelmed by the interpretive machine he helped to set into motion. He admitted that: “Mary interpreted everything that was done for her (or for anyone else for that matter) as therapy. If the coal was not delivered on time, that was therapy. And so on, to the most absurd conclusions.” This didn’t prevent Joe from continuing to struggle with his own interpretations, which had no other goal than to make his relationship with Mary fit into the oedipal triangle: “By 1966, however, I had a pretty good idea of what and who I was for her when we were together. ‘Mama’ took the lead when she was Mary the baby. ‘Papa’ and ‘brother Peter’ vied for second place. In order to protect my own sense of reality, and to help Mary break through her web of illusion, I always took the trouble to point out when I thought Mary was using me as someone else”. But it would be impossible for him to break free of this spider web. Mary had caught the whole household up in it.

Let’s now turn to the technique of regression into childhood and the transference: their “derealizing” effects were accentuated by being developed in a communal milieu. In the traditional analytic encounter, the dual relation, the artificial and limited nature of the session establishes a barricade of sorts against imaginary outbursts. At Kingsley Hall, it was a real death that confronted Mary Barnes at the end of each of her trips, and the entire institution was overcome with a sadness and distress equally as real. At this point Aaron Esterson resorted to the old methods of authority and suggestion: Mary was on the verge of death by starvation, and he forcefully ended her fast.

A few years earlier a Catholic psychoanalyst had forbidden her, with the same measure of brutality, to masturbate, explaining to her, as she recalled, that it was an even graver sin than sleeping with a man out of wedlock. It worked then as well. In fact, isn’t this return to authority and suggestion the inevitable correlate of this technique of regression on all fronts? Suddenly returning from the brink of death, a papa-cop comes out into the open. ‘The imaginary, especially that of the psychoanalyst, does not constitute a defense against social repression; on the contrary, it secretly invites it.

One of the most valuable lessons of this book perhaps is that it shows us the extent to which it is illusory to hope to recover raw desire, pure and simple, by embarking on a search for the knots hidden in the
unconscious and the secret keys of interpretation. Nothing can unravel, by the sole magic of the transference, the real micropolitical conflicts in which the subject is imprisoned; no mystery, no hidden universe. There is nothing to discover in the unconscious. The unconscious is something to be built. If the Oedipus of the transference does not resolve the familial Oedipus, it is because it is deeply attached to the familialialized individual.

Alone on the couch or in a group, in an institutional regression, the “normal-neurotic” (you and I) or the psychiatrist’s neurotic (the “mad”) continues to ask again and again for Oedipus. Psychoanalysts, whose entire training and practice has saturated them with the reductionist drug of interpretation, can only reinforce this policy of crushing desire: transference is a technique of diverting the investments of desire. Far from slowing the race towards death, it seems on the contrary to accelerate it, accumulating, as in a cyclotron, “individuated” oedipal energies, in what Joe Berke calls “the vicious spiral of punishment-anger-guilt-punishment” It can only lead to castration, self-denial, and sublimation: a shoddy sort of asceticism. The objects of collective guilt succeed one another, accentuating the punitive, self-destructive impulses by doubling them with a real repression composed of anger, jealousy and fear.

Guilt becomes a specific form of the libido – capitalist Eros – when it enters into conjunction with the deterritorialized fluxes of capitalism. It then finds a new way, a novel solution, outside the confines of family, asylum, or psychoanalysis. I shouldn’t have, what I did was bad and, the more I feel it’s bad, the more I want to do it, because then I can live in this zone of intensity of guilt. However, this zone, instead of being “embodied”, of being attached to the body of the subject, to the ego, to the family, takes possession of the institution – Mary Barnes was the real boss of Kingsley Hall. She knew it intimately. Everything revolved around her. She just played with Oedipus, while the others were well and truly caught in a collective oedipalism.

One day Joe Berke finds her covered in shit and shivering from the cold, and his nerves crack. He then becomes aware of “her extraordinary ability to conjure up everyone’s favorite nightmare and embody it for them” Thus, at Kingsley Hall, the transference is no longer “contained” by the analyst, but goes in all directions and threatens even the psychoanalyst. Everyone becomes a psychoanalyst! And yet, it very nearly happened that nobody was the analyst, and that the desiring intensities, the “partial objects”, followed their own lines of force without being haunted by systems of interpretation, and duly codified by the social grids of the “dominant reality”

Why did Berke desperately attempt to reglue the scattered multiplicity through which Mary “experiments” with the dissolution of her ego and gives free rein to her neurosis? Why this return to familial poles, to the
unity of the person which prevents Mary from becoming aware of the world outside with its potential rewards? "The initial process of her coming together was akin to my trying to put together a jigsaw puzzle without having all the pieces. Of those pieces at hand, many had had their tabs cut off and their slots plugged. So it was practically impossible to tell what went where. This puzzle, of course, was Mary's emotional life. The pieces were her thoughts, her actions, her associations, her dreams, etc."

What proof do we have that the solution for Mary Barnes lies with infantile regression? What proof do we have that the origin of her problems stem from disturbances, from blockages in the intrafamilial system of communication of her childhood? Why not consider instead what was happening around the family? In fact, we note that all the doors to the outside were firmly shut on her when she tried to open them; that's how she came up against a familialism that was, without doubt, even more repressive than what she had known during her childhood. What if poor father and mother Barnes were only the pitiful, unknowing relays of the repressive tempest raging outside? Mary was not _fixated_ in childhood; she simply never found the exit! Her desire for a real exit was too violent and too demanding to adapt itself to the compromises of the outside world.

The first episode occurred at school. "School was dangerous" She sat in her chair, paralysed, terrorized, and she fought with the teacher. "Most things at school worried me..." She pretended to read, sing, draw. She wanted, however, to be a writer, a journalist, a painter, a doctor! One day it was explained to her that all that meant she wanted to become a man. "I was ashamed of wanting to be a doctor. I know this shame was bound up – and here the interpretation kicks in again – with the enormous guilt I had in connection with my desire to be a boy. Everything masculine in myself must remain hidden, secret, unexperienced."

Priests and cops of every type tried to make her feel guilty, about everything and nothing and, in particular, about masturbation. When she resigned herself to being a nurse and enlisted in the army, she hit another dead end. Once she wanted to go to Russia because she had heard that there "women with babies and no husbands were quite acceptable". When she decided to enter a convent, her religious faith was doubted: "What brought you into the Church?"

And the priests were undoubtedly right; her desire for saintliness seemed fishy. Finally, all this led to the asylum. Even there, she was prepared to do something, to dedicate herself to others. One day she brought a bouquet of flowers for a nurse and was told: "Get out! You should not be in here!" There is no end to recounting the social traumas and subjugations she suffered. Having become a nurse, her right to
higher education was challenged. Mary Barnes was not, at the outset, interested in the family, but in society! But everything brought her back to the family. And, this is hard to say, even her stay at Kingsley Hall! Since the familialist interpretation was the game of choice of the place, and since she adored everyone there, she also played along. But did she ever play!

She was the real analyst of Kingsley Hall; she fully explored all the neurotic forces and subjacent paranoia of her father and mother of Kingsley Hall. Has Mary-the-missionary at least helped the anti-psychiatrists to clarify the reactionary implications of their psychoanalytic postulates?

Notes


1 Kingsley Hall, in Bow (East London), was leased for a five year period from 1965–1970. It was one of seven experimental therapeutic community households in London administered by the Philadelphia Association, whose chairman was R. D. Laing.


3 Nothing is comparable, however, with the Italian repression which has destroyed less ‘provocative’ attempts and, above all, with the truly barbaric German repression, currently inflicted upon the SPK (Sozialistiches Patientenkollektiv) in Heidelberg.

4 Behaviorism: a turn of the century theory which reduced psychology to the study of behavior, defined as the interaction between external stimuli and the responses of the subject. The neo-behaviorism of today tends to reduce all human problems to questions of communication and information, ignoring the socio-political problems of power at all levels.

5 A contradictory double constraint situated on the level of the communication between a subject and his family, and which is completely disturbing.

6 Her exhibitions, in Great Britain and abroad, brought her a certain notoriety. Much could be said about this sort of recuperation, "art brut" style, which consists in promoting a mad artist, like the star of a variety show, for the benefit of the producers of this kind of spectacle. The essence of mad art is to be above and beyond notions of oeuvre and authorial functions.

Translated by Gary Genosko
The Four Truths of Psychiatry

The slump that psychiatry and its shaky therapeutic grounds have found themselves mired in over the last few decades cannot be accounted for independently of contemporary economic and social upheavals. Some of the anti-establishment and counter-cultural movements of the sixties may have appeared, to many who had intensely lived through those times, as the premises for profound transformations which later on became woven into the social fabric. None of these transformations, however, actually took place! History, of course, may have a few surprises in store for us! But, while we wait, we may conclude that the recurring crises of these last few years justified these movements. One can even ask whether this was not one of their prime objectives. Whatever the hopes, utopias, and innovative experiments of this epoch amounted to, all that remains of them today is a dim memory – cherished by some, full of spite and revenge in others or, deemed to be quite indifferent by the majority. This doesn’t mean that alternative efforts and movements have been definitively swept away, having lost all legitimacy. Other generations have taken up the challenge where they left off, perhaps with less dreaming, more realism, and less mythical and theoretical baggage. As for me, I remain convinced that far from having gone beyond the issues of that period, the same problems continue to haunt the future of our societies, in that the choice at the time was either to gear efforts towards human ends by bringing about, through every possible means, the task of reappropriating individual and collective existential territories, or fast-forwarding towards collective murderous and suicidal madness our present situation providing an abundance of symptoms and indices to this effect.

I believe it is in the context of this more or less roughly sketched state of affairs that the notions of transformation within the field of psychiatry over the last few years should be re-examined. To give a brief sketch of the most notable events: the movement of institutional therapy in its early period under the impact of people like Daumezon, Le Guillant, Bonnafé, etc., who were committed to the humanization of old psychiatric hospitals; the initial implementation of a psychiatry of the sector, with its day hospitals, supervised workshops, home visits, etc.; institutional psychiatry
in its later phase, rearticulated by François Tosquelles, Jean Oury and GTPSI [Groupe de travail de psychothérapie institutionelle] in terms of psychoanalytic concepts and practices; the different movements aimed at offering an alternative to psychiatry. All of these carried within them a fraction of the truth without ever having had to face or consider the effects of upheavals in society at large. In addition to their particular contributions – which I would certainly be the last to underestimate – the question of a truly radical reconfiguration, a paradigmatic change of psychiatry, always seemed to loom in the background as a possibility.

Without putting myself in a situation of having to provide an exhaustive mapping of this problem, I would like to delineate a few characteristics of the necessary conditions for a complete progressive revival of this languishing field – after all, this is the place to spill the beans! It seems to me that we have to connect this exclusively to at least four levels of intervention, to four kinds of truths:

1 the transformation of existing cumbersome apparatuses;
2 the maintenance of alternative experiments;
3 the sensitization and mobilization of these themes with the most diverse social partners;
4 the development of revamped methods for the analysis of unconscious subjectivity, both at the individual as well as the collective level.

The task, in other words, is to free ourselves, in a most radical way, from the dogmatic shortsightedness and corporate quarrels that, for such a long period, have fed parasitically on our reflections and practices. In this domain, much like any other, one truth does not hound the other. Since there is no universal remedy that one could prescribe and apply univocally to all situations, the first criterion of concrete feasibility would be to take on a project in which committed social functionaries would accept responsibility for the consequences of all plans.

In the following few examples let us try to illustrate, for the moment, how recent efforts directed at the transformation of psychiatry already implied at least a minimum consideration of one of our four truths and how they have also come up against their own limits by not having concurrently weighed all of them – which, in turn, would have necessitated a sufficiently consistent presupposition of the existence of collective assemblages required for their commencement.

What has been termed as the first psychiatric revolution of the post-war years, which had taken the tangible material and moral amelioration of a
number of French psychiatric hospitals as its aim, could only succeed because of its appeal to the following coordinates:

1 a strong progressive psychiatric standard;

2 a powerful majority of militant psychiatric nurses all in favor of transforming the conditions of the asylum (leading, for example, to the formative stages of the Centre d'entraînement aux méthodes actives: CEMEA);

3 a nucleus of Ministry of Health officials pursuing similar aims.

It was by way of these exceptionally well linked conditions that an effective intervention was made possible at the first level. On the other hand, neither of the other three levels – alternatives, social mobilization, and analysis of subjectivity – were taken up in spite of the fact that there had been many questions revolving around these issues at the very heart of the psychiatry of the sector.

The English communitarian experiments, developed in the wake of Maxwell Jones, and then by R. D. Laing, David Cooper and the Philadelphia Association, have proved that they were endowed with a certain social intelligence and an indisputable analytic sensibility. Yet they received no support whatsoever from the state or from what we might conveniently call the forces of the left. This denial of patronage had so profoundly affected their personal efforts that the movement lacked the potential for rapid development within the field.

If we now turn to an experiment like that of La Borde – a clinic of a hundred beds where Jean Oury has been the main inspirational force over the last thirty years and to whom I remain personally indebted – we will find ourselves in the presence of an extraordinary institutional clockwork constituting a collective analyzer which, to my mind, is of the utmost importance. There is no shortage of flaws attributed to its work by external supporters, although according to different modalities than the examples listed above. Let us only invoke the fact that in spite of Social Security, this clinic has always been systematically marginalized from an economic point of view while its lot, paradoxically, has not improved under a socialist regime. On the contrary, it has deteriorated. While some believe it ought to be treated as an historical relic, the clinic has remained more alive than ever and has even found itself “carried” on a wave of sympathy that has never failed it, and is attested to by the enrolment of over a hundred French and foreign trainees. Meanwhile, it can very well be regarded as having been condemned to isolation. An experiment like this cannot acquire its full meaning unless it is placed within the context of a proliferating network of alternative initiatives. The issue to be
pinpointed here is the reevaluation of the role of hospitalization. It is quite evident that one must urgently do away with all the incarcerative methods of accommodation. This by no means implies the unnuanced renunciation of structures of hospitality and collective life. For many dissidents of the psyché, the question can no longer be posed in terms of a reintegration into the so-called normal structures of the socius. In this respect, all too often we have mythified the more or less forced and guilt-ridden maintenance of, or a return to, the heart of the family. Other modes of individuality and collectivity need to be found and it is here that an immense site for research and experimentation is suddenly opened up.

I could list other figures to put into relief the discord of the four levels of intervention that would illustrate a less ambivalent attitude on the part of French public powers vis-à-vis alternative communities in the South-West region of France where, for example, my friend Claude Sigala has been caught up in a strange coming-and-going between the halls of the ministry, those of the Department of Justice, and a cell in the prison of Health! But I will content myself with a final example by referring to Psichiatria Democratica and to the work of Franco Basaglia, whose memory I honor here. This was the first movement to explore, with similar intensity, the potential for work in the field that would align itself with the forces of the left in order to seek ways of creating public awareness and systemic action with respect to public powers. Unfortunately – and this had been the object of a friendly debate between Basaglia and myself – it was the analytic dimension that had blurred the situation and which had often been vehemently rejected.

Why, you may ask, are you insisting, as a leitmotif, on your fourth, analytic dimension? Should it really be considered as one of the principle jurisdictions of our problem? Without getting bogged down in further elaborations, it seems to me that there is a possible cure for the leprosy of our psychiatric institutions and, beyond the entirety of welfare arrangements, I would like to speak to this desperate serialization of misguided individuals, not only with reference to them as “users”, but also to their therapeutic, technical, and administrative roles. To conduct an institutional analysis on a grand scale, one would need to make a permanent effort to study the subjectivity produced in all relations of social assistance, education, etc. A certain type of subjectivity which I will qualify as capitalist, is poised to sweep the planet: a subjectivity of equivalence, of standard fantasy, of massive consumption and infantilizing reassurance. This is the source of all passivity, all the forms of the degeneration of democratic values, the collective abandonment to racism. It is today secreted in massive doses by the mass media, by collective apparatuses, by the allegedly cultural industries. It does not merely concern conscious ideological formations, but equally encom-
passes the sphere of unconscious collective affects. Psychiatry and the entire range of therapies have a particular responsibility: either they caution us regarding their present forms, or they strive to branch out in non-alienating directions. It is relative to this problematic that alternative approaches to psychiatry and psychoanalysis acquire their significance. They will have no real impact unless they align themselves with other movements aimed at transforming subjectivity and can present themselves in multiple ways through ecological, nationalist, and feminist interest groups that are sympathetic towards the fight against racism and, in general, through conscientious and well thought out alternative practices that are able to properly gauge the perspectives of an ever increasing crowd of marginalized and non-guaranteed people.

But this implies correlativelly that parties, groupuscules, communities, collectives and individuals desiring to work in his direction must be capable of self-transformation and break the pattern of modelling their functions and unconscious representations on dominant repressive models. In order to accomplish this, they must operate towards themselves and the exterior, not only as a social and political instrument, but also as a collective analytic assemblage of these unconscious processes. And here, I repeat, everything has yet to be invented. Everything is ahead of us. It is the ensemble of social practices that need to be questioned and which demand to be rethought and retried.

This is basically what we have attempted to accomplish with the "Réseau alternative à la psychiatrie" since its inception in 1975, and which periodically organizes an international debate between the most diverse, the most heterogeneous components of the therapeutic profession and its alternative movements. There are, of course, other initiatives along these lines. I am thinking, in particular, about the gatherings in Italy on mental ecology to be held at the end of this year, thanks to the initiatives of the Topia group in Bologna, under the direction of Franco Berardi.

The aim is to reaffirm, stronger than ever, the right to singularity, to the freedom of individual and collective creation, and the removal of technocratic conformisms; the goal is to do away with the arrogance of all forms of postmodernism and to conjure up and call attention to the dangers inherent in the levelling out of all subjectivity that is being promoted in the wake of new levelling technologies.

Here are a few elements I would like to bring to your debate. Allow me again, by way of concluding, to add three remarks pertaining to your Bill 180:

1 It was by all considerations of crucial importance to redress the previous legislation and the complete return to the reinstitution of the old structures of asylums and confront them as wholly reaction-
The Vicissitudes of Therapy

ary and absurd. In France, the debate continues to go round in circles with respect to the modification of the old law of 1838 (a law that is segregative and contrary to human rights). I fully agree with Henri Ey in this matter: that the only solution is its suppression pure and simple, and that all the questions that have been shelved should only be taken up in the spirit of the Code of Health.

2 If one is to recreate the specific facilities of the reception hospital – and I believe this is absolutely necessary – these need to be conceived of as evolutive places of research and experimentation, which is to restate just how much I am against having them reestablished within general hospitals.

3 Only renewed forms of social mobilization will allow for the growth and development of mentalities and for the possibility of overcoming the always menacing ‘anti-mad’ racism. The initiative and decisions in this domain ultimately do not lie with traditional political formations, hampered as they generally are by their bureaucratic shackles, but with the reinvention of a new type of social and alternative movement.

Notes


1 References to the law of 30 juin 1838 are commonplace in progressive French psychiatric circles. The result of cooperation between proto-psychiatrists and the government of the period, the law had several far-reaching effects: i) it provided a legal justification for the theory of isolation as a therapeutic method; ii) it gave legal status to the sequestering of so-called “lunatics”; iii) it legitimated psychiatry as a profession; and iv) led to the establishment of a nation-wide, public departmental network of asylums.

Translated by Charles Dudas
The Transference

J. Schotte was right in highlighting the nature of signifying operations that allow us to identify transferential phenomena with those of speech and language. This ought to help us clarify the question of the transference outside of the strict field of psychoanalytic experience, that is to say, of the transference as it manifests itself in the group or institution. To the extent that we can regard the group as also "structured like a language" – to transpose one of Lacan's expressions regarding the unconscious – the question can also be posed, perhaps, as to how it speaks, and, above all, if it is even legitimate to consider that it gives us access to speech. Can a group be the subject of its own enunciation? If so, would this be by virtue of consciousness or the unconscious? To whom does the group speak? Is the subjugated group, alienated from the discourse of other groups, condemned to remain prisoner of the non-meaning of its own discourse? Is there a possible, even if only partial, way out for such a group that would allow for it to step back a little from its own utterances and, in spite of its subjugation, become both subject and object?

Under what sort of conditions could we hope to see a full speech emerge from a field of empty speech – to borrow other expressions from Lacan? Can we, for example, envisage in good faith and without betrayal that there may be "for all that something to do" in situations as alienating as those to be found in psychiatric hospitals, schools, and so forth? Or must we give up in sheer despair, and live a politics where we resign ourselves to the worst possible outcome, and make social revolution the absolute precondition for any intervention in the local running of institutions by its "users"?

Or does the group and its non-meaning maintain a kind of secret dialogue – harbouring a potential alterity? In this way, could not the group be, even on the basis of its impotence, the carrier of an unconscious call that might render this alterity possible? Even if only to speak this impotence together as a group: "What does the unconscious [ça] think of all this around us?" "What good is it?" "What the hell are we doing there?" So, the subjugated group and the subject-group should not be regarded as being mutually exclusive. A formerly
revolutionary contingent, that is now more or less subject to the dominant order, can still occupy, in the eyes of the masses, the empty place left by the subject of history, and may even, in certain circumstances become, despite itself, the subject of the enunciation of a revolutionary struggle, that is, the spokesperson of a discourse that is not its own, though it may mean betraying this discourse when the development of the relation of forces give it the hope of a "return to normalcy." Thus, however subject it may be to socio-economic restraints, such a group will – as a transformation of context would reveal – unintentionally retain the possibility of a subjective cut. It is, therefore, not a question for us of conceiving the alienating and disalienating phenomena of the group as things-in-themselves, but rather as the varying sides – that would be differently expressed and developed depending on the context – of a similar institutional object.

On the side of the subjection of the group, we will need to decode those phenomena that encourage the group to withdraw into itself: leadships, identifications, effects of suggestion, disavowals, scape-goating, and so forth. We will also need to decode anything that tends to promote local laws and idiosyncratic formations involving interdictions, rites, and anything else that tends to protect the group by buttressing it against signifying storms in which as the result of a specific operation of misrecognition – the threat is experienced as issuing from the outside. This has the effect of producing those deceitful outlooks peculiar to group delusions. This kind of group is thus involved in a perpetual struggle against any possible inscription of non-meaning: various roles are reified by a phallic appropriation along the model of the leader or of exclusion. One is part of such a group so as to collectively refuse to face up to the nothingness, that is, to the ultimate meaning of the projects in which we are engaged. This group is a kind of a syndicate or lobby of mutual defense against solitude, and of anything that might be classified as having a transcendental nature.

As concerns the other side, the subject-group does not employ the same means to secure itself. One is here threatened with being submerged in a flood of problems, tensions, internal battles, and risk of secession. This is so for the very reason of the opening of this group onto other groups. Dialogue – the intervention into other groups is an accepted aim of the subject-group – compels this group to have a certain clarity in relation to its finitude, that is, it brings into profile its distinct death, or its rupture. The calling of the subject-group to speak tends to compromise the status and security of the group’s members. There thus develops a kind of vertigo, or madness peculiar to this group. A kind of paranoid contraction is substituted for this calling to be subject: the group would like to be subject at any cost, including being in the place of
the other, and in this way, it will fall into the worst alienation, the kind that is at the origin of all the compulsive and mortiferous mechanisms employed by religious, literary, and revolutionary coteries.

What might be the balancing factors of a group placed between these diverse sides of alienation; that is, between the external one of the subjugated-group, and that of the internal or borderline madness that is the project of the subject-group?

Our experience in hospitals might shed some light on this question. We know quite well that the "socialization" or reintegration of someone who is ill into a group does not simply depend on the good will of the therapists. In their attempts to reintegrate into a group or society, some of the ill in institutions encounter zones of tolerance, but also thresholds of absolute impossibility. We are here in the presence of a similar mechanism that is to be found in the rites of passage of primitive societies when initiating or welcoming into the culture a sub-group that has come of age. What happens if a person does not accept being marked by the group? If we force things to their limit, we arrive at one of two possibilities: either the group, or the recalcitrant individual, is shattered. Now, it is precisely in those groups that do not cultivate their symptoms by rituals – the subject-groups – that the risk of a face to face encounter with non-meaning is much greater, but, consequently, so is the possibility of a lifting of individual symptomatic impasses.

So long as the group remains an object for other groups and receives its non-meaning, that is, death, from the outside, one can always count on finding refuge in the group's structures of misrecognition. But from the moment the group becomes a subject of its own destiny and assumes its own finitude and death, it is then that the data received by the superego is modified, and, consequently, the threshold of the castration complex, specific to a given social order, can be locally modified. Thus one belongs to such a group not so as to hide from desire and death, engaging in a collective process of neurotic obsession, but owing to a particular problem which is ultimately not eternal in nature, but transitory. This is what I have called the structure of "transversality."

Schotte emphasizes the fact that in the transference there is virtually never any actual dual relation. This is very important to note. The mother–child relationship, for example, is not a dual relation, at whatever level it is considered. At the moment that we envisage this relation in a real situation we recognize that it is, at the very least, triangular in character. In other words, there is always in a real situation a mediating object that acts as an ambiguous support or medium. For there to be displacement, transference, or language, there must also by necessity exist something there that can be cut or detached. Lacan strongly emphasized this feature of the object as decisive for making one's way
through those questions concerning the transference and counter-transference. One is displaced in the order of the transference only insofar as something can be displaced. Something that is neither the subject nor the object. There is no intersubjective relation, dual or otherwise, that would suffice to establish a system of expression, that is to say, a position of alterity. The face to face encounter with the other does not account for the opening onto the other, nor does it establish access to the other’s understanding. The founder of metaphor is this something outside or adjacent to the subject that Lacan described under the heading of the objet “a”

But what about this “a”? One must not make of it a universal key of linguistic essence, an experiment of some new genre, or a new kind of tourism that would permit one to visit ancient Greece, for example, by effortless linguistic means. I am thinking here in particular of this perverse etymological practice brought into fashion by Heidegger. These kinds of imaginary retrospectives have basically nothing to do with Freud’s genuine work on the signifier. I do not think that these etymological retrospectives are the carriers of some special message from the unconscious. In my opinion, whatever Freud borrowed, rightly or wrongly, from the realm of mythologies in order to translate his conceptual arrangements, should not be interpreted “imaginingly” [pied de l'image]. It is the “literality” [pied de la lettre], in all its artificiality, indeed the combination which is the key to interpretation for Freud. This is clear in a book like Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious wherein we see that the unconscious signifying chains in the term “joke” [mot d’esprit], for example, do not maintain any special relation with etymological laws. For the link can just as easily be made with a phoneme, an accentuation, syntactic play or semantic displacement. Unfortunately – and it is not by chance what was reified by Freud, and practically deified by his successors, were the mythical references that initially came to him somewhat arbitrarily in his attempt to chart out and locate the dramatization and impasses of the conjugal family. But let us not make a myth of myth! As references, the ancient myths dealing with the topic of Oedipus, for example, have nothing to do with the imaginary forces and symbolic articulations of the present conjugal family, nor with our system of social coordinates!

It is an illusion to think that there is something to read in the order of being, or of a lost world – or to think that recovering a mythical being, on this side of all historical origins, could be institutionalized as a psychoanalytic propaedeutic or maieutic. Considering the actual processes involved in the therapeutic cure or in setting up a therapeutic organization, reference to these kinds of mythico-linguistic reductions lead one nowhere except directly into the pitfalls of speculative frameworks. The
important thing here is to get to the remarkable message, as well as to the object-carrier and founder of this message. But such an object would only derive its meaning on the basis of a similar retrospective illusion. We cannot hope to recover the specificity of the Freudian message unless we are able to disconnect it or sever it from its desire to return to the origins—a modern myth that established its diet for a full outpouring of sentiments beginning with Romanticism: the infinite quest for an impossible truth that supposedly lies beyond the manifest, in the heart of nature and the dark night of existence.

The remedy for this desire consists in orienting oneself in the direction of history, and the direction of the diachronic cut-out of the real and its provisional and partial attempts towards totalization—what I would call the bricolage of history and social constructions. It is impossible to carry out such a reconfiguration if we do not as a precondition ask the question: where is the law? Is it behind us? Behind history? Does it fall short of our actual situation, in which case it would lie outside our grasp? Or is it, perhaps, before us, within our reach, and potentially retrievable? As Bachelard says: nature must be pushed at least as far as our minds. Who will ask this question? Certainly not the groupings and societies who establish their reason for being on ahistorical systems of religious and political legitimacy. The only groups to ask this question are the ones that accept from the start the precarious and transient nature of their existence: lucidly accept the situational and historical contingencies that confront them; accept an encounter with nothingness; and, finally, refuse to mystically reestablish and justify the existing order.

Today, a psychoanalyst would be content if his analysand overcame his anachronistic fixations; if he were able, for example, to get married, have children, reconcile himself to his biological contingencies, and integrate himself into the status quo. Regardless of the particular psychoanalytic curriculum, a reference to a predetermined model of normality remains implicit within its framework. The analyst, of course, does not in principle expect that this normalization is the product of a pure and simple identification of the analysand with the analyst, but it works no less, and even despite him (if only from the point of view of the continuity of the treatment, that is to say, often from the capacity of the analysand to continue to pay), as a process of identification of the analysand with a human profile that is compatible with the existing social order, and the acceptance [assumption] of his branding by the cogs of production and institutions. The analyst does not find this model ready-made in present society. His work is to create just that: to forge a new model in the place where his patient is lacking one. Moreover, and generally, this has to be his work, given that the modern bourgeois, capitalist society no longer
has any satisfactory model at its disposal. It is in order to respond to this
deficiency that psychoanalysis borrows its myths from earlier societies. It
is thus that psychoanalysis proposes a model of drives and an ideal type
of subjectivity and of familial relations that is at once new and composite;
a kind of syncretism that encompasses elements of an archaic nature, and
some that are quite modern. As far as the dominant social order is
concerned, what is important is that the model be in a position to
function in the present society. Such is the meaning of this requisite
acceptance [assumption] of the castration complex – a kind of initiation
substitution for modern societies – as the possible outcome of Oedipal
impasses. This also accounts for the success and profitability of psycho-
analysis.

For us the question is of a completely different kind. Our problem is to
find out whether this recourse to alienating models can be limited,
whether it is possible to establish the laws of subjectivity in places other
than social constraint and the mystifying means of these mythical com-
posite references. My question, therefore, is: can man become the
founder of his own law?

Let us attempt afresh to resituate certain key concepts. If a totalizing
god of values exists, every system of metaphoric expression will remain
connected to the subjugated group by a kind of fantasmatic umbilical
cord connecting it to this system of divine totalization. So as to not
stretch this formulation, and in order to avoid, at whatever cost, falling
into an idealist option, let us begin with the idea that we no longer need
consider that such a totalizing system is to be sought at the level of human
ramification, as if transmitted from sperm to sperm. While a medium of
transmission certainly exists, this does not translate into it being an
actual message. Spermatozoids, after all, do not speak! Also, from the
point of view of meaning, this transmission eludes all the orders which
are said to be “structured like a language” Taken as a system of refer-
ence, the order of human values is but an inch away from the systems of
divine positionality. What is transmitted from the pregnant woman to her
child? Quite a bit: nourishment and antibodies, for example. But not just
these obvious things. For what is transmitted above all are the fundamen-
tal models of our industrial society. While there is still no speech here
there is already a message. The message concerns industrial society; it is
a specific message and differs according to the place one occupies within
this order. We are here already in the signifier, though not yet in speech
or in language. While the transmitted message has hardly anything to do
with the structural laws of linguistics or etymology, it has a great deal to
do with all those heterogeneous things that converge in the aforemen-
tioned idea of human ramification. Everything that concerns man in his
relation to the most primitive demand is clearly marked by the signifier,
but not necessarily by a signifier that partakes of a more or less universal linguistic essence.

All that attempts to speak in this way—though is not yet at the level of speech, but rather has to do with transference, transmission, or exchange—can be characterized as what can be cut, and as something that allows for the signifiers’ play of articulation. If the objects of transmission, gestures, and glances result in rendering possible the nourishment of a child this is because, at all levels, these things have already been marked and have a direct effect on this system of signifying chains. What is the law of exchange at this level? It is impossible to avoid this question! It is played out and exposes itself anew at every turn. We are faced with a fundamental precariousness in the structure of exchange, as this signifier that is not “crystallized” like a language is clearly at the foundation of society and, in the final analysis, at the foundation of all the signifying systems, including linguistics.

If speech does not exist in the animal realm, this is because the system of transmission and of totalization of this order has until now been able to do without speech, which is not the case for the degenerate branch of humanity; this is so because the relations of speech, image, and the transference in man are tied to a fundamental deficiency what Lacan calls a “dehiscence at the heart of the organism” — which, furthermore, constrains man to have recourse to various forms of social division of labor in order to survive. In the future, this survival will depend on the capacity of cybernetic machines to resolve humanity’s problems. It will, therefore, be impossible to respond to the attack of a new virus without the intervention of continuously advancing computers.

If I evoke this myth of the machine, it is to highlight the absurdity of the situation. Is the computer in question God? Or perhaps it is God himself who predetermined these successive versions so that they would respond to all sorts of more or less contingent problems such as, for example, the novel strategic calculations that would be required in a new cold war. After all, this myth illustrates better the impasses of present society than the staid references to the habitual imagery of familialism, regionalism, nationalism, which, moreover, suffer the disadvantage of serving to reinforce forms of social neurosis to the same extent that they are unable to respond to the goals they have set out for themselves. In fact, this traditional imagery would probably be incapable of sustaining its subjugating function were it not for the incessant work of misrecognition and the neurosis of civilization, forever condemning the subject to compulsively resort to degenerate forms of need – needs that are at once blind and without object, and addressed to a god that has become idiotic and evil.
Notes

This short presentation to the GTPSI (Groupe de travail de psychothérapie institutionnelle, which is also referred to as the Groupe de travail de psychologie et sociologie institutionnelle) appeared in *Psychanalyse et transversalité* (Paris: Maspero, 1972), pp. 52–58. It dates from 1964. GTPSI was founded in 1960. Upon expansion in 1965 it became known as the SPI (Société de psychothérapie institutionnelle).


*Translated by John Caruana*
Anti-Oedipus managed to stir things up a bit with its severe criticism of the "familialism" of psychoanalysis. After about ten years, however, this has now become a banal issue. Nearly everyone realized that that criticism had the ring of truth. I duly respect Freud, for what he represents; he was incredibly creative. His strokes of both genius and folly were rejected as he remained marginalized, kept at the peripheries of the scientific and medical arenas, over a rather long period of his life, and it was during this period of marginalization that he managed to draw attention to subjective facts which had been, until then, totally mistaken. His successors, however, in particular those of the Lacanian structuralist strain, have transformed psychoanalysis into a cult, turning psychoanalytic theory into a kind of theology celebrated by affected and pretentious sects which are still proliferating. At the time of my studies at the École freudienne, I was struck by the schism that inserted itself between the sophistication of the theoretical propositions taught there and the attitude people had developed vis-à-vis the clinical domain. Those with discourses that were not particularly brilliant and short on razzle-dazzle, still managed to hold down a fairly reasonable practice while, inversely, those known for distinguished and elegant discourses employed in their monkey-see-monkey-do mimicking of the Master, often behaved outright irresponsibly in therapy. To take charge of someone's life and direct its outcome, all the while running the risk of perhaps having all efforts lead one down a blind alley, is a matter of no little significance! There are people who come to you in total disarray, who are very vulnerable and very responsive to your suggestions, so much so that if the transference gets off on a bad footing the peril of alienating the person becomes a real threat. This phenomenon is not peculiar to the domain of psychoanalysis. Most of us are certainly aware of other examples of grand theories that have been employed for religious and perverted purposes and have had dreadful consequences (I can think of the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia or of certain Marxist-Leninist groups in South America . . .).
In short, this method of furthering the cause of psychoanalysis no longer holds much water; others continue to do it with great talent – for example, Robert Castel.\textsuperscript{1} On the other hand, one must admit that it is also important not to tip the scale and sink into reductionist, neo-behaviourist or systemist perspectives so typical of the Anglo-Saxon tradition which are currently conveyed by trends in family therapy.

Should one wish to go beyond this critical point to envision possibilities for the reconstruction of analysis on a different basis, I feel it is important to restate the question in terms of its status as a \textit{myth of reference}. In order to live one’s life – one’s madness as well as one’s neurosis, desire, melancholy, or even one’s quotidian “normality” – each individual is bound to refer to a certain number of public or private myths. In ancient societies these myths had social consistency sufficient to allow for a system of reference with respect to morals, religion, sex, etc., in a manner that was much less dogmatic compared to what we have today; hence, in the case of a sacrificial exploration, the collectivity sought out ways to locate the kind of spirit dwelling within the sick person and to uncover the cultural, social, mythical and affective nature of the transgression. If a practical ritual no longer worked, one oriented oneself in another direction without pretending that one had come up against a resistance. These people probed subjectivity with an indisputable pragmatism and with an appeal to codes of conduct shared by the whole social body that provided the \textit{testing grounds} for the effects of these codes. This is far from being the case with our psychological and psychoanalytic methods!

In societies where human faculties are highly integrated, the mythical systems of reference, at the very beginning, were taken over by great monotheistic religions which strived to respond to the cultural demand of castes, national groups and social classes. In time, all this collapsed with the deterritorialization of the ancient forms of filiation, of the clan, the community, the chiefs, etc. Consequently, the great monotheistic religions in their turn declined and lost a major portion of the direct sway they once held over collective subjective realities. (Aside from certain paradoxical situations today like those of Poland or Iran where religious ideologies have recovered their structural function for a whole nation. I draw on these two examples for their symmetric and, at the same time, antinomic nature: the latter leaning towards fascism, the former towards social liberation.) Generally speaking, however, reference to sin, confession, and prayer no longer carry the same weight as they once did; nor can they intervene any longer in the same manner in the problems of individuals held in the grip of psychotic intensity, neurosis or whatever form of mental distress. To make up for this loss, we can often see spectacular and daring ventures to bring back onto the modern scene
animistic religions and traditional approaches to medicine in countries like Brazil with the *candomblé*, Macumba and Voodoo, etc.

To compensate for the relapse of these religions, great devices of subjectivation have emerged as conduits of modern myths: from the bourgeois novel of Jean-Jacques Rousseau to James Joyce, from the star-system of cinema to hit songs and sports and, generally speaking, the whole array of what we recognize today as mass-mediated culture. Only here we are talking of ruptured family myths. Psychoanalysis and family therapy constitute in their own right a kind of background reference, providing a body and a serious demeanor for this profane subjectivation. To restate my point, it seems to me that nobody can possibly organize their life independently of these subjective formations of reference. When one is through with one of them – whether it has lost its motivating force, or whether it is reduced to the level of banality one sees that in spite of its degeneration and impoverishment, it continues to survive. This is perhaps the case with Freudianism and Marxism. Unless they are replaced in their role as collective myths, they will never wither away! They have, in fact, become a kind of chronic collective delirium. Take the end of the Hitlerian paradigm, for example: the matter was already lost in 1941 and 1942; but it was seen through to the end, to total disaster, and it has managed to linger well after its end. As Kuhn pointed out so well with reference to scientific paradigms, a body of explication that loses its consistency is never simply replaced by a more credible alternative. It retains its place and hangs on like an ailing patient.

Under these conditions it is useless even to attempt to demonstrate in a rational way the absurdity of most psychoanalytic hypotheses. One has to drain one’s own cup to the last drop! And this probably applies just as well to the systematization of family therapy. Psychologists and social workers today display a certain avidity for rediscovering frames of reference. The university is poised as a resource to supply them with scientific bases. In most of the cases, however, all we are dealing with are reductionist theories that position themselves side-by-side with real problems – a metonymic scientificity, in a manner of speaking. In fact, when the *users* go to see a shrink, they know very well that they are not dealing with real scientists, but with people who present themselves as *servers* in a particular problematic order. In the past, when people went to see a priest, the servant of God, they were to some extent familiar with his methods of proceeding, his intimate ties with his maid, with the neighbours, and had some idea of his way of thinking. Psychoanalysts are, no doubt, people held in high esteem! However, they are far more isolated and, in my opinion, will not continue to carry on with their business much longer by referring to deflated myths.
Once the necessity, or dare I say even the legitimacy, of mythic references is understood, the question is no longer aimed at their scientific validity but is redirected towards their social functionality. This is the true site of theoretical research in this domain. One can theorize a production of subjectivity in a given context, within a particular group or with respect to a neurosis or psychosis, without having to resort to the authority of science in the matter and refer instead to something that would imply a formalization of a sense of the universal in order to affirm itself as a universal truth. I feel a strong urge to underline that we are not talking about ways to create a general theory for the human sciences – not even for the social and juridical sciences – since theorization, in all the matters it may encompass, cannot amount to more than what I call a descriptive or functional cartography. In my estimation, this would involve an invitation to all parties and groups concerned, in accordance with the appropriate modalities, to participate in the activity of creating models that touch on their lives. Furthermore, it is precisely the study of these modalities that I perceive as being the essence of analytic theorizing. I read in the papers quite recently that twenty million Brazilians are on the brink of dying of hunger in the north-east part of the country, which may lead to the engendering of a race of autistic dwarfs. In order to understand and help this population, references to symbolic castration, the signifier or the Name of the Father would hardly amount to more than a paltry form of support!

On the other hand, people who need to confront these types of challenges would make unmistakable gains were they able to create a certain number of social instruments and functional concepts to deal with the situation. The political dimension of the production of subjectivity is clearly evident in such a case. Yet it goes beyond that under the auspices of other modalities and into different contexts. I repeat, therefore, the less the shrinks see themselves as scientists, the more they will take heed of their responsibilities; we are not talking about an air of guilt ridden responsibility displayed by those who pretend to be speaking in the name of truth or history. I belong to a generation who witnessed the attacks on J.-P. Sartre, where some people imagined, in the age of La Nausée, that they knew for certain the reasons behind suicide and delinquency among the youth of that period, and held him responsible for all of it. Intellectuals who labor on the building of theories sometimes caution us against states of affairs they disapprove of and will even take some responsibility for the consequences that follow from the theory. This, however, only seldom amounts to a direct assuming of responsibility. On the other hand, they often frequently exert an inhibiting function by treading, unwarranted, on a terrain where they constrain the emergence of certain problems that could be looked at from more constructive angles. I always
find myself politically involved in various ways and degrees. I have been participating in social movements since my childhood and, moreover, I became a psychoanalyst. This has led me to reject any tight compartmentalization between the individual and society. In my view, the singular and collective dimensions always tend to merge. If one refuses to situate a problem in its political and micropolitical context, one ends up sterilizing its impact of truth. To intervene with one's intelligence and one's means, as feeble as they may be, or as simple as they may appear, nevertheless, remains quite essential. And this is an integral part of any propaedeutic, of any conceivable didactic process.

After 1968, psychologists, psychiatrists, caretakers on mental wards, were all seen as cops. This we have to admit! But where does this begin, where does this end? What is important is to determine whether the position one occupies will, or will not, contribute to the overcoming of the realities of segregation, social and psychological mutilation, and whether one will, at least, be able to minimize the damage.

Notes


Translated by Charles Dudas
PART II

From Schizo Bypasses to Postmodern Impasses
The First Positive Task of Schizoanalysis
With Gilles Deleuze

The negative or destructive task of schizoanalysis is in no way separable from its positive tasks – all these tasks are necessarily undertaken at the same time. The first positive task consists of discovering in a subject the nature, the formation, of the functioning of his desiring-machines, independently of any interpretations. What are your desiring-machines, what do you put into these machines, what is the output, how does it work, what are your nonhuman sexes? The schizoanalyst is a mechanic, and schizoanalysis is solely functional. In this respect it cannot remain at the level of a still interpretative examination – interpretative from the point of view of the unconscious – of the social machines in which the subject is caught as a cog or as a user; nor of the technical machines that are his prized possession, or that he perfects or even produces through handiwork; nor of the subject’s use of his machines in his dreams and his fantasies. These machines are still too representative, and represent units that are too large – even the perverted machines of the sadist or the masochist, even the influencing machines of the paranoiac. We have seen in general that the pseudo-analyses of the “object” were really the lowest level of analytic activity, even and especially when they claim to double the real object with an imaginary object; and better a how-to-interpret-your-dreams book than a psychoanalysis of the market place.

The consideration of all these machines, however, whether they be real, symbolic, or imaginary, must indeed intervene in a specific way – but as functional indices to point us in the direction of the desiring-machines, to which these indices are more or less close and affinal. The desiring-machines in fact are only reached starting from a certain threshold of dispersion that no longer permits either their imaginary identity or their structural unity to subsist. (These instances still belong to the order of interpretation, that is to say the order of the signified or the signifier.) Partial objects are what make up the parts of the desiring-machines; partial objects define the working machine or the working parts, but in a state of dispersion such that one part is continually referring to a
part from an entirely different machine, like the red clover and the bumble bee, the wasp and the orchid, the bicycle horn and the dead rat’s ass. Let’s not rush to introduce a term that would be like a phallus structuring the whole and personifying the parts, unifying and totalizing everything. Everywhere there is libido as machine energy, and neither the horn nor the bumble bee have the privilege of being a phallus: the phallus intervenes only in the structural organization and the personal relations deriving from it, where everyone, like the worker called to war, abandons his machines and sets to fighting for a war trophy that is nothing but a great absence, with one and the same penalty, one and the same ridiculous wound for all – castration. This entire struggle for the phallus, this poorly understood will to power, this anthropomorphic representation of sex, this whole conception of sexuality that horrifies Lawrence precisely because it is no more than a conception, because it is an idea that “reason” imposes on the unconscious and introduces into the passional sphere, and is not by any means a formation of this sphere – here is where desire finds itself trapped, specifically limited to human sex, unified and identified in the molar constellation. But the desiring-machines live on the contrary under the order of dispersion of the molecular elements. And one fails to understand the nature and function of partial objects if one does not see therein such elements, rather than parts of even a fragmented whole. As Lawrence said, analysis does not have to do with anything that resembles a concept or a person, “the so-called human relations are not involved”.¹ Analysis should deal solely (except in its negative task) with the machinic arrangements grasped in the context of their molecular dispersion.

Let us therefore return to the rule so clearly stated by Serge Leclaire, even if he sees this only as a fiction instead of the real-desire [réel-désir]: the elements or parts of the desiring-machines are recognized by their mutual independence, such that nothing in the one depends or should depend on something in the other. They must not be opposed determinations of a same entity, nor the differentiations of a single being, such as the masculine and the feminine in the human sex, but different or really-distinct things [des réellement-distincts], distinct “beings,” as found in the dispersion of the nonhuman sex (the clover and the bee). As long as schizoanalysis has not arrived at these disparate elements, it has not yet discovered the partial objects as the ultimate elements of the unconscious. It is in this sense that Leclaire used the term “erogenous body” not to designate a fragmented organism, but an emission of preindividual and prepersonal singularities, a pure dispersed and anarchic multiplicity, without unity or totality, and whose elements are welded, pasted together by the real distinction or the very absence of a link. Such is the case in the schizoid sequences of Beckett: stones,
pockets, mouth; a shoe, a pipe bowl, a small limp bundle that is undefined, a cover for a bicycle bell, half a crutch (if one indefinitely runs up against the same set of pure singularities, one can feel confident that he has drawn near the singularity of the subject's desire). To be sure, one can always establish or re-establish some sort of link between these elements: organic links between organs or fragments or organs that eventually form part of the multiplicity; psychological and axiological links — the good, the bad — that finally refer to the persons or to the scenes from which these elements are borrowed; structural links between the ideas or the concepts apt to correspond to them. But it is not in this respect that the partial objects are elements of the unconscious, and we cannot even go along with the image of the partial objects that their inventor, Melanie Klein, proposes. This is because, whether organs or fragments of organs, the partial objects do not refer in the least to an organism that would function phantasmatically as a lost unity or a totality to come. Their dispersion has nothing to do with a lack, and constitutes their mode or presence in the multiplicity they form without unification or totalization. With every structure dislodged, every memory abolished, every organism set aside, every link undone, they function as raw partial objects, dispersed working parts of a machine that is itself dispersed. In short, partial objects are the molecular functions of the unconscious. That is why, when we insisted earlier on the difference between desiring-machines and all the figures of molar machines, we were fully aware that they were both contained in, and did not exist without, one another, but we had to stress the difference in regime and in scale between these two machinic species.

It is true that one might instead wonder how these conditions of dispersion, of real distinction, and of the absence of a link permit any machinic regime to exist — how the partial objects thus defined are able to form machines and arrangements of machines. The answer lies in the passive nature of the syntheses, or — what amounts to the same thing — in the indirect nature of the interactions under consideration. If it is true that every partial object emits a flow, it is also the case that this flow is associated with another partial object and defines the other's potential field of presence, which is itself multiple (a multiplicity of anuses for the flows of shit). The synthesis of connection of the partial objects is indirect, since one of the partial objects, in each point of its presence within the field, always breaks the flow that another object emits or produces relatively, itself ready to emit a flow that other partial objects will break. The flows are two-headed, so to speak, and it is by means of these flows that every productive connection is made, such as we have tried to account for with the notion of flow-schizz or break-flow. So that the true activities of the unconscious, causing to flow and
breaking flows, consist of the passive synthesis itself insofar as it ensures the relative coexistence and displacement of the two different functions.

Now let us assume that the respective flows associated with two partial objects at least partially overlap: their production remains distinct in relation to the objects \( x \) and \( y \) that emit them, but not the fields of presence in relation to the objects \( a \) and \( b \) that inhabit and interrupt them, such that the partial \( a \) and the partial \( b \) become in this regard indiscernible (thus the mouth and the anus, the mouth-anus of the anorexic). And they are not indiscernible solely in the mixed region, since one can always assume that, having exchanged their function within this region, they cannot be further distinguished by exclusion there where the two flows no longer overlap: one then finds oneself before a new passive synthesis where \( a \) and \( b \) are in a paradoxical relationship of included disjunction. Finally there remains the possibility, not of an overlapping of the flows, but of a permutation of the objects that emit them: one discovers fringes of interference on the edge of each field of presence, fringes that testify to the remainder of a flow in the other, and form residual conjunctive syntheses guiding the passage or the heartfelt becoming from the one to the other. A permutation involving 2, 3, \( n \) organs; deformable abstract polygons that make game of the figurative Oedipal triangle, and never cease to undo it. Through binarity, overlapping, or permutation, all these indirect passive syntheses are one and the same engineering of desire. But who will be able to describe the desiring-machines of each subject, what analysis will be exacting enough for this?

Mozart's desiring-machine? “Raise your ass to your mouth, ah, my ass burns like fire, but what can be the meaning of that? Perhaps a turd wants to come out. Yes, yes, turd, I know you, I see you, I feel you. What is this – is such a thing possible?”

These syntheses necessarily imply the position of a body without organs. This is due to the fact that the body without organs is in no way the contrary of the organs-partial objects. It is itself produced in the first passive synthesis of connection, as that which is going to neutralize – or on the contrary put into motion – the two activities, the two heads of desire. For as we have seen, it can be produced as the amorphous fluid of antiproduction, just as it can be produced as the support that appropriates for itself the flow production. It can as well repel the organs-objects as attract them, and appropriate them for itself. But in repulsion as in attraction, the body without organs is not in opposition to these organ-objects; it merely ensures its own opposition, and their opposition, with regard to an organism. The body without organs and the organs-partial objects are opposed conjointly to the organism. The body without organs is in fact produced as a whole, but a whole alongside the parts – a whole
that does not unify or totalize them, but that is added to them like a new, really distinct part.

When it repels the organs, as in the mounting of the paranoiac machine, the body without organs marks the external limit of the pure multiplicity formed by these organs themselves insofar as they constitute a nonorganic and nonorganized multiplicity. And when it attracts them and fits itself over them, in the process of a miraculating fetishistic machine, it still does not totalize them, unify them in the manner of an organism: the organs-partial objects cling to the body without organs, and enter into the new syntheses of included disjunction and nomadic conjunction, of overlapping and permutation, on this body — syntheses that continue to repudiate the organism and its organization. Desire indeed passes through the body, and through the organs, but not through the organism. That is why the partial objects are not the expression of a fragmented, shattered organism, which would presuppose a destroyed totality or the freed parts of a whole; nor is the body without organs the expression of a “de-differentiated” [dé-différencié] organism stuck back together that would surmount its parts. The organs-partial objects and the body without organs are at bottom one and the same thing, one and the same multiplicity that must be conceived as such by schizoanalysis. Partial objects are the direct powers of the body without organs, and the body without organs, the raw material of the partial objects. The body without organs is the matter that always fills space to given degrees of intensity, and the partial objects are these degrees, these intensive parts that produce the real in space starting from matter as intensity = 0. The body without organs is the immanent substance, in the most Spinozist sense of the word; and the partial objects are like its ultimate attributes, which belong to it precisely insofar as they are really distinct and cannot on this account exclude or oppose one another. The partial objects and the body without organs are the two material elements of the schizophrenic desiring-machines: the one as the immobile motor, the others as the working parts; the one as the giant molecule, the others as the micromolecules — the two together in a relationship of continuity from one end to the other of the molecular chain of desire.

The chain is like the apparatus of transmission or of reproduction in the desiring-machine. Insofar as it brings together — without unifying or uniting them — the body without organs and the partial objects, the desiring-machine is inseparable both from the distribution of the partial objects on the body without organs, and from the leveling effect exerted on the partial objects by the body without organs, which results in appropriation. The chain also implies another type of synthesis than the flows: it is no longer the lines of connection that traverse the productive parts of the machine, but an entire network of disjunction on the
recording surface of the body without organs. And we have doubtless been able to present things in a logical order where the disjunctive synthesis of recording seemed to follow after the connective synthesis of production, with a part of the energy of production (Libido) being converted into a recording energy (Numen). But in fact, from the standpoint of the machine itself, there is no succession that ensures the strict coexistence of the chains and the flows, as well as of the body without organs and the partial objects. The conversion of a portion of the energy does not occur at a given moment, but is a preliminary and constant condition of the system. The chain is the network of included disjunctions on the body without organs, inasmuch as these disjunctions resect the productive connections; the chain causes them to pass over to the body without organs itself, thereby channeling or "codifying" the flows. However, the whole question is in knowing whether one can speak of a code at the level of this molecular chain of desire. We have seen that a code implied two things – one or the other, or the two together: on the one hand, the specific determination of the full body as a territoriality of support; on the other hand, the erection of a despotic signifier on which the entire chain depends. In this regard, in vain is the axiomatic in profound opposition to codes; since it works on the decoded flows, it cannot itself proceed except by effecting reterritorializations and by reviving the signifying unity. The very notions of code and axiomatic therefore seem to be valid only for the molar aggregates, where the signifying chain forms a given determinate configuration on a support that is itself specifically determined, and in terms of a detached signifier. These conditions are not fulfilled without exclusions forming and appearing in the disjunctive network – at the same time as the connective lines take on a global and specific meaning.

But it is another case altogether with the properly molecular chain: insofar as the body without organs is a nonspecific and nonspecified support that marks the molecular limit of the molar aggregates, the chain no longer has any other function than that of deterritorializing the flows and causing them to pass through the signifying wall, thereby undoing the codes. The function of the chain is no longer that of coding the flows on a full body of the earth, the despot, or capital, but on the contrary that of decoding them on the full body without organs. It is a chain of escape, and no longer a code. The signifying chain has become a chain of decoding and deterritorialization, which must be apprehended – and can only be apprehended – as the reverse of the codes and the territorialities. This molecular chain is still signifying because it is composed of signs of desire; but these signs are no longer signifying, given the fact that they are under the order of the included disjunctions where everything is possible. These signs are points whose nature is a matter of indifference,
abstract machinic figures that play freely on the body without organs and as yet form no structured configuration— or rather, they form one no longer. As Jacques Monod says, we must conceive of a machine that is such by its functional properties not by its structure, “where nothing but the play of blind combinations can be discerned”.

It is precisely the ambiguity of what the biologists call a genetic code that enables us to understand this kind of situation: for if the corresponding chain effectively forms codes, inasmuch as it folds into exclusive molar configurations, it undoes the code by unfolding along a molecular fibre that includes all the possible figures. Similarly in Lacan, the symbolic organization of the structure, with its exclusions that come from the function of the signifier, has as its reverse side the real inorganization of desire.

It would seem that the genetic code points to a genic decoding: one need only grasp the decoding and deterritorialization functions in their own positivity, inasmuch as they imply a particular chain state that is metastable and distinct both from any axiomatic and from any code. The molecular chain is the form in which the genic unconscious, always remaining subject, reproduces itself. And as we have seen, that is the primary inspiration of psychoanalysis: it does not add a code to all those that are already known. The signifying chain of the unconscious, Numen, is not used to discover or decipher codes of desire, but to cause absolutely decoded flows of desire, Libido, to circulate, and to discover in desire that which scrambles all the codes and undoes all the territorialities. It is true that Oedipus will restore psychoanalysis to the status of a simple code, with the familial territoriality and the signifier of castration. Worse yet, it will happen that psychoanalysis itself wants to act as an axiomatic, which is the famous turning point where it no longer even relates to the familial scene, but solely to the psychoanalytic scene that supposedly answers for its own truth, and to the psychoanalytic operation that supposedly answers for its own success—the couch as an axiomatized earth, the axiomatic of the “cure” as a successful castration! But by recoding or axiomatizing the flows of desire in this way, psychoanalysis makes a molar use of the signifying chain that results in a misappreciation of all the syntheses of the unconscious.

The body without organs is the model of death. As the authors of horror stories have understood so well, it is not death that serves as the model for catatonia, it is catatonic schizophrenia that gives its model to death. Zero intensity. The death model appears when the body without organs repels the organs and lays them aside: no mouth, no tongue, no teeth— to the point of self-mutilation, to the point of suicide. Yet there is no real opposition between the body without organs and the organs as partial objects; the only real opposition is to the molar organism that is their common enemy. In the desiring-machine, one sees the same
catatonic inspired by the immobile motor that forces him to put aside his organs, to immobilize them, to silence them, but also, impelled by the working parts that work in an autonomous or stereotyped fashion, to reactivate the organs, to reanimate them with local movements. It is a question of different parts of the machine, different and coexisting, different in their very coexistence. Hence it is absurd to speak of a death desire that would presumably be in qualitative opposition to the life desires. Death is not desired, there is only death that desires, by virtue of the body without organs or the immobile motor, and there is also life that desires, by virtue of the working organs. There we do not have two desires but two parts, two kinds of desiring-machine parts, in the dispersion of the machine itself. And yet the problem persists: how can all that function together? For it is not yet a functioning, but solely the (non-structural) condition of a molecular functioning. The functioning appears when the motor, under the preceding conditions — i.e. without ceasing to be immobile and without forming an organism — attracts the organs to the body without organs, and appropriates them for itself in the apparent objective movement. Repulsion is the condition of the machine's functioning, but attraction is the functioning itself. That the functioning depends on repulsion is clear to us, inasmuch as it all works only by breaking down. One is then able to say what this running or this functioning consists of: in the cycle of the desiring-machine it is a matter of constantly translating, constantly converting the death model into something else altogether, which is the experience of death. Converting the death that rises from within (in the body without organs) into the death that comes from without (on the body without organs).

But it seems that things are becoming very obscure, for what is this distinction between the experience of death and the model of death? Here again, is it a death desire? A being-for-death? Or rather an investment of death, even if speculative? None of the above. The experience of death is the most common of occurrences in the unconscious, precisely because it occurs in life and for life, in every passage or becoming, in every intensity as passage or becoming. It is in the very nature of every intensity to invest within itself the zero intensity starting from which it is produced, in one moment, as that which grows or diminishes according to an infinity of degrees (as Pierre Klossowski noted, “an afflux is necessary merely to signify the absence of intensity”). We have attempted to show in this respect how the relations of attraction and repulsion produced such states, sensations, and emotions, which imply a new energetic conversion and form the third kind of synthesis, the synthesis of conjunction. One might say that the unconscious as a real subject has scattered an apparent residual and nomadic subject around the entire compass of its cycle, a subject that passes by way of all the becomings
corresponding to the included disjunctions: the last part of the desiring-machine, the adjacent part. These intense becomings and feelings, these intensive emotions, feed deliriums and hallucinations. But in themselves, these intensive emotions are closest to the matter whose zero degree they invest in itself. They control the unconscious experience of death, insofar as death is what is felt in every feeling, *what never ceases and never finishes happening in every becoming* – in the becoming-another-sex, the becoming-god, the becoming-a-face, etc., forming zones of intensity on the body without organs. Every intensity controls within its own life the experience of death, and envelopes it. And it is doubtless the case that every intensity is extinguished at the end, that every becoming itself becomes a becoming-death! Death, then, does actually happen. Maurice Blanchot distinguishes this twofold nature clearly, these two irreducible aspects of death; the one, according to which the apparent subject never ceases to live and travel as a One – “one never stops and never has done with dying”; and the other, according to which this same subject, fixed as \( l \), actually dies – which is to say it finally ceases to die since it ends up dying, in the reality of a last instant that fixes it in this way as an \( l \), all the while undoing the intensity, carrying it back to the zero that envelopes it.\(^6\)

From one aspect to the other, there is not at all a personal deepening, but something quite different: there is a return from the experience of death to the model of death, in the cycle of the desiring-machines. The cycle is closed. For a new departure, since this \( l \) is another? The experience of death must have given us exactly enough broadened experience, in order to live and know that the desiring-machines do not die. And that the subject as an adjacent part is always a “one” who conducts the experience, not an \( l \) who receives the model. For the model itself is not the \( l \) either, but the body without organs. And \( l \) does not rejoin the model without the model starting out again in the direction of another experience. Always going from the model to the experience, and starting out again, returning from the model to the experience, is what *schizophrenizing death* amounts to, the exercise of the desiring-machines (which is their very secret, well understood by the terrifying authors). The machines tell us this, and make us live it, feel it, deeper than delirium and further than hallucination; yes, the return to repulsion will condition other attractions, other functionings, the setting in motion of other working parts on the body without organs, the putting to work of other adjacent parts on the periphery that have as much a right to say One as we ourselves do. “Let him die in his leaping through unheard-of and unnamable things: other horrible workers will come; they will begin on the horizons where the other collapsed”? The Eternal Return as experience, and as the deterritorialized circuit of all the cycles of desire.
How odd the psychoanalytic venture is. Psychoanalysis ought to be a song of life, or else be worth nothing at all. It ought, practically, to teach us to sing life. And see how the most defeated, sad song of death emanates from it: 

\[ \text{eia} \text{popeia}. \]

From the start, and because of his stubborn dualism of the drives, Freud never stopped trying to limit the discovery of a subjective or vital essence of desire as libido. But when the dualism passed into a death instinct against Eros, this was no longer a simple limitation, it was a liquidation of the libido. Reich did not go wrong here, and was perhaps the only one to maintain that the product of analysis should be a free and joyous person, a carrier of the life flows, capable of carrying them all the way into the desert and decoding them – even if this idea necessarily took on the appearance of a crazy idea, given what had become of analysis. He demonstrated that Freud, no less than Jung and Adler, had repudiated the sexual position: the fixing of the death instinct in fact deprives sexuality of its generative role on at least one essential point, which is the genesis of anxiety, since this genesis becomes the autonomous cause of sexual repression instead of its result; it follows that sexuality as desire no longer animates a social critique of civilization, but that civilization on the contrary finds itself sanctified as the sole agency capable of opposing the death desire. And how does it do this? By in principle turning death against death, by making this turned-back death \([\text{la mort retournée}]\) into a force of desire, by putting it in the service of a pseudo-life through an entire culture of guilt feeling.

There is no need to tell all over how psychoanalysis culminates in a theory of culture that takes up again the age-old task of the ascetic ideal, Nirvana, the cultural extract, judging life, belittling life, measuring life against death, and only retaining from life what the death of death wants very much to leave us with – a sublime resignation. As Reich says, when psychoanalysis began to speak of Eros, the whole world breathed a sigh of relief: one knew what this meant, and that everything was going to unfold within a mortified life, since Thanatos was now the partner of Eros, for worse but also \textit{for better}.\(^8\) Psychoanalysis becomes the training ground of a new kind of priest, the director of bad conscience: bad conscience has made us sick, but that is what will cure us! Freud did not hide what was really at issue with the introduction of the death instinct: it is not a question of any fact whatever, but merely of a principle, a question of principle. The death instinct is pure silence, pure transcendence, not givable and not given in experience. This very point is remarkable: it is because death, according to Freud, has neither a model nor an experience, that he makes of it a transcendent principle.\(^9\) So that the psychoanalysts who refused the death instinct did so for the same reasons as those who accepted it: some said that there was no death instinct \textit{since} there was no model or experience in the unconscious; others, that there
was a death instinct precisely because there was no model or experience. We say, to the contrary, that there is no death instinct because there is both the model and the experience of death in the unconscious. Death then is a part of the desiring-machine, a part that must itself be judged, evaluated in the functioning of the machine and the system of its energetic conversions, and not as an abstract principle.

If Freud needs death as a principle, this is by virtue of the requirements of the dualism that maintains a qualitative opposition between the drives (you will not escape the conflict): once the dualism of the sexual drives and the ego drives has only a topological scope, the qualitative or dynamic dualism passes between Eros and Thanatos. But the same enterprise is continued and reinforced – eliminating the machinic element of desire, the desiring-machines. It is a matter of eliminating the libido, insofar as it implies the possibility of energetic conversions in the machine (Libido-Numen-Voluptas). It is a matter of imposing the idea of an energetic duality rendering the machinic transformations impossible, with everything obliged to pass by way of an indifferent neutral energy, that energy emanating from Oedipus and capable of being added to either of the two irreducible forms – neutralizing, mortifying life. The purpose of the topological and dynamic dualities is to thrust aside the point of view of functional multiplicity that alone is economic. (Szondi situates the problem clearly: why two kinds of drives qualified as molar, functioning mysteriously, which is to say oedipally, rather than \( n \) genes of drives – eight molecular genes, for example – functioning machinally?)

If one looks in this direction for the ultimate reason why Freud erects a transcendent death instinct as a principle, the reason will be found in Freud’s practice itself. For if the principle has nothing to do with the facts, it has a lot to do with the psychoanalyst’s conception of psychoanalytic practice, a conception the psychoanalyst wishes to impose. Freud made the most profound discovery of the abstract subjective essence of desire – Libido. But since he realienated this essence, reinvesting it in a subjective system of representation of the ego, and since he recoded this essence on the residual territoriality of Oedipus and under the despotic signifier of castration, he could no longer conceive the essence of life except in a form turned back against itself, in the form of death itself. And this neutralization, this turning against life, is also the last way in which a depressive and exhausted libido can go on surviving, and dream that it is surviving: “The ascetic ideal is an artifice for the preservation of life even when he wounds himself, this master of destruction, of self-destructing – the very wound itself compels him to live .” It is Oedipus, the marshy earth, that gives off a powerful odor of decay and death; and it is castration, the pious ascetic wound, the signifier, that makes of this death a conservatory for the Oedipal life. Desire is in itself
not a desire to love, but a force to love, a virtue that gives and produces, that engineers. (For how could what is in life still desire life? Who would want to call that a desire?) But desire must turn back against itself in the name of a horrible Ananke, the Ananke of the weak and the depressed, the contagious neurotic Ananke; desire must produce its shadow or its monkey, and find a strange artificial force for vegetating in the void, at the heart of its own lack. For better days to come? It must – but who talks in this way? what abjectness – become a desire to be loved, and worse, a sniveling desire to have been loved, a desire that is reborn of its own frustration: no, daddy-mommy didn't love me enough. Sick desire stretches out on the couch, an artificial swamp, a little earth, a little mother. "Look at you, stumbling and staggering with no use in your legs. And it's nothing but your wanting to be loved which does it. A maudlin crying to be loved, which makes your knees go all ricky" 12 Just as there are two stomachs for the ruminant, there must also exist two abortions, two castrations for sick desire: once in the family, in the familial scene, with the knitting mother; another time in an asepticized clinic, in the psychoanalytic scene, with specialist artists who know how to handle the death instinct and "bring off" castration, "bring off" frustration.

Is this really the right way to bring on better days? And aren't all the destructions performed by schizoanalysis worth more than this psychoanalytic conservatory, aren't they more a part of an affirmative task? "Lie down, then, on the soft couch which the analyst provides and try to think up something different if you realize that he is not a god but a human being like yourself, with worries, defects, ambitions, frailties, that he is not the repository of an all-encompassing wisdom [= code] but a wanderer, along the [deterioralized] path, perhaps you will cease pouring it out like a sewer, however melodious it may sound to your ears, and rise up on your own two legs and sing with your own God-given voice [Numen]. To confess, to whine, to complain, to commiserate, always demands a toll. To sing it doesn't cost you a penny. Not only does it cost nothing – you actually enrich others (instead of infecting them). The phantasmal world is the world which has not been fully conquered over. It is the world of the past, never of the future. To move forward clinging to the past is like dragging a ball and chain. We are all guilty of crime, the great crime of not living life to the full". 13 You weren't born Oedipus, you caused it to grow in yourself; and you aim to get out of it through fantasy, through castration, but this in turn you have caused to grow in Oedipus – namely, in yourself: the horrible circle. Shit on your whole mortifying, imaginary, and symbolic theatre. What does schizoanalysis ask? Nothing more than a bit of a relation to the outside, a little real reality. And we claim the right to a radical laxity, a radical incompetence – the
right to enter the analyst’s office and say it smells bad there. It reeks of the great death and the little ego.

Freud himself indeed spoke of the link between his “discovery” of the death instinct and World War I, which remains the model of capitalist war. More generally, the death instinct celebrates the wedding of psychoanalysis and capitalism; their engagement had been full of hesitation. What we have tried to show is a propos of capitalism is how it inherited much from a transcendent death-carrying agency, the despotic signifier, but also how it brought about this agency’s effusion in the full immanence of its own system: the full body, having become that of capital, suppresses the distinction between production and anti-production; everywhere it mixes antiproduction with the productive forces in the immanent reproduction of its own always widened limits (the axiomatic). The death enterprise is one of the principal and specific forms of the absorption of surplus value in capitalism. It is this itinerary that psychoanalysis rediscovers and retraces with the death instinct: the death instinct is now only pure silence in its transcendent distinction from life, but it effuses all the more, throughout all the immanent combinations it forms with this same life. Absorbed, diffuse, immanent death is the condition formed by the signifier in capitalism, the empty locus that is everywhere displaced in order to block the schizophrenic escapes and place restraints on the flights.

The only modern myth is the myth of zombies – mortified schizos, good for work, brought back to reason. In this sense the primitive and the barbarian, with their ways of coding death, are children in comparison to modern man and his axiomatic (so many unemployed are needed, so many deaths, the Algerian War doesn’t kill more people than weekend automobile accidents, planned death in Bengal, etc.). Modern man “raves to a far greater extent. His delirium is a switchboard with thirteen telephones. He gives his orders to the world. He doesn’t care for the ladies. He is brave, too. He is decorated like crazy. In man’s game of chance the death instinct, the silent instinct is decidedly well placed, perhaps next to egotism. It takes the place of zero in roulette. The house always wins. So too does death. The law of large numbers works for death”.\(^{14}\) It is now or never that we must take up a problem we had left hanging. Once it is said that capitalism works on the basis of decoded flows as such, how is it that it is infinitely further removed from desiring-production than were the primitive or even the barbarian systems, which nonetheless code and overcode the flows? Once it is said that desiring-production is itself a decoded and deterritorialized production, how do we explain that capitalism, with its axiomatic, its statistics, performs an infinitely vaster repression of this production than do the preceding regimes, which nonetheless did not lack the necessary repressive means?
We have seen that the molar statistical aggregates of social production were in a variable relationship of affinity with the molecular formations of desiring-production. What must be explained is that the capitalist aggregate is the least affinal, at the very moment it decodes and deterrioralizes with all its might.

The answer is the death instinct, if we call instinct in general the conditions of life that are historically and socially determined by the relations of production and antiproduction in a system. We know that molar social production and molecular desiring-production must be evaluated both from the viewpoint of their identity in nature and from the viewpoint of their difference in regime. But it could be that these two aspects, nature and regime, are in a sense potential and are actualized only in inverse proportion. Which means that where the regimes are the closest, the identity in nature is on the contrary at its minimum; and where the identity in nature appears to be at its maximum, the regimes differ to the highest degree. If we examine the primitive or the barbarian constellations, we see that the subjective essence of desire as production is referred to large objectivities, to the territorial or the despotic body, which act as natural or divine preconditions that thus ensure the coding or the overcoding of the flows of desire by introducing them into systems of representation that are themselves objective. Hence it can be said that the identity in nature between the two productions is completely hidden there: as much by the difference between the objective socius and the subjective full body of desiring-production, as by the difference between the qualified codes and overcodings of social production and the chains of decoding or of deterritorialization belonging to desiring-production, and by the entire repressive apparatus represented in the savage prohibitions, the barbarian law, and the rights of antiproduction. And yet the difference in regime, far from being accentuated and deepened, is on the contrary reduced to a minimum, because desiring-production as an absolute limit remains an exterior limit, or else stays unoccupied as an internalized and displaced limit, with the result that the machines of desire operate on this side of their limit within the framework of the socius and its codes. That is why the primitive codes and even the despotic overcodings testify to a polyvocity that functionally draws them nearer to a chain of decoding of desire: the parts of the desiring-machine function in the very workings of the social machine; the flows of desire enter and exit through the codes that continue, however, to inform the model and experience of death that are elaborated in the unity of the sociodesiring-apparatus. And it is even less a question of the death instinct to the extent that the model and the experience are better coded in a circuit that never stops grafting the desiring-machines onto the social machine and implanting the social machine in the desiring-machines.
Death comes all the more from without as it is coded from within. This is especially true of the system of cruelty, where death is inscribed in the primitive mechanism of surplus value as well as in the movement of the finite blocks of debt. But even in the system of despotic terror, where debt becomes infinite and where death experiences an elevation that tends to make of it a latent instinct, there nonetheless subsists a model in the overcoding law, and an experience for the overcoded subjects, at the same time as antiproduction remains separate as the share owing to the overlords.

Things are very different in capitalism. Precisely because the flows of capital are decoded and deterritorialized flows; precisely because the subjective essence of production is revealed in capitalism; precisely because the limit becomes internal to capitalism, which continually reproduces it, and also continually occupies it as an internalized and displaced limit; precisely for these reasons, the identity in nature must appear for itself between social production and desiring-production. But in its turn, this identity in nature, far from favoring an affinity in regime between the two modes of production, increases the difference in regime in a catastrophic fashion, and assembles an apparatus of repression the mere idea of which neither savagery nor barbarism could provide us. This is because, on the basis of a general collapse of the large objectivities, the decoded and deterritorialized flows of capitalism are not recaptured or co-opted, but directly apprehended in a codeless axiomatic that consigns them to the universe of subjective representation. Now this universe has as its function the splitting of the subjective essence (the identity in nature) into two functions, that of abstract labor alienated in private property that reproduces the ever wider interior limits, and that of abstract desire alienated in the privatized family that displaces the ever narrower internalized limits. The double alienation – labor-desire – is constantly increasing and deepening the difference in regime at the heart of the identity in nature. At the same time that death is decoded, it loses its relationship with a model and an experience, and becomes an instinct; that is, it effuses in the immanent system where each act of production is inextricably linked to the process of antiproduction as capital. There where the codes are undone, the death instinct lays hold of the repressive apparatus and begins to direct the circulation of the libido. A mortuary axiomatic. One might then believe in liberated desires, but ones that, like cadavers, feed on images. Death is not desired, but what is desired is dead, already dead: images. Everything labors in death, everything wishes for death. In truth, capitalism has nothing to co-opt; or rather, its powers of co-option coexist more often than not with what is to be co-opted, and even anticipate it. (How many revolutionary groups as such are already in place for a co-option that will be carried out only in
the future, and form an apparatus for the absorption of a surplus value not even produced yet – which gives them precisely an apparent revolutionary position.) In a world such as this, there is no living desire that could not of itself cause the system to explode, or that would not make the system dissolve at one end where everything would end up following behind and being swallowed up – a question of regime.

Here are the desiring-machines, with their three parts: the working parts, the immobile motor, the adjacent parts; their three forms of energy: Libido, Numen, and Voluptas; and their three syntheses: the connective syntheses of partial objects and flows, the disjunctive syntheses of singularities and chains, and the conjunctive syntheses of intensities and becomings. The schizoanalyst is not an interpreter, even less a theatre director; he is a mechanic, a micromechanic. There are no excavations to be undertaken, no archaeology, no statues in the unconscious: there are only stones to be sucked, à la Beckett, and other machinic elements belonging to deterritorialized constellations. The task of schizoanalysis is that of learning what a subject’s desiring-machines are, how they work, with what syntheses, what bursts of energy in the machines, what constituent misfires, with what flows, what chains, and what becomings in each case. Moreover, this positive task cannot be separated from indispensable destructions, the destruction of the molar aggregates, the structures and representations that prevent the machine from functioning. It is not easy to rediscover the molecules – even the giant molecule – their paths, their zones of presence, and their own syntheses, amid the large accumulations that fill the preconscious, and that delegate their representatives in the unconscious itself, thereby immobilizing the machines, silencing them, trapping them, sabotaging them, cornering them, holding them fast. In the unconscious it is not the lines of pressure that matter, but on the contrary the lines of escape. The unconscious does not apply pressure to consciousness; rather, consciousness applies pressure and straitjackets the unconscious, to prevent its escape. As to the unconscious, it is like the Platonic opposite whose opposite draws near: it flies or it perishes. What we have tried to show from the outset is how the unconscious productions and formations were not merely repelled by an agency of psychic repression that would enter into compromises with them, but actually covered over by antiformations that disfigure the unconscious in itself, and impose on it causations, comprehensions, and expressions that no longer have anything to do with its real functioning: thus all the statues, the Oedipal images, the phantasmal mise en scène, the Symbolic of castration, the effusion of the death instinct, the perverse reterritorializations. So that one can never, as in an interpretation, read the repressed through and in repression, since the latter is constantly inducing a false image of the thing it represses: illegitimate and tran-
scendent uses of the syntheses according to which the unconscious can no longer operate in accordance with its own constituent machines, but merely “represent” what a repressive apparatus gives it to represent. It is the very form of interpretation that shows itself to be incapable of attaining the unconscious, since it gives rise to the inevitable illusions (including the structure and the signifier) by means of which the conscious makes of the unconscious an image consonant with its wishes: we are still pious, psychoanalysis remains in the precritical stage.

Doubtless these illusions would not take hold if they did not benefit from a coincidence and a support in the unconscious itself that ensures the “hold”. We have seen what this support was: primal repression, as exerted by the body without organs at the moment of repulsion, at the heart of molecular desiring-production. Without this primal repression, a psychic regression in the proper sense of the word could not be delegated in the unconscious by the molar forces and thus crush desiring-production. Regression properly speaking profits from an occasion without which it could not interfere in the machinery of desire.15 In contrast to psychoanalysis, which itself falls into the trap while causing the unconscious to fall into its trap, schizoanalysis follows the lines of escape and the machinic indices all the way to the desiring-machines. If the essential aspect of the destructive task is to undo the Oedipal trap of regression properly speaking, and all its dependencies, each time in a way adapted to the “case” in question, the essential aspect of the first positive task is to ensure the machinic conversion of primal repression, there too in an adapted variable manner. Which is to say: undoing the blockage or the coincidence on which the repression properly speaking relies; transforming the apparent opposition of repulsion (the body without organs/the machines-partial objects) into a condition of real functioning; ensuring this functioning in the forms of attraction and production of intensities; thereafter integrating the failures in the attractive functioning, as well as enveloping the zero degree in the intensities produced; and thereby causing the desiring-machines to start up again. Such is the delicate and focal point that fills the function of transference in schizoanalysis dispersing, schizophrenizing the perverse transference of psychoanalysis.

Notes
3 From a letter by Mozart, cited by Marcel Moré, Le Dieu Mozart et le monde des oiseaux (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), p. 124: "Having come of age, he found the means of concealing his divine essence, by indulging in scatological amusements." Moré shows convincingly how the scatological machine works underneath and against the Oedipal "cage".

4 In his study on "Objet magique, sorcellerie et fétichisme" in Nouvelle revue de psychanalyse 2 (1970), Pierre Bonnafé clearly demonstrates in this respect the inadequacy of a notion like that of a fragmented body: "There is indeed a fragmenting of the body, but not at all with a feeling of loss or degradation. Quite to the contrary, as much for the holder as for the others, the body is fragmented by multiplication: the others no longer have to do with a simple person, but with a man to the \( x + y + z \) power whose life has been immeasurably increased, dispersed while being united with other natural forces . . . , since its existence no longer rests at the center of its person, but has hidden itself in several far-off and impregnable locations" (pp. 166–67). Bonnafé recognizes in the magic object the existence of the three desiring syntheses: the connective synthesis, which combines the fragments of the person with those of animals or plants; the included disjunctive synthesis, which records the man-animal composite; the conjunctive synthesis, which implies a veritable migration of the remainder or residue.


7 Arthur Rimbaud, letter to Paul Demeny, 15 May, 1871.


10 On the impossibility of immediate qualitative conversions, and the necessity for going by way of neutral energy, see Freud, The Ego and the Id, trans. Joan Riviere (New York: Norton, 1961). This impossibility, this necessity is no longer understandable, it seems to us, if one agrees with Jean Laplanche that "the death drive has no energy of its own" (Via et mort en psychanalyse [Paris: Flammarion, 1970], p. 211). Therefore the death drive could not enter into a veritable dualism, or would have to be confused with the neutral energy itself, which Freud denies.


14 L.-F. Céline, in L'Herne no. 3, p. 171.

15 Ibid.

Translated by Robert Hurley and Mark Seem