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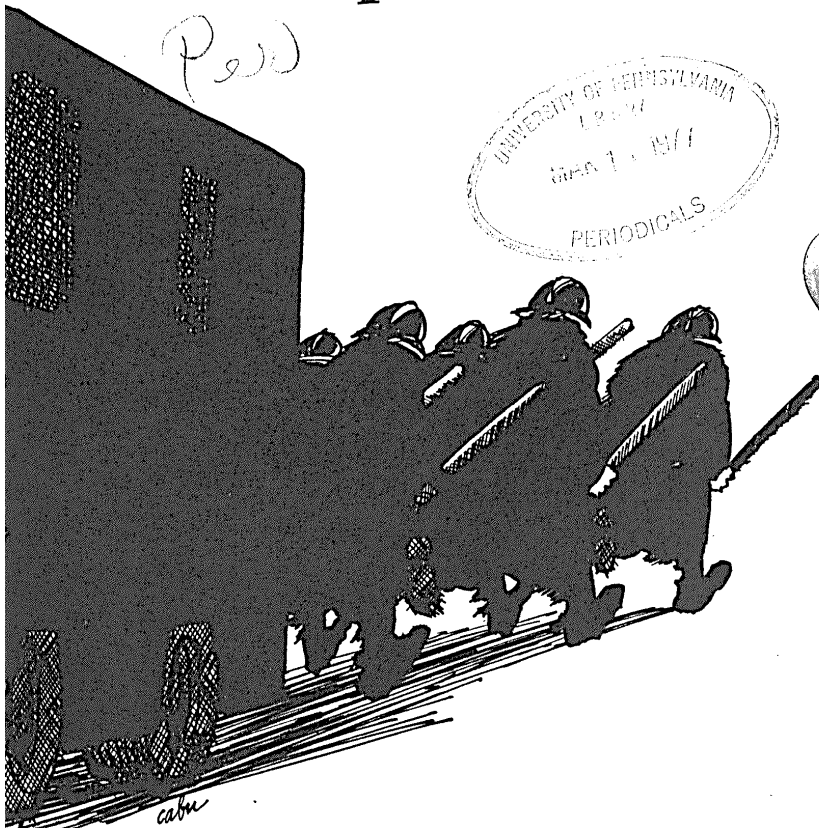
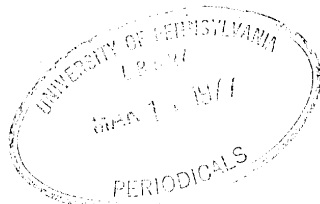
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THE JOURNAL OF A GROUP ANALYZING THE POWER MECHANISMS WHICH PRODUCE AND MAINTAIN THE PRESENT DIVISIONS OF KNOWLEDGE.

Anti-Oedipus

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From Psychoanalysis to Schizopolitics

SEMIOTEXT(E)

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NOUS SOMMES TOUS

'INDESIRABLES'

“We all are undesirables” (Daniel Cohn-Bendit)

Psycho-Analysis and Schizo-Analysis

AN INTERVIEW WITH FÉLIX GUATTARI

Arno Munster: For a long time Freudo-Marxists and left-wing Freudians have struggled for the recognition of psychoanalysis by the labor movement, for the integration of psychoanalysis into political combat, for a synthesis of dialectical materialism and psychoanalysis. After the failure of this attempt, shouldn't you fear that your critique might be taken up at least in part by the Right which has long fought Freudianism because of its materialism, because it destroys society's hypocrisy in matters of sexuality?

Félix Guattari: There are two parts to your question. First, when the communist movement deigns at last to pay attention to the problems of the unconscious, of sexuality, when a great reconciliation is at hand, are we going to spoil the whole deal? Second, the recovery by the Right. On the first point, it's precisely my belief that all the consequences must be drawn from the fact that the communist movement, the socialist movement, the leftist movements, etc., have never unreservedly accepted to consider the desiring economy in its relation to the work of revolutionaries. Let it suffice to mention the famous conversation between Lenin and Clara Zetkin!

A certain degree of tolerance undoubtedly exists today between the labor movement and psychoanalysis. There are two ways of looking at it: on the one hand, there are the resistances manifested by the revolutionary movement, the labor movement, and on the other there is the psychoanalytical movement proper. It is quite obvious that the labor movement and the revolutionary movement participate in the repression of desire; therefore they are not very willing to face questions which could eventually break their internal bureaucratic equilibrium. In this sense your question is justified. It should, however, be added immediately that the psychoanalytic movement has contributed a good deal to these resistances; indeed, it has consistently promoted them. The psychoanalytical movement has organized itself on the basis of a complete split between social formations and unconscious ones; it has set up a radical separation between what happens in political and social struggles and what takes place in "private life" with the couple, the child, etc. Psychoanalysts have discarded social issues and politicians have considered that desiring economy did not concern them. The two groups finally appear to be acting in complicity. Such a reconciliation between Marxism and Freudianism is inseparable from their respective entry into the University. The preliminary step was the emasculation of Marxism.

This interview was given shortly after the publication of Anti-Oedipus. The title is ours.

It was thus necessary, on the one hand, that Freudianism shift once and for all from its origins to an ideology of the Oedipus, of the signifier, and that Marxism, on the other hand, reduce itself to an exercise in textual practice so that the welding of the two could be worked out. As for the text, nothing is left of it but a powerless residue cut off from any revolutionary opening.

The warders of the labor movement now agree to deal with the family and with desire just as long as the issue is confined to sterilized institutional objects: the "quality of life" and other nonsense. But as soon as other objects, dynamite carriers, come into the picture—homosexuality, delinquency, abortion—they call in the cops! They are willing to take into consideration the problems of the couple, of women, housing, tenants, but they are not really inclined to tackle seriously with libido-revolutionary problems. Psychoanalysts, on the other hand, do not mind investigating social formations, but on the express condition that no one will question the status of the family, of the school, etc.

Munster: If a psychoanalyst wanted to stop being an accomplice, if he wanted to bring about this rupture you mentioned, what should he do? Your book gives an answer—perhaps not a completely satisfying one—to this question: one must "de-Oedipianize" psychoanalysis, replace it by another institutional practice conceived as an attempt to break down the familialism of traditional psychoanalysis and create a completely different psychoanalytical practice. But is it sufficient, in the context of the system, to avoid giving a hand to authority and repression? Is this "de-Oedipianization" of psychoanalysis possible, is it possible without a total revolution of psychoanalysis and of the institutional framework of psychiatry, which, as one of the authors of *The Kursbuch Number 28* concerning "the misery of the psyche" very correctly points out, continues to fight mental illness by repressing the patient? How does *Anti-Oedipus* operate in this perspective and what can "schizo-analysis" do here?

Guattari: The problem is once again to avoid considering the institutions of psychiatry and psychoanalysis as confined arenas. We remain in some sort of "social objectivity" as if there were a particular battle to fight with the workers in the factories, another in hospitals with the sick, yet another in the University with the students, etc. . . . We must question this "containing-contained" approach of institutions which are supposed to be filled with people. Sociologists and Technocrats see things that way. The problem of the University—we certainly found out in May '68—is not that of *the* students and *the* professors; it is the problem of the entire society inasmuch as it involves the relationship between the transmission of knowledge, the training of executives, the desire of the masses, the requirements of industry, and, finally, everything which could intermingle in the setting of the University. What was the magnificent answer of the governmental reformists? To refocus the problem on the object itself, to confine it to the University's structure and organization. The same holds for psychiatry and the associations for psychoanalysis; what we should try to elucidate today is not how

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to alter the role of the psychiatrist, of the psychoanalyst, the attitude of groups of patients, but, more fundamentally, how society functions in order to bring about such a situation. Marxism raises the very same question, which is not to know how the situation in the concentration camps could have been improved, but what was the process that led to them. We assert that a society which overcodes production through the law of capitalist profit tends to create an inseparable split between desiring production and social production. Desire is thrown upon private life while sociality recedes into profit-making labor.

The real question is whether a production of desire, a dream, a passion, a concrete Utopia, will finally acquire the same existential dignity in social life as the manufacturing of cars or fads. It is naive to think that production can be reduced to the simple opposition of the variable investment of work forces and the constant investment of technical means. Underlying the whole problem is the division which will determine what component of desire will be accepted and what will be rejected. The capitalist is interested only in the different machines of production that he can connect to his machine of exploitation: your arms, if you are a janitor; your brains, if you are an engineer; your looks, if a cover-girl. Not only doesn't he give a damn about the rest, but he won't hear a word about it. To speak in the name of the rest would upset—could only upset—the normal process of his production. At the heart of industrial machines, there are desiring machines which are split, separated, and tapped by the dominant system. The point at issue is whether this division which is considered to be legitimate and human—this castrating slash by machines which is supposed to give access to who knows what sacrosanct sublimation—can or cannot be overcome. Will the revolutionaries ever come to grips with this separation, this castration which people constantly run up against, this recuperation by the family, by the school, etc.?

As for the second part of your question—the recovery by the Right—I agree completely! It is even surprising that this book elicited, let us say, so many responses. We didn't anticipate any. I believe that the explanation can be found, to a certain extent, in a blend of several elements: a revolutionary current which was fed up with being overcoded by all these psychoanalytical concepts and perhaps a long-standing hatred of the reactionary Right which was happy, finally, to find people who could support an attack that it had never known how to lead. But, in the end, such a misunderstanding is not fundamental. Anything can always be recovered: the most daring artistic production, the most untimely philosophy, as long as it does not depart from the framework of writing, books, the University. . .

Munster: But by attacking psychoanalysis' fixation upon Oedipus and upon the superego, you also attack part of the theoretical heritage of Freud. Your theory of schizophrenia is at variance with Freudian theory.

Guattari: Freud didn't understand much about schizophrenia. Many inner struggles in the psychoanalytic movement would be understood if Freud's fundamental hostility toward psychosis were finally acknowledged. Psychosis

and revolution have always been taboo. Normality was identified with the acceptance of family life. From its origin Freudianism was built upon a vision of the family man. Freud despised delirium: for example that of President Schreber! He also held women in contempt. His representation of sexuality and society is entirely "phallogentric" as the Women's Liberation Movement would say. In *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* (1937), the problem of castration appeared as the stumbling block which analysis hit upon; man refuses the necessary castration because he does not want to be "like a woman," while the woman does not accept the lack of a penis, etc. In no way does Freud elucidate the element of political struggle which underlies this kind of "resistance." Women refuse castration as much as men (if, indeed, the latter succeed in doing so). The key term is the superego. The question is whether the superego is a formation derived from the social milieu and transmitted through the family in such a way that the individual comes to desire repression and to assume his own curbing as the ultimate link in a long chain which begins with the father, or if the superego is to be accepted as a necessary split at the core of the psychic topography which alone would allow the subject to reach a satisfactory equilibrium and guarantee the ego a good adaptation to reality. In this perspective, the authority of the father and the images of social hierarchy would only be accessories to this necessary, sacrosanct castration. It all boils down to these alternatives: either desire comes to desire repression and actively supports its aims, thus preserving itself as desire, or desire revolts against repression and loses itself as desire. Quite a clever mechanism!

About ten years ago I introduced the notion of *transversality* to express the capacity of an institution to remodel the ways of access it offers the superego so that certain symptoms and inhibitions are removed. Modification of the local coefficient of transversality implies the existence of an erotic focal point, a group cross, and a take-over—even if partial—of local politics by a group-subject. A social formation can modify the erotic "causality" which sets off the activity of the superego. This modification of the ways it accommodates the superego leads to a radical transformation of the whole of the topography. Under these conditions, repression and inhibition take on a completely different meaning. Psychoanalysis is simply reactionary when it covers up for what happens at school, in the family, in the army, etc. No existential dehiscence, no splitting of the ego, no lack, no castration can justify the intervention of a repressive third party. To no avail are we told that we don't have to deal anymore with the real father, that what's really at stake is a structural logic without which the "subject" could not establish himself as desire within the signifying chain, that we must at all costs renounce the undifferentiated Imaginary pleasures in order to accede to the "Symbolic" order¹—the Symbolic is mere twaddle (you have it or you don't, and that's that). All this sordid paraphernalia is there only to safeguard the comfort of the couch. Let society have it its own way, we'll take care of desire; we will assign it the small, secret domain of the couch. And it works! *Psychoanalysis works only too well.* That's what makes it so dangerous! It's

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the best of all capitalist drugs. Denouncing it is not enough; something has to be found to replace it!

Munster: Psychoanalytical struggle has to be shifted into the social domain. Instead of attacking the institutional framework of traditional psychoanalysis, we should fight it in the context of politics, which would one day allow us to destroy the conditions out of which the "social Oedipus" originates, dismantle family life, etc.

Guattari: I agree completely.

Munster: Yes, but the point is not completely elucidated in the book . . .

Guattari: The second part of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* will have to deal with the concrete conditions of schizo-analytical struggle—in other words, a political struggle on all fronts of desiring production. We should avoid centering the struggle on a single field. The problem of psychoanalysis is the problem of the revolutionary movement; the problem of the revolutionary movement is the problem of madness; the problem of madness is the problem of artistic creation. Transversality is, at heart nothing but this nomadism. . . . The unconscious is in the first place a social set-up, the collective distribution of virtual utterances. Statements such as "this is yours and that is mine" will only be differentiated in a second phase. The unconscious recognizes the private property of statements no more than it recognizes the private property of desire. Desire is always extraterritorial—deterritorialized-deterritorializing; it passes over and under all barriers. Although psychoanalysis readjusts its concepts and passes them through a linguistical, logical, and anthropological sieve, it cannot leave its home base which is that of familialism and capitalism. It serves capitalism as a substitute religion. Its function is to update repression, to give it a personal touch so it sells better—as has been done for the Ford Pinto or Plymouth Duster. Sin and confession don't work the way they used to. Desire has to be given leeway. Gadgets aren't enough. Something imperishable, waterproof and imputrescible, is needed: a subjective prostitution, an interminable ritual. Once hooked on this new drug, there is no longer any reason to fear that the subject will truly invest its energy into social struggle. Reality must remain at the door of the consulting room. The objective is not really to defend the values of capitalism but only to pretend not to be aware of them. Revolutionary struggle must act upon such a representation of social production and of labor in general. This shift of emphasis you mentioned must be operated in all places where familial repression is exerted on desire, women, children, drug addicts, alcoholics, homosexuals, etc. This "micro class struggle" can not be undertaken in the sole territory of psychoanalysis. Whatever conceptual references we adopt, we should never lose sight of the true stakes, the real institutional objects of this class struggle. The complicity between psychoanalysis and left-wing trends is based upon ideas, never upon practice. When militants in groupuscules or in revolutionary parties are asked what their real attitude is in regard to children, homosexuals, etc., what their

bureaucrats get off on, or what depresses or maddens their comrades . . . no answer. When things get out of hand, the psychoanalyst or the psychiatrist is called for.

Munster: You said: "micro class struggle." Can we truly separate it from the "macro-struggle"?

Guattari: No more than we can separate atomic chemistry from molecular chemistry.

Munster: This confirms an article you wrote immediately after the events of May, 1968, in which you asserted that as many "subject-groups" should be created as possible, and that the struggle should also be led against "serialization" which was responsible, according to Sartre, for the inertia inherent in groups, parties, unions, etc. In short, political action had to be started off again. Here the psychoanalyst and militant are intermingled. Where, in an identical strategy, is the place of the patient, the place of the psychoanalyst, in this radical psychoanalysis you call "schizo-analysis"?

Guattari: The place of contemporary psychoanalysis in the revolutionary struggle—I don't see it! Which does not mean that all analytical exercises, including "dual" analysis, must be condemned. But there are two facets to the question: on the one hand, shifting the focus of analysis to "subject-groups" involved in political reality or in an activity of creative self-analysis, and, on the other hand, a constant fight against the insidious reinjection of repressive social patterns. A group analysis of the Slavson or Ezriel type can be as thoroughly harmful as a "dual" analysis if the real function of parental poles is not elucidated; what element of the father and mother intervenes in a neurotic relation? Does the father serve as an integrating symbolic pole or is he, despite himself, only the homing head of the social hydra? Take, for example, the case of Kafka.² Photographs are a constant theme of his work. There are several ways of looking at it. We might reduce the theme by interpreting it: photos could refer to a crystallization of the imaginary, the theme of the double, narcissicism, whatever. Many a theory would be elaborated here. . . . But wouldn't it be much more interesting to try to find out how photos really function in the work, when they appear, what networks they modify, etc. In one section of *The Trial*, a series of identical pictures appear: it is one of the "hottest" moments of the work, at a juncture where Joseph K. is almost freed from the hold of the Oedipal process. Instead of saying, "Hey, things are strangely resolved in identity, there is a duplication, etc.," schizo-analysis will find paths of differentiation which originate there. There is no such thing as a father in general. There is only a father who works at the bank, who works in a factory, who is unemployed, who is an alcoholic: the father is only the element of a particular social machine. According to traditional psychoanalysts, it's always the same father and always the same mother—always the same triangle. But who can deny that the Oedipal situation differs greatly, depending on whether the father is an Algerian revolutionary or a well-to-do executive? It

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isn't the same death which awaits your father in an African shanty town as in a German industrial town; it isn't *the same* Oedipus complex or the same homosexuality. It may seem stupid to have to make such obvious statements and yet such swindles must be denounced tirelessly; there is no universal structure of the human mind!

Munster: Is the schizo-analyst, then, someone who wants to synthesize the analysis of social economy and of libidinal economy in this society?

Guattari: Synthesis is a big word! Instead of reducing things to no more than a logical skeleton, we must enrich them, follow sequences, the real tracks, the social implications. Difference originates in repetition. Repetition is not the law, the finality of something; on the contrary, it marks the threshold to "deterritorialization," the indication of a desiring mutation. Blocked representation, catatonia as a response to aggression, group photos, etc., don't play the same role in the work of Kafka before and after his meeting with Felice Bauer. The family picture crystallizes Kafka's anti-Oedipal hatred from the time of *The Trial*. Hate and fascination. Kafka being a top level executive—not at all a shabby bureaucrat—is also confronted with his own Fascist desire to master the other in the framework of bureaucratic hierarchy, for instance. A tele-mastery. The other, fixed in the photo, is crystallized in some sort of submission ritual. The attempt to possess Felice from a distance through the interplay of love letters is inserted in a much larger practice of remote-possession based on the power of titles and functions. We will thus come closer and closer to the social ties "holding" Felice and Kafka; both of them are bureaucrats fascinated by the power of bureaucracy. Kafka's denunciation is only a denial. The analysis of a "perversion" of the letter, of a bureaucratic perversion, leads him to analyse the decaying bureaucracy of Austria-Hungary and the cultural turmoil out of which Nazi Eros will rise. Analysis will move in this direction. But if one is content to point out Kafka's impossible identification with his shopkeeper of a father, one completely overlooks the social dynamic of desiring energy. Kafka is not, in spite of what has been said, a writer of the nineteenth century. He is a writer of the twenty-first century who describes a desiring process in embryo, the scope of which we have scarcely begun to grasp.

Munster: Your book is, above all, a plea for the liberation of desire, a revolt against the overcoding of individuals by the fluxes of capitalism. But you go farther still, you call for an identification of the analyst, the patient, and the militant. Exactly what does this mean:?

Guattari: To start with, we never said: "identification of the analyst and the schizophrenic." We say that the analyst, like the militant, the writer, or whoever it may be, is more or less involved in a "schizo-process" to be distinguished from the locked-up schizophrenic whose own "schizo-process" runs aimlessly or is blocked up. We don't say that revolutionaries ought to identify with free-wheeling madmen, but that they should model their action

on the "schizo-process." The schizophrenic is a guy who, for whatever reason, has been touched off by a desiring flow which threatens the social order. There's an immediate intervention to ward off such a menace. The issue is libidinal energy in its process of "deterritorialization" and not at all the interruption of this process. Like the militant, the analyst must drift with the process instead of serving the "Oedipianizing" social repression by stating, for instance that "All you do is the result of an abnormal homosexual desire." (So they claim to interpret President Schreber's delusion.) Or "It's so because, in your case, the death instinct and Eros are not properly interrelated." Schizo-analysis, on the other hand, meets with the revolutionary struggle to the extent that it strives to free the flows, to remove the bolts—the axiomatics of capitalism, the overcoding of the superego, the primitive territorialities artificially reconstructed, etc. The work of the analyst, the revolutionary, and the artist meet to the extent that they must constantly tear down systems which reify desire, which submit the subject to the familial and social hierarchy. (I am a man, I am a woman, I am a son, I am a brother, etc.) No sooner does someone say, "I am this or that" than desire is strangled.

Munster: One last question on this new analytical practice. Your activities as a psychoanalyst are closely linked to the experience of the La Borde clinic at Cour Cheverny where institutional psychoanalysis is practiced.³ Do you think this institution (the clinic) takes on special importance for your project of liberation, or is it to be considered a compromise solution with all the characteristics of contemporary reformism in psychoanalysis? Don't the determinations of the general sociological framework condemn it to a failure at the outset?

Guattari: Yes and no! It effectively partakes in reformism, being surrounded by Social Security, the way patients perceive their illness, the whole medical ideology and social hierarchy, money, etc. . . . So, in this sense it is but a small-scale experiment which is easily repressed and even recuperated. It is, however, sufficiently alien to the rest of society to offer a number of people new conceptual instruments. If I had had to work as a psychoanalyst in private practice or as a professor it would have been much more difficult for me to challenge psychoanalytic dogmas. Our teamwork, although it is prey to all the mechanisms you were referring to, has nevertheless allowed us to pursue somehow or other a positive collective experiment with the French Communist Party, the radical "groupuscules," the Movement of March 22.⁴ If we had worked in a traditional hospital, this would have been impossible. It is important to preserve a few pals, a network which allows us to escape from this abominable solitude which capitalist society brings us to.

So, yes and no. No, it's not a vanguardist undertaking; it is nevertheless by progressively modifying the tutelages which weigh on desire, that we will succeed in setting up revolutionary machines of a new type. As much as I am against the illusion of a step by step transformation of society—"small reforms which make up great transformations"—I believe that microscopic

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attempts at creating communities, setting up analytic groups among militants, organizing a day-care center in a university—are crucial. It is out of such small attempts that one fine day we will bring about a great big rip like May '68. At the outset, the Movement of March 22 was almost a joke! I believe in a permanent reformism of the revolutionary organization. It's better to have ten consecutive failures or insignificant results than a besotted passivity before the mechanisms of retrieval.

Translated by Janis Forman

NOTES

1. A reference to Lacanian theory of the "subject." The *Symbolic* designates everything that has to do with the Law. In short, the power of language as well as the language of power. The subject being caught in language becomes a mere element of the signifying chain. An instrument to its structure, it is bound to miss the object it desires. [Editor's Note].
2. Cf. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Pour une littérature mineure*, Minuit, 1975.
3. Institutional psychotherapy corresponds roughly to the Anglo-American therapeutic communities. Cour-Cheverny (La Borde) is directed by Jean Oury, an orthodox Lacanian. [Ed. Note].
4. The Movement of March 22 was instrumental in bringing about the May '68 "revolution" in France.