



# THE DESIRING-MACHINES

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## 1 | Desiring-Production

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

self-protective, denying itself to service and communication alike. There was something stunned about it, something petrified. Perhaps it suggested a stalled engine."<sup>6</sup>

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 2 | The Body without Organs

An apparent conflict arises between desiring-machines and the body without organs. Every coupling of machines, every production of a machine, every sound of a machine running, becomes unbearable to the body without organs. Beneath its organs it senses there are larvae and loathsome worms, and a God at work messing it all up or strangling it by organizing it. "The body is the body/it is all by itself/and has no need of organs/the body is never an organism/organisms are the enemies of the body."<sup>8</sup> Merely so many nails piercing the flesh, so many forms of torture. In order to resist organ-machines, the body without organs presents its smooth, slippery, opaque, taut surface as a barrier. In order to resist linked, connected, and interrupted flows, it sets up a counterflow of amorphous, undifferentiated fluid. In order to resist using words composed of articulated phonetic units, it utters only gasps and cries that are sheer unarticulated blocks of sound. We are of the opinion that what is ordinarily referred to as "primary repression" means precisely that: it is not a "countercaethesis," but rather this *repulsion* of desiring-machines by the body without organs. This is the real meaning of the paranoiac machine: the desiring-machines attempt to break into the body without organs, and the body without organs repels them, since it experiences them as an over-all persecution apparatus. Thus we cannot agree with Victor Tausk when he regards the paranoiac machine as a mere projection of "a person's own body" and the genital organs.<sup>8</sup> The genesis of the machine lies precisely here: in the opposition of the process of production of the desiring-machines and the nonproductive stasis of the body without organs. The anonymous nature of the machine and the nondifferentiated nature of its surface are proof of this. Projection enters the picture only secondarily, as does counter-investment,<sup>†</sup> as the body without organs invests a counterinside or a counteroutside, in the form of a persecuting organ or some exterior agent of persecution. But in and of itself the paranoiac machine is merely an avatar of the desiring-machines: it is a result of the relationship between the desiring-machines and the body without organs, and occurs when the latter can no longer tolerate these machines.

<sup>8</sup>Antonin Artaud, in *84*, nos. 5-6 (1948). The French text reads: "Le corps est le corps/il est seul/et n'a pas besoin d'organe/le corps n'est jamais un organisme/les organismes sont les ennemis du corps." (Translators' note.) (Throughout, all English translations of works cited in the text are by the translators, unless otherwise noted.)

<sup>†</sup>We have adopted this term throughout, except when quoting directly from psychoanalytic literature, because it renders more faithfully the meaning of *investissement*, which in French does service in libidinal as well as political economy. We have likewise chosen to translate *investir* as "to invest" instead of "to cathect." (Translators' note.)

If we wish to have some idea of the forces that the body without organs exerts later on in the uninterrupted process, we must first establish a parallel between desiring-production and social production. We intend such a parallel to be regarded as merely phenomenological: we are here drawing no conclusions whatsoever as to the nature and the relationship of the two productions, nor does the parallel we are about to establish provide any sort of a priori answer to the question whether desiring-production and social production are really two separate and distinct productions. Its one purpose is to point out the fact that the forms of social production, like those of desiring-production, involve an unengendered nonproductive attitude, an element of antiproduction coupled with the process, a full body that functions as a *socius*. This *socius* may be the body of the earth, that of the tyrant, or capital. This is the body that Marx is referring to when he says that it is not the product of labor, but rather appears as its natural or divine presupposition. In fact, it does not restrict itself merely to opposing productive forces in and of themselves. It falls back on (*il se rabat sur*)\* all production, constituting a surface over which the forces and agents of production are distributed, thereby appropriating for itself all surplus production and arrogating to itself both the whole and the parts of the process, which now seem to emanate from it as a quasi cause. Forces and agents come to represent a miraculous form of its own power: they appear to be "miraculated" (*miraculés*) by it. In a word, the *socius* as a full body forms a surface where all production is recorded, whereupon the entire process appears to emanate from this recording surface. Society constructs its own delirium by recording the process of production; but it is not a conscious delirium, or rather is a true consciousness of a false movement, a true perception of an apparent objective movement, a true perception of the movement that is produced on the recording surface.

Capital is indeed the body without organs of the capitalist, or rather of the capitalist being. But as such, it is not only the fluid and petrified substance of money, for it will give to the sterility of money the form whereby money produces money. It produces surplus value, just as the body without organs reproduces itself, puts forth shoots, and branches out to the farthest corners of the universe. It makes the machine responsible for producing a relative surplus value, while embodying itself in the machine as fixed capital. Machines and agents cling so

closely to capital that their very functioning appears to be miraculated by it. Everything seems objectively to be produced by capital as quasi cause. As Marx observes, *in the beginning* capitalists are necessarily conscious of the opposition between capital and labor, and of the use of capital as a means of extorting surplus labor. But a perverted, bewitched world quickly comes into being, as capital increasingly plays the role of a recording surface that falls back on (*se rabat sur*) all of production. (Furnishing or realizing surplus value is what establishes recording rights.) "With the development of relative surplus-value in the actual specifically capitalist mode of production, whereby the productive powers of social labour are developed, these productive powers and the social interrelations of labour in the direct labour-process seem transferred from labour to capital. Capital thus becomes a very mystic being since all of labour's social productive forces appear to be due to capital, rather than labour as such, and seem to issue from the womb of capital itself."<sup>9</sup> What is specifically capitalist here is the role of money and the use of capital as a full body to constitute the recording or inscribing surface. But some kind of full body, that of the earth or the despot, a recording surface, an apparent objective movement, a fetishistic, perverted, bewitched world are characteristic of all types of society as a constant of social reproduction.]

The body without organs now falls back on (*se rabat sur*) desiring-production, attracts it, and appropriates it for its own. The organ-machines now cling to the body without organs as though it were a fencer's padded jacket, or as though these organ-machines were medals pinned onto the jersey of a wrestler who makes them jingle as he starts toward his opponent. An attraction-machine now takes the place, or may take the place, of a repulsion-machine: a miraculating-machine succeeding the paranoiac machine. But what is meant here by "succeeding"? The two coexist, rather, and black humor does not attempt to resolve contradictions, but to make it so that there are none, and never were any. The body without organs, the unproductive, the unconsumable, serves as a surface for the recording of the entire process of production of desire, so that desiring-machines seem to emanate from it in the apparent objective movement that establishes a relationship between the machines and the body without organs. The organs are regenerated, "miraculated" on the body of Judge Schreber, who attracts God's rays to himself. Doubtless the former paranoiac machine continues to exist in the form of mocking voices that attempt to "de-miraculate" (*démiraculer*) the organs, the Judge's anus in particular. But the essential thing is the establishment of an enchanted recording or inscribing surface that arrogates to itself all the productive forces and all the organs of

\*The verb *se rabattre sur* (and the noun *rebattement*), used by the authors here and in numerous instances in the text below, has several different connotations, as for instance: in descriptive geometry, to describe the rotation of a plane so as to coincide with another plane, usually followed by a reverse rotation back into its original position; a retreat to a previously held position, as in a battle; and a reduction to a lower level. In the English text below, it will be translated in various ways, depending on the context, followed by the French expression in parentheses. (Translators' note.)



production, and that acts as a quasi cause by communicating the apparent movement (the fetish) to them. So true is it that the schizo practices political economy, and that all sexuality is a matter of economy.

Production is not recorded in the same way it is produced, however. Or rather, it is not reproduced within the apparent objective movement in the same way in which it is produced within the process of constitution. In fact, we have passed imperceptibly into a domain of the production of recording, whose law is not the same as that of the production of production. The law governing the latter was connective synthesis or coupling. But when the productive *connections* pass from machines to the body without organs (as from labor to capital), it would seem that they then come under another law that expresses a *distribution* in relation to the nonproductive element as a "natural or divine presupposition" (the disjunctions of capital). Machines attach themselves to the body without organs as so many points of disjunction, between which an entire network of new syntheses is now woven, marking the surface off into co-ordinates, like a grid. The "either . . . or . . . or" of the schizophrenic takes over from the "and then": no matter what two organs are involved, the way in which they are attached to the body without organs must be such that all the disjunctive syntheses between the two amount to the same on the slippery surface. Whereas the "either/or" claims to mark decisive choices between immutable terms (the alternative: either this or that), the schizophrenic "either . . . or . . . or" refers to the system of possible permutations between differences that always amount to the same as they shift and slide about. As in the case of Beckett's mouth that speaks and feet that walk: "He sometimes halted without saying anything. Either he had finally nothing to say, or while having something to say he finally decided not to say it. . . . Other main examples suggest themselves to the mind. Immediate continuous communication with immediate redeparture. Same thing with delayed redeparture. Delayed continuous communication with immediate redeparture. Same thing with delayed redeparture. Immediate discontinuous communication with immediate redeparture. Same thing with delayed redeparture. Delayed discontinuous communication with immediate redeparture. Same thing with delayed redeparture."<sup>10</sup>

Thus the schizophrenic, the possessor of the most touchingly meager capital—Malone's belongings, for instance—inscribes on his own body the litany of disjunctions, and creates for himself a world of parries where the most minute of permutations is supposed to be a response to the new situation or a reply to the indiscreet questioner. The disjunctive synthesis of recording therefore comes to overlap the

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connective syntheses of production. The process as process of production extends into the method as method of inscription. Or rather, if what we term libido is the connective "labor" of desiring-production, it should be said that a part of this energy is transformed into the energy of disjunctive inscription (Numen). A transformation of energy. But why call this new form of energy divine, why label it Numen, in view of all the ambiguities caused by a problem of the unconscious that is only apparently religious? The body without organs is not God, quite the contrary. But the energy that sweeps through it is divine, when it attracts to itself the entire process of production and serves as its miraculate, enchanted surface, inscribing it in each and every one of its disjunctions. Hence the strange relationship that Schreber has with God. To anyone who asks: "Do you believe in God?" we should reply in strictly Kantian or Schreberian terms: "Of course, but only as the master of the disjunctive syllogism, or as its a priori principle (God defined as the *Omnitudo realitatis*, from which all secondary realities are derived by a process of division)."

Hence the sole thing that is divine is the nature of an energy of disjunctions. Schreber's divine is inseparable from the disjunctions he employs to divide himself up into parts: earlier empires, later empires; later empires of a superior God, and those of an inferior God. Freud stresses the importance of these disjunctive syntheses in Schreber's delirium in particular, but also in delirium as a general phenomenon. "A process of decomposition of this kind is very characteristic of paranoia. Paranoia decomposes just as hysteria condenses. Or rather, paranoia resolves once more into their elements the products of the condensations and identifications which are effected in the unconscious."<sup>11</sup> But why does Freud thus add that, on second thought, hysterical neurosis comes first, and that disjunctions appear only as a result of the projection of a more basic, primordial condensed material? Doubtless this is a way of maintaining intact the rights of Oedipus in the God of delirium and the schizoparanoiac recording process. And for that very reason we must pose the most far-reaching question in this regard: does the recording of desire go by way of the various stages in the formation of the Oedipus complex? Disjunctions are the form that the genealogy of desire assumes; but is this genealogy Oedipal, is it recorded in the Oedipal-triangulation? Is it not more likely that Oedipus is a requirement or a consequence of social reproduction, insofar as this latter aims at domesticating a genealogical form and content that are in every way intractable? For there is no doubting the fact that the schizo is constantly subjected to interrogation, constantly cross-examined. Precisely because his relationship with nature does not constitute a specific

pole, the questions put to him are formulated in terms of the existing social code: your name, your father, your mother? In the course of his exercises in desiring-production, Beckett's Molloy is cross-examined by a policeman: "Your name is Molloy, said the sergeant. Yes, I said, now I remember. And your mother? said the sergeant. I didn't follow. Is your mother's name Molloy too? said the sergeant. I thought it over. Your mother, said the sergeant, is your mother's— Let me think! I cried. At least I imagine that's how it was. Take your time, said the sergeant. Was mother's name Molloy? Very likely. Her name must be Molloy too, I said. They took me away, to the guardroom I suppose, and there I was told to sit down. I must have tried to explain."<sup>12</sup>

We cannot say that psychoanalysis is very innovative in this respect: it continues to ask its questions and develop its interpretations from the depths of the Oedipal triangle as its basic perspective, even though today it is acutely aware that this frame of reference is not at all adequate to explain so-called psychotic phenomena. The psychoanalyst says that we must *necessarily* discover Schreber's daddy beneath his superior God, and doubtless also his elder brother beneath his inferior God. At times the schizophrenic loses his patience and demands to be left alone. Other times he goes along with the whole game and even invents a few tricks of his own, introducing his own reference points in the model put before him and undermining it from within ("Yes, that's my mother, all right, but my mother's the Virgin Mary, you know"). One can easily imagine Schreber answering Freud: "Yes, I quite agree, naturally the talking birds are young girls, and the superior God is my daddy and the inferior God my brother." But little by little he will surreptitiously "reimpregnate" the series of young girls with all talking birds, his father with the superior God, and his brother with the inferior God, all of them divine forms that become complicated, or rather "desimplified," as they break through the simplistic terms and functions of the Oedipal triangle. As Artaud put it:

*I don't believe in father  
in mother,  
got no  
papamummy*

Desiring-production forms a binary-linear system. The full body is introduced as a third term in the series, without destroying, however, the essential binary-linear nature of this series: 2, 1, 2, 1. . . . The series is completely refractory to a transcription that would transform and mold

it into a specifically ternary and triangular schema such as Oedipus. The full body without organs is produced as antiproduction, that is to say it intervenes within the process as such for the sole purpose of rejecting any attempt to impose on it any sort of triangulation implying that it was produced by parents. How could this body have been produced by parents, when by its very nature it is such eloquent witness of its own self-production, of its own engendering of itself? And it is precisely here on this body, right where it is, that the Numen is distributed and disjunctions are established, independent of any sort of projection. *Yes, I have been my father and I have been my son.* "I, Antonin Artaud, am my son, my father, my mother, and myself."<sup>12a</sup> The schizo has his own system of co-ordinates for situating himself at his disposal, because, first of all, he has at his disposal his very own recording code, which does not coincide with the social code, or coincides with it only in order to parody it. The code of delirium or of desire proves to have an extraordinary fluidity. It might be said that the schizophrenic passes from one code to the other, that he deliberately *scrambles all the codes*, by quickly shifting from one to another, according to the questions asked him, never giving the same explanation from one day to the next, never invoking the same genealogy, never recording the same event in the same way. When he is more or less forced into it and is not in a touchy mood, he may even accept the banal Oedipal code, so long as he can stuff it full of all the disjunctions that this code was designed to eliminate.

Adolf Wölfli's drawings reveal the workings of all sorts of clocks, turbines, dynamos, celestial machines, house-machines, and so on. And these machines work in a connective fashion, from the perimeter to the center, in successive layers or segments. But the "explanations" that he provides for them, which he changes as often as the mood strikes him, are based on genealogical series that constitute the recording of each of his drawings. What is even more important, the recording process affects the drawings themselves, showing up in the form of lines standing for "catastrophe" or "collapse" that are so many disjunctions surrounded by spirals.<sup>13</sup> The schizo maintains a shaky balance for the simple reason that the result is always the same, no matter what the disjunctions. Although the organ-machines attach themselves to the body without organs, the latter continues nonetheless to be without organs and does not become an organism in the ordinary sense of the word. It remains fluid and slippery. Agents of production likewise alight on Schreber's body and cling to it—the sunbeams, for instance, that he attracts, which contain thousands of tiny spermatozooids. Sunbeams,



birds, voices, nerves enter into changeable and genealogically complex relationships with God and forms of God derived from the godhead by division. But all this happens and is all recorded on the surface of the body without organs: even the copulations of the agents, even the divisions of God, even the genealogies marking it off into squares like a grid, and their permutations. The surface of this uncreated body swarms with them, as a lion's mane swarms with fleas.

### 3 | The Subject and Enjoyment

Conforming to the meaning of the word "process," recording falls back on (*se rabat sur*) production, but the production of recording itself is produced by the production of production. Similarly, recording is followed by consumption, but the production of consumption is produced in and through the production of recording. This is because something on the order of a *subject* can be discerned on the recording surface. It is a strange subject, however, with no fixed identity, wandering about over the body without organs, but always remaining peripheral to the desiring-machines, being defined by the share of the product it takes for itself, garnering here, there, and everywhere a reward in the form of a becoming or an avatar, being born of the states that it consumes and being reborn with each new state. "It's me, and so it's mine. . . ." Even suffering, as Marx says, is a form of self-enjoyment. Doubtless all desiring-production is, in and of itself, immediately consumption and consummation, and therefore, "sensual pleasure." But this is not yet the case for a subject that can situate itself only in terms of the disjunctions of a recording surface, in what is left after each division. Returning yet again to the case of Judge Schreber, we note that he is vividly aware of this fact: the rate of cosmic sexual pleasure remains constant, so that God will find a way of taking his pleasure with Schreber, even if in order to do so Schreber must transform himself into a woman. But Schreber experiences only a residual share of this pleasure, as a recompense for his suffering or as a reward for his becoming-woman. "On the other hand, God demands a *constant state of enjoyment* . . . and it is my duty to provide him with this . . . in the shape of the greatest possible output of spiritual voluptuousness. And if, in this process, a little sensual pleasure falls to my share, I feel justified in accepting it as some slight compensation for the inordinate measure of suffering and privation that has been mine for so many past years."<sup>14</sup> Just as a part of the libido as energy of production was transformed into energy of recording (Numen), a part of this energy

of recording is transformed into energy of consummation (*Voluptas*).<sup>\*</sup> It is this residual energy that is the motive force behind the third synthesis of the unconscious: the conjunctive synthesis "so it's . . .," or the production of consumption.

We must examine how this synthesis is formed or how the subject is produced. Our point of departure was the opposition between desiring-machines and the body without organs. The repulsion of these machines, as found in the paranoiac machine of primary repression, gave way to an attraction in the miraculating machine. But the opposition between attraction and repulsion persists. It would seem that a genuine reconciliation of the two can take place only on the level of a new machine, functioning as "the return of the repressed." There are a number of proofs that such a reconciliation does or can exist. With no further details being provided, we are told of Robert Gie, the very talented designer of paranoiac electrical machines: "Since he was unable to free himself of these currents that were tormenting him, he gives every appearance of having finally joined forces with them, taking passionate pride in portraying them in their total victory, in their triumph."<sup>15</sup> Freud is more specific when he stresses the crucial turning point that occurs in Schreber's illness when Schreber becomes reconciled to becoming-woman and embarks upon a process of self-cure that brings him back to the equation Nature = Production (the production of a new humanity). As a matter of fact, Schreber finds himself frozen in the pose and trapped in the paraphernalia of a transvestite, at a moment when he is practically cured and has recovered all his faculties: "I am sometimes to be found, standing before the mirror or elsewhere, with the upper portion of my body partly bared, and wearing sundry feminine adornments, such as ribbons, trumpery necklaces, and the like. This occurs only, I may add, when I am *by myself*, and never, at least so far as I am able to avoid it, in the presence of other people."<sup>16</sup> Let us borrow the term "celibate machine" to designate this machine that succeeds the paranoiac machine and the miraculating machine, forming a new alliance between the desiring-machines and the body without organs so as to give birth to a new humanity or a glorious organism. This is tantamount to saying that the subject is produced as a mere residuum alongside the desiring-machines, or that he confuses himself with this third productive machine and with the residual reconciliation that it brings about: a

<sup>\*</sup>The French term here is *énergie de consommation*. The word *consommation* has a number of meanings in French, among them consummation (as of a marriage); an ultimate fulfillment or perfection; and consumption (as of raw material, fuel, or products). The term has therefore been translated variously below, depending on the context. (Translators' note.)

conjunctive synthesis of consummation in the form of a wonderstruck "So *that's* what it was!"

Michel Carrouges has identified a certain number of fantastic machines—"celibate machines"—that he has discovered in works of literature. The examples he points to are of many very different sorts, and at first glance do not seem to belong to a single category: Marcel Duchamp's painting "La mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires, même" ("The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even"), the machine in Kafka's "In the Penal Colony," Raymond Roussel's machines, those of Jarry's *Surmâle* (*Supermale*), certain of Edgar Allan Poe's machines, Villiers's *Eve future* (*The Future Eve*), etc.<sup>17</sup> The characteristics that allow us to classify all of them in this one category—though their importance varies according to the example considered—are as follows: the celibate machine first of all reveals the existence of a much older paranoiac machine, with its tortures, its dark shadows, its ancient Law. The celibate machine itself is not a paranoiac machine, however. Everything about it is different: its cogs, its sliding carriage, its shears, needles, magnets, rays. Even when it tortures or kills, it manifests something new and different, a solar force. In the second place, this transfiguration cannot be explained by the "miraculating" powers the machine possesses due to the inscription hidden inside it, though it in fact contains within itself the most impressive sort of inscriptions (cf. the recording supplied by Edison for *Eve future*). A genuine consummation is achieved by the new machine, a pleasure that can rightly be called autoerotic, or rather automatic: the nuptial celebration of a new alliance, a new birth, a radiant ecstasy, as though the eroticism of the machine liberated other unlimited forces.

The question becomes: what does the celibate machine produce? what is produced by means of it? The answer would seem to be: intensive quantities. There is a schizophrenic experience of intensive quantities in their pure state, to a point that is almost unbearable—a celibate misery and glory experienced to the fullest, like a cry suspended between life and death, an intense feeling of transition, states of pure, naked intensity stripped of all shape and form. These are often described as hallucinations and delirium, but the basic phenomenon of hallucination (*I see, I hear*) and the basic phenomenon of delirium (*I think . . .*) presuppose an *I feel* at an even deeper level, which gives hallucinations their object and thought delirium its content—an "I feel that I am becoming a woman," "that I am becoming a god," and so on, which is neither delirious nor hallucinatory, but will project the hallucination or internalize the delirium. Delirium and hallucination are secondary in relation to the really primary emotion, which in the beginning

only experiences intensities, becomings, transitions.\* Where do these pure intensities come from? They come from the two preceding forces, repulsion and attraction, and from the opposition of these two forces. It must not be thought that the intensities themselves are in opposition to one another, arriving at a state of balance around a neutral state. On the contrary, they are all positive in relationship to the zero intensity that designates the full body without organs. And they undergo relative rises or falls depending on the complex relationship between them and the variations in the relative strength of attraction and repulsion as determining factors. In a word, the opposition of the forces of attraction and repulsion produces an open series of intensive elements, all of them positive, that are never an expression of the final equilibrium of a system, but consist, rather, of an unlimited number of stationary, metastable states through which a subject passes. The Kantian theory according to which intensive quantities fill up, to varying degrees, *matter that has no empty spaces*, is profoundly schizoid.

Further, if we are to believe Judge Schreber's doctrine, *attraction and repulsion* produce intense *nervous states* that fill up the body without organs to varying degrees—states through which Schreber-the-subject passes, becoming a woman and many other things as well, following an endless circle of eternal return. The breasts on the judge's naked torso are neither delirious nor hallucinatory phenomena: they designate, first of all, a band of intensity, a zone of intensity on his body without organs. The body without organs is an egg: it is crisscrossed with axes and thresholds, with latitudes and longitudes and geodesic lines, traversed by *gradients* marking the transitions and the becomings, the destinations of the subject developing along these particular vectors. Nothing here is representative; rather, it is all life and lived experience: the actual, lived emotion of having breasts does not resemble breasts, it does not represent them, any more than a predestined zone in the egg resembles the organ that it is going to be stimulated to produce within itself. Nothing but bands of intensity, potentials, thresholds, and gradients. A harrowing, emotionally overwhelming experience, which brings the schizo as close as possible to matter, to a burning, living center of matter: ". . . this emotion, situated outside of the particular point where the mind is searching for it . . . one's entire soul flows into this emotion that makes the mind aware of the terribly disturbing sound of matter, and passes through its white-hot flame."<sup>18</sup>

How is it possible that the schizo was conceived of as the autistic

\*W.R. Bion is the first to have stressed this importance of the *I feel*, but he places it in the realm of fantasy and makes it an affective parallel of the *I think*. See *Elements of Psycho-analysis* (London: Heinemann, 1963), pp. 94ff.

rag—separated from the real and cut off from life—that he is so often thought to be? Worse still: how can psychiatric practice have made him this sort of rag, how can it have reduced him to this state of a body without organs that has become a dead thing—this schizo who sought to remain at that unbearable point where the mind touches matter and lives its every intensity, consumes it? And shouldn't this question immediately compel us to raise another one, which at first glance seems quite different: how does psychoanalysis go about reducing a person, who this time is not a schizophrenic but a neurotic, to a pitiful creature who eternally consumes daddy-and-mommy and nothing else whatsoever? How could the conjunctive synthesis of "So *that's* what it was!" and "So it's *me!*" have been reduced to the endless, dreary discovery of Oedipus: "So it's my father, my mother"? We cannot answer these two questions at this point. We merely see how very little the consumption of pure intensities has to do with family figures, and how very different the connective tissue of the "So it's . . ." is from the Oedipal tissue.

How can we sum up this entire vital progression? Let us trace it along a first path (the shortest route): the points of disjunction on the body without organs form circles that converge on the desiring-machines; then the subject—produced as a residuum alongside the machine, as an appendix, or as a spare part adjacent to the machine—passes through all the degrees of the circle, and passes from one circle to another. This subject itself is not at the center, which is occupied by the machine, but on the periphery, with no fixed identity, forever decentered, *defined* by the states through which it passes. Thus the circles traced by Beckett's Unnamable: "a succession of irregular loops, now sharp and short as in the waltz, now of a parabolic sweep,"<sup>19</sup> with Murphy, Watt, Mercier, etc., as states, without the family having anything whatsoever to do with all of this. Or, to follow a path that is more complex, but leads in the end to the same thing: by means of the paranoiac machine and the miraculating machine, the proportions of attraction and repulsion on the body without organs produce, starting from zero, a series of states in the celibate machine; and the subject is born of each state in the series, is continually reborn of the following state that determines him at a given moment, consuming-consummating all these states that cause him to be born and reborn (the lived state coming first, in relation to the subject that lives it).

This is what Klossowski has admirably demonstrated in his commentary on Nietzsche: the presence of the *Stimmung* as a material emotion, constitutive of the most lofty thought and the most acute perception. "The centrifugal forces do not flee the center forever, but approach it once again, only to retreat from it yet again: such is the

nature of the violent oscillations that overwhelm an individual so long as he seeks only his own center and is incapable of seeing the circle of which he himself is a part; for if these oscillations overwhelm him, it is because each one of them corresponds to an individual other than the one he believes himself to be, from the point of view of the unlocatable center. As a result, an identity is essentially fortuitous, and a series of individualities must be undergone by each of these oscillations, so that as a consequence the fortuitousness of this or that particular individuality will render all of them necessary."<sup>20</sup> The forces of attraction and repulsion, of soaring ascents and plunging falls, produce a series of intensive states based on the intensity = 0 that designates the body without organs ("but what is most unusual is that here again a new afflux is necessary, merely to signify this absence"<sup>21</sup>). There is no Nietzsche-the-self, professor of philology, who suddenly loses his mind and supposedly identifies with all sorts of strange people; rather, there is the Nietzschean subject who passes through a series of states, and who identifies these states with the names of history: "*every name in history is I. . .*"<sup>22</sup> The subject spreads itself out along the entire circumference of the circle, the center of which has been abandoned by the ego. At the center is the desiring-machine, the celibate machine of the Eternal Return. A residual subject of the machine, Nietzsche-as-subject garners a euphoric reward (*Voluptas*) from everything that this machine turns out, a product that the reader had thought to be no more than the fragmented *oeuvre* by Nietzsche. "Nietzsche believes that he is now pursuing, not the realization of a system, but the application of a program . . . in the form of residues of the Nietzschean discourse, which have now become the repertory, so to speak, of his histrionicism."<sup>23</sup> It is not a matter of identifying with various historical personages, but rather identifying the names of history with zones of intensity on the body without organs; and each time Nietzsche-as-subject exclaims: "They're *me!* So it's *me!*" No one has ever been as deeply involved in history as the schizo, or dealt with it in this way. He consumes all of universal history in one fell swoop. We began by defining him as *Homo natura*, and lo and behold, he has turned out to be *Homo historia*. This long road that leads from the one to the other stretches from Hölderlin to Nietzsche, and the pace becomes faster and faster. "The euphoria could not be prolonged in Nietzsche for as long a time as the contemplative alienation of Hölderlin. . . . The vision of the world granted to Nietzsche does not inaugurate a more or less regular succession of landscapes or still lifes, extending over a period of forty years or so; it is, rather, a parody of the process of recollection of an event: a single actor will play the whole of it in pantomime in the course

of a single solemn day—because the whole of it reaches expression and then disappears once again in the space of just one day—even though it may appear to have taken place between December 31 and January 6—in a realm above and beyond the usual rational calendar.”<sup>24</sup>

#### 4 | A Materialist Psychiatry

The famous hypothesis put forward by the psychiatrist G. de Clerambault seems well founded: delirium, which is by nature global and systematic, is a secondary phenomenon, a consequence of partial and local automatistic phenomena. Delirium is in fact characteristic of the recording that is made of the process of production of the desiring-machines; and though there are syntheses and disorders (*affections*) that are peculiar to this recording process, as we see in paranoia and even in the paranoid forms of schizophrenia, it does not constitute an autonomous sphere, for it depends on the functioning and the breakdowns of desiring-machines. Nonetheless Clerambault used the term “(mental) automatism” to designate only athematic phenomena—echolalia, the uttering of odd sounds, or sudden irrational outbursts—which he attributed to the mechanical effects of infections or intoxications. Moreover, he explained a large part of delirium in turn as an effect of automatism; as for the rest of it, the “personal” part, in his view it was of the nature of a reaction and had to do with “character,” the manifestations of which might well precede the automatism (as in the paranoiac character, for instance).<sup>25</sup> Hence Clerambault regarded automatism as merely a neurological mechanism in the most general sense of the word, rather than a process of economic production involving desiring-machines. As for history, he was content merely to mention its innate or acquired nature. Clerambault is the Feuerbach of psychiatry, in the sense in which Marx remarks: “Whenever Feuerbach looks at things as a materialist, there is no history in his works, and whenever he takes history into account, he no longer is a materialist.” A truly materialist psychiatry can be defined, on the contrary, by the twofold task it sets itself: introducing desire into the mechanism, and introducing production into desire.

There is no very great difference between false materialism and typical forms of idealism. The theory of schizophrenia is formulated in terms of three concepts that constitute its trinary schema: dissociation (Kraepelin), autism (Bleuler), and space-time or being-in-the-world (Binswanger). The first of these is an explanatory concept that supposedly locates the specific dysfunction or primary deficiency. The second