

Canadian Journal of
POLITICAL AND SOCIAL
THEORY

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Ideology and
(Post) Marxism



TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY
REVISITED

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Subscription information should be addressed to:

CJPST

Concordia University, Department of Political Science

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Montréal, Québec H4B 1R6

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VOICES FROM THE MARGIN

Suzanne Bellrichard

In his essay "Prison Talk" Foucault wrote:

With the prisons there would be no sense in limiting oneself to discourses *about* prisons; just as important are the discourses which arise within the prison, the decisions and regulations which are among its constitutive elements, its means of functioning, along with its strategies, its covert discourses and ruses, ruses which are not ultimately played *by* any particular person, but which are none the less lived, and assure the permanence and functioning of the institution. All of this has to be brought together and made visible by the historian. And in my view this task consists rather in making all these discourses visible in their strategic connections than in constituting them as unities, to the exclusion of all other forms of discourse.¹

The text which follows is from a larger work entitled *Voices from the Margin*, based primarily on the writings of prisoners in a maximum-security penitentiary in Quebec, and secondarily on my teaching work with them. The following selection from these writings is therefore neither a discourse about prison from the Outside, nor those discourses sanctioned from within the institution that relate to its functioning and permanence. It is rather a counter-discourse from Inside. This work is unusual in its length and elaboration, first because it was written by a person who was not encouraged by either prison or society to speak for himself, much less to write, and secondly because the counter-discourses which arise in prison even in fragmented form are usually silenced by the functioning of the dominant normalizing discourses of the in-

SUZANNE BELLRICHARD

stitution. Counter-discursive writings rarely surface Outside because prisoners are not supposed to have the last word about anything. When they do, it does not usually occur in a speech-act, but in an act of violence, which is turned back on them and on others in a rationalization of power. Basically prisoners are told who they are; they are spoken for. When they do speak, it is necessarily in discredited discourse. The fundamental positivity of their discourse is that it is unauthorized; it may as well have been stolen.

When a person, arrested and convicted for deviancy, is removed from society to prison, all the non-criminal aspects of his character cease to be pertinent for his custodians, and in addition, become potential liabilities for him in the inmate population. The person's identity is reconstituted and retotalized in dossiers as criminal. Medical and therapeutic discourses are invoked to see all aspects of his life as related to what has now become his essential being: his criminality. The person is eclipsed by his file. The institutional dossier in this sense assumes the knowledge of Fate and the power of History. It encompasses the subject, enacts a closure and delivers the delinquent-as-object.

Ironically, men and women in maximum-security and in other total institutions arrive at a point where they seem almost inaccessible to further extensions of power. They acquire a power in turn of total resistance and intransigence, because having been arrested in their living and dispossessed of their distinctiveness, they arrive at the limits of social and carceral power against them. They arrive also at the limits of their own sensibility to suffering. When a person's subjectivity has been most totally cancelled, it can at that very point, reassert itself from below with a haunting vengeance. Hence the almost proverbial, "Freedom is having nothing more to lose" or, "What are you going to do, put us in jail?" Foucault called this phenomenon "la plèbe", that which

in the social body, in classes, groups and individuals ... in some sense escapes relations of social power, something which is by no means a more or less docile or reactive primal matter, but rather a centrifugal movement, an inverse energy, a discharge ... This measure of plebs is not so much what stands outside relations of power as their limit, their underside, their counterstroke, that which responds to every advance of power by a movement of disengagement.²

The text which follows was produced by a man who throughout the opening weeks of class wore dark sunglasses and sat in total silence. He was absolutely "disengaged" in his refusal to be reduced and subordinated further from criminal to student. To the extent that I could, I put in abeyance the teaching role in which I was constituted before him. We found ourselves facing each other in what my students came to call a "no man's land" or an "ar-

VOICES FROM THE MARGIN

mistice in a cold war". Nate Jones wrote "Holiday '72" not as an assignment but as a gift. It is a product of the subjectivity that reasserts itself in one who cannot be put into jail because he is already there.

"Holiday '72" is the account of a summer trip he took before his disappearance from society. This work, in its openness, in its freedom from shame, and always in its poignancy, imparted to me perspectives on life, on survival and on crime to which I had never been exposed. It illuminates with its inverse energy the margins of discourse. And in this light, eyes whose gaze has burned, if not always penetrated beyond capitalist society, become mirrors, reflecting and refracting it up from its underside.

This writing was for Nate a celebration and a remembrance of freedom. It is the outrageous and joyous freedom of the person who has already been marginalized, but never totally excluded from society, simply because he is there. It is also a freedom burdened at times with rage and exhaustion, carried by a man who does not belong anywhere and who can never take tomorrow for granted. This man's journey across Canada was a journey into self-realization and self-knowledge, always — we would say "limited" but Nate's word here would be — "clarified" by necessity, by the need to insist almost constantly on the right to be where he was and to remain alive and in control.³

From a traditional sociological perspective, this work represents a phenomenological view of criminal life, and it involves at times what are called "neutralization techniques" or "strategies of legitimation". I refrain from the presumption or duty of locating and analysing examples of "bad faith" or "false consciousness". Rather than qualifying this work in any particular way, I would refer to Foucault's point in "Truth and Power" as an outer limit against which to interrogate it. Foucault wrote:

The struggle around the prisons, the penal system and the police-judicial system, because it has developed 'in solitary', among social workers and ex-prisoners, has tended increasingly to separate itself from the forces which would have enabled it to grow. It has allowed itself to be penetrated by a whole naive, archaic ideology which makes the criminal at once into the innocent victim and the pure rebel — society's scapegoat — and the young wolf of future revolutions. This return to anarchist themes of the late nineteenth century was possible only because of a failure of integration of current strategies. And the result has been a deep split between this campaign with its monotonous little chant, heard only among a few small groups, and the masses who have good reason not to accept it as valid political currency, but who also — thanks to the studiously cultivated fear of

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criminals — tolerate the maintenance, or rather the reinforcement, of the judicial and police apparatuses.⁴

M^cGill University

Notes

1. Michel Foucault, "Prison Talk" in *Power/Knowledge*, ed. by Colin Gordon, New York: Pantheon Books, 1980 (1972), p. 38.
2. Op.cit., "Power and Strategies", p. 138.
3. One may note the presuppositions or ideological investments of both terms. "Limited" implies social privilege; it takes for granted freedom from necessity as a need in itself for a certain "quality of life". "Clarified" accepts the lack of this social privilege, but compensates for it with another: access to criminal behavior. This points to the working-class criminal's desire for social and economic equality. He is insulated from guilt partly because our society itself pretends that equality is a right — denied it, he takes it. He is partly insulated because he pays for his seizure of "equality" in the risk he takes in performing criminal acts.
4. Op.cit., "Truth and Power", p. 130.

I am grateful to Nate Jones for the permission to publish his work, and I thank also the Canada Council for its support of the project.

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HOLIDAY '72

Nate Jones

I

Of all the trips I have made across this great country called Canada, the one that stands out from all the rest was the one I made in 1972. I really discovered myself in the months it took me to complete it — as if during this period I jumped right out of my shell and became the kind of person I am today.

I had been out of work at this time and on unemployment for about six months. I was sharing an apartment with my very best friend and his girl. My old lady was also living with me there. Of course my partner and I were into all kinds of little gaf trips and making a fair living. My girl was just too much though. She thought her only duty to me was to feed me and be under the sheets when I got home from wherever the hell I'd been. To try and get her out of the apartment was a trial in itself. I can't understand why any woman in her right mind would just sit around all day and do zero. Personally, I got tired of that shit. I couldn't stand living with someone who was afraid to walk beside me and try to be equal to me.

(It's incredible the trips I put my mind through sometimes. I never thought I could sit around and think how dull a dull person could make me feel.)

Now that I think of it, it was real funny how I got off on this trip. I was sitting watching T.V. with my friend and my girl. We were watching the afternoon football game when I got up and went into the bathroom. I hadn't been there looking at the mirror ten seconds when I started packing my shaving gear in an old C.N. rail bag I owned. At the time, I had approximately \$350. and an old thirty-two caliber revolver I had bought a few months back. I finished

NATE JONES

packing and told Jerry that I was going out for a case of beer. HA! As I walked out the front door, there was my old lady in the window screaming at me not to forget to get smokes.

She had some look on her face when I finally returned about six months later. I've pulled the old "I'm going out for a pack of cigarettes" routine a few times.

Well, here I was on my way with my thumb out. I could have flown or taken the train, but I wasn't really very sure where in the hell I was going or where I would end up. The one thing that there wasn't any doubt about was that I was headed west.

My stop for that night was to be Toronto, so I made my way up to Decarie and took a number seventeen up to the Metropolitan. After a half hour of waiting in front of Parkway Auto, my first lift picked me up. I'll never forget this woman because she was a strange one. (Come to think of it, I don't think anyone could have been picked up by any stranger characters than I was throughout this whole trip). This woman started gabbing the minute I sat on the car seat. She had apparently driven down from Toronto the night before due to some beef she had had with her old man who happened to be in Montreal on business. Nothing strange about that. But then she started to tell me about what a good car mechanic she was, and how her father was some kind of big-shot car dealer in Toronto. Then I got the whole family-tie routine about how good mom and dad were and how much love there was in the family. Then came the big switch-over. She started telling me how frustrating it was being skinny and having no tits. Well, I was sure that was it and she was out of words, but not so. She had to top it off with the Paki thing. She told me about how sleazy they were and dirty. The poor kid was turning purple while she was talking about this. She then got on the subject of books. I thank God today for the moment when she gave me one to read and quit chewing my god-damned ear off. Well, I just kept my eye on the book until we were saying good-bye at a downtown Toronto metro station.

I arrived in Toronto at about eleven o'clock and decided I would spend a day or two with a very good friend of mine in Hamilton. Whenever me and this guy get together, all hell breaks out. It's out with the booze and non-stop until I leave. Lovely attitude for a Protestant minister, eh? I spent three days with him and was on my way again. He was the last person I would know anywhere west of Hamilton.

That day I arrived in Sudbury, or the Rock, which is what I call this town. There was just no way I was going to spend any time at all in that city. The cops must have driven by me five or six times as I was walking along on my way out of there. There's something about a place where you don't feel comfortable and all you want to do is get the hell out of it. Also I was carrying my pal tucked under my left arm, and naturally, wanted to avoid any contact with the pigs.

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I don't remember what time it was, but it was dark and I found myself on Mars in the darkness. What the hell, that's the only time a person can really get down to thinking about anything — when he knows for sure that he's the only one standing there. If a god-damned bear came out of the bushes, one would just have to hope that the legs could go as fast as the mind was functioning at that time. At any rate, the pea-shooter I was carrying wouldn't stop the bastard.

I feel good at these times because of the challenge, I guess — the challenge being the weather or whatever might come bounding down the highway or out of the dark bushes. The snow falls earlier up in northern Ontario than in southern Quebec, and when it starts falling, you start hoping you're somewhere rather than nowhere. A few places where I ran into problems come to mind. The first was just outside Sault Ste Marie.

I was hitching at a cross section about five miles outside the city when a dude picked me up. We introduced ourselves to each other and went through the obvious bullshit. We'd been driving for about fifteen minutes and were in the middle of nowhere when the trip came down. The guy asked me where I was from and when I told him Montreal, he gave me the "You've come a long way" crap. Then he started asking me about the ladies who pick up hitchhiking men on the road, and asking me whether I had got it on with any of them. I told him no, that so far I hadn't been fortunate in that particular area. So then he started telling me about all the certain things and possibilities which could come about. Then I got the play — the fucker was a fag. So he said to me, "What would you do if a guy who swings picked you up?" and I was out with the hardware in a second. Thinking I was going to dump him right there, the shit nearly had a heart-attack. I threw him out of his car and drove myself down the highway about five miles. I didn't want to give him no chance to pull a shot on me. Mind you, I made sure any cars approaching me after that weren't the pigs.

About an hour after this, a guy stopped and gave me a lift. Where he'd come from wasn't hard to guess. Christ, he was all over the road. I remember his name was Frank and he invited me to his home for the evening. When we got there, he introduced me to his old lady and opened us both a beer. We both sat around bull-shitting for an hour or so. The next day he gave me a lift back out to the highway.

Once in a while one does get lucky and meets somebody half-human. I had a fairly good day started by a ride I got within five minutes. The guy left me off at well-known Wawa, Ontario, where a friend of mine once spent two days waiting for a lift. The guy was gone for about a half an hour when he returned to pick me up again. He was some kind of travelling salesman, I guess.

Our next stop was Terrace Bay with, I'm sure, a population of ten. A very small place. Small as it was, it took forever to walk through it. The red-necks

NATE JONES

gave me the look-over when I stopped in at the local cafe for a pack of cigarettes. Then, walking past the out-skirts of the place, some fucking Indians all liquored up started howling at me like wild animals. I was glad when another guy stopped to pick me up.

He was driving a green panel truck loaded to the roof with samples of water from the Lake Superior. He told me that once a year he had to drive all along the lakehead collecting samples of the water. I had a lift all the way to Thunder Bay with him and I got off in downtown Fort William. It was time for a good shower and a shave. A change of clothes was also in order.

I got myself a room in some dive hotel and got cleaned up. The only thing I was interested in doing that night was getting drunk and then grabbing a needed night's sleep. And that's what I did.

When I started on that old beer, I didn't stop until I almost couldn't see anymore. I did sit with a couple of old-timers and played a bit of pool with them. These old bastards you meet on the road are pretty interesting sometimes. They're always full of old tales from a-way-back-when and they're the best company for a few laughs. That helps a person get comfortable among strangers.

The next day was a bitch-and-a-half, though. By late afternoon I was only about fifty miles out of Thunder Bay. Finally, this Indian fella picked me up in an old beat-up truck. He was going about a hundred miles to a little joint called Ignace. This place is in the middle of nowhere, so once you arrive, you push on and if you don't get a ride, you might just freeze to death with your fucking thumb out. This place had a motel and a hotel for truckers passing through and — I almost forgot — one provincial police station.

I got there at about eight at night, having stopped off first at a greasy spoon with the Indian dude. I figured eight was still early and I could make it to Kenora by midnight if a trucker gave me a lift. But at about ten-thirty I called it quits and was about ready to get a room for the night. Now, of all times, the cops showed up. Since I weighed a few pounds heavier on the left side, I had to bluff my way with the pricks to keep from being searched. I also prayed to God that nobody in the area had been murdered with a thirty-two lately. The cop took my I.D. cards, jotted down a few notes, then fucked off.

Five minutes later I saw him come tearing around the corner heading back towards me. I said to myself, "Fuck this shit! If I end up in jail in this crazy little town, I might get myself hanged the next day." So I took off running through the woods and through a freight yard. The son of a bitch was screaming behind me at the top of his lungs to stop or he'd shoot. I didn't think he'd shoot because he couldn't have had anything more on me than a few lousy tickets I hadn't paid.

But the shit opened right up on me. I was running through Christ knows where, and into Christ knows what, hearing bullets fly by my head! The only

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way out of this sleazy joint now was by freight. I had to get on one soon or freeze my ass right off if I didn't get it shot off first. Well, one finally came chugging through about midnight and I hopped on the last diesel. I got the hell out of there and didn't get off until I arrived in Dryden.

That was another small town, but at least it had a few factories and a hell of a lot more people to blend in with. It smelled like hell in this place though, and I don't know how people could put up with that god-damned smell. I hoped it wasn't like that all fucking day long. I marched on out to the highway from the freight yard and was picked up in no time at all.

A few hours and a few rides later, I finally arrived in Kenora, Ontario — about seventy miles from the Manitoba border, and about a hundred and thirty miles from Winnipeg. I went through my usual routine of getting cleaned up in a dive hotel and then went down to the bar to relax over a hot meal and lots of beer.

I left the next day with two Frenchmen who picked me up on their way to Edmonton. We were ten miles out of Kenora when an old lady of about eighty tried to pass us and lost control of her car. She must have flipped over four times. How she was still alive when we jumped out and ran to her car, is beyond me. The old broad had a lot of scrapes and bruises, but that was it. We helped her up into the car we were in and drove her to the hospital in town. The old girl was crying all the way in to the hospital, but not because she was hurt — because her car was ruined. Well, we got rid of her and hit the road once more.

When we arrived in Winnipeg, the guys offered me a ride all the way to Edmonton, but I had to decline because I needed to get a room and relax for a few days. Being on the road all that time gets tiresome. Also the dollars were getting low. It was time to do a little unlawful business with my pal just to replenish my dwindling finances.

I took up a room at the Imperial Hotel on the corner of Main and Logan. Main Street is very well-known all through Canada for all the shit that comes down there. I wouldn't trust a nun if I saw her walking down Main.

The next day I boogied on downtown to look for my victim of unusual circumstances for that evening. When evening came, I went to the bar downstairs from the hotel to get blasted. I'm sure if one wanted to find a dirtier sleazier hole, he'd have to go to Mexico.

I also went out the next day to look for my second victim of unusual circumstances. I planned to hit the road again the day after. I call these people "victims of unusual circumstances" because it's not every day that someone walks into your store to take all the money you made for that day. I'm glad these people are insured because I feel good knowing they'll get their money back from a government-operated agency. I'm sure some of them don't mind helping out a poor soul such as myself, especially since I insist on it.

NATE JONES

Well, I finished my good deeds for those couple of days, and I'm sure the city of Winnipeg was glad to see me on my way. If not the city, a couple of small shop owners, for sure. Leaving, I found myself standing among the OR-BIT trash cans along Route One leading out of Winnipeg. It was real funny the first time I saw trash cans evenly spaced along a major Canadian highway. It was also here that I got picked up by the craziest son-of-a-bitch I'll never forget.

II

This dude was just too much. It almost seemed like he came from some other planet. A "real raving religious fanatic" would simply describe this guy. This was one of them times I was glad I was carrying more than my balls. The asshole wasn't going very far, but at the rate he was driving, it took forever to get there. He didn't take long to lay his trip on me. It all started by his telling me every sin he'd ever committed and, of course, how the Good Lord had finally saved his soul. Every ten minutes or so, he'd jump into some hymn, and he must've sung "Amazing Grace" five or six times.

While he was carrying on and performing, he was always looking over at me. I was catching him from the corner of my eye, but I just kept on staring at the road — which I'm sure he forgot he was driving on. Then he turned to me and asked me straight out if I had ever stolen anything in my life. I told him I'd stolen a pencil from the local shopping center when I was a kid. I had explained to him earlier that I was an Anglican, but he pointed out to me that I couldn't just go to the Lord in prayer and be forgiven. No, I had to go back to the shopping center and pay for that pencil I had stolen probably twelve years earlier. What a fucking joker, eh?

Then he asked me if I had ever gotten a girl pregnant. At the time I had a two-and-a-half year old son, but I told him "No." Who knows what the creep would have tried to do if I'd said, "Yes."

I'm sure he knew I was lying, anyhow.

From what he told me, we were approaching his home about twenty miles up the highway, and he invited me to stay the night with his old lady and two kids. What I wanted to do was tell him to go fuck himself. I wanted to tell him that I was tired of all his bullshit, but — what the hell — I accepted. It turned out that the turn-off for his home was twenty miles up the highway but another forty off the highway.

We arrived at a house in Christ-knows-where. From what he told me, he never got it on with his old lady because it was such a sin unless it was to have children. To be truthful, if I'd had his old lady, I'd have wanted to adopt. (I'm terrible, eh?)

His kids just sat there staring at me. I wonder if they had ever actually seen

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another human being besides the old man and his wife. I was glad they all went to bed early because they were the most boring fuckers I had ever run into. The whole time I was there, he didn't say three words to his wife. Needless to say, I didn't sleep a wink that night. There was just no way I was going to close my eyes on those weirdos.

After breakfast the next day, he gave me a tour of the town. This consisted of three houses that I could see, and one post office and a grocery that were in the same house. I also got a tour of the local church. The damned thing was the size of two class-rooms. How the hell anybody could live like that is beyond me.

We then drove out to the Trans-Canada where he let me out with a lunch his wife had packed for me, and with his address. He wanted me to write him to let him know how I made out. As soon as he drove out of sight, I threw his address away. The lunch, too. I thought maybe it could be my last meal — very suspicious of me.

I got a lift after waiting about twenty minutes. The guy who picked me up was my kind of man. He was me to the till, except he was driving. He was driving an old '65 Chevy that was falling to pieces beneath us. He'd apparently left Toronto a couple of days earlier with that old car and a couple hundred bucks, and he was on his way to get together with an old girl-friend.

The guy was the size of a lumberjack. There was nothing but empty cigarette packages and beer cans all over the floor — and was he cut! All the way to Regina, me and this guy drank beer and shot the shit. On the way we picked up another guy who had fuck all. The guy sat in the back bumming smokes off us, and food. He just wasn't shy, he had no manners, and he looked like he had had a shower the year before. We put up with him for about an hour or so, then pulled over and threw him out in the middle of nowhere.

We were both going like hell by now, laughing like sons of bitches. We arrived, loaded, in Regina and decided we'd stop at a hotel for a couple of more beers before we went our ways. We ended up splitting on a room — him too drunk to arrive at his girl's in that condition, and me too drunk to walk. I needed a little cleaning up at that point anyway.

The next morning we went downstairs for breakfast, this consisting of two beers. Then, he went his way, and me mine. Since the hotel was just a mile or so from the Trans-Canada, I walked back out to the highway.

This old guy of about sixty or so picked me up, and you know where he was going? Just to the next exit. He started right away about how rough it could be for a young man on the road, and about how a couple of extra bucks could help out. Then he came right out and said that if I'd let him do my joint, he'd give me five bucks. He was too old to beat the hell out of, so I told him to pull over right away so we wouldn't have any trouble.

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I really think most people who see you hitching feel you're a nut, a queer, or a homicidal maniac. Me, that's what I think anybody who picks me up could be. Anyhow, I was just out of his car half a minute when the car coming behind us a distance pulled over to pick me up. This guy explained to me later that it wasn't a habit of his to pick up hitch-hikers, but he had seen me get out of the other car, so he figured I couldn't be dangerous.

But a small incident did happen as we started off, that changed his mind for a moment. I had gotten into his car, closed the door, and we started going, when he asked me if I were dangerous, or did I carry a gun? I could see that he wasn't really serious though, because he was smiling when he asked me. Before I could answer him, he went on to tell me that if anyone ever pulled a gun on him, he'd give him the car and his wallet and just ask to be let out.

Well, I think you know what I did next. I mean, I just had to. I said, "In answer to your question, chief, yes, I do carry a gun" which I pulled out at that moment, "and yes, I could be dangerous, given the circumstances." The poor dude just went white as a ghost when he saw the god-damned gun.

People's minds do work fast at the right moments. He started carrying on that he had a wife and kids and all he wanted was to give me everything and let me be on my way. I had to tell him to hold on, hold on a second. I said, "Man, I got my own money if I need to eat or take a bus or a train or a plane to wherever I'm going." I told him that just as he could never be sure about who he picked up, I could never be sure about who picked me up. I went on to explain about the old bastard whose car I had just got out of.

He calmed down right away once he realized he wasn't in any danger from me. He then went on to tell me his life story, and it was a pretty interesting one. He wasn't near as boring as some other assholes who have given me lifts. The guy was some kind of real-estate salesman and he stopped in three little towns along the highway to check and see if past customers were satisfied with new properties and residences.

He came out of one place where he said he told a woman she would be receiving some sort of rebate. He said she was ready to take him to bed. I told him that if he wanted to, he should get the hell back in there. I'd be glad to wait.

The guy was funny as hell with all the god-damned tales he layed on me. We laughed all the way to his turn-off, and he even offered me his home for the night if I wanted to stay. It was only about nine o'clock and I declined because I wanted to try and make it to Calgary that night. He did drive me about five miles past his turn-off, however, where there was a small motel with a cafe. I could slip in there and get a coffee if it got too cold for me waiting on the highway. He gave me his address before I got out and told me if I ever passed by his way again to stop in and say hello or spend a night with his family. A real good person, one of the best I met along the way!

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I got a lift some fifteen minutes or so later from a young guy going to Calgary, but I got out of his car in Medicine Hat because the guy was a dud. I'd try and start some conversation and he'd just nod or grunt in agreement and that was that. I couldn't stand another hundred and eighty miles with the fucker.

I never could break through with people my own age for some reason. I guess that's why a great majority of my friends are fifteen years or more my senior. I was picked up earlier on my trip by a young girl my own age, but I asked to be let out about ten minutes later. She started laying all kinds of bullshit on me that I had no interest in listening to mile after mile. I only put up with the religious fanatic for so long because he was not to be believed!

Anyway, in Medicine Hat I dropped into this truckers' cafe and made the rounds asking who would be going into Calgary that night. I got a lift with an old guy who was leaving after his coffee.

When the old guy finished his coffee, we went outside and hopped into his rig. It was a big bastard GMC with god-damned ladders on it to get up and into the fucker. Those trucks take some getting used to. I mean I wouldn't want to drive three thousand miles in one of them. This guy was hauling a truck load of steel girders that just about pulled it off the road on every turn. I guess he was used to pulling shit like that all over the country, but me, I was wondering when the whole load was going to spread itself all over the bloody highway.

One wonders how these guys ever make it to their destinations. For Christ's sake, they talk and smoke and pop bennies and never shut up ever. If you've ever taken bennies, you know you've got to talk to whoever is with you or talk to yourself. These guys just never seem to have their eyes on the road. I felt like I guided us from Medicine Hat to Calgary. Anyhow, nothing serious happened along the way, and we arrived in Calgary in one piece about three hours later. The driver I was with was going on through, but I jumped out because I wanted to drop in on an old friend who had moved out there a few years earlier.

I gave him a call the next day and we arranged a meeting at the Airliner Inn, a large tavern in southeast Calgary. We never thought we'd be getting together for beer once more. He had been my best friend before he moved out that way, and we really tied one on for the old times. He was doing zero in the way of work, so he gave me a lift to Banff for the hell of it. We stopped in at the King's Arms Tavern for a few beers and then he split and I hit the road once more.

In the Rockies, the god-damned pigs are just too much. They're always stopping you and warning you against the bears and other wild animals. They must think anybody up in the mountains is out of his mind for hiking through them. The animals were there, and I knew it, and saw quite a number of

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them. If one gets you, its all part of the game. My finest catch of the eye was two cougars, probably a male and its mate, making their way up the mountain-side. I don't think they saw me, and if they did, I guess I just didn't appeal as a good dinner. I saw a moose and three bears, but they just split into the woods when they saw me walking on the highway. I wouldn't count on a grizzly running away, but they're quite rare on the lower ranges.

Nothing much really happened going through the Rockies. The mountain people are very quiet and don't have very much to talk about, but they're probably the friendliest people in the whole country. When you stop in at a cafe, or just about anywhere, they ask a lot of questions about where you came from and how it's gone so far. And they'll wish you the best when you're on your way again.

I didn't really look for adventures on my way through the Rockies. I just wanted to enjoy the small luxuries the mountains had to offer — just to breathe the freshest air and drink the freshest water in the world. Water pouring down from the glacier is fantastic. Sometimes I just felt like taking a piece of land and building a cabin where I could live the rest of my life away in peace, and live off the land like man was supposed to — instead of living off each other.

Rides in the mountains are only for short distances, so I made a sign just for the next town of any major size. I wanted to experience as much of the mountains as possible because each mile was so different from the one before.

Maybe the day will come when I won't feel committed to living in the city, and my way of life and I will go off into the wilderness to die like all the other animals in the world. It's a place where a man can live off a rifle and on a fishing rod, where the only thing that resembles the evil dollar is tree leaves.

I'm very glad for one thing, that is, that I took my time to go through the mountains slowly and to enjoy all the peace and quiet and the freshness of it all. I'm glad because I finally had to come down from them on the last flat stretch of road leading into Vancouver. When I arrived there, I was back in the big city again, and in my position, all hell had to break loose. It did.

III

I spent approximately the next four months in this city doing a number of things. Of all the cities I've been in, this one tops the list. It makes Montreal seem like a picnic. The city of Vancouver seems to be a mixture of Toronto and Montreal with a bit of Seattle, Washington put in. I don't mean the people, of course, but just the whole trip, and all the bullshit that comes down there. As far as the people are concerned, one couldn't find friendlier or in some cases, more disgusting people anywhere.

This is all just my personal point of view, mind you, and others may not agree. But who gives a fuck, eh?

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When I got into town, I was, of course, scraping the pit, also known as my pocket, for bread. I was short, and naturally, it was time to get down to business. Late one night, I approached a sports supply shop which I assumed to be doing sufficient sales. The only problem was, there were two cash registers, one in the front of the store, and one way in the back. I have one thing on my mind every time I get down to business, and that's to leave with everything from all registers or to leave with nothing. This damned place was loaded with people, actually, too many to keep under control, so I guess that's why it attracted me. To see if it would come off nice and quietly would be a small adventure in itself.

Well, enough thinking of all the pros and cons, I went on through the door. I walked right up to the front cash register and came straight out with the hardware. Throwing the bag at the dude, I told him to put all the money in the sack.

No shit, the guy just stood there looking at me and smiling. I reached over and pulled him across the counter, shoved my piece in his face and screamed at him, "Man, I'm for real!"

That was it, all hell broke out among the customers. Some were diving behind counters, while others tried to sneak their way to the door. I fired one shot through the front store window and changed their minds right quick. The guy from the back of the store came running up to me with the bread from his register, begging me just to take it all quick and go. I grabbed it and looked at the other dude. "You, for being so stupid, put your wallet in there too!"

The asshole should have realized that you just don't fuck with nobody holding a gun on you.

Out the door and on my way I was. No cops, no problems. That was that. I trucked on down to East Hartway Street and took a room at the Blackstone Hotel, a local dive hotel right across from the bus terminal just in case I should have to make my way out of the city nice and quietly. I would spend a lot of time down in the tavern playing pool and drinking beer with the old fishermen and loggers. Pool was my game, and I would drink all night and buy rounds of beer, but still leave having spent next to nothing. I had to keep the fucking Indians and whores off my back all night long. They see you winning on the pool table and figure you'll be buying them beer all night. Then at the closing of the tavern, the ladies of the evening will try to take you for a hundred bucks for a piece of ass. The dose comes free.

One night after I guess I had been there for three weeks or so, I was sitting there drinking beer and minding my own business. A couple of the local Indians came up to me and asked me to buy them all a couple of beers. I told them sorry, but I couldn't afford it, and I didn't know them — so why should I cater to them?

The sons of bitches jumped me and started kicking the shit out of me. A

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couple of waiters came over and broke it all up. Those fuckers had smashed my face up some, but nothing sensational. Me, I was asked to leave — naturally, because they were regulars and I was a sort of stranger.

I don't go for that shit for one second, the two on one, and then being asked to part. I got up off the floor and looked at those two bastards to make sure there'd be no mistake the next night when I planned to make my re-entry. I went up to my room and slept it off and just stayed there all the next day, ordering my meals by the shabby facility they called "room service".

About nine that night, I took my piece and walked into the tavern, and — sure enough — both of them fuckers were sitting there. Me, I was tripping now, because I was gonna set them up, and it felt so great. I walked over to their table with my hand out and I started apologizing for last night. I told them how unfriendly it had been of me not to buy them a couple of beers — if there were no hard feelings, I'd gladly join them right now and buy a round.

I sat down and ordered a round, and when it came, we all started sipping, and they were patting me on the back and thanking me. You know, laying the usual snow job on the white man. I was really going by now. I mean I was cracking up inside. I really couldn't believe that these bastards were playing God because I was kissing their asses.

That was it. I jumped the fuck up at that moment and screamed at them. "You fucking bastards!" And they saw my piece. It all happened in a second, but that was time enough for me to see the looks on their faces. The look on a man's face is so strange when he thinks he's about to die. I could see that they wanted to beg or give anything at that moment just to have me sit down and not do it. But they just never had the time, because I pulled the fucking trigger on both of them two times and just walked out of the joint like nothing had happened.

The people inside were quiet because by-standers just go into shock when something like that happens — not that I came back to find out. I always check into these places under an alias for the reason that one just never knows what's going to come down.

I picked up the paper the next day after having checked into the Royal Hotel. They had a small article and picture of those two shits being carried out of the Blackstone. They were both apparently in hospital with serious holes in their chests. The amazing thing was that they were both listed as "stable". I couldn't believe it when I read it — I mean I was two or three feet from them when I opened up! Two very lucky people, if I don't say so myself. If I had had a forty-five, there wouldn't have been any question of their whereabouts the next day. They would have been in the morgue.

Don't be thinking I'm some sort of crazy, now, because I put it down very simple here. If a man comes to me and beats the hell out of me one on one, then he's the winner and that's that. But when it's two on one, then they

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deserve the worst I can give them. A rather sad affair over and done with, so what the hell? Maybe next time they'll buy the beer.

I spent the next few days just roaming around town, having a beer here and there and eating some good food. Good food is a must with me — I don't like to boast, but I have yet to come across a better cook than myself. Food is art and preparing it is an art I perform well. One day, maybe you'll come to the house for dinner.

I spent a lot of time just walking along the beaches of the English Bay. You run into all kinds of happenings on the beaches. Parties and things are always going on even into the winter months. It's just nice though, to sit on an old washed-up log and watch and listen to the tide come in and go out — more or less a place to go and think it all out. All the shit that happens — a person has to think about how it will all end.

I wonder about things like if I'll get shot coming out of a store one night, and if I do, what'll happen to my body? I don't carry any identification, and nobody knows where I am or what I'm doing. There's nothing I can do about it, but my mind just wanders into such thoughts when I find myself really alone.

Well, I was feeling dragged and I needed a little cheery atmosphere to perk me up a bit. I figured I'd walk on over to Rovair, a little club on Fourth Avenue but with lots of action and noise. That's just what I felt would do me good at that moment.

I walked in, paid the cover charge and sat in a booth — I can't stand chairs — besides, to meet people you have to sit where you know a crowd will be joining you sooner or later. But wouldn't you know that three guys and their girls would show up and ask to share the booth with me. Stupid me, I said "Sure" and moved into the center of it. Now I was trapped when they all sat down, and I was feeling like an asshole just sitting there with my I.D. I banged off a couple of drinks and excused myself with little having been said between any of us. They were there to have a good time, and they didn't want any part of any strangers, I guess.

I decided I'd head on back downtown and I stopped in at the Alexandria. I was just going to have a few beers and play a little pool for the hell of it. I walked in and put my name up on the chalk board to play when my turn came up, and I ordered a couple of drafts.

After I had been playing pool with them for about an hour, the people at the next table invited me to join them. A young lady who was sitting there had only been in Vancouver for a few months and she had moved there from Pierrefonds. It was nice to meet somebody from close to home — we sort of got off on each other. Well to make a long story short, we were sharing an apartment two weeks later — which we held together for the next three months.

Final

The three months I spent living with her were the best I'd ever spent with any woman. We did everything together except what had to do with the way I made my bucks. She had her trip, which was just going out to work every day. She accepted the fact of my trip and was almost able to live with it permanently. But one night there was trouble at the apartment door involving guns, and she was gone the next day.

I couldn't really expect her to live with people coming knocking on the door with pieces and that kind of shit coming down. That would be expecting something from somebody who just didn't have it. Besides, if guns start going off, somebody totally innocent could end up with undeserved injuries.

Well, that was it. My mind was made up to get back on the road again. Trouble was in the air, and to keep myself from putting on a total performance, I felt I'd best hit the road. I'm not one to back away from it, but the odds of trouble coming out on top were overwhelming. The whole problem was that I had been asked to do something I could do, but felt was no concern of mine. I don't mind handling my own personal problems, but to handle those of others takes careful consideration. I had been asked to pull a trigger on someone I had only met once before, and to do that would have been out of character for me.

So that was it for me and Vancouver, and I hit the road. I decided to take the bus to Chilliwack before I'd make my first attempt at hitch-hiking once again. I felt like flying back, but I just had to go through the Rockies once more because they were so beautiful.

After a long trip I'm kind of dragged. When I got a lift with a guy and his old lady who were heading on all the way to Edmonton, I decided to accept the offer of staying on with them until we reached that city. We drove straight through except for a few stops to take some pictures. They had a lot of smoke on them, and we were blowing pipes of weed all the way there. I'm sure that other than introducing ourselves, we didn't say more than a small paragraph between the three of us. I guess we were all into our own trips just enjoying all the scenery, so why break in on each other's worlds? You can take it that nothing interesting happened during this part of my trip back to the one-and-only Montreal. I don't know about them, but each time I got high, I just wanted me and the mountains to be blasted out somewhere into space so I could have them all to myself.

I was tripping on the thought of meeting Eve and starting a new world all over again, a world with no apple tree and no serpent to tempt us to eat of it. It would be a place where making love would be our hardest labor and afterwards, we'd hold one another and savor our reward — not like today, where people just fuck, and then reach over to the end-table for a cigarette. They're total strangers like two passing cars on a dark freeway. Anyhow, trips and

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dreams are what you can make of them; opinions are personal.

We arrived in Edmonton and said our good-byes. I checked into a sleazy joint on 105th Street late at night. I had to move two old drunks off the steps to get in through the door. I didn't use force on them or anything, I just bent down and leaned them up against the wall in a sitting position. These guys were really out of it — no doubt on the cheap shit one buys in green bottles — that Niagara Falls crap that's passed off as wine and sherry.

I had a good night's sleep and split early the next morning. The same two dudes were still out there, but they were coming out of their stupors. They hit me right away for the price of a coffee, but I knew they'd be at it all day just trying to get the price of a bottle. Anyhow, I thought I'd save them a day's work and gave them each five bucks. I guess I'm just a modern-day Robin Hood. They both thanked me a hundred times, patting me on the back and shaking my hand.

I told them to have a good day and was on my way out of the city. I imagine they were on that same door-step that night, but they have as much right as the rest of us to a small portion of this earth. I took a bus out to the Trans-Canada north and stood at the side of the highway until about nine-thirty that evening. What a drag it was getting a lift out of that god-damned city!

A guy and chick finally picked me up. They were going all the way to Toronto, but after reaching Winnipeg, I couldn't go on with them any longer. Me and him took turns driving, and there was a pipe of shit burning constantly in the truck. I was just burned out from it all. We nearly killed ourselves ten times driving wrecked like we were. Besides, we made only one stop along the way for meals — we stopped in Saskatoon at the place of some of their friends and did nothing but smoke, drink and get sick. I'm sure they were content with just wasting themselves, but I wanted to arrive back in Montreal resembling a human being — not something the cat dragged in.

Well, we finally landed in Winnipeg — in one piece, I might add. They gave me a lift to the corner of Portage and Main where I rolled out of the door almost lifeless. I needed a good rest after those two characters, so I checked into the Winnipeg Inn for two days. I'm sure they weren't really interested in giving me a room there, but I guess my money was almost the same as everyone else's.

It's one of the classier places in that city with all the plastics moving around trying to find themselves and each other. The looks I got from some of them when I went into the bar wearing blue jeans and a jean shirt! I pulled up a stool. I actually heard one old bitch say to her old man, "Do they let people like that come in here?" I was ready to pay for their drinks and meals just to show them they weren't any better than I was, but I said to myself, "To fuck with them all."

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Now I know why they build classy joints for those kind of people: They don't want the phony shits outside in the real world where they'd shock themselves to death.

Two days went by, and having done some business the night before, I was ready to be on my way again. In fact, I was anxious because this place was driving me up the god-damned walls. I was making my way out to the highway, but was on foot when I came upon the freight yards. I made a decision right away: I'd give them freight trains a whirl!

As an experience, it was fine, but I wouldn't care to go through it again. I was wandering through the yards, checking out all the trains that were going east. I wanted one with about three or four diesels so I could get on the last one without anybody in front knowing I was on it. Well, I got on a train and off it went, but I forgot one very important thing. Water. I had food in my sack but forgot to get anything to drink.

That train took about four days to reach Sault Ste Marie and I didn't have a drink until we got there. Sure, they made many stops, but in places where I would have been screwed royally if I had gotten off. The train kept stopping in joints with no motels or stations — just little places or shacks, rather. Every time it came upon a town of any major size, the fucker would boom right on through, going too fast for me to get off. Sometimes, when the train was going through the mountains in northern Ontario, I'd look at the speedometer and see that it was going along at a rate of ten miles per hour. Other times it would reach forty or so.

In the day-time it was nice to look at the scenery but Christ, was I thirsty! There was water in a drum because these diesels have toilets in them, but I guessed it was only for washing and didn't want to take a chance on drinking it.

At night I had to sleep on the floor, but sleep was rough because of the noise from the engine room. I also had to be careful I didn't bang any of the controls in my sleep. Who knows what kind of disaster that might have caused?

Well, like I said before, when that train arrived in Sault Ste Marie, I was dying of thirst, and I was as black as coal. It was heaven to get some water into my system along with some fresh country air. I checked into a motel for a much-needed shower and change of clothes and stayed for about twelve hours of sleep. When I finally hit the road again, it was about three in the afternoon.

I was feeling very refreshed and in good spirits, so I decided to leave at that time and travel at night. I was also getting very anxious about ending this last leg of my trip. As far as I was concerned, my trip had come to an end when I got off that god-damned train! I wasn't expecting anything else of any interest to happen for the last seven hundred miles or so that I had left to travel.

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I got a lift with an old farmer to the outside of town and got out at a truck stop. I was hitch-hiking while asking truckers at the same time if any of them would be going on down to Toronto. Suddenly this guy comes to a screeching stop and says he's only going two miles. I told him I'd try somebody else, but he explained that I'd be right at the spot where the highway breaks away from all the other city-limit roads. So I jumped in.

Only one look told me the guy was a fag. He was putting along at about twenty-five miles an hour, and he started talking to me. He was explaining to me that he was on his way to his ex-boyfriend's farm to get back the ring he had given to him. They had apparently had a terrible fight and had broken up. I was just sitting there nodding in agreement with all his statements. Then he lets on to me that he's queer — as if I had no idea of it yet.

He looked at me to see if I was going to jump out of the car in shock, or at least, that's what I think he was expecting. I just told him that if that was his bag, who the fuck was I to say anything about it? Then he started talking about his mother and his father and about their different attitudes towards his choice of sexual direction. He was getting all shaken up now and I was sure he was going to break down and cry or something. I was beginning to see him as a real neurotic. He just kept carrying on and I felt that any moment he would be driving into a tree to end it all — one of those suicides that don't go alone, but have to have someone to go with them. I was feeling I might be his chosen subject, but it all ended by our arriving at his turn-off to the farm he was going to.

He asked me if I wanted to go on to the farm with him. I wasn't surprised because I figured he'd lay that shot on me sooner or later. I declined and he pulled over to let me out. After we had shaken hands he split. I guess I could say he was one of the more straight-forward queers I've met — not the kind who wiggled around like a snake trying to pick the right moment to put the shot to you.

I got a ride within two minutes with a guy my own age who had apparently been driving for the last twelve hours or so. He said he was going to Toronto and if I wanted to take the wheel right away, I was welcome to go with him. Otherwise, he would be stopping at a motel until the next day. I told him I'd be glad to take over for him. He told me to just wake him up when we got there, and he was fast asleep in a matter of minutes. The guy had told me to also wake him up when the gas got low so he could pay for it, but I didn't bother and just payed for it myself.

I was kind of glad to have the opportunity to drive and not have to talk to anybody. I just cruised along the highway looking back on my whole trip and all the small and large incidents that had taken place. I can say that I wasn't sorry for any of it, because it was all a part of the whole trip, a sort of battle. At the same time, it was a sort of relationship between me and a country of large

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cities, long highways, and different people. It was all an experience of day-to-day happenings and situations that arise in all those different places. I had come out on top, and I knew that because I was still me and hadn't changed a bit. I looked upon myself as an animal like all the rest I'd seen travelling across the country. I saw that being called "human" was just a label placed upon me by man himself, by men just like me.

My thoughts went back to that night in the Blackstone Hotel in Vancouver. I still think about those two Indians today. I'm not thinking in the sense of remorse — I don't feel that. They were wrong by my own laws and rules in the game of life, and I was right. Everything happened as it should have during the episode. The only flaw which still lingers in my mind today is that they should both be dead for making the mistake of choosing the wrong man to try and defeat. That's what would have happened among the real so-called animals of the world. I thought back on many more things of my journey up to the point of where I was driving along on the highway. I could think of more things in an hour than I could write down in a few months.

Well, we arrived in Toronto late that night. I took a room in a motel just up the 401, so when I got up the next day, I'd only be a hop, skip and a jump away from the final three-hundred-fifty miles of my long holiday. (I'll stay with "trip" or "holiday" because I feel they're simpler to write. It was really so many things, who could give it a definite name? If not me, then nobody.)

I hit the highway the next day and after four or five rides I was only in Belleville, Ontario. Rides along the 401 always seem to be short little ones, thirty, thirty-five miles. All kinds of shit like that.

My last ride was the one I really enjoyed the most. A young woman driving a little red Datsun came along, and can you believe where she was from? Vancouver, British Columbia! When she was pulling over and I caught a glimpse of that license plate, I nearly pissed myself laughing.

I got in and we started talking. She was on her way to Halifax to visit some relatives and she said her trip so far had been a god-damned bore. Then she started asking me where I was coming from, so I laid the whole shot on her except for the major incident. I didn't want her thinking she'd picked up some trigger-happy maniac. I gave it to her from start to finish. She asked me why I had made the trip. She just couldn't believe me when I replied that it was all for the hell of it. I told her I had made the trip just to see what it would all be like.

She was good-looking with one of those refreshing smiles that I like to see on all women. When we arrived at Kingston it was pretty late, so I guess you know how long I had had to wait for some of them rides. The woman I was with had been driving for quite some time that day and asked me if I'd like to stop in Kingston for a drink — if not, she said I could take the wheel to Mon-

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treal. I told her if she was in no rush to get to Halifax, I was certainly in no rush to get to Montreal.

We both broke down laughing like hell, knowing what the other had in mind, of course. Well, we drove into Kingston to a small bar — and so as not to get too personal — I'll say we only managed to leave the next day. But in the short time we knew each other, we became like real close friends.

Some people take time trying to feel each other out in all those phony ways that people tend to go about. But when we were in that bar, we were laughing like hell, sharing funny stories. Some of the other occupants were staring at us as if we were nuts. But it was almost as if we had known each other for years.

Anyhow, we arrived in Montreal early the next afternoon, and I got out at St-Laurent just off the Metropolitan. We exchanged addresses and told each other that each of us was welcome at the other's place anytime we found ourselves in the neighborhood. We gave each other a little kiss and went off in our own directions.

Up until the time I came Inside, we wrote one another every few months just to say hello and wish each other well. I thought it was really great to have a good friend like that, someone I'd only known for a brief period of time, but kept in touch with. I guess we were a little more than pen pals, too, because we'd actually spent a night together.

Well, I was back in Montreal and I jumped in a taxi and headed for the South Shore. When I arrived at the apartment, there was my partner sitting out on the balcony having a beer. He didn't notice me until I yelled up at him, "Hey, open one of those up for me, will ya?"

The trip was over, and you know what? I felt so good about it, I guess I said to myself, "A hell of a lot has happened" — and I wondered why things happen the way they do.

Maximum Security
Canada

THE GROUP IN PLURALIST IDEOLOGY AND POLITICS

Koula Mellos

Minority groups are currently receiving a great deal of attention from many different sources motivated by a variety of concerns. Scholars of liberal or Marxist theoretical persuasion, political party strategists, state advisers demonstrate, in different forms, a marked interest in minorities. For some critical scholars for example, minorities, and in particular cultural minorities, are particularly well suited historical subjects to lead the struggle against imperialism in this phase in history.¹ Liberal scholars look upon minorities as the appropriate means of both liberalizing society in breaking down social barriers to equality, and at the same time of conserving the best in tradition.² Political party strategists focus on minorities as a source of electoral support and, depending on the party's ideology, either minimize the differences between a given minority and the rest of the electorate as do the Liberals and the Conservatives by proposing conciliatory appeals, or accentuating the distinctions into irreconcilable differences as do the péquistes. The state identifies in activist groups, particularly in urban centres, a form of militancy exploitable to its advantage in two distinct ways: by delegating greater responsibility for the management of local social services in response to group demands for greater direct participation in community affairs the state seeks, on the one hand, to reduce the cost of such programmes and thereby contain the depletion of its dwindling resources in this period of economic crisis, while, on the other hand, to generate a legitimacy by converting resistance into cooperation.³

Minority groups have not just recently sprung up. Indeed, most western social formations have a history of politicized minority groups of various degrees of militancy. Some of these groups, mainly in the form of regional

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minorities often of distinct cultural identity, have constituted formidable decentralizing forces within the nation state assuming, in some cases, separatist forms of considerable strength. The struggles of such groups have not been without difficulties, obstacles and setbacks in the face of resistance, often of crushing proportions, from the established power structure. In the last few decades, however, new developments have arisen on the political and ideological levels making for a more favourable setting for at least certain forms of minority group action. The "group" as a unit of action has assumed a prominent place in political practice⁴ and as subject in ideological discourse.⁵ This political and ideological climate in which the dominant class in various fractional forms of group organization such as the manufacturers' association, the bankers' association, the oil producers' association and so on, as well as the working class organized in trade unions as a group unit of action, provides a setting favourable to the group organization of minorities. Indeed, minority groups organized as specific linguistic, ethnic, cultural or regional groups enter an already legitimized pluralist group form of political and ideological practice. It has often been contended that in Canada and in the United States, group politics rather than class politics dominates the political scene and that the dominant ideological images which mediate social identification are group rather than class images.⁶ That is, Canadians and Americans tend to see themselves first as belonging to such and such a group and secondarily, if at all, as belonging to such and such a class. Thus, although in recent years minority identification and minority political action has acquired a new form and a new salience, they have prevailed for several decades. Political action is mediated by the group and channelled to group-defined demands which largely flow from the specific occupational, religious, ethnic, linguistic, regional, etc., character of the group's identity.

If the dominance of the group at the political and ideological levels is an accurate depiction of the current and recent history of our society, what sense can we make of this predominance? What are the theoretical foundations of pluralism in its political and ideological forms? Can we assume that there is and has been a retreat from class politics and class ideology, or can we more justifiably believe that pluralism is a form of political and ideological class struggle which situates the locus of conflict between disparate groups rather than between opposing classes and that through this the bourgeois class exercises its dominance at all levels of the social structure? It is the latter hypothesis that appears to be more fruitful in understanding our situation and in this paper we examine the theoretical basis of group dynamics of the pluralist form of bourgeois class domination.

If we hope to demonstrate that group ideology and politics marks neither the end of the political class struggle nor the end of the ideological class struggle as many prominent ideologues have been arguing for some time,⁷ but

rather than group ideology and politics which we have already referred to as pluralism are particular forms of class struggle, we should begin by theoretically distinguishing between group and group conflict on the one hand, and social class and class struggle on the other. That is, we must determine the respective specificity of group and group conflict and social class and class conflict and identify the particular field in the social structure in which they are constituted.

Class in relation to mode of production

As is generally well-known and well-worked out by Marxist theorists, the theoretical foundation of social classes is the mode of production.⁸ It is on the abstract level of a mode of production that the constitution of social classes as a structural effect becomes intelligible. More precisely, social classes are seen as the effect of the economic structure of producers and non-producers in relation to the means of production. In the capitalist mode of production an antagonistic relation between the working class and the bourgeois class is the effect of the productive relation in which the surplus product, produced by the direct producers (working class), is privately appropriated by the non-producers (bourgeois class) owing to the latter's ownership and control of the means of production. Thus the relations of production is the level at which classes are constituted in antagonistic relation to each other. Classes occupy a position opposite to each other in a social relation of class struggle. The surplus product thus, in the form of surplus value, constitutes the working class and bourgeoisie and at the same time constitutes this very class relation as an antagonistic relation of struggle.

But the mode of production of the surplus product does not simply imply an economic relation, for the reproduction of the economic class relations involves and indeed necessitates political and ideological relations.⁹ A mode of production is thus constitutive of economic, political and ideological structures each of which occupies a particular place in the whole and has a particular specificity such that neither the political nor the ideological are directly reducible to the economic even though they both owe their specificity or their relative autonomy to the requirements for assuring private appropriation of surplus value. In this sense, the economic level can be said to be determinant in the last instance or that each level, including the economic, is overdetermined by the others in a complex articulation in which the economic is determinant in the last instance. The antagonistic class relations at the economic level are not simply reproduced on the political or the ideological levels in exactly the same form. Indeed, neither the political nor the ideological forms of class struggle are reducible to the economic. The political and ideological class struggles, as effects of the political and ideological structures overdetermined

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by the economic, take a form not of a struggle between opposing classes in a dominant-dominated relation but rather a form which conceals this very relation of force operating on each level. Below we will look at the political and ideological forms of class struggle.

Social class is a concept then, which denotes the effects of the structures constitutive of a mode of production. As Poulantzas formulates it, "classe sociale est un concept qui indique les effets de l'ensemble des structures, de la matrice d'un mode de production ou d'une formation sociale sur les agents qui indique les effets de la structure globale dans la dominance des rapports sociaux."¹⁰

Political and Ideological Constituents of Mode of Production

Economic, political and ideological class relations as relations of forms of class struggle are intelligible on the abstract level of mode of production. On the concrete level of social formation, a particular mode of production rarely if ever exists in its purity. That is, there is not a coincidence between social formation and mode of production.¹¹ Social formations are constitutive of modes of production not in a form in which one mode exists along side or parallel to another but in an articulated form. Rather than a co-existence of modes of production marking a social formation, there is an articulation of modes of production of such character that one mode of production is dominant and that the very reproduction of another mode of production derives or is the effect of the dominance of this mode of production. It is an articulation in dominance making for the dominance of one mode and the reproduction of others the very effect of this dominance. Such an articulation marks not one or another level of the modes of production, for example, the economic. It is rather a complex vertical and horizontal articulation of all levels. It is the specificity of the articulation that precisely distinguishes between particular concrete social formations.

How can these Marxist theoretical constructs which serve to depict and situate social class help us to understand the pluralism of groups in North American societies? Is a social group simply an empirical category with no theoretical foundation? In other words, is a social group entirely unintelligible on the abstract level of mode of production or for that matter on the concrete level of social formation taken as a theoretical construct? Or does the group have a basis in the capitalist mode of production and if so at what level?

In order to determine whether or not a social group has a basis in the capitalist mode of production, let us look more closely at the three instances and in particular the political and ideological levels constitutive of this mode. We leave aside for the moment the question of whether or not the capitalist mode of production has undergone structural and historical changes in which social group may possibly be constituted as an integral effect of one or other

instance of this mode. As we saw above, the economic level which, in the capitalist mode of production is not only determinant in the last instance but also reserves for itself the role of dominance, constitutes the working class and the bourgeois class as the effect of the structure of relations of production. That is, the structure of relations of production, namely the form of appropriation of the surplus product, i.e. surplus-value, determines the working class and the bourgeoisie. We may say that the particular structure of surplus-value distributes the direct producers and non-producers into two classes: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie each situated at opposite sides of a conflicting productive social relation. The particular structure of the capitalist surplus product, i.e. the fusion of the necessary labour and surplus labour in time and space, has a political effect the separation of the political instance, the state superstructure, from the economic.¹² For with the fusion of necessary and surplus labour in time and space, no longer does the state directly mediate relations of production as in precapitalist modes. With this structural and historical transformation in the appropriation of the surplus product, the law of value becomes the mediator of the relations of production assuring the reproduction of these same relations. The state superstructure or political instance and the economic instance become two discrete spheres their separation being necessitated by the very requirements of reproduction of the social relations of production.

A political instance 'set apart' from the economic which is now governed by the law of value can best maintain conditions for the reproduction of productive relations by creating the legal framework facilitating the flow of capital including the exchange between capital and labour. Nicos Poulantzas has examined in detail the structural basis of the capitalist state in *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales*, in which he proposes that the political effect of the capitalist state structure is the distribution of the agents of production into a class of legal owners of the means of production and a class of non-owners of the means of production making private property a legally binding basis of differentiation of class.

Les structures du politique, notamment la superstructure juridico-politique de l'État, ne sont pas des classes sociales, pas plus d'ailleurs que les structures de l'idéologie. Elles ont cependant pour effet, dans les rapports sociaux, et à leur niveau — rapports sociaux juridico-politiques et rapports sociaux idéologiques, — la distribution des agents qui en sont les porteurs en classes sociales. Plus particulièrement, dans le cas du droit, on sait que cet effet dépend de la propriété juridique formelle des moyens de production.¹³

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We would disagree with Poulantzas that the effect of the political structure is the distribution of agents of production into classes on the political level. Rather the agents of production are distributed as individual, free contracting agents with legally binding rewards and commitments. This juridico-political effect is reinforced by the peculiar capitalist ideological effect. Let us examine this ideological effect and see the way it relates to the juridico-political effect.

The nature of surplus-value and the concomitant separation of the sphere of production from the sphere of circulation holds the key to the particularly bourgeois nature of the ideological effect of this structure. Marx pointed to circulation of capital as that sphere in which specifically bourgeois ideological notions are generated¹⁴. In the very exchange of commodities, an exchange always mediated by the most abstract form of commodity, namely money, labour-power and salary retain a formal equivalence and owing to the separation of the sphere of circulation from the sphere of production, the real non-equivalence between labour and salary is concealed. For the equal exchange between labour-power and salary on the level of circulation is unequal on the level of production as the exchange value of labour-power becomes use-value and produces a value in excess of the value of its own reproduction. Of course, these exchanges are made possible in the first place by the separation of the direct producer from the means of production, the necessary access to which is only attainable by selling his labour-power in exchange for a salary. We know that in this very separation of the direct producers from the means of production is a "freeing" of the direct producer to enter into contracts "freely" with capital. These very contracts themselves have their basis in the sphere of circulation and claim validity on the basis of equality. They are however the ideological effect of the inequality of value between actual labour and labour power. The dominant ideological effect of surplus-value and the separation of the sphere of production from the sphere of circulation is the distribution of the agents of production on the ideological level not as classes of owners and non-owners of the means of production but as equal individual subjects in the sense of individual centers of initiative and unique masters of personal conditions. Such individualist formal equality underlies the entire system of legal contracts mediating exchanges between capital and labour.

This ideological effect overdetermined by the economic at the same time has as effect on the economic level what Poulantzas calls an "isolation effect".

Elle consiste en ce que les structures juridiques et idéologiques qui, déterminées en dernière instance par la structure du procès de travail, instaurent, à leur niveau, les agents de la production distribués en classes sociales en "sujets" juridiques et idéologiques, ont comme effet, sur la lutte économique de classe, l'occultation, de façon particulière, aux agents de leurs rapports comme rapports de classe. Les

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rapports sociaux économiques sont effectivement vécus par les supports sur le mode d'un fractionnement et d'une atomisation spécifiques. Les classiques du marxisme l'ont souvent désigné en opposant la lutte économique "individuelle", "locale", "partielle", "isolée", etc., à la lutte politique qui tend à présenter un caractère d'unité, voire d'unité de classe. Cet isolement est ainsi l'effet, sur les rapports sociaux économiques 1) du juridique, 2) de l'idéologie juridico-politique, 3) de l'idéologique en général. Cet effet d'isolement est terriblement réel: il a un nom, la concurrence entre les ouvriers salariés et entre les capitalistes propriétaires privés.¹⁵ (Emphasis is that of the author).

In this legalist ideological matrix in which the dominant principles are equality, free contracting agent, equivalent exchanges, the individual acquires the attributes of subject, his own reason as the first and ultimate authority determining free choice and the concomitant responsibility and obligation of contracts. The equality and individual freedom of this ideological matrix appears to negate the presence of class at least on the level of ideology. One individual as commodity owner, be he owner solely of labour-power or not, has the same legal rights as any other commodity owner in his freedom of choice and contractual obligations. Class, however, is not absent from this level. Indeed, one may say that it is present in its very absence, for the equality and freedom of individual subjects is a specific form of capitalist equality and freedom in which the bourgeois class exercises its dominance on the ideological level. The contractual exchanges on the basis of equivalence in the sphere of circulation conceals the inequality in the sphere of production where surplus-value is privately appropriated. It is a relation of bourgeois dominance over the working class but is not, of course, a dominance which is perceived even by the bourgeois class itself as a relation of class dominance. Rather, the bourgeoisie perceives this form of equality and freedom as the universal form of equality and freedom equally valid for itself and for all other classes. On this point Althusser argues that

dans l'idéologie de la *liberté*, la bourgeoisie vit (...) très exactement son rapport à ses conditions d'existence: c'est-à-dire son rapport réel (le droit de l'économie capitaliste libérale) mais investi dans un rapport *imaginaire* (tous les hommes sont libres, y compris les travailleurs libres). Son idéologie consiste dans ce jeu de mots sur la liberté, qui trahit autant la volonté bourgeoise de mystifier ses exploités ("libre") pour les tenir en bride, par le chantage à la liberté, que le besoin de la bourgeoisie de vivre sa propre domination de classe comme la liberté de ses propres exploités.¹⁶ (Emphasis is that of the author).

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Equally on the political level classes are present as a relation of bourgeois dominance over the working class although not in precisely the manner in which Poulantzas argues, but rather in the manner in which they are present on the ideological level. Class dominance on the political level is exercised through such means as contractual arrangements between exchanging commodity owners which is the legal-political framework of private property and which secures the conditions for accumulation of capital. Even if Poulantzas is right that the agents of production are distributed as a class of owners and a class of non-owners of the means of production on the political level and this as the effect of the political structure, a political class struggle following from this cannot but be attenuated by a whole series of ideological implications derived from the ideological structure.

The "Group" Effect

The abstract notion of capitalist mode of production makes intelligible a number of theoretical constructs in particular, class, proletariat and bourgeois, and individual subject which is the effect of the ideological and political structures. While class is necessarily present on all three instances of the mode of production, individual subject is intelligible on the ideological and political levels and as the effects of these structures overdetermined by the whole mode of production which is, itself, determined in the last instance by the economic. In this account we do not encounter "group" on any of the levels constitutive of the capitalist mode of production.

Do we encounter it on the concrete theoretical level of social formation? If we conceive of a social formation not as an empirical notion but rather a theoretical concept of an articulation of modes of production in which one mode of production as the structure in dominance overdetermines the whole, we are still not likely to encounter a group effect where the structure in dominance is the capitalist mode of production as is, of course, the case in Canada and the United States. Can we then conclude that group is not comprehensible at the theoretical level of social formation and that it is simply an empirical category?

A crucial point in helping us arrive at a sound conclusion regards possible structural and historical modifications of the capitalist mode of production in its process of maturation. We should inquire precisely into any possible modifications in the effects of this mode of production at the advanced phase of accumulation in relation to the economic, political and ideological forms of class relations. If we encountered no identifiable group effect in the mode of production we have just briefly reviewed, it may be the result of our having limited our consideration of the structure of the capitalist mode of production to a particular phase of its development, namely to the competitive phase. To

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attribute to the capitalist mode of production solely features characteristic of its liberal, competitive phase would be to deny any internal dynamic to this mode and to ignore a number of historical developments marking its growth. Below we examine those modifications at the level of relations of production which we argue are relevant to the "group" question.

There is nothing novel in the observation that the social relations of production propelled by the economic class struggle have undergone modification. A double concentration of capital in the form of monopolies and oligopolies of multinational dimension on the one hand, and on the other the organization of labour in the form of large trade unions marks the advanced capitalist form of relations of production. It is in the effect of the double concentration of capital on the political and ideological levels that we can determine a group basis in the very capitalist mode of production at the advanced phase of accumulation.

We saw briefly above that where capital's extraction of surplus-value from labour is conducted in conditions of competitive market, the effect on the ideological level of the unequal exchange and thus exploitative relation between capitalist and labourer is an interaction of freely competing individuals of whom one is equal to another, each an independent actor and a legal subject. The agents of production are reconstituted ideologically not as exploiting and exploited classes but as free, equal subjects and freely contracting individuals to legal agreements.

In the concentration of capital both in the form of large corporations and trade unions (variable capital) is a new historical development in the relations of production as well as a structural development which can be understood at the abstract level of mode of production. If the normal progression of capital accumulation leads to a concentration of capital in the form of large corporate capital, the organization of the working class into trade unions did not come about as a result of a deterministic operation of objective laws of capital reproduction. The working class has paid dearly for the right to negotiate salary settlements in a fierce class struggle in which its claim to a right to strike as the ultimate bargaining resource has been achieved at the cost of bloody repressions. Neither does this imply that the working class in the Third World negotiates the conditions of its own exploitation from the vantage point of a politically sanctioned right to strike, for the history of the working class struggle is met with devastating armed repression by the state.¹⁷ In advanced capitalist social formations, a proportion of the working class is organized in trade unions although not by any means the entire working class nor is the proportion equal for all sectors of the economy. In the monopoly sectors there is a higher degree of unionization just as there is a high degree of corporate capital concentration but in the more "competitive" sectors there remains non-unionized, semi-skilled and unskilled workers as well as smaller

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family enterprises however difficult their survival becomes in the current economic crisis.

The historical development of politically sanctioned negotiation of salary settlements between capital and organized labour, involves political and ideological changes which are discernable at the structural level of mode of production and which are fundamental to our understanding of pluralist ideologies and politics. The structural modification on the level of the capitalist mode of production with regard to the double concentration of capital lies not in the simple unionization of the working class nor in the concentration of corporate capital as such. The modification lies in the manner in which the two forms of capital are constituted: the trade union and corporation are juridically constituted as formally equal agents of exchange. On the level of circulation each collective occupies a "fixed" and opposite position in relation to the other and the salary levels are negotiated between them. The issue is one of where to insert the line dividing the workers' portion of the total value produced, from the corporate capital's portion. The issue in the exchange is the quantity of total value to remain as surplus value for private appropriation. That the juridical constitution of these agents as equal is merely a formal equality and not a real equality is seen in the fact that the issue of exchange is not and cannot be, within this structure, the worker appropriation of the total value, i.e. the reappropriation of the means of production by the producers of value.

The effect of this structure on the ideological level is a "group" effect where the agents of production are distributed not as classes of exploiters and exploited, nor as independent, singular individuals, but rather as collective entities. Labour constituted as collective group subject, equal but different from capital as collective group subject.

The ideological group subject acquires a number of characteristics. A group subject is not simply an arbitrary aggregate of individuals, it is not simply a strategic assemblage of persons for the purpose of more effectively pursuing some pragmatic goals. It is rather a collective with an internal coherence. Individuals are united by a common vision, common interest, common destiny. The group becomes the collective actor differentiated one from another not by a power disparity or other forms of inequality but simply by the distinguishing feature which constitutes its asset and marks its peculiar identity. All groups in this ideological sense are equal, as were previously the individuals — equal in the pursuit of their interests, subjects as centers of initiative, singular units of action.

On the juridical level where the group subject is created, the group effect assumes the form of legal equality between collective parties to a contract. The group as legal subject is the responsible party in legal agreements which are binding on all concrete individuals forming each collective party as if in-

separable elements of the singular but collective legal unit. The whole body of labour and corporate law which indeed constitutes the dominant form of bourgeois law is based on the collective entity concept. The group association is endowed with a "corporate personality" linked either to its collective executive or to some abstract organic level beyond its component members.¹⁸

The analysis so far proposes the group effect on the ideological and juridico-political levels not as an empirical component of a given ideology nor of a given juridico-political practice of a specified state, for the characteristic of these latter is that they are immediately open to observation and have an empirical existence where the group effect is discernable at the abstract level of mode of production as a theoretical construct. The group effect rather than being itself a particular component of empirical ideologies and political practice that we may empirically point to is rather that element which circumscribes and lends internal coherence to particular ideologies and particular political practice. It is what Roberto Miguelez calls a "matrix", ideological or juridico-political, on which specific ideological representations, ideas, etc., are imprinted and which conditions the character of these very representations. The ideological matrix of group subject provides the basic logical structure of the possible ideological modalities which regulate the form of specific, concrete representations. In developing the notion of matrix in particular reference to ideology, Miguelez points out that

ce que l'analyse du mode de production dévoile lors de l'examen de la sphère de la circulation ce ne sont pas des éléments concrets, encore moins des éléments discursifs mais une *matrice* à partir de laquelle et sur laquelle viendront se forger, comme à leur "base", toutes les notions, idées, jugements du "libre-échangiste", c'est-à-dire des agents soumis aux lois du mode de production capitaliste. Plus particulièrement, c'est sur cette matrice que viendront se forger les éléments idéologiques (des idéologies dominantes) — y compris les éléments discursifs (des discours dominants), et c'est sous le mode de la critique demystificatrice, de l'analyse de ces "illusions" qui est conduite, à ce niveau, la lutte idéologique des classes dominées.¹⁹ (The emphasis is that of the author).

As we traced the ideological matrix of group subject as the effect of the relations of production, this matrix cannot but be the dominant ideological matrix — dominant in the sense of containing a relation of dominance of the capitalist class with the working class. The presence of the dominant class in an ideological matrix as a necessary feature of structure of class relations is well put by Miguelez,

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l'effet essentiel ou décisif repérable au niveau du mode de production capitaliste demeure, dans un certain sens, le même — l'occultation de l'organisation classiste de la société — l'évolution ou les transformations dans la forme de l'effet, autrement dit dans ce que nous avons appelé la "matrice" idéologique du mode, qui est la matrice idéologique dominante.²⁰

Ideological and juridico-political modalities of group action: Conflictual cooperation

Just as the group effect on the ideological level is an ideological matrix of group subject which conditions the range of ideological modalities, by the same token, a group effect on the juridico-political level is a matrix of "group" action which circumscribes the modalities of institutionalized political action including general norms on which specific rules and regulations defining political practice are based. The juridico-political matrix of group action is constitutive of a relation of political dominance of the capitalist class as it is the effect of the relations of production on the political level.

If the analysis so far is correct, it points to two important factors, namely that the capitalist class exercises its dominance on the ideological and juridico-political levels and that the form of this dominance is the ideological group subject and juridico-political group action. These are not small or insignificant revelations which the theoretical analysis at the abstract level of the capitalist mode of production of advanced stages of accumulation makes possible. It is indeed fundamental to a critique of particular empirical ideologies and political practice which, if approached directly through only empirical methodological means, appear as egalitarian and libertarian and from which are concealed the whole basis of capitalist class dominance in social relations. The notion of matrix and specifically the group form of ideological and juridico-political matrices permit us to determine the basic principles, the dominant modalities, the class character of particular pluralist ideologies and pluralist politics pervasive in advanced capitalist social formations. But it does not suffice in itself to account for features of a given ideology and politics of a substantive nature. It cannot, in itself, therefore, account for the variation between particular pluralist ideology and politics. In other words, we cannot simply reconstruct particular pluralist ideologies and politics on the sole basis of the group matrix. A given pluralist ideology or politics is not derivable as such from the group matrix. The particular specificity of a given American pluralist ideology and pluralist politics as compared to those in the Canadian context is determined in part by the specific forces in the class struggle. But the group ideological and juridico-political matrices also play a determining role in that they provide the logical structural apparatus within which specific ideological themes as well as, and perhaps even more importantly, specific

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connotations and specific forms of political action are inscribed. On this very point and again in particular reference to the ideological matrix, Roberto Miguelez is particularly relevant.

L'analyse des idéologies ne peut être conçue que comme une analyse à la fois théorique et historique: théorique dans la mesure où la connaissance de la matrice idéologique dominante ou des modalités idéologiques les plus générales correspondant au mode de production — ou à la phase où se trouve celui-ci — oriente globalement mais dans ses paramètres décisifs l'analyse: historique, dans la mesure où la connotation idéologique précise d'un élément idéologique précis est affectée nécessairement par l'histoire idéologique de l'élément.²¹

From the group effect as the ideological and juridico-political matrices of group action, we can derive the principal ideological modality and modality of political action which we may refer to as "conflictual cooperation" or compromise between groups. Or, another way of formulating this proposition: the ideological and juridico-political group effect has a conflictual cooperative effect on the modality of interaction between groups. We can see this in the very derivation of the ideological and political group effect itself of the economic structure of the double concentration of capital which on the level of circulation replaces the competitive market and the concomitant modality of competition by the negotiation of salary settlements between two collectives of opposing but "fixed" positions. That is, each collective as such is not "free" to accept or reject the offer under the compelling regulating sanction of competition where the buyer of labour power chooses the cheapest offer and the seller of labour power chooses the highest bidding buyer in a free flow of the labour power commodity. The competitive principle of a free market determines which buyer confronts and exchanges with which seller. Neither the trade union nor the corporate collective is "free" to choose the other in the exchange. For these agents of exchange are juridically constituted as fixed collectives. The juridico-political presence in this structure, as we saw, goes further: not only are these agents of exchange constituted as collective bargaining agents but they are constituted as agents of equal power occupying opposite positions. They are formally equal. The effect of this structure on the modalities of intervention in the exchange is one of conflictual cooperation. That is, mutual concession, give-and-take, compromise become the modalities of exchange. The breakdown of these modalities is stalemate in the form, for example, of strikes and lockouts, preventing the occurrence of exchange until such time as one side or both concede to some of the opponent's demands or at least to resume negotiations.

The modality of compromise and concession at the economic level is clear-

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ly one in which the capitalist class exercises its dominance, for each agent of the exchange juridically constituted as equal bargaining agent seeks to maximize its relative share of the total socially produced value and the issue, as we saw, is one of where to insert the dividing line between the worker's portion and the corporate portion and not a worker reappropriation of the total value. Such a revolutionary issue as a worker reappropriation of the total value is precisely what this structure excludes. The modality of compromise on the economic level as the effect of the juridical component of the structure of exchange becomes the dominant modality of action on the political and ideological levels. The modality of conflictual cooperation is inscribed in the juridico-political and ideological matrices of group action: conflict as a mark of the ideological equality of group subjects, each of which expresses and pursues its own demands, cooperation and compromise also as a mark of the formal equality of group subjects as a necessary requirement for the co-existence of a plurality or diversity of equal group actors. Conflict and opposition thus go hand-in-hand or at least along side cooperation in the form of reconciliation and compromise. Communication becomes one based on a mutual recognition of differences and of undisputed right of each group to seek to preserve its differences. Such communication secures agreements between opposing parties for the coexistence of differences occurs within the framework of reconciliation. In this ideological matrix of group subjects and the dominant modality of conflictual cooperation, the contradictory class interests are reconstituted as distinct but reconcilable differences between equal groups. Conflict is contained by rules of moderation within which compromise can be achieved.

This juridico-political and ideological matrices of group action and the modality of conflictual cooperation is the structure within which pluralist ideologies and politics propelled by the class struggle take form. Although it is on the historical level that the emergence of concrete issues can be appreciated, the structurally derived modality of conflictual cooperation is not without some consequence for substantive issues. The norms of moderation and compromise predetermine in part the type of issues and the form in which they can be promoted. A whole range of non-negotiable issues over which there can be no compromise are disqualified or at least disadvantaged by the rules. This, of course, is not to say that radical, revolutionary issues do not arise, for in fact they are the motor of historical change. It is to say that such issues are disadvantaged and even suppressed by the very dominance of juridico-political modality of conflictual cooperation of group action. This type of issue can only be admissible if it is translated in away that eliminates its revolutionary import.

Conflictual interaction between group actors emphasizes not the elimination of one by another but rather the mutual recognition of each other's

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rights to its own differences, the necessity of coexistence and consequently the imperative of cooperation, moderation and conciliation. This does not mean that such a modality of political action leads on the concrete level to an objective equalization of groups in terms of their power to promote their interests. It allows for, indeed, nurtures inequalities between groups but inequalities which derive from degree of ability to achieve compromise. Political majorities and political minorities are constituted in this way. The group's effectiveness in arriving at mutually acceptable agreements with others of expressed differences such that each group obtains something and no one obtains all nor loses all determines its relative power vis-à-vis others. The conflictual cooperation between groups leads to a power differentiation between groups which is linked not to distinguishing characteristics of the group, i.e. occupation, ethnicity, etc., but rather to its dexterity in achieving compromise with other groups. It achieves power from entering majority coalitions in the formation of political majorities. For the ideological formalism of politico-juridical rules discount any inequality between groups as arising from the position they occupy within the social structure just as they discount inequality between individuals. Power inequality is simply an expression of the group's inability to employ effectively the rules of compromise. But such inequality owing to the failure to be included in political majorities, i.e. ruling political parties, is not a permanent, legally sanctioned condition. It is but temporary. The moment the group concedes compromise, embarks on the game of give-and-take, it converts from relatively powerless political minority to power wielding political majority.

As we have stated repeatedly, the political modality of conflictual cooperation between groups can be derived from the political matrix of group action, but the constitution of actual political majorities, i.e. the formation of coalitions of groups and the particular issues on which compromise occurs is a historical matter. The class character of the hegemonic fraction of the political power block in the context of the political class struggle is a factor of decisive importance. If the analysis of mode of production tells us that the ideological and political effects of the advanced capitalist relations of production are such that ideological and political dominance is accorded to the capitalist class, it is the concrete level of social formation and the class struggle in its various forms that is indicative of which fraction of the dominant class has hegemony in the power block. This is a critical factor for it is the particular class interests of the hegemonic fraction of the power block which will determine the nature of agreements arrived at through negotiation. In other words, the constitution of a political majority from a series of particular groups with conflicting interests is orchestrated by the hegemonic fraction of the dominant class. It is this which determines which groups will constitute the political majority and more importantly on what terms the groups will enter the political majority. In the

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dialectic between the dominant modality of action and political issues — a dialectic mediated by the hegemonic fraction of the power block — the resulting articulated general programme derives from a process of filtration of issues: the retention of just such conflicting issues as are translatable into a sufficiently moderate form as to unite opposing groups, and the exclusion of a whole range of possible contradictory issues whose differences cannot be internally regulated by the principle of moderating synthesis.

We may say on the basis of these considerations of the structural and historical determinants of group politics that the majority principle and rules of conciliation constitute the structure in which issues are filtered such that contradictory demands and even milder incompatibilities with the dominant class interests are eliminated or translated into a form in which the dominant class interests are asserted.

Both on the ideological and juridico-political levels, power is concentrated in the diverse group-constituted majority. That is, a majority acquires the legitimate power to govern. Its governing right is justified by its being a majority. The quantitative character of majority is accompanied by the qualitative trait of power. Majority rule has legitimate power.

The same ideological qualifiers apply to political minorities but in inverse relation, of course. A political minority is smaller and without legitimate power to make legally binding decisions. That it is small and powerless and thus a political minority, attests to its having been less effective in applying rules of moderation in winning group support. That is to say, that although it is constituted in the same manner as that of a political majority, it does not succeed as well in reconciling group differences sufficiently to form a majority itself. Remaining without power is the price the minority pays for this political ineptness. Thus the lack of power on the political level is justified in terms of the political minority's relative smallness which, in turn, is ideologically linked to an inability to mobilize support by compromise and conciliation. The strategic ineptness at reconciling differences or the refusal to compromise, for indeed, a political minority may reflect the insistence of this or that group to pursue its demands unmodified, carries the political price of being assigned to the opposition without the legitimate power to rule. Smallness and powerlessness go hand-in-hand, inseparably, whatever the reason for the smallness.

The Group effect implication for social minorities

The modality of conflictual cooperation between group subjects as the dominant modality of action of pluralism, has some important effects on the ideological characterization or connotation of a social minority. Historical factors may account for the smallness and relative powerlessness of a given social minority, usually cultural minority, as its objective characteristic. Such

historical factors as economic, ideological and political struggles may account for such a minority group's unwillingness or even inability to conform to the dominant modalities of action of compromise and moderation. But small and powerless as ideological qualifiers of social minority have a particular connotation, one which is based both on the ideological significance of the rules of compromise and on the historical experience of the minority. Ideologically, powerlessness of a minority, its place in the periphery, the margin of society is linked to its smallness and this in turn to the dominant rules of compromise. What, more specifically, are the relations which are drawn in a pluralist ideology between smallness and rules of compromise? Moderation and compromise is the key to integration into a majority group, which is often itself constituted as a majority from a number of minorities on the basis of such rules. The place of privilege, indeed of dominance which the social majority occupies is ideologically its reward for moderation and compromise. By the same token a social minority carries the ideological stigma of failure at moderation and compromise. It is here that we can see that the pluralist modalities of action ideologically recasts the minority's real history. Whether the minority is such as a result of a struggle to resist integration and thereby refusing to operate within the rules of compromise or whether it is such as a result of being inept at the game of compromise, is a distinction which is blurred or eliminated in pluralism. The rules of compromise allow for no distinctions between inability and refusal: they are indifferent to the group's possible motivations. Whether it is non-conformist by choice or by an ineptness in participating in a dialogue of conciliation with the greater majority is of no great consequence to the logic of compromise. Social pluralism cannot mean, within this framework, a social diversity whose mode of cultural interaction claims validity by virtue of its success at compromise translated into a collective wisdom. This form of social pluralism demands conformity, integration into its ways as the superior, legitimate ways. A social minority incapable of adjusting to the means of the majority should content itself to an inferior social status. It is the price of non-conformity.

Ideologically and juridically groups are treated indifferently, interchangeably, equally. What divides them can be reduced to common denominators. The formula ideologically reconstitutes the objective contradictory interests of direct producers and non-producers to a common interest to sustain economic growth. Even the contradictory class interests of communal vs. private property is reconstituted as conflicting interests between groups reconciled through the formula of coexistence of both private and public (state) ownership and control of means of production as a more effective means of assuring expansion and sustaining negotiated rates of growth.

A variety of organized groups within rather broad social movements which have emerged in the last 15 years or so such as the women's movement, the

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environmentalist, anti-pollution, anti-nuclear movement and so on are, to some extent, becoming integrated within political majorities to the degree that they operate by means of the juridico-political modality of compromise. While women's groups are numerous, a factor which attests to their heterogeneity in respect to their political demands and degrees of militancy, those groups demanding opportunity to achieve the valued social resources equal to that of their male counterparts are the most likely to be reconciled to the rules of compromise. For indeed, they seek integration into the mainstream, on terms which call for some modification in the male culture — modifications achievable through pluralist compromise. These groups constitute the majority within the women's movement and not surprisingly they are the politically dominant groups, for as neither a distinct cultural minority nor a distinct class promoting distinctly working class demands but as groups seeking to join the main stream, they adjust to the political rules of compromise and accommodation and join more readily the dominant political majority. Environmental groups, too, are disparate in respect to demands and degrees of militancy. But just as in the case of the women's movement, the moderate groups whose demands and action are most compatible with or adaptable to compromise are the most readily integrated into the political majority.

The very factor of diversity within social movements such as the women's, the environmentalists', is itself exploitable by the ideological and juridico-political matrices of group action, for as the most moderate groups are integrated into majorities as if they were the sole or at least the most representative of the whole movement, the more radical groups are excluded without there being a serious threat to the rule of compromise as the legitimate modality of political intervention on the basis of its capacity to assure representation.

This brief consideration of the effects of the ideological and juridico-political matrices of group action on the concrete level of ideological and political conflict reveals that the antagonistic or revolutionary potential of conflict of group action is neutralized. While conflict acquires the form of conciliatory resistance in politics, in ideology it becomes a principle of defense of liberal freedoms such as freedom of expression, freedom of association and so on. Pluralist conflict is not only compatible with the dominance of the capitalist class but is indeed the form in which the capitalist class exercises its political and ideological dominance. The insight is only possible via a consideration of the juridico-political and ideological matrices of group subject and the modality of conflictual cooperation as the group effect of the double concentration of capital at the level of relations of production. Particular pluralist ideologies and politics differ one from the other depending on the particular forces in which they emerge and studying them solely empirically is not easy, nor often possible to see the presence of class dominance in pluralism and of the way in

which the dominant class exercises its dominance. It is not surprising that a variety of empirical studies of pluralism arrive at the conclusion that class dominance may be present in pluralist ideological and political conflict but not necessarily. To argue the necessary presence of class dominance in pluralist ideology and politics is neither to advance a fatalistic argument nor, and especially not, an apologetic argument for the dominant class. The juridico-political and ideological matrices of group subject and group action contain the contradictions of which they are an effect, the fundamental one being that between capital and labour. This contradiction not only cannot be resolved within the ideological and juridico-political matrices of action, but these latter owe their existence to this contradiction. The matrices exist insofar as they can check this contradiction. When the contradiction surfaces in the form of a class struggle in which the working class rejects all grounds curtailing its pursuit of its class interest of reappropriating the surplus product, the ideological and juridico-political matrices and the modality of compromise collapse. The realization of the working class interest cannot be achieved within a context of compromise with the capitalist class, for the contradictory nature of class interests cannot lend itself to class compromise. Class compromise can only mean the subordination of working class interests to those of the bourgeoisie.

The structural limits and class bias of the juridico-political and ideological matrices and the modality of compromise can also surface when cultural minorities set forth to preserve their cultural identity on a basis of real equality. It is at these moments that the ideological group equality reveals itself as a false, illusory equality, uncompromising in the social relations of force which it attempts to conceal, paradoxically, by compromise. But as long as cultural minorities operate by means of the dominant modality of compromise, the demands they advance for cultural survival must be compatible with the majority programme and, on the other hand, the majority programme must be accommodating to the demands for cultural survival of the minority. Of course, the accommodation can only be one of degree — a degree tolerable to and compatible with the hegemony of the majority culture. In the long run, these rules of compromise on cultural issues have one of two possible consequences: a) high degrees of total assimilation or b) the retention of cultural identity as a mark of inferior social status and lower economic advantage. In both cases the cultural dimension reflects the pattern of economic relations between the cultural minority and the larger social formation, i.e. the character of the relations of the minority bourgeoisie with the dominant fractions of the larger bourgeois class and with the minority working class, as well as the relations of the minority working class with the whole class structure. The juridico-political and ideological matrices of group subject and the modality of compromise are more likely to lose their legitimacy vis-à-vis a minority group of the second type, that is, a minority group whose retention

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of its distinct cultural identity and thus its resistance to assimilation is tied to a marked economic dependence and whose claims to real equality, cultural and economic, is not satisfied and indeed cannot be satisfied within the framework of compromise. In this context of cultural group radicalism, the contradictions of pluralist ideology and politics can be revealed, for the necessary integration which the rules of moderation and compromise anticipate and indeed produce, is the very state which the cultural minorities resist. The very nature of the demands of cultural minorities contradict the juridico-political rules by which the demands are modified in the process of being translated into policy. If the cultural minority succeeds in achieving at least some distance from the political hegemony of the majority, as may be the case in federal state systems where the cultural minority is concentrated in a distinct territorial unit of some degree of political autonomy such as a state or a province, it, itself, adopts rules of compromise in relation to the group pluralism constitutive of the social formation within this political unit, with the difference that, being the majority in relation to the latter, it determines the basis of conciliation and degrees of accommodation to its own minorities. But where the claims to cultural distinction achieve advanced or radical proportions, the federalist relation can be only one of marked instability as the cultural minority aims through various means toward total political secession. Recent history of Quebec comprises both types of forces.

With a political separation, the cultural minority is transformed into a cultural majority. Its relation toward cultural minority groups parallels its relation to the hegemonic majority in the larger social formation but in reverse, for if the argument is correct that a group effect on the ideological and on the juridico-political levels and the modality of compromise is the effect of the capitalist relations of production at the advanced phase of concentration, then these same matrices and modality of action will mark the new social formation, to the extent that the new feature of the new social formation is but the different constellation of fractions of the dominant class in the power block. As the capital-labour economic structure persists, the contradictions of this structure will be reproduced on the other levels, militating against the possibility that the political rules of negotiation and compromise will lead to what Habermas refers to as a "true" consensus²² between all parties to an issue. For such a consensus can only be achieved where all parties are united by a true, universal common interest, itself conceivable only when the relations of production are such that the producers of the surplus product are also the appropriators and controllers of it. In a structure in which the surplus product is privately appropriated, the interests of producers and the interests of non-producers are diametrically opposed, contradictory, and a consensus, even in the form of a compromise, is consensus produced in conditions of class domination and can be but an ideological consensus compatible to the

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interests of the dominant class. It is a false consensus insofar as it claims universality on the basis of a compromise in which all parties have equal input and bargain from equal power positions. It is false insofar as this ideological depiction hardly coincides with the objective social relations between classes in the capitalist mode of production.

Department of Political Science
University of Ottawa

Notes

1. See for example, Michèle Lalonde and Denis Monière, *Cause commune, manifeste pour une internationale des petites cultures*, L'hexagone, Montréal, 1981.
2. See Jean-Claude Vernex, *Les acadiens*, Éditions Entente, Paris, 1979; Norman Sheffe, ed., *Many Cultures, Many Heritages*, McGraw-Hill, Toronto, 1975; Dean Wood and Robert Remnant, *The People We Are: Canada's Multicultural Society*, Gage, Toronto, 1980.
3. This current conjunctural relation between groups and the state pervades in many advanced capitalist social formations according to Alain Bihr, "L'inavouable compromis", in *Le monde, diplomatique*, jan. 1980. See also my "State and Ideology in Advanced Capitalism", in *L'idéologie et la reproduction du capital*, Raymundo de Andrade, et al., University of Ottawa Press, 1981.
4. On the basis of empirical research of contemporary political practice, a large number of pluralist scholars point to the group as the basic collective unit of political action and as having replaced the individual of previous political practice. They accordingly propose modifications to democratic theory in recognition and defense of this change. Amongst the influential proponents of this position are David Truman, *The Governmental Process*, Knopf, 1967; William Kornhouser, *The Politics of Mass Society*, Free Press, Glencoe, 1961; Robert Dahl, *Who Governs?*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1962.
5. The notion of ideological subject which will be discussed below is developed by Louis Althusser in "L'idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'État" in *Positions*, Éditions sociales, Paris, 1976.
6. Opinion surveys conducted for the study of electoral behaviour as well as many interpretations of aggregate electoral results seem to indicate that the major determinants of opinion and voting behaviour are region, ethnicity, religion, rather than class. See Mildred A. Schwartz, "Canadian Voting Behaviour" in *Electoral Behaviour*, Richard Rose, ed., Macmillan, N.Y., 1974, for a synthetic review of electoral studies in Canada, many of which argue this point.
7. See for example, Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology*, Free Press, N.Y., 1962; Seymour Lipset, *Political Man*, Mercury, London, 1963.
8. The structuralist Marxist theoretical tradition has developed a rich articulated body of constructs which is particularly useful for working out the group question in pluralist ideology and politics. To situate our arguments, we begin by defining some crucial concepts, the structuralist nuances of which we do not pause to relate to, compare with and evaluate against historicist formulations even though much of Marxist structuralist theorizing has been conducted in critique of and in debate with historicist Marxists as well, of course, as non-Marxists. This is not because we consider the debate resolved in favour of the structuralists but because the comparative substantive issues are examined in a number of published texts (see for example Louis Althusser, *Pour Marx*, François Maspero, Paris, 1966; Nicos Poulantzas, *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales*, petite collection Maspero, Paris, 1978) and to engage in them here would take us away from our immediate objective and perhaps add little to the clarity of the 'group effect' argument.
9. See in particular Louis Althusser, "L'idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'État", *op. cit.*
10. Nicos Poulantzas, *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales*, vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
11. Günder Frank advances a model of coincidence between mode of production and social formation in *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, Monthly Review Press, N.Y., 1967; and in *Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution*, Monthly Review Press, N.Y., 1969. For a critique of this conception, see Roberto Miguelez, "Le concept de 'formation sociale' dans l'analyse des sociétés dépendantes: le cas de l'Amérique Latine", University of Ottawa, 1980.

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12. This thesis is defended by Nicos Poulantzas, amongst others, in *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales*, *op. cit.*
13. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
14. Marx's analysis of circulation in *Capital* especially in chapter 6, vol. 1, points to circulation and its separation from production as the basis of ideological notions of equality and freedom.
15. Nicos Poulantzas, *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales*, *op. cit.*, p. 136.
16. Louis Althusser, "Marxisme et humanisme" in *Pour Marx*, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-2.
17. The more intensive exploitation of the working class of the Third World, in relation to the exploitation of the working class at the centre of accumulation, is accompanied by a form of political domination which relies heavily on physical coercion. This contrasts to that of the centre where political and ideological "persuasion" of the working class is dominant. These distinctions in economic, political and ideological relations cannot be grasped merely as marking different phases of the development of capitalist relations of production, but indeed, as marking a total unified, articulated system whose centre of accumulation determines and at the same time is dependent on the various forms of control of the periphery. See for example, Samir Amin, *L'accumulation à l'échelle mondiale*, Anthropos, Paris, 1970; *Imperialism and Unequal Development*, Monthly Review Press, N.Y., 1977.
18. See W. Friedmann, *Legal Theory*, Stevens & Sons, London, 1967, especially pp. 559-72 for an account of various bourgeois legal theories of the "corporate personality".
19. Roberto Miguelez, "Le 'peuple' et l'idéologie" in *L'idéologie et la reproduction du capital*, Raymundo de Andrade, *et. al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-7.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 129.
21. *ibid.*, p. 131-2.
22. See Jürgen Habermas's consensus theory of truth as the basis of genuine democracy in *Legitimation Crisis*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1975, especially part III, pp. 95-143.

THE CUL-DE-SAC OF STRUCTURALIST MARXISM: A REPLY TO KOULA MELLOS

Raymond Morrow

To know what questions may reasonably be asked is already a great and necessary proof of sagacity and insight. For if a question is absurd in itself and calls for an answer where none is required, it not only brings shame on the propounder of the question, but may betray an incautious listener into absurd answers, thus presenting, as the ancients said, the ludicrous spectacle of one man milking a he-goat and the other holding a sieve underneath.¹

As the Kuhnian history of science has taught us, even in the uncontestably cumulative natural sciences theoretical progress may depend as much upon the demise of a generation of scientists as the persuasiveness of evidence and rational argumentation. In the case of the social sciences, the passing from the scene of the two leading theorists of neo-Marxist structuralism — Louis Althusser and Nicos Poulantzas — may have mercifully speeded the decline of a paradigm. In the case of Althusser silence was occasioned by mental breakdown and the murder of his spouse — circumstances which ironically paralleled certain symptomatic silences in his own thoughts. As for Poulantzas, one might plausibly argue that his suicide implied a kind of repentance already evident in his last writings, i.e. a kind of last-ditch Sartrean existential leap (“I jump, therefore I am not merely a bearer of structures.”) Regrettably, however, Poulantzas *might* have been able to lead his followers in new directions, thus renewing the capacity of structuralist Marxism to provide important contributions to contemporary debates.

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Instead, as the case at hand suggests, we may be confronted with epigones still working within the framework of "normal" structuralist science, thus unable or unwilling to take the courageous step with Poulantzas of unloosening the Althusserian epistemological and political straightjacket. Hence Mellos' revision of Poulantzas early theory of the state through the introduction of the concept of a "group effect" understands itself simply as an extension and refinement of an otherwise adequate theoretical paradigm. At the same time it provides a means for ostensibly deepening the critique of pluralist and group theories of politics, a task of great strategic importance. On the one hand, the predominance of "minority" groups in contemporary political conflicts and the emergence of new non-class based social movements creates practical problems for a class-based revolutionary strategy of the type envisioned by this theoretical program. Furthermore, as the author concedes — partly as a reflection of the North American context — the dominance of the group at the ideological and political levels is an accurate "empirical" description of advanced liberal democratic capitalism.

The ingenious solution to this dilemma for this form of neo-Marxist theory is to introduce a means of incorporating the concept of "group" into the analysis of modes of production, rather than viewing it merely as an empirical concept, hence an epiphenomenon from the perspective of the higher realities of modes of production and concrete social formations. This is achieved by acknowledging the need to draw out the implications of the shift from the competitive to the monopolistic phases of capitalism. As a result of this transition, there has been a fundamental transformation of the "juridico-politico effect" which follows from the double concentration of capital: monopolies and oligopolies on the one hand and the organization of labour in trade unions on the other. In other words, the manner in which the political and ideological effects re-integrate class members shifts from the mystification of formally equal, freely competing individuals to one of formally equal, freely competing groups. Hence labour and capital confront one another as juridical equals, a fiction which sustains the new means of preserving class dominance — the "ideological group subject" and the "juridico-politico political group action."

Accordingly, what appears from the empirical point of view to be "egalitarian and libertarian" competition is revealed as the new form of the reproduction of domination through the modality of "conflictual cooperation" or "compromise" between groups. Since compromise is the ultimate foundation for securing power in the context of political coalition formation, such a structure necessarily excludes more radical demands such as worker reappropriation of surplus value. In short, "the majority principle and rules of conciliation constitute the structure in which issues are filtered such that contradictory demands and even milder incompatibilities with the dominant class

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interests are asserted." (p. 26) And this applies not only to class-based politics, but also to the variety of new social movements, a process reinforced by the co-optive opportunities created by their internal diversity.

Surprisingly, however, it is concluded that this account of the role of class dominance in pluralist politics is not a "fatalistic" argument because within the "group effect" is still preserved the explosive capital-labour contradiction: "The realization of working class interest cannot be achieved within a context of compromise with the capitalist class, for the contradictory nature of class interests cannot lend itself to class compromise. Class compromise can only mean the subordination of working class interests to those of the bourgeoisie." (p. 32) A similar process operates in the case of cultural minorities which attempt to achieve greater autonomy through compromise. In the case of Quebec the failure of a compromise strategy culminated in an independence movement (which in any case would only reproduce new constellations of fractions of the bourgeoisie in a new power bloc). Even where there is overtly voluntary compromise, in short, consensus is achieved under conditions of class domination and thus remains "ideological" and "false."

Despite a certain internal consistency of argumentation, Mellos has not succeeded, however, in making a persuasive case, even for those with considerable sympathy for a critique of pluralist theory based on some version of the political economy of the state. For the purpose at hand, therefore, I will assume that this is the intended audience; the kinds of objections that might be forthcoming from other perspectives would require rather different considerations. Accordingly, Mellos would have to address at least five fundamental issues to satisfy otherwise sympathetic readers: (1) provide at least a cursory defence against the scathing critiques which have been directed against Althusser's Marxism and Poulantzas' relation to it; further, this would have to include an interpretation of the widespread disillusionment with structuralist Marxism of this type in France and elsewhere; (2) explain why no recourse is made to Poulantzas' writings shortly before his death where he makes an abrupt political about face, advocating that the only road to socialism is democratic; (3) give some indication why the "group effect" critique of pluralist theory is superior to the longstanding existing critical analyses; (4) come to terms with the limitations of any critique of the democratic politics of compromise which oversimplifies the logic of democratic competition and remains silent about the alternatives; and (5) confront the latent fatalistic consequences of the "group effect" theory of democratic politics proposed.

As for the first point, I will make no attempt to summarize the massive and diverse literature which has called into question the foundations of the Althusserian version of structuralist Marxism.² Admittedly, this is beyond the scope of the author's project, but at least some consideration should be given to defending this stance through some other means than labeling all potential

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criticisms as derived from an “historicist” and/or “empiricist” problematic. Crucial here would be to take a position with respect to the debates *within* the structuralist tradition, e.g. in relation to people such as Hindess and Hirst, Therborn or those working in the francophone context.

Closely related to this is the question of Poulantzas’ later work, especially his *State, Power, Socialism*,³ as well as that of those once associated with structuralist Marxism who have moved in rather different directions. For example, though Maurice Godelier is still mentioned by many in this context, his more recent work has increasingly distanced himself from Althusser.⁴ Even closer to home it would be necessary to deal with Poulantzas’ rejection of the Leninist type of “dual power” strategy of state seizure which he previously advocated in favour of a “democratic road to socialism” despite the fact that “reformism is an ever-latent danger.”⁵ The crucial shift here is that Poulantzas came to realize — here confronted with the diverse challenge of people such as Miliband, Foucault, the Frankfurt tradition, etc. — that the state was not merely a “class state” and there was no credible alternative to a democratic strategy of radical change. Further, the outcome of the military dictatorship in Spain, Portugal and Greece had confronted him with an “empirical” refutation of a number of assumptions which he was honest enough to abandon in moving closer to, if not fully embracing, a Eurocommunist position.

Hence this forced him to acknowledge — unlike Mellos — the strategic importance of new social movements:

If we consider the widespread character of the phenomenon — which stretches from citizens’ committees through various structures of popular control and self-defence to neighborhood committees — it becomes clear that we are talking of something quite without precedent. Even though the movement is located ‘at a distance’ from the State, it sets up major dislocationary effects within the state itself. It is a phenomenon which marks both more traditional political struggles and, above all, such new struggles as those associated with the women’s and ecological movements and the campaign to improve the quality of life.⁶

Ironically, though the analysis of the “group effect” claims to be based upon an extension of Poulantzas work, it actually contradicts the implications of his final political stance:

It is necessary to take sides. If we understand the democratic road to socialism and democratic socialism itself to involve, among other things, political (party) and ideological pluralism, recognition of the

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role of universal suffrage, and extension and deepening of all political freedoms including for opponents, then talk of smashing or destroying the state apparatus can be no more than a verbal trick. What is involved, through all the various transformations, is a real permanence and continuity of the institutions of representative democracy — not as unfortunate relics to be tolerated as long as necessary, but as an essential condition of democratic socialism... socialism will be democratic or it will not be at all.⁷

Thirdly, it is necessary to respond to the question of what the “group effect” analysis adds to existing criticisms of pluralist theory. It is striking that Mellos makes no attempt to explain why this approach is superior to the many rival efforts to demystify the formal claims of representative democracy, especially those which go beyond elitist assumptions.⁸ It is simply not true that such critics deal with merely “empirical” issues in that they work with an understanding of the latent interests of subordinate groups. But where they do differ, however, is a reluctance to assume that these interests can be derived theoretically and objectively. Hence the resulting agnosticism opens the way to forms of empirical research which seek to reveal such suppressed interests, as well as to develop conceptions of political mobilization and participation which might create conditions for their more adequate expression. Curiously, this kind of research converges in many respects with Poulantzas’ final position, but it completely contradicts the objectivist stance proposed by Mellos.

A fourth set of difficulties arise from the effort to construe the constraining effects of democratic compromise under conditions of class domination in a very rigid manner. As a consequence, by definition it is excluded at the outset that compromise can result in anything other than the reproduction of class domination. Authentic consensus formation only becomes possible (Habermas is cited in this context) under conditions where class rule has been abolished and the producers of the surplus product are the appropriators. This “all or nothing” logic has little to do with Habermas’ position and has obviously pernicious political implications: democracy cannot be tolerated until the revolution is won. What this type of argument also conceals is that *any form* of unequal power constrains democratic dialogue. Furthermore, to lump all forms of potential democratic compromise and competition together serves to obscure the way in which the differences between them do indeed make a fundamental difference. Finally, it is evasive to imply that there is an alternative which would not suffer from even more crucial weaknesses. As Poulantzas suggests, it is a question of taking sides: “Risks there are...at worst, we could be heading for camps and massacres as appointed victims. But to that I reply: if we weigh up the risks, that is in any case preferable to massacring other people only to end up ourselves beneath the blade of a

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committee of Public Safety or some Dictator of the proletariat.”⁹ What is lost in an “all or nothing” logic is that compromise is a two-way process and that over time it may become possible to re-structure politics in a manner which substantially modifies the role of the state as the agency for reproducing class domination (as already in the case of the emergence of the welfare state).¹⁰

Finally, the political consequences of the “group effect” argument should be faced without the flinching of wish-fulfillment. Paradoxically, in its resolute orthodoxy this type of conclusion resembles in certain respects that of Adorno’s account of “total administration” under state capitalism and Marcuse’s notion of a “one-dimensional society.” Of course they put much greater stress on the role of instrumental rationality in suppressing class politics, but there was a similar critique of the politics of democratic compromise, culminating in Marcuse’s concept of “repressive tolerance”. But aside from important differences in the underlying assumptions of their arguments, two features of this phase of Frankfurt Critical Theory stand out. First, it was advanced in another era: to question pluralist democracy in the immediate postwar period was a novel and progressive step amidst the celebrations of the “end of ideology.” Now, especially in the context of the re-emergence of neo-conservatism and the possibilities of authoritarian statism, the strategic context has shifted, a point clearly recognized by Poulantzas before his death. Secondly, the Frankfurt theorists in this period were realistic enough to come to terms with the pessimism of their own diagnosis; and in the case of Adorno this culminated in the “negative dialectics” of a tragic philosophy of history. A similar honesty can be found in writers such as Baudrillard who follow indirectly in their footsteps. By continuing, however, to persist in giving lip-service to revolutionary contradictions and denying the “fatalistic” consequences of structuralist Marxism, Mellos and others cannot even begin to confront the reality of contemporary politics in all its “nitty gritty” empiricism. Fortunately, unlike much of Mediterranean Europe, in North America such theoretical considerations have no practical or political importance; hence, they remain simply academic exercises in concept spinning. And in responding to such forms of questioning, one runs the risk of falling prey to holding the sieve underneath Kant’s he-goat. So if there is a residual justification for such a polemical exercise, it is to be reminded of Goethe’s dictum: “There is nothing more illogical than absolute logic; it gives rise to unnatural phenomena, which finally collapse.”¹¹

Department of Sociology
University of Alberta

RAYMOND MORROW

Notes

1. I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. N.K. Smith, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965, p. 97.
2. See, however, the brief, sympathetic but forceful critique in Bob Jessop, *The Capitalist State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982, pp. 181-191.
3. N. Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism*, trans. P. Camiller, London: Verso, 1978.
4. As Godelier concludes his most recent book: "Ces réflexions nous amènent à réaffirmer qu'il est stratégiquement prioritaire, en histoire et en anthropologie, de chercher *ailleurs* que dans la violence physique ou dans une prétendue 'plus grande importance du juridique' les raisons, économiques ou non économiques, qui ont permis d'engendrer distinctions et hiérarchies avec le consentement des membres de la société." (*L'idéel et le matériel*, Paris: Fayard, 1984, p. 311.)
5. N. Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism*, p. 258.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 246-7.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 261, 265.
8. See, for example, C. B. Macpherson, *Democratic Theory*, London: Oxford University press, 1974, Carole Pateman, *Participation and Democratic Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970, and Steven Lukes, *Power*, London: Macmillan, 1974.
9. N. Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism*, p. 265.
10. See Claus Offe, *Contradiction of the Welfare State*, London: Hutchinson, 1984.
11. Goethe, *Maximen und Reflexionen*, No. 899; cited in Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, trans. D.E. Green, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor, 1964, p. 63.

MORROW'S CRITIQUES?

Koula Mellos

Professor Morrow appears to be distressed at finding a poor, misled soul still casting her reflections in the structuralist perspective which he would have wished laid to rest once and for all with the passing from the scene of the leading structuralist theorists, Althusser and Poulantzas. For Morrow, the substance of structuralist Marxism deserves the same fate as that of its greatest exponents and indeed its total lack of any virtue has doomed its inevitable demise. The last remaining handful of sympathizers, including myself, should come to realize it and abandon the perspective altogether. But if structuralist Marxism is dead or dying, why not just ignore it and allow it to suffer the last pangs of death in peace? Why kick a dog when it is down, unless, of course, one intuitively senses that the dog has a lot more life in it than one would wish.

Morrow characterizes structuralist Marxism in general in the strongest, most categorical of terms: an "epistemological and political straightjacket", "fatalistic", "cul-de-sac". Nowhere in his critical exposé, however, has he discussed the sense in which structuralist Marxism is fatalistic, nor how it constitutes an epistemological and political straightjacket nor has he identified the "cul-de-sac" of structuralist Marxism, the very title of his text. I confess to some difficulty in knowing how to respond substantively to a critique which is so confident of its grounds that it does not consider it necessary to specify them. Nevertheless, to Morrow's thinking, it is incumbent upon structuralists or upon anyone with the remotest sympathy for structuralism to justify his/her position and at the same time respond to its critics while reviewing previous debates on the relative merits of structuralist Marxism versus other

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more subjectivist, voluntarist forms of Marxism. This is the first task which Morrow sets for me.

I would have thought it inappropriate and even presumptuous, in the framework of an article-length essay on one specific aspect of advanced capitalism, namely the group effect, to proceed with a defence of Althusser and Poulantzas, even though they are responsible for the development and refinement of some important concepts essential to a critical understanding of this effect. And even in the context of this debate, I think I would be very ill-advised to take up Morrow's first challenge when he, himself, does not take the trouble to specify what it is about this perspective which makes it theoretically weak, politically unsound or otherwise objectionable. An adequate expository *and* critical treatment of the diversity of structuralist Marxist positions, of the debates between their adherents *and* of the various Hegelian Marxist and non-Marxist critiques of structuralist Marxism could not be done in a cursory manner. Distortion and oversimplification of these perspectives and of their relative merits would be the inevitable result. In his reticence to provide specific grounds for debate on his first point, Morrow is perhaps betraying an awareness of the hazards of such an undertaking in the space of a few paragraphs, since specific grounds, to make sense would have to be situated in the general, overall perspective. I shall follow his example in declining his invitation to fall into such a trap.

There is one name, that of Poulantzas, which comes up here and which recurs in most of the subsequent remarks of Morrow's critique. The specific reference to Poulantzas provides the key to that which inspires Morrow's entire critique of my paper. It is with praise that Morrow points to Poulantzas's reformist political stance in his last work, *State, Power, Socialism* as opposed to the disdain he expresses for the radical political action to which my analysis leads. Indeed, it is Poulantzas's politics of reform which wins Morrow's favour and it is the politics of radical action, the logical conclusion of my analysis, which Morrow so fervently opposes. That which divides us is the form of politics which we deem essential and necessary in the struggle against exploitation and domination. The form he espouses is reformist, and this accounts for his interest in late Poulantzas.

But Morrow situates the differences between us on a political level. He does not merely note in passing a difference in our positions but, in a combative spirit, raises this difference in the form of a challenge. He is quite right to do so for the defence of a given form of politics is not a purely academic question, it is a question of political struggle and it is in this spirit in which I accept his challenge.

An adequate defence of politics can never, of course, be dogmatic. It must go beyond a simple declaration of superiority of a given set of values. It must also avoid making efficiency the grounds of validity in an instrumental link

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between posited and achieved goals. A proper defence must go beyond politics. I also think that it must go beyond ideology as well, in order to dispel much of the dogmatism with which ideology is necessarily constituted. This is what I try to do in my analysis of advanced capitalist processes and ultimately the merits of the political theory of radical action must be judged on the merits of such an analysis. This, Morrow does not do.

If my account of social relations in advanced capitalism which attempts to penetrate the ideological veil of compromise, the very principle of reform, is correct, we cannot reject it simply because it points to radical action as the necessary form of politics in the struggle against exploitation and domination. We cannot reject a valid theory because we do not like its political implications. But this is precisely what Morrow's critique consists of. In this he commits two serious methodological errors: he abstracts the theory of radical politics from the general theory and makes it the grounds of assessing merits of validity of the general theory. In other words, he takes the conclusions of the analysis ignoring the process by which they are arrived at and makes them the grounds for accepting or rejecting the analysis. Secondly, the conclusion, itself (i.e. radical action), is judged not on the basis of a proven validity of external criteria, theoretically permissible in itself, but on the basis simply of a disparity between it and his preferred politics (i.e. reform). It is a dogmatic assessment because his real grounds for rejecting my entire analysis as invalid in a simple disparity between my conclusions and his closely held values.

I would have preferred that he demonstrate errors or falsehoods in elements of my analysis on some rationally sustainable grounds. To make the judgement of conclusions dependent on the judgement of preceding theory is not, of course, a matter of my personal preference but a matter of theoretical necessity. He does indirectly, however, make a judgement of the general theory by appealing to Poulantzas but in doing so I do not think that he departs from his own grounds. Indeed, his attraction to Poulantzas owes to the similarity in the form of political action they both favour. This is the criterion on which Poulantzas's last work, *State, Power, Socialism*, proposing politics of reform, is judged as being superior to other structuralist Marxist analyses and indeed to his earlier work. Morrow reproaches me, therefore, for having ignored it. I should have commented on the evolution of Poulantzas's work, he says, taking an explicit position on it insofar as the development in its treatment of the state is one showing a departure from early emphasis on structure to later preoccupation with various forms of struggle beyond simply that of the class struggle. Perhaps my not having assessed Poulantzas's later work in relation to mine makes for an ambiguity which might be translated as a theoretical weakness in my arguments as opposed to a relative strength in his. For how can our account of advanced capitalist processes be equally valid when we arrive at irreconcilable positions?

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I do not, however, think that the theoretical approach of Poulantzas in *State, Power, Socialism*, is at odds with my own; nor do I think there is disagreement between his analysis of forms of advanced capitalist relations and their effects, and my analysis. I think, rather, that the theory he expounds is more consistent with my argument concerning group effect and radical action than with his own conclusion regarding the form of transition from capitalism to socialism and if Morrow will bear with me for a moment I should like to look at some of Poulantzas's arguments in this work to judge the consistency between his analysis of capitalist state, relations of power and his conclusive remarks for a politics of reform.

It seems to me that what Poulantzas is saying is that capitalist relations (economic, political and ideological), are power relations in which the bourgeois class is dominant and that the actual struggles (economic, political and ideological), between classes do not directly or indirectly escape this bourgeois dominance. They are marked in determinate ways by this relation of capitalist power. Now this is, of course, a gross oversimplification of his argument but most Marxists would have little difficulty recognizing that the statement, even in its simplicity, is true however unacceptable they find the social conditions to which it refers. The question that Poulantzas raises is how, in the light of this power structure, can socialism emerge. In other words, what form must the struggle against capitalist dominance and for the creation of socialism take if it is to avoid the statist forms of social domination associated with Stalinism? Democratic, is the answer he gives, of which there are already some promising signs: a form of anti-statist popular struggle in which ordinary citizens are organizing to manage various facets of their lives. This is a democratic form of political action as direct participation in decisions affecting their lives. It is self-management, a form of action which seems to mediate the development of women's movement and the ecology movement as well as the more traditional struggles. Morrow captures all this in his first Poulantzas citation.

According to Poulantzas, that this form of popular struggle is wide-spread and that it is located "at a distance" from the state with major dislocatory effects within the state, bears repeating, for it is here on the second point, that I differ from Poulantzas. The question of how "wide-spread" is this form of action presumably both in the sense of numbers and variety or diversity of action, is, of course, an important one. It is not, in this case, simply an empirical matter but one of considerable theoretical significance for we are concerned with, after all, a "democratic" form of struggle and the numerical or quantitative component is not totally irrelevant. But this is not the point on which I should like to dwell, for I do not challenge Poulantzas's estimates, impressionistic as they are, of the extensiveness of this form of struggle in various western social formations. This is not the issue that divides us. The second

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point, namely, the relation to and effect on the state is the critical one. Poulantzas claims that this form of struggle is located “at a distance” from the state and that it “sets up major dislocatory effects within the state itself”. The implication here is that the practice of self-management has not only the positive effect of creating an anti-statist material infrastructure essential for socialism but strikes a blow at the state through a negative weakening effect on the state — both effects being critical for the transition from capitalism to socialism.

When Poulantzas says that these struggles are “at a distance from the state” he is not implying that there is no articulation between these struggles and the state, for he does claim that the struggles have a “major dislocatory effect” on the state. The critical question to raise, then, is how does this articulation operate? He provides the answer.

Poulantzas first tells us that class struggles (economic, political, ideological), make up the primary field of power relations which have primacy over the state. He also tells us that all struggles that are relations of power are not class struggles but they have a “class pertinency”.

Of course, they will still have class pertinency, continuing to be located, and to have a stake, in the terrain of political domination. But they do not rest on the same foundation as the social class division of labour, and are neither a mere consequence nor homologues or isomorphs of that division; this is so most notably in the case of relations between men and women.¹

“Class pertinency” refers to the articulation of class and non-class relations and struggles so that what Poulantzas is really saying is that class struggles overlie all other forms of struggle (women’s, ecology, etc.), such that these struggles are overdetermined by the class struggles without their being themselves, strictly speaking, class struggles. Poulantzas adds that the state is, itself, organically present in bourgeois class power and hence in the class struggle — political, economic and ideological, as well. The following makes the point well.

Although(...) power relations (and struggles K.M.) stretch beyond class relations, the State cannot keep aloof from them any more than they can be materialized and reproduced without specific apparatuses and institutions(...) Through its activity and effects, the State intervenes in all the relations of power in order to assign them a class pertinency and enmesh them in the web of class power. The State thereby takes over heterogeneous powers which relay and recharge the economic, political and ideological powers of the dominant class.

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The power exhibited in sexual relations between men and women, which is certainly dissimilar to that of class relations, is nevertheless invested in the latter and is mediated and reproduced as a class relation by the State(...) class power therefore traverses, utilizes, and gears down that other power, assigning to it a given political significance. The State is a class State not only insofar as it concentrates power based on class relations, but also in the sense in which it tends to spread through every power by appropriating its mechanisms (even though that power is never co-extensive with the State).²

Simply following Poulantzas' reasoning, these struggles in their "distance from the state" are overdetermined by the class struggle and class power relations. Now if the state is organically present in bourgeois class power, how far can it be from these struggles? I think that there is some inconsistency between Poulantzas's analysis and his conclusions regarding reformist politics, for politics of reform including the action of these popular struggles are contained within relations of class domination. My arguments of group effect are consistent with his theory but not with his conclusions.

This theoretically derived presence of class relations in popular struggles is confirmed when we witness, in this conjuncture, actual state technical and financial assistance, however small, not to mention the ideological encouragement offered by the state to these movements. As I say in my paper, in the conjuncture of pressure for balanced budgets, do-it-yourself citizens committees, clean-up-the-environment neighbourhood groups receiving a minimum of financial help from the state are not entirely incompatible or in contradiction with bourgeois dominant economic, political and ideological structures.

These arguments already touch on Poulantzas's second point regarding popular struggles, namely that they have a dislocatory effect on the state, but I should like to comment specifically on it nevertheless. Assuming for a moment that these struggles are independent of the state and of class relations and struggles, it would be very undialectical (and naive) to argue that their articulation to the state would be simply one of dislocatory effects — internal disruption and weakening of the state — without some reaction from the state to absorb the dislocation in ways that have effects on the struggles themselves. These effects may well be ones of containment within a reformist mold.

It may appear that in my paper I commit the same error of undialectical reasoning in reverse. As this seems to underly Morrow's fourth point, I should like to take it up now, returning to the third point later. I would never wish to say that whatever popular struggles emerge in capitalist relations they are doomed to failure or at least fall far short of their objective because the dominant bourgeois power militates against their becoming a threat to it and that

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this determines their fate of failure, so it is useless to differentiate between different forms of popular struggle since they have the same lamentable destiny. I hope it is not this that one reads into my paper. The questions I raise fall within the problematic of the reproduction of capitalist relations of production. It seems to me that an objective understanding of the processes of reproduction promotes the struggle against this very reproduction; and in this sense the problematic is neither innocent nor an apology for bourgeois power. If Marxism is anything it is the perspective which allows an objective understanding of inequality and promotes the struggle against it and part of this is seeing compromise in capitalist relations for what it is — a form of articulation of popular struggle to dominant structures.

Negotiations in relations of unequal power cannot lead to an equalization of power nor is the equalization of power even a negotiable issue. Liberal ideology, makes the assumption of equality and this assumption becomes the means of excluding the issue from discourse. It was Marx who discovered this in his analysis of the level of circulation of capital in which the circulation of labour-power is mediated by the free market operating on the basis of take-it-or-leave-it. Capital and labour are assumed equal, an assumption generated by the structural separation of the level of circulation from the level of production. To read an equality in this exchange between capital and labour is to remain within the confines of liberal ideology. In my analysis of class relations and class struggle in advanced capitalism I do not depart from Marx but rather apply the relations between economic, ideological and political structures that are implicit in *Capital*. The take-it-or-leave-it of competitive capitalism which, strictly speaking, is not negotiation for there is no obligation to participate on either side, is assumed to be a mode of interaction between equals. The compromise which replaces the take-it-or-leave-it is also assumed to be a mode of interaction between equals as well — also as an ideological effect of the relations of production. There is no need to repeat my whole argument again. I have taken it this far to emphasize one thing: that there is nothing to suggest that compromise in relations of unequal power leads, in itself, to a normalization of power or equality. It is rather a mode of interaction mediating the reproduction of these unequal power relations precisely because it either appears as a relation of equality (neo-liberalism) or that it appears to hold the promise of leading to equality (social democracy). Now this is not to say that negotiation of salary settlements that succeeds in allocating a favourable proportion of value to labour is not progressive, but that its very structure excludes the issue of exploitation, i.e. wage labour and privatized surplus product as such. Just as does any relation, this particular relation has determinate effects — effects that go beyond it as simply an economic relation. The ideological and political effects are what I tried to examine in my paper. I do not think that my analysis proceeds by definition but rather examines concrete

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relations and their effects which were there long before I set out to define them.

I wonder if Morrow does not commit the error of logic of which he is accusing me, namely definitional formalism, in defining compromise as democratic without distinguishing between forms of democracy, i.e. liberal democracy, socialist democracy, etc. I think it is necessary to relate compromise to specific democracies in order to determine the extent or limits of compromise, itself, for compromise is not simply form. It has determinate content as well. Many critical thinkers, Macpherson amongst them, have indicated the affinity between liberal democracy and capitalist market relations. Compromise in these relations must be examined as form and substance. First of all compromise draws attention to a give-and-take, to a mode of interaction in which differences are settled by mutual acceptance of concessions. It is a mediator of issues and in being this it also draws attention to the quality of issues themselves — issues considered to be negotiable and on which compromise can be achieved. The assumption here is that both partners in the compromise retain their identity including, and especially, capitalist and labourer. There are matters that are not raised as issues for the compromise cannot accommodate the negation of the identity of either or both. Such issues are eliminated from dialogue (and even perception). It is not a coincidence that the neo-liberal theories of democracy which emerged and flourished in the '50s and '60s from Dahl to Lipset to Dahrendorf emphasizing conflict and compromise as being the stuff of democracy did so after declaring that class interests were no longer contradictory making the class conflict simply another form of conflict resolvable by compromise. A bit of this seems to echo even in Habermas's revisionist reflections on Marx's labour theory of value implying a resolution to the objective contradiction between labour and capital. I am aware of the theoretical dangers of overstretching the point of there being a similarity between crude neo-liberal pluralism and Habermas but in emphasizing dialogue and compromise both found it necessary before anything else to settle the question of relations of production and class struggle. They are right about one thing: that the basic resolution of the objective contradictory class interests cannot be reconciled through compromise and it becomes essential to eliminate such a question in one way or another from becoming an issue. The whole point of my paper is to show how the economic relations between the capitalist class and the working class, a relation of contradiction, is ideologically translated as a relation of non-contradiction and of healthy differences between opponents — differences resolvable by compromise. My first concern is to examine how conflicts emerge, are received by, and handled in these relations so as to know how to resist the logic of these relations. It is the ideological structure of compromise between groups of equal power as the effect of the economic relations of production which

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assigns equal value, importance and fate (resolvability by compromise) to all forms of conflict. Morrow seems to imply that it is I who define them as equal.

When Morrow raises the welfare state as a promising example of a process of political change in which the state is emerging as something other than "an agency of reproducing class domination" he has hardly chosen a strong supporting case for his position. I think he is rather proving my point. Reform and class domination are not incompatible or contradictory. Surely the welfare state for all its progressiveness in the reproduction of a healthier, more educated and more materially secure working class particularly in the '50s and '60s was not antithetical to capitalist interests. In the present conjuncture of deregulation, privatization, cutbacks, I wonder whose welfare the welfare state is promoting and I wonder how progressive it can sensibly be considered to be? One thing is certain, the welfare state is a capitalist state and the interests of the capitalist class prevail over the interests of other classes.

But what are the alternatives to compromise, concessions and reform? Morrow fears there is only one, namely Stalinism, which, of course, he rejects and I join him in this rejection. As a first step to working out a better alternative for the struggle for social equality let us at least go beyond the ideological image of compromise in which it is abstracted from concrete relations of inequality and linked to democracy as a fair, just mode of settling differences always of equal value. Let us at least shed our naïveté and innocence about its implications and consequences.

In his third and fifth critique, Morrow raises a methodological/epistemological question. If I read him correctly he is essentially saying that there is no substitute for empirical analysis and that since structuralism ignores the "nitty gritty empiricism" or since it theoretically cannot be reconciled to empiricism, it should be rejected quite apart from the political consideration crying out for its rejection. There is some theoretical confusion here. It is certainly true that structuralist epistemology rejects empiricist epistemology as a theory of knowledge, but it is not true that structuralism ignores the real, concrete world for it is this with which the object of knowledge tries to come to grips and without real objects, there cannot objects of knowledge be. The difference thus between structuralism and empiricism is *not* one of ignoring vs. highlighting the concrete world which we often refer to loosely as "empirical" (though this is what Morrow's critique of theory and his applause of "nitty gritty empiricism" seems to imply) but rather in the way in which this concrete world is known, or, in other words, in the way in which knowledge of the real world is produced. As to the relative merits of my paper versus other critiques of pluralism, I shall leave it to the reader to judge, but I cannot but interpret the implication that, unlike that of other critiques, my analysis either ignores concrete social phenomena or in its theoretical direction is a hindrance to future research on specific forms of political or other action, as a confusion

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about this elementary distinction. Do I cut myself off from concrete phenomena when I talk about collective bargaining, brokerage political parties, etc. or do I say that their specific operations should not be documented? What I do not do is allow the dominant pluralist ideology to mediate my interpretation of these concrete social objects for if a knowledge of the concrete world is produced by a means which simply reproduces ideological categories, that is, if the reconstitution in theory of social relations is governed by an ideological structure, be a mere extension of the prevailing ideological discourse, the knowledge product could only be qualified as ideological (and indeed, is it not the dominant ideology of pluralism which underlies Morrow's entire critique?).

If the differences between Morrow and myself on this epistemological point were not based on a confusion, I would, in spite of lack of space, pursue the question, complex and inexhaustible as it is, of the relative merits of structuralist epistemology versus empiricism.³ How confusion breeds irony, for is it not indeed ironical that in Morrow's insistence on the importance of "the empirical" he should totally miss the point that it is not in Mediterranean Europe where one observes a high concentration of capital, a strong institution of collective bargaining, thriving brokerage political parties and so on, but right here in North America, right in front of his eyes?

Department of Political Science
University of Ottawa

Notes

1. Nicos Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism*, translated P. Camiller, Verso, London, 1978. p. 43.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-4.
3. See Barry Hindess, *Philosophy and Methodology in the Social Sciences*, Harvester Press, Sussex, 1977, for a structuralist critique of empiricism which is not uncritical of Althusser.

WILL, COMMUNITY AND ALIENATION IN ROUSSEAU'S SOCIAL CONTRACT

Asher Horowitz

Rousseau's *Social Contract* is customarily, often presumptively, taken to be the prescriptive centrepiece of his work. His readers seem at least to agree that the *Contract* is offered as a partial or total solution to a problem or complex of problems developed in various other writings, but in its most sustained and powerful form in the second *Discourse*.¹ The solution that the *Social Contract* offers to the sorry condition of modern society is, however, unfolded on three distinct levels simultaneously. Too often it is read at only one of these, or else all three are collapsed or reduced to one. The first is the ideal and pertains to the ultimate resolution of the historically developed conflict between individuality and community. At this level the *Social Contract* projects a model of social individuality of which the essence is the mutual recognition by each of the inherent, non-fungible value of all other persons. At this level the political community of equals as "ends in themselves" is perceived by its members to be the condition of the free development of each and all.

The second level is the practical. Here Rousseau is concerned to demonstrate two things: that the ideal is not simply a static, timeless form but is a real possibility emerging from a definite set of historically evolved social relations. The ideal must be rooted in the *interests* of individuals as these are formed in their patterned interactions. Possible members must have a compelling interest in *this* form of community and they must be persuaded that it can be made to work at the level of institutions.

The third level, the least explicit, is the reflective, and it appears not only in

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the juxtaposition of the two previous levels but in Rousseau's desperate regressions to archaic and authoritarian practices such as the civil religion, censorship and the Legislator. At this level Rousseau indicates the historical limits imposed upon the project in question. These levels are not parts or sections of the *Social Contract*. The work as a whole, at any point, contains all of them to a lesser or greater extent. And when the assumption is suspended that the second *Discourse* is superceded, answered wholly or in part in the *Social Contract*, a different understanding of its meaning becomes possible. It is not for Rousseau himself the best or ultimate or only possible solution to the most fundamental problems set forth in the second *Discourse*. It may be read not simply as a prescriptive ideal, but as a continuation, in a hypothetical mode, of the general critique of bourgeois society that he had there grounded in a conception of the historicity of human nature. The sovereignty of the general will, derived from principles inherent in liberalism, represents the best polity that a society patterned on market relations can conceive and attempt to realize. Yet since in that society it remains unattainable, life under the sovereignty of the general will amounts to the alienation of communal life in the state. The status of the solution is therefore at best ambivalent, since it announces the project of human mastery over a previously reified history under conditions in which that project must, in perpetually failing, reproduce reification.

The *Social Contract* develops the early liberal theory of the state to its point of logical termination in popular sovereignty as political democracy. For Rousseau, however, political democracy is implied not by timeless principles of right but in bourgeois social relations, in a society essentially structured through the market, and, were it to be attempted, this new polity *could not be realized*. Thus the *Social Contract* is both prescriptive and critical of its own prescriptive dimension as ideology. Once Rousseau's "solution" is understood to be fundamentally problematic for Rousseau himself, it should then become necessary to reopen the question of Rousseau's work as a whole, and particularly of his understanding of history. In this essay I will content myself with only suggesting what that conception of history might be and where it is to be found.

II

The problem can be divided into three analytically distinct but inseparable questions and approached serially: what exactly is the problem for which Rousseau poses the contract as a solution; what is the solution itself; and finally, what is the status of the solution? In its most immediate form the pro-

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blem posed is that of the possible conditions of a morally legitimate and practically effective popular sovereignty. His basic premise is the existence of independent, thus free and equal individuals owning no allegiance higher than their own will. Hegel was essentially correct in perceiving that with Rousseau the principle of absolute liberty found its quintessential spokesman.² And, in fact, the inalienability of sovereignty that is the institutional keystone of the *Social Contract* is logically prior to any specific form of contract and is grounded, for Rousseau, in the will itself. The absolute rule of the popular will does not, in and of itself, require a contract.

The first book of the *Social Contract* outlines negatively the foundation of political authority, summarily dismissing tradition and prescription, "nature" in the form of patriarchal authority, force, fact or superiority in wisdom, leaving only the ultimate residue of the individual will. (SC, I, II-III, pp. 4-6)³ The origin of political authority in the modern world is therefore to be found in a convention. In referring the foundations of the civil power to an original convention Rousseau is doing no more than joining with the natural law orthodoxy of his age. The revolution that had separated natural law from theology had already been accomplished in the previous century by Grotius and Puffendorf.⁴ All the natural law theorists agreed that sovereignty derives from the individual wills of the members of society; but all of them also agreed that sovereignty was at least in some degree alienable, subject to an of course largely tacit consent, and fixed in its forms by the pact of submission transferring sovereignty in some proportion to a "Prince". This general schema allowed for both the political absolutism of Hobbes as well as more limited Lockean government. The will for Rousseau, however, is much more strictly self-limiting. The alienation of sovereignty is a self-denial by the will of its very essence, a "renunciation", rather than an act of "alienation" and, "to renounce liberty is to renounce being a man, to surrender the rights of humanity and even its duties." (SC, I, IV, p. 8) The absolute distinction between "alienation", which implies an exchange of equivalents, and "renunciation", which does not, immediately entails the non-alienability of sovereignty. All this is accomplished without a contract; if anything, the specific form of contract to be proposed follows from the distinction. Any theory that founds the legitimacy of government on the sovereign will of the individual is inherently and *eo ipso* a theory of the non-alienability of sovereignty and therefore implicitly a theory of popular sovereignty. All earlier versions of the contract are nullified when it is admitted that "the will does not admit of representation". (SC, III, XV, p. 78)

It is the distinction between the source and exercise of sovereignty made by previous theorists of natural law that is now seen to be in conflict with its own principle — the autonomy and responsibility of the independent and rational agent. The problem is not the normative grounding of the legitimacy of the

will — that is taken for granted, indeed pressed relentlessly towards its dialectical involution. And political democracy is its natural result: “The people, being subject to the laws, ought to be their author: the conditions of society ought to be regulated solely by those who come together to form it.” (SC, II, VI, p. 31) With the supremacy of the individual will granted, the relation of government to society is settled forthwith. Sovereignty is inalienable, indivisible and absolute; government can be nothing else but a trust. (SC, II, VI, p. 31; also SC, III, I, pp. 46-50) Citizenship can no longer be realized in consent and obedience and the peaceful pursuit of private business, but must be an active “participatory” exercise of the will.⁵ The theory of sovereignty that has so preoccupied liberal commentators on the *Social Contract* is not the heart of the problem. The problem partly hidden behind the question of the legitimacy of popular sovereignty is the possibility of the formation of a continuously effective and legitimate popular or collective will. (SC, I, V, p. 11)

That this act of social constitution is *logically* prior does not, however, entail the practical or historical necessity of its accomplishment. The emancipated individual will that will be the foundation of the possible legitimacy of popular sovereignty has nothing in common with other wills but need, fear and abstract equality. Because of this the foundation of popular sovereignty is simultaneously a mortal danger to itself. The theory of natural law had morally foundered when, as with Hobbes, Grotius and Puffendorf, although it fully recognized the supremacy of the will it opted for a monarchical absolutism.⁹ Thus the *Social Contract* is, among other things, an attempt to compel the emerging liberal theory of bourgeois society to face the political implications of its principles of existence.

In insisting that society henceforward abjure the rule of a master in order to live with itself, Rousseau is clearly implying that the act of association refers to a particular type of historical situation. His purpose is to inquire if “in the civil order, there can any sure and legitimate rule of administration, men being taken as they are, and the laws as they might be.” (SC, Intro., p. 3) In order to properly specify the problem it is necessary to examine the historical condition — that specific state of nature — that is the major premise of the contract. Rousseau devotes a lengthy chapter of the *Geneva Manuscript*, the first version of the *Social Contract*, to elucidating the question of whence “the necessity for political institutions arises.” (GMS, p. 157) The social soil of the contract, the particular historic socio-economic order which is presupposed as the basis of a contract and delimits the boundaries of possible solutions is there termed “la société générale du genre humain.”

Society becomes “general” when in it men do not confront one another as members of an organic social order with culturally prescribed duties and claims but perceive themselves to be in an abstract relation of instrumental

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reciprocity in which each makes of all the rest an instrument for the satisfaction of his needs without claiming dominion over them:

and when his desires finally encompass the whole of nature, the cooperation of the entire human race is barely enough to satisfy them... Our needs bring us together in proportion as our passions divide us, and the more we become enemies of our fellow men, the less we can do without them. Such are the first bonds of the general society... (GMs, pp. 157-158)

It is assumed that the general society is itself the product of a lengthy historical development and is realized when, in principle, nature (both external and "human nature") is no longer the all-encompassing and order-giving moral context of social action, a cosmos known through human reason in its lawfulness, but the neutral and controllable abstract condition of subjective human instrumentality and satisfaction. The social bond is predicated upon a continual and dynamic expansion of private need, so that as the bond becomes stronger, need does not disappear in satisfaction, but the opposition of interests increases.⁶ (see also DOI, pp. 201-203) The general society is, in short, the market becoming freed of traditional constraints and beginning to expand without external limit.⁷

The *Social Contract* has of course been read, notably by C.B. Macpherson,⁸ as a petit-bourgeois response to the expanding power of the capitalist market. And, to be sure, the polity established through the contract would maintain itself in existence longest in a small, economically backwards, parochial and culturally unified society of independent commodity producers. Its fundamental principles, however, are of such generality that they are applicable in some form or other to the entire range of bourgeois social formations.⁹

When Rousseau does occasionally make a plea for an economy based on the moderate property of the working proprietor, this is not a basic condition of the contract, a *sine qua non* without which the formation of a general will becomes impossible. Such an arrangement is consistent with the contract but not required. Insofar as productive resources are concerned, the citizens may "share it out among themselves, either equally or according to a scale fixed by the sovereign." (SC, I, IX, p. 18) That the institution of economic equality is left up to the activity of the Legislator further suggests that as a realistic possibility, it remains a matter of contingent circumstances. (SC, II, XI, p. 42) Although a "one class society of working proprietors"¹⁰ would be consonant with civil liberty, it is not a strict requirement of a "legitimate rule of administration" following of necessity from the nature of the Sovereign such as indivisibility or inalienability. Thus when Rousseau makes a plea in the *Dis-*

course on *Political Economy* for “securing the citizens from becoming poor” (DPE, p. 250) or in the *Social Contract* that “no citizen shall ever be wealthy enough to buy another, and none poor enough to be forced to sell himself” (SC, II, XI, p. 42), it is not a prohibition of wage labour he has in mind but a guarding of the “people” against “corruption”. The principal fear is that with the natural operation of the system of needs there is a constant tendency towards the production not simply of a class of wage labourers, but of a mob on the one hand and a set of grandees on the other, between whom the sovereign will be put up for sale. (SC, II, XI, p. 42, n. 1) Rousseau fully expects men to be guided by class interests, otherwise why exclude “democracy” as a possibility? But he also knows that certain structures of class interest need not completely overwhelm and abolish the sphere of political liberty.

Certainly Rousseau maintains that a near equality of wealth is necessary to the preservation of liberty. The main aim of every system of legislation are “liberty and equality... equality because liberty cannot exist without it.” (SC, II, XI, p. 42) Civic or political equality requires some moderation of economic inequality, but economic equality is strictly subordinated to the greater and essential aim of political liberty. Nor is this surprising, since the equality of moderate property ownership, although a desirable aim of “legislation”, is not given within the terms of the contract itself. The strict terms of the contract even allow for communistic property relations: “It may also happen that men begin to unite one with another before they possess anything, and that... they enjoy it in common...” (SC, I, IX, p. 18)

Even in the most favourable practical case, the predominance of a “middle estate” of petit-bourgeois producers, Rousseau does not expect liberty to be maintained without a constant vigilance on the part of the Sovereign over the “the force of the circumstances (which) tends continually to destroy equality ...”. (SC, II, XI, p. 42) These are the operations of the market as they were presented in the second *Discourse*. There Rousseau recognizes that even a situation of independent commodity production has a way of generating unequal classes. In other words, simple exchange, in which there is no authoritative distribution of reward, and/or no commutative system of just exchange, cannot remain long in existence. (DOI, pp. 201-202) Once access to the major productive resources are barred as a result of the whole of the land being owned, “one man could aggrandize himself only at the expense of another.” (DOI, p. 203) Society tends to bifurcate into two distinct classes of men, the “rich”, the owners of the productive resources, and the “super-numeraries”, those without access or who are driven off the land and “were obliged to receive their subsistence or steal it from the rich.” (DOI, p. 203) Although at the practical level Rousseau recognizes the petit-bourgeois case

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to be the better approximation to the ideal, it is not exclusively relevant to the social relations of independent commodity producers.

There is in fact no simple exit from the internal dynamic of the general society. Just as a constant regulation of the terms of trade and perpetual redistribution of private property fall short of offering a solution so do some of the favourite notions of natural law theory. Within the general society the "natural sociability" of natural law theorists like Puffendorf, according to which an immediate intuitive consciousness by human beings of the identity of their natures issues in a general kindliness towards others, is a fiction invented by philosophers. (GMs, p. 158) Nor is Rousseau's own "pitié" effective any longer. (GMs, p. 158) Even the "natural law", to the extent that it can be said to exist, is no source of rescue: "concepts of the natural law... begin to develop only when the prior development of the passions renders all its precepts impotent." (GMs, p. 159); modified translation)

The general society, the state of nature that is logically prior to the contract, or civil society in much the same sense given to the term by Hegel and Marx, is not only a condition of injustice, it is inherently unstable. In it

nothing is permanent except the misery that results from all these vicissitudes... The kind of general society that reciprocal needs can engender, does not, therefore, offer any effective assistance to man once he has become miserable, or at least it gives new force to him who already has too much... whereas the weak man — lost, stifled, crushed... finally perishes as a victim of the deceptive union from which he expected happiness... far from proposing a goal of shared felicity from which each individual would derive his own, one man's happiness is the other's misfortune... (GMs, p. 158; modified translation)

The general society vindicates Hobbes's state of war; only Rousseau knows that it is not "natural": "Hobbes's mistake, therefore, is not that he established the state of war among men who are independent and have become sociable, but that he supposed this state natural to the species and gave it as the cause of the vices of which it is the effect." (GMs, p. 162)

How is a sovereign popular will to be formed in the "general society", without the will being renounced through the alienation of sovereignty? If the alienation of sovereignty constitutes a renunciation of the will that violates its very essence, how, given this state of nature, is a body politic to be formed? The necessity arises for an overwhelming power standing above society capable of imposing unity and pacifying social conflicts. This, however, is exactly what Rousseau rejects, implying as it does a prior renunciation of the will. (SC, I, V, pp. 10-11; I, VI, p. 12)

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Despite the historical predicament into which mankind has brought itself in bourgeois society, this "deceptive union", Rousseau nonetheless claims that it is still possible to find a basis within existing historical conditions for a political society that will be legitimate and more than a mere pacified aggregate of self-seeking wills. It is worthwhile noting how self-consciously Rousseau restricts himself, at least in the *Geneva Manuscript*, to the material at hand in proposing a "solution". In the fictional figure of the "violent interlocutor" of the *Geneva Manuscript* the internal test of Rousseau's claim is to be found. The violent interlocutor is one of the "stronger" members of civil society, able to profit from its arrangements but refusing to submit his right to the rules of natural justice, of which he claims to be fully cognizant, without at least secure guarantees. Yet he claims even more; that the strong have no interest in justice: "to get the stronger on my side by sharing with them the spoils from the weak... would be better than justice for my own advantage and for my security." (GMs, p. 160) The contract must issue from such types and satisfy them. The solution, may not be a *deus ex machina*, but must be present as a potential within the problem itself:

... although the laws of justice and equality mean nothing to those who live in the freedom of the state of nature and subjects to the needs of the social state... let us attempt to draw from the ill itself the remedy that should cure it. Let us use new associations to correct, if possible, the defect of the general association. Let our violent interlocutor judge its success. If my zeal does not blind me in this undertaking, let us not doubt that... this enemy of the human race will at last abjure his hate along with his errors; that reason which led him astray will bring him back to humanity; that he will learn to prefer his interest properly understood to his apparent interest; that he will become good, virtuous, sympathetic, and finally... rather than the ferocious brigand he wished to become, the most solid support of a well-ordered society. (GMs, pp. 162-163)

III

How are reason, artifice and conscious convention, the "ill itself", which are in a sense responsible for bringing forth the sovereign individual will, to serve as a remedy to the state of war in which that individual inevitably finds himself entangled? How is a people to be formed, a continuous collective will arrived at, capable of practical unity, and all this while the individual will shall "obey himself alone, and remain as free as before"? (SC, I, VI, p. 13)

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Rousseau is able to propose a solution only because he perceives *both* sides of the relation of instrumental reciprocity subsisting among agents in the marketplace. Market relations require the reciprocal recognition of formal, putative equals. Thus the relations of civil society contain, as formal conditions of their possibility, a basis for a form of duty in the recognition by each of the freedom and equality of every other person. At the same time, it is well to note, those same relations objectively dictate to each his interest in the economic struggle of the market, where the other is necessarily the objectified instrument of my satisfaction. Even the violent interlocutor, the man who is "enlightened and independent" (GMs, p. 160) knows duty in the form of the rules of natural justice. His problem is a different one: "It is not a matter of teaching me what justice is, but of showing me what interest I have in being just." (GMs, p 161)

The solution may thus be found in a contract that can establish only one form of a sovereign collective will. The general will transposes into the public sphere the same logic embodied in the morality of instrumental reciprocity: "Each man, in giving himself to all, gives himself to nobody; and... there is no associate over which he does not acquire the same right as he yields others over himself...". (SC, I, VI, p. 12; see also SC, II, IV, pp. 24-25) The popular will in bourgeois society must therefore take the form of a general will (a will in which considerations of utility are present but distinctly secondary): the act of forming impersonal, universal and formal rules within the protected sphere of the assembly but originating in the private rational conscience, and applying to all equally, irrespective of wealth, rank, status, virtue or any other personal attribute, or any social accident, all of which are now seen to be irrelevant to the status of a citizen as an autonomous and responsible moral agent. The "contract" itself, as a fictive legal device, is structured in such a way as to make such a general will both possible and the only legitimate sovereign political entity. And, above all, it is meant to satisfy the conditions following from the distinction between alienation and renunciation. In the contract it seems that only one simple act is necessary in order to restore the will to itself, to return it from its previous alienation (in our terms) to a master.

Rousseau accepts Hobbes's description of the state of nature as a state of war, but refuses to ontologize it. Under present conditions of production and exchange it is a state of war. At the same time he detects greater potential in the structure of bourgeois social relations for that morality of formal universality which was to find its most complete expression in Kant.¹¹ Yet the principle of this morality follows from the very conditions of existence of the bourgeois individual. It is not "the State" which rescues the individual from the meaningless immorality of the lawless pursuit of acquisition and satisfaction in order to deliver him into a condition where the possibility of regulating his own conduct through the generation of universalizable rules guarantees his

“dignity”.¹² The state finds its ground not in an atemporal reason and freedom, but in the specific rationality of the “free” relations of abstract exchange.

Yet, it is the specific moral potential of exchange relations that allows Rousseau to avoid the “renunciation” of sovereignty exemplified in *Leviathan*. Like Hobbes’s contract, Rousseau’s is an agreement among the several individuals, each contracting with all the rest; but it is not undertaken on behalf of a third party. (SC, I, VI, p. 13) What renders the contract morally acceptable is the fact that not only is there no renunciation of the will, there is rather in “total alienation” an integral recovery, in that moment, of liberty (and thus responsibility), property, power and security: “Instead of a renunciation they have made an advantageous exchange...”. (SC, II, IV, pp. 26-27) Thus a *collective* sovereign will, the general will, may both satisfy the demands of the individual sovereign will *and* form the means by which a settled political condition becomes possible. It is the only possible reconstitution of community, as opposed to a pacified aggregate. And community may be formed now only as an association on the basis of equality in the form of law: “when the whole people decrees for the whole people,” (SC, II, VI, p. 30; see also SC, II, IV, pp. 25-26) The community created on the basis of the contract is a legislating body. The only legitimate political will in bourgeois society is the general will. The popular will cannot be the customary law identified with a traditional community, since under the conditions of civil society it has been, or is in the process of being, dissolved. Nor can it be the command of any merely actual superior, for that denies the innermost meaning of the will itself. It is not simply that the community or collective produces legislation. It is rather community that is constituted and reaffirmed, *and* individuality that is grounded, sheltered, nurtured and realized in the *act* of legislation itself. The solution to the problem of the supremacy of the will in bourgeois society lies in the assumption by all of its members of the lawmaking power, conceived as the power to make rules strictly limited by their universality. Bourgeois society is thus shown to be, despite its past and the despotic tendencies of its theorists, inherently democratic. The general will is, if you like, the truth, in the Hegelian sense, of civil society.

The problem and the solution are thus inseparable and form a structured whole. The solution *in principle* is grounded in the conditions of civil society, but the very same conditions, those absolutely free and equal wills, set definite limits within which the solution might be realized in practice. In this way the problem is taken up into the solution itself. Much of the remainder of the *Social Contract* is thus integral to the work as a whole and attempts to establish *a priori*, in the future conditional, the outcome of the concretization of the solution under different classes of conditions. And in doing so it points to the contradictions, evasions and flights from reality contained in the solution.

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IV

"The passage from the state of nature to the civil state produces a very remarkable change in man, by substituting justice for instinct in his conduct, and giving his actions the morality they had formerly lacked." (SC, I, VIII, p. 15) What is truly remarkable is that the barely veiled irony in this statement should with such constancy be conveniently overlooked. The "remarkable change" that occurs in the member of civil society, Rousseau reminds us immediately before this statement, characterizes *only one side* of his existence, his membership in the political community. As a member of the "Sovereign" he shares in the legislative power whose lawful acts he is under as a member of the "State". As a citizen he is both sovereign and subject simultaneously. But alongside this "manner of existence", the prior one embodied in the state of nature is most definitely not abolished: "...each individual as a man, may have a particular will contrary or dissimilar to the general will which he has as a citizen." (SC, I, VII, p. 15) The man of civil society intrudes between sovereign and subject, splitting them in two threatening to make a mockery of citizenship, to dissolve this trinity by separating its parts in unholy antagonism.

The *sovereign-subject* must therefore in his earthly and mundane existence as a *man* be forced to obey his own law, must be "forced to be free". (SC, I, VII, p. 15) The existence and possibility of the formation of a general will are at stake. *Existence* as a citizen comes, therefore, to be predicated upon the presence of a relatively autonomous administrative power standing outside and over the realm of particular wills. Just as the liberty of the state of nature, under the threat of personal extinction, is exchanged for an equivalent in civil liberty, the inherent powerlessness of the general will assures that the mortal danger of the state of nature must be transferred to political society.¹³ Civil liberty is thus not only pure devotion to duty that raises the ego out of subjection to the realm of the passions, but is informed by the most "base" of the passions themselves, and the one which previously grounded all relations of master and "subordinates" — the fear of a violent death.

Rousseau also, therefore, places beyond the normal range of possibility any relation between civil society and the state that is not antagonistic and reactive. Any continuing proper relation of State and Sovereign comes to be dependent on the Prince. The Prince enforces as well as administers the laws, and it is this threat of legitimate force, the "key to the workings of the political machine," which "alone legitimizes civil undertakings." (SC, I, VII, p. 15)¹⁴

The general will and the sphere of particular wills are exact correlatives; each is mediated dialectically by the other, as was the case with the relation of the problem of the *Social Contract* and its solution. The general will can exist *only* by virtue of the particular wills of the members of a "general society", and exists in order that within the sphere of particular wills, personal dependence and direct exploitation do not become the general condition.

The doubling of human existence that takes place is the only legitimate form in which civil society may constitute itself as a political community. But it has as a necessary condition the existence of an intermediary which must keep the two spheres apart and isolated from each other. This, and not technical reasons of size, communications and complexity is the fundamental reason why "democracy" becomes impossible. It would threaten the purity of the Sovereign were "the body of the people to turn its attention away from a general standpoint and devote it to particular objects." (SC, III, IV, p. 55)

That civil society persists substantially unchanged as the inverse of the artificial body of the political state *and* poses a constant threat to it is also evident in the status of the private property under the contract. Although the alienation that constitutes the Sovereign is total, including wealth in the hands of the contractors, the political community does not assume control over the economic process, but "changes usurpation into a true right". (SC, I, IX, p. 18) Although property is no longer a sacrosanct natural right and "is always subordinate to the right the community has over all," (SC, I, IX, p. 18) the political community under the contract, it is only reasonable to expect, merely formally subordinates the rule of private property to its own rule. It substitutes an equality which is merely "moral and legitimate". (SC, I, IX, p. 19) "Moral equality" is substituted for "natural" inequality, but "artificial" inequality, generated by the process of market production, and the result for Rousseau of the unlimited acquisition of private property, remains untouched. (SC, I, IX, p. 18-19)²¹

Given the "very remarkable change" and the "peculiar fact" the intervention of a Legislator is necessary in order to make a "blind multitude" "see the good they reject". (SC, II, VI, p. 31) What is at first forgotten in the abstraction from all historical conditions — an abstraction which must be made in order that the general society constitute itself as a political community of equal and morally autonomus persons — civil society as an aggregate of rational wills which as a whole is irrational, returns in this need for a Legislator. The Legislator as the personification of a more inclusive and therefore higher rationality has the task of bringing into existence an articulated whole, a cultural unity, out of a blind multitude. He must lay down the foundations for the legitimacy of the general will in the usages, customs and conventions of society. And he must do all this relying not on the right of command, but only on the "miracle" of his "great soul". (SC, II, VII, p. 35)

The Legislator is, however, "an intelligence... wholly unrelated to our nature, while knowing it through and through." Thus, "while great princes are rare, how much more so are great Legislators." This prodigy is the *deus ex machina* abjured in the original formulation of the problem in the *Geneva Ms*: "It would take gods to give men laws." (SC, II, VII, p. 32) Rousseau is adamant that the task can simply not be assumed by his charges, constituting

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as it does "an enterprise too difficult for human powers, and for its execution, an authority that is no authority." (SC, II, VII, p. 34) The idea of a rational and directive general will turns into, and is displayed as, a myth in the need for a Legislator, and also in the divine myth upon which the Legislator founds his authority. For to the extent that a Legislator may be said to exist and be "capable, so to speak, of changing human nature" from a "physical and independent existence" to a "partial and moral existence," (SC, II, VII, p. 32) the autonomy proclaimed in the principle of the will is vitiated by a return of the heteronomy characteristic of Rousseau's notion of ancient virtue. His absence signals the perpetual frustration of the sphere of mutual recognition, but his presence denies the autonomy of the will. The need for a Legislator (and a civil religion) are almost blatant admissions of the illusory status of that "remarkable change" produced through the contract. The citizens cannot themselves successfully mediate their abstract and ideal civic life with their given social conditions.

The hidden substance of social life, the sphere of particular wills, contains the seeds for the demise of the moral and collective body established through the contract. The general will is defeated *in and by its own preconditions*. Civil society, not transformed but sustained and maintained through the contract, prepares the destruction of the Sovereign in several ways. First, under the strict terms of the contract itself, equality will most likely remain purely formal, insofar as the market tends to continually reproduce and exacerbate economic inequality. (SC, II, XI, p. 42) Although the community has the power to regulate, redistribute and even socialize property, there is no guarantee that this will be accomplished when it is vital to the cause of equality or the health of the state. (SC, II, IV, p. 24) It would be foolish not to expect the opposite. (DPE, pp. 262-263, 268-269) The formal equality enjoyed by men as citizens may hide the untransformed substantive inequality of a society divided into economic classes. (see above, pp. 4-5 and SC, I, IX, p. 19, n. 1)

In the second place, although the formation of a general will requires, not the legal suppression of partial associations,¹⁶ but the insulation of the lawmaking act from their pressure, particular wills cannot and must not be suppressed. The next best alternative would be "to have as many as possible and to prevent them from being unequal." (SC, II, III, p. 23) This move in the direction of pluralism would, however, only serve to prevent the state from falling into the grip of an extremely narrow group and would replace the general will with a more or less tenuous will of all, depending upon how acute and intense conflicts of interest were among particular groups.

Finally, as a result of the combination of the above two factors, which follow directly from the retention of a separate sphere of particular wills, Rousseau fully expects that, especially in large states economically dependent

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upon industry and commerce, the state administration will "unavoidably" grow in substantive legislative power until it overshadows and usurps the general will, the legitimate Sovereign: "...sooner or later the prince must inevitably usurp the sovereign and suppress the social treaty." (SC, III, X, p. 70) Just as political democracy is the truth of civil society, the "despotism" of the administrative state is the truth of a merely "political" democracy based upon and sustaining the relations of civil society.

What should be noted above all is the retention of the sphere of particular wills as the wills of the actors in a market society, or to be more accurate, the fact that a general will is based upon the existence of such a plurality of particular, rational wills.¹⁷ The political community that arises through the contract has, of necessity, no perfectly autonomous existence of its own. The conditions that inspire it, that make it practically possible and morally necessary, never disappear within it no matter how much they are constantly negated by it. If Rousseau's citizen learns the lesson of civil liberty, he never forgets the lessons of the state of nature. The contract itself does not abolish the antagonisms of civil society, but only creates another sphere of relations that ought to be superior in fact, but whose superiority is in fact always in doubt. Although in some sense the particularity of the individual will is taken up into, included within and surpassed in the general will, this general will, the Legislator notwithstanding, is never taken down fully into the particular but merely regulates it.

Community and equality are thus expressed *only* in the state. The necessary guarding of the sphere of pure reciprocity from the sphere of instrumentality can never be fully accomplished. The purported and necessary transformation in the "manner of existence" of the previously isolated individuals, does not, cannot, in fact take place. The "moral and collective body" which leads a merely "abstract and collective existence", (GMs, p. 167, 177; SC, I, VII, p. 15; II, III, p. 22; IV, I, pp. 85-86) thus exists both in place of and alongside the previous aggregate, not supplanting the state of nature, but expressing and maintaining it, negatively exemplifying it.

V

It is thus, with hindsight, both ironic and perfectly apt that Rousseau should have described his "solution" to the problem of civil society as an alienation rather than a renunciation. For it in fact propounds the notion that the perfected political state, the absolute sovereignty of the general will implicit in both the theory and practice of bourgeois society, would, were it to be

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established, constitute the alienated expression of a communal life whose criteria of legitimacy could themselves not be realized.

Rousseau's sense of alienation cannot be adequately analyzed in quasi-Durkheimian terms as "marginality".¹⁸ Nor is it simply the complaint of a petit-bourgeois against being pushed aside by the march of material progress.¹⁹ Rousseau's understanding of alienation, whatever its psychological origins, is based upon the notion that the social relations that themselves constitute individuals, that always render the will in a determinate historical form, are the actual basis of those forces that escape human control. In the *Social Contract* the relations of instrumental reciprocity generate an ideal of social individuality, of man as a species-being, which ideal must be given some measure of real force in order to regulate the *bellum omnia contra omnes* which persists in the everyday world of private lives. Thus the membership of this polity *must* live a double life in reality. The general will is no more nor less "real" than the particular wills. The particular bourgeois must continually submit to this community which frustrates his private striving in the system of needs, but which expresses both his social being and his need for security. From the point of view of the community the sphere of instrumental reciprocity is *also* both an obstacle to and a condition of its being. The general will cannot be the communal life of serfs, helots or aristocrats.

In his transition from radical democracy to communism Marx retrieved this level of meaning in the *Social Contract* when he commended Rousseau for offering a good description "of the abstraction of the political man".²⁰ Yet Marx did not see that he *also* recognized that the abstraction and opposition of political forces to man's "own forces" is the determinate product of bourgeois social relations. That at the reflective level Rousseau recognizes the contract to be no more than the alienation of communal life in the state implies that he grasps the starting point, the historical "problem" as already constituting a condition of alienation. The only other reader of Rousseau who, to my knowledge, understands the historical grounds of the contract to be a condition of "universal alienation" is Althusser.²¹ And Rousseau does in fact specify that the social contract is both possible and necessary at a certain "point" in the historical development of society. (SC, I, VI, p. 11) As Althusser points out, in this condition the forces of each individual are not the undeveloped powers of the pre-human "savage", but the capacities and powers of the civilized man as they have been historically developed in social relations with others. Opposed to the forces at the disposal of the social individual are the equally social and historically generated obstacles to his continued self-preservation in the "primitive condition" of the state of nature. The obstacles to self-preservation are not "natural", external dangers, but purely human dangers issuing from the social power which now stands outside of individual and collective human control. Both the "forces" of the individual and

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the "obstacles" to his preservation are functions of the relations subsisting among the same historical and social individuals. And the relations which generate this contradiction between the individuals and their own social powers arise in the course of their labour to produce the necessities of life as defined by the system of needs. The relevant point in history is a condition of alienation, because both the forces and the obstacles whose opposition constitutes a danger "to the human race" are both functions and products of the historically developed relations of the market.

Althusser, however, believes that Rousseau forecloses on the possibility of socio-historical change, of change in "men as they are" and is therefore limited to an ideal solution to the problem of alienation. And he is thus forced to implicitly attribute the assumption to Rousseau that social relations as such, by nature, are bourgeois. But this is Rousseau's own critique of Hobbes, Locke and the rest. In the *Social Contract* Rousseau does not foreclose on the possibility of change. He is merely pessimistic about it. He abstracts from the possibility quite consciously and says so twice in the first few lines of the book.

The solution envisaged, the only possible one that does not contradict the supremacy of the will, is the total alienation that is the fundamental clause of the contract: "they have no other means of preserving themselves than the formation, by aggregation, of a sum of forces great enough to overcome the resistance." (SC, I, VI, p. 11) This "sum of forces" is the force of the "moral and collective body" produced by the contract. The answer to the state of alienation is the state as the alienated expression of communal life. The contract is thus a compounding of alienation and not its solution.

Rousseau's critique of Christianity as a fictitious "other world" opposed to the lived material world of the *patria* has been seen to be the beginning of a theory of alienation and ideology.²² But the critique of alienation and ideology permeates the *Social Contract* as a whole. When grasped in this fashion, any notion of contradiction or discontinuity between the second *Discourse* and the *Social Contract* disappears.²³ The former is not a defense of individualism while the latter is paradoxically staunchly collectivist.²⁴ They are both parts of a critique of bourgeois individualism grounded in a radical insight into the social historicity of human "nature". Thus the problem of the *Social Contract* is the outcome of the process analyzed in the second *Discourse* where Rousseau had based his critique of bourgeois society and of the liberal conception of the state on a philosophical anthropology that placed the historicity of human nature at its centre. The historicity of nature was precisely what liberal (and conservative) theorists of bourgeois society could not accept. Only so long as nature was static and transcended the historical process itself (either as "laws" of nature or as the *telos* of a history of progress) could it perform due service as the ultimate justification of bourgeois social relations. But in beginning to unravel the theory of bourgeois society

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Rousseau was simultaneously posing a problem which was larger and more difficult. His solution to the question concerning the origins of inequality thus posed the much more complex, subtle and intractable problem of historicity which he began to conceive as a process of increasing (and increasingly interdependent) alienation and repression.²⁵

The *Social Contract* describes the best polity that might be formed within the state of alienation characteristic of market society. It is the potential development of a realm of value arising from the actuality of historically developed social relations, and also the perpetual defeat of this realm arising from the very same source. But the whole of the *Social Contract* also points back to the critique of its own major premise, the relations of civil society as the sphere where the contradictions germinate.

The omission of the "general society" and the "violent interlocutor" could certainly be a result of the ambivalent status of the solution itself. On the one hand the solution only embodies a compounding of the condition of alienation. But on the other hand, perhaps Rousseau in 1762, for whom it would have been impossible even to dream of a potentially revolutionary class that felt the universal state of alienation as its own particular and unsupportable condition, could nevertheless have said, along with Marx, that "political emancipation is certainly a big step forward. It may not be the last form of general human emancipation, but it is the last form of human emancipation within the prevailing scheme of things."²⁶ Leo Strauss has suggested that in the *Social Contract* Rousseau proclaimed that men had arrived at that "privileged historical moment" where they could assume control over a history previously subjected to blind and mechanical lawfulness.²⁷ But it was precisely because Rousseau was more of and a better historical materialist than Strauss imagined that in the *Social Contract* he both raises the demand and demonstrates that it was, under contemporary conditions, conditions whose end he could not see, something that men could only pretend to. Since without maintaining the pretense the claim might die he drops the internal test of the violent interlocutor and seems on the surface to propose forging ahead in clear conscience.

For the *Social Contract* still remains the founding document of political emancipation. In it the liberal theory of the state is definitely transcended in the theory of popular sovereignty as participatory self-rule expressed in the rule of law as a general will. By working liberal premises through to a conception of the perfected political state both the limited class government of Locke and the enlightened despotism favoured by contemporary French liberalism meet a challenge to which they have never, even in their updated forms, fully responded. Yet in its careful delimitation of the grounds, conditions and limits of the sovereignty of a general will, it already supplies the elements of a critique of political emancipation as the final form of human emancipation. In the

Social Contract men can be seen to truly run to their legitimate chains. Although the will is (temporarily) returned from the will of a master, it is not returned to itself. The question is then: did Rousseau see beyond the prevailing scheme of things or did he in the end bow before the failing which he constantly berated in his greatest predecessors — that they ontologized the actual and mistook the social individual for the member of market society? But the answer to this question is not to be found in the *Social Contract*. Rousseau, in his day, could not relinquish the *Social Contract* since it represented the best of what might be attainable within the prevailing scheme of things. Also, he could not relinquish it because it at least pointed beyond that prevailing scheme. But neither of these things mean that he could in any way abide that scheme.

Department of Political Science
York University

Notes

1. M. Berman, *The Politics of Authenticity*, (New York: Athenaeum), 1970; P. Burgelin, *La philosophie de l'Existence de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France), 1952; E. Cassirer, *The Question of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 1955; A. Cobban, *Rousseau and the Modern State*, (London: Allen and Unwin), 1964; L. Colletti, *From Rousseau to Lenin*, (New York: Monthly Review Press), 1972; L.G. Crocker, *Rousseau's Social Contract*, (Cleveland: Press of Case Western Reserve University), 1968; R. Derathe, *Le Rationalisme de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France), 1948; D. Gauthier, "The Politics of Redemption," *Trent Rousseau Papers*, J. MacAdam, et. al., eds., (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press), 1980, pp. 71-98; R. Grimsley, *The Philosophy of Rousseau*, (London: Oxford University Press), 1973; T.E. Marshall, "Rousseau and Enlightenment," *Political Theory*, (Vol. 6, No.4, 1978), pp. 421-455; A.M. Melzer, "Rousseau and the Problem of Bourgeois Society," *American Political Science Review*, (Vol. 74, No.4, 1980), pp. 1019-1033; J. Shklar, *Men and Citizens*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1969; J. Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: La Transparence et l'Obstacle*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France), 1957. My own view is that all of his work should be seen as the relatively self-conscious expression of "la contradiction connaisseante". The latter expression belongs to B. Muntéano, "Les 'contradictions' de Jean-Jacques Rousseau," in *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et son Oeuvre*, (Paris: Klencksieck), 1964, p. 111.
2. G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller, (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 1977, pp. 355-363. For an excellent discussion of Hegel's understanding as the first sustained reading of an authoritarian *Social contract* see J. Hyppolite, *Studies on Marx and Hegel*, (New York: Harper Torchbooks), 1969, pp. 54-62.
3. All translations from the *Social Contract*, *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* and the *Discourse on Political Economy* are from G.D.H. Cole's edition of *The Social Contract and Discourses*, (London: Dent), 1968, and will be referred to as SC, DOI and DPE respectively. Book and chapter numbers, in roman numerals, are included in references to the *Social Contract*. All translations of the *Geneva Manuscript*, referred to as GMs, are from R.D. Masters, ed., *On the Social Contract*, (New York: St. Martins Press), 1978.
4. R. Derathé, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et la Science Politique de son Temps*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France), 1950, esp. p. 39.
5. For all its abstraction of the participatory moment of the *Social Contract* from its context, G. Pateman's *Participation and Democratic Theory*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1970, is I believe quite correct in seeing participation as an active requirement. Others, e.g. Gauthier, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 86,88,92-93, although they recognize the existence of the demand for autonomy and participation detect Rousseau's "real" intention in the arts of psychological manipulation of the Legislator. For a much less sinister understanding of the Legislator see R. Matthews and D. Ingersoll, "The Therapist and the Lawgiver," *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, (Vol. 4, No.3), 1980, pp. 83-99.

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6. On "instrumental reciprocity" see C. Gould, *Marx's Social Ontology*, (Cambridge: MIT Press), 1978, esp. p. 147.
7. A similar view is offered by Colletti; also by N. Keohane, "The Masterpiece of Policy in our Century': Rousseau on the Morality of the Enlightenment," *Political Theory*, (Vol. 6, No.4), 1978, pp. 457-483; There is a strong repetition of this theme in Rousseau's "Preface to Narcissus," B. Barber and T. Foreman, trans., *Political Theory*, (Vol. 6, No.4), 1978, pp. 543-554.
8. C.B. Macpherson, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1977, esp. pp. 15-17; see also his *Democracy in Alberta*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 1962, pp. 126, 221-237; see also Y. Peled, "Rousseau's inhibited Radicalism," *American Political Science Review*, (Vol. 74, No. 4), 1980, pp. 1034-1045
9. See Derathé, *Science Politique, Op. Cit.*, esp. pp. 9-23
10. Macpherson, *Life and Times*, p. 17
11. The standard Kantian reading of Rousseau is Cassirer. Critiques of Cassirer are to be found in Derathé, *Rationalisme*, esp. the appendix, and G.A. Kelly, "Rousseau, Kant and History," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, (Vol. 28, No.4), 1968, pp. 347-364. A recent restatement of the affinity between the two thinkers is A. Levine, "On the General Will," in *Trent Rousseau Papers*, pp. 173-179.
12. Cassirer, esp. pp. 63, 70, 126-127
13. Were not even the "stronger" member of civil society threatened by the absence of a pacifying power the contract would not be possible. This is why the *Social Contract* does not live up to the test of the "violent interlocator". As it is, *all* must feel a deadly insecurity; all must recognize not only a certain inconvenience a la Locke, but that the "human race would perish unless it changed its manner of existence." (SC, I, VI, p. 11)
14. See also *Emile*, trans. B. Foxley, (New York: Dutton), 1976, p. 427. In Marx's terms: "the practical struggle of these particular interests which constantly really run counter to the communal and illusory communal interests, make practical intervention and control necessary through the illusory "general" interest in the form of the state." From *The German Ideology in The Marx-Engels Reader*, R.C. Tucker, ed., (New York: Norton), 1972, p. 125.
15. See also SC, II, XI, p. 42; SC, II, XI, p. 42, n.1 But there is nothing in the terms of the contract itself that demands the abolition of the real system of private property. cf. Marx's analysis of "the political annulment of private property", in *On the Jewish Question, Early Writings*, trans. R. Livingstone, (New York: Vintage Books), 1975, p. 219
16. See H. Cell, "Breaking Rousseau's Chains," in *Trent Rousseau Papers*, pp. 164-165
17. On this point that the particular will is the essence of the general will as well as an obstacle to it, L. Althusser, *Politics and History*, (London: New Left Books), 1977, p. 151, is essentially correct, so long as it is understood that the particular will refers to the will formed for and within the relations of instrumental reciprocity.
18. B. Baczkó, "Rousseau and social Marginality," *Daedalus*, Summer 1978, pp. 27-40
19. J. Shklar, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Equality," *Daedalus*, Summer 1978, pp. 13-26
20. Marx, *Jewish Question*, p. 234; see also, p. 220
21. Althusser, pp. 118-124
22. Colletti, pp. 176-179
23. Cassirer, e.g., pp. 52-54, sees a profound transformation of viewpoint between the two works.
24. See, e.g., C.E. Vaughan, "Introduction," *The Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, (Cambridge: The University Press), 1915, pp. 4-5, 9-18, 39ff., 111, 115
25. Rousseau's theory of history is not as contested an issue as it should be. Majority opinion seems to find him to be an a-historical thinker, or at least an historical fatalist. See, e.g., Vaughan, p. 45; R.D. Masters, "Nothing Fails like Success: Development and History in Rousseau's Political Teaching," *Trent Rousseau Papers*, pp. 99-118; G.A. Kelly, pp. 357-360; B. de Jouvenel, "Rousseau the Pessimistic Evolutionist", *Yale French Studies*, (Vol. 28), 1961-2, pp. 83-96; J. Ehrard, *L'Idée de la Nature en France dans la première moitié du xviii siècle*, 2 Vols., (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N.), 1963, Vol. II, esp. pp. 536-538. For the dissenters, e.g. Cassirer and Colletti, the focus is on the formulation of a utopian ideal to orient historical practice. The most penetrating understanding of Rousseau's grasp of historicity to date, Lionel Gossman, "Time and History in Rousseau," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, (Vol. 30), 1964,

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- pp. 311-349 does not extend this into Rousseau's political and social thought. For such an attempt see A. Horowitz, "Rousseau, Nature and History" (Toronto: University of Toronto Press) 1986.
26. Marx, Jewish Question, p. 221
27. L. Strauss, *Natural Right and History*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1953, esp. pp. 271-273.

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HEARTS AND MINDS: THE CONFESSIONS OF ROUSSEAU, RASKOLNIKOV, AND THE UNDERGROUND MAN

Mary L. Bellhouse

Apparent antagonists, assumed to be ideological opposites, Rousseau and Dostoevsky actually share profoundly similar moral outlooks.¹ Each attempts to demonstrate the inadequacy of the rationalism, individualism, scientism and optimism characteristic of the Enlightenment. Their writings marked by an underlying pessimism, both authors argue that human beings are born to suffer; each sees history as essentially tragic. In the case of Dostoevsky, this tragic quality is mitigated by Christian transcendence. For both, the rejection of certain varieties of rationalism is paralleled by an emphasis on faith and on the value of religious belief, though Dostoevsky's mystic Christianity is very different from the civil religion of Rousseau. Both portray moral goodness as tied to the heart, feelings and true conscience. Each warns that reason twisted by pride may distort moral judgment, yet neither rejects rationality proper. While Dostoevsky depicts characters like Raskolnikov, Stavrogin and the Grand Inquisitor to show reason without faith as an extreme evil, he values reason for its role in developing consciousness. And Rousseau allows that the

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rare true sage may be lacking in faith and feeling and yet serve others as a valuable moral guide.

The Underground Man, Raskolnikov and Rousseau must bare their souls in order to overcome the dangers of pride and shame; all three strive for "transparency" and seek acceptance.² Transparency brings each closer to others; it diminishes feelings of isolation and separation — feelings which, engendered by pride, tend to encourage immoral behavior. While both Rousseau and Dostoevsky suggest that vulnerability to feelings of shame may be rooted in poverty and exacerbated by an urban life, the solution implied by each is not so much economic change as escape from *amour-propre*, vanity, and the sway of opinion. The solution, as Raskolnikov illustrates, begins at least with confession, sincerity and love.

According to Rousseau and Dostoevsky, because reason is subject to distortion by pride and vanity and because most human beings act on the basis of the passions, the good community must also be based on feeling, not rational truth alone. At the same time, the two authors caution that pity is inadequate to form the community's affective ties since, as both observe, pity may be either too weak or based on an unrecognized egotism, an assertion of superiority that reduces its object. Thus, Rousseau and Dostoevsky each hold that pity is no substitute for duty, justice and adherence to law.

The emphasis placed by Rousseau and Dostoevsky on feeling, love and confession carries political implications as each author calls for an integration of self, an integration achieved by Rousseau's citizen and, in the end, by Raskolnikov. In Dostoevsky's political vision of Russia as the Christian nation and in Rousseau's *Social Contract*, what is crucial are the ties of feeling uniting the people. In each case, one finds a community whose members feel a part of the whole and stand willing to sacrifice self-interest for the needs of others. Such a people are not strangers, detached and cloaked by calculations of self-interest, but, instead, are loving and open in their feelings. Thus, Rousseau and Dostoevsky decry the egoistic individualism they see to be dominant in Western European culture; the alternative they both espouse is greater moral and psychological equality among human beings and, in its political dimensions, a community of brotherhood.

With an eye toward deepening understanding of the counter-Enlightenment and dispelling the notion that Rousseau and Dostoevsky are ideological opposites, the "complex but authentic link" which connects their ideas will be explored in this essay. Three particular moral issues of fundamental importance to both thinkers are considered: the role of conscience, pity and reason in moral choice; the purpose of confession; and love as a means of moral regeneration.

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I

Moral Freedom and the Role of Conscience, Pity, and Reason

Rousseau, like Dostoevsky, is no Grand Inquisitor. Philosophically, both writers grant the highest value to moral and spiritual freedom, judging it far more precious than, for example, material prosperity.³ They each accord freedom primary value while recognizing its tragic quality: freedom, including what Rousseau calls "perfectibility," does not necessarily lead to virtue; rather its likely result is moral corruption.⁴ As the Underground Man insists, humans may exercise their free will stupidly, irrationally, illogically, and self-destructively.⁵ Still, as Rousseau states, "To give up freedom is to give up one's human quality: to remove freedom from one's will is to remove all morality from one's actions."⁶

In analyzing the factors involved in making moral choices, Rousseau and Dostoevsky both pay great attention to conscience, pity, and reason. Rousseau contends that humans are characterized by two fundamental, pre-rational traits: *amour de soi* and *pitié*, which, combined, render humans unwilling to harm each other in the state of nature. According to the *Second Discourse*:

pity is a natural sentiment which, moderating in each individual the activity of love of oneself, contributes to the mutual preservation of the entire species. It carries us without reflection to the aid of those whom we see suffer; in the state of nature, it takes the place of laws, morals, and virtue, with the advantage that no one is tempted to disobey its gentle voice.⁷

All the social virtues — generosity, clemency, humanity, benevolence, friendship — are said to flow from pity.

Rousseau takes conscience to be the first derivative of love of oneself (*amour de soi*) and pity. In the *Profession of Faith* — Rousseau's most thorough discussion of conscience — the Savoyard Vicar explains that conscience is a natural feeling, "a simple gift of nature" that precedes all acquired ideas. Conscience, "an innate principle of justice and virtue," inspires human beings with love of the good and hatred of evil. The Vicar stresses that conscience, said to be found "in the depths of souls," issues *feelings*, not judgments.⁸

In analyzing the development of human reason and its effects, Rousseau is led to consider the question of "hearts and minds": what is the relation of moral feeling — pity and the decrees of conscience — to reason? Rousseau approaches this relationship variously and offers a complex perspective on it. The Savoyard Vicar highlights the possibility of conflict between reason and

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conscience and suggests that, as a guide to right and wrong, conscience is more reliable:

Too often reason deceives us. We have acquired only too much right to challenge it. But conscience never deceives; it is man's true guide. It is to the soul what instinct is to the body; he who follows conscience obeys nature and does not fear being led astray.⁹

Rousseau claims in his autobiographies that his own conscience and pity have *not* been destroyed or silenced and that he is still able to rely on conscience for moral guidance. He asserts that his heart generally has sway over his reason. While admitting that he has sometimes been wrong in his outward behavior, he insists that, due to the goodness of his intentions, his heart has remained pure and his conscience free.¹⁰ Rousseau's criticism of the vain rationalizing of sophistic philosophers, his praise of simple folk still guided by conscience, and his self-portraits all seem to support the popular view of him as an apostle of *sentiment* and enemy of reason.¹¹

But, despite its lively history, such an interpretation remains inadequate. It fails to recognize that Rousseau condemns not reason as such, but reason misled by vanity. Characterizing modern society as morally corrupt, Rousseau avers that this corruption is rooted in the workings of pride or vanity (*amour-propre*). Pride not only weakens the voice of conscience, it tends to distort or pervert the functioning of reason. Reason is vulnerable in this respect: it is likely to become subjugated to vanity.

At the same time, Rousseau teaches that reason may play an extremely valuable moral role so long as it is not a tool of pride. He asserts that conscience requires reason for its completion. The two faculties, at best, ought to function in harmony: conscience will prompt human beings to *love* what is right, while reason will allow them to *perceive* what is right.¹²

While conscience is always correct, reason perverted by vanity may *imitate* conscience. In such a case, uncorrupted reason may be able to distinguish true conscience from false or imitated conscience. Thus, Rousseau speaks of the "true philosopher" as one whose reason resists the pressures of vanity. Such a sage might be lacking in feeling — his conscience might even be silent — but he would be able to distinguish right from wrong and, as a result, might serve others as a valuable moral guide. Emile's tutor, the Lawgiver of the *Social Contract*, and Wolmar of *Julie, or the New Heloise* approximate this type.

Rousseau portrays himself in his autobiographies as, for the most part, a kind of 'natural man,' *not* as a model of moral or civic virtue. Thus, for example, he explains in the sixth Walk of the *Rêveries* that he is generous only when acting freely, not when driven by a sense of duty or bound by feelings of

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constraint. Virtue, which Rousseau distinguishes from natural goodness, is founded on duty and requires constraint. According to the *Social Contract*, the citizen's virtue is guided by his or her own reason, the rational direction of the Lawgiver, and morally salutary national feeling, including a civil religion.

Rousseau, then, is not an anti-rationalist; rather, he holds that reason may play a major role in the attainment of moral and civil freedom, keeping conscience from going astray.

While *sentiment* often overwhelms Jean-Jacques, the Underground Man finds himself enervated in a state of detached analytic reflection, unable to sustain deep feelings of compassion for others. The Underground Man has freedom and individuality, two primary values for Dostoevsky, but he suffers in his consciousness from the great modern disease of isolation. He is not sure of what is in his head or his heart, and his inner turmoil produces a marked ambivalence in his behavior. As he regards himself, he fluctuates between exaggerated feelings of esteem and degradation. This "characterless creature" is struck by the uselessness of consciousness of virtue and, ironically, in remarking that he would probably never have been able to do anything with his magnanimity, he echoes Rousseau.¹³ Like Rousseau, the Underground Man claims his wrongdoing originates in his mind, not his heart. When the Underground Man admits to deliberate cruelty, he adds: "it was not an impulse from the heart, but came from my evil brain. This cruelty was so affected, so purposely made up, so completely a product of the brain, of books."¹⁴ But the text also indicates that the Underground Man's heart is "corrupted by depravity" and that he "cannot have a full, genuine consciousness without a pure heart."¹⁵

The Underground Man, paralyzed by the inertia resulting from hyperconsciousness, searches for a base, a "primary reason" for action; he seems to think too much and cannot act out what is in his heart. Despite his discomfort with this stance, the Underground Man insists that any intelligent man is reduced to inaction, that only fools can act. He looks down on the "men of action" as only exterior, lacking in freedom, self-awareness and development. While the "men of action" mouth the latest rationalist theories, the Underground Man claims to recognize the moral implications of scientific determinism and the significance of will and desire.

Both Jean-Jacques and the Underground Man eschew the idea of life lived by reason alone. For Rousseau's life to have meaning, he needs love and the freedom to follow his passions. For the Underground Man, the truth is that there is no meaning, and hyperconsciousness does not allow him to delude himself with man-made meanings. In his view, even the rationalist acts out of impulse — hate, spite, anger, pride — without realizing it and every act of reason is an act of the will. Still, *he* is the great rationalizer, using his reason to protect himself from his failure of will. The Underground Man wants to

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believe in morality, in virtue, in love, in his own character, but he lacks faith and is incapable of transforming himself.

The character Raskolnikov offers an even more fascinating example of reason in conflict with feeling. A striking feature of *Crime and Punishment* is that Raskolnikov is repeatedly moved to great feelings of pity and generosity. Despite his destitution, he leaves money for the pathetic Marfa and her starving children; he aids the drunken girl, apparently already raped and now pursued again; he brings the injured clerk Marmeladov home to die and pays for his funeral.¹⁶ Yet, typically, Raskolnikov is quick to regret his generosity. His immediate feelings of compassion soon pass and are replaced by an abstract rationalism, which leaves him scornful of his attempts to help.¹⁷ His friend Razumihin perceives this see-saw dynamic in Raskolnikov's character:

he is morose, gloomy, proud and haughty, and of late — perhaps for a long time before — he has been suspicious and fanciful. He has a noble nature and a kind heart. He does not like showing his feelings and would rather do a cruel thing than open his heart freely. Sometimes, though, he is not at all morbid, but simply cold and inhumanly callous; it's as though he were alternating between two characters.¹⁸

This change from pity to detachment is addressed by Rousseau in his distinction between the nature of simple souls and that of "hyper-rational" philosophers. Rousseau argues that the development of reason tends to diminish the workings of pity:

Reason engenders vanity and reflection fortifies it; reason turns man back upon himself, it separates him from all that bothers and afflicts him. Philosophy isolates him; because of it he says in secret, at the sight of a suffering man: Perish if you will, I am safe. No longer can anything except dangers to the entire society trouble the tranquil sleep of the philosopher and tear him from his bed. His fellow-man can be murdered with impunity right under his window; he has only to put his hands over his ears and argue with himself a bit to prevent nature, which revolts within him, from identifying him with the man who is being assassinated. Savage man does not have this admirable talent, and for want of wisdom and reason he is always seen heedlessly yielding to the first sentiment of humanity. In riots or street fights the populace assembles, the prudent man moves away; it is the rabble, the market-women, who separate the combatants and prevent honest people from murdering each other.¹⁹

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Raskolnikov has within himself both great reasoning ability and powerful feelings of pity. The conflict between the two is emphasized even by the character's name: the Russian word *raskol* means schism. Hyperconscious like the Underground Man, Raskolnikov is also hyper-rational; he uses reason to justify his decision to rob and kill the old pawnbroker. Dostoevsky writes, "it would seem, as regards the moral question, that his analysis was complete; his casuistry had become keen as a razor, and he could not find rational objections in himself."²⁰ Early on, Raskolnikov suggests that he commits the crime partly in order to aid the poor (is the irony of murder in the name of compassion lost on him?). Later he reveals that he killed because he "wanted to become a Napoleon." He deems the murder an "experiment" designed to demonstrate his theory that great men have the right to transgress moral boundaries, and that he is such a man.²¹

Explaining his theory, Raskolnikov haltingly discloses that

an extraordinary man has the right ... that is not an official right, but an inner right to decide in his own conscience to overstep ... certain obstacles, and only in case it is essential for the practical fulfilment of his idea (sometimes, perhaps, of benefit to the whole of humanity).²²

The good Razumihin is shocked by Raskolnikov's position on conscience, seeing it as the most disconcerting aspect of his friend's theory:

what is really *original* in all this, and is exclusively your own, to my horror, is that you sanction bloodshed *in the name of conscience*, and, excuse my saying so, with such fanaticism... That, I take it, is the point of your article. But that sanction of bloodshed *by conscience* is, to my mind ... more terrible than the official, legal sanction of bloodshed...²³

By implying that the murder of the pawnbroker was sanctioned by his conscience Raskolnikov seems to directly contradict Rousseau's view on this sentiment.

But Raskolnikov later learns that his "conscience" is a false one. His act of murder was not based on true conscience, but on reason *perverted by vanity and pride*. Soon after his crime, Raskolnikov feels "horror and loathing of what he had done."²⁴ His reason and conscience conflict, tearing him apart. His failure as a "superman" occurs within himself: he cannot sustain his efforts to use reason to fend off his feelings of guilt and torment. When his rationalizing ceases and he begins to *feel*, he is horrified. Then he is engulfed by a "dull, unreasoning terror."²⁵ Several times, losing control over his reasoning, he is overcome by a desire to confess.

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The impulse (to confess) was so strong that he got up from his seat to carry it out. 'Hadn't I better think a minute?' flashed through his mind. 'No, better cast off the burden without thinking.'²⁶

After the murder, he is bitter at the realization that it was a vain experiment, not a stepping stone to some great, noble end. It is a blow to his ego that he cannot control his conscience with the logic of his theory. He insults himself for not being extraordinary, but does not abandon his theory,²⁷ which remains a rationalization for an impulse to kill, an impulse stemming from *wounded pride*. After the crime, his pride, still dominant, denies him total remorse.

Even after a year of imprisonment in Siberia, Raskolnikov remains unrepentant, claiming his "conscience is at rest."²⁸ Yet the novel, taken as a whole and particularly its ending, indicates that Raskolnikov has been out of touch with his true conscience and has mistaken the casuistry of his reason for conscience's voice. When Rousseau's Savoyard Vicar explains that fanaticism may counterfeit the voice of conscience, his observation accurately portrays Raskolnikov:

If it (conscience) speaks to all hearts, then why are there so few of them who hear it? Well, this is because it speaks to us in nature's language, which everything has made us forget. Conscience is timid; it likes refuge and peace. The world and noise scare it; the prejudices from which they claim it is born are its cruellest enemies. It flees or keeps quiet before them. Their noisy voices stifle its voice and prevent it from making itself heard. *Fanaticism dares to counterfeit it and to dictate crime in its name*. It finally gives up as a result of being dismissed. It no longer speaks to us. It no longer responds to us. And after such long contempt for it, to recall it costs as much as banishing it did.²⁹

In a sense, Raskolnikov's true conscience turns out to be Sonia, who eventually leads him to the path of moral regeneration. The ending of *Crime and Punishment* suggests that Raskolnikov eventually discovers what Rousseau understands, that abstract reason twisted by pride should not overrule conscience. What seems to be a perversion of Rousseau's views on conscience, then, ends up an extraordinary example in support of this aspect of the Genevan's teachings.

Dostoevsky is clearly denouncing Raskolnikov's pitiless side — the superman's "higher morality" is after all shown to be that of a callous murderer, who takes the life of not only the old usurers but also her gentle sister, Lizaveta.³⁰ Dostoevsky shares Rousseau's deep concern with the relationship

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among pity, conscience, reason and pride. His novels *echo* but do not simply repeat Rousseau. They appear as exaggerations — the portrayal of the extraordinarily divided Raskolnikov as a criminal, a murderer, is part of this exaggeration.

II

Purpose of Confession: From Shame to Sincerity

At the beginning of his *Confessions* Rousseau issues a remarkable challenge to the reader:

So let the numberless legion of my fellow men gather round me, and hear my confessions. Let them groan at my depravities, and blush for my misdeeds. But let each one of them reveal his heart at the foot of thy throne with equal sincerity and may any man who dares, say 'I was a better man than he.'³¹

To types like the Underground Man these remarks may seem simply boastful. Yet the implied demand for self-examination suggests that Rousseau's purpose in writing the *Confessions* is not merely exculpatory, nor only to gain self-knowledge; rather, he is also deeply concerned to bring about the moral improvement of his readers. To foster this improvement, Rousseau stresses sincerity and, in effect, argues for lower moral standards. It is this combination of lowering moral standards and the elevation of sincerity that leads Rousseau to unprecedented frankness in exposing his moral weaknesses.³² His revelations are essential if others are to examine their own character and conduct squarely.

Both Rousseau and Dostoevsky stress *shame* and vanity as major forces undermining moral goodness, destroying pure intentions and silencing conscience. Rousseau focuses on shame in his repeated discussions of a lie told in his youth blaming his theft of a ribbon on a poor servant girl. His heart was good, but he was overwhelmed by shame when accused of the theft, and, too proud to admit his crime, he wrongly blamed his friend. Rousseau implies that if one is driven to commit misdeeds, one ought to confess and seek understanding. The solution is found in openness, not secrecy and lying.

The Underground Man also lies out of shame. Like Rousseau in the ribbon incident,³³ the Underground Man continually alternates between feeling ashamed and hurt and making rude attempts to defend himself. All the Underground Man's relations — with his co-workers, with his former school-mates, with Liza, with his servant — involve wild vacillation between feelings

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of inferiority and superiority, between shame and pride. He wants to be accepted, yet he needs to sneer at others. Thus he is rude, petty and cruel and, at other times, grovels. He takes pride in his consciousness and in his unwillingness to compromise or to pretend, yet he is left with nothing to enjoy but his own suffering. He sneers at others for accepting delusions, but is left alone, trapped in his "hole."

Notes from Underground represents not parody of confession, but confession aborted.³⁴ After the Underground Man has sexual relations with Liza, he is ashamed because he, too, has defiled her, an innocent and simple creature. Struggling with his guilt, he uses false pretenses to win her respect: he plays the hero, preaching to her of "the holy mystery of love," borrowing the romantic rhetoric of other. Late, when Liza arrives at his squalid apartment and the real plight of his isolation and poverty are exposed, he stands before her in his filthy, tattered robe, "crushed, crest-fallen, revoltingly embarrassed."³⁵ Deeply ashamed of his indigency, he starts to cry and then, comforted by her sympathy, to confess to her. But his tears and confession only add to his shame and, stripped of his sense of superiority, his vanity destroys his compassion. Tormented by hurt pride, he ruthlessly insults her till she is forced to leave. However, even after Liza departs, he is ambivalent and, again in shame and despair, rushes after her to beg forgiveness. He fails to catch up with her and his confession remains aborted, basically because for him, "loving meant tyrannizing and showing... moral superiority."³⁶ He cannot accept her as an equal.

Not only his confession to Liza, but also his confession to the reader is incomplete. Like the former schoolmates, the servant, and Liza, the reader, too, witnesses his petty nastiness. He succeeds in revealing the "dark side" of his character, but he fails to open his heart consciously to the reader. Once again he is unable to relate to others as equals. He wants to be accepted by the reader but cannot admit so; instead, he again pretends indifference and attempts to ridicule the reader, too.

The Underground Man's confessions, both to Liza and to the reader, are failures in that he is not transformed by his revelations. His split personality and gloomy isolation are unchanged. Yet, like Rousseau, the Underground Man effectively calls readers to examine their own lives and begin their own confessions. In this way, despite his own failure to confess fully, and despite his resentment of his audience, the confessional narrator of *The Notes* may serve as a vehicle for moral guidance.³⁷

Like the Underground Man, Raskolnikov is tormented by shame and at the same time wants to prove his superiority. In contrast to the Underground Man, though, Raskolnikov is able to confess fully. He picks Sonia as his confessor, his choice settled after hearing her read the Lazarus story. He chooses a good-hearted, true believer as his confidante — a person, like Liza, whose

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goodness in no way depends on wisdom. Sonia's lack of deep metaphysical thought doesn't matter to Raskolnikov; he is attracted to her purity. Raskolnikov's confession to Sonia begins his moral regeneration. The ending of the novel suggests that her acceptance of his crime leads to love and a life no longer in conflict with feeling. With Sonia he will eventually humble himself and "settle" for love: as he gives up his drive for superiority, his conscience is revitalized. At the same time, he is not motivated — primarily at least — by repentance. For both Rousseau and Dostoevsky, the emphasis in portraying confession is not on repentance, but on overcoming isolation and insincerity.

III

Love and Moral Regeneration

Although Rousseau asserts that primitive man's needs were limited to nourishment, repose, and sex, he allows that love is a true need of social man.³⁸ Significantly, Rousseau's last writing — the tenth Promenade of the *Rêveries* — is devoted to the subject of love. There he discusses love as a source of happiness, and presents an idealized version of his youthful liaison with Mme. de Warens. He stresses that this, his first love affair, occurred at a critical juncture in his life, shaping his soul and determining his fate. As Rousseau matured, his relationship with this woman changed from his acting as her student and child to being treated as an equal — a friend, and, finally, being accepted as her lover.³⁹ Rousseau writes that in their years as lovers, he could at last truly live and be himself "without admixture and without obstacle."⁴⁰ This love, he claims, helped him to gain self-knowledge. Without it, he was too pulled by the passions of others and dominated by necessity to know what was his own in his conduct. He found freedom, too, with this woman: "I could not bear subjection; I was perfectly free and better than free, for bound only by my affections, I did only what I wanted to do."⁴¹

It is not mere romantic sentimentality that leads Rousseau to conclude his last work with the subject of love. Rather, he wants to emphasize his view that love is the key if humans are to relate to each other on a basis other than *amour-propre* — a course that is imperative for happiness and virtue in a social context.

This is not to say that Rousseau views love as a panacea. In fact, he appears to rate the likelihood of successful, long-term love as small.⁴² On the surface, this is suggested by the fact that the two marriages portrayed by Rousseau end as failures (in the sequel to *Emile*, called *Les Solitaires*, and in the *Nouvelle Héloïse*). At the fundamental level there is the problem of the in-

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stability of a relationship based on *amour de soi*.⁴³ Also, Rousseau discloses in the *Confessions* that his affair with Mme. de Warens ended unhappily when he was displaced by another lover. Yet, in deliberately depicting that love optimistically in his final account, Rousseau stresses that human beings need others. Even in his self-portrait as the *solitary*, he points to the value of love.

The parallel in Dostoevsky is important: in both *Notes from Underground* and *Crime and Punishment*, the Russian presents love as the key to spiritual regeneration. As the Underground Man recognizes, his one chance for "salvation" — for escape from the underground — is through loving Liza. Even after he begins to humiliate her, she opens her heart and arms to him:

Liza wounded and crushed by me, understood a great deal more than I imagined. She understood from all this what a woman understands first of all, if she feels genuine love, that is, that I was myself unhappy... Suddenly she leapt up from her chair with an irresistible impulse and held out her hands, yearning toward me, though still timid and not daring to stir.⁴⁴

Liza warmly embraces the Underground Man, but he finds that he is overcome by shame and seized by hatred of her. Although he did not even guess it till much later, she had come to love him, "because to a woman, true resurrection, true salvation from any sort of ruin, and true moral regeneration is contained in love and can only show itself in that form."⁴⁵

The Underground Man, immersed in spitefulness and bookish abstraction, is, as he admits, incapable of loving. In contrast to the happy memories of love recorded in the tenth Promenade, the Underground Man's love story is one of dismal failure. While Rousseau abandons himself to the desire to love, the Underground Man refuses to live by such feeling. He is emotionally stirred by Liza and by his outpourings to her, but he does not think this feeling is worth much: it is not a "primary cause" for action.

While the Underground Man looks down on the fools, the men of action, those who are pacified at the appearance of a "wall," he wants to believe in something, to form his character around it, and to find happiness in *love*. Still, his underground mentality tells him that all meaning is, in a way, a delusion, and he hates himself for aching for meaning. He envies Liza because she is capable of love. Full of disdain and spite, he persists in isolating himself in his underground world.

Raskolnikov, on the other hand, succeeds precisely where the Underground Man fails. Just as Raskolnikov is a spiritual heir to the Underground Man, so, too, the two prostitutes, Sonia and Liza, are related, and it is Sonia who saves Raskolnikov from his hyperrationalism. Forced by the corrupt

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society into prostitution, Sonia remains uncannily pure. A Magdalene figure, a self-sacrificer, she is spiritually untouched by sin. Something in her face, "a sort of *insatiable* compassion," draws Raskolnikov to her so completely that his perverted rational side is rendered impotent.⁴⁶ Through her, he is finally able to sustain true feeling and, unlike the Underground Man, to overcome his pride.⁴⁷

Raskolnikov's transformation occurs near the end of the epilogue:

She (Sonia) knew and had no doubt that he loved her beyond everything and that at last the moment had come.... They wanted to speak, but could not; tears stood in their eyes. They were both pale and thin; but those sick pale faces were bright with the dawn of a new future, of a full resurrection into a new life. *They were renewed by love: the heart of each held infinite sources of life for the heart of the other.*⁴⁸

Based on this love, Raskolnikov overcomes the inner division between sentiment and prideful rationality. Transformed, he gives up theorizing and, instead, is dominated by feeling:

He could not think for long together of anything that evening, and he could not have analysed anything consciously; he was simply feeling. Life had stepped into the place of theory and something quite different would work itself out in his mind.⁴⁹

In contrast to the Underground Man, Raskolnikov, then, is finally able to live life more fully.

Love, for both Rousseau and Dostoevsky, is especially precious to the extent that it can overcome or subdue pride and shame. Perhaps Rousseau's attitude toward the morally regenerative effect of love is more pessimistic than Dostoevsky's, but this is less certain in light of the mature statement of *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879-1880) where the treatment of love is still central but more problematic. Katerina and Grushenka are more complex and in some ways more negative characters than Liza and Sonia. The "active love" of Zossima and Alyosha takes on a greater purity and importance than romantic love. Moreover, the *brotherhood* espoused by Dostoevsky in that final work bears a significant resemblance to the patriotic love which unites the citizens of Rousseau's *Social Contract*.⁵⁰

IV
Conclusion

In conclusion, I cite a passage from Dostoevsky's *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions* (1983) and invite the reader to consider it in light of Rousseau's social political theory, particularly as formulated in the *Social Contract*. Dostoevsky contrasts the nature of the Russian and the Western European and analyzes what he takes to be the lack of fraternity in the West:

In French nature, and in Occidental nature in general, it (fraternity) is not present; you find there instead a principle of individualism, a principle of isolation, of intense self-preservation, of personal gain, of self-determination of the *I*, of opposing this *I* to all nature and the rest of mankind as an independent, autonomous principle entirely equal and equivalent to all that exists outside itself. Well, fraternity could scarcely arise from such an attitude. Why? Because in fraternity, in true brotherhood, it is not the separate personality, not the *I*, which should be concerned with its right to equality and equilibrium with everything else ... This demanding, rebellious individual ought first of all to offer the *I*, to offer himself entirely to society, not only without demanding any rights but, on the contrary, offering these up unconditionally to society. But the Western personality is not accustomed to acting in this manner; it fights for what it wants; it demands its rights; it desires to separate — well, fraternity will not flourish in such an atmosphere.... What, you will say to me, must one be without personality in order to be happy? Does salvation lie in impersonality? To the contrary, I say: a person must not only not lose his personality, but must actually attain a much greater degree of individuality than now exists in the West. Understand me: voluntary, fully conscious self-sacrifice utterly free of outside constraint, sacrifice of one's entire self for the benefit of all, is in my opinion a sign of the supreme development of individuality, of its supreme power, absolute self-mastery and freedom of will... A highly developed individuality, completely convinced of its right to individuality, no longer fearing for itself, can do nothing else by virtue of its individuality, i.e., can serve no other purpose through it than to give itself entirely to others in order that others too may be equally autonomous and happy.⁵¹

Ironically, as Dostoevsky knew Rousseau's writings in only a partial, limited way, he remained unaware of the extent to which his moral outlook sympathetically recalls the Genevan's.

Department of Political Science
Providence College

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1. Dostoevsky, in explicitly referring to Rousseau's *Confessions* in both *notes from Underground* (1864) and *Crime and Punishment* (1866), invites a comparison. As does the first announced title for *Notes from Underground* — *A Confession*. The *Notes*, particularly its opening passages, seems a curious parody of Rousseau's last work, *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*. Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground and The Grand Inquisitor*, trans. Ralph E. Matlaw (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1960), p. 35, p. xvi; *Crime and Punishment*, trans. Constance Garnett (New York: Bantam Books, 1958), p. 100. The brief explicit reference to *The Confessions* centers on the notion that "Rousseau was a kind of Radischev." On the influence of Rousseau on this Russian writer see Allen McConnell, "Rousseau and Radischev," in *The Slavic and East European Journal*, VIII, 3 (Fall, 1964), pp. 253-272. According to McConnell, the main influence of Rousseau on Radischev lies in Radischev's appeals to the heart and conscience. Scholars have seldom paired the two authors except to offer a cursory antithesis. See, for example, Peter Axthelm, *The Modern Confessional Novel* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 8. George Steiner mentions in passing the idea of "a complex but authentic link" between Rousseau and Dostoevsky in *Tolstoy or Dostoevsky* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959), p. 228, and Ernest J. Simmons asserts briefly that Rousseau had a profound influence on Dostoevsky in *Dostoevski: The Making of a Novelist* (New York: Oxford University Press), pp. 312-313. Despite the *Notes'* attack on Chernyshevsky's amalgam of Hegelian and Rousseauian ideas and despite Raskolnikov's apparent mockery of the Genevan's principles, the two Dostoevsky novels tend to affirm a number of Rousseau's teachings. See Matlaw, Introduction to *Notes from Underground*, p. xiii. For a lengthier discussion of how the Underground Man parodies Chernyshevsky as well as the poet Nkrasov, see Irina Kirk, *Dostoevsky and Camus: The Themes of Conscientiousness, Isolation, Freedom and Love* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1974), pp. 13-31. Recognition of the important affinities is not to deny the tensions that separate Rousseau and Dostoevsky — the gulf of a century, the gap between what Strauss called the second and third waves of modernity. Leo Strauss, "The Three Waves of Modernity," in *Political Philosophy: Six Essays by Leo Strauss*, ed. by Hilail Gildin (Indianapolis: Pegasus, Bobbs-Merrill, 1975), pp. 81-98. Dostoevsky's radicalization of certain eighteenth-century moral problems signals the ebbing of the second or Rousseauian wave of modernity and its replacement by the Nietzschean phase. Dostoevsky may be taken as a transitional figure in this regard: his novels are filled with nihilistic terror and anguish, yet his moral perspective is vehemently anti-nihilist.
2. Rousseau writes in his *Confessions*, "I should like in some way to make my soul transparent to the reader's eye," (p. 169). The demand for acceptance is perhaps clearest in the case of Raskolnikov in his relationship with Sonia. Raskolnikov, in this respect, is like Marmeladov who, too, cries out for acceptance. Marmeladov not only asks forgiveness from his wife, his statement to Raskolnikov near the start of the novel seems to echo and parody the opening of Rousseau's *Confessions*: "Behold the man! Excuse me, young man, can you. . . . No, to put it more strongly and more distinctly; not can you but dare you, looking upon me, assert that I am a pig?" *Crime and Punishment*, pp. 161, 12.
3. Rousseau, too, would criticize the lure of the crystal palace. In a related way, both Rousseau and Dostoevsky are deeply critical of modern science. Marmeladov tells Raskolnikov that he's heard from a man "who keeps up with modern ideas" that "compassion is forbidden nowadays by science itself, and that that's what is done now in England, where there is political economy." (*Crime and Punishment*, p. 12). When Raskolnikov reflects on his sister Dounia's motivation for becoming engaged to Luzhin, he realizes that "she would not barter her moral freedom for comfort" but, "for her brother, for her mother, she will sell herself! She will sell everything! In such cases, 'we overcome our moral feeling if necessary,' freedom, peace, conscience even, all, all are brought into the market." (p. 39).
4. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The First and Second Discourses*, ed. Roger D. Masters, trans. Roger D. and Judith R. Masters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), pp. 114-115.
5. Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground*, p. 23.
6. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book I, Chapter 4.
7. Rousseau, *The First and Second Discourses*, pp. 132-133.
8. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), pp. 289-291. Rousseau stresses the importance of the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar* in the *Rêveries*. See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Oeuvres Complètes*, eds. Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1959-) I, 1018, where Rousseau says that the *Profession of Faith* "peut faire un jour révolution parmi les hommes si jamais il y renaît du bon sens et de la bonne foi." This edition hereafter cited as O.C.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 286-287. It is conscience, not reason, that the Vicar fully praises: "Conscience, conscience! Divine instinct, immortal and celestial voice, certain guide of a being that is ignorant and limited but intelligent and free; infallible judge of good and bad which makes man like unto God; it is you who make the excellence of his nature and the morality of his actions. Without you I sense nothing in me that raises me

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- above the beasts, other than the sad privilege of leading myself astray from error to error with the aid of an understanding without rule and reason without principle." (p. 290).
10. See, e.g., Rousseau, *The Confessions*, trans. J.M. Cohen (Baltimore: Penguin, 1954), pp. 333-335. Rousseau's analysis of Mme. de Warens is similar, pp. 190-192. See also Rousseau, *Rêveries*, pp. 14, 47-48, 89, *passim*.
 11. See, e.g., Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, trans. Charles E. Butterworth (New York: New York University Press, 1979), pp. 32-33.
 12. *Emile*, pp. 67, 290-291. See also Robert Derathé, *Le Rationalisme de Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1948), Chapter 3, esp. pp. 110-112, and François Bouchardy. "Une définition de la Conscience par J.-J. Rousseau," *Annales de la Société Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, XXXII (1950-52), 167-75. Bouchardy comments, "En refusant de voir en la conscience un jugement, il se peut que Jean-Jacques manifeste plus précisément son intention de se séparer des juriconsultes du Droit National, des philosophes de l'Encyclopédie dont l'article sur la conscience — s'inspirant de Barbeyrac — la définit très traditionnellement comme un acte de l'entendement" (p. 170).
 13. Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground*, pp. 8-9.
 14. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
 15. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
 16. Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, pp. 23, 41-45, 154-163. Raskolnikov's deep compassion is also revealed in his remarkable dream about the beating of a horse (pp. 48-53). Further, we learn in the Epilogue of earlier acts of generosity performed by Raskolnikov, cited at his trial as mitigating factors in his defense: six months' support of a tubercular student, paying for the funeral of the student's father, and the rescue of two children from a fire (pp. 460-461).
 17. A similar mood change occurs when Raskolnikov strenuously objects to Dounia's plans to marry Pyotr Petrovitch and then suddenly says, "what am I making such a fuss for? ... Marry whom you like!" (*Ibid.*, p. 203).
 18. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
 19. Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, p. 132. Rousseau also points out that even the most depraved are not wholly without pity and that it often leads them to anomalous acts of mercy (*Second Discourse*, p. 131; *Emile*, p. 287-288).
 20. Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, p. 63.
 21. Cf. the following note by Nietzsche, written between November 1882 and February 1883, while he was preparing to write *Zarathustra I*: "You lovers of knowledge! What have you done up to now out of your love for knowledge? Have you stolen and murdered yet, so as to know how a thief and a murderer feels?" trans. by Richard Perkins from Friedrich Nietzsche, *Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1967-). VII 1, 196 (5(1) number 47). An earlier variant appears in the same volume at 124(4(43)). For references in Nietzsche to crime and the criminal, see the following for a comprehensive overview: *Dawn* 50, 187, 202 and 366; *The Wanderer and His Shadow* 24, 28 and 186; *Zarathustra* "The Pale Criminal" and "The Shadow"; *Beyond Good and Evil* 109, 110 and 201; *On the Genealogy of Morals* II 10 and 14; *Twilight of the Idols* "The Problem of Socrates" 3 and "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man" 45; *The Will to Power* 42, 50, 116, 135, 233, 235, 292, 374, 736, 739, 740, 765, 788, 864, 928 and 951; *Die Unschuld des Werdens* (Innocence of Becoming: an editorial compilation of unpublished material Alfred Bäumler printed in *Kröners Taschenausgabe*, volumes 82 and 83/1915 as well as II 379, 423, 521, 525, 592, 593, 782, 1064 and 1105; the letter to Strindberg dated December 7, 1888, and letter to Jacob Burckhardt, January 6, 1889. Nietzsche knew nothing of Dostoevsky until February 1887. He read *Notes from Underground*, *The House of the Dead*, and *Insult and Injured*, and the was aware that the French were performing *Crime and Punishment* on the stage, but it is unclear whether he read that work or not. On Nietzsche's view of Dostoevsky, see esp., *Twilight of the Idols*, 45; *The Anti-Christ*, 31, 54; letter to Overbeck, February 23, 1887; letters to Gast, March 7, 1887, and October 4, 1888, letter to von Meysenbug, May 12, 1887; and letters to Brandes, October 20, 1888 and November 20, 1888. Even though, in any case, Nietzsche could not have read *Crime and Punishment* until four years after *Zarathustra I* was completed, the portrait of "The Pale Criminal" seems to represent what might have been his view of Raskolnikov's crime — indeed Thomas Mann, not realizing the large anachronism, thought *Zarathustra's* pale criminal was a deliberate copy of Raskolnikov. There is a preliminary sketch at KGW VIII 1, 191-192 (5(1) number 6), dating November 1882 to February 1883, that contains the psychological insight: "With our intentions, we rationalize our inexplicable drives: as, e.g., the murderer, who makes his true inclination, towards murder, acceptable to his reason by deciding to stage a robbery or to take revenge." (trans. Richard Perkins). While Nietzsche praises *Dostoevsky*, he denigrates Rousseau and rails against pity. On Nietzsche's view of Rousseau, see esp., *Human, All-Too-Human*, Part

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- I, 463, Part II, 221; *Thoughts Out of Season*, 4: *Twilight of the Idols*, 6, 48; *The Will to Power*, 62, 94, 95, 98, 99, 100, 117, 120, 340, 382, 1017; and letter to Gast, November 24, 1887.
22. Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, P. 226.
 23. *Ibid.*, p. 229.
 24. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
 26. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
 27. *Ibid.*, pp. 238-239.
 28. *Ibid.*, p. 467.
 29. Rousseau, *Emile*, p. 291 (italics added).
 30. In an early draft, Lizaveta is six months pregnant when killed, a circumstance further emphasizing Raskolnikov's murder of the innocent. Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Notebooks for Crime and Punishment*, ed. and trans. Edward Wasiolek (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 165.
 31. Rousseau, *Confessions* p. 17.
 32. Leo Strauss, "On the Intention of Rousseau," in *Hobbes and Rousseau: A Collection of Critical Essays*, eds. Maurice Cranston and Richard S. Peters (Garden City: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1972), p. 289. For example, in the *Confessions* Rousseau admits his pleasure in being whipped, his sexual exhibitionism, his desertion of an epileptic friend during a seizure, and the surrender of each of his five children at birth to a foundling home. (*Confessions*, pp. 25-29; 90-91; 127-128; 332-334.) Rousseau's discussion of the ring of Gyges in the *Reveries*, and its contrast with Socrates' response to Glaucon's version in the *Republic*, illustrates how the Genevan seeks to alter moral standards and how, in doing so, he displays the moral pathos of his own life. In the sixth Promenade Rousseau says that he has often asked himself what he would do with the ring of Gyges, were he to possess it. His first impulses are praiseworthy. But Rousseau then admits that, despite reason, he would use the ring's powers to accomplish a blameworthy act — apparently some type of voyeurism. The general point Rousseau makes is to stress the weakness of humanity. He states, "He whose power puts him above man should be above the weaknesses of humanity; otherwise this excess of strength will only serve to place him, in effect, below others and below what he himself would have been if he had remained their equal." In the end, Rousseau decides that he would be better off to throw away the magic ring before it led him to do something foolish. (See O.C. I, 1058 and n. 3.) Rousseau's remarks about the ring of Gyges may be seen as an inversion of Raskolnikov's theory. Raskolnikov commits murder out of a desire to prove he is superior, while Rousseau rejects the superiority to be gained by possession of the ring precisely because it would lead him to immoral behavior. Rousseau and Dostoevsky each stress that the accomplishment or realization of superiority in one traditional sense, i.e., power over others, does not bring with it, automatically, moral acts or a morally-content consciousness.
 33. Rousseau remarks more generally in the ninth Promenade of the *Reveries*: "The same shame which held me back has often prevented me from doing good works which would have filled me with joy and from which I have abstained only in deploring my foolishness." *Reveries*, p. 134.
 34. René E. Fortin, "Responsive Form: Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground* and the Confessional Tradition," *Essays in Literature*, VII, 2 (Fall, 1980), pp. 237-240.
 35. Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground*, p. 104.
 36. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
 37. See Fortin, p. 243.
 38. *Second Discourse*, p. 116.
 39. Rousseau, *The Confessions*, Books Two-Six.
 40. Rousseau, O.C., I, 1099; *Reveries*, p. 141.
 41. *Ibid.* Consider, in contrast, the curious loss of freedom Raskolnikov feels once he decides to go through with the murder. Raskolnikov passes through the Haymarket and overhears Lizaveta say she will be out the next evening, leaving the pawnbroker alone. Upon learning this crucial news, Raskolnikov "felt suddenly in his whole being that he had no more freedom of thought, no will, and that everything was suddenly and irrevocably decided." Afterwards, this moment always seemed to him "the predestined turning-point of his fate." (*Crime and Punishment*, pp. 54-56).

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42. Rousseau claims there is an essential difference between the sexes and he thinks that the possibility of love has been vastly diminished in modern society because of our failure to respect this difference (see *Emile*, Book Five).
43. Roger Masters argues that relations of friendship and love are particularly unstable because they are based on *amour de soi* which can readily degenerate into *amour-propre*. (This degeneration will occur if one comes to see the friend or loved one as happier than oneself, and is thereby led to envy him or her.) Masters argues that relations based on pity are more stable because they already involve the making of comparisons. His argument is intriguing, but his contention that relations of love do not involve making comparisons seems to be directly contradicted by Rousseau in the early part of Book Four of *Emile*. There Rousseau states that to love is to prefer, to be loved is to be preferred, and preference rests on comparison. Masters, *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 43-46; *Emile*, pp. 213-215.
44. Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground*, p. 109.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
46. Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, p. 276.
47. The benefits of Sonia's love are prefigured in the novel when Raskolnikov asks Sonia's sister Polenka, "And will you love me?" and he regains strength and the will to live from the little girl's affection (p. 165).
48. *Ibid.*, p. 471, italics added.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 472.
50. Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, 2 vols., trans. David Magarshack (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), on "active love" and brotherhood see esp. Vol. I, pp. 61-64, 218, 354-381.
51. Feodor M. Dostoevsky, *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*, trans. Richard Lee Renfield (New York: Criterion Books, 1955), pp. 110-112.

ROUSSEAU'S ENGAGEMENT WITH AMOUR-PROPRE

Peter Fuss

A number of years ago, while reflecting on the notion of self, I had occasion to wonder to what extent the French expression *amour-propre* had found its way into North American usage. Several standard American dictionaries had it, though flagged as being a foreign term. The translation given was self-esteem. I tried Larousse's small French-English, which offered two definitions: self-pride and self-respect. A considerably larger Cassell's gave four translations: self-love, self-respect, conceit, and vanity. Even this brief immersion in the ways of ordinary language was enough to bring out in me the frustrated philosopher, with his passion for making distinctions: Are self-esteem, self-love, and self-respect fundamentally the same things? And do any or all of these compounds amount or reduce to uncompounded conceit or vanity? Or is it that *amour-propre* is complicated, ambiguous, perhaps even in some sense "dialectical," so that self-respect and vanity mark out, respectively, its polar extremes?

Lacking sufficient self-esteem (or is it conceit?) simply to retire to my study and think this through on my own, I cast about for inspiration. It took a while to find some. The passions and affections in general are not traditionally among the preferred subjects of the philosophical mainliners, who seem to have a distinctive passion of their own for quarreling about the so-called higher, more noetic human faculties. But quite by accident I did stumble across a strange passage in a student's paper. It was a brief quotation from Rousseau's *Emile*, the treatise on education he published in 1762. It went like this:

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Self-love (*l'amour de soi*), which regards only ourselves, is contented when our true needs are satisfied. But *amour-propre*, which makes comparisons, is never content and never could be, because this sentiment, preferring ourselves to others, also demands others to prefer us to ourselves, which is impossible.

(Book IV, tr. Allan Bloom, Basic Books, 1979, 213-214.)

Here, at last, was a sharp distinction, the kind that forces one to think.¹ But at the time I was having an intellectual affair with Hegel — a passionate love/hate relationship that was, if nothing else, all-consuming. So I did only a few things with Rousseau's distinction, and then let it sit. I checked with some French scholars and was told that the distinction was idiosyncratic to Rousseau: modern French has not adopted it. Further reading led me to realize that no distinction comparable to Rousseau's, at least none with any firmness to it, could be found in modern Italian, Spanish, German, or English either. Rousseau's failure to make such a distinction stick — he being, after all, one of the most articulate, influential, and stylistically seductive of modern thinkers — told me something important about modern self-consciousness, about its own inability to find within itself a sufficient basis for so firm a distinction*. For what I sensed Rousseau to have been driving at was the difference between a primordially natural disposition and a sociopathological state — a distinction that we in general would neither readily nor willingly make. And then I promised myself I'd some day pursue Rousseau's distinction as best I could within his own writings so as to determine what he, at any rate, had had in mind in making it. It has taken me a decade to get free enough of Hegel to begin to keep this promise. Here, then, is a preliminary report.

I

We find Rousseau drawing his sharp distinction for the first time in the *Discourse on Inequality* (1755):

Vanity (*amour-propre*) and love of self (*amour de soi*), two passions very different in their nature and their effects, must not be confused. Love of oneself is a natural sentiment which inclines every animal to watch over its own preservation, and which, directed in man by reason

* This is not to say that Rousseau's distinction has fallen on altogether deaf philosophical ears as well. One need mention only three German thinkers: Max Stirner, especially when contrasting "ownness" and "possession," and Nietzsche and Scheler whenever they are preoccupied with the psychology of "*ressentiment*." See also note three with respect to Hegel. The distinction I have alluded to between *bourgeois* and *citoyen* is also drawn by Karl Marx in the Paris Manuscripts.

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and modified by pity, produces humanity and virtue. Vanity is only a relative sentiment, artificial and born in society, which inclines each individual to have a greater esteem for himself than for anyone, else, inspires in men all the harm they do to one another, and is the true source of "honor." (Footnote 'o' in the Masters edition, 221-222. Honor, as opposed to civic virtue in the "classical" republic, is the highest value known to the ambitions and the socially favored in monarchies of the modern ages such as that of Louis XIV, for which Rousseau had nothing but contempt.)

Our primitive ancestor in the conjectural "state of nature" from which we have evolved must have been incapable of vanity. Rousseau adds, because he was too isolated, too pre-social to make the necessary comparisons.

For the same reason, this man could have neither hate nor desire for revenge — passions that can arise only from the opinion that some offense has been received; and as it is scorn or intention to hurt and not the harm that constitutes the offense, men who know neither how to evaluate themselves nor to compare themselves can do each other a great deal of mutual violence when they derive some advantage from it, without ever offending one another. In a word, every man, seeing his fellow-men hardly otherwise than he would see animals of another species, can carry off the prey of the weaker or relinquish his own to the stronger, without considering these plunderings as anything but natural events, without the slightest emotion of insolence or spite, and with no other passion than the sadness or joy of a good or bad outcome. (222)

In its broader implications, this portrait of primitive man should help dispel the lingering illusion that Rousseau himself was some sort of primitivist, seeking in his own person or advocating for mankind at large a return to the "natural state." (The most important of his footnotes to the *Second Discourse*, 'i' in the Masters edition, explicitly repudiates any such intentions.) Socialization and the emergence of a sense of self in comparison with other selves are inseparable and irreversible processes: for us there can be no going back. Emergent in this passage as well is the first of a series of paradoxes regarding self, self-love, and love of self. I am most absolutely myself, and in one sense most unambiguously "inner-directed," when I am least aware that I am or have a distinct "self" at all. Conversely, my consciousness of self is never greater than when, in the wake of numerous invidious comparisons, my sense of my own identity has become relativized, compromised, wounded to the core by anxiety-ridden surmises regarding what others think of me. To this

and several related paradoxes we shall return presently.

Neither this passage nor any other in the *Second Discourse* sheds much light, however, on the question how “love of oneself” as a “natural sentiment” inclining us toward self-preservation gives rise to, or is even compatible with, the sentiment of pity or compassion — a sentiment which Rousseau earlier in this same work had claimed to be equally natural and at least almost as primitive. Moreover, we are told little as to why, or in what sense, *amour-propre*, and by implication the socialization process that occasions it, deviates from what is “natural.” Finally, aside from a broad hint in ‘i,’ the *Second Discourse* is silent regarding how love of self as a “natural sentiment” could survive the nefarious socialization process long enough to be “directed in man by reason and modified by pity” so as to produce something apparently no less ‘unnatural’ than *amour-propre*, namely “humanity and virtue.” These three questions contain a fourth, one that I am by now persuaded is the most interesting of all for students of Rousseau: Why did this revolutionary modern thinker, who summarily rejected the “natural law” and “natural right” theories still prevalent in his own day, adopt as his criterion of individual and collective well-being “that which is in accordance with nature”? But our first three questions alone are handful; the fourth is for another day.

II

In Book IV of *Emile*, his modern *paideia*, Rousseau, who like Plato has been urging non-repressive principles and practices of child-rearing, maintains that our “natural” passions cannot be extirpated and should not even be inhibited or altered. A qualification, however, is immediately forthcoming:

But would it be reasoning well to conclude, from the fact that it is man’s nature to have passions, that all the passions we feel in ourselves and see in others are natural? Their source is natural, it is true. But countless alien streams have swollen it. It is a great river which constantly grows and in which one could hardly find a few drops of its first waters. Our natural passions are very limited. They are the instruments of our freedom; they tend to preserve us. All those which subject us and destroy us come from elsewhere. (212)

The argument continues, but we should linger for a moment over the last sentence. There are passions and passions, it seems. Only those which are

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not *per se* “natural” tend to be self-enslaving and self-destructive. “Natural” passions, since they help preserve and, as we shall see presently, even complete our natures, may be said to be self-liberating. This distinction is hardly a commonplace in the Christian West.

Affections are specifically different from *passions*. The former are related merely to feeling; the latter belong to the faculty of desire and are inclinations which render difficult or impossible all determination of the will by principles. The former are stormy and unpremeditated, the latter are steady and deliberate; thus indignation in the form of wrath is an affection, but in the form of hatred (revenge) (it) is a passion. ... while in an affection the freedom of the mind is *hindered*, in a passion it is *abolished*.

That is Immanuel Kant speaking, in the *Critique of Judgment* (29, tr. J.H. Bernard, Hafner, p. 112f). Rousseau, as we shall see, will basically have none of this — principally because of the mind-body dualism it presupposes and reinforces. He proceeds:

The source of our passions, the origin and principle of all the others, the only one born with man and which never leaves him so long as he lives, is self-love (*l'amour de soi*) — a primitive, innate passion, which is anterior to every other, and of which all others are in a sense only modifications. In this sense, if you wish, all passions are natural. But most of these modifications have alien causes... They alter the primary goal (self-preservation) and are at odds with their (own) principle. It is then that man finds himself outside of nature and sets himself in contradiction with himself. (212-213)

It is still less than clear what Rousseau understands by “nature.” But it is obviously his criterion for distinguishing between what fosters and what thwarts our development as human beings. As for what it means to be in contradiction with oneself, this will become clearer when we examine more closely the forthcoming *amour-propre* passage with which we began.

Rousseau continues:

The love of oneself (*l'amour de soi-même*) is always good and always in conformity with order. Since each man is specifically entrusted with his own preservation, the first and most important of his cares is and ought to be to watch over it constantly. And how could he watch over it if he did not take the greatest interest in it? (213)

What strikes me as impressive about this passage is how naturally (in yet another sense of this ubiquitous term) it accounts for the primacy of a first-personal *concern* in each of us, how it makes this primacy seem inevitable and even desirable — without implying or entailing in the least that this concern dooms us to first-personal *bias*. We begin to see why Kant's careful distinction would have seemed to Rousseau singularly unhelpful. One's natural love of oneself is in the first instance an instinct, not an affection. Yet it has from the first the steadiness and constancy Kant attributed to passion rather than affection. And there is nothing about it at any point that would of itself cause it to hinder, not to speak of abolish, "the freedom of the mind" — whenever such a faculty or capacity should begin to emerge.

Nevertheless, a passage closely following makes one wonder all over again whether Rousseau might not have warded off confusion had he saved the term 'passion' for developments posterior to the "state of nature."

... What fosters the well-being of an individual attracts him; what harms him repels him. This is merely a blind instinct. What transforms this instinct into sentiment — attachment into love, aversion into hate — is the intention manifested to harm us or to be useful to us. One is never passionate about insensible beings which merely follow the impulsion given to them. But those from whom one expects good or ill by their inner disposition, by their will — those we see acting freely for us or against us — inspire in us sentiments similar to those they manifest toward us. We seek what serves us, but we love what wants to serve us. We flee what harms us, but we hate what wants to harm us. (213)

Stopping just short of what was later to become Freud's conviction that the experiences of early childhood are decisive for the possibilities of maturation in adulthood, Rousseau now carries on his argument in the context of child psychology.

A child is therefore naturally inclined to benevolence, because he sees that everything approaching him is inclined to assist him; and from this observation he gets the habit of a sentiment favorable to his species. (213)

This "habit," when it is nurtured with some consistency by those who people the child's environment, sustains his "innocence" in this word's etymological sense: the non-noxious character of his spontaneous feelings toward them.² And here at last we find the outlines of an answer to the first of our questions. The natural instinct 'self-preservation' and/or the natural senti-

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ment 'love of oneself' come quite naturally to encompass those of our fellows who further our primary concern, and do so in two forms: we become attached to them in our weakness, and we become actively fond of them once we comprehend that they mean well by us. The suffering they alleviate in us out of pity and compassion quite naturally leads us to feel pity and show compassion when they suffer. What under favorable conditions ripens into benevolence is thus not only consistent with love of self but is a natural extension of it. One can even go so far as to identify innocence in Rousseau's "classical" sense of the term with being morally well-habituated.

III

Unfortunately, the converse is no less true: most of our corruption is the result of being morally ill-habituated.

But as he (the child) extends his relations, his needs, and his active or passive dependencies, the sentiment of his connections (*rappports*) with others is awakened and produces the sentiment of duties and preferences. Then the child becomes imperious, jealous, deceitful, and vindictive. If he is bent to obedience ((for Rousseau this is an unnatural way of rearing children)), he does not see the utility of what he is ordered (to do), and he attributes it to caprice, to the intention of tormenting him; and he revolts. If he is obeyed ((for Rousseau this is an equally unnatural way of raising children — namely to incubate in them, and then cater to, childish whims)), as soon as something resists him, he sees it as a rebellion, an intention to resist him. (Before long) he beats the chair or the table for having disobeyed him. (213)

Why is such behavior irrational and, in the most important of the several senses in which Rousseau uses the term 'nature,' unnatural? Because it is in principle self-destructive, and self-destructiveness is not the operative principle of any natural world or natural order with which Rousseau is familiar. It was this same fundamental conviction that had already led Rousseau to adopt as his inscription for the *Second Discourse* a suggestively circular sentence from Aristotle's *Politics* (I, 1): "We should consider what is natural not in things which are corrupt but in those which are well ordered in accordance with nature."

But we have now finished examining the textual foreground of our initial

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quotation from Rousseau. The very next words are already familiar to us.

Self-love (*l'amour de soi*), which regards only ourselves is contented when our true needs are satisfied. But *amour-propre*, which makes comparisons, is never content and never could be, because this sentiment, preferring ourselves to others, also demands others to prefer us to themselves, which is impossible. (213-214)

On the face of it, 'impossible' seems rather misleading here, since what Rousseau is describing is something we egoists do all the time. 'Self-contradictory' would seem to be more like it. *Amour-propre* is the height of self-preoccupation engendered by the most aggravating sense of self-loss. I act as though solipsism were the truth of my being even as all that matters to me is what others think of me. Supremely vain (by etymology *vanus*: empty), the fulfillment I seek from others is their emptying themselves by becoming supremely preoccupied with the emptiness that is me. On second thought, Rousseau is right after all: *amour-propre* is in an impossible situation; they live an impossibility. For their vanity, as he puts it most succinctly later in *Emile*, "demands everything and grants nothing." (V, 430)

Indeed, a society of *amour-propre* lives a *retrograde* existential impossibility. For the more that *amour-propre* asks of others what it as such cannot give — namely concern for existence other than one's own, which is the capacity of a self as distinguished from a mere ego — the more it will be dealt with in kind. The more one demands the less one gets: in such a society, this is as true for all as it is for one. If anything is misleading here, it is the term *amour-propre* itself. For what Rousseau has been analyzing ever since the *Second Discourse* (the individual infected with *amour-propre* lives "always outside of himself [and] only in the opinion of others" (II, 179) is really *amour-impropre* or *amour-exproprié*.³ We have now aswered in our second question. *Amour-propre* is unnatural, and the kind of society that entrenches it is corrupt and degenerate, because what they constitute is the antithesis of good order: an ever-widening spiral of self-contradictory and self-destructive feelings, attitudes, and activities which comes eventually to *seem* natural and to be taken for granted only because so few are able to escape its vortex.

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IV

There are those who might be tempted to suppose that this personal and social hell animated by *amour-propre* is the product of a modern-day Dante's overwrought, projective, paranoid imagination — that if Rousseau had had a competent psychoanalyst, his demon would have been exorcised, or at least unmasked as a figment. This is a temptation we might do well to resist. Rousseau gave the inmate of his inferno a name. He called him *le bourgeois* — and this time he did make it stick. Convinced that his Enlightenment predecessors and contemporaries had effectively completed the task of undermining the principles of the *ancien régime*, Rousseau devoted his critical energies to the question of who and what might come to replace it. The new bourgeois for whom Hobbes had proposed an all-powerful state was driven by fear of violence and death to seek his personal security at any price. As a freshly enfranchised property owner, this individual was heedless of Locke's feeble and abortive attempts to distinguish between what it means to appropriate (i.e. to make truly one's own) and what it is to expropriate (i.e. to arrogate what in the end one cannot make one's own). Petty, pretentious, slavish in the face of public opinion yet deaf to the legitimate claims of a common or public good, this bourgeois played the role of free and proud *citoyen* projected for him by the French *philosophes* only as a hypocrite and an impostor. Rousseau, whose commitment to the cause of human emancipation was second to none, set himself the task of conjuring up the image of a new human being who would not trash that cause.

The remainder of the passage in *Emile* that distinguishes *amour de soi* from *amour-propre* outlines what Rousseau thought needed to be done:

This is how the gentle and affectionate passions are born of self-love, and how the hateful and irascible passions are born of *amour-propre*. Thus what makes man naturally good is to have few needs and to compare himself little with others; what makes him essentially wicked is to have many needs and to depend very much on opinion. On the basis of this principle it is easy to see how the passions of children and men can be directed to good or bad. It is true that since they are not able always to live alone, it will be difficult for them always to be good. This same difficulty will necessarily increase with their relations; and this, above all, is why the dangers of society make art and care all the more indispensable for us (if we are) to forestall in the human heart the depravity born of their new needs. (214)

It is in *Emile* that Rousseau elaborates the principles and practices he believes can educate an uncorrupted child and prepare him for responsible

citizenhood. Here a very brief recapitulation should suffice. Beginning with Emile as an infant, Rousseau the governor responds with alacrity to his ward's real, physical needs, while pretending not to hear his capricious cries for attention: Emile must learn to trust but not to manipulate his elders. Raising him in bucolic surroundings, his discreetly watchful tutor encourages his young charge to follow his natural inclinations, to accept natural necessity, and to learn self-reliance through tempering his native curiosity with the rudiments of natural science. There is little idle time for indulging in the bogeys of an overwrought imagination, especially those that induce a terror of death and dying. And instead of being made to recite catechisms and memorize abstract moral preachments, he becomes accustomed to stand up for himself and to respect others by way of real-life situations that call for both. As a young adolescent, Emile is self-contained, happy, and whole. Spontaneously truthful, modest in his needs, and relatively carefree, he cherishes his independence and envies no one else's lot, not even the lot of those presented to him as heroes. And yet, having come to realize that he himself is by no means invulnerable to the suffering he sees all around him, he has also come naturally to be caring and kind.

Emile's wholeness, however, is short-lived. When his sexual passions awaken, his tutor (who has by now become his friend) faces a supreme challenge. He must somehow check their urgency by sublimating them without repressing them. Rousseau has not forgotten his own pedagogical principles:

One can hold on to the passions only by means of the passions. It is by their empire that their tyranny must be combated; and it is always from nature itself that the proper instruments to regulate nature must be drawn. (IV, 327)⁴

Having trained himself never to overlook a natural resource, Rousseau avails himself of the tendency in young lovers to romanticize the objects of their affection. He simultaneously stays and intensifies Emile's passion by inflaming his imagination with a poeticized ideal of womanhood — and by appealing to his pride (the kind of *amour-propre* of which even Emile is not free now) in refusing to settle for anything less. This sublimative distraction works so well that when Emile finally encounters an approximation to his ideal in the flesh and proceeds to court her, his mentor is able to lure him away from attempts at hasty consummation by convincing him that he is not yet worthy of or ready for such an ideal mate. And by the time he is, he is also ready for the responsibilities of citizenship. For by learning to suspend the immediate gratification of his appetites in favor of more abiding satisfactions, Emile has culti-

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vated in himself precisely the sort of general will that envisions and pursues the common good.

This, in skeletal form, is Rousseau's answer to our third question, namely how love of self as a natural sentiment might possibly survive and even triumph over the evils of socialization and, guided by reason and affected by compassion, issue in something like civic virtue. But a bit more needs to be said here. In one description of Sophie, Emile's betrothed, it is Rousseau himself who seems to be suggesting, as I did at the beginning of this essay, that *amour-propre* is ambiguous in nature, capable of running a gamut from unbrilled vanity at one extreme to fully justified self-esteem at the other.

(Sophie) is imperious and exacting. She would rather not be loved than be loved moderately. She has the noble pride based on merit which is conscious of itself, and wants to be honored as it honors itself. She would disdain a heart which did not feel the value of her heart, which did not love her for her virtues as much as, or more than, for her charms, and which did not prefer its own duty to her and her to everything else. She did not want a lover who knew no law other than hers. She wants to reign over a man whom she has not disfigured. It is thus that Circe, having debased Ulysses' companions, disclaims them and gives herself only to him whom she is unable to change.

(*Emile*, Book V, p. 439)

This passage, perhaps more than any other in Rousseau's writings, reads as though there can be after all an *amour-propre* recultivated into an *amour de soi-même*. And indeed what Rousseau professes to find in Sophie's character, which he did not help form, is what he insists will be found in that of his ward Emile's as well — at least once he is ready for her. This should come as no surprise. For if, under favorable pedagogical conditions, it is possible to redirect and refashion a budding social vice into a humane virtue, then Rousseau has discovered good ground for not capitulating, as most of the British empiricists and political economists so reluctantly felt compelled to do, to the psychology of the bourgeois ego with its *amour-propric* bent.

The main point here could be restated in terms of another distinction. *Amour-propre* is not Hobbesian "egoism," which could in principle focus on my real vs. delusory interests and could, in a more favorable social environment, grow into compassion and a well-ordered *amour de soi*. From where Rousseau looks, Hobbes at once confounded this "egoism" with the worst kind of *amour-propre* and compounded the two so as to vindicate the need for a single and total Sovereign. And Rousseau's critique of Hobbes — namely that the logic supporting the repressive Leviathan is predicated on this compounding and confounding of valid self-interest ("the natural state") with

vanity, violence, greed, and unconcern with the common weal⁵ (the Four Horsemen of civil society) — carries similar force against Locke and Adam Smith. They, the vanguard of the liberal opposition to Hobbes, tried to justify a viable bourgeois free market based on enlightened self-interest — as if this principle had not already degenerated beyond retrieval in precisely such a market society, a travesty of freedom in all but its most trivial form.

A word, finally, about narcissism, currently much in vogue as a sociological shibboleth rather than as a psychiatric category. It seems to me that in its present-day manifestations narcissism is typically neither *amour de soi* nor *amour-propre* — fashionable but one-sided and shallow invocations to the ancient myth of Narcissus to the contrary notwithstanding. For its part, the legend is richly ambiguous, so much so that in versions stressing the fair youth's fascination with the depth, beauty, and strangeness of the human image as such. Narcissus may be said to be unwittingly but authentically engaged in an act of *amour de soi*;⁶ while in versions where the accent is on Narcissus' primal discovery and eventual obsession with self, he is no doubt nearer to *amour-propre*, although even then the vanity is of an intensely personal and private rather than social nature. For our part, if narcissism is nowadays more widespread than it used to be, this could be prompted by a not altogether unhealthy satiety in response to decades of unrelenting social pressure on the individual to care passionately about an ever widening range of global, even galactic problems and perplexities which at the same time he is deemed ever more incapable of comprehending and addressing effectually. "Narcissism" as a defensive reaction to such a societally reinforced double bind might well be, in Rousseauian terms, a newly emergent form of *amour de soi-même*, or at least of *amour-propre à la Sophie*.

Department of Philosophy
University of Missouri

Notes

1. J.G.A. Pocock, in *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton, 1975, pp. 465f), argues that Mandeville had previously made much the same distinction, in different words.
2. It is interesting to note that the ancient Greek term for innocence, *euêtheia*, is compounded from the words for 'good' and 'habits.' Rousseau may well have been influenced in his own use of the term 'innocence' by the way in which Plato used in the *Republic* (Book III, 409a and *passim*) to designate habituation in goodness and even virtue rather than naïveté or lack of experience.
3. As I read it, Hegel's much-anthologized portrayal of a "life-and-death" struggle for mutual recognition in Chapter IV, A of the *Phenomenology* adopts, adapts, and seeks to resolve both from an individual and a social perspective the existential impasse of *amour-propre* as Rousseau had conceived it.
4. In retrospect, Rousseau had good reason to use the term 'passion' plurisignatively. Indeed, as he argues later on (V, 445), virtue itself can become one's ruling passion.

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5. Rousseau develops this critique of Hobbes most incisively in the *Second Discourse*, Part Two.
6. Ortega y Gasset, in *Man and People*, W.W. Norton, 1957, p. 126, promotes this version — too exclusively, in my opinion.

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POUR UNE AUTOPSIE DE L'IMAGINAIRE QUÉBÉCOIS: REGARDS SUR LA MOROSITÉ POSTMODERNE

Daniel Salée

Entre l'utopie et la morosité

Il n'y pas si longtemps encore, il semblait possible, voire légitime, à un observateur des pratiques politiques et culturelles québécoises d'affirmer que le Québec constitue le centre de l'imagination utopiste en Amérique du Nord. Entre le darwinisme social étatsunien et le libéralisme manqué du Canada anglais, le Québec, concluait-il, se retrouve au coeur d'une expérience culturelle et politique différente et dynamique, qui a réussi à prendre forme à l'extérieur de la triste monotonie de l'ordre social technologique nord-américain.¹

Aujourd'hui, il s'en trouverait bien peu pour être solidaires d'une telle affirmation. Il semble de bon ton de s'affliger plutôt sur le vide idéologico-politique dans lequel le Québec s'engonce, de déplorer ce qu'un sociologue identifiait tout récemment comme "le manque presque complet de vision progressiste synthétique, de projets novateurs à la fois stimulants pour l'imaginaire et possibles à réaliser, de contre-propositions articulées et ancrées vis-à-vis du contexte social actuel."²

Chacune de ces deux appréciations de la réalité contient une part de vrai. Personne niera l'impressionnante distance parcourue par la société québécoise dans sa course à la modernité. Course qui lui fit emprunter des itinéraires risqués et inattendus, mais qui la vit aussi effectuer les bonds les plus audacieux. Depuis *Le refus global*, le Québec a articulé une multitude de projets

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sociaux et accumulé des expériences politiques, idéologiques, morales et artistiques diverses qui ont transformé de manière radicale et stimulante l'imaginaire collectif. La spécificité tant de fois proclamée ne fut pas qu'une question de différence ethno-culturelle: elle s'affirma dans un bouillonnement de pratiques novatrices et libérantes, dans un vécu social qui n'a pas son pareil dans l'histoire récente du monde occidental. Pourtant, l'effervescence n'eut qu'un temps. C'est que la modernité ne s'est pas acquise sans déception, sans amertume. Depuis dix ans, on a assisté à l'apparition d'inquiétudes, d'incertitudes nouvelles. La confiance et l'enthousiasme des années précédentes se font faits violence devant l'échec du référendum, la crise du syndicalisme, la dénaturation du parti québécois, l'avortement des projets autogestionnaires et la trop difficile percée du féminisme et des autres mouvements d'émancipation.³ Bref, le fond de l'air est à la morosité.⁴ Panne de projets? Sans doute y a-t-il un peu de cela; mais aussi, et peut-être surtout, surconsommation de modernité.

La destruction des grands récits

La structure référentielle du Québec d'avant la Révolution tranquille repose largement sur un bagage idéal qui, suivant la formule de Jean-François Lyotard, pourrait être qualifié de "métanarratif".⁵ Le Québec d'alors pense, agit et s'informe selon un savoir qui puise aux grands récits constitutif d'un passé idéalisé. Traditions, fables, mythologies religieuses et croyances populaires produisent une culture unitaire et fondamentalement spéculative qui assure sans conteste la cohésion de la communauté nationale canadienne française. Une culture dont le rapport Tremblay estimait qu'elle participât d'un long processus d'hérédité psycho-biologique; une culture qui se doit donc aussi d'être protégée des influences extérieures susceptibles d'affecter son intégrité et de mettre en jeu sa pérennité.⁶

Alors que le projet socio-économique nationaliste des années soixante et soixante-dix, et l'État québécois, sa cheville ouvrière, se constituent pour assurer la protection des éléments moteur du corpus métanarratif (particularisme ethno-linguistique, spécificité historique), par un paradoxal retour des choses, les politiques de la révolution tranquille et des années subséquentes facilitent et accentuent l'intégration du Québec à la structure sociale et aux valeurs capitalistes nord-américaines. Témoins, les politiques économiques qui, dans le but de promouvoir les intérêts capitalistes locaux cherchent essentiellement, de Lesage à Lévesque, à établir des liens plus soutenus avec les éléments du grand capital nord-américain. Témoin aussi la grande réforme de l'éducation qui vise d'abord et surtout à répondre aux nouveaux besoins en ressources humaines qualifiées d'une société désormais entièrement absorbée par les impératifs de son insertion dans une économie capitaliste avancée. Témoins enfin, les politiques socio-sanitaires par lesquelles l'État québécois fait

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usage de sa nouvelle latitude administrative pour démanteler l'ancien réseau institutionnel ecclésiastique, créer des programmes déjà en vigueur ailleurs au pays et, en même temps, pour se mettre au diapason de la logique du capitalisme keynesien triomphant.

De même, malgré leur volonté maintes fois affirmée de renforcer la cohésion d'un groupe national supposé homogène, les politiques à contenu culturel ou nationalitaire contribuent bizarrement de leur côté à l'étiollement des assises socio-culturelles qui avaient jusqu'alors conservé au Québec son caractère distinct. Les grands actions d'affirmation politique et culturelle des années soixante et soixante-dix ne seront en définitive que paravent nationaliste à des manœuvres économiques continentalistes: jamais les politiques culturelles ou les victoires partielles sur le gouvernement central pour le contrôle de certaines juridictions ne contreviennent à la logique fondamentale des politiques économiques; l'établissement de liens politiques internationaux en dépit d'Ottawa ne sont que gestes symboliques qui n'altèrent en rien la dynamique économique de dépendance continentale.

Plus paradoxales encore sont les politiques linguistiques des années soixante-dix qui, tout en démarquant le Québec comme communauté politique et culturelle, satisfont et désamorcent à la fois l'émotivité nationalitaire et émancipatoire qui les avaient suscitées. La francisation économique du Québec rendra acceptable la présence du grand capital nord-américain et fera du français lui-même le véhicule complice de sa philosophie sociale techniciste.⁷

Les politiques linguistiques bouclent en quelque sorte du procès de destruction des grands récits au Québec. D'abord, en favorisant l'intégration sociale et culturelle des francophones et des non-francophones, elles ont inévitablement exposé le groupe francophone à un bagage psycho-culturel qui n'était pas le sien, altérant par le fait même la "pureté" de son propre bagage et le forçant éventuellement à en revoir les termes. Cela vaut aussi, à l'inverse, pour le groupe non-francophone; mais eu égard aux attentes du projet nationalitaire québécois, la transformation de l'imaginaire que supposent les interactions inter-culturelles revêt une signification plus spéciale. L'inattendu, c'est que le français se soit fait à travers ces politiques le mode de communication d'une structure conceptuelle et référentielle, d'un univers langagier et, plus globalement, d'une *Weltanschauung* qui, pour l'essentiel, étaient restés étrangers à une grande partie de la population québécoise francophone. L'anglais est longtemps demeuré la voie d'accès exclusive à la modernité techniciste du capitalisme, l'unique moyen aussi de profiter de ses "bienfaits". En transcendant les frontières de l'échange informel (quotidien) dans lesquelles il avait été confiné, en s'imposant comme moyen de communication formelle (économique), le français a assimilé le langage de la modernité et l'a fait sien, partageant ses critères, et surtout, sa logique. Désormais, ainsi que l'a noté Jean-Jacques Simard, "le langage du pouvoir n'est plus le même.

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Les préceptes et les lois attribués à Dieu (cèdent) devant les valorisations inspi-
rées des succès même de l'industrie capitaliste."⁸

La tentation du technicisme l'a emporté. Et avec elle surgit la conviction
que seule l'imagination rationnelle et technocratique fût en mesure de répon-
dre aux aspirations collectives. Le récent désir obsessionnel de prendre le vi-
rage technologique⁹ représente la manifestation ultime de cette conviction.
Certes, les grands programmes socio-économiques des dernières décennies
participaient à n'en pas douter d'un motif initial louable, celui d'humaniser le
capitalisme, de créer une société meilleure, plus généreuse, à la mesure de
l'homme. Le discours sociologique nouveau témoignage alors largement de
cette intention et son influence intellectuelle s'est faite sentir dans la mise en
oeuvre des grands programmes.¹⁰ En cours de routes toutefois, l'intention
s'est prise au piège d'un langage qui la dépasse, d'un langage où "planifica-
tion", "développement", "efficacité", "productivité" et "performance" sont
les mots-clé. Un langage qui organise et programme l'homme plus qu'il ne le
libère vraiment.¹¹

Voilà en quelque sorte le fin mot de la morosité actuelle. Tout comme l'en-
trevoiaient déjà les sociologues les plus terre-à-terre de l'avant-référendum,
on s'aperçoit aujourd'hui que "malgré les cris nationalistes et les chants d'un
peuple qui, reprenant pied sur la terre ferme de l'histoire, a repris la parole, le
résidu le plus concret, le plus palpable du changement renvoie l'image d'une
société qui n'a fait que rejoindre le chenail principal creusé par la civilisation
américaine et le capitalisme occidental."¹² Pas si spéciale que ça, finalement,
la spécificité!

Mais cette "lente décantation des utopies"¹³ n'est-elle pas tout simplement
le résultat d'une évolution irréfutable vers la condition postmoderne? Vers
cet état de société où l'imaginaire a perdu le sens des savoirs traditionnels,
aliéné par une quête paradigmatique dont on contrôle mal l'itinéraire.

La transe moderniste des dernières décennies s'est alimentée à la source
des grands récits: c'est d'abord dans l'adhésion à une culture passéiste que
l'imagination nationalitaire et émancipatoire à l'origine de cette transe s'est ar-
ticulée. Pendant le passage à la modernité, l'imaginaire québécois s'est ex-
primé en un discours polymorphe, mélangeant les niveaux de langage et
jonglant avec les référents les plus divers. L'utopie humaniste, bien que d'in-
spiration métanarrative, a néanmoins puisé pour se réaliser dans le système
langagier et conceptuel de la scientificité et du technicisme. Participant de l'ir-
résistible mouvement du capitalisme, ce dernier a tiré profit de cette interpé-
nétration en s'appropriant les métarécits pour justifier sa présence et son
hégémonie grandissante dans l'imaginaire collectif. Par technocrates interpo-
sés, il a réussi à "canaliser du même coup le nationalisme traditionnel et une
volonté collective réelle de prendre le monde à bras le corps."¹⁴ Dérive de
l'utopie, donc, qui en pariant sur une modernité qu'elle ne définissait pas et

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qu'elle empruntait ailleurs, s'est implosée, transcendée par la modernité elle-même, désintégrée dans un univers idéal où prime à jamais la rationalité techniciste. Le péquisme johnsonniste représente la théorie et la pratique par excellence de cette dérive.

La morosité actuelle participe de ce constat. Constat d'autant plus dramatique et difficile à accepter que les porteurs de l'utopie se sont aussi faits bien souvent les porteurs du projet techniciste, articulant l'un à l'autre, croyant que celui-ci rendrait possible celui-là. C'était oublier la nature éminemment contradictoire, par définition, des deux projets et qu'en bout de piste, l'un excluait inévitablement l'autre. C'était aussi peut-être faire la sourde oreille à une leçon de l'histoire que Luc Bureau a admirablement bien rendue: "Plus les hommes érigent des cités imaginaires parfaites, plus ils sont prêts à sacrifier et à piétiner leurs cités réelles."¹⁵

La réification des projets nationalitaires et d'émancipation

Le nationalisme a servi de point d'ancrage à l'imaginaire québécois. D'une manière quasi-obsessionnelle, le verbe sociologique¹⁶ et l'imagination culturelle s'y sont accrochés; souvent pour le plus grand bénéfice de la conscience collective. Aujourd'hui, la question nationale s'estompe dans les vapeurs d'un discours politique sulfureux qui en a, pour ainsi dire, blanchi la substance. Du coup, la parole et les pratiques émancipatoires surgies dans la foulée du nationalisme subissent un sort similaire. L'État se les est approprié en les institutionnalisant et en les moulant suivant les impératifs technicistes et les critères performatifs de la rationalité moderniste¹⁷ qu'il a d'ores et déjà fait sienne. À la résistance de ceux qui se sentent trahis par ses méthodes de nivellement et de dénaturation du projet émancipatoire, il oppose une fin de non-recevoir et discipline les récalcitrants.¹⁸

En adhérant au processus civilisationnel occidental moderniste, explique Gilbert Renaud¹⁹, le Québec a dû nécessairement se conformer à de nouvelles règles de jeu. Règles qui, pour l'essentiel, redéfinissent le social par la désintégration de l'espace communautaire traditionnel et des rapports d'interdépendance qui le meublent. Démarche qui ici prend un tour contradictoire: alors que le nationalisme articule l'idée de la communauté, les politiques socio-économiques qui opèrent en son nom récusent pourtant sa logique surannée et la nient. L'organicité sociale que suppose un projet nationalitaire ou tout autre projet de type communautaire — organicité qui, à l'évidence caractérise la société québécoise jusqu'au début des années soixante — s'est progressivement désagrégée au Québec sous l'effet de la sacralisation de la raison techniciste/productiviste individualisante. Sans cette organicité, le projet nationalitaire et les projets émancipatoires qu'il stimule tournent à vide. Dans une structure relationnelle où les rapports sociaux sont marqués au coin du productivisme, le sujet social se transmue en *homo economicus* pour qui le

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seul échange qui compte est l'échange des objets et, éventuellement, des symboles que peuvent représenter les objets. Réification du sujet (commodification du travail salarié) et dévalorisation du social (individualisation du sujet) posent les assises d'un système référentiel qui ne peut que trivialisier le projet nationalitaire. Dans la foulée puissante et irrésistible de la raison techniciste, le nationalisme québécois est devenu un objet. Fétiche trop rationalisé, rendu hyper-réel, le projet nationalitaire s'est mu en un produit de consommation ("On est six millions, faut se parler!") clamait une annonce de bière au milieu des années soixante-dix) et ainsi banalisé voit son contenu émancipatoire se dégrader. Imperceptiblement, mais sans rémission, il se fait monnaie d'échange pour imposer un mode civilisationnel qui est en réalité son antithèse.

Le nationalisme québécois s'est prétendu libérateur parce que animé par une volonté d'émancipation économique. Mais en articulant aux charnières de la raison économique son *mordus operandi*, il s'est doté d'un État qui s'est évertué à planifier, coordonner, prévoir et uniformiser la vie collective selon les critères de l'ordre social moderniste; comme pour compenser la rupture de l'interdépendance traditionnelle; comme pour réinventer, artificiellement, l'organicité perdue. Ce faisant, la rationalité technocratique dont s'est réclamé et se réclame encore cet État n'aura réussi à toutes fins utiles qu'à imposer un simulacre de société. Forcé par la raison techniciste/productiviste qui, poussée à l'ultime limite de sa logique atomisante gruge jusqu'à l'a défiguration complète le collectif, l'État simule le social.²⁰ Simulation qui abstrait le social ou qui, du moins, propose une socialité synthétique par laquelle l'individu ne se sent plus concerné: il y participe parce qu'il n'a pas le choix, mais sans conviction et de l'extérieur parce qu'il sait que le réel n'existe plus. Simulation aussi qui s'inscrit à l'inverse d'un véritable projet de libération puisque l'État et le nouveau pouvoir qu'il incarne règlent la vie collective, "dicte(nt) dans leurs moindres détails les habitudes de vie conformes à un fonctionnement social rationel et productif."²³ En misant sur un État qui nie l'organicité vitale de la communauté, le nationalisme et autres émancipants se sont voués à l'échec et à l'autodestruction. Sans le vouloir sans doute, mais le résultat final ne se dément pas: simulation, donc, qui ne peut être que productrice de désenchantement, de cynisme et de morosité.

La morosité et le refus: la nostalgie ne sera plus ce qu'elle était

Pourtant, bien qu'un projet clair soit encore à formuler, ici et là il est possible de voir sourdre un discours posé, dépouillé des aphorisme lyriques auxquels le verbe nationalitaire avait habitué. Un discours d'émancipation, bien sûr, conscient des limites des anciens projets d'affranchissement et des pièges qui les guettent — et la tentation du pouvoir n'est pas le moindre. Un discours

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qui allie désormais plus nettement la libération individuelle à la libération collective.

La tâche de l'écrivain a toujours été en quelque sorte de maintenir une distance toujours difficile (à la limite intenable) avec le réseau du Sens, du National, du Pouvoir. Dans la conjoncture québécoise actuelle, il me semble qu'il se doit, à la fois, et dans une tension ravivée, de combattre pour cette reconnaissance politique du fait québécois, son auto-détermination (...) tout en poursuivant le refus radical que cette reconnaissance recherchée ou trouvée ne se gèle en un endroit imposé du savoir, des comportements, de la culture. Il doit parier non seulement pour une libération de la "mémoire collective", mais aussi et surtout pour la libération de cette mémoire individuelle dans tout ce qui l'enracine obsessivement à un Sol où les défunts lui lèguent leurs inhibitions et leurs culpabilités.²²

C'est François Charron qui s'exprime, un des chefs de file de la nouvelle poésie québécoise. Le fait est d'ailleurs indicatif des sources du nouveau discours: encore une fois, il faudra se tourner vers les poètes, écrivains, artistes, penseurs et autres créateurs pour trouver les linéaments d'un imaginaire novateur. Faut-il s'en surprendre? Borduas et les automatistes avaient déjà marqué la piste à suivre en ce sens. L'artiste-prophète, par une lucidité à fleur de peau, éclaire une quotidienneté fade: *Le refus global*, dénaturé dans certains quartiers par la récupération technocratique, reste encore vivace comme état d'esprit. La littérature et le geste artistique d'avant-garde qui s'affirment dans l'acte déconstructeur disent le refus des esthétiques bourgeoises et, du même coup, le refus de la société programmée: va pour la modernité, mais pour une modernité qui ne cherche pas à nous flouer. La parole créatrice n'est pas dupe; elle a bien vu le simulacre et n'entend pas s'y laisser prendre. L'intention s'affiche d'une certaine transparence en tout cas chez Nicole Brossard:

ici s'arrêtent les effets de la simulation
car je veux l'intervention plausible, émoi,
questionnement. Face à la prose comme à
l'histoire pouvant susciter le nombre et les
sécrétions du corps, de la structure tout
un rythme dans la voie des mots de vive voix
de l'écho: les musiques d'arôme à une épo-
que où la proximité de la partenaire excite
en moi le texte, une autre forme de résistance
et de défaillance ainsi au moment même où
va s'accomplir la transformation (l'écriture)

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le rituel se pose toujours comme une simulation chaque fois plus précisément de sa réalité²³

Derrière l'imagination poétique se profile une imagination sociologique branchée sur l'élaboration du sens à donner aux pratiques qui permettraient de réapproprier le social. Les récents écrits de Marcel Rioux, par exemple, posent à leur manière les assises théoriques d'une praxis de rupture avec une technologie envahissante.²⁴ Le message est clair: il faut "revenir vers le concret de la personne, de la communauté et de la cité dans tout ce qu'elles comportent de richesses, de possibles, et qui peuvent chacune être considérée 'comme totalité de manifestations humaines de la vie'."²⁵ Il faut donc "promouvoir l'appropriation par l'homme de sa propre nature"²⁶, contrairement à la rationalité productiviste qui a toujours visé l'appropriation de la nature et le développement des forces productives.

Sans être encore très nombreux, des sites de cette réappropriation émergent et persistent au-delà du temps²⁷ en dépit d'obstacles posés par la raison dominante qui tend à les déconsidérer sans vergogne. Le mouvement féministe notamment, malgré une existence souvent remise en question par le pouvoir patriarcal dominant, réussit tout de même à s'insinuer dans le champ politique en proposant un modèle culturel de relations sociales et politiques qui rompt de manière significative avec les pratiques antérieures. Par ses revendications spécifiques (travail domestique salarié, autonomie/contrôle du corps féminin, etc.) et des revendications qui font appel à des valeurs fondamentales de la vie humaine (protection de la planète, respect de la nature, qualité de la vie, qualité de sa reproduction comme fonction économique essentielle, égalité des rapports humains, respect de la différence)²⁸, le mouvement des femmes s'élève au-dessus de l'étroit et contraignant schéma techniciste/ productiviste.

En fin de compte, la morosité s'insinue peut-être comme une posture plus positive qu'il n'en paraît. Devant le nihilisme niveleur de la condition postmoderne, elle se pose comme une résistance, comme un refus existentiel du pouvoir déshumanisant de la science et de la technique. Par-delà la déception et la tristesse, la morosité peut se faire réflexion critique sur le mouvement contradictoire utopie/technique. Elle n'est pas gémissements nostalgiques sur un passé idéalisé, mais bien volonté de renégocier la modernité selon des paramètres à redéfinir. Attendons pour cela la suite de l'histoire.

Science politique
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Notes

1. Arthur Kroker, "The Cultural Imagination and the National Questions", *Revue canadienne de théorie politique et sociale*, 6, 1-2 (hiver/printemps 1982), p. 5.
2. Eric Alsène, "Face au changement", *Possibles*, 10, 2 (hiver 1986), p. 14.
3. Gabriel Gagnon, "Faire une revue", *Possibles*, 10,2 (hiver 1986), p. 59.
4. La morosité chez les intellectuels québécois est le thème de fond articulé par les textes de la revue *Possibles*, 10, 2 (hiver 1986). Chacun ressent différemment cette morosité, mais on semble bien s'accorder sur son existence.
5. Jean-François Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne*, (Paris: Les éditions de Minuit, 1979).
6. Sur cette question, voir William D. Coleman, *The Independence Movement in Quebec, 1945-1980*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), chapitre 3.
7. Les arguments présentés dans ce paragraphe et dans le paragraphe précédent sont repris de *Ibid.*, chapitre 4-7.
8. Jean-Jacques Simard, *La longue marche des technocrates*, (Montréal: les éditions coopératives Albert Saint-Martin, 1979), p. 45.
9. Voir Louise E. Fortin, "La politique technologique québécoise". *Politique*, 8, (automne 1985), pp. 23-44.
10. Voir M.A. Weinstein, *Culture Critique, Fernand Dumont and New Quebec Sociology*, (Montréal: New World Perspectives, 1985); Guy Rocher et al., *Continuités et ruptures*, (Montréal: Presse de l'Université de Montréal, 1984).
11. Voir sur cette idée les ouvrages de: Simard, *op. cit.*: Gilbert Renaud, *À l'ombre du rationalisme*, (Montréal: Les éditions coopératives Albert Saint-Martin, 1984); Luc Bureau, *Entre l'Eden et l'utopie*, (Montréal: Québec-Amérique, 1984).
12. Simard, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
13. Gagnon, *op. cit.*, o, 59.
14. Simard, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.
15. Bureau, *op. cit.*, p. 222.
16. Daniel Salée, "L'analyse socio-politique de la société québécoise: bilan et perspectives", dans Gérard Boismenu et al., *Espace régional et nation. Pour un nouveau débat sur le Québec*, (Montréal: Boréal Express, 1983), pp. 15-49.
17. Frédéric Lesemann, *Du pain et des services*, (Montréal: Les éditions coopératives Albert Saint-Martin, 1978); Gérard Bergeron et Réjean Pelletier (dir.) *L'État du Québec en devenir*, (Montréal: Boréal Express, 1981).
18. Carol Levasseur, "De l'État-providence à l'État disciplinaire" dans Bergeron et Pelletier, *op. cit.*, pp. 285-330.
19. La formulation et les concepts du reste de cette section empruntent à Renaud, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-226 en particulier.
20. C'est ce phénomène que Jean-Jacques Simard, notamment, illustre par son analyse des politiques de restructuration économique-spatiale dans l'est du Québec (*op. cit.*, chapitre 2-3). L'État fit intervenir des savoirs professionnels qui, quoique bien intentionnés, détruisirent l'organicité originelle de communautés en suggérant des plans de redressement qui dénaturèrent la dynamique communautaire de la région. C'était en quelque sorte reprendre avec du fil de soie un tissu social fabriqué dans la jute.
21. Renaud, *op. cit.*, p. 213.
22. François Charron, "La passion d'autonomie: Littérature et nationalisme", *Les Herbes rouges*, nos. 99-100, p. 44. Cité par Nicole Gauvin, "Le Québec malgré tout", dans N. Gauvin et J.M. Klinkenberg (dir.), *Trajectoires: Littérature et institutions au Québec et en Belgique francophone*, (Montréal et Bruxelles: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal et Labor, 1985), p. 26.
23. Nicole Brossard, "simulation" dans N. Brossard (dir.), *Les stratégies du réel*, (Montréal et Toronto: NBJ et Coach House Press, 1979), p. 164.
24. Voir Ray Morrow, "Marcel Rioux: Critiquing Quebec's Discourse on Science and Technology" *Revue canadienne de théorie politique et sociale*, 10, 1-2 (hiver/printemps, 1986), pp. 151-173.

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25. Marcel Rioux, "Remarques sur les pratiques émancipatoires dans les sociétés industrielles en crise" dans Jean-Pierre Dupuis et al., *Les pratiques émancipatoires en milieu populaire*, (Québec: Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, 1982), p. 54.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
27. Gabriel Gagnon, "Les pratiques émancipatoires collectives en milieu populaire québécois" dans Dupuis et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 123-145.
28. Claire Duguay et Micheline De Sève, "Tant d'amarres à larguer: une analyse des pratiques du mouvement des femmes", *Politiques*, 5 (hiver 1984), pp. 51-73. Voir aussi Diane Lamoureux, *Fragments et collages*, (Montréal: Éditions Remue-Ménage, 1986).

CHANGEMENTS SCIENTIFIQUES ET TRANSFORMATIONS DU POUVOIR: LES SCIENCES SOCIALES AU QUÉBEC

Michel Leclerc

Guy Rocher & al, *Continuités et ruptures*, (Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1984).

Du temps où les sciences sociales québécoises ne possédaient qu'une histoire, on n'invoquait guère que leurs finalités internes pour justifier leur existence. Aujourd'hui elles ont intégré le circuit des échanges économiques, de telle sorte que leur légitimité n'est plus strictement limitée aux frontières du savoir et qu'elles doivent répondre de leur valeur d'échange. Mais cette nouvelle assise économique paraît bien fragile. En 1983, par exemple, les dépenses brutes de R-D en sciences humaines au Canada totalisaient 459 millions \$. Somme impressionnante certes, mais infime en regard des dépenses affectées aux sciences naturelles au titre de la R-D, lesquelles équivalaient à près de 5 milliards \$. En termes relatifs, pourtant, la part des sciences humaines dans l'effort global de recherche au Canada n'a cessé de s'amenuiser au cours de la décennie précédente, passant de 11,9% en 1971 à 8,5% en 1983, soit une réduction égale à 28,6%¹.

En dépit d'un poids relatif en continuelle régression, l'importance économique des sciences sociales suffirait à justifier qu'on les scrute à nouveau. Au

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Québec, la réflexion sur le sujet n'est pas nouvelle et a déjà donné lieu à un éventail considérable de travaux². La réflexion collective sur le sujet fait également partie de nos traditions intellectuelles, en particulier depuis la parution en 1953 des *Essais sur le Québec contemporain* regroupés par J.-C. Falardeau dans le cadre d'un colloque de la Faculté des sciences sociales de l'Université Laval qui devait mettre en lumière la nature des changements sociaux engendrés par l'industrialisation et l'urbanisation de la société québécoise.

En 1962, à l'occasion de son premier colloque, la revue *Recherches sociographiques* fit paraître à son tour *Situation de la recherche sur le Canada français*, lequel rassemblait les textes de communication esquissant "un diagnostic de l'état des travaux dans les divers domaines de la recherche"³. Récemment, à l'occasion de son vingt-cinquième anniversaire de fondation, *Recherches sociographiques* renouait avec sa propre tradition en publiant *Situation de la recherche 1962-1984*,⁴ premier volume des communications présentées lors d'un colloque tenu à Québec en septembre 1984 et dont le thème central s'inscrivait dans le prolongement du colloque inaugural de 1962.

Un peu plus tôt, soit en octobre 1981, la Société Royale du Canada tenait au Mont-Gabriel un colloque réunissant une cinquantaine de praticiens des sciences sociales, invités à échanger leurs points de vue sur le thème: "Continuité et rupture — Les sciences sociales au Québec". Selon le sociologue Guy Rocher, qui fut l'un des organisateurs de cette rencontre, le "colloque du Mont-Gabriel" poursuivait un double objectif: 1. instaurer "un moment de dialogue entre les quatre générations de chercheurs et de professeurs qui, des années trente aux années quatre-vingt, ont ouvert et étendu le chantier des sciences humaines au Québec et 2: dégager de la confrontation des témoignages "une perception plus raffinée, plus subtile, plus pénétrante de l'interaction qui s'établissait entre les idées et les recherches en sciences humaines et l'évolution économique, sociale et politique de la société québécoise dont elles émanaient ou à laquelle elles s'adressaient" (pp. 7-8).

De ce colloque sont issus deux volumes regroupant trente-quatre textes de trente-six auteurs différents et totalisant plus de six cents pages. Tour à tour inventaire, analyse rétrospective, bilan, témoignage personnel, réflexion critique, ce document constitue, indépendamment de la diversité et du caractère forcément disparate de l'ensemble, une somme précieuse pour notre connaissance des sciences sociales dans la société québécoise.

Compte tenu de l'espace dont nous disposons, il est à toute fin pratique impossible de dresser un compte-rendu fidèle et équitable d'un ouvrage aussi fragmenté et dont, par surcroît, la subdivision en quatre sections thématiques (1. "L'histoire par ceux qui l'ont faite"; 2. "Les pratiques disciplinaires: unité ou diversité"; 3. "Les pratiques sociales: sur les chantiers ouverts"; 4. "Les perspectives critiques; quelques remises en question") a donné lieu à de

nombreux chevauchements internes entre des textes mal à l'aise dans cette découpe artificielle. Il nous a semblé préférable, dans ces conditions, de ne pas subordonner rigidement notre propre commentaire à un plan général déjà abondamment transgressé. Notre compte-rendu s'articulera donc autour de deux thèmes principaux: 1. continuités et ruptures; 2. science, pouvoir et société.

1. Continuités et ruptures

Reconnaissons d'emblée aux organisateurs du colloque le mérite d'avoir perçu à l'avance les multiples interprétations potentielles contenues dans ce thème: "continuités et ruptures entre les générations, entre les écoles de pensée, entre les thèmes majeurs adoptés par les chercheurs, entre le XIX^e et le XX^e siècle, entre l'Europe et l'Amérique entre l'homme et les sciences de l'homme, entre la société et les sciences sociales" (G. Rocher, p. 10).

Si l'axe des continuités et des ruptures peut en effet être décomposé sous la forme de semblables unités paradoxales, celles-ci se développent, en contrepartie, à l'intérieur d'un champ plus vaste de déterminations sociales, de telle manière que, comme l'a montré W.O. Hagstrom, la rupture sur le plan scientifique se double d'une rupture sur le plan social⁵.

Les sciences sociales au Québec fournissent de nombreux exemples de ce phénomène. Ainsi, la constitution d'un nouveau corps de scientifiques formé non plus selon la tradition académique européenne, mais selon les méthodes et les principes en vigueur dans les universités américaines, entraînera un renouvellement profond des programmes et des structures dans les sciences sociales. À la Faculté des sciences sociales de l'Université Laval, 1943 marque le retour d'un premier contingent de professeurs formé majoritairement aux États-Unis. Ceux-ci vont rompre à la fois avec le modèle de l'"amateurisme scientifique" hérité des années 1920 — caractérisé par l'hybridation des rôles et des idées⁶, la sous-spécialisation, l'indifférenciation disciplinaire, etc. — et avec la conception philosophique dominante qui régissait jusque-là l'enseignement des sciences sociales. L'autonomisation de la pratique scientifique par rapport à la philosophie thomiste ne sera possible cependant qu'avec la transformation des enjeux sociaux gouvernant l'organisation des structures universitaires et la vie des élites. Comme l'explique Marcel Fournier, le "moment où les sciences sociales entrent, un peu malgré elles et en dépit des nombreuses précautions (oratoires et institutionnelles) que prennent leurs responsables, en conflit avec la philosophie (thomiste) coïncide donc avec celui où ces "nouvelles" disciplines acquièrent un poids plus élevé dans la structure universitaire et deviennent, pour un plus grand nombre de membres de la nouvelle petite bourgeoisie, un capital culturel hautement valorisé"⁷.

La formation de base représente donc une source de discontinuité intellectuelle suffisamment structurante pour que l'économiste Pierre Fortin puisse

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affirmer que "parmi les membres de la jeune génération, les éléments de rupture avec les aînés ont nettement dominés les éléments de continuité" (p. 161). Si dans le domaine de la recherche économique cette rupture prit notamment la forme d'une "décanadianisation" des objets d'étude sinon, comme le suggère Fortin, d'une *désintellectualisation* (p. 163) de l'analyse économique au profit d'une conception plus pragmatique des faits, en histoire l'adhésion à de nouveaux paradigmes disciplinaires s'inscrivait ouvertement dans une critique plus large des institutions politiques et sociales.

Au début des années 1950, les membres de l'école historique de Montréal (Michel Brunet, Guy Frégault, Maurice Séguin) commençaient à définir les principes fondamentaux du "néo-nationalisme": "la nécessité de vivre, d'agir par soi, d'être autonome dans le plus grand nombre de champs collectifs possibles; et, ultimement, chez les plus radicaux, la nécessité de se déterminer soi-même librement dans les affaires politiques, économiques et culturelles pour devenir "normaux" (J.P. Wallot, p. 116).

Ces postulats constituaient non seulement une critique systématique de l'interprétation historique traditionnelle, dont ils dégonflaient certains mythes" (M. Brunet, . 46) imposés depuis la Conquête, mais conduisaient en outre à la contestation radicale d'un fédéralisme centralisé et tout entier fondé sur l'infériorisation structurelle de la minorité "canadienne-française". En somme, la rupture avec la pensée historique dominante servit de base à la formulation, à l'intérieur du champ disciplinaire lui-même, d'une nouvelle idéologie nationaliste.

Plus que tout autre phénomène sans doute, l'émergence d'une pensée nationaliste moderne au Québec, aussi bien en sociologie qu'en histoire, met en lumière le caractère baroque de toute tentative visant, à la façon de l'idéalisme philosophique de A. Koyré, à définir la science comme essentiellement *theoria* et possédant de ce fait une vie propre et une histoire immanente⁸.

La nationalisation du champ scientifique québécois montre à l'évidence que "l'institution scientifique est l'enclume sur laquelle on donne une forme viable aux valeurs souvent conflictuelles de la science et de la société"⁹. Les axiomes fondamentaux du nationalisme d'après-guerre se sont donc réconciliés et dissous, quinze ans plus tard, au sein de groupes et de fractions de classe en pleine ascension. "L'obsession nationalitaire" (J.J. Simard, p. 511), à l'intérieur du champ scientifique lui-même, représente moins une réfutation de l'idéologie conservatrice qu'un support rationnel visant à "modifier la division ethnique du travail scientifique et par là même de favoriser l'accès des francophones à des positions plus élevées au sein du champ scientifique canadien"¹⁰.

Les textes de ce colloque sur les sciences sociales au Québec ont surtout insisté sur les éléments de rupture et de discontinuité. Faut-il attribuer cette tendance au fait que certaines générations éprouvent le sentiment de n'avoir

“rien reçu en héritage”, selon la formule désabusée de Daniel Latouche (p. 191) ou, plutôt, à une sorte de volontarisme intellectuel rejetant toute forme d’ascendance idéologique ou toute appartenance à une orthodoxie passée?

En fait, alors que la génération de la Révolution tranquille se retranchait dans des stratégies de *fermeture* ou de *dénégation*, marquant ainsi une séparation explicite entre l’éthique scientifique et le sens commun, la génération précédente adoptait, *a contrario*, des stratégies destinées à reproduire les “apparences de la cumulativité”, lesquelles impliquaient la référence visible aux sources canoniques de leurs disciplines d’appartenance.¹¹

Dans cette perspective, les éléments de continuité cognitive sont spontanément associés à une forme plus ou moins définie de dépendance intellectuelle, tandis que l’axe des ruptures est invoqué de manière ostentatoire pour marquer son hétérodoxie intellectuelle.

Mais les réflexes collectifs de générations successives de praticiens des sciences sociales ne sont peut-être pas si aisément réductibles à ce genre de polarisation idéologique. Les sciences sociales qui, au cours des années 1930, s’organisaient autour du processus de sécularisation du discours savant, sont-elles intrinsèquement en rupture avec les sciences sociales des années 1960, toutes entières absorbées dans la nationalisation de ce discours? Ne s’agit-il pas, dans les deux cas, d’une volonté d’instaurer une cohérence commune entre une pratique discursive toujours incapable de se réfugier dans la seule revendication positiviste, et un ordre social qui tend naturellement à supprimer la distance symbolique qui sépare le discours savant de l’idéologie, comme si *la rupture (apparente) participait d’une continuité (sous-jacente et indéfinie)* (J. J. Simard, p. 516)?

2. Science, société et pouvoir

Les premières années des sciences sociales à l’Université Laval se résument en un mot d’ordre impérieux: “s’engager” (G.H. Lévesque, p. 57). Le premier colloque du département des relations industrielles en 1951 n’est pas simplement l’occasion d’amorcer une réflexion systématique sur les changements sociaux, mais plutôt un moyen de redéfinir l’ordre des relations entre l’université et la société, c’est-à-dire entre des savoirs spécialisés et des demandes sociales.

La légitimation des positions acquises à l’université passait donc par l’extension de la visibilité externe. Les moyens d’action utilisés prirent des formes diverses: création d’un *Bulletin des relations industrielles*, lutte pour la déconcessionnalisation des organisations syndicales, mise sur pied d’un Conseil supérieur de la coopération, laïcisation du corps professoral, etc. Mais ce que les textes des “pionniers” révèlent principalement c’est l’intrusion délibérée des sciences sociales dans le champ des luttes politico-sociales. Le cas des relations industrielles est exemplaire à cet égard, car il indique clairement com-

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ment certaines sciences sociales se sont posées non pas d'abord comme une source d'expertise technique, mais surtout comme des systèmes d'intervention sociale d'un genre nouveau. Ainsi, l'action menée par le département des relations industrielles en faveur du retrait d'un projet de Code du travail (bill no 5) présenté en janvier 1950 par Maurice Duplessis, ainsi que son soutien concret aux travailleurs de Murdochville à l'occasion de la grève de l'amiante s'inspiraient d'une "philosophie" qui prônaient l'"humanisation des rapports du travail".

L'aménagement des relations de travail, qui constituait l'enjeu central de l'intervention sociale de certains groupes d'universitaires dans le champ des relations industrielles, s'inscrivait dans le cadre de quelques libertés fondamentales: "liberté d'initiative, liberté d'entreprise, liberté d'expression, liberté d'association, démocratie politique" (G. Dion pp. 78-79).

La modernisation de l'appareil d'État transformera radicalement les relations entre le pouvoir politique et les praticiens des sciences sociales. Jusque là, les sciences sociales québécoises étaient demeurées sous l'influence d'un paradoxe sans solution: détentrice d'une "identité cognitive" récemment acquise et fortement variable selon les disciplines, elles apparaissaient dans l'ensemble désespérément dépourvue d'une véritable "identité professionnelle"¹², en dépit des efforts tentés ou des jugements *a posteriori* trop flatteurs (E. Bouvier, p. 144).

Le développement tardif de l'appareil bureaucratique avait engendré deux conséquences majeures pour les sciences sociales: premièrement, une forte détermination de la structure occupationnelle du système scientifique qui refoulait ses membres à l'extérieur des centres de décisions politiques de telle sorte que le statut de scientifique, chez les francophones en particulier, fut longtemps indissociable de celui d'universitaire¹³; deuxièmement, une sous-professionnalisation de l'activité scientifique, dans la mesure où le comportement professionnel peut être décrit, simultanément, par un haut niveau de savoir généralisé et systématique, une orientation explicite à l'égard de la communauté plutôt qu'envers les seuls intérêts individuels, un haut niveau de contrôle occupationnel à-travers des codes d'éthique intériorisés dans un processus de socialisation du travail, et enfin l'existence d'un système de récompenses matérielles et symboliques¹⁴.

Avec l'apparition d'un système technocratique moderne, l'aire de diffusion des sciences sociales s'élargit et se diversifie; à l'instant même ou l'intellectuel des sciences sociales abandonne son rôle d'intercesseur politique et de contempteur de l'idéologie clérico-nationaliste, il accède à la dignité d'*expert*, son savoir étant désormais perçu non plus comme le support savant des idéologies nouvelles, mais comme la source légitimante et rationnelle d'une planification politique indépendante¹⁵.

La révolution technocratique a également pour effet immédiat d'élargir le

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champ d'appropriation du pouvoir. Celui-ci, comme l'écrivait le sociologue Fernand Dumont au terme de la Révolution tranquille, "tend à devenir une sorte de monopole de la connaissance" en vertu d'un déplacement qui s'exerce "du pouvoir sur les personnes au pouvoir sur la connaissance et sur les valeurs"¹⁶. Les intellectuels des sciences des super-structures", selon la formule de Gramsci. Dès lors, les rapports entre le pouvoir et les agents de l'université cessent d'être des rapports fondamentalement critiques ou antinomiques; l'intellectuel québécois des sciences sociales, ne fût-ce que par l'intermédiaire des commissions d'enquête auxquelles il est convié, participe à l'exercice du pouvoir politique (G. Rocher, pp. 374-375) dont il est la représentation technique nécessaire.

L'insertion des diverses sciences sociales dans l'appareil d'État n'est pas un phénomène uniforme. Ce qui a été diagnostiqué par certains comme une "emprise sociologique sur les structures et les politiques de la technocratie québécoise" (M.A. Tremblay, G. Gold, p. 261), correspondait en réalité à une suprématie professionnelle de l'économie et de ses méthodes d'analyse, dont A. Raynauld conclura qu'elle "ne dictait aucune politique" (p. 393). Entre 1955 et 1966, par exemple, 37,3% des diplômés en sciences sociales recrutés par la fonction publique du Québec étaient détenteurs d'un diplôme en économie, tandis que les diplômés de sociologie représentaient seulement 10,3% de ce groupe, soit une proportion deux fois inférieure à celle des diplômés en relations industrielles¹⁷.

Les implications juridiques des problèmes sociaux et des décisions politiques ont tout naturellement rapproché le droit de l'appareil étatique. En revanche, "la place du droit dans l'université ne s'est donc pas acquise simplement, et son intégration n'est pas encore complète" (P. Mackay, p. 340). En tant que mode dominant de contrôle social, le droit est investi par l'État d'une sorte de mission séculière. Il échappe de ce fait aux procédures d'insertion habituellement observées dans les sciences sociales.

Dans une toute autre perspective, le cas de la criminologie s'est révélé un exemple type dans la redéfinition, amorcée aux débuts des années 1960, des rapports entre la science et le pouvoir politique. Dans cet effort de redéfinition, la criminologie est rapidement apparue comme la science sociale québécoise la plus ouvertement engagée dans l'action réformatrice de l'État. À l'origine des principaux changements effectués dans le domaine pénal et dans le champ de la politique criminelle, la criminologie québécoise a déterminé des options de politiques sociales. La mise en application de programmes sociaux de prévention et des réformes dans l'administration de la justice a suscité l'arrivée d'une "légion de fonctionnaires chargés d'administrer les services, les programmes tout nouveaux, sortis directement des livres des universitaires-chercheurs-réformateurs" (D. Szabo, p. 408). Discipline à vocation professionnelle, la recherche criminologique "s'est traduite, *ipso facto*, dans la créa-

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tion d'un champ d'action précis investi de fonctions spécifiques" (p. 409). L'institutionnalisation accélérée de la criminologie s'est faite cependant au prix d'accommodations difficiles: en tant que catégorie objectivante d'un système de justice pénal déterminé fondamentalement par le droit, "la criminologie fut accusée de pratiquer la répression "administrativo-thérapeutique" " (p. 410). En devenant l'allié, sinon l'appui symbolique de la répression thérapeutique de l'État dans le domaine pénal, la criminologie s'est mise à douter de son propre pouvoir et fournissait, malgré elle, la preuve que "dans une société technocratique (...), le pouvoir donné aux experts camoufle le fait que leur "savoir" repose toujours sur les paradigmes qui ont défini les problèmes que ce "savoir" étudie"¹⁸.

La croyance en "l'autorité de la science" et en "l'utilité sociale de connaissances" fut définitivement blessée. La génération des années 1970 prit conscience, parfois brutalement, de la formidable rigidité éthique de l'appareil d'État: le soutien accordé depuis une décennie aux sciences sociales apparaissait lié tout à coup aux conditions autonomes de la décision politique et de ses intérêts particuliers. À mesure que le jugement des scientifiques tend à coïncider avec celui des décideurs politiques, c'est-à-dire à intégrer à son propre raisonnement des éléments du discours politique, il tend à se désinvestir peu à peu de ce qui fondait à l'origine sa spécificité culturelle. Plutôt qu'une alliance émanant du consensus démocratique, le soutien étatique apparut rétrospectivement comme l'annihilation d'une liberté: "dans ces conditions, conclut le criminologue Denis Szabo, ce que les sciences sociales ont gagné en influence et en autorité bureaucratique, elles le perdent, par ailleurs, en termes de liberté et d'indépendance de jugement dans l'exercice de leur fonction critique" (p. 414).

Ce désenchantement des sciences sociales n'eut pas seulement pour objet la nature de leurs relations à l'État; ce fut aussi un désenchantement à l'égard de soi-même, issu d'une crise de la légitimité scientifique et de la découverte soudaine de l'impuissance relative de la science à établir des prévisions appuyées sur l'analyse rationnelle. La fin des espoirs prométhéens marquera également la disparition des apprentis sorciers. "Mais peut-être, s'interroge à ce propos D. Szabo, avons-nous pris les résultats partiels de quelques recherches insuffisamment testées pour de l'argent comptant avec le désir de faire contribuer notre science à l'oeuvre de la justice sociale! Nous sommes ainsi devenus, sans en être conscients, et surtout, sans y être préparés, les jouets (...) des diverses parties engagées dans de féroces et machiavéliques combats politiques" (p. 428).

Si l'on tentait de décrire schématiquement, dans la perspective que l'on vient d'évoquer, les modes d'insertion dominant des générations successives d'universitaires des sciences sociales dans le champ politico-social, on pourrait dresser le tableau suivant:

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1. la génération des pionniers (1930-1960): émergeant dans le champ du savoir sous la houppelande de l'universitaire humaniste, elle est publiquement engagée dans la critique des institutions politiques et sociales. Boudé par un État autoritaire et personnalisé qui le rejette à la périphérie de l'espace politique, l'intellectuel universitaire de cette génération occupe simultanément divers champs sociaux (scientifiques et extra-scientifiques), son influence culturelle s'exerçant dès lors bien au-delà de l'institution universitaire. Figure anti-weberrienne par excellence, l'universitaire de cette époque est d'abord un *intellectuel* engagé pour qui l'antinomie éthique de la responsabilité et de la conviction ne peut se résoudre par la seule neutralisation du discours savant;
2. la génération des "intellectuels organiques" (1960-1970); à l'ère du "narcissisme universitaire"¹⁹, l'influence culturelle des praticiens des sciences sociales emprunte les cheminements intéressés de la planification bureaucratique. Les universitaires de cette génération accèdent graduellement au positionnement central et stratégique de définisseurs légitimes et privilégiés de situation" (L. Maheu, p. 481). Toutefois, en concentrant ainsi leur action dans le champ du pouvoir et de l'université, c'est-à-dire en acceptant de soumettre l'application de leurs résultats au jeu de la décision politique, les universitaires de cette génération consentent du même coup à n'apparaître sur la place publique qu'à travers l'espèce de rayonnement indirect des réformes politiques qu'ils ont contribué à concevoir. Cette époque est donc celle de la marginalisation sur le plan social de l'intellectuel universitaire, désormais métamorphosé en "expert"
3. la génération du désenchantement critique (1970)-1980): l'ère du désenchantement marque la résurgence de l'universitaire comme intellectuel ou, plus précisément, l'apparition d'un nouveau type d'intellectuel dont N. Laurin-Frenette s'efforce de tracer l'univers (pp. 530-545). Armée d'une nouvelle grille sociographique qui rêve d'entreprendre "une réécriture de l'histoire nationale dans le langage des classes et de la lutte des classes" (pp. 539-541), cette nouvelle génération d'intellectuels universitaires exerce son magistère dans des lieux inédits: le syndicalisme universitaire bien sûr, mais surtout dans un cadre institutionnel distinct des formes académiques, celui des revues militantes (*Parti Pris, Socialisme, Chroniques, les Cahiers du socialisme*). En retrait partiel du champ politico-administratif, ces universitaires s'efforcent de démystifier

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l'idéologie technocratique qui entretient "au nom de la rationalité une forme déterminée de domination politique inavouée". Avec cette génération, l'intellectuel universitaire québécois entre dans l'ère de la visibilité restreinte.

En guise de conclusion

Nous n'espérons pas en entreprenant ce texte rédiger un compte-rendu exhaustif des "actes du colloque" **Continuité et rupture** de la Société Royale du Canada. Au moment de conclure on serait tenté, face à cette gigantesque "oeuvre ouverte", d'emprunter les mots des organisateurs et d'affirmer qu'"au terme de la lecture d'un ouvrage comme celui-ci, on doit reconnaître qu'il ne se prête à aucune conclusion" (p. 400).

Ajoutons tout de même que si l'objectif premier de cette entreprise, qui consistait à créer des conditions favorables de dialogue entre différentes générations de praticiens des sciences sociales, a pu être facilement réalisé, le deuxième objectif comportait des difficultés certaines puisqu'il impliquait un approfondissement qualitatif des connaissances sur les rapports entre les sciences humaines et la société québécoise. À cet égard, il faut bien reconnaître que la première section de l'ouvrage qui représente en volume environ le quart des textes rassemblés, n'ajoute rien de significatif au stock de connaissances accumulées. Les textes de cette série des "Itinéraires sociologiques" publiés il y a une décennie dans un numéro spécial de la revue *Recherches sociographiques*²¹. La même génération, sinon les mêmes acteurs parfois, ne peut engendrer, au plan strictement historiographique, qu'un seul et même discours. Si le débat a pu y gagner en authenticité, il a été par ailleurs incapable d'échapper à une certaine répétition. Les sections suivantes, en revanche, décrivent un panorama plus neuf, et c'est là sans aucun doute que réside la contribution la plus originale de cet ouvrage, puisqu'on y montre non seulement les discontinuités idéologiques entre les générations de "social scientists", mais aussi l'arrière-plan des luttes politico-sociales, l'éclatement des valeurs, la stratification graduelle du tissu social, l'intégration de la raison technique au discours politique, la réorganisation de l'activité professionnelle, l'envahissement bureaucratique, etc.

Cet ouvrage n'échappe pas, évidemment, au particularisme des ouvrages collectifs qui n'ont pas, préalablement, fait l'objet d'une planification coordonnée. Aussi, à côté de textes véritablement remarquables (D. Szabo) ou suggestifs (J.J. Simard), retrouve-t-on d'autres textes beaucoup plus faibles (J. Dufresne, D. Latouche), sinon carrément décevants (L. Courville), ou encore, des textes dont la forme et le contenu sont en totale rupture avec le reste de l'ouvrage (P. Bernard).

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Quant au mérite particulier de cet ouvrage, il consiste essentiellement à avoir démontré, une fois encore, mais à partir de la réflexion et du témoignage de ses principaux acteurs, que les sciences sociales québécoises ont contribué par à-coups, alliances, ruptures, retraductions diverses, illusions déçues ou espoirs réalisés, à façonner la culture d'une société et à la libérer, même incomplètement, des pouvoirs qui ont tenté de soumettre ou d'orienter son destin.

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Notes

1. Conseil des sciences du Canada, *La recherche en sciences sociales au Canada — Stagnation ou régénération?*, (Ottawa: Ministre des Approvisionnement et Services, 1985), pp. 34-35.
2. Soulignons à titre de références indicatives les quelques titres suivants: J.-C. Falardeau, *L'essor des sciences sociales au Canada français*, (Québec: Ministère des Affaires culturelles, 1964). M. Fournier, "L'institutionnalisation des sciences sociales au Québec", *Sociologie et sociétés*, 5, 1, 1973, pp. 27-59; M. Fournier et al., "Le champ scientifique québécois: structure, fonctionnement et fonctions", *Sociologie et sociétés*, 7, 1, 1975, pp. 119-130; M. Leclerc, *La science politique au Québec*, (Montréal: Éditions de l'Hexagone, 1982), pp. 57-94.
3. F. Dumont, Y. Martin (dir.), *Situation de la recherche sur le Canada français*, (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1962), p. 7.
4. "Situation de la recherche 1962-1984", *Recherches sociographiques*, 26, nos 1-2, 1985.
5. W.O. Hagstrom, *The Scientific Community*, (New York: Basic Books, 1963). Dans le même esprit, le criminologue Denis Szabo ("Révolution permanente ou éternel renouvellement: la criminologie en situation") souligne à sa manière ce mouvement parallèle de rupture: "C'est en rejetant "l'ancien" (et les anciens...) que l'on impose le nouveau (et surtout "les nouveaux...")" (p. 415).
6. J. Ben-David, R. Collins, "Social Factors in the Origins of a New Science: the Case of Psychology", *American Sociological Review*, 21, 4, 1966, pp. 451-466.
7. M. Fournier, "Les conflits de disciplines: Philosophie et sciences sociales au Québec, 1930-1960", *Philosophie au Québec*, L'univers de la philosophie 5, (Montréal: Bellarmin, 1976), pp. 207-237.
8. Cf. à ce sujet A. Koyré, "Perspectives sur l'histoire des sciences", *Études d'histoire de la pensée scientifique*, A. Koyré (dir.) (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), pp. 352-361.
9. R. Hahn, *The Anatomy of a Scientific Institution. The Paris Academy of Science. 1666-1803*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 10.
10. M. Fournier, L. Maheu, "Nationalisme et nationalisation du champ scientifique québécois", *Sociologie et sociétés*, 7, 1975, p. 101.
11. Sur les différentes stratégies d'autorité produites par le champ scientifique, voir P. Bourdieu, "La spécificité du champ scientifique et les conditions sociales des progrès de la raison", *Sociologie et sociétés*, 7, 1, 1975, pp. 114-116.
12. Sur ce paradoxe de l'institutionnalisation des connaissances scientifiques, voir A. Thackray et R.K. Merton, "On Discipline Building: The Paradoxes of George Sarton", *Isis*, 63, 1972, pp. 473-495.
13. Y. Lamarche, "Le champ intellectuel et la structure de ses positions: le cas de la Société Royale du Canada", *Sociologie et sociétés*, 7, 1, 1975 p. 151.
14. B. Barber, "Some Problems in the Sociology of the Professions", *Daedalus*, 1963, p. 672.
15. Voir à ce propos, D. Nelkin, "The Political Impact of Technical Expertise", *Social Studies of Science*, 5, 1, 1975, pp. 35-54.
16. F. Dumont, "Le sociologue et le pouvoir", *Le pouvoir dans la société canadienne-française*, F. Dumont,

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- J.P. Montminy (dir.), (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1966), pp. 19-20.
17. P. Gervais, *Les diplômés en sciences sociales dans la fonction publique du Québec*, thèse de maîtrise en science politique, Université de Montréal, 1970, p. 66.
 18. G. Fourez, *La science partisane*, (Paris: Duculot, 1974), p. 123.
 19. J. Godbout, "Des saucissons dignes de ce nom", *Possibles*, 10, 2, 1986, p. 96.
 20. J. Habermas, *La technique et la science comme idéologie*, (Paris: Denoël, 1973), Coll. Médiations, p. 5.
 21. *La sociologie au Québec*, Extrait de la revue *Recherches sociographiques*, volume XV, numéros 2-3, mai-décembre 1974.

RÊVE NOIR

Marcel Fournier

Michael Weinstein, *Culture Critique. Fernand Dumont and New Quebec Sociology*, Montréal, New World Perspectives, 1985.

L'ironie du sort veut que la première étude consacrée à Fernand Dumont, l'un des sociologues les plus importants de sa génération et des intellectuels les plus engagés, soit publié en anglais par la maison d'édition "New World Perspectives", sous la plume d'un professeur de philosophie d'une université américaine. Nul n'est prophète dans son pays! Encore une fois c'est à travers le regard de l'autre que nous prenons conscience de la valeur et de la qualité de l'oeuvre de l'un de nos intellectuels.

Mais de quel regard s'agit-il? À premier abord, la lecture que Michael A. Weinstein propose de l'oeuvre de Fernand Dumont étonne. Le seul titre de l'ouvrage associe ce professeur d'université et président d'un Institut de recherche sur la culture à la "culture critique" et en fait un des représentants de la "New Quebec Sociology" (dont les deux autres représentants seraient Marcel Rioux et Guy Rocher). Qui pourrait soutenir qu'il s'agit là de la "nouvelle sociologie québécoise"? Est-ce de la fausse représentation? La longue introduction que Michael Dorland et Arthur Kroker font de l'ouvrage de M. Weinstein risque par ailleurs de déconcerter le lecteur et de biaiser sa compréhension de l'oeuvre de Fernand Dumont. Leur stratégie, qui en est une de mise en valeur, consiste à mettre en relief le caractère *unique* de la société québécoise afin de mettre en évidence le caractère *original* de la production culturelle québécoise. Américain par la technologie, français par la culture intellectuelle et latin par l'émotivité, le Québec apparaît comme une "anoma-

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lie sociale” parce qu’il est une “société réelle” (avec de vraies familles!); son privilège — celui du “retard historique”? — est d’être passé en quelques décennies du “médiévalisme à la post-modernité” pour devenir “an innovative forum of new cultural possibilities in North America”. Pourquoi pas? Mieux vaut l’image d’un Québec à l’avant-garde que celle d’une société arriérée! Mais que vient faire Dumont dans ce décor?

Les auteurs utilisent aussi, pour illustrer le texte de présentation, quatre reproductions de tableaux du peintre automatiste Paul-Émile Borduas et publient une longue citation de son célèbre *Refus global*. “Artiste maudit”, Borduas se voit investi du rôle de prophète: il réalisera lors de son “exil” à Paris à la fin des années cinquante une série de tableaux qui sont “an eerie and ominous prophetic vision of the darkness within the Québec of the 1980s” (p. 18). Qu’y a-t-il de commun entre l’artiste des années quarante et cinquante et le sociologue des années soixante et soixante-dix? Tout, de la position sociale à l’idéologie, semble séparer ces deux intellectuels: l’un propose la rupture totale — “Au diable, la tuque et le goupillon”, —; l’autre suggère d’introduire le changement (projet) en maintenant une fidélité au passé (mémoire). Concédonc cependant que celui-ci partage avec l’auteur de *Refus global* la même attitude critique face à l’Entrée dans la Modernité. “Notre raison permet l’envahissement du monde, écrivait Borduas, mais d’un monde où nous avons perdu notre unité”.

Un même agacement apparaît à la lecture de chacun des chapitres de l’ouvrage de Michael A. Weinstein. D’abord, des titres énigmatiques: “prologue: Rêve Noir”, “The September Mood”, “Technology and Utopia”, etc. Seul celui d’“Ideology and Religion” nous amène sur le terrain familier des pratiques culturelles. Ensuite, pour étoffer l’analyse et lui donner de la profondeur, l’auteur établit ici et là des comparaisons, ou mieux des affinités, entre la pensée du Dumont et celles d’autres grands philosophes et penseurs: Heidegger, Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Gabriel Marcel, Ortega y Gasset, le philosophe canadien George Grant, etc. Enfin, parce qu’il faut bien situer Dumont dans l’ensemble flou de la pensée contemporaine, on lui attribue les titres de “Theistic existentialist” (p. 43), d’“explorer of absence” (p. 46), de “phenomenologist... guided by an existential account of sense and absence” (p. 63), de “penseur” (p. 81), d’“analyst and critic of the Quiet Revolution” (p. 83), de “practical philosopher” (p. 116), etc. Tout cela est très gentil, mais sur la base de ces divers indices, quelle image quelque peu précise peut-on se faire des positions théoriques et épistémologiques de Fernand Dumont? Et si nous sommes d’accord pour ranger le sociologue-philosophe-poète parmi les phénoménologues, faut-il aussi le considérer comme “existentialiste”? Mais s’il y a une influence dont M. A. Weinstein aurait dû parler, c’est celle du philosophe Mounier. “Le plus cher de (mes) maîtres a été très tôt, confie-t-il, Emmanuel Mounier. Je me répète souvent la

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profession de foi qui ouvre le gros *Traité du caractère*: "Nous n'avons pas seulement voulu traiter de l'homme mais combattre pour l'homme"¹.

L'approche que M. Weinstein adopte dans son étude de la pensée de F. Dumont est, il faut le souligner, particulière et échappe aux genres habituels: son ouvrage ne relève pas de l'histoire des idées et il ne s'agit ni d'une biographie intellectuelle ni d'une analyse sociologique. On n'y trouve aucune information sur l'itinéraire social (date, lieu de naissance, origine sociale), scolaire et professionnel et politique de Dumont.

La lecture que nous propose M. Weinstein peut être dite, si on veut lui trouver un qualificatif, *poético-philosophique*: non seulement la compréhension des écrits théoriques et épistémologiques de Dumont nécessite une connaissance de ses écrits poétiques, mais aussi la question centrale qui traverse son oeuvre est celle du sens dans les sociétés contemporaines. En cela, M. Weinstein n'a pas tort. "Si ce que je cherche a quelque unité, je ne veux pas, confie Dumont lui-même, la devoir à une spécialité mais à des interrogations dont il faut essayer de faire voir les diverses résonnances, fut-ce sous la forme d'un poème"². Et parmi ces interrogations, celle qui le préoccupe depuis son passage à l'école, est celle-là même de la place et de la signification du savoir. "Le passage à l'école, à la science m'aura toujours laissé mal à l'aise. De ce malaise, j'ai fait problème d'école et de science"³. Les champs d'intérêt de Dumont sont diversifiés, mais son orientation principale demeure épistémologique (avec une thèse de doctorat sur la *Dialectique de l'objet économique*). Et lorsqu'il touche à la sociologie, il s'agit d'une sociologie de la connaissance et de la culture.

M. Weinstein n'a pas non plus tort de mettre en évidence l'engagement religieux de F. Dumont: non seulement celui-ci est l'auteur d'un essai *Pour la conversion de la pensée chrétienne* (1964) mais aussi il fut le président d'une commission d'enquête sur la place des laïcs et l'Église (*L'Église au Québec: un héritage, un projet*, Montréal, Fides, 1971), et il collabora régulièrement à la revue *Maintenant* dirigée par des Dominicains. Le thème de l'"absence" auquel M. Weinstein accorde une très grande importance n'est pas purement épistémologique, il est aussi, comme on peut le voir dans l'essai récent de Pierre Vadeboncoeur, *L'absence* (Montréal, Boréal Express, 1985), métaphysique et étroitement relié à l'expérience religieuse. Et dans un débat à propos de *L'Anthropologie en l'absence de l'homme*, Dumont donnait à la question "Que faut-il faire de l'absence?", la réponse suivante:

Mes commentateurs me rappellent que c'est là, à tout considérer, la question finale. Pourquoi le cacherais-je, puisque l'on sait qu'en marge d'une recherche qui se veut anthropologique, j'ai beaucoup écrit sur la théologie et ses alentours? À ma modeste place, j'aurai confectionné, à l'exemple de Pascal, un *Traité du vide*, et j'espère bien

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continuer à explorer l'absence. Par ailleurs et en contrepartie, je ne cesse pas, moi non plus, de m'interroger sur cet "étrange secret dans lequel Dieu s'est retiré" dont parle Pascal dans son admirable lettre d'octobre 1656 à Mademoiselle de Roanez"⁴

Depuis *Le lieu de l'homme* (1968), F. Dumont poursuit sa réflexion sur l'esprit de notre temps et interroge l'état actuel des savoirs et de la culture: pour cet intellectuel qui aurait aimé vivre au XIX^e siècle avec les Michelet, Sainte-Beuve, Renan et Taine, l'Entrée dans la modernité est la source de toutes les inquiétudes (et angoisses, ajouterait M. Weinstein). Du point de vue de la sociologie, cette interrogation le rapproche de la problématique de la modernisation — "passage de la société traditionnelle à la société moderne" — et l'identifie à ce qui fut un moment appelé l'"École de Laval": il participe à la remise en question de la représentation unitaire du Canada français et il apparaît comme un "agent de changement" engagé dans la lutte pour faire du Québec une "société moderne" (démocratie et pluralisme idéologique, développement de l'État et participation des citoyens, etc.).

Dans le mouvement même où, par ses engagements politiques et ses écrits, il contribue à la modernisation du Québec, F. Dumont se montre, et c'est un paradoxe que M. Weinstein met en évidence, profondément déçu face au changement et plus que tout autre, il déplore la "perte de sens" et les diverses formes de *dédoublement* et de séparation (vie privée/vie publique, etc.) qu'il entraîne: tout comme Weber à la fin du siècle dernier, Dumont exprime son désenchantement devant la "rationalisation du monde", au risque d'apparaître, dans certains débats, comme un "conservateur". Enfin chez Dumont tout comme chez Weber, le désenchantement est à l'origine d'une réflexion sur la religion. Weber a mené une vaste entreprise d'objectivation, avec de nombreuses recherches d'histoire et de sociologie des religions. Dumont demeure manifestement croyant et inscrit ses recherches dans le cadre de la philosophie et aussi de la théologie. De sa propre trajectoire intellectuelle, Dumont a déjà dit qu'elle avait suivi, mais en sens inverse, les "trois états" décrits par Auguste Comte: "positiviste" au début de sa carrière avec des recherches empiriques, ensuite "métaphysicien" avec des écrits qui s'adressent au monde des philosophes et enfin "théologien" (avec le projet d'une thèse de doctorat et d'une "Encyclopédie de la religion").

L'"erreur" de M. Weinstein est d'avoir considéré les écrits de F. Dumont comme un "tout achevé" avec une cohérence propre. Trois grands "chantiers" ont retenu et retiennent l'attention de Dumont: l'épistémologie des sciences sociales et humaines, l'histoire du Québec (du point de vue de la conscience historique et des idéologies) et enfin la religion. Son ouvrage le plus important et aussi le plus ambitieux est, M. Weinstein le reconnaît, son *Anthropologie en l'absence de l'homme* (1981). De cet ouvrage et aussi des

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divers autres, émergent les éléments à la fois d'une théorie de la connaissance sociologique et d'une théorie de la société: la distinction entre culture première et culture seconde, la conceptualisation de la notion d'idéologie, etc. Il faut voir dans ce qu'il appelle l'"anthropologie de l'interprétation", la voie d'analyse que lui-même privilégie et qui (re-) donne à l'homme le statut de "sujet".

Même et surtout lorsqu'elle acquiert, comme chez Dumont, le statut d'oeuvre, une démarche intellectuelle comporte toujours des ambiguïtés, des incohérences et des contradictions⁵, elle fonctionne, selon une expression de Cavailles que Dumont a déjà fait sienne, par "approximations successives". Les divers écrits de Dumont ont une histoire, ils s'inscrivent dans une histoire (intellectuelle et sociale). L'on perçoit bien ici et là, à la lecture de l'essai de M. Weinstein, l'influence d'une trajectoire sociale particulière (passage de la culture populaire à la culture savante, formation et recherche multidisciplinaire en sociologie, philosophie, psychologie, histoire et économie, maintien de convictions religieuses dans un milieu intellectuel laïcisé, etc.) et aussi l'impact de conjonctures politiques (la "Révolution tranquille" de 1960, la Crise d'Octobre en 1970, etc.). Michael Weinstein ne nous fournit cependant une analyse complète ni de l'évolution de la pensée de Dumont ni du contexte institutionnel (Université Laval, Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture), intellectuel et social dans lequel elle s'est déployée.

Tout au plus l'ouvrage de M. Weinstein constitue-t-il, sous la forme d'un "personal and appreciative criticism", une introduction générale à l'oeuvre d'un intellectuel québécois de premier plan: Dumont apparaît comme "a model for the vocation of the contemporary thinker, who must remain close to the particularities of the flesh and open to the universal, cognizant and respectful of the past, but thoroughly critical and experimental" (p. 116). Pour le lecteur québécois quelque peu familier avec les écrits de Dumont, cette lecture peut être le moment de la (re)-découverte d'un intellectuel que l'on a trop rapidement et trop souvent étiqueté (d'"idéaliste", etc.). Et si l'ouvrage de M. Weinstein assure une meilleure visibilité à cet intellectuel québécois dans les milieux anglo-saxons, l'auteur et les éditeurs auront gagné en parti leur pari, celui de fournir "both a celebration of the uniqueness of New World thought and a critical appraisal of its most dynamic tendencies, past and present". Espérons que le titre de l'ouvrage de M. Weinstein ne créera pas une trop grande confusion, repoussant ceux qui ont tout intérêt à connaître l'oeuvre de Fernand Dumont et attirant ceux-là même qui sont les moins disposés à la comprendre.

Département de sociologie
Université de Montréal

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Notes

1. Fernand Dumont, "Itinéraire sociologique", *Recherches sociographiques*, 15, 2-3 (1974), p. 255. Voir aussi Jean Terrasse, "Fernand Dumont ou l'essai retrouvé" dans *L'essai et la prose des idées au Québec*, Archives des Lettres canadiennes, tome IV, (Montréal: Fides, 1985), pp. 591-609.
2. Dumont, *op. cit.*, p. 255.
3. *Idem*.
4. Fernand Dumont, "Pour participer à un dialogue", *Sociologie et sociétés*, 14, 2 (octobre 1982), pp. 173-174.
5. Voir J. Alexander, *Theoretical Logic in Sociology*, vol. I. (Berkeley: Université of California Press, 1983).

HARO SUR LES TECHNOCRATES ET L'ÉTAT

François Rocher

Gilbert Renaud, *À l'ombre du rationalisme — La société québécoise, de sa dépendance à sa quotidienneté*, Montréal, Albert St-Martin, 1984, 278 pages.

La démarche à laquelle nous convie Renaud est intéressante à plus d'un titre. D'une part, elle nous propose une relecture du processus de structuration de l'État québécois en cours depuis la Révolution tranquille à travers les grilles de la sociologie du contrôle de Robert Castel¹ et de la sociologie de l'action d'Alain Touraine². Cette relecture jette un nouveau regard sur le problème de la gestion technocratique de la vie sociale telle qu'elle s'est constituée au Québec depuis vingt cinq ans. En cela, l'accent porte davantage sur les mécanismes et les significations sociales de cette gestion et non sur la pérennité de la "question nationale" qui a monopolisé et alimenté la réflexion sociologique portant sur le Québec. D'autre part, Renaud nous livre sa critique, encore en gestation, sur les limites de la sociologie québécoise en ce qu'elle contribue, même dans ses élans critiques, à la construction de l'État et à la consolidation du pouvoir. S'alimentant à grandes goulées des travaux de Maffesoli³, Renaud tente de saisir l'insaisissable en défiant la pensée rationaliste qui teinte de façon indélébile la civilisation occidentale. Sa réflexion réinterroge le rapport entre individus, entre la société et l'État, à partir d'un point de vue qui se veut ancré dans les passions humaines et la richesse du "vouloir-vivre" qui transcende toutes les tentatives de domination, de con-

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trainte et d'oppression qui sont la marque de l'État moderne.

Les deux pôles de la réflexion de Renaud ne se veulent pas contradictoires. Au contraire, la "rationalité" qui se dégage de la première partie trouve sa contrepartie dans la volontaire "irrationalité" de la seconde dans la mesure où cette dernière pose les limites d'un discours théorique englobant, par définition totalitaire. Cette entreprise singulière, bien que riche en intuition, n'est certes pas elle-même exempte de contradictions. Ces contradictions se manifestent plus explicitement lorsque Renaud nous propose ses propres alternatives, son "projet" à la fois de réappropriation de l'historicité à partir des mouvements sociaux et de redéfinition des voies que devraient emprunter la recherche sociologique.

Notre exposé va suivre à la trace les arguments et la logique qui sont développés dans *À l'ombre du rationalisme*. Cette entreprise, sûrement trop didactique pour certains, nous apparaît néanmoins indispensable pour saisir, dans leur complexité, les propos de Renaud mais aussi pour situer ces derniers dans la littérature ayant abordé les mêmes questions et formuler nos inévitables critiques.

De la prédominance de la question sociale

L'intention de départ de Renaud était de "montrer (...) que les politiques de gestion des populations (c'est-à-dire les politiques sociales) s'articulent à la structuration d'un État technocratique qui étend sa domination sur l'ensemble de la vie sociale" (pp. 169-170) et qu'à cette dynamique s'oppose de nouveaux mouvements sociaux. Cette approche s'est toutefois confrontée avec les problèmes de la dépendance et de la question nationale: "Faut-il privilégier la problématique de la dépendance ou convient-il plutôt de montrer que les nouveaux mouvements sociaux y occupent désormais une position centrale qui relègue à l'arrière-plan la question nationale? Selon la priorité établie, le centre de gravité se déplace: ou bien, c'est le mouvement national qui constitue le point nodal autour duquel gravitent les différents acteurs sociaux, ou bien, le conflit majeur qui s'y profile se moule sur celui des sociétés avancées" (p. 13). Bien que Renaud reconnaisse le phénomène de la dépendance et ses conséquences sur le développement économique, il souligne que cette réalité n'embrasse pas tous les traits de la société québécoise puisque cette dernière est aussi partie prenante de la société post-industrielle et de la modernité.

La production sociologique québécoise se divise donc entre ceux qui prétendent que le développement de l'État québécois correspond aux intérêts du capital étranger et/ou autochtone et ceux qui associent ce processus à la modernisation, conséquence de la montée d'une nouvelle élite urbaine prenant d'assaut l'État au détriment des élites traditionnelles. Cette polarisation de la démarche sociologique apparaît aux yeux de Renaud comme situant in-

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correctement le développement économique et social du Québec car ce dernier "constitue bel et bien une société dépendante et il est également entraîné vers la société programmée" (p. 17). S'inspirant largement des travaux de Touraine, il soutient que ces deux problématiques ne relèvent pas du même champ d'analyse puisque le phénomène de la dépendance fait appel à la question de la direction de l'économie (l'État développementiste) alors que le phénomène de la modernité (l'État technocratique) réfère aux rapports de domination qui caractérisent une formation sociale. Ces rapports transcendent la traditionnelle dichotomie capital-travail pour se situer au niveau d'un nouveau conflit fondamental qui oppose les appareils technocratiques de gestion et les classes populaires.

L'État occupe une place centrale au sein de ce double processus tout comme l'émergence de nouveaux mouvements sociaux qui contestent l'appropriation technocratique de l'action sociale. Ainsi, la problématique "nationalitaire" qui a inspiré les travaux sociologiques sur le Québec est secondarisée pour "laisser place au problème de la gestion technocratique de la vie sociale: la question sociale prend le dessus sur la question nationale" (p. 21). Cette perspective analytique veut mettre l'accent sur la *dynamique interne des rapports sociaux* et non plus uniquement sur le seul phénomène de la dépendance perçue comme une inféodation de la direction économique à une bourgeoisie étrangère. L'ouvrage de Renaud entend donc illustrer ce nouveau conflit à travers l'analyse de la période allant de la Révolution tranquille au règne péquiste.

Révolution tranquille et construction du capitalisme périphérique

La période de la Révolution tranquille et le courant nationaliste qui y est associé s'articulent autour de l'enjeu de l'appropriation de l'accumulation produite sur le territoire québécois. À cause de la dépendance du Québec, la bourgeoisie autochtone est faible permettant ainsi, d'une part, aux classes moyennes d'exercer une influence considérable et, d'autre part, à l'État de se constituer comme le gestionnaire du rapport avec le capital étranger lui conférant de la sorte un rôle dominant dans les transformations historiques. La Révolution tranquille correspond à la prise en charge par l'État, selon un mode volontariste, du développement de la collectivité. Cette dynamique est le résultat d'une double pression: la première venant des classes moyennes dont la promotion est bloquée par la classe dominante anglo-canadienne et, la seconde, de la crise économique qui marque la fin des années 1950 et qui fait prendre conscience des limites et des problèmes inhérents à la dépendance. À travers la Révolution tranquille, l'État contribue à la formation d'une nouvelle classe dirigeante composée des couches supérieures de l'État. En somme, cette période est marquée par deux tendances complémentaires: "il s'agit, d'une part, de susciter la création d'un secteur économique public qui

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permette à la société québécoise d'exercer une certaine emprise sur son développement et, d'autre part, de moderniser l'organisation sociale, ce qui signifie une restructuration des secteurs contrôlés par la classe dominante et une ouverture de débouchés pour les classes moyennes" (p. 31). Ainsi s'expliquerait, pour Renaud, le développement du secteur public québécois.

La mise en place d'un capitalisme périphérique, par opposition au capitalisme dépendant, rencontre toutefois le problème de la forme fédérative de l'État. En ce sens, le projet de souveraineté politique du Québec est contradictoire avec les intérêts du capital étranger s'appuyant essentiellement sur le palier central de l'État. Ce problème se transposera au sein de l'élite dirigeante où les deux modèles de développement s'affronteront: le Parti libéral, au cours des années 1970, cherchera davantage à gérer la relation dépendante, dans le cadre d'un État technocratique, alors que le Parti québécois, dès 1976, poursuivra sa tentative de "concordance entre les forces politiques de développement et le rôle de l'État comme agent central de développement" (p. 42), permettant de consolider le capital autochtone et de contrôler le capital étranger. Cependant, en dépit de l'adéquation entre les intérêts de la bourgeoisie québécoise et l'État, Renaud reprend l'argumentation d'Arnaud Sales⁴ selon laquelle le rôle prédominant de l'État découle de la faiblesse de la bourgeoisie autochtone.

L'analyse que fait Renaud du "mode de développement" de la société québécoise, bien que reprenant *in extenso* les catégories tourainiennes tout en les faisant correspondre quasi de force à la réalité québécoise, ne constitue pas à proprement parler une contribution originale à l'analyse du Québec contemporain. L'hypothèse du rapport entre les classes sociales et l'État proposée par Renaud se situe dans le sillage des travaux des Simard⁵, Lesemann⁶, Mc Roberts et Postgate⁷ pour qui la croissance de l'État correspond à la montée des classes moyennes et de la technocratie. De plus, cette approche s'inspire largement de l'école de la modernisation politique qui confère à la question nationale une place somme toute déterminante. Reprenant à son compte les discours politiques dominants sur la place du Québec au sein de la Confédération et sur le rôle de l'État dans la société québécoise, Renaud leur attribue un pouvoir explicatif de l'évolution de la société depuis 1960.

Parce que Renaud rejette la correspondance entre la classe dominante (bourgeoisie) et l'État dans la perspective d'une analyse des mécanismes de l'accumulation du capital au Québec, il en vient à s'opposer à toutes les approches qui ont privilégié une interprétation de la transformation du rôle de l'État en fonction de l'évolution des rapports sociaux et économiques dans et autour de la sphère de la production. Ainsi, il ne retient pas comme élément explicatif l'entrée du Québec au stade monopoliste de l'accumulation capitaliste, sinon pour indiquer que cette thèse est trop rivée à la situation des

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pays dominants alors que le Québec est d'abord une société dépendante. Chez Renaud, tout fonctionne comme si la Révolution tranquille n'était que le fruit d'une "prise de conscience" de la capacité d'intervention de l'État et des avantages que pourraient en retirer les classes moyennes, dans une perspective on ne peut plus volontariste. Quelques considérations comparatives auraient permis à Renaud de resituer ce processus dans un environnement beaucoup plus vaste lui permettant ainsi de constater que la croissance de l'État provincial trouve des équivalences dans d'autres espaces régionaux au Canada.

Par ailleurs, le parti-pris moderniste de l'analyse de Renaud limite la compréhension de la dynamique sociale, réduisant cette dernière aux initiatives pouvant être prises par l'État. La mobilisation sociale est le fait de l'État qui cherche, à travers la concertation-consultation, à consolider son pouvoir et à s'affirmer comme agent central de développement. En somme, tout concourt au développement des intérêts des classes moyennes et de la technocratie qui sont perçues, en bout de piste, comme les véritables classes dominantes au Québec. Le nationalisme québécois ne correspondrait qu'à une stratégie particulière de développement associée à ces classes en obnubilant les effets différenciés de l'oppression nationale sur toutes les classes sociales.

Gestion technocratique de la vie sociale

Si l'évolution du Québec oscille entre l'approfondissement de la dépendance et la constitution d'un capitalisme périphérique, ces deux pôles de développement subsument la mise en place d'un nouveau type de société dans lequel les rapports de domination se transforment. La société programmée correspond à un nouveau modèle culturel "qui n'a plus rien à voir avec celui du monde industriel: tout se conçoit désormais en termes de gestion, de planification, d'organisation, de système et de programmation" (pp. 58-59), de sorte que toute la vie sociale est l'objet de gestion et de domination. Les comportements et les conduites sont orientés pour assurer la bonne marche des appareils productifs et de l'organisation sociale. La science contribue à la mise en place de cette réalité. Elle pénètre le champ de l'accumulation et constitue un outil indispensable dans le projet du développement national autocentré. La science devient un enjeu social puisqu'elle accentue la domination technocratique tant en ce qui concerne les stratégies de développement économique que celles du développement social. L'instauration d'une société programmée touche d'emblée toutes les activités... rien n'y échappe.

La Révolution tranquille s'avère donc le moment où l'État commence à développer largement son appareillage scientifique (notamment à travers les sciences sociales) pour accroître son emprise sur la vie des citoyens, suscitant, du coup, l'émergence de nouveaux rapports sociaux. Cette réalité est con-

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duite par les fractions supérieures des classes moyennes qui "aspirent à se constituer en classe dirigeante et l'intervention de l'État au fur et à mesure qu'elle va se renforcer et s'achever va contribuer en retour à la constitution de cette nouvelle classe dirigeante" (p. 64). La technocratie représente le lieu où se déploie la lutte des classes moyennes en vue de mettre en place leur "nouveau savoir", délogeant de ce fait la classe dominante de la direction des organismes chargés de gérer la pauvreté et réduisant le pouvoir des professionnels qui ne contrôlent plus la finalité de leurs interventions, tout en étant soumis à la logique technocratique qui exige d'eux d'être fonctionnels et efficaces par rapport aux objectifs de l'organisation. Les couches populaires sont investies de la rationalité scientifique par les animateurs sociaux qui cherchent à imposer le modèle culturel de la nouvelle élite dirigeante. La technocratie intègre l'animation sociale dans le but d'obtenir l'adhésion de l'ensemble à la gestion de ses services et de la poursuite de ses objectifs. L'animation des classes populaires participe donc à ce mouvement de domination.

Pour Renaud, le sur-développement de la régulation des instances sociales s'explique essentiellement par le peu d'emprise de la société québécoise sur son développement économique. La rationalisation technocratique, administrée par des professionnels développant de nouvelles stratégies d'intervention auprès des clientèles cibles, vise à accroître le contrôle sur des populations à risque. Ainsi, selon Renaud, "une nouvelle ère s'amorce: (...) il importe de planifier, c'est-à-dire d'accumuler des informations et de les traiter pour élaborer des programmes qui accroissent toujours le rendement" (p. 84). Les services sociaux et sanitaires passent du champ de l'activité improductive à celui de l'activité productive puisqu'ils contribuent à accroître l'efficacité de la production. Mais l'intention des technocrates est aussi d'organiser, de systématiser "le fonctionnement social et assurer du même coup une capacité supérieure de la société québécoise à se produire elle-même" (p. 103). C'est en ces termes que Renaud relie à nouveau le projet technocratique et la question nationale puisque la construction du capitalisme périphérique accentue le passage à la société programmée dans le sens des intérêts de la nouvelle classe dirigeante-dominante.

Chez Renaud, tout concourt à la mise en place de la société programmée. Les technocrates, en dépit des résistances qui par ailleurs s'atténuent graduellement, "orchestrent savamment leur domination sur tout le travail que la société québécoise exerce sur elle-même: pas un domaine n'échappe à leur bienveillante attention planificatrice qui fait appel à la manipulation de l'éducateur-animateur chargé d'orienter les "citoyens" vers la participation que l'on attend d'eux" (p. 117). En somme, la domination technocratique dispose de tous les instruments de sorte que "la programmation s'accroît, les problèmes sociaux sont instrumentalisés et la capacité supérieure d'in-

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tervenir se travestit en une application mécanique de techniques qui participent d'une efficacité quantifiée" (p. 131). Dans la perspective de Renaud, la croissance de l'État interventionniste s'explique fondamentalement par le double processus de consolidation du capitalisme périphérique et d'une technocratie qui gère en fonction de sa domination.

L'argumentation de Renaud repose sur la reformulation d'une problématique sociologique déjà développée dans la littérature portant sur la gestion étatique du social, notamment celle de J.J. Simard. Toutefois, contrairement à Renaud, Simard n'établit pas une adéquation simple entre la technocratie et l'exercice du pouvoir: les technocrates ne sont "que les idéologues et les exécutants du pouvoir réel"⁸. Le pouvoir reste donc foncièrement marqué par le mode de production dans lequel il évolue. Ainsi, pour Simard, "si la culture politique est techno-bureaucratique, le pouvoir lui, n'a pas besoin de l'être"⁹. L'action de l'État, même si elle est marquée par le mode technocratique, renvoie aux déterminants de la croissance et de la productivité au sein du capitalisme avancé. De la même manière, Lesemann en étudiant le modèle technocratique de gestion des rapports sociaux et la rationalisation qu'il met en place reconnaît que l'émergence de l'intervention de l'État dans les secteurs socio-sanitaires est tributaire du passage du capitalisme concurrentiel au capitalisme monopoliste. En ce sens, les transformations étatiques, même si elles ne se limitent pas à la simple reproduction des rapports de production, sont liées aux mutations de la structure économique. L'ouvrage de Godbout¹⁰, publié peu de temps avant celui de Renaud, partage les observations de Lesemann et Simard et soutient que malgré les expériences de planification et de participation conduites par les instances technobureaucratiques, le pouvoir politique n'a nullement été transféré aux technocrates.

Le principal problème de l'analyse de Renaud provient du fait qu'il attribue à la seule technocratie le monopole de la dynamique qui a conduit au développement de l'État interventionniste. La gestion du social et de l'économique devient donc un "en soi": le projet d'une couche qui se constitue en classe sociale aspirant à la domination. Renaud passe sous silence le fait que la gestion technocratique de la vie sociale, bien que réelle et fort bien implantée, se situe dans le sillage de la transformation des rapports de production et des exigences du développement économique, comme le soulignent pertinemment M. Pelletier et Y. Vaillancourt¹¹. Ainsi, la prise en charge par l'État de pans entiers de la vie sociale procède du développement du capitalisme et des bouleversements qu'il produit tant au niveau de la reproduction sociale que du mode de socialisation. La croissance de l'État, bien que gérée en partie en fonction des intérêts d'une nouvelle couche sociale, se veut une réponse capitaliste à une déstabilisation des réseaux traditionnels d'intégration. La pénétration étatique du social est l'occasion de

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la consolidation du pouvoir de la technocratie mais ne saurait s'expliquer par la simple volonté de cette dernière de s'approprier le monopole du contrôle et de la domination. Les nouvelles formes de contrôle social — qui se traduisent par un traitement fonctionnel et systématique des problèmes, la spécialisation des interventions, la définition de populations cibles, la normalisation des conduites, la rationalisation bureaucratique — doivent être analysées comme étant le reflet d'une modification en profondeur des rapports entre les sphères privée et publique. L'État interventionniste est aussi confronté aux exigences des masses populaires, même si ces demandes participent, en bout de piste, à l'hégémonie de l'État sur toute la collectivité. En ce sens, l'État impose des contraintes non seulement à la classe ouvrière, mais aussi au capital. Renaud oublie donc de considérer la gestion étatique comme un *compromis* entre tous les intervenants sociaux (y compris les sommets de l'État) toujours à renouveler, pouvant se modifier selon les conjonctures. Finalement, mentionnons que l'émergence d'un nouveau type d'État contribue à redéfinir le mode de production, de distribution et de gestion des services sociaux et humains non seulement en instaurant des systèmes d'assurance et de sécurité sociale, mais aussi en recherchant la contractualisation accrue des rapports de travail, dimension largement sous-estimée par les travaux de Renaud.

L'intention de Renaud était de montrer qu'il existe une confusion au sein de la sociologie québécoise ne lui permettant pas de saisir la profondeur de la domination technocratique. Pour Renaud, il existe une distinction entre la dynamique qui a conduit au projet de capitalisme périphérique tel que développé au cours de la Révolution tranquille et sous la gouverne du P.Q. et celle qui est sous-jacente à la constitution d'un État technocratique. Ces deux réalités s'interpénètrent et se complètent mais relèvent de deux mouvances singulières. Or, s'il est juste d'affirmer que le mode de développement de la société québécoise a reposé sur des alliances de classes qui ont favorisé l'émergence d'un nouvel acteur social, le clivage opéré par Renaud entre ces deux sphères d'activité l'a conduit à évacuer le rapport étroit qui existe entre le développement du capitalisme et la constitution d'une nouvelle forme d'intervention étatique. Le nouveau conflit fondamental identifié par Renaud — société contre État — nous amène à considérer l'État comme une entité totalement indépendante, à l'abri des contradictions qui relèvent du champ de la société civile et du mode de production capitaliste. La résolution de la confusion soupçonnée en a produit une seconde qui laisse un nombre plus important de problèmes en plan.

L'envers du rationalisme: interrogations sur le discours sociologique

La seconde partie de l'ouvrage s'articule autour des trois axes qui se veulent "l'envers de la rationalité progressiste, le jeu des passions humaines et l'oeuvre du vouloir-vivre collectif" (p. 167). Cette réflexion est le fruit d'une insatisfaction et d'une indisposition à l'égard de la sociologie qui apparaît, aux yeux de Renaud, comme "une vaste entreprise de construction de l'État et du pouvoir. Même lorsqu'elle se fait critique, elle se positionne toujours dans l'orbite de ce pouvoir et de ce fait, elle le conforte. Aveuglée par le problème national et l'idéologie du progrès, elle n'est pas encore parvenue à dire aussi la socialité, la passion qui anime la société québécoise" (p. 174). Il s'agit donc, pour Renaud, d'exorciser la pensée rationnelle pour faire surgir la puissance créatrice de la socialité en action. Cette entreprise implique que la réflexion sur les rapports entre individus, État et société soit libérée de la représentation rationnelle du fonctionnement social. Elle module une relecture de la Révolution tranquille à la lumière de la pensée de Maffesoli.

La Révolution tranquille correspond à l'achèvement de l'organisation de la société québécoise en État, faisant accéder la communauté au stade de la modernité. Ce faisant, "la conscience collective, organique des Québécois s'annulera de plus en plus dans le construit étatique" (p. 194). Dans cette équation à somme nulle, au développement de l'État correspond la destruction de la communauté, puisque le mode de fonctionnement étatique nie ce qui caractérise la socialité: la spécificité individuelle qui est à la base de l'échange à travers lequel se créent la solidarité, l'interdépendance et le vouloir-vivre collectif. L'État, en organisant le social et en monopolisant l'économique, à partir de la fiscalité, détruit l'économie de troc et de ce fait "amorce la déconstruction de communautés organiques structurées par de multiples réseaux d'échange et de solidarité (...) parachevant l'anéantissement de la puissance communautaire" (p. 199). Ce processus conduit à une impasse puisque devant la perte de l'"organicité communautaire" l'État se surorganise, accentuant inéluctablement le mouvement. L'individu est ainsi soumis à la logique marchande dans toutes ses activités, sécurisé en cela par le filet protecteur de l'État-providence en échange d'une totale dépendance.

L'État devient le structurant social contre lequel les individus, en quête d'identité, s'opposent. Les "problèmes sociaux" se présentent donc comme l'expression violente de la socialité détruite, les manifestations de la recherche d'une singularité perdue. Par ailleurs, la passivité de la multitude exprime aussi une résistance à l'entreprise de contrôle étatique. Nous ne pouvons nous empêcher de faire remarquer le caractère tautologique de la pensée de Renaud. Toutes les actions menées par les classes populaires sont l'expression soit de sa résistance à l'emprise étatique ou de sa soumission. Les autres théories explicatives sont automatiquement disqualifiées sous le rouleau com-

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presseur de la nouvelle interprétation véhiculée par Renaud, en dépit de son aversion pour tout cadre globalisant. La Révolution tranquille correspond donc à la version québécoise du mouvement de production-destruction du social: "l'édification constante d'un social-étatique qui se pare du chant nationaliste de la libération et assume la prise en charge de plus en plus totale des individus déliés de leur interdépendance communautaire" (p. 208). Encore ici, la libération nationale n'est pas autre chose qu'un projet étatique de contrôle du social mené au profit des technocrates.

La domestication des passions humaines est le fruit d'un projet social dominé par le seul travail de la Raison. Pour Renaud, l'idéologie et le mythe du progrès teintent toutes les interventions au point que "l'irrationnel, associé à la tradition obscurantiste, est sans cesse nié et combattu, et c'est en ce sens que le technocrate de même que le sociologue, en tant qu'ingénieur du social, sont issus et prolongent le projet rationnel et scientifique de la conquête d'une nature maîtrisée au point d'y inclure le rameau humain" (p. 231). Les sciences sociales sont donc inévitablement complices du pouvoir lorsqu'elles définissent le sens de l'action et identifient les structurants sociaux. L'intellectuel participe, en dépit de ses efforts critiques, à domestiquer les passions en rationalisant les conduites collectives, en les faisant entrer de force dans la grille qu'il maîtrise: "la sociologie reste prisonnière du fantasme de l'unité et de la cohérence absolue qui sont les attributs du pouvoir" (p. 236). Le couple État-science est ainsi indissolublement lié dans la mesure où le second élément ne peut croire que par le renforcement du premier et réciproquement.

Tout en reconnaissant malgré tout la fécondité de la démarche sociologique qui permet d'éclairer les enjeux globaux qui confrontent la collectivité, Renaud s'efforce d'en identifier les limites destructrices et totalitaires. L'alternative à la réflexion sociologique totalisante passe par "une analyse qui se fonde sur le banal, le quotidien, le mythe, le jeu, la passion, bref tout ce "résiduel" dans lequel s'incarnent aussi nos sociétés" (p. 242). Cette démarche est foncièrement anti-théorique puisqu'elle refuse de cerner complètement le donné social, de le réduire et de l'uniformiser. Renaud se fait l'apôtre de la reconnaissance de la "vie banale", lieu de ruse et de résistance au pouvoir rationnel, du qualificatif détruit par la civilisation quantitative.

La valorisation du "vouloir-vivre", qui est par définition insaisissable parce qu'il évolue à la périphérie des enjeux sociaux, au détriment du "devoir-être", constitue l'essentiel de la démarche souhaitée par Renaud. Ce faisant, l'irrationnel, l'inquantifiable, l'innommable deviennent les champs d'analyse privilégiés: "cette socialité naturelle, la sociologie québécoise doit (...) la redécouvrir aujourd'hui" (p. 259). Or, c'est ici que loge le paradoxe. Comment peut-on, d'une part, reconnaître que le quotidien se dresse contre la pensée rationnelle, refuse les tentatives de domestication qui conduisent à

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plus d'État et, d'autre part, souhaiter réfléchir le quotidien? Toute réflexion, selon Renaud, ne porte-t-elle pas en elle-même la nécessité de saisir une réalité et de la réduire à un cadre intelligible? Ce faisant, elle contribue à nier ce qu'elle veut valoriser. La solution à ce dilemme ne pourra jamais résider dans le champ des sciences sociales. Une démarche anti-théorique se braque contre toute tentative d'appréhension du réel. Le pas qu'il reste à franchir par Renaud est de quitter la sphère de la sociologie pour entrer de plain pied dans celle de la poésie, du jeu et des passions. Comment pourrait-il en être autrement?

Département de science politique
Université de Montréal

Notes

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À PROPOS DU MOUVEMENT INDÉPENDANTISTE

Gilles Bourque

William D. Coleman, *The Independance Movement in Quebec 1945-1980*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1984.

Soulignons-le d'entrée de jeu, l'essai de William D. Coleman sur le mouvement indépendantiste est l'une des contributions les plus fouillées et les plus originales à l'analyse de la société québécoise contemporaine qui ait été publiée au Canada anglais ces dernières années. Manifestant le plus souvent une bonne connaissance des sources secondaires, l'auteur se fonde à de multiples reprises sur des sources primaires pour développer une thèse qu'il expose avec clarté et systématité. Accessible à un public relativement large, le livre de Coleman n'en suscitera pas moins l'intérêt des spécialistes de la sociologie du Québec contemporain qui, à défaut d'apprendre des choses nouvelles, y trouveront de nombreux éléments de discussion et de débat concernant la "véritable nature" du mouvement indépendantiste. La contribution de Coleman adopte donc la forme de l'essai et, au-delà de son originalité et de son intérêt, c'est d'abord et avant tout la thèse proposée qui doit être questionnée. Dans le domaine des sciences sociales, l'essai constitue une forme d'écriture obéissant à des règles particulières dont la critique ne peut se dispenser de tenir compte sans risquer de s'engager dans de fausses polémiques. Aussi ne s'agira-t-il pas de nous demander ici (ce que la critique fait malheureusement trop souvent dans pareil cas) si Coleman démontre ses

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thèses en respectant l'ensemble des règles d'une recherche empirique, entreprise à l'évidence impossible quand l'on embrasse près de quarante ans d'histoire sociale, mais plutôt de nous intéresser aux propositions analytiques qu'il défend. Nous nous interrogerons donc d'abord et avant tout sur la validité des thèses de Coleman, c'est-à-dire sur leur aptitude à ouvrir un nouveau champ de recherches et à susciter des questions susceptibles de faire avancer les connaissances sur le Québec contemporain.

La thèse. William D. Coleman tente d'expliquer le développement du mouvement indépendantiste et les principaux phénomènes sociaux qui s'y rattacheront au Québec depuis 1945 en adaptant une position que nous qualifierons de classiste. Le Rapport Tremblay, la Révolution tranquille et le mouvement indépendantiste lui-même sont d'abord et avant tout présentés comme le résultat de coalitions entre différentes classes sociales. Après une critique sommaire de trois types de thèses s'inspirant de la même perspective, il propose une nouvelle approche centrée sur les rapports entre les classes sociales et les idéologies. L'explication de Coleman se développe en trois temps qui peuvent être saisis de la manière suivante: l'origine (le Rapport Tremblay), la transformation (la Révolution tranquille) et la conséquence (le mouvement indépendantiste). C'est donc dans le Québec des années cinquante que l'auteur entend retrouver les origines du mouvement indépendantiste. Il y centre ses analyses sur le Rapport Tremblay qu'il présente comme une sorte de charte initiée par la bourgeoisie francophone et la classe moyenne traditionnelle. Communément menacées par le développement du capitalisme et l'affirmation de la société de consommation, ainsi que par les velléités centralisatrices du fédéral (il insiste surtout sur le rapport de la Commission Massey), ces deux classes proposent un nouveau "programme politique" essentiellement axé sur la préservation du capitalisme local et la défense des institutions et de la culture traditionnelles. Le Rapport Tremblay s'organise ainsi autour de deux grandes lignes de forces: la première tend à relier le destin collectif des Canadiens-français à l'État provincial (contrairement au fédéral représenté comme "l'État du Canada anglais"); la seconde pose la nécessité de la préservation de la culture traditionnelle. Quand le rapport envisage la nécessité de la transformation de la société, il pose ainsi l'État et le territoire québécois comme le lieu à partir duquel doit être pensée toute perspective de changement, changement qui devrait toujours et encore respecter les institutions traditionnelles. Il importe surtout de constater ici que, pour Coleman, le rapport Tremblay constitue le point de départ d'une dynamique socio-politique qui se développera durant les deux décennies suivantes: "The political program of the Tremblay Commission became the basis, the cornerstone, of political strategy by the Government of Quebec throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s. It may be argued that the various movements for independence and for renewed federation that have emerged

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since are all variations on the Tremblay theme" (p. 17-18). Il voit même dans ce rapport "l'antécédent logique" du projet de souveraineté association.

Bien sûr, la stratégie proposée par la Commission Tremblay ne sera jamais intégralement mise en pratique. Au contraire, Coleman explique les contradictions qui se sont développées par la suite comme une conséquence de l'abandon de l'un des deux aspects de la stratégie avancée dans le Rapport Tremblay, soit celle de la défense de la culture et des institutions traditionnelles. Ceci nous permettra d'aborder la deuxième étape de la démarche analytique de l'auteur, celle de la "transformation". Ce deuxième moment s'ouvre avec la Révolution tranquille que Coleman, fidèle à sa perspective classiste, présente comme le résultat d'une coalition entre la bourgeoisie francophone, le mouvement ouvrier et certains éléments de la classe moyenne traditionnelle adoptant une nouvelle stratégie. Ici s'enclenchera un processus contradictoire de reconduction-dénaturation de la perspective développée dans le Rapport Tremblay. L'ensemble des réformes initiées durant la Révolution tranquille et réalisées par la suite respecteront l'axe politique de la stratégie des années cinquante en faisant de l'État du Québec le lieu privilégié à partir duquel est envisagée la transformation de la société québécoise. Mais il en ira tout autrement de l'axe culturel de la même stratégie. Les réformes des années soixante et soixante-dix, loin d'être axées sur la préservation des institutions et de la culture traditionnelles, contribueront au contraire à les dissoudre au profit de l'intégration de l'économie québécoise dans la structure de l'économie continentale et de la promotion d'une culture entièrement calquée sur celle de la société de consommation. Somme toute, durant les années soixante et soixante-dix, on s'inspire de la stratégie politique du Rapport Tremblay pour mettre à mort la société traditionnelle que naguère on voulait à tout prix et avant tout préserver. Coleman tente de démontrer que la politique économique, les réformes de l'éducation et des politiques sociales et même la politique linguistique ont depuis lors invariablement favorisé l'intégration économique et culturelle de la société québécoise au sein de l'univers nord-américain. Cette dénaturation de la stratégie développée durant les années cinquante s'expliquerait par le fait que l'ensemble des réformes n'ont servi en dernière analyse que les intérêts étroits de la bourgeoisie francophone qui aurait finalement pris toute la place au sein de la coalition ayant initié la Révolution tranquille. On comprendra bien sûr qu'un tel rejet des intérêts des autres composantes de la coalition provoquera la rupture et la réorganisation des rapports de forces. Nous en sommes au troisième moment du processus, celui des conséquences.

La rupture générera la formation du mouvement indépendantiste constitué, selon Coleman, de la classe ouvrière organisée, de la classe moyenne traditionnelle et de la nouvelle classe moyenne prenant conscience d'elle-même durant le processus de la Révolution tranquille. Le mouvement in-

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dépendantiste est présenté d'abord et avant tout comme une réaction à la disparition de la culture du Canada français: "a people that remembers having some sense of self and of being a community and that feels that both are now gone" (p. 211). Cette intégration économique et culturelle au continent nord-américain et à l'entier profit de la bourgeoisie francophone posait, en effet, le problème de l'identité culturelle et nationale. Sous des formes différentes, les membres du mouvement indépendantiste renoue ainsi avec les préoccupations culturelles du Rapport Tremblay: "The hope is that with full political power, the offending institutions can be taken in hand and reordered. In this sense, there is a certain similarity between the proposals of the independantistes of today and those nationalists of the Tremblay Commission almost three decades ago" (p. 227). Dans ses pages à vrai dire les moins convaincantes, Coleman essaie ainsi de présenter le mouvement indépendantiste comme un mouvement culturel ou à tout le moins politico-culturel contraint d'adopter des positions socialistes compte tenu de la composition de classes de la coalition qui le constitue (les classes moyenne et ouvrière). Ce mouvement aurait été en quelque sorte "trahi" par les dirigeants du Parti Québécois après la prise du pouvoir, ceux-ci étant dès lors forcés de tenir compte des intérêts de la bourgeoisie, comme tout parti au pouvoir dans un État capitaliste.

Et Coleman termine sur cette note pessimiste "As Quebec's francophone community has come to participate more fully in the continental economy, its culture has become more similar to others active in that economy. In the view of many, this has led to a situation where that inner quality burning in the hearts of Québécois will soon be extinguished. If this does happen, then the nationalist movement in Quebec will have failed and may itself die" (p. 228).

Aussi séduisante qu'elle soit, la thèse de Coleman n'en pose pas moins un ensemble de problèmes qu'une lecture un tant soit peu attentive ne manquera pas de relever. Au risque d'étonner, je ne m'attarderai ni à la perspective classiste de l'auteur, ni à ses propositions particulières concernant les différentes alliances de classes qui auraient influé sur le déroulement de l'histoire du Québec depuis 1945. La production québécoise des dernières années a donné lieu à un tel foisonnement de thèses différentes qu'une discussion serrée de la position de Coleman dépasserait les cadres de ce compte rendu critique. On me permettra cependant de souligner au passage que si l'auteur trouve "trop simpliste" les analyses que j'ai proposées avec Anne Legaré dans *Le Québec, la question nationale*, c'est peut-être qu'il les simplifie lui-même en tentant de s'en démarquer. Mais passons à des considérations qui touchent plus directement le coeur même de la thèse de l'auteur.

Une approche téléologique. L'auteur, nous l'avons souligné, s'intéresse particulièrement à l'histoire des idéologies durant la période qu'il étudie. Mais force est de reconnaître qu'il s'appuie pour ce faire sur une perspective fort

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traditionnelle essentiellement fondée sur ce que Michel Foucault a appelé la "recherche forcenée des origines" (*L'archéologie du savoir*). Pour expliquer le mouvement indépendantiste qui s'affirme durant les années soixante-dix, Coleman remonte le cours de l'histoire pour enfin découvrir, de filiations présumées en filiations présumées, une origine qui contiendrait en germe la suite des événements. Le repérage de l'origine qu'aurait constitué le rapport de la Commission Tremblay lui permet ainsi de reconstituer le déroulement d'une histoire qu'il nous exposera dès lors dans son ordre chronologique, du Rapport Tremblay à la Révolution tranquille, à la formation du mouvement indépendantiste. Ce point de vue en vaudrait bien un autre si l'interprétation qui en découle apparaissait convaincante, mais tel n'est malheureusement pas le cas. Pour résumer le plus succinctement possible, rappelons que Coleman avance que le Rapport Tremblay pose une dialectique politico-culturelle qui se reproduira sous son aspect politique durant la Révolution tranquille et sous son aspect culturel dans le mouvement indépendantiste. La stratégie politique des années cinquante serait ainsi à l'origine aussi bien des réformes politiques que du projet indépendantiste des années soixante et soixante-dix. Les préoccupations culturelles d'inspiration socialiste du mouvement indépendantiste constitueraient des formes transformées de la volonté de défendre la culture traditionnelle dans l'après-guerre. De telles thèses goment la spécificité des trois phénomènes et conduisent à découvrir des parentés fort étranges. Le problème est classique: suffit-il de repérer l'existence d'un même thème dans l'oeuvre de deux écrivains ou d'une position semblable au sein de deux idéologies différentes pour affirmer que les unes entretiennent des rapports de filiation avec les autres? Le seul fait que les secondes apparaissent chronologiquement après les premières ne constitue certes pas une preuve bien convaincante. Ne prenons ici que l'exemple de la prétendue filiation politique entre le Rapport Tremblay et la Révolution tranquille. On pourrait certes souligner, comme le fait Coleman, que dans les deux cas on privilégie l'État du Québec au détriment de l'État fédéral, mais il nous faudra immédiatement ajouter que, dans le premier, on favorise une stratégie politique de nature libérale et, dans le second, une stratégie interventionniste de nature keynésienne. Cette nouvelle position du problème nous amènera à nous demander non pas s'il y a filiation entre les deux événements, mais plutôt pourquoi des stratégies sociales et politiques aussi radicalement différentes valorisent communément l'État québécois. Mais pour répondre à cette question nous serons forcés d'élargir le système de contradictions que nous propose Coleman et il nous faudra accorder une attention beaucoup plus grande au processus de la mise en place de l'État keynésien au Canada et au Québec. On découvrira dès lors que, pour contrer le procès d'affirmation de l'État keynésien, les élites traditionnelles sont amenées à se replier autour de l'État québécois et à brandir la constitution

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pour préserver les derniers vestiges des institutions et de la culture qui assurent leur place au sein des rapports socio-politiques. La stratégie est ici essentiellement défensive et conservatrice. Au contraire, on devra reconnaître la spécificité radicalement différente de la stratégie keynésienne qui s'impose avec la Révolution tranquille. Bien sûr, l'État québécois y tient encore une bonne place, mais dans le cadre plus global d'un projet nettement offensif et moderniste. Autrement dit, c'est dans le passage de l'état libéral à l'État keynésien que des acteurs différents proposant des projets de société radicalement antithétiques, aussi bien sur le plan social que sur le plan national, sont amenés à valoriser l'État québécois parce qu'ils s'inscrivent (à des moments différents) dans le même processus de transformations politique et au sein des mêmes structures du fédéralisme canadien.

Il me semble donc plus pertinent d'avancer que c'est dans le commun rapport aux transformations de la forme de l'État qu'il faut rechercher la commune valorisation de l'État québécois durant les années cinquante et soixante, plutôt que dans la reconnaissance d'une quelconque filiation entre les "Anciens" et les "Modernes". Cette discussion n'aurait cependant qu'un intérêt étroitement académique, si la perspective continuiste de Coleman ne le conduisait à sous-estimer certains phénomènes au profit d'une survalorisation de quelques aspects des réalités qu'il étudie.

Un système trop restreint de contradictions. Comme c'est trop souvent le cas dans les analyses sur le Québec, Coleman sous-estime très largement l'ensemble des phénomènes et des facteurs de détermination qui relie le Québec aux structures de l'État canadien et à l'ensemble des forces sociales qui dominent les rapports de force au niveau nord-américain (le poids politique des bourgeoisies monopolistes canadienne et américaine, par exemple). On m'objectera sans doute immédiatement que Coleman présente le Rapport Tremblay comme une réaction au rapport de la Commission Massey ou encore qu'il souligne avec force les effets d'intégration économique et culturelle du Québec au sein du continent nord-américain des réformes des années soixante et soixante-dix. Il n'en reste pas moins qu'au coeur du système d'explication qu'il nous propose, la société québécoise (réduite d'ailleurs le plus souvent à sa nation francophone) fonctionne comme une entité relativement fermée n'entretenant dans sa dynamique même que des rapports d'extériorité avec le reste des sociétés nord-américaines, soit qu'elle réagisse à des phénomènes venus d'ailleurs (des menaces à sa culture, par exemple) soit qu'elle choisisse de s'adapter sans véritable contrainte digne de mention. Revenons d'abord à la question du passage à l'État keynésien. Coleman insiste, bien sûr, sur le rapport de la Commission Massey. Il nomme aussi au passage un ensemble de mesures centralisatrices émanant du fédéral et se rapportant au processus de passage à l'État interventionniste. Mais jamais l'auteur ne fait ressortir les pleines implications de ce processus au sein de la

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société québécoise elle-même ou plus précisément, devrions-nous dire, il réduit ces dernières à leur dimension étroitement culturelle (pour des raisons sur lesquelles nous reviendrons). Une telle perspective l'amène, malgré une lecture attentive, à réduire le Rapport Tremblay à ses aspects étroitement culturel et national. Nous l'avons souligné, Coleman affirme que la stratégie de ce rapport s'articule autour de deux pôles: l'un politique, l'autre culturel. Mais l'aspect politique de la stratégie se résume à sa dimension étroitement nationale (l'État et le territoire du Québec s'identifient à celui du Canada français), alors que son aspect culturel ne donne guère lieu qu'à une lecture de surface (celle de la sauvegarde de la culture). Coleman ne prend jamais sérieusement en considération les perspectives anti-keynésiennes du rapport qui, dans une très large mesure, subsument ses perspectives politico-culturelles d'inspiration nationale. Bien sûr, la Commission Tremblay s'oppose aux propositions centralisatrices de la Commission Massey dans le domaine de la culture (la fameuse question des subventions aux universités), mais le rapport de cette dernière n'est que l'une des pièces d'un "dossier" beaucoup plus large auquel il faudrait ajouter le Rapport Rowell-Sirois, le rapport Marsh et l'ensemble des documents déposés par le fédéral lors des conférences de la Reconstruction, et j'en passe. Pour bien rendre compte du Rapport Tremblay, il importe donc de le replacer dans l'ensemble des luttes qui opposent, au Québec comme dans le reste du Canada, les forces sociales favorables à la reconduction de la forme de l'État libérale et celles qui préconisent l'affirmation de l'État keynésien. Si les notables de la province se tournent vers l'État du Québec, c'est en grande partie parce que la stratégie keynésienne s'impose à Ottawa; s'ils cherchent à défendre toutes gardes levées les institutions traditionnelles, c'est aussi en grande partie parce que les transformations keynésiennes ne manqueraient pas de leur soutirer le contrôle qu'ils exercent sur la culture (l'école, les mouvements de jeunesse) et dans le domaine social (les hôpitaux, la charité privée). Il ne s'agit pas de nier l'importance de la question nationale sur laquelle nous reviendrons, mais de souligner que la perspective provincialiste adoptée par Coleman l'empêche de mesurer les pleines dimensions des phénomènes qu'il étudie et, comme nous l'avons souligné plus haut, l'amène à reconnaître des filiations là où prédomine largement la dissemblance.

La perspective provincialiste de Coleman apparaît aussi clairement quand on aborde l'ensemble de ses analyses sur les alliances de classes. Les classes composant ces alliances demeurent toujours parquées dans l'enclos québécois. Tout se passe comme si la vie politique au Québec n'était que le résultat de rapports entre des forces étroitement circonscrites dans la "belle province". Passe encore pour le mouvement indépendantiste, mais on s'étonne du fait que la Révolution tranquille soit présentée comme le résultat d'une alliance restreinte entre la bourgeoisie francophone, le mouvement

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ouvrier et certains membres recyclés de la classe moyenne traditionnelle. Les différentes fractions de la bourgeoisie monopoliste, canadienne et américaine, semblent assister au spectacle. J'éviterai encore ici une polémique qui nous entrainerait trop loin¹. Je soumettrai seulement que ce provincialisme empêche de rendre compte de la complexité du phénomène qu'a été la Révolution tranquille (l'accord de plus en plus large, par exemple, au sein de la bourgeoisie monopoliste canadienne pour l'adoption des réformes keynésiennes dans l'ensemble du Canada à la fin des années cinquante et les relations étroites qu'elle entretient alors avec le Parti libéral au Québec). Un tel réductionnisme conduit aussi à sous-estimer les contradictions qui se sont développées par la suite et qui ont provoqué de nombreuses transformations-adaptations de la politique économique (échec de la planification, réorganisation des rapports entre capital monopoliste et non monopoliste, querelle autour de la place de certaines sociétés d'État dans l'économie québécoise et canadienne, etc.).

Une théorie de la question nationale étroitement culturaliste. Bien que l'auteur n'expose pas la théorie de la nation et de la question nationale qui l'inspire, il apparaît clairement que celle-ci est étroitement liée aux perspectives provincialiste et téléologique que nous avons évoquées plus haut. Pour Coleman, la question nationale semble se réduire à ses dimensions d'ordre culturel. Voilà pourquoi il est amené à surestimer les aspects culturels du Rapport Tremblay (du moins à en faire une lecture étroite) et à présenter le mouvement indépendantiste comme une sorte de réaction à dominante culturelle, pour enfin suggérer l'existence d'une filiation entre les deux phénomènes. On retrouve ici le coeur de la thèse, mais en même temps ses aspects les moins convaincants. Le Rapport Tremblay et le mouvement indépendantiste ne réfèrent ni à la même nation (la nation québécoise à l'encontre de la nation canadienne-française), ni au même type de représentation de la communauté nationale (la nation québécoise se donne comme une communauté politique, alors que la nation canadienne-française s'identifie comme une communauté culturelle définie en termes religieux). Bien sûr, la dimension culturelle tient une place importante dans la représentation de la nation durant les années soixante et soixante-dix, mais cette dernière n'a de sens qu'en rapport avec une définition essentiellement politique de la communauté. La nation québécoise se reconnaît dans son rapport à l'État. On peut le constater en étudiant la production de l'ensemble des mouvements indépendantistes, de gauche et de droite, de l'Alliance laurentienne au Parti québécois, en passant par le courant socialisme et indépendance. On assiste à une véritable politisation de la question culturelle et l'incroyable explosion de la créativité artistique durant ces années s'inscrit dans ce même mouvement de redéfinition de la communauté nationale en termes politiques ("Mon

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pays ce n'est pas un pays, mais l'envers d'un pays qui n'était ni pays, ni patrie", Gilles Vigneault).

La nation québécoise se définit ainsi comme une communauté politique et le mouvement indépendantiste dans toutes ses composantes (politique, sociale, artistique et culturelle) pose le problème de l'identité comme une question politique. En ce sens, il peut être avancé que loin d'être en filiation avec le Rapport Tremblay, le mouvement indépendantiste se développe à l'encontre des positions de la Commission. S'il fallait absolument rechercher une filiation, ce que je conteste pour les raisons évoquées plus haut, on la trouverait au contraire au niveau de l'aspect politique de la stratégie de ce rapport. Encore une fois, le problème n'est pas de s'attacher de façon prévalente aux similitudes, mais d'expliquer les dissemblances. L'une des voies possibles se trouvent de nouveau dans la prise en considération du procès d'affirmation de l'État keynésien. Dans la forme de l'État libérale caractérisée par une nette séparation entre la société politique et la société civile et au sein des structures particulières du fédéralisme canadien conférant aux provinces les principaux pouvoirs liés à la légitimation (éducation, culture, bien-être social), on assista au Québec comme ailleurs au Canada à une sorte de partage du monde entre des forces sociales reliées aux instances de la société moderne (une société politique correspondant au développement du mode de production capitaliste) et à celles de la société traditionnelle (une société définie en termes religieux et culturels et reliée à la reproduction de formes de production précapitaliste). Au Québec, (comme d'ailleurs dans l'ensemble du Canada-français) se structure ainsi la reproduction complexe et contradictoire de deux formes de la représentation de la société, l'une, politique, s'articulant principalement à partir des structures politiques du fédéralisme, l'autre, culturalo-religieuse, se reproduisant à partir des instances de la société civile en grande partie contrôlée par le clergé. Jusqu'à la fin des années cinquante, la définition de la communauté nationale peut ainsi s'articuler dans la société civile grâce aux institutions contrôlées par les forces sociales liées à la reproduction du traditionnalisme: la nation était canadienne-française et catholique. En suscitant l'interpénétration des sociétés civile et politique, la mise en place de l'État keynésien balaie les forces sociales et la représentation traditionnelles, provoque une véritable politisation de la question nationale et force l'apparition de cette nouvelle nation, la nation québécoise, définie essentiellement comme une communauté politique. En ce sens, le mouvement indépendantiste n'est pas en filiation, mais bien en rupture avec les thèses du rapport Tremblay.

Une thèse réductionniste. Pour faire fonctionner sa thèse, culturaliste en dernière analyse, Coleman est amené à développer des positions paradoxalement instrumentaliste et économiciste. Partant de son postulat implicite liant de façon étroite et restrictive question nationale et culture, il veut démontrer

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que les réformes politiques des années soixante et soixante-dix n'ont servi que les intérêts d'une bourgeoisie francophone utilisant l'État pour favoriser l'intégration économique et culturelle du Québec à la société nord-américaine. Risquant de faire disparaître la culture nationale, cette intégration aurait provoqué la rupture de la coalition initiatrice de la Révolution tranquille et l'opposition d'un mouvement indépendantiste contraint de rechercher dans le socialisme le renouvellement de la culture. Or, il est aussi périlleux d'affirmer que les réformes politiques n'ont servi que les intérêts étroits de la bourgeoisie francophone que d'avancer que le mouvement indépendantiste était d'inspiration culturelle et socialiste. Dans le premier cas, on néglige la promotion du mouvement ouvrier reliée aux réformes keynésiennes et l'intérêt manifeste qu'a représenté le développement des secteurs public et parapublic pour la nouvelle petite bourgeoisie; dans le second cas, on oublie que l'affirmation et le développement de l'État québécois constituaient l'objectif central d'un mouvement définissant désormais la nation en termes politiques.

La thèse du bon sauvage. Il nous reste à considérer cette curieuse affirmation de Coleman suggérant que le mouvement indépendantiste était un mouvement d'inspiration socialiste: "indépendantistes feel comfortable in espousing socialism" (p. 226). Cette thèse est malheureusement contraire aux faits. Le mouvement indépendantiste, dans sa composante largement majoritaire, n'a jamais été socialiste. Il s'y est certes développé un courant socialisme et indépendance, mais ce dernier a été très rapidement marginalisé dès la fin des années soixante. Coleman amalgame manifestement ici les quelques velléités social-démocrates qui se sont développées à l'intérieur du Parti québécois et les positions socialistes émanant des centrales syndicales aux débuts des années soixante-dix. Mais il importe de constater que le courant socialiste n'a jamais constitué une force significative et organisée au sein du mouvement indépendantiste, sauf au moment de l'éclatement du Rassemblement pour l'indépendance nationale. Mais pourquoi Coleman force-t-il ainsi la note? Parce que ce rapport entre socialisme et indépendantisme est essentiel à la démonstration de ses thèses et plus particulièrement de l'une d'entre elles qui dynamise l'ensemble de ses interprétations.

Réduisant la question nationale à celle de la culture, Coleman voit dans le Rapport Tremblay la proclamation en même temps que le chant du cygne d'une représentation culturelle de la communauté nationale francophone au Québec (la fameuse nation canadienne-française et catholique). Il constate par la suite que la Révolution tranquille provoque la mise à mort de la culture traditionnelle en favorisant l'intégration à la société américaine. La spécificité de la culture ayant disparu, la nation risque de mourir. L'analyse de Coleman fonctionne ici à partir de deux postulats implicites qu'il importe de discuter. 1) Le capitalisme provoquerait nécessairement et fatalement l'intégration culturelle et la fusion des nationalités; 2) dans la société capitaliste, la nation

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minoritaire doit développer une culture différente d'inspiration anti-capitaliste, si elle veut survivre. Une discussion approfondie de ces deux postulats nous entraînerait beaucoup trop loin, aussi nous en tiendrons nous à la "question du Québec". Il me faudra cependant avancer une contre-thèse pour la clarté de l'exposé: la question nationale et la communauté nationale dans la société capitaliste ne saurait être comprise dans toutes ses dimensions que dans leurs rapports à l'État. Comme je l'ai souligné plus haut, jusqu'à la fin des années cinquante, la communauté nationale a été définie en termes culturels en grande partie parce que la société traditionnelle pouvait se reproduire au Québec grâce aux structures du fédéralisme, durant la dominance de la forme de l'État libérale au Canada. Déjà cependant la définition d'une communauté nationale à dominante ethnique (la "race") et culturelle ("catholique") n'était pas dépourvue de rapports au politique, puisqu'elle s'identifiait au territoire de l'État canadien ("canadienne-française"). Avec l'affirmation de l'État keynésien, la société québécoise entrant de plain pied dans la société politique et moderne, on assiste à un déplacement du lieu de la définition de l'identité nationale. D'une communauté à dominante culturelle on passe à la représentation d'une communauté politique. Contrairement à ce qu'affirme Coleman, il n'y a pas perte d'identité, mais reformulation d'une identité symboliquement rattachée au territoire et à l'État québécois. La culture de la nation devient pour ainsi dire une culture politique. Le capitalisme n'a donc pas provoqué la disparition de la nation, mais bien plutôt la transformation de la représentation de son identité.

La discussion du second postulat est plus complexe. Elle renvoie à un problème plus général que l'on pourrait formuler de la façon suivante: comment s'articule la différence culturelle dans la société capitaliste pleinement développée? Coleman postule à l'évidence que la culture capitaliste fait nécessairement disparaître le sentiment d'identité et la représentation de la différence nationale. Même si un tel postulat réfère à une tendance réelle du capitalisme, il en surévalue à ce point l'importance qu'il élude la complexité de l'ensemble du processus du développement culturel dans la société capitaliste. Le capitalisme tend bien à reproduire à l'échelle planétaire un mode de vie identique fondé sur les pratiques de la société de consommation. Mais ce mode de vie ne se développe qu'au sein de rapports de forces socio-politiques toujours circonscrits dans les cadres d'États nationaux différents. La culture capitaliste, malgré ses tendances à l'homogénéisation des pratiques demeure toujours et encore une culture politique historiquement circonscrite. La société capitaliste fonctionne à la différence politique; la démocratie bourgeoise trouve les instances de sa légitimation dans la production d'une communauté nationale populaire différenciée. Voilà pourquoi, même s'ils se sont "convertis" à la culture de masse, les francophones du Québec ne sont pas moins différents depuis qu'ils se représentent comme des membres de la

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nation québécoise que lorsqu'ils s'identifiaient à la "race canadienne-française et catholique". La théologie de l'État a remplacé celle de la catholicité!

La thèse de Coleman risque de déboucher sur le mythe du "bon sauvage" à travers lequel l'observateur finit par être tellement obnubilé par la différence de la société autochtone qu'il en vient à craindre qu'elle se transforme. Il oublie de considérer que, grâce à ses luttes, cette société peut trouver les éléments essentiels à la retraduction de sa différence dans le processus même de sa transformation. Il ne s'agit certes pas de nier les dangers que représente la tendance à l'homogénéisation culturelle impulsée par le développement du capitalisme, mais nous ne croyons pas qu'il faille verser dans le catastrophisme à ce propos. Coleman semble confondre ici les possibilités pratiques de réaliser l'indépendance du Québec sans la lier à la lutte pour le socialisme avec la probabilité que puisse s'y reproduire une nation différente au sein même de la société capitaliste nord-américaine.

Malgré son intérêt, la thèse de Coleman pose donc un ensemble de problèmes importants. Bien qu'elle soulève plusieurs questions pertinentes, il est difficile de la recevoir dans sa globalité. Elle s'inspire en même temps des deux courants antagonistes qui ont dominé la sociographie québécoise durant les années soixante-dix: l'un, d'inspiration marxiste, privilégiait l'analyse des classes sociales; l'autre, culturaliste, s'attachait aux phénomènes de la représentation et de la culture². Même si la tentative de réconciliation que nous propose Coleman n'est pas sans intérêt, elle procède davantage de l'amalgame que d'une redéfinition des termes du débat, qui seule serait susceptible d'ouvrir une nouvelle voie.

Notes

1. Voir à ce propos Gilles Bourque, "Petite bourgeoisie envahissante et bourgeoisie ténébreuse" dans G. Bourque et G. Dostaler, *Socialisme et indépendance*, (Montréal: Boréal Express, 1980).
2. Voir Daniel Salée, "L'analyse socio-politique de la société québécoise" dans Gérard Boismenu et al., *Espace régional et nation. Pour un nouveau débat sur le Québec*, (Montréal: Boréal Express, 1983), 15-49; et Gilles Bourque, "Société politique et sociologie québécoise", *Revue canadienne de sociologie*, à paraître.

DU FÉMINISME COMME ANTIDOTE À LA MOROSITÉ

Chantal Maillé

Diane Lamoureux, *Fragments et collages. Essai sur le féminisme québécois des années 70*, Montréal, Éditions du Remue-ménage, 1986, et Micheline deSève, *Pour un féminisme libertaire*, Montréal, Boréal Express, 1985

Au cours de la dernière année, j'ai recensé un grand nombre de textes qui proposaient de réfléchir sur le déclin du féminisme. Le ton oscillait entre le cynisme et la consternation, selon le point de vue. Et pourtant, il apparaît difficile de nier que le discours féministe continue d'interpeller hommes et femmes, ne laissant que rarement indifférent. En cette époque où tombent les gourous et où se succèdent les modes intellectuelles, deux publications arrivent à brûle-pourpoint pour témoigner de l'enracinement de ce mouvement d'idées, mais aussi de sa non-orthodoxie politico-philosophique. Le féminisme n'a rien du mouvement qui a un corpus construit; en cela, il reste vulnérable bien que cet état permette en même temps de lui donner le statut de pensée singulière. Sa démarche suggère intrinsèquement le doute et, alors qu'il est possible d'identifier clairement les mécanismes qui organisent les rapports sociaux de sexe en patriarcat, il n'existe pas en contrepartie dans la démarche féministe une vision unique et précise de l'alternative souhaitée.

Cependant, on comprendra, à l'intérieur de la crise des idéologies, l'originalité de la pensée féministe. Dans ce contexte, comment aborder le thème du féminisme québécois des dernières années? Évoquer les stratégies du

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mouvement militant, les discours dominants et les autres, les idées en circulation et celles qui n'ont plus la cote? Deux ouvrages québécois récents méritent une attention particulière. Diane Lamoureux, avec *Fragments et collages* propose d'abord une analyse de ce qu'a été le mouvement féministe québécois des années soixante-dix puis suggère les éléments pour en penser le devenir, mettant au coeur de sa démarche une subjectivité "politico-militante" propre, un regard à la fois analytique et engagé sur les années de pratique féministe au Québec. Micheline deSève, avec *Pour un féminisme libertaire*, présente un ouvrage qui se veut d'une part une introduction à la pensée féministe, alors que sont analysés les thèses et les thèmes fondamentaux du féminisme, mais aussi une proposition, une esquisse de projet politique suggérant de nouveaux rapports sociaux.

Pour Lamoureux, le féminisme fait figure de premier mouvement, de première pensée anti-capitaliste post-marxiste; il a représenté le plus profond bouleversement de la pensée politique occidentale, telle qu'elle s'est structurée autour de la notion d'État au XVI^e siècle. "À l'idée de l'État et du politique étanchement et hygiéniquement coupés du social, servant à unifier, à universaliser le social, le féminisme a posé au centre de son projet la multiplicité du politique et l'impossibilité tant de l'unification que de l'universel dans des sociétés divisées par les rapports sociaux de sexe." (24)

Voilà un ouvrage qui annonce des couleurs plutôt tranchées alors que baigne partout en Occident un climat de morosité intellectuelle généralisée. Là où, entretenus d'un discours ayant pour nom la postmodernité, les intellectuels n'auront vu que la décadence de tous les idéaux, sans appel possible, le féminisme continue d'aspirer à une certaine forme de leadership idéologique. L'ouvrage de Lamoureux entend aussi exposer comment s'est réalisé l'ancrage de la pensée féministe au Québec. Faisant d'abord le constat de la baisse actuelle de toutes les formes de militantisme, il propose l'analyse suivante: "ce que cette crise du militantisme met en lumière, c'est la nécessité d'inventer de nouvelles formes de subversion sociale qui questionnent l'ensemble des rapports sociaux et d'abord, pour nous, les rapports de sexes à partir d'une multiplicité de points de vue et surtout de niveaux. La survie du féminisme passe par sa capacité de renouvellement, non pas en s'adjoignant des étiquettes — comme a tenté de le faire le marxisme — mais en retrouvant sa radicalité." (36)

L'introduction de l'ouvrage, "Où en est le féminisme?" énonce une série de questions sur le militantisme, questions auxquelles il devient impératif de répondre pour saisir les enjeux sur lesquels la lutte des femmes devra éventuellement miser. C'est aussi le constat d'une situation sociale d'ensemble trouble, à laquelle Lamoureux joint une analyse rétrospective; il faut ici chercher à dépasser ce qu'ont été les premiers mots d'ordre du féminisme militant. Questionner l'ensemble des rapports sociaux, donc, à partir de plusieurs

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niveaux d'analyse, dépasser l'analyse statique et unidimensionnelle à saveur d'universel édulcoré.

Un premier chapitre classe les groupes féministes des années 1970 à partir du caractère propre des problématiques qu'ils ont défendues. L'un des chapitres suivants, "Différence et identité", se penche sur la dynamique du mouvement. L'idée principale est la suivante: l'un des traits marquants du féminisme des années soixante-dix, c'est justement cette insistance sur l'expérience commune des femmes, sur l'existence des femmes, prises dans leur globalité, comme groupe social disposant de caractéristiques propres et partagées par l'ensemble des composantes du groupe. (95) Avec le recul, il devient nécessaire de constater que l'insistance sur la communauté de sort des femmes nous a souvent empêchées de percevoir des différences d'intérêt et de situation entre les femmes. (96) Un dernier chapitre. "À la recherche du politique", constitue peut-être la contribution la plus importante de cet ouvrage. Deux thèmes s'y retrouvent: la recherche d'identité pour les femmes et le rôle des lesbiennes dans le mouvement féministe. Pour Lamoureux, l'un des acquis du féminisme comme mouvement social réside dans sa capacité d'élargir la notion de politique. Et, ajoute-t-elle, il y a un autre phénomène à l'oeuvre principalement dans la deuxième moitié des années 1970, c'est la constitution d'un espace politique féministe, très difficile à cerner puisqu'il s'exprime rarement dans des lieux précis mais se traduit par une volonté de libération par la parole. Dans ce contexte, l'apport du lesbianisme, c'est d'avoir valorisé les femmes comme individus.

En conclusion, l'auteure revient sur le féminisme québécois des années soixante-dix et sur sa pratique actuelle, attribuant les transformations qu'il a connues depuis à la disparition des projets sociaux d'ensemble, à la récupération institutionnelle qui s'est opérée et à la dissociation de plus en plus importante entre les lesbiennes et le féminisme, celles-là mêmes qui en avaient assuré la radicalité.

Chez deSève, on retrouve aussi l'idée que le féminisme est un mouvement de première importance, car il représente la seule idéologie capable de faire cesser les formes existantes de domination. S'adressant d'abord à un public qui cherchera un ouvrage initiatique à la pensée féministe, deSève propose de développer l'idée d'un féminisme libertaire, défini comme projet de société où différence et égalité cessent de s'opposer. Prenant l'individu, homme et femme, comme espace pour accomplir sa libération, ce féminisme cherche à penser un modèle social permettant l'expression des différences, en rupture avec la conception univoque de l'ordre patriarcal. Dans ce contexte, se revendiquer comme femme prend une signification politique, l'objectif étant non pas l'abolition des distinctions de sexes mais la reconnaissance de ces distinctions comme principe d'éclatement du social (en une myriade d'individus et de groupes personnalisés, caractérisés culturellement ou sexuelle-

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ment mais non divisés ou hiérarchisés pour autant).

L'ensemble du texte a comme premier propos d'expliquer des concepts qui, sont au coeur de la pensée féministe: le patriarcat, d'abord, et la maternité, la production domestique, l'amour, la violence. Chaque chapitre présente à la fois un aperçu des auteures qui ont abordé ces thèmes et une analyse, plus subjective, qui positionne les rapports sociaux actuels. Cette démarche permet de faire ressortir les multiples facettes d'un patriarcat, posé ici comme modèle structurant fortement les rapports sociaux. En filigrane, deSève se livre à un commentaire qui a comme objectif de proposer une redéfinition des rapports entre les individus, hommes, femmes, enfants, formulant un projet politique qui érige l'individu et sa singularité comme fondement des nouveaux rapports sociaux à négocier. "Au plan de l'ensemble de la société, notre émancipation exige la substitution, aux rapports de domination actuels, d'une multiplicité de formes de rapports sociaux non antagoniques entre hommes et femmes de tous âges et de toutes professions dans et hors ces institutions qui, pour l'heure, emprisonnent l'ensemble des composantes de la société civile dans une véritable camisole de force." (76)

La réflexion sur les pratiques politiques chez deSève se pose d'abord assez longuement sur le marxisme; le propos est de critiquer la théorie marxiste et le socialisme pour leur échec à réaliser l'émancipation de l'individu. Cette réflexion se termine par une tirade engagée en faveur du pacifisme et un rejet des manifestations de la force et de la violence propres au patriarcat; si nous voulons survivre, poursuit-elle, il devient impératif de dissocier force et violence, agressivité et virilité. (118) Le féminisme libertaire proposé par deSève doit faire éclore une révolution de l'individu, celui-ci étant la base de toute reconstruction sociale. Il faut pouvoir aller vers l'émancipation du champ des activités publiques, mais sur la base de conceptions libertaires empruntées à l'expérience des liens affectifs et des rapports amoureux. (135)

On peut considérer ces deux ouvrages comme des indicateurs importants. La mort des idéologies ne semble pas atteindre les velléités de libération humaine propres au féminisme. Ces textes, qui se situent géographiquement sur le même continent, en témoignent. Lamoureux a proposé une nouvelle lecture de la lutte des femmes dans les années 1970 et, en cela, sa démarche historique permet de resituer la dynamique d'ensemble du mouvement dans l'atmosphère propre à la période. Elle suggère aussi de regarder devant, de penser "l'être des femmes". Et pourtant, comme le dit Collin dans la préface qu'elle a écrite pour le livre de Lamoureux, le féminisme est irréductible à sa traduction en termes politiques traditionnels, bien qu'il ne puisse en faire l'économie. Il n'est pas de projet politique qui puisse assumer l'exigence féministe. Et c'est ce dont témoignent deSève et Lamoureux: de la nécessité de penser le féminisme en dehors des référents politiques étatiques/nationaux que l'on connaît, de le penser donc comme projet philosophique se

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structurant à partir d'une analyse des fondements d'oppression.

J'en reviens donc au premier propos de mon texte, la morosité ambiante et la mort du féminisme, pour soutenir que la réflexion des femmes sur le monde constitue en ce moment un lieu de quête qui propose un sens nouveau à l'action dans le politique. Si le monde post-industriel et les États-nations craquent sous le poids des mutations sociales et techniques, les rapports sociaux, s'ils en sont affectés, n'ont pas été transformés au point de rendre méconnaissables les rapports dominant/dominé-e. C'est ce qui continuera d'alimenter la pensée féministe qui, dégagée de sa référence première, le marxisme, se constitue en pratique émancipatoire non-doctrinaire.

Département de science politique
Université du Québec à Montréal

SURREALISM AND THE POSTMODERN IN THE QUEBEC LITERARY INSTITUTION

Greg M. Nielsen

pour André Belleau

André G. Bourassa, *Surrealism and Quebec Literature: History of a Cultural Revolution*. Translated by Mark Czarneki, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, p. 374.

Quebec has not (yet) produced a Great writer; no Gabriel Garcia Marquez, James Joyce or Virginia Woolf, no Nobel Prize winner, no single Great world-class contribution. A similar comment might be aimed at Quebec art. Still, Quebec has its own art and literature which are certainly gaining in international acclaim. To say that a contemporary society has not given birth to a Great author in no way diminishes or degrades the quality of that society's cultural creations. Rather, it invites speculation concerning the relative aesthetic value of the *oeuvres* as attributed by the institution of art and literature on both the national and international scale.

Critical theory teaches us that judgments of the genius of aesthetic creations can only be derived from the specific reflexions of immanent critique. At the same time, however, the legitimation of the product as a Great or average work is only achieved through the institution. While critique of Quebec art and literature has grown to a point where it seems at times to surpass the actual volume of cultural productions, the legitimation of the ensemble of the work is only slowly being achieved. Historically, art and literature in Quebec

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have either been far behind or far ahead of what seems to be occurring elsewhere. My argument is that this internal/external tension is not only a trait of the institution of cultural production in Quebec but more generally founded in the social-historical fabric of the society itself. As a means of elaborating this hypothesis I will first outline a critical approach to the institution of cultural production. Secondly, I will attempt to apply a working definition of aesthetic value to a consideration of the Quebec literary institution by reviewing the English translation of André Bourassa's work, *Surrealism and Quebec Literature*.

Cultural Creation as Product and Social Force

A critical approach to cultural production requires a *dédoublement* (splitting) of presuppositions. Art and literature are seen as both institutional products and as institution. Peter Bürger has shown, how in the 18th and 19th centuries, autonomous (bourgeois) art separated itself from day to day praxis and as such became itself an institution. He goes on to argue that the avant-garde movements of the 20th century must be interpreted as attacks against art and literature as institution.¹ Bürger's analysis privileges the social function of art as the primary object of analysis and consequently tends to downplay the development of the aesthetic discourse within the institution.² Internally, the aesthetic practice of the institution works itself out across an open-ended maze of socio-discursive or dialogical relations which are generally referred to as the intertext. Intertextuality here refers to the entire ensemble of preceding and contemporary art and literature as well as to the social discourse bearing on a period; i.e., all that is argued, said or narrated in addition to the arguable, speakable and the narratable in the given society. In any period, art and literature as institution give a definition to the intertext and thereby establish a stratified scale of genres and sub-genres. Themes and narrative styles become the receptacles of social discourse. Art and literature are thus prisons for the hierarchisation of language itself. Aesthetic creations, then, both stratify and are stratified; they are both a social product and a social force. The ambiguity inherent in this presupposition stems, on the one hand, from an attempt to privilege the potentiality of the aesthetic creation and, on the other, to explain the process in which the creation becomes objectified.

Taken a step further, the above discussion of the *dédoublement* between art as social product and as social force must also, at some point, take into account the organizing and regulating practice of the institution. As social products, art and literature have an exchange value. I have no intention of developing an economic theory of cultural products here. Instead, I wish to introduce the analytical polarity between the organizing and aesthetic practices of art and literature which allows us to distinguish them as both products and institution. It is important to keep in mind that these two practices com-

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bine in the creation of a condition of production and that any discussion which holds them to be separate is purely analytical. At one pole, the organizing practice brings together all the materials of the technical and discursive infrastructure of the institution, its system(s) of (re)production and (re)distribution. At the other pole, the imaginary or aesthetic practice brings together all the materials (codes, norms, genres, themes, narrative styles) of the creative act. Given that the theory of intertextuality assumes the audience and the author to be co-creative participants already inserted in the text, it follows that the creative act also structures the possibilities of reception. Although the organizing and aesthetic practices work together in attaining a condition of production/reception, they do not necessarily share the same genesis. For example, aesthetic practices historically predate new organizing technologies and thereby carry a pre-set aesthetic of reception into the actual creation. At the same time, however, the combination of the two practices results in the illusion of *nouveauté*.

The Surrealist Aesthetic in Quebec Literature

Leaving aside the organizing component of the artistic/literary practice, I can now return to the problem I proposed above concerning the relative aesthetic values mediated within the Québec institution. André Bourassa's well-documented history of surrealist literature in Quebec provides an excellent point of departure. Bourassa sets out to demonstrate the Quebec contribution to the surrealist movement, both internally and internationally. Dealing with only written documents (manifestos, poems, plays, articles, correspondence) as source material, Bourassa excludes discussion of visual art but is careful to place the most important surrealist painters (Pellan, Barbeau, Ferron, Riopelle, Borduas) at the centre of the Quebec institution. While the book proclaims itself to be an outline of the ongoing Quebec cultural revolution coinciding with the background of the 1837 Patriot rebellions and continuing across the social movements of the 20th century, there is actually very little discussion of problems in Quebec social history. Its real strength lies in its diligent but typically descriptive historical exposition which traces otherwise inaccessible and often obscure texts to authors within intimate literary and artistic circles. Combining this sort of biography and textual hermeneutics, Bourassa teases out a series of aesthetic values which have slowly emerged to occupy an important position in the Quebec literary and artistic institution over the last century.

(Pre)Modernism and the Poetics of Unreason

Bourassa's work is not limited to a discussion of surrealism proper. He goes beyond the definition of the genre to situation its various sub-genres and

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counter-genres within the intertext of Quebec literature. His overall outline includes three distinct phases as practiced in Quebec literature. His overall outline includes three distinct phases as practiced in Quebec over the last century:

Breton's school as defined in the manifestos from 1924 on; another more generally related to movements such as cubism or revolutionary surrealism; and finally the spontaneous use of surrealism ... as in cathedral gargoyles and African masks ..., the dream imagery of Bosch and Goya or the automatic criting of Achim von Armin and Gérard de Nerval. (p. 1)

Actually, all three of the surrealist phases owe at least a common debt of definition to Breton who was the first to outline the movement's philosophy as a "state of mind". Still, Bourassa is anxious to point out that surrealism does not begin with Breton nor is it ideologically consistent across its several phases. Because its boundaries are fluid, its relations to other movements (romanticism, impressionism, expressionism, etc.) are only loosely defined. Hence, the precise origins of surrealism are difficult to locate. Bourassa begins his survey by situating the Quebec surrealist intertext in the cabalistic, cubo-futurist and dadaist precursors of the period from 1837-1937. Four writers are presented as having contributed to a presurrealist literary revolution by experimenting with cabalistic romanticism: de Gaspé fils, Lenoir, Cremazie and Nelligan. Of the four, the poet Emile Nelligan is perhaps best known. Drawing on dreamlike hallucinations and macabre spiritualism, Nelligan constructs an aesthetic of *unreason*:

On winter nights in my green velour armchair beside the hearth, an enormous ghost sat smoking my clay pipe under the iron chandelier behind my funeral screen ...

When I asked him his name, my voice booming out like a cannon, the skeleton bit his purple lip, stood and, point at the clock, howled out his name behind my funeral screen. (p. 11)

Unlike cabalistic romanticism which drew heavily on local mythology, the cubo-futurists and dadaist influences were imported by a handful of authors who studied abroad (Delahaye, Dugas, Grandbois, Garneau). Surrealism proper, as both a social and artistic movement, did not cement itself in Quebec until the early 1940s — almost 20 years after Breton's manifestos. As artists and authors retreated from Europe in 1940, a very special cultural break occurred. Beginning with the innovative collaboration between the painter

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Alfred Pellan and the poet Alain Grandbois, continuing through the autonomist writers around Paul-Émile Borduas and later to Gaston Miron and the founding of the poetry group *Hexagone*, surrealism in Quebec emerged very quickly as a generalized political refusal as much as an institutional aesthetic break. In their political forms, the Borduas manifestos (*Rupture inaugurale*, *Refus global*, *Projections libérantes*) shook the intellectual formation of a society dominated by a traditional political and clerical elite. In their aesthetic form, the autonomist writers and painters were ridding themselves of the barriers formed by the Quebec institution of art and literature itself (galleries, schools, publishing houses, critics, etc.).

Postmodernism and the Surreational Break

Emerging aesthetic values in the Quebec literary institution, much like the values of its social institution, were caught in the transition from the modern to the postmodern. This transition implies a shift from the formalism included in the break from representation, and the resulting tendency of self-referentiality in modernism, to the anti-formalism and the free play of desire at the base of the postmodern aesthetic. As Scott Lash defines it: "Postmodern art draws on uncoded and semi-coded libido in the unconscious to produce a literature and fine arts that break with the classical aesthetics of representation and with the formalism of modernity."³ The first traces of this shift in the Quebec institution are found in the autonomist movement and the plea to move beyond surrealism to a surreational aesthetic.

Bourassa presents Claude Gauvreau, a member of the *Refus global* group, as the key autonomist literary figure of the period. Gauvreau's definition of the autonomist aesthetic is distinctly postmodern in that it demands that "the materials of the creative act (be) furnished exclusively by the free play of the unconscious." He pleads for a surreational break from surrealism proper, arguing that the former "takes place in a particular emotional state", whereas the latter requires an emotional neutrality on the part of the author. According to Gauvreau, the contribution of the Quebec autonomist movement is its surreationalism and the critical attitude which accompanies the "emotional state" of its aesthetic practice. Founded then in the transition between modernism and postmodernism, Gauvreau attempts to push the mechanical/bodily and the physic/emotionless forms of surrealism through to a surreational state in the realm of pure desire. His work is especially marked by a lyrical form, typical of the *Refus global* group, which is itself an attempt to break through to the surreational level.

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The moon will go down on my belly and the reply will flow from the squeezed udder of the star.

The celestial creamery toils all night and the bright liquid flows from every corner in the universal sleep.

Only drowned people can smell it.

And the largest breast of all bloom in the center. It is the moon.
(p. 109).

Thus, even though the modernist aspects of surrealism take on a particular importance in the drive toward Quebec's Quiet Revolution, certain elements of the postmodern aesthetic also begin to appear in the same historical fold. Actually Quebec's first and perhaps most complete post-modernist writer is generally recognized as Hubert Aquin. Metafiction, mixed narrative, auto-representation, minimalism, maximalism, *mise en abîme*, are among some of the most common postmodern characteristics found in his work. Anne Hébert, Nicole Brossard, Victor-Lévy Beaulieu and other contemporary Quebec writers also gravitate toward postmodernism at times. Indeed, the proliferation of postmodernism can be discerned in a wide variety of new literary and critical/cultural reviews dating from the founding of *Liberté* through the *Parti Pris* era and into the most contemporary publications such as *Dérives*, *Spirale*, *Vice Versa*, *Autrement*, *XYZ*, *La Nouvelle Barre du Jour* and *Possibles*. Still, to situate the first traces of the postmodern aesthetic in the Quebec literary institution one must return to the autonomist movement of the 40's and 50's. Its impact on the evolution of aesthetic values in the Quebec literary and artistic institution has been central. Bourassa's work takes an important step in defining the historical parameters of the movement.

Glendon College
York University

Notes

1. Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984): "The Institution of Art as a Category in the Sociology of Literature". *Cultural Critique* no. 2 (1985-86) pp. 5-33.
2. Cf. Pierre Zima, *Manuel de sociocritique* (Paris: Picard, 1985).
3. Scott Lash, "Postmodernity and Desire" *Theory and Society* Vol 14, n° 1, pp. 1-33, 1985.

MANAGING THE DIFFERENCE

Geraldine Finn

I was both pleased and puzzled by "Fetishism and Pornography", a commentary on "The Pornographic Eye/I" by Graham Knight and Berkeley Kaite: pleased because it seemed to me that we agreed on what is fundamental to pornography (its "viciousness ... instated contradictorily within its representational form"); puzzled, because it seemed to them that we didn't. For they frame their description of the processes, affects and effects of fetishistic looking, which I think complements, develops and parallels my own analysis of male sexual subjectification, between two statements of difference, of opposition to and separation from both my analysis and my agenda (my gender, I wonder?)

They announce the difference in their opening paragraph, repeat it in much the same terms in the closing paragraph, and hint at it from time to time in the main body of their text by opposing their analysis to feminist critiques of porn which they claim do not sufficiently take into account "the way looking is a differentiated activity whose effect is produced in the plays and counter-plays of power-in-ideology". What they reject in fact, is the *conclusion* I draw in "The Pornographic Eye/I" from what seem to be a set of shared beliefs about pornography and its viciousness. They argue, in their first paragraph, for example, that my call for:

the unspecified de-sexualisation of representation stands in danger of implicitly reproducing the essentialist, binarist system of sexual different (sic) — 'either/orism' — in which patriarchal power consists.

They repeat the same charge almost verbatim in their closing paragraph, though they never explain how or why my conclusion stands in this particular

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danger. They do, however, imply that the perceived danger is immanent in my analysis as well, which also according to them:

remains uncritical in its assumption of the radical separation of subjects and objects ... does not distinguish fully enough between the voyeuristic and fetishistic, and the political implications of this vis-à-vis the internally contradictory and unstable mode of representation that pornography embodies.

These charges puzzle me first of all because they just don't stick; and secondly, because, given that, they obviously signal other differences between us that remain concealed and unspoken and are perhaps more fundamentally divisive than the ones Knight and Kaite attempt to name. In the first place, for example, I never actually make that call for the "unspecified de-sexualisation of representation" which these writers hold against me as implicitly reproducing the dualisms and oppositions "in which patriarchal power consists". What I suggest is the following:

We should aim at the *desexualisation* of pleasure, bodies, persons, relations, needs and not at sexual specificity.

We must refuse the sexual codification of our identity, our pleasures, our frustrations and our freedoms; stop looking at and appraising each other like commodities, 'objects' of 'desire'; and start presenting ourselves to the world and others in all our ambivalence and ambiguity.

Admittedly, this project of "desexualisation" as it stands is very vague and needs to be clarified and developed and "made practical" in the light of the analysis of sexuality, representation, masculinity and femininity, identity, desire, objectification, subjectification and spectatorship which produced it. And this is no small task; it calls for practice as well as theory — a creative praxis of systematic and relentless deconstruction. I do, however, clarify one practical consequence of my analysis and conclusion in the paper (and this is perhaps the real bone of contention between us). I argue that: "We will not fight pornography by censoring it, therefore, nor by flooding the market with alternative sexual imagery as is often argued by those who oppose present pornography".¹ I say this because my preceding analysis of pornography has demonstrated that what is pernicious about porn is not *what* it shows but *that* it shows: the fact/act of showing and looking itself. More precisely, I argue that what is wrong with pornography is its construction of sexual identity, sexual pleasure and sexual power through *spectatorship*; i.e. the form rather than the content of its representations. (A process which is not of course specific to pornography as my paper makes clear).

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It seems to me that Knight and Kaite admit as much when they introduce their own alternative "radical intervention in porno" with the reminder that:

pornography's viciousness is instated contradictorily within its representational form, and not simply in its radical contrast to a real that exists outside and negates it.

It would seem to follow from this, that it is precisely this *representational form* which must be repudiated if we want to develop alternatives to the sexuality depicted in and reproduced by pornography; that it is this very relationship between looking/representation and being, between *spectatorship and sexuality* which must be disrupted in sexist society, since that relationship is one of the principal modes of production of the masculine/feminine difference and the order of dominance constituted by it. If we want to undermine that order of dominance we must attack its representational form. As I argue:

Objectification and abstraction, emotional detachment, isolation and estrangement from the Other belong to the *voyeur-subject* of sexuality itself i.e. to the 'ontological condition of viewing' and not to the world-viewed. Tinkering with the latter does nothing to challenge the sexual régime articulated through the former ... its form, its logic, its mode of production of truth, knowledge, pleasure, need, people, practices and sexuality ...

It is hard for me to see how this call for the "desexualisation" of pleasure, persons, bodies etc., either presumes or risks the reproduction of the dangerous dichotomies attributed to it by Knight and Kaite: the separation of representation and the real, of objects and subjects, of masculine and feminine. Indeed, it is precisely because I recognise the constitutive relationship between (and correspondingly ambivalent identity of) real sex and represented sex, real masculinity and represented masculinity, real subjects and object and represented subjects and objects, that I repudiate the production of sexual imagery as any kind of means for liberating ourselves from the "austere monarchy" of pornographic/patriarchal sex. For, that denotes for me a 'sex' which is organised around and constructed through spectatorship: through the 'sighting' of an other precisely as Other i.e. as one who is neither particular nor specific nor *present to or with* me in a shared world; but *re-presented* by or *for* me as an anonymous and separate substitutable any/body, frozen in a time and space which is not mine, from which I am screened, and with which I have no other relationship than that of "voyeur". It is the *specular* (sexual) self that constructs the world and others as its (sexual) object, which must

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therefore be questioned and repudiated. And this can only be done through questioning and repudiating (sexual) spectatorship, sexual representation, itself.

Knight and Kaite are not prepared to go so far in their "radical intervention in porno", though they do not actually come right out and say so. What they do propose as an alternative to my strategy of "desexualisation" suggests as much, however: that there is still a place for pornography, for sexual spectatorship (for voyeurism and fetishism, therefore) in their particular politics:

To liberate ourselves from the "austere monarchy of sex", sex must be made quite literally insignificant, removed from the 'semicracy' that fetishism is all about; and to do that it must first be made to signify everything it can.

Frankly, I don't know what this means in terms of practice though I suspect it is a rather subtle expression of the call for more sexual imagery. On the one hand, it seems to call for deconstruction: for the deconstruction of the significance of sexual difference, of the difference different sex organs make, of gender, in other words; for the systematic dis-closure of sexual imagery, identity, pleasure and desire as socially constructed and political realities; for "confronting men with the phallic economy of their pleasure and desire" as these writers suggest; for what, in short, I have called elsewhere a "sex-critical" political practice — which I would therefore also endorse². On the other hand, it sounds like a call for more sexual imagery; for more and more varied representations of 'sex' (whatever this means) "to signify everything it can" (whatever that means); and this is a strategy which I must oppose. We cannot decree at will what 'sex' will mean in sexist society, or what social meanings will accrue to representations of male and female bodies, whether or not they are designated "sexual". For, in sexist society, representations of men and women (and male and female) have over-determined social meanings (male-active-dominant, female-passive-submissive etc.) which accrue to them regardless of the intentions of those who create or look at them. Besides, as "The Pornographic Eye/I" and this analysis of fetishism demonstrate, in sexist society the very act of representation reproduces actual male power positions.³ Of course, the spectator-subject position of sexuality is not confined to men; women can assume it too, just as men can assume the position of 'feminized' object. But this does not mean that the structural relationship between spectator and 'object' and the social reality which produces it as both plausible and desirable cease to be sexist. A simple reversal of roles does nothing to undermine the fundamental social division between men and women (male and female) and the order of dominance and subordination between them, which the desire to represent/to look both assumes and

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reproduces. The privilege of the phallus, of patriarchy, is based on and in turn relies on the privilege of *sight* over the other senses: the sight of the penis, in particular, the reality of which must be forever veiled, concealed (con-cealed, hidden behind the cunt, the absence of penis which must therefore be constantly displayed); never presented as flesh, but only ever *re-presented* as phallus, if the privilege and power of those who possess it is to be maintained or realized in practice. Assuming the phallus may give power to some individuals who are not thus possessed (of the penis, that is) but it does absolutely nothing to undermine the hegemony of those who are of patriarchy: it merely adds another veil of "neutrality" to its authority by masking the *gender-specificity* of both its form and content.

I suspect that what Knight and Kaite really object to in my analysis and in my call for "desexualisation" is precisely this differentiation I insist on making between male and female social being and, therefore, between male and female sexuality; my insistence on the gender-specificity of phallic power and the sexual economy organized under its 'law'⁴. In "The Pornographic Eye/I", I, a woman, presume to describe and deconstruct the sexuality of men. I look at men looking at women (or other men or objects suitably 'feminized' for the showing) and designate this "looking" as specific to and constitutive of masculine identity, sexuality and power as *distinct from, though not unconnected with*, feminine sexuality, identity and powerlessness. In a sense, I assume the phallus, to which I am not entitled by virtue of my 'sex' (my genitals, that is), in order to unveil it (expose the man, the penis, beneath) and the mechanisms of division, denial, domination/and desire which constitute its power (men's power over women and women's corresponding powerlessness). Furthermore, I use it to disclose and affirm those very differences (between male and female, man and woman) which it has been the traditional function of the phallus to deny. (Man includes woman, remember: is the norm of Humanity, Rationality, Freedom and now Sex). Female difference and the threat it poses to male dominance has been traditionally managed by excluding and containing it at one and the same time within a system of polar oppositions which purports to be both natural and neutral: masculine/feminine, subject/object, self/other, mind/matter, culture/nature etc. The truth is, of course, that such categories are neither 'natural' nor 'neutral': they are socially constructed and they are hierarchical. For one pole and whatever is included under its category is always sanctioned by the polarity itself to dominate the other: thus masculine dominates feminine, subject object, mind matter, culture nature ... and so forth. "Indeed, why differentiate if not to form a hierarchy?"⁵

I think Knight and Kaite are made anxious by my assertion and affirmation of the sexual specificity of men in particular. Men are not used to being distinguished as a particular class of subjects, least of all 'sighted' and discussed by and from the standpoint of Man's traditional excluded Other, the

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sex which is usually silenced by sex itself. Perhaps because they are two speaking as one, they are uncomfortable with my refusal to *homogenize* sexuality and collapse men and women into one undifferentiated sexual subject (the undifferentiated subject of their own intervention?). They deal with their discomfort in very traditional ways, however: polarizing both the differences between us — forcing us into an either/or situation — and the differences I insist on affirming between male and female (sexual) subjectivity (“her analysis remains uncritical in its assumption of the radical separation between subjects and objects”). They polarize the difference between us by casting me as the Other, as the untruth to their Truth — the preserver and reproducer of patriarchal binarist essentialist sexual differences — who must, therefore, be refused, punished, disavowed, excluded, absorbed. Because they don’t agree with me, they actually exclude me from their discourse by placing me, politically and ideologically, beyond the pornographic pale:

When Finn states that porno tells us a lot about men’s sexuality she assumes a privileged position of objective detachment which must then be made practical. For its viewers, pornography says nothing at all about their sexuality: its silence in this respect, its ability to take that sexuality for granted, is the very privilege that must be shattered.

According to this, there are only two experiences of pornographic sexuality available: that of pornography’s viewers who are in a position to know about pornographic sex but apparently too mystified by it to know that they know; and that of an ‘objective’ and detached observer who, it is implied, doesn’t really know what she is talking about. Not only do Knight and Kaite falsify pornographic experience by reducing it to two mutually exclusive options here, they actually reproduce it by representing my specific difference from them in terms of the same “phallic economy” of subjects and objects and ‘either/or-ism’ they detect and deplore in pornography itself. By polarizing our differences like this, they continue to deny an opening for the other in their discourse of sex (for me, that is), and thus the possibility of effective *heterosexual* intercourse: between me/woman and the viewers/men, between me and my call for “desexualisation” and them and their desire to make ‘sex’ signify everything it can.

The polarity is false because I do not assume a “a privileged position of objective detachment” when I draw conclusions about men’s sexuality from pornography. I draw on my own experience as a woman in a sexist society which is saturated with sexual imagery: imagery which positions me as viewer, *vis-à-vis* the eroticised bodies of others, usually other women, whether I like it or want it or not. And it is from the contradictions and ambivalences of that position of enforced and en-gendered spectatorship that I speak of a sexuality

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which is not-mine but thrust upon me from all directions in our society of the spectacle. For, pornographic looking, as Knight and Kaite's own analysis of fetishism shows, is essentially *homocentric* and *homosexual*: a closed circuit of self-reference and self-desire designed precisely to manage "the threat to *male* dominance posed by *female* difference". If I succumb to pornography's seductions (to scopophilia) I thereby collude in my own *disavowal* as a woman, my own objectification, oppression, division, denial and domination, inasmuch as I am female; and at the same time confirm the privilege and power which possession of the (unsighted) penis confers on men. Pornography may offer men a choice, or at least a possibility of choice, between "objectification and identification (subjectification)", between the designated masculine subject position and the designated feminine object position. But whichever they chose they, men, remain in the privileged phallic and essentially *homosexual* position:

objectification resulting in pleasure from the fantasized control of the other, identification in narcissism and auto-erotic pleasure.

There is still no room in this oscillation for the other as other, for me as *woman*. As viewer of pornography I can identify with either the spectator or the 'object' viewed. If I identify with the object or person viewed (the appropriate feminized object of desire) I subordinate myself to the rule of the *man*-made artifact, arranged and produced to serve *his* desire, to be both idol and idolizer for *him*. If I identify with the male spectator-owner for whom the image has been arranged I also align myself with *his* desire and therefore *his* subjectivity. There is no place for women as *women* (as opposed to women as not-men) in this dynamic and therefore no possibility of real sexual relations: of relations between the sexes that is, between men and women who are not merely images of Man.

It is also false to claim that pornography says "nothing at all about their sexuality" to its viewers. In the first place, there is no exclusive and discrete group of pornography's "viewers" as such: we are all 'subjected' to it and we all learn from it. Secondly, because pornography does re-present 'truths' of male and female sexuality to us; for many of us it is the chief instrument of our sexual education (particularly if you use 'pornography' in its broadest sense, as I do, to include practically all representations of men and women as differentially sexed). It tells us that women desire to be desired by men and will go to great lengths to manipulate their bodies to call forth that desire; that women's sexual pleasure is in being the site/sight for men's sexual pleasure; which is, in turn, in looking at women's objectified and seamless bodies, manipulated and displayed for them, for their pleasure and penetration... and so forth. (Gay and lesbian pornography complicates the picture a bit, but

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still relies on and reproduces the same fundamental structures and meanings of so-called *heterosexuality* and desire; a heterosexuality which reveals itself, after all, as just “a mediated form of homosexuality”).⁶

However, pornography has nothing to say about the history, social construction, politics and lived reality of the sexualities it re-presents as ‘natural’, ‘necessary’ and ‘neutral’. And I agree with Knight and Kaite on this point, that “its silence in this respect, its ability to take that sexuality for granted, is the very privilege that must be shattered”. Deconstruction goes part of the way to shattering that silence and the privilege it confers, and if this is what Knight and Kaite mean by making ‘sex’ signify everything it can, then our conclusions are not as different as they seem to think. For that would surely have the effect of “desexualising” both the representation and the reality of specific differences.

Or would it? It really depends on what they mean by ‘sex’ and whether they plan to retain it as a privileged category or not (along with sexual identities, sexual pleasures, sexual desires etc.). Since I believe that sex cannot be separated from gender, that it:

has become a pertinent fact, hence a perceived category, because of gender ... in the sense that the hierarchical division of humanity into two transforms an anatomical difference (which is in itself devoid of social implications) into a relevant distinction for social practice.⁷

And since gender itself is created by oppression, I cannot condone the preservation of ‘sex’ (or any of the realities qualified as ‘sexual’: pleasures, desires, identities) as a privileged category for thought or action in any intervention in porn which purports to be radical. Hence my call for “desexualisation”. Since Knight and Kaite explicitly distance themselves from this call with their own project of making sex “signify everything it can” I fear that they may be actually advocating its antithesis: the *sexualisation* of everything. Though this is still ambiguous. If it means dis-closing the phallus as a penis (or prick), “the male sexuality behind the supposedly neutral position of authority”⁸ in all its manifestations, then I am all in favour. If it means re-presenting the penis as a phallus, I’m not. The distinction is subtle but absolutely central to feminism. The first exposes and subverts the *homosexual* power of the phallus by unveiling its assumption as presumption,⁹ the latter assumes that power to use it in traditional ways: to manage the threat of (female) difference, to conceal the gap between knowledge and belief (between patriarchal ideology and ideas and lived sexual experience), to ‘suture’ the lack of *heterosexual* relation between men and women, and to obscure the systematic oppression of women upon which all this phallic activity is built.

I hope, therefore, that Knight and Kaite will clarify and “make practical”

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their proposed political agenda: to remove sex "from the 'semiocracy' that fetishism is all about", to make sex "signify everything it can", so that I can understand what exactly it is that they are proposing. More importantly, perhaps, I hope they will also clarify and likewise make practical the position from which they speak. For, though they speak with one voice, they are not one but two: two different sexes too. And since the threat of female difference is so central to their analysis of pornography I cannot help wondering how they managed that difference in the production of this text itself, which has, after all, only one sexually undifferentiated voice. Whose voice is it and what did they do with their differences, the different sites/sights they occupy in the political economy of sex and gender? Since they are silent on this it is tempting to surmise that they denied the difference, projected it upon the Other — me — and repudiated it there by polarising it into an opposition: either my gender(ed)/ agenda or theirs.

Pointe Gatineau

Editors' note: See *CJPST*, Vol. 10, n° 1:2 (Winter/Spring 1985) and, Vol. 10 n° 3 (Fall/1986).

Notes

1. More recently I have argued that some form of social control may be an appropriate way of fighting pornography. See Finn 1986.
2. See Finn 1986, especially 1986a.
3. See Gidal 1984: 27.
4. "This problem of dealing with difference without constituting an opposition may just be what feminism is all about" (Gallop 1982: 93).
5. Reynaud 1980: 10.
6. Gallop 1982 : 84.
7. Delphy 1984: 144. See Finn 1985, 1986a, 1986b for a development of this argument.
8. Gallop 1982 : 122.
9. Gallop 1982: 192.

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LOCAL FEMINIST PRACTICE?

Sherry Simon

Angela Miles' paper on the new integrative feminism is a stirring, closely argued call for the frank recognition of the specificity of feminist values and their role in a universal liberatory politics. The historical basis for her claim she situates in "a powerful and central tendency of the woman's liberation movement for almost twenty years". The theoretical basis for this affirmation of feminist values she finds in the new feminist scholarship — principally that of Mary O'Brien and Nancy Hartsock — which situates female difference materially and historically in the process of reproduction. How are we to interpret the timing of such a call for a "universal, utopian feminist perspective" — a vision which Miles proposes as a heady alternative to the narrow and faint-hearted negativism of those feminists who refuse to recognize specifically feminine values?

Miles herself foresaw many of the possible objections to her presentation of integrative feminism and she details these critiques towards the end of her paper (p. 25-29). Rather than responding to these arguments with the same care with which she exposes them, Miles seems to consider that they fall into the category of "resistance" to the integrative vision. "They are all essentially arguments for a narrowly defined feminist politics. And they represent resistance to the early stages of the emergence in practice of a universal feminist politics." (p. 30) The critiques merit, however, considerably more attention.

Why indeed impose one aspect of sexual identity — reproduction — as the site of women's common experience when, as Miles notes, it is not assumed by all women; why generalize feminist theory before local practices have had a chance to develop fully; why seek on the part of feminist theory a claim to

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completeness and universality, a smoothing over of contradictions? And, even more fundamentally perhaps, why assume that there is a necessary link between the common experience of women — wherever that common experience may be located — and a specific moral vision?

Seeking to construct integrative feminism on the widest possible base, Angela Miles provides a historical account of the women's movement in North America which makes little provision for historical, geographical or generational specificities. In the same way, Miles presents the future of integrative feminism as a global, "universal" project. Surely in using the term "universal" Miles did not have in mind the kind of cultural imperialism which we now know to be embedded in that notion. "Universal", we suppose, is to mean universally applicable, referring to a body of feminist ideas and practices which can be exercised outside the limited arena of feminist issues.

It is easy to sympathize with this desire to demarginalize feminist activities. Feminist studies and publishing, for instance, suffer a great deal from such marginalization. But the difficulty of course becomes the basis on which such a universal feminist politics would be based. What would be the *programme* of such a politics? Miles' assumption that there is now within the North American women's movement — and among women in general — the basis of a consensus for action can be supported only if some overwhelming conflicts are denied. The most important of these differences is the current debate on sexuality and the issue of pornography.

Beyond the conjunctural difficulties which emerge through the unity and diversity of practice, one is led to question the very enterprise of attempting to locate the definitive source of women's commonality and therefore of a common definition of the future. Current debates within the North American women's movement, growing recognition of the specificity of women's experience in other cultures, indicate that there is hardly an easy or automatic unity to be found in feminist values. And surely that's the way it should be. Feminism is not a redemptive vision or an essentialist definition of selfhood. It provides above all an understanding of power and domination — an understanding which is contingent and not absolute. Feminism can be a powerful machine for revealing the power which is in knowledge, but it cannot provide the content of a solution to every issue.

In a recent article¹, Alice Echols undertakes a review of the history of the last 15 years of feminist thought and practice which is similar in spirit to Miles' essay. She also attempts to reclaim the "radical" spirit which was so important to early second-wave feminism. Echols' characterization of "cultural feminism", which equates women's liberation with the nurturance of a female counter culture and the valorization rather than the elimination of gender differences, shares some important similarities with Miles' definition of integrative feminism. If Miles equates integrative feminism with the original

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radicalism of feminism, however, Echols defines it as quite the opposite.

Focussing on the issue of sexuality, Echols criticizes cultural feminism "and the anti-pornography movement which is its extension" for "foreclosing on sexuality". The original vision, she reminds us, "joined sexual liberation with women's liberation." "Whereas radical feminism represented a rebellion against the mother in which identification with the mother was suppressed, cultural feminism represents fusion with the mother in which differences between mother and daughter are suppressed". (p. 66)

It is this (strategic?) suppression of differences which is so striking in integrative feminism. At a time when the focus on sexuality has the immense merit of showing how women's struggles have been historically circumscribed and damaged by a very limited perspective on sexuality², it would hardly seem appropriate to impose closure on a very productive debate.

Angela Miles' essay certainly recognizes the social and political diversity of women's practice, but it seeks to subsume these differences within a larger, unifying vision which has its basis in the identity of female experience and the negation of equality as an ultimate goal. Is it fruitful to think in these terms? Are we really seeking a unified feminism which pursues a unified vision of social change? It seems to me, as to many others³, that perhaps a more useful approach to theory would consist in discovering new ways of manipulating the concept of difference within a feminist perspective. Theory, then, would more accurately articulate the distinct and local forms of feminist practice.

Dép. d'études françaises
Université Concordia

Notes

1. Alice Echols, "The Taming of the Id: Feminist sexual politics, 1968-83", in *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring female sexuality*, Ed. Carole S. Vance. Routledge & Kegan Paul, Boston, 1984.
2. See particularly Judith Walkowitz, "Male Vice and Female Virtue: Feminism and the Politics of Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Britain" in *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, ed. A. Snitow et al. Monthly Review Press, New York, 1983; and Eileen Manion, "We Objects Object: Pornography and the Woman's movement" in *Feminism Now*, ed. Marilouise Kroker et al. CultureTexts, Montréal, 1985.
3. One example: Andrée Yanacopoulos, "Des féminismes", in *Spirale*, mai 1985, p. 3.

IS THERE LIFE AFTER SPECIFICITY?

Mair Verthuy

In 1984, or to mark 1984, a large proportion of the Western World was (re)reading George Orwell's book of the same title. They would have done better, I contend, to (re)read Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, which offered a much more realistic view of the direction our society was moving in.

Angela Miles has offered a very thoughtful historical overview of some of the major developments in recent North American feminism and made a convincing case both for the existence and the revolutionary value of a radical integrative feminism still in its birth pangs but growing apace. As a feminist, I wish to reveal my bias: Angela is to me one of the most important thinkers in feminist/political circles and I am in basic if not total agreement with her position. Having said that, I can now address a few at least of the points in her monograph to which I reacted.

The first of these is technical. The word "universal" liberally (so to speak) scattered throughout the paper needs clarification. Without that, such a loaded expression invites misunderstanding, encourages the reader to think in terms of expansionism and not, as must have been intended, in terms of a broadly encompassing political theory not confined to "women's issues".

One of the most important aspects of integrative feminism as described in the article must surely be the emphasis on dialogue with women's groups of various kinds, feminist or not, the recognition that there is a possible solidarity across the differences. Two examples come to mind. Real Women, a group that one considers to be totally opposed to anything we as feminists might stand for, are not so far removed from us as we might think in their analysis of many problems confronting women. It is their solutions that are different. We

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have, nevertheless, a basis from which to start a discussion that could prove most fruitful. We have certainly nothing to lose.

The other example is that of the nurses' organizations in Ontario. When the unexplained children's deaths at the Toronto Sick Children's Hospital provoked a minor witch hunt (heaven forbid that DOCTORS — male — might be suspected of involvement), the support that Ontario feminists were quick to offer encouraged the nurses to see the witch hunt for what it was and stimulated a real feminist consciousness-raising that will have far-reaching results.

The process of reestablishing links with our female past must also be considered exciting. The oppression that our foremothers knew, we must reject. We should never, however, have allowed ourselves to be robbed of all their knowledge and all their strengths. Not for nothing was commonsense traditionally known in English as "motherwit". Let us restore that concept as we redevelop our bonds with our ancestresses, reevaluate their contribution to humanity, learn to appreciate their positive values.

Other issues I wish to address are, perhaps, more basic. Angela points out (p. 14) Adrienne Rich's emphasis on patriarchal dualism and the efforts made by integrative feminists to overcome it. Elsewhere she quotes Mary O'Brien on the subject of women's reproductive consciousness. It is women's sense of continuity, of having been borne, of being able to bear, that distinguishes them from men and "integrates their biological, emotional and intellectual capacities" (p. 19), whereas men must mediate the alienation of their seed. Again we meet the idea that feminism can overcome patriarchal dualism.

Herein, it seems to me, lies the truly revolutionary nature of the movement. Western culture, or what passes for such, i.e. high white wasp male culture, has been characterized, since its "official" beginning, by dualism, a dichotomous and manichean world view, that must of necessity see everything in opposing pairs: good, bad; male, female; spirit, flesh; mind, body; friend, enemy; dualism, monism; reason, emotion; etc. Our priority must be to return to pre-Pythagorean concepts, to *unthink* (to engage in *das Udenken* as Giuseppina Moneta says*) the metaphysics that condition our perceptions, to *re-think* the world from the beginning, to arrive at a new knowledge and a new experience. Our history is filled with revolutionary movements like Christianity and Marxism. They have all failed to take the integrative leap. They have all failed. It is essential then to pursue our struggle against dualism.

It is equally important, nevertheless, to point up a major flaw in Mary O'Brien's (and I address her theory in particular only because I know it better than that of Nancy Hartsock) vision of a world in which women are freed by contraceptive technology to transform relations between humans, and be-

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tween humans and nature. It is both Utopian and unconnected with current reality.

If, in fact, as Mary O'Brien states, our consciousness is "continuous and integrative for it is mediated within the reproductive process" (p. 19), if our sense of continuity is what allows us to envisage combating patriarchal dualism, then she would do well to reflect not so much on contraceptive technology as on reproductive technology. We have become a bio-society without even noticing it. Genetic manipulation is a daily event in our universities, in industrial laboratories, in military installations. Reproductive technologies are listed on the stock market.

Women have indeed always stood out and up for continuity, for linking, for networking. When Sophocles wrote *Antigone*, he showed how a young girl defended her sense of "genetic coherence and species continuity" (p. 19) against the encroaching state in the person of Creon. The state always prefers to deal with citizens and/or slaves who have no support networks behind them. Antigone stood for that alternate loyalty to family and friends, for that continuity that dictators must break. Her struggle against centralizing authority is archetypal.

Such actions may soon, however, constitute an endangered privilege. As the use of reproductive technologies becomes more widespread, we may find that the sense of continuity disappears along with other aspects of our specific female being. In my generation, as I pointed out in a recent interviews in *La Gazette des femmes*, we fought for — an unsuccessful battle, alas — free abortion on demand, but my granddaughter may have to fight for the right actually to bear children. Already female fetuses are aborted in greater number than male; femicide is a fact of life in China; work is being carried out to predetermine the sex of the foetus; lactation can be developed in males; artificial placenta exist; it will soon be possible to implant an embryo in any abdomen: male, female; animal, human.

Plato wrote that the highest love was that between two males; women were only good for procreation — a feat denied to men by nature. Now men can procreate. The issue is not whether men should also bear children and thus share our sense of continuity. The issue in a patriarchal society is whether men will allow us to continue doing so, whether indeed they will even simply allow us to continue. They may in fact have found the "final solution" to one form of dualism: male, female, by eliminating one half. We shall have to act quickly if we are to solve their problem and therefore ours in a more constructive manner.

That is a question which the integrative feminism of the late 1980's must address NOW if we hope to have a future in the Brave New World.

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* Giuseppina Moneta is a professor of philosophy in Italy

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PUBLIC BODIES/PUBLIC POWER

Elsbeth Probyn

We are born into a room in which a raging conversation is in full force. We listen, watch and learn a voice with which to converse. A voice which due to factors of gender, or environment may be fainter than the rest. We begin to speak in whispers in the shadow of a guy armed with loudspeakers and worse. Occasionally whispers may swell in chorus and a lull allows them to be heard....

Angela Miles' article is important in that it gives those of us born late into the dialogues amongst feminists a sketch of how these discussions emerged. For those generations of women who were not around to cut their political teeth in the heady years of the '60's and 70's when in Shulamith Firestone's words, "the revolution was about to happen through feminism", it is essential to be reminded of the battles, the meagre spoils of which we tend to take as our 'natural' rights, as part of our gender identity. The impulse in Miles' work to assemble some of the major themes in North American feminist theory is admirable and is especially and thoroughly well done both here and in a previous collection edited by Miles and Geraldine Finn, *Feminism in Canada*.

However Miles has a political project in mind as must we all. And it is with the articulation of the central tenet of her project that I have problems. Miles' historical overview is vitally important, as is the work of those she cites, in providing us with a history of the present. To attempt to arrive at a critical understanding of what it means to experience ourselves as women we must be aware of how we come to that understanding. This process, which is in the broadest sense epistemological, must necessarily entail both an understanding of the actual way in which our gender identity is socially constructed, and

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a realization that the formulation of gender identity is to some degree grounded in our bodies. If we wish to come to terms with what it means, individually and collectively, to be a woman neither of these two forces can be over-privileged. And it is here that Angela Miles' article is most problematic.

Whilst it cannot be denied that our identity as women has been historically, and thus actually, defined by our capacity to bear children, to contain and nurture within our bodies new life, or what is flatly termed 'reproduction', this process has also always been socially appropriated and defined. The attendant values concerning the activity of having children and looking out and after them comes to be equally socially defined. Indeed, this activity is so historically layered with different social meanings and myths that it is difficult to actually pinpoint which experiences of motherhood are generated by the biological process itself and to what extent the feelings and, for Miles, values associated with reproduction are mere social interpretations.

Thus, we must question the extent to which our identity is constructed through our biological capacity to reproduce (and all the attendant emotions and values that this may entail). The task becomes one of deciphering how central is our biological reproductive capacity to those values that Miles suggests all women, in all times and places, possess. This, I think, is of key importance to the construction of a feminist theory which seeks to unravel how women come to know themselves as such, and to the formulation of a feminist project which seeks to engender change in the manner proposed by integrative feminists such as Miles. For the values that she states are inherent to woman through their function as nurturers may quite simply be the qualities possessed by all those excluded from power. If the qualities Miles attributes to women due to their mothering experience are only the characteristics of any group excluded from power, wherein will we find the force to fuel a political project for change? This all becomes even more hazardous when we consider the key historical reason for our exclusion from the realm of public power; that is, when we examine how under the sign of reproduction we have been excluded from the structure or power, incarcerated in a space in which over time we have developed and practiced those qualities which Miles wishes to say are ours by nature. This seems to me to be a tenuous basis indeed upon which to construct a political project. Can the values which come from a socially defined position of power exclusion be extended to become the motivating force of a universal feminist politics?

Also, we must inquire whether these female values which Miles considers as *a priori* to being a woman really do hold true for all women, including those who for many factors will never experience 'reproduction'. Miles' reply to this gap in practical experience is that women develop in the close single-gender mother-daughter role the same values of wholeness which they then may or may not re-experience, re-create in reproduction. This is a contentious pro-

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posals, indeed, in the light of the research of feminist psychologists such as Cathy Urwin, whose work in the field of infant development and gender identification points to an early recognition and participation in socially defined gender relations by young girls.

However, as well as considering whether Miles' values can be held by all women, we must also examine how closely these terms describe our own phenomenological experiences. For, although Hartsock is quoted as saying that "the body — its desires and needs, and its mortality... would be given a place of honour at the centre of theory", there remains little convincing exploration into what those desires and needs are, and how they might differ from those of men's. (And this is not to say that they should be defined in opposition to male desires.) The realization of what our desires are, and can be, is a difficult task, in that our sexuality has been traditionally reduced to narrowly encompass child-bearing. This is an inadequate description of our sexuality. Over and over again in historical documents we find references to "the rampant sexuality of women which threatens to undermine white manhood and empire". Discussion is needed on what our sexuality is or, might be, once emancipated of the oppressive labels of virgin, mother or whore. Victorian administrators were quite correct in assuming that our true sexuality would be threatening to order. Expressing, practicing and even discussing our bodily passions and desires as women is indeed politically subversive. True enough, articulations on this issue have been on-going in the feminist press and is a central issue in the debate between heterosexual feminism and political lesbianism, but in order to reach and involve all women articulation of our sexuality should be heard and seen in the more mainstream media.

I would stress, then, the importance of Angela Miles' work. It is self-avowedly incomplete, which is for me a positive quality. That we must aim for a deep understanding of what our experience, in the fullest sense, of ourselves constitutes in itself a political act. In order to come to an understanding of how we are, we must consider how we come to know what we know, as we both experience ourselves within social definitions and know ourselves at point-zero, that is to say, bodily. Thus, we should open up the relationship of women as object; socially constructed, and woman as an experiencing subject, in order to consider where and what our desires and passions may be. We must create a space between biology and social construction in order to consider and explore our fleshed out identities as women.

Communication Studies
Concordia University

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SEXUALITY AND INTEGRATIVE FEMINISM

Angela Miles

Universal Politics

Both Mair Verthuy and Sherry Simon caution me, and correctly so, on the use of the term "universal politics". I left the definition implicit, to be picked up as one reads, rather than explaining it explicitly as I have done elsewhere.¹ This is a serious weakness because it is an important concept in my argument and because there is a growing awareness among feminists that we must not deny differences among women and must not arrogantly claim the last word. The term "universal" is very liable to be misunderstood as representing just such an imperialist homogenizing intention.

In fact, I use the term in a very different sense, to differentiate a full politics with a self-conscious alternative perspective on the whole of society (a universal politics) from a limited pressure group approach which presumes to speak only to women's issues. This distinction between a *politique entier* and mere pressure is central to my analysis because I am concerned to argue that only a specific set of values (what Alain Touraine calls an "alternative rationality") can provide the basis for a full fledged social movement with a full politics. And I try to show that a recognition of women's specificity is essential in order for such values to be articulated. It follows from this that any of the varied feminisms based on arguing simply women's sameness with men will be essentially partial and reformist whatever the intention or self-definition of its practitioners. Only a feminism which can encompass the apparently contradictory claims of women's equality and women's difference can be truly radical. These two essential aspects of women's existence must both be recognized in and contribute to radical practice. In the process they transform

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each other. Equality becomes something different when women's specificity is recognized and women's specificity must be reconceptualized when equality is recognized. Contrary to Sherry Simon's suggestion, this is to posit a transcendence, not "negation of equality as the ultimate goal" of feminism.

In the context of feminist struggle for equality, the recognition and valorization of women's difference is not a reification of that difference that supercedes or contradicts the commitment to break down sex barriers and sex differences. It is rather an essential aspect of that project.²

I will have to struggle with the word "universal" and decide whether in the future the risk of misunderstanding can be adequately avoided by a fuller explanation or whether I should drop it altogether. I am reluctant to adopt the latter, apparently simple, solution because I think the term "universal" has a ring that communicates well the huge claims that I (and other feminists) are making for women and for feminism.

Radical Integrative Feminism

On the other hand, the phrase "radical integrative feminism" used by Mair Verthuy in her comments solves a terminological problem I have been struggling with for some time and I am indebted to her for it.

In arguing that the major political division within feminism is between feminisms which transcend equality as their defining value and those that do not, or, put another way, those that are involved in articulating specifically feminist values that can sustain a full politics and those that are not, I am identifying a division which cuts across all established categorizations of feminism. There are some radical, socialist, marxist, anarchist and lesbian feminists who accept the larger project, and some who do not. I had therefore to use an entirely new term to refer to a tendency that included all categories of feminist radicalism but fully encompassed none.

I coined the term integrative feminism to refer to the tendency of feminism that, in recognizing both women's difference and equality, is beginning to articulate specifically feminist values and therefore (I would argue) represents, sometimes actually and explicitly and always potentially and implicitly, the most radical and politically significant expression of women's activism in this period. The term integrative feminism seems appropriate to indicate a feminist politics:

- which integrates the claims of equality and specificity
- which tends to stress integrative values grounded in women's reproductive activity such as caring, cooperation and nurture rather than such dominant separative values as competition and individualism
- whose project is coming more and more clearly to be understood in terms of, as Mair Verthuy says, "combating patriarchal dualism."

Radical feminists are among the foremost proponents and opponents of in-

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tegrative feminism as I have defined it. It would utterly confuse the issue to use the term. Nevertheless, I have regretted its abandonment. The clumsy alternative "feminist radicalism" used in the title of my monograph, clearly refers to numerous categories of feminism but does not in any way indicate the specific nature of the politics referred to. The term radical integrative feminism seems to do both tasks very well and at the same time suggest a valuable political continuity with radical feminism.

Biologism

Elsbeth Probyn raises an important question when she takes issue with what she perceives to be my claim that the values expressed in integrative feminism are rooted in "women's biological capacity to reproduce" and are hence possessed by "all women, in all times and all places." She points out, in opposition to this supposed biologism that "our capacity to bear children ... has always been socially appropriated and defined (to the point) that it becomes very difficult to actually pinpoint which experiences of motherhood are generated by the very biological process itself and to what extent the feelings, and for Miles, values associated with reproduction are mere social interpretations." In fact, if I have a quarrel with her formulation it is that she does not stress the social enough. For I do not believe that there is any human biological experience that is unshaped by the social, and I would argue that the distinction is a false one.

My argument is not that feminist values are "inherent in women through their function as nurturers" or are women's "by nature" any more than Marx's argument was that working class consciousness is innate in workers. Doubtless women are shaped partly by their lack of power and do share characteristics with other powerless groups. In fact, this point was central to earlier radical feminist theory which sought to acknowledge women's difference from men without granting inherent or innate difference. But women, like the working class that Marx wrote about, cannot adequately be characterized by powerlessness alone. It is not only the subordinate status but the full and rich life activity of both groups which provides the basis for alternative perspectives on the world from the dominant one.

The alternative values and rationality embodied in feminism must be forged in a collective political practice through which women gradually win the power to define their own needs and interests. Women's particular life experience, life work and structural position in society provides a material basis for this essentially *political* consciousness, it does not make it inevitable and does not mean that all women will agree.

Once the material reality of reproduction and reproductive activity is recognized one can acknowledge particular female characteristics and concerns as

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a basis for a developing politics without fearing the biologism earlier radical feminists feared and Elspeth Probyn thinks she has found.

Suppression of Difference

Sherry Simon suspects that my identification of an integrative feminist political tendency may involve a "suppression of differences." In fact, my aim is the clearer articulation and more accurate understanding of political differences within feminism. My claim that there are self-defined radical, socialist, lesbian, marxist, anarchist and other feminists whose politics are integrative is not meant to suggest that all feminist radicals can be contained within this category or that there are no real divisions among feminists. For there are also feminists in each of these and other categories who oppose integrative feminism. In defining integrative feminism I am defining a tendency of feminism, with a distinct perspective different from other tendencies.

The importance of this definition is not that it creates unity or uncovers an existing and *automatic* unity among feminists, but that it helps us understand more clearly than established categorizations do, the essential political differences among some feminists, and the bases of unity among others, where they exist.

Feminist Debates: the Case of Sexuality

Sherry Simon mentions that I detail many objections to integrative feminism and criticises me for not "responding to these arguments," but, instead, simply claiming that they "fall into the category of 'resistance' to integrative feminism." All these debates are important, of course, and are engaged widely among feminists. What I was concerned to do in the article, however, was to illustrate how underlying political principles link apparently diverse issues and to show that an integrative feminist approach (though not position) can be clearly identified on each issue. The presumption that feminism is a full politics and represents a commitment to build a new world shaped by specifically feminist values leads to a very different approach to issues than an essentially pressure group stance which denies a specifically feminist vision. The fact that it is possible to understand such diverse debates as whether feminists should be involved in the peace movement, international development activity and the anti-pornography movement as refusals or defence of integrative politics seems to me to be extremely significant evidence that this is a useful way of conceptualizing feminist politics. For my purposes in the article it was more important to illustrate this and to define integrative feminism with regard to a number of issues than to engage any single issue in depth.

However, I do think the concept of integrative feminism can be very useful in helping us understand the political implications of issues, and on occasion

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can transform our way of seeing debates. The issue of sexuality which Sherry Simon and Elspeth Probyn both raise specifically is an interesting case in point. The women's movement has been deeply rent recently by debates between what are known (I think misleadingly) as anti-pornography (or anti-sex) and anticensorship feminists. These debates have generated a disproportionate number of conferences and speeches and a surprising amount of published work and media attention. They are always heated and painful and in certain instances also destructive.

The real divisions in this debate go much deeper than the empirical question of whether pornography harms women or the tactical question of whether censorship is a useful or adequate or dangerous means to attack pornography. These have been the central articulated question in the debate. Yet the dividing lines do not fall neatly around these questions; many feminists, for instance, are against both pornography and censorship. And the mood of the debate has been far more acrimonious and sectarian than seems warranted by these issues alone. Enormous confusion has resulted. Feminists who do not see an easy place for themselves in either camp are appalled at the unsisterly bitterness of both sides who call each other anti-feminist and condemn each other for being in bed with the Right or the porn industry as the case may be. I think the kind of analysis I have developed can help explain these things by providing a better understanding of the underlying political divisions represented by this debate.

Anti-porn feminists hold a wide variety of positions on, among other things, how to define pornography, whether one can distinguish erotica from pornography as a separate category of sexual representation, the role pornography plays in women's oppression, how best its negative effects can be countered, whether state involvement in the issue should be welcomed, how much it is possible and desirable to work with non-feminists around the issue, how best to help women working in the sex industry, and so on. They nevertheless all accept that the feminist project should include a struggle to build a new world in the terms of values, which are not automatically given or known finally (and may never be), but which we must consciously and critically forge in our practice. The struggle to consciously recreate our sexuality and sexual relationships as positive, self and other affirming, non-objectifying and fully human relationships is a necessary part of this larger project.

Anti-censorship feminists also differ in the specifics of their positions, but share a narrower sense of feminism as critique, refusal, analysis which poses no such alternative values. Where anti-pornography feminists see critical discussion, even heated debate about sexuality as a necessary part of the collective process of developing common values and a new sexuality and new world, anti-censorship feminists see this same discussion as an attack on individual freedom and an attempt to impose narrow and rigid standards and to

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prevent women's full exploration of their true sexuality. For these feminists sexuality is a natural area of life potentially gloriously unshaped by society, politics, and values. Their project is not to consciously and collectively create a new more human sexuality in tune with feminist values, but to discover and release an innate true sexuality from the limits patriarchy has placed upon it. There is real biologism here in the presumption that this part of life can, unlike all others, ever be free of social construction. And it leads these feminists to perceive those who attempt to develop a political and moral practice around sexuality as repressive and anti-sex and to accuse anti-pornography feminists of "foreclosing on sexuality" as Sherry Simon mentions.

In fact, the real debate about issues of sexuality and the struggle about means and ends, what should be done and how, in personal and political terms is going on among anti-pornography feminists, or, perhaps more accurately, anti-anti-censorship feminists (some of whom support censorship, some of whom do not). The anti-censorship position as it is articulated by its main proponents attacks not just censorship as a tactic but the very presumption of most feminists to critique existing forms of sexuality in terms of our values and vision of a new more human world and relations. Anti-censorship feminists, while claiming to leave sexuality open to discussion, have in fact defined this discussion out of the feminist project by condemning any critical perspective based on articulated values. It is this anti-censorship refusal of sexuality as a ground of collective political and moral practice that forecloses debate, not the anti-pornography willingness to criticize existing sexual practices in political and moral terms.

If the difference I have identified between feminist pressure politics and a full feminist politics is the most significant political division within feminism today, some of our debates over issues and tactics will be *within* a shared framework/perspective while others, such as the anti-censorship/ anti-pornography debate (or the sexuality debate as it is sometimes called) will be *between* perspectives or between feminisms. Anti-pornography feminists presume to articulate alternative values, anti-censorship feminists do not. Therefore, the very nature of feminism is at issue in this debate. The charges from both sides that the other is not truly feminist or is betraying feminism, result not from the participants' intemperate personality traits or inadequate training in sisterhood, but from the depth of the political issues involved here. A clearer articulation of the underlying issues won't make them go away, but it can help us gain much more benefit from the debate in developing and clarifying our diverse positions.

Sherry Simon is hence mistaken in believing that I presume an easy "unity of feminist values" or "consensus for action," and her criticism that there is no integrative feminist programme is beside the point. The term integrative feminism identifies a *perspective*, not a *programme*, and provides no ready

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position on any individual issue. In fact, integrative feminists differ on all issues. What they share is a presumption that feminist politics is about all of life and society and a commitment to develop an active and critical practice in all areas, shaped by values which may never be finally articulated but which we should attempt, and can expect to express ever more clearly and fully in our practice. Many feminists disagree. It is that division which underlies the sexuality debate and that an understanding of integrative feminism can clarify.

Dept. of Sociology
St. Francis Xavier University

Notes

1. See "The Integrative Feminine Principle: Value Basis of a New Feminism," *Women's Studies International Quarterly* IV, 4(1981): 481-495.
2. See my article: "Feminism, Equality and Liberation," *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* I, 1(1985):

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