

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Post-Anarchism and Psychoanalysis

Three Lectures

Duane Rousselle

Duane Rousselle
Post-Anarchism and Psychoanalysis
Three Lectures
2022

The following text consists of a transcription of a series of
free seminars conducted by Duane Rousselle in the early part
of 2022.

theanarchistlibrary.org

2022

Contents

The Revolutionary Impulse of Melancholia . . .	5
Revolutions of the One	19
Singularities, Fraternities, and the Newest So- cial Movements	31
Three Plus One: The Lawless Real	51

is his own, a country's cause is its own, and so on, then each presents an 'auto-erotic' fixation. Stirner saw singularities, 'islands of jouissance,' of self-enclosure and self-interest. And he resolved to dissociate against the fixed ideas, spooks, and so on. In the end, the problem with Stirner is that he simply has nothing to believe in. He gives up on all fictions: fiction not fixation. There is a deflation of desire. He retains the fixation but dismisses all fictions. Unfortunately, he did not have a 'plus one.'

As for me, I believe in psychoanalysis. And it was anarchism and my revolutionary aspirations that led me to it. So, I brought myself, and now all of you, to the end. What you do beyond the end is up to you. To go to the end, I would claim that the cartel is a type of post-anarchist politics. So, what can I still say about anarchism, after the end? It might surprise you to learn that post-anarchism persists when you go to the end. But it is up to each of you, one by one, all alone, to find your way with it. I hope that you will make something of what I've presented in these four lectures. But I hope you do it in your own way.

I'll stop here.

The Revolutionary Impulse of Melancholia

I'd like to begin with a statement that I made a few months ago while nearing the end of a seminar for some students in Russia. You know, when I speak, I frequently surprise myself. This happens because I permit myself every opportunity to ramble. Maybe that's not exactly what you might call 'teaching,' but it certainly has its pedagogical effects. When I speak as a teacher it is as if I am involved in a psychoanalytic session. I am surprised—as typically happens in an analysis—by my own speech. This was an important aspect of undergoing psychoanalysis for Freud. He named it the 'parapraxis.' And in his work on dreams he also discussed the 'latent' content, discoverable through interpretation of the 'manifest content.' Lacan even made a distinction like that in his earlier teaching between 'empty' and 'full' speech. The latter invokes a meaning that is susceptible to psychoanalytic interpretation. In any case, what I said to those Russian students was surprising but it didn't imply that there was some deeper meaning to be interpreted inside of it.

I remain committed to the statement that surprised me. What I said was that there are no genuine revolutionaries without melancholia. I'm sure that this statement will irritate some clinicians. For many of them, melancholia is a very serious condition that involves, among other things, suicidal ideation. I respect that it is important to have what is called a 'differential clinic.' So I'm not intended to challenge this position by playing loose with the definition. In any case, I don't want to repeat all of the heavy lifting that brought me to make that claim. But what is melancholia? Put simply, it exists, not, as one might expect, when one discovers that the world has collapsed, but rather when one realizes that one never existed in the world from the very beginning. In such

circumstances, in some sense, there is nothing but 'world.' It is a world of profound subjective destitution, to put it mildly. The melancholic cannot seem to conquer a place for itself in the world. (I am here repurposing Lacan's statement on psychosis.)

I would even claim that the melancholic experience is one of only 'revolution.' Lacan once reminded his students that the word 'revolution' means 'to return to the same.' Hence, in the 1970s, he said: "this term 'revolution' in the use made of it in the mechanics of heavenly bodies, means a return to the state." He added: "the master's discourse accomplishes its own revolution in the sense of doing a complete circle." How should we read this? I take it to imply that there was something 'real' at stake in his conception of revolution. I am surprised, therefore, to discover that Lacan was actually quite interested in revolutions. The concept of the 'real' was for him pivotal. And perhaps you already know that he once gave a definition of the 'real' as that which 'always returns to its place.' His example was precisely the movement of heavenly bodies. It would therefore seem as though the concept of the 'real' and that of 'revolution' are in some ways homologous. There is a 'real' at stake in melancholia that is revolutionary and that forces us to reflect also upon the concepts of repetition, circularity, and even fixation. The melancholic is therefore the one for whom there is most certainly a revolution, but without there being any place for herself in the world.

This is what differentiates the melancholic from the hysteric. The latter, in the first instance, confronts a world. The hysterical subject situates her revolutionary aspirations in some relation to the world. It doesn't imply that it works out well for her. But she demands something from the world. She demands that there be a transgression of the laws which sustain it. She is not necessarily the instrument of the world, as in perversion, but she does aim to expose the world's inadequacies and to force it to take stock. Yet, for all of that, to put it simply,

of desire' which can be found inside of the 'repetition compulsion,' which was, to put it in Freudian terms: a fixation. I quote Alexander Stevens concerning this repetition compulsion: "it is repetition compulsion that, according to Freud, puts us on the trail of the death drive on the basis of the repetition of the traumatic element." What Stirner demonstrated was that Feuerbach only exchanged a religious conception of 'God,' which pre-existed his work, for a humanistic conception of 'Man.' In fact, it's not exactly progress. It returns us back to the same place, and that's what makes it revolutionary: 'Man' increases the potency of the 'place of power,' but it does not evacuate it—clear it—of jouissance. Not only does the 'place of power' remain intact but its function improves, it becomes more cunning. The situation becomes worse with the category of 'man.' So we move from God, the father, to man, or men, the brothers.

Today's social movements effectuate a similar effect: through cancellation, do they not place the 'un-human' outside of their social bond, to further consolidate the internal consistency of their own group: 'moralistic human.' Eric Laurent, in his short piece "Racism 2.0," reminds us that, I quote him: "[w]hen Lacan constructed the logic of the social bond, he does not begin with the [vertical] identification with the leader." He continues by claiming that the logic proceeds in the following way:

1. "A man knows what is not a man.
2. Men recognize themselves among themselves.
3. I declare myself to be a man for fear of being convinced by men that I am not a man."

In other words, it begins from segregation: isolation from the 'hole' that one confronts in the place of the Other. In any case, Stirner located within this repetition an enigmatic and stubborn point of fixation. He was that stubborn fixation within the Hegelian movement. If, for example, God's cause

You know, it has been a month or two since this lecture series ended, and here we are again. As Lacan put it: encore! You should think of today's lecture as an encore! It would seem that I've only reestablished the series, returned to the same place, perpetuating the repetition. But I am not offering you four lectures. I'm offering three, ... plus one. I thereby isolate this final lecture from the series, and I take it all by itself, alone. This stubborn one should therefore receive more serious attention. As you know, Stirner was also a very serious thinker, which is why, perhaps, he was given the nickname "Stirner." Okay: I've asked my friend, Roman Aslamov, to speak for 2-3 minutes about Stirner. I've asked him for an important reason which he will not perhaps realize today. But, anyway, hopefully he can quickly, in 2-3 minutes, tell us what he believes to be Stirner's significance, and, moreover, what we should know about Stirner's reading of the young Hegelian Ludwig Feuerbach. After he speaks, for 2 minutes, we will return to our thread and try to bring the lecture to a conclusion.

[Roman Speaks]

Ah! Perhaps Stirner discovered something that we've been overlooking, namely a repetition that was occurring within the history of ideas. It is a question – one perhaps we could pursue another day – of the difference between dialectics and repetition. In any case, a repetition, and he underlined it in the dialectical philosophy of the Left Hegelian Ludwig Feuerbach. Within Ludwig Feuerbach's dialectical work there was nonetheless a repetition. Stirner was very clear about it when he wrote:

What [Feuerbach] took from God has been superadded to Man, and the power of humanity grew greater in proportion to the degree of piety that was lost: 'Man' is the God of today, and fear of Man has taken the place of the old fear of God.

It was perhaps by underlining this repetition that was at stake in the dialectic that he was able to move from repetition to fixation. Stirner isolated something outside of the 'dialectics

she remains subjected to that world. For example, the hysteric will come inside of the walls of your world for no other reason than to demand that you go outside of the world. In fact, this is what one revolutionary student did during one of Lacan's seminars. The student interrupted Lacan in order to demand that he stop teaching, that he stop speaking. The demand was for him to go outside of speech. I'll quote the incident:

Student: If we are to overthrow the University, it will be from the outside, with others who are on the outside.

Intervention: So why are you inside?

Student: I am inside, comrade, because if I want people to leave, I have to come inside to tell them.

Lacan: Ah! You see... Everything is there, my friend. In order to get them to go out, you come in.

It is a rather interesting dialogue. Perhaps the hysteric goes inside so that she can preach the gospel of going outside. Yet, this is not true of the melancholic. The melancholic experiences revolution without a place for herself in the world and without aspirations. The concept of revolution is therefore a real pivot between hysteria and melancholia. This is what will eventually lead us toward some real surprises. For example, Lacan once said to the revolutionary students: "as revolutionaries, what you aspire to is a master." After all the years since I first read this statement, it continues to lead me to be surprised. In fact, I was surprised yet again, just last night, when one of you provided me with another reading of the statement. Hugh know who you are! In any case, it is likely that the statement also surprised Lacan since he didn't plan on saying what he said. The point is that hysteria is precisely that: a big surprise! But, for whom is it a surprise? On the one hand, it is a surprise for

those who attempt to relate to the hysteric. I wouldn't recommend that. On the other hand, it is a surprise, precisely, for the hysteric herself.

It was a point made many years ago by Jacques-Alain Miller. He said, quite simply: 'hysteria is the surprise package!' It doesn't work out well for partners who do not like surprises. Truthfully, there are many people today who don't like to be surprised. It is probably a part of our contemporary condition. My concern is that anarchists stopped being surprised by the world as well. In any case, Miller went on to remind us that the hysteric is never where her partner expects her to be, based upon what he believes he knows about her. It was a fundamental point. A clear point. It helped to orient me on the question of the hysteric's truth. However, it didn't make things understood. It only leads me toward more confusion. This expression – the hysteric's truth – ... I'm not sure if Lacan ever said it quite like that. It was Ellie Ragland who put it clearly like that in an essay of the same title. She's never where you expect her to be because she is not entirely captured by the world of meaning, by speech.

There can be no psychoanalysis without surprises. Psychoanalysis has been fundamentally oriented by surprises of all sorts. It is why we might claim that psychoanalysis really began as an outcome of the hysterical revolution. And psychoanalysts attempted to make the surprise a motor of their discourse, the 'analytic discourse,' by beginning with what is called the objet petit a. That is what Lacan called it: the objet petit a. It is a confusing concept because it took different shapes during different periods of his teaching. To get a sense of some of these shifts you might read Miller's "Six Paradigms of Jouissance." At around the time of the impromptu session with the revolutionary students, not long after the uprisings began in France, the objet petit a was resituated to account for a renewed interest in the relationship of the unconscious to what is called the drives or what today I will simply call, and it is not quite cor-

up of insurrectionaries or insurgents who 'no longer let themselves be arranged by the world.' It could mean that they fundamentally refuse the determinations of their world: a refusal of surprises. It is a foreclosure of the world, a rejection of any constitution. That makes it quite a bit different from the social order proposed by Sergei Nachev in his "Catechisms of a Revolutionary," which established precisely that: a constitution for the union of egoists, point by point, as a condition of membership into his secret society. Now, here is the big secret: it has been said that his fraternity had no members except for himself. It was a fraternity, but a strange one because its constitution had only one function: to empty out all of the meaning that makes up a world. The revolutionary is a doomed man: he has no religion, identity, name, friends, morality, father, ... nothing. Ultimately, he is without a world. His only cause is 'revolution,' which means, finally: his revolutionary impulses. His conviction is certainly a stubborn one.

It is interesting to think about all of this in relation to a passage that I've extracted from Jacques-Alain Miller's "Turin Theory of the Subject of the School," which I will read now:

Lacan returns each one to his loneliness as a subject, to the relation that each one has with the master-signifier of the Ideal beneath which he places himself. In the very moment when Lacan institutes a collective formation, his first words are to dissociate, and bring forward subjective loneliness.

It was the same with Stirner's 'union of egoists,' because the aim was to dissociate from fixed ideas, from what Stirner called 'spooks,' which, for him, structured the entire world. Hence, Stirner's first suggestion, when instituting a social link, was to dissociate. It was therefore a principle of dissolution.

Okay, I've lost my thread.

this in order to be that agent provocateur from where there is a teaching.

You know, Miller was only interested, at this time, in the 1980s, with the cartel in terms of producing knowledge. That's not my interest. My interest is in the invention of the cartel, which is, in times of war, an invention of a social link. In any case, the 'plus one' of a cartel occupies the supposed 'place of power' but serves the cause of disrupting the hierarchical aspirations and fraternal impulses, thereby returning each member back into the loneliness of their relation to their revolutionary cause: it isolates the fixation in the impulses. I claim that Miller highlighted this later in his teaching of the School, in 2000.

And it is why Max Stirner's proposal, which he called the 'union of egoists,' has been an extremely important intervention within the history of anarchism. You'll find that even Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx were surprised by his intervention. I happen to like surprises. Stirner offered a fundamental challenge not only to the communist tradition but also to the anarchist tradition. And not everybody likes surprises, so the anarchists still do not know what to do about Stirner: they call him an 'individualist anarchist.' It's not a charitable designation because there is in fact nothing more in-dividual than a singularity, a fraternity ... a social bond or group. It is clear that Stirner did not offer us a blueprint for the 'union of egoists.' It is a point that commentators on his work never fail to mention. He offered a concept, but he left it empty. The union of egoists is an empty space reserved for a social link still possible after the annihilation of the world.

That's already quite a bit, though, because it implies that he emptied the social bond of its fraternal relations, thereby insisting that each member pursue their own singular cause, unshackled from oppressive hierarchies and moralistic fraternities. Allan Antliff, a friend of mine, reminded me not so long ago that Stirner's 'union of egoists' was supposed to be made

rect, the impulse. It is not long after this that the objet petit a became understood as a 'void,' which means that it was something missing from within the symbolic order. Put another way, it was related to that which resists being inscribed within the symbolic world. That was what happened to the little object 'cause' of desire. So, I say that the hysterical subject is the one for whom jouissance is resolutely and inescapably enigmatic from the standpoint of the world.

It's not exactly clear to me. I'm not sure where I am going with all of this. But something nonetheless has become cleared away. Incidentally, I quite like the word 'clear.' I like it because one of you told me yesterday in Dublin that it is one of the Cartesian virtues. I didn't know about that. I like it, but, nonetheless, nothing is really clear to me yet with regard to the point of this lecture. I'm confused in-Claire, unclear. In any case, what I've mentioned so far does nonetheless produce a clearing away of knowledge from jouissance. There is a disjuncture of knowledge, the sort of knowledge that might be interpreted in terms of meaning, and jouissance. Maybe what I'm saying is not altogether virtuous but perhaps I can learn to speak-well of it as the course proceeds. I'm working on it. For now, I'll continue rambling.

I was thinking that it would be difficult for psychoanalysis to continue if not for the fact that they like surprises. There are even some psychoanalysts on facebook who really enjoy them. You will find them endlessly playing with language, making jokes, producing double entendres, and so on. For them, there is nothing but the playfulness of language. That is not my way. However, this point about the disjuncture of knowledge and jouissance allows us to advance a little further than some 'so-called anarchists' (which sounds a lot like 'psychoanalysts,' doesn't it?). They offered readings of psychoanalysis and revolution by focusing on hysteria and desire without at all plunging into the darkness of the drives, the revolutionary impulses, and enigmatic jouissance. Some of them have claimed

that they've isolated the basic ontological presuppositions of classical anarchism and that they have revealed an uncritical 'essentialist position' with respect to human nature.

This led them toward a claim that classical anarchists had a simplistic or reductive account of political revolution: if human nature is essentially good and creative, and if the master is essentially repressive, then one just has to get rid of the master and we can all hold hands and join a communist fraternity. What I find interesting about this moment in anarchist thinking was that it nonetheless produced an initial surprise among anarchists around the world. They were surprised by what we revealed to them about what they were saying. So, suddenly, when the post-anarchist critique of classical anarchist ontology and epistemology occurred, there was a jolt of surprise among anarchists. It was perhaps most surprising, though, because the post-anarchists were anarchists who defined themselves, their orientation, precisely in fidelity to that surprise. It was most surprising for the anarchists themselves! And just like that most anarchists began to work hard to demonstrate that there was already this other 'scene' within anarchist theory.

They busied themselves to show us that the classical texts are not at all homogeneous like many of the post-anarchists seemed to be claiming. They aimed to show us that there was always another reading of the anarchist theory of power, subjectivity, and so on. It was already there within the classical tradition. It means that the post-anarchists and the anarchists were fighting with each other but nonetheless both pursuing the consequences of the same surprising moment. It was an engagement with the unconscious, truthfully. What mattered at that moment wasn't about who had the correct reading of anarchist texts but rather the fact that we were all surprised by what he had already been saying within the anarchist tradition. I wonder if today there are any of such surprises left for anarchists.

'assemblies of the tribes.' Each affinity group is deliberately kept small to allow for the greatest degree of intimacy between those who compose it. Autonomous, communal, and directly democratic, the group combines revolution theory with revolutionary lifestyle [and] creates a free space in which revolutionaries can remake themselves individually, and also as social beings.

There are clear differences between the affinity group model and the cartel. Both are small and intimate social groups, arranged according to some work or cause, and developed, from the beginning, within times of war. But the affinity group operates in much closer proximity to the horizontal principle of fraternity: it is auto-non-mous. From the beginning, it does not propose to eradicate the internal inclinations toward group identification, nor does it eliminate the principle of segregation. The cartel functions according to a fundamentally different point of departure. It retains the 'place of power.' I quite like this expression, which I've extracted from Saul Newman's book *From Bakunin to Lacan: place of power*. The cartel retains the place of power, but empties it of its potency. The place of power remains, but its function serves a different cause. Rather than affirming the segregation of the group, the 'plus one' functions to produce, as Laurent Dupont has put it: a certain function of desire, which is a draining of the *jouissance* at play in the affirmative impulses. It is why the 'plus one' is neither a master nor a care-taker, but rather an agent provocateur. This is how Miller has put it. I quote him:

The plus-one must come with question marks [...] and make holes in heads. This implies that he refuses to be a master who puts to work; to be the one who knows; to be an analyst in the cartel; and

a great essay by Eric Laurent about this which was published some twenty years ago, titled “The Real and the Group.”

Lacan’s report, presented in 1947, titled “British Psychiatry and the War,” examined the formation of small groups of soldiers during the second world war whose direction was ensured by psychiatrists and inspired by psychoanalysis. We might imagine that the cartel is roughly homologous with the anarchist ‘affinity group’ or ‘collective.’ Why not? Murray Bookchin, who I met many years ago in Vermont, reasoned, persuasively, that the anarchist affinity group model was transported into American anarchist practice from idealistic militants fighting within the Spanish Civil War. There is something about the war—the trauma that it reveals, and the subsequent dissolution of the social bond—that necessitates social inventions of these sorts. I’m not without realizing it myself, having now fled Russia, and finding myself in small groups such as this one. The war led Freud to conceptualize a notion of ‘death drive,’ Lacan to develop the basic coordinates of the ‘cartel,’ and, as for the anarchists, the development of an ‘affinity group’ model. Finally, Stirner, who wrote about the ‘union of egoists,’ as we shall see, thought of this during a moment when the German social bond began to erode, shortly before the revolutions of the 1840s.

I would like to quote Bookchin on the affinity group:

The term ‘affinity group’ is the English translation of the Spanish grup de afinidad, which was the name of an organizational form devised [...] as the basis of the [...] Iberian Anarchist Federation (FAI). [...] [It] could easily be regarded as a new type of extended family, in which kinship ties are replaced by deeply empathetic human relationships [...]. Long before the word ‘tribe’ gained popularity in the American counterculture, the Spanish anarchists called their congresses

Not much has been said about the incompatibility or the non-rapport of jouissance and the world. The mystery of hysteria was thought to be mastered by many of the post-anarchists. I propose to you that we instead begin to move backward from mastery to mystery, from meaningful knowledge back to the enigma. You know, the word ‘surprise’ carries two meanings: first, it means to be captured or mastered, and, second, it means that you are astonished by something unexpected. On the one hand, you could say that you are mastered by the symbolic unconscious. So, when some post-anarchists wrote about hysteria and revolution they focused only on the unacknowledged dependence upon the world of mastery. For example, it was the position of Saul Newman in his exploration of the Nietzschean concept of resentment and ‘slave morality.’ It was also the position of Richard J. F. Day, in a way, when he discussed what he called the ‘loopback structure’ of ‘reform and revolution’ within counter-hegemonic social movements. For him, these movements were captured by what he named the circular ‘politics of demand.’ For Lacan, it is only the analyst’s discourse that offers a revolution without the world of mastery.

The big secret of hysteria is that she is ultimately not entirely in the world. This is why Lacan seemed to retain a link among hysteria and femininity. This will probably upset those of you who are not in favor of surprises: he located a link among hysteria and the essence of the feminine position and it was in a logic of the ‘not-all’ (pas-toute). The ‘not-all’ highlights an exception to the laws of the world. It is not a universal position, since that would make it an ‘All.’ The ‘not-all’ remains enigmatic. Marie-Helene Brousse pointed out that in hysteria it is important to think not only about a revolutionary response to the world of mastery. Hysteria is also a response to the ‘real.’ In other words, hysteria is also a defense against revolution. Put differently, hysteria is a response to the master just as much as the mystery. In both cases there is something like a ravage. Psychoanalysts often mitsake hyster-

ical and melancholic or psychotic ravage. The key difference, I think, is that the hysteric makes victimization the point of departure upon which to launch her interrogation of the master, while the melancholic remains within the mystery. There are no secrets or surprises.

You get my point? What is at stake in hysteria? Ultimately, it concerns this enigmatic and unspeakable *jouissance*. It is a *jouissance* that is anarchic and revolutionary. It is a *jouissance* uncoupled from the world. The melancholic understands the big secret, the hysteric's truth: the world is radically without foundation. The melancholic knows very well about the profound violence of the world and of speech. For the melancholic, the secret is truly out. This is why knowing the big secret doesn't make life any easier. You know, I am currently in Ireland, and I was reminded recently that in Catholicism there is the 'mystery of faith.' I remember hearing it every Sunday while I was in the church: "let us proclaim the mystery of faith." What is the mystery of faith? Quite simply, it is the secret as such, something radically without meaning. The mystery of faith is not some meaning to be solved, it is just that: a pure enigma. However, there was some theosopher, I don't know his name, who claimed that he found a way to grasp the mystery of faith and it was in the pure writing of the tetragrammaton. In any case, I digress.

None of this stops the melancholic from engaging in what seems to be self-sabotaging behavior. However, that happens along a different track than what we see in hysteria. The hysteric sabotages her desire in order to sustain the very space within which her subjectivity has been split in relation to the world. It is a possible solution. However, the melancholic, as you know, sabotages this very split of subjectivity. The cut that should have occurred from the world into *jouissance* didn't happen, and so it sometimes happens instead with a razor blade or with a pill. In such cases, the revolution overcomes her. I imagine those monks who sit out in the streets in protest and

up the 'symbolic' patriarchy; and, on the other hand, there is something of the father which exists outside of this vertical world: a real father. It is a father whose presence is felt more severely. Perhaps we might claim that the father becomes the world, and it is from this world-father that the subject stages her retreat. Patriarchy can therefore continue to exist according to the horizontal principle of fraternity. I don't see why we can't claim that class functions according to a fraternal logic as well. In any case, the fraternity without a master exists outside of the world. When the symbolic prohibition against *jouissance* becomes ineffective, the cut perhaps comes from the real: not the signifier but the razor blade or the insult.

Paradoxically, one feels prohibitions even more. The fraternal group really feels the weight of the world. The internal consistency and integrity of the group is secured not by prohibitions but also by segregations: the group segregates together, in isolation from the world. That's how Lacan put it: "isolates, together." It is a lonely segregation of 'ones.' How is it possible, then, that it is when patriarchy is most under attack that fathers also seem to be felt as more tyrannical? In any case, this other mode of social organization led me toward a discussion of the psychoanalytic cartel. I hope you know this word, cartel. The word emerged, long before Lacan picked it up, in the context of war. As formulated by Lacan, the cartel was meant to be a social bond that would not be predicated upon the principles of prohibition or affirmation: neither hierarchy nor fraternity, neither exploitation nor segregation. Many people assume that a cartel is simply a Lacanian reading group, but what it really elaborates, and this is its politics, is the necessity of a 'non-hierarchical' and 'non-fraternizing' social bond. I might claim that the cartel is a post-anarchist mode of social organization. It goes further than the anarchists themselves were often willing to go: to the end. Lacan began to formulate the basic coordinates of the 'cartel' very early in his teaching. There was even

witness the comedians move from aspiration toward perspiration, sweating on stage rather than laughing. When you are outside of the world, jokes might become insulting to you. I know that it doesn't make any of this easier for you to accept but I am not trying to insult any of you: my feeling is that we are in the worst of times. It is not that we are approaching some apocalypse-to-come but rather that the apocalypse has already happened. Maybe I'm holding my lantern today, whispering to you that the world is already dead, that you have killed it. We have already lost our world. Consequently, I would say, our social bonds are increasingly structured according to a logic of segregation.

The newest social movements have demonstrated this point very well. They are not alone in showing it to us. These are fraternal social bonds, singularities. When the paternal function weakens, when there is, as Slavoj Žižek has put it, 'a decline in symbolic or paternal efficiency,' we can begin to see the real cunning of the father, of the master. The *pere* [father] becomes the peer, or pair. The organizing principle of the non-dup-*pere* is replaced by the principle of 'auto-non-me,' which institutes a new lonely mode of traumatic unspeakable suffering. The fraternal function replaces the paternal function: oppression and exploitation operate less explicitly and more implicitly, through a logic of segregation. And Lacan insisted upon the fact that psychoanalysis is the only counterpoint to the world of mastery, patriarchy. And why? It is because psychoanalysis disrupts the tendency toward hierarchy and fraternity.

I risk the claim that our problem today is not at all what some notable psychologists seem to be lamenting: the end of patriarchy. I don't care much about the fact that hierarchies might exist in nature, as Jordan Peterson has maintained, because it really doesn't get to what is truly at stake: patriarchy has become worse. It has shifted from the symbolic into the real. On the one hand, there are 'vertical' social bonds, which make

burn themselves to death. It is definitely a type of 'revolutionary' activity. In this case, the molotov cocktail isn't thrown at the world but is thrown at oneself. Lacan once defined *jouissance* in the following way: 'it begins with a tickle and ends in a blaze of petrol.' Lacan reminded us that this behavior has been popular among Buddhists for a while, and he related it to the melancholic position. However, this is a revolution that outlives the subject.

This is why it is important to understand that there are revolutionary aspirations but also revolutions of *jouissance*, or what we might call the revolutionary activity of death drive. What the melancholic demonstrates is that there is a revolution of *jouissance* which burns away at the subject. It reveals that the subject is refused in this world and that the world can easily go on about its business without him or her. The subject is revealed as this refuse, this piece of trash. The melancholic subject will state this quite clearly. I was thinking that it is an interesting position to imagine oneself since that is what the psychoanalyst ultimately becomes for a patient in psychoanalysis: cast off, rejected, refused at the end of analysis. The analyst is also a piece of trash, truth be told.

Maybe there are just a few more things that I would like to say.

There is a possible reading of the legend of Orpheus and Eurydice. I hope you know something about this narrative. What Orpheus learned upon losing Eurydice in the underworld was that he needed to lose her precisely to convince himself that he ever had her from the beginning. He was trying to trick himself, I think. He wanted to be duped. He wanted to forget that he already knew the big secret. In the end, after losing her, he realized, I think, that he never had her from the beginning. He sat all alone, beneath a tree, like the Buddha, absolutely dedicated to her long after she vanished. This is what we are often told: his dedication to her never waned, long after she was gone. He nonetheless refused all possible relationships to others. He

could not substitute her. I will quote Ovid: “he abstained from the love of women [...]. Yet, many felt a desire to be joined with him, and many grieved at being rejected.” What happened in the end? Precisely, the world tore him to pieces, limb by limb. It wasn’t petrol but it had the same effect.

Perhaps another reading exists, one which thinks that he was a melancholic. He could not separate from Eurydice, he could not find a position from which to properly mourn her. The paradox was that she was all the more proximate precisely after her vanishing. It is perhaps also a way to read the lesson of Antigone. Many people believe that Antigone was a hysteric who performed a truly ethical act. Judith Butler noted that she couldn’t have been hysterical. She agreed with Julia Kristeva in claiming that she must have been melancholic. Kristeva advanced this point a bit further: Antigone was melancholic because she could not separate from the familial bond with her brother. She was closer to him precisely in his absence. She nonetheless seemed like a revolutionary figure, ungovernable by the laws of the world. But what kind of revolution was that? The revolution went on without them.

Hence, I really like how clearly Russell Grigg put the matter several years ago. He said something like: in melancholic psychosis, it is not a process of mourning the loss of an object/person that is at stake. It is not a process of mourning. Rather, melancholia is about the unbearable presence of the object/person. He referred to the ‘unabandoned object.’

Let’s return to our thread after this long detour. I want to return to this moment when Lacan was speaking to the revolutionary students of France. Lacan’s statement really did surprise me. I’ll explain why. First of all, it occurred during an impromptu session. Lacan frequently permitted himself the freedom to ramble. But at that time his students challenged that space. They challenged the very space within which rambling could have occurred. On the one hand, they demanded that he respond to their provocations and accusations; and, on the

the seminar title, missing from that symbolic place. So you just have to imagine that the father is there, which is precisely what we seem to be doing. It was a point that led me to provide a third lecture on the topic of what precisely is worse today. So, I spoke about ‘singularities.’ That’s what I call them. And I examined their logic, with particular attention to the ‘newest social movements.’

I turned to the work of Todd May and Richard J. F. Day to show how post-anarchist theory succumbed to the temptation to remain complicit with the contemporary political world: a world of weakening prohibitions. It’s not a discovery that I’m happy to report. I was inspired by the work of May and Day, but now it is June and it is Night: May Day is over. Things have changed in the years that have passed: the world has gone dark. It is surprising to me. Again, I don’t mind being surprised. However, it is clear to me that many people don’t like to feel surprised anymore. I have even claimed that what was so essential about post-anarchist theory was that it surprised anarchists. We became surprised by what it was that we have been saying for over 150 years. Anarchism was also at one time a surprise to the modern world, especially to the Marxists who they were often provoking. What was most important about post-anarchist was that it surprised us. It’s a fundamental point because post-anarchism surprised us by demonstrating that the modern or classical anarchist tradition was a defense against our revolution impulses: we preferred to remain within the world of mastery. Learning that was surprising to us.

Some of our critics described these theories as a joke. It might even surprise you to learn that I prefer that it be understood as a joke. Freud showed us where a joke leads: toward the unconscious. Today, of course, it is very difficult to tell a joke. And it is why we must learn how to be surprised again. But singularities are too serious for jokes: there is nothing to laugh about. The joke can only exist in a world within which one aspires toward liberation. However, we seemed to

was a point under-developed in the work of Slavoj Žižek, who, in the 1990s, was among the first, though it was still long after Jacques Lacan and Jacques-Alain Miller, to argue that enjoyment, or *jouissance*, is a political factor.

Ultimately, I follow Slavoj in this direction. But I do it in my own way. He was always fond of saying: ‘we should be willing to go to the end!’ Slavoj, who always supports my work and who is a friend, should nonetheless be asked: well, why didn’t you go to the end of your analysis with Miller? It is a discussion concerning the end of analysis, and, indeed, the end of the world. If there is a political trauma that we might isolate in the domain of politics then what those revolutionaries demonstrated was that their hysteria was a mode of defense against that trauma. In the end, hysterics prefer to maintain their relationship to the world, and to the master. The hysteric is not entirely willing to go to the end! It is perhaps why there are so very few who have in fact gone to the end of their analysis, and even those who do, they often return again. The goal of analysis is quite simply to transform the hysteric into an analyst, that is, into one who does go beyond the end of analysis. In any case, the anarchist is the one for whom politics also consists of contingent encounters with what exists outside of the world of mastery. So, there are really two anarchist traditions, and they do not necessarily operate in isolation from one another.

What I want to convince you of today is that it’s not exactly progress when the anarchist overcomes the world of mastery. The situation can become much worse: the world itself can become a cruel master, the master becomes real. It is a movement from a world that was characterized by internal problems and inconsistencies toward a world that is fundamentally suffering: a trauma without a world to house it. So: from suffering to trauma, which is not progress. It’s worse. And it was why Lacan’s seminar, which occurred during a period of uprisings, was titled “... Or Worse.” We all know that it was supposed to be called “the father, or worse.” Yet, the father is missing from

other hand, they interrupted him, and, in fact, spoke for him. When he did find a moment to speak it was clear that they only heard what they were already prepared to hear. They already knew all of the answers to the questions that they were asking. Perhaps that offers us another way to understand what it means to work at an ‘impossible profession.’ (That’s what Freud called them, impossible professions: teaching, politics, and psychoanalysis.) Perhaps teaching is an ‘impossible profession’ because there never was a world within which the teacher could have possibly been permitted to ramble. Lacan probably knew this better than most since there was always a question of where it was that he would speak. But that didn’t stop him from speaking and from saying things that continue to astonish us.

As for Antigone, she was not able to make use of a world after hers clearly disappeared. There is something ethically wrong, I would say, in claiming that Antigone’s action was revolutionary and that tragedy is at the heart of what psychoanalysis and anarchism can offer the world. We might think it is courageous when she says: “I will bury him myself even if I die in the act, that death will be a glory. I will sleep with the one I love and be loved by him.” You know what is interesting – I will have to go back to the ethics seminar to confirm this – Lacan described Antigone as having the ‘true secret.’ She possessed the mystery. Yet, for Lacan, she was also ‘inflexible,’ which means, quite fixated, stuck. At one point Lacan even claims that it might be the case that she was a fascist. She goes beyond the limits of the world. It was an act of rebellion and transgression. However, when did the transgression happen? Well, it didn’t happen suddenly, because of an injustice. She said somewhere that “her soul died a long time ago.” She didn’t say that the world died but rather that her soul died. In the same seminar, before discussing Antigone, Lacan spoke of another melancholic woman who acted in relation to an overly proximate object, her brother-in-law. It shows that

he had something of melancholia in mind when speaking of Antigone.

The melancholic doesn't know how to find a place for herself in relation to the world. And it has something to do with the fact that she has a strange access to the hysteric's truth. I made a distinction last week when speaking about something else: idiot, moron, and stupid person. When one does not see the way in which one is implicated in the world of mastery, we can speak about a person who is duped as if they are an idiot. The hysteric is clearly an idiot. The idiot is always determined by the world. I call that idiot-ology, which means that one remains trapped within the field of mastery. This is a different position than that of living without a world. Those who live without a world are morons. We might claim that the moron is an elevated idiot. The moron isn't duped at all. But can't live properly without being duped. The psychoanalyst is interested in a revolution that is neither moronic nor idiotic. I think that it says something about our 'stupidity.' Perhaps it is about not being without a world, which means making use of a world. The stupid person really likes surprises, it stunned him. I want to quote Natalie Wulfing, who I think put it exceptionally well:

[For the melancholic, there is] nothing to be gained from the World. Freud in fact thought that the melancholic had an uncharacteristic access to the truth [...] It would cast him as a non-dupe [in other words, a moron].

It is a terrible thing to say because I advise you to never call a melancholic a moron. It will have catastrophic consequences. I would conclude only by reminding you that some anarchists knew about the big secret. I admire them very much. Take Max Stirner who wrote that 'revolutions aim at new arrangements, but insurrections lead us to no longer allow ourselves to be arranged by the social order.' You know, when you

In any case, I stumbled upon a point that really fascinated me. I even wondered why nobody else noticed it. Why hasn't Daniel Colson, when he was researching for his paper on Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and Jacques Lacan, noticed the homology within Lacan's teaching on the concept of 'revolution' and 'real.' It is a point within Lacan's teaching: he provided the same definition for both concepts. It's remarkable. It means that Lacan was in fact a bit of a revolutionary, since he committed to the concept of the 'real' and to the 'revolution' that would not return the subject back into the world of mastery. What was at stake in each concept? In both cases, we are told to take the rotations of the heavenly bodies as our example, as in, for example, early science: a 'real' which revolves. These heavenly bodies always return to their place. The 'real' and 'revolution' are synonymous concepts which target a logic of 'returning to its place' and 'resisting the symbolic.' Well, it points toward what Freud named 'fixation.' At this point, we reach something that is quite stubborn.

This fixation at the core of the 'real' of 'revolution' forces us to be very serious, stubborn, perhaps even stern. We also find this in a psychoanalytic session: as the time passes—month after month, year after year—there are therapeutic effects, but still, in the final instance, something of our suffering or enjoyment, our 'jouissance,' remains, persists. It is stubborn, fixed. And the sessions go on like that, demonstrating that we only ever become more and more stern, ... sterner. For us, it necessitates a theory of repetition and fixation concerning the revolutionary impulses: what is it that repeats in these impulses? The stubborn fixation we take as 'one,' and it is the 'one' of an enigmatic jouissance. This 'one' of enigmatic jouissance, which we can isolate from the series of repetitions, as Lacan did in his later teaching, it localizes something of trauma. There is a trauma at the core of any law, representation, meaning, or image. Perhaps we can be led to believe that there is even a 'political' jouissance that bears some relation to this stubborn 'one.' It

roduce a distinction between ‘revolutionary aspirations’ and ‘revolutionary impulses.’ Post-anarchists have written already about the former, the aspirations. For example, there was an excellent essay by Saul Newman that you might go and read on The Anarchist Library titled “Interrogating the Master.” These aspirations operate along the pathways of desire, and they are exemplified by those hysterics who interrogated Jacques Lacan during the French uprisings of the late 1960s. You already know his response: “... as revolutionaries, what you aspire to is a master. You will get it.”

Okay, I don’t think it was a threat. He wasn’t threatening them. It was a prophecy. In fact, I do believe that prophets ‘exist’ (which is to say nothing about their ‘being,’ but that is a discussion for another lecture). Perhaps it is one that Mark and I might have one day: ‘what is a prophecy?’ In any case, what those revolutionaries demonstrated was that their desires were supported by the world. In his way, Lacan proposed that they remained fundamentally committed to the world, which was, truth be told, a world of mastery. So much for the revolutionary aspirations, there are also revolutionary impulses, which operate along the circuit of the drive. It is a movement from ‘desire’ toward what Freud called the ‘drive.’ These impulses operate outside of the symbolic and imaginary coordinates of the world, and this is why we can claim that they are lawless. Lawlessness occurs when there is a more fundamental resistance to the world, when, in the final instance, one resists incorporation into the world. Incidentally, for a very long time there have been critical debates, mostly originating within Lacanian circles, about the proper translation of Freud’s various words: ‘drives,’ ‘instincts,’ ‘impulses.’ The thought occurred to them that the standard translation conflated these concepts, and so it is important to effect a separation of concepts. I don’t see why we can’t maintain the conflation, since impulses have a non-discursive, almost biological, locus.

look at the painting that Engels drew of the young Hegelians, Stirner was always off to the side, at a distance from the world. Stirner wasn’t essentially aiming to provoke a master. He was confronting the world as such. His books and essays basically say the following: ‘I resolve to speak of revolutions without the need of a world.’ He finds himself, therefore, all alone. He is this void, this piece of waste. For example, how does Stirner open his famous book *The Ego and Its Own*? He writes: “All things are nothing to me.” He continues:

What is not supposed to be my thing! First and foremost, the Good thing, then God’s thing, the thing of mankind, of truth, of freedom, of humanity, of justice; further, the thing of my people, my prince, my fatherland; finally even the thing of Mind, and a thousand other things. Only my cause, my thing, is never to be my concern.

I take from this that there is a fundamental rejection of the world, of the entire field of ‘world.’ There is nothing left except the pure revolutionary impulse. He destroys all objects. This is how he put it in a small essay on art and religion: ‘art makes the Object, and religion lives only in its many ties to that Object.’ He continues to explain that he ‘clearly sets himself apart from both [...]. Neither enmeshed with an Object, as religion, nor making one, as in art, but rather [he] places his pulverizing hand upon all the business of making Objects as well as the whole of objectivity itself, and so breathes the air of freedom.’ Finally, it is a rejection of the world, and hence, a rejection of himself as being represented in that world. He resists being an object of the world. So, where does that leave him? Precisely with the truth!

His solution was to produce a self-enclosed circuit of autistic jouissance. He is ‘nothing.’ Yet, when he says he is nothing, it is not as ‘lack,’ as something missing. He is not nothing in

the sense of emptiness, as he puts it, but rather as a creative nothing. He is this void of an anarchic jouissance which is overflowing, lawless, and enigmatic. The 'nothing' was an enigma and not an object. It gives us a reason to presume that there has always been something like a revolutionary impulse in the anarchist tradition. But these melancholics do not know how to live without a world. It was why so many melancholics of history left us too soon. Yet, there have been attempts to form a social bond, however paradoxical, from the melancholic position. Stirner spoke of the 'union of egoists,' but never gave it any meaning. A particularly good example comes from Sergey Nechayev, a young companion of Mikhail Bakunin. Nechayev claimed to have built a very large revolutionary secret society.

There is no evidence that he did do that. But his manifesto highlighted what was at stake. I quote from the Revolutionary Catechism:

The revolutionary is a doomed man. He has no personal interests, no business affairs, no emotions, no attachments, no property, and no name. Everything in him is wholly absorbed in the single thought and the single passion for revolution.

The revolutionary knows that in the very depths of his being, not only in words but also in deeds, he has broken all the bonds which tie him to the social order and the civilized world with all its laws, moralities, and customs, and with all its generally accepted conventions. He is their implacable enemy, and if he continues to live with them it is only in order to destroy them more speedily.

And then he proceeded to discuss justifications for the murder of whole groups of society. But, more importantly, the revolutionary subject, he insisted, must be prepared to end his own life as a part of the revolutionary process. The revolution is a pure consequence, even if it means the loss of space of subjectivity.

Three Plus One: The Lawless Real

[Mark Gerard Murphy introduces Duane]

Thank you Mark, for your spark.

I want to begin with a joke. It was told to me by a friend named Zuleykha, and I'll repeat it here in my own way. A man goes to the grocery store and asks the clerk for 1000 eggs. It is a small shop, so the clerk informed the customer that he only had a few dozen eggs in stock. The customer seemed disappointed, and left the store. But he returned the next day and asked again: 'do you have 1000 eggs?' The clerk, even more surprised, gave the same response: 'I'm sorry, we only have a few dozen eggs in stock.' This continued day after day for months until, finally, the clerk realized that he was missing out on an important business opportunity. He collects together 1000 eggs to sell to the man. The man returns to the shop the next morning and asks, 'do you have 1000 eggs?' The clerk responds: 'yes, as a matter of fact, we do have 1000 eggs.' The customer smiles and says: 'Okay, will you sell me one of them?'

It is clear that the customer would have kept returning, day after day. There was a repetition at stake in the joke. Yet, precisely when the clerk thought he found a way to benefit from the repetition, to put an end to it, he discovered that there was behind all of that a stubbornness to continue.

I cannot promise that today's lecture will be altogether easy to follow. I'll be developing and perhaps even summarizing thoughts that were introduced in prior lectures. If you feel a bit lost then you might at some point return to watch those lectures, which are available on YouTube. Today I am offering a final lecture for this series on "post-anarchism and psychoanalysis." That makes this lecture a particularly serious one. Anyway, that's precisely what I provided, a lecture series. And today I will attempt to circumscribe what it was within this lecture series that was most serious. The first seminar was framed by a discussion of 'revolutionary melancholia,' and it led me to in-

Yet, the post-structuralist anarchist approach, it seems to me, surprises us by discovering the space of singularity and the revolutions of the One. It is an approach of singularity because there is no single master. Rather, there exists a series, a repetition, of encounters with the master, that is, with the signifier: each one is traumatic and triggering. Todd May wrote:

[F]or tactical political philosophy, there is no center within which power is to be located. Otherwise put, power, and consequently politics, are irreducible. There are many different sites from which it arises, and there is an interplay among these various sites in the creation of the social world.

It is clear that the movement away from the ‘unitary analysis’ (which is an analysis of a confrontation with the master signifier, that is, the name-of-the-father) transforms into a tactical confrontation without a name-of-the-father, that is, without the master signifier. At this point, one confronts the world as such, never knowing when or where power might next launch its attack. This is why I caution against the approach which begins from a celebration of the newest social movements, as well as the approaches that have hitherto been classified as formal, strategic, and/or tactical political philosophy. It seems to me that we need to invent another position.

This is what psychoanalytic anarchism opens us up into: if post-anarchism is to continue to be relevant today then it should be taken as a moment of surprise for anarchism and not as a post-structuralist position. It must find itself surprised by what anarchism has become, by what we’ve been saying and doing within our social movements. Finally, it should be prepared to invent an anarchism that is not without a world. It is this point that I hope to develop and conclude with, in a more concise way, next week. I hope that you will all join me for that final session.

Well, I’m not sure I agree with anything that I’ve said today. But what I really wanted to do was simply to set the stage for another discussion. Next week I want to focus not on hysteria, necessarily; nor on melancholy, or the improper ways in which I’ve discussed it today. I am interested in the world that an anarchist might make use of, or in, rather, what sort of social bond is at stake for anarchists. It is clear to me that revolutionaries cannot be without a world. Hence, if the hysteric’s world was governed by what Lacan called the ‘name of the father,’ said ‘non-du-pere,’ then the revolutionary anarchist might be governed by a principle of ‘auto-non-me,’ which is another strange homophony since it bridges the French and English. Auto-non-me, it is another way to ‘say no to the subject,’ to make use of the non-du-pere precisely when it has gone missing. Maybe auto-non-me can help us clear a path forward for those of us who want to live beyond the consequences of the revolutionary impulse.

I’ll stop here.

I ask you for this week to write your questions and comments into the chat for the Facebook group. I will look at them and see what can be made from them for next week.

Revolutions of the One

I am no more prepared this week than I was last week. However, this time I find myself oriented by some of our confusions. I also discovered a title for last week’s lecture, which I quite like: “The Revolutionary Impulse of Melancholia.” In any case, I want to thank you again for being here. It is because you are here that I have a position from which to speak. And that’s not nothing. It’s what I call a world. I didn’t say that it is the world because that would imply something more definite, something more predictable. One should really not be without a world, one should not be without a place from which to speak.

Perhaps it also provides an opportunity for speaking-well. Incidentally, when we speak about the ethics of psychoanalysis, as we did last week with Antigone, we should remember that the real statement on psychoanalytic ethics didn't come from Lacan's ethics seminar. I think that it was described in his later teaching, for example in *Television*: it concerns a duty to be well-spoken. And he claimed that depression, melancholy, occurs when one fails in one's ethical duty of speaking-well.

I am oriented by the question of melancholy, anarchism, and the social bond. However I am led toward a discussion, today, of the moronic One, that is, the One who is without a world; or who has, paradoxically, become nothing in the world. It is an important point because the collapse of the world, or rather, the realization of the inexistence of the world, as is the case for melancholics, can lead one to feel surrounded by the world. When taken to its extreme, the world shifts into a different register. It is a movement from the symbolic world of meaning toward a 'real' world, the mystery. It is possible in such circumstances that the space of the subject becomes eclipsed. You know, perhaps the beautiful soul retreats from the world, into four walls, disappearing even in her attempt to produce a space for herself, like Julian of Norwich. It means, finally, that there are revolutions of the One. The revolution of the One is not-at-all what was foregrounded during the modern revolutionary aspirations of anarchists. It's why I made a distinction last week between revolutionary impulses and revolutionary aspirations. The One can be detached from the Other, from the world. In fact, the direction toward which all revolutionary aspirations lead, as hysteria shows, is a decoupling of the One and World.

This was precisely the case with Antigone. I begin my rambling for today with Antigone. I didn't say that I will begin against Antigone. In fact, I am with the revolutionary melancholics, the depressed revolutionaries: melancholics without a world, unite! However, to be clear, Antigone wasn't

Todd May's challenge leads us to consider. It means that no matter how many places of power are registered ... there can always be one more. There is always another possible site of capture for the subject. We can call this the 'plus one,' if you like: it is the infinity of registers of power that tactical political philosophy demonstrates.

Finally, we confront what is beyond the places of power: the real. It can be discussed in many ways. Perhaps we could say – some people thought they were clever in their critique of Foucault by saying this – 'if power is everywhere, then power is nowhere and nothing.' But that was, precisely, Stirner's point: the 'nothing' is the only 'semblant' that can still hold it all together, a last defense against the 'real.' An overlooked point with Todd May's analysis is that he believes that the proliferation of networks of power, the constant reinvention of power in different nodal points, conglomerations of power, implies that there is an infinitely constituted space of resistance and revolution. The revolution becomes infinite, or, as Simon Critchley once put it, one of the subject's 'infinite demands to power.' In other words, we end up precisely in the surprising place of the 'plus one:' power is never where 'we expect to know it' to be. In this conception, power is a surprise package. And from the future possibilities of power, there is an endless resistance, an endless revolution. Put another way, power continuously changes, domineering within certain registers, and then receding, inventing new unforeseen registers, and so on. Saul Newman recognized this, briefly, when he said that there is a 'shopping list' of oppressions which anarchists are supposed to pay homage to - and there is always a new one we didn't see coming.

Revolution therefore becomes transformed into the repetition of an encounter with mastery, without end: it becomes the revolution of the One.

At this point I think it is fruitful to adopt a topological approach. The strategic approach is akin to hysterical revolutions.

what he names a 'unitary analysis of power.' In other words, there is a concern with what Saul Newman, whose work to which I am much more closely aligned, refers to as 'the place of power.' It is a central idea in modern revolutionary political philosophy that there is a 'place of power,' and that the abolition of this 'unitary' place, produces an effect of liberation. The revolution is therefore against the place of power. Hence, overcoming the 'place of power' implies that one can live in the great totality of signifying relations: workers join hands with workers, and so on. So, strategic political philosophy has a central agenda around which all political aspirations lead: it is the 'unit' or the 'object,' or what we would call a master signifier, or signifier-One. The problem is manifold: first, it is clear that the anarchists complicated the Marxist conception of power. It is a point that Saul Newman once made very clearly: if it were only about removing the place of power then we must have presumed something about the 'real' that is hiding outside of power. In other words, we must rely upon presuppositions, certainties, that the real subject is basically good, social, creative, and so on.

The anarchist challenge to Marxism was at a very early time to suggest that there are multiple 'registers of power.' This was how Todd May put it: multiple nodes or registers of power. It means that there is not a 'unitary analysis,' since that would imply a centralization of the power within the master. Anarchists demonstrated very early that power is not centralized in one location or object (e.g., the state, or the economy). There is also patriarchy, racism, the ideological manipulation of the church, and so on. Finally, we recognize that there are multiple registers of power. At this point we are led toward what Todd May called 'tactical political philosophy,' which is informed by post-structuralism and anarchism. It is a politics oriented by the multiplicitous registers of power rather than one particular location of power. What is interesting to me is that it means that there can always be one more place of power. This is what

much of a rambler. She preferred to solicit the ramblings of the world. I imagine that it could be a soul-crushing position from which to engage with the world. Perhaps what Antigone died of was 'soul murder.' That was the expression used by Schreber, the most cited psychotic in the Freudian field. It was always a matter of her silence, and prolonged silence is, I discovered, an essential ingredient in Greek tragedy. I was just reading about this in some idiotic literature journal: Antigone's silence demonstrated a stubborn refusal of speech – 'full speech' – in relation to the world. It was a stubborn defiance of the world's determinations. Prolonged silence indicates that the subject is not situated within idiot-ology, and that's why I call her a moron.

It is also why I would claim that she doesn't deliver us the ethics of psychoanalysis. She was a figure of profound silence, but this does not mean that she didn't experience the soul-murdering ramblings of the world. The world always went on rambling without any need of her; in fact, she solicited the world to speak in her place. Yet, to be fair, that's what speaking is, anyway. In this case, though, the signifier fills in the place of the subject, a void, a place that should have remained 'empty.' You know, for the earlier Lacan, the subject is split by one signifier for another signifier. This is because, ultimately, the subject is not entirely there in language except through her representation by a signifier, which, in of itself, never touches the real. The signifier never at the real but only at another signifier. Antigone's was a different position than the one demonstrated by the interjections of revolutionary students toward Lacan. Those students attempted to speak in Lacan's place. Whereas Antigone preferred that the world speak in her place, the students preferred to speak in Lacan's place.

Polynieces pleaded with Antigone. He requested that Antigone speak with his father, a father who had gone silent. For her part, Antigone stubbornly refused to speak to the father. She preferred, in fact, to be left alone. Yet, at the same

time, she provided Polynieces precise instructions about how to solicit speech in the father, that is, how to make him speak using an 'abundance of words.' That's her expression: 'abundance of words.' I imagine, when there is an 'abundance of words' coming at you from the world, that most of you would prefer the world to just shut up. It wasn't Antigone's way. Antigone preferred for the world to simply go on rambling without her. We can call this Antigone's *jouissance*. It's not a molotov cocktail tossed onto a burning monk but it has the same effect. Antigone even preferred that others discuss her marital prospects. She preferred to have no say in these matters.

What's more is that she confessed that it would be better for the world to focus on their own concerns. You will remember that this was also Stirner's conviction: 'what is not supposed to be my concern?' Stirner, like Antigone, felt the demands of the world on his shoulders. She likewise asked, why should these be her concerns? In the end, it is a similar question. The solution for both was simply to let them concern themselves with themselves, the world should concern itself with the world. It is a decoupling of the One from the world. Antigone and Stirner decoupled themselves from all of that, preferring to have no part for themselves in the world. The word we have for that process is foreclosure. It would have been different had the world determined them without them even realizing it, which presumes that there is a position of the subject within the totality of his or her signifying relations. In such circumstances, we could discuss ideas like the 'sociological imagination' or 'ideological critique.' This can only occur when one is inside of the world.

And Antigone had no intention to go inside of the world. She really preferred at all times to remain on the outside; outside of the walls of the city, outside of the world. In fact, this position ran in her family. It is the feminine way, and it is the melancholic way. If I am being honest with you, I believe that

our certainty. Hence, the world becomes threatening to the integrity of the singularity. So, we attempt to defend, at all costs, the certainty of a semblant that sustains our fraternal group and that threatens to take away the space of our speech, leaving us, essentially, destitute, homeless. Hence the stubbornness of today's newest social movements testifies more generally to the cancellation of the dwelling space of language and speech. It leads us to a problem: the newest social movements, by practicing tactical political philosophy, cannot seem to escape the pitfalls of the revolution of the One. This expression 'tactical political philosophy' comes out of the post-anarchist political philosophy of Todd May. I should bring our discussion to a close today by speaking a bit about his political framework.

Todd May is against psychoanalysis, as well as the Lacanian tradition. He sees it as being too focused on the individual rather than the collective, which amounts to, I would say, the fraternity. The problem is quite the opposite: the fraternity leaves no space for the subject. It is the fraternity which is individual, without division. In any case, May famously distinguished between three types of political philosophies: 'formal,' 'strategic,' and, his brand, 'tactical.' In a word, according to him, formal political philosophy cleaves stubbornly either to what is or else to what should be. It is a stubborn position because it refuses the tension between what is and what should be, and therefore refuses work in the tension of is or ought. For example: you can focus on preserving the political order as it currently is without concerning oneself at all with what ought to be. Or, perhaps you could go the other way: focus on the political order that ought to exist without recognizing that you must, nonetheless, relate oneself to the world as it actually is. This is how Todd May plots formal politics, in a nutshell.

Strategic political philosophy was thought to be an advancement because there is a concern with the tension between the is and the ought. The problem is that it remains tethered to

suggestive to see how this network, which is symbolic by nature and maintains the image in a degree of stability in interhuman relationships, is necessary so that everything doesn't suddenly reduce to nothing, so that the entire veil of the imaginary relation does not suddenly draw back and disappear in the yawning blackness that Schreber was not so very far away from at the outside.

It goes to show you that the future teachings of Lacan have their way of producing effects precisely in his past teaching.

Let me be straightforward: we used to doubt our knowledge. Consequently, we supposed that there were 'experts' out there (e.g., doctors, police officers, judges, presidents, professors, psychoanalysts). Today there is a general incredulity toward meta-narratives. That is how Lyotard put it. It means that there is an intense suspicion of the world of mastery and of the knowledge generated by constituents of that world. Singularities do not overthrow that world but rather find themselves uncoupled from it. This produces the paradoxical result of an ever more cruel, disgusting, and insulting world. The problem shifts into another register: for example, we have not become 'post-patriarchal,' as some suggest today; rather, we have displaced the 'symbolic patriarchy' into a 'real patriarchy.' This is worse! We got out of patriarchy only to experience it in a much more devastating way. Moreover, we have not actually conquered our doubts, we have merely replaced them with certainties and discovered that it is the world that doubts us.

It is a fundamental change. Today, more than ever, the voices that are foregrounded in political and social commentary begin with presuppositions regarding their singular group. It belies a fear of falling into the depths of uncertainty, of losing the space within which we are capable of speaking. The problem is that the world doubts our presuppositions,

we are now in a feminine world. It means that the world has shifted into another register, and we have moved from the 'All' to that of the 'Not-All' as the governing function. The contemporary world is no longer one that would give rise to modern revolutionary aspirations. Rather, we are in a world of revolutionary impulses that are capable of outliving the subject, threatening the subject: it is a world of particular affirmations of jouissance. The problem is not therefore 'how do we instigate a revolution?,' 'how can we overthrow the world of mastery?,' but rather: 'how can we sustain a space for ourselves in a world without burning ourselves alive?' It is why I claim that the psychoanalyst is not exclusively a product of revolutionary aspirations nor of revolutionary impulses. The revolution that is at stake in the formation of a psychoanalyst is something different.

Shortly after concluding our seminar last week I reread an important passage from a pivotal text by Jacques-Alain Miller, titled "The Turin Theory of the Subject of the School." I wasn't looking for anything in particular. But a sentence jumped out at me. Maybe it's better to say that it floated above the page like a bubble. I don't have the quotation with me, but what I remember was that he pointed at Antigone's 'act.' He reminded us that she was ultimately situated beyond the laws of the world. And then he claimed that at some point she must have met up with the object 'cause' of her desire, objet petit a. Beyond the world of mastery, she meets up with the truth, the hysteric's truth; and, in that place, she would have found out that she was not-at-all made for the world. Or, rather, the world was not the place for her. Hence, in this case, Antigone, the 'beautiful soul' of Greek tragedy, who is also often thought to be the exemplary subject of hysteria, went beyond the bar of her truth. For Lacan, at one point, he constructed a formula of hysteria, the 'hysteric's discourse:'

\$ → S1

-- --

a S2

Agent → Other

Truth Product

There is a barrier between the objet petit a, which is in the position of unconscious truth, and the agent of her discourse, her own victimization, s-barred, \$. So, for Antigone (it is a really technical point) the s-barred, \$, meets up with the truth, objet petit a. It means that the truth of the hysteric's discourse is, in a word: the real, jouissance. We could write it out like this: \$->a. That makes it look a bit like the 'matheme of fantasy,' which, for Lacan, was \$<>a. This is precisely what the hysteric would have surpassed in her act: the fantasy, which is a separation from the real of jouissance. This traversal of the fundamental fantasy is, for many Lacanians, an important and revolutionary moment because it involves a transgression beyond the governing fantasmatic frame that sustains the position of the hysteric. There was even a time when psychoanalysts believed that this revolution would lead the hysteric toward the analyst's position. Some people still believe that psychoanalysts believe this. It is not my position. A traversal of the fantasy is no guarantee that there is before you a psychoanalyst. A different revolution is at stake. However, the point is that the hysteric's crossing beyond the bar, into the position of her truth, implies a passage toward objet petit a. This could mean that it is a passage to the position of the real, that is, either as waste or as One, which means, as a bubble floating above the pages of the world.

I'm sorry for all of the technical details today. I'm doing it so that I can try to clear away some of the noise that keeps

periences the world as a truly threatening place. The signifier no longer represents the group but rather triggers the group.

This was Lacan's early definition of foreclosure, taken from his third seminar: what gets rejected from the symbolic, namely castration, returns in the real. It came from Freud's discussion of psychosis: what is rejected returns from without. What is outside of the singularity becomes quite precisely a potential source of trauma or insult for everything inside the singularity. This is what the principle of fraternity entails (I will quote Lacan):

Fraternity is founded on segregation. No fraternity is conceivable, has even the slightest foundation [...] except through the fact that people are isolated together, isolated from the rest [...].

We could have said: '... isolated from the world.' This quotation comes from the later teaching of Lacan, but, already in the third seminar there was an interest in the concept of fraternity among the psychotic figure of Schreber, whose earliest manifestation of psychosis was perhaps melancholic. Lacan focused on Schreber's 'soul murder,' citing a 'soul fragment,' which might have later been referred to as a semblant, or, why not, a 'spook.' The semblant was established by Schreber by way of a fraternity named "The brother's of Cassiopeia." I will quote a long passage from Lacan's third seminar:

A soul fragment thus ties itself on somewhere. Cassiopeia, the brothers of Cassiopeia, play a major role here. [...] It is the name of a student confederation from the time of Schreber's studies. An attachment to such a fraternity, whose narcissitic, even homosexual, character is brought out in the analysis, is moreover a characteristic mark of Schreber's imaginary antecedents. It is

nant principle of our world. Lacan warned us about this when he spoke about the rise of 'fraternities,' which are societies of 'brothers' and 'comrades.' They come after the weakening of the paternal metaphor, the weakening of the organizational capacity of the 'name-of-the-father.' This rise of the logic of autonomy, voluntary association, characteristic of the newest social movements can be quite accurately described as being predicated upon a more primordial logic of 'segregation.' I remember it quite clearly, when I was at Queen's University organizing with the revolutionary anarchist students. These were fraternal activities. The principle of 'voluntary association' was taken very seriously by most of them, and used, precisely, as a means of 'segregation.'

I even remember pointing out to them that it seemed to be an easy way to justify segregation from 'people of color.' I was quite moronic at the time. So I said: 'what stops you from voluntarily associating only with men, implicitly excluding women?' You could say, simply: 'voluntary association, it is freedom! I'm not excluding anybody, I'm just freely choosing who to include.' Of course, racism has a very particular meaning, but for Lacan it took on a characteristic logic of our time. We can call it 'Lacanian racism,' or, as Eric Laurent put it: 'racism 2.0.' It is not 'reverse racism' but rather a logic of 'segregation' that inevitably occurs among singularities. When they spit out antagonisms, ruptures, fissures, constitutive lack, and so on, so that nothing is lacking from within the group, there is a segregation from the world. The singularity segregates itself from the world, and from other singularities whose jouissance is insulting or traumatizing to them. When castration is not accepted, when foreclosure is generalized, the split which would have made internal relations difficult and produced aspirations of overcoming them, gets rejected. It returns with a vengeance from without, outside of the singularity, from the real. Suddenly, because castration shifts into the real, one ex-

me from orienting myself on this question of the melancholic's revolutionary impulse (as opposed to the hysteric's revolutionary aspirations). However, now, it seems to me, there is also a third term: the revolution of psychoanalysis, which is the revolution that makes One a psychoanalyst. So, I need to turn my attention to the technical concepts that were tripping us up last week. I realize that we tend to use these concepts interchangeably. There is even a good reason for it: in Lacan's late teaching, many of these concepts were similar, perhaps grouped under the heading of *semblant*. *Semblant* was a concept that meant 'stand-in' or 'substitute object.' Russell Grigg reminded us a few years ago that during Lacan's late teaching the concept of *semblant* meant almost anything. For Grigg this was a problem. I'm less convinced that it's a problem. I see it as a clearing. What it demonstrates is that the Other, as such, became much more important, in relation to the One. *Semblant*, then, was what would be there as a means of forming a couple with the Other. Hence, in using the concept, quickly, we deprioritize the concepts of *objet petit a*, lack, nothing, and so many other concepts – even *phallus* and *non-du-pere*.

So, it serves a function. It produces a clearing. And every now and then that's what we need to do so that these concepts do not get routinized and reified; so that we can continue to think about the contemporary condition with fresh attention, which means, with the attitude of a stupid person. However, this point won't keep me, today, from wasting a lot of your time by saying some words about these concepts that tripped us up. It is my way of addressing the discussion that happened last week, particularly between Volkan and Mark. The concepts that tripped us up a bit were lack, hole, nothing, void, and *objet petit a*. Why don't we begin with the most well-known concept: lack. Already I can sense the relief that some of you feel now that you've heard this concept, lack. It is odd when 'lack' is viewed as a comfort, but that's how it is sometimes. Some people have presumed that it's the central concept in Lacan's

teaching, even going on to pronounce, as if it were clever, lack-on. It doesn't surprise me. For my part, I think that Lacan was more of a con, or la-con, which, in French, means 'the cunt.' In any case, people feel attuned to this concept, 'lack,' even those at the outermost peripherals of psychoanalytic circles. It's especially true for those in the university. There was even a popular article, as well as an edited collection, that was making it rounds several years ago, which introduced—no, presupposed—a distinction between what they named 'philosophies of immanence or abundance,' to which we might include the exemplary work of Deleuze, Bataille, Spinoza, and others, and, on the other hand, 'philosophies of lack or constitutive lack,' which includes Lacan, as alone as he ever was.

It's a moronic distinction. It's not clear to me that beginning from within the philosophical position orients us very well in Lacan's teaching. It is also not clear to me that 'lack' is a foundational concept of psychoanalysis for Lacan. If we return to the seminar titled "The Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis" then we can see what the four fundamental concepts were: the unconscious, desire, repetition, and transference. Lack was not one of the fundamental concepts. However, there is the unconscious, which, from the French, might even be pronounced *une-conscious*, the One, unsubscribed from the unconscious. It's not all word play, don't worry. When it comes to matters of the One there can be no funny business! In any case, this seminar, on the fundamental concepts, also serves as a reminder that 'repetition' and 'transference' were conceptually distinct. Transference was not a particularly revolutionary category for Lacan. Repetition wasn't meant to be the key for thinking about the transference. Rather, repetition is at stake in the drive. It implies a revolution of the One, without transference.

For some reason I opened up the question of the objet petit a and the void last week. Maybe it was a mistake. Because now we are in the middle of some very technical stuff. Maybe

impulses are neither reducible to aspirations toward the future nor are they merely in the 'here and now.' Rather, they come to us from the future. Melancholia is a view from the future. I gave a lecture on this a few weeks ago so I won't repeat all of my reasoning today. However, I will add that revolutionary aspirations are a view toward an impossible future. In any case, I return to my thread. Autonomous organizations are meant to exist outside of the logic of totality, outside of the 'all,' and hence, as a view from the future. Anarchists pride themselves often on suggesting that they have at least one foot in the future. They prefigure the future they would like to see, here and now.

What is also surprising to me is that Richard J. F. Day described his autonomous logic as being a 'revolutionary impulse.' It is just a coincidence, but a convenient one. I'll share a quote from his book: "[t]he radical impulse of post-1968 French theory [was] the impulse to create alternatives to the state and corporate forms rather than just work within them." Once again, it is not a call to go outside but rather a call from the outside. It is for this reason that I claim that autonomy is the work of radical homelessness. How can the autonomous movement grow in influence if not without finding a means to not be without a world, that is, to write a book or enter a lecture hall to remind everybody that they must go outside. It is only during moments of particular lucidity that these 'alternatives' presume themselves to be independent of the world of mastery. The problem is that the contemporary world is also increasingly independent of the world of mastery, which doesn't mean that this world is inhabitable.

It also doesn't mean that fascism and tyranny do not exist, or that we do not have in our midst dangerous new forms of radical authoritarianism across all corners of the globe. It just means that they function according to a different, more singular, and hence more cunning, logic. Perhaps, to provoke you, I will claim that the logic of 'autonomy' has become the domi-

coming communities,' a phrase borrowed from Giorgio Agamben. How are these ones-all-alone organized? He used the anarchist and autonomous Marxist language of 'affinity,' 'network,' and 'voluntary association.'

This latter phrase – 'voluntary association' – has been very important for some anarchists, particularly those in the United States of America, but also those in the United Kingdom. It was also an important concept for Benjamin Tucker, Emma Goldman, and who knows how many of the earlier classical anarchists. They insisted upon principles of voluntary associations, voluntary social bonds formed of one's own free motivation. It is different from the alienation described by Marx: where one is forced into social bonds at the workplace not of one's own choosing. It seems to presume, then, a social bond entirely independent of the world of mastery. So: either it is a goal to be achieved and hence an aspiration or else we must presume that it is to be achieved here and now, spontaneously. This raises some problems. If we cannot have a voluntary association until we are prepared for it, that is, until we are capable of forming fair and equal bonds with one another without various strata of mastery or ideology, then it is a revolutionary aspiration. But if you think you can begin in the here and now then you must presume that there are no systems of mastery already in place for those subjects.

Take, for example, the related psychoanalytic concept of 'free association,' one of the golden rules of traditional psychoanalysis. You are told by your psychoanalyst to speak freely in your analytic work with your psychoanalyst. But then, after months or decades you begin to recognize that you had certain unconscious presuppositions that had been motivating all of your speech, and that hadn't yet been interrogated. So, you move into 'full speech,' as Lacan once called it. In the final instance, it is an aspiration, it is based upon free association which, like free speech, is governed by the contours of your linguistic world. It is why I maintain that revolutionary

it won't be of interest to those of you who expect more talk of what you think you know about anarchism. But I can promise you that it's relevant to you. Miller made a point to distinguish between void and nothing, and so did Lacan. Yet Miller seemed a bit confused by the distinction. He opened the question up to his audience: 'what is the difference between void and nothing?' This is what he asked them. What he gathered from it was that the void has no limits. So, void is limitless, and yet the 'nothing' is limited by its place. For 'nothing,' the limit is the place within which it is situated. So, nothing is limited by its place. Hence, the 'nothing' was for Lacan one of the objet petit a, one of the objects, since the objet petit a, as semblant, is limited by the world. Unless, of course, we transgress those laws. An example of this 'nothing' can be found in Lacan's *Ecrits*. He invites us to suppose ourselves to be looking for a book at the library. It is in the library catalog, it hasn't been checked out, and yet there is nothing in its place on the shelf where we expect to know it to be. That's nothing.

The void is something different, since it is not limited by its place. Suppose for the moment that you expect to find Max Stirner in the world. Well, you won't find him there, except as nothing, as missing from that world. He is not in the library of the world, he is not in the books, he is not on the pages of the books. That is why we can claim that Stirner is nothing within the world. Perhaps you expect to find Sergey Nechayev's secret society or revolutionary 'man' in the world. Both are absent. So they are not in the place we might expect to know them to be found. It's a surprise when that happens. As for the void, it is on the side of *jouissance*. It means that it is on the side of the revolutionary impulse. There is something in the concept of the nothing that nonetheless connects us to the void. Stirner wrote: "I am not nothing in the sense of emptiness, which means 'lack,' but the creative nothing out of which I myself as creator create everything [world]." Lacan actually said something very similar: "the nothing, a hole in the Real, from which the Signifier,

creates the world.” And then Lacan added: “It is the place of deadly jouissance.” The void is on the side of this deadly jouissance, this revolutionary impulse. The revolutionary impulses are linked to the void, then; and, with thanks to ‘nothing,’ a ‘hole’ can be produced into that deadly jouissance.

This is where the three terms come together. There is a lot of work to do on these three terms. I won’t be able to do it today. I have a different agenda. For now, though, we can say that the ‘nothing,’ as an object, produces a hole in the void of jouissance. The ‘nothing’ produces a ‘hole’ in the real, such that, as semblant, nothing functions as if it were a non-du-pere. Miller made this very clear for me: “the name-of-the-father is an instrument, a semblance. It is a signifier as a semblant that has the advantage of allowing us to find ourselves in relation to signifiers and signifieds.” So we can say that without the non-du-pere, there is no hole in the real, and hence, the void becomes limitless and revolutionary. We can therefore situate the place of Stirner’s ‘limitless creativity of jouissance,’ the jouissance out of which he as creator creates a world: it is the revolution of the One, the revolution of the Ego and Its Own, all alone. It is a bit much for some of you to follow, but nothing stops us from going a bit further for today. Miller discussed the void and nothing in relation to hysteria. His claim was that in hysteria there is ‘a passage from void to nothing.’ I really like this expression. It highlights the point that hysteria is also a defense against the real. But Miller did not claim that the passage from ‘void to nothing’ in hysteria is a transgression because that would imply that one goes in the opposite direction: from ‘nothing to void,’ that is, from semblant to real. Put another way, it would imply that one moves beyond the limits of the world of mastery. It’s a key difference.

Hysteria is a defense against the real. So, it is a solution against the revolution of the One. The solution never works out well for the hysteric. This is even how psychoanalysis learned about hysteria in the clinic: through the solution not work-

reminded us that ‘the thing,’ the ‘cause,’ is the real secret. When you make the thing your cause, when you make the cause your own, you become the secret, the enigma, the mystery. But how to live with this unbearable mystery of jouissance?

A Canadian anarchist professor named Richard J. F. Day wrote an incredible book titled Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements. It was an important book for me before I discovered clinical psychoanalysis. I left my hometown and traveled to the other side of Canada to study with him. His work showcases attempts to live beyond revolutionary aspirations. What he named ‘the logic of hegemony’ is in our language the world of the ‘all.’ For him, it is a logic whose political tendencies are oriented by either ‘reform’ or ‘revolution.’ These twin tendencies are traps because they remain within a totalizing principle, the ‘all.’ It is clear to me that the book discovered a secret: how to locate the spaces of the ‘not-all.’ However, it did not offer a way to sustain that space. I can imagine these as melancholic communities, spaces of suicidal ideation. His claim, put simply, was that anarchists discovered an alternative political logic not-at-all trapped within the logic of hegemony. What was his logic? It was a logic beyond the determinations of the world of mastery.

It is a logic of ‘autonomy’ or ‘singularity.’ Those are the words he used. His idea was that the future world could be experienced today, here and now. It was also the position of some of the more peripheral anarchists, including Gustav Landeaur and Hakim Bey. It is a call to experience the future today and to ‘render redundant,’ as he put it, the world of mastery. I never quite understood what it meant to ‘render redundant’ the world ... until I saw the Beneventura Hotel. It is as if the world of mastery would defeat itself if only you allowed it to go on living without you, to go on rambling without you. It is an uncoupling of oneself from the world, the displacement of the subject from the world into the autonomous zones of the ones-all-all. These singular communities are described as ‘the

workers, other women, and so on. This was even the foundation upon which much of the earlier Marxist criticism aimed, particularly before the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts. The subject was thought to be split from the totality of its symbolic relationships. In a word, the subject was represented by one-signifier for another signifier, and this was the price of admission into the Western social order. Freud named 'neurosis' that condition resulting from not accepting the prior mortification of *jouissance*. Neurosis is the inability to live with the consequences of the part that was not-at-all made for civilization.

Neurotics suffered because they cannot live with the consequences of having paid the price, so they went to psychoanalysts to find reprieve from their symptoms. However, singularities have not paid the price from the beginning and therefore have no need of psychoanalysts. They are not in search of any surprises because they already have too-much. But it doesn't stop singularities from forming groups, fraternizing with one another. What some anarchists have referred to as the 'newest social movements' are precisely these singularities: bubbles without castration.

The revolutionary aspirations of modern anarchism have led to a proliferation of relatively autonomous social movements whose confrontation with the master became postponed, or, at the extreme, abandoned. Raymond Williams would have described it as a 'long revolution.' But all revolutions are 'long' when you begin from the position of the slave's aspirations. The slave postpones a confrontation with the master out of fear of death, about which he is certain. This is what begins the long revolution from the standpoint of the slave's revolutionary aspirations. Autonomous social movements demonstrate a problem that exists beyond political representation and the long revolution: *jouissance*. The key problem of these singularities is not 'how can we live without a master' but rather 'how can we live within the mystery?' And in his ethics seminar, Lacan

ing out. We can learn about this other movement, from 'nothing to void,' according to Miller, when hysteric's experience what is called 'depersonalization.' It is a moment when she becomes Other to herself, but in an extreme sense. It happens, then, when she is more-than surprised, that is, when she is shocked! It is not a comfortable feeling when you are surprised too-much. I would say that shock is 'too-much' surprise. While there are some who can't get enough surprises, and so they go in search of them, there are others who get too many surprises in life. In any case, the movement from nothing to void is difficult to visualize at the conceptual level. This is why Lacan favored topology. In his 'ethics seminar,' he discussed – like Heidegger before him – the simple topology of a vase.

For Lacan, the vase was perhaps the first signifier. It was a signifier fabricated in such a way as to construct a space missing. Lacan said that the vase "introduces the possibility of filling it." It led him to claim that "it is on the basis of the fabricated signifier, this vase, that emptiness and fullness as such enter the world." You can even, if you like, exchange the words "empty" and "full" for "inside" and "outside." The hysteric goes "inside" only to demand that you go "outside." That's what the hysterics demanded of Lacan, after 1968. But it was also what we heard as demands from those who stormed the American White House with their confederate flags not so long ago. It serves as a reminder that those who occupy this position are not only anarchists, and that revolutionaries are diverse, the revolutionary aspiration offers no guarantee of the world you might imagine for yourself. Lacan went on: "if the vase may be filled, it is because in the first place, in its essence, it is empty. And it is exactly in the same sense that speech may be full or empty." It forces a return to what I said at the beginning, last week, about empty and full speech. You cannot be surprised enough unless you have a vase, and with it, a world.

Incidentally, the person who writes so well about melancholia, the one who introduced this expression 'depressive re-

alism,' as well as its theory, long before I began to think about it, namely Julie Reshe, recently found some flowers outside. To me they looked a bit morbid. They are nonetheless beautiful, in their way. Especially when they are placed inside of the nice little vase that she found for them. She always seems to find a vase for her dark flowers and colorless plants. Some of these flowers populate the sides of the roads in Ireland. They are called "speedwells," I learned. It sounds almost like 'speak-well.' I suppose that it's not that far from it, in fact. However, I prefer my coffee mug to a vase, because, topologically speaking, a coffee mug has a hole, whereas a vase, from the standpoint of topology, doesn't. The coffee mug has a hole, and you can place your finger through it like a wedding ring. But the vase does not have a hole. Anyway, look at the time: I'll continue forward just a bit more.

What I wanted to say today is simply that when we speak of the One, we are speaking of that part of *jouissance* that has not been subjected to the non-du-pere. This means that it is the part of *jouissance* which was not prohibited by the signifier. Furthermore, it means that it is the part of *jouissance* that is not-all to the world, and which, because of that, may also be taken on its own, independent of that world and any of the laws that might attempt to govern or master it. Hence, to summarize this long detour that brought me to these final thoughts for today, I would say the following: revolutionary aspirations have to do with the world of mastery, and the attempt to transgress beyond those laws. It is a world of *jouissance* that has been negatized by the signifier, so that the subject can emerge along the differential network of signifiers as s-barred. In such cases, the subject is split: the subject is represented by a signifier for another signifier. Okay, but revolutionary impulses have to do with what subsists, without negatization by any non-du-pere, that is, what repeats, as a bubble, as One, of *jouissance*.

Finally, we can say that we are ultimately interested in the One and World. If we are to advance any further as

with the consequences of the revolutionary impulses' without in the process producing a device that would bury the subject in his or her own revolutionary impulses. In any case, there is more to say about these 'newest social movements,' which are not at all the stuff of psychoanalytic 'groups.'

I have named these newest social movements, these fraternities, 'singularities.' We can trace a history of the emergence of singularities in the Western world. Many have done so, in each their own way and with each their own assessment of the consequences. Most have claimed that the transition began in the last part of the 1960s or in the early 1970s. Slavoj Žižek took his bearings from Lacan and described the transition as a being characterized by a 'decline of symbolic efficiency.' It means that the function of the name-of-the-father, as master signifier, weakened, no longer being the lynchpin of Western social bonds. There have been an assortment of names to describe this new logic: 'post-patriarchal,' 'neoliberal,' 'postmodern,' 'postmodern capitalism,' 'liquid modernity,' 'risk society,' 'the society of the spectacle,' 'prosumer capitalism,' and so on. Each position constructs a narrative for itself concerning the mortification of the master signifier as the lynchpin of the social bond. In other words, these narratives concern the mortification of the place of power, which is the signifier. The traditional way of thinking about this was to claim that a master signifier would have prohibited *jouissance*, which means that it would have negated *jouissance*. Admittedly, Lacanians discovered that there was always this bit of surplus *jouissance*, this residue of positive *jouissance* that could not be negated.

Finally, not-all of it would have been negated. We can say that *jouissance* is therefore the source of a certain toxic positivity. There is a positivity to *jouissance* because at its root it refuses to be relinquished, negated. The subject, by accepting the prohibition of *jouissance*, would have emerged split from within the totality of its social relations, split from its cause. For example, the subject would have been split off from other

disjointed from the world. This is why it is necessary to speak of anarchist social movements.

Lacan had a name for these ‘newest social movements:’ ‘fraternities.’ A few weeks ago I gave a lecture to a different audience where I tried to convince some people that Althusser’s logic of ideological interpellation was actually a way of ‘fraternizing’ with police officers, rather than subjection to a symbolic master, splitting the subject. It helped me to explain Althusser’s melancholia. In any case, Lacan was, in fact, a bit of a sociologist, perhaps more sociological than sociologists themselves, and he was even a scholar of the newest social movements. What he named ‘fraternities’ were a group orientation. Psychoanalysts have always been suspicious of groups, but that doesn’t mean that we are incapable of working alongside one another – even if it proves difficult. After all, the group is also a subject. Psychoanalysts have a different orientation to the group, a position closer to Max Stirner’s ‘union of egoists’ but not reducible to it. It is close also to the anarchist logic of the ‘affinity group.’ Except Lacan called his ‘affinity group’ a ‘cartel.’ However, there are key differences between an ‘affinity group’ and a ‘cartel.’

The ‘cartel’ does not pretend to eradicate the place of power. Rather, it effects a separation of knowledge and power. We can see this clearly in the function of the ‘plus one’ in the psychoanalytic cartel. The ‘plus one’ is not a place of representation. Quite the opposite. The ‘plus one’ of the psychoanalytic ‘cartel’ is a place of ‘hystericization,’ a place that functions to disrupt the group effects that lead us toward either ‘hierarchy’ or else ‘fraternity.’ This is how I read the cartel as a group. The cartel, which is an ‘organ’ of the psychoanalytic School, was capable of producing what anarchists have never been capable of producing: a group that is anti-authoritarian, anti-representation, but also anti-fraternity, and yet, for all that, without killing the world or the space that would house the loneliness of the subject. The cartel is an answer to the question: ‘how can we live

post-anarchists then we should concern ourselves with the revolutions of the One. The revolution of the One exists under the thesis of ‘generalized foreclosure.’ We can say that where the world ceases to exist there is One. This is precisely how Lacan put it in his seminar “... Or Worse,” whose title could be read as: “the Master ... or Worse.” He said that where the ‘world,’ that is, the big Other, ceases to exist, there exists, instead, the One. And there really is a difficult revolution at stake here. I quote Miller: “[T]he repetition of the One commemorates an unforgettable irruption of jouissance. The subject finds himself bound to a cycle of repetitions [...]. This repetition of jouissance takes place outside of meaning, and we complain about it.”

When we speak of revolutions of the One there is no reason to discuss lack, because, quite precisely, lack is lacking. There is a question of semblances, finally. The semblant is auto-non-mous from the real, and it involves, for the speaking-being, a modality of dupery. In relation to ‘semblant,’ one can be an idiot or a moron. However, I choose stupidity.

I’ll stop.

Singularities, Fraternities, and the Newest Social Movements

I hope that I won’t disappoint you too much today. I know that some of you have been participating in these seminars because you’ve been expecting a more explicit (and perhaps pointed) discussion about anarchism. In fact, I have a plan for today that involves speaking more directly on the topic. However, I want to first provide you with a broad overview of some of the discoveries that I’ve made during the last two sessions. I began the first day by claiming that there is some melancholia in each one of us. However, ‘some’ is already ‘too-much.’ We cannot seem to relinquish this ‘too-muchness.’ It led to a fur-

ther claim that there is another revolution at stake in melancholia, other than the one frequently discussed within modern anarchist discourses. Incidentally, if I have been defending this concept of 'revolution' then it is because, quite precisely, it is a Lacanian concept. Perhaps it is even one of the fundamental concepts, since it implies a logic of 'repetition.' What I discovered was that Lacan's definition of 'revolution' was synonymous at one time with his definition of the 'real,' namely 'that which always returns to its place.'

I was led to think about a revolution that does not have its point of departure within the world of mastery. When we speak of these sorts of revolutions we are in essence returning to the Freudian theory of 'death drive.' Moreover, we are broaching it as a logic of 'repetition' and 'fixation,' the latter being another term for 'stubbornness.' Hence, we've spoken of the stubbornness of Antigone and Stirner. It permitted me to separate 'revolutionary aspirations' from 'revolutionary impulses.' Anarchists haven't spoken very well about 'revolutionary impulses' within anarchism because, frankly, they've always been enigmatic to the anarchists themselves. Put simply, the enigmatic impulses demonstrate that revolutions can outlive the subject. Moreover, they show us that it is not necessary, at this level, to raise questions about 'representation.' Although modern anarchists were concerned with epistemic and political representation, revolutionary impulses open us up to another problem: there are revolutions which repeat without any representation.

It was a different point of departure than those of the 'revolutionary aspirations,' which seek to transgress the laws of the world of mastery and to challenge its modes of epistemic and political representation. We see it clearly with the hysteric's discourse: the split-subject stages a confrontation with the master signifier, the anchoring principle of the world. Lacan's claim was that the signifier represents the subject for another signifier. The agent of the hysteric's discourse, the split

on. You wake up only to find yourself repeating the nightmare again.

I would say that it is only by permitting yourself to be a dupe, by believing in the semblant, or in what Stirner named a 'spook,' that you are capable of producing a hole in jouissance. Otherwise the hole turns on the symbolic such that a hole occurs on the very space that would have housed the signifier, in which case one wouldn't have a home with holes but a hole in the place of a home. So, it is a vase without a home. The revolutions of the One, which involve repetitions not-at-all in the world, are revolutions that occur without a home. So the key question is this: how can one speak when there is a housing crisis? Anarchists might propose that you squat the homes of oligarchs and masters but it will not solve the problem. You only move into the space of mastery, demonstrating, for the time being, that you can pretend to be the king of the castle. I begin from a different perspective, with the presumption that we all have some homelessness within ourselves. And even some homelessness is 'too-much.' Therefore, even a king who believes that he has a castle is homeless.

I said something last week that made some of you uncomfortable. I'm not necessarily concerned. You know, I can't exactly be 'canceled' because Russia already canceled me. I take this very clever point from Julie who said in a recent interview that Russia has been trying to 'cancel' Ukraine. However, I've already been 'canceled.' It is why I am giving this lecture to you from a bedroom that is not my own. I am in a period of homelessness. Yet, for all that I would claim that I am not without a home. I do have access to this bedroom, and access to this home, which provides me with certain luxuries, despite the circumstances. Anyway, the uncomfortable claim that I made was that we moved from the 'all-world' to the 'not-all world,' which are two different governing principles. Finally, it is a shift into a feminine world. It's not exactly good news. It means, for example, that our social movements have become like bubbles

The film is about the horror of getting outside of the cube once you are found mysteriously inside of it. You can't seem to find a way out. The students at the aforementioned university have even given wonderful presentations showcasing the similarities between the 'hypercube' of the film and the actual world of the School of Advanced Studies, University of Tyumen. What fascinated me was that one could only ever find a way outside of the hypercube, in the film, through mathematics, through formulae, and so on. It is a way to break through the verbosity of knowledge in order to arrive at a hard kernel, what Lacan called the 'letter.' It is a point of convergence between the real and the symbolic; a pact, something like a quilting point against the terror of not having an 'inside' or an 'outside.' It is a point that we can explore another time. For now, the point is simply that when there is no hole you experience the world as if it were a vase rather than a torus. Finally, when you live in that sort of nightmare you might have a vase but that doesn't mean that you have a home.

As I see it, one of the fundamental problems in the West began several decades ago, roughly corresponding with a transitional moment in its social history, has been radical homelessness. There is even a dimension of radical homelessness at play in Freud's essay on the *unheimlich*. It seems to me that the 'double' appears there often as something in the real that was foreclosed in the symbolic. Hence, the dolls whose eyes feel threatening to children, the sandman delusions, and so on, occur when the signifier does not castrate, but the real does. In any case, there are more than enough vases in the world today. I am reminded, suddenly, that you can find some vases inside of the Kabbah in Mecca, God's home, giving the impression that the congregations there, the *umma*, are circumambulating not around the home but rather around the vases. The vases are nested inside of the Kabbah, and the revolutions there keep you spinning, returning to the same place. In any case, a nightmare is a disc, or a navel of the dream-house, and it goes on and

or barred subject – I did not say the 'buried subject,' because that would bring us back to melancholia – is symbolically torn by signifiers. The impulses do not partake in this logic because the subject is not-at-all split by a master signifier at that level; so there are no pitfalls of representation. It's a worse situation!: the subject is set ablaze by the cold flame, a black flame, of revolution: *jouissance*. Lacan said: "the flame is the real [and it] sets fire to everything. But it's a cold flame. There is no limit to the high temperatures one may imagine." It reminds me of a point made by Russell Grigg: the real trauma of *jouissance* occurs as a consequence of enigmatic status; an enigma outside of the pitfalls of representation.

There is a shift: from a subject torn at either end by signifiers toward One which is not torn by signifiers. The One is a bubble, a bubble of *jouissance*, not barred by any signifier. Put simply: there is, on the one hand, a split-subject, and there is, on the other hand, a subject without splitting. It implies that there are different subjects at stake in the 'aspirations' and in the 'impulses.' On the one hand, there is the subject split by signifiers whose truth might be revealed as being implicated in the totality of the signifying system, and, on the other hand, there is the speaking-being taken outside of that totality, what Lacan named the *parletre*. The *parletre* is a being who speaks, yes, but with its *jouissance*. She is not torn apart from within by signifiers of the symbolic, which doesn't mean that there isn't a traumatic encounter with the signifier. The point is that our point of departure changes: we no longer begin from the victimized or split subject of representation but rather from the tragically triumphant subject of enjoyment, the *parletre*. It is also a movement from suffering to trauma. I make a distinction then: the split-subject suffers but the *parletre* is traumatized.

It is why I have found that a vase is a much more interesting object than a coffee cup. There is something quite remarkable about the practice of placing dead flowers into a vase. Maybe every psychoanalyst should have dead flowers in a vase placed

onto the bookshelves or desks in their consulting rooms to remind them of this point. For every consulting room, as for every home, a vase. Why? Well, remember that a vase is not a coffee cup. That really makes a difference. When the subject is not split then it means that there is no home for that subject as a speaking-being in the world. It doesn't mean that it cannot be without a home, since not being without a home is quite different from being homeless as well as having a home. Julie reminded us last week that the *unheimlich*, variously translated as 'uncanny' or 'unhomely,' for Freud, but also for Heidegger, is, basically, a topological device. She said that the vase is like a home. It is brilliant. It is why I would claim that Julie is a vase to me. In any case, during this commentary she reminded us that a home has holes. I find it interesting because today there are more vases than homes in the world. But from the standpoint of topology a vase does not have any holes. This is why the vase is closer to the Buenaventura Hotel than a home; remember that Fredric Jameson described the hotel in his essay on postmodern ideology. In any case, with the Beneventura Hotel, like the vase, you do not know if it is possible to enter the space, or leave it.

Where is the inside and where is the outside? Is the distinction traceable at the level of structure? It is fascinating to me, because, for example, we are told that postmodern architecture is produced in such a way that it reflects the world back at itself. On a sunny day, or even during the evening, you cannot see the hotel because it reflects the world back at you. Finally, there is only the world, which overtakes the hotel, such that there is only 'world.' I can imagine that the Buenaventura Hotel disappears into the world like Antigone disappeared into the world: that is why, ultimately, it is a piece of melancholic architecture. In any case, if you play with the surface of a vase, melting down the surfaces while retaining all 'thru-holes,' it becomes reducible to a disc or a sphere. Finally, it becomes a ball: a surface without a hole, One. It is not like my coffee cup be-

cause there is a little space for your finger on the side and this means that it can be reduced to a donut or a torus, which has a hole. That is the difference between a vase and a coffee cup: 'no-hole' and 'hole.' It is also the difference between, on the one hand, my childhood home, which has a front door that can bring you, without any obstructions, right out the back door, and, on the other hand, the Buenaventura Hotel.

I apologize for the tangent, but I have something else to say about melancholic architecture. While working in Russia as a professor at the School of Advanced Studies, University of Tyumen, I remember having dreams about being trapped inside of the campus building. I'm not sure that it was a dream. In fact, it was a nightmare, which means, precisely, that I wasn't dreaming. Most of the people who worked there felt the same way. We would talk privately about how we would each wake up in the middle of the night and check our emails and text messages to be sure that we didn't miss a request from the institution. So, it was a nightmare. The building was designed in such a way that you never really feel outside of it, and yet, upon entering it, you feel endlessly reflected back outside: you are not wanted by this building or by this school. We couldn't leave the fucking place, even though it took a grueling few weeks of proving oneself in initiations, "project design sessions," as they called them, which are really just hazing rituals, just to get 'inside,' to get hired. Even when we left, tried to go outside, due to the war, fleeing Russia because of the war, the building and some of its people followed us around like a bad nightmare: taunting us, provoking my family on social media, and so on. Well, I learned that the building design was inspired by another one, from Moscow City, a part of the infamous Skokovo campus, named 'the hypercube.' Perhaps it was designed by the same architect. Anyway, if you are Canadian then you no doubt recognize this word 'hypercube' because it was also the name of a popular horror film franchise.