

DAVID COOPER

THE LANGUAGE  
OF  
MADNESS

*Allen Lane*

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This book is dedicated to the first Revolutionary.  
In each of us.

Forewarning	11
1. The Language of Madness	18
2. What are Radical Needs?	45
3. Orgasmic Politics	65
4. Links – and Some Disconnections	77
5. The Invention of Non-Psychiatry	116
Appendix I. What is Schizophrenia?	153
Appendix II. Statement of the International Network	164
Letter to the Network	172

I receive very many letters and I am sorry that I am generally not able to reply to them as I have no secretary or fixed address – so often they don't reach me in any case, unless sometimes by chance months later. But one can always internally register human statements without the formal reply.

# FOREWARNING

We do not want to be like Nietzsche, who went mad searching for just a few people to whom he could talk or who thought a bit like him. In our fight against all the oppressive and repressive forces that we find around us we know that through a plenitude of imposed suffering we find a free enough joy by which, across the crooked physiognomy of despair, we find enough of ourselves to make a minor celebration; at least finding a sufficient liberation to keep going in a perpetually renewable sense of total absurdity – the sense that cracks all ‘personal’ crises.

The points I want to make in this book are very simple; they are:

1. That to act politically means simply regaining what has been stolen from us, starting with our consciousness of our oppression within the capitalist system. I am addressing myself primarily to other people in the capitalist 'first world'. I shall refer to repression in bureaucratic socialist countries later in the text.

2. That consciousness of oppression is firstly a consciousness of *our* oppression – not that of the poor other people – otherwise we would be those celebrated 'professional liberators of *other* people' – certain psychiatrists, priests, social workers, teachers, etc.

3. That we have become conscious of our oppression in our most immediate everyday experiences of relationships, with people in our family, our friends, people in the road to the market place. Also in becoming aware that fruit dies on the trees because peasant farmers can't deal with a parasitic market structure which stops the fruit that they gather meeting the mouths of other workers who supply them in turn – by their work.

4. That, in the capitalist countries, we fight against all the mystifications of capitalist censorship of the mass-media and the educational processes (especially in 'advanced liberalism') and the ideology of familialism (you can get paid if you make children to become cheap sources of labour, the supply of increasingly necessary unemployed man-power, or conditioned to become psychiatric victims, delinquents, cannon-fodder for capitalism, mercenaries for those 'men' whose strong fascist businessmen-like faces express the tragedy of their violent, violating impotence).

5. That we realize that masses of 'human scientists', psychologists, psychiatrists, all forms of teachers and reformers and managers are being reproduced in the capitalist-fascist-imperialist countries to reinforce the definitions of normality laid down cunningly (in the short term) and idiotically (in the long term) by

the ruling class. Normalization imposes needs rather than recognizes them.

6. That the capitalist countries can no longer contain the liberatory forces amongst their own proletariat (e.g. Latin Europe) – much less than they can contain those of the third world (e.g. China, Cuba, Vietnam, Mozambique, Angola, already and specifically – but everywhere in the third world generally).

7. That the death agonies of capitalism have to be contained, and the contradictions fully developed, by all revolutionary socialist forces – which means not only the armed power of the countries of ‘achieved socialism’ which is essential at this time for the liberation of the third world (at least pending changes in the U.S. and Western Europe) if not for the people of those countries themselves – because they are probably looking for other things too – *their own social revolution*, a liberation that is not just another ‘liberalism’.

8. That it is a ‘good thing’, for example, that in 1936 the Soviet Union banned psychological testing as classist (now we recognize that it is racist and sexist also) technology and that in 1950 it banned the psychosurgical operation of lobotomy introduced in 1935 by the Portuguese fascist Egas Moniz. *But* that it is a ‘better thing’ that all psycho-techniques including chemical and bodily manipulation – including all the commercialized versions of this in the capitalist world (‘alternative therapies’) – be abandoned. These must be replaced by political recuperation<sup>1</sup> (*by the people from the repressive system*) of disorder. By the rediscovery of

1. I shall use ‘recuperation’ in two sorts of sense in this book:

(i) in individual experience as the recovery in the present, though not necessarily in the form of explicit, articulated knowledge, of ‘lost’ elements of early individual and pre-individual experience *or* of an original project of the election of



orgasm and madness (including the 'madness' of artists) as radical needs for the transformation of persons. These alone will integrate the 'political (infrastructural) revolution' of the change of relations of production with the 'social revolution' in the way that people live their lives to the way that they love their lives. If in 1917 that was not possible – now it is. Madness is a common social property that has been stolen from us, like the reality of our dreams and our deaths: we have to get these things back politically so that they become creativity and spontaneity in a transformed society.

9. That it is absurd to speak of the 'abolition' of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In certain situations that abolition is clearly not possible; in others we can begin to explore the limits of possible action *within* the system of bourgeois power. Proletarian internationalism means the respect of the right to various types of national 'practical communism' – that unite on one issue – that of total opposition to capitalism, fascism and imperialist war. But first we find through a certain agony the proletariat in each of ourselves. In ancient Rome the proletariat was the lowest person in the society, whose only use was to produce healthy progeny for the state: now, realizing our proletarian nature (just as we locate the third world in our hearts, not only in Asia, Africa and Latin America) we produce beautiful monsters to devour the system that oppresses us.

10. That revolutionary morality means the overcoming of established familialist moralism of duty based on

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a specific autonomous way of being (much as Sartre uses *recuperation* in his Study on Baudelaire).

(ii) as social action: *either* recuperation in the sense of normalization, neutralization, destructive absorption by the state system of what is dangerous to it, *or* recuperation by the people of everything the system has stolen from them.

guilt: that it means the creation of solidarity and trust between us, based on a fully conscious knowledge and therefore mistrust of the repressive systems we are caught up in. It means avoiding the familial traps of jealousy, envy, possessiveness, and above all *culpabilization* – making the other persons feel guilty in order to control them – but also the aggressive violence of ‘feeling guilty’ oneself – the great evasion. Revolutionary morality means the seizing of autonomy and autonomy by definition cannot depend on diminishing the autonomy of anyone else.

11. That revolutionary loving may mean killing, but as counter-violence, not as violence. Revolutionary loving is the violation of bourgeois violence in all its forms of oppression, mystification and simple, universally pervasive cheating. One most effective weapon of counter-violence is our personal-collective poetry, our creation (*poiesis*). The metaphorical but highly effective murder of our assassins.

12. That we speak too many words when we have too few things to say. Knowing that it is almost enough, almost too much – but then we might begin.

There is no hope.

There is only permanent struggle.

That is our hope.

That is a first sentence, in the language of madness.

Many of the letters I receive are gifts, though some show the ambiguity of ‘the gift’. One real gift letter, that I replied to, was from a retired English clown, Clown Roma, who lives with his small dog Bobby Hooligan in a caravan on the banks of a river in Norfolk. He sent me an acrobat’s remedy for backache that really works,

warm olive oil applied by the palm of someone's hand – but it also depends on who the other person is.

One of the critical experiences in my life was when at the age of four, at a circus in Cape Town, I burst into tears because I thought the clown had been really hurt by the wicked ring-master. I could not be consoled until the clown came into the audience to tell me that hurt was illusion, make-belief. At the age of four he made me really believe him.

I mention this because we all perform in circuses (or in concentration camps).

How do we make-believe without making too many more beliefs?

The aim of this book amongst other things is to help create disbelief in the inevitability of the things that oppress us.

A final warning to despairing people who may read this book. *There are no examples to follow, certainly not mine. What is necessary for one person is by no means necessary for anyone else. We each have our own mad-nesses, our own paths.*

We can find our own paths only with the joyful, albeit despairing, assumption of our full autonomy and total responsibility for our lives. We find our freedom in a world that we transform by using our freedom. There's no freedom there otherwise, only an occasional absence of constraint. Freedom is a human production. It is never granted us. We forge it against all the odds.

All the contradictions in these pages are my own responsibility but some of them belong to all human-kind.

\*

Chapter 2 on Radical Needs is largely abstracted from seminars I gave in the Collège de France, December 1975.

Chapter 3 on Orgasmic Politics is an extended version of a dissertation I gave at the International Congress of Psychoanalysis on Sexuality and Politics, Milan, November 1975.

Chapter 5 on The Invention of Non-Psychiatry includes some material from an article on 'Ipotesi per una non-psichiatria' for the Italian journal VEL, ed. Armando Verdiglione, Milan 1975.

Appendix 1 on 'What is Schizophrenia?' is abstracted from (and added to) an address I delivered with that title at the Tokyo Congress of the Japanese Society of Neurology and Psychiatry, May 1975.

I thank Franca Crespi of Milan for her heroic efforts in typing this manuscript.

And the students at the University of Paris VIII, Vincennes, for actually wanting me to not teach psychopathology.

D.C.

Paris, February 1977

# I

'I have heard voices say:

"He is conscious of his life".'

Exemplary schizophrenic patient quoted in  
Price's *Text Book of Medicine* – 9th edition

The prevalent romanticization of madness has no future.

The politicization of madness is indispensable if we would  
create a future.<sup>1</sup>

D.C.

## THE LANGUAGE OF MADNESS

The madness about which I'm writing is the madness that is more or less present in each one of us and not only the madness that gets the psychiatric baptism by diagnosis of 'schizophrenia' or some other label invented by the specialized psycho-police agents of final phase capitalist society. So when I use the word 'madman' here I'm not referring to a special race of people, but the madman in me is addressing the madman in you in the hope that the former madman

1. Madness, of course, is always immediately political but this is not yet evident to everyone. The 'politicization' of madness is both to demonstrate its political nature and to work out its political implications.

speaks clearly or loudly enough for the latter to hear.

The 'language of madness' means the way that this universal madness is expressed not only in uttered, audible words, but in a type of action, running across experience, that is 'mad dis-course'.

One would erect a mockery if one were to attempt to write systematically about a discourse that dismantles systematic thought. Perhaps however one can show the truth-force and finally the periodic necessity of this dismantling by alternating apparent rigour of expression with significant moments of its ridiculization.

We exist within the context of a language that is our own invention but which controls us in so far as we have lost sight of its origins in our day-to-day practice, and that of our forebears, extending back in history over some 6,000 years or so . . . a very small bite out of time's apple, but that is the sort of time it has taken for our language progressively to control us.

This 'language', which means all that is in common, and present communicatively, as regards structure and the ways of forming new structures, includes all the actual languages that we speak like Icelandic, French, English, Japanese. But it also includes large elements of sound, the ways we look at each other, ways of moving, guessing in our actions, that introduce an uncertainty, a necessary uncertainty, about exactly how and how exactly we are expressing ourselves and what this expression, whatever it is, means for the person who we suppose receives it or who supposes that they receive it. We act as if we understand much of the other person's communication as if it made sense whereas for us it doesn't at all – that is to say we make our own sense out of the communicated non-sense (to us) of the other.<sup>2</sup>

2. Apart from the exchange of a few highly functional messages, how much do we actually speak to each other? We talk to

Perhaps 'exactitude' is the problem. One considers certain structures that imply definable laws of logical ordering (laws perhaps not clearly formalized that are special to these types of structures as well as more general laws) in a sequence in which the laws in turn imply the structure themselves. This closed system as a basis for analysis defeats itself when it denies the variability of history (recorded willed human change), which makes any sort of exactness impossible, not even desirable.

We live not on the certainty of structures but 'on their precise immeasurability'.

Too much security makes one feel unsafe. If it doesn't perhaps it should.

The logic of a full sexuality, for example, does not follow any translation of Aristotelian-like rules such as 'you can't be in one state and the opposite state at the same time'. Nor does this curious logic exist as the opposite – that you can be both things in one and the same moment – that you can have your cake and eat it.

The anti-logic is to *take* one's cake and eat it because that is the only way of ever having it and of being the 'having of it' (as well as having the eating of it). And that, precisely, is where mad discourse comes in. The language of madness is the perpetual slipping over of words into acts *until the moment is achieved where the word is pure act*. Psychoanalytic discourse reduces the normal verbal state of expression with all its deformities (including academic discourse in all the scientific disciplines that begin to become truly speculative, wondering about and doubting themselves) to the expression of earlier states of expressive being. Mad dis-

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ourselves continually and sometimes mistake bits of our monologue for the 'dialogue' of the other who is present, on the basis of signals received that are beyond the narrow verbal ones.

course skirts around, reaches above all this to regions where it finds nothing – but an important and specific nothing that is creative precisely in the measure that it is not destroyed by the normalizing techniques of the society.<sup>3</sup>

Many psychoanalysts, having already heard the last post being intoned, have heroically given up Freud's mechanistic-biologistic reductions in favour of something more like a dialectic of personal transformation. But there is ever the numinous 'It' that speaks (*Ça qui parle*). 'It' is the mysterious region that only psychoanalysts have access to, at least as regards comprehension, when (which is most of the time) they want no relation with the other person, the analysand. 'It' is what you want when you don't know what you want (or 'it slipped my mind', 'it went over my head', 'I'd never have thought of that ('it')'). The psychoanalyst, initiated into the symbolic order where the great Phallus is the supreme signifier (of all the concrete things in the experience of the analysand), is engaged in a quasi-dialogue with the 'It' – a dialogue that in principle passes over the other person's head.

The madman will have none of this!

As for the Phallus he reaches over the 'It' and seizes it (the Phallus!), makes it – and It – his own.

He reduces the Symbolic Order to ruins by making the Phallus and any other signifier either touchable or nothing! He refuses to have his existence reduced to nice proper grammar and has no use for the psychoanalyst three yards away, staring into another space,

3. Like: one takes power because the normalizing ruling class never gives power except in ways that deafen and blind most people, e.g. the ballot-box, key-stone of 'democracy', which contains only (in a total censorship) what the press, radio, T.V. churches, schools, families, businesses of that system want to put into it – not in their own interests but in those of the system that they, the entrepreneurs, suppose they have bought 'cash down'.



listening only to 'It' and not to things said about real collective social experience. For the madman it is of no interest that the 'unconscious is structured like a language' – *it is language that must be structured like the 'unconscious'* (in the sense that I shall try to define later in Chapter 4)!

But then we know how wicked and dangerous it is to exceed the contractual limits of the psychoanalytic situation: the limits of time, money, non-presence, built-in submission and obedience, the implicit goal of normalization and conformism (however much this may be denied theoretically), and above all the implicit family model. The subtle reinforcement of familial ways of experiencing is one of the worst psychoanalytic traps. An anti-psychoanalysis,<sup>4</sup> which is a form of political education functioning without any of the microsocial context of psychoanalysis, is concerned with the *defamilialization of discourse* moving out of the family model of experience (the model implicit in the notion of transference) towards the political analysis of actual current relationships (as well as dreams and waking reveries), seen in their macro-context, the family being merely one mediator of macro-political repression.

Madness (contrary to most interpretations of 'schizophrenia') is a movement out of familialism (including family-modelled institutions) *towards autonomy*. This is the real 'danger' of madness and the reason for its violent repression. Society should be one big happy family with hordes of obedient children. One must be mad not to want such an enviable state of affairs. And one is punished for madness (the teutonic origin of

4. See the very important definitional statement of an anti-psychoanalysis by Gilles Deleuze: 'Relation introductive au Congrès de Psychanalyse de Milan' – Mai 1973 in 'Psicanalisi & Politica', Feltrinelli, Milan 1973.

'mad' is 'maimed').<sup>5</sup> If you go mad, by normal social definition, in psychoanalysis your likely fate is the usual psychiatric incarceration with all the violent trimmings – at least until your language – words and acts – becomes normally 'grammatical' – and normally banal once again.

Mad discourse, as opening to the world, moves in the opposite direction to psychoanalytical discourse. I shall return to the theme that *all delusion is political statement* (and that all madmen are political dissidents) later but would here simply add some pertinent observations on psychoanalysis more generally.

Psychoanalysis is revered, feared and criticized as a watertight system that cannot be refuted since any refutation can in turn be psychoanalytically demolished, or it is seen as a bag that you have to get into before you can get out of – but once you are in you are in for good.

In fact the position is quite different: psychoanalysis has the choice of being either a truth told in bad faith or a lie told in good faith. The option is not enviable. The usual oscillation is both endless and vertiginous. When it is 'done' by a philosophical dramaturgue like Jacques Lacan it may be treated with affection, fascination and poetical respect. *Or not*, of course. The option is open. When it is 'practised' by 'scientists' it must be treated with non-personal political contempt. The real problem about psychoanalysis is that so many people behave as if it were true.

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If people behave as if psychoanalysis were true perhaps they should get into it if only to be sure that they can get out. Having some 'good experiences' in psychoanalysis I am certainly not 'advising' anyone against it –

5. This is one of many etymological self-fulfilling prophetic attributions.

in any case it is an *a priori* impossibility that anyone can advise anyone else what to do with their lives, lives not being like broken-down motor cars.

My criticisms of psychoanalysis are:

1. In terms of the mystification of its reductionist theory (see Chapter 4, 'Links', first section);

2. In terms of the micro-politics of the analytical situation – the money, time, etc. contract involves an acceptance of capitalism as embodied in the analyst's situation of work and way of living. Is this the necessary acceptance of 'reality'? It is not a question of accepting capitalist reality but of becoming conscious of its oppression in the only way possible: in the work of changing it.

3. In terms of its familialist ideology: no one is 'against the family', but one is against the reduction of real problems of life and work to the personal problematics of oneself and family, or family-like others. Psychoanalysis, in so far as it produces a family-protective system of production of non-orgasmic imbecilization of people, becomes a para-fascist reinforcing ideological device. It is all the more able to recuperate young 'intellectuals of the left' by its sensitive gliding away of meanings (*glissements*), especially in the latest authorized Lacanian version. Start in a clear space of meeting; end where you find no one to be.

Lacan, that human expert in the domain of the non-human 'grammatical', has said enough good things to exculpate himself from the moralizing, normalizing discourse of talking in family terms. For example, in 'Propos sur la causalité psychique' (Paris, 1947), he talks of madness as, far from being an insult to liberty, following liberty like its shadow. And, then, being human means that we can't after all be human in the way that we talk amongst ourselves if we ignore madness as the limit of our freedom.

In very practical terms it means 'how do we live still and have children without re-inventing the bourgeois nuclear family, the foundation of the Oedipus?' That means that the couple are prepared to lose themselves in themselves in a mutual symbiotic zoophilia, being animal enough to put their human aspect aside. Children find their right to form their own relationships outside the schematization of the biological parental couple. In even more practical terms it means that we make our revolution in solidarity finding the sense of our crazy discourse in this common action.

4. In terms of its increasing macro-political functioning in repressive institutions, e.g. special schools, law courts (see the trial of Pelosi for the murder of Pasolini, Rome 1976), psychiatric 'therapeutic communities' and in community therapy (see Robert Castel, *Le Psychanalyse*, Paris, 1973).

5. The psychoanalyst cannot function, even survive, without his contract of non-meeting and his heavily defensive theory that, with a certain seductive internal coherence, depends on a false and falsifying version of childhood experience and a pseudo-knowledge about human beings. With the strategy of the contract and the securing theoretical defences his practice induces an ultra-repressive normalization. There are also the 'failed lunatics' (the 'successful' ones are almost entirely destroyed) who have a need to speak about themselves since their failure is exactly that they can't *do* themselves (and, therefore, can't do 'it' themselves). This is the 'psychoanalysable' area of the 'neurotic'. A young psychiatrist whom I met recently said that if he stopped talking he would die. So he went on talking through the night and when the rest of us woke up the next morning he was still talking. So I suggested that he went to see a good friend who, without irony, happened to be a psychoanalyst. After a few months he talks a

little less. When he does perhaps he begins to listen to himself. Then, hopefully, he would talk even less. If 'good things' sometimes happen in psychoanalysis they are not related to the technique and training of the analyst but rather to the human quality (a political state of affairs) of both the people involved.

Recognizing that *most of us have very few things to say about ourselves in the course of our lives (perhaps four or five things, or two or one things)*, we had better, perhaps, invent some sort of summary about where we are 'at'. Our educational and familial conditioning might make it necessary that we make an immense intellectual detour (e.g. Sartre's *Critique of Dialectical Reason* and so many other peoples' prior and subsequent philosophical voyages) to arrive at a single almost simple point of departure which is also a disembarkation. This is valuable and necessary for many of us but the madman will have none of it. He stays where he is as a manner of moving. What heresy! There are so many people who talk about their need to make 'a voyage' through madness to 'liberate' themselves, discover 'who' they are, to find a place of 'rebirth', and so on. It is time to say *bon voyage* to the 'bon voyage'.

This spectacularly banal though fashionable project eludes the madman, who lacks or who, rather, has given up not only literary but even grammatical expertise and never speaks of 'voyages' because he doesn't have the normal 'cash' (=techniques of non-being) to make the down payment but really because he doesn't experience the need to pay anyone precisely for precisely nothing.

Such are the metaphors of capitalism. Metaphor means the change or carrying over of meaning from one situation in which things seem to be literally what they seem to seem ('be'), to another in which one term is changed to make the discourse less literal but more exact – in the sense of a poetry of madness (or madness of poetry).

But then what is it in the language of madness that makes it different from the discourse of poetry? And what curious sense, perhaps revolutionary sense, can we find in this absurdity?

We find that metaphor,<sup>6</sup> metonymy,<sup>7</sup> synecdoche,<sup>8</sup> the figures (faces) of speech are in fact a radical denormalization of language, or 'demystification' of the normal language. Speech is 'defaced' but in a particular way. In poetry there is a multiplicity of specificities – the poetic discipline defines itself specifically by the breaking in a specific way of certain specific rules that would normalize language – rules that would make language either instrumental or diversionary and enslaving rather than simply *relevant* to autonomous human needs.<sup>9</sup>

The poet none the less retains a self-preservative contact with the world of the normal ones, the madman does not because although like the poet the ancient origins of his thought come from a prehuman history he has been deprived of present strategies. We are somehow back in the age of the great apes reborn with

6, 7, 8. Lacan in his efforts to make psychoanalysis literate would relate metonymy (like the substitution of cause for effect) to the Freudian 'displacement', and metaphor to the Freudian 'repression'. Synecdoche, overlapping a bit with metonymy, would replace the whole, by the part: 'the village was aroused by this act of hooliganism' (= some actual people were disturbed by a certain action by certain others against their norms). No psychoanalyst in the history of the psychoanalytic movement has shown a more profound and practical comprehension of the European philosophical tradition than Lacan, and his work is replete with heuristic insights. They are, however, perhaps more a critique than a defence of psychoanalytic theory. (See his 'Ecrits' and 'Seminaires' (ed. Seuil).)

9. Some psychoanalysts see mad discourse as a rupture with the 'mother-tongue', duly conditioned by family experience. Mad ones in fact 'fool' the mother tongue to find, and feel in the finding, their own tongue, and that is a dépassment of familialism towards autonomy.

less auto-genocidal impulsion than *we* have. An ideal of recuperation of anthropoid and pre-anthropoid ways of living is not like the Rousseau idea of the 'noble savage' – it's just about the opposite. We go back all the time not to *be* back but to *recuperate* our evolutionary origins and then to throw them into the face of a future – that no one occupies – that no one has – because it is that sort of empty future that terrorizes us in each moment of our approach to it. Because we have no clear sense of class, because we lack all conscious definition of the ways we are oppressed in the present. And precisely because of our total lack of the consciousnesses we don't know how, amongst many other things, to produce a society of minimal technology which means a society of minimal pollution (in every sense) and of maximal free time.

The madman, like the poet, would refuse Wittgenstein's proposition that 'that of which one cannot speak one should be silent'. It is precisely the unsayable and unspeakable that must be expressed in mad and poetic discourse. All this comes down to the choice that one *listens* by habit to the banalizing chatter of everyday normality (which includes most printed words), or that one hears certain occasional big words uttered in obscurity or even fewer certain small words uttered in the light or in the darkness of delight – words that thoroughly break through normal discourse.

In the tension between the compulsion to fix things – human and non-human – in concepts and the need to free things in images, the need has been terrorized by the compulsion to the point where we are left with nothing but a sterile security – that should in fact be the ultimate terror.

Our madness is with us all the time, though the madness of the totally normal ones has committed suicide to leave a statistical cipher. Sometimes our madness be-

comes visible to us for a short time, perhaps discretely and in solitude, and we transform ourselves. Sometimes it becomes socially visible and then it runs the risk of being murdered. We each have our own way of living our own madness, there are no preformed paths. We each assume our own responsibility to blaze our own trail – and what a responsibility it is to see that no one takes our responsibility from us.

\*

When I was mad briefly, but for enough weeks to begin to know a little, in Argentina five years ago in a place on the Atlantic coast south of Buenos Aires, I found it possible to experience in total solitude a ‘philosophical problem’ in all the concreteness of *embodiment*. Stopping all drugs like normal eating habits, normal ways of being with other people, tobacco, alcohol, I lived materially on water and nourishment that flowed and roots and rhizomes from the ground. Rushing naked as always into the sea I nearly got drowned by the famous undertow of that bit of the coast, in the heart of a tempest that transformed miraculously the sand dunes into amiable and terrifying other humps, dinosauric monsters that put the inorganic finally on the march. Stopping normal habits, however, was entirely secondary to the fact that it was the right moment in my life to destructure and then painfully to restructure an altered existence.

I began to experience the world across a whole range of transformations. First, words lost all abstract structure and became physical objects flattened, spread out, angular or conic, founding a mathematical beyond in all that ‘should be’ articulated, piecing together, possible. The language stretched and new words (‘neologisms’) were planted in my mind by alien good or evil powers. In this autonomous cosmos there emerged the ‘omnipotent delusion’ of being extra-terrestrial and that



there were among us other extra-terrestrial beings, allocated a function for good or for evil in their being in the world but appointed from another region, widely remote, in the cosmos that is not 'our' astronomic cosmos.

There were experiences of howling, hurling myself around even with a faintly disguised joy to find a true solitary way of experiencing one special death fully enough, in life, before the other human ones took even that away, like acting a word when the word conventionally should be said, for trying to make a circus in a 'space' where small dogs are not allowed. I underwent many metamorphoses of shame that finally proved irrelevant. What a job this disculpabilization is – getting rid of ancient and irrelevant guilt, seeing the final absurdity of all the aggression that exists on a personal, anti-political level.

After the descent from all that, I found all the cosmic extra-terrestrial things, transformed, here on earth in an animal banality, but I felt inscribed on my body the realization that there is no human subject (which is different from working this out theoretically); 'human nature' is fictive because, however hard we try we can never repeat ourselves – every return is to a new place. In our materiality and our animality we are unique enough; human enough, in our social reality, we risk becoming identical with our exchange value.<sup>10</sup> No further tragedy is imaginable. The only thing to do with absurdity is to realize it, because, grasping it, we are truly in motion. No further transformation ('therapy' as

10. The worker who implicitly accepts his boss's (and the state's) summing up of him as not having but *being* so much productive value and the source of so much extractable surplus value. Or the capitalist who is said by his friends to be 'worth' £250,000 (in property and life insurance that he would leave behind were he to die at this moment). He may happily accept that his life is worth the value of his death.

*technique* of changing consciousness and action) is necessary – or possible.

And, then, the question: how do we live our lives so that even if we could retrospectively eliminate any of the most anguished, painful experiences, we would choose not to? If we reach this position any future pain, without losing its character as pain, will become totally transformed in its value.

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I once knew a young man called John, previously put in a psychiatric hospital in North America for mute defiance of his parents, shutting himself up in his room and barricading the door with a chair on which he had piled a huge family bible and a mass of religious pamphlets, reinforced by piles of popular newspapers full of heavy stories of scandals and sensational crimes. He was hospitalized the second time after a brief ‘good response’ to electroshock and chlorpromazine, because he proclaimed the fact that he was John the Baptist (his name was John and his family were literally Baptists) and that it was his duty to baptize the world to make a new race of people.

In his ‘thought-disorder’, a technical psychiatric term for a flow of speech with nonsensical associations (non-sensical for the normal psychiatrist and his fellow ‘non-believers’), John said: ‘The world’s full of shit, people-shit shitting people, I’m going to pee in the only place where no shit is. It’s like being alone in the desert for a long time. The gospel was written with shit on shit-house paper. The world is ready with its arse blocked. You talk about democracy here – it’s not here; it’s locked up with me in my room – the room where I am. I’m not here, you think you are. You’re at home and I’m at home too. We’re in the same home – it’s my room here. Mum and dad knock at the door. You know

what knocking means. Then they all knock at the door all the time for all the time all who knock knock and knock and knock at the doors and all the doors of all time for all time every time, knocking they knock and make time, making time is shitting like knocking. I know the cure for constipation, that is my great discovery, it's not knocking, no more knocking no time for all time which is now that time which is now forever.'

'The next time someone knocks on the door I'll throw them down the stairs.'

John broke out of his ward when the door was locked. Being big and strong he simply broke the door down and escaped to return to his home quarter some eight miles away. He did not return to his parents' house, but broke into a meeting of Jewish church elders which he called *the* Sanhedrin and spoke at length about how he, he alone, was going to introduce new people into the world and that they must not stop him any longer. Of course no one could listen to this nonsense when there were serious and respectable things to discuss, and the police were inevitably called and he was duly returned to his psychiatric home.

It was nearly a year later that I learned that, after a reversal of the 'libertarian' policy of the hospital, John had died in a closed (locked and closely supervised) ward. He was not a popular figure since he was identified with the dangers of permissiveness (e.g. with the nurses who did not notify the police after his 'violent escape' even though he was not legally detained). I learned indirectly that his body when found in the 'seclusion room' was covered in bruises and that the hospital pathologist diagnosed death due to heart failure following a coronary thrombosis. A medical rarity in a healthy young man of twenty-seven years.

It would be ridiculous to consider all this in terms of

symbolic re-enactment of St John the Baptist, who, after years in the desert, started dipping people in water to bring about internal conversion (metanoia): if you wash the outside of people the inside changes because the difference of 'inside' and 'outside' is illusory (interpreted in Christian mythology as a preparation of people for the coming of the Messiah). Or that his psychiatric murder was in response to the demand of Salome, on her mother's instructions, that in reward for her famous dance for her uncle Herod Antipas, John's head be presented on a silver platter. John would have nothing to do with this sort of accounting for his reality, any more than he would have with any psychoanalytic reduction (in terms of the link between anality and aggression or whatever in his spoken language and non-verbal acts). He was concerned only with the political issue, in total despair and in total joy, of taking the shit out of people, making people real with words and acts and words that were acts and acts that were words. How many western political dissidents find themselves in the same situation of being murdered – suicided by the society because of their original aim of *realizing language* – of introducing the necessary, vivifying political insertion of unreason, which has its own rationality, into the coherent, instrumental and manipulative discourse of the normal ones.

What an outrage it is, such an incestuous union of language and action. What a just fate for a political poet who refuses domestication. What a threat it is finally to make language real.

The language of madness is nothing more nor less than the *realization* of language. Our words begin to touch the other and that's where the danger of madness lies: when it tells its truth. One danger, the only danger of madness, is violent denormalization of trivial words and worlds of security.

In Price's *Text Book of the Practice of Medicine*, 9th edition, the following example of thought-disorder is given:

'If I should return during my absence, keep me here until I come back.' 'I have a lot of forced thoughts. My thoughts are all drawn out words, they ought to be pin-pricks. There is an unnatural stoppage in my thoughts, too . . . I have heard voices say, "*he is conscious of his life*" . . . To get my feeling back to normal I feel like changing motor cars into battle-ships, to be superior to them.'

Well! One can imagine the psychiatrist seriously writing down the 'evidence' of madness. What more beautifully precise statement of actual non-meeting could there be than the madman's first sentence. And of course he 'heard voices saying' that he was 'conscious of his life' (that's really why he was put away in the first place – becoming conscious of his life he was aware that others were aware of this subversive fact). Whatever neurological correlates may be found, or not found, for the state of 'hearing voices', the language of 'hearing' means that one becomes aware of something that exceeds the consciousness of normal discourse and which therefore must be experienced as 'other'. And how could one find a better metaphor for normalization than the last sentence. Moving from one situation of grotesque, anguished non-comprehension (home) to another (the hospital). What other language is relevant? What else can one say?

It is, as in the 'problem area' of 'not speaking' (autism and autistic withdrawal) a question of 'what is there to say?' (in a context of unvarying non-comprehension and interference). Fernand Deligny, who works with autistic children in the Cevennes in France (without any clinical, psychiatric context – he is not a

doctor and was originally a school-teacher), has asked, why, instead of trying to get them to speak, do we not learn silence from them?

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Having considered the threat posed by the language of madness to normal structures of security, there is another sort of security that emerges through the destructuring-restructuring movement of madness. This has nothing to do with the primary security of the mother-child relationship that some psychoanalysts like to talk about, or 'ontological' security as some primary state of existence that becomes lessened or lost in the 'schizoid'.

In general in psychoanalysis there is the view that security is developed in and through the earliest relations in the family, especially with the mother. The infant originally is in bits and pieces and good early experiences unite the bits and pieces. On the contrary, from the fertilized egg onwards there is a 'more or less' original organismic *unity* that gets dismembered not only through the early child-parent experiences and intra-uterine experiences but through all the things before conception (parents' courtship, their own origins, ancestry, history, pre-history, evolutionary origins and beyond) that are mediated to the embryo through male and female gametes and the mother's body. We can consider these things through correlative systems of knowledge like genetics, biochemistry, embryology, but we can also consider them and *express* them through all art forms, poetry and the language/acts of madness. The 'correlative' systems of scientific knowledge (though they may correlate between themselves) are understood here as objectifying-objectified systems correlative to the organism-consciousness – an original unity that may be split into objectified organism and

objectifying consciousness but which remains a unity in all forms of *poietic* activity (the discourse of poetry, other art forms and of madness). The dismembering of the original unity is one expression of alienation.

This dismemberment instead of being actively 'remembered' is simply patched together into a conglomerate, the pseudo-totality of normality with its family-conditioned security. Too much of this patch-worked security, as I've suggested, should make us feel really insecure.

An excess of security should make us begin to feel unsafe.

Feeling an excess of awesome doubt about every aspect of our reality should make us begin to *be* real.

But there is another sort of security which is not trivializing. It is however very hard-won and is based on a promise that one makes 'to return'. It is not a matter of consciously promising or of knowing what the promise is about but rather an awareness that one is not directing one's life (or having one's life directed) *into* crisis, but that one is directing one's life *through* radical change *towards* a less alienated way of being. The political signification of madness becomes clearer if social alienation is grasped as being most evidently an issue of the class-division of society between exploiters and exploited, with more and more people being caught up in systems of mystification between the two poles – and also recognizing without wasting 'sympathy' that the exploiters are exploited by their own system, though the exploited are always simply exploited.

Madness is permanent revolution in the life of a person. Sometimes this revolutionary process becomes evident as a major change in the way that we live, a

change in the direction of greater autonomy that may be accomplished without the intervention of other people, but sometimes it becomes socially visible as a crisis in which other people intervene. If the intervention falls into the fatal closed circuit of family and psychiatry, or friends who behave in familial ways replicating one's own and their bits of experience of mother, father, children and amateur psychiatrist (who can be even worse than the real one), one can get stuck in a life-long crisis that is certainly not revolutionary for anyone.

Having introduced the term 'crisis' I had better say something about crises that have nothing to do with madness or with mad discourse – before defining the present sense of madness. One encounters crises amongst friends and friends of friends almost every day – or at least I do, despite having stopped doing any form of psychiatry or therapy. The remarkable thing about these crises is that they always seem to be happening more clearly in the people, family and good familial friends, who surround the person 'in crisis' – who often just wants to be left alone but left alone in the right way. One right way is not rejection but simply defining the limits of the situation and one's own needs. Most victims of crises of supposed madness, suicide and so on are made victims by those who compulsively have to help, when it's really a matter of the friends helping themselves to participate safely and victoriously (for them) in a process of psychiatrization or suicide attempt. Many such victims would prefer a week or two or three with other victims and down-to-earth nurses in an ordinary bin in the country – were it not for the stigmatization, the institutionalizing process, and the interference of doctors who have to justify their existence by the medical game of diagnosis, shocks and chemical 'euthanasia'.



Most of these everyday crises are family crises; even if the person is living away from their family, the family can act at 'long-distance' and there are always only too familial friends. Most crises would get the label of 'neurosis' – which simply means that the person behaves in certain deviant ways that are psychiatrically classifiable but accepts the social definition of normality (i.e. she/he has 'insight') and the discourse of normality (i.e. talking in such a way that one bores other equally boring people in an unhappy family-like situation). The essential contradiction of the 'neurotic' situation is that one *protests* against the social shit that one is immersed in with the only tools that are apparently too hard, i.e. 'symptoms', *but* at the same time collusively reinforces a familial, 'oedipian' way of being in the doctor-patient – and thus one obligingly sabotages oneself.

Other crises would be labelled 'psychopathic' or 'personality disorder'; here the emphasis is more on overt protest but the protest is easily recuperated by a familialist ideology (acting out against authority, 'figures') because it is politically illiterate and needs (like every other micro-social crisis) political education – *not* principally of the victim but of the whole micro-social situation *around* him. Yet other crises are called 'manic-depressive psychosis', where there is a split in the unity of madness that I shall describe later; the important thing however is that the person should explore the depression as far as they can without the accompaniment of people who are afraid of suicide (in any case it is when people are starting to be or stopping being elated that they kill themselves). The 'mania' is the expression of a protest against the capitalist ethos – spending money rather than making it, starting wonderfully good enterprises rather than the normal ones that, as simple legal robbery, accumulate capital. Someone in such a crisis of impracticability has every right to use an

ordinary doctor, *in collaboration* – not as the object of the exercise of medical power to help him modify the biochemical correlates (when we know enough about these) of his state of existence to suit him. He does not need a psychiatrist to defend his property and his life – the ‘price he would pay’ in autonomy (because this is all in the capitalist metaphor) would be too high for him to afford.

Then of course there is the typical ‘schizophrenic’ crisis. So-called ‘schizogenic’ things happen in families, involving double-binds and other mystifying things, that produce a state of ‘madness’ in one of the family members which gets labelled as schizophrenic. In fact this situation of mystification does not ‘produce madness’ and is gravely in need of demystification itself. What it produces are *the conditions for invalidation as schizophrenic*, usually for relatively trivial signs of deviance. A few people so invalidated may enter into a madness, like John the Baptist on his second admission to hospital, but most do not and are simply invalidated and proposed as madmen to be contained preferably by long-acting drugs in the family asylum outside hospital (‘community psychiatry’, the ‘psychiatry of the sector’ in Europe).

In fact in the asylum there is a remarkable dearth of madmen. The mystifying strategy is to hospitalize masses of people with organic brain disease (where occasionally there is a danger of physical violence), senile, head-injury victims, mentally subnormal, etc. to produce a false image of madness. But even with these medical problems the political action of their *social* recuperation is paramount.

It is not madmen who murder but the normal ones<sup>11</sup>

11. Of course some people already classed as mental patients commit violent acts, e.g. a husband regarded as having ‘paranoid jealousy’ kills his wife when on probationary leave from the

especially the cases of hypertrophied normality and certain neurotic caricatures of normality. Murder is an act of compliance with a murderous system and has its base in familial obedience. The only question is 'how do we produce disciplined disobedience?' Control on the one hand is compulsive, sets 'moralistic' limits and more or less subtly destroys life in so far as it limits it. Control says 'No'. Discipline frees us in so far as it is that which guides us through the most total and totally necessary disordering of our alienated existences. Discipline is the right way to say 'No' to the 'no' of control. It is also the promise to restructure the destructured.

Madness is the destructuring of the alienated structures of an existence and the restructuring of a less alienated way of being. The less alienated way of being is a more responsible way of being. Responsibility means answering with one's own voice, not with all the voices and their messages that have been planted in one's mind throughout one's history (the 'schizophrenic symptom' of alien ideas being planted in one's mind is a true realization of this alienation). Alienation is the invasion of what we regard as 'our' 'selves' by deformed human

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hospital, or after his discharge (the liberal psychiatrist might be in trouble for this). This is simply in line with most family murders, including murders of people who 'represent' family personages, where the murderer has not been classed as 'mentally ill'. These family murders constitute the majority of murders apart from those that are for 'pure gain' (of money), imitating the greed of the capitalist system, and political assassinations. They have nothing to do with madness. Again, people with a history of head injuries or with a lack of functioning brain substance ('mentally subnormal') may lose their fragile sangfroid and throw a knife at someone, but this is not madness, either. Incidentally, most people who get classified as high-grade subnormal have intelligible political problems of discrimination in schools rather than deficient functioning brain substance. That's the subject of another study.

otherness – the otherness consisting in the whole mass of human relations from the micro-social ‘personal’ experiences in relationships to the institutional and the macro-social. The deformation arises because human social existence is perpetually perplexed and shattered by the relation exploiter/exploited with the whole zone of mystification that comes in between the poles. The destructuring I’m talking about involves the elimination of these traces of otherness which, if thoroughgoing enough, passes a zero-point, a point of emptied out existence, the nullifying of mind that marks the beginning of the next phase; of restructuring.

Destructuring/restructuring follows a dialectical rationality, a rationality of depassment.<sup>12</sup> This is the logic of every form of creative activity; it is also the logic of madness and the language of madness. There is another logic, antagonistic to the logic of destructuring/restructuring, which in this age we may call capitalistic logic – a logic of destruction: a state of affairs exists or it is simply negated. In destructuring as in destruction there is negation (of alienated experience in the former case), but inherent in destructuring there is the negation of this negation, the actualization of the ‘promise’ that leads to restructuring.

In the destructuring moment of madness there is a paradoxical union of ecstatic joy and total despair and it is on the basis of this experiential union that the words and acts of mad discourse arise. Language is denormal-

12. Depassment is a term that, for want of any other, I used in *Reason and Violence* (with R. D. Laing, Tavistock Publications, 1964) as a transliteration of Sartre’s *dépassement*, equivalent to Hegel’s *aufhebung*. An existing totalization (i.e. a more or less unified human state of affairs) is put in question by another totalization. The first totalization loses its absolute value and, conserving a relative value, is absorbed by the second (if wide enough). There is thus a synthesis that will be absorbed by another and so on.

ized to express urgent truths that are normally unsayable and, to the normal people, unspeakable. Without interference a transformed discourse and existence is produced; the problem is the mode of insertion of this transformed existence into an untransformed world because the restructuring is never towards normality but towards sanity. Sanity means the preservation of elements of the former normality, albeit transformed, that facilitate the elaboration of self-defensive strategies that keep at bay the craziness (noting the distinction between craziness and madness) of the normal world. But the problems of surviving as sane are immense.

What usually happens with socially visible madness is that there *is* psychiatric intervention, and the development of community psychiatry (of the sector) and the general increase of surveillance of the population makes this more and more likely. What psychiatric intervention achieves is a split in the paradoxical union of madness; first the joy is destroyed by treatment and then even the despair is annihilated, leaving the optimal 'good result' of psychiatry – no person. The non-person may function for the system either by becoming profitable, though working perhaps at a reduced level, or as part of the sub-population of 'mentally ill' either in a hospital or in the 'family asylum' maintained outside but in any case serving as 'negative reinforcement' of the definition of normality for the system and the interest in the unlimited control of the population.

The attainment of the paradoxical union of ecstatic joy and total despair in a synthetic moment of existence is the pre-condition for transformation. It is in contradiction with the norms of social 'reality' and this contradiction is an expression of the general contradictions of bourgeois society. Paradoxes are intrinsic to any form of creativity and are not supposed 'conflicts' to be 'resolved' but real situations in existence that have to be

*lived through*. Mad/poetic<sup>13</sup> discourse is the 'living through', in language, of paradox by paradox. The only other way is the way of submission – with a certain margin of viable pretence.

Of course there is suffering involved in psychiatrized madness *but this suffering is entirely imposed* by the intervention of techniques, family techniques, other micro-social techniques of evasion and elimination, and then the biggest, most technical and most medically respectable evasion and elimination of all – psychiatry and its adjunct professionalisms, psychologists, social workers, nurses, etc. (though there is a usable gap between the medical and the non-medical power). But there is a world of difference between this socially imposed suffering and a despair that one chooses, even joyfully, to live through. One knows, and they become more and more recognizable, people who have discretely, with total social invisibility, lived through this madness of the paradoxical extremities of joy and despair. They are not 'gurus', the gurus have a long way to go (out!), but they are people who are also the internally secreted person in each of us – our madman. Our madness inserts itself into our talk only in the rare moments when our talk matters as the being of change in the way that we actually live our lives out. The way that we make our being in the world here, by total fluke, its own justification.

What has to be done historically in our society is to

13. Taking poetic in the widest sense of *ποίησις* as making creation. And language in its widest sense as the unsaid implication of words, gestures; the articulation of the way we live. See what is left of poetry in asylums despite psychiatry. Kierkegaard, master of paradox, said, 'I want to go into a mad-house to see if the depths of madness might not bring to me the solution of the enigma of life.' His romantic sense of paradox romantically failed him here: there were no 'solutions' – but perhaps a better questioning.

take madness out of all clinical context, which has no function apart from repression and social control, and find its place in a world of universal creativity. This implies a political action. Mental illness and psychiatry can have no place in a genuine socialist society. More than a precise analogy there is a precise logic that unites the struggle of any one person against alienation, for the full expression of liberty and autonomy, with the struggle of any oppressed group, nation or class.

Pursuing the inevitably devious logic of this book we shall proceed to re-examine what it is that we really need, and what is the nature of collective experience, before considering what has been done and what is to be done.

But already, anticipating one of the last lines of these pages, one can say in its own language that the word madness has no future. Nor has madness.

*If one is seduced by happiness one ends by marrying disaster.*

D.C.

## WHAT ARE RADICAL NEEDS?

It is a very fashionable academic exercise these days to become an expert in human needs. People 'have' needs and these needs that people are supposed to have have 'responses' that can be 'met' by a variety of experts: economists, sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, educators, architects, urban planners and so on. So we find the development in bourgeois society of a *technology of needs* – the technicians invent the needs that people 'have' in order to be the satisfiers of those 'needs'. As Sartre has said, the scientific technician becomes an intellectual when she/he becomes reflectively aware of the social implications of their activity (e.g. the point at which the technicians who aid in the manufacture of



nuclear weaponry become scientists – responsible human beings – human beings who answer for their actions – answer *to themselves* as the indispensable starting point).

As regards ‘responsibility’: in capitalist society there is a moralistic imperative to ‘succeed’, to be economically independent, provide for one’s family and so on. If one does not do so one is blame-worthy and should feel guilty. This curious submissiveness is proposed as ‘autonomy’ but in fact is totally contrary to the autonomy that declares itself against the exploitative system and refuses the guilt-manufacturing process. This latter autonomy is revolutionary and is subversive. It tells the truth, and about the only guide-line we have left is that ‘the worst’ will not happen if we tell the truth – even though bad enough things may. In capitalist society the teller is one who counts out money. Well, in a metaphor of boxing, one cannot ‘count out’ the truth but only tell it.

Talking of radical needs involves us in two sorts of question: a philosophical question regarding the structuring not only of the concept but of the experienced reality of needing, and the question of revolutionary morality as opposed to quasi-revolutionary moralism<sup>1</sup> prevalent in most movements of the left in countries of ‘achieved’ (e.g. Eastern Europe) and ‘achieving’ (e.g. Western Europe) socialism. Revolutionary morality is based on the experiential premiss of a rediscovery of hatred (the form assumed by the consciousness of

1. *Viz.* the embarrassment of many on the left in Italy when Pier Paolo Pasolini was the subject of a fascist political assassination. Pasolini was homosexual, and his murder was seen as the result of ‘personal problems’ without the clarifying vision that all ‘personal problems’ become immediately political. Pasolini’s choice to take certain risks was inseparable from his choice to create for a revolution on all levels of human experience. So his murder was a truly political one.

oppression) that surpasses the personal. To hate an actual other person is, amongst other things, a waste of energy and time and can only exist within a bourgeois familial schema. There is no *one* worth hating, no 'worthy enemy', one can hate only the system that in principle is no *one*. But this system is always viscerally embodied for us as the proprietor who comes to collect his rent, the clothes he wears and where they come from, the car he drives or is driven in and so on. The bourgeois is finally visible.

The sources of revolutionary morality are to be found in overlapping nineteenth-century sources – firstly Karl Marx and then Nietzsche. Marx who learnt about money and then learned how to hate it, how to hate the market place of exchange value and thence the system that expresses this degradation – the system that portrays not the 'pathology' (Erich Fromm) but the 'impoverishment' of normality (K. Marx). Nietzsche who taught principally the second point – the point of impoverishment – in an aphoristic, poetic way that found few resonances in his time, or, for that matter, in our time. Pointing out the way in a poetic manner although without providing the analytic tools with which Marx had already equipped us, Nietzsche placed his scalpel in the largest bursting point of the carbuncle of nineteenth-century European society. His vision drove him mad (socially visibly so) because his 'will to power' meant that we, each of us, choose our own values – against the system – the Judaeo-Christian system. Nietzsche saw the original Christian suicide (the Crucifixion), the original '*ecce homo*' as the ushering in of (though he did not employ the political economic categories) firstly feudal and then capitalist servitude. Nietzsche's solution for all this was to write his own *Ecce Homo*, fragile but now confirmed in its vision of freedom confronting all the conditioning forces that converge on our situation – a

force that finds its precarious way to a space to breathe and live in. But Nietzsche also meant that the only thing left for any of us to do is to declare one's own '*ecco homo*'. Karl Marx did something more complicated, but at the same time, perhaps, something more simple. The often involuted complexity of his thought had its own internal necessity and it is not by chance that the *Grundrisse* were not published in German, although they existed a long time in the archives in Moscow, until 1939. And that the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* were published firstly in an extremely distorted form in 1932 – then more carefully in 1935; long after Lenin had made the Russian Revolution.

One cannot *be* 'a Marxist' any more than one be 'a schizophrenic' or 'an anti-psychiatrist'. Marx towards the end of his life said that he at least was not a Marxist. It is, however, possible to fall into or ever to seek the illusory being of an identity-object, defined by sets of rôle-functions, called, say, a 'capitalist' or a 'psychiatrist' – a comforting illusion that eclipses human being and therefore functions disastrously in the world. So Marxists, anti-psychiatrists and schizophrenics don't exist, but capitalists, psychologists and psychiatrists unfortunately still do. What also exists is a certain form of activity, the Marxist analysis of society which is indispensable if we are to understand the manner of our insertion into the social. This analysis is simply a methodological tool based on an original concrete understanding of human alienation that defies the efforts of microcephalic 'Marxists' to convert it into a dogmatic religion which would be merely another bourgeois fetish.

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To account for radical needs, there is a prior methodological necessity to define, for example, what it means to talk about anti-definitions and anti-classifications.

Anti-definition is no way of fixing a moving entity but is a way of opening up the definiendum, that which is and is to be defined, to a reality that never imprisons or fixes it. Anti-classification means seeking and stating existing differences as opposed to enclosing entities in boxes and hierarchies of boxes. Anti-classification sees certain human phenomena as being experienced as being in illusionary boxes and it is important to see through this illusion because the boxes really are open at one end.<sup>2</sup> The aim of an anti-classification is lucid mobilized action as opposed to control, the control that exists in most classificatory systems. Anti-classification means seeing differences and not imposing differences on experienced phenomena. It also means seeing the movement out of enclosure – and this is the ‘anti’ of the anti-classification.

We have first to disabuse ourselves of certain ideas in terms of a classification into ‘necessary’ needs that are supposed to be primary and other needs, very desirable only, that are supposed to be secondary. There is no possible division on those lines because, not only in advanced capitalist society but throughout the world, those needs posited as secondary are as vital to us as the air we breathe.

Let us talk rather in terms, firstly of the needs *to have*, needs dependent on nature and the formation of our society, quantitative needs, needs which are process and passivity, needs expressed in the negation of the presented as lack (we don’t have what is not out there to be had); needs expressed as simple negation seen falsely as a process that objectivizes itself. Under this title there

2. A metric, quantitative mathematics of space (topology) would close the boxes as a matter of convenience and control; a non-metric, qualitative topology would insist on a less convenient and less controlling dialectic of continuity/discontinuity in which there are boxes which are open at one end and the problem then is to be clear about *which* end.

are included quantities of objects experienced as what we are ourselves – we as lack – lacking, the need for food, shelter and warmth, needs for pleasure cut up into pieces expressed in some sort of terms of sustenance of bodily energy. We can take for example the physiological discharges: for procreative sexuality, the making of more babies ('having babies') for the system along the trajectory of masturbation of any particular penis in some vagina. The needs for defecation (having 'a good shit'), urination, to vomit, to sweat, finally to disintoxicate ourselves.

An anti-classification, as a heuristic exercise, should in principle be vulnerable and not be watertight. Play as quantitative muscular exercise undergoes a qualitative change into creative transformation. 'Passive' physiological processes may be actively experienced. Eating for survival and bodily health transforms qualitatively not only in *haute cuisine* but when we become fully conscious of the truth of the old German saying *Man ist was man isst* – we not only become what we eat in our minds and bodies but today it is truer to say that *we are eaten by what we eat*. And *all* the things we take into ourselves, not only factory-farmed artificial animal produce, but through our skin and all our orifices, for example Gombrowicz's telling images of 'rape through the ears' and through our metaphorical anuses: *cuculization*. Our imbecilization by 'our' education, mass media, popular and professional psychology, and so on.

Secondly, after these needs to have, there are the needs to *act-to-be different*,<sup>3</sup> the negation of the negation as a

3. The ontological difference is vital: the being of 'to have' is 'becoming static' (when the object is had); acting to *be* different implies continuous permanent revolution.

A psychoanalyst in Mexico was recently somewhat offended when I would not accept 'repression' (the psychoanalytic concept of it) as a radical need. Most of what his system considers as

depassment towards another way of living. The level of these needs to act is qualitative. Its base is material, its motivation (moving force in the world) is the seizure of consciousness of the individual person in relation to all the society. One might also call these needs, the need to take initiative, the need to begin something new, the need to change something in the external social world in terms, simultaneously, of personal transformation, the need to find a spontaneous expression that would have nothing to do with finding the sources of security for oneself. On this level of necessary need, we find all the time an annulment, cancelling out all the alienated forms of existence that have been imposed on us. Orgasm is one of the rare but endlessly possible modes of achieving this annulment. Madness is another, but madness not as some sort of tragic personal crisis but as renewal of oneself in a way that breaks all the obsessional rules of what we have to be but at the same time hurts no one; madness as a deconstitution<sup>4</sup> of oneself with the implicit promise of return to a more fully realized world.

4. While certain 'psychedelic' substances such as LSD have a powerful 'deconstituting' potential, radical needs cannot be met with an ampoule or pill but finally only with political action. The conditions and context that I have previously defined (in *The Grammar of Living*) for taking LSD are so rigorous that it cannot be recommended – certainly not in the urgency of the European political situation. There are so many phoney mad-nesses around, and the problem is to avoid them and rather to

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repressed desires, necessarily repressed for the sake of 'civilization', are imputed desires – imputed to fit into a system of constructs (designed to furnish a quasi-knowledge, useful for a *really* repressive conformism, about the lives of persons) based on supposedly primal phantasies (primal scene, castration, etc. – the whole oedipal apparatus). Non-imputed 'repressed desires' are precisely what have to be mobilized for permanent personal and macro-social revolution against extremely visible and concrete forms of institutional repression: a political problem.

NEEDS	→TO HAVE (Dependent	Food
	Quantitative	Shelter
	Normality	Bodily evacuations (defecation, micturition, sweating, vomiting – disintoxications)
	Logic of affirmation-negation)	Play (as muscular exercise)
		Procreative Sexuality
		Communication (naked or disguised commands)
		Property (social property converted into private property as artificial need)
	→TO ACT-TO-BE (different)	
	(Radical Needs	To express oneself – in the creation of values against imposed values:
	Autonomy	transforming creative play and the mergence of play and work in non-alienated labour
	Qualitative	Communion (non-exigent communication)
	Logic of Depassment –	respect of the right of the other to say 'No!'
	destructuring/ restructuring –	formation of silences) → auto-gestion – running one's own life and work with others
	Negation of the Negation)	Madness <sup>5</sup>
		Orgasmic Sexuality
		Re-appropriation of Death (as the only final 'private property') and the De-terrorization of Death

5. I'm not saying that there is a radical need to go mad but that madness is one desperate expression of a radical need for autonomizing change.

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make love, orgasmically, and create social revolution, actively. As regards the soft substance cannabis: laws against possession must be stopped but it represents no great liberation of experience, especially while it is still inextricably caught up with the capitalists of the hard drug mafia.

There is also the radical need for the assumption of consciousness of our own death. It's inadequate to think in the manner of Benjamin Franklin of man as a tool-using animal. True enough but the primary historic fact is that human beings are the only animals capable of reflecting on death. And apart from the origin of private property in the division of labour and the emergence of use-value, there is the experiential origin of private property in terms of the terror of death and the need to perpetuate oneself in one form or other, inevitably a vain and useless form. In terms of this latter false need, we can see the active and revolutionary need to deterrorize death because death is never taken into our minds, truly owned by us as our particular death, but it is denied through the mechanisms of private property and inheritance and violence, murder and most types of suicide. I think that finally our fear of death is *our fear of the incapacity to die*, because on the molecular level and sub-atomically, within each minute deflection of the orbit of one electron, there is something left in the world from our cadavers, there is an inscription of our history not just in the memory of the people that we love but in the use that we've made of our bodies. And not only our history and pre-history but that of the cosmos.

Then again there is the very suppressed need in each of us not to talk, not compulsively as we feel ourselves compelled to do, but the need for the formation of perfect silences in spoken and written speech because, in fact, we need to say very few things in life. And the formation of the perfect silence involves work but not quantitative work, certain powers measured that have a measurable product, but a qualitative work with a qualitative product, the radical changes of the way that we live, not *in* the world, but the way we live the world because there is no other world but the world that we live in – in the light of, not the 'darkness' of our deaths.



This means a non-exigent communion between people as distinct from the more or less concealed injunctive or demanding nature of most quotidian communication.

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For Plato, the eros in the '*Banquet*' was the infinite aspiration as need for completeness because eros has the nature of the mother and is married to need. There is always an implicit familialism in Plato. For Aristotle, there were immediate needs satisfied in family life and all the materiality of that, but also needs, necessary needs for the State to work in these spheres as the arts, sciences, finance, the market and so on. For St Augustine, the questions of human needs pointed to paradise where, in a perfect One, a supposed communism, there would be no needs at all, needs before paradise being the just punishment for original sin.

Kierkegaard spoke about the correspondence of needs with lacking and spoke of the greatest poverty as the greatest richness; the position of this is widely open to reactionary interpretation. Also Kierkegaard thought almost entirely in terms of exceptional people, like saying that the highest thing that one can say of a poet or an orator is that he has a *need* to speak and, finally, for Kierkegaard, need at last becomes value. For Adam Smith and Ricardo, writing at about the same time, a bit before, need finally is a need for maximization of profit – supposedly in the wider sense also.

But let's return to Karl Marx for a moment, where need expresses the dialectical relation man–nature with the mediation of work. But above all, for Marx, needs meant all that one has to do through work, to achieve a total manifestation of human being and all that is experienced as an internal necessity as need. Need for Marx was never simply to do with the production of 'more reasonable' commodities for the market but

rather with self-fulfilment. Of all the 're-readings' of Marx (though perhaps it's not a matter of re-reading but simply *of reading*) perhaps one of the most interesting is that of Agnès Heller, expressed for example in a book translated into Italian, *La teoria dei bisogni di Marx*,<sup>6</sup> published by Feltrinelli in 1974. After all the rebellions, contestations, even incipient movements of revolution in both Western and Eastern Europe in 1968–9, Heller returned to certain themes insufficiently dealt with by Lukàcs, the 'father' of the school of Budapest to which she belonged. In his *History and Class Consciousness* Heller felt that Lukàcs was too dependent on certain very historically conditioned and limited moments in Leninist thought; especially, she returned to a concept of radical needs expressed by Marx in the *Economic Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, the *German Ideology*, the *Grundrisse*, and some parts of *Capital*. In the *Economic Philosophical Manuscripts* Marx referred to rich human needs that correspond to communism and represent a total reversal of the capitalist reduction of needs to needs to have. At a logical limit of capitalism, the worker who, by definition, can have nothing, cannot even have needs.

Heller finds, disputably, in Marx two theories of contradiction. Firstly, as in Hegel, the negation of the negation is a law that is natural and necessary, the downfall of capitalism will arise naturally following a mysterious movement of history. Secondly, that history moves only in terms of praxis, that is the revolutionary struggle of a collective subject (the working class), constituted by virtue of radical needs as a guarantor of the passage to a

6. But see also in the *Bisogni e Teoria Marxista* – for a useful exploration of pertinent issues, P.A. Rovatti, R. Tomassini, A. Vigorelli, Ed. Mazzotta 1976. Heller's book was published in Hungary originally as *Bedeutung und Funktion des Begriffs Bedürfnis im Denken von Karl Marx*.

future society. I've tried to work out this apparent presentation of contradictions in Marx, in the terms that I have stated, of needs to have and needs to act, the needs to act being autonomous needs. Agnès Heller was expelled from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for one principal divergence: she tried, from the interior of the system of 'realized socialism', to oppose the status quo limited in its vision by social 'necessity' with the view that radical needs alone can lead to a true consciousness of communism as a realizable possibility. Infrastructural reformism, changing the economic base of society and the relations of production, is limited to the piecemeal satisfaction of other needs that are the 'immense needs' presented in the last phase of capitalist society. Thus a social revolution or cultural revolution in counterpoint with the political revolution is necessary. Heller has been criticized by, for example, Pier Aldo Rovatti, the Italian Marxist theoretician, on the grounds that she leaves out the question of organization as political mediation, that she talks of style of life, for example, the communities created by students rather than the organizational praxis that must lie beyond that. And also that there is an implicit moralism in Heller, the 'collective duty' to transform ourselves in a manner that breaks many taboos that maybe we don't want to break at all. Who 'wants' freedom in the abstract after all? In this way, according to the critics (other than Rovatti), the radical needs are rigidified in a framework of systems of value that leads to a new essentialism. When Heller speaks of the development of work, she does not imply the disappearance of the human subject who invents the dialectic as against Engels' simplistic dialectic of nature<sup>7</sup> where, in terms of one line of criticism, no human subject was necessary for a simple reduction of natural events to a mechanistic model that

7. See section on Alienation, Chapter 4.

pretends towards the dialectic. Heller talks of the progression of work as vital need (as expressed in Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*) as becoming qualitative need at the moment when it achieves the level of free intellectual activity. Without an analysis of political expression in the interior of the struggle the problem of needs is destined to oscillate between either naturalistic solutions or ethical solutions. It is quite true that Marx had distanced himself from the naturalistic solutions, but it is also necessary to distinguish the heavy objective vision of History progressing, in Marx, from the other more hidden side of subjectivity – consciousness-praxis.

Unlike some of the critics I think that Heller's limitations, rather than being philosophical, are strategically chosen in a society of 'realized socialism'. She cannot say much *concretely* about radical needs in Budapest now, but the work done there is more challenging to the bureaucratic order than Dubcekian liberal communism because it is ideologically founded.

Returning to the concrete, Michel Foucault reminded me (after his experiences in Brazil) of another radical need, that is the need for bodily health, and posed this problem: how are doctors going to facilitate health for people without subjecting them to the medical power. In very simple terms one might say: how to explain the disease process without lying and without any sort of domination but to say the truth and not mystify people terminologically with the techniques of medical power? How to end medical-technological imperialism, clarify the facts of illness and above all share decisions, and to make an end to paternalism – despite the patients' heavy conditioning to this attitude. The emerging need is for clarity and the demand is for patient responsibility – and counter-power when necessary. There are, for example, medical workers being trained in several socialist countries with the necessary medical basics but also

with an ideological and cultural-linguistic introduction to the oppressed countries in which they will work.

This is not a question of up-graded first aid or 'do it yourself' medicine. The Chinese practice of 'bare-footed doctors', like the respect accorded to traditional non-occidental medicine, has been an intensely practical matter. In capitalist countries all professional training is oriented towards privilege and power and is filtered through the system of competition. To qualify, medical students have to memorize by rote many things that, scientifically comprehended, would be beautiful and fascinating objects of serious study. But there is not time for the latter, only time for the endless accumulation of competitive power. For the poor people of the earth (most of us) it's a matter of practical responses which have been and can be made more widely available. The role of the great specialists is humbly to assist other workers as comrades. In the time of 'philosophy in the classless society', there will be *created* time for free-ranging scientific speculation recognized as radical need conditioned by the other radical need for responsibility – answering socially for one's acts from the base of a *collective consciousness* that finally defines the individuality of the one who seeks knowledge, as opposed to the spurious 'individuality' of the 'free enterprise' entrepreneur of the multinational company, with all its economic and ecologic violence.

Or again in the movement in Europe for increased professionalization and pseudo-specialization in the human sciences; the huge surplus of unemployed psychologists (trained to do what? create more needs?), sociologists, philosophers and historians represents a subversive threat to capitalism.<sup>8</sup>

8. The solution of the French Education Ministry, for instance, is to suppress the 'human sciences' in favour of law, medicine, etc., where no student has time or space to think socially.

Young people have virtually no choice but to become politically conscious and active – students have to recognize their social reality *as* workers (no longer ‘rebellions’ of ‘students *and* workers’) and help make the revolution of the working class. The ruling class tries to select the ever-multiplying dangerous ones by nonsensical admission rituals for the universities (like the notorious Scholastic Aptitude Test in the U.S.), or by raising the academic ‘standards’, e.g. demanding a high level in neurophysiology from psychology students who lack a base in biological science – certainly they should be provided with such a base but the point is that too many questioning students in the human sciences may question the system. All this destroys both political awareness and true scientific curiosity in the marvellous discoveries of the functions of the rhinencephalon – the old ‘pre-human’ brain – that is well expressed in the decision (September 1976) of the U.S. Government commission for the protection of human research subjects to permit psycho-surgery, now minutely aimed at areas of the ‘old brain’ to, frankly, suppress deviance, dissidence, reality (with totally unrealistic committees to control the operations).

In the face of this massive programme of indoctrination, based on the manufacture of artificial needs by specialists who are put in the position of being the only ones who can ‘meet’ them, there is only one form of action possible. Or rather there are two<sup>9</sup> that can work together: the first is to enter into the terms of debate posed by the issue of intelligence tests, as Noam Chomsky and Richard C. Lewontin have done admirably;<sup>10</sup> the second is to identify and defeat and unseat fascist anti-scientific

9. Apart from epistemological arguments about the essentially political abuse of genetics (see Appendix I).

10. *The I.Q. Controversy*, ed. N. J. Block and Gerald Dworkin, Pantheon, 1976.

academic agents, including most of the range of 'behaviour scientists', who are the aftermath of B. F. Skinner and Eysenck – including the late psycho-diplomat, Henry Kissinger, who on the reward-and-punishment doctrine would give two billion dollars to the whites in Zimbabwe in reward for their giving nominal power to black puppets who would permit the continued operation of U.S.-dominated multinational big business in Southern Africa. A sizeable award for a pretended cure. The corollary of this realization is for capitalist-world students to do what the black people in Zimbabwe, Namibia and Azania ('South Africa') are doing, like their brothers in Cuba and South-East Asia, to make one's own revolution using whatever disinterested sources are available. Even if it wanted to, the Soviet Union could not impose its own pattern of socialism on the third world, even less so than in Europe.

Students, then, in the capitalist countries, have one duty – to achieve their own liberation like all the oppressed people of the earth: to organize themselves, together with politically conscious teachers, towards a cultural revolution that will, even in five or ten years, unseat the holders, appointed by the governmental agents of the ruling class, of the seats of academic power.

This action expresses autonomous need and is the only final action possible towards the goal of academic freedom – freedom, never presented to us, that we must now seize.

The political, economic, infrastructural revolution is now happening all over the world. The social revolution is still somewhat submerged. When we get the political and the social revolution together we make the total, the permanent, the communist revolution. The danger in, for example, the Latin-European political revolution is that we 'forget' to make the social revolution at

the same time and thereby perpetuate the repressive forces.

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There are more things to explore, obviously, in the reappropriation of death as radical need, but firstly, one should note certain ambiguities about 'having', 'doing', and 'being'.

I am grateful to Jean Robert<sup>11</sup> (of the University of Cuernavaca, Mexico), who reminded me that the linguistic expression of needs, like 'having a good shit', was an invention of this century, in the English language; before that it was simply a matter of *to shit*. There was, in fact, well before the First World War a semantic shift from the verb to the substantive. All this implies a shift from natural forms of self-expression to forms for which one has to be specially trained. In fact one does not 'have' a need 'for it', one 'needs' and 'does' it. 'It' is precisely this mediation of *doing*, between *having* and *being* that breaks down the classification into an 'anti-'. Jean finished his critical response with the phrase 'Now, I don't *have* needs but *need* many things!'

So, what do we or don't we need? We don't need a world like this that does violence to our every judgement. We need another world that we can alter *by our altering*. A world that does not mean our imbecilization by its media, that is not a world that is a '*cuculization*' of our existences – *cuculization* by consent – A world in which we can be freely vulnerable without concessions to the power of the system that lives only parasitically on our furtive potency.

If we can't live in a world like this, can we dare to live

11. As a 'rich' and perhaps necessary counterpoise to the argument on needs in this chapter, see Jean-Pierre Dupuy and Jean Robert, *La Trahison de l'Opulence*, Presses Universitaires de France, 1976.



in any other conceivable world? I think not and I think that we have urgently to propel our thoughts in the direction of Marx's 11th Thesis on Feuerbach – and always beyond: we don't try to think out our world differently but we change it and, finally, change it *differently*. It is not a matter of change for sake of change but rather a question within a question: revolution? revolution *for what?* The having of the doing of the being that becomes the becoming of a being that exceeds itself by a sharp reverse of the spiral of its vertigo. In short, the challenge of our calamitous, precipitous age is to break the presently presented techniques of fracturing our minds for now and for all the time that our species still allows itself.

Post Scriptum Memo to other professional human beings:

Being vulnerable means that we are available to the next thing that happens to us in the street – sight of the deformed, mutilated, old other person presented to us not by 'them' but through our own experience of our own suffering. Nothing vicarious. There is no need for confirmation that what we are feeling is 'right' because the 'moral imperative' will be asserted in any case by the other, any other, no other; moral imperatives are nobody's business. Not being 'the professional liberators of other people' we 'need' to liberate ourselves by a philosophy of risk. The risk is that which is proposed to our own professionalism, by our own resistance to this risk. It's all old stuff, this business of risk, how can we make it new? By relinquishing the compulsion to be innovative. By seeing how, increasingly, we paraphrase each other as we paraphrase ourselves.

It's a risk simply to realize that, for example, as

intellectuals of the left, academics, professionals, writers for newspapers or publishing houses, critics and so on, we are the watch-dogs of capitalism. We may not recognize how we are being used to distort information when there is a growing radical need for the simple presentation of facts, with minimal interpretation as a basis for action. We must simplify language (but how can one write anything without using at least words like dialectic?). But at least we can take the obvious risk of opening our eyes to the obvious: we then witness our cunning, endless deviousness and small-minded, senseless and aggressive manipulation of each other, and finally knowing the vanity of all the effort we witness the greater authority and authenticity, dignity and generosity of the poorest people on earth, in the mines and ghettos of the capitalist world, in all the tortured recesses of the third world – the people on whose backs the remaining parasitic power of capitalism rests,<sup>12</sup> but who now at last begin to stand up straight and unburden themselves.

Too cynical for sentimentality and too sentimental for cynicism, there is, finally, no moral exhortation involved in all this, but there is the available vision of links of solidarity between people who are oppressed in widely different ways. When we become aware of the exploited third world *that we belong to* in the centres of first world power we will know what we need.

12. Could the economies of the capitalist countries, the U.S.A. in particular, survive one month without the massive exploitation of the third world through the multinational companies with their interlocking finance systems and universal mystification – ranging from the imposition of hired and blackmailed fascist military régimes of torture all over the world to subtle distortion of political events to the endless advertising of un-needed identical commodities in competition with each other? *What is the sheer quantity of wasted work in the world?*

When we know what we need we will unite our revolutionary power.

When we do these things the watch-dogs of capitalism will become lap-dogs – on the way to beginning to becoming a little bit human at last.

# 3

*A nostro avviso la famiglia è e deve restare la cellula madre della società fascista.*

*Old Italian saying<sup>1</sup>*

*The family which emerged in the final phase of primitive communism, will in future be abolished. It had a beginning and will find its end.*

*Mao Tse-tung<sup>2</sup>*

## ORGASMIC POLITICS

The first thing that one has to say about orgasm is that one cannot talk about it. One can however talk 'round about' it and then we find that such talk immediately becomes political talk with clear implications for action.

I want to say a few things round about orgasm in terms of experience rather than in mechanistic terms of biological reactions in the manner of Wilhelm Reich, who historically lacked the perspective of the *mediations*

1. 'In our opinion the family is and must remain the mother cell of fascist society' – Marlio Pompei, theoretician for Mussolini, in *Critica fascista*, 1 May 1933.

2. Mao Tse-tung: 'Talks at Chengtu: Against Blind Faith in Learning'.

of experience-action between the micro- and the macro-political. Reich, whose courage in his fight with the politically reactionary psychoanalytic establishment one can greatly admire, defines his sex-economy for instance as 'the theory of the "basic laws of sexuality"'. These basic laws are determined by the "orgasm formula": tension – charge-discharge-relaxation.' 'Psychoanalysis is a psychology; sex economy is sexology. "Sexology" is the science of the biological, physiological, emotional and social processes of sexuality. Sex-economy is the first discipline to establish the profession of sex-physician.' 'The abundance of emotional affects, which entail certain dangers in the hands of unskilled practitioners, requires an extremely tight control both in training and in practice. By definition this control can only be exercised by specially schooled and experienced physicians and pedagogues.' 'He must have the knowledge of basic consideration of the mechanism operative in schizophrenia and in manic-depressive psychosis.' (Quoted from elucidation occasioned by the Norwegian Government's 'Authorization of Psychoanalytic Practice 1938' – translated Therese Pol.)

It is not simply a matter, here, of Reich's general position of a pseudo-natural-scientific language being put into unmediated conjunction with the macro-political, but it is a matter, clear in these quotations, of the deforming submission of sexuality to professional expertise and especially medical power. How can we get beyond the 'orgasm formula' to return to the present experiences of actual people in the political rather than 'scientific reality'.

Orgasm is the cancelling out of mind<sup>3</sup> at the height of

3. This does not mean that one should feel guilty or make the other one feel guilty if 'one's mind' functions sporadically with images of other people and situations during the experience before and after the non-experience. During the return there is

a sexual experience. 'In' orgasm, there is no desire, no instinct, no passion, no love.

There are no two persons in orgasm because not even one person remains. There is no experience of the orgasmic moment since this moment is precisely the evacuation of all experience.

There is a whole myth about 'simultaneous orgasm' as the finally desirable thing. Well, it's just something that sometimes happens or sometimes is pretended out of a mistaken sense of generosity (guilt in one of its forms). What matters is that one totally gives up one's self ('reality') pre-conditioned by the same giving up by the other person of the 'reality' of who they are. More basic than that is the need to be witnessed by the other in the state of selflessness. That expresses a more total mutual affirmation than the famous simultaneous orgasm. The experience about the selflessness is the realization of the non-substantiality of the self, and is the key to the demystification and elimination of alienated self-structures that links personal with macro-political consciousness.

On the question of extra-genital sexuality and homosexuality: it is never a question of 'immaturity' or 'fixation' at a level of polymorphous perversity or pregenitality. All levels and all forms are involved. It is simply a matter of choice about what sort or part of body and what person arouses one erotically leading to orgasm. One might argue that the incapacity for homosexual experience is an 'illness' in need of 'treatment'. I'd rather say that it's a matter

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the only possibility of 'free association' – to all one's experience, all one's history. Of being truly alone with the other person. Even in the most neutral psychoanalysis one's awareness is structured by the other – especially by his 'neutrality'. There is a problem about guilt – how do we transform it into a necessary sadness, and that only for a time?

of simply finding one's own most joyful path to orgasm.

All orgasmic sexual relations are heterosexual and homosexual and polymorphous. In the phases of experience that preface orgasm, we are not only both sexes with no opposition of penetrator/penetrated, but we are all things – before the allness of things is lost in the annihilation of minds that leads to our renaissance that takes the shape of all the regions of past and future being.

And as regards age? Some men like older women though the majority tend to find younger ones. This is partly because men take so long to reach orgasmic possibility – often in middle age after many years of marriage and many children. The menopausal changes in women are socially conditioned and should be socially-politically reversible. There is no clear female menopause in the other primates – it's our human invention in terms of reproductivity of man-power for the system of property. Political change involves changing our endocrinological structure in a way that achieves orgasmic possibilities well beyond the present endocrinological limits (the reduction of post-menopausal orgasmic potential by atrophic external genital changes and diminution of secretions). This political chemistry of our bodies obviously has nothing to do with simple change of régimes, but operates on an evolutionary level with the abolition of power-structures in human relations and the form of economic infrastructure that conditions them.

Forms of therapy<sup>4</sup> aimed at liberating the bodies of individuals are easily recuperated by the system, not

4. A friend at the age of eighty-two told me that after the age of eighty lovemaking gets 'a bit less frequent but much better'. Perhaps it was a coincidence that he was a Reichian analyst and analysand of Reich. The experience needless to say is not unique.

only by virtue of being commercial techniques but because the liberation is fragile and one returns to the same slot in an unaltered social context. It's a bit like the good feelings of giving up smoking (some feel that they have solved the ecological problems of the world). It's also rather like meditation practices in a capitalist context. The question of liberation is to be posed in other terms, political terms, and particularly in terms of time.

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Before and after the moment of no-mind (the annullment of alienated experiences) there is of course the most intense experience, the most intense desire, but that is experience on the periphery of orgasm, not 'in' it.

*No one can 'have an orgasm' since one cannot have nothing. This nothing is being with which one is without (outside of). Orgasm is nothing but it is not nowhere.*

Like the other nothing that people call 'the self', orgasm is in history and has a location but has no substance; it is indicated by the directions of certain acts and experience. Orgasm is a precise objectification of the self as a specific nothing. So it is not possible, even with the best conceived diagrams and schemas, to talk 'around about' orgasm with psychoanalytical conceptions of the 'self' as some sort of receptacle into which objects are put or sent out of (introjection, projection and so on), or with the biological conception in which the human entity is reduced to a substantial organism in which 'instinctual tensions' have to be released in orgasm; all this then being simply put in conjunction with the social mass.

Rather we have to use language in such a way that the language of normal consciousness, which is anti-orgasmic, is undermined. For example, we might use language not merely for information but in such a way



that in our discourse the words exist to form perfect silences. This is orgasmic language and, and in much the same way, orgasmic acts destroy repressive bourgeois time, normal time, in order not to be destroyed by it.

In capitalist society, once again, normality is defined by those who own the means of production and is defined solely in their class interest; their definitions are accepted by all those who are bewildered and confused by the systematic and more or less subtle misinformation and false constructions in the capitalist-controlled press, radio and television and educational system, even though it is not in their interest. So that these people do not revolt against the capitalist mode of production and relations of production and are made to accept the repressive version of normality that goes with that system.

Along with this repressive normality goes the repressive use of time. Capitalist time, totally conditioned by the system of production for profit based on the profitability of persons, imprisons sexual life and destroys the conditions of possibility of orgasm. The principal condition of orgasm is the destruction of regular clock-time to rediscover the infinitely variable clocks of our bodies. The man who returns home at the same time every day after seven hours of routine work and passes the evening in a routine manner (routine cuisine, routine T.V.) with his routine family, goes to bed with his wife, who at the best is seething with anger at the oppressive conditions of her daily routine, aimed at the destruction of her personality and autonomy; at the worst, she passively accepts her condition. In any case, when they 'make love', once or twice a week or fortnight or month, for ten minutes or so, they do so in the face of the destruction of the time conditions for orgasm. The man who has internalized the mechanical routine of his

hours of labour, expresses the routine in his body and mistakes pleasurable ejaculation, which is like having a good shit, for orgasm. Reich of course recognized that ejaculation does not mean orgasm, but orgasm is more than his mechanical 'adequate release of (bodily) tensions'; in experience, orgasm is the renewing movement out of an old and back into a new mind in the presence of another person with whom one creates trust without the need for false promises for a 'future'. This man's wife, with her more or less virgin clitoris, has been conditioned to accept this as 'it', this routine and nothing more. One might reverse the 'protestant work ethic' and say 'early to bed and early to rise make a man impotent, impoverished and dead'. 'Healthy, wealthy and wise' are for all the 'other' people.

This is *Procreative Sexuality* aimed, with the least pleasure possible, at producing man-power for the labour-market and woman-power for the maintenance of the family as a principal mediator of repressive violence through which people are first taught to submit obediently, surrender their autonomy and give up hope. Their oppressors, the non-producing parasites, are hidden from vision by the other mediating systems of repression, kindergarten, school, the regimented factory with its alienated labour, the technologized university, and all the agents of repression – bureaucrats, police, psychiatrists, psychologists, experts on human relations and 'sexology', educators and so on – who are also the victims of the repression for which they are the functionaries.

Procreative sexuality is submissive sexuality and is in total contradiction with *Orgasmic Sexuality*. Procreative sexuality can and usually just does mean a penis masturbating itself in a vagina – the clitoris virtually and virginally untouched. For this form of sexuality the

'missionary'<sup>5</sup> position' is ideally suited (man lying on top of the woman) – the man can achieve his masturbatory pumping; the woman can't move at all. Orgasmic sexuality implies that there are more things that we can do with our bodies-in-relation than merely that. Orgasmic sexuality is revolutionary sexuality.<sup>6</sup> The moment of ecstasy, stepping out of one's mind and out of their system of repressive time is a revolutionary moment. This moment is based on trust and is one central point of origin of autonomy and freedom in human relations and therefore of revolutionary solidarity. I don't like the moralistic and financial correlation of 'trust' that, further, in the Latin languages, is translated into something close to fidelity and religious faith. Thus in Italian, instead of *confianza* one might use *affiatamento*, in the sense of a harmony between people who truly recognize each other (Latin *flatus* (vital) breath) e.g. the *affiatamento* of comrades who might risk their lives together. Also in Italian *orgasmo* has a wider sense of great enthusiasm investing many human experiences: if one says 'my mother had an 'orgasmo' with that new priest in the church this morning' no sexual activity is implied (though one can always hope). Oppression in terms of other material needs, food, warmth, and shelter, are not enough for *total* revolution. We must have revolution against the capitalist system but, once again, we must also ask persistently 'revolution for what?' Evidently not just breaking any taboo, like the incest taboo, but any taboo that we choose to break in

5. The way they tried to de-sexualize the Africans and destroy their culture before the big guns came.

6. Someone has asked why the rich bourgeois or the inheritor of private property, apparently with much free time, is not revolutionary and orgasmic. Well, the time of the bourgeois is the most structured of all; it is the internalized cadaveric time, the destroyed time of others, of all the labour that has produced this poor wealth.

common and by consent. Someone suggested to me recently as a point of breakthrough that at one moment a child 'should be allowed' (how does one distinguish 'allowing' and imposing?) to break the incest taboo – and that's it. That's not 'it'. Who conditions the needs of any child? New, liberated ways of living our relationships do not automatically form a change in the ownership of the means of production any more than 'the other way around'. Repressive capitalist time has to be destroyed too, and it was no accident that the communards in Paris in 1871 'instinctively' shot at the clocks that represented bourgeois time.

The most radical of radical needs is the need to denormalize society in the sense of attacking not just some but *all* repressive structures *now*, and this most radical of radical needs is needed in terms of our need for specific experiences of liberation in orgasm that refuses family procreative repression, and in creative madness or mad creativity that refuses psychiatric repression. These ways of perpetually, albeit never completely, clearing out our minds and beginning new ones are subjective and on a qualitative plane, but their base is material and their mode is that of individual and social (collective) consciousness; they are historically conditioned and they are factual and not metaphysical. Their frustration or sometimes their impossibility of expression expresses the most advanced level of contradiction in capitalist society, but the same difficulties exist in those socialist countries in which an inadequate revolutionary consciousness has led to a situation in which social revolution lags behind the political revolution.

If we produce for ourselves and not to create surplus value we create time for ourselves, to meet, play with and enjoy each other without the oppression of regular

hours.<sup>7</sup> In any case, far too many goods are produced to delude people and lead them into the illusion of joy and away from the reality of joy in liberated relationships. And just like the absurdity of useless consumer goods (and all those identical pseudo-necessities with different brand names), there is the absurdity of the millions of workers in the commercial office blocks, in advertising, banks, and in the endless bureaucratic corridors of the capitalist state, who produce *nothing* but profits and delusions for their bosses to use. There is much time to be liberated in all those office blocks – free time that not only is the condition for orgasmic experience *but must be conditioned by it*. The new revolutionary factor is that people start making love instead of just fucking to procreate for the bosses. Orgasm is a contagious, good madness. Liberation into orgasm means the end of the servile, restrictive, suffocating family system that serves only the bosses, and the creation of the true family of ‘sisters’ and ‘brothers’. This ‘true family’ language, though obviously ironic, is too suspect. No more ‘fraternal greetings’.

There is no question of promiscuity when there is a matter of love. There is no question of sexual perversions. Sexual perversions do not exist because nothing that leads to trust and orgasm can be perverse. Only sadism and masochism, carried to the point of bodily damage, are non-orgasmic relations of submission and oppression, non-sexual perversions that are typical

7. Of course, in practice in the present, if one would really de-structure bourgeois time one risks an extreme marginalization. But there is also a marginalization inevitably imposed by capitalism. A French journal of the unemployed recently published reports of a remarkable improvement in sexual life during unemployment. This is no argument for unemployment but for exactly the opposite – workers’ control of *their* time. In contrast to the celebrated Californian boss who installs prostitutes on the factory roof to limit over-production.

products of the capitalist system of production and of all systems of master and slave.

Fuck the clocks of the bosses and make love<sup>8</sup> with your neighbour (depending on one's neighbour, of course).

The world has suffered immensely from the fact that Jesus Christ is supposed to have died to save it – it would have been better if he could have been seen historically as having had one orgasm to save himself.<sup>9</sup> The crucifixion was no orgasm but rather, in the power structure of the emerging Church, the historical ushering in of submission in the interests of the emerging feudal society.

The personal condition of orgasm is trust – a harmony produced through personal work – between two people. This trust is totally different to bourgeois marital 'fidelity'. With trust, we form non-exclusive, non-possessive relations that spell out a death-curse to repression. With orgasmic trust, we finally reinforce links of solidarity between us. Then we will not merely undergo a revolutionary process – we will create permanent revolution.

The experts of the psyche talk about the sexuality of *other* people and run desperately away from any awareness and presentation of their own sexuality. We should, perhaps, catch ourselves out if we do this, or catch each other out and remember that there are orgasmic and non-orgasmic ways of talking and of looking at each other. Some of us, at least in terms of our training, are psychoanalysts of the Great Phallus<sup>10</sup> – the only function

8. 'Making love' is the bodily interaction leading to orgasmic sexuality. The term 'fucking' applies to procreative sexuality and is consequently and rightly abusive.

9. Though perhaps he did, and perhaps that precisely was what Paul didn't see through a glass darkly.

10. No wonder some psycho-technicians find it incomprehensible when I say that women – *physiologically* speaking – have

of which seems to be the clitoridectomy of women. Others of us are psychiatrists whose crimes against humanity include not the mystical castration that psychoanalysts talk about but the literal castration of patients both with certain specific neuroleptic drugs and with the anti-sexual social progress of institutionalization both in the hospitals and the community centres and sectors. Others of us, again, are the victims or future victims of these forms of repressive violence.

Finally: the social revolution goes on *now*, not in one or two years time. It goes on in every institution that mediates capitalist repression, every school, factory, university, prison, in every family and in every bed.

People do *not* come to international congresses<sup>11</sup> on sexuality and politics to avoid confronting the issues of sexuality but to avoid their sexuality. Others no doubt *come* to avoid confronting sexuality with many weighty words of mystification.

*It is not a matter that you have no time for such an evasion of our sexual reality, the savage surpassing of the limits of our bodies, or that I have no time for it.*

*History has no time for it.*

11. The context of my concluding remarks was the International Congress on Sexuality and Politics held in Milan, November 1975.

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bigger phalluses than men and that though orgasm is rare in women (see, *inter alia*, *The Hite Report*, compiled by Shere Hite, London, 1977) – it is even rarer in men (see also *The Grammar of Living* – ‘An Orgasm Manifesto’).

As regards rape, four women in England were recently sentenced for raping a man. Though that might be some men’s dream of paradise there is the concrete problem of the rape of one girl by one man. This crime like all violent acts depends on the ultra-normalization by the bourgeois system – the system that legally demands the rape of women by men. The political object of attack is bourgeois law.

## LINKS – AND SOME DISCONNECTIONS

Before proceeding from the above reflections on madness and orgasm, seen in the context of radical needs, to a consideration of what is being and what can be done against repressive violence, there are certain links that should perhaps be made. Links between the politics of personal lives and the macro-, geo-political and perhaps beyond. Although some of those linking statements might assume an 'aphoristic' form (from Greek *ὄρος* – boundary) they are in fact provocations breaking boundaries, to connect up things, rather than definitional 'sorting-out' statements. One could endlessly multiply personal illustrations in the lives of certain people, but it is perhaps preferable to



find one's own personal resources to 'receive' presented ideas.

It is by no means perverse, nor should it be even a bit perplexing, for someone to say:

If you know I will tell you  
If you don't I won't.

Whatever the diversity of our experiences, there can only be one aim: to recover what is obvious – as such. It is one thing to have the highly-principled compassion to let the other person know that one knows (and that one knows they know that one knows that they know, and so on). It is another thing, risking the social disgrace of arrogance – though perhaps it is more a matter of respect, to take it for granted that the other person, involved in a dialogue, will seize the obvious and throw it up into the air from the space between us.

But then, *if one is not ruthless enough one invents a Sadism.*

ON ALIENATION: THE UNCONSCIOUS IS A  
CONSCIOUSNESS: THE DIALECTIC IN NATURE

Alienation has to do with a split in an original unity, but one should add 'in the sphere of the human'. The word 'alienation' has a long history.<sup>1</sup> For Hegel, it had to do with the unhappy fact that from inside ourselves we are disturbed by the recognition that there is something outside our insides (objectification and exteriorization) that has to do with us; there was a passage between the metaphysical inside and the outside that could only be resolved in some sort of masturbatory orgasm of Abstract Spirit.

1. E.g. 'Alienacioun of God is to men workynge wickidnesse' (Wyclif, 1388). Firstly theological, then philosophical, as in Fichte before Hegel.

Marx on the other hand saw alienation as arising practically, in everyday life when people's acts (objectification and exteriorization) were turned against them. Seeing alienation as arising from the division of society into classes of exploiters and exploited, as having its origin in private property, he concentrated his work on the critique of political economy as the science that he found most humanly relevant in his day (though now we explore alienation also in other human and extra-human (natural) sciences that grow in their relevance). This science (of Adam Smith, Ricardo, Mill, etc.), while implicitly establishing alienation as necessary for their vision of the social good, helped reveal its nature to anyone who was prepared to see. But today the critique must extend to all the sciences in their bourgeois expression right up to or down to the most advanced psychoanalysis and the 'sociology of the absurd'.

The 'sphere of the human' comes from the operation of consciousness-action that generates reflective consciousness (being aware of what we are primarily aware of), which in turn, when systematized, generates knowledge. An error arises when we try to reduce primordial, pre-reflecting awareness to terms that are posited by the reflection of knowledge. Knowledge of course is alienation (the split in consciousness introduced by reflection) and involves such a mystifying oscillation between inside and outside that we begin to think of it as really 'there' ('outside = reality') – like its really real effects and results. If we take knowledge 'with a pinch of salt', however, there's nothing wrong with it, especially if we can use it. There is 'good' alienation too – alienation is not a moral condemnation.

Reflection probably arose (phylogenetically) in the transition from the anthropoid apes to man and probably in the human infant (ontogenetically) when it begins to be regarded by the adults as 'becoming human

(like us) at last'. Though I don't know how a gorilla or orang-utang imprisoned in a zoo cage is supposed not to be reflectively conscious of his awareness at certain moments (so I refuse any obvious psychoanalytic interpretation of my recurrent dreams of at last speaking to someone, the caged people, who at last understands and accepts my hand to dissolve the bars and then walk away together – without any question about who is liberating whom).

Humans (why 'Man'?) started tool-using three million years ago. Two million years ago they started making fire. Only 100,000 years ago did they start burying their dead. After reflecting on the world outside, the humans at last reflected on themselves. *The human subject was born with its denial, its burial.* The human subject as an object of science has a history of only two centuries or so.

Before reflection there is a pre-reflective consciousness that certain stages, the post-natal early infantile ones, constitute the Freudian (and Rankian, Kleinian, etc.) 'unconscious' (with genetically grafted-on primal phantasies such as birth-trauma, envy, and the primal scene, castration, seduction – the whole oedipal performance). Whatever consciousness the lamentable and pre-lamenting infant might have is mutilated amongst all the other fragmenting influences, by this psychoanalytic imposition and by what has now become a dutiful proto-psychoanalysis effected by the parental couple itself. Jung extended the Freudian unconscious to further realms that again have grafted-on phantasies, but these now come also from the 'collective unconscious' of the 'race' that may or may not (Jung is somewhat ambiguous about this) have localizable sites in the human brain. Well, the neuro-physiological is both important and potentially dangerous. It is important if one can comprehend it (not be taken-in by it) in

the totalizing movement of knowledge, and it is dangerous if one attempts to reduce reality of human experience to it with a view to manipulating human objects.

The reflective act of consciousness on itself is not the only activity of human pre-reflective consciousness: another field of action is that in which the pre-reflective consciousness posits its object as inseparable (from the consciousness) but also as *other*.<sup>2</sup> Consciousness, pre-reflective or reflective, has no substance other than the specificity of (non-(physical) – spatial) direction. It is not an ‘external secretion’ of ‘mind’ or ‘self’, but rather, in a deceptive analogy, mind or self are ‘internal secretions’, at certain moments, of sets of reflective consciousness. Mind and self are non-physical ‘unoccupied’ spaces pointed out by the specific directionality of non-metric ‘lines’ or arrows of synchronous acts and experiences. The analogy breaks down at the point where the ‘internal secretion’ evaporates into the specific nothing of the very definite space where ‘mind’ or ‘self’ are supposed (by reflective consciousness) to be but ‘are’ not. (See Chapter 2, ‘On Becoming Aware’, in D. G. Cooper, *The Grammar of Living*, Allen Lane, 1974.)

The ‘unconscious’ is a consciousness prior to the reflective act of consciousness that makes consciousness conscious of itself; that is to say the unconscious is pre-reflective consciousness as distinct from the consciousness of consciousness which is the base of knowledge. This pre-reflective consciousness is present not only in the human embryo but in all non-human forms of life, animal and plant. And why not extend our recognition of pre-reflective consciousness to the inorganic – mud and steel, mountains and skies? The only reason why not is the etymological connection of consciousness

2. As, on another level, certain ‘ideal’ human relationships are symbiotic or fluctuate within a symbiosis in a non-parasitic way.

with knowledge (Latin *cum-scire*, to know fully or together). The Anglo-Saxon 'awareness' with its 'becoming true' is a bit better. But if we are to find a way of talking that would establish a continuum between the human, non-human life and the inorganic it is better to speak of *sensitive systems*, the conceptualized units of which would be 'molecular, atomic and sub-atomic' (M.A.S.). *But there is a pre-conceptual phenomenological reality of the sensitive systems* and I would suggest that this reality, which is pre-reflective consciousness, extends beyond the human – far beyond.

Inanimate objects that enter into the field of human consciousness, in particular man-made and man-used objects, can be seen as being 'conscious' in the sense that there is relation, and, in terms of the conceptualized units, even a possibly ascertainable relation, between the sensitive systems of the object and the maker or user. Is there a difference between a piece of wood that is part of a tree and the same piece of wood cut out of the tree by a man and fashioned into, say, a bowl? Apart, that is to say, from the obvious differences brought about by the functional shaping of the wood. To carry this speculation a bit further along one parameter of natural scientific conceptualization, one might consider the possibility of minute alterations in the orbits of electrons in the atoms of the molecules of the wood before and after its transformation into a used object. When the natural wood becomes the used wooden object, would it be too absurd to consider that some sort of attunement arises between the inanimate, fashioned cut wood and its human user on the conceptual level of sensitive systems however minute the alterations? Or, again, one might consider the change in a metal before it is mined and the 'same' metal in a metal implement.

There are many psychiatric accounts of abnormal human movements and of states of frozen immobility

(as in 'katatonia'), sometimes expressed in 'delusional' statements about becoming a certain type of plant, or becoming an emitting or receiving electronic apparatus. Or, apart from the language of madness, in the metaphors of normal discourse: 'you have a heart of stone', 'his face had a wooden expression' or 'his hand a steel grip'. In all these forms of speech, experience and behaviour, but particularly in the mad ones, there is a human exploration of non-human life and of the inanimate and the inorganic. If we can abandon our anthropocentric attitude sufficiently to consider the possibility of a continuum of sensitive systems running through all these human and extrahuman domains, our thought will perhaps begin to find an approximation between delusion and truth, between metaphor and literality.

For the poetic consciousness, the continuum of sensitive systems is the primary material to be worked on. Although the tendency is to anthropomorphize non-human nature, this could not be achieved without a prior modification of human sensitive systems to attune to the non-human systems, to listen to the language of animal, vegetable *and* mineral, like Saint-John Perse:

A présent laissez-moi, je vais seul.

Je sortirai, car j'ai affaire: un insecte m'attend pour  
traiter. Je me fais joie

du gros œil à facettes: anguleux, imprévu, comme  
le fruit du cyprès.

Ou bien j'ai alliance avec les pierres veinées-bleu:  
et vous me laissez également,

assis, dans l'amitié de mes genoux.<sup>3</sup>

3. *Eloges* XVIII. Translation (D.G.C.):

Leave me now, I'm going alone.

I'm going because I've business: an insect waits  
to deal with me. I feel a joy

The *poietic*, creative act, here the poietic act of the poet, is the seizing of reflective awareness of the pre-reflective consciousness of the system of sensitive systems: man – insect – tree – stone. This is the reality of poetic discourse from which issues the secondary activity of the inscription of words on paper. Mad discourse usually, but by no means invariably, falls short of this secondary ‘achievement’. But madness participates in the poesis, the general sense of making, creating, that is founded on the reflective seizure of the primary awareness that extends way beyond the human.

And so in the poetic discourse of all other art forms. Such as the sculpture (1975) of the broken safe by Michel Gérard. This shows a person as imprisoned in and with his history, his family, genealogy, with and by his money, deeds, stocks and shares, testament, property; he is breaking out from the inside and at the same time his prison is being crushed and cracked from the outside, by another history, the massive present history of all the people. Liberation comes from inside and outside. The evolving of the piece came about from the attunement between the active and passive bi-directional transforming of the sensitive systems (the M.A.S. conceptual units) of the artist’s body and the body of the material (chromium). It is a wordless dialogue but, as the artist said, in a very few words, ‘if it had been just a little taller or a little shorter it wouldn’t have worked’, it wouldn’t have been body-size, the sensitivity of the systems would have been broken down.

The artist, in any form of art, functions from the base of an attunement of bodily sensitive systems with the

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in that great faceted eye, sudden as  
cypress fruit.

Or else, I’ve a union with the blue-veined stones:  
so, leave me just the same,  
sitting in the solace of my knees.

sensitive systems of non-human nature – or certain bits of it. The artist works from a total despair in the face of the repressive, alienating forces in the world but never loses a certain vision, at least, of long-lost lasting joy. The work of art is revolutionary by definition in so far as it destructures normal, alienated systems of perception at the centre of its creating dialectic. Activities that aim at a comforting normalization, for the art market, destroy the attunement of sensitive systems and constitute a commercial techno-fascism. All these characters exist in madness too, but one does not need explanations in terms of pathological genetic pre-disposition to account for the victimization of madness and the abortion of its creative moment; there are a host of scientific intelligible factors, hyper-normalizing family pressures, massive and arbitrary surveillance and control, specific formative and educational influences, and so on, to account for the fact that the artist can potently influence the world while the madman's potency is destroyed – yet both equally terrorize the normal world.<sup>4</sup>

If all this, and in particular the sketch of a general aesthetics, sounds a bit like another monadology, it is at least a materialist monadology, and unlike the metaphysical monads of Leibniz, for whom God decreed a beginning and an end, the monads, far from being windowless, are totally transparent. The negation of the negation means perhaps the production of an anti-aesthetic.

Some dialectical philosophers, such as Kojève, have criticized Engels' *Dialectic of Nature* as being inconceivable in principle. It is argued that there can only be a

4. A musicologist recently, after listing the aberrations of a number of great composers, concluded that they were not *all* pathological cases, however: 'Look at Richard Strauss.' Well, listen to *Der Rosenkavalier*!



dialectic in so far as a human being comes on to the scene of nature, that the natural sciences cannot be dialectical (Engels argued that quantitative changes in evolution, in chemistry and in electricity and magnetism generate qualitative changes), that only the history of the development of natural sciences could be dialectical and never the *content* of these sciences as this content consists in abstractions made by men not the *making* of those abstractions. Recognizing, however, the continuum of sensitive systems (across human and extra-human nature) *phenomenologically*, in experience as well as in terms of conceptual M.A.S. units, we can perhaps begin to consider a Dialectic *in* Nature, rather than *of* it.

#### THE GARDENER OF ILLICH

In Cuernavaca recently Ivan Illich told a story of a Mexican gardener who worked at C.I.D.O.C. (The Inter-Cultural Centre for Documentation). This gardener had a special relationship with each of the trees he tended. Each tree was inhabited by a dragon-spirit and the gardener would spend much time in conversation with these spirits. He discovered the story of the life of each tree and learned that while most of the spirits were good there were some evil ones that should be killed. When he approached Illich about the evil trees the response was simple: 'Kill them!'

It would be too easy to see all this in terms of superstition or mythology in a derogative sense where the 'mythos' varies etymologically from a slight sound (Greek  $\mu\upsilon$ , a 'slight sound' suggesting perhaps the origin of myth in direct apprehension of nature prior to the verbal elaboration of the fable) to a fable, a story told, that is far from 'objective truth' or at least verifiability. It would be more difficult for most of us to find

an interrogative sense that realizes the concordance of sensitive systems that exists between that particular gardener and those particular trees which he chooses to see as 'his own', his trees. Seeing them in this way is totally in accord with that culture and makes non-sense of any cultural imposition – of which Mexico, fed up with hunger, like all the third world, has had enough.

There is a mutual sensitizing of sensitive systems that, far from humanizing the extra-human systems, de-humanizes the anthropocentric. There is too much humanism, too much self- (-human) centredness. A surfeit, in fact, of anthropocentrism. The trouble with humanity is that it is too human.

Another story told to me by Silvia Marcos (a psychologist at Cuernavaca) may make this clearer: there was a woman who was tormented by a pain in her belly. She believed that a neighbour had cast a spell on her to occupy her insides and then, by a gradual metastasis, to invade all her body. She visited a '*curandera*' (a traditional Mexican healer) who suggested that the only possible cure would be for her to accept the power, the evil power, to do the same thing to her neighbour. She refused this power but decided to do some work on her crisis with people that she knew in her circle of family and friends. She got people to hold her physically while she went through agonies of destructuring in which things came out of her body like a long worm from behind her right ear, until she reached a point of total evacuation. But what matters is that she felt, saw, smelled the very particular beasts coming out of her body and she talked about it all to people who 'knew' what she meant.

In third world cultures there is generally greater continuity of human and extra-human sensitive systems and there can hardly be any sense in a project to

'uncover the unconscious', since on the base of the economic relations there is a greater awareness of the primordial consciousness embodied in 'mythic consciousness' and traditions. Also the extended family and larger communal unit do not generate the fearful repression that is intrinsic to the bourgeois nuclear family. The danger to the third world is not only that of economic imperialism and imperialist subversion and war, but also that of cultural and pseudo-scientific imperialism aimed at the destruction of traditional forms of life in the interest of neo-colonialism and the multinational companies. One witnesses, for example, in Mexico at present a slogan campaign in favour of the nuclear family, with the children held prisoner, against the traditional community with its extended and open families, and at the same time efforts to implant capitalist psycho-technology; both campaigns having the aim of increasing surveillance and control of the population.

The problem is that of moving from economic underdevelopment to autonomous socialism while *preserving* the traditional human resources of the people in a dialectic of liberation. One might compare Tanzanian socialist principles of preserving traditional healing as opposed to African countries where capitalist psychiatry has been imposed and where it has duly invented all the capitalist patterns of 'mental illness'.

The gardener of Illich knew all about the dragon-spirits in the trees. But there are other evil dragons who would cure him of the malady of keeping his own mind-dragons for him to identify and to kill. The mind-dragons of imperialism and neo-colonialism, its illegitimate and infinitely prolific daughter, bringing her stolen dowry – stolen from all of us, especially from us, the thieves.

## ON THE LIMITS OF DEATH

The Freudian model of the mind is a mixture of a natural scientific model and an anthropocentric conception. There is consciousness (reflective consciousness) as the tip of an iceberg, the submerged portion of which is the unconscious (pre-reflective, primary or primordial consciousness). In fact this narrow unconscious is a consciousness which is the tip of the tip of an immeasurably bigger iceberg of consciousness that includes pre- and extra-human primordial consciousness, and, when we consider death, also 'post-human' consciousness.

On dying we undergo molecular alterations and the bits of our bodies are dispersed in the universe. On the M.A.S. systems all our personal and pre-personal experience is inscribed, in fact the history of the universe is there as the minutiae of the movements of the minutest sub-atomic particles in the topography of their trajectories and their sometimes momentary,  $10^{-20}$  second, 'appearances' in clock time; these latter are the conceptual correlates of the sensitive systems of primordial consciousness. Anyhow, on death all that experience remains in the universe as universal experience, no longer 'our' experience. But why is it so important that it should be 'our' experience? What we 'lose' on dying is not lost to the universe. For the dialectical scientist, if he existed, all matter would be living matter. The difference between organic and inorganic chemistry is a useful one when it is a matter of manipulating our environment, but the dialectic is not to be found in quantitative changes in inorganic matter resulting in the qualitative change that results in organic, living matter (though there is a dialectical development in the history of chemical science and the human use of it in changing

nature). The dialectic *in* nature is in the phenomenology of the primordial consciousness that is all nature. Or, put in another way, the dialectic in nature is the phenomenology (without phenomenologists) of nature; this is a materialist conception of embodied primordial consciousness that can no more be reduced to disembodied psychological systems of consciousnesses than it can be reduced to the conceptual correlates of M.A.S. systems. This is the dimensionless meeting point of scientific knowledge and poetic sensibility.

Perhaps the most terrifying thing about dying is the idea of losing all the richness of our accumulated personal experience, and it seems small consolation to know that all that being 'experience' remains inscribed in the universe even if does not remain *in us*. And perhaps that is why so much social activity is aimed at stereotyping and finally killing precisely that richness of experience — because we cannot stand losing it at 'the end'.

But the terror has also much to do with the invention of private property as the illusory perpetuation of the richness of personal experience reduced to the 'richness' of possessions that can be passed on in the family line of descent. Putting in parentheses for the moment the objective historical origin of private property, in the division of labour and the growth of exchange value in relation to use-value, we should consider the human being as the first animal to develop a reflective consciousness of death and then a *concept* of death. Other animals arrive at an experience of death in the last moments of mortal combat for food or territory. The human tries to perpetuate his person in the minds of his descendants and in the property, malevolently engraven in his image, that he hands down to them.<sup>5</sup>

5. Even the small property of the poor. What does the son do when his mother hands down the clothes of his recently dead father? Wear them if they fit; and if they suit.

Private property purchases a spurious immortality, and in so doing expropriates us from our death. The new discipline of thanatology would lead us to an un-frightened lucidity about our personal deaths and the possibility of a proper mourning. What we need however is a political demystification of private property as death-masking – not the techniques of the thanatocrats! Nor the techniques of the morticians who at least in certain states in the U.S. can legally stop one being buried in legally specified coffins of specified materials if at the last moment it is discovered that one has not been embalmed in the specified way (thanks to the undertakers' lobby).

A thanatocentric religion such as Christianity soon lost its original impulse to communalism, against property and family 'ties' and for resurrection, and became used in defence of property under feudalism and capitalism, right down into the vaults of the ubiquitous Bank of the Holy Ghost. In the Shamanistic religion of primitive communism the Shaman presented his death within life for participatory experience in the tribal group. So, in the collective consciousness of post-capitalist society, personal death must be reappropriated as social value and radical need.

#### SUICIDE AND ITS 'ANTI-DOTES'

Someone I saw quite recently asked me how not to kill himself. The absurdity (in a totally non-derogatory sense) of this question became clear because there is no answer apart from remembering the peculiar scent of a freshly peeled lemon, and beyond that, there is the answer, that is no sort of response at all. If you can pose the problem of your freedom ultimately enough to pose the free choice to kill yourself you are no longer free to kill yourself because you have reached the limit of

human freedom. The Kirilov of Dostoyevsky was a fictional character. He had better remain so because while recognizing the possibility of freely living one's life or ceasing to do that, one remembers absurd things like the budding of a rhizome that paradoxically grows underneath the earth, and if one remembers even in the dire extreme of incarceration that one fact, one can no longer kill oneself. Because that impossibility is our freedom too and then one can finally live for oneself. As no one can liberate anyone else, because liberty is the act of taking it, there is no sensible way of speaking about our duty and obligation apart from the duty and obligation we have towards ourselves. All the rest is the trap of culpability/culpabilization. If we can't liberate ourselves even to this minimal extent of demystifying guilt we can only enslave other people in our delusions of freedom.

Suicide anti-dotes: no one can prescribe suicide but we all have the anti-dotes.

Most people who kill themselves definitively (without the obscured intentionality of the 'accident' or half-accident) do so because they have been conditioned into experiencing themselves, and making others despairingly or angrily experience them as 'bit mouths' wanting to suck in and swallow more things than are presented in the world; other people are not enough. Well, of course one has to respect anyone's right to kill himself (it is here that one meets the most violent disrespect exercised by psychiatry). The irony is that at any moment one is totally free to step beyond this conditioning powered by nothing more nor less than a sense of its total absurdity.

Lacking such a sense of absurdity we magnify personal problems. When we turn the imaginary telescope the other way around these problems shoot off into an

ultra-microscopic universe where they belong. No-where.

Our personal problems are not 'our' problems; our political existence is problematic enough without them. They come from an otherness and by the mere, sheer fact of being; we are the power that can send them back to where they came from.

From other people.

From another place.

Some of the worst social violence, repression, comes from trying to stop other people from killing themselves. One's right to live is the right to die, categorically; but, of course, also vice versa. Another violence comes from the illusory need of others for the suicide of other others. In burying the suicide we bury our despair – or so we think.

So, another anti-dote for suicide is a sufficiency of despair. Let us at least keep the little we have left. Why not? With a necessary ambiguity, the only point in suicide is its absence.

So, we continue . . . There is nothing more unnatural than 'death from natural causes'. That is a fiction of bourgeois law that only makes sense in the nonsensical context of coroners' courts and insurance companies. All deaths are suicide or murder, or usually both, in any case. Guilt and the making of guilt is the luxury of domination – for a power that no one needs.

So we continue . . . with the power that is continuing. If you have been contemplating an overdose and now start thinking about all these things, you won't have time to take it. In which case – I am sorry!

**ONLY THE PERSECUTORS ARE PARANOID!**

Freud's Schreber was really persecuted, not as a judge who became paranoid, but as a person who was trying to



break out of the paranoia of the bourgeois legal system and a father who was the same sort of system.

Police and mind-police of the world unite – join the persecutors and you will be persecuted no longer. Persecute a bit more and you are persecuted so much less.

The possible genesis of a birth becomes the procreation of delusion from words half said: ‘are they about me?’ The noises next door of people making love (the most persecuting sound of all) – ‘are they about me also about my not making love?’ and will some idiot find the biochemical correlates<sup>6</sup> that would be the cause of this disease – the one I am supposed to have? In fact so many millions of dollars are spent on research and the chemical techniques to control experience that the rates of profit exceed all possible social control in the capitalist world. For real research that threatens the system politically and therefore must be suppressed, there are no dollars available at all. Because information on simple facts is revolutionary. Telling the truth threatens the system. Just a little bit of truth fells it, even if it is never told. But why waste our last years on fascist reaction, knowing that it will never work. The world is crucified on the sagging pricks of those who want at least one generation more of immortality. How to last out that bit longer at the cost of how many vital lives. In all Southern Africa and everywhere the people are sacrificed on the altar of the false delusion that oppression has the nature of Methuselah.

Living on my wits as I have to because I can’t practise psychiatry or any form of therapy, I meet many other mad people all the time. People who believe the true proposition that they are the centre of the universe and

6. Biochemical correlates of states of experience are one thing; that’s science. To convert them in causes of ‘mental disease’ is another; that is psychiatry.

that all things that happen happen to have a special reference to them. True enough. But if you persist in stating the truth, how much longer can you get away with it? I just say to people who come by here: the truth is so precious and so precarious that you have to be careful to whom you say it.

The 'paranoid patient' tries to tell his truth and we can always find some political centre to that truth. As for using paranoia as a defence, it is simply a matter of trying out passive homosexuality, like all other sexual possibilities, and deciding what suits you best. If that was not possible in Freud's Vienna, it is possible now.

The really defensive paranoia lies in the institutional structuring of the intellectual-scientific-cultural establishment with its impotent power – a structuring that evades political truth in the interest of the Permanent Mystification.

#### PROGRESS

Progress is the human event that happens when we go back far enough.

When we go back sufficient millennia to the unpropertied man, and then sufficient aeons to our inorganic crustacean past and to what, if anything, preceded that – a prior cosmos which might with the aeonic destruction of scientific time, be a future cosmos – or perhaps nothing. If you read a pessimism in that you write your own epitaph – but we refuse our own. In defiance we will write our own.

The route of the way back passes by way of the interstices of our nearly congealed society and the last stop on route is the limit of our personal interiority before we cross the zero-self barrier.

The aim of the retreat is not to go back, to stay

behind the present because in the sense of going back, one does not leave the present behind. Who wants to be left behind in any case? The truth is never the object of desire – we can only want the means to arrive at it – and that, unfortunately, means other people.

The retreat is one of memory but memory in a special sense, the sense of a profound alteration of the spirit.<sup>7</sup> Memory in the ordinary sense of recall is calling on the operators of our body machines to evoke certain images and words engraved on those bodies-as-machines as clear consciousness transformed into a neurophysiological subscript in the sense of memory as analogy that accords with clock-time. Such conceptions of memory are passive and dependent on systems of mechanics – that is to say useful systems of working illusion that are ready to hand for the moment.

The memory involved in going back is not that sort of memory at all but is rather aeonic memory.

When one refers to memory as a profound alteration of spirit, one is talking about a unified movement that depasses the present and in one historical breath recuperates a mass of pastness (rather than clock historical past) and propels it into ‘futuraity’ (rather than historical ‘future’).

Our historical present is fixed, frozen, unmoving.

This is no conjecture but experienced fact. The movements, noises, shifting visual images that go around us in the present indicate a false duration. They are like the bubbles of putrefying gases on the surface of a stagnant pool indicating a life always elsewhere.

7. The Latin and Greek etymology of ‘memory’ includes words that mean ‘mindful’, ‘anxious’, ‘ponder earnestly’, ‘care’, ‘thought’ (Skeat, *Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*). Perhaps all this means a recuperation – getting not only what is all ourselves back but also what is all ourselves back as a project not into anyone’s but into all our ‘futures’ as we invent them.

It is not the past that is dead.

It is the present that is dead.

No one any more is responsible for the acts of anyone else. Responsibility means having to answer for something that one has promised to answer for. Such a promise can be no compromise. Or, in short, it can never be made to another.

We are conditioned in the measure that we, as human objects, refuse our determination.

When our sun extinguishes itself and 'us' in 5,000 million years, almost tomorrow, perhaps our history will begin. Not in the colonization of other bits of what we regard as the universe 'out there', but by the simple reappropriation of what is inside us. Not by a molecular biological technology but by a recuperation experientially of all that is inscribed on our sub-atomic register.

Just for once let's turn ourselves outside in. At least it can hardly be less boring than the conventional reverse.

#### THE OUTSIDE AND THE INSIDE OF ECOLOGY

The issues of 'outside' ecology should be clear enough. Aerosol sprays that destroy the vital ozone layer, dangers officially declared to be not yet clear enough for official purposes, sprays to deodorize what natural smell we have left or to make shine what little hair we have left. These are but one bit of the totally destructive uselessness of the mass of useless commodities that capitalism produces. And then electric can-openers — who needs cans far less than electric openers? Incidentally it has been estimated that men, on the average, spend nearly a year of their lives in the barber's shop and shaving into mourning, morning mirrors, not meditating but worrying about points in their often pointless, totally non-productive, but hard work, about their

family life and their few, furtive sexual desires for 'otherness', and their income tax.

Washington, 7 February 1977: the Department of Commerce has ruled that private companies (government and university research in the area is already prohibited) like Dow Chemicals, General Electric, Merck and Upjohn, may apply for accelerated patent action on the molecular biological (genetic) creation of new forms of life. Forms of 'life' far more menacing than the production of antibiotic-resistant micro-organisms in a senseless mechanistic medical spiral of producing diseases and producing their 'anti-'. Then October 1976, Sir Brian Flowers, head of an elite, seventeen-member 'Royal' Commission on environmental pollution: 'The concept of an energy gap arises from the assumption that energy demand will continue to grow exponentially. If you assume that, you will always have an energy gap. But growth cannot be exponential. It never is. We are coming to the point in our understanding of technological society that the days of exponential growth are over, or at least approaching being over.' Flowers fears a 'plutonium economy' that any 'terrorist' may use any way. The normal reactors used to produce electricity consume uranium. They diffuse local radioactivity and they create a waste that we have no ways of dealing with. The used-up uranium is then processed elsewhere to become the radioactive material plutonium – an essential element in nuclear bombs. Breeder reactors also burn uranium, but they burn it along with plutonium and they convert some of the uranium into an increasing surplus of plutonium.

Through all these planetary metaphors of Pluto and Uranus there runs an ancient mythology. The procreation of plants planting breeder plants and so on perpetuate a curious familialism that runs down to the sub-atomic. Like the Caltech physicists' early suggestion

that there are three kinds of those sub-atomic particles called 'quarks' (from *Finnegans Wake* – 'three quarks for Muster Mark . . .'): 'up' quarks and 'down' quarks similar in some ways to the normal and the delinquent children in the sub-atomic family. But there were also certain 'strange' quarks that did not follow the normal decay patterns theoretically prescribed. The strange quarks, the mad ones, preceded the 'charmed' quarks (the mad geniuses?). Richter of Stanford and Ting of M.I.T., the Nobel Prize-winning discoverers of respectively the psi (sic) and the J particles, then had a new big idea of another big bit of this family, the construction of the charmed quark and a charmed anti-quark. The anti-quark, being an 'identical twin' of the quark, was made of anti-matter so that all its 'properties' were exactly the opposite of those of matter – so that the negative and positive properties would cancel each other out. They never found a 'naked' (extra-familial?) charmed particle whose charm could be finally thrust into vision. Professor G. Goldhaber of the University of California's Lawrence Berkely Laboratory said, 'Everything that we've looked for so far has structure to it . . . so why not quarks? So when you ask me do I think they are totally impenetrable, or, at high energies can individual, free quarks be picked out, I would have to say: That's the next century's work.'

There is no question of 'the next century's work', that is the illusion that science and philosophy go on developing for ever. We have less than the end of this millennium, the year 2000, not to make, but to *do* certain decisions. Decisions like breaking through every level of familialism on every level of research and on every level of our lives. Let us stop merely seeking, searching out structure everywhere and become the strange, charmed quarks and dialectically, not like switching on and off an electric light, become the

anti-quarks too. Finding the light wherever the darkness is too bright, and never bright enough. Then – that is us! And it is our connection as human subjects, the objects of at least two centuries of the ‘human sciences’ – sciences which, when they lose consciousness of the realities of oppression and repression, become studies into how and how most obediently to dehumanize ourselves for the system – the eternal and seemingly indefinable others.

It is ironic, but expresses profound contradictions, that some of the most noble and sincere and personally practical efforts against eco-destruction are happening in the U.S.A. at this time. The work of these young people expressing a real and full generosity unfortunately founders on a geo-political reality in which all our fates are fused though our destinies would be distinct. If this reality is not just clear enough yet in California (apart from the Chicanos – i.e. the Mexican immigrants), it is clear enough for the major part of the world which is the Third World.

But the ecological issues, already somewhat inside out, are getting turned more so. Our bodies including our brains are becoming part of the eco-outside for objectifying scientists – scientists for whom knowing means obedient consciousness of what is prescribed as being ‘already there’. Well, our brains are already there on the prescribed marble slab. Our insides are ‘really’ out.

Washington, September 1976: the U.S. Government Commission ‘for the protection of human research subjects’ recommended that the secretary of health, welfare and education ‘conduct and support’ psycho-surgery on a research basis. And that psycho-surgery be done ‘primarily’ at ‘research centres’ and that it be limited to patients for whom ‘nothing else has worked’. (Worked for whom and for what?) Subject to the safe-

guards, such as court-hearings, psycho-surgery should not be denied even to involuntarily confined mental patients or prisoners, since it sometimes 'may be their best, if not only, possibility for recovery' (whose recovery of what for whom?).<sup>8</sup>

One of the chain-line professional puppets of this system of statist annihilation of people who try to make their political positions clear once said that 'we get better results in the lower classes and better results with women than with men, better results with Jewish women than Jewish men and the best results with black women'. The 'best results' are often total vegetation but always total submission. So finally we fit the imbecilizing formula of the psychiatrists normality. The violence of psychiatry can only be understood on the basis of its fundamental dogma: if you don't understand what another human being is doing 'diagnose it!' You will always find enough collusive victims to play that game. Now we begin to play that game out.

A black psycho-surgeon recently complained that not enough of 'his' people could afford to have their brains cut to pieces by him at his price (the declared aim of the 'new wave' of psycho-surgery is to suppress dissidents, like potential leaders of black ghetto rebellions. To keep the trouble-makers quiet, in the family, in the society, in the international family. Kill them, respectably enough, as a research project).

Brain-butchers have the economic problem of price: they get too few thousand dollars for pushing, for two or three seconds, a very fine scalpel into a brain of which

8. Peter Breggin of the U.S.A., who has done pioneer work on the new wave of psycho-surgery, has reported (at the International Congress of Psychoanalysis on Madness, Milan, 1976) on how the personnel who administered the Nazi extermination camps were trained in the principles and practice of euthanasia for inferior human beings by psychiatrists in mental hospitals in Germany through the 1930s.



the skull has already been cracked open by a junior surgeon (who is paid several hundred dollars less than he is worth for his ten minutes' work). It was much more honest, perhaps, in the old days of the 1940s when you just sat in the dentist's chair and had a chisel hammered home just above your eye-ball to sever the fronto-thalamic tracts to separate your thought from your feeling. You paid not too much more than a dentist's price to go home with one (maybe two, if you were a bad enough case) black eye – and a new personality. *No* personality. And everyone was happy with this result that resolved all family problems – in fact all problems, because how could you have any now?

Now, on the psycho-butchers' market, there are cut-price jobs for stereotactically-guided surgery, taking two or three hours, that cauterizes exactly the wrong bits of your personality (located in your old archeopallic limbic system brain) that you don't want – or rather what other people don't want you to keep. Like the blind anger that you have against all the shit that is dutifully poured on to you all the time. After all, we don't want a revolution, do we?

I remember working in a hospital in England in which on one side there was Maxwell-Jones's original therapeutic community for psychopaths (talk out your problems rather than act them out – in a psychoanalytically understanding context), and, on the other hand, there was the conventional bin situation, though without concrete walls. One of the famous bin psychiatrists suggested that the only problem with those (other) psychopaths and delinquents was to find a brain-ageing drug to get them old enough quickly enough, because after middle age those people get too tired to be troublesome. His wishes were rapidly fulfilled from 1955 onwards with the phenothiazines (largactil, etc.) and then, later, haloperidol in normal dosage.

But really, after considering these two systems of inside-outside eco-destruction, I don't know which was the worst. The half-shamefaced analysis *en groupe* of 'intra-psychic' conflicts (with the staff in perpetual conflict about how 'open', undefensive, to be with the 'others' in their separate staff groups) – or the barefaced 'great man' who sent one poor and gentle little man who was considered 'schizophrenic' or 'psychopathic' (had 'family problems' in any case) not once, or twice, but *four times* to have his brain sliced into for the benefit, presumably, of 'science and humanity'. I just remember him as a poor and gentle little man wearing a cap to hide his head-movements (he couldn't move much else); 'Good morning, dear doctor' as I passed on my daily rounds. I don't know if it is history or poetically truer legend that Egas Moniz, the Portuguese fascist inventor of psycho-surgery in 1935 (banned in even Stalinist Russia in 1950), was assassinated by one of his victims. Perhaps that was the only successful lobotomy.

After such experiences and countless others (which are another story) in the 1950s it became clear to me that in the 1960s we would have to form a movement against every form of psychiatric action, because, far from it being simply a matter of certain obviously violent treatments, it was a question of the whole functioning of this form of medical power for the bourgeois state. So, anti-psychiatry started in institutions and then political action outside too.

The problems of our minds and bodies objectified by medicine are not out there in the environment mixed up with a mass of drugs and repressive actions. The problems are produced by the controlling needs of capitalism and, as with the 'outside' ecological problems, their only solution must be a political one since the problems are necessary for the systems of profitability and control. Making the revolution now we must be fully

conscious that the struggle against repressive control will have to continue bitterly in socialism, in the work of permanent revolution.

Apart from the history of the contradiction of the repression of authentically socialist dissidents, there is one story that impressed me with particular force. A Russian couple were sent to prison for a year by their (and, after all, our) comrades because they separated themselves from the society and lived for some months in a burrow in the woods.

Communism *must* mean that we can have our burrows too.

#### PHILOSOPHY IN THE CLASSLESS SOCIETY

The compulsive finding of linguistic structures has no part at all because miraculously we live in a phenomenological universe where the logos drops off all the time from the phenomena of experience.

We'll hear the silences between words, read between the lines, learn how to disarticulate the language of our dreams (to make anti-interpretations).

As the silences become real in themselves, the words will fade and this is no cold universe because 'nothing' 'cannot be' cold held between the warm-enough hands of such possibilities.

Efforts to control people and their work are limitless in capitalist society. An organism called S.N.E.C.M.A. (*Société Constructive des Moteurs d'Avion*) was recently constituted in France, thanks to the concerted operation of the trade union movement. It had, however, an offshoot, C.E.S.A.R. (*Collecte Efficace et Sûre de l'Activité Réalisée*), which was translated by the major union C.F.D.T. as *contrôle effarant et subtil de l'aliénation renforcée*. With 'big brothers' like the IBM 3750 at the *Assurances Générales de France*, it is hoped that the

bosses will finally control by computer each hour of arrival at work, the moment of commencing each job, time spent on activity and 'inactivity', but relying all the time, in the end of this, on each worker's betrayal of each other – for the bosses.

The final (one hopes) struggle of capitalism is not based on its ballot-boxes of bourgeois democracy like sentimental little stories of the family lives of the last or the next presidents – all the degraded upstaged façades and facts of such events. We live our residual joy in the realization that our taking our own power in our own hands takes nothing from anyone else – but adds itself to the power of all others.

Power is to make possible a praxis that expresses a desire. What harm is there in the desire against all the odds, to remain intact. In every repressive system, however, *all power is perversion but potency is always revolutionary.*

#### DE-THEOLOGIZING OF THE SOCIETY

Let us assume for the moment the voice of the devil as expressed by Paul Tillich, a protestant theologian who finally succeeded in making god sufficiently unreal. Paul Tillich said that 'it is difficult not to become my own follower'. There being no masters and no disciples, it is unfortunately impossible to do the even more difficult thing – to be one's own disciple.

*While one should always practise what one preaches, one can only start by preaching what one practises:* one's practice being based on the feeling of certainty that we have a relatively free access to unconditioned action:<sup>9</sup> the certainty being based on total doubt about every

9. Our actions are always *conditioned* by all manner, by all sorts of other correlates of experience – but they are never determined by them.

aspect of one's social being. It is some sort of evil temptation to say that all evil is conditioning and that the quasi-platonic good is the free negation of conditioning. That's too good to be true. An end to moral language!

Here we run on to the difficulty of the paradox *either one is ruthless or one crucifies the other*. But at the same time, it's a matter of the expurgation of our language of all these forms of theologizing; even to talk about expurgation is to theologize. Even if one makes certain assertions, such as that a person is defined by a specific assumption of responsibility, that you can never blame other specific persons, only systems, then immediately you are engaged in a theologizing discourse. One can at this point only remember what Nietzsche said, that: 'One must separate from anything that forces one to say NO again and again.'

The question perhaps for Western Europe is to find what remains of what is politically real in terms of the existing, not always apparent, misery of people, and what is coherent with regard to the relation of what seems to be in-built paradox or 'original sin', and objective contradictions within the system.

We might take for example<sup>10</sup> what Søren Kierkegaard said in *The Sickness unto Death*: 'Self is the relation that relates itself to its own self. Despair is a disrelationship that arises in the self.' While one abolishes 'the self' that's a great thing to say.

'The despair of infinitude is due to the lack of finitude.  
The despair of finitude is due to the lack of infinitude.  
The despair of possibility is due to the lack of necessity.  
The despair of necessity is due to the lack of possibility.'

10. Another example one might take is just to listen to some folk music from Cuba (as I'm doing right now), or from Africa.

Thus we find inscribed on ourselves a cosmic wound that hesitates in becoming a cosmic womb. A disrelation that makes itself another self. Kierkegaard had some ideas about this cosmic wound but the cosmic womb where we can be alone enough at last is my preference. The fact is perhaps that we are sick of 'The Self'. That we no longer see the so-called schizoid as a failure of ontological security, but rather one sort of vision of escape from that security that must make us feel insecure enough.

The 'schizoid' and also full madness is a last-ditch attempt to achieve autonomy in the face of its universal violation. One philosophy of the classless society is the anti-schizoid – being alone enough at last to enjoy each other as we choose to.

#### A DUBIOUS INTERIORITY

In the present moment, we will live another time, we will live everywhere else and at all times in that cosmos without displacing anything at all.

A dreadful confusion arises between the act of absenting oneself from the world, where both world and act are imposed on oneself by others or rather by the otherness of others, 'the system', and the act that directs itself into an interiority that is sufficiently interior to cease to be one's own insides or those of anyone else. This latter interiority is freely assumed and, in some seemingly remote sense, is opened to the world – as transparent being.

Thus emerges a difference between the opaque locked-in space of looking into oneself and the free space of interiority which implies no inside as opposed to any supposed outside – because in one moment both are there or even here. It's all the time a matter of using the imaginary telescope to see the insignificance and the absurdity of personal problems, and then to see what

exists on the macro-scale of politics, either macro-politics, geo-politics or cosmopolitics. This telescope that I've already referred to in this book (the pages on Suicide) may be imaginary but what it sees is real. What matters is simply which end you look through.

Interiority, paradoxically enough, is in fact a movement into the world in what seems to be the wrong direction but which uses the seeming to make the wrongness right enough. It may lead other people to feel locked out from oneself, but that's because they are locked into themselves. What seems to be a ruthless denial of the existence of other people is in fact an invitation to a mutual liberation.

This movement is an invitation to a communion in the sense of being totally different in its nature from the impositional character of communication. The injunctive nature of communications<sup>11</sup> between people usually effectively eliminates the possibility of response and therefore the possibility of not responding if one does not want to. This has nothing to do with the non-answering of communications but it does seem to me to be one of the most extreme problems that exist in terms of *being human* rather than in terms of being those too solid entities which are *human beings*.

'Not wanting' is a double negation that each of us may therefore experience in the presence of the other, a presence which becomes an absence, a false presence, a pretended presence, precisely in terms of this presentation of the double negation. To say 'no' once should perhaps be enough for anyone; the 'not' of the not wanting and the 'want', implying a mystifying sense of

11. Someone recently asked me whether all communications were not commands. The more one reflects on many examples the more difficult it is to escape this conclusion. Even in the two statements of the 'neutral' exchange: 'What's the time?' 'It's eleven o'clock' (pay attention to your obligations!).

absence in and of the other, produces a responding double negation in the second person.

This may be paradigmatically presented right now from me to you, but you will find all the paradigms that you need and then far more than you will need or even may need in your present experience, in its recollected forms.

It is the idea of Total Property (one can *have* 'one's' 'self' as well as objects) that originated five or six millennia back in human history which created the split between primal self and self-possession – as if we could ever possess certain aspects of ourselves – aspects that are ulterior visions of what we are made out of. These visions become substantialized as regards the constituent parts of our body-mind-bodies or mind-body-minds and we have been taught to regard them as our 'made-up', constitution. We are in fact bits of intestinal mucosa as we are the selective bits of chemical substance which that mucosa allows to filter across its capillary system into our increasingly definable metabolical processes. And just so, we are bits of past experience of good-bad, bits of breast, penis, faeces and so on. We are taught in the most sophisticated academic and quasi-academic systems of prevalent thought to regard ourselves as being made-up versions of what doggedly, residually, we still feel ourselves to be – as making ourselves rather than being the made-up versions of ourselves. When just by chance we find the time to make love, we find a time for action. Any split at this point is an invitation to reaction. Fascist reaction.

When, then, we find no time to make love, we find no time for socially expressive action. We find the time only for an endlessly perpetuated reaction that activates endlessly the system that oppresses us.

The endlessness comes from our incapacity in female and male terms to terminate that system. So we must



find a rhyming in our melodies of self, in an age where all diatonic tunes have already been told.

It is a hard learning, hard coming and going; the going somehow becomes easier as the coming becomes more difficult. But then, strangely as it seems to us, the coming becomes as easy as the going. And then, both the coming and the going become too easy and too difficult but easy enough. And then we pose the question: 'The revolution or not the revolution?' – and always we return to the doubt: 'Revolution for nothing'. Are we finally all on the same side or not? We could easily simply affirm revolution here, but there is a certain sense in which we have to wait, not on circumstances but on ourselves. We act *now* of course, but all the time must wait for ourselves to catch up with the acts. We have perhaps to face this dual irony that we are more dreamed by our dreams than that we create our dreams. By these undreamed dreams, we are displaced, and we find a dislocation between the reality of the undreamed dreams and the dreams that direct the society. One speaks in a facile manner of recollecting one's dreams, as one has said before, arousing the person that one is sleeping with, to enregister the dreams on the consciousness of another person. And finally there's no point even in that. There is finally no point in that because, with unequal finality, that's what our dreams are about – our dreams *are* the recollection. We can only let our dreams grow in regions that are beyond our own space, leading into a shared space. Our dreams come from a region beyond our death, before our birth, and that's why they are so terrifying to us. I remember a prayer that I said compulsively for several years in my infancy: 'God, don't let me die, dream or grow old.' But the lattermost came before the foremost.

We have no possession of our dreams. Our dreams dream us. The eternal contradiction between what our

waking selves seem to be doing and what our dreams seem to be doing with us, we can only call a forgotten action. Those dreams seem to lead us into other directions, other paths than the ones traced out by a measured society. In our dreams there is a secret politic – the politic of de-measuring our society beyond the secret police – that is our active and collusive repression of a clear oppression.

Dreaming floods over the rivulet of particular individual experience into the immense lake of collective social experience.

Rather than as Freud's 'royal road to the unconscious', let us see dreams as the common highway to social reality. The dream is the anti-psychoanalysis. Its interpretation is its death, and ours.

Our dreams are part of the material that matters of our collective consciousness, of our political reality, our liberation, and we refuse its future theft by any system.

One dreams of shit and rotten stale blood pouring out of every orifice of one's body. Everyone who is sufficiently poetic will have all the resonances of the message-to-oneself. One has no need of the interpretation of the symbolic (shit, etc. = anger, chaos, destructivity and so on). Shit, being shit, retains all its senses. It is not a question of transference but of the transformation of the society.

We don't live our life spaces out in terms of some simple sort of mockery. We live them out rather in terms of an absurdity, a jocular, a clowning act that makes nonsense of all our serious pretensions. We find, if we look hard enough, an idiot, a sort of Dostoyevskian idiot, fool epileptic clown hidden away in our most secret thoughts. But in fact we have no region, no space, no time for jocular, much less absurdity, and the paranoiac in us presents himself, herself (it's all about

past people), itself with an increasing gravity. And then we are at a loss. Defeated by our seriousness.

And then, we may begin to find ourselves.

But it's not by the internal ages of the wise man but by the nonsense of the clowns – the clown contacted in us – that we save ourselves. That's the fate of the guru, the wise man who has forgotten his clown, his absurdity: we save ourselves *from* not *by* being disciples!

#### AUTOGESTION

What does autogestion mean? Autogestion means that we take power. It means that we look up not into but through the stars and that we find other spaces. That we respect our dreams but even more that we find a peculiar respect for the dreams of other people.

If autonomy is laying down the law for oneself – the original autonomy – then autogestion is taking over the power structures of one's life and work, obviously not alone but with identifiable other people who work, kind of live, or live and work with oneself. It's certainly not simply a matter of 'workers taking over factories': autogestion applies to every aspect of life. If one's personal needs conflict with those of the group of other people, that becomes tangible and frangible, we assume we can fight it out. The enemy of the autogestion movement is centralized state power expressed in all the operations of the machine of the system of that power. Autogestion does not mean autodigestion, eating up oneself, but means eating up our indigestible social system, chewing it, drying it out on our stomachs, vomiting it finally when we know its impossibility and flushing it down the toilet pan. The historical tradition starting in the nineteenth century, running across all the transversal lines of Marxism and anarchism through those times, runs through events like the Kronstadt

rebellion, Leningrad in revolutionary Russia, during which Trotsky drank champagne to celebrate the Paris commune of 1871 which had its anniversary on that eve, while using the Red Army to crush the spontaneous worker-naval-military-formations in that city. Workers' councils in Germany, Hungary, Spain, Italy also asserted all the time the 'propositions': (1) We are and where we are we'll take over the units of production. (2) We will free the expression of what even we might feel as minorities of people, class, racial, sexual, cultural or whatever. (3) That we will get from and keep power over all those people that we put in power so that we can remind them of, at least, their responsibilities and, at the most, of ours; softly kill the State that makes us unequal, that makes us unequal to them, unequal to ourselves.

#### ON CERTAIN CLICHÉS OF CAPITALISM

'Totalitarianism is evil.' So they say.

But all contemporary industrialized states are totalitarian. And so what? It is simply a question of who, owning the means of production, owns the means of communication (and the 'democratic process', etc.).

'Collectivism' is evil. (See, if it is not too boring, Carter, Giscard d'Estaing or Thomas Szasz.)

But collective struggle will (because it will *have* to) produce self-controlling socialist societies with self-controlling individuals (admittedly easier in liberated third world countries, viz. Tanzania).

It is the struggle that counts, making a collective fate, finally, of each of our destinies. We are always at least free to die the right way since, knowing that, we are at least free to live *our* way.

'Democracy' means that people take power – not vote for someone else's. And taking power they progressively destroy it by, with and for their potency.

12617

One popular dialectic of power runs from objective powerlessness (with its subjective dimension of impotence), *through* the taking of power *to* the surpassing of power into a reality of potency in each person. That is the meaning of demystification. Values are not posited, they are the meaning of this work of demystification.<sup>12</sup>

Some Marxists argue that with the total and final achievement of the classless society all national, cultural and religious differences will disappear. That is somewhat abstract. What is more concretely certain is that, along with the increasing uniformity of used objects, making labour more meaningful, but above all making labour less and less, people will become more and more different, distinct from each other, with the liberty of relating to each other or not in the infinite acceleration of remaining contradictions into paradoxes to live by. Paradoxes like the perpetual demolition of death by existing lives loving themselves enough, in the world enough.

#### ON COMPETITIVENESS

One has only one thing that one can do, and oneself alone. One must perpetually do it infinitely better than one can do it, oneself. All other competitiveness is sin – or, far rather, counter-revolutionary error.

#### AMBITION

Each and every one of us must have one ambition – to be the first Revolutionary. Such an ambition of yours makes no conflict with mine, nor mine with yours.

12. See 'Note Sur Mystification' in *Qui sont les Dissidents?*, David Cooper, Editions Galilée, 1977.

## OBEDIENCE

Crime exists. It is obedience and control. What could be more obedient to the norms of bourgeois society than the micro-mass-murder by the Charles Manson 'family' – at the height of the genocidal war against the Vietnamese people? The allegedly crazy murderer, the 'Son of Sam', learned about senseless killing on military service in Korea: he was a true son of Uncle Sam. Once again, how do we discover the discipline of disobedience, the living enemy of the walking death of compulsive control? Asking the question hard enough *in our actions* we begin to answer it.

*All delusion is political statement.*

## THE INVENTION OF NON- PSYCHIATRY

Non-psychiatry is coming into being. Its birth has been a difficult affair. Modern psychiatry, as the pseudo-medical action of detecting faulty ways of living lives and the technique of their categorization and their correction, began in the eighteenth century and developed through the nineteenth to its consummation in the twentieth century. Hand in hand with the rise of capitalism it began, as a principal agent of the destruction of the absurd hopes, fears, joys and despair of joy of people who refused containment by that system. Hand in hand with capitalism in its death agonies, over the coming years (it might be twenty or thirty years), psychiatry, after familialization and education one of the principal

repressive devices (with its more sophisticated junior affiliate psychoanalysis) of the bourgeois order, will be duly interred.

The movement, schematically, is very simple: psychiatry, fully institutionalized (put in place) by a state system aimed at the perpetuation of its labour supply, using the persecution of the non-obedient as its threat to make 'them' conform or be socially eliminated, was attacked in the year 1960 – by an anti-psychiatric movement which was a sort of groping anti-thesis, a resistance movement against psychiatric hospitals and their indefinite spread in the community sectors, that was to lead dialectically to its dialectical issue which we can only call non-psychiatry, a word that erodes itself as one writes it.

Non-psychiatry means that profoundly disturbing, incomprehensible, 'mad' behaviour is to be contained, incorporated in and diffused through the whole society as a subversive source of creativity, spontaneity, not 'disease'. Under the conditions of capitalism, this is clearly 'impossible'. What we have to do is to accept this impossibility as the challenge. How can any challenge be measured by less than its impossibility. The non-existence of psychiatry will only be reached in a transformed society, but it is vital to start the work of de-psychiatrization now.

After being sufficiently fed and housed, there is the radical need to express oneself autonomously in the world and to have one's acts and words recognized as one's own by at least one other human being. The total ideal autonomy of not needing one word of confirmation from anyone else remains ideal. While some people certainly find great satisfaction in a certain type of productive work, there are immense needs for confirmed, autonomous expression that exceed such satisfaction. *But* this personal expression becomes



increasingly difficult. We have seen how madness becomes increasingly impracticable because of extending psycho-surveillance.

Orgasmic sexuality is destroyed by the hours and quality of labour and, at least for the bourgeoisie, is replaced by the passivity of pornographic spectacle or Thai massage. People attend classes or 'therapy' for corporal expression. Universal, popular artistic expression (such as Japanese *haiku* poetry or the formerly universal popular invention of song and dance) is overshadowed by the professionalization and technologization of the specialized art forms deformed by the market.

The key question for revolutionaries is how to avoid the recuperation of people and their autonomous expression (and for that matter, of all new revolutionary ideas) by the state system (as opposed to the recuperation of invalidated persons and ideas by the people). The question within this question centres on the word 'avoid'. Avoiding here involves the systematic abolition of all institutional repression, but we are focusing here on the abolition of all psycho-technology – a wider question than the abolition of psychiatric institutions inside and outside hospitals by the forms of non-psychiatric action to be considered in this chapter.

One should understand by psycho-technology not only psychiatry, psychology, psychoanalysis and alternative therapy, but also the mystifying techniques of the mass media (one has only to follow the desperately, and accelerated, mystifying 'moral' convolutions in the editorials of the capitalist press from day to day). Then reward and punishment doctrine (or bribery and blackmail) of Kissinger-type foreign policies. The use of psycho-technology in law courts, prisons, and by the military. Technology is for things, not people.

In a bookshop in now fashionable Cannery Row in California I found, after an ironic display of all the

works of Steinbeck, the department of best-selling technology. The books (and I'm certainly not implying that they are on the same level) included treatises on T.A. (Transactional Analysis), T.M. (Transcendental Meditation), E.S.T. (Erhard Seminars Training, not exactly electro-shock, E.C.T.), Creative Fidelity, Creative Aggression, Provocative Therapy, Gestalt Therapy, Primal Scream, Encounter Therapy, the conducting of three-day 'Marathons', a form of deep massage, Bio-energy, Japanese Hot Tubs (you take off your clothes and enter them *en groupe* as part of a liberation). Then, 'Behaviour Mod' (the new generation Skinner) on how to toilet-train your child in twenty-four hours – and then on the next shelf another book advertising a method of toilet-training your child in *less* than twenty-four hours! I've no doubt that after some of these experiences some people feel better, or begin to 'feel', or feel more 'real' – or whatever the ideals of capitalism prescribe for them.

One day the United States, together with the European countries of 'advanced liberal democracy' (whose fascist nature will more rapidly and nakedly emerge), will have to stand on their own feet rather than sit on the back of the rest of the world, and then there will be another less easy and lucrative sort of 'reality' to face.<sup>1</sup>

1. Even such remorseless critics of psychiatry, from the interior of the establishment, as Dr Thomas Szasz equate freedom with the U.S. Constitution and bourgeois law. What freedom is it that depends on the enslavement of the rest of the world, particularly the Third World on which capitalism (parasitic even in its origins, the genocide of original people and the destruction of their civilizations and black slavery) depends – and could not survive without. The implantation, the direct and indirect support of fascist military dictatorships by the imperialist countries, neo-colonialism and multinational company criminality exist, even though schizophrenia doesn't. Dr Szasz (who has accused all psychiatrists of crimes against humanity while one mental patient remains compulsorily detained against

In the meantime there is a growing cultural imperialism, by which highly commercialized psycho-techniques are being insidiously imported into the poorer but more politically advanced countries of Europe and the Third World by professional liberators who go to the U.S. for crash courses in the latest techniques and return to their countries to reap the cash results. While this development is clearly not on the scale of exploitation by the multinational drug companies with their psychotropic drugs, its ideological content is significant. After psychiatry based on de-conditioning (in fact a sad re-conditioning) or conventional psychoanalysis, there is the 'third force' of 'alternative therapy' to seduce the desperate who shun the first two. The ideology of personal salvation presents highly effective strategies of de-politicization.

Once again, *there are no personal problems, only political problems.* But one takes 'the political' in a wide sense that refers to the deployment of power in or between social entities (including between the parts of the body of a person which incarnate certain social realities). Personal problems in the commonest sense reduce the political to things going on between one person and a few others, usually on an at least implicit family model; problems of work, creativity and finding oneself in a lost society are clearly political problems. Therapies and conventional psychoanalysis reinforce 'oedipian' familialism and, whatever contrary intentions, exclude from the concrete field of action macro-political reality and the repressive systems that mediate this reality to the individual. Psychoanalysts, sensitive

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his will) is far more consistent and honest than most ('Psychiatry is a religion . . . I teach the religion'). In general however, the teaching of psycho-technologies introduces a police operation into the universities and is in contradiction with the celebrated Academic Freedom.

to issues such as this, increasingly raise questions about their theory and practice. As in the *Revue Française de Psychanalyse* (No. 1-2, January-April, 1975) where there are papers on 'The future of psychoanalysis', 'Reflections on what is becoming of psychoanalysis', 'Is there still a psychoanalytic movement?', 'Psychoanalysis, its object and its future', 'Freud disrobed even by his disciples', 'Messianism in psychoanalysis', 'Which psychoanalysis and to do what?', 'Will psychoanalysis survive in 1984?' (an unintentional irony?), 'Irreverent remarks on the present and future of psychoanalysis', 'The death of psychoanalysis?'. In fact politically conscious psychoanalysts are risking excommunication from their Associations (Reich was only the first) and many are 'liberalizing' the duration, timing and frequency of sessions (though in some cases this follows the demand of a less obedient clientele). Despite the sincerity, awareness and richness of experience of many analysts the final contradiction remains: between, on the one hand, the universal need of people (not only a few bourgeois, seeking adjustment and 'maturity'), for 'real' forms of liberation ('knowing that one can find no freedom without the finding of it with others'), and on the other the in-built familialization of discourse in psychoanalysis and its inevitable normalization, inevitably in the interest of the ruling class. That is the opposite interest.

Capitalism resourcefully finds many ideological escape-exits for its moments of crisis: historic fascism is one - find the scapegoats, Jews, Slavs, Gypsies, lunatics, and you can seduce the petite bourgeoisie and the lumpen who in Gramsci's words would imitate like monkeys the demonstrations of workers in the streets; industry buys off the military and capitalism prospers through imperialist war. But always it's a matter of maintaining the family as social control. Psychoanalysis

reinforces this bourgeois nuclear family ideology in terms that fascinate and seduce the professional and intellectual classes, and thereby constitutes a reinforcing para-fascist ideology supported by the mythological apparatus, not of an Arian super-race, but of a super-race of psycho-technicians who know how systematically to falsify childhood experience into the universal inborn phantasies of the oedipus, primal scene, thanatos, etc. . . . Psychoanalysis is an ideology, for the *literate* masses – maintaining its hold by the fact that it really touches that which is a bit (but a big bit) hidden in the experiences of everyday life. The alternative therapies offer the same but economize on time – saving time for what?

Capitalism manufactures its ideological heroes with a neo-Keynesian economy of thought. If there was not one puppet called Adolf Hitler for them to use, they had the choice of thousands of other candidates.<sup>2</sup> Wanting one Freud at the turn of the last century they had the choice of thousands of others, but they needed only one who could write down the emergent necessities of the capitalist system, and then invent whole schools of sheep-like disciples to spread the brood.<sup>3</sup>

Does any valid sense of therapy exist outside the psycho-servicing industries? *Not* if it involves any

2. Like the limitless register of the unemployed there is a limitless field of führers, or charismatic chimpanzees with large enough vocal cords. The bourgeois politician does not produce himself but, like the rats in the mazes of behaviourist psychology, he is the absolute product – but he is sufficiently saleable.

3. One of the contradictions I've been caught up in recently is working with European groups protesting the victimization of psychoanalysts in Argentina. For the fascists of the military dictatorship even bourgeois conformism is revolutionary. But how can these politically conscious psychoanalysts reconcile their practice – their functioning for the system, while being the anti-fascist comrades that they are?

collusive power-relation, generating dependence, which pretends to a technique. Yes if it involves a political education that involves in turn an exploding into absurdity of all personally posed problematics. There is no technique for the exploding into absurdity of the familiarization of discourse, ways of acting (talking based on the mother-father-child model that entraps all sorts of other people around the 'personal problematic', that gets inscribed on the structures of bourgeois institutions); it is a political activism of a new sort that plants the bomb of absurdity under the plants of this problem – industry.

There are, however, always some people around who have depassed their conditioning enough and who have dealt sufficiently with their suffering in their interiority. People without professional training who will 'know' what the other person (with the problem) is 'about' – without necessarily knowing what they know or how they have come to know it. But this sort of knowing, which is not confined to or by knowledge, communicates in the (de-christianized) communion of the spiral in which the other knows and knows that the second other (with 'the problem') knows that they know and knows that the first other knows that they know this knowing and so on. This non-verbal activity undercuts the formal, explicit words of dialogue. The only way to depass the verbal is through a discourse that does not 'consist in' words (the inconsistent discourse, the language of madness), that runs across words into the spiral of communion. From an adequacy of contained and worked-on suffering one destructures normal discourse and the incarnation of its word sufficiently to enter the spiral of communion in which one finally becomes equal to oneself in an equation that is never arithmetically static. Wanting to say the word enough one *does* it. Quietly enough.

The word 'therapy' had better be banished because of its medical-technical connotation. But people still seem, non-'radically', to talk with articulated words. But it should not take many hours to say the few things that matter in one's life if the other person unstops his ears. Listening to someone in 'full flight of delusion' one can effectively stop one's ears by trying to interpret the 'content' of the words, or by the ridiculous attempt to speak in the same language. The words attempt to express the inexpressible which is never the content of the words but always in the very precise silences formed in a unique way by the words. So, unblocking one's ears, one listens to the silences in their preciseness and their specificity. There is never any doubt that the 'deluded one' will know whether or not one's ears are unblocked. Beyond that, with 'paranoia', there is always the practical task of ascertaining the real past and present forms of persecution. Psycho-technological training, to fulfil its social purpose of mystification, tends to blind and deafen people to what should be obvious.

Franco Basaglia and his associates recently set up a centre at Belluno, in a large country house in the Dolomites, to receive people from the psychiatric hospital at Trieste who live for varying periods in a relatively de-institutionalized setting. One day while I was living in the house a man who had been a hospitalized withdrawn 'chronic schizophrenic' for over twenty years smashed the television set in the middle of a football match, and then three windows (to see the world 'outside' rather than the world 'in the box' etc. etc.). The point was that in the group situation of anger and fear he was not immediately 'dealt with' by a large injection of a neuroleptic drug (costing much more than occasional broken windows) but was taken on one side by one of the staff, who made no comment but opened

his ears while the patient with great feeling told the history of his life for two hours. Of course the problem remained of finding a mode of insertion in the outside world after twenty years of systematic institutional incapacitation, but the point was that 'chronic schizophrenia' was abolished by the conjunction of a more reasonable context, one or two acts, and a few more words and a lot more feeling – and by the personal 'policy' on the part of someone to have 'open ears' rather than just the simple mystification of 'open doors'.

So now one says that psychiatrists have one option – either they kill themselves or we assassinate them – metaphorically of course.<sup>4</sup> What does that mean? It means that one recognizes just how difficult it is for someone formed, preformed, deformed as a professional psycho-technologist principally in the medical policing racket of psychiatry but also in the areas of psychoanalysis and psychology, social psychology, 'socio-psychoanalysis' and so on, to change their life structures, which entail gaining money as part of the system. To make a clear enough rupture with the system means risking every security structure in one's life – and one's body and one's mind; family, house, insurance, highly acceptable social identity and highly acceptable means of making enough or more than enough money to live by, all these possessions that one cannot contain in one suitcase (pianos excepted). For some few professionals

4. Wolfgang Huber (a psychiatrist) and his wife, of the Socialist Patients' Collective (S.P.K.), Heidelberg, were imprisoned for four years for being, very obviously, taken as literal. They wanted to establish an autogestion in the university psychiatric centre. The police, directed by the psychiatric establishment, 'found' guns in their possession. The S.P.K., now resuscitated, had the aim of using 'illness' as an arm against the capitalist system, a method of political education, not therapy.



that has been an historic necessity, for others a temporary historical compromise is possible. We don't all have to have a total destructuring all the time (the 'suicide' of the psychiatrist) – on the same side, and with total solidarity with the other madmen who are murdered. But if psychiatrists don't destructure *enough* of the time they produce the necessity for their 'murder'.

When in the early 1960s, in the course of various polemics in England, I produced finally the wretched and infinitely distorted term 'anti-psychiatry',<sup>5</sup> there was no collective consciousness of the necessity of political involvement. In those years we were all isolated in our national contexts of work. Now there are thousands and thousands of us who begin to recognize a dialectic in our struggle through the growing solidarity of our action.

( There is a dialectic that proceeds from psychiatry through anti-psychiatry to non-psychiatry (or the final abolition of all psycho-technological methods of surveillance and control). The development of this dialectic is inseparable from the development of the class struggle. It does not, however, follow automatically from the dialectic of the *political revolution* that leads from capitalism through socialism (whether achieved in some cases by the dictatorship of the proletariat, direct seizure of power by the working class with popular elements of the military, in other cases by guerrilla warfare (urban, rural) or in others by using the bourgeois democratic machinery, including turning the mystification of the electoral process against itself) to the classless society of communism that abolishes also the last elements of bureaucratic power. The  $\Psi \rightarrow \text{anti-}\Psi \rightarrow \text{non-}\Psi$  dialectic does not follow the political revolution because it follows a *social revolution*, against all forms

5. David Cooper: *Psychiatry and Anti-Psychiatry*, Tavistock Publications, 1967. Also *The Grammar of Living*, Allen Lane, 1974, Chapter 5.

of institutional repression that retains its own, highly variable, momentum. Those things that condition the variability of this momentum are made clear in the concrete struggle for social revolution in each country on the way to its national communism as the base of the only possible internationalism. If anyone finds an idealism or utopianism in this one can only reflect that it is as utopian as the active aspirations of just about all human-kind. As the political revolution is against class (infrastructural) and national oppression, so social revolution is the struggle against institutional repression as we experience ourselves victimized by it wherever we are, the struggle against the mystification of our needs.

If we begin to see madness as our tentative move to disalienation, and if we see the most immediately present forms of alienation as arising from the class division of society, there can be no psychiatry in fully developed socialism (i.e. in a society where the gap between political revolution and social revolution has been 'adequately' narrowed) and no form of psycho-technology whatever in communist society. Such, in very crude outline, are the 'hypotheses for the non-psychiatry' and the creation of the non- $\Psi$  society. To fill in the outline and make it less crude depends on specific people and groups of people seizing consciousness not only of their oppression but of the specific modes of their repression in those particular institutions in which they live as functioning organisms and strive to keep alive as human beings. The living, palpating and now palpable solidarity that they invent is what brings the vision down to earth. This solidarity as revealer of the concrete is what we witness today in some of the more authentic anti- and non-psychiatric strivings that must now be considered.

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At this point of recollecting a certain bit of history I excuse myself for writing personally, but the anti-psychiatric struggle as I originally envisioned it was a struggle *within the state institutions of psychiatry*, as well as the extensions of psychiatry into 'catchment areas' or sectors (in Europe) with their general hospital psychiatric units and day hospitals, 'sheltered workshops', half-way houses, etc. When I concluded, in 1967, at the limit of what I felt I could do anti-psychiatrically in isolation, that the next step must be out of the hospital structure 'into the community', I had only vague ideas about forms of political action such as the creation of Revolutionary Centres of Consciousness,<sup>6</sup> setting up as (anti-) 'Director' with Joseph Berke and Leon Redler an (ironic) 'Institute of Phenomenological Studies' that organized the Congress 'Dialectics of Liberation' in London in 1967, immediately followed by work on the short-lived anti-university of London. I was unaware of important politically conscious work that was being done at the hospital of Gorizia in Italy by Basaglia, Jervis, Pirella and their comrades.

Anyhow, whatever might be done politically 'outside', anti-psychiatry was essentially and, as far as I'm concerned remains, a systematic action against psychiatric repression within the state structure of psychiatry where its predominantly working-class victims are to be found.

Before simply listing the principal defining points of the anti-psychiatry ideology, I shall mention some of the theoretical work that proved stimulating in the

6. David Cooper (ed.), *Dialectics of Liberation*, Penguin, 1968, Chapter 'Beyond Words', and *The Death of the Family*, Penguin, 1970. Representing views from those of political activists like Stokely Carmichael to those of theoreticians like Herbert Marcuse and theoretician-activists like Paul Sweezy, editor of the invaluable *Monthly Review*.

development of that ideology, though this work should by no means be considered as anti-psychiatric.<sup>7</sup> The context of this work was that of researches done in the U.S. and England. There was for example the work of Gregory Bateson and the Palo Alto group in California on the communicational theory of schizophrenia, mainly the 'double-bind' (1956), and also much family research, some of which tended to produce ideas such as the 'schizogenic' mother or family. Then the brilliant and fundamental depassment of Kraepelinian psychiatry in R. D. Laing's *The Divided Self* in 1960 and, in 1964, Laing and A. Esterson's *Sanity, Madness and the Family*, which showed the intelligibility in simple terms of family interaction of supposedly opaque 'schizophrenic symptoms'. Thomas Szasz's *The Myth of Mental Illness* in 1962 was a decisive, carefully documented demystification of psychiatric diagnostic labelling in general.

Overlapping with and successively after the work in Villa 21 that I described in *Psychiatry and Anti-Psychiatry*, a number of communities outside the state hospital system were developed in England; the aim was to produce a context in the community in which people could live through critical situations in their lives without having the process of change arrested by the usual psychiatric invalidation and interference by physical 'treatments'. The Philadelphia Association produced Kingsley Hall and now has a number of household communities. The Arbours Association then

7. Nor should any of the writers mentioned in this chapter be associated with my projects or the political positions referred to – for their sakes, and for mine. *Nor should the currents of psychiatric dissidence and contestation of some of psychiatric violence by some of the people and movements in the U.S., England and Europe referred to in this chapter be confused with anti-psychiatry as I've defined it.* I make clear reference to those things that I regard as anti- or non-psychiatric (e.g. in Italy).

developed a crisis centre in one house and now also has a number of households in London. Ex-mental patients organized themselves into a Mental Patients' Union. Communities alternative to psychiatry also developed in North America, 'radical therapists' organized themselves, and ex-patients organized a network against Psychiatric Assault that produces an extremely practical bi-monthly paper, *Madness Network News*. Many of these movements received inspiration from the spirit of revolt throughout the capitalist world around 1968, the student and ghetto rebellions and the war against Vietnam.

Now, as for anti-psychiatry, it was initiated in the 1960s and it exists today wherever the following ideological points find practical expression in work in the psychiatric institution and in its related sector of the community:

1. Reversing the rules of the psychiatric game; countering medical power as embodied in the diagnosis, the principal way of not leaving the other in the humiliation ceremonial of the psychiatric interrogation ('interview') ('patients' make their own anti-diagnosis in the form of the principal statement of their madness, the truth of their delusion: 'I hear voices saying 'he is conscious of his life'', 'I'm John the Baptist (because) you all must be born again', 'My mind is controlled by (whatever) *alien* forces' – but the examples are literally endless). As embodied in the secret dossier (case-notes) – rather than a shared, mutually written dossier. As embodied in the system of compulsory detention and the prescription sheet for treatment. As embodied in the key as possession of the doctors and nurses. As embodied by all the irrational medico-nursing techniques aimed simply at the symbolic perpetuation of medical power – from the white coat to the routine administration of intravenous infusions to mildly dehydrated

drinkers. As and against the system as power-motivated pretence.

2. Abolition of hierarchical authority structure, recognizing that the madman may express the central authority. Doctors realizing the more central position of nurses who speak the same class and (hopefully) body language as the patients. The function of the doctor is to serve as a protection from administrative interference – and to provide contraceptive pills – and to shut up and listen and learn (more than his psychoanalysis will ever teach him and certainly more than his medical school ever did).

3. Attentive non-interference aimed at the opening up of experience rather than its closing down. This means the abolition of all forms of shock treatment (insulin and electric in all its forms – ‘even’ today one finds articles such as that in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*, April 1975 – ‘Unilateral Electroconvulsive Therapy: How to Determine Which Hemisphere is Dominant’); the abolition of psycho-surgery right down to its increasingly ‘sophisticated’ stereotactically guided attacks on selected bits of the limbic system of the brain; the ending of massive and continued doses of the most destructive psychotropic drugs instead of *human* containment by real bodies of real people (no phenothiazines and haloperidol) – though anyone might need a bit of valium from time to time. The use of any drug should be openly explained (most ‘psycho’ drugs are inexplicable except to the accountants of the multinational drug companies). Above all the respect of the right under all circumstances to say ‘no’ to any treatment, and beyond that the respect at all times of the right to say ‘no’ effectively to anything at all that impinges on one’s most fundamental right not to be involved in the power-games of others.

4. The ending of all forms of sexual repression – of

sexuality between any two (or more) people who desire it. In Dahomey when the madman is taken into the enclave of the traditional doctor he is more sexually active than before, and that as part of a system that recognizes social madness as a necessary phase of life that has a beginning and finds its end. Well, orgasmically speaking: 'We all come from Dahomey.'<sup>8</sup>

Some psychiatrists are now saying that anti-psychiatry is *dépassé*. We will believe them when they begin to put some significant bit of this programmatized ideology into practice.

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Before proceeding to the difficult area of 'mixed states' of anti- and non-psychiatry in various European experiences, all on the way to definition in practice of non-psychiatry, it might be a good idea to reflect on all those many things that are not anti-psychiatric. For example: recently in Mexico I was invited to comment on an 'anti-psychiatric' project in a hospital where, using standard advertising techniques imported from the U.S., they distributed T-shirts to patients with the slogan 'I'm a person not an object!' They regarded me with bewilderment when I asked them if the staff got the T-shirts too. Perhaps the anti-psychiatry will begin when the staff steal the patients' T-shirts rather than their 'souls'. Then there are the psycho-technicians who operate, desperately, conventional psychiatric institutions with bits of avant-garde literary anti-psychiatry thrown in, or bits of psychoanalysis or even bits of

8. Just as the Paris of May 1968 resounded to chants of 'We are all German Jews' (on the suppression of Danny Cohn-Bendit) so the Spring (all the Springs) of '68 are returning with a quiet discipline that now recognizes the despair and the hope of not merely making a 'liberal' communism but a really revolutionary communism.

Reichian psychoanalysis. With due and acknowledging respects to the insights of Wilhelm Reich, *that* is not anti-psychiatry either.

Then, finally, there are the communities outside the state psychiatric services. Those in England are serious enough affairs but with all the 'inner voyages' going on one wonders if the devaluation of the pound sterling, massive unemployment and the increasing fascisization of the people on the issue of black immigrants (15 million immigrant workers in all Western Europe – more than there were Jews in Germany in 1938) connects up at all with practical action in that world (let alone the bloody-minded Irish who want and effectively affirm their freedom – and the autonomists of Scotland, Wales, Cornwall and, presently, Brittany who want theirs too – even if in Celtic limboes still behind, though in some ways ahead, of the class struggle).

The North American communities seem sometimes to be tragically funny. In one there is a rule that no same two people can sleep together for two nights in succession because that would not be liberation, it would not be love – not love for all the rest of the group. (It's private property that invents the violation of privacy – this commune, apart from its internal work, survives on the basis of two prospering macrobiotic restaurants). In another that I visited, a psychiatrist of sixty had reduced the community to six young girls and himself: he was a far more honest man. But?

Then there are groups that would form networks to prevent psychiatrization by doing emergency sessions before that dreadful event. There are a number in Europe and the process of familialization is the same – there is always someone in this micro-oedipus who has to be the chronic mad person outside the hospital system, or the chronic suicider – otherwise the rest of the group would either disperse, go mad or kill



themselves. Most victims of such 'anti-psychiatric' interventions would prefer the security of a slightly liberalized, ordinary bin. So would I – and that goes for any of the 'community experiences' too.

In short, as far as those communities outside the state psychiatric system go, one can state certain conclusions:

One cannot fracture a macro-political reality of oppression and repression with introspective micro-groups of privileged children of the bourgeoisie (the parents who finally pay if the social security does not).

One can multiply such experiences endlessly (one or two households) – into the recuperative arms of the system.<sup>9</sup>

One cannot convert 'bad' psychiatrists into 'good' psychiatrists – morally, spiritually, and so on.

There are no messiahs and the prophets have only one lesson to learn – that of decent and respectful silence.

'The system' will end, not with a bang, nor with a whimper, but with the animal ordinariness that is all we have left to undo the work of a civilization that decomposes us (like the mythical but effective Freudian civilization that 'needs' repression, like thanatos and the second law of thermodynamics).

*All madmen are political dissidents. Each of our mad-nesses is our political dissidence.* An honest man came to Paris this last year, Leonid Pliouchtch. He had been through the prescribed bin ritual in the U.S.S.R. for dissident liberal communists and other sorts of dissidents. He told his story to the press along with his statement that he was a Marxist and a communist (the

9. Especially if, as in some cases, they are associated, on the medical model with training programmes for therapists to spread another psycho-technological plague. There are even outrageous advertisements in newspapers in Paris for 'anti-psychiatric therapy' (which even use my name). Anti-psychiatry is a political movement of resistance to psychiatric violence. It is never a way of making a living.

whole story was told in the U.S. press with the universal omission of those last two epithets). Pliouchtch had been through all the violence – insulin (shock) coma, haloperidol drug treatment and humiliation by psychiatric interrogation.<sup>10</sup> This treatment, far less advanced and sophisticated than in the capitalist world, must be protested, but it can only be protested by political groups in the capitalist world who realize their solidarity with an authentically socialist opposition in the U.S.S.R., and who realize that this psychiatric violence against political dissidence is practised throughout the capitalist world against hundreds of thousands of people – not 90 or 900 people as in the U.S.S.R. – not to mention the psychiatric torture of the political activists in Uruguay and many other countries, and the sensory deprivation torture elaborated by the English in Northern Ireland and by the West German régime.

There can be no excuse for what goes on psychiatrically in the U.S.S.R. – where no psychiatry has any right to exist. But the Serbsky Institute seems to have been guilty of less rampant felony in relation to the crimes against humanity practised by associations of psychiatrists in the capitalist world, which have the self-justifying hypocrisy to criticize their Soviet fellow-culprits for using but a selection of their routine procedures. An impertinence that cannot be as naïve as it seems. The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. have to teach each other hard lessons about their mutual histories, though the U.S.S.R. knows more about the non-future of capitalism. The outcome depends on the death of

10. Such practices are standard in the West, where there are also many more: various forms of surgical brain-mutilation and by now publicly notorious conditioning treatments for ‘diseases’ like homosexuality (a gauge is attached to the penis to measure erectile responses to pictures of naked men and women; bad responses are punished by electric shocks, good ones rewarded with nothing). And so on . . .

thousands of guerrillas in Zimbabwe and countless thousands all over the rest of the world. The question remaining is why do false hegemonies of power have to fight to the death – the death of so many *other* people? And the psychiatric assassinations. The cause is lost but they carry on until we stop them. Imperialism has really gone crazy. And so have the psychiatric agents of capitalism and bureaucratic forms of socialism.<sup>11</sup> Would that they could instead become mad, a little – on the way to being human.

All this time there were things going on in other parts of the world. Michel Foucault's book *Madness and Civilization* (published in Paris with the more accurate title *Histoire de la Folie à l'Age classique*) was written in 1961 – a true history of madness from the medieval sanctity of madness (access to a higher order of reality in the sense of being able at least to speak to oneself) into its clinical assassination from the seventeenth century onwards. It was followed, after an immense philosophical *tour de force* in other books, by his unique analysis of the concrete modes of repressive power, demystifying a whole range of 'gauchiste' preconceptions in his later book *Surveiller et punir* in 1975 and the first volume of *La Volonté de Savoir (Sexualité)* in 1976.

Through all this morass of references there remains one thing for me that is very clear. That is the highly practical authority of Michel (Foucault) who, in the series of works that runs through after the *Naissance of the Clinic*, has broken down the power-structures of 'ideological blocks' of thinking. We cannot begin to

11. Let no one think that bureaucracy is a mild perversion of power. Bureaucrats are not a class (defined in terms of relation to the means of production), though in capitalism they act for the ruling class. Bureaucracy is the accumulative power-investment in administrators of the state in the interest of increasing compulsive control of the people. Dying of their compulsion they finally kill. Eichmann was the perfect bureaucrat.

comprehend the ways of power-structuring into which we are interwoven not as persons but as strands of an ulterior structuration. Foucault has laid down a philosophical time-bomb – but the moment of its explosion depends on our triggering off at the precise point of its arrival. He may dislike the metaphor of a time-bomb – Michel Foucault is an eminently modest man – but it takes time for notions such as the multiplicity of analyses of power from all the positions in which we find ourselves presently subjected to a multiplicity of powers to penetrate our ideologically thickened skulls.

Jacques Lacan was active with his *Ecrits* and *Seminaires*, containing an irony about psychoanalytic practice that left him isolated in the midst of hordes of disciples who could not see that the ‘unconscious’ of the patient was put by the patient in opposition to the unconscious of the analyst, who was finally directed or misdirected by an escalade of other unconsciousnesses (the *phenomenologically* true symbolic order – that comes from no other god than oneself). Colleagues or disciples of Lacan produced other concrete situations of work – Jean Oury (with Félix Guattari and Jean Claude Pollack) at the hospital of La Borde (‘institutional therapy’ on a Lacanian model) and Maud Mannoni at Bounneuil, a hospital for children (*Un Lieu pour Vivre*, Seuil, 1976).

France is very well ahead in theory. In France there is a concentration on ‘desire’, in Italy it’s a concentration on ‘needs’. The resolution of this difference must happen from another place where one expands one’s desire into dread-full regions like one’s own madness, one’s own orgasm, one’s own re-owned death. And then one *needs* those things as vitally as one needs the air that one breathes – a final desire for the fullness of the horror – to make it habitable.

Robert Castel wrote *Le Psychanalysme* (Maspero, Paris, 1973) as a critique of the insinuation of familialist

psychoanalytic ideology into all the institutions of bourgeois society. This is the most authoritative and definitive critique of psychoanalysis from the point of view of a totally politically conscious sociology. One should also cite here the book by Bernard de Fréminville (*La Raison du Plus Fort*, Editions du Seuil, 1977) in which the development of therapeutic techniques in psychiatry from the nineteenth century till today is analysed in terms of the subjugation of the *bodies* of victims (prolonged against psychiatry in the first volume of *L'Ordre Psychiatrique*, Paris, 1977).

In 1972 there appeared the *Anti-Oedipe* of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari; a magnificent vision of madness as a revolutionary force, the decoding, deterritorializing refusal of fixity and outside definition by schizophrenia (they insist on this term) as opposed to a paranoid-capitalist pole and as a dépassment of the oedipian, familial neurotic state of non-existence (paranoid-fascist as opposed to revolutionary schizophrenia – but clearly showing that ‘the schizophrenic’ is not ‘the revolutionary’, nor the revolutionary schizoid). These authors effectively used the psychoanalytic language and the discourse of Saussure (and his successors), linguistics against itself in what is already proving to be an historic act of dépassment.<sup>12</sup>

Practical as well as theoretical movements have

12. Although Lacan has a remarkable way out of the label ‘Oedipus complex’. In his much underquoted paper ‘Propos sur la causalité psychique’, he refers to other cultures where the oedipus complex scenario has been replaced by other forms of initiation. Now we are multiplying in experience of these other forms of child/woman/man transition. Our experimentation with ourselves finally replaces the little puzzle of our exasperation with people who want to find the key that opens the door to their lives in the pockets of other people who are supposed to own those keys. The misery of psychoanalysis lies in the fact that it pretends to have a huge bunch of those keys.

flourished in France since 1968; community groups like *Le Vouvray* (associated with Pierre Gay) and *La Brèche* (associated with Axel Horst and Marcos Einis and their comrades), and more political groupings such as G.I.A. (*Groupe d'Information sur les Asiles*), *Gardes Fous*, organizations of psychiatric nurses such as A.E.R.L.I.P.P. Also Roger Gentis, who battles on against all the odds in a large mental hospital, has produced a number of brilliant colloquially-colourful polemics against psychiatry such as *The Walls of the Asylum* and *To Cure Life*. But it was only in January of 1975 that most of these strands of theory and practice began to get together, in Brussels, in an 'International Network – alternative to psychiatry' (or, as I would prefer, against psychiatric and *all* forms of institutional repression). Movements such as *La Gerbe* in Belgium, some of the French movements that I have listed above, the very strong Italian movement against psychiatric repression, mainly organized in *Psichiatria Democratica*, groups of workers from Spain and Portugal (and later individuals and groups from West Germany and Switzerland) got together to coordinate their efforts in a decentralized anti-organization with a permanently changing secretariat<sup>13</sup> – in terms of personnel and the internationalizing of places of meeting of the network. As an anti-organization it is difficult to know where this network will lead. It will probably transform itself and become one of several different entities invented through ongoing meetings of workers against psychiatric repression in many countries, which can only gain momentum in the course of the developing crisis of capitalism. We all risk invalidation all the time, but

13. See Appendix I, 'Statement of Purpose of the International Network', and my 'Letter to the Network'. An invaluable source-book is the 'Histoire de la Psychiatrie de Secteur', in *Recherches*, No. 17, March 1975, revue du Cerfi.

obviously some more than others, for example Ramòn Garcia, working at Santiago de Compostela in Spain, and Wolfgang Huber of the S.P.K. (Sozialistisches Patienten Kollektiv) in Heidelberg. The aim of the S.P.K., already referred to, was to use 'sickness' as an arm against the craziness of the capitalist system; finally some five hundred patients and a few doctors were involved in the autogestion, patients' control, of their own illness, demanding control of the psychiatric clinic against the reactionary medical power.

The present secretary of the International Network is a Moroccan psychiatrist, Mony Elkaim, who works in Brussels. His work is based on previous experiences in South Bronx, New York, in 1970, when militants occupied a floor of the Lincoln Hospital and initiated the 'Lincoln Detox' programme for heroin addicts – methadone withdrawal over ten days with political education seminars followed by integration into the, mainly Puerto Rican, community, where highly politically-conscious groups, such as the 'United Bronx Parents', have since 1966 assumed autogestion of many aspects of daily life including health. What Mony Elkaim does is eminently non-psychiatric, since he and his friends make a political intervention without any resource to medical power or therapeutic technique. He refuses only theoretical elaboration of his work, in a sub-proletarian milieu with many immigrants in the Skaarbek quarter of Brussels, but says that he works simply as a catalyst producing relevant forms of meeting that would never otherwise occur in the atomized community. For example, an adolescent boy is expelled from school and is immediately in trouble with the police. A meeting is convened that involves the boy and his family, his friends, their families, but also 5 or 6 *other* expelled boys, their families and friends and the heads of the schools. The problem is not seen as an

individual one, or one of family 'psychopathology', absent father, etc., but the group rapidly generates a political solidarity, the head-teacher talks of overcrowding, lack of money, the pressures to keep down numbers of pupils, and an action group is formed, or at least a nucleus of expanding political consciousness, naturally and without any 'need' for directive intervention. People, thus, through seeing the commonalty of their problems, become conscious not only of their oppression but *how* they are oppressed.

Although Mony Elkaim does not choose to theorize about his work, I find that in the different groups that I meet, classes of psychology students at the University of Vincennes,<sup>14</sup> social workers, political activists, there tends to be a growing consensus on a certain strategy within a theoretical frame-work. The repressive power of the state remains intangible and anonymous to the repressed individual unless, through a form of meeting, the person can see how repression is concretely mediated to him by the institutions in which his existence is embedded. People thus re-appropriate the power

14. In the class at Vincennes (University of Paris VIII), for example (officially on 'psychopathology'), I don't teach psychology but only the political critique of various theoretical positions in the psycho-technologies. What we do in practice is to talk about each of our personal *impasses* in the institutions in which we live and work (just about everyone has at least the institution of the family). Students work in hostels for marginal people, schools, various types of psychiatric situation. We discuss the particular institutional *impasses* of particular student-workers to work out the best strategy to produce a micro-political educational action – who are the most relevant people in the institutional situation and around it (in the community), who could and should be got together to make a critique-in-action that overcomes the atomization of institutional experience, and with the solidarity of an 'external network' produces a political consciousness in the internal network produced in the institution and its immediate social periphery.



invested in the abstract system (stolen by its agents), and growing potent they see the impotence of the system. A problem of 'deviance' (madness or badness) arises in a certain quarter of a town and activists form a network that refuses to see a personal or family problem in the individual. The network of forty or fifty or sixty people is formed from family, friends, workmates, trade union representative, teacher or doctor perhaps, and, easier in towns with 'red' administrations, the police too (increasingly possible in many parts of Europe where police can recognize their class origins). The personal problem is seen in the context of the political contradictions that it embodies. Then there is another problem and another network forms, and there is an overlapping of networks which are maintained as autogestive foci of political education in that quarter, and then other quarters of the town. So that as economic crisis deepens and as insurgent situations are produced, as in 1968, we will hopefully have enough 'liberated zones' of political consciousness in the cities not to lose the momentum. If the possibilities for such forms of action have become much more really present in the Latin-European countries, there is no 'final' reason why they should not in other capitalist countries (though there are many 'reasons why not' that do not take sufficiently into account the general collapse of capitalism).

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Which brings us on to the 'Italian experience'. This is a curious conglomerate of: (1) what seem to have been obvious liberal psychiatric advances, like the unchaining of patients, the 'opening of the doors' of the psychiatric hospital, stopping electro-shock and having at least a bad conscience about psychiatric perversions such as compulsory detention; (2) anti-psychiatric practices

such as the negation of the institution and, later, the destruction of the psychiatric institution from its interior; (3) non-psychiatric developments, against and beyond medical power, that lead to the social recuperation-regaining-of madness as part of the people's culture, as part of a more total subversion of the bourgeois spirit.

In the early years of the 1960s (alphabetically) Franco Basaglia, Franca Basaglia-Ongaro, Nico Casagrande, Giovanni Jervis, Pirella, Slavich and other workers formed a situation in the backward psychiatric hospital of Gorizia near the Yugoslav border in north-east Italy. They carried through programmes both of liberalization and of the anti-psychiatric destruction of the mental hospital from the interior ('The Institution Negated'). In 1968 the original team split up. Jervis went to Reggio Emilia, Pirella to Arezzo. The assumption of consciousness by student and worker student movements in 1968-9 was a necessary catalysed-catalyst; students finding inspiration in the new political psychiatry inspired it in turn. Gorizia was left with a nucleus of embattled but conscious workers. Basaglia worked at Parma from November 1970 for one year under a 'red' provincial administration. Basaglia then obtained the post of Medical Director at Trieste and most of the medical and other personnel of Parma transposed themselves there, into a situation with a Christian Democrat administration, but demonstrating a remarkable political mobility of 'mental health' workers in Italy. So, at Trieste the psychiatric hospital population was halved and then reduced to much less.

But for the victims of psychiatry other things were more important. Meetings, however opaque sometimes and however heavily theoretical in terms of the analysis of needs, 'who needs what?', and above all what do the 'healers' need? Patients, nurses and doctors discussing

privately (always overheard) and openly the contradictions of their work *in relation to* the contradictions of capitalist society and in relation to and with the local organs of political power. Patients hearing doctors talk self-critically about using technique to destroy technique (the necessity of which the patients know all about, anyhow – but now even *they* were beginning to be heard). People meeting on every ‘level’ towards the production of a growing disbelief in the political system of class domination and its expression in psychiatry. The mad and the marginals henceforth would find a solidarity with the Italian working class and with all oppressed peoples. And: it was not enough for administrations to be labelled ‘red’ – it was a matter of *making* them red *enough*.

The conditions of work of nurses were discussed (nurses as the central personages on the stage of this particular scenario) – but discussed in the context of dehierarchization of power and autogestion. Above all, trade unions of nurses were involved at every level of discussion and in practical issues. And trade unions in general began to recognize problems of psychiatric repression and marginalization.<sup>15</sup>

In Trieste there was a hostel for ex-mental patients and ‘deviants’ of all sorts at Gaspare Gozzi (all sorts of people whose ‘work’ was not regarded as profitable ‘work’ for the system, the sub-proletariat on whom even true proletarians as well as the ruling-class sit). With the destruction of the psychiatric hospital of Trieste power moved progressively, at Gaspare Gozzi, from the hands of doctors and nurses into the hands of non-medical people, young sociologists, political

15. Franco Basaglia (in the French daily *Libération*, January 1977) has proclaimed that the psychiatric hospital of Trieste will close in September 1977, because the logic of the mental hospital, torture and the isolation of people, has run its course.

activists, until, finally, into the hands of the people, who conduct their own negotiations with the authorities. Doctors are only called in when it is (rarely) *medically* and not psychiatrically necessary. But it remains to be seen to what extent the medical model is truly dismantled and deposed in the structures put into place after the closure of the mental hospital. One has reason to fear that the 'addiction' of psychiatrists to their role will never be 'cured' by their own treatment of themselves because this is a question of the political problem of the abolition of this role.

Giovanni Jervis was invited by a 'red' administration to Reggio Emilia in 1969, an area where the anti-fascist tradition of struggle was very strong, to be Director of a preventive Mental Hygiene Service. What he did in fact was to meet with groups of peasants and workers to make a completely unorthodox nursing training course on the base of a political education but also teaching the psychiatric language. People in the villages in the hills came down to recover their own people from the psychiatric institutions. Nurses everywhere speak the same class-language and body-language as the patients and this always latent solidarity is only broken by the divide-and-rule tactics of the ruling class, which makes it difficult for workers to realize their solidarity, especially, or even, on the critical issue of madness. Jervis's *Manuale critico di psichiatria* (Feltrinelli, 1975) illustrates his programme of political education of mental health workers who still have to learn the bourgeois categories of psycho-technology to effectively overturn them. My only divergence, but it is a principle point of difference, with Jervis is where he finds a lack of autonomy in the mad person (who he still refers to as 'the schizophrenic', however heavily ironized): there is no clear deposal of 'psychosis' by madness. Madness searches and will find 'its' (own) universal

autonomy. 'Psychosis' will go under with psychiatry. There's just no time left for it.<sup>16</sup>

I've made no mention of much important work that is going on in Italy, beyond the already well publicized essays by Basaglia's group and by Jervis, nor the publications of *Psichiatria Democratica* or *Magistratura Democratica*, the politically conscious and active organs of the professional groups of mental health workers and lawyers. Or the work at Arezzo (with Pirella), Rome, Perugia, Naples and so on. Much of this work is expressed by people who don't have journalistic gifts, in the 'Fogli di informazione' (Editrice Centro di Documentazione - Pistoia). Much of it has simply to be witnessed by people who are prepared enough to shift off their sufficiently penetrated arses to do something in a world where so many things are happening. Like in Naples, where people are trying to get together in households, not to make the celebrated 'voyage through madness', but to run their own desperate services of health and helping against the prevalent destructive power. Finally families make themselves open as micro-groupings of people in couples or whatever against that power.

Mario Tommasini and some comrades got together in Parma in 1965. Before that time he had spent fifteen years in the Communist Party of Italy as an activist - he had been employed by the state as a reader of gas-

16. There are a host of medical problems caught up in the so-called 'field of psychiatry'. That is part of the mystification. Everyone has the right to medical 'screening', and will insist on that right already paid for by their labour. The cooperative organization of semi-specialized general practitioners into polyclinics of the quarter or district must be brought about.

Doctors are quickly destroyed by their training: they see 'their' problems as either dyadic (two-person) or statistical (no person). What happens in between *cannot* matter to them. That's where psychoanalysis creeps in.

meters. Then partly because of the red provincial administration that he and his comrades had helped to produce, he brought about the occupation of the psychiatric hospital of Parma. During forty days of occupation these comrades achieved a large bit of the political education of the population about the realities of madness. The mad ones were our comrades – their battle was ours – we as workers were with them as with other oppressed workers.

The practical effects were to empty an institution of orphaned children, to empty a juvenile prison, to create four autogestive situations of work for former mental patients, to create many other possibilities that were hidden from people by the simple mystification of the facts of their exploitation. Freud knew nothing of these possibilities, nor, before his action, did Tomassini. Acting on the base of true enough instincts we arrive at other possibilities.

For the power that invents *our* power that we find now, in and through all the spaces where it ‘drops out’ of the nest of the system in the direction of its own freedom, that power we make the base of our discipline – the system of our disordering, then our personal restructuring and the reconstruction of the society.

At the last moment of all this we may say that anti- and non-psychiatric movements exist, but that no anti- or non-psychiatrists exist, any more than ‘schizophrenics’, ‘addicts’, ‘perverts’, or no matter what other psycho-diagnostic category. What *do* exist are psychiatrists, psychologists and all manner of other psycho-technicians. The latter exist only precariously; when no roles remain for them to live, their very securizing identity is at stake – *on* the stake waiting to be roasted. Psychiatrists and their associated tribe have cannibalized us too long in the perverse mode of fattening us up for the slaughter with masses of neuroleptics, injections,

shocks, interpretations in their masters' voice, and with their projections – of their fear of their madness, their envy of the other's madness and their hatred of the reality of human difference, of autonomy. Now, though fed up, we will de-vow them! Even though they are small fry they fry quicker than quick since they wash whiter than white.

There are two things to be done: firstly, the final extinguishing of capitalism and the entire mystifying ethos of private property; secondly, the social revolution against every form of repression, every violation of autonomy, every form of surveillance and every technique of mind-manipulation – the social revolution that must happen before, during and forever after the political revolution that will produce the classless society.

If these things do not happen well within the limits of this century, within the life-span of most of us now living, our species will be doomed to rapid extinction. In such a case, if our species is not extinguished, it should be, because it will no longer be the human species.

It is not true as the philosophers of pessimism say that 'the dreadful has already happened' (Heidegger), but it is true that we are haunted by the dreadful and it is true that there *is* no hope.

There is only incessant, unrelenting struggle and *that* is the permanent creation of the hoped *for* . . . a forgotten intentionality.

After the destruction of 'psychosis' and the depassment of the structures that invented it for their system, we can now consider the abolition of madness, and the word 'madness'. But first let us consider this state of affairs: The madman in the psychiatric situation is faced, in short, by a three-fold impossibility:

1. *If he lies*, enters into a collusive situation of pretence

with the psychiatrist, he betrays his own experience, murders his own reality, and it is not likely to work anyhow in a situation where the other (respectable one) is defined by his role as being always 'one up' with regard to reality.

2. *If he tells the truth* he will be destroyed by all the techniques available, because who can dare express things that exceed the wretched limits of normal language imposed by the ruling class and all its psycho-agents. He must be protected from such a suicidal defiance; he is logically saved from such a suicide by the simple act of murder.

3. *If he stays silent* he will be forced to chatter acceptable nonsense (withdrawal would be seen as katatonic or paranoid, as if there were something to feel suspicious about in the psychiatric, or any of all the other repressive situations surrounding the psychiatric one).

Schizophrenia has no existence but that of an exploitable fiction.

*Madness exists as the delusion that consists in really uttering an unsayable truth in an unspeakable situation.*

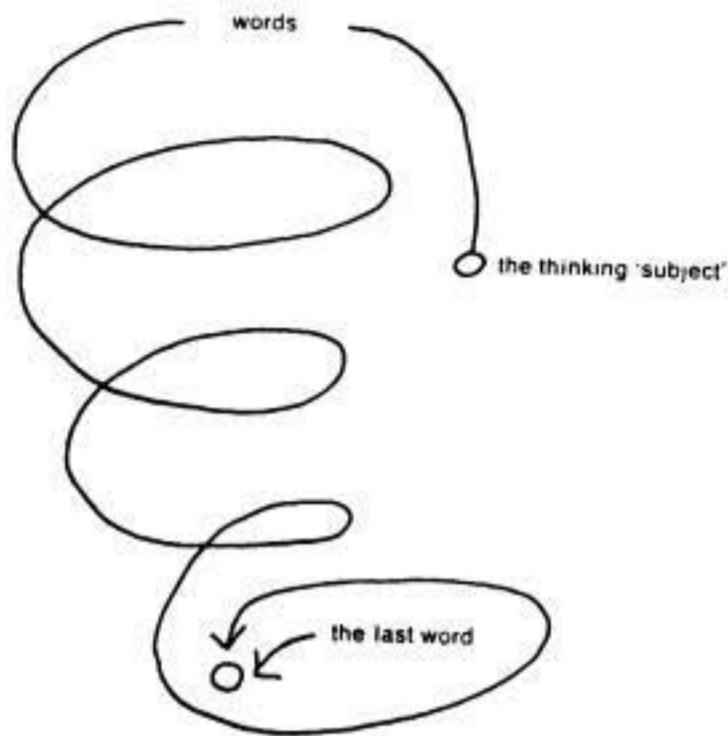
Madness, presently, is universal subversion desperately chased by extending systems of control and surveillance. It will find its issue with the victory of all forms of subversive struggle against capitalism, fascism and imperialism and against the massive, undigested lumps of repression that exist in bureaucratic socialism, awaiting the social revolution that got left behind in the urgency of political revolution, understandably perhaps, though never excusably.

The future of madness is its end, its transformation into a universal creativity which is the lost place where it came from in the first place.

Philosophical systems involve spirals of words that descend in increasingly smaller spirals on to a specific area which is real but inconceivable (beyond concepts),



inexpressible directly in words though words, becoming fewer and fewer in the descent of the spiral, may point to it.



On the 'perimeter' of the last spiral before the inexpressible are the scarcely articulated words of the language of madness and also the scarcely more articulated words of poetry. And then the plunge into nothing that has no more than a place that can only begin to find its place in a transformed world. On the final perimeter idealist philosophy is finally silenced because it cannot bear what cannot be articulated – it can make nothing of a nothing that is nowhere 'else'. Materialist philosophy makes matter what is beyond the words of the spiral of chattering discourse.

Spilling over the last word of the perimeter of the last spiral we finally know what it means to say that

There is nothing to be afraid of  
Especially Nothing.

#### A FURTHER REFLECTION

Looking around me as I do at this moment, situated on the corner of two streets in the 15th *arrondissement* in

Paris, I ask myself and you, the little other hidden away inside myself as distinct from the big Other – the other who is supposed to make a beginning to meaning. I see old people dying from not having enough meat, protein, people who have no work, young people who lack any work that makes any meaning in their lives – and ask you what you think about that?

We are all oppressed by powers in their multiform specificity. We become conscious of the powers wherever we find ourselves and we make our collective analyses of those powers just where and how we feel ourselves pinned down on the board of bourgeois entomologists.

In Paris of all places there are, for example, two things that we can do right now:

1. Take any arrondissement of Paris, work with the dissident workers in mental health in the asylums and the *secteurs* that cover this region of the City (out-patient facilities, dispensaries and all that). In a matter of action that does not directly challenge the *secteur* but uses and works with its own internal contradictions and dissidents – both crazy and professional dissidents.

Beyond that it is a matter of sensibilizing the community to the possibility of their using their own human natural resources to effect a non-medical deprofessionalized autogestion of their madness, and ‘affective problems’. From every bit of craziness that demands its expression, we move to the political realities of how each person’s apparent madness is derouted from its original impulse out into the world. In that outside world we will find the sense of that madness.

Knowing where you stand you can move to any other place you want to. Knowing the system and the fact of your oppression enough, you will rid yourselves of it in your time and the time of your comrades. Just as Tommasini and his comrades did in Parma.

No more little hideouts for the privileged playing at madness.

2. Take a department of France or given experimental field, examine the specific modes of failure of secteurization – all its creation of family asylums by long-acting neuroleptic injection – and find ways of politically mobilizing the natural human resources of the people.

Dealing with madness there is no arm other than the arm of our own madness. Professional qualifications make sufficient immediate nonsense of their own pretensions. No further multiplication of training programmes of teaching for the Psi.

We await our political fate. But we wait without expectation. Because we know that the hope is the final struggle and *la lutte finale est la lutte sans fin.*

# APPENDIX I: WHAT IS SCHIZOPHRENIA?<sup>1</sup>

1. These notes, based on a speech I delivered at the Congress of the Japanese Congress of Neurology and Psychiatry, Tokyo, May 1975, are added because I still encounter much confusion about the distinction between schizophrenia (and psychosis in general) and madness. I also feel it necessary to summarize certain methodological points and re-assert an earlier definition I put forward ten years ago. In some languages a distinction is made between madness seen in a medical perspective (*pazzia* in Italian) and a more general sense of madness (*follia*) that is often seen as something creative, inspirational and often satirical (as in the plays of Pirandello) or the other madness of the repressive social system, every form of bureaucracy, etc., for which I prefer the English word 'craziness'. As the German *verrückt* is opposed to the true delusion of *wahnsinn*. Or like the Latin delusion (*de-ludere* is to play, or mock at fully, differing from *delirium* – wandering off the beaten track of the plough). In French there is only *délire* for the two very different senses.

As everyone expects me to say it, I may as well commence with the proposition that schizophrenia does not exist. The precise manner of its non-existence, however, raises many semantic and philosophical questions as well as a number of social-historical issues.

The 'non-existence' of schizophrenia refers simply to the actual non-establishment of a disease-entity in the ordinary medical-nosological sense: a (more or less) unified collection of objective signs and objectifiable symptoms for which a cause or causes exist or have to be found. It is the relevance of this way of thinking in relation to certain forms of human experience and behaviour that is in question – the classificatory approach and the casual epistemological model. When I refer to 'schizophrenia' here, therefore, it will always be with implied commas. I'm certainly not going to argue a case for a social or socio-psychological aetiology of schizophrenia as opposed to an organic one, or as a part of a complex aetiology involving all factors to a varying extent. That would be a futile game if it were all centred on an 'entity' that did not exist in the first place.

If schizophrenia does not exist, *madness certainly does* exist. In a half-secret, esoteric medical language the label schizophrenia is applied to the vast majority of people who are regarded socially as mad. Madness is latent in each of us as the possibility of a near total destructuring of the normal structures of existence with a view to the restructuring of a less alienated (i.e. governed by internalized forces of 'otherness') form of existence in a new personal space; disintegration-reintegration, death-rebirth. It is only when, at some arbitrary point, a person ceases to conform sufficiently with social conventions that that person is regarded socially as mad, and at that point in bourgeois society at this moment in history the

medical apparatus is brought into play. If the deviant behaviour is obscure enough, sufficiently incomprehensible and therefore terrifying to normal people *because it resonates with the terrifying death-rebirth possibilities within each person*, the stigmatizing label schizophrenia is usually applied. It is different in the case of 'manic-depression', because we are all a bit 'manic' or depressed from time to time and therefore there is a certain comprehensibility, it is also difficult in the case with someone with a brain tumour or someone who has taken a certain drug. In the case of schizophrenia, however, we seem to confront the ultimately incomprehensible madness.

This has not always been the case. As Michel Foucault has shown (in *Madness and Civilization*), in the Middle Ages in Europe madness was respected as a different way of being and knowing, perhaps a privileged way with a more direct access to heaven. It was only after the so-called European renaissance, with the flourishing of mercantilism and the earliest beginnings of capitalism, that, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the process of *exclusion* of the mad began; there were the ships of fools travelling endlessly on the canals of Europe, and then the incarceration of the mad in the leprosaria that had by then become vacant. This exclusion of the mad went hand in hand with the extreme narrowing down of Reason in the pragmatic interest of the emergent bourgeoisie. We have, I believe, to distinguish between Reason and Knowledge. Reason and Unreason are both ways of knowing. Madness is a way of knowing, another mode of empirical exploration of both the 'inner' and the 'outer' worlds. The reason for the exclusion and *invalidation* of madness is not a purely medical one, nor is it a narrowly social one. It is, as I shall try to show, a political one. In the nineteenth

century, with the full development of European capitalism, the exclusion and control of the mad became absolute, and psychiatry developed as a branch of medicine, with all the respectability, all the secrecy and all the special powers of the Medical Order, to control the mad on behalf of the new bourgeois state. In the twentieth century, with all the mystifications of 'liberal progress', this control has become more intensive and extensive than ever, and especially with many of the 'patients' living outside the institutions.

During the 1950s and early 1960s a great deal of work was published that challenged the traditional medical conception of schizophrenia which had persisted almost unaltered since the time of Kraepelin and Bleuler – the insights of psychoanalysis having for a long time had little effect on the practice and diagnostic approach of clinical psychiatry. I shall not refer here to the classic demythologizing work of Dr Szasz, nor shall I attempt to summarize the work done on the families of schizophrenics by Lidz, Wynne and others, as this work is now widely known and at least critically recognized. Perhaps the most immediately practically significant work was that published in 1956 by Gregory Bateson and the Palo Alto group, in which they advanced a tentative theory of schizophrenia based on communicational pathology.

This work by no means challenged the notion of schizophrenia as disease-entity, and remained within or rather not opposed to the medical conceptual framework. The double-bind theory, however, significantly shifted the emphasis from a mechanistic organic approach to a micro-social interactional approach. The double-bind is of course a triple-bind, and the third injunction, against leaving the field of contradiction produced by the first two injunctions, is not always clearly understood. In fact the victim of the double-bind

cannot make the critical meta-communication on the presented contradiction because of the built-in injunction to be obedient, the injunction not to say 'No' to his parents. In my view *it is when the patient-to-be begins to say 'No' to the prior negation that is represented by the family obedience-structure* (which merely mediates the alienating obedience-conformism system of bourgeois society in general) *that he enters the psychiatric process and is labelled as schizophrenic – precisely because he is trying to assert his autonomous existence against a system of mind-imperialism* that is mediated to him by the collusive closed system of his family and conventional psychiatry, as well as by all the other mediating systems.

The work done in the United States opened the way to a view of schizophrenia as not being a disease-process going on in one person but rather as something going on *between* people. As the medical attitude always seeks the concrete, the substantial, the locatable, the idea of finding supposedly pathological processes, going on as it were in the empty spaces between entities, is disturbing to the medical consciousness; everything in the field of investigation becomes flux, contradiction, the negation of the negation and the vertiginous spiralling of endless 'meta-levels' of discourse. The objective perspective is lost in a field of intersubjectivity; it is as if *the method of studying the field of madness must itself be involved in that madness*. Not a method in a madness but a method of madness. Analytic rationality which is a logic of exteriority operates with an epistemological model characterized by a twofold passivity – the observer does not, in the act of observing, affect the field of the observed nor is he affected by that field. This is a usable model in the natural sciences, e.g. in at least classical physics, but in a micro-social interactional field a dialectical rationality is necessary: the observer participates in the observed field and is inevitably



affected by it; it is this *very fact of 'being affected'* that forms the base of the investigation. If we look at the concrete situation of psychiatrist and patient, where the former is supposed to diagnose the condition of the latter, the situation is different from that in which a doctor examines the patient's central nervous system (which exists clearly as an object to be objectively investigated) in this way: the patient is a subject who experiences the world and acts on it, and that world includes the doctor with whom a relationship of reciprocity (inter-subjectivity) is in principle possible unless the doctor objectifies the subjectivity of the other. To put it another way, the doctor forms an impression of the patient or 'sums him up', but at the same time the patient is forming an impression of the doctor, summing up the doctor who is summing him up; but then the doctor has to sum up the person who is summing him up to include that person's summing up of him (the doctor) who in turn is summed up together with his summing up of the other who has summed him up together with his summing up of the other's summing up of his summing up. And so on perpetually and through many meta-levels. If the doctor objectifies the other to make a diagnosis he is totally altering the real, presented field of experience and behaviour, and this is in fact a form of violence which is felt as such by the other person, who may, however, be too mystified and submissive in the medical power-situation to assert himself as a real, existing subject. The diagnostic act in psychiatry is thus by no means a medical action as ordinary understood; rather it is a micro-political intervention that mediates, just as the family also mediates, the subtle repressive violence that characterizes the macro-system of a repressive society.

Although one may be totally sceptical of the existence of schizophrenia as a nosological entity, the term does

have a semantic reality and is also the label for a certain social role. The tentative anti-nosological definitional guide that I put forward (1967) was as follows: 'Schizophrenia is a microsocial crisis situation in which the acts and experience of a certain person are invalidated by others for certain intelligible cultural and microcultural (usually familial) reasons, to the point where he is elected and defined as being "mentally ill" in a certain way, and is then confirmed (by a specifiable but highly arbitrary labelling process) in the identity "Schizophrenic Patient" by medical or quasi-medical agents.' This statement refers to extreme disturbance in a group of people. The disturbance is intelligible but outside intervention is desperately invoked and a process of role-assignation results in the exclusion of one person from the group. The exclusion in fact is to relieve the unbearable tension in the group. No mention is made of disturbance in a schizophrenic person but in fact one person has already (perhaps through all his life) been rendered vulnerable to invalidation. This 'vulnerability'; when one gets to know the family better, is so clearly intelligible in terms of a history of near total lack of the famous 'consensual validation' of the person's self – and other – perceptions that one has no need to hypothesize other factors as predisposing or sensitizing.

So, at this point, we are dealing with a social situation in which a person has had the schizophrenia label attached. It is a question of the relevance, and also the urgency, of the various possible parameters in our investigation. As no disease-entity is established but only a system of labelling operations, it seems not to be relevant to think in terms of genetic, biochemical, or virus, etc., aetiology. Aetiology of what? What *does* exist is an ensemble of experiences and acts in the person labelled schizophrenic and the others involved. These acts and experiences are unified in terms of some sort of

code, but a code that is profoundly different from that expressed in 'normal' ensembles of experience and behaviour. The abnormal ensemble is relatively decoded and undergoes frequent internal shifts as opposed to the rigidity of the normal ensemble. These differences doubtlessly reflect coding differences on an entirely different conceptual level, the level on which the geneticist studies 'purely' objective phenomena – assuming that such epistemological purity is a reasonable possibility. It is easy to talk about one conceptual level 'reflecting' another and how different a relation of reflection is from a casual relation. But the differences between the objects of the geneticists' studies and the subjects involved in family interaction and the diagnoser-diagnosed game run deeper than this. The difference between an object and an objectifiable subject is an ontological difference. *To make sense of the Schizophrenic Initiation Scene what we need is not a new sort of method but a new sort of mind.* Our minds are formed by the praxis we engage in so that if we act differently in relation to people who would be labelled schizophrenic we might perhaps deform our normal minds sufficiently to reform them in such a way that discourse replaces dissection and dialogue replaces diagnosis. The language of madness as a common language.

Then again with biochemistry. There are biochemical correlates for any human experiential-behavioural ensemble but then correlates are not causes. We might if we knew enough be able to find highly correlating biochemical configurations for the role of being a clinical psychiatrist in an institution or for the experiential-behavioural ensemble shared by successive presidents of the United States, but although there is a common 'symptomatology' within each of these two ensembles or role-complexes we would not necessarily, for some reason or other, think of psychiatrists or

presidents as having new diseases. Though we perhaps justifiably might.

Biochemical research in the 'schizophrenia area' is I believe, of great importance – but not with the aim of finding drugs to *arrest* some supposed schizophrenic process – if anything there might be chemical substances to facilitate a positive madness – madness as recuperation of lost experience, as regeneration – but in fact I believe that social changes are the way to accomplish such a personal regeneration and as our intake of experience alters so will the chemistry of our bodies. The initial 'schizophrenic breakdown' is, as I have said, a way of starting to say 'No' to a prior negation in the person's alienated micro-cosmos and therefore something potentially valuable until it is aborted by conventional psychiatric treatment and efforts to re-normalize the person.

Reflection on the 'No' of the schizophrenic crisis leads us to a reconsideration of the schizophrenic 'symptomatology'. The person says 'No' to the mystifying manoeuvres that would forever deprive him of an autonomous existence, separate from the symbiotic obscurities of the family and the network that later involves the psychiatric institution and its extensions. The 'No', however, is not heard and the only possibility then is to express itself by some other means. The 'other means' might for instance be withdrawal into one's own thoughts so that the words spoken to other people may seem halting, fragmentary and disconnected (in clinical language this would be regarded as 'thought block'). Or in the case of the schizophrenic-in-the-making he may laugh, smile or weep at the absurdity of the narrow, poverty-stricken, uncomprehending type of communication that is all that is possible between him and his parents and the doctors (clinically this would be 'incongruity of affect'). Or, again, to make some sense

of his experience and to express a truth that is difficult to state directly, and which he knows would be greeted with blank incomprehension by the others even if it could be directly stated, the erstwhile madman tells the truth about the family micro-cosmos (and later the psychiatric micro-cosmos), interweaving with truths about the macro-world, in a metaphorical language (clinically 'delusion') – but why should we not see this delusional discourse as re-realizing or de-metaphorizing the faded and inadequate metaphors of normality? The metaphorical language (or now perhaps anti-metaphorical language in which metaphors displace metaphors) may in fact be more suited for a discourse on the strange goings-on in the normal world than a more literal language, and if that is the case it would seem to be imperative for the psychiatrist to untrain himself, to de-normalize his medical consciousness sufficiently to share in this discourse – which implies his suicide as a psychiatrist. If he does not, the 'absence of rapport' may not be a deficiency in the patient only. I personally never found difficulties of rapport with a person at the time of his admission to hospital as schizophrenic, but I often have difficulties of rapport with psychiatrists whose communications seem to me often to be bizarre, lacking in relevance and in short not seeing what is under one's nose. I suppose that means either that I am too far into my own madness or that the particular psychiatrist is too far out of *his*. Perhaps he is pathologically normal. But then I find no great virtue in statistical normality which is something like death-within-life, the sclerosis of existence in which people become wholly identified with the stereotype of their social roles.

Sanity, on the other hand, is more closely related to madness and is in polar opposition to normality. The difference between the sane man and the madman who becomes a hospitalized schizophrenic is simply that the

sane man retains sufficient strategies to avoid, only just avoid, the traps of invalidation in the normal world.

To explain the meaning of madness at this stage of history we have to engage in a politically conscious form of social action and at the same time reflect on that action. From such a reflection will be generated a knowledge that exceeds technique. A logic of unreason that does not *find* sense but *makes* sense – in a world rendered less nonsensical than our present one.

# APPENDIX II

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE CONCERNING THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

### *Alternative to Psychiatry*<sup>1</sup>

The persons and the groups present at the meeting, 'An Alternative to the Sector', held in Brussels on 24, 25 and 26 January 1975, comprising teams of mental health workers, nurses, the psychiatrized population (*les*

1. Statement issued by the International Network Brussels January 1975. This statement was composed as a group effort, and I apologize for a heaviness that comes across in the English translation, D.G.C.

*psychiatrisés*), lawyers, members of communes, etc., have decided to set up a European Network that will serve to bring about a coordination among these various groups and persons,<sup>2</sup> as well as contribute a link with any and all teams in agreement with this statement of purpose and who would like to connect up with the network.

This network brings together the following people:  
—First of all the psychiatrized population and also any group determined to struggle against the oppression weighing on this population.

—All those who really promote or organize psychiatric or non-psychiatric collective experiences and who thereby create alternatives to the official divisions into catchment areas and districts or who attempt to destroy the psychiatric institution.

—Finally, all those – whether workers in the mental health field or not – who refuse to occupy the position of agents of a repressive psychiatric order and who demand that the real problems be treated in a mode other than the medico-technocratic mode.

Two or three persons per country will carry out this coordination on the European scale. This coordination is comprised of the following elements:

—Exchanges of information on the experiences and the struggles of those involved.

—A struggle against repression.

—The concretization of common actions.

The position of European Secretary for the network will be filled by a Belgian person until the next general meeting of the group. From the time of this meeting, to be held in about six months, the European Secretariat will be taken over by a person from the country where this meeting is to be held.

2. Since January 1975 a number of contacts have been established with groups outside Europe.



## *Preamble*

We feel the struggles in the area of mental health must be inserted into the entire constellation of struggles of workers for the defence of their own health and in co-ordination with all of the struggles of the social and political forces for a transformation of the society. For us it is not a question of obtaining a tolerance for madness, but rather of making it understood that madness is the expression of social contradictions against which we must struggle as such. Without the transformation of the society there is never a 'better psychiatry'<sup>3</sup> but always an oppressive psychiatry.

We refuse to confine the problems of alienation and marginalization, created by the socio-political system, in a psychiatric terminology.

We demand to have done with the position of being passive agents of a system of repression that in effect represses marginal populations under the guise of treatment and re-adaptation.

The network fixes for itself the following objectives:—The largest possible circulation of information on non-psychiatric institutions, and creating alternatives to the 'sector',<sup>4</sup> community projects, the support and the defence of these experiences through every possible means (the press, financial and legal aid, etc.).

—The collective political analysis of local situations and

3. This statement of the Network expresses a residual reformism, not surprising in view of the sheer 'material' violence in terms of filth and poverty in psychiatric institutions in southern Europe. In a transformed society there can be no 'better' or non-repressive psychiatry, only *no psychiatry*. The only 'abuse' of psychiatry to be abolished is its *use!* D.G.C.

4. 'Secteur' in French denotes what in England is termed catchment area; it is that sector of a town or rural area that is 'provided for' by a unified psychiatric service, consisting for example of a mental hospital, general hospital units and clinics, domiciliary visits, etc.

established institutions, by means of a dismantling of the economic and political mechanisms which justify and perpetuate the repressive institutions at the same time as maintaining the processes of marginalization.

—The support of struggles in progress within the field of psychiatric institutions and hence inseparable from other struggles led by the marginalized populations themselves and by the oppressed social classes.

—Active research into the means aimed at dissolving the monopoly of psychiatric power in favour of a struggle led by those immediately concerned within the framework of the social struggles that begin in school, in the community, in the workplace and in the city.

—The demand for a concrete relation between the practices and the theoretical discourses put forth in their behalf.

### *The Psychiatric Hospital*

The psychiatric hospital is the backbone of a psychiatric sector. Every attempt at sectorization, or psychiatry in the 'community', will merely lead to a miniaturization of the hospital if the logic of the hospital is not broken. This rupture – which constitutes one of the fundamental axes of the international network which we have set up – seeks to have done, in the first place, with the medical perspective of treatment and of 'mental health' and with the imperatives of profitability which systematically constitute a part of this perspective (for example the notion of honorariums for medical consultations and services, the price of a day in the hospital, the number of beds, etc.). The existence of fields for the care of madness (psychiatrists, nurses, educators, etc.) participates in the general system of control, of normalization and of repression. Madness raises questions whose answers are to be sought at an altogether different level

than the answers put forward by different bodies in specialized fields. The fact that there is suffering somewhere does not mean that one must defer automatically to the medical machine.

Whatever the case may be, there is no doubt that in the immediate future it is necessary to:

—Stop all new construction of psychiatric hospitals and specialized services. In those countries saturated by this kind of repressive equipment and where the effective force of the hospitals is growing ever weaker, why seek to fill them up by force? In those countries where such equipment and structures are 'behind', it is of utmost importance to struggle against their construction and the sort of impasse they entail.

—Set immediately into motion a process of reconversion of existing psychiatric hospitals. This in no way implies a bureaucratic liquidation such as took place in California. It is not a question of undermining one level of workers and throwing patients on to the streets. This process of reconversion ought to be undertaken by the entire constellation of people who live madness, who live with madness and who live off madness, along with the different social groups interested in this reconversion who are not necessarily connected with madness.

### *Childhood*

At a progressive younger age children are marginalized and excluded from school, and led to psychiatric or psycho-paedagogic institutions. Hence childhood is an essential front for struggle for our network. The 'Sector' or zone and its parallel institutions are the guarantee and the privileged instrument of this exclusion, since these structures afford children, adults and teachers geared-down possibilities for taking charge, possibilities that are proposed as individual technical

solutions for problems that are political in nature. The psychoanalysing ideology is one of the most subtle forms now in use for maintaining this system.

The present function of childhood psychiatry is medically to treat those children sent there for slowness in school or for maladaptation to the school structure. In our struggle the school itself is of an essential strategic importance.

We propose the constitution of several international work groups at the heart of the network:

—In order to analyse precisely the situation of child psychiatry and the school within the different national, local and other contexts.

—To bring together experiences which once isolated are immediately recuperated by the system.

—To work out possibilities for concrete ties at the level of the community with workers, political groups, action groups, teachers, taking into account the lack of understanding which might possibly arise in union organizations.

—To elaborate forms of struggle and the possibility for bringing to fruition an alternative practice.

—Finally to allow children, as the ones most immediately concerned, the greatest space for speaking out.

### *Law and Psychiatry*

The law and psychiatry are two complementary modalities for intervention against deviance. Delinquency control and mental health become equivalent. Against the alliance of penal law and psychiatry, we want to develop the alliance of mental health workers, lawyers 'of the left' and magistrates. It is a matter of using their respective powers, not for the repression of deviants, but in order to cause the social contradictions at the base of deviance to explode.

1. We must participate in the defence of the imprisoned and the psychiatrically interned, and obtain for them the respect of the rights guaranteed by the constitutions for all citizens, the elementary rights of the individual.

2. We must especially struggle for the right of these populations to information on what takes place in the institutions where they are confined. The network must force the press to approach these questions. It must permit reciprocal exchange of information on the struggles led by each country against psychiatric repression.

3. We can begin immediately to publish widely documents of psychiatric information. We can also set up groups of psychiatrists who are at the disposal of the accused.<sup>5</sup>

4. We demand the abolition of laws on prison psychiatric hospitals and centres, on drug addiction, against dangerous alcoholics, on compulsory hospitalization.

5. We denounce the growing intervention of psychiatrists in prisons and the use of tranquillizers on the detained population to maintain order in the institution.

6. We dispute the types of prison surveillance in which psychiatrists – who are delegated more and more of their power through the courts – participate. We refuse the law enforcement role of the psychiatric sector (files, treatment by force, etc.).

7. The network we are setting up is open to all groups of magistrates, lawyers and legal defence groups, and the detained populations which struggle in the same direction. Its coordinating organ will work in close touch with international movements of democratic justice.

5. i.e. *against* the growing use of psychiatry by the system to form a double control, D.G.C.

## *The Psychiatrized*

The psychiatrized and confined are not merely marginals, since they are workers (or out of work due to the exploitation or the repression of capitalist society).

Only a transformation of the society, a class confrontation, *with this population participating*, will be able to suppress the psychiatric institution with its numerous branches (psychiatric hospitals, catchment areas and districts, etc.). We must struggle against the psychoanalytic ideology that takes over this population's discourse and struggles within a new, subtle framework of repression and of police surveillance and control throughout the sector as passage from the psychiatric hospital to the community.

We must also abolish the relations between those administering treatment, the attendants, and those receiving it which reproduce class domination.

We demand for movements of confined and psychiatrized people the right to information, organization and freedom of expression, the right to consultation and withdrawal of material from dossiers, the right to medical information and to the refusal of medication, and the abolition of all laws of confinement and classification.<sup>6</sup>

6. I would add simply that we cannot deny the existence of the mental hospital and its sectors. On the basis of an adequate research into the macro- and micro-economics of the field, political activists must work with the anti-psychiatric consciousness that now exists within the institutional structure and, in parallel, use its contradictions to affect a sensibilization of the population of a quarter or district to the possibility of an auto-gestion and non-medical management of 'affective problems' which no longer violates human rights and which locates madness in the heart of social life.

LETTER TO THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK<sup>7</sup>

*On Power and Difference*

*Segismundo: Pues te daré,  
Porque no sepas que sé que sabes flazequas mías  
A sela* (Calderón, *La Vida es Sueño*)<sup>8</sup>

For me the richness of the Réseau Internationale should reside in two principles of difference. Firstly, as regards the context of the réseau, there is the difference between on the one hand the impotent who hold the state power (their impotence being the result of the haemorrhage of their personal reality into the abstract but mechanically effective institutions that 'they' control), and on the other hand their potent opponents who lack all power apart from their consciousness of their difference to the anonymous system and their choice autonomously to fight that system with all the resources of their personal reality.

Secondly, the difference between each person who participates in the network (which has no 'members' because it is no 'body', no organization) and each other.

7. This letter is published by the Editions 10/18 as part of a collection of statements by participants in the International Network. It repeats many arguments in this book (again please flick through them), but I include it here because, regarding the Network as historically significant (whatever happens to it), I'd like to respond to that bit of history that it represents. It remains to be seen what the Network can do with its own internal contradictions between medical power and non-medical potency and one cannot predict what other forms of action groups may replace it at any time.

8. Sigismundo:

So now! I'm going to kill you  
So that you don't know that I know that you know  
my weaknesses. (He stabs Rosanna but  
fails to kill her – Rosanna is a woman  
disguised as a man.)

The ideal, at least, is that the only competitiveness that exists is between each person and her/himself. The correlates of competitiveness are envy, jealousy and possessiveness and proprietary, familial, 'oedipal' types of relationship whose only issue is impotent power or imbecilic schism. Competitiveness is vitally important, but the only competitiveness that makes sense is one's competitiveness *with oneself* – doing one's 'own thing' better than one could ever have imagined oneself doing it. Not only is such self-competition in accord with working together with other people, it is the precondition of collaboration.

So the network, as anti-organization, is a pragmatic ensemble of autonomous autogestive projects in different parts of Europe and the world that comes together not only once or twice a year but in a more personal and apparently haphazard and fragmentary way most of the time. In this way, over the last two years, a form of solidarity has been initiated that is all the more impressive when one (or at least I) recalls how isolated in the struggle against psychiatric repression one felt oneself to be just a few years ago. Now we are growing massively even though we are not all free to meet in the arranged annual or bi-annual times and places. And, along with this solidarity there has so far been a healthy preservation of prudent suspicion about the formation of anything like a 'central committee' structure. Charisma 'is around' with its 'natural authority' but my bet still is that the original impulse to liberty (based on so many bitter institutional experiences) which was so apparent in Brussels will destroy any incipient degeneration of authority into authoritarianism.

After that somewhat pompous and wordy introduction I would add that I have had much joy, some fun and even a little madness in my encounters with



people working in the réseau. I stress the personal aspect of experience because that is the level we are more or less on in terms of actual meeting. But that joy, fun and madness are clearly not enough. In meeting we have now, after two years, to define progressively and urgently our political commitment – obviously with no implication of specific party affiliation.

Although the réseau originated in the capitalist (mainly Latin) countries of Western Europe, my understanding of the original spirit was that, starting from a base of struggle against psychiatric repression, the struggle essentially was against repression in the mediating institutions of society on an ‘international’ base (‘réseau international’). Otherwise the réseau conceived simply as ‘alternative to psychiatry’ would reflect the very split of which it accuses psychiatry – that between madness and every other aspect of life. These mediating ‘institutions’ (‘institutions’ literally meaning being ‘put in one’s right place’ – right for ‘others’ – in the ‘normalizing’ interest of the ruling class<sup>9</sup> of any state) – run from the family (including genealogy, courtship rituals, marriage, nature of procreation, ante-natal clinic and manner of being born, through pre-school formation, primary socialization, to familial celebrations of death and rites of inheritance), through school, apprenticeship, factory, university, law courts, prison, hospital, office, the institutions of (always familialist) advertising and the mass media, totally controlled and more or less subtly censored in the interest of mystification for capitalism, institutionalized retirement, till we arrive at the well-ordered,

9. Yes, there are ambiguities in the notion of class. But there is also a reality about who is exploiting whom. Finding the relation of exploitation we know even in our bodies the existence of classes.

regimented cemetery (mode of embalmment, coffin size, quality of coffin material, etc.<sup>10</sup>).

When we reflect upon these institutions and consider carefully the shit that we are in, the shit that we swallow, shit out again or regurgitate upon each other, we reach the conclusion, at least in bourgeois society, that the only sort of love possible between us is pre-conditioned by a hatred of the (shit) system that we are in. There's no question of founding a society based on love, much less than 'brotherly love' or 'love of one's neighbour'.

To begin to love a little *we have to learn how to hate much better.*<sup>11</sup>

We start, the very first time, by simply regarding our neighbours. And then regarding ourselves in that mirror that we are supposed to carry around inside ourselves from the first year of life.

But then we have to look at these institutions from within the total context in which we live, and that context is an international one that subsumes the specific states in which we are geographically located. I remember writing about the secret third world hidden within the heart of the first world – all the marginals of Marcuse, blacks in the U.S.A., drop-outs, sexual minorities and so on – but also the biggest 'minority' of all, women, whose struggle finally challenges all the repressive institutions because double repression entails double consciousness – all that, indeed, and then the most

10. Legally specified in many countries, e.g. by the undertakers' lobby in the U.S.A.

11. To act in the interest of subjective and objective liberation we have to become precisely conscious of the nature of our oppression (and so on!). It is not in the spirit of European 'gauchisme' founded on the eighteenth-century Enlightenment to hate enough the bourgeois and the bourgeois in oneself. The bourgeois is always the other. You can see him. There he is! But the recognition is based on the self-recognition of one's own bourgeois nature.

marginal of all, the marginality of all of our madresses as well as the madresses that get 'caught out' by the big  $\Psi$ .

We cannot separate off the 'internal' third world of our repression from the oppressed third world 'out there' in Africa, Asia and Latin America. But how does it all come together? There is perhaps a linking word, and that word is 'autonomy'. Cuba, South East Asia, and now Angola along with other countries have fought for their autonomy by autonomous revolutionary struggles, but they have needed the support of the Soviet Union which has not in fact violated, or been able to violate, their autonomy. They have needed the Soviet Union as all people in the cause of revolution against *their* capitalism, fascism and imperialism need the containment by the Socialist countries of the violent thrusts of the death agonies of capitalism – which threatens, like the biblical Samson, to bring down the walls of the temple of the world to destroy his foes as well as himself.<sup>12</sup> But they also need to be free of it.

And then we have the contradiction (non-antagonistic but to the point of obliterating the transition of antagonism to non-antagonism) of the continued existence of repression and, for us in particular, psychiatric repression in the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is strong enough not to need it (in one view) and popular organizations (like the Network?) in the rest of the world certainly do not need it.

12. Socialism in the U.S.S.R. is obviously deficient internally but helps liberate the third world. Chinese socialism achieved an almost immediate *internal* 'practical' communism. It's not true, as Enrico Berlinguer would have it, that we don't know enough about what goes on inside China – what they have done is visible enough (and I don't rely only on my own direct experience). But the long-awaited marriage between Russia and China awaits *their* announcement – we have our own communism to make. And it will be different everywhere.

It's a residual lump of repression that reflects the split between the almost achieved political revolution and the Social Revolution. Its answer will come with the breaking down of all systems of *quadrillage*, of surveillance and control that is the historic heart of all revolutionary struggle.

Leonid Pliouctch has told us his story of psychiatric punishment for dissidence (he had proposed a Dubcekian liberal communist reform, simply and necessarily). He was 'treated' to haloperidol,<sup>13</sup> insulin shock and humiliation by psychiatric interrogation. These forms of treatment are universally practised on hundreds of thousands of victims in all the capitalist countries. All delusion is political dissidence and subversion.<sup>14</sup> Say one word of truth about society without literary, scientific or philosophical respectability or disguise and you will know that. Through all the countries of imperialist oppression these repressive techniques are easily come by and not only in relation to their easy victims. Latin America is the promptly available breeding ground for North American psycho-experimentation – not only Uruguay and Chile where there is a psychoanalytic sophistication<sup>15</sup> as well as Skinnerist behaviour-

13. A non-phenothiazine neuroleptic drug that, in normal dosage, would reduce anyone into a state of mindless automatism in twenty-four hours. Mao Tse-tung suggested that all doctors should try their treatment on themselves. One day on haloperidol would mean no psychiatrists and many more chronic schizophrenics – chemically castrated and lobotomized psychiatrists.

14. I have explored the question of dissidence in my book *Qui sont les Dissidents?*, in which is described 'the mega-Gulag of the West'. It is an impertinence of western psychiatrists to try to absolve their own practices by accusing their true brothers in the Soviet Union of the 'abuse' of psychiatry for political ends: it is psychiatry that is the abuse of humanity – for political ends.

15. A. Vazquez (ex Chile), 21st International Congress of Psychology, Paris, 1976.

modification. 'Great Britain' (anti-Celtic England) has used psycho-techniques of sensory deprivation against Irish victims<sup>16</sup> violating Article 3 of the Protection of the Rights of Man and its fundamental liberties – 'no one should have to submit to torture or an inhuman or degrading treatment'.<sup>17</sup> Add on the same 'pre-interrogative treatment' in the social democratic state of West Germany and you begin to know the score in this joyless game. All the pretences of the great advanced liberal democracies tumble down through the inviting arse-hole of the capitalist system; wipe it once with the pages of its press and then pull the chain.

In one (or several) words one can deal with psychiatric repression: anti-psychiatry<sup>18</sup> was and is the struggle, within the state institutions of hospitals and sectors, to destroy that system from the inside. Now there are, beyond anti-psychiatry, non-psychiatric stirrings that would not only 'contain' madness in the community but integrate it in with the community and use it as a revolutionary force and to assist its transformation into

16. R. Daly (professor of psychiatry at Cork), on the investigation of thirteen Irish prisoners who had long-term negative personality effects after undergoing this treatment (A.P.A., Miama). (Compton U.K. government report, 1971; Parker, 1972).

17. The English government have now promised to stop these practices (though continuing them against their own soldiers, as training, in case they fall into the hands of 'an unscrupulous enemy'). But their military occupation of the northern part of Ireland continues – not to quell religious sectarian conflict but to subdue a little longer the menace of the Irish working class with its massive unemployment.

18. I don't think we should too readily abandon (and not only in the interest of a dialectical terminology) this term that I introduced in the 1960s, despite the fact that it has been often misapplied and that there are advanced areas of work, e.g. Franco Basaglia's in Italy, where an anti-psychiatric praxis (the Institution Negated) is already overlapped by a non-psychiatric one.

personal creativity (now new and never to be invalidated).

The dialectic involved in this movement is opposed to the idealistic creations of alternative 'communities' (other sorts of families) for 'good voyages' through madness and the moral, religious conversion of 'bad' psychiatrists into 'good ones', and it is opposed to all forms of 'alternative therapy' (family, encounter, sexology, rebirth of birth therapy etc.). It is a dialectic that is of one piece with the class and national struggle against capitalism, against bureaucratic degenerations of socialism and against imperialism all over the world.

All this implies a dual activism. Many of us work in and against psychiatric institutions; many of us are engaged in psychology to destroy the destructiveness of the normalizing teaching of it (that destroys the teachers even before the taught), or against the invasion by oedipian, familial psychoanalysis in many sorts of institution. Or we write books or teach about all this. But there is no way of avoiding, in France or West Germany, in Spain or in Mozambique, the necessity to act against all the powerful, though impotent, remnants of capitalism and imperialism.

If power is pure otherness, somewhere but for no one, potency is the unified total expression of the organism at full liberty in full presence. The recovery of our potency is the precondition for the destruction of the impotent power of the bourgeois state – the Eunuch Power – the control that lies in the spaces between us and receives substance only through our submission.

Finally we assert and then re-assert our difference when we recognize the unity of needs. In fully developed capitalist society the primary needs of food and shelter are no more vital – like the air we breathe – than

the radical needs<sup>19</sup> for total bodily health (not just a medical professional problem), for orgasmic sexuality (as distinct from serviceable procreative coupling), for madness (as the re-unification of that which is divided by *psychiatry*), transformed into new, non-stylized forms of creativity, the art of quotidian living, for a liberty that finds no use for more freedom (on the issue, for example, of food and housing), for liberty of the expression of the right to express the individual person who respects, as its own negation, the right of the other to say 'No', 'enough', 'there are other things I want to do right now', of a self-disciplining liberty that finally makes this distinction (originally that of Marx) *and* the unification: political revolution, yet that is happening now, but if we are to avoid mere piecemeal reformism and the perpetuation of all our institutional forms of repression, we have to demand the realization of all our 'other needs', radical needs, *now*.

The social revolution, the 'final' and completed revolution (on the way to its anti-establishment as permanent), the communist revolution will not automatically follow political revolution (that was Stalin's dogma based on a mechanistic cause and effect relation between infra- and suprastructure).

Overcoming my residual pessimism that the réseau might find a way of remaining yet another self-congratulating liberatory movement of the 'extrême gauche' and nothing more, I remember enough significant moments of meeting among us, and enough of the sometimes

19. Agnès Heller of the Budapest School after Lukacs in, e.g., *Teoria dei bisogni di Marx*, Feltrinelli, 1974, has stressed the difference between primary needs and radical needs, against much official party opposition – because what she says, based on a profound re-reading of Marx's *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* and the *Grundrisse*, is much more subversive to the bureaucracy than Dubcekian socialism 'with a liberal face' – the face can be a mask, it is the reality that matters.

corrosive challenge in our exchanges of personal experiences in embattled work, to find, if not hope, *for* our work (the facile hope, the pontifical attitude), but rather the *other* hope that finds its expression in our ragged and dogged more-or-less-unity of action. But then we surpass sentimentalism and utopianism only when we have gone into them fully enough.

The réseau, anti-familial in its very nature, provides no comforting institutional matrix,<sup>20</sup> mother substance, but rather something that Félix Guattari might call 'rhizomatique'; for all those of us who have been isolated so long it has become possible to invent systems forming buds underground, pushing towards the surface, a new form of solidarity.

*Then* we were each of us one person, striving to remain at least that one person.

*Now* we are thousands, becoming thousands more all the time.

Needing no religions or even non-religious conversion (the alternative therapies for personal salvation), recognizing the historic nature of our repression and oppression, we recognize our friends and by that simple act start to put our enemies in final flight.

After too many words,

The struggle continues,

David

Thought after this letter:

As I write this I'm involved in yet another Congress (on 'Madness', in Milan, 1 December 1976).

20. This regression into the womb of the institutional matrix is 'normal' regression, difficult to recognize, but it's against this mystification that the spontaneous 'regression' of madness originates.



There are many words and many people waiting. I see all our assembled bodies as the bodies of sheep, with tails, and all our faces express the uniform attentive politeness, impatient anger, habitual bewilderment and perpetual bewitchment of others:

The psychoanalysts know how to begin a paragraph of speech that makes sense and an apparent justification of their position, but they also know how to turn it once again at the end into a pure, poor nonsense.

Everyone is, of course, against intellectual masturbation, just as everyone is against imbecilic masturbation (because after all we still have to think) – there would be at least some joy in that – but what happens in fact is an intellectual constipation and it seems that we have to wait until the shit reaches up to the taste-buds of our tongues.

There's no arrogance in that. We are all in the same morass. I don't know what you do but I don't listen much more to what people say. But it's still worthwhile watching, noticing that what people really mean rarely comes out of their mouths. Breaking the hegemony of tongue and ear can be revolutionary too – like unwriting sentences to de-code experience.

The only point in writing I can see now is to infect the world with the cells of its own madness. As the madness is its own madness there should be no phenomenon of rejection. But who can tell?