THE LAW OF KINSHIP

ANTHROPOLOGY, PSYCHOANALYSIS, AND THE FAMILY IN FRANCE

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CHAPTER 5

Fatherless Societies and Anti-Oedipal Philosophies

During the 1960s and 1970s, the law was not the only domain that questioned the legal fiction of paternity or used the family to rethink social norms. The idea that a critique of the nuclear heterosexual family would lead to a more forceful *social* critique was certainly not specific to France. In West Germany, the New Left embraced the "sexual revolution," which they argued would protect their country against the resurgence of fascism.[1] For these German '68ers, there was no doubt that sexuality and politics were intimately and causally connected. Around this time, in the United States, several women who had grown increasingly dissatisfied with both the sexual conservatism of the New Left and the limited demands of second-wave feminism organized in groups under the banner of "radical feminism." The oppression of women, they argued, was not merely a symptom of capitalist exploitation that would naturally disappear with the advent of a socialist revolution, nor would it be solved by giving women full access to the public sphere as second-wave feminists such as Betty Friedan had contended. Instead, feminism needed to better understand the construction of gender

1. For an excellent analysis of the complicated ways in which the Left in Germany negotiated sexuality and the memory of fascism in the 1960s and 1970s, see Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton University Press, 2005), esp. chap. 4. See also Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies* (University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

(although they tended to use the term "sexual function" instead) and the operation of social and sexual norms in order to dismantle them. In this context, the family appeared to provide a particularly fruitful terrain. In her 1970 *Dialectic of Sex,* for example, the radical feminist Shulamith Firestone called for the elimination of the family structure, "the vinculum through which the psychology of power can be smuggled."[2]

In France, the intellectual critique of the family in the seventies also came from the Left and from feminism, but it was articulated somewhat differently than in Germany or the United States. Indeed, I would argue that many French thinkers of the time elaborated their critique of the family and of the prevailing social order through a critique of structuralism, and more specifically, a critique of what I have been calling the "structuralist social contract" of Lévi-Strauss and Lacan. As I have suggested so far, the concept of the symbolic—which Lacan had inherited and adapted from Lévi-Strauss—offered structuralism a new way of tying together the subjective, the sexual, and the social, defining all three terms universally, transhistorically, and in relation to a particular ethical and normative framework. As such, a critique of the Lacanian symbolic could theoretically also bring about a critique of the three terms structuring the symbolic: the subjective, the sexual, and the social. This was precisely the point made by several French philosophers of the 1970s, including the three figures I focus on in this chapter: Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, whose collaborative work, *Anti-Oedipus,* appeared in 1972; and Luce Irigaray, who developed this analysis in two of her first published works, *Speculum of the Other Woman* in 1974 and *This Sex Which Is Not One* in 1977. For these thinkers, the critique of the structuralist social contract rooted in the heterosexual family was the condition for producing freer subjects and less authoritarian societies, for developing a new ethics no longer premised on the exchange of women.

The critiques of the symbolic presented by Irigaray, Deleuze, and Guattari were, in many ways, in line with a wider reassessment of structuralism in French philosophy. In 1967, Jacques Derrida published *Of Grammatology,* in which he conducted a meticulous reading of Lévi-Strauss's *Elementary Structures,* particularly of the passage concerning the nature/culture divide. According to Derrida, Lévi-Strauss remained caught within the Western "metaphysics of presence" and "logocentrism," a term Derrida coined to describe this understanding of writing as a mere representation of speech.

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2. Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution* (Morrow, 1970). For more on this, see Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967–1975* (University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

Moreover, Lévi-Strauss's structuralist system of exchange, anchored on the opposition between nature and culture, and on its corollary, "the Law" or prohibition of incest, provided Derrida with a springboard to critique the inclusions and exclusions central to this philosophical tradition and to introduce his concept of deconstruction. The Lévi-Straussian system of exchange, Derrida concluded, required a transcendental referent, a center, and the series of binary oppositions set up around this center. A year before, in 1966, Michel Foucault had made a similar claim against psychoanalysis and ethnology in *The Order of Things,* accusing these disciplines of relying on a particular historical narrative with a particular causality and humanistic presuppositions. Foucault characterized it as the "a priori of all the sciences of man—those great caesuras, furrows, and dividing-lines which traced man's outline in the Western episteme and made him a possible area of knowledge."[3]

Foucault perfected his critique of the structuralist social and sexual contract in 1976 in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality.* There, he argued that the primary function of the family was to channel sexuality—which, he claimed, naturally operated along "mobile, polymorphous, and contingent techniques of power"—into a system of alliance, "a system of marriage, of fixation and development of kinship ties, of transmission of names and possessions."[4] The family thus "conveys the law and the juridical dimension in the deployment of sexuality; and it conveys the economy of pleasure and the intensity of sensations in the regime of alliance."[5] This premise, Foucault continued, explains a number of conventions and taboos set up around the family, and among them, the obsession with the prohibition of incest:

> If for more than a century the West has displayed such a strong interest in the prohibition of incest, if more or less by common accord it has been seen as a social universal and one of the points through which every society is obliged to pass on the way to becoming a culture, perhaps this is because it was found to be a means of self-defense, not against an incestuous desire, but against the expansion and the implications of this deployment of sexuality which has been set up, but which, among its many benefits, had the disadvantage of ignoring the laws and juridical forms of alliance. By asserting that all societies without exception, and consequently our own, were subject to this rule of rules, one

3. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences,* trans. Alan Sheridan (Vintage Books, 1973), 378.

4. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality,* trans. Robert Hurley (Vintage Books, 1980), 1:106.

5. Ibid., 1:108.

> guaranteed that this deployment of sexuality . . . would not be able to escape from the grand and ancient system of alliance. Thus the law would be secure, even in the new mechanics of power . . . If one considers the threshold of all culture to be prohibited incest, then sexuality has been, from the dawn of time, under the sway of law and right. By devoting so much effort to an endless reworking of the transcultural theory of the incest taboo, anthropology has proved worthy of the whole modern deployment of sexuality and the theoretical discourses it generates.[6]

After his discussion of anthropology, Foucault turned to psychoanalysis, which he located in the long history of power/knowledge around sex. Despite Freud's original intention to demarcate his new science from neurology and psychiatry, psychoanalysis remained entangled with a similar set of limitations, a continuity that Foucault had already hinted at in his 1961 *Madness and Civilization*. Indeed, psychoanalysis

> rediscovered the law of alliance, the involved workings of marriage and kinship, and incest at the heart of this sexuality, as the principle of its formation and the key to its intelligibility. The guarantee that one would find the parents-children relationship at the root of everyone's sexuality made it possible—even when everything seemed to point to the reverse process—to keep the deployment of sexuality coupled to the system of alliance. There was no risk that sexuality would appear to be by nature, alien to the law: it was constituted only though the law. Parents, do not be afraid to bring your children to analysis: it will teach them that in any case it is you whom they love. Children, you really shouldn't complain that you are not orphans, that you always rediscover in your innermost selves your Object-Mother or the sovereign sign of your Father: it is through them that you gain access to desire.[7]

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6. Ibid., 1:109. Foucault is referencing Lévi-Strauss directly when he uses expressions such as the "rule of rules" or the "threshold of culture."

7. Ibid., 1:113. Foucault's language would seem to indicate that he is referring to Lacan, especially by insisting on the role of desire, the law, and the sign, even though he never mentions him directly and even though Foucault was often quite close to Lacan intellectually, particularly in his conception of the law as productive. This is confirmed by Jacques-Alain Miller, who claimed that "we cannot understand anything about the *History of Sexuality* if we do not recognize in Foucault not an explanation of Lacan, but an explanation with Lacan." *Michel Foucault, philosophe: Rencontre internationale, Paris, 9, 10, 11 janvier 1988* (Seuil, 1989), 81.

Louis Althusser had been one of the most enthusiastic supporters of Lacan and of his theories, inviting him to conduct a seminar at the École normale supérieure, and reappropriating many of Lacan's key concepts—particularly around the question of interpellation and subject formation—for his own work.[8] Yet even Althusser was pointing to the limits of the structuralist grid, which could not, according to Althusser, address the problem of ideology. As he asked in a 1969 essay on "Freud and Lacan,"

> How can we rigorously formulate the relation between the formal structure of language, the absolute precondition for the existence and intelligibility of the unconscious, on the one hand, the concrete kinship structures on the other, and finally the concrete ideological formations in which the specific functions implied by the kinship structures (paternity, maternity, childhood) are lived? Is it conceivable that the historical variation of these latter structures (kinship, ideology) might materially affect some or other aspect of the instances isolated by Freud? . . . What relations are there between analytic theory and 1. the historical preconditions of its appearance, and 2. the social preconditions of its application?[9]

For Althusser, "a mass of research remains to be done on these ideological formations" such as paternity, maternity, conjugality, and childhood. This, however, was "a task for historical materialism" and not for psychoanalysis.[10]

Finally, to give one last example, we could mention Robert Castel's 1973 book *Le psychanalysme.* Castel, who was trained as a sociologist and had been very much influenced by Foucault and Bourdieu, coined the term *psychanalysme* to describe the complicity between psychoanalysis and "dominant ideology." More specifically, Castel denounced the political and social uses (or abuses) of psychoanalysis, especially in light of psychoanalysis's explicit and persistent position of social and political neutrality.[11] Among other things, Castel criticized French psychoanalysis for its esoteric language, its

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8. Althusser noted for instance that "the most original aspect of Lacan's work, his discovery" was to have shown "that this transition from (ultimately purely) biological existence to human existence (the human child) is achieved within the Law of Order, the law I shall call the Law of Culture, and that this Law of Order is confounded in its *formal* essence with the order of language" (emphasis in original). Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays* (New Left Books, 1971), 209.

9. Ibid., 217.

10. Ibid., 211.

11. Robert Castel, *Le psychanalysme* (Maspero, 1973), 10.

blindness to ideology, its commodification, its narcissism, its "social extra-territoriality."[12] Castel's book was broadly disseminated and thoroughly debated. The psychoanalyst Octave Mannoni, a close colleague of Lacan's, published a twenty-page article refuting Castel's argument point by point: it concluded that Castel ought to undergo analysis himself. Castel's work was even discussed within the confines of the École freudienne where, supposedly, other young psychoanalysts unhappy with the ruling Lacanian orthodoxy had organized a clandestine seminar devoted to this problem of *psychanalysme.*[13] In 1972, the journal *Esprit* published a special issue around *Anti-Oedipus* entitled "The Death of Oedipus and Anti-Psychoanalysis." As Jacqueline Rousseau-Dujardin described these years in an article on Lacan in the journal *L'Arc,* "For the last two years, in France at least, the tone of the writings *on* psychoanalysis has changed. Until recently, in so-called intellectual milieux, people sang its praises; now, its death knell is rung [*on lui sonne les cloches*]: the first strike was given on the Left, with much fanfare, by *Anti-Oedipus* which, even though it rang false, rang loudly; *Le psychanalysme* responded from a neighboring bell tower, less striking but better founded."[14]

This chapter aims to elucidate the specificity of the French intellectual critique of the structuralist symbolic by focusing on the early works of Deleuze, Guattari, and Irigaray. While all the figures listed previously were, like Deleuze, Guattari, and Irigaray, deeply aware of the interconnectedness of the symbolic and the social, these three authors offer a slightly different perspective in their interrogation of the Oedipal economy, to the extent that they not only critique its foundation but also offer an alternative vision of a social order premised on an alternative concept of the symbolic. In their works, the critique of structuralism is the starting point for a larger critique of normative subjectivities, families, and social formations, whether it be capitalism, colonialism, or patriarchy. After exposing the main lines of their arguments and their programs for implanting an alternative social order, I turn to the activists of the Front homosexuel d'action révolutionnaire (FHAR) and of the feminist group Psychanalyse et politique (known as Psych et Po) who attempted to incorporate and "apply" the theories of *Anti-Oedipus* and of Irigaray, respectively, to their political action in order to promote "anti-Oedipal lifestyles."

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12. Ibid., introduction.

13. Interview with Robert Castel by Edouard Gardella and Julien Souloumiac in *Revue Tracés,* no. 8.

14. Jacqueline Rousseau-Dujardin, "Du temps, qu'entends-je?" *L'Arc,* no. 58, 1974, 31.

Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari met in 1969. Deleuze, an *agrégé* philosophy professor who had previously written monographs on Hume, Nietzsche, Kant, Bergson, Proust, Sacher-Masoch, and Spinoza, had, earlier that year, accepted a teaching position at the new University of Paris VIII known as Vincennes. Vincennes, which opened its doors in December 1969, was created in response to the May '68 student uprising. The minister of education at the time, Edgar Faure, proposed a law in November 1968 to reform higher education, taking into account some of the student demands. The law promised, among other things, a greater degree of curricular flexibility and student participation in the university's administrative committees. Vincennes was conceived as an "experimental center" to test out liberal pedagogical theories. Students could be accepted without the *baccalauréat,* the high school diploma mandatory for enrollment in all other universities. They were encouraged to take classes in various disciplines and were only required to choose a "major" in a particular field, a decentralization unprecedented in the French curriculum. Courses were organized around a system of *unités de valeur* (or "value units") that students could choose among. But Vincennes's innovation was not only administrative. On a theoretical level, the university sought to challenge the authoritarianism of student-teacher relationships and, more generally, to question structures of power, hierarchy, and subjection.[15]

For Deleuze and his colleagues—who, in the philosophy department, included Michel Foucault and François Châtelet—Vincennes appeared as a perfect forum to reflect on the practical ramifications of their philosophical theories of power. The problem of power was also at the heart of Guattari's work, although his medium for approaching this question was different from Deleuze's. Deleuze once described his personality as "more like a hill: I don't move much, I can't manage two projects at once, I obsess over my ideas, and the few movements I do have are internal." Guattari, in the words of Deleuze, was more like "an 'intersection' of groups, like a star. Or perhaps I should compare him to the sea: he always seems to be in motion, sparkling with light. He can jump from one activity to another. He doesn't sleep

15. For more on Vincennes, see the collection of archival documents and testimonies in Jean-Michel Djian, ed., *Vincennes: Une aventure de la pensée critique* (Flammarion, 2009). There is some scattered information about the management of the university in Elisabeth Roudinesco, *La bataille de cent ans: Histoire de la psychanalyse en France* (Ramsay, 1986), 2:558–59, and in Sherry Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics: Freud's French Revolution* (Basic Books, 1978), 175–80.

much, he travels, he never stops. He never ceases. He has extraordinary speeds."[16] By the time Deleuze met him, Guattari was involved in a number of political and intellectual activities, which could be grouped under three main categories, intersecting indeed "like a star": psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and politics.

Guattari's interest in psychiatry began in the 1950s, and was triggered partly by one of his high school teachers, Fernand Oury. Oury, who had been following Lacan's career and the development of psychoanalysis in France more generally, was one of the first promoters of "institutional pedagogy," an approach to education that took into account the child's unconscious and the psychic dynamics of the classroom. Oury suggested that Guattari—who was at the time frustrated with his studies to become a pharmacist—meet his brother Jean, who in 1953 had founded La Borde, a private psychiatric clinic at Cour-Cheverny in the Loire region. Prior to La Borde, Jean Oury had been involved in several other psychiatric institutions that had been experimenting with alternative treatments for psychotic patients. These institutions were part of a movement that came to be known as "institutional psychotherapy." As its name indicates, institutional psychotherapy responded to a double demand: first, to the increasing awareness of the deplorable conditions in many public mental health institutions, and second, to the gradual incorporation of psychoanalysis (particularly the theories of Freud and Lacan) into psychiatric care. Unlike the British or Italian anti-psychiatry movements promoted by figures such as Ronald Laing, David Cooper, Franco Basaglia, and Giovanni Jervis (all of whom Oury and Guattari had read extensively), the point of institutional psychotherapy was never to abolish the asylum as an institution, but to radically reconceive its practical and intellectual foundations.

Although the term "institutional psychotherapy" was only devised in 1952, the practice emerged in the 1940s at the Saint-Alban hospital in a small town in central France. During World War II, Saint-Alban, like much of the French population, suffered from food restrictions under the Occupation. Hospitals, however, were particularly affected, and by the end of the war, 40,000 French inpatients died of hunger.[17] Alerted by this disaster, the personnel at Saint-Alban had made it its mission to hoard enough food with the help of the local population to subsist and feed its patients. During those

16. Gilles Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975–1995,* trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (Semiotext(e), 2006), 237.

17. See Isabelle von Bueltzingsloewen, *L'hécatombe des fous: La famine dans les hôpitaux psychiatriques français sous l'Occupation* (Aubier, 2007).

years, Saint-Alban also provided a shelter for many artists and intellectuals who were fleeing fascism and the Vichy regime. Surrealist artists such as Paul Éluard and Tristan Tzara and the historian of science Georges Canghuilhem all transited through Saint-Alban. The hospital soon became famous as a center in which artists, intellectuals, avant-garde doctors—such as François Tosquelles, a Spanish refugee who had escaped the Franco regime—and left-wing militants—such as the communist Lucien Bonnafé—cohabited with psychotic patients, exchanged ideas, and attempted to reconcile Marx and Freud, while pondering the topic of madness. This peculiar environment drew Jean Oury, who from 1947 to 1949 interned at the Saint-Alban hospital, collaborating with other promising young doctors, including Frantz Fanon, the Martinique-born psychiatrist and Algerian freedom fighter.[18]

One of the main goals of institutional psychotherapy was to challenge the nineteenth-century asylum structure, which, according to the founders of institutional psychotherapy, functioned more like a prison than a caregiving facility. In particular, institutional psychotherapy objected to the asylum's "pyramidal hierarchy" and to its "fixed roles" with detached, unquestionable, and supposedly omniscient doctors who lacked empathy with their patients.[19] For institutional psychotherapy, this model had become untenable, particularly after the experience of the war had highlighted the dangers of what they called *institutions concentrationnaires* or concentration-camp-like institutions. Instead of confining patients to isolation, solitary treatments, or one-on-one analyses with their doctor, institutional psychotherapy encouraged collective work, group activities, clubs, artistic creation, and the "explosion of fixed roles" within the medical team.

Institutional psychotherapy was built on the theoretical premise, put forth by both Freud and Lacan, that transferential relationships were difficult—if not impossible—with psychotic subjects. Thus, the promoters of institutional psychotherapy argued, rethinking the transferential process and the doctor/patient relationship was the starting point for any potential treatment of

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18. For more information on the history of institutional psychotherapy, see Jean Aymé, "Essai sur l'histoire de la psychothérapie institutionnelle," in *Actualités de la psychothérapie institutionnelle* (Matrices, 1985); Julian Bourg, *From Revolution to Ethics: May 1968 and Contemporary French Thought* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), chap. 10; Pierre Chanoit, *La psychothérapie institutionnelle* (Presses universitaires de France, 1995); Patrick Faugeras, ed., *L'ombre portée de François Tosquelles* (Érès, 2007); Félix Guattari, *Psychanalyse et transversalité: Essais d'analyse institutionnelle* (La découverte, 2003); Joseph Mornet, *Psychothérapie institutionnelle: Histoire & actualité* (Champ Social, 2007).

19. See the dialogue between Jean Oury and Féliz Guattari, "Sur les rapports infirmiers-médecins," in Guattari, *Psychanalyse et transversalité,* 7–17.

psychosis. Guattari proposed to replace transference, which he described as a "stuck, insoluble mechanism . . . predetermined, 'territorialized' on a role" with a new concept that he called "transversality."[20] Opposed to both "verticality" and "horizontality," transversality could give a new expression to the psychotic unconscious, which, he argued, was a group unconscious.[21] Along similar lines, the daily activities at La Borde were organized around a double-entry chart called *la grille,* which tracked the daily chores of the staff and the patients as well as their reactions or feelings toward the particular tasks. As Guattari described it, the *grille* sought to "deregulate the 'normal' order of things."[22] Guattari began practicing at La Borde full time in 1955. As an academic extension of his work there, he founded in 1964 the interdisciplinary research group Fédération des groupes d'études et de recherches institutionnelles (FGERI), which, in 1967 merged into the Centre d'études, de recherches et de formation institutionnelle (CERFI). In 1966, the center began publishing its own journal, *Recherches,* on which various intellectuals of the time, including Foucault, collaborated, and which addressed social issues such as psychiatry, psychoanalysis, urbanism, homosexuality, women, and the family.

The relationship between institutional psychotherapy and psychoanalysis was complicated, as was that between Guattari and psychoanalysis. Most of the promoters of institutional psychotherapy insisted on their intellectual debt to Freud and Lacan. When Tosquelles fled the Franco regime during the Spanish Civil War, he was supposedly only able to carry two books with him, one of which was Lacan's thesis on paranoia (the other was Hermann Simon's work on the Gütersloh asylum). In his writings, Oury constantly acknowledged the influence of Lacan, whom he had met in 1947.[23] By the 1970s, however, Oury became increasingly critical of Lacan's heuristic style

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20. Ibid., 79.

21. Ibid.

22. Félix Guattari, "La grille," 1987 (IMEC, GTR2.Aa-10.27). For more on La Borde, see Éric Favereau, "Portrait de Jean Oury," *Libération,* June 27, 1998. See also François Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari: Biographie croisée* (La découverte, 2007), chap. 3; Anne-Marie Norgeu, *La Borde: Le château des chercheurs de sens* (Érès, 2006); Jean Oury, *Onze heures du soir à La Borde* (Gallilée, 1995); Jean Claude Polack and Danielle Sivadon-Sabourin, *La Borde: Ou, Le droit à la folie* (Calmann-Levy, 1976). See also the clinic's website: http://www.cliniquedelaborde.com. For a different approach, also highly informative about the day-to-day activities and operation of La Borde, see the documentary by Nicolas Philibert, *La moindre des choses* (Éditions Montparnasse, 1996), which follows the production of a Witold Gombrowicz play at La Borde. For more on Guattari's life and work at La Borde, see the special issue of *Libération,* August 31, 1992.

23. See, for example, Oury, *Onze heures,* 20.

and of his growing remoteness from actual clinical work. Guattari's relation to Lacan was equally ambivalent (for reasons that I will elucidate later in this chapter). Throughout the 1950s, however, he faithfully attended Lacan's seminar, and in 1962, he began an analysis with Lacan, which lasted seven years. At the end of it, in 1969, just as Guattari was refining his critique of Lacan in what would become *Anti-Oedipus*, he still decided to join Lacan's group, the École freudienne.[24]

Finally, if Guattari's political engagements were as varied as his intellectual interests, they nonetheless shared a defining feature: the relentless critique of all forms of fixed power, hierarchy, or authoritarianism. As a student, Guattari was active in the Jeunesses communistes, and like many of his peers he joined the French Communist Party. Throughout the early fifties, he became disillusioned with the party's subservience to Moscow, particularly after the Hungarian Revolution in 1956. Likewise, he condemned the party's stance on Algeria, and became vociferously critical of its official position, leaving it in 1956. Guattari channeled his political activism into alternative groups such as the leftist Voie communiste, which he ran from 1955 to 1965, the Opposition de gauche (OG), which he established in 1966, the Mouvement du 22 mars, or the Porteurs de valises ("luggage carriers"), a clandestine support group for the Front de libération nationale (FLN) of Algeria. In parallel, Guattari championed various Latin American revolutionary movements, defended the French students and the workers in 1968, signed petitions to help the Vietnamese resistance, endorsed the early French gay liberation movement, and was later involved in the nascent environmental activism.[25]

Anti-Oedipus was the product of the intellectual encounter between Deleuze and Guattari, an almost perfect combination of each author's background and personality. The actual writing of the book was done collaboratively with a particular style designed to mimic the multiple, rhizomatic, and flowing "modes of assemblage" that the book advocated. The idea was to imitate the unconscious and to avoid the stable, immutable, and ultimately "Oedipal" style of writing of the ego. Thus, during their collaboration, Deleuze and Guattari would meet, take notes when the other was talking, and eventually continue the conversation through letters and texts

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24. Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze,* 91; Félix Guattari, *Chaosophy,* trans. David L. Sweet, Jarred Becker, and Taylor Adkins (Semiotext(e), 1995), 10.

25. See Jean-Baptiste Marongiu and Marc Ragon, "Un militant tout-terrain," *Libération*, 31 August 1992, 33; Gilles Deleuze, *Pourparlers, 1972–1990* (Éditions de minuit, 1990), 26. For a detailed account of Guattari's life, see Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze.*

that they would, in turn, annotate.[26] *Anti-Oedipus*, however, was also the product of the very particular context of May '68 and its aftermath. As Guattari explained in 1972,

> This collaboration is not the product of a simple meeting of two individuals. Aside from a variety of circumstances, there was a whole political context that led up to it. Initially, it was less a question of pooling our knowledge than an accumulation of our uncertainties; we were confused about the turn of events after May '68. We both belong to that generation whose political consciousness awoke during the Liberation, in the enthusiasm and naiveté and the conspiring myths of fascism that came with it. Also, the questions left unanswered by the aborted revolution of May '68 developed in a counter-point that we found troubling: we were worried, like many others, about the future being prepared for us by those singing hymns of a newly made-over fascism that would make you wish for the Nazis of the old days. Our starting point was to consider how during these crucial periods, something along the order of desire was manifested throughout the society as a whole, and then was repressed, liquidated, as much by the government and police as by the parties and so-called workers unions and, to a certain extent, the leftist organizations as well.[27]

For Deleuze, Guattari, and much of the French intellectual Left, the failure of May '68 to bring about revolution could not be understood within a traditional socioeconomic paradigm: it was clear that a communist revolution was "in the interest" of the working class in social and economic terms, yet workers systematically voted *against* their interests, sabotaging their own potential emancipation. The explanation for this phenomenon, these thinkers argued, had to lie somewhere else, namely, at the level of subjectivity. Subjects had been conditioned to think and act a certain way through a particularly insidious process. Althusser called this ideology. Deleuze and Guattari designated it as Oedipalization, the repression of man's innate desire.[28]

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26. See Stéphane Nadaud's introduction to Félix Guattari, *The Anti-Oedipus Papers,* trans. Kélina Gotman (Semiotext(e), 2006), and "Letter to Uno: How Félix and I Worked Together," in Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness,* 237–40.

27. Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953–1974,* trans. Michael Taormina (Semiotext(e), 2004), 216. See also Manola Antonioli, Frédéric Astier, and Olivier Fressard, *Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari: Une rencontre dans l'après Mai 68* (L'Harmattan, 2009).

28. I am drawing here on Michel Feher's analysis in "Mai 68 dans la pensée," in *Histoire des gauches en France,* vol. 2, ed. Jean-Jacques Becker and Gilles Candar (La découverte, 2004), esp. 2:608.

The theory of desire in *Anti-Oedipus* can be traced back to Deleuze's prior philosophical work, and more specifically to his interest in Spinoza, to whom he devoted two books, one in 1968 (*Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*) and another in 1970 (*Spinoza: Philosophie pratique*). Drawing on Spinoza's definition of desire as the essence of man, and of nature as an infinite and all-encompassing reality assimilated to God, Deleuze and Guattari, in the first pages of *Anti-Oedipus,* establish an identity between production and consumption on one hand, and between man and nature on the other. Man, they tell us, is a "desiring machine": "*Social production is purely and simply desiring-production itself under determinate conditions.* We maintain that the social field is immediately invested by desire, that it is the historically determined product of desire, and that libido has no need of any mediation or sublimation, any psychic operation, any transformation, in order to invade and invest the productive forces and the relations of production. *There is only desire and the social and nothing else.*"[29] From this passage alone, we can already detect a series of crucial differences from a thinker such as Lacan, but also from Hegel, for whom desire is, by definition, lacking, negative, and dependent on an exterior object, an "other."[30]

Once these preliminary hypotheses are set up, the authors of *Anti-Oedipus* ask a question which in many ways serves as the guiding thread for the book: "Does the recording of desire go by way of the various stages in the formation of the Oedipus complex? Disjunctions are the form that the genealogy of desire assumes; but is this genealogy Oedipal, is it recorded in the Oedipal triangulation? Is it not more likely that Oedipus is a requirement or a consequence of social reproduction, insofar as this latter aims at domesticating a genealogical form and content that are in every way intractable?"[31] Can desire, in other words, be captured within the framework of the Oedipus complex? According to its authors, the goal of *Anti-Oedipus* is neither to question the significance of the parents for the child's emotional development nor to "deny the vital importance of parents, of love attachments of children to their mothers and father." Rather, it is to understand "what the place and the function of parents are within desiring-production, rather than doing the opposite and forcing the entire interplay

29. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 29 (emphases in original).

30. For more on this, see Judith Butler, *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France* (Columbia University Press, 1999), 205–17.

31. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus,* 13.

of desiring-machines to fit within the restricted code of the Oedipus."[32] Another way to put this would be to say that *Anti-Oedipus* investigates whether the child's parents occupy a particular *structural* position within the child's subject formation, or whether Freud and especially Lacan were right in assigning such importance to the Oedipal regulatory mechanism. The point is not to question the existence of an Oedipus complex, or even its universality, but rather the fact that it is naturalized, depoliticized, and presented as the necessary condition for all social and subject formations:

> We even believe what we are told when Oedipus is presented as a kind of invariant. But the question is altogether different: is there an equivalence between the productions of the unconscious and this invariant—between desiring-machines and the Oedipal structure? Or rather, does not the invariant merely express the history of a long mistake, throughout all its variations and modalities; the strain of an endless repression? What we are calling into question is the frantic Oedipalization to which psychoanalysis devotes itself, practically and theoretically, with the combined resources of image and structure.[33]

Deleuze and Guattari's objections to the structuralist version of the Oedipus complex are multiple. First, Freud's Oedipus structure depends on a definition of the subject as lacking whereas defining the subject as desire implies a constitutive plenitude: "Such is always the case with Freud. Something common to the two sexes is required, but something that will be lacking in both, and that will distribute the lack in two nonsymmetrical series, establishing the exclusive use of the disjunctions: you are girl or boy!"[34] Lacan emphasizes this constitutive lack in his concept of castration:

> Castration is at once the common lot—that is, the prevalent and transcendent Phallus, and the exclusive distribution that presents itself in girls as desire for the penis, and in boys as fear of losing it or refusal of a passive attitude. This something in common must lay the foundation for the exclusive use of the disjunctions of the unconscious—and teach us resignation. Resignation to Oedipus, to castration: for girls, renunciation of their desire for the penis; for boys, renunciation of male protest—in short "assumption of one's sex." This something in common, the great Phallus, the Lack with two nonsuperimposable

32. Ibid., 47.

33. Ibid., 53.

34. Ibid., 59.

> sides, is purely mythical; it is like the One in negative theology, it introduces lack into desire and causes exclusive series to emanate, to which it attributes a goal, an origin, and a path of resignation.[35]

By relying on concepts such as "the great Phallus" or "the Lack," psychoanalysis is intrinsically metaphysical. Like Kant, who "intended to discover criteria immanent to understanding so as to distinguish the legitimate and illegitimate uses of the syntheses of consciousness" and who "in the name of *transcendental* philosophy (immanence of criteria) . . . denounced the transcendental use of syntheses such as appeared in metaphysics," Deleuze and Guattari claim that "in like fashion [they] are compelled to say that psychoanalysis has its metaphysics—its name is Oedipus."[36] All of the fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis have to be posited transcendentally, just like God in metaphysics. In that sense, "the question of the father is like that of God: born of an abstraction, it assumes the link to be already broken between man and nature, man and the world, so that man must be produced by something exterior to nature and to man."[37]

According to Deleuze and Guattari, the Oedipus complex is also problematic from a logical perspective. It is anchored on what the authors call a "double bind" in the sense that it is at the same time the problem and the solution of one and the same question. "Why," they ask, "does psychoanalysis reinforce the transcendent use that introduces exclusions and restrictions everywhere in the disjunctive network, and that makes the unconscious swing over into Oedipus? And why is Oedipalization precisely that?" "It is because," they argue, "the exclusive relation introduced by Oedipus comes into play not only between the various disjunctions conceived as differentiations, *but between the whole of the differentiations that it imposes and an undifferentiated [un indifférencié] that it presupposes*. Oedipus informs us: if you don't follow the lines of differentiation daddy-mommy-me, and the exclusive alternatives that delineate them, you will fall into the black night of the undifferentiated."[38] But, Deleuze and Guattari continue, "Oedipus creates both the differentiations that it orders and the undifferentiated with which it threatens us. With the same movement the Oedipus complex inserts desire into triangulation, and prohibits desire from satisfying itself with the terms

35. Ibid., 59–60.

36. Ibid., 75.

37. Ibid., 107.

38. Ibid., 78 (emphasis in original).

of the triangulation."[39] This process, which Deleuze and Guattari call the "Freudian blackmail," is designed so that "everything is made to begin with Oedipus, by means of explanation, with all the more certainty as one has reduced everything to Oedipus by means of application."[40] However, "only in appearance is Oedipus a beginning, either as a historical or prehistorical origin, or as a structural foundation. In reality it is a completely ideological beginning, for the sake of ideology."[41]

Finally, and most importantly for our purposes here, Oedipus functions, according to Deleuze and Guattari, as a normative regulator through which certain subjects and behaviors are judged normal and integrated, and others deviant, both psychically (with the schizophrenic, for instance) and socially: "Oedipus is a means of integration into the group, in . . . the adaptive form of its own reproduction that makes it pass from one generation to the next."[42] Incest is conceptually necessary to set up the prohibition but also, according to the logic of the structuralist social contract and as Deleuze and Guattari highlight here, to define the symbolic, the system of exchanges, and consequently, the social: "By placing the distorting mirror of incest before desire (that's what you wanted, isn't it?) desire is shamed, stupefied, it is placed in a situation without exit, it is easily persuaded to deny 'itself' in the name of more important interest of civilization (what if everyone did the same, what if everyone married his mother or kept his sister for himself? There would no longer be any differentiation, any exchanges possible). We must act quickly and soon. Incest, a slandered shallow stream."[43]

The obsession with incest is equally prevalent, Deleuze and Guattari tell us, in modern anthropology, and particularly in the work of Lévi-Strauss. Just as psychoanalysis needs the pervert and the psychotic for the neurotic to feel normal, anthropology requires the savage and the barbarian for the civilized man to impose his ruling. Citing the anthropologist Edmund Leach, Deleuze and Guattari reproach anthropology for disregarding all elements that fall outside the "declension of alliance and filiation:" "Every time one interprets kinship relations in the primitive commune in terms of a structure unfolding in the mind, one relapses into an ideology of large segments that makes alliance depend on the major filiations, and that finds itself contradicted by

39. Ibid., 78–79.

40. Ibid., 101.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., 103.

43. Ibid., 120.

practice."[44] Moreover, "ethnologists are constantly saying that kinship rules are neither applied nor applicable to real marriages: not because these rules are ideal but rather because they determine critical points where the apparatus starts up again—provided it is blocked, and where it necessarily places itself in a negative relation to the group. Here it becomes apparent that the social machine is identical with the desiring-machine."[45]

In this context, Deleuze and Guattari mention the work of Edmond Ortigues, a psychoanalyst close to Lacan who in 1966 published *L'Œdipe africain* based on his fieldwork in Senegal, which led him to argue for the prevalence of an Oedipus complex in traditional African societies. For Deleuze and Guattari, this is yet another act of colonial violence. "How are we to understand those who claim to have discovered an Indian Oedipus or an African Oedipus?" they ask: "They are the first to admit that they re-encounter none of these mechanisms or attitudes that constitute our own Oedipus (our own presumed Oedipus). No matter, they say that the structure is there, although it has no existence whatever that is 'accessible to clinical practice'; or that the problem, the point of departure, is indeed Oedipal, although the developments and the solutions are completely different from ours."[46] All ethnological or psychoanalytic debates around the universality of the Oedipus complex are beside the point since "Oedipus-as-universal recommences the old metaphysical operation that consists in interpreting negation as a deprivation, as a lack: the symbolic lack of the dead father, or the Great Signifier."[47]

If Deleuze and Guattari engage with a series of anthropologists and psychoanalysts in *Anti-Oedipus,* their primary interlocutor appears to be Jacques Lacan. Lacan is mentioned several times but always with ambivalence, unlike Freud who is subjected to a much more vigorous critique. Thus, Deleuze and Guattari write that they "owe to Jacques Lacan the discovery of this fertile domain of a code of the unconscious, incorporating the entire chain—or several chains—of meaning: a discovery thus totally transforming analysis." But immediately after, they add: "But how very strange this domain seems, simply because of its multiplicity—a multiplicity so complex that we can scarcely speak of one chain or even of one code of desire."[48] Similarly, they cite Lacan's 1970 seminar in which he claimed to have never

44. Ibid., 147 (emphasis in original).

45. Ibid., 151.

46. Ibid., 169–70.

47. Ibid., 171.

48. Ibid., 38.

spoken of an Oedipus complex but rather of a "paternal metaphor."[49] Consequently, the authors of *Anti-Oedipus* blame Lacan's disciples for their "overtly or secretly pious" interpretation of Lacanism, and for their "less and less sensitive [attitude] to the false problems of Oedipus."[50]

Yet although Lacan's name does not figure prominently in *Anti-Oedipus,* the book remains, from start to finish, one long dialogue with Lacanian structuralist psychoanalysis, and more specifically an engagement with his structuralist social contract, as evidenced by the notions of "the Great Signifier," the Phallus, lack, and the Signifier, which recur throughout the book. Lacan might have changed the terms of psychoanalysis, but for Deleuze and Guattari the concepts remained the same. Psychoanalysis still sought to break the "production of desire" and to channel language into fixed restrictive codes. As Deleuze explained in a 1977 interview, in the context of Freud's clinical essays,

> It is said that there is no longer any of this today: significance has replaced interpretation, the signifier has replaced the signified, the analyst's silence has replaced the commentaries, castration is revealed more certain than Oedipus, structural functions have replaced parental images, the name of the Father has replaced my daddy. We see no important practical changes . . . It's all very well to say to us: you understand nothing, Oedipus, it's not daddy-mommy, it's the symbolic, the law, the arrival of culture, it's the effect of the signifier, it's the finitude of the subject, it has the 'lack-to-be which is life.' And if it's not Oedipus, it will be castration, and the supposed death drives. Psychoanalysts teach infinite resignation, they are the last priests.[51]

Much has been written in recent years about the relationship among Deleuze, Guattari, and Lacan. On the one hand, authors such as Slavoj Žižek, Alain Badiou, and Tim Dean have attempted to recuperate Deleuze as a "Lacanian" thinker.[52] Others such as Didier Eribon have focused on Deleuze's *Anti-Oedipus* as the paradigmatic anti-psychoanalytic text to which

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49. Ibid., 53.

50. Ibid., 83.

51. Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Columbia University Press, 1987), 82.

52. Alain Badiou, *Deleuze: La clameur de l'être* (Hachette, 1997); Tim Dean, *Beyond Sexuality* (University of Chicago Press, 2000); Slavoj Žižek, *Organs without Bodies: Deleuze and Consequences* (Routledge, 2004). For an interesting critique of Žižek's book, see Daniel W. Smith, "The Inverse Side of the Structure: Žižek on Deleuze on Lacan," *Criticism* 46, no. 4 (2004).

we can return for today's critique of psychoanalysis.[53] What is indisputable in any case, judging from Deleuze and Guattari's correspondence, from their subsequent interviews, and especially from Guattari's diaries from the *Anti-Oedipus* period (published under the title *The Anti-Oedipus Papers*), is that Lacan was a fundamental interlocutor—if not the main one—for both authors. In August 1971, for example, Guattari recorded the following dream:

> Another dream about Lacan! This is insane! I can hear them, from here, saying: "badly eliminated transference," etc. In a sense, it's true if transference is Oedipal reterritorialization artificially woven onto the space of the couch. I have Oedipal rot sticking to my skin. Not passively, but with all the will to power of the death drive. The more I become disengaged—the more I try to become disengaged—from twenty years of Lacano-Labordian comfort, the more this familialist carcass enfolds me secretly. I would rather admit anything else.[54]

According to Guattari, Lacan was curious about the production of *Anti-Oedipus,* and he had attempted to get a hold of a manuscript from both Deleuze and Guattari before its publication. When Guattari was asked about his book, he answered, "I told him that I still consider myself to be a front-line Lacanian, but I've chosen to scout out areas that have not been explored much, instead of trailing in the wake . . ."[55] Guattari also recounts in detail a dinner with Lacan on October 6, 1971, which began with Lacan asking him to explain schizoanalysis: " 'So what is schizo-analysis?' The beginning of the meeting was very hard. I messed up a reference to a sacred Lacanian formula, and tried to redeem myself as well as I could. Unbelievable authoritarianism with the maître d'. I was hot and not very hungry. I laid it all out. The *'a'* is a desiring machine; deterritorialization, history. I expounded on everything that I could think of in anthropology and political economy." And while Guattari spent the entire evening trying to convince Lacan that he remained deeply committed to psychoanalysis, he observed, "It's too late! Something had already been broken. Maybe things had always been broken between the two of us. But also, has he ever accessed anyone, has he ever talked to anyone? I wonder! He sets himself up as a despotic signifier. Hasn't he condemned himself to this kind of solitude with no respite?"[56] Similarly, a few

53. Didier Eribon, *Echapper à la psychanalyse* (Léo Scheer, 2005).

54. Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus Papers,* 305 (translation modified).

55. Ibid., 343.

56. Ibid., 344.

months later, Guattari recounted a conversation with Jean Oury to whom he confessed, "Conflict with Lacan can be avoided. It will depend on his attitude. There's no turning back now. At first, there was no hostility toward Lacanism. It was the logic of our development that led us to emphasize the dangers of an a-historic interpretation of the signifier that promotes a dualist subjectivity and an unconscious level of representation."[57]

Psychoanalysis, Deleuze and Guattari conclude, is not responsible for inventing the Oedipus complex or for repressing desire. Society itself is. Psychoanalysis, however, legitimizes and encourages this process of repression. It seeks, in other words, to preserve the status quo and to block the production of progressive artistic or political productions:

> No, psychoanalysts invent nothing, though they have invented much in another way, and have legislated a lot, reinforced a lot, injected a lot. All that psychoanalysts do is to reinforce the movement; they add a last burst of energy to the displacement of the entire unconscious. What they do is merely to make the unconscious speak according to the transcendent uses of synthesis imposed on it by other forces: Global Persons, the Complete Object, the Great Phallus, the Terrible Undifferentiated of the Imaginary, Symbolic Differentiations, Segregations. What psychoanalysts invent is only the transference, a transference Oedipus, a consulting-room Oedipus of Oedipus, especially noxious and virulent, but where the subject finally has what he wants, and sucks away at his Oedipus on the full body of the analyst. And that's already too much.[58]

And, finally,

> The Oedipal uses of synthesis, Oedipalization, triangulation, castration, all refer to forces a bit more powerful, a bit more subterranean, than the family, than ideology, even joined together. There we have all the forces of social production, reproduction, and repression. This can be explained by the simple truth that very powerful forces are required to defeat the forces of desire, lead them to resignation, and substitute everywhere reactions of the daddy-mommy type for what is essentially active, aggressive, artistic, productive, and triumphant in the unconscious itself.[59]

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57. Ibid., 349.

58. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus,* 121.

59. Ibid., 122.

According to Deleuze and Guattari, the main goal of their project was not to dismiss psychoanalysis per se: "We refuse to play 'take it or leave it,' under the pretext that theory justifies practice, or that one cannot challenge the process of 'cure' except by starting from elements drawn from this very cure."[60] Rather, it was to bring to light its complicity with authoritarian and normalizing structures of power. Thus, they argue, "psychoanalysis cannot become a rigorous discipline unless it accepts putting belief in parenthesis, which is to say a materialist reduction of Oedipus as an ideological form."[61] This is precisely what *schizoanalysis* hoped to achieve. "The psychoanalyst," Deleuze and Guattari tell us, "reterritorializes on the couch, in the representation of Oedipus and castration. Schizoanalysis on the contrary must disengage the deterritorialized flows of desire, in the molecular elements of desiring-production."[62] In this context, "the schizoanalytic argument is simple: desire is a machine, a synthesis of machines, a machinic arrangement—desiring machines. The order of desire is the order of production; all production is at once desiring-production and social production."[63]

Although schizoanalysis is never defined much more explicitly than this, one could argue that in clinical terms it would probably look like the kind of work undertaken at institutions such as Saint-Alban or La Borde. Because one of the main premises of *Anti-Oedipus* is that the psychic and the social are always mutually dependent, schizoanalysis is not only a psychic procedure, it is also a political gesture seeking to bring about real and profound social change, revolutionary change. It is in this sense that Deleuze and Guattari call desire revolutionary because the proliferation of what they call "uncoded desire" would necessarily bring down the established social order. Thus, when Deleuze and Guattari write that "in certain respects it is correct to question all social formations starting from Oedipus,"[64] it is not because the Oedipal structure reveals the "truth" of the unconscious, but rather because it is intimately tied to capitalism and because capitalism, in a Marxist vision, is universal. It is in this sense and in this sense only that Deleuze and Guattari argue that Oedipus is indeed universal: "In reality, it is universal because it is the displacement of the limit that haunts all societies, the displaced represented [*le représenté déplacé*] that disfigures what all societies

60. Ibid., 117.

61. Ibid., 107.

62. Ibid., 314.

63. Ibid., 296.

64. Ibid., 175.

dread absolutely as their most profound negative: namely, the decoded flows of desire."[65]

Any leftist political program must thus be rooted in a critique of the structuralist social contract, of the Oedipal model in its symbolic and structural configuration: "the family has become the locus of retention and resonance of all social determinations. It falls to the reactionary investment of the capitalist field to apply all the social images to the simulacra of the restricted family, with the result that, wherever one turns, one no longer finds anything but father-mother—this Oedipal filth that sticks to our skin."[66] Or again: "In the territorial or even despotic machine, social economic reproduction is never independent of human reproduction, of the social form of this reproduction . . . The reproduction process is not directly economic, but passes by way of the noneconomic factors of kinship."[67] Ultimately, *Anti-Oedipus* suggests, the critique of Oedipus is the prerequisite to any critique of capitalism, of society, of organized exchanges. Oedipus, the authors claim, "is always colonization pursued by other means, it is the interior colony, and . . . where we Europeans are concerned, it is our intimate colonial education."[68] In order to shed this "colonial yoke," to end the "colonization of everyday life," it is not so much the conditions of *production* that must be destroyed as the means of *reproduction*—that is to say, the family, or more precisely familialism in its current form.

Luce Irigaray's Feminine Symbolic

In January 1975, Deleuze along with Jean-François Lyotard published a letter in the important journal *Les Temps Modernes* protesting the sudden dismissal of seven faculty members of the psychoanalysis department at the University of Vincennes. Comparing this move to the "Stalinist purges," Deleuze and Lyotard accused the École freudienne, and Lacan more directly, of "intellectual and emotional terrorism" and of "unconscious-washing . . . no less authoritarian and frightening than brainwashing." "The question," they claimed, "is not one of doctrine but concerns the organization of

65. Ibid., 177.

66. Ibid., 269.

67. Ibid., 262.

68. Ibid., 170. Deleuze and Guattari refer to Oedipus as "our intimate colonial formation that corresponds to the form of social sovereignty. We are all little colonies and it is Oedipus that colonizes us" (265).

power." And, referring to Lacan, they added, "It is the first time a private individual of any stature has granted himself the right to intervene in a university in a sovereign manner in order to carry out, or have carried out, a reorganization involving dismissals and nominations of teaching personnel."[69] Among the different academic divisions at Vincennes, the Department of Psychoanalysis occupied a privileged position. It had gathered some of the most famous French psychoanalysts of the time (including Michèle Montrelay, Jean Clavreul, Michel de Certeau, and Jacques-Alain Miller). Furthermore, for the first time, psychoanalysis was officially recognized by the university and was able to grant students diplomas and operate as an autonomous academic discipline.

Although Lacan had always voiced his resistance to grounding psychoanalysis in an academic setting, he had originally supported the Vincennes experiment. In January 1969, he appointed his friend and colleague Serge Leclaire as chair of the psychoanalysis department. By the end of that same year, Leclaire's Vincennes seminar, which dealt with issues such as the paternal function, incest, and the relation between psychoanalysis and other disciplines (and which was eventually published under the title *Œdipe à Vincennes*), had been transcribed by one of his students and published without the authorization of the École freudienne. This strongly displeased Lacan. Also in 1969, Lacan was relieved of his teaching position at the École normale supérieure. In the course of his seminar that year, he developed his famous "four discourses," which included the "discourse of the master" and the "discourse of the university." In addition, Lacan criticized the traditional university structure, Vincennes's free-flowing *unités de valeur,* and his Maoist students who were, he believed, desperately seeking a master and a totalizing system of knowledge.[70] Vincennes appeared to have failed to live up to Lacan's expectations, and Lacan made his position increasingly clear between 1969 and 1974. More and more apprehensive about Leclaire's role, Lacan eventually persuaded him to resign, leave his post to Jean Clavreul, and transfer more power to his son-in-law Jacques-Alain Miller.

Between October and November 1974, seven of the Vincennes faculty members—five of whom were women—were inexplicably fired from their

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69. Letter republished in Deleuze, *Desert Islands,* 61–62. For more details on the dismissal, see the article by M. Nguyen in the same issue of *Temps Modernes,* no. 342, January 1975, 858–61. See also Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze,* 412–13; Roudinesco, *La bataille de cent ans,* 2:560.

70. See Jacques Lacan, *L'envers de la psychanalyse: Le séminaire, Livre XVII, 1969–1970* (Seuil, 1991). For the details of the Vincennes crisis, see Elisabeth Roudinesco's preface to Serge Leclaire, *Œdipe à Vincennes: Séminaire 69* (Fayard, 1999), 7–15.

teaching positions. The list included Luce Irigaray, who in October 1974 had just published a major work, *Speculum of the Other Woman,* in which she conducted a forceful critique of Freud's writings on women, femininity, and sexual difference.[71] Between 1973 and 1976, Irigaray sharpened this critique in a series of essays appearing in various academic journals, which were eventually grouped in 1977 under the title *This Sex Which Is Not One*. Before the publication of *Speculum,* however, Irigaray's work and career could hardly be described as "heretical" in relation to Lacanian psychoanalysis. Trained in linguistics, philosophy, and psychoanalysis, Irigaray had worked at the Hôpital Sainte-Anne, the same institution where Lacan had begun his career. She underwent analysis with Serge Leclaire, attended Lacan's seminar at the École normale supérieure, and belonged to the École freudienne (from which she was eventually expelled). Her first book, *Le langage des déments,* challenged the misconception that schizophrenic discourse was not subject to any linguistic rules or structures. Drawing on her double background in linguistics and psychoanalysis, Irigaray brought to light a particular logic and set of formal features that she referred to as a "demential grammar."[72]

In both *Speculum of the Other Woman* and *This Sex Which Is Not One,* Irigaray's relationship to Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis is complex, ambivalent, and in certain ways comparable to Deleuze and Guattari's. While the main goal of *Anti-Oedipus* was to critique the symbolic order as the ultimate repressive version of Freud's Oedipus complex, Deleuze and Guattari never denied the *existence* of this symbolic order, or of the two other terms of the Lacanian triad, the imaginary and the real. On the contrary, their focus and privileging of the real and the schizophrenic testify the extent to which both authors continued to operate within a certain

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71. Irigaray later referred to her expulsion from Vincennes as an attempt to "quarantine her from the analytic world." In Elaine Hoffman Baruch and Lucienne J. Serrano, eds., *Women Analyze Women: In France, England, and the United States* (New York University Press, 1988), 163–64. See also Alice Jardine and Anne M. Menke, eds., *Shifting Scenes: Interviews on Women, Writing, and Politics in Post-68 France* (Columbia University Press, 1991), 98; Stuart Schneiderman, *Jacques Lacan: The Death of an Intellectual Hero* (Harvard University Press, 1983), 42–43. Luce Irigaray reproduced her teaching proposal for the 1975 spring term at Vincennes: "A commission of three members named by Jacques Lacan wrote me without further explanation that my proposal 'could not be accepted.'" It turns out, Irigaray tells us, that this proposal concerned the figure of Antigone in the work of Sophocles, Hölderlin, Hegel, and Brecht, and more specifically Antigone's attempt to confront "the law." In Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One,* trans. Catherine Porter (Cornell University Press, 1985), 167. It is interesting to notice how Judith Butler, years later, also focused on the figure of Antigone to explore the problem of kinship in psychoanalysis and the possibility of constructing an alternative to the Oedipal economy; *Antigone's Claim: Kinship between Life and Death* (Columbia University Press, 2000).

72. Luce Irigaray, *Le langage des déments* (Mouton, 1973).

psychoanalytic paradigm.[73] Similarly, I would argue, Irigaray's critique of the social order envisioned by Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis—of the structuralist social contract more specifically—is one articulated "from the inside." In that sense, Irigaray's relation to Freud differs from other feminist critics such as Simone de Beauvoir in significant ways. Irigaray might have agreed with certain elements of Beauvoir's critique, in particular with the objection to Freud's reliance on a transcendent, deterministic, and male-centered model to study women and the consequent interpretation of women as "lacking" and their role as "objects" within the male economy of exchange. Yet she would never subscribe to Beauvoir's existentialist philosophy with its stress on consciousness, choice, and freedom.

According to Irigaray, one of the major impediments of psychoanalysis is that "female sexuality has always been conceptualized on the basis of masculine parameters."[74] In biological terms, Freud describes the woman's clitoris as a "small penis," which, in psychic terms, leads him to define femininity entirely in relation to masculinity: "[Female] sexuality is never defined with respect to any sex but the masculine. Freud does not see two sexes whose differences are articulated in the act of intercourse, and more generally speaking, in the imaginary and symbolic processes that regulate the workings of a society and a culture. The 'feminine' is always described in terms of deficiency or atrophy, as the other side of the sex that alone holds a monopoly on value: the male sex."[75] Thus, Irigaray argues, for Freud " 'sexual difference' is a derivation of the problematics of sameness, it is, now and forever, determined within the project, the projection, the sphere of representation, of the same."[76] Moreover, although Freud's ambition was to absolutely distinguish the psychic from the biological and the social, his notions of sexuality remain, in Irigaray's eyes, linked to reproduction: "The anatomical references Freud uses to justify the development of sexuality are almost all tied . . . to the issue of reproduction."[77]

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73. For a comparison of Deleuze and Irigaray and their "stated desire to move beyond Lacanianism," see Rosi Braidotti, "Of Bugs and Women: Irigaray and Deleuze on the Becoming-Woman," in Carolyn Burke, Naomi Schor, and Margaret Whitford, eds., *Engaging with Irigaray: Feminist Philosophy and Modern European Thought* (Columbia University Press, 1994), 111–37.

74. Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One,* 23.

75. Ibid., 69.

76. Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman,* trans. Gillian G. Gill (Cornell University Press, 1985), 26.

77. Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One,* 71.

Freud was Irigaray's primary target in *Speculum,* but by the time *This Sex Which Is Not One* appeared she was taking on Lacan with the same vigor. In an essay entitled "Così Fan Tutti" (a play on the Mozart title that replaced the feminine plural *tutte* with the masculine plural *tutti*), Irigaray focused on Lacan's 1972–1973 seminar *Encore,* which centered on the problem of femininity.[78] Sexual difference, as Lacan famously argued, did not concern anatomical difference but rather one's position vis-à-vis the phallus. By shifting the focus from the body to language, Lacan, according to Irigaray, hoped to present us with the "truth of the truth about female sexuality."[79] Ultimately, however, women could never be *subjects* within the "phallic circulation," only "others," powerless and yet necessary.

Language, according to Irigaray, is the symptom of the woman's psychic structural frustration, which leaves her to function "as a hole" in the elaboration of imaginary and symbolic processes:

> But this fault, this deficiency, this "hole," inevitably affords women too few figurations, images, or representations by which to represent herself. It is not that she lacks some "master signifier" or that none is imposed upon her, but rather that access to a signifying economy, to the coining of signifiers, is difficult, even impossible for her because she remains an outsider, herself (a) subject to their norms. She borrows signifiers but cannot make her mark, or re-mark upon them. Which all surely keeps her deficient, empty, lacking, in a way that could be labeled "psychotic": a latent but not actual psychosis, for want of a practical signifying system.[80]

Within this order, which Irigaray deems "phallogocentric," hysteria is all that the woman has left. When the hysteric speaks, she is only retransmitting the language that she has been taught within the family, the school, and society.[81] Psychoanalysis in this context is not responsible for women's oppression—

78. For a wonderful reading of the mimetic relation between Irigaray and Lacan in "Cosi Fan Tutti," see Elizabeth Weed, "The Question of Style," in Burke, Schor, and Whitford, *Engaging with Irigaray,* 79–109.

79. Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One,* 87.

80. Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman,* 71.

81. Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One,* 136. "Phallogocentric" is a neologism based on Derrida's concept of "logocentrism" (itself derived from ethnocentrism), which Derrida used to describe the metaphysical investment of having writing "represent" speech, thus conveying some sort of truth, and from "phallocentric" in relation to the Lacanian phallus, the universal signifier.

society and, more precisely, the structures of power, are. Nevertheless, Irigaray blames psychoanalysis for being complicit with this normative social model: "Psychoanalysis, unfortunately, does not bring, or no longer brings, the 'plague,' but it conforms too closely to a social order."[82]

One modality of this complicity is psychoanalysis's refusal to question its own historical positions and limitations. As Irigaray puts it, directly quoting Lacan, "Psychoanalytic theory thus utters the truth about the status of female sexuality, and about the sexual relation. But it stops there. Refusing to interpret the historical determinants of its discourse—'. . . that thing I detest for the best of reasons, that is, History'—and in particular what is implied by the up to now exclusively masculine sexualization of the application of its laws, it remains caught up in phallocentrism, which it claims to make into a universal and eternal value."[83] Or again:

> The insufficient questioning of historical determinations is part and parcel, obviously, of political and material history. So long as psychoanalysis does not interpret its entrapment within a certain type of regime of property, within a certain type of discourse (to simplify, let us say that of metaphysics), within a certain type of religious mythology, it cannot raise the question of female sexuality. This latter cannot in fact be reduced to one among other isolated questions within the theoretical and practical field of psychoanalysis; rather, it requires the interpretation of the cultural capital and the general economy underlying that field.[84]

"Metaphysical," we will remember, was also the adjective used by Deleuze and Guattari to describe psychoanalysis. In fact, Irigaray also compares Freud to Kant for relying on transcendental hypotheses.[85] In this context, Irigaray calls psychoanalysis a "negative theology"[86] based on a notion of desire as lack, but also as trapped in idealism, particularly with the concept of the phallus.[87] Given this framework, the point is not to reject psychoanalysis as a whole: this would be the "anti-analyst" position, which would simply

82. Ibid., 146.

83. Ibid., 102–3.

84. Ibid., 125.

85. On Kant, see Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman,* 44. On Freud's metaphysical a priori, see Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, 73, 123.

86. Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, 89.

87. Ibid., 110.

reverse the terms of the debate without fundamentally changing them. Instead, Irigaray describes her mission as follows: "I am trying to interpret the traditional operation of the analytic institution starting from what it fails to grasp of female sexuality, and from the masculine homosexual ideology that subtends it. And in particular from its relation to power."[88] In this context, "homosexual" does not refer to the sexual orientation but rather is to be taken literally as "of the same sex." As we will see, Irigaray's political position will be based on *difference* as opposed to this *sameness.*[89]

As for Deleuze and Guattari, Irigaray's primary objection to the symbolic order is that it introduces a particular social order. For Irigaray, it is one defined by men's exchange of women.[90] Irigaray juxtaposes structuralist anthropology (in particular, Lévi-Strauss's *Elementary Structures*) to structuralist psychoanalysis to argue:

> The society we know, our own culture, is based upon the exchange of women. Without the exchange of women, we are told, we would fall back into the anarchy (?) of the natural world, the randomness (?) of the animal kingdom. The passage into the social order, into the symbolic order, into order as such, is assured by the fact that men, or groups of men, circulate women among themselves, according to a rule known as the incest taboo. Whatever familial form this prohibition may take in a given state of society, its signification has a much broader impact. It assures the foundation of the economic, social, and cultural order that has been ours for centuries.[91]

Within this model of exchange, women can only be commodities (the recurring term is *marchandises*), with use-values and exchange-values for men.[92] Moreover, "the use, consumption, and circulation of their sexualized bodies underwrite the organization and the reproduction of the social order, in which they never have taken part as 'subjects.'"[93] As fetish-objects "in ex-

88. Ibid., 145.

89. For an interesting analysis of Irigaray's use of the hetero and homo, see Elizabeth Grosz, "The Hetero and the Homo: The Sexual Ethics of Luce Irigaray," in Burke, Schor, and Whitford, *Engaging with Irigaray,* 335–50.

90. Gayle Rubin came to remarkably similar conclusions in "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna R. Reiter (Monthly Review Press, 1975).

91. Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One,* 170.

92. Ibid., 31.

93. Ibid., 84.

changes, [women] are the manifestation and the circulation of a power of the Phallus, establishing relationships of men with each other."[94] In this system, described by Irigaray as a "socio-cultural endogamy," women can never actually participate in the exchange, and yet they remain necessary for the exchange to take place: it "forbid[s] commerce with women. Men make commerce of them, but they do not enter into any exchanges with them."[95] Within this structuralist social contract, women can only occupy certain prototypical social roles, just as psychoanalysis limits them to certain prototypical psychic structures, in the case of the hysteric, for example. Thus, the mother, protected by the incest taboo, exists only to guarantee the reproduction of the system, to preserve the social order without intervening or changing it. Conversely, the virgin serves as pure exchange value, while the prostitute is "tolerated" as "usage that is exchanged."[96]

According to Irigaray, psychoanalysis relies on the family to ascribe particular psychic traits through the Oedipus complex. Similarly, the social/economic order needs the family to perpetuate its existence: "the family has always been the privileged locus of women's exploitation . . . In the patriarchal family, man is the proprietor of woman and children. Not to recognize this is to deny all historical determinism."[97] Within this framework, Irigaray describes heterosexuality as "nothing but the assignment of economic roles: there are producer subjects and agents of exchange (male) on the one hand, productive earth and commodities (female) on the other." Although this model is *homosexual* in the sense that it is run and established by men and for men only, it necessitates heterosexuality. Moreover, it requires the explicit condemnation of homosexuality "because the 'incest' involved in homosexuality has to remain in the realm of pretense." Indeed, Irigaray suggests that real homosexual relations (as in same-sex sexual acts)

> openly interpret the law according to which society operates, they threaten in fact to shift the horizon of that law. Besides, they challenge the nature, status, and "exogamic" necessity of the product of exchange. By short-circuiting the mechanisms of commerce, might they also expose what is really at stake? Furthermore, they might lower the sublime value of the standard, the yardstick. Once the penis itself becomes merely a means to pleasure, pleasure among men, the phallus

94. Ibid., 183.

95. Ibid., 172.

96. Ibid., 186.

97. Ibid., 142.

> loses its power. Sexual pleasure, we are told, is best left to those creatures who are ill-suited for the seriousness of symbolic rules, namely women. Exchanges and relationships, always among men, would thus be required and forbidden by law.[98]

Given these restrictions, what can women do? As Irigaray asks, "What can be said of a feminine sexuality 'other' than the one prescribed in, and by, phallocratism? How can its language be recovered, or invented? How, for women, can the question of their sexual exploitation be articulated with the question of their social exploitation? What position can women take, today, with respect to politics?"[99] On these questions, Irigaray is perhaps clearest on one point: the kind of political action she is advocating cannot be constructed as a simple reversal of the existing order, one modeled along the same political and philosophical presuppositions. In that sense, it seems particularly surprising that so many of Irigaray's readers—especially those coming from materialist feminism—have accused her of essentialism given that her project wants to achieve precisely the opposite effect. By undermining the *two* terms of the woman-man binary and by refusing to simply reverse the terms of the equation (or of the inequality), Irigaray's procedure appears, if anything, closer to Derridian deconstruction than to essentialism or reverse-essentialism.[100]

Thus, Irigaray wonders, "It would be interesting to know what might become of psychoanalytic notions in a culture that did not repress the feminine. Since the recognition of a 'specific' female sexuality would challenge the monopoly on value held by the masculine sex alone, in the final analysis by the father, what meaning could the Oedipus complex have in a symbolic system other than patriarchy?" But answering her own question, she immediately asserts, "But that order is indeed the one that lays down the law today. To fail to recognize this would be as naïve as to let it continue to rule without questioning the conditions that make domination possible."[101] Similarly, she suggests that "what is important is to disconcert the staging of representation according to *exclusively* 'masculine' parameters, that is,

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98. Ibid., 192–93.

99. Ibid., 119.

100. For an analysis of the debate surrounding Irigaray's "essentialism," see Naomi Schor, "The Essentialism Which Is Not One," and Margaret Whitford, "Reading Irigaray in the Nineties," in Burke, Schor, and Whitford, *Engaging with Irigaray*. See also Diana Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference* (Routledge, 1989), chap. 4.

101. Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One,* 73.

according to a phallocratic order. It is not a matter of toppling that order so as to replace it—that amounts to the same thing in the end—but of disrupting and modifying it, starting from an 'outside' that is exempt, in part from phallocratic law."[102] Or, to give one last example,

> It clearly cannot be a matter of substituting feminine power for masculine power. Because this reversal would still be caught up in the economy of the same, in the same economy—in which, of course, what I am trying to designate as "feminine" would not emerge. There would be a phallic "seizure of power." Which, moreover, seems impossible: women may 'dream' of it, it may sometimes be accomplished marginally, in limited groups, but for society as a whole, such a substitution of power, such a reversal of power, is impossible.[103]

Irigaray's caution against a form of politics premised on the reversal of phallocratic order explains her ambivalence toward feminism as an organized political movement, and more specifically toward the Mouvement de libération des femmes (MLF). According to Irigaray, organized feminist movements have accomplished a number of things:

> liberalized contraception, abortion, and so on. These gains make it possible to raise again, differently, the question of what the social status of women might be—in particular through its differentiation from a simple reproductive-maternal function. But these contributions may always just as easily be turned against women. In other words, we cannot yet speak, in this connection, of a feminine politics, but only of certain conditions under which it may be possible. The first being an end to silence concerning the exploitation experienced by women: the systematic refusal to 'keep quiet' practiced by the liberation movements.[104]

Her fear, however, is that by focusing on "equality," feminist movements will simply struggle for women to have the same opportunities as men in the *public* sphere, without questioning and transforming the *private*—the subjective and the sexual. For Irigaray, demands for civil rights are "certainly indispensable stages in the escape from their proletarization on the exchange market. But if their aim were simply to reverse the order of things, even supposing this to be possible, history would repeat itself in the long run, would

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102. Ibid., 68 (emphasis in original).

103. Ibid., 130.

104. Ibid., 128.

revert to sameness: to phallocratism. It would leave room neither for women's sexuality, nor for women's imaginary, nor for women's language to take (their) place."[105] Similarly, she writes:

> when women's movements challenge the forms and nature of political life, the contemporary play of powers and power relations, they are in fact working toward a modification of women's status. On the other hand, when these same movements aim simply for a change in the distribution of power, leaving intact the power structure itself, then they are resubjecting themselves, deliberately or not, to a phallocratic order. This latter gesture must of course be denounced, and with determination, since it may constitute a more subtly concealed exploitation of women. Indeed, that gesture plays on a certain naiveté that suggests one need only be a woman to remain outside the phallic order.[106]

The MLF should thus not renounce its demands for equality in the sphere of civil rights. But it should also reflect on how to articulate "the double demand—for equality and difference."[107]

Irigaray's insistence on the interdependence of the political/social and the subjective/psychic makes sense in light of her extensive discussion of the symbolic order, which, as I have suggested, serves to structure the subjective, the sexual, and the social, all at once. Thus, the MLF has focused on transforming the social, but Irigaray wants to imagine other strategies to rethink the other two terms of the triad, the sexual and the subjective. It is in this context that she preaches masturbation—or "self-affection"—as a way to sidestep the male-centered phallic model of sexuality. Because self-affection falls *outside* the Oedipal economy, it is not surprising that psychoanalysis and society have taken such an interest in repressing the practice: "No effort is spared to prevent this touching, to prevent her from touching herself: the valorization of the masculine sex alone, the reign of the phallus and its logic of meaning and its system of representation, these are just some of the ways women's sex is cut off from itself and woman is deprived of her 'self-affection.' "[108]

Irigaray's reliance on psychoanalysis, and more specifically on Lacanian psychoanalysis, is evident in her attention to language, which, as we have

105. Ibid., 33.

106. Ibid., 81.

107. Ibid.

108. Ibid., 133.

seen, is intimately tied to the symbolic. Language would provide a new system of representation for women: "In order to prevent the other—not the inversed *alter ego* of the 'masculine' subject or *its* complement, or *its* supplement, but that other, woman—from being caught up again in systems of representation whose goal of teleology is to reduce her within the same, it is of course necessary to interpret *any process of reversal, of overturning,* also as an *attempt to duplicate the exclusion of what exceeds representation*: the other, woman."[109] Irigaray calls this new system of representation of the feminine the *parler-femme,* or "speaking (as) woman," which, as Irigaray's English translators tell us, "would try to disrupt or alter the syntax of discursive logic, based on the requirements of univocity and masculine sameness, in order to express the plurality and mutuality of feminine difference and mime the relations of 'self-affection.'"[110] The last essay in *This Sex Which Is Not One,* "When Our Lips Speak Together," seeks precisely to put this *parler-femme* into application, with lips referring to both the sexual organ and the medium for language:

> If we don't invent a language, if we don't find our body's language, it will have too few gestures to accompany our story. We shall tire of the same ones, and leave our desires unexpressed, unrealized. Asleep again, unsatisfied, we shall fall back upon the words of men—who, for their part, have "known" for a long time. But *not our body.* Seduced, attracted, fascinated, ecstatic with our becoming, we shall remain paralyzed. Deprived of *our movements.* Rigid, whereas we are made for endless change. Without leaps or falls, and without repetitions.[111]

Anti-Oedipal Lifestyles: Psych et Po and the FHAR

For Deleuze, Guattari, and Irigaray, the critique of the structuralist symbolic was not simply a philosophical enterprise. Because kinship was intimately tied to the social and the individual, any revolutionary program required a revolution in kinship, a transformation of sexuality and "lifestyle." During the 1960s and 1970s, two groups attempted to "apply" the anti-Oedipal theories of Deleuze, Guattari, and Irigaray. The first was a branch of the women's movement calling itself Psychanalyse et politique, which

109. Ibid., 156 (emphasis in original).

110. Ibid., 222 (emphasis in original).

111. Ibid., 214.

became known as Psych et Po. The second was the Front homosexuel d'action révolutionnaire (FHAR), led by the charismatic figure of Guy Hocquenghem.

Psych et Po began as a consciousness-raising group for women founded in the aftermath of May '68. The group met on Friday evenings at the home of Antoinette Fouque, who is often considered the leader of the movement. Fouque, a professor of literature writing a doctoral thesis with Roland Barthes, had worked as an editor at the Éditions du Seuil throughout the sixties. In particular, she had assisted François Wahl, Lacan's editor, in the laborious publication of the *Écrits.* Fouque's encounter with psychoanalysis, and more specifically with Lacan, was decisive. She attended his seminars on a regular basis and eventually decided to undergo analysis with Lacan himself from 1969 to 1974.[112] In 1970, she was asked to give a seminar at Vincennes where Psych et Po drew large crowds and became a social movement of its own. Fouque's Friday meetings were conceived as an extension of her theoretical work.

According to Fouque, Psych et Po grew out of a double disillusionment: with Marxism on the one hand, and with the kind of materialist feminism inspired by Simone de Beauvoir which guided much of the MLF on the other. As Fouque puts it, "nothing really suited us" in the doctrines of Marx, Engels, and Lenin: "We were eager to free ourselves from the constraints of our domestic, professional, and emotional lives. We wanted to expand the field of our subjectivity. We wanted to throw ourselves into the discovery of women through the discovery of each other, starting with ourselves. We were launched in Marxist-Leninist-Maoist causes but we swam against the current."[113] Moreover, Fouque continues, "I was hoping to understand what was unconscious in our political commitments. I wanted to bring out the power of psychoanalysis, not only in institutions and schools, but in the discovery of the unconscious and its theorization. To me, it seemed vital that one of us knew and questioned the other, and vice versa. In short, the unconscious existed in the political and the political in the unconscious."[114]

Psychoanalysis thus offered a double possibility, at the level of the subjective and of the political. The Friday meetings were structured like a group therapy session presided over by Fouque, in which the women would explore

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112. See Antoinette Fouque, *Il y a deux sexes: Essais de féminologie* (Gallimard, 2004), 26–27. Elisabeth Roudinesco claims that Fouque's analyst was Irigaray, but this seems contradicted by Fouque's own account. See Roudinesco, *La bataille de cent ans,* 2:525.

113. Fouque, *Il y a deux sexes,* 32.

114. Ibid., 33.

their fears, their fantasies, and their internalized misogyny. The goal was to reach a certain "erotic independence," to unearth the specificity of a feminine unconscious.[115] But psychoanalysis was not just a tool for self-exploration: it was considered, as thinkers such as Irigaray had suggested, the best mechanism to examine and understand the social and the political. As Psych et Po described itself in a 1972 issue of the feminist newspaper *Le Torchon Brûle,* its purpose was to analyze "our contradictions . . . the work we do using ourselves, our bodies, our unconscious, our sexuality as the starting point, always trying to link subjectivity to history and the political to the sexual."[116] Because "women's power is not legal, patriarchal, sadistic, pederastic, it is not concerned with representation, with leadership, with names, with rape, repression, hatred, avarice, knowledge, order, individualism, with abstractions. It is a non-power of the matrix, of birthings, giving, chaos, differences, of collective freedoms, of openings, of bodies, of recognitions, of lifting censorships, of pleasure, outside the law, it is a power-to, act-think-do, by/for all women, all."[117] The point of the movement was to think about equality and difference together, to place sexual difference as the "fourth principle" of society, alongside liberty, equality, and fraternity. All this was destined to trigger, in Fouque's words, a "revolution of the symbolic."[118]

Psych et Po left very few written traces, and by the 1980s its name was associated with many scandals and controversies that made it difficult to measure or adequately assess its legacy.[119] Yet if we consider Psych et Po in

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115. For an amusing account of these sessions, see Anne Tristan and Annie de Pisan, *Histoires du M.L.F.* (Calmann-Lévy, 1977), 90, and Françoise Picq, *Libération des femmes: Les années-mouvement* (Seuil, 1993), 127.

116. Cited in Claire Duchen, *Women's Rights and Women's Lives in France, 1944–1968* (Routledge, 1994), 32.

117. *Le Torchon Brûle,* cited ibid., 36 (translation modified).

118. Fouque, *Il y a deux sexes,* 53.

119. In 1979, for instance, Psych et Po registered the name Mouvement de libération des femmes as an official *association* with the MLF logo. Many of the MLF members, especially those who disapproved of Psych and Po's strategies, which they deemed obscure, sectlike, and elitist, were furious. They circulated a petition denouncing Psych et Po for attempting to "monopolize the women's liberation movement—either to capture it or to destroy it." For more on this, see Duchen, *Women's Rights,* 32–39, and the text by Nadja Ringart in *Chroniques d'une imposture: Du mouvement de libération des femmes à une marque commerciale* (Association mouvement pour les luttes féministes, 1981). Another scandal emerged when, after the death of Simone de Beauvoir, Fouque wrote an obituary in *Libération* hoping that Beauvoir's death would "accelerate the entry of women in the Twenty-First Century" and condemning Beauvoir's "intolerant universalism, heinously assimilationist, sterilizing, reductive of all others." In opposition, she called for the need to be open to "pluralism, to fecund differences which, as each of us knows, take their sources, are informed by, and begin,

light of Irigaray's theories, we can see how the "revolution of the symbolic" might lead to a kind of political action different from both the Marxism and existentialism that had dominated feminism at the time. Feminism, according to Psych et Po, needed to operate at a double level: on the subjective and on the social. Through psychoanalysis and consciousness-raising groups, women would be able to shed their Oedipal education. On a more collective level, the group launched a series of bookshops, magazines, and even a publishing company called the Édition des femmes, whose goal was precisely to enact the kind of *parler-femme* preached by Irigaray. Language, kinship, and society were intimately linked, and any true revolutionary action needed to "articulate history and the unconscious."[120]

The history of the Front homosexuel d'action révolutionnaire intersected with that of the MLF. Both were products of May '68, and both were born out of the generalized spirit of contestation and disenchantment with the traditional Marxist approach to questions of gender and sexuality. In May 1970, Antoinette Fouque, Monique Wittig, and other MLF feminists were booed by leftist students as they conducted their first official meeting at Vincennes. During the occupation of the Sorbonne in May 1968, a certain Comité d'action pédérastique révolutionnaire (CAPR) put up posters denouncing homophobia and celebrating sexual diversity—they were immediately taken down. On March 10, 1971, the famous radio "sex-therapist" Ménie Grégoire devoted one of her shows to "homosexuality, this painful problem." Several activists from the MLF who were interested in the idea of a "gay liberation" movement interrupted the show, screaming "It's not true, we are not suffering!" The FHAR was officially born that day. From 1971 to 1974, the same auditorium of the École des beaux-arts on the rue Bonaparte that had hosted the MLF meetings since 1968 became the formal headquarters of the FHAR gatherings. The members of both organizations interacted, several crossed over, and the FHAR joined the MLF in its first public march in the streets of Paris on November 20, 1971.

Prior to the creation of the FHAR, the only organization available to French homosexuals was Arcadie, a secretive association of self-described "homophiles" modeled on the Swiss Der Kreis, founded in 1954 by a philosophy teacher, André Baudry. Condemning effeminacy and promiscuity, Arcadie sought to promote a homosexual lifestyle inspired by the ancient

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with sexual difference"; cited in Catherine Rodgers, "Elle et Elle: Antoinette Fouque et Simone de Beauvoir," *Modern Language Notes* 115 (2000): 741.

120. Picq, *Libération des femmes,* 126.

Greeks. Above all, it sought to facilitate the normalization and integration of homosexuals in society.[121] Despite the visible discomfort of most left-wing groups around gay issues, a new form of activism was emerging in the seventies, inspired partly by the American examples of the civil rights movement, radical feminism, and the gay liberation movement that had been developing since the Stonewall protests in 1969. In 1970, the Maoist group Vive la révolution (VLR) reprinted in its journal *Tout* (the full title being *Tout: Ce Que Nous Voulons!* or "Everything: We Want!") a speech delivered by Huey Newton of the Black Panthers in support of the women's and gay liberation movements.[122] Less than a year after, *Tout* published another issue that featured a four-page article on homosexuality and included a manifesto entitled "We Are More Than 343 Sluts [*Salopes*]. We Have Been Buggered by Arabs. We Are Proud of It and We Will Do It Again."[123] Their intention was to parody the highly controversial manifesto published in *Le Nouvel Observateur* earlier that month signed by 343 women—many of whom were famous public figures such as Simone de Beauvoir, Catherine Deneuve, Jeanne Moreau, Gisèle Halimi—claiming that they had had an abortion.[124] The government banned that issue of *Tout* and managed to seize 10,000 copies. Jean-Paul Sartre, the great patron of the Left who was *Tout*'s nominal director of publication, was brought up on charges of obscenity (*outrage aux bonnes mœurs*).[125]

Among the principal contributors to this issue of *Tout* on homosexuality was Guy Hocquenghem, a 25-year-old writer, philosopher, and graduate of

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121. The best account of Arcadie's history is Julian Jackson, *Living in Arcadia: Homosexuality, Politics, and Morality in France from the Liberation to AIDS* (University of Chicago Press, 2009). There is also some scattered information on the group in Scott Gunther, *The Elastic Closet: A History of Homosexuality in France, 1942–Present* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Frédéric Martel, *Le rose et le noir: Les homosexuels en France depuis 1968* (Seuil, 1996); Janine Mossuz-Lavau, *Les lois de l'amour: Les politiques de la sexualité en France, 1950–2002* (Payot & Rivages, 2002).

122. For an analysis of how the different leftist groups of time reacted to the FHAR and for more on Hocquenghem, see Ron Haas, "Guy Hocquenghem and the Cultural Revolution in France after May 1968," in *After the Deluge: New Perspectives on the Intellectual and Cultural History of Postwar France,* ed. Julian Bourg (Lexington Books, 2004).

123. The centrality of race in this statement is of course significant given the memory of the Algerian war haunting France. For an excellent analysis of the complicated relations between race and sexuality during this period, see Todd Shepard, "'Something Notably Erotic': Politics, 'Arab Men,' and Sexual Revolution in Post-Decolonization France, 1962–1974," *Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 1 (2012).

124. See Mossuz-Lavau, *Les lois de l'amour,* 97–98. The magazine *Charlie-Hebdo* referred to the women as the 343 *salopes* or "sluts," the same term that the FHAR had used in *Tout*.

125. Haas, "Guy Hocquenghem," 190. See also Michael Moon's introduction to the English edition of Guy Hocquenghem, *Homosexual Desire* (Duke University Press, 1993).

the École normale supérieure, who was active in the VLR group. Before joining the Maoist association, Hocquenghem had belonged to a series of communist student organizations, to Trotskyite groups, and to various communes in the suburbs of Paris. He was also very active during the May '68 protests. Before entering the École normale supérieure, while he was at the prestigious Lycée Henri IV, Hocquenghem had been involved with his philosophy teacher, René Schérer, a close friend of Deleuze, Lyotard, and Foucault, who also taught at Vincennes. Schérer introduced Hocquenghem to some of the major philosophical figures of the time, including Deleuze and Guattari whose work made a profound impression on the young writer. During the FHAR meetings, Hocquenghem emerged as the sort of leader who could discern the theoretical underpinnings of the blooming gay liberation movement.[126] In January 1972, Hocquenghem gave a long interview to *Le Nouvel Observateur* for a special issue on "The Homosexual Revolution." Later that year, his most famous work *Le désir homosexuel* came out, only a few months after *Anti-Oedipus. Homosexual Desire* inaugurated the dialogue among Hocquenghem, Deleuze, and Guattari that was to continue for many years.[127]

From the introduction to *Homosexual Desire*, Hocquenghem's intellectual debt to *Anti-Oedipus* is evident. Because of society's fear of homosexuality, Hocquenghem writes, "homosexual desire is socially eliminated from childhood by means of a series of family and educational mechanisms."[128] To speak of a "homosexual desire" as such is meaningless, Hocquenghem tells us, because desire is not object-dependent; rather, it emerges as a multiple, uninterrupted, "unbroken and polyvocal flux."[129] Following Deleuze and Guattari on this understanding of desire, Hocquenghem argues that, since its inception, psychoanalysis has attempted to marginalize homosexuality, to shame it, to define it as a perversion, as narcissism, and ultimately to "Oedipalize it": "the Oedipus complex is the only effective means of controlling the libido. Stages need to be built, a pyramidal construction that will

126. For a peek at how these meetings were structured, see the documentary film by Carole Roussopolous on the FHAR from 1971, as well as Lionel Soukaz's 1979 *Raz d'Ep,* to which Hocquenghem contributed.

127. Deleuze, for instance, wrote the preface to Hocquenghem's 1974 book *L'après-mai des faunes,* translated into English in Deleuze, *Desert Islands,* 284–88. Hocquenghem also contributed to Guattari's journal *Recherches,* which in 1973 published an issue entitled "Three Million Perverts: The Great Encyclopedia of Homosexualities." Guattari was fined for this issue, as an *outrage aux bonnes mœurs.*

128. Hocquenghem, *Homosexual Desire,* 49.

129. Ibid., 50.

enclose homosexual desire within the three sides of the triangle."[130] Similarly, Hocquenghem writes, "in the eyes of the psychoanalytic institution, [desire] must exist only as lack, or absence. It must always signify something, always relate to an object which will then become meaningful within the Oedipal triangulation."[131]

And like Deleuze and Guattari, Hocquenghem is as critical of Lacan's structuralist paradigm as he is of Freud: "The world of Oedipal sexuality is deprived of a free plugging in of organs, of the relations of direct pleasure. There is just one organ—a purely sexual organ—at the center of the Oedipal triangulation, the 'One' which determines the position of the three elements of the triangle. This is the organ which constructs absence; it is the 'despotic signifier,' in relation to which the situations of the whole person are created."[132] Because of the direct connection between the sexual and the social as articulated in the structuralist social contract, Hocquenghem refers to his society as "phallocratic," "inasmuch as social relationships as a whole are constructed according to a hierarchy which reveals the transcendence of the great signifier. The schoolmaster, the general and the departmental manager are the father-phallus; everything is organized according to the pyramidal mode, by which the Oedipal signifier allocates various levels and identifications."[133]

In *Homosexual Desire*, Hocquenghem's argument is indeed premised on the connection between the sexual, the psychic, and the social, as articulated by Lévi-Strauss, Lacan, Deleuze, Guattari, and Irigaray. For Hocquenghem, since the primary modality of social relations at the time he is writing is capitalism, the Oedipus complex and capitalism are also intrinsically linked. In fact, capitalism uses the Oedipus complex to control minds, to master the means of *re*production: "Capitalist ideology's strongest weapon is its transformation of the Oedipus complex into a social characteristic, an internalization of oppression which is left free to develop, whatever the political conditions."[134] Within this "control of minds," the family, Hocquenghem argues, plays a crucial role:

> The place of the family is now less in the institutions and more in the mind. The family is the place where sexual pleasure is legal, though

130. Ibid., 79.

131. Ibid., 77.

132. Ibid., 95.

133. Ibid., 96.

134. Ibid., 93.

> no longer in the sense that everybody has to marry in order to take their pleasure within the law; far from putting an end to the exclusive function of reproductive heterosexuality, the actual dissolution by capitalism of the functions of the family has turned the family into the rule inhabiting every individual under free competition. This individual does not replace the family, he prolongs its farcical games. The decoding of the fluxes of pleasure is accompanied by their axiomatisation, just as the disappearance of the journeyman's apprenticeship and the discovery of labor as value go hand in hand with the private ownership of the means of production.[135]

As this passage suggests, "the mind" should be the primary fighting terrain for the Left as opposed to the "institutions" which is what Marxism has traditionally focused on: "It is no longer sufficient to analyze society in terms of a conflict between conscious groups united by their interests (the classes). We must also recognize the existence, besides conscious (political) investments, of unconscious libidinal investments which sometimes conflict with the former."[136]

The fight against the Oedipal domination of the minds is thus also a revolutionary fight for a new society. Hocquenghem, however, distances himself from the revolutionary politics informing most leftist movements in the seventies: the driving force for social change is no longer class struggle, but desire. In his later work, Hocquenghem describes his strategy as one not destined for revolution but for *volutions*: "We must give up the dream of reconciling the official spokesmen of revolution with the expression of desire . . . Revolutionary demands must be derived from the very movement of desire; it isn't only a new revolutionary model that is needed, but a new questioning of the content traditionally associated with the term 'revolution,' particularly the notion of the seizure of power."[137] Moreover, Hocquenghem tells us, "revolutionary tradition maintains a clear division between the public and the private. The special characteristic of the homosexual intervention is to make what is private—sexuality's shameful little secret—intervene in public, in social organization."[138] Unlike Hirshfeld's

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135. Ibid., 93–94.

136. Ibid., 72.

137. Ibid., 135. In his following work, *L'après-mai des faunes,* Hocquenghem explains that because revolutions can come so close to reactionary politics, "nous ne ferons plus en ré." In Guy Hocquenghem, *L'après-mai des faunes; volutions* (Grasset, 1974), 19.

138. Hocquenghem, *Homosexual Desire,* 136.

Scientific Humanitarian Committee in Germany or Arcadie, the kind of homosexual struggle that Hocquenghem advocates is one where it is "no longer a matter of justifying, or vindicating, or even attempting a better integration of homosexuality within society."[139] Rather, the point is to explode society, to radically rethink the very terms of sociality.

Hocquenghem's new "social contract" privileges the figure of the anus, which Hocquenghem opposes to the phallus and which he defines with examples from the writings of Georges Bataille and Daniel Paul Schreber. In Freud's work, Hocquenghem contends, "the anus has no social desiring function left, because all its functions have become excremental: that is to say chiefly private."[140] Similarly, he writes, "whereas the phallus is essentially social, the anus is essentially private. If phallic transcendence and the organization of society around the great signifier are to be possible, the anus must be privatized in individualized and Oedipalized persons."[141] Whereas the phallic stage serves as an "identity stage," the anus "ignores sexual difference."[142] In contrast to the anus, the phallus "guarantees a social role."[143] This, in some ways, is exactly what Lacan and Lévi-Strauss argue. It is in this sense that Hocquenghem advocates "savagery" as opposed to "civilization" and that he refers to the homosexual movement as fundamentally uncivilized: "Civilization forms the interpretive grid through which desire becomes cohesive energy."[144] Against these grids, these pyramidal structures, these hierarchies, Hocquenghem defends a headless movement, an "unavowable community" that in his terms would have "no real center, no representatives."[145] His group would be a subject rather than subjected:

> The group which is composed of individuals, the phallic and hierarchical group, is subjected; it obeys civilized institutions whose values it adopts because the individual feels weaker than the institution, and because the individual's tempo is circumscribed by death while the institutions are apparently immortal. In the subject group, the opposition between the collective and the individual is transcended; the subject group is stronger than death because the institutions appear to

139. Ibid., 133.

140. Ibid., 96.

141. Ibid.

142. Ibid., 102.

143. Ibid., 97.

144. Ibid., 137.

145. Ibid., 146.

it to be mortal. The homosexual subject group—circular and horizontal, annular and with no signifier—knows that civilization alone is mortal.[146]

Anti-Oedipal Ethics

In his preface to the English edition of *Anti-Oedipus,* Michel Foucault calls Deleuze and Guattari's work, "a book of ethics, the first book of ethics to be written in France in quite a long time."[147] *Anti-Oedipus,* Foucault suggests, despite its "extraordinary profusion of new notions and surprise concepts," should not be understood as a new "philosophy." It is not "a flashy Hegel." Rather, it should be read as an "art": "Questions are less concerned with why this or that than with how to proceed. How does one introduce desire into thought, into discourse, into action? How can and must desire deploy its forces within the political domain and grow more intense in the process of overturning the established order? *Ars erotica, ars theorica, ars politica*."[148] Comparing *Anti-Oedipus* to Saint Francis de Sales's *Introduction to the Devout Life,* Foucault argues that "being anti-Oedipal has become a life style, a way

146. Ibid., 147. We can mention in this context the similarities between Hocquenghem's work and recent contributions to queer theory that rely on psychoanalysis to advocate selflessness, sublimation, and a new form of queer relationality. I am thinking in particular of the works of Tim Dean (*Beyond Sexuality* and *Unlimited Intimacy*) and Leo Bersani (in particular *Homos* and *Intimacies*). In their recent works on barebacking, "bug chasing," and "gift giving" within the gay male community, both authors imagine a new form of gay identity outside of normativity, a community based on nonstructured intimacies, a new kind of non-ego-based identifications and ethics. What interests me in the comparison is how Dean, Bersani, and Hocquenghem can reach similar conclusions through completely opposite means, as Dean and Bersani depend on psychoanalysis while Hocquenghem's argument is premised on the critique of the Oedipal model. Dean appears to want to "save" Hocquenghem as well as Deleuze and Guattari from the "anti-Lacanian" label. As he puts it, "in view of the tendency to read *Anti-Oedipus* as an unequivocal denunciation of the Freudo-Lacanian tradition, it is also worth noting that Félix Guattari, who was gay, had been trained by Lacan and remained both a member of his École freudienne de Paris (EFP) and a practicing analyst even after the publication of *Anti-Oedipus.* Hocquenghem too, while composing *Homosexual Desire,* was teaching philosophy at Vincennes, practically next door to Lacan's department of psychoanalysis, and therefore effectively he was working in a Lacanian milieu" (Dean, *Beyond Sexuality,* 243–44). Although these biographical elements may or may not be true (in his diaries, Guattari talks primarily about his relationship with women and not men), they hardly suffice to suggest that *Anti-Oedipus* was not an "unequivocal denunciation of the Freudo-Lacanian tradition." As I have argued, both Guattari and Deleuze had complicated personal relationships with Lacan, but *Anti-Oedipus* itself is very much a critique of the Lacanian structuralist system, and in particular of the symbolic, and so is Hocquenghem's *Homosexual Desire.*

147. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus,* xiii.

148. Ibid., xii.

of thinking and living."[149] Similarly, I would suggest that Irigaray's work proposes an *ethics of sexual difference*—the title of one of her later books: "A revolution in thought and ethics is needed if the work of sexual difference is to take place. We need to reinterpret everything concerning the relations between the subject and the discourse, the subject and the world, the subject and the cosmic, the microcosmic and the macrocosmic."[150] For Irigaray, the point was not to develop a new theory or "philosophy" of womanhood, but rather to indicate—and to invent if necessary—a set of practices that could open the self to the other.

As I have argued in this chapter, Deleuze, Guattari, Irigaray, Fouque, and Hocquenghem all sought in different ways to rework the structuralist social contract through alternative kinships. Deeply aware of the connections between the sexual, the social, the psychic, the linguistic, and the ethical, these authors sought to imagine new modes of subjectivities, socialities, and behaviors. As Foucault suggests, ethical work required "*ars erotica, ars theorica, ars politica*" all at once. And indeed, for these thinkers the philosophical critique of the structuralist symbolic, the refusal of normative kinship, and the social revolution were part of the same project: the possibility of theorizing and enacting anti-Oedipal ethics.

149. Ibid., xiii. The distinction between morality and ethics is crucial in Foucault's thought. Foucault highlights this difference at the end of *The Order of Things* and develops it more fully in volumes 2 and 3 of *The History of Sexuality.* See Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité* (Gallimard, 1976), 2:32–37; Foucault, *Order of Things,* 327–28.

150. Luce Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference,* trans. Carolyn Burke and Gillian Gill (Cornell University Press, 1993), 6.