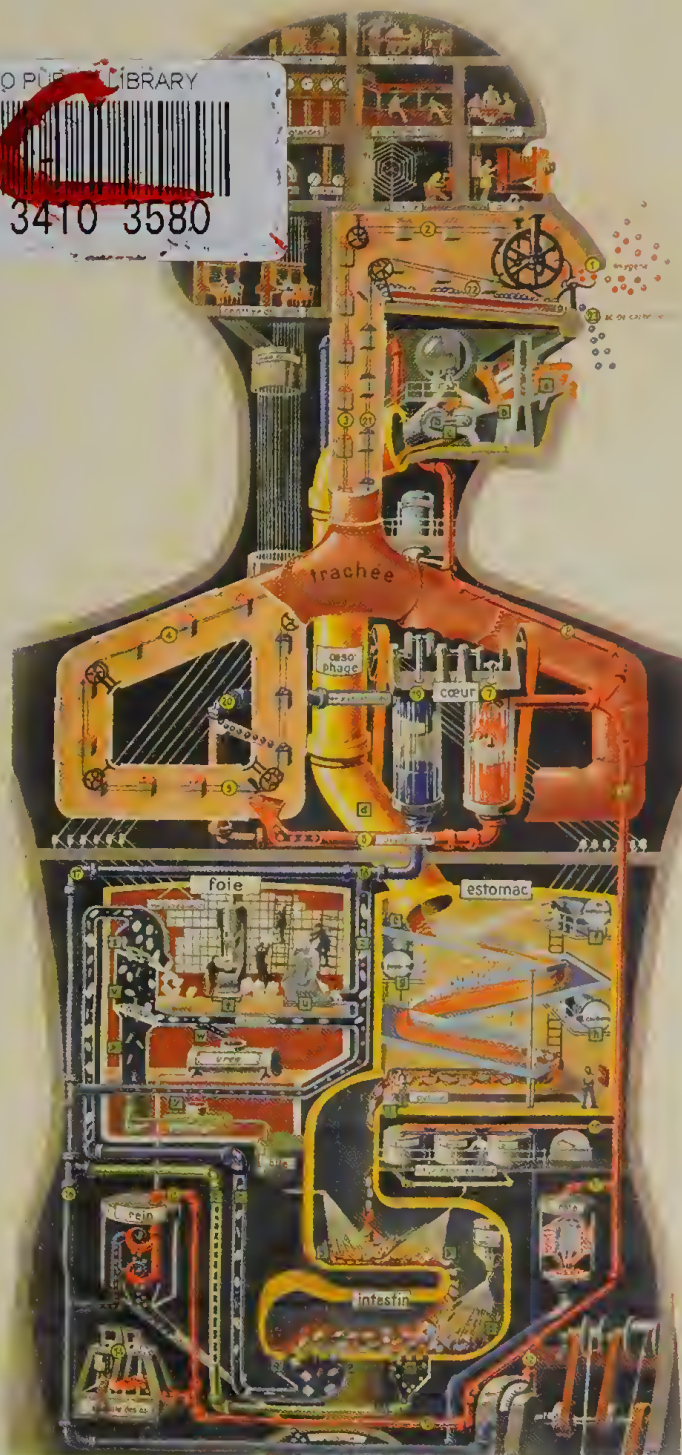




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**GILLES DELEUZE and
FÉLIX GUATTARI**

*Anti-Oedipus
Capitalism and Schizophrenia*

Preface by MICHEL FOUCAULT



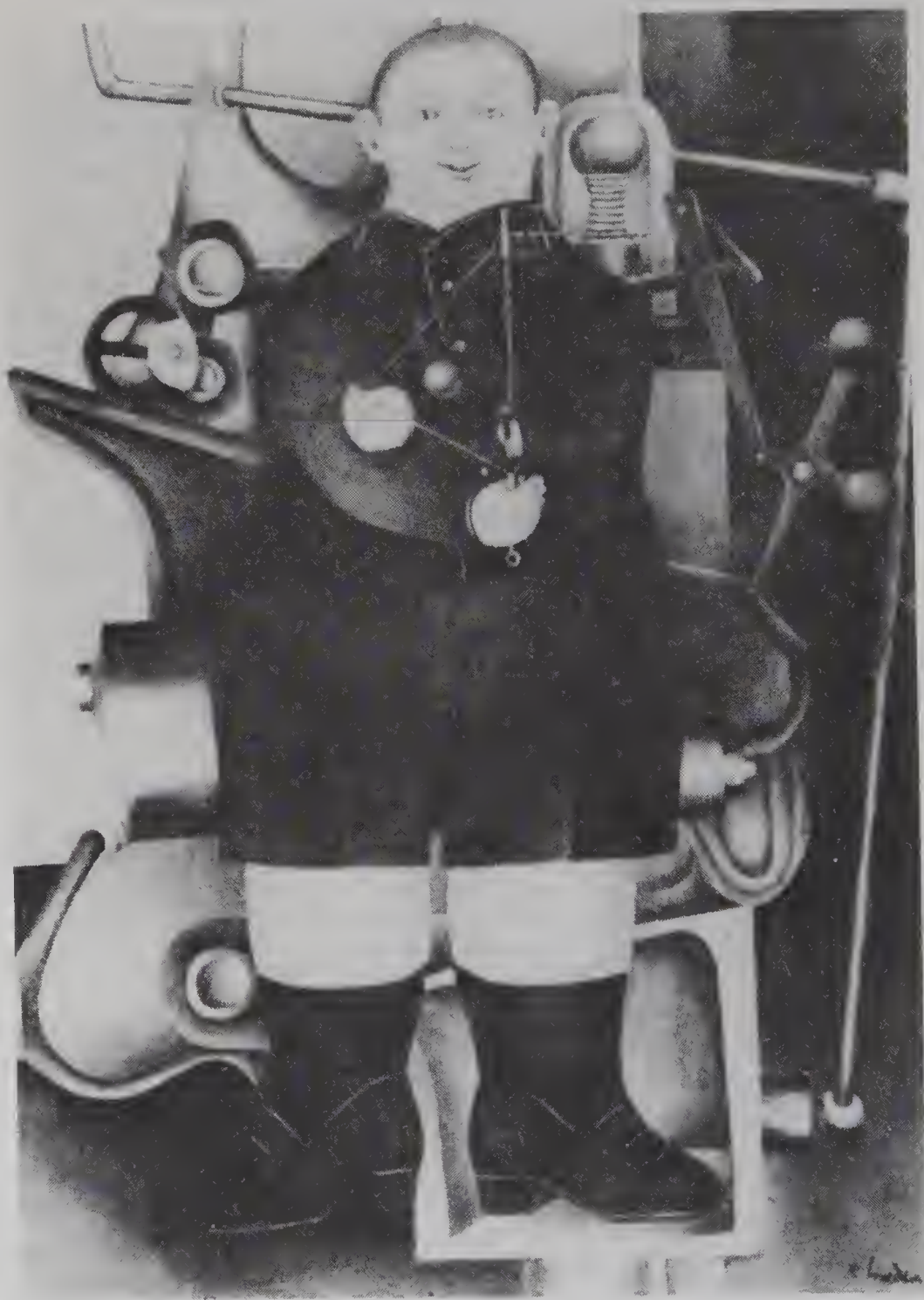
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ANTI-OEDIPUS:
CAPITALISM AND SCHIZOPHRENIA

GILLES DELEUZE (1925–1995) was a professor of philosophy at the University of Paris (Vincennes) and wrote numerous works, including studies of such philosophers as Kant, Spinoza, and Nietzsche, and such topics as sadomasochism and the logic of meaning.

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Boy with Machine, Richard Lindner (1954, oil on canvas, 40" × 30", Drs. Rosier and Lefer, M.D., P.A. Pension Trust)

GILLES DELEUZE
AND
FÉLIX GUATTARI

Anti-Oedipus

CAPITALISM AND SCHIZOPHRENIA

Preface by MICHEL FOUCAULT

Introduction by MARK SEEM

Translated by ROBERT HURLEY, MARK SEEM, *and* HELEN R. LANE

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PREFACE

by Michel Foucault

During the years 1945–1965 (I am referring to Europe), there was a certain way of thinking correctly, a certain style of political discourse, a certain ethics of the intellectual. One had to be on familiar terms with Marx, not let one's dreams stray too far from Freud. And one had to treat sign-systems—the signifier—with the greatest respect. These were the three requirements that made the strange occupation of writing and speaking a measure of truth about oneself and one's time acceptable.

Then came the five brief, impassioned, jubilant, enigmatic years. At the gates of our world, there was Vietnam, of course, and the first major blow to the powers that be. But here, inside our walls, what exactly was taking place? An amalgam of revolutionary and antirepressive politics? A war fought on two fronts: against social exploitation and psychic repression? A surge of libido modulated by the class struggle? Perhaps. At any rate, it is this familiar, dualistic interpretation that has laid claim

to the events of those years. The dream that cast its spell, between the First World War and fascism, over the dreamiest parts of Europe—the Germany of Wilhelm Reich, and the France of the surrealists—had returned and set fire to reality itself: Marx and Freud in the same incandescent light.

But is that really what happened? Had the utopian project of the thirties been resumed, this time on the scale of historical practice? Or was there, on the contrary, a movement toward political struggles that no longer conformed to the model that Marxist tradition had prescribed? Toward an experience and a technology of desire that were no longer Freudian. It is true that the old banners were raised, but the combat shifted and spread into new zones.

Anti-Oedipus shows first of all how much ground has been covered. But it does much more than that. It wastes no time in discrediting the old idols, even though it does have a great deal of fun with Freud. Most important, it motivates us to go further.

It would be a mistake to read *Anti-Oedipus* as *the* new theoretical reference (you know, that much-heralded theory that finally encompasses everything, that finally totalizes and reassures, the one we are told we “need so badly” in our age of dispersion and specialization where “hope” is lacking). One must not look for a “philosophy” amid the extraordinary profusion of new notions and surprise concepts: *Anti-Oedipus* is not a flashy Hegel. I think that *Anti-Oedipus* can best be read as an “art,” in the sense that is conveyed by the term “erotic art,” for example. Informed by the seemingly abstract notions of multiplicities, flows, arrangements, and connections, the analysis of the relationship of desire to reality and to the capitalist “machine” yields answers to concrete questions. Questions that 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 theoretica, ars politica*.

Whence the three adversaries confronted by *Anti-Oedipus*. Three adversaries who do not have the same strength, who represent varying degrees of danger, and whom the book combats in different ways:

1. The political ascetics, the sad militants, the terrorists of theory, those who would preserve the pure order of politics and political discourse. Bureaucrats of the revolution and civil servants of Truth.

2. The poor technicians of desire—psychoanalysts and semiolo-

gists of every sign and symptom—who would subjugate the multiplicity of desire to the twofold law of structure and lack.

3. Last but not least, the major enemy, the strategic adversary is fascism (whereas *Anti-Oedipus*' opposition to the others is more of a tactical engagement). And not only historical fascism, the fascism of Hitler and Mussolini—which was able to mobilize and use the desire of the masses so effectively—but also the fascism in us all, in our heads and in our everyday behavior, the fascism that causes us to love power, to desire the very thing that dominates and exploits us.

I would say that *Anti-Oedipus* (may its authors forgive me) is a book of ethics, the first book of ethics to be written in France in quite a long time (perhaps that explains why its success was not limited to a particular “readership”: being anti-oedipal has become a life style, a way of thinking and living). How does one keep from being fascist, even (especially) when one believes oneself to be a revolutionary militant? How do we rid our speech and our acts, our hearts and our pleasures, of fascism? How do we ferret out the fascism that is ingrained in our behavior? The Christian moralists sought out the traces of the flesh lodged deep within the soul. Deleuze and Guattari, for their part, pursue the slightest traces of fascism in the body.

Paying a modest tribute to Saint Francis de Sales,* one might say that *Anti-Oedipus* is an *Introduction to the Non-Fascist Life*.

This art of living counter to all forms of fascism, whether already present or impending, carries with it a certain number of essential principles which I would summarize as follows if I were to make this great book into a manual or guide to everyday life:

- Free political action from all unitary and totalizing paranoia.
- Develop action, thought, and desires by proliferation, juxtaposition, and disjunction, and not by subdivision and pyramidal hierarchization.
- Withdraw allegiance from the old categories of the Negative (law, limit, castration, lack, lacuna), which Western thought has so long held sacred as a form of power and an access to reality. Prefer what is positive and multiple, difference over uniformity, flows over unities, mobile arrangements over systems. Believe that what is productive is not sedentary but nomadic.
- Do not think that one has to be sad in order to be militant, even though the thing one is fighting is abominable. It is the connection of

*A seventeenth-century priest and Bishop of Geneva, known for his *Introduction to the Devout Life*.

desire to reality (and not its retreat into the forms of representation) that possesses revolutionary force.

- Do not use thought to ground a political practice in Truth; nor political action to discredit, as mere speculation, a line of thought. Use political practice as an intensifier of thought, and analysis as a multiplier of the forms and domains for the intervention of political action.

- Do not demand of politics that it restore the “rights” of the individual, as philosophy has defined them. The individual is the product of power. What is needed is to “de-individualize” by means of multiplication and displacement, diverse combinations. The group must not be the organic bond uniting hierarchized individuals, but a constant generator of de-individualization.

- Do not become enamored of power.

It could even be said that Deleuze and Guattari care so little for power that they have tried to neutralize the effects of power linked to their own discourse. Hence the games and snares scattered throughout the book, rendering its translation a feat of real prowess. But these are not the familiar traps of rhetoric; the latter work to sway the reader without his being aware of the manipulation, and ultimately win him over against his will. The traps of *Anti-Oedipus* are those of humor: so many invitations to let oneself be put out, to take one’s leave of the text and slam the door shut. The book often leads one to believe it is all fun and games, when something essential is taking place, something of extreme seriousness: the tracking down of all varieties of fascism, from the enormous ones that surround and crush us to the petty ones that constitute the tyrannical bitterness of our everyday lives.

INTRODUCTION

by Mark Seem

"We must die as egos and be
born again in the swarm, not
separate and self-hypnotized, but
individual and related."

—Henry Miller, *Sexus*

The Anti-Ego

"Lie down, then, on the soft couch which the analyst provides, and try to think up something different. The analyst has endless time and patience; every minute you detain him means money in his pocket. . . . Whether you whine, howl, beg, weep, cajole, pray or curse—he listens. He is just a big ear minus a sympathetic nervous system. He is impervious to everything but truth. If you think it pays to fool him then fool him. Who will be the loser? If you think he can help you, and not yourself, then stick to him until you rot."¹* So concludes Henry Miller in *Sexus*, and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari are quick to agree in their attack on psychoanalysis' own Oedipus complex (the holy family: daddy-mommy-me), an attack that is at times brutal and without pity, at other times sympathetic and full of a profound love of

*Reference notes begin on page 383.

life, and often enormously amusing. An attack on the ego, on what is all-too-human in mankind, on oedipalized and oedipalizing analyses and neurotic modes of living.

In confronting and finally overturning the Oedipal rock on which Man has chosen to take his stand, *Anti-Oedipus* comes as a kind of sequel to another similar venture, the attack on Christ, Christianity, and the herd in Nietzsche's *The AntiChrist*. For who would deny, *Anti-Oedipus* begins, that psychoanalysis was from the start, still is, and perhaps always will be a well-constituted church and a form of treatment based on a set of beliefs that only the very faithful could adhere to, ie., those who believe in a security that amounts to being lost in the herd and defined in terms of common and external goals? But where do such beliefs originate? What are they based on? For it is absolutely hopeless to think in terms of security, as Miller states in *Sexus*; "there is none. The man who looks for security, even in the mind, is like a man who would chop off his limbs in order to have artificial ones which will give him no pain or trouble" (page 428). No pain, no trouble—this is the neurotic's dream of a tranquilized and conflict-free existence.

Such a set of beliefs, Deleuze and Guattari demonstrate, such a herd instinct, is based on the desire to be led, the desire to have someone else legislate life. The very desire that was brought so glaringly into focus in Europe with Hitler, Mussolini, and fascism; the desire that is still at work, making us all sick, today. *Anti-Oedipus* starts by reviving Reich's completely serious question with respect to the rise of fascism: 'How could the masses be made to desire their own repression?' This is a question which the English and Americans are reluctant to deal with directly, tending too often to respond: "Fascism is a phenomenon that took place elsewhere, something that could only happen to others, but not to us; it's *their* problem." Is it though? Is fascism really a problem for others to deal with? Even revolutionary groups deal gingerly with the fascisizing elements we all carry deep within us, and yet they often possess a rarely analyzed but overriding group 'superego' that leads them to state, much like Nietzsche's man of *ressentiment*, that the *other* is evil (the Fascist! the Capitalist! the Communist!), and hence that *they themselves are good*. This conclusion is reached as an afterthought and a justification, a supremely *self-righteous* rationalization for a politics that can only "squint" at life, through the thick clouds of foul-smelling air that permeates secret meeting places and "security" councils. The man of *ressentiment*, as Nietzsche explains, "loves hiding places, secret paths and back doors, everything covert entices him as *his* world, *his* security, *his* refreshment; he understands how to keep silent, how not to forget,

how to wait, how to be provisionally self-deprecating and humble.”² Such a man, Nietzsche concludes, needs very much to believe in some neutral, independent “subject”—the ego—for he is prompted by an instinct of *self*-affirmation and *self*-preservation that cares little about preserving or affirming life, an instinct “in which every lie is sanctified.”³ This is the realm of the silent majority. And it is into these back rooms, behind the closed doors of the analyst’s office, in the wings of the Oedipal theater, that Deleuze and Guattari weave their way, exclaiming as does Nietzsche that it smells bad there, and that what is needed is “a breath of fresh air, a relationship with the outside world.”

In examining the problem of the subject, the behind-the-scenes reactive and reactionary man, *Anti-Oedipus* develops an approach that is decidedly *diagnostic* (“What constitutes our sickness today?”) and profoundly *healing* as well. What it attempts to cure us of is the cure itself. Deleuze and Guattari term their approach “schizoanalysis,” which they oppose on every count to psychoanalysis. Where the latter measures everything against neurosis and castration, schizoanalysis begins with the schizo, his breakdowns and his breakthroughs. For, they affirm, “a schizophrenic out for a walk is a better model than a neurotic lying on the analyst’s couch. . . .” Against the Oedipal and oedipalized territorialities (Family, Church, School, Nation, Party), and especially the territoriality of the individual, *Anti-Oedipus* seeks to discover the “deterritorialized” flows of desire, the flows that have not been reduced to the Oedipal codes and the neuroticized territorialities, the *desiring-machines* that escape such codes as *lines of escape* leading elsewhere.

Much like R.D. Laing, Deleuze and Guattari aim to develop a materialistically and experientially based analysis of the “breakdowns” and the “breakthroughs” that characterize *some* of those labeled schizophrenic by psychiatry. Rather than view the creations and productions of desire—all of desiring-production—from the point of view of the norm and the normal, they force their analysis into the sphere of extremes. From paranoia to schizophrenia, from fascism to revolution, from breakdowns to breakthroughs, what is investigated is the process of life flows as they oscillate from one extreme to the other, on a scale of intensity that goes from 0 (“I never asked to be born . . . leave me in peace”), *the body without organs*, to the *n*th power (“I am all that exists, all the names in history”), *the schizophrenic process of desire*.

The Experience of Delirium

In order to carry out this ambitious undertaking, *Anti-Oedipus* makes joyously unorthodox use of many writers and thinkers,

whose concepts flow together with all the other elements in the book in what might well be described as a carefully constructed and executed experiment in delirium.

While Deleuze and Guattari quote frequently from Marx and Freud, it would be an error to view *Anti-Oedipus* as yet another attempt at a Freud/Marx synthesis. For such an attempt always treats political economy (the flows of capital and interest) and the economy of the libido (the flows of desire) as two separate economies, even in the work of Reich, who went as far as possible in this direction. Deleuze and Guattari, on the other hand, postulate one and the same economy, the economy of flows. The flows and productions of desire will simply be viewed as the unconscious of the social productions. Behind every investment of time and interest and capital, an investment of desire, and vice versa.

In order to reach this conclusion a new confrontation was required. Not the standard confrontation between a bourgeois Freud and a revolutionary Marx, where Freud ends up the loser, but a more radical confrontation, between Marx the revolutionary and Nietzsche the madman. The result of this confrontation, as the authors demonstrate convincingly, is that Freud and psychoanalysis (and perhaps even Lacan, although they remain ambiguous on this point) become “impossible.”

“Why Marx and Nietzsche? Now that’s really mixing things up!” one might protest at this point. But there is really no cause for alarm. Readers of Marx will be happy to learn that Marx fares quite well in this confrontation. One might even say he is trimmed down to bare essentials and improved upon from the point of view of use. Given Deleuze and Guattari’s perspective, this confrontation was inevitable. If one wants to do an analysis of the flows of money and capital that circulate in society, nothing is more useful than Marx and the Marxist theory of money. But if one wishes also to analyze the flows of desire, the fears and the anxieties, the loves and the despairs that traverse the social field as intensive notes from the underground (i.e., *libidinal economy*), one must look elsewhere. Since psychoanalysis is of no help, reducing as it does every social manifestation of desire to the familial complex, where is one to turn? To Nietzsche, and the Nietzschean theory of affects and intensity, *Anti-Oedipus* suggests. For here, and especially in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, is a theory of desire and will, of the conscious and the unconscious forces, that relates desire directly to the social field and to a monetary system based on profit. What Nietzsche teaches, as a complement to Marx’s theory of alienation, is how the history of mankind is the history of a *becoming-reactive*. And it is Nietzsche,

Deleuze and Guattari stress, whose thought already pointed a *way out* for humanity, whereas Marx and Freud were too ingrained in the culture that they were working against.

One could not really view *Anti-Oedipus* as a purely Nietzschean undertaking, however, for the book would be nothing without the tension between Nietzsche and Marx, between philosophy and politics between thought and revolution; the tension, in short, between Deleuze the philosopher and Guattari the militant. This tension is quite novel, and leads to a combination of the artistic “machine,” the revolutionary “machine,” and the analytical “machine”; a combination of three modes of knowledge—the *intuitive*, the *practical*, and the *reflective*, which all become joined as bits and pieces of one and the same strategic machine whose target is the ego and the fascist in each of us. Extending thought to the point of madness and action to the point of revolution, theirs is indeed a politics of experience. The experience, however, is no longer that of man, but of what is nonhuman in man, his desires and his forces: a politics of desire directed against all that is egoic—and heroic—in man.

In addition to Nietzsche they also found it necessary to listen to others: to Miller and Lawrence and Kafka and Beckett, to Proust and Reich and Foucault, to Burroughs and Ginsberg, each of whom had different insights concerning madness and dissension, politics and desire. They needed everything they could get their hands on and they took whatever they could find, in an eclectic fashion closer to Henry Miller than it is to Marx or Freud. More poetic, undoubtedly, but also more fun.

While Deleuze and Guattari use many authors and concepts, this is never done in an academic fashion aimed at persuading the reader. Rather, they use these names and ideas as effects that traverse their analyses, generating ever new effects, as points of reference indeed, but also as points of intensity and signs pointing a way out: *points-signs* that offer a multiplicity of solutions and a variety of directions for a new style of politics. Such an approach carries much along with it, in the course of its flow, but it also leaves much behind. Chunks of Marx and Freud that cannot keep up with the fast current will be left behind, buried or forgotten, while everything in Marx and Freud that has to do with how things and people and desires actually flow will be kept, and added to the infernal machine evoked above. This political analysis of desire, this *schizoanalysis*, becomes a mighty tool where schizophrenia as a process—the schiz—serves as a point of departure as well as a point of destination. Like Laing, they encourage mankind to take a journey, the journey through *ego-loss*. They go much further than Laing on this

point, however. They urge mankind to strip itself of *all* anthropomorphic and anthropological armoring, all myth and tragedy, and all existentialism, in order to perceive what is nonhuman in man, his will and his forces, his transformations and mutations. The human and social sciences have accustomed us to see the figure of Man behind every social event, just as Christianity taught us to see the Eye of the Lord looking down upon us. Such forms of knowledge project an image of reality, at the expense of reality itself. They talk figures and icons and signs, but fail to perceive forces and flows. They blind us to other realities, and especially the reality of power as it subjugates us. Their function is to tame, and the result is the fabrication of docile and obedient subjects.

Schizoanalysis and Collectivity

To be anti-oedipal is to be anti-ego as well as anti-homo, willfully attacking all reductive psychoanalytic and political analyses that remain caught within the sphere of totality and unity, in order to free the multiplicity of desire from the deadly neurotic and Oedipal yoke. For Oedipus is not a mere psychoanalytic construct, Deleuze and Guattari explain. Oedipus is the figurehead of imperialism, “colonization pursued by other means, it is the interior colony, and we shall see that even here at home . . . it is our intimate colonial education.” This internalization of man by man, this “oedipalization,” creates a new meaning for suffering, *internal suffering*, and a new tone for life: the depressive tone. Now depression does not just come about one fine day, *Anti-Oedipus* goes on, nor does Oedipus appear one day in the Family and feel secure in remaining there. Depression and Oedipus are agencies of the State, agencies of paranoia, agencies of power, long before being delegated to the family. Oedipus is the figure of power as such, just as neurosis is the result of power on individuals. Oedipus is everywhere.

For anti-oedipalists the ego, like Oedipus, is “part of those things we must dismantle through the united assault of analytical and political forces.”⁴ Oedipus is belief injected into the unconscious, it is what gives us faith as it robs us of power, *it* is what teaches us to desire our own repression. Everybody has been oedipalized and neuroticized at home, at school, at work. Everybody wants to be a fascist. Deleuze and Guattari want to know how these beliefs succeed in taking hold of a body, thereby silencing the productive machines of the libido. They also want to know how the opposite situation is brought about, where a body successfully wards off the effects of power. Reversing the Freudian distinction between neurosis and psychosis that measures everything

against the former, *Anti-Oedipus* concludes: the neurotic is the one on whom the Oedipal imprints take, whereas the psychotic is the one incapable of being oedipalized, even and especially by psychoanalysis. The first task of the revolutionary, they add, is to learn from the psychotic how to shake off the Oedipal yoke and the effects of power, in order to initiate a radical politics of desire freed from all beliefs. Such a politics dissolves the mystifications of power through the kindling, on all levels, of anti-oedipal forces—the schizzes-flows—forces that escape coding, scramble the codes, and flee in all directions: *orphans* (no daddy-mommy-me), *atheists* (no beliefs), and *nomads* (no habits, no territories).

A schizoanalysis schizophrenizes in order to break the holds of power and institute research into a new collective subjectivity and a revolutionary healing of mankind. For we are sick, so sick, of our *selves*!

It is actually not accurate to say that Deleuze and Guattari develop the schizoanalytic approach, for, as they show, it has always been at work in writers like Miller or Nietzsche or Artaud. Stoned thinking based on intensely lived experiences: Pop Philosophy.

To put it simply, as does Miller, “everybody becomes a healer the moment he forgets about himself.” And Miller continues: “Reality is here and now, everywhere, gleaming through every reflection that meets the eye. . . . Everybody is a neurotic, down to the last man and woman. The healer, or the analyst, if you like, is only a super-neurotic. . . . To be cured we must rise from our graves and throw off the cerements of the dead. Nobody can do it for another—it is a private affair which is best done collectively.”⁵ Once we forget about our egos a non-neurotic form of politics becomes possible, where singularity and collectivity are no longer at odds with each other, and where collective expressions of desire are possible. Such a politics does not seek to regiment individuals according to a totalitarian system of norms, but to de-normalize and de-individualize through a multiplicity of new, collective arrangements against power. Its goal is the transformation of human relationships in a struggle against power. And it urges militant groups, as well as lone individuals, to analyze and fight against the effects of power that subjugate them: “For a revolutionary group at the preconscious level remains a *subjugated group*, even in seizing power, as long as this power itself refers to a form of force that continues to enslave and crush desiring-production. . . . A *subject-group*, on the contrary, is a group whose libidinal investments are themselves revolutionary, it causes desire to penetrate into the social field, and subordinates the socius or the forms of power to desiring-production; productive of desire and a desire that produces, the subject-group always invents mortal forma-

tions that exorcize the effusion in it of a death instinct; it opposes real coefficients of transversality to the symbolic determinations of subjugation, coefficients without a hierarchy or a group superego.” There can be no revolutionary actions, *Anti-Oedipus* concludes, where the relations between people and groups are relations of exclusion and segregation. Groups must multiply and connect in ever new ways, freeing up territorialities for the construction of new social arrangements. Theory must therefore be conceived as a toolbox, producing tools that work; or as Ivan Illich says, we must learn to construct *tools for conviviality* through the use of counterfoil research.⁶ When Illich speaks of “convivial reconstruction,” he is very close to Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of a “desiring-revolution.” Like Deleuze and Guattari, Illich also calls for a radical reversal of the relationships between individuals and tools or machines: “This reversal would permit the evolution of a life-style and of a political system which give priority to the protection, the maximum use, and the enjoyment of the one resource that is almost equally distributed among all people: personal energy under personal control.”⁷ All three authors agree that such a reversal must be governed by a collective political process, and not by professionals and experts. The ultimate answer to neurotic dependencies on professionals is *mutual self-care*.⁸

Freed from a psychoanalytic framework, the political group or collective cannot, however, push aside the problem of desire. Nor can it leave desire in the hands of new experts. It must analyze the function of desire, in itself and in the groups with which it is involved. What is the function of desire, *Anti-Oedipus* asks, if not one of making connections? For to be bogged down in arrangements from which escape is possible is to be neurotic, seeing an irresolvable crisis where alternatives in fact exist. And as Deleuze and Guattari comment, “perhaps it will be discovered that the only incurable is the neurotic.”

We defend so cautiously against our egoically limited experiences, states Laing in *The Politics of Experience*, that it is not surprising to see people grow defensive and panic at the idea of experiencing ego-loss through the use of drugs or collective experiences. But there is nothing pathological about ego-loss, Laing adds; quite the contrary. Ego-loss is the experience of all mankind, “of the primal man, of Adam and perhaps even [a journey] further into the beings of animals, vegetables and minerals.”⁹ No age, Laing concludes, has so lost touch with this healing process as has ours. Deleuze and Guattari’s schizoanalytic approach serves to begin such a healing process. Its major task is to destroy the oedipalized and neuroticized individual dependencies through the forg-

ing of a collective subjectivity, a nonfascist subject—anti-Oedipus. Anti-Oedipus is an individual or a group that no longer functions in terms of beliefs and that comes to redeem mankind, as Nietzsche foresaw, not only from the ideals that weighed it down, “but also from that which was bound to grow out of it, the great nausea, the will to nothingness, nihilism; this bell-stroke of noon and of the great decision that liberates the will again and restores its goal to the earth and his hope to man; this AntiChrist and antinihilist. . . *He must come one day.*—”¹⁰

Unlike Nietzsche’s antinihilist, however, Deleuze and Guattari’s anti-Oedipus is not alone. Anti-Oedipus is not the superman. It is not transcendent. Where Nietzsche grew progressively more isolated to the point of madness, Deleuze and Guattari call for actions and passions of a collective nature, *here and now*. Madness is a radical break from power in the form of a disconnection. Militancy, in Deleuze and Guattari’s framework, would learn from madness but then move beyond it, beyond disconnections and deterritorializations, to ever new connections. A politics of desire would see loneliness and depression as the first things to go. Such is the anti-oedipal strategy: if man is connected to the machines of the universe, if he is in tune with his desires, if he is “anchored,” “he ceases to worry about the fitness of things, about the behavior of his fellow-men, about right or wrong and justice and injustice. If his roots are in the current of life he will float on the surface like a lotus and he will blossom and give forth fruit. . . . The life that’s in him will manifest itself in growth, and growth is an endless, eternal process. The process is everything.”¹¹ It is this process—of desiring-production—that *Anti-Oedipus* sets out to analyze.

For if desire is repressed in a society, Deleuze and Guattari state, this is hardly because “it is a desire for the mother or for the death of the father; on the contrary, desire becomes that only because it is repressed, it takes that mask on under the reign of the repression that models the mask for it and plasters it on its face. . . . The real danger is elsewhere. If desire is repressed, it is because every position of desire, no matter how small, is capable of calling into question the established order of a society: not that desire is asocial; on the contrary. But it is explosive; there is no desiring-machine capable of being assembled without demolishing entire social sectors.”

Deleuze and Guattari conclude that desire, any desiring-machine, is always a combination of various elements and forces of all types. Hence the need to listen not only to revolutionaries but to all those who know how to be truly objective: “Revolutionaries, artists, and seers are

content to be objective, merely objective: they know that desire clasps life in its powerfully productive embrace, and reproduces it in a way all the more intense because it has few needs. And never mind those who believe that this is very easy to say, or that it is the sort of idea to be found in books.”

ANTI-EDIPUS



THE DESIRING-MACHINES

Translated by Helen R. Lane, Robert Hurley, and Mark Seem

1 | Desiring-Production

It is at work everywhere, functioning smoothly at times, at other times in fits and starts. It breathes, it heats, it eats. It shits and fucks. What a mistake to have ever said *the* id. Everywhere *it* is machines—real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, machines being driven by other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections. An organ-machine is plugged into an energy-source-machine: the one produces a flow that the other interrupts. The breast is a machine that produces milk, and the mouth a machine coupled to it. The mouth of the anorexic wavers between several functions: its possessor is uncertain as to whether it is an eating-machine, an anal machine, a talking-machine, or a breathing-machine (asthma attacks). Hence we are all handymen: each with his little machines. For every organ-machine, an energy-machine: all the

time, flows and interruptions. Judge Schreber* has sunbeams in his ass. *A solar anus*. And rest assured that it works: Judge Schreber feels something, produces something, and is capable of explaining the process theoretically. Something is produced: the effects of a machine, not mere metaphors.

A schizophrenic out for a walk is a better model than a neurotic lying on the analyst's couch. A breath of fresh air, a relationship with the outside world. Lenz's stroll, for example, as reconstructed by Büchner. This walk outdoors is different from the moments when Lenz finds himself closeted with his pastor, who forces him to situate himself socially, in relationship to the God of established religion, in relationship to his father, to his mother. While taking a stroll outdoors, on the other hand, he is in the mountains, amid falling snowflakes, with other gods or without any gods at all, without a family, without a father or a mother, with nature. "What does my father want? Can he offer me more than that? Impossible. Leave me in peace."¹ Everything is a machine. Celestial machines, the stars or rainbows in the sky, alpine machines—all of them connected to those of his body. The continual whirr of machines. "He thought that it must be a feeling of endless bliss to be in contact with the profound life of every form, to have a soul for rocks, metals, water, and plants, to take into himself, as in a dream, every element of nature, like flowers that breathe with the waxing and waning of the moon."^{1a} To be a chlorophyll- or a photosynthesis-machine, or at least slip his body into such machines as one part among the others. Lenz has projected himself back to a time before the man-nature dichotomy, before all the co-ordinates based on this fundamental dichotomy have been laid down. He does not live nature as nature, but as a process of production. There is no such thing as either man or nature now, only a process that produces the one within the other and couples the machines together. Producing-machines, desiring-machines everywhere, schizophrenic machines, all of species life: the self and the non-self, outside and inside, no longer have any meaning whatsoever.

Now that we have had a look at this stroll of a schizo, let us compare what happens when Samuel Beckett's characters decide to venture outdoors. Their various gaits and methods of self-locomotion constitute, in and of themselves, a finely tuned machine. And then there is the function of the bicycle in Beckett's works: what relationship does the bicycle-horn machine have with the mother-anus machine? "What a

*Daniel Paul Schreber was a German judge who began psychiatric treatment in 1884 at the age of forty-two, and spent the remaining twenty-seven years of his life in and out of mental institutions. In 1903, at the age of sixty-one, he published his *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken* (*Memoirs of a Nervous Illness*), which Freud used as the basis of his influential 1911 study on paranoia, "Psycho-Analytic Notes" (reference note 7, page 384 of this volume). pp. 390–472. (*Translators' note*.)

rest to speak of bicycles and horns. Unfortunately it is not of them I have to speak, but of her who brought me into the world, through the hole in her arse if my memory is correct.”² It is often thought that Oedipus* is an easy subject to deal with, something perfectly obvious, a “given” that is there from the very beginning. But that is not so at all: Oedipus presupposes a fantastic repression of desiring-machines. And why are they repressed? To what end? Is it really necessary or desirable to submit to such repression? And what means are to be used to accomplish this? What ought to go inside the Oedipal triangle, what sort of thing is required to construct it? Are a bicycle horn and my mother’s arse sufficient to do the job? Aren’t there more important questions than these, however? Given a certain effect, what machine is capable of producing it? And given a certain machine, what can it be used for? Can we possibly guess, for instance, what a knife rest is used for if all we are given is a geometrical description of it? Or yet another example: on being confronted with a complete machine made up of six stones in the right-hand pocket of my coat (the pocket that serves as the source of the stones), five stones in the right-hand pocket of my trousers, and five in the left-hand pocket (transmission pockets), with the remaining pocket of my coat receiving the stones that have already been handled, as each of the stones moves forward one pocket, how can we determine the effect of this circuit of distribution in which the mouth, too, plays a role as a stone-sucking machine? Where in this entire circuit do we find the production of sexual pleasure? At the end of *Malone Dies*, Lady Pedal takes the schizophrenics out for a ride in a van and a rowboat, and on a picnic in the midst of nature: an infernal machine is being assembled. “Under the skin the body is an over-heated factory,/ and outside,/ the invalid shines,/ glows,/ from every burst pore.”³

This does not mean that we are attempting to make nature one of the poles of schizophrenia. What the schizophrenic experiences, both as an individual and as a member of the human species, is not at all any one specific aspect of nature, but nature as a process of production. What do we mean here by process? It is probable that at a certain level nature and industry are two separate and distinct things: from one point of view, industry is the opposite of nature; from another, industry extracts its raw materials from nature; from yet another, it returns its refuse to nature; and so on. Even within society, this characteristic man-nature, industry-nature, society-nature relationship is responsible for the dis-

*As will be seen below, the term Oedipus has many widely varying connotations in this volume. It refers, for instance, not only to the Greek myth of Oedipus and to the Oedipus complex as defined by classical psychoanalysis, but also to Oedipal mechanisms, processes, and structures. The translators follow the authors’ use and employ the word “Oedipus” by itself, using the more traditional term “Oedipus complex” only when the authors do so. (*Translators’ note.*)

inction of relatively autonomous spheres that are called production, distribution, consumption. But in general this entire level of distinctions, examined from the point of view of its formal developed structures, presupposes (as Marx has demonstrated) not only the existence of capital and the division of labor, but also the false consciousness that the capitalist being necessarily acquires, both of itself and of the supposedly fixed elements within an over-all process. For the real truth of the matter—the glaring, sober truth that resides in delirium—is that there is no such thing as relatively independent spheres or circuits: production is immediately consumption and a recording process (*enregistrement**), without any sort of mediation, and the recording process and consumption directly determine production, though they do so within the production process itself. Hence everything is production: *production of productions*, of actions and of passions; *productions of recording processes*, of distributions and of co-ordinates that serve as points of reference; *productions of consumptions*, of sensual pleasures, of anxieties, and of pain. Everything is production, since the recording processes are immediately consumed, immediately consummated, and these consumptions directly reproduced.† This is the first meaning of process as we use the term: incorporating recording and consumption within production itself, thus making them the productions of one and the same process.

Second, we make no distinction between man and nature: the human essence of nature and the natural essence of man become one within nature in the form of production or industry, just as they do within the life of man as a species. Industry is then no longer considered from the extrinsic point of view of utility, but rather from the point of view of its fundamental identity with nature as production of man and by man.⁴ Not man as the king of creation, but rather as the being who is in intimate contact with the profound life of all forms or all types of beings, who is responsible for even the stars and animal life, and who ceaselessly plugs an organ-machine into an energy-machine, a tree into his body, a breast into his mouth, the sun into his asshole: the eternal custodian of the machines of the universe. This is the second meaning of process as we use the term: man and nature are not like two opposite

*The French term *enregistrement* has a number of meanings, among them the process of making a recording to be played back by a mechanical device (e.g., a phonograph), the recording so made (e.g., a phonograph record or a magnetic tape), and the entering of births, deaths, deeds, marriages, and so on, in an official register. (*Translators' note.*)

†When Georges Bataille speaks of sumptuary, nonproductive expenditures or consumptions in connection with the energy of nature, these are expenditures or consumptions that are not part of the supposedly independent sphere of human production, insofar as the latter is determined by "the useful." They therefore have to do with what we call the production of consumption. See Georges Bataille, *La part maudite, précédé de La notion de dépense* (Paris: Editions de Minuit).

terms confronting each other—not even in the sense of bipolar opposites within a relationship of causation, ideation, or expression (cause and effect, subject and object, etc.); rather, they are one and the same essential reality, the producer-product. Production as process overtakes all idealistic categories and constitutes a cycle whose relationship to desire is that of an immanent principle. That is why desiring-production is the principal concern of a materialist psychiatry, which conceives of and deals with the schizo as *Homo natura*. This will be the case, however, only on one condition, which in fact constitutes the third meaning of process as we use the term: it must not be viewed as a goal or an end in itself, nor must it be confused with an infinite perpetuation of itself. Putting an end to the process or prolonging it indefinitely—which, strictly speaking, is tantamount to ending it abruptly and prematurely—is what creates the artificial schizophrenic found in mental institutions: a limp rag forced into autistic behavior, produced as an entirely separate and independent entity. D. H. Lawrence says of love: “We have pushed a process into a goal. The aim of any process is not the perpetuation of that process, but the completion thereof. . . . The process should work to a completion, not to some horror of intensification and extremity wherein the soul and body ultimately perish.”⁵ Schizophrenia is like love: there is no specifically schizophrenic phenomenon or entity; schizophrenia is the universe of productive and reproductive desiring-machines, universal primary production as “the essential reality of man and nature.”

Desiring-machines are binary machines, obeying a binary law or set of rules governing associations: one machine is always coupled with another. The productive synthesis, the production of production, is inherently connective in nature: “and . . .” “and then . . .” This is because there is always a flow-producing machine, and another machine connected to it that interrupts or draws off part of this flow (the breast—the mouth). And because the first machine is in turn connected to another whose flow it interrupts or partially drains off, the binary series is linear in every direction. Desire constantly couples continuous flows and partial objects that are by nature fragmentary and fragmented. Desire causes the current to flow, itself flows in turn, and breaks the flows. “I love everything that flows, even the menstrual flow that carries away the seed unfecund.”* Amniotic fluid spilling out of the sac and kidney stones; flowing hair; a flow of spittle, a flow of sperm, shit, or urine that are produced by partial objects and constantly cut off by other

*Henry Miller, *Tropic of Cancer*, Ch. 13. See in this same chapter the celebration of desire-as-flux expressed in the phrase: “. . . and my guts spilled out in a grand schizophrenic rush, an evacuation that leaves me face to face with the Absolute.”

partial objects, which in turn produce other flows, interrupted by other partial objects. Every “object” presupposes the continuity of a flow; every flow, the fragmentation of the object. Doubtless each organ-machine interprets the entire world from the perspective of its own flux, from the point of view of the energy that flows from it: the eye interprets everything—speaking, understanding, shitting, fucking—in terms of seeing. But a connection with another machine is always established, along a transverse path, so that one machine interrupts the current of the other or “sees” its own current interrupted.

Hence the coupling that takes place within the partial object–flow connective synthesis also has another form: product/producing. Producing is always something “grafted onto” the product; and for that reason desiring-production is production of production, just as every machine is a machine connected to another machine. We cannot accept the idealist category of “expression” as a satisfactory or sufficient explanation of this phenomenon. We cannot, we must not attempt to describe the schizophrenic object without relating it to the process of production. The *Cahiers de l’art brut** are a striking confirmation of this principle, since by taking such an approach they deny that there is any such thing as a specific, identifiable schizophrenic entity. Or to take another example, Henri Michaux describes a schizophrenic table in terms of a process of production which is that of desire: “Once noticed, it continued to occupy one’s mind. It even persisted, as it were, in going about its own business. . . . The striking thing was that it was neither simple nor really complex, initially or intentionally complex, or constructed according to a complicated plan. Instead, it had been desimplified in the course of its carpentering. . . . As it stood, it was a table of additions, much like certain schizophrenics’ drawings, described as ‘overstuffed,’ and if finished it was only in so far as there was no way of adding anything more to it, the table having become more and more an accumulation, less and less a table. . . . It was not intended for any specific purpose, for anything one expects of a table. Heavy, cumbersome, it was virtually immovable. One didn’t know how to handle it (mentally or physically). Its top surface, the useful part of the table, having been gradually reduced, was disappearing, with so little relation to the clumsy framework that the thing did not strike one as a table, but as some freak piece of furniture, an unfamiliar instrument . . . for which there was no purpose. A dehumanized table, nothing cozy about it, nothing ‘middle-class,’ nothing rustic, nothing countrified, not a kitchen table or a work table. A table which lent itself to no function,

*A series of monographs, issued periodically, containing reproductions of art works created by inmates of the psychiatric asylums of Europe. *L’Art brut* is edited by Jean Dubuffet.

self-protective, denying itself to service and communication alike. There was something stunned about it, something petrified. Perhaps it suggested a stalled engine.’”⁶

The schizophrenic is the universal producer. There is no need to distinguish here between producing and its product. We need merely note that the pure “thisness” of the object produced is carried over into a new act of producing. The table continues to “go about its business.” The surface of the table, however, is eaten up by the supporting framework. The nontermination of the table is a necessary consequence of its mode of production. When Claude Lévi-Strauss defines *bricolage*,* he does so in terms of a set of closely related characteristics: the possession of a stock of materials or of rules of thumb that are fairly extensive, though more or less a hodgepodge—multiple and at the same time limited; the ability to rearrange fragments continually in new and different patterns or configurations; and as a consequence, an indifference toward the act of producing and toward the product, toward the set of instruments to be used and toward the over-all result to be achieved.† The satisfaction the handyman experiences when he plugs something into an electric socket or diverts a stream of water can scarcely be explained in terms of “playing mommy and daddy,” or by the pleasure of violating a taboo. The rule of continually producing production, of grafting producing onto the product, is a characteristic of desiring-machines or of primary production: the production of production. A painting by Richard Lindner, “Boy with Machine,” shows a huge, pudgy, bloated boy working one of his little desiring-machines, after having hooked it up to a vast technical social machine—which, as we shall see, is what even the very young child does.

Producing, a product: a producing/product identity. It is this identity that constitutes a third term in the linear series: an enormous undifferentiated object. Everything stops dead for a moment, everything freezes in place—and then the whole process will begin all over again. From a certain point of view it would be much better if nothing worked, if nothing functioned. Never being born, escaping the wheel of continual birth and rebirth, no mouth to suck with, no anus to shit through. Will

**bricolage*: The tinkering about of the *bricoleur*, or amateur handyman. The art of making do with what’s at hand. (Translators’ note.)

†Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 17: “The ‘bricoleur’ is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks; but unlike the engineer, he does not subordinate each of them to the availability of raw materials and tools conceived and procured for the purpose of the project. His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with ‘whatever is at hand,’ that is to say with a set of tools and materials which is always finite and is also heterogeneous because what it contains bears no relation to the current project, or indeed to any particular project, but is the contingent result of all the occasions there have been to renew or enrich the stock or to maintain it with the remains of previous constructions or destructions.”

the machines run so badly, their component pieces fall apart to such a point that they will return to nothingness and thus allow us to return to nothingness? It would seem, however, that the flows of energy are still too closely connected, the partial objects still too organic, for this to happen. What would be required is a pure fluid in a free state, flowing without interruption, streaming over the surface of a full body. Desiring-machines make us an organism; but at the very heart of this production, within the very production of this production, the body suffers from being organized in this way, from not having some other sort of organization, or no organization at all. “An incomprehensible, absolutely rigid stasis” in the very midst of process, as a third stage: “*No mouth. No tongue. No teeth. No larynx. No esophagus. No belly. No anus.*” The automata stop dead and set free the unorganized mass they once served to articulate. The full body without organs is the unproductive, the sterile, the unengendered, the unconsumable. Antonin Artaud discovered this one day, finding himself with no shape or form whatsoever, right there where he was at that moment. The death instinct: that is its name, and death is not without a model. For desire desires death also, because the full body of death is its motor, just as it desires life, because the organs of life are the *working machine*. We shall not inquire how all this fits together so that the machine will run: the question itself is the result of a process of abstraction.

Desiring-machines work only when they break down, and by continually breaking down. Judge Schreber “lived for a long time without a stomach, without intestines, almost without lungs, with a torn oesophagus, without a bladder, and with shattered ribs; he used sometimes to swallow part of his own larynx with his food, etc.”⁷ The body without organs is nonproductive; nonetheless it is produced, at a certain place and a certain time in the connective synthesis, as the identity of producing and the product: the schizophrenic table is a body without organs. The body without organs is not the proof of an original nothingness, nor is it what remains of a lost totality. Above all, it is not a projection; it has nothing whatsoever to do with the body itself, or with an image of the body. It is the body without an image. This imageless, organless body, the nonproductive, exists right there where it is produced, in the third stage of the binary-linear series. It is perpetually reinserted into the process of production. The catatonic body is produced in the water of the hydrotherapy tub. The full body without organs belongs to the realm of antiproduction; but yet another characteristic of the connective or productive synthesis is the fact that it couples production with antiproduction, with an element of antiproduction.