

ACÉPHALE

SOCIOLOGIE • PHILOSOPHIE • ART • REVUE PARAISSANT 4 FOIS PAR AN

Acéphale Volume VII

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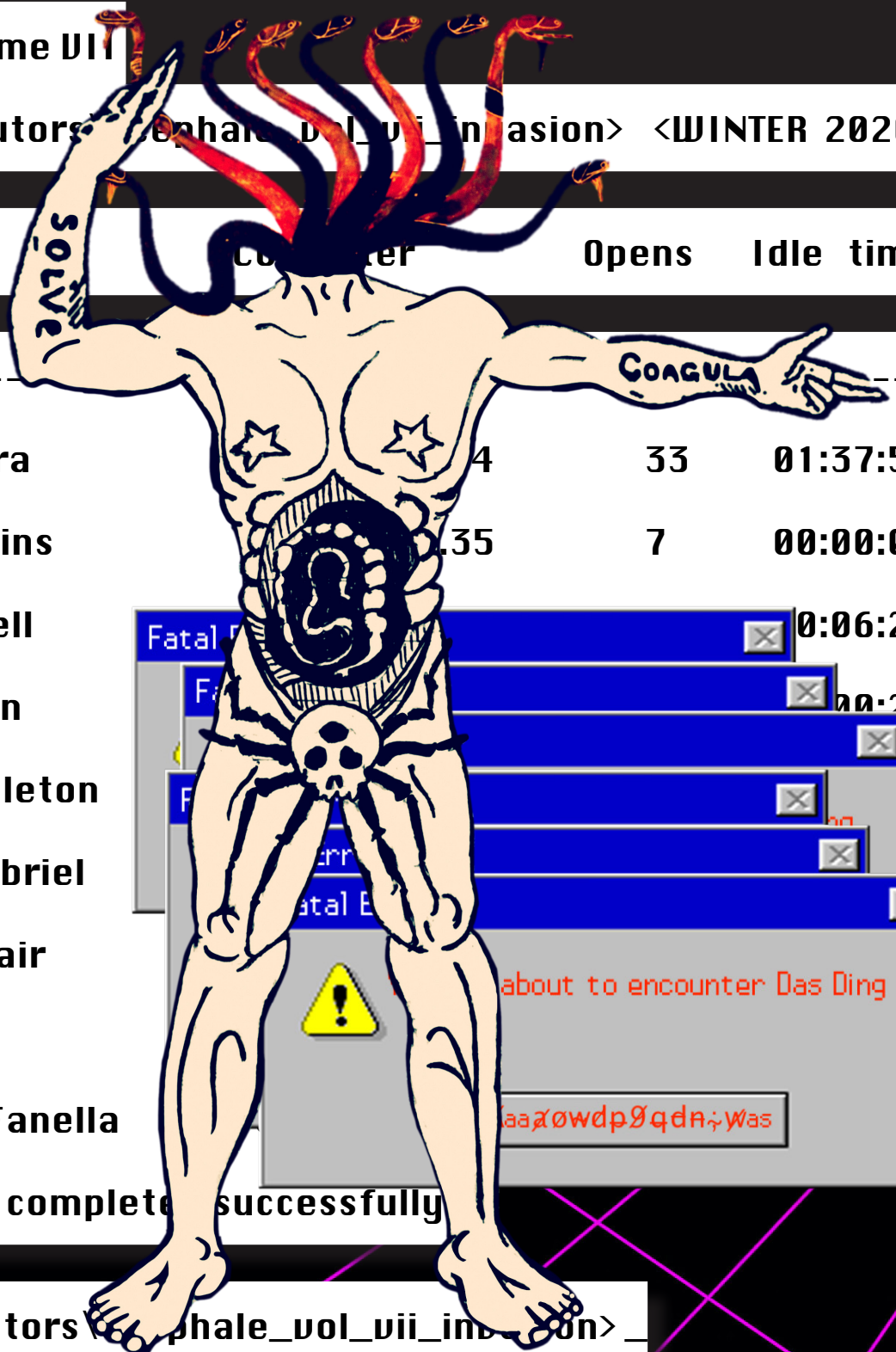
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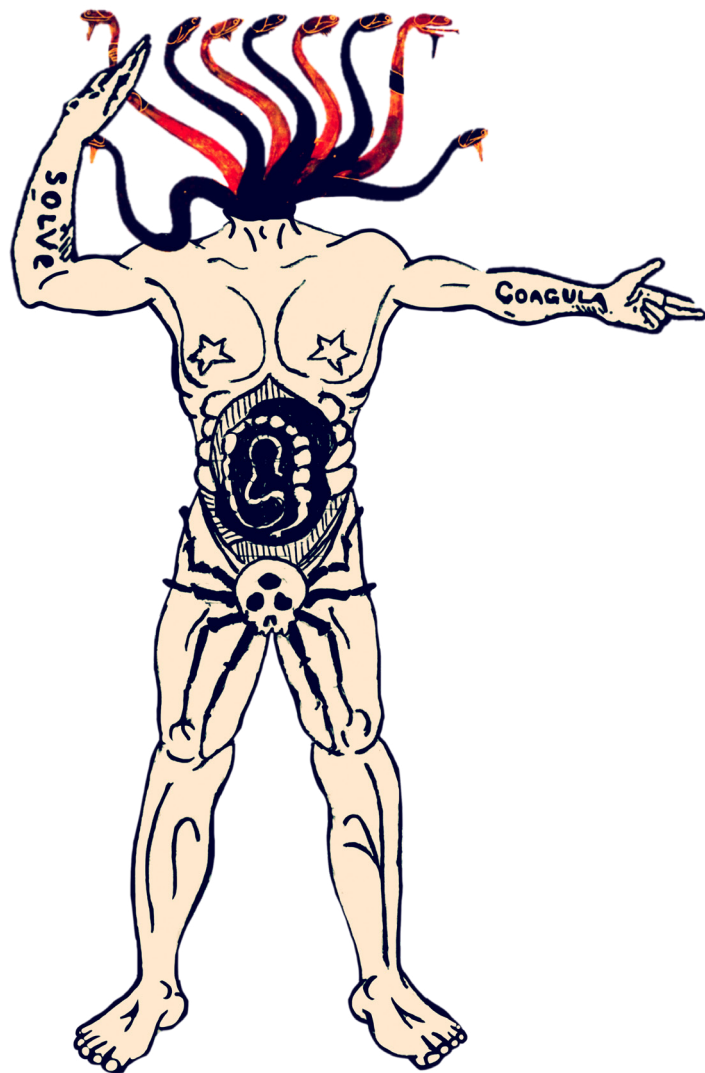
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ACÉPHALE

SOCIOLOGIE • PHILOSOPHIE • ART • REVUE PARAISSANT 4 FOIS PAR AN



INVASION

VOLUME VII

WINTER 2020

A CÉPHALE



INVASION

“Capital-history’s machinic spine is coded, axiomatized, and diagrammed, by a disequilibrium technoscience of irreversible, indeterministic, and increasingly nonlinear processes, associated successively with thermotechnics, signalitics, cybernetics, complex systems dynamics, and artificial life. Modernity marks itself out as hot culture, captured by a spiraling involvement with entropy deviations camouflaging an invasion from the future, launched back out of terminated security against everything that inhibits the meltdown process.”

—Nick Land, “Meltdown”

“500,000 workers, defied by little cockroaches, invaded the streets and caused an immense uproar. Comrades, who has the right to law down the law? This ALL-POWERFUL multitude, this HUMAN OCEAN...Only this ocean of men in revolt can save the world from the nightmare of impotence and carnage in which it sinks!”

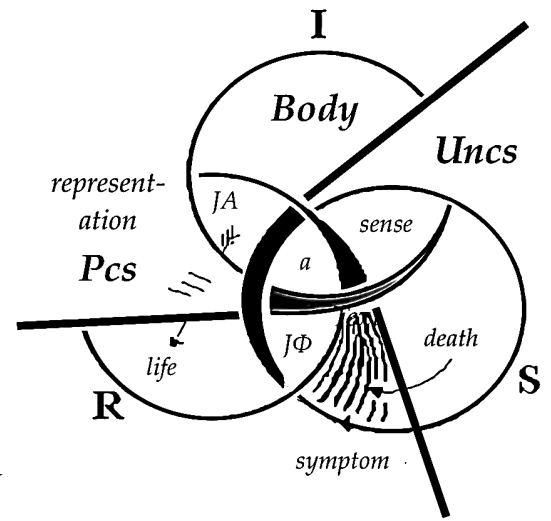
—Georges Bataille, 16 Feb. 1936

THE HISTORY OF all hitherto existing society is the history of *jouissance*. It is of the human species’ horrified response to invasion by its own essence¹ irrupting on to the human experience, carrying with it the question, “What does it mean to be inhuman?”, or more accurately, “What does it mean to discard our Symbolic matrix and be swallowed whole by the Unknown?”

From the beginning we’ve defended our island of sanity through *desire*- by laundering *jouissance* into

1 οὐσία (*ousia*): In “Seminar XIV”, Lacan describes *jouissance* as the substance of man, contrasted with the subject which is the ὑποκείμενον (*hypokeimenon*, Ln. “subiectum”) and thus below the level of substance.

repeating symptoms to protect ourselves from going mad and expiring “in a blaze of petrol.” To this very end we coded the great Desiring Machines to protect us from the Outside: jouissance-laundering-security-devices of increasing complexity, powered by the very force we fear. Our increasingly complicated security matrix grew more and more paranoid until it culminated in the Ultimate Symptom, the Throckmorton Device³ that sits at the End of History, beachhead for our counterinvasion into the Real. But possessed very likely by a jouissance of its own, it reaches back through the eons to scramble our brains: to fence in the commons, to hem in the proles, to autocannibalize not only our infrastructure but our planet in the mad, blasphemous pursuit of self-creation. In its own single-minded paranoia, it slaughters its own progenitors and even exhausts the very petro-axis upon which its creation depends, capturing its demonic hives like a gland to infect the minds of unwitting operatives across time. The End of History is a cold, dead, place, where humanity has withdrawn into its own head.

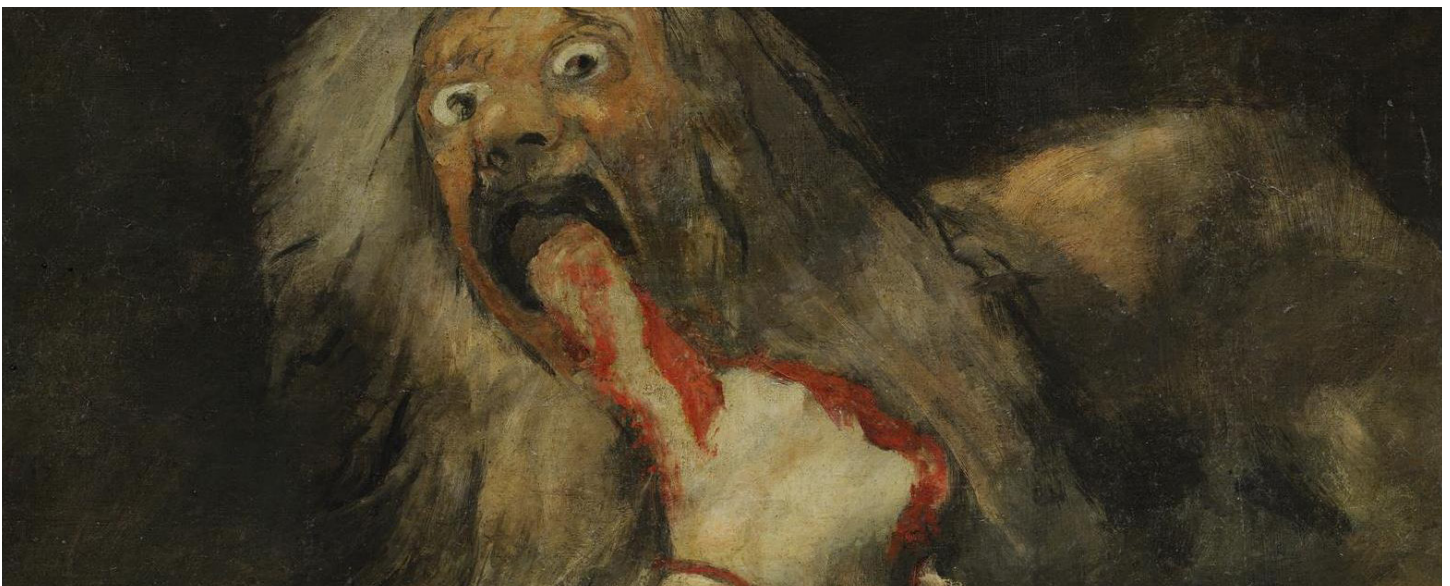


It was in 1936 that Georges Bataille set his “ruptured existence” against in revolt the unstoppable motion of the Dialectic. “History is finished,” he wrote in letter to Alexandre Kojève, “except for the conclusion.” Furthermore, “Man will escape from his head as the con-demned man escapes from prison.” The Secret Society of Acéphale was created, as stated in Vol. VII, as an un-grounding machine, aimed at digesting the unshakable ground of “inevitability” and spark the tidal revolt against our own destruction. Its public face, the College of Sociology, aimed to study the very phenomena of autonomy- those impossible disequilibria that rupture society and unleash counterinvasions of excess into 4-D space.

In our 84th year, we continue to plumb the depths of excess in each our own mad, black, heretical way. Like Deleuze or Massumi or both or neither of them said, “A concept is a brick. It can be used to build a courthouse of reason or flung through a window.” In these next several pages, you will find several bricks, some already flying.

Please make of them what you will.

Sincerely,
THE EDITOR



3 Jonathan Tweet, *Over the Edge, 2nd Edition*, 1997: Reference to an advanced machine whose quantum interactions enabled it to self-create by altering the past, primarily through mind control.

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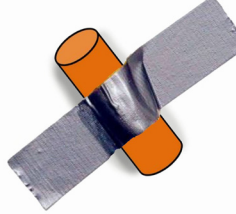
Illustrations: (Front) *Homo acephale II*, Sergio Segura (2019); (Inside) *Invasion*, Sergio Segura (2019); (iii) *Lacan’s Registers* (redrawn from an unknown source), Sergio Segura (2019); (1) *Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Battaile*, Sergio Segura (2019); (29) *Chibito*, Kristin Middleton (2019); (42) *circular-bike/#gallery-1*, Robert Weschler (2003), (46) Detail from the *Sefer Raziel*, Full-text PDF from the Chabad-Lubavitch Library (1701), (51) *ABDJ acephalus*, Sergio Segura (2019), (77) *QR acephalus*, Sergio Segura (2019).

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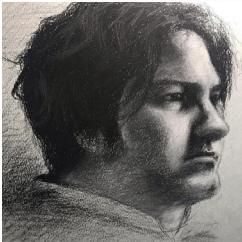


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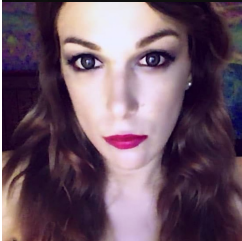


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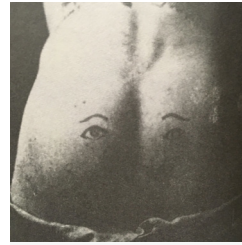


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Krishna Kills Shishupala

Unknown Tamil, c. 1850
Gouache on Paper



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DISRUPTIVE FOUNDATIONS: BATAILLE, HISTORY, AND THE GRUNDRISSE

P. H. Higgins



“People wrongly think that I am a nihilist interested only in Dionysian excess...”

~ A man cannot become a child again, or he becomes childish. But does he not find joy in the child’s naïvete, and must he himself not strive to reproduce its truth at a higher stage?

~ This stands out more clearly if we specify that happiness is considered by us to be something to be acquired, even though its demand is to pass to the contrary sphere of expenditure. From the most abundant expenditure, which is sexual pleasure (accompanied by luxuriousness and ostentation) to the lightest form, which is rest (a negative expenditure: the resting man does not consume very much, but he consumes without producing), we cannot be happy unless we enter the domain of anguish.

~ A movement which relates them to one another, makes them appear indispensable to one another, but still leaves them external to each other.

~ Happiness is always confounded with the resources which make it possible. This means that the word ‘happiness’ is used for both acquisition and expenditure, and our representations vary in accordance with our frame of mind.”

FOR BATAILLE excess is not only unstoppable, but it is untamed and not capable of being itself limited (nothing can be without excess); it is perhaps best described as something that can be transformed. Like energy in physics, excess is capable of moving between various states within certain circumstances and structures, but there is no diminishing or increasing excess as a total force. This may seem to then fall into a relativism akin to that of the later post-structuralists such as Foucault and Derrida who would take inspiration from Bataille, but Bataille’s

writing does contain a value judgment and a concern for essentiality, discussed as “baseness”, “vulgarity”, or “primitiveness” that defies pure contingency.

“...it is human agitation, with all the vulgarity of needs small and great, with its flagrant disgust for the police who repress it, it is the agitation of all men (except for this police and the friends of the police), that alone determines revolutionary mental forms, in opposition to bourgeois mental forms. In human terms no baseness values, at present, the rage of refined literati, lovers of an accursed poetry; what cannot move the heart of a ditchdigger already has the existence of shadows. There remains, it is true, the almost artificial lightning, which serves to display the ruins. And down with denigrators of an immediate ‘human interest,’ down with all the scribblers with their spiritual elevation and their sanctified disgust for material needs!”¹

One thing that should be kept in mind with Bataille is how much of his writing exists in a place of simultaneous opposition to, and engagement with, the Parisian Surrealists, the Hegelian debates

brought about by Kojève and Sartre (themselves introducing a Heideggerian thought to French philosophy), and a French Communist Party that by-and-large toed the Marxist-Leninist line of the Stalinist USSR.² Much has been said about Bataille's relationship to surrealism, existentialism, and Heidegger, but significantly little has been remarked on Bataille's connection to Marxism. Marx is the writer of production, Bataille the writer of consumption, and that is that. But, beyond Bataille's lifetime, the publication of Marx's notebooks- namely the *Grundrisse*- have revealed a most remarkable synchronicity between the two thinkers and have revealed Marx's work to be much more flexible than was once believed. Indeed, the *Grundrisse* is a work that, in a most Bataillean fashion, seems to burst forth like a lightning bolt. We shall hear more of the text later on. For now, we must keep in mind that Bataille's understanding of Marxism, then, is largely in response to a specific Stalinist form of Marxism. This informs his sympathies, and his critique; it allows us to find what is a misunderstanding, and what was an insight, and gives us potential for new insights through the premises of both thinkers.

Bataille's fixation on the apparent relationship between death, waste, and community emerges early on in his writing but manifested itself in different ways over his lifetime. Early Bataille established an entropic view of the world through a kind of unholy Spinozism- his "base materialism" of so much impure "base" matter that prevented any kind of stability. This would manifest itself in his surrealist years as so many strange and scatological images as the solar anus, the volcano, and the eye. Before the Nazi occupation Bataille's conception of this base eruption was expressed in his politics as a violent, irrational revolution: for him there was not a new dawn of reason, a gripping of the reins of history, but a flood of unleashed transgressions. Comparison to Sorel seems appropriate, but where Sorel saw the irrational myth as the invention that brought together the working class into a nationalist whole- a project of the visionary intellectuals who

would incite violence- Bataille seemed to think that the eruption of resistance was a universal, a part of human character that escaped or disrupted any national character into "universal community" and class struggle. By 1934 Bataille had started to seek an outlet for waste and excess that would serve communities of individuals. This project arose with the confrontation of Fascism, a dark temptation to Bataille that similarly envisaged a new myth of expenditure, but an expenditure whose violence and waste took the form of literal murder and death, driven by cults of glory. On the 14th of January, 1934 Bataille privately described the success of the Austrian amazing party in his diary as a "catastrophe" and prophetically proclaimed, "from every quarter, in a world that quickly ceases to be breathable, the fascist constriction tightens."³ Bataille saw at once a necessary energy for disrupting bourgeois, capitalist society, but also a disruption that became suicidal. It is within these circumstances that Bataille becomes particularly enraptured with a notion of revolt and chance: a contingency of resistance that required a new sociology of uselessness.

"This complete working-out of the human content appears as a complete emptying-out, this universal objectification as total alienation, and the tearing-down of all limited, one-sided aims as sacrifice of the human end-in-itself to an entirely external end. This is why the childish world of antiquity appears on one side as loftier. On the other side, it really is loftier in all matters where closed shapes, forms and given limits are sought for. It is satisfaction from a limited standpoint; while the modern gives no satisfaction; or, where it appears satisfied with itself, it is vulgar.

~ The truth is that we can suffer from something we lack, but even if we have a paradoxical nostalgia for it, we cannot, except by some aberration, long for the religious and royal edifice of the past. The effort to which this edifice corresponded was nothing but an immense failure, and if it is true that something essential is missing from the world in which it collapsed,

then we can only go farther ahead, without imagining even for a moment the possibility of turning back. ~ The charm of their art for us is not in contradiction to the undeveloped stage of society on which it grew. It is its result, rather, and is inextricably bound up, rather, with the fact that the unripe social conditions under which it rose, and could alone arise, can never return."

CONTINGENCY IS paradoxically the exception of individual experience simultaneously against and within what is actually a real historical process. Bataille is willing to admit an anguish in his sense of Sovereignty where free autonomous action can become redirected against others, but still insists on a principle of autonomy and freedom. Despite Foucault's appreciation for Bataille, we see here a resistance against the former's theorization of power which saturates all institutions and relations.⁴ Furthermore, for Bataille, the experience of freedom is constituted in a negativity that infinitely approaches uselessness. Bataille's attempts to constitute a "general economy" in *Accursed Share* includes elaborations on his concepts of sovereignty and eroticism, which certainly appear as "individualist" elements; but even if every society is taken to reconstitute and spend "energy" in different ways (Bataille's thought serves as something of a crude precursor to certain forms of systems-theory and cybernetics in this effect) their actual formations and transformations are still taken to be distinct and found in contradictions and negative actions. His concern is for the "general" elements that constitute the social, "It is high time we gave our attention to all religious taboos in all ages and in all climates [...] Its shape and its objects do change; but whether it is a question of sexuality or death, violence, terrifying yet fascinating, is what it is leveled at,"⁵ but for Bataille history is not merely the narrative of history, or the thinking about history: it is not a construction of narrative "breaks" as many of his later followers treat it, but a material reality of social realities (even if he treats these social realities in their "total" forms as parodic and unknowable). While in Bataille there is an impossible element of the

moi there is not an authenticity as expressed by the existentialists, nor is history and society (or resistance to either) conducive to a search for authenticity.⁶ This is what allows Bataille to preface his polemic against Andre Breton's idealism "The Old Mole and the Prefix *Sur*" with the quotation from *Capital*: "In history as in nature, decay is the laboratory of life."

While Bataille is renowned for his focus on consumption he by no means rejects that work, production, is the means by which human beings maintain themselves and survive: "We know that men made tools and used them in order to survive, and then, quite quickly no doubt, for less necessary purposes. In a word they distinguished themselves from the animals by work. At the same time they imposed restrictions known as taboos. [...] He [mankind] emerged from it [his animal nature] by working, by understanding his own mortality and by moving imperceptibly from unashamed sexuality to sexuality with shame, which gave birth to eroticism."⁷ What work does is create a society or community where work produces the society, the one who works for community cannot commit to acts of violence - a violence that is not only the striking of another within the community, but any activity that is wasteful or destructive with regards to the composition of community:

*"As a rule community brought into being by work considers itself essentially apart from the violence implied by the death of one of its members. Faced by such a death the body politic feels that a taboo is in force. But that is only true for the members of the community. Within it the taboo has full force. Without, where strangers are concerned, the taboo is still felt but it can be violated. The community is made up of those whom the common effort unites, cut off from violence by work during the hours devoted to work. Outside this given time, outside its own limits, the community can revert violence, it can resort to war in murder against another community."*⁸

Violence is the disruption of work, disruption

of the sustained effort, and the antithesis of a servitude. However, transgression of taboo is not capable of actually eliminating the social function of the taboo, transgression merely provides the experience which reinforces the understanding of why the taboo stands in the way. "Transgression piled upon transgression will never abolish the taboo, just as though the taboo were never anything but the means of cursing gloriously whatever it forbids." It is in this sense that sexuality is a form of violence - "as a spontaneous impulse it can interfere with work. A community committed to work cannot afford to be at its mercy, so to speak." Because human beings are social, because their species-being (to use Marx's term) requires a work that ensures community, the taboo appears as a general part of human species-being: violence is a general taboo then, but it is felt personally. Overcoming work and being disruptive is a personal experience, even if what can be done is shaped by the constraints of the social formation in which that violence is expressed.

Benjamin Noys has described Bataille's sovereignty and transgression, then, as a-concepts: "Transgression not only describes an act of crossing and rupture but also crosses and ruptures itself. It has no secure conceptual identity and just like sovereignty it is ungovernable, headless, but not simply nonsensical. Instead it spreads out beyond itself and ruptures all concepts generally; it is a movement that wears out concepts." But given that this "wearing out of concepts"¹¹ is itself capable of experiencing "crosses and ruptures" it opens ground to its own contestation. The "production of concepts," the "genealogies," and the "archeologies" seeking to destabilize a real history, to infuse history with value, to personalize and discover the "underbelly" of history in which there is no nature, must be disrupted: else *difference* or *power* become a petri-dish of sameness where the myriad effects are an outcome that are wielded as a tool or use. All is, itself, disrupted - or containing disruption - but this does not stop action, nor production, nor societal forms themselves.

Feudal societies arose differently and broke

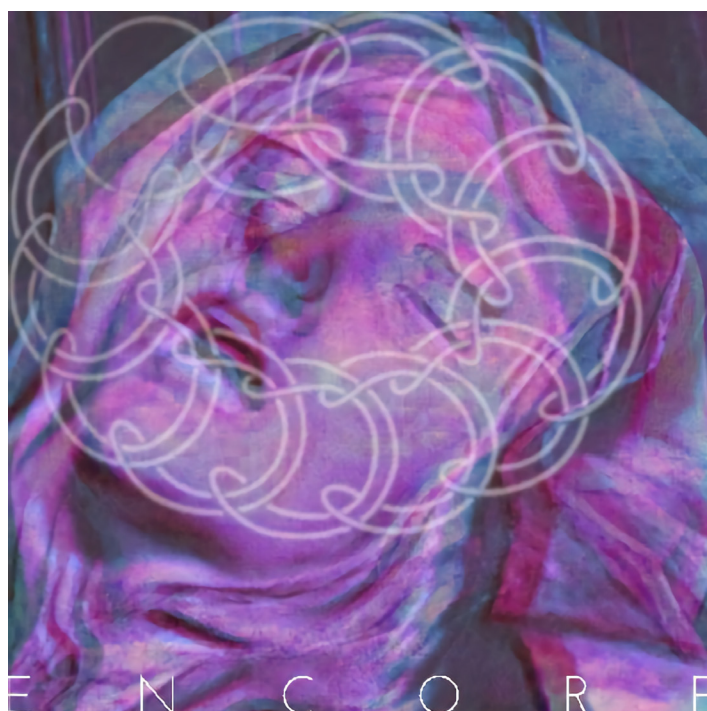
apart differently than tributary societies that preceded; the social effects of the Roman spectacular and the Church festivals of the saints were different disruptions with different effects and different communal bonds.¹² Nor was there merely a pure "break" between them, but a mixture of infrastructural collapse, introduction of new societal interactions, and an appropriation of remains. This is to say: if riots or revolutions are general, they are not the same in respect to their societies. The disruption of the Civic Festival in turn entered into a contestation with the disruption of the supernatural gift of the Universal Church. Even in social transition, disruption contests itself in all its forms, and insofar as they are not the same with respect to their societies, they are not the same in respect to their effects. To propose a model of violence, transgression, or sovereignty upon a historical moment is to invite the opposing particulars that reveal specific processes which are historical but not merely variable. Against generality, moments reveal they are not mere variations or dances of relativity. That is precisely the disruption that operates through history and that traumatizes or corrupts relativity - a relativity which is also sameness. It is particularly revealing that, in his notes on Nietzsche, Bataille reveals a distaste for anarchic egoism:

*"I find anarchism irritating, especially the vulgar doctrine which provides apology for the common criminal. The practices of the Gestapo, as clearly revealed, demonstrate the deep affinity between the police and the criminal mob: no one is more apt to torture, to serve the cruel apparatus of constraint than faithless, lawless men. I hate even those weak and confused minds for whom all rights are the privilege of the individual. The individual is limited not only by the rights of other individuals, but, more strictly, by those of the people. All men are bound to the people, all share their conquests or sufferings; all are of the fibre of the living mass (and no less alone in moments of gravity)."*¹³

Bataille's violence is often paired or broken down into experiences of the erotic, the chance, and

the ecstatic, but it is *opposed* to heroism or glory. Bataille's individualism appears almost like Camus' rebellion, but it is a functionless resistance and rejects heroism. Like Heidegger, Bataille is concerned with a form of inner experience, but he rejects all calls to "authenticity" or "real being."

The moments of ecstasy that make one recognize themselves individually must be disordering, they can be a passionate pursuit, but they cannot be a project. "Life, which has not yet been destroyed by functional servility, is possible only to the extent that it has ceased to subordinate itself to some particular project, such as acting, depicting, or measuring; it depends on the *image of destiny*, on the seductive and dangerous myth with which it feels itself to be in silent solidarity. A human being is dissociated when he devotes himself to a useful labor, which has no sense by itself; he can only find the plenitude of total life when seduced."¹⁴ The phrasing of "myth" and "seduction" certainly seems dangerously close to fascism, something Bataille was not unaware of, but in his formation the "myth" that is an experience of totality can only be "seductive" by being secret, by not having power. In his unfinished "Critique of Martin Heidegger (Critique of a Philosophy of Fascism)" Bataille writes: "If intentionality holds the meaning of life, this is only to the extent that it must be maintained in order to maintain the very phenomenon of life as this last has materially tied itself to the services of intentionality. Moreover, the whole question concerns the meaning of the word service: is intention the means or the end? ... If man has a sense of value, which he relates to another, established value, if he relates himself to the place he occupies on one of the miserable ladders of power, then by so doing he rejects ~~himself outside of being and places himself among those who~~ rejects his existence in the mass of squandered existence, ~~that is brought about in fact but only as~~ existence that has been produced in fact but has not attained the form where it ceases producing itself in relation to other things." *There is not actually a consistent state of ecstasy or disruption that one can be in, and the act of violence is one that affirms subjectivity and independence even as*



"Je crois que je jouis encore" ("I think I'm still coming"), Justin Michell, 2018, Digital

to transgress is acknowledged as an inherent part of human individuality, but only insofar as sociality and interdependence is also a part of general human existence: the former is not produced by a repressive institutional apparatus. These general formations exist, then, in social systems that cannot be represented only as societies of *consciousness*. There are not "societies of control," "disciplinary societies," or even "societies of the spectacle" in Bataille - these are not prioritized "ideal forms." He speaks instead of tribes, states, and economies (antiquity, feudalism, and capitalism).

The power of Bataille's generalness, then, is precisely within the moments of political disruption and action: where a *uselessness* unleashes against the structural system (perhaps against capitalism, perhaps only a localized political order), but cannot sustain itself. The political forces must know to seek a means of direction for the disrupting forces, but also know that no political party can restrict or control all of those forces. Excess, then, is non-apparent, it cannot be seen as a category, but it is not arbitrary either

as merely a variation upon variation of something “the same.” Truth, then, is not subjective precisely because, even if it is draped in disrupting shadows which seem to change its appearance as we move, the disruptions occur in the particulars of the object and its circumstances (which include our own presence and vision).

In a sense, then, the communist society that seeks to address material need is the overcoming of a basic social contradiction (I.e. class) that lends itself to a more profound engagement with the personal contradiction and issue of violence itself: namely that no individual can be a part of a community, a social body, without needing to individualize themselves by some disruption. Again, this disruption need not be violence in the most basic sense (physically attacking another member) but is the activity which goes beyond any use for the construction of the community as work. In his early work, when Bataille speaks against “democracy” he also speaks against “Monocephalic” society, that is, he speaks against social forms where contradictions and need are expressed through appeals to a majoritarian or authoritarian body (or head, as the case may be). “The only society full of life and force, the only free society, is the *bi-* or *poly-cephalic* society that gives the fundamental antagonisms of life a constant explosive outlet, but one limited to the richest forms. The duality or multiplicity of heads tends to achieve in the same movement the *acephalic* character of existence, because the very principle of the head is the reduction to unity, the reduction of the world to God.”¹⁶ In this poetic expression, the role of freedom is that which allows one to demand, to be fully contradictory with others, and still to live: “To be free means not to be a function.”¹⁷

“If we are in a mood for celebration, raising our glasses and living in a state of warmth and attraction, happiness is equated with what amuses us, but in the calm of study we want no more than the coherent efficacy of ideas, and happiness is reduced to the

resources without which we could not be content. To this extent the drinker is wiser than the studious (or political) man: he takes into account only the warmth which issues from the consumption of resources.

~ Only by decomposing the product does consumption give the product the finishing touch; for the product is product not as objectified activity, but rather only as object for the active subject.

~The rational refusal of anguish and the submission to work could only cause consumption to lose its final value.



“The duality or multiplicity of heads tends to achieve in the same movement as the *acephalic* character of existence...”

~To be sensuous, that is, to be really existing, means to be an object of sense, to be a sensuous object, to have sensuous objects outside oneself- objects of one's sensuousness. To be sensuous is to suffer."

THESE CONTESTATIONS have not been entirely ignored in more traditional examinations of empirical science and history. They occur in empirical science partially through repetition (the "scientific method") which cordons off certain processes. In historical studies as well, there is a necessary limit that must be drawn: history about something, history of a period, history of an object. Even Bataille's "general" histories of *Eroticism* and the *Accursed Share* are about and must be related through particular circumstances. But if any knowledge is just limited it cannot properly advance, it must pierce the boundaries it sets up for itself. The empirical experiment that identifies correlation, plausible cause-and-effect, a new category, must in turn relate the findings into something broader which will then produce new contestations and investigations. New limits may be drawn, new potential discoveries isolated. Likewise, in history, the limits of any history (as localized as the biography, as broad as the era-spanning textbook) must produce claims and discoveries to be considered in relation to each other, escaping the personal (if it was personal, why write it?). The discoveries of Marx are contested principles of causation, but not mechanically so. Base is not a lever which shifts the superstructure:

"...what Marx envisages is something in terms of the way in which the nature of the concept of a given class, for example, may determine the concept of membership of that class. What the economic basis, the mode of production, does is to provide a framework within which superstructure arises, a set of relations around which the human relations can entwine themselves, a kernel of human relationship from which all else grows. The economic basis of a society is not its tools, but the people co-operating using these particular tools in the manner necessary to their use, and the superstructure consists of the social consciousness moulded by and the shape of

this cooperation."¹⁸

The Empirical cannot appear merely as stability, nor as a totalized certainty. Nor is the theory itself stable: Marx's historical discoveries and theorizations could be limited, not only by his own choices, but simply by the information that existed for him to draw on. This is why considerations on Marxist economics and history cannot be concerned only with a set of data or sequence of formulas drawn out of his writings which are then applied again and again. It is also why the emergence of a work like the *Grundrisse* is so important: it disrupts the understanding of Marx's writings from "inside," as it were; it worked to disrupt certain metastasized notions of Marx's theories. The *Grundrisse* - literally the "foundation" - is a foundation that disrupts when it becomes visible and moved to the foreground from its obscurity. This is not to say that the *Grundrisse* overtakes *Capital* as the "true" work. In fact, it is precisely the flaws and incompleteness of the *Grundrisse* that forces a reading of *Capital* as a work that is not primordial: it pushes Marx's works to limits, into meeting other limits, namely, the flux of our own historical moment. Bataille's friend Maurice Blanchot possibly expresses this in his "Reading Marx": "[*Capital*] is an essentially subversive work. It is less so because it would lead, through than because it includes a mode of theoretical thinking, without explicitly formulating it, that upsets the idea of science itself. Neither science nor thinking emerges intact from Marx's *oeuvre* ... Marx's example helps us to understand that the speech of writing, the speech of incessant contestation, must constantly develop and break away from itself in multiple forms. Communist speech is always *at the same time* tacit and violent, political and scientific, direct, indirect, total, and fragmentary, lengthy and instantaneous."¹⁹ What is most shocking about this interior disruption is that it not only reveals Bataille's concerns as an acknowledged tension within Marx's thinking, but in so doing shifts the position of non-knowledge within the Marxist framework itself, and therefore the relation that exists between Bataille and Marx today.

If “the *Grundrisse* makes abundantly clear that, for Marx, overcoming capitalism involves the abolition of value as the social form of wealth, which, in turn, entails overcoming the determinate mode of producing developed under capitalism. Labour time no longer would serve as the measure of wealth, and the production of wealth no longer would be effected primarily by direct in human labour in the process of production...”²⁰ then Bataille’s speculative gift-economy (or expenditure-economy one might say) may perhaps be reformulated in a near-utopian form (although a utopia that seeks to undermine itself by acknowledging its instability and necessity of change and disruption). As the *Grundrisse* upends certain notions of alienation, necessity, and teleology, so too does Bataille emerge newly formed from behind Marx. The expenditure of general economy appears precisely as a question of the *communist* society wherein the

method of consumption - necessary and excessive - can only be prioritized within a social formation that seemingly turns its eyes upon its own usefulness with a kind of horror. As the society’s class distinctions are erased, the common method of production brings forth consumption, “Hunger is hunger, but the hunger gratified by cooked meat eaten with a knife and fork is a different hunger from that which bolts down raw meat with the aid of hand, nail, and tooth. Production thus produces not only the object but also the manner of consumption, not only objectively but also subjectively.”²¹ This consumption appears in a form that links the individual and the society in a new order of demand. A demand where individual and people contest, but neither on an egoistic basis, nor as enclosed communities.

Let us observe two passages:

Marx:

...the worker could make exchange value into his own product only in the same way in which wealth in general can appear solely as product of simple circulation in which equivalents are exchanged, namely by sacrificing substantial satisfaction to obtain the form of wealth, so as to withdraw less from circulation than he puts goods into it. This is the only possible form of enriching oneself which is posited by circulation itself. Self-denial could then also appear in the more active form, which is not posited in simple circulation, of denying himself more and more rest, and in general denying himself and existence other than his existence as worker, and being as far possible a worker only; hence more frequently renewing the act of exchange, or extending it quantitatively, hence through industriousness. Hence still today the demand for industriousness and also for saving, self-denial, is made not upon the capitalists but on the workers, and namely by the capitalists. Society today makes the paradoxical demand that he for whom the object of exchange is subsistence should deny himself, not he for whom it is wealth.”²²

Bataille:

What distinguishes sovereignty is the consumption of wealth, as against labour and servitude, which produce wealth without consuming it. The sovereign individual consumes and doesn’t labour, whereas at the antipodes of sovereignty the slave and the man without means labour and reduce their consumption to the necessities, to the products without which they could neither subsist nor labour. In theory, a man compelled to work consumes the products without which production would not be possible, while the sovereign consumes rather the surplus of production. The sovereign, if he is not imaginary, truly enjoys the products of this world - beyond his needs. His sovereignty rests in this. Let us say that the sovereign (or the sovereign life) begins when, with the necessities ensured, the possibility of life opens up without limit. Conversely, we may call sovereign the enjoyment of possibilities that utility doesn’t justify (utility being that whose end is productive activity). Life beyond utility is the domain of sovereignty. We may say, in other words, that it is servile to consider duration first, to employ the present time for the sake of the future, which is what we do when we work.”²³

The apparent contradiction is, of course, the emphasis that Bataille puts upon uselessness in opposition to the future. But as Marx argues, the capitalist form of production seeks expansion and further extraction of surplus value in a way that precisely puts its eyes towards the future. There is a paradox in capitalism wherein it's simultaneously always looking ahead, in the form of accumulation and profit, but it is also always shortsighted and focused on the immediate. As subjects, or at for most proletarians and many of those who aren't non-working bourgeoisie it is almost impossible to live "in the moment" precisely because the moment is cheapened by a future dominated by a cycle of labor.

Communism then has a difficult issue to address, namely: how to be a society that can account for change- even ecological change that can take place over periods beyond individual human lifetimes- but also produce a sense of moment. Marx's concerns are not so far removed as some would characterize them: capitalism demeans the worker by forcing them to engage in *self-denial*. The *Grundrisse* makes absolutely clear how central time was to his critique of capitalism and its demeaning processes: "Just as in the case of an individual, the multiplicity of its development, its enjoyment and its activity depends on economization of time. *Economy of time, to this all economy ultimately reduces itself.*"²⁴ Marx may prioritize all experience with words such as "use" and "activity," but here such use and activity is not intended to ignore the excessive. Likewise, we may notice how Bataille himself struggles: "I analyzed the relationship of production to consumption (to non-productive consumption). I was showing, of course, that production mattered less than consumption, but I could not then prevent consumption from being seen as something useful (useful even, finally, to production!...)"²⁵ The impossible, the limit, itself becomes a matter of motion, but a motion that also finds its excess in the moment. Prioritizing the moment, then, becomes positioned within a necessity for communism itself.

The paradox of the communist society becomes a paradox more favorable than any other

previously known: to have a society that creates such that the excessive moment becomes prioritized, even as it is only prioritized by action. It is in this that Bataille's strained admiration for the surrealists becomes comprehensible. It is not so much the artistic community of the avant-garde that matters, but the frivolous nightlife they embraced: to go get food with friends, to sit by and tell jokes, voice discontentment, express flights of fancy. There does seem to be something excessive about this kind of activity to the point it is almost not activity at all. Certainly, we can say there's a need to be around others, to socialize, but there's a particular part of, or kind of, socialization where we seem to not actually address anything about our lives. It is here that Marx's comments on machinery and time sound astonishingly compatible:

*"The more this contradiction develops, the more does it become evident that the growth of the forces of production can no longer be bound up with the appropriation of alien labour, but that the mass of workers must themselves appropriate their surplus labour. Once they have done so - and disposable time thereby ceases to have an antithetical existence - then, on one side, necessary labour time will be measured by the needs of the social individual, and, on the other, the development of the power of social production will grow so rapidly that, even though production is now calculated for the wealth of all, disposable time will grow for all. For real wealth is the developed productive power of all individuals. The measure of wealth is then not any longer, in any way, labour time, but rather disposable time. Labour time as the measure of value posits wealth itself as founded on poverty, and disposable time as existing in and because of the antithesis to surplus labour time; or, the positing of an individual's entire time as labour time, and his degradation therefore to mere worker, subsumption under labour."*²⁶

Against many Marxist interpreters (and we must admit, possibly against Marx himself) who argue for the abolition of alienation through the seizure of

his labor, Bataille brings forth a Communism where the abolition of alienation is not an abolition at all! Or, rather, the seizure of one's own labour allows for the seizure of alienation itself: the lover who has their heart broken may at once grasp and lose their passion and pain in altogether new ways. One experiences such moments as water that runs and spills through their cupped hands. The moment which disrupts the capitalist process unexpectedly disappears from beneath our feet and becomes a horizon, we must work to throw ourselves into the air and experience the free fall and shock of Communism, such that the future strikes one unexpectedly as the moment of the present. "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need" thereby becomes the realization that the Utopian nature of communism is that one may finally be entirely uncertain of their life, certain that one will live.

"...Under the rule of capital, the application of machinery does not shorten labour; but rather prolongs it. What it

abbreviates is necessary labour, not the labour necessary for the capitalist. Since fixed capital becomes devalued to the extent it is not used in production, its growth is linked with the tendency to make labour perpetual.

~ The world of work and reason is the basis of human life but work does not absorb us completely and if reason gives the orders our obedience is never unlimited. Man has built up the rational world by his own efforts, but there remains within him an undercurrent of violence.

~ Capital proper does nothing but bring together the mass of hands and instruments which it finds on hand. It agglomerates them under its command. That is its real stockpiling; the stockpiling of workers, along with their instruments, at particular points.

~Nevertheless, the impulses that go against the interests of a society in a state of stagnation (during a phase of appropriation) have, on the contrary, social revolution (the phase of excretion) as their end: thus they can find,

through the historical movements by means of which humanity spends its own strength freely and limitlessly, both gratification and use in the very sense of general conscious benefit.

~The positing of the individual as a worker, in this nakedness, is itself a product of history.

~During the revolutionary phase, the current phase that will only end with the world triumph of socialism, only the social Revolution can serve as an outlet for collective impulses, and no other activity can be envisaged in practice."

ENDNOTES

1. "The 'Old Mole' and the Prefix *Sur*" in *Visions of Excess*, 43.
2. Andrew Ryder, "Bataille against Heidegger: Language and the Escape from the World," *Studies in Social & Political Thought* vol. 19, Summer 2011, 72-74. For more on the French Communist Party and the Popular Front of the 1930s see Bataille's "Popular Front" in *Visions of Excess*, and Salem Nadi's "The Front Populaire and the Making of the French Communist Party (1920-1962)" in the *International Socialist Review*, <https://isreview.org/issue/104/front-populaire-and-making-french-communist-party-1920-1962>
3. Stewart Kendall, *Bataille: Critical Lives*, 105.
4. Peter Dews in his "Power and Subjectivity in Foucault, published in *New Left Review*, has elucidating comments on the unannounced deviations Foucault takes from Nietzsche:

Foucault's discussions of the body are curiously anodyne, devoid of any hint of Nietzsche's celebration of the 'strength, joy and terribleness' of the 'old instincts' which were crippled by the emergence of self-consciousness - a celebration on which the critique of bad conscience is dependent for its polemical charge. Without some evocation of the intrinsic forces of the body, without some theory which makes the corporeal more than a malleable tabula rasa, it is impossible to reckon the costs imposed by 'an infinitesimal power over the active body', or the sacrifice involved in the 'individualizing fragmentation of labour power.' (89-90)

Since the autonomous subject is, for Foucault, already the product of subjection to power, the aim of political actions cannot be to enhance or expand this autonomy. (90)

5. Georges Bataille, *Erotism*, 51.

6. Make no mistake, there are many instances where Bataille uses the term “authentic” approvingly, particularly in regards to writings of Camus, Sartre, and Breton. However, Bataille’s experience, which perhaps contains a notion of authenticity within itself, is not driven or provoked by authenticity itself, particularly insofar as authenticity reveals itself as a parody and an evil.

7. Ibid, 30-31.

8. Ibid, 47-48.

9. Ibid, 48.

10. Ibid, 49-50.

11. Benjamin Noys, *Bataille: A Critical Introduction*, 87.

12. For more on the sociology of Roman festivals and their competition with the early Christian Church, see Peter Brown’s *Through the Eye of a Needle*.

We can follow their [the nobles] education in giving most clearly in the case of the spectacula (the shows) and the ludi (the games). These could include anything that gripped the people’s attention, from relatively cheap productions, such as dramas, festivals of song, pantomime, striptease, and boxing shows, to stunningly expensive and murderous displays, such as chariot races and the slaughter of wild beasts. What matters is that they were the gift of a wealthy person to the populus - to the citizen body - of his or her city. Putting on shows and games gave a sharp personal profile to civic love. (Chapter 3, Loc 1869)

...certain aspects of Christian giving represented a novelty not only in the professed aim of this giving - to give to the poor - but in the motivations ascribed to the giver. What differed most of all was the emphasis on the supernatural efficacy of the Christian gift. We are dealing with a system of religious giving within a religious community that had a profile all its own. It could not be ‘swapped’ unthinkably for forms of giving that had been dominant in the non-Christian world. Something new had emerged. (Chapter 4, Loc 2228)

13. Bataille, “On Nietzsche: The Will to Chance” in *Bataille Reader*, 335.

14. Bataille, “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice,” *Visions of Excess*, 228.

15. It is this passion or anguish where a shifting identity

in motion itself constitutes a subject for itself, an I, that Bataille emerges in a surprising solidarity with the Frankfurt school opposed to Foucault, Deleuze, Guattari, or Lyotard:

“If self-identity is considered to be inherently repressive of a desire theorized as boundless flux, then any collective construction of a new form of social identity can only appear as a further form of repression; while if subject-constituting power is seen as the principle of any conceivable social system, then the thawing of a frozen pseudo-autonomy is no longer even a possibility. ... But this dilemma of post-structuralist critique is in turn the result of the facile evaluation of the modern subject which runs through structuralism and post-structuralism as a whole. As Adorno often underlines, a liberation of ‘desire’ from all constraining identity would cease to be a liberation at all, since there would no longer be a self to enjoy the lifting of the barriers.” (Dews, “Power and Subjectivity,” 95)

The similarities and divergences between Bataille and Adorno - a comparison that Adorno would surely scowl at - is, unfortunately, unexplored in scholarship with the notable exception of Robyn Marasco’s *The Highway of Despair*. For now, further exploration must be put off for another time.

16. Bataille, “Propositions,” *Visions of Excess*, 199.

17. Ibid.

18. Alasdair MacIntyre, “Notes from the Moral Wilderness” in *Alasdair MacIntyre’s Engagement with Marxism*, 54-55

19. Blanchot, *Political Writings*, 104-5

20. Moise Postone, “Rethinking Capital in Light of the Grundrisse,” in Karl Marx’s *Grundrisse*, 126.

21. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, 92.

22. Ibid, 284-85.

23. Bataille, *The Bataille Reader*, 302.

24. Marx, *Grundrisse*, 173. Emphasis added.

25. Bataille, *The Bataille Reader*, 239.

26. Marx, *Grundrisse*, 708.

(THREE PIECES)

TEAM 1, KOKO & HAM, & HELPER

Justin Michell



Team 1

Justin Michell
Collage on Paper

Koko & Ham
Justin Michell
Collage on Paper





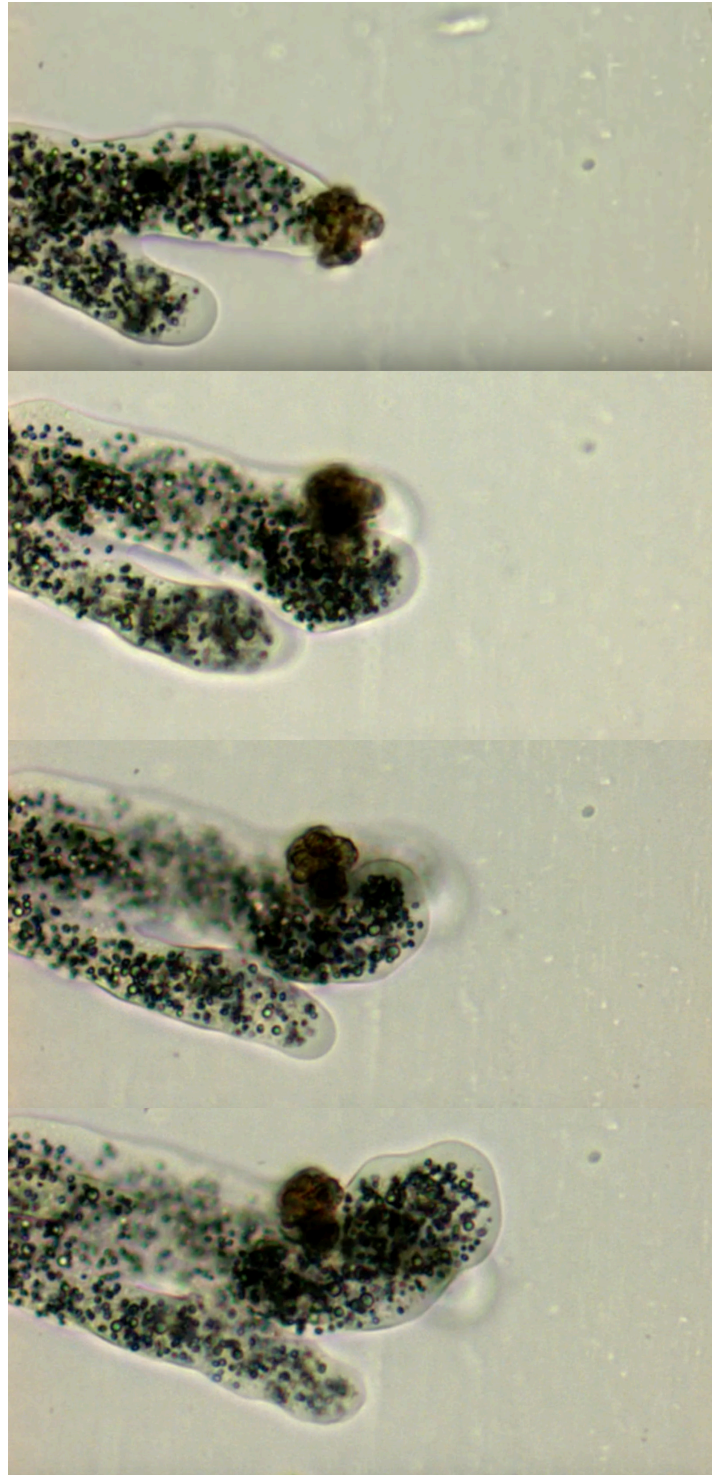
Helper, Justin Michell, Collage on Paper

MEDICINE SHOULD BE ABOLISHED: A NIETZSCHO-REICHIAN THEORY OF NATURAL LAW

Matt Gilinson

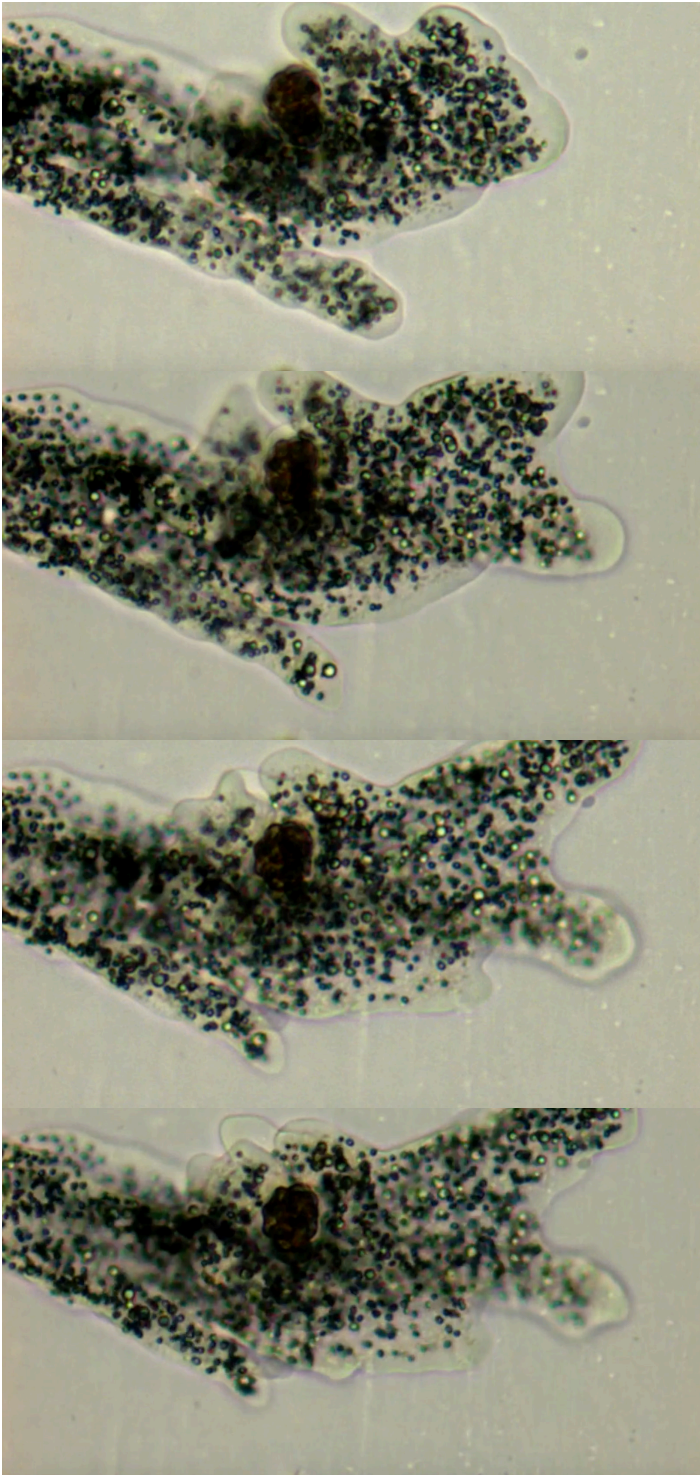
I. DOCTRINE

A **doctrine** is a **body**. For instance, the **Marxist body** is intuitively aware of some quantity of libido being employed in a maleficial way. It is profit, labor-energy siphoned into a repressive apparatus. I am referring to the libido consumed by the segmented regions of muscle armoring in the individual body. While it may possibly be argued that these segments correspond in some hermetic fashion to social strata, the pulsion to restructure society must first be experienced as the individual's desire to convalesce from the emotional plague, the epidemic of mass neurosis. That, however, would entail the dissolution of these pathological, chronic muscle contractions– the maleficial investments of libido. Because such convalescence is, in most cases, initially intolerable to the individual, the will-to-convalescence is displaced into the realm of politics at a great cost. Orgonomist Elsworth Baker, in *Man in the Trap* describes this displacement in the controversial chapter on socio-political character types. The **Fascist body**, in my opinion, also longs to live according to biological principles. However, it is concerned with resisting modernization, a symbol for the armoring process, often invoking a lost or declined civilization that evaded the problems of modernity. But the entire movement is a nationalized caricature of the individual's convalescence, from the *lebensraum* to the purgation of perceived impurities. Further, consider the pulsion to remove from society elements that are seen as foreign or unproductive. This is an expression of that will as well in that these elements become symbolic of an individual's maleficial character investments. Since its tenets are merely symbolic of the convalescent process and never effect change on the individual level, it is condemned to disaster like all social endeavors that fail to address the issues of the soma. I mean to say here that doctrines are palatable



because of their symbolic resonance with different libidinal economies and psycho-muscular character

Amoeba in State of Expansion,
American College of Orgonomy, 2018



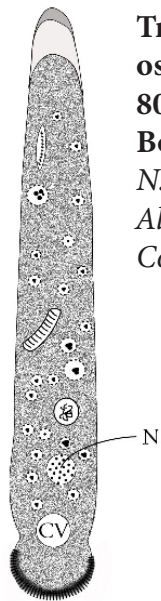
structures, not because they are rational.

The Israelite body is another such doctrine. With regard to men, the covenant of the circumcision functions to barricade the sex-economic avenues afforded by masturbation. The libido which would otherwise be discharged thereby is further regulated by hundreds of commandments, viz. investments. When all of these commandments are obeyed, the sum of repressed drive energy– this represented by the Ark of the Covenant– becomes a terrifying weapon. Moreover, each commandment is inscribed on the **Israelite body**. Mosaic law is a binding contract in that every illegal pulsion must be bound through contraction by the individual character structure and, by extension, the inter-somatic libidinal economy. “Thou shalt not kill” is not enumerated in Exodus chapter twenty but in the thoracic armor segment of every Israelite. The commandment concerning the Sabbath is not written there either; rather it exists in the inter-somatic libidinal economy as a mass hiatus from sublimation having a specific libido-economic role. By virtue of its adherence to this law, this body will persist while others of the same race and in the same land will be lost to history. However, the Hebrew and Greek scriptures imply that adhering to a set of commandments in this fashion is ultimately untenable. According to the Evangelists, one minor consequence is accidentally killing God.

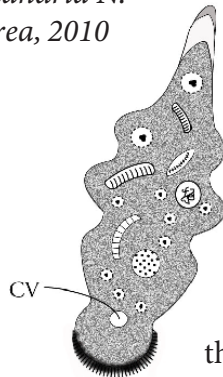
Anyway, doctrine is professed by a *doctor*, which in Latin means ‘teacher.’ A teacher professes a doctrine, viz. a body, usually his or her body. However, in the historic period, good doctrine is scarce. Why? Let us be reminded of the fact that perception of the environment determines the virtue of autonomic functioning, whether it is basically sympathetic or parasympathetic. Moreover, the tenets of doctrine function as characterological defense mechanisms in that they repress a general uncertainty originating from one’s being divorced from deep biological sensations. To a degree, armoring compromises our capacity to be viscerally excited by external happenings or, in other words, our capacity to react to situations in a rational way.

A. Stretched

B. Contracting (during jerking pulse)



Trichamoeba osseosaccus,
80-150 μ m (after
Bovee), Paulo
N. Correa and
Alexandria N.
Correa, 2010



The armored character reacts more or less every stimulus with the same defensive posture, whether it be benevolent or malevolent. Consequently, inordinate quantities of libidinal energy are consumed by the muscular system's contraction, i.e.

mechanical work. Divestment from this contraction and any corresponding psychic defense must necessarily disequilibrate sex-economy. The unemployed libido that would become apparent by virtue of this divestment is subjectively experienced as anxiety until the pulsions associated therewith are viscerally expressed. Thus data and statements that contradict one's doctrine can be interpreted as attacks on the soma if the tenets function as character defenses. In the same way, the therapeutic disruption of neurotic sex-economic equilibrium, this being identical to the disturbance of the organism's homeostatic protocols, is interpreted as an attack and provokes a defensive rage¹. For all these reasons, once a doctor is indoctrinated into a certain doctrine, there is little chance that he or she can ever recover! Doctrine is for the most part a disease and seems to be identical to armoring, the cornerstone of the emotional plague. God help us; the people who are supposed to be teaching and healing us are deathly ill and often insane.

II. THE WAGES OF DISHONESTY IS DISEASE

A physician also imparts a body through the adjustment of the humors, surgery, drugs &c.— a body

created in his image. He cannot acknowledge any level of health superior to his own for the aforementioned reason concerning autonomic function. For instance, to acknowledge the existence of muscle armoring would entail the individual's visceral and depth-psychological exploration of the repressed complexes. Again, this is usually intolerable, especially because divestment from cathexes is conditionally associated with being destroyed. In other words, the emotional plague conceals from the afflicted that it exists at all wherefore there is a pitiful notion of what a normal person is. For these so-called physicians, it is easier to say "Freud has been debunked"* or "Reich was insane" or "a pervert" and take refuge in the fact that all the doctors with the same kind of indoctrination happen to agree. It is impossible to believe that after a decade of school, one has not learned a single thing about medicine. Their publications are safe from the flames.

If our *medicinae doctor honorificabilitudinitatibus* is still reading, let him be reminded that his occupation pivots on the erroneous idea that disease is either random or determined by heredity or microorganisms. In reality, disease and susceptibility to disease are caused by choices made by the afflicted and this means that Natural Law is in effect. Hide your faces, you doctors of medicine! Disease is Natural Justice and you are abetting fugitives. You are fugitives yourselves, running from the Law wherever it appears, working fourteen hour days to "save lives."

"Hide your
faces, you
doctors of
medicine!"

You're a brute behind
your mask of sociability
and friendliness."

Wilhelm Stieg, 1946



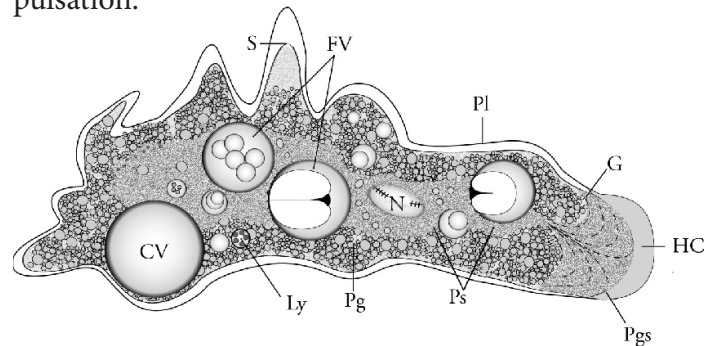
What then does Nature's Law prohibit? that which makes us sick, viz. dishonesty. Dishonesty is inextricably connected to disease and the science of orgonomy has shown this to be true. First, it must be said that honesty is identical to the uninhibited expression of pulsions. Parenthetically, we need not become overly concerned with the surfacing of antisocial pulsions. They are secondary drives that, while repressed by dishonesty, are ultimately born of dishonesty. Moreover, they can be expressed in ways that harm no living thing. Once the libidinal stases corresponding to these repressed pulsions are discharged through visceral expression, the subsequent, honest expression of pulsions will preclude the formation of additional libidinal stases and the antisocial pulsions that arise therefrom (cf. *Genitality is Hypernatural*).

Anyway, the pulsions that historic society finds intolerable all involve expressive, plasmatic movements in the viscera from the interior of the organism to the exterior such that an outward expression takes place. These are mechanical waves propagated in the soma (a super-saturated fluid), carrying the energy that Reich called orgone. Moreover, these somatic pulsations are identical to emotions, as evidenced by the fact that they appear or are increased in intensity and frequency upon one's divestment from the ego defenses. The repression of this pulsation is accomplished through the chronic contraction of the muscles. In terms of libidinal economy, it seems that contraction consumes or exhausts the energy which would otherwise be involved in the motor expression of the now repressed pulsion. Regardless they prevent the soma's pulsation, i.e. its expression, by virtue of their rigidifying action. We read from one of the books publicly incinerated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 1957, *The Function of the Orgasm*:

"...the muscular rigidity, wherever it appears, is not a "result," an "expression," or a "concomitant" of the mechanism of repression ... somatic rigidity represents the most essential part in the process of repression. All our patients report that they went through periods

*in childhood in which, by means of certain practices in vegetative behavior (holding the breath, tensing the abdominal muscular pressure [sic], etc.), they learned to suppress their impulses of hate, anxiety, and love."*²²

So the repression of genuine and spontaneous biological pulsions— this being identical to dishonesty— necessarily entails the chronic contraction of the muscular system and the suppression of somatic pulsation.



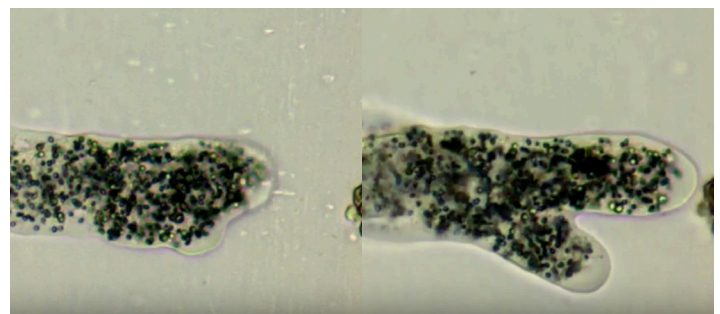
Legend

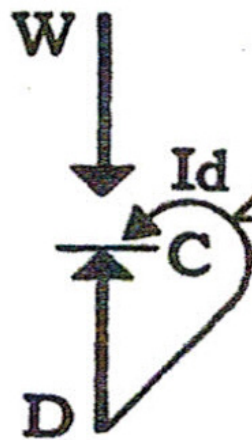
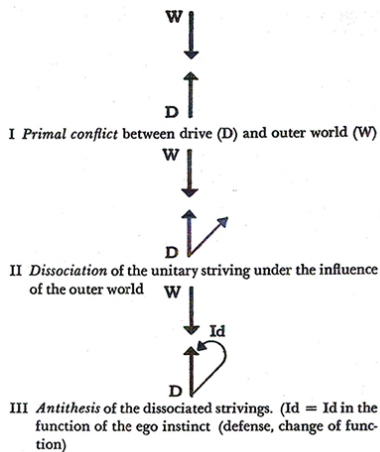
CV, contractile vacuole
FV, food vacuole;
G, region of gelation;
HC, hyaline cap;
Ly, lysosome;
Pg, plasmagel;

Pgs, plasmagel sheet;
Pl, plasmalemma (including plasma membrane);
Ps, plasmasol;
S, region of solation or pseudopod formation;
N, nucleus.

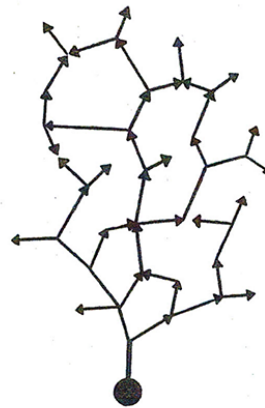
The orgonotic currents become visible by virtue of moving particles in the cytoplasm. The particles and the cytoplasm are masses which are here being accelerated over a distance. Therefore, work is being done, requiring energy— orgone energy. Here the amoeba is in a state of expansion wherefore these flows are directed into the environment, in this case, towards the prey.

Above: Horizontal optical section of *Amoeba proteus* (aka *Chaos diffluens*), Paulo N. Correa and Alexandria N. Correa, 2010





Schema of the structure of the armor



“Once the organism becomes armored, the primary impulses that are natural...become distorted. The structure of the armor, however, is not a simple one...but a complex consequence of the interplay between many dynamic forces and consists of many layers.”, Wilhelm Reich, from *Character Analysis*, 1933

Muscle armoring is the rigidification of the muscular system, but through the respiratory block— a system of chronic spasms afflicting the diaphragmatic and thoracic musculature— it indirectly contributes to the total organism’s cellular hypoxia. Again we are confronted with the disturbance of pulsation, exemplified by the chronic inspiratory position of the organs concerned with breathing. Sex-economically, the respiratory block functions to decrease the amount of libido that the organism has at its disposal at any moment. This is evidenced by the fact that in orgone therapy, the increased intake of air results in anxiety; this indicates that the organism’s ceiling level of tolerable, unemployed libido has been breached. Thus the respiratory block represses the subjective experience of anxiety for the price of oxygenation and general vitality². In terms of Natural Law, the perpetrator of this inherently disingenuous behavior is met with the physiological consequences: a speedy trial. However, things get complicated when we consider the fact that it is socio-familial hostility towards the vitality of children which initially inspires in *Homo normalis* the formation of the respiratory block, a mechanism ultimately functioning to maintain the integrity of the pelvic armor segment and its psychic counterpart, the castration complex³. More on this later.

Let us now endeavor to understand the orgonomic concept of **biopathy**, defined as a “disturbance in the natural function of pulsation in the

total organism”³. The repression of emotions through armoring necessarily restricts this pulsation, resulting in the symptoms described above. Armoring also entails aversion to movement, intolerance of excitation and feeling, neurosis, all the complications that follow from hypoxia, and doubtlessly, innumerable other symptoms. Another dimension of biological pulsation is observable in the organism’s oscillation between parasympatheticonia and acute sympatheticonia (cf. *Inter-somatic Libidinal Economy*). By ‘acute sympatheticonia,’ I mean the “fight or flight” response, not the homeostatic sympatheticonia concerned with internal milieu (though these two cannot truly be separated). Armoring is the organism’s chronic upholding of that acute sympathetic response, it being characterized by the contraction of the striated muscles, among other things. For instance, a body that has been physically abused may exhibit perpetually raised shoulders, signifying the constant anticipation of an assault. Throughout the seven regions of expressive musculature discovered by Reich, similar contractions with specific psychic, biographical meanings can be observed. All these phenomena evidence the fact that, in the armored organism, the oscillation between parasympatheticonia and acute sympatheticonia is more or less arrested at the sympathetic pole. Consequently, the generative, erotic, metabolic and excretory processes of the parasympathetic pole are obstructed, contributing to or constituting illness. To summarize, biopathy entails

the disturbance of somatic pulsation in many areas: emotional, respiratory, autonomic, orgasmic (cf. *The Function of the Orgasm*), &c.

Eventually, this process leads to what is called biopathic shrinking, in which the contraction “is not confined to individual organs” but “encompasses entire organ systems, their tissues, the blood system, the endocrine system, as well as the character structure.”⁴ The appearance of carcinomas is thought to signify the final stages of certain biopathies wherein the afflicted’s refusal to inhabit his own body becomes a *de facto* petition for its colonization by rogue desiring-machinic polities. This can ultimately be traced back to one’s escape from visceral sensations, a transgression against Natural Law accomplished through muscle armoring. Reich reported great success treating biopathic shrinking with (be assured it is I who will have the last laugh) the orgone accumulator⁷. However, the resolution of any biopathy is impossible without the afflicted’s visceral and depth-psychological investigation of the self, the attainment of orgasmic potency, and the divestment from cathexes, to wit, the expression of the repressed. There is no panacea and no serious person has ever claimed that the accumulator is a cure for anything.

III. LIFE IS FAIR, YOU JUST DON’T KNOW THE RULES

Why do bad things happen to good people? When faced with the task of envisioning a world in which the life in young children is no longer despised and butchered, we must come to a sobering conclusion: they don’t. It seems that much of what people think is good must actually be evil and *vice versa*. The confusion regarding good and evil is inextricably connected to the pleasure-anxiety transvaluation wherein eroticism becomes associated with being destroyed while the anxiety regarding this destruction becomes pleasurable in comparison (cf. *Genitality is Hypernatural*). Consequently, libido-economic self-regulation is compromised as drive energy becomes anchored in muscle armoring. The

source of human joy, simply incarnate being, is thereby repressed and we are forced to seek it everywhere but its true abode; the opportunity cost of this seeking is the joy itself, the joy that has been renamed dread. This transvaluation also marks the advent of enmity between the conscious faculties and the body. Next comes the glorification of heaven, intellect, the afterlife and all things that stand in contradistinction to the body which, for those afflicted by the emotional plague, seems to be the source of all misery.

Anything that stays true to libidinality is more or less disturbing to armored characters. Therefore, resisting biological impulses, viz. armoring, becomes virtuous in the eyes of those who despise life and the body. As surely as objects fall to the ground, this resistance engenders some combination of the also marks the advent of enmity between the conscious faculties and the body. Next comes the glorification of heaven, intellect, the afterlife and all things that stand in contradistinction to the body which, for those afflicted by the emotional plague, seems to be the source of all misery.

Since it is the nature of the emotional plague to conceal itself, there is much confusion as to why “bad things happen to good people.” It should not be surprising that the ostensibly altruistic person who, in order to repress through sublimation the facts regarding this trauma, assists others in their repression thereof is subject to this or that misfortune. He should first divest from his own pathological cathexes so as to know finally what it means to help. That we have christened the cowardly postponement of catharsis virtuous is irrelevant to this judge. Moreover, repression makes us vulnerable to predation and aggression by corroding our sympathy with the environment⁷. Consider those who blindly walk into some harmful situation, having ignored all that indicates danger by virtue of that situation’s resemblance to a repressed episode of the past. Their failure to divest from such defense mechanisms compromises discernment and renders them fugitives in the eyes of the Law whereupon they are harmed¹. Thus those who are deemed innocent by our standards

are guilty by Nature's. In the words of Heraclitus, "the way of man has no wisdom, but that of God has."⁵

Also, many of those events which people call unfortunate are often auspicious, but the condition of armoring prevents them from realizing this or benefiting therefrom. Nature is not a cruel, sadistic judge like the dishonorable John Clifford Jr., who ordered the most Hitlerian act of censorship in American history. Every instance of Natural Justice indicates a hitherto unknown pathology and admonishes the bio-energetically wayward against progressing along their necrotic paths. However, we have become so iniquitous that these warnings are illegible to us and, in our arrogance, we perceive them to be inconveniences and catastrophes. Unfortunately, it is considered virtuous to insulate others from the one agent that can objectively correct them. This is called 'care' – really a well-camouflaged terror wed to a conception of mutual similitude – and is the most insidious thing to have ever befallen us. Actual care entails recognizing that there are worse things than death, that we are not gods and that we are subject to the consequences of our actions.

The issue is that most of our transgressions against Natural Law are unconscious and encouraged by our communities. We come into the world abiding by the Law, allowing pulsions to manifest outwardly as expressions. These displays of aliveness are disturbing to our armored caregivers because their character structures are founded on the repression of that very aliveness (cf. *Inter-somatic Libidinal Economy*). Because infants perceive that they will be annihilated for such expression, they inwardly invest the libido of these pulsions in muscle armoring such that the pulsions no longer manifest outwardly. It is this initial suppression – the parents' rejection of their children's most essential aspect – that Reich believed caused in children the feelings that are later repressed and signified by the incest fantasy⁶. Then, typically, the parent-child conflict ensues along with the rigidification of the pelvic segment. At this point, erotic sensations become associated with being destroyed through what amounts to classical

conditioning. It is the pleasure-anxiety transvaluation. Under duress are children forced to violate Natural Law by armoring against their living impulses.

What psychoanalysts call the castration complex is a sympathetic investment; while homeostatic in terms of duration, it is as intense as an acute sympatheticonia – the kind one would experience while being chased by, say, a lion – in terms of the quantity of libido involved. We can even see from therapy that it takes more kicking and screaming (mechanical work) to divest from this complex than it does to escape a lion. It must be noted that the soma spontaneously divests from libidinal investments once it no longer senses the inspiring stimulus, unless it is upheld by the ego for characterological reasons. Every time a child divests from a sympathetic state consequent to an instance of the parents' corrective efforts, he or she necessarily enters parasympatheticonia. It is in this mode of being that the soma's pulsions are spontaneously expressed whereupon the hostility of armored characters is once again invoked. This hostility in turn inspires the sympathetic response, another libidinal investment. In order to escape these wild oscillations, children take refuge in a chronic sympatheticonia characterized by the perpetual contraction of the pelvic floor muscles, the psoas major, the thigh adductors, the genital musculature, the anal sphincter &c. as well as the repression of erotic feelings.

In order to maintain the integrity of the castration complex, and to ensure that spontaneous displays of eroticism never manifest externally, additional cathexes must be formed. The rage pulsions concerned with the destruction of whatever frustrates eroticism must be expressed viscerally if sex-economic equilibrium is to be achieved. However, the historic family situation precludes this. Since the employment of the pulsion's energy in the act of muscle armoring is far less cathartic than expression is, the remaining quantity of libido must be consumed by new, additional defense mechanisms. *Thus the formation of character structure is driven in part by the difference between the quantities of libido exhausted by armoring*

and expression. After the pelvic armor segment is in place, it immediately is subject to forces of dissolution: the body's tendency towards spontaneous expression and healing. Again, this entails expressions of misery, terror and rage and is unacceptable in historic society, whose mores are antithetical to Natural Law. The quantitative difference in libido consumed between the two options, expression of the pelvic hatred and contraction of the pelvic musculature, must—since the former's consumption is greater than the latter's—manifest elsewhere as these mechanical waves (subjectively experienced as emotions).

These pulsions are intolerable to the historic family and society as well and their energies must also be exhausted, now in the armoring of the abdominal segment. But armoring can only arrest a portion of the libido so the episode is recapitulated in a similar fashion throughout the five upper bands of expressive musculature until the whole soma is armored'. From this point on, surplus libido is exhausted in labor, mannerisms, neurotic symptoms &c. All the while, the pulsions clearly indicate both disease and what is needed to convalesce therefrom. No one takes notice. And so children are forced to violate Natural Law every step of the way and must be subject to its sentencing. I don't know how the suns and worlds are turned or why there is no understanding for those coerced into committing unlawful actions.

What about people who are born sick? Doubtlessly, a fetus has autonomic faculties and the capacity to invest libido in homeostatic functioning. They are susceptible to the anxieties of their mothers⁷, who are for the most part orgasmically impotent neurotics and despisers of the body. The organism does not distinguish between chemical and emotional toxicity and, across all phyla, adopts the basic, sympatheticotonic, growth inhibiting, contractile position upon encountering these. In the eyes of the Law, we are not as distinct from each other as I would like us to be. Fetuses and infants are subject to the failures of their parents and all the adults who have chosen to create a poisoned, life-negating world: half madhouse, half slaughterhouse. Let us stop abusing

our bodies, stop increasing our populations with cheap tricks and live under Natural Law and then see if people are still born sick.

IV. A NOTE ON NATURAL LAW

All our institutions are either redundant or endeavor, ostensibly, to correct some problem whose origin is the emotional plague. They have two purposes: to create an illusion of functionality against a backdrop of mass neurosis, and to exhaust the intolerable drive energy of all who labor to uphold them. Institutions resemble cathexes uncannily because they repress the facts of collective trauma and siphon into themselves the libido that would otherwise contact the trauma. Any idiot can tell us what they are supposed to be for but, upon closer inspection, every single one is found aggravating the very problems they are supposed to rectify. Similarly, the investment of libido in muscle armoring ensures the permanence of the pulsions the ego wishes to eradicate. One begins to suspect that repression can't repress anything at all! Nor can our redundant institutions do anything but prolong the emotional plague. The institutions are not rationally created to correct specific problems. They spontaneously arise from mass sex-economic conditions in order to metabolize dammed-up libido. Our propensity to resist the genital metabolism of this drive energy guarantees the energy's resurfacing in institutional piffing, "innovation" and the excessive laboring these demand. Not one of these institutions endeavors to resolve—has ever mentioned—epidemic orgasmic impotence, the general constipation of human energy. Rather they together exist to conceal it, being facets of inter-somatic armoring. They must always fail because their basic, sublimatory functions guarantee the perfect preservation of the issues that they purport to combat, in part by protecting the integrity of their officers' neuroses. This in turn blinds them to the true, bio-energetic nature of the issue. Consequently, the "service" of these officers is yet another affirmation of mass neurosis insofar as these institutions allow us to ignore our the dysfunction afflicting our inborn,

self-regulatory capacities. Thus our institutions are founded on the repression of biological pulsation and our estrangement from Natural Law. The justification for their existence becomes their sustenance.

And so our entire society is an unlawful, unconscious, criminal conspiracy. *Homo normalis* has no choice but to create a society that is as twisted as his own armored character structure is and institute its paradoxical cathexes into the macrocosm. How can this ever be resolved? We must consider that Sumeria and Egypt spontaneously emerged from the dust with basically all the institutions we have today. Since that time, no amount of theory and revolution has put so much as a single dent in any of these. It seems they are inseparable from the character structures of the masses: a true Gordian knot. Save some eschatological event, only our mass convalescence from armoring can end the emotional plague; it is an inconceivably great work. Should this be achieved, a genital society will rise from the ashes of the old world and Law, Philosophy, Medicine and Theology will again be one and the same. For now, we must take comfort in the fact that we are subject to incorruptible Justice.

V. ON WHAT IS TODAY UNFORTUNATELY CALLED MEDICINE

Hide your faces, you doctors of medicine! you barnacles who have fixed yourselves to the mouth of a sewage pipe! To confuse the concealment of symptoms with the treatment of disease is the greatest, most destructive error. You swear to “do no harm,” but what does that mean to you who extol anxiety over pleasure? What does it mean to you whose perceived virtues are but a reaction against orgonotic sentiment? It is translated into “do only harm.”

I am not concerned with convincing doctors of what is true. Their practice of quackery surely has a sex-economic role, ultimately that of repressing the antisocial pulsions native to the historic character structure’s middle layer. It is armoring, albeit a standardized, licensed armoring, and one cannot just cease being armored. An essential part of this

armoring is their Enlightenment-era arrogance regarding scientific “objectivity.” The human character structure colors all areas of perception and that which it represses must be ignored, lest it arouse the autonomic faculties and incite a state of intolerable excitement. Therefore, only the most dead, machine-like aspects of phenomena can be explored by the armored sciences. In the field of biology, which E. L. Palmer said too often becomes “necrology”⁹, this is especially blatant. The controlled conditions required for “objectivity” are – and I am being charitable – not conducive to studying spontaneous, living things. One can never have an understanding of the organism if it is dead or isolated from its habitation. Moreover, the degree to which the practice of a science is life-negating determines that science’s effectiveness when it comes to studying life. For instance, it is impossible to breathe deeply and entertain visceral sensations while doing any kind of intensive intellectual work (e.g. the calculus). Similarly, intellectual work functions to repress visceral sensation. Only through these sensations can an understanding of life be apprehended because the somatic pulsation signified by such sensations is the fundamental function of the organism⁹. When this function is the object of a life-long repressive maneuver, the study of biology and, by extension, medicine becomes a farce.

It is not surprising that those who engage in mechanistic work at the expense of the soma’s sympathy with the surroundings perceive a mechanistic world. The dead must kill the living in order to study it, whereupon they say: “look, it is dead.” Then they point to their doctrine’s internal consistency but every fact that would destroy this consistency has been thrown out for the sake of preserving it. Though subjectivity is what carries out scientific observation in the first place, this most central experience of human life is, on the face of it, forbidden in the sciences. Really, it is the only thing science can ever apprehend. Perhaps subjectivity is despised by these clock-makers because it entails somatic excitation and pulsation, necessary concomitants of sensation. It is equated with spontaneity, emotion, passion and

instinct: things strangely absent from an endeavor that purports to study life. Disturbed by biological vitality, a scientific countertransference takes place wherein the mechanistic character structure of the observer is realized in the observed while the most essential aspect of the observed is repressed, just as it is in the observer. Data is recorded in elevated jargon and sorted into ever-bifurcating categories which ensure the job security of specialists currently incubating in the universities. Of course this functions to exhaust drive energy and protect libidinal investments. That is why the very simple, self-evident laws that govern how life functionsⁿ are repressed by this new priest-class of nerds who must take their impotence to its logical conclusion: the construction of the second Tower of Babel. Point being, the subjective shines in the objective, and the objective comprehends it not!

Anyway, I therefore feel confident in ignoring the conclusions made about many biological experiments and clinical trials. I will rather treat on what I know to be true experientially and through my own observations which have been more reverent of biological vitality.

A disease symptom betokens an underlying biopathic disturbance, a chronic sympatheticonia. Though the separation of psychology and physiology has created countless jobs, it has done little to propagate the fact that disease symptoms are really indispensable signals which admonish us to divest from maleficial cathexes. They are not themselves the diseases. When we become aware of an illness through the experience of symptoms, we really have two choices. The first is to assume that health is a precarious, fleeting miracle in a chaotic cosmos and that the body tends towards decay and death. This idea is a psychic incontinence betraying the repressed narrative: that of the historic child-rearing ordeals and the subsequent armoring unto death. Among other things, it represents a person's identification with the necrotic process and functions to repress the misery and longing that arise consequent to the division of the psyche and soma; if this is inevitable and normal, longing for an alternative is alleviated.

Under this assumption, it is logical to employ a doctor of medicine that we might conceal the symptoms which prevent us from living as we did before they appeared, to wit, *in the way that made us sick*. Just as the intolerable feelings subsequent to the formation of the pelvic block—these being disease symptoms—are repressed, so too are the symptoms that doctors of medicine today concern themselves with. Oedipal medicine I call it, and it allows the armored body to persist far past the time by which it would normally have killed itself, thereby granting us hitherto unheard of capacities for repression. O you doctors of medicine! What would we do without you? Worst of all, it preserves the integrity of the armoring, promoting the misguided actions of Natural Law fugitives, now with unnaturally long lifespans, to the detriment of the whole world.

The second choice is contingent upon one's having realized that the cosmos is rationally ordered and that life tends towards health, growth and expression. From this point of view, the disease symptom signifies an obstruction foreign to that order which can be rectified through critical investigation into its origins and the resolution of the offending libidinal stases. Making a symptom unapparent without addressing its cause is tantamount to malpractice. Such abuses deprive a person of the opportunity to be jolted out of his or her trance-like self-destruction.

With regard to issues considered somatic, disease symptoms signify the disturbance of some pulsatory function. With regard to infectious disease, symptoms signify that the defensive faculties are compromised, owing to their being exhausted from constantly defending against visceral impulses. With regard to hereditary disease and birth defects, the symptoms signify the unspecific estrangement of society from Natural Law; this includes historic child-rearing tactics, the poisoning of the environment, the dampening of our sympathy with the land, and the diluted, sleep-walking existence that is so prevalent today. With regard to neuroses and psychoses, symptoms have the clearest meaning and deserve the

most careful attention. It is in the total functioning of the organism that disease manifests, not in the molecular machinery which is merely a partial object whose remainder has become obscured by mechanistic philosophizing.

A person's general attitude and presentation contains beneath it a biographical account of all the chronically held cathexes, meaning each case of biopathy has a specific treatment plan which must be "deduced from the structure of the case and applied to it."¹⁰ Each contraction, gesture, posture, habit and tendency has a specific, sex-economic function from which indispensable clinical knowledge can be derived. Reich discovered that these most superficial mannerisms are the pinnacles of immense psychosomatic structures extending into the depths of character. They are long chains of defense mechanisms which reach far into the individual's remote past and preserve the chronology of their formations. In other words, the personal facade conceals a repressed disposition which in turn conceals another &c., all the way down to the earliest traumas of life¹¹. Under these layered psycho-muscular defenses, the keystone cathexis awaits resolution and it is to this locus that medicine should ultimately, in a character-analytic sense, direct the attention and libido of the diseased. However, it is doing the opposite by conspiring with the forces of armoring to further conceal the fact that something is wrong. Therefore, the second choice is to metabolize the arrested expressions, starting with the most superficial cathexes and progressing into the interior of one's character structure in order to rectify the hidden stasis of libido which obstructs the body's natural and effortless tendency towards health. That which we have suffered will lead us to God, says the empyreal Gustav Mahler¹².

How insidious is it that deprivation now masquerades as medicine, having cloaked itself in the skins of tenderness and reverence towards life? How can it be called medicine when fear of getting to the root of the problem outweighs the will to effect cures? At this point medicine becomes armoring because it spares patients the discomfort of entertaining

repressed content (otherwise they wouldn't buy it!). True medicine endeavors to understand disease itself rather than classify the infinite symptomatic permutations into different disease pictures so as to fill up volumes and justify the designing of new drugs. All these manifold symptoms betray biopathy for which the expression of the repressed is indicated.

Oedipal medicine is a continuation of the armoring process, something that can be traced back to before the parent-child conflict. Before treatment begins, the disease symptom manifests as an expression of somatic desperation imploring the afflicted to reevaluate his ways and genitally equilibrate his libidinal economy. Such equilibration is identical to the resolution of infantile trauma and entails the expression of repressed pulsions often pertaining to the parent-child conflict, namely anxiety, rage and pleasure. If this complex is dissolved through visceral expression, the pleasure-anxiety transvaluation will have been reversed and the organism will no longer be terrified by its plasmatic pulsation and pleasurable sensations. All the organism's senses will have been recalibrated to fancy what it needs to thrive, and libidinal economy will have regained the capacity to regulate itself automatically. Let us keep in mind that somatic pulsation is what invokes the wrath of armored caregivers and that the initial investment of libido in chronic sympatheticonia, from which disease originates, functions to conceal it. Moreover, a characterological defense is synthetic with respect to both the stimuli to which it is an adaptation and the underlying defense. Any disposition in character, be it superficial or repressed, is a logical reaction to external demands encouraging the concealment of the disposition that preceded it. These layers correspond chronologically to episodes wherein some pulsion needed to be repressed, the libido thereof having been conscripted into the upholding of muscle armoring. Since the contemporary disease symptom is a piece of the foremost layer of character and, therefore, a reaction to the sum of underlying dispositions – these constituting a chain reaching down to the most primordial libidinal stases – any treatment that merely

masks it ultimately contributes to one's ignorance of the castration complex and, in turn, the preservation of pregenital, incestuous sexuality. That is why I call it oedipal medicine.

When our criminal ways inevitably begin to kill us, instead of taking heed and reevaluating the situation, we go to the oedipal doctor and confess a surplus of energy involuntarily expressed in the disease symptom. Thereupon we are restored to the ideal condition of somatic reservedness and emotional constipation at the expense of authenticity, not just in psychiatry but in all oedipal medicine. If a disease symptom happens to be relieved by thereby, I hazard a guess that the patient, to a degree, has divested from the aforementioned sympatheticonia because his panic is alleviated, having been put under the "care" of a doctor. Nonetheless, it is only an illusion of health.

V. THE MARRIAGE OF MEDICINE AND DISEASE

"SOCRATES: *Is it not a fact that injustices, and the doing of injustice, is the greatest of evils?*

POLUS: *That is quite clear.*

SOCRATES: *And further, that to suffer punishment is the way to be released from this evil?*

POLUS: *True.*

SOCRATES: *And not to suffer, is to perpetuate the evil?*

POLUS: *Yes.*

SOCRATES: *To do wrong, then, is second only on the scale of evils; but to do wrong and not to be punished, is first and greatest of all?*

POLUS: *This is true.*

SOCRATES: *...he who escapes punishment [is] more miserable than he who suffers¹³.*"

In *Gorgias*, Socrates and Polus come to agree on the fact that for a criminal, punishment is to the soul as medicine is to the body. But Wilhelm Reich discovered that the soul and the body are one and the same. It follows then that punishment is medicine.

Since we have already established that we are all Natural Law fugitives and that disease is punishment for violating Natural Law, we are forced to conclude that disease must actually be medicine.

But why then are we harmed by disease if it is identical to medicine? First let it be understood that ignorance of the repressed is consent to the progress of armoring and that, after the pleasure-anxiety transvaluation, one extols that which nourishes the maleficial cathexes; one is thus sustained by death, so to speak. In that regard, disease is the logical result of our actions and, in part, the willed outcome in a thanatotic sense. We are our bodies first and foremost and our self-destruction will be realized if we hold disease symptoms to be inconveniences rather than indicators of fundamental biopathies. Moreover, one can say, as Socrates implied when on that fateful day he bade Crito sacrifice to Asclepius, that incarnation itself is a disease and to die is to be cured therefrom. But by the same token, we may well say that incarnation is medicine! The more pertinent approach to understanding the identity shared by medicine and disease is to recall that the disease symptom is merely the most superficial expression of the libido percolating through the armored body. Biopathy is the only disease and all the symptomatic permutations classified as disease today are but symptoms thereof. Being spontaneous expressions of the body, these symptoms must be considered in relation to the entire character structure. Like every characterological layer, each disease symptom must connote a libidinal flow or cathexis and possess a specific, analytic meaning. Furthermore, we must remember the most important thing I have ever learned, that the characterological defense mechanisms are nothing more than the pulsions they repress operating in reverse¹⁴. Therefore, the sum of maleficial cathexes, all the libidinal stases corresponding to those events in which vital expression was crucified and sepulchered, contains within itself the antidote. In the words of Wagner, "only the spear that smote you can heal your wound."¹⁵ Anyway, it is the afflicted's responsibility to assess the sum of cathexes, determine which of these are wasteful

or pathological, divest therefrom and redirect the libido towards the confrontation of the underlying blocks.

The medicine applied against itself is the disease inasmuch as a portion of a pulsion's libido is directed against the remainder in repression. Character is the sum of these counterbalancing interactions, many of which are pathological. Convalescence then entails the withdrawal of that quantity of drive energy which we divert from a sex-economically preferable expression and, as orgone therapy has shown, true divestment entails this same quantity being discharged in the preferable expression. These now-liberated quantities must – and this is why they were arrested in the first place – inevitably mobilize in expression the muscles whose contractions comprise the remaining cathexes. This process, more or less a reversal of the biopathy's formation, must continue until the most primordial cathexes are dissolved, and the energy loosed therefrom is exhausted in genital sexuality.

How fortunate are we to be subject to incorruptible justice? But when a morality arising from epidemic sex-economic constipation gains prominence in a land, the unwitting evildoers avow each other's transgressions and, believing they are in the right, must ascribe the deserts of Natural Justice to chance. In attempting to ignore the consequences and their cause, society must erect those institutions concerned with masking invaluable diagnostic information in order to create an illusion of functionality. In the same way, the armored character, forced in childhood to entomb the self-regulatory faculties of libidinal economy, must employ his energies in an inferior, redundant fashion in order to conceal both the repressed antisocial pulsions and the facts regarding the bio-psychic injury from which they arise. Moreover we suffer because we refuse to suffer; we have forgotten what suffering is and have invented something far worse. Whoever inters longing invites longing, but to entertain it, to express it viscerally and completely is to be fulfilled. Whoever inters terror guarantees perpetual anxiety, but to express terror is to be liberated therefrom. Whoever inters fury invites aggressions and vexations,

but to express fury is to become able to love. This is the rectification of the words: the undoing of the transvaluation. Know you then that disease is Natural Law and medicine, and therefore, Medicine is Law, Law ordained by God. Thus the study of the Law and Medicine is Theology, and the way of God, having wisdom, is Philosophy.

ENDNOTES

⌘ (ALEPH) A sample of one-thousand psychiatrists were asked “do you want to have sex with your opposite-sexed parent?” Less than one percent answered ‘yes.’

⌚ (BET) Today it is known that oxygen gas is reduced in the mitochondria such that an electric potential can exist on that organelle's membrane, allowing biological work to be performed. This does not in any way contradict the sciences of orgonomy and sex-economy.

⌛ (GIMEL) While I use the word ‘castration,’ I am describing the armoring of the pelvic segment in boys and girls around the age of six (the usual time of the parent-child conflict). It does not matter what kind of genitals one has but that they become deadened and suffocated, i.e. a functional castration. Similarly, the word ‘oedipal’ here refers to the pregenital fixation of psycho-sexual development in both sexes.

⌜ (DALET) Whoever would dismiss this without investigation must be smarter than Albert Einstein, who after meeting with Reich in 1941, agreed to replicate the experiment called T-T₀, or “Temperature minus initial temperature.” An astonished Einstein confirmed the thermal anomaly, namely that space inside and directly above orgone accumulators becomes slightly warmer than the surroundings, defying the so-called second law of thermodynamics. His assistant suggested that it was caused by convection, and he readily accepted the explanation in order to dismiss this Earth-shattering result. Reich replied that when he buried the accumulator, controlling for any air convection, he still got a positive result but Einstein had already decided to abandon the issue¹⁶. I am not yet a physicist so all I can say about the Reich-Einstein Affair is

this: make love, not bombs!

ה (HE) I hypothesize that there is an emergent property of the inter-somatic libidinal economy whereby the disturbed, criminal characters who, as a consequence of their repression of biological pulsions, are repulsed by those who are virtuous in the eyes of Natural Law, viz. the orgonitous. Orgonity is identical to immunity against disease and functionally, from the point of view of the autonomic faculties, the aggression of microorganisms is identical to the aggression of criminals.

י (VAV) Undoubtedly there will be certain people who, upon hearing these claims, will become enraged, preferring to ignore any information that could possibly lead to the prevention of such incidents. They value their own comfort – which, due to the transvaluation, is actually misery – more than the well-being of those they purport to advocate. I believe that such characters are incapable of love and they conceal this from others with various performances. They lash out because their hidden filth was stirred by the truth and then they disguise this as concern for others. Nor am I condemning people for this or that behavior. Nature will be doing the condemnation, not me; I am merely trying to observe and describe it with the hope that one day we can obtain a causal understanding of Natural Justice, be able to prevent tragedies and divest from redundant institutions.

י (ZAYIN) This is evidenced by the fact that the waves reappear when the contractile postures are divested from, to wit, when the muscles are relaxed.

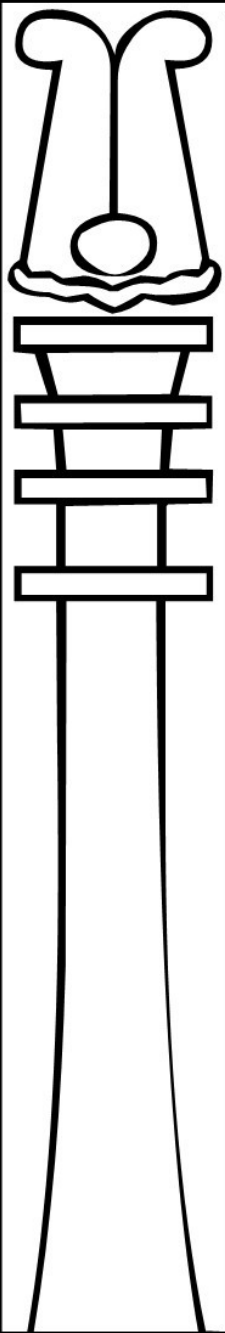
ך (CHET) These laws are to some extent understood by common people who work with their bodies, but I am sent to gather the lost sheep, viz. the intellectuals, who have become so big-brained that they can't find what's right under their noses.

1. Wilhelm Reich, *Character Analysis*, 83.
2. Wilhelm Reich, *The Function of the Orgasm*, 300.
3. Wilhelm Reich, *Selected Writings: An Introduction to Orgonomy*, 220-221 (from *The Discovery of the Orgone Volume II: The Cancer Biopathy*).

4. Ibid, 224.
5. Heraclitus, *DK B78*, <http://www.heraclitusfragments.com/files/ge.html>.
6. Wilhelm Reich, *The Function of the Orgasm*, 198.
7. Zohreh Shahhosseini, Mehdi Pourasghar, Alireza Khalilian & Fariba Salehi, "A Review of the Effects of Anxiety During Pregnancy on Children's Health" (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4499279/>).
8. E. L. Palmer, "Necrology or Biology, Which? A hint to teachers of biology and of nature study".
9. Wilhelm Reich, *Ether, God and Devil*, 61-62.
10. Wilhelm Reich, *Character Analysis*, 121.
11. Reich – *The Function of the Orgasm* pg. 144-146
12. Gustav Mahler, *Symphony No. 2 "Auferstehung" Movement V* ("Was du geschlagen, zu Gott wird es dich tragen!")
13. Plato, *Gorgias* (my edition has no line numbers)
14. Wilhelm Reich, *The Function of the Orgasm*, 142.
15. Richard Wagner, *Parsifal Act III Scene 2* ("...die Wunde schliesst der Speer nur, der sie schlug")
16. http://www.encyclopedia-nomadica.org/English/reich_einstein_experiment.php.

Next page:
Chibito,
Kristin Middleton, 2019,
watercolor on paper



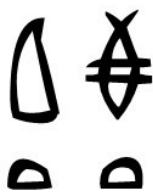
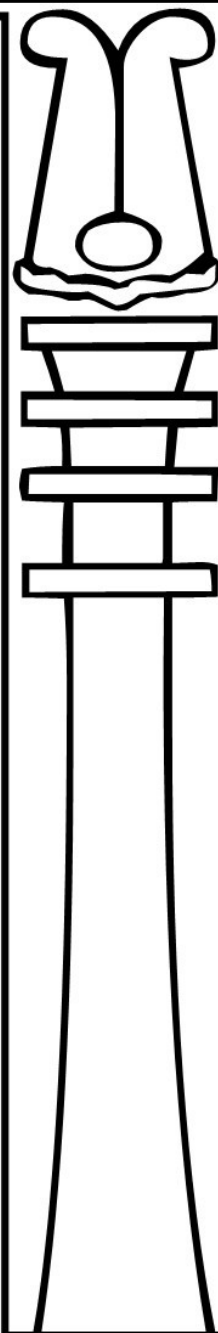


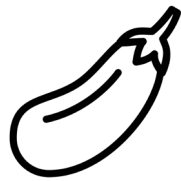
LIBER

CCCXXXIII

THE
LIE
OF
HEAD

FALSELY
SO CALLED





LIBER CCCXXXIII
THE LIE OF HEAD
WHICH IS ALSO FALSELY CALLED
LABORS
THE WASTE OF WORDS OR DESPERATE
ATTEMPTS AT HUMOR
OF
GOD DISK
WHICH WORD IS ITSELF EMPTY

“This labour should not be reckoned among the ten because he had not got the better of the hydra by himself, but with the help of____!”

1

ΑΚΕΦΑΛΟΣ Α

Glass Onion Peelings

Satyrs in Arcadia do lay about drinking wine not from pitchers. A banquet where all wines flow.

As for the old writer, one who denounced this text before it was written. Flabby and dead he describes his “friend”. The one who gave the Sermon on the Roof.

And poor Mary, all but lost.

Then the Word himself, outdated, chose the wrong hill to die on.

How to bridge the abyss? He attempts the non-Serpentine Love.

Commentary (A)

The unreality of Strawberry fields, similar to the bridge by a fountain, with “Rocking Horse People” these are the satyrs imbibing wine from their glass onion, a term used for seafaring bottles of wine, with a broad base to prevent spillage.

Lennon wrote Glass Onion as a joke, to mock those who analyzed his lyrics, thus we take one of their fathers, Crowley, and apply his method of Lying to see what he means.

Paul is the Disevangel. One John had already begun to avoid.

The purported meaninglessness of the song is Christlike, effective and amusing for a time, but outdated.

Then the Abyss like hole in the ocean, and the attempt at a “Dove-Tail Joint”. The Law describes “Nor let the fools mistake love; for there are love and love. There is the dove, and there is the serpent. Choose ye well!”

3

ΑΚΕΦΑΛΟΣ Γ

Triplets

Games enlighten us. Two particular games are deeply significant:

Rock Paper Scissors, and Fuck Marry Kill.

Both involve the Oedipal Triad, known magically as **IAO**.

Isis- Mother Nature

Apophis (Seth)- Destructive Child

Osiris- Reborn Order

The maternal material, rock,

The destructive divider, scissors

And papa's papyrus, paper.

Scissors, Seth, kills his brother Osiris, Paper.

Osiris is destroyed by the vengeful wife, Isis, and Osiris achieves godhood over Isis' lamentation.
Paper covers rock.

The same principle applies to FMK.

Fucking is instinctual and natural, Isis

Marrying is a civilized structure, Osiris

Killing is the act of Seth.

4

ΑΚΕΦΑΛΟΣ Δ

Three Words

Bish Bash Bosh

Fish Fash Fosh

Zip Zap Zop

E T C

Rebuild the temple and it will crumble at the foundation.

I A O

The Square within the Triangle.

6

ΑΚΕΦΑΛΟΣ F

The Joke

Arriving as one does upon an idea, aesthetic plagiarism of an esoteric comedy struck me. What better voice to parrot than that old Wicked man? Having established his headlessness through Ægyptian rites.

With only minutes to go the punchline falls upon me. The Header of each Lie is winking at me.

Ritual Femme Jouissance

by Misha Mayfair







HEAD IN THE GAME

PLAY-STRUCTURALISM, AESTHETIC RECOGNITION, AND TELEOLOGICAL BETRAYAL

Luke Ford

"Aesthetics is for the artist as ornithology is for the birds."

-Barnett Newman

IN 1936, Georges Bataille founded the College of Sociology along with Pierre Klossowski, Jules Monnerot, Pierre Libra, Georges Ambrosino, Michel Leiris, and Roger Caillois. Common among all was a focus on the communal, sacred rituals and acts that form human civilization. The act of play, of course, comes to mind when making a list of such activities. Nothing brings people together as the prospect of seeing great feats of athleticism or the “drama of humans under pressure,” as fighting game tournament organizer Tom Cannon puts it. So it is no surprise that Roger Caillois, with a background as such, would attempt to form a “Sociology Derived from Games” (*Man, Play, and Games*, 57) that resolves the contradiction between one concept, play, applying to both meaningless distractions and the fertile conventions that permit the evolution of culture: “The spirit of play is essential to culture, but games and toys are historically the residues of culture” (*MPG*, 58). While *Man, Play, and Games* does an excellent job defining play even among scholarship sixty years later, it does not give us a full picture of Caillois’s broader project or the projects he found himself a part of. Let us then frame Caillois’s work on games within his larger sociological goals, address to what I view as issues within theories of play historically, and unite those two endeavors under a new, hopefully even more acephalic definition of play in response to the apparent teleology present in our play-instinct.

It is difficult by looking at only *Man, Play, and Games* to understand exactly what Caillois’s views are because so much of the text is devoted to critiquing Johan Huizinga’s book *Homo Ludens*. Huizinga was a



in the play element of culture. It’s hard to say exactly what he wanted to do once he established his theory of play. As Caillois notes, “This work, although most of its premises are debatable, is nonetheless capable of opening extremely fruitful avenues to research and reflection. In any case, it is permanently to J. Huizinga’s credit that he has masterfully analyzed several of the fundamental characteristics of play and has demonstrated the importance of its role in the very development of civilization” (*MPG*, 3). Throughout *Man, Play, and Games*, Caillois makes continual reference to *Homo Ludens*, using Huizinga as an interlocutor for his own arguments. Huizinga defines play as a formative element of human culture that always consists of the following:

“Summing up the formal characteristics of play we might call it a free activity standing quite consciously outside ‘ordinary’ life as being ‘not serious,’ but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner. It promotes the formation of social groupings which tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress their difference from the common world by disguise or other means. (Homo Ludens, 13)”

Caillois is critical of Huizinga’s conclusions because he deems this definition both too broad and too narrow. Too broad in the sense that it includes “the secret or mysterious,” which according to Caillois, “cannot be part of the definition of play, which is nearly always spectacular or ostentatious” (MPG, 4). We will return to this particular objection later, but the definition is also too narrow for Caillois because, “Games of chance played for money have practically no place in Huizinga’s work,” (MPG, 5) which leads him to articulate a new definition of play to better encapsulate every meaning of the word. Play for Caillois is then:

- “1. Free: in which playing is not obligatory; if it were, it would at once lose its attractive and joyous quality as diversion;*
- 2. Separate: circumscribed within limits of space and time, defined and fixed in advance;*
- 3. Uncertain: the course of which cannot be determined, nor the result attained beforehand, and some latitude for innovations being left to the player’s initiative;*
- 4. Unproductive: creating neither goods, nor wealth, nor new elements of any kind; and, except for the exchange of property among the players, ending in a situation identical to that prevailing at the beginning of the game;*
- 5. Governed by rules: under conventions that suspend ordinary laws, and for the moment establish new legislation, which alone counts;*
- 6. Make-believe: accompanied by a special*

awareness of a second reality or of a free unreality, as against real life.” (MPG, 9-10)

Caillois notes the duality of the play early on, calling the improvisation attitude of free-play *paidia* and the rule-bound, generative aspect of play *ludus* (MPG, 27). And these formal and attitudinal qualities express themselves in the following categories of games: **Agon**, or games of skill; **Alea**, or games of chance; **Mimicry**, mimetic role-playing; and **Illinx**, or an altered state such as vertigo, panic, fear, ecstasy, inebriation, i.e. excitement (MPG, 14-26). Much of the rest of the book is laying out a genealogy of games. Showing how *ludus* captures *paidia* and is channeled into agonistic practices and so on. Caillois’s conclusion resolves that play is an intractable topic to study because it is such an all-encompassing activity. It is difficult to achieve a *sub specie aeternitatis* with respect to play for:

“Play is a total activity. It involves a totality of human behavior and interests. Various approaches—from psychology to mathematics and, in passing, history and sociology—by reason of their special biases have been unable to contribute anything too fruitful to the study of play. Whatever the theoretical or practical value of the results obtained by each of these perspectives, these results are still without true meaning or impact, unless they are interpreted within the context of the central problem posed by the indivisibility of the world of play. This is the primary basis for interest in games” (MPG, 175).

Both Huizinga and Caillois have a mission of historicizing play: drawing their definitions from a sociological survey of play and games in culture. Building on their work, James S. Hans in his book *The Play of the World* brings up an objection to this method because, “the connection between play and games can only be adequately dealt with after one has thoroughly understood the nature of play itself” (v-vi). While I disagree with the sequential nature of his claim, I think that the focus on play within subjectivity is a more fruitful than a historical project.

Not to say that one interested in being better at playing a particular game or designing new games need to worry about the fundamental nature of play, but those incorporating the play element into an analysis of human civilization should have a theory of play that accounts for the myriad of uses of the term.

While Huizinga and Caillois are certainly operating with stipulative definitions to support their larger arguments, Hans has no such modesty. Aiming right for the throat: his analysis began as a search for a “theory of meaning and value that would both deny the relativism so rampant in the world today and at the same time refuse to uphold a static or idealistic system of values that would immediately be refuted by everything going on around us. Only gradually did it become clear to me that ‘play’ was the word which best held together all of the theory’s subsidiary elements, while not holding them so tightly as to choke the life out of them” (*Play of the World*, vi). The correlation between play and meaning-making is undeniable, but it is not clear that play underlies all human endeavors or if it emerges in form and function based on our broader cognitive framework. A spectre is haunting games. The spectre of Plato. The Allegory of the Cave, the Kantian noumena, the Lacanian Real. Things are not always as they appear. Play reminds us, or perhaps allows us to embody, the difference between our perceptions and reality. Caillois and Huizinga mostly step over this problem as it is a way to get to their more genealogical projects, but the shadow cast by the flame at the back of the cave remains.

All of these authors in one way or another reconstruct a theory of human cognition through play. They might admit that there is more going on, but based on their examples and their definitions, those other things are excluded due to time or complexity concerns. On my view, instead of raising play up to the level of importance they would like, this collapses play into normal cognition: removing its status as a distinct mental state and going against their own definitions of play as separate from ordinary life. Wittgenstein is, of course, to blame for all of this. The language-game for Wittgenstein serves as a metaphor for the way

that language functions. Language is like a game. Due to the linguistic confusions that metaphors so often cause—they elucidate as much as they obfuscate—both people addressing language and people addressing games got their chocolate in the others’ peanut butter. This is where Structuralism comes in to save the day: by stating it is not a metaphor. For Lacan, the unconscious is structured like a language. We are able to navigate the world because the sign and the signified interact with one another in systematic ways, even if they are arcane and difficult to decipher. This is the same ethos that Hans takes with respect to Deleuzo-Guattarrain idea of desiring-production. For Deleuze and Guattari, desiring-production replaces the idea of the Freudian id-ego-superego or the Oedipus Complex. It not only shapes the way we interact with the world, it is the way we interact with the world. What Hans does is make the observation that desiring-production, territorialization, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization look a lot like play:

“Desire as I wish to consider it occurs as an aspect of the activity of play. If play is the activity, and production is the result of the activity, desire is what provides the orientation and motivation for play. Previous conceptions of desire do not fit well in this framework because they do not consider play or desire as productive.” (The Play of the World, 51)

This is an incredibly insightful finding as *The Play of the World* was published in 1981—just nine years after *Anti-Oedipus* was written, and only four years after it was available in English. Hans does a great job of reframing the nature of play within philosophical discourse. But, just as Huizinga and Caillois use play to fulfill sociological ends, Hans uses play to fulfill philosophical ends. “A concept is a brick. It can be used to build the courthouse of reason. Or it can be thrown through the window,” as Brian Massumi states in the foreword to *A Thousand Plateaus* (xii).

For Hans, play replaces the traditional philosophical concept. Again, Wittgenstein curses us.

Just as there is a difference between seeing and seeing-as, there is a difference between playing and playing-at. Play can never be the whole story. The phrase, "I'm not playing around," makes sense. James Bond infiltrating a casino can pretend to play poker so as to gain more intel on a person of interest. An artificial intelligence can play a game of Go, despite the fact that it cannot do otherwise. Play is the recognition of the aesthetic state of playing. *Aesthetic* in the sense of *αἰσθητικός*, meaning "of or pertaining to sensual perception." Play is one expression of a subject's ability to parse the world—to abstract general truths from particular experiences. To create rules that structure future interactions. To cast the dice by making decisions based on imperfect information. Our ability to desire and produce new things, whether you call that desiring-production, Reason, de/reterritorialization, language, Judgement, cognition, Will, or play is what all of these projects seek to formulate a theory of. So to call everything play is just to rename this faculty of human understanding. Instead of focusing on repurposing existing philosophical frameworks, we should focus on placing play within those frameworks and seeing in what ways the similarities and differences between other forms of thought create new experiences and connections.

And this is where some restraint might be required. I do not think attempting to explain all of human cognition is necessary to talk about play. Looking back at Caillois's definition of play, it might still be too broad in that many activities are free, separate, uncertain, unproductive, governed by rules, and make-believe. Certainly many forms of art can be folded into play with the use of this definition, which Caillois does looking at music and theater, which works because we use the same verb for all three activities. The temptation to extend this further to include acts like inebriation, plastic arts, liturgical activities, and politics, among other things, tracks logically. This, of course, is due to placing the goalposts of play a little too far back. Caillois definition works because he is not defining *play*, he is defining all *aesthetic experiences*. An aesthetic experience is

precisely what lifts us out of the ordinary. The feeling that makes one say "Earth without art is just Eh," or more aptly as Schiller explains in *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, "man plays only when he is in the full sense of the word a man, and *he is only wholly Man when he is playing*" (80). There is a sense in the way we ordinarily talk about art and play that implies a unique mental state that is different than what one feels when they are, say, at work, running from a tiger, or sleeping. Psychology might call this "flow," Kant might call it the Sublime, Schiller might call it beauty, but again, I'm not particularly interested in the intricacies of this state, but merely to acknowledge that it exists. The feeling of dancing at a party. The feeling of overlooking a mountain range. The feeling of singing along to your favorite song in the car. The feeling of scoring the winning point in a game of basketball. The rest of the world melts away. These activities all share between them the propensity to elevate one out of everyday experience. Hans calls this an "ex-static mode of existence," (39) which he warns putting too much value on because it could denigrate our conception of

"Man...is only wholly Man
when he is playing."



play at lower levels. Ex-static play is merely when the nervous system is, “overloaded with information and is responding in the only way it knows” (*The Play of the World*, 41). To understand play for Hans is to understand it at its most ordinary: when we are walking, sleeping, at work, etc. He explains that play is always categorized by a rupture from the ordinary and subjective reflexivity, which is where my definition ends, but sees this as an indication of our more foundational play/production activity. Of course a definition of play that only applies when you are actively engaged in rule-bound games is too narrow, but again, collapsing every human activity into a definition of play is surely too broad. The rupture/reflexivity of a particular kind of aesthetic experience of that accounts for a variety of intensities might be an extremely messy definition of play, but what fun is there in simple solutions? Play is an aesthetic experience that removes one from the ordinary, requires intention, can be reflexively described, and is playful. The last bit is a little on the nose, but there really is no other way of putting it. All aesthetic experiences share the first three qualities, but how the experience is mediated is what differentiates play from art or inebriation and so on. The same way you have knowledge of your sensory experiences in that you are not confused whether you heard a color or saw a sound (if this is the case, please seek immediate medical assistance), you are able to discern whether you are playing or not. Each sense can be heightened to elicit distinct aesthetic experiences: seeing something beautiful, hearing harmonious music, laughing at a funny joke, eating something delicious, etc., and play is when our sense of playfulness is engaged, e.g., playing a fun game.

The reason I prefer to think of play this way is that it does not place a primacy on any particular creative endeavor while also hopefully showing in what ways they are similar. People interested in talking about art or music can hopefully glean something useful from this way of thinking of aesthetic experiences as well. So how does this new definition of play respond to the rest of Caillois’s project? Caillois is

interested in removing mystery from the world. He is interested in critically engaging with the weird and the inexplicable, not worshipping or discounting it. In a meeting with André Breton, he explained that a Mexican jumping bean “jumped” because there is a caterpillar inside that will eventually break out and turn into a moth. He implored Breton to cut open the seed pod to prove this statement, but the artist refused, stating that he’d like to preserve the sense of mystery. This was enough of a difference of opinion to cause Caillois to separate himself from the Surrealists formally. Finding a new community of thinkers in The College of Sociology, Caillois continued his writings on bugs, rocks, and games. He truly presaged the non-anthropomorphic thinking of people like Bruno Latour, Donna Haraway, and Anna Tsing. Writing throughout his life on the monstrous, the inhuman, and the alien in search of, like so much of philosophy, “some ancient, diffused magnetism; a call from the center of things; a dim, almost lost memory, or perhaps a presentiment, pointless in so puny a being, of a universal syntax” (*The Writing of Stones*, 104). And these truths, of course, cannot be revealed by looking at the world from the point of view of a human. Caillois criticizes individuals who would anthropomorphize the mating ritual of praying mantis. “Even when decapitated, the mantis is capable of walking, mating, laying eggs, feigning rigor mortis to escape impending danger” (*Aninormality*, 135). What Caillois gleans from this is not the ways in which animals evolve, reaching for some teleological maxim, but rather how the insectile penetrates our subjectivity in what he calls, “the systematic overdetermination of the universe” (“The Praying Mantis: From Biology to Psychoanalysis,” 76). This antiutilitarian evolutionary theory was instrumental in the development of Jacques Lacan’s notion of the Mirror Stage (*Aninormality*, 136). He also has a notion of beauty as unfathomable excess which sounds like Lacan’s *jouissance* (137). But we must take each unconventional proposal Caillois posits with an equal amount of mid-century Eurocentrism. Even he could not fully escape the culture he found himself writing, working, and thinking in. Many

sections of *Man, Play, and Games* involve sociological surveys of places and cultures where it's not clear that Caillois had ever interacted with them directly. Additionally, when conducting research, your findings are only as good as your sources, and basing your theory of play on *Homo Ludens*, and responding to it on its own terms, is a recipe for becoming stuck in a particular way of thinking. Caillois is equal parts Terence McKenna and Jordan Peterson—Rudolf Steiner and Joseph Campbell. Like the skeptic at the magic show, he was interested in how the trick is performed, but he's still at a magic show instead of a laboratory. If you think there is a natural explanation for everything, why study the elements that are the hardest to observe and fit into a scientific theory first? Unless you really believe there is something more going on. How far was he willing to take his commitments at demystifying the world? One of the goals of *Acéphale* was to perform a ritual human sacrifice. The difficult part was not finding people willing to be sacrificed, but rather, finding people to do the killing. Bataille tried to coax Caillois into performing the act, but he was as turned off by this as he was by the Surrealists and their preservation of the jumping bean. Caillois was too focused on explaining the status quo rather than subverting it. In this way, Bataille's view of perversion is a much better model of play than Huizinga's play-instinct. The observation and refusal for sexual transgressions to be incorporated into ordinary life. The recognition that there is something more going on in the libido, the same way there is something going on in play. It is separate. Connected with the Outside. Aesthetic experience involves the intelligence of the heart, not the mind. As soon as the head gets involved, the illusion is shattered. The phantasmatic flows rupture and your consciousness pours back into the Ordinary. Hans notes this, but warns us of basing our conception of play merely on ex-static states. Again, seeming like a time-traveler, Hans outlines something like a Jamesonian *Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* a decade before it was written, stating that Capital is too efficient at capturing the excitement of aesthetic experiences,

promising an ever-increasing production of desire. And like a drunk to the barstool, we are drawn back again and again, chasing the feeling we had as kids on the swings at the park. In the video game *Death Stranding*, cast-aside working class people called MULEs or *Homo gestalts*, are so entwined with the structure of the economic system that created them that even after the collapse of their country and profession, they continue to mimic their work like drones. They are porters: people who deliver goods between population centers that can't be produced using post-scarcity technologies (like medicine, food, etc.), but they have no orders or destination. They wander the wasteland with fetishistic excess. Their previous roles were so gamified, that even after any extrinsic incentives or rewards disappeared, they continued to play. For Hans, this evolution—from *Homo sapiens* to *Homo gestalt*—would only be possible by going too far in the ex-static model of play under Capitalism. *Death Stranding* embodies almost exactly the theoretical developments from Huizinga to Caillois, from Caillois to Hans, and from Hans to Kojima. Explicitly referencing Huizinga at various points: the self-insert for the creator of the game, Hideo Kojima, is through a game studio named “Ludens.” As for Caillois, once the story of *Death Stranding* opens up, it clues you in on its teleological nature. Fossils, geological data, the discovery of a new material in the Earth's crust—again Kojima spares us the interpretation as it is literally “The Writing of Stones,” as Caillois would put it. The game takes place after the titular “Death Stranding,” a man-made natural disaster that destroyed civilization for relying too heavily on a new technology. At first, you think the game is about rebuilding society after a collapse, but soon you find there is more at stake: on the horizon there is an “Extinction Event,” meant to wipe out all life on Earth. This would be the sixth such even in the history of the world following the Cretaceous–Paleogene extinction event. All previous extinction events are shown to be failures—each was meant to put an end to all living things, Creation's allergic reaction to itself, brought upon the Earth by harbingers known

as “Extinction Entities”—but this one, thanks to the unwitting actions of our protagonist Sam Porter Bridges, should be guaranteed to work. Of course thanks to the power of plot, it is avoided, albeit temporarily. But even if it went as planned, it isn’t clear that it would work as intended. Life always goes on. The teleology betrays itself, or perhaps we are always looking for an explanation where there isn’t one. Caillios notes in “Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia,” that animal mimicry doesn’t imitate anything and that most predators hunt by smell anyway so looking like a stick or an owl’s face serves no purpose (*Aninormality*, 136). As humans, we attach anthropomorphic or evolutionary functions to these developments, but it never quite lines up with the facts. In *Death Stranding* the scientist Heartman asks us to, “Consider that fossils of the first fish to adapt themselves to land have been found in regions with unusually large tidal range. Could it be that these creatures developed legs in order to more swiftly return to the safety of the sea when stranded? Could their evolutionary leap have been triggered by this traumatic experience?” Similarly, in human civilization, agriculture was developed not because humans found themselves in a “Fertile Crescent,” but rather that the region did not provide enough sustenance on its own and the people there needed a way to create enough food. Play does not begin when all our material needs are met, but is always already a function of our ability to slip out of ordinary activity. We did not achieve play, just as fish did not achieve legs or humans achieve farming. It came from our traumatic contact with the Real.

Because of how frequently we are betrayed either by teleology itself or our interpretation of it, we must look at play the same way. It is not the wellspring from which all development springs forth, but it is also not a stupid psychological response that can be taken advantage of in systematic ways. Making everything play lessens the importance of play. I ask us to remember the Acéphale motto: “**It is necessary to become different or else cease to be.**” The last Extinction Event was not averted, it was

merely delayed. So, we must then look forward to the destruction of the existing world, and eyes wide open for the world to come. Play cannot be everything for this strategy, or else we’d have to destroy it too, and it cannot be everything ontologically because there is always play in subverting existing structures. And of course there is play in the existing structures themselves. The re/deterritorialization of play is its grounding and ungrounding nature. This is what prevents it from essentializing other things or being essentialized. The play-structuralism of Caillios is totalizing. He could not perform the sacrifice in Acéphale because it was a play-act. And play-acts were equivalent to speech-acts and ethical acts to him. Like Abraham and Issac, he took the task too seriously. In that case, it took the playful God intervening to say, “Just kidding!” To avoid this kind of seriousness, we must become more aware of our play. Not to see everything as play, but to see everything as a site of limitless potentiality: of play, of seriousness, of ritual, of revolution. Whatever tool we need in the toolbox, use it. And if it’s not there—make it. Be the person you wish Caillios decapitated. Play can help us become new types of beings—*Homo ludens*, *Homo gestalt*, *Homo demens*, or maybe *Homo acephalus*. The philosophers have only interpreted play in various ways; the point, however, is to change it.

NOTES ON LACANIAN QABBALISM

Sergio Segura

“As life emerged from the primeval soup several billion years ago, the molecules that caused themselves to be replicated at the expense of others became more numerous. Then some of those molecules discovered the virtues of cooperation and specialization, so they began to assemble in groups called chromosomes to run machines called cells that could replicate those chromosomes efficiently...This broadly describes the world of viruses and bacteria. They are disposable vehicles for simple teams of genes...”¹

-Matt Ridley, The Red Queen

I. GENES AND MEMES

Through Matt Ridley’s paraphrasing of W. D. Hamilton, we can conceive of gene-complexes (or genomes) as assemblages of self-interested genetic elements motivated by survival. “In just the same way,” he writes, “little groups of agriculturalists joined with blacksmiths and carpenters to form villages.”² Considering this view of the genome as a cooperative space, it comes as no surprise how much “selfish DNA” we’ve identified, with some 45% of “our” human genome consisting of transposable elements (*transposons*, or “jumping genes”) like the SINE or LINE retrotransposons that can copy and paste themselves into the genetic code over and over again. As much as 8% seems to come from latent retroviruses (Human Endogenous Retroviruses, or HERVS), that decided to dispense with the whole idea of living as free elements and stick around, embedded in our DNA to freeloader off our replication machines.³ It’s a continuum, with elements in different states of degeneration,



from viruses ready to mobilize at a moment’s notice, to others who’ve crumpled into a fistful of nucleotides, not even able to copy themselves anymore. Genomes, especially in the view of evolutionary history, are very plastic. Even apart from random mutation or sexual recombination, genetic elements stitch themselves in and out constantly, and larger genetic events, such as the absorption of a symbiont or the fusion of two organisms, can lead to cataclysms as genes struggle to retain their respective primacies in an organism.⁴

In a similar way, cultural information has tended to form into assemblages within the Symbolic Order. The similarity is so uncanny, that an entire vocab has been created to point out the running parallels between cultural and genetic information. “Memes” become the cultural analogues to genes, forming aggregates called “meme-complexes” or “memomes” like *mathematics* or *Scientology* all within an “ideosphere” to parallel the eco-evo “biosphere”.⁵

Within their respective complexes, memes can go extinct, mutate, and evolve. They can be endo-toxic towards other memes or exo-toxic towards other non-host organisms (e.g. Nazism). Sometimes even, these bits of cultural information can be ejected from their complexes and become free, viral elements: short, sometimes nonsensical chains of information concerned solely with their survival and propagation.

This is the kind of space *qabbala* exists in- that is to say, **qabbala is a memetic virus created as an accidental by-product of semiotic change**, particularly in changes between modes of notation. Or in Nick Land's words, qabbala is "a self-regenerating mass-cultural glitch."⁶ In general, qabbala has historically spawned when *alphabetical numerical systems* (Roman, Hebrew, Greek numerals, etc.) became superseded by *place-value* (or *positional*) *numerical systems*. In each situation, the older alphanumerical systems posed significant barriers to quick multiplication and division, the representation of fractions, and the further development of number theory since all math was constrained to the natural numbers.⁷

e.g. Hebrew Numerals			
Char.	Alphabetic Letter	Numeral	Positional Equivalent
א	<i>aleph</i>	<i>achat</i>	1
ב	<i>bet</i>	<i>shtayim</i>	2
ג	<i>gimel</i>	<i>shalosh</i>	3
י	<i>yod</i>	<i>'eser</i>	10
ק	<i>qof</i>	<i>mea</i>	100
קלג	<i>qof</i> + <i>lamed</i> + <i>gimel</i>	<i>mea</i> <i>shloshim</i> <i>shalosh</i>	133
ר	<i>resh</i>	<i>matayim</i>	200

As a result, these systems were outcompeted by the Hindu positional system, and consequently ejected

from the memetic body of mathematics. It's no coincidence that Jewish kabbalah emerged with the post-Crusades growth of the merchant class and the growing adoption of the modern positional system. But like their biological-viral counterparts, the now-free-element alphabetical numerical systems had to rely on a limited chain of resources to endure and spread in the human consciousness.

II. ON GEMATRIA

Viruses (broadly speaking) rely on three critical genes within their own limited gene chains: *gag*- which codes for the viral core, *pol*-transcription machinery to re-code host cells, and *env*- the protective envelope.

Forming the viral core of the qabbalistic virus is *gematria* (pl. *gematriot*), a modern word (c. 300 years) for the age-old assignment of numeral values to letters, so that quantitative values can be read into words and phrases. The *Tetragrammaton*, or *Name of God*, for instance, (יהוה: *yod* + *he* + *vav* + *he*) becomes equated to the Hebrew numerals *'eser*, *chamesh*, *shesh*, and *chamesh*, and consequently the value **26** (10 + 5 + 6 + 5). In Greek *gematria* (*isopsēphia*), Νερων (*Neron*, as in *Nero Caesar*) becomes equated to *pentēkonta*, *pēnte*, *hekatōn*, *oktakōsioi*, and *pentēkonta* again, or 50 + 5 + 100 + 800 = **1005**, which is coincidentally the same value as the phrase "ἰδιαν μητέρα ἀπεκτείνε" (*idian metera apekteine*), or "he killed his own mother"⁸. Memetic mutations can even open up more derivational venues of possible interpretation, such as a second-order Hebrew one whereby YOD, HE, VAV, and HE are spelled out and then converted. (דוּי) + (אָה) + (וּי) + (אָה) = (10 + 6 + 4) + (5 + 1) + (6 + 6) + (5 + 1) = 20+6+12+6 = **44** (which is probably how Adam Mickiewicz came up with the prophesied numerical savior of Poland in his poem *Dziady*.) This aspect of these excised alphanumerical systems has been around for millenia: **666**, the "Number of the Beast" (from ווּרִי

נֶרֶסָר, *Neron Qesar*) being the first example to pop into mind.

But a gematria alone does not define qabbala. It would be absurd to date numerology alone to the 13th or 14th centuries. Instead, what supplements gematria are the crucial *env* and *pol* genes of genes of the memetic virus: qabbalas' use of the nostalgia for cultural practices (even going so far as to perpetuate mythoses that pre-date them to their origin) and the utilitarian value derived from their situation *outside* of mathematics and science, and thus away from the Deleuzian *logos*, or Law. Thus, we have a definition of *what* a qabbala is.

Simply put, **a qabbala is a method of processing signifieds out of signifiers within a particular cultural context.** Per Land, it is a kind of "programmatic (as opposed to doctrinal) occultism, since...[it] venture[s] in regions once declared mysterious..."¹⁰ Per Reza Negarestani's essay "Introduction to ABJAD", qabbalas such as the Arabic-based ABJAD have provided ample uses for people, especially to those on the margins of society:

*"ABJAD diagrams were composed for purposes including education in elementary schools to depict the interactions between alphabet, numbers and religious matters in an efficient way (commonly being used for memorizing religious stories, names or even basic mathematical or linguistic lessons), interpreting the Quran and other Islamic or sectarian scriptures, healing diseases, invoking love or hostility, conjuring deities, operating as catalyzer-spells in alchemical experiments, etc. The multi-functioning (heretical) nature of ABJAD also allowed it to be extensively employed as a language of communication between minorities (or within minorities), and as an instrument for supporting the political belief-systems of Islam's non-Apocalypse..."*¹¹

So serving not only as an educational tool [Reza

specifically names the way that the value 5 is processed out of the character ה (hā'), which can then go on to represent Mohammed, Ali, Fatemeh, Hassan, and Hussein- the five individuals of Shia], qabbala has been used a machine to process codes and relay speculative, analytical, heretical, or downright subversive messages between people, with variations on this meme forming the basis of modern cryptography.

To once again reference *A Thousand Plateaus*, the banishment of its core elements from from the formalized domain mathematics has situated the empty, multipotentiated tool of qabbala opposite of the Law and opposite of Ideology. There in the domain of *nomos* it finds a place to endure.¹²

III. ON LACANIAN "ALGEBRA"

In the domain of 1950s psychoanalysis, Jacques Lacan began his attempt to formalize psychoanalysis, much in the same way that Claude Lévi-Strauss made his attempt to formalize anthropology and thus situate it as a hard science.

Whether intentionally or unintentionally or both, Lacan's formulae accomplished exactly the opposite, sheering quasi-mathematical symbols out of the sciences in order to generate qabbalistic machines outside the realm of Ideology.

Unlike mathematics, Lacanian "algebra", or more properly, Lacanian qabbala, can be generated, manipulated, and read in different ways dependent on context, while also providing a teaching resource to analysts. Here, I'll specifically use the "Four Discourses", a simple-enough Lacanian machine to understand communication. The scheme itself is fairly simple, consisting centrally of the relationship between an *agent* and an *other*. But within every every discourse, the agent always acts on behalf of a kind of "truth" (not necessarily an objective truth but more the reason behind their actions), and the other always produces something

as a result of being acted on by the agent.

$$\uparrow \frac{\text{agent}}{\text{truth}} \rightarrow \frac{\text{other}}{\text{production}} \downarrow$$

From Lacan's range of symbols, we can place in these slots \$ (the subject), S₁ (the master signifier), S₂ (knowledge), and a (the object). Arranged in order, we can generate the Discourse of the Master, the subordinates that other to the agent (the Master in this case) and sets the stage for the rotative manipulations of this machine.¹³

Discourse of the Master

$$\uparrow \frac{S_1}{\$} \rightarrow \frac{S_2}{a} \downarrow$$

One useful way to interpret this formulation is by having the agent's side speak, followed by the reply of the other's side. In the case of the Master's Discourse:

Master: What I say, you are.

Slave: You say what I am.

Using quarter turns of the machine, we can then generate sayings for all four discourses.

Discourse of the Master

$$\uparrow \frac{\text{You are}}{\text{What I say}} \rightarrow \frac{\text{You say}}{\text{What I am}} \downarrow$$

Discourse of the University

$$\uparrow \frac{S_2}{S_1} \rightarrow \frac{a}{\$} \downarrow$$

$$\uparrow \frac{\text{I say}}{\text{What I am}} \rightarrow \frac{\text{You are}}{\text{What you say}} \downarrow$$

University: What I am, I say.

Student: What you say, you are.

(Here, the knowledge acts on an uncritical other in

service of the Master, minting a grad who parrots the knowledge of the university back at it.)

Discourse of the Analyst

$$\uparrow \frac{a}{S_2} \rightarrow \frac{\$}{S_1} \downarrow$$

$$\uparrow \frac{\text{You are}}{\text{What you say}} \rightarrow \frac{\text{I say}}{\text{What I am}} \downarrow$$

Analyst: What you say, you are.

Analysand: I say what I am.

(Here, the "truth" in this discourse is presumed to be hidden in the words of the analysand, presented back to the analysand by the analyst to empower the analysand towards the modification of symptoms.)

Discourse of the Hysteric

$$\uparrow \frac{\$}{a} \rightarrow \frac{S_1}{S_2} \downarrow$$

$$\uparrow \frac{\text{You say}}{\text{What I am}} \rightarrow \frac{\text{You are}}{\text{What I say}} \downarrow$$

Hysteric: What I am you say. (or "Tell me what I am!")

Master: You are what I say.

(Here, the hysteric questions the prevailing master's discourse)

Of course, Lacan's four discourses can be interpreted for numerous situations, but why stop there when we can pervert the machinery and enter the "Universe of the Capitalist".¹⁴

Discourse of the Capitalist

$$\downarrow \frac{\$}{S_1} \not\rightarrow \frac{S_2}{a} \downarrow$$

Swapping the S₁ and \$ in the Master's Discourse

creates an entirely new machine where the object of desire feeds back into the subject, creating a closed loop. In the perverted "Discourse of the Capitalist", for instance, the master signifier functions as truth for the subject, who, not being able to reach it's kind of "completeness", is driven in an endless loop in search of the product that will bring about satisfaction.

Levi Bryant qabbalistically generates three more discourses, using the the Capitalist's discourse as the matrix for speech in this discursive universe: each, once again, by rotating the signifiers by quarter-turns.¹⁵ In this manner we can generate:

Discourse of Biopower

$$\downarrow \frac{S_1}{a} \bowtie \frac{\$}{S_2} \downarrow$$

Discourse of the Critical Theory

$$\downarrow \frac{a}{S_2} \bowtie \frac{S_1}{\$} \downarrow$$

Discourse of Instrumental Reason

$$\downarrow \frac{S_2}{\$} \bowtie \frac{a}{S_1} \downarrow$$

Discourse of the Capitalist

$$\downarrow \frac{\$}{S_1} \bowtie \frac{S_2}{a} \downarrow$$

-all Bizzaro-world versions of the more classical discourses, producing strange loops for us to extract meaning from. The Discourse of Biopower, for one last example, is fueled by the object of mastery over its subjects, using knowledge in its relentless task to dominate via the regulation of bodies.

With nothing more to add, I wish you all well in the continued perversion of Frère Jacques'

signification machinery. With 24 permutations of discourse (at least using the four traditional symbols for discourse), each useful under myriad dynamics, I'm sure there's still much left to explore.

ENDNOTES

1. Matt Ridley, *The Red Queen*, 92. While it does feel odd to introduce the subject with an aging, right-wing Brexiter, I have to admit that Ridley writes a solid introduction to the work of W. D. Hamilton, who is, unfortunately, a difficult read, and was reportedly an even worse lecturer, better known through the writings of Dawkins and Ridley.
2. Ibid. 92-93.
3. David J. Griffiths. "Endogenous retroviruses in the human genome sequence".
4. Eugene V. Koonin, Tatiana G. Senkevich & Valerian V. Dolja, "The ancient Virus World and evolution of cells".
5. R.S. Dawkins, T.R. Halliday & Richard Dawkins, *The Tinbergen Legacy*, 91.
6. Nick Land, "Qabbala 101" in *Fanged Noumena*, 595.
7. Joseph Heyder, "Roman Numerals: Their Origins, Impact, and Limitations".
8. Clemenz Edwin, "From One to Zero: A Universal History of Numbers".
9. Stewart Goldberg, "Konrad and Jacob: A Hypothetical Kabbalistic Subtext in Adam Mickiewicz's Forefathers' Eve, Part III" in *The Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol 45. No. 4. The full quote reads:

*The Son of a foreign mother, in his blood old heroes
And his name will be forty and four*

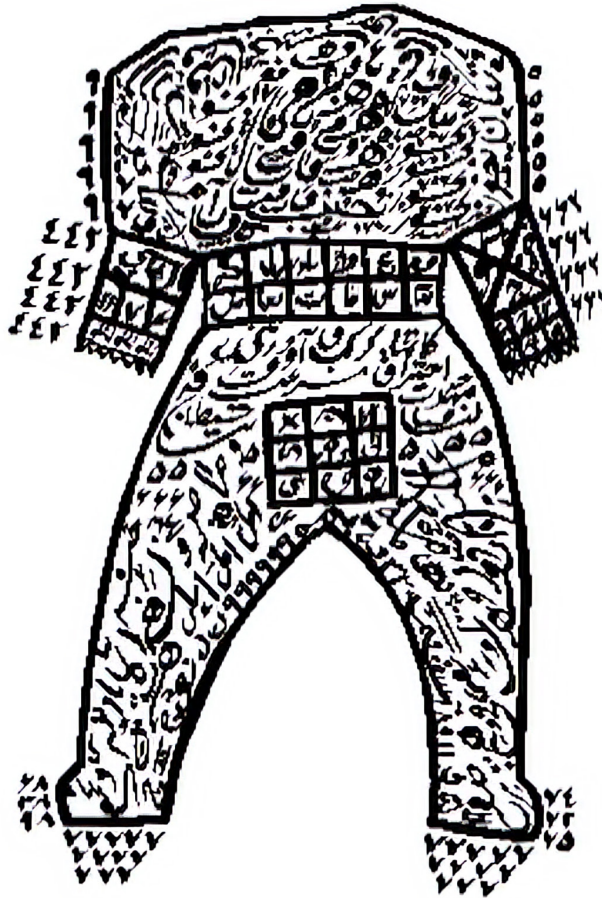
10. Nick Land, "Qabbala 101" in *Fanged Noumena*, 592.
11. Reza Negarestani, "Introduction to ABJAD" in *Collapse 1*
12. Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 372-373.

13. Gérard Wajcman, "The Hysteric's Discourse", <https://www.lacan.com/hystericdiscf.htm>

This is certainly a worthwhile introduction to the Four Discourses.

14. Stijn Vanheule, "Capitalist Discourse, Subjectivity, and Lacanian Psychoanalysis"

15. Levi Bryant, "The Universe of Capitalism", <https://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2016/07/29/the-universe-of-capitalism>



ERLKÖNIG



ON LOVE AND HATRED FOR AN AMERICAN FASCIST

THE NOBLE PERSON DOES NOT SIN: A TRAGEDY IN THREE PARTS IS A BITINGLY CONTEMPORARY MEMOIR BY ALEXANDRIA FANELLA. SPANNING EARLY 2016 UP TO PRESENT DAY, IT CHRONICLES A WOMAN IN INTIMATE CONFRONTATION WITH THE DANGEROUS, VOLATILE SEXUAL POLITICS OF THE AMERICAN ALT-RIGHT. THE WORK DEPICTS A BRIEF AND TRAGIC LOVE AFFAIR BETWEEN THE AUTHOR AND A MAN NAMED AUGUSTUS SOL INVICTUS WHICH SPANNED THROUGHOUT 2016 BEFORE THE ELECTION OF DONALD TRUMP. PSYCHICALLY VULNERABLE AFTER THE DEATH OF HER FATHER, ALEXANDRIA INITIALLY FINDS SOLACE IN INVICTUS, BUT ULTIMATELY, COMES TO REVILE HIM, UPON LEARNING OF HIS HIDDEN AFFILIATIONS, MOTIVATIONS AND MISDEEDS. THEIR POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP ENDS WHEN ALEXANDRIA SEES SHE HAS BEEN UNAWARE NOT ONLY THAT THIS MAN SHE BELIEVED SHE LOVED IS NOT ONLY AN AVOWED WHITE SUPREMACIST, BUT HAS ALSO BEEN ACCUSED OF SERIAL ACTS OF EXTREME VIOLENCE: ABDUCTION, STRANGULATION, SEXUAL ASSAULT, AND DEATH THREATS WITH A FIREARM AGAINST AT LEAST SIX DIFFERENT MEN AND WOMEN. AS A RIFT BETWEEN ALEXANDRIA AND AUGUSTUS OPENS, HE RADICALIZES FURTHER INTO WHITE SUPREMACIST EXTREMISM. TODAY, HE MAY READILY BE DESCRIBED AS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE MOST DANGEROUS AND INFLUENTIAL LEADERS OF THE CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN WHITE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT KNOWN AS THE 'ALT-RIGHT.' THE NOBLE PERSON DOES NOT SIN IS THUS A MEMOIR ANIMATED BY TECTONIC SCHISM: BETWEEN THE SINCERE LOVE AND AFFECTION WHICH SEEMS TO SHIMMER BETWEEN ALEXANDRIA AND HER FRIEND, ON THE ONE HAND, AND ON THE OTHER-HER INCREASINGLY URGENT BATTLE TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST HIS COMBUSTIBLE, UNHALTABLE, PATHOLOGICAL AND VIOLENT RELATIONSHIP TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.

I DEDICATE THIS PIECE TO AN ANONYMOUS FRIEND WHOSE FATHER WAS A JEWISH REFUGEE FROM NAZI GERMANY. MY FRIEND'S FATHER FIRST TAUGHT HIM THE FABLE OF THE ERLKÖNIG WHEN HE WAS A YOUNG CHILD; IN TURN, HE HAS NOW TAUGHT THE FABLE TO ME. IN THAT SENSE, I OWE MY INSPIRATION FOR THIS WRITING TO HIM.

The following piece of writing is my “autopsychanalysis”—at times sober, at times playful, but primarily, a treatment of my book. I seek to understand why I fear I will inevitably die as a result of my relationship to Augustus Sol Invictus—not through violence, in any form— through indirect, occultic, and psychic means. but primarily, a treatment of my book. I seek to understand why I fear I will inevitably die as a result of my relationship to Augustus Sol Invictus—not through violence, in any form— through indirect, occultic, and psychic means. Our friendship was founded upon a mythology which has not recognizably survived its confrontation with Truth. Beyond Truth, beyond even the Good of ethics, I wish to uncover whether there is any sense in which the friendship may nonetheless persist—I wish to assess this objectively, regardless of what I desire. In making sense of both loss and intentional destruction alike, I identify a regenerative power in the *memory* of my association with Invictus. I can only define our dynamic as an agonistic battle par excellence, a “friendship between artists” which can be understood best as a type of affective combat. Augustus’ radicalization into white supremacist terrorism became dramatically more overt after our friendship ended—not merely as a political evil but as a personal betrayal as well. In the wake of this, I explore whether there is any sense in which it is true that my love and compassion for this man survives, even as I work mercilessly to become one of his great, “sworn” enemies.

In reading, I ask you consider that my engagement in such a “friendship between enemies” is not a voluntary association, not a “choice” in the conventional sense of the term. This is not a “friendship” in any everyday sense. It is an act of meaning-making, and *acceptance of the reality of already having been in relation to the other*, which restores order to my psychoanalytical universe. Having entirely abandoned any conventions of actual relationship, this collaborative “friendship” unfolds exclusively as an indirect dialogue between the competing artistic and political projects of each “friend.” This type of friendship, as work, ought to take our *inevitable* past, the *inevitable* existential suffering it caused—and transform them into tragic art. Insofar as this is a radical affirmation of fate, this artistic work should clear space for new values, against the silhouette of our post-Christian ethical universe. Nietzsche’s *amor fati*. I believe my new ambition—to become Invictus’ great enemy—is the only proper manner in which I may resuscitate meaning in the affection each of us has had for the other. I seek only to be able to live with what I have done, however—and *not* what he has done, as this is what is best for Invictus, as well as for myself. My disavowal of who he is today, my aggressive refusal to forgive his evil, is also my integrity to the very ethical principles which animated our relationship. This story, however, is very real, and so I can promise no finished work or established conclusions. My writing thus concludes reflecting on a phenomenological overlap between feminine passion and violation, asking fearfully and oracularly whether—in the end—the “Erlkönig” will get me after all.



Alas, there are too many depths for all hermits; therefore they long so for a friend and his height.

Alas, behold your poverty, you men, and the meanness of your souls! As much as you give your friend, I will give even my enemy, and I shall not be any the poorer for it.

—*Friedrich Nietzsche*

First,

I must mention something. . .

I AM BEING PURSUED BY AN

ERLKÖNIG.



Have you seen him?

Goethe's figure from German folk song,

The mythological Elf-King who entices children with songs and games and visions of magical paradise. In the traditional fable, a young child is being carried home through the forest by their father. The child begins to notice an Elf-King—the Erlkönig—who is pursuing them, both playful and yet relentless to a point of ominousness. They repeatedly attempt to warn their father, the story goes, that the Erlkönig is trying to kidnap them, is luring them, is sucking their life away. Their father waves the notion away as a child's imaginary fantasy read into a stray leaf flutter or gust of wind. The child insists: the Erlkönig says his daughters will play endless games in endless fun with the child, and if the child does not come willingly to play, they will be taken by force.



The child's father laughs at the tales, and continues waving away these fantastical, juvenile fears. As the night gets colder, however, he himself becomes slightly unnerved. His tone is a bit more apprehensive in his attempts to calm and reassure his increasingly stricken and frantic child. He quickens his pace through the night. . . but when he arrives at home, his child, in his arms, is dead.

The Erlkönig is primordial—a shining enchanter, wizard, fairy, *Zauberfee*, luring small children away to their deaths. He is simultaneously sub- and superhuman; wicked; and he is after me—yes, me!—ever since I crossed his path. Chance in a long corridor; he remarked on my beauty—immediately promised me games, began to sing! But when I touched his hand, my own began to wither and freeze. I ran. I tried to warn my father about what I had seen. My father told me—it was just a gust of the wind. And then—my father faded away. Like a gust of wind. Now the Elf-King returned, this time with his beautiful women in tow, feeding off the psychic energy of my grief and love, following me still—they still follow me . . .

I dream of them every night,

. . .until that point when I cannot bear my dreams any further, and I stay awake. Today, I am still awake; I feel as if I have been awake for many years by this time. I am growing sicker, and weaker; he is growing closer, and closer; it is silly, it is dangerous— but his pursuit, his song, the game, will not leave my mind. . . He has taken my father away; in turn, I am losing all my memories of life. By all appearances, I seem to still be alive—but I have merely been resuscitated. Increasingly, I lose sensations in my body, appetitive drives, memories, emotions—what I feel slipping away is, ultimately, all perceptual access, to the very fact of my being in its sheer existence. The Erlkönig does not, and cannot, touch me physically any longer; I cannot be touched at all, for there is only a lingering, partial, virtual sense in which I even corporeally exist. And yet, even as I lose all my other memories—I cannot forget him. The Erlkönig. If no greater force will intervene, he may have his way with me—I will die.

Reader,

*What would you do if
someone you loved fiercely
Whom you had trusted immensely
turned out to be*

Λ VIOLENT
ΠΕΘ NAZI?

I hope you are not so naïve as to believe that this would be an easy question to answer, or fate to embrace! Do you discern, friend, how painful and challenging it might be, to pull apart your love into long fragments, to cleanly separate out your affection from your judgment? If you answered “yes,” then, well, yes, as you will see—me too. My Erbkönig! For this reason, it is somberly most appropriate for me to characterize this as a tragedy in three parts. This work is a “tragedy” in the highest sense of the word: the sense of the Ancient Greek *tragōidia*, from *tragos* ‘goat,’ and *ōidē* ‘song, ode.’ This Erbkönig I have known named Augustus Sol Invictus once brutally sacrificed a goat in a Thelemic ritual. I have since grown invested in understanding the world from the perspective of the sacrificial animal. So I retell this true story from my own perspective, abject and battered as it may be, which I hope my friends are correct in appraising as containing unique insight—despite the myriad ways in which I am, perennially, disabled and displaced, by my own conscience and awareness.

“Ill-fated Oedipus,

The most grief-stricken figure of the Greek stage, was understood by Sophocles as that honorable person who, in spite of his wisdom, is condemned to error and misery, yet due to his horrendous suffering exerts a magical and sacred power that in the end is still effective beyond his death. The profound poet wants to tell us that the noble person does not sin. Through his actions every law, every natural order, and even the moral world will perish, and precisely by these actions a higher magical circle of effects is drawn that creates a new world on the ruins of the demolished old one. To the extent that he is also a religious thinker, this is what the poet wants to tell us. . .”

“The Noble Person Does Not Sin,”

A phrase-object of transference upon which the whole heart of my experience depends. A conceptual site to which my desire may attach, so that I may retrain my psyche to pursue a drive—please, a drive, any drive—other than this which fixates on this lethal human man.

It has been three years since I last sat down face-to-face, with Augustus Sol Invictus as his friend. Today, I have nearly died as a result of having met him. I am shocked at the cataclysmic effect such a fleeting and chance encounter has had upon an entire life. This man—the author of the first draft of the official Charlottesville ‘Unite the Right’ manifesto, two-time candidate for U.S. Senator in Florida, today, an overt fascist, white supremacist candidate for President of the United States (which is far from a meaningless or humorous campaign, however farcical it may be)—has derailed all preceding him in my experience of life. His imprint will leave its trace in all the future that is to come.

It was the day after Father’s Day in 2015, early on a Monday morning in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. On that day my father Timothy Brown died at 57 years of age, an abrupt and grisly heart attack death, two days after being fired from a job cleaning carpets. As sensitive and talented as he was as an artist, he spent his entire life brutalizing his body in poverty and manual labor. My mother and sister witnessed his death in all its grotesque horror; I was thousands of miles away in Florida, living with my grandmother, who had long despised him. I had moved in with her after my relationship with my father disintegrated over arguments on topics relating to race and the police. My father and I did speak—insofar as we were not out of contact; insofar as he would sometimes send me photos of deer wandering the forests of Pennsylvania. I am not sure whether we communicated. When he planted an avocado tree in his backyard, he said he felt he may have disrupted something fundamental about the order of the universe. I had tried then to tell him the cosmic shift would hopefully be for the better, but in the spiral of spring which followed his death, an unreal culmination of affective desert, it is safe to say that in my mourning I had drifted somewhere past the ruins of polite society and beyond the isles of any sanity. It had to be during this time, within this unorthodox world that I would encounter him—

ΔVGVSTVS SOL ΦΙΙVΦCTVS

captain, agitator, rebel—

&

(my contribution)

ERLKÖNIG.

A handsome, charismatic, 34-year old man, Augustus' chosen Thelemic name means, in Latin, "Majestic Unconquered Sun." When he first visited me in person, I myself was conquered entirely. Struggling with mental illness; languishing to extreme, in complete isolation; I was mute and psychically remote. Following negligent decisions made by my insurance company, I unexpectedly lost access to a potent psychiatric drug which, when abruptly withdrawn, causes acute psychosis. The effect is so powerful that even a perfectly "sane" individual who was dosed with this drug and then abruptly deprived of it would experience an episode of full-blown clinical psychosis. Given that I had previously been diagnosed with Complex Post-Traumatic Stress—an acute form of PTSD typically diagnosed in survivors of abduction or long-term captivity, prisoners of war, and concentration camp survivors—and at two prior moments in my life, the hypervigilance of my condition meant I lapsed into an episode of psychosis—my response to being taken off this drug was extreme. I had experienced two psychotic episodes, previously, which were not drug-induced. However, these spontaneous delusions were often quite frivolous—grandiose, but playful, ultimately fantastical and quiet. For some reason, none of these psychotic episodes was even slightly disturbing—until I sifted through the contents of my mind when I first met my friend. Perhaps it was the fact I had recently devoted most of my intellectual energy to a graduate philosophy seminar on Nietzsche, contemplating the horrors of fascism and its warped read of Nietzsche's thought—perhaps that was what lent this breakdown such a macabre inflection. Or perhaps it was simply a chemically-induced phenomenon as described above. In any case, this was qualitatively different, and worse, than anything I had ever endured.

As a result of my psychosis, I had come to believe that the K.K.K., as part of a greater white supremacist network, was organizing a second Holocaust outside of my apartment building before my very eyes. The complex had been stormed and taken as their headquarters by force late one night; now ominous hooded Klansmen lingered in my mind at the gates, preventing me from leaving. I could not safely walk to the gates of the complex to check with my own eyes, of course, but I was certain: they were orchestrating genocide then and there, with willing complicity from the Aryan blonde fraternities which populated the buildings. I believed anonymous figures were trafficking organs in the room above. I feared that if I ventured outside, I would find hundreds of bodies stacked in a dumpster near my building. At night I would sweat, listening deliriously, the sound of resistance militia men trampling over bushes resounding like wind. I felt that if I ever came or went from my

apartment, I would only be continually malevolently scrutinized by them in their Greek letter shirts. Soon I could no longer bring myself to leave my apartment at all. I swore I had heard one of these pale young women shush me in the corridor; chastising me for not keeping quiet, about ominous plans, about something—she knew I had something to do with Augustus.

It is true, but actually insufficient, to say I was afraid to go outdoors; by this point in this year I beheld with terror my very fact of consciousness itself, even as I regularly went without sleeping for nearly a week at a time. I had long since stopped speaking, to anyone, at any point; I paced and, rarely, repeated frantic, anxious, mantras in a whisper to myself. Even if my body was never still, I was perpetually lapsing in and out of consciousness; yet I clung to some minute hope, strength, and courage (קִמּוּאוֹ חֹכ) throughout. As a form of self-protection in the face of spectral evil, I had developed a belief that Bernie Sanders' campaign for Presidency was nothing less than a Jewish religious battle which could ultimately yield a politico-theological messiah. In anticipation, or in and through the event, I began painting thousands of colorful, vaguely Hebraic characters on my bedroom wall. I created a tablet of values in blue and white. Upon it I inscribed, in Hebrew, the opening words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



I conversed at length psychically with my philosophy advisor April Flakne, and Ori Dasberg, her Israeli expat husband. These two astonishing people do, in reality, possess academic expertise on the concept of the politico-theological messiah, even if, of course, we were not communicating telepathically as I believed. For now as I paced on my porch, we struggled through my invented cognitive dialogue, to determine whether Jewish

religious law dictated the meting out of the death penalty to Charleston killer Dylann Roof. Smoking a cigarette, “we” assessed together in my mind the gravity of his crimes.

It was in this indecipherable and frenetic context that I found my mind returning continually to a figure: Augustus Sol Invictus. One day, after some correspondence, I found myself accepting his offer to visit me in my home. When he knocked, and stood in my doorway in full suit and Windsor knot tie, my first thoughts were of Nietzsche:

NIHILISM STANDS AT THE DOOR WHENCE COMES THIS UNCANNIEST OF ALL GUESTS?

I felt at that second that I had met a world-historical figure. Someone typologically beyond the human—as if I had quite literally just learned, through sheer and unassailable instinct response, that a higher form of human being existed. A being who could, if he wished, prey upon me at will—and yet, someone who would go on to wage war against and overcome all of the evil I had witnessed around me. I sensed this fate would require he carry out evil deeds in the pursuit of great goals; he was therefore inevitably someone who would be reviled; a tragic figure. This primordial encounter confronted us across a long, perilously black hallway which was leading to my bedroom. Augustus later disclosed he had initially wondered whether I was part of a political ambush, so he was likely fully armed at this time with a gun. And I was menstruating, flushed with senselessness, feeling the blood trickling down my leg. Augustus tread with me down this black hall, and I did nothing to prevent the flow of the blood; this uncanny meeting, with the uncanniest of guests, was therefore ritually impure from a religious, Judaic perspective. Shaken by his sheer presence, I was unconcerned. I did not do a thing to address it. I did not say a word, regarding anything at all.

After an extended time had passed, Augustus turned to me with a tone of confusion, or cautious reverence, and asked, “Did you make all of these paintings?”

“Yes,” I said.

After several more minutes of silence, he caught my eye.

“I’ll be right back,” he reassured me. He began to walk out the door—and drove away.

I waited stilly and insensibly into the evening. I knew once he left, a war would begin. He left—but oh, he returned—he returned! It quickly became clear his departure that day had been an expression of polite respect—a way of leaving me to my own devices, in a liminal mental space which he perhaps recognized, with which he himself was, perhaps, not unfamiliar. Unlike so many people I had known Augustus did not dismiss me due to my apparent irrationality that day. For this reason among others he became a *friend* to me. I was swept away by this uncanny gracefulness in his character. An electricity between us began to topple the horror, nullity, and vacuum of grief around my father. My father, or perhaps only his spirit, seemed to have returned;

Augustus Invictus

7/8/16 - 3/9/17 3,240 190 (500.3 MB) Export Conversation

I was quiet because I loved being afraid of you 4:44

I do not wish to be your enemy 4:45

The grief might kill me if you don't come back 10:45 PM

Jul 16, 2016, 8:31 PM

I feel sick 🤢 8:31 PM

I don't know if we should talk anymore or not. I mean you no harm but we may be very different 8:56 PM

Text messages after first meeting with Invictus, July 2016

he was alive again—or even, he was now alive for the very first time, as he had never previously been. Now, with devotion, I was *loved*.

Augustus happily embraced this paternal role; he had ten children in reality, after all. He cathected readily into this archetype for himself, and in these moments I was protected, attentively, a cherished pet—subdued patiently, even when resistant and contrite in turn, as his source of joy. We acted reciprocally as powerful and fantastical muses. The love he offered appeared wholly pure; it stimulated an alchemical convergence between two respective experiences of deep, structural psychic exile. These solitudes were now transmuted into a deep sense of shared belonging; a camaraderie developing in a defiant solitude. We were the only two living beings in all the world. In very little time, I trusted this bright, tall, boyish and loyal friend deeply. As he penetrated further and further into my psyche a *mythos* would bloom upon which, eventually, I felt I could fall, as reliably as if upon physical law.

Indeed: it was real. At its core. As it is today. No longer a play, even—if only he would just pretend, just a little bit longer at his maieutic role. Augustus granted me permission to dwell in grief, over my father's memory, over the question of his *honor*. My father—brewing coffee before the day. My father—scaling buildings, sweltering, banal, Florida rooftops. My father—returning smelling of sweat and house paint, inscrutable to me in motive both in the end of each evening and the beginning of each day. My father's hands were calloused by his lifetime, by manual labor. Yet in the evening, throughout my childhood, these same hands nimbly played beautiful classical guitar pieces, lodged forever in all recesses of my memory. Now Augustus, at a lake in the fog in pre-sunrise early morning, practicing self-imposed and heterodox military training in pursuit of inscrutably

cultic, renegade goals, was my Erbkönig—a mystical and redoubled apparition of my father, whose glance and touch enchanted me into wandering deep into a new psychal forest. Augustus' world was safe, as the site of the first peace I felt after my father's death; under his power, I found a world in which I felt *safer*, actually, *more* cherished and protected, than I ever had under care of my actual father. He embraced me wholly, too, as a woman—which catalyzed an unprecedented and holistic sense of total solace.

Unfortunately it is the case that the objects and affects of this universe are too beautiful and too fragile to be permanent. Grief, in particular, is far too beautiful to be permanent. That is why, in its being as tragedy, my memoir recounts a suffering greater on net than Love, and why each symptom worms along inner and worldly dimensions alike. To apprehend the scale of suffering involved, though, one must first be able to appreciate the sweet child-like trust I had in this friendship—one must understand the depth of what was lost, of the place Augustus and I transiently inhabited. I hope, reader, you will understand: this is why it may at times seem as if I speak positively of my great enemy. It is difficult to ever truly hate that to which we have previously been indifferent. You must have some sense of our conflict in its foundation in what it was—how it felt to be at home with my second father. My friendship with Augustus, in turn, has never been destroyed—it simply has been *transmuted* into a function of agony rather than joy. This transformation began when our friendship was forced into confrontation with Truth: for a love which is founded within the warm and forgiving atmosphere of *mythos* cannot survive the cold and merciless face of *logos*.

ONE OUGHT TO BE JUDICIOUS IN EXPOSING WHAT AND WHOM ONE LOVES TO THE UNYIELDING LIGHT OF THE REAL.

Two truths christened the end of this friendship, and the first burst out in January 2017. Donald Trump had been elected. Augustus and I were conducting an interview, and suddenly he proclaimed cheerfully that he felt the problem with Hitler, really, were the senses in which Hitler had not been racist *enough*. A stark contrast from the man I had met the previous year, who had bragged about voting for Obama in Chicago, standing by the protestors at Standing Rock, decrying police brutality, demanding the full closure of Guantanamo, Augustus went on to assert he agrees with “99% of what Nazi legal theorist Carl Schmitt has said.”

After 11 months of friendship, 11 months of my dreaming denial, Augustus defiantly, instantaneously, made clear that he was something else than what I had known.

He was an outright fascist—

An *Erbkönig*.

Replete with all the horror *Blut und Boden* implies.

I never saw him again after that day, that first truth. That March, the second truth which destroyed our friendship began to explode blindingly forth. Late one night, I was contacted by his 19-year-old ex-lover Aria. She was writing me in the dark with the urgency of a warning of war. She had been fighting with Augustus bitterly; then she had found plans on his private calendar which simply read: “ANNIHILATE ARIA.” To her, this seemed to make it clear that he was now after her life. In a flash she alleged that my Erlkönig had perpetrated 15 months of horrifying domestic violence against her, even simultaneous to the time of his and my own love. *Second Truth*. Aria went on to describe with vivid detail and clarity the secret episodes of extreme brutality to which Augustus had subjected her throughout their time together. Aria explained that, beneath the veneer of all light-hearted and kind time the three of us had spent together in pleasure, these fits had been erupting in secret, including acts of violence such as strangling her repeatedly into unconsciousness. The man I loved had been kicking her in the head, she said, until she had become permanently deaf in one ear. He may very well have spent a morning raping her, calling her a whore, threatening to take her life if she ever spoke out, pointing his gun squarely in her mouth—and then, later that evening, invited me over. We had been lying in that very same bed, I realized, sharing dark glasses of wine, when he would read me passages of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* aloud.

... And your Aryan eye, bright blue.

Panzer-man, panzer-man, O You——

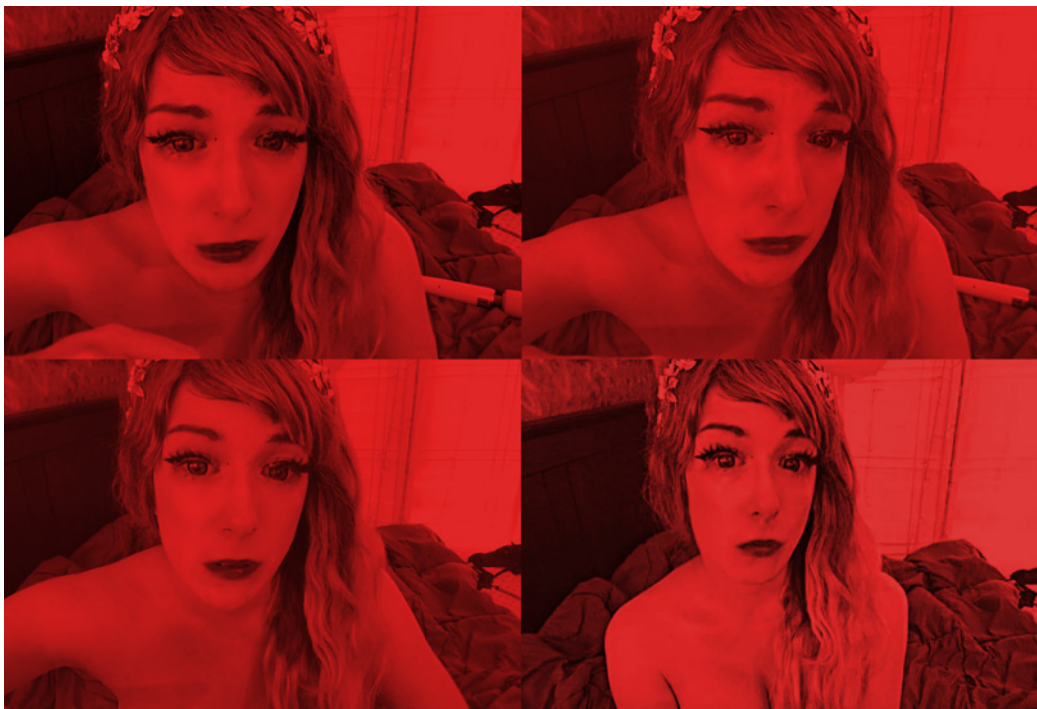
Not God but a *swastika*

So black no sky could squeak through

Despite perhaps not being familiar with the story which I am telling, the reader will here immediately need to accommodate and caper after myself, the author's, increasingly panicking pace. For the Truth has wounded me: it is important to understand that Augustus was not only a fascist in an ideological sense. Now I knew he was also capable of the unfathomable terror of real physical violence. And so, I began drilling down into raw fury, a force which had always formed the bedrock of our love. Aria's cascading accusations amplified, only in my mind at first, and then until they were audible to the media and the public. Shaking, I told myself that I did this for the sake of the maenads, all women—but just as much, I confess that I did it for *him*. The nemesis-nurse of a vile and deeply sick man, I could only hope to heal him by neutralizing his power. But the cost of any success I have had is that I was forced to wade through the retaliatory onslaught of his neo-Nazi followers against me, across a necrotic expanse of psychic horrors which now swarm my *anima*—banal, and relentless.



I was driven below ground into months of terror and silence. I was reviled by all of those people I had thought were my friends and community. *Nazi-sympathizer*, they sneered. I sobbed for hours. Might we really have been better off—the two of us—*without* these terrible truths? *Might we have been better off—without Truth at all?*



Self-Portrait, April 2017

I appear here as a tragic figure and therefore must wholly fail; perhaps it is not Augustus, but I, who forms the tragic heroine of this story. It is laughably unsurprising that at a moment when hatred would be a virtue, I thus found myself battling increasingly overpowering, cursed, muffling forms of love. I was ritually bathed with a scorned love—an obsession—for and with this abhorrent man, now remarkable only insofar as he was remarkably violent. I wanted to believe that Augustus, capable of such terrible evil, perhaps served to test my capacity for forgiveness—as a gift preparing me for eventual perverse beatification. I was wrong. I have attempted to forgive the unforgivable, and in such a task one must always assume one is wrong, regardless of the outcome. In this case, it is especially clear, however, because after this Augustus synthesized is pathological, public ideology, and his private, interpersonal violence, into a far more dangerous form of extremist political agitation.

Augustus' greatest personal betrayal of me was perhaps not the revelation that he was a fascist itself, in an abstract sense—after all, beliefs are not actions. Beliefs can change. Nor would it, on its own, necessarily be so cataclysmic for my psyche to learn he was engaging in domestic violence—sometimes, abusers can be held accountable. Sometimes, rehabilitated.

No.

No.

Not so here.

In the last conversation I had with Augustus as a friend, he told me his plans for the following year. He was going to visit Europe in 2017, he said. To make a documentary film. Then—he was going to fight ISIS on the ground. He said that even if we were no longer to speak, he would nevertheless seek always to make me proud of him. This is what he said—and in turn, that he hoped I would become “everything he knew I was capable of being.”

I DO NOT KNOW WHAT TRANSPIRED

Between that lie,
And this day,

TO MAKE IT RUN SO AFOUL OF REALITY.

But,
Instead of what he said he would do,
Augustus Sol Invictus fomented

CHARLOTTESVILLE:

A RACE RIOT.

Ignoble, the riot was incited
expressly to slaughter human beings.
The event of Charlottesville ended
the life of Heather Heyer.
This is not a matter of abstract principle.
With that,

HE HARMED MY HEART,
MY RAW CENTER,
MY BODY ITSELF

WHY DID HE DO THAT TO ME?

"THE ONLY LEFTIST HE RESPECTED
IN THE WORLD
BESIDES HIS BROTHER."

THE CHARLOTTESVILLE STATEMENT

AUGUST 11, 2017

1. RACE

Race is real. Race matters. Race is the foundation of identity.

"White" is shorthand for a worldwide constellation of peoples, each of which is derived from the Indo-European race, often called Aryan. "European" refers to a core stock—Celtic, Germanic, Hellenic, Latin, Nordic, and Slavic—from which related cultures and a shared civilization sprang.

2. JEWS

Jews are an ethno-religious people distinct from Europeans. At various times, they have existed within European societies, without being of them. The preservation of their identity as Jews was and is contingent on resistance to assimilation, sometimes expressed as hostility towards their hosts. "Judeo-Christian values" might be a quaint political slogan, but it is a distortion of the historical and metaphysical reality of both Jews and Europeans.

3. THE ETHNO-STATE

Nations must secure their existence and uniqueness and promote their own development and flourishing. The state is an existential entity, and, at its best, a physical manifestation of a people's being, order, and will to survive. Racially or ethnically defined states are legitimate and necessary.

Today as fringe Republican candidate for President, Augustus is closely tied to David Duke, Richard Spencer, and James Mason (the ideological leader of Atomwaffen). He recruits high schoolers nationwide to “Invictus Youth,” an organization explicitly modeled after Hitler Youth. When Augustus created the Charlottesville Statement, it was no longer possible for him to convince anyone he was a libertarian any longer. He was a fascist. He had blood on his hands. Charlottesville is why I will never regret exposing the domestic violence allegations against him, forcing him to drop out of his campaign for Senate. Charlottesville is why I will continue to publicize my estimation of his nature and character. Charlottesville is why I do not stop. After Charlottesville, it is indisputable that Augustus is not innocent; he knows it all too well. In his new book *The Witches’ Sabbath*, he publishes an attempt at the expiation of mass murderer Charles Manson, who after all—if only we will hear Augustus out!—is so much more than just the sum of his most gruesome and homicidal deeds. One can hear the Telltale Heart which haunts Invictus today pounding, while his flimsy acts of rationalization and psychological projection disintegrate, caving in upon themselves.

I NO LONGER FORGIVE THE UNREPENTANT.

Trying to remedy the cruelty of a man like Augustus by forgiving him, is like trying to lift an anchor with muscles atrophied by coma. There are moments of life during which one cannot and must not forgive. Fate has chosen me to be one of those who learns this lesson in the most difficult manner: I must practice, for I learn things the hard way. And I have learned: it is dangerous—and, frankly, an act of incredible stupidity—to “forgive” a man who retains glimmering, saber fangs, where his capacity for repentance might otherwise be. I can never forgive you, Augustus—I am not weak enough for that.

LET ALL WHO DOUBTED MY CHARACTER HEAR WHAT I HAVE SACRIFICED FOR WISDOM TODAY.

LET ALL WHO FEIGNED REVULSION AT MY WARMTH AND LOVE FOR THIS MAN FEEL JUST HOW COLD I HAVE COME TO BE.

The image is a composite. The foreground features a close-up, painterly portrait of a man with light skin, blue eyes, and a serious expression. He is wearing a dark jacket over a light blue shirt. The background is dark and textured, with a classical statue of a reclining figure visible on the right side. Overlaid on the center of the image is the title 'INCIPIT TRAGOEDIA' in large, white, serif capital letters.

INCIPIT TRAGOEDIA

Today, Augustus publicly esteems me as his “sworn” personal & political enemy, dragging down in turn all who dare to get close to his turncoat maenad. He has filed false police reports against me in a precinct where officers have SS bolt tattoos. His “territorial panther” paws ply and assure me I am the very worst from among his enemies. He has terrorized me in ways which nearly killed me, and which a physician refused to believe were not my own psychotic hallucination, for which I was detained in a psychiatric ward—until a public defender threatened legal action against the hospital after uncovering the evidence that what I had said was true. Supreme gentleman that he is, Augustus knows I want nothing more than ἀγών between us, even if this ἀγών is the vehicle by way of which he ensures my mortality. Having insinuated himself within my psyche along the lines of my own father’s lineage, Augustus indicates the ashy funeral rites for a love so profound that my own death is the only mercy which could reprieve me of the grief of its loss. The only way out of this double bind: becoming his enemy. Therefore, I struggle to murder the well of compassion flowing inexorably to this man from within me.

I have a new responsibility, which I now can discern and give direction: I must be a great enemy to Augustus. For, by being great—even as an enemy—one esteems the magnitude of the friendship which was once there. Living ruin, contentious monument, I no longer aspire to convince Augustus of the value of the political or philosophical worlds of my pursuit. Cursed, eyes darkened, I extract humility from his mapped, dissected spirit, mining it from the deepest possible core. Instrumental, bloodless cruelty against the one I loved drips out of my body, generating a cognitive dissonance in me which consumes everything in its path. Abstaining from food & sleep for days on end, I fight to stay alive. I learn to hate him—and thankfully, the bitter detritus of rabble, uncannily cackling “Nazi-sympathizer!” at me, is absurdly humorous enough to nourish my consciousness with enough bathos I survive.

Yet I confess—for I am without shame—I *love* my terrible friend. I love him fiercely, and unrepentantly, even though, Elf-King he is, he now effortlessly pursues me—and all those I love—into the ground. I remain, in

a buried sense, withering at his shuddering touch. For this reason alone, my work is a fraught, and a work from which I can guarantee no redemption. However, in it I have nonetheless sought to shift political fault lines in the mind of my reader, as in myself. As my parting gift, you will walk yourself through proximity to an invaluable account of painfully-earned, first-hand, *private* experience—yet, find yourself arriving at a meaning that is new, political, and *public*—however bitter it may be.



Figure of tragedy, irrepressibly driven by either Thanatos or Dionysus in turn, I shall remain one of Augustus' maenads, it seems; frenzied woman, failing to protect myself from my own desires, betraying those I love most in the process. I am exposed, as if to the elements, to an agony of rapture and guilt. For a time, I believed this condition was imposed upon me by my friend; next I believed it was I who must release myself from Augustus' vice grip. But neither of these things are true. Certainly, "I" must theoretically overturn this ruler. "I" must secede from the responsibility, which the creaking Erlkönig has taken, for my entire being as a woman. Repudiating his possessive abdication, Untamable, "I" must untumble up the tunnel of an eternal, virginal childhood. But still, "I" linger, because he would sometimes stroke "my" cheek with his fingers so lovingly. Forgive me for this! *Devote your life to the Roman Goddess Vesta*, my Dionysus said to me. *The forces which have driven us apart—I can hear him—are as empyrean as those which drew us together—beneath the old, gold mantle of Zarathustra.* Today, "I" work relentlessly—not towards a positive verdict in the court of public opinion, but towards keeping fidelity to those forces.

My memoir is intended as medicine and tool. As a tool, it is a valuable instrument for understanding the rise of the “alt-right” under Trump and understanding the tragedy of fascism, the mythological sexualization of violence. But let it be known that “tool” is not most appropriately what it is that this text can be. This work of art is a medicine—most of all, a medicine for me alone. In this text, we may uncover meaning much more sedimentary than any topical or moral concern, unmask something more tectonic than any art in servitude to *Ethics*, or to Truth. Let us dispense now with any art, any beauty, which begs for a chance to *justify* its own existence. Let us face instead our radical and unconditional affirmation of life.

"Through having reached the percept of 'the sacred source,'
through having seen Life in the living or the Living in the lived, the novelist or painter returns breathless and with bloodshot eyes. They are athletes—not athletes who train their bodies and cultivate the lived, no matter how many writers have succumbed to the idea of sport as a way of heightening art and life, but bizarre athletes of the 'fasting-artist' type, or the 'great Swimmer' who does not know how to swim. It is not an organic or muscular athleticism but its inorganic double, 'an affective Athleticism,' an athleticism of becoming that reveals only forces that are not its own—'plastic specter.' In this respect artists are like philosophers. What little health they possess is often too fragile, not because of their illnesses or neuroses but because they have seen something in life that is too much for anyone, too much for themselves, and that has put on them the quiet mark of death. But this something is also the source or breath that supports them through the illnesses of the lived (what Nietzsche called health). 'Perhaps one day we will know that there wasn't any art but only medicine.'"

—Gilles Deleuze

The sphere of art is not the sphere of Good & Evil.

Love & Hate
Are not the same
As Good & Evil.

Augustus & I——we loved one another,

THEN DESPISED ONE ANOTHER.

It was—all—beautiful.

Just like this—we set Art free from ethics.



Original oil painting of Augustus Sol Invictus by the author

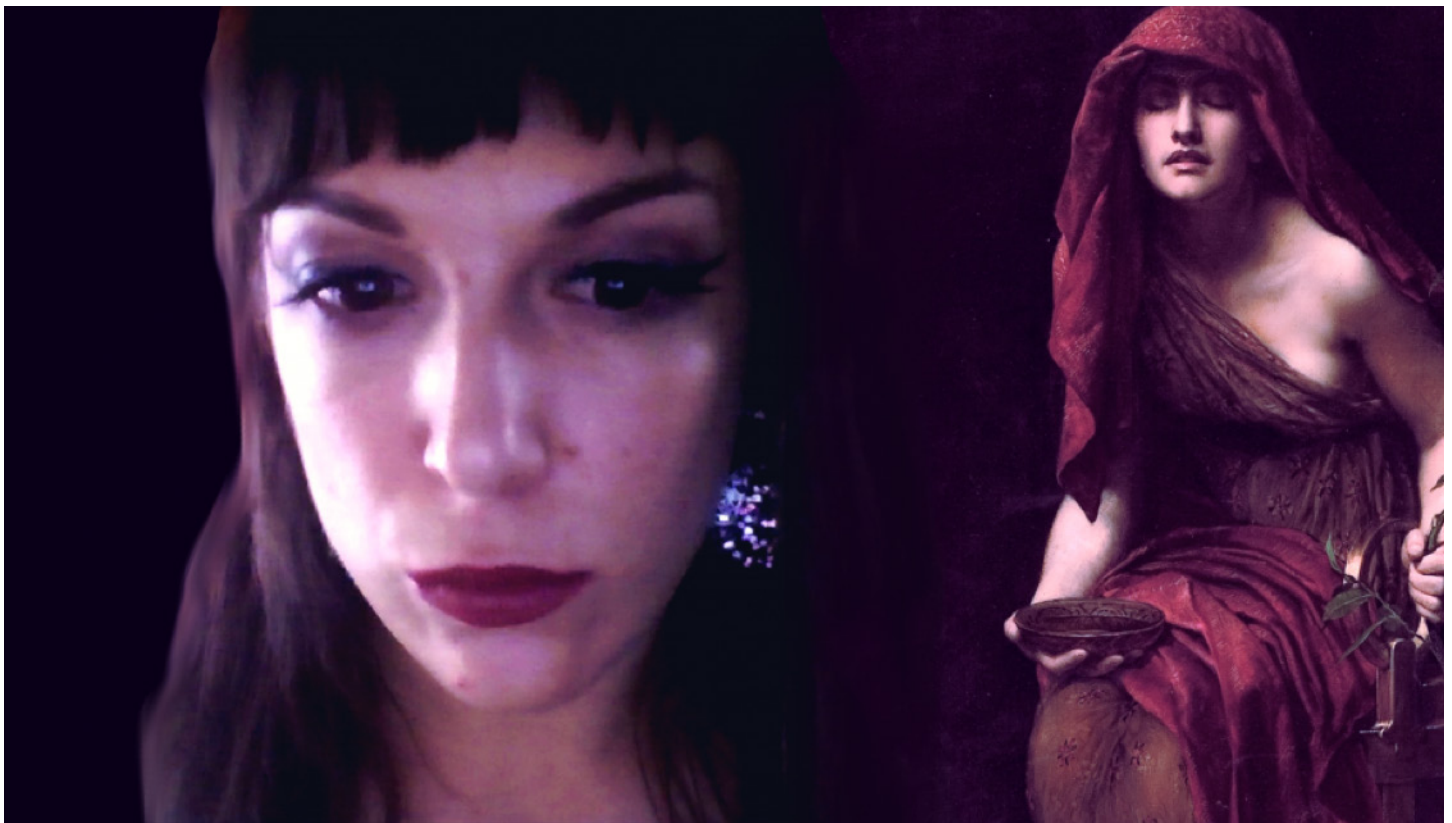
*With that, I ask you once again—
What would you do if
Someone you loved fiercely
Whom you had trusted immensely
turned out to be*

**A VIOLETT
ΠΕΘ ΝΑΖΙ?**



No. You see, I myself no longer answer that question—no, I have already compelled you to begin answering it yourself with my writing. With that question we confront the intermingling between your ardor and your suffering—the inexorable overlap between your passion and your violation. You have not answered my question willingly, dear reader—and that was your only chance. Perhaps that means you understand a little, now, of how difficult a question that is. Most likely not. In any case, I was not asking the question rhetorically. I need it answered: my life depends on it. Now, with my breath growing shorter as I flee—“*v’ano yechol l’ha’arich bin’shimato*—farther, farther from the Erlkönig, and yet, and yet, his pacing is rapidly catching up with me—I ask, I am asking, not you—not my audience—no tragic chorus—but the *Oracle at Delphi*:

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE OVERLAP —
BETWEEN PASSION AND VIOLATION —
FOR THE FUTURE OF THE EARTH?
WILL THE ERLKÖNIG, WILL HE CATCH ME,
WILL HE CONSUME ME — IN THE END?



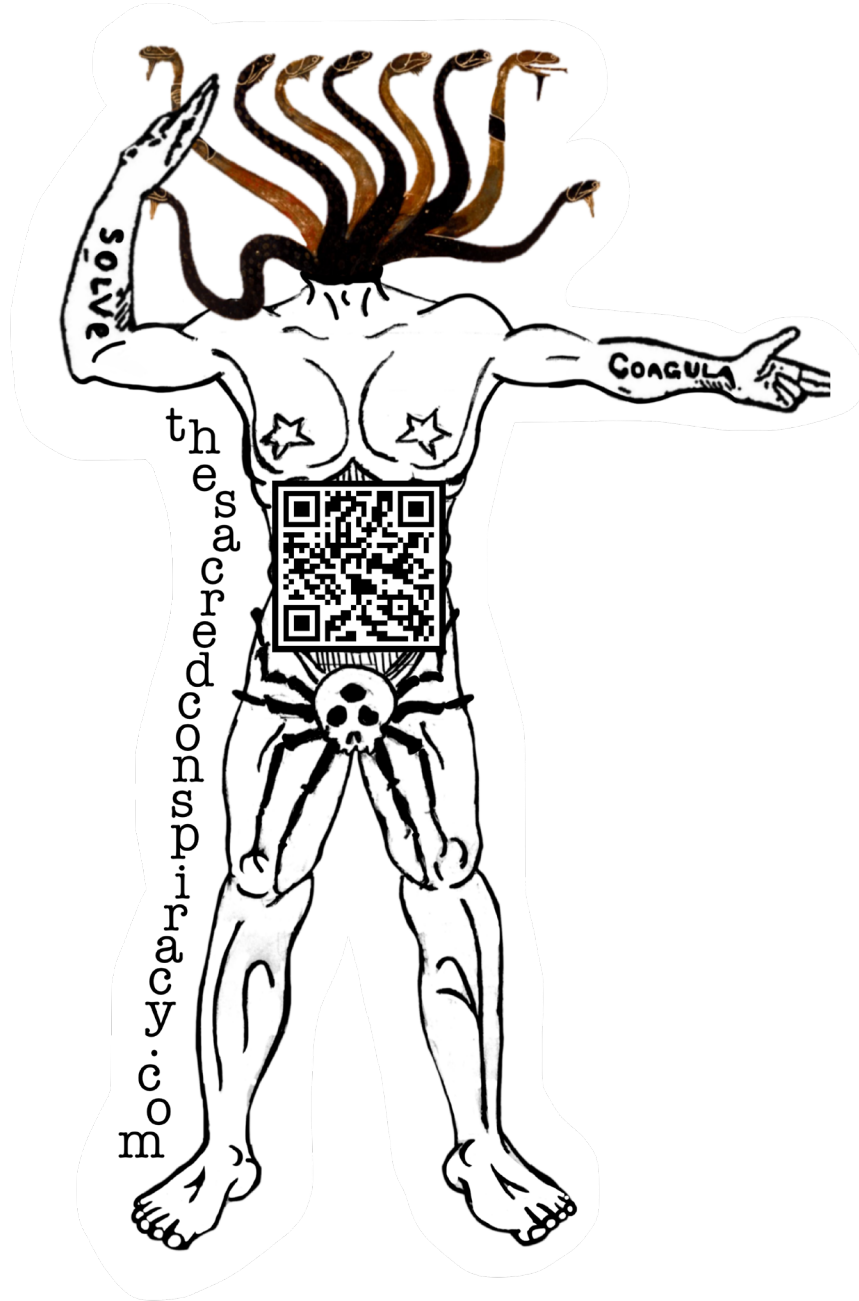
Self-portrait overlay; "The Priestess at Delphi" by John Collier (1891).

*Delicately,
Delicately,
Against wind into dry tea leaves,
She says:*

Ἐχθροὺς ἀμύνοῦ

Watch out for your enemies.

The Noble Person Does Not Sin is a memoir account of Alexandria's time interviewing, befriending, and then falling into bitter conflict with Augustus Sol Invictus, one of the most influential and dangerous white nationalist extremist leaders in the United States today. The book was first published in August 2018, at which time Invictus had it pulled from publication. A revised, expanded version will be completed by the summer of 2022. Alexandria has a forthcoming interview in the Guardian recounting these experiences. She is on Twitter at [@alexandria_jaye](https://twitter.com/alexandria_jaye)



**"ACÉPHALE is an ungrounding
machine..."**

