

## PSYCHOANALYSIS, IDEOLOGY AND LANGUAGE

### “WITH SUCH PRIVACIES CAN A MAN FEEL WELL?”

*Jon Robert Schiller*

—such a price  
The Gods exact for a song:  
To become what we sing.  
—Arnold

#### I

For those who have labored in relative isolation with the Freudian texts, convinced that within them lay the key to the phantasy otherwise known as political reality, the works reviewed in this section have had a liberating effect. Support for such labors has been denied by university and psychoanalytic institute alike, the one claiming the irrelevancy of the subject, and the other rushing headlong to justify that charge. Until the recent appearance on these shores of works by Lacan, the Birmingham School, Althusser, etc., the effort to understand Freud felt like a symptom — a private system of discourse inaccessible to the rational elements of social life.

The “return to Freud” has taken place in the space left by two long-standing theoretical lacunae: the absence of an explicit social discourse in psychoanalytic thought, and the subjective element bracketed by Marx. It is of special note that repairing the former has taken place by interpolation rather than extrapolation. Enough harm had been done to psychoanalytic thought by the Fromms of the world tacking a Marxist humanism onto a desexualized Freudianism. In general, the radical elements in psychoanalysis had nearly been forgotten under the onslaught of that diverse crew of social theorists and analysts whose expropriations threatened to effect a new historical repression; the idea of the unconscious was close to reacquiring the quality of unconsciousness. I refer here to Horney, Hartmann, Mahler, Erikson, etc. In the United States the list is endless.

Following upon the psychoanalytic method, the interpretation rather than revision of Freud is now dispelling the amnesia of the last forty years,

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discovering in the original texts the latent social meaning. The most significant ally in this interpretation has come from the science of linguistics, in conjunction with forceful renunciations of the common sense “discoveries” of adaptation and individuation.

Two parallel paths have been followed in reaching the social: the one (owing its origins to the Frankfurt School) has emphasized psychoanalysis as the study of socialization, disclosing the deepest structures where the internalization of social formations are embedded; the other consists in turning the analytic method onto the last vestige of human narcissism remaining after Freud’s exposé of the ego as not master of its own house. Far from being a master, we now hear that the ego is a slave, as the final remnants of Kantian presuppositions are expunged from the theory. At the risk of exaggeration, it may be said that Freud’s work settled on distortions regarding the object-world, and the ego is more or less taken as a given. In this schema, the fragile but nevertheless unified ego defends itself by adopting measures which work over reality, altering it in accordance with the antipodal demands of danger and desire.

The French, led by Lacan and fired by his relentless attack on ego-psychology, have subjected the ego itself to analysis, and found its own internal integrity as chimerical as its capacity to reality-test the external world. The sources of this shifted focus are manifold: from Freud’s own work on narcissism and melancholia, never fully incorporated into the second topography; from an examination of psychotic, rather than neurotic, structures; and from Lacan’s familiarity with Surrealist thought.

From the Marxist side as well, a re-examination along the same lines has been taking place: toward a theory of the subject. The associative link between the Freudian and Marxist endeavors consists in the new formulations regarding the processes and logic of *ideology*. It may sound curious that the register of material social relations should be sought at the level of subjectivity, but it was precisely owing to an ignorance concerning this admixture that European Marxists felt obliged to understand psychoanalysis. Ideology refers to the manner in which ideas are lived — in other words, a subject matter properly belonging to the field of psychology. It is no longer possible to believe that the individual simply reflects forces acting on him from without. This conception should have been laid to rest the day Freud resolved his anguish over the seduction theory by discovering the psychical reality into which the practical reality of parental sexuality had been transposed in the thought processes of the child. Here, in a nutshell, lies the problematic of the subject in its relation to social formations: that such formations, when internalized, take on a life of their own. Thus at the level of meaning, it is the subject who is to be brought under scrutiny as the cipher for comprehending the ways in which the outer world is articulated in practice.

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### II

Is psychoanalysis capable of this comprehension? In order to approximate an answer to this question, I want to take leave from discussions *about* psychoanalysis and turn instead to an explication from within. In this way it will be finally ascertained whether the special logic of analytic thought can be employed as an instrument to reveal the ideological subject. As for the theory of the ideological field itself, I will make use of Althusser's formulations:

(a) that the ideological level is "relatively autonomous" in relation to the economic structure. In other words, the former has a history of its own which cannot be reduced to economics. Though the concept "relative autonomy" is remarkably vague, it does serve to undermine the silly, but persistent, dismissal of psychoanalysis on the grounds that its findings are independent of material determination. I will propose, without arguing further here, that relative ideological autonomy derives from the relation of the subject to its own unconscious — i.e., to the autonomous realm within. The unconscious is autonomous in a two-fold sense: first, in that it understands experience according to its own laws, and thus cannot be determined in any straightforward way by social reality; and second, it is outside the control of the conscious ego. Nevertheless, the unconscious is deeply implicated in the processes and consequences of socialization, as I will point out below:

(b) ideology inheres less in our ideas about reality, than in our "lived relation" to it, designated by Althusser as "Imaginary." It is not, as in the classical Marxist understanding, a relationship to reality mediated by false ideas; rather, ideology inheres in the lived, imaginary relationship to the real relations. The exemplary model of such relationships is one whose actual signification is power, but which is experienced and lived as if it were authority. The real, "first order" relationship is re-presented in consciousness and lived out (practiced) as a "second order" relationship. This *practical* transformational process is, I believe, the same as the preconscious *ideational* process which subjects unacceptable unconscious ideas to a "secondary revision" as a condition of conscious recognition. Such ideas undergo the tripartite revision of *rationalization*, *justification* and *naturalization*. In the same fashion, the reality of social domination remains a secret, and is experienced instead as rational, just and natural.

It is impossible to understand Althusser's refinement of the Marxist concept of ideology — characterized by one author as "the first new . . . conception of ideology since Marx and Nietzsche"<sup>2</sup> — without reference to the division of the psyche into conscious and unconscious systems wherein ideological transvaluation originates and is sustained. The contents of the unconscious are elaborations of two themes, violence (from which power is derived) and sex. These themes are *re-presented* to consciousness; that is to

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say, they are *revised* in a manner which is acceptable to the ego. In this way, lust becomes "affection," and murderous impulses are transformed into "respect." It is in this sense that Freud defined ego-consciousness as a "protective barrier," shielding the ego from the recognition of danger.

Suddenly we come to understand the effects of this structuration as it influences the experience of the external world. The ego represents to consciousness that world in the same manner that unconscious desire is represented. The dual processes of repression and revision, first called into play as a defense against internal danger, are now turned outward. Instead of being altered through action, reality is repressed and revised internally, and then experienced along the lines laid down by this modification.

By way of contrast, note that in Freud's work misrecognition was a *direct* result of unconscious influence, where spurious identifications were made between unconscious materials and the material of reality. Thus the perception of reality dangers, and the defense against them, were, in effect, created by the unconscious memory of danger and did not inhere in reality itself. (The archetypal expression of this line of thought is contained in Freud's discussions of the fear of death which is but a derivative of the unconscious fear of castration.) In my reading, the emphasis shifts from unconscious *contents* to defensive *structures*, first acquired by the ego as a protection against its unconscious phantasies. Having learned to defend itself internally through repression and revision, the ego now employs the same tactics in its external recognitions. In thinking of *origins* as the determinant of misrecognition, it is to structural rather than substantive elements that we turn. The beginning of consciousness is the recognition of danger (see below) and its subsequent repression. The after-effects follow the same lines laid down by these origins.

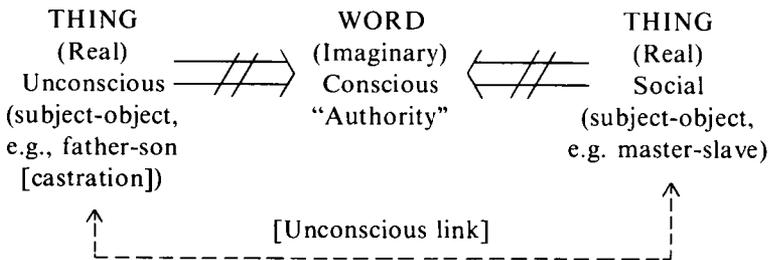
Two other elements are implicated in the establishment and maintenance of the ideological level. I have just described the effects of the original structuration which, as it were, turns around to face the world — much as the child changes from a narcissist to a social being. But it is, of course, also the case, that the social world is constituted by relations of violence and sex, nuclear elements in social institutions as diverse as family and factory. The unconscious, which in any case "stretches feelers to the external world"<sup>3</sup> and forges the most improbable links between its own repressed material and the external world, recognizes the versimilitude between its own content and the content of social relations. Repression, Freud noted, is applied not only on the original material, but to its derivatives as well — on the elements of the world brought into association with that material.

The second element establishes a difference between the operations performed on the dangers emanating from the two different sources. In the relations between the conscious and unconscious systems the distortions are

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private: the subject creates its own transformational grammar as a way of laundering unconscious memories and thus making them acceptable to consciousness. It is for this reason that dream interpretation depends on the associations of the dreamer himself and cannot be made from outside, or by reference to a universal dream index. In the relations between consciousness and the external world, *the transformational grammar is already pre-formed in the linguistic structures of the culture*. The “work” which in nocturnal and neurotic states must be done by the individual is, in waking life, performed by language. Thus, the latent (i.e., actual) content of social relations is revised through linguistic re-definition.

Freud provided some clues to the nature of this process in a few random remarks on the interplay between “thing-presentations” and “word-presentations.” Thing-presentations refer to the pre-linguistic content of the unconscious, the relations among persons and objects. Thus the language of dreams is contained in dramatic scenes, where words themselves are treated as things. The language of consciousness is made up of words, and it is by means of word-presentations and word-presentations alone that consciousness comes to “understand” the relations among things. Thing-presentations — actual social relations — are presented to consciousness linguistically, and in this fashion transformed. Moreover, there is, as I have just noted, a secret affinity between the thing-presentations of the unconscious and the thing-presentations of the external world, and this too is filtered by language. The structure appears to take this form:



(c) finally, ideology refers to the creation of the subject — the “interpellation” of the individual such that he *experiences himself* and not only the world in ways dictated by the ideological order. It is here that the contribution of Lacan plays the greatest role.

I mentioned earlier that Freud never fully analyzed the ego, though he lay the groundwork in several of the metapsychological papers.<sup>4</sup> Lacan made this final analysis, and in so doing constructed a bridge between the intrasubjective and the ideological. This bridge consists of three supports — the phases passed through by the ego in the process of its constitution:

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(1) the *mirror phase* when the ego is falsely recognized as a unitary entity by identification with a counterpart — most clearly understood by reference to a mirror imago. This is not yet the subject but its foundation, evoked in alienation where the ego only discovers itself in a reflection from without. Primary narcissism is the product of this stage — a delusionary idealization of the self, created as a defense against the previous state of affairs when self is experienced on one hand, as identical to an other, and on the other, as fragmented, a “body-in-pieces” (*corps morcelé*);

(2) the *imaginary phase* when the narcissistic structure is invested in object relations. Here, the nascent subject undergoes a second alienation in the dependence on others for its sense of self-hood. Object-relations theory has documented this phase in describing the initial merger of self- and object-representations.

My own understanding of this phase is that it is marked by the processes of identification, set into motion by the infantile psyche as a way of denying difference and object-loss. Stated briefly, the infant's narcissism is belied by the presence of the other on whom the child depends. The paradox is resolved by merging the idealized self-representation with the imago of the object, and the ego is thus displaced: it becomes for itself, the other. In classical terms, the Imaginary explicates the infant's Oedipal “attachment” to the mother, not as an object-relation per se, but as a movement to reify the self via the psychical association with her. While this may sound somewhat abstruse and hypothetical, it should be acknowledged that adult love relationships clearly repeat their infantile origins: love is both a verification of narcissism, and a wound to it — and in every case, involves the incorporation of the object into the ego;

(3) the *symbolic phase* at which point the psyche is split into two systems (conscious and unconscious) and the subject is born. As a moment in the Oedipal drama, the Symbolic results from the recognition by and of the father; that is to say, it is the time when the child represses its imaginary relation to the mother and assumes its rightful place in the family structure. That which was formerly conscious — the identification with the mother, the ego as other — is now rendered unconscious *and in the space thus created linguistic substitutions are imposed*: the child takes the “name-of-the-Father” and becomes an “I,” misrecognizing himself as separate, unique and free.

There is scarcely anything new in the idea that language, or the acquisition of symbols, ideologizes the subject and forces him to comprehend social formations through filters of mystification. Lacan has penetrated this simplistic and abstract notion: first by way of an analysis of language itself, and second by analyzing the ego in its relation to language.

In examining the structure of language, Lacan discovered a striking similarity to the structure of unconscious ideation (primary process thought).

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Consciousness is ruled by linguistic representations which employ, in the creation of meaning, metaphor and metonymy — the secondary process counterparts to condensation and displacement. In the case of both the primary and secondary modalities, the actual referent (i.e., the “thing” — relations) is lost, subsumed by the processes which revise it as a pre-condition for conscious recognition. The latent content of perception is worked over, translated into metaphors and metonyms, and only then does it become manifest as “meaning,” in the same way that the latent content of a dream must be subjected to condensation and displacement.

Now wherever there is a similtude of this type, it is assumed that a substitutive process is at work, and that the secondary manifestation represents a safe mode of gratification. Unconscious thought, falling under the sign of Desire, gives way to repression, and its place is taken by social discourse. The latter is to its predecessor as a wife is to her husband’s mother: a substitute sharing characteristics with the original such that attention, belief and faith characterize the derivative.<sup>5</sup> Again we are faced with the realization that it is not the substitution of objects, emphasized by Freud, which holds the key to the process of misrecognition, or even the substitution of words for objects, but *the substitution of structures*. I might add in this regard the intriguing notion that critical social theory consists of interpretation in the technical sense of the term: the re-construction of latent structures which have undergone censorship at the hands of social discourse.

### III

Up to this point, I have only discussed the creation of social subjectivity, but we have heard nothing of the subject who bears that subjectivity. We know from psychoanalysis that behind every act of mystification lies a narcissistic component, for which the mystification is in some way a defense. So it should come as no surprise to learn that the roots of ideological misrecognition lie in a narcissistic defense as well. Or to put the matter differently, under what conditions could the pale substitute of language supplant the play of unconscious desire? Why accept this substitution — and not only accept it, but celebrate it as the instrument of attention, faith and belief — in a word, of meaning?

The answer derives from the original sequence of events ending in the incorporation of the Symbolic — at which point psychic development has been foreclosed and a subject reproduced. Recall that the mirror and imaginary phases were invoked as means of constituting the self in defiance of actual experience (*corps morcelé*, object-loss). The Symbolic is a continuation of this defensive process in the service of narcissism, but now social rather than private materials are utilized. Language is forced on the individual and

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seized by him, and a cover is thus created which seems to unify the opposing demands of self-love and of Law.

I refer here to the creation of the "ego." It is necessary to remember that Freud never employed the Latin sublimation; rather he spoke simply of the "*Ich*" ("I") which Lacan has seen for what it is: a word. Thus the first instance of linguistic acquisition continues the previous phases while simultaneously dispossessing them. "I" signifies the desire of the mirror phase, and enforces a breach in the imaginary unity with the mother, placing in that breach the symbolic self.

In this constitutive instance of ego-consciousness, the individual colludes with culture in accepting a linguistic substitute for desire — a substitution, it must be said, which wholly confounds the narcissistic impulse that it seems to objectify. For not only is the impulse displaced onto a mere symbol, but in the same act the "I" is situated in relation to other "I" 's — it is, in Althusser's word, "interpellated" into the structure of social relations such that the subject is defined by its relation to other selves. To speak the word "I" is to unconsciously acknowledge subordination. Thus for Lacan the acquisition of the "I" and of *le nom-du-père* are indistinguishable.

The foregoing represents a double radicalization of Freud: first, by subjecting the ego itself to the same deep analysis that Freud accomplished in dissecting the relations between the ego and the forces acting on it; and second, by discovering in the course of this analysis the social constitution of the ego. It is now necessary to disabuse ourselves of the notion held dearly by radical humanists (e.g., Laing), ego-psychologists, vulgar Marxists and the like, of an ego, pristine and autonomous in its origins, but invaded by the external world. Instead, a more complex and alarming picture emerges, revealing a psyche protecting itself from internal and external dangers by incorporating into its own structure the structure of social reality. One is still free to conceive of this reality as an invading army, but it must be borne in mind that the troops are greeted with open arms.

I believe that my summary, read in conjunction with other papers included in this Section (Peltz, Goldberg and Sekoff, Wolff von Amerongen), represents an approximation to the long sought after synthesis of Marxist and Freudian studies. Still, we must be alert to the danger — seemingly inherent in the structuralist style of thought — of describing the subject in ways that remain universal and abstract: there is, for example, nothing in my analysis to distinguish the ideological constitution of the subject in one culture from its constitution in any other. In all cultures the subject presumably is called into being by language, and willingly answers that call as an alternative to dissolution, merger and castration. What is there in our particular comprehension of the ideological subject to render a distinction? What is it that specifies not only the content, but also the structure of interpenetration

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between the ideational formations accompanying bourgeois-capitalist culture and the psyche?

The subject has always and everywhere been enacted in the manner described above, but this enactment is now eclipsed by totally unique forms of mystification. Prior to the bourgeois *epistème*, the truth of the subject's condition was inherent in communal mythology, and the power of the Word was recognized in religious practice. The term "ideology" does not apply to this condition or practice, but to their wholesale mystification. The "individual," as Foucault has shown, did not exist until modern times, and it was only at the moment of his enunciation, occurring concurrently with the demise of the Word, that ideology came into being. Thus Althusser's formula — ideology as the imaginary relation to real relations — applies only to capitalist social formations. Before their rise, real relations, mediated through mythology, were embedded in experience.

Two prominent features of liberal ideation and practice are brought to bear on this point: individualism, and the unprecedented hegemony of words over things. By ways that I am not yet able to specify, the hegemony derives from the technological mediation of the relation to nature. Or so it seems that phenomena surely related to technological mastery give evidence of linguistic omnipotence: the legalization of existence; bureaucracy as the dominant mode of organization; the penetration of media into the most intimate recesses of private life; the shifting balance between blue- and white-collar jobs; and the rise of a psychology prescribing the efficacy of speech at the expense of action. It is as if a mass of verbiage had interposed itself between nature — human and otherwise — and the experience of it.

Nowhere is the displacement of the Real by language more influential than in the reification of the individual. Individualism reproduces the imaginary constitution of the I, *articulating the repression of its unconscious foundation as social discourse*; whereas, in pre-scientific discourse it was not the sign of repression (the I) but the repressed which found public articulation. In our own time, the repressed only makes itself known by way of private symptoms, so firm has the split become between the actual foundation of the I, and its superficial layer of consciousness.

"I" is the social word *nonpareil*, eluding the "we" for which it is a screen, and thus reproducing social determination by repressing the consciousness of it. Now we come to understand the meaning intrinsic to the *repression of the Oedipus-complex*, in contrast to its content. For it is not, as Freud thought, the content which is its distinguishing element, but the repression of the social interpellation signified by that content; to wit, paternal power transvalued by reaction-formation into a liberated "I." It is again useful to mark off this state of affairs from other cultural formations where the interpellation is everywhere acknowledged, albeit in hidden ways: by the sense of *community*,

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by the recognition of social *hierarchy*, and by the conscious submission to *authority*. Bourgeois culture fills in the lacunae created by repression through the presentation of three fictional *idées fixes* which effect, like a symptom, the reversal of social consciousness: the *individual*, *equality* and *rational organization*. Cultures of freedom thus derive their unprecedented social control from the repression of the very idea of social existence. As Freud noted, the power of the unconscious lies in the characteristic of unconsciousness itself, where determinant forces act beyond the reach of awareness.

It is my understanding that this psychological analysis explains the paradoxical observation of Tocqueville, inexplicable in the sociological terms that can only describe it; namely, the conjunction of individualism with social despotism. The paradox is normally explained away by the argument that the idea of individualism is simply a cover for the reality of control. Tocqueville was not so naive: he understood that individualism was more than an idea — it was the central character in the structure of *mores*, or what is termed here “lived experience.” “Fetters and horsemen,” he wrote

were the coarse instruments which tyranny formerly employed; but the civilization of our age has refined the ideas of despotism, which seemed however to have been sufficiently developed before. The excesses of monarchical power had devised a variety of physical means of oppression: the democratic republics of the present day have rendered it entirely an affair of the mind, as that will which it is intended to coerce. Under the absolute sway of an individual despot, the body was attacked in order to subdue the soul; and the soul escaped the blows which were directed against it, and rose superior to the attempt; but such is not the course adopted by tyranny in democratic republics; there the body is left free, and the soul is enslaved.<sup>6</sup>

I have shown psychoanalytically the sense in which ideology is understood as lived experience. As noted earlier, Althusser also characterizes the ideological level as relatively autonomous. This autonomy must be understood as the result of psychic dynamics which can only partially reflect the level of economic determination. Stuart Hall has suggested, by way of Max Weber, that the mediation between psychical and economic levels takes place at the locus of *character-structure* which is *homologously rather than causally related* to the material domain.<sup>7</sup>

The representative character-structure of advanced capitalism is, as I have written elsewhere, the narcissistic disposition,<sup>8</sup> whose most pronounced

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clinical attributes are the defensive structures erected against the social properties of dependence and intimacy. For developmental reasons that need not be reviewed here, the unconscious representation of social relations are considered dangerous, and are defended against internally by means of repression and splitting, and externally by the maintenance of detachment. In the place of such relations, a grandiose self-concept is formed which exercises a hyper-vigilance to threats from without. So, in addition to the dangers of intimacy and dependence, envy occupies a considerable portion of the character-structure, since qualities possessed by others can at any moment belie the illusion of the grandiose self. Narcissism thus presents itself as the psychopathological metaphor for individualism — the apotheosis of the fictional “I,” defending itself on all sides from the forces which rule it.

In Weber’s schema, the Puritan character-type — objectified in routinized activity — found an “elective affinity” with the regulated economic activity necessary to early capitalist development. We need to ask what similar affinities might exist between narcissism and late capitalist development: in other words, how the lived experience of the individualistic ideological field conforms to capitalist production. Besides the mystification of social control, several such affinities come easily to mind:

*Consumption.* As words come to replace things in the wholesale supercession of the unconscious by consciousness, so there is a new register of thing-presentations in the form of consumer objects. Advertising makes it quite clear that these objects are conceived as appurtenances to the self, and thus they must be thought of as weapons in the ego’s defensive armour. It is indeed astonishing that a social product, mass-produced and consumed, could be incorporated as the signification of the ego’s integrity — but this process, after all, only recapitulates the process by which the ego was originally formed;

*Bureaucracy.* Bureaucratic organization demands of the subjects who inhabit it that they not be emotionally beholden to persons, offices or the organization itself, and that decisions be made on rational grounds alone. Of course, this ideal is systematically contradicted by the intense emotional investment of the participants. But this investment is not to the organization as a social formation, but to one’s position. The genius of bureaucracy is that order and control are maintained, rather than opposed, by self-worship;

*Envy.* For reasons of both competition and consumption, envy is an important economic attribute, and one which comes naturally to selves signified by relations of *position*, rather than by *connection* to other selves;

*Technology.* Phillip Slater has usefully argued the connection between narcissism and technological power, showing that the latter objectifies omnipotent phantasies of control;<sup>9</sup>

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*Cultural idealization.* Individualism itself becomes a source of cultural pride, often expressed as horror toward communal modes of organization.<sup>10</sup> We see now that this pride is not simply an identification with the culture, but in a more profound sense it represents *the* important psychical interest: the belief in the reality of the individual ego. It is in order to maintain the deepest beliefs regarding the self that the irreality of cultural individualism, and the particular cultures which embody it, are so vigorously defended.

The cultural psyche depicted in these pages exists in a state of contradiction: its ideological constitution now holds the truth of social determination and the illusion of individual freedom in an uneasy relationship. As long as the social determination is consigned to the unconscious, it exists only as a danger which is the meaning attached to all ideas thus maintained. At other times and in other places, social power presents itself as the collective truth of the human condition; but at the present historical juncture, it is only the repressed which bespeaks this truth. It does not take Jeremiah to foresee that the forces of production will soon be limited in their capacity to preserve the illusion of individualism, nor can the repressed be secured in that state forever. It shall return as a demand for collective articulation. Whether this return takes a fascist form, or whether it expresses the Marxist vision is not, however, a question amenable to psychological analysis. This analysis can only lay bare the inner forces at work: their manifestation as political reality is the proper field of praxis.

### IV

The following papers, despite their apparent diversity, elucidate the unconscious foundations of the ego, for which its surface unity and facility at adaptation and competence are but defenses receiving verification from the ideology of individualism. Thus Hummel's review, while seemingly an account of the theoretical struggles in France, evoked by the discovery of the de-centered ego, implicitly suggests the intriguing notion that there is a quality within the nature of the discovery itself necessarily lending itself to those struggles. Having de-constructed the agent of psychic unity, one would hardly expect a theoretical unity to arise out of the product: the uncovering of the heterogeneous ego seeks revenge in heterogeneous theorizing.

Three papers (Marcil-Lacoste on Irigaray, Melman on French feminist thought, and Adams on homosexuality) address the topic of sexuality. Lacan has been accused of de-sexualizing psychoanalysis; for example, sublimating the penis into a Phallus — and in general, subsuming sexuality by language. The works reviewed on feminism and homosexuality, coming out of a Lacanian perspective, redress Lacan's impulse toward sublimation. It is becoming increasingly evident that a major portion of the unconscious ego is

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not so much the repression of sexuality itself as Freud tended to argue, but of particular forms; namely, the feminine and the homosexual. To paraphrase Melman's astute formula: the sexuality of the oppressed sexual classes is the royal road to the unconscious foundations of bourgeois culture.

Peltz's paper introduces a second line of advance for bridging the intrapsychic and the social: namely, in the analysis of those intermediary social formations which assimilate the individual to the social order. Owing in part to the rigidity of contemporary psychoanalytic discourse, and also to the unfortunate history of family therapy — now little more than a compilation of barely understood (and hence dangerous) clinical techniques — the psycho-familial impulses of inner life inevitably play themselves out in social consciousness through processes that remain mysterious. The difficulty of Peltz's project is indicated by the necessity to synthesize four separate strands of thought: the family as a system, psychoanalysis, Marxism, and structuralism. The urgency with which this project must be pursued is laid out at the conclusion of Harned's paper on Coward and Ellis, at the same time bringing us to the topic of praxis: that a psychoanalytic/Marxist praxis is most appropriate at the level of groups where regression to the psycho-familial in blatantly pre-Oedipal forms is endemic. The gap in the Marxist theory of consciousness and ideology necessarily appears in socialist praxis where group efforts at consciousness-raising are routinely sabotaged by the regressive pull toward archaic, unconscious structures. New conceptions of praxis must be capable of contending with this danger through the comprehension and interpretation of such structures.

The review of Lasch addresses many of these questions from the other side: namely, the psychological and social forms assumed by what I have termed the repression of our social constitution. The formation erected as a defence is narcissism, a character-type perfectly suited to the maintenance of late capitalist social disintegration. Wolff von Amerongen's paper on Lacan summarizes the work most influential in building bridges between psychoanalysis and structuralism, and from which Althusser in particular has derived great insights. Goldberg's and Sekoff's exegesis presents us with a history of the understanding of ideology, carefully detailing the gaps in that understanding, and pointing the way toward closing them.

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### Notes

1. Phillip Rieff, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic: The Uses of Faith after Freud*, New York and Evanston: Harper & Row Publishers/Harper Torchbooks, 1968, p. 70. My essay and those by Peltz, Goldberg and Sekoff, Melman, Wolff von Amerongen, and Harned are, in part, the fruits of an intellectual collective, The Sunday Group. An additional member of the Group, Michel Roublev, is represented in these pages by his editorial advice and assistance.
2. Fredric Jameson, "Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan: Marxism, Psycholanalytic Criticism, and the Problem of the Subject," *Yale French Studies*, No. 55/56, pp. 393-394.
3. Sigmund Freud, "A Note Upon the 'Mystic Writing-Pad,'" (1925e) *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. XIX, James Strachey, ed. and trans., London: The Hogarth Press, p. 231. Hereafter references to the *Standard Edition* will be designated by "S.E."
4. Freud, "On Narcissism: An Introduction" (1914c), S.E. XIV; "Instincts and their Vicissitudes (1915c), S.E., XIV; "Mourning and Melancholia" (1917e), S.E. XIV; *The Ego and the Id* (1923b), S.E. XIX; "Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence" (1940e), S.E. XXIII.
5. The prerequisite for attention, belief and faith is that the objects thus endowed are derivatives of unconscious memories: every object finding is an object-refinding. See Freud, "Negation" (1925h), S.E. XIX, pp. 234ff.
6. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol. I, trans. Henry Reeve and with a critical appraisal by John Stuart Mill, New York: Schocken Books, 1961, pp. 310-311.
7. Stuart Hall, "The Hinterland of Science: Ideology and the 'Sociology of Knowledge,'" in Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *On Ideology*, London: Hutchinson & Co. (Publishers) Ltd., 1978, pp. 16-17.
8. Jon Robert Schiller, "The Political Psychology of Narcissism" (Xerox, 1978); and "The Illusion of a Future," *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Spring/Summer, 1979), 118-120.
9. Phillip Slater, *Earthwalk*, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc./A Bantam Book, 1975, *passim*.
10. The dread of communalism pre-dates its cold war expression. Michael Rogin (*Fathers and Sons: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indians*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975) and Richard Slotkin (*Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*, Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1974) have documented this dread in the white reaction to Indian social organization, thus implicitly indicating a psycho-social foundation rather than a superficial political one.