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Meditations of the Socialist Dream: Psychoanalysis, Psychology, and the Political Organization of a Discipline

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Abstract *Many Marxists have argued that social organization is that by which practical and theoretical problems are mediated. It becomes clear that this is not only true of strictly political problems when looking at the history of the Canadian Psychological Association in the context of a general history of the creation of psychology as a discipline. Professional associations act as means of differentiating one discipline from another, of determining its objects of knowledge, and securing markets for its products. Organizational questions are thus not secondary for the theories and practices of psychology, but something to be kept constantly in view. Knowing this to be so it becomes imperative to critique the governing principles of these bodies. In this paper this is done with reference to professional ethics. Where in Canada these are clearly a liberal, rather than socialist, discourse, psychoanalysis is evoked for a suggestive alternative. Turning to the work of Fenichel and Lacan, it is possible to forefront the relation between theory, practice, and the aims of psychology as the relationship between people rather than as one between subjects and objects. The implication of this assertion is the need to reorganize professional associations in line with the needs of human interaction rather than market imperatives.*

Organization is the form of the mediation between theory and practice. And, as in every dialectical relationship, the terms of the relation only acquire concreteness and reality in and by virtue of this mediation (Lukács, 1971: p. 299).

There's absolutely no reason why we should make ourselves the guarantors of the bourgeois dream (Lacan, 1997: p. 303).

I begin with these two quotes – one from a practicing Marxist, the other from a practicing psychoanalyst – as a way to articulate a thesis: It is not merely a question of how a patient is treated or cured, or of the theory that informs what is done in the clinical setting; It is also very much a question of how the profession and therefore the psychological disciplines are organized. The question of organization is precisely the question that helps properly formulate these other two. This is so because it is tightly tied to the problem of ends. It's tied to the problem of *political* ends.

To elaborate this thesis I first attempt to establish that the ends of psychological practice are indeed political, that they do not involve merely the individual but also the individual's constitution through their social world. This is followed by a discussion of the work of German psychoanalyst Otto Fenichel and his suggestion

that psychoanalysis could serve as a basis for the creation of a dialectical materialist psychology – not as a replacement of other psychological practices, but as a means to explain their effectiveness and their relation to society at large. I critique his position for leaving out a discussion of how the prevention of neuroses could be achieved via the practice of psychoanalysis, of how the clinic and the rest of the social world might be mediated in such a way to effect each other. As a means to elaborate how this might be the case, the history of the Canadian Psychological Association is briefly discussed to show that the way the discipline of psychology is organized at the national level in Canada affects what the discipline is and how it is practiced. I rely largely on the work of John Dunbar, in which he suggests the introduction of the CPA's *Code of Ethics* in 1977 transformed the CPA and what it meant to be a psychologist in Canada. While acknowledging some of the progressive elements of this development, I critique it for its limitations. Based as it is in the discourse of human rights the CPA's *Code* does introduce the question of the social role of psychology into the practice of the profession; without acknowledging the limits of this liberal discourse, however, and the way it is put into practice, these rights can never actually be achieved.

Knowing that the organization of the discipline affects what it is and how it is practiced, and that there are real political limits to

the efficacy of liberal forms, I consider a potential Marxist alternative to the question of organization and the outcomes of psychological practice. Here I turn to the work of French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. It was Lacan's contention, made with reference to the thought of Marx, that the ends of analysis were not to integrate people into the bourgeois world and help them achieve the 'American dream', but to have them confront the truth of their existence. The end of the analytic treatment was thus, for Lacan, the creation not only of an individual who did not rely on the 'big Other' to furnish the elements of the 'good life', but also thereby another psychoanalyst who would work to help others achieve the same approach to the world. The end of analysis was thus the creation of a new sort of individual *and* a new sort of community. This is evident not just in Lacan's theory, but also the history of his tussles with the psychoanalytic associations of his day. All of this suggests that an alternative to liberal-democratic organization is possible and worth serious consideration when discussing the practical and theoretical issues that arise in the psychological disciplines.

Psychoanalysis, Psychology, War, and Politics

To assert that the ends of any psychological endeavour are political is not something particularly new. This is most clearly discernible in relation to war: in an Austrian court During the First World War Freud testified against the nationalist commitment of army doctors whose analyses were used as a means to send soldiers back to the front or deny them their pensions. Freud wrote that in this way 'medicine was serving purposes foreign to its essence.'¹ That is, rather than helping soldiers – who today might be diagnosed with PTSD – overcome their traumas, German and Austro-Hungarian army psychologists 'aimed above all, at restoring his [the soldier's] fitness for service.' In the hands of the state the psychologist becomes a weapon: '[T]he physicians were put into a role like that of machine guns behind the front, of driving fugitives back' (Freud in Brunner, 2000, p. 311).

In another better known example, French psychiatrist Frantz Fanon offered analyses of colonialism that didn't separate the questions of political domination, liberation and the psyche, but articulated them as a complex whole. In his *Wretched of the Earth*, for example, his treatment of France's colonization of Algeria culminates in a discussion of its psychological effects in terms of both the colonized and the agents of colonization. It was his contention that the task set for the psychiatric institutions that proliferated with the colonial project in Algeria – the task of 'making him [the colonized subject] thoroughly fit into a social environment of the colonial type' – was 'difficult' because the colonial project reduced the colonized population to objects, to a humanless part of the environment that was no different from

1 Freud's testimony makes it clear that this essence is some form of liberal humanism. This will be problematized later in this paper when the discourse of human rights is discussed.

land or camel (Fanon, 2004: p. 181-2). The answer to curing the psychological afflictions wrought by colonialism was thus not simply psychiatry or psychoanalysis, but revolution and the overthrow of the European occupier. This was not just Fanon's analysis – in the course of his work he joined the national liberation movement. (For a short overview of Fanon and some of his contemporaries, see Hook, 2005; see also Teo, 2005).

More recently, an American psychoanalyst attempted to organize against the unethical involvement of members of the American Psychological Association (APA) in the ongoing torture of political prisoners at Guantanamo Bay. He reported that psychologists are there being used not to ensure that prisoners are being properly treated, but aiding in the torture of detainees. Here the question of organization starts to become clear: while the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association publicly urged its members to refuse to do such work, the APA fought to protect its members' ability to participate in such matters of 'national security' (Summers, 2007). As a result, the Pentagon reported a preference for members of the APA for its interrogations (Soldz, 2007).²

In a related and uncanny example – uncanny in that it stands as an inverted image of the myriad attempts of Marxists, psychologists and psychoanalysts to bring the two together – Naomi Klein (2008) argues that the work done by American psychologist Ewen Cameron at McGill University in Montreal became the psychological backbone of American economic and military imperialism. In her account, the psychology pioneered by Cameron and used by the CIA is homologous to the logic underlying the neoliberal economic theories of the likes of Volker: raze the economy, raze the individual, and rebuild them to your liking. She outlines how the US has used this vicious method – what she calls the 'shock doctrine' – all over the planet, from Eastern Europe to South America to the Middle East.

But the politics of the psychological disciplines are not limited to its relationship to colonialism, imperial projects and war: Morawski (1982) discusses how some of psychology's early practitioners and theorists – G. Stanley Hall, Hugo Münsterberg, and John B. Watson in particular – saw their work as consistent with and part of a larger project to transform their own societies. It is only more recently that psychology's political role has been neglected. Speaking of this forgetfulness in relation to post-modernism and the rise of evolutionary biology, Conway (2010) explores the political economy of psychology to explain the turn away from an understanding of the social etiology of psychological disorders (i.e. poverty). He concludes that it is in part the result of governments' unwillingness to see the social depth of the problem coupled with drug companies' interests in selling a cheaper, alternative individualist solution (i.e. medication) that

2 For an interesting take on the relationship of psychology and torture, see De Vos (2011).

allows it to be avoided in practice.

Further in this vein, in his discussion of the historical roots of psychology Danziger (1990) shows that the discipline's pretensions to scientism disguise its social nature and genesis. Danziger argues that psychology's roots in philosophy and its search for the causal mechanisms behind individual human psychology (as seen in Wundt's Leipzig laboratory) were displaced by functionalism and statistical analysis of aggregates abstracted from social reality in part because of the demands of the capitalist market: The development of statistical methods and their adoption by psychologists enabled them to 'convince their publics that they represented the sacred spirit of Science' (p. 119), publics which in the 1920s in the United States were administrators who were looking for means of social control. In particular, this trend took hold in relation to education, which people in power wanted to transform in order to meet the needs of a burgeoning corporate industrialism. One of the major effects of this, according to Danziger, is that what were initially taken to be 'participants' in psychological inquiry quickly became 'subjects' – passive elements upon which the psychologist (experimental or otherwise) acted. This has had effects on psychological research that are still very visible today. All of this points to the fact that the ends, theories, and practices of the psychological disciplines are an interrelated political problem. We are not just dealing with a scientific – or more accurately, technocratic – question, that of the correct pill or physical regimen, but also that of the relationship between the individual, the psychological disciplines per se, and the social.

Prevention = Psychoanalysis + the Professional Associations

The work of psychoanalyst Otto Fenichel puts an interesting spin on this, one that takes us from the theatre of war and the economy to that of the clinic. He was a practicing analyst who wrote a highly influential textbook entitled *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neuroses* that was published in English in 1945. In its final chapter he outlines how treatments that do not take into account the relationship between the physician and the patient – a relationship, as I noted, that has become one of expert and object – can lead to substitute neuroses that perpetuate, aggravate or only temporarily alleviate the problem at hand (Fenichel, 1945, p. 557-9). While focusing his discussion on transference effects, he also argues that the neuroses are not merely the result of the biological disposition of the patient, but also the contradictions present in their social world. He takes several pages to note that the lived contradictions of capitalism are in great part what makes neuroses what they are. In decidedly Marxist fashion, he writes 'it is characteristic of the present day society that many people are not able to satisfy their needs, although the means for their satisfaction are present' (p. 587). In this way he is able to say that neuroses are as such a 'social disease' (p. 586).

There is perhaps nothing terribly original in this either, considering it appeared during the thirties and forties. As Harris (1996) notes, in the United States at this same time psychologists from many orientations claimed their own theoretical bend as compatible with Marxism. The reason Fenichel in particular is given space here is because he held that while other psychotherapies could at times be more effective than psychoanalysis, it was only psychoanalysis that could give an account of 'the effectiveness of *all* psychotherapies' (Fenichel, 1945, p. 554). Knowing Fenichel's Marxist disposition (which he for the most part kept hidden – see Jacoby (1983)), it's not hard to take this in the spirit of a Marxist dedication to the understanding of 'the totality.'³ Psychoanalysis might be taken as the means to best understand human psychology because it is a conceptualization that sees the individual as constituted through the particular metabolism established between itself and the social and natural world.

This can more clearly be seen in another piece written by Fenichel around the time of the English release of *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neuroses*. In a paper unpublished in his lifetime Fenichel (1967) wrote that psychoanalysis was the only human science that 'could be considered the nucleus of a dialectical-materialist psychology' (p. 300). His primary concern when he wrote this was to point out the need for 'prophylaxis' (i.e. prevention) at the social level rather than simply treatment at the personal level. However, while he raises the question of the economic interests of clinicians and their relation to this end, while he addresses the question of the applicability of a supposedly 'bourgeois science' to the working class,⁴ while he raises questions about the organization of the state's 'ideology mills' in relation to the psychology of those living under capitalism, Fenichel's take is somewhat mechanical. He doesn't answer the question of how prevention might actually be achieved in practice, how the clinic and the social world might be *mediated*. As such, he builds a door that opens onto an understanding of 'the totality,' but forgets to add the hinges.

It seems to me that the question of the relation of the clinic and the political can be posed in three ways. First, there is the question of political advocacy outside the clinic. A practitioner could be a member of a political group, even one composed solely of other practitioners, and not have it directly affect their clinical practice in the least. Second, there is the question of how politics is approached within the analytic/clinical situation. This might mean including a *political* history of the patient in their overall history, and attending to transferences in this light. Thirdly – and this is the more dialectical option, the hinge on the door that will be taken up in the most detail – there is the question of how the

3 I.e. the assertion that reality is not composed of unrelated parts, but is composed of reciprocally mediating 'distinctions within a unity' (Marx, 1973, p. 99-101).

4 On this question Fenichel briefly brings up the free clinics that were organized in Vienna and elsewhere. For a much fuller treatment of the subject, see Danto's *Freud's Free Clinics* (2005).

psychological professions are organized. This last option opens the question of the profession's relationship to the economy, the state, fellow practitioners, different racialized groups, social classes, and last but not least their patients. As a result it also aims at what happens in research and clinical practice and the ends of that research and practice.

The first of these possible approaches is fairly familiar. Examples include Psychoanalysts for the Prevention of Nuclear War in Britain in the 1990s, Physicians for Human Rights today in the United States, or some such other group found in civil society. Here one's professional standing is used as a means to influence wider goings-on. This solution to the problem of prophylaxis is an external one: actions outside the clinic are aimed at changing society, which would presumably in turn positively affect all members of it and their psychological wellbeing. While such groups serve a purpose, here the clinic and the political world are separated from each other in practice; Here politics is 'outside' and bringing it in forbidden.

Politics *could*, of course, directly affect what happens in clinical practice, could be brought 'in' – hence its mention in the Canadian Psychological Association's code of ethics (see for instance article III.31). Here the vulnerability of the patient is at issue, as one's interests might influence clinical outcomes in negative ways: patients could be unscrupulously manipulated by their physicians for the latter's own personal economic and political ends – consciously or not. As Botticelli points out in a review of *Psychoanalysis, Class and Politics*, bringing politics directly into the clinic raises complications as the spectre of transference: In many of the clinical examples presented in the book, 'patients came to express views or act in the world in a way that moved them closer to the attitudes of which they might imagine their therapist would approve' (Botticelli, 2007, p.198). This is to suggest that the transference was not adequately dealt with, and as such the political outcomes of these analyses suspect.

A means of properly addressing this concern is proposed by Samuels in *The Political Psyche* (1993). He suggests that it's not only a matter of discussing political topics as they arise, but also constructing a *political* history of the analysand. In this way any particular political topic is tied into their psychological history, and provides a greater basis by which to work through the transference when it arises. In a discussion of an ad-hoc survey that he sent out to 11 psychological/psychoanalytic associations around the globe (including Brazil, Israel, Russia, The U.S. and Britain), Samuels shows that there are three approaches that analysts took to political question as they arose in practice: they either ignored the political content of analysands' statements and took them merely as symbolic grist for the transference, acknowledged the political concerns as such (e.g. the bombing of Iraq being a terrible thing), or did both. This suggests that political content in analysis could be dealt with progressively by 1) acknowledging that politics is not merely a sign to interpret but exists as a real

concern outside of the clinical setting; 2) the analysand has a particular relationship with those political questions and events and this relationship is tied into the analysand's political history; 3) the analyst's political position – both material (i.e. class, race, gender...) and theoretical ("I'm a Marxist") – and those of the analysand meet in the transference and must be taken into account when working through it.

There are some problems with this formulation, however: Samuels suggestions are conceptualized at the individual level (i.e. that between a clinician and a patient), and not that of the collective. In addition, Samuels (1993) announces his is a libertarian project (p. 50), and so the outcomes of clinical practice are couched in terms of the 'development' of the individual's ego – yet another example of the importance of politics in relation to clinical ends. He does, however, point towards the possibility that group therapy is perhaps a better type of treatment in general, and gestures towards the question of organization in acknowledging that the training of professionals needs to take into account the political. He saw the lack of discussion on this topic at the level of the official organs of the discipline as particularly marked, often times calling psychoanalysis a conservative profession.

It is professional associations that in large part maintain the standards of training and practice in a discipline, and therefore what is practiced and how. This points in the direction of the third possible approach to the political ends of clinical and experimental/theoretical work: changing the professional organization of the psychological disciplines. With this in mind I now turn to the history of an actually existing professional body – the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA).

Liberal Organization, the Market, and Ethics

Dunbar (1992)⁵ shows that in the beginning the CPA was a means to consolidate psychology as a profession *per se*, one that was separate from and no longer subject to psychiatry. In post-war Canada there was an increase in the demand for psychological services by governments and private interests, but it was unclear what a psychologist did (as opposed to a social worker, teacher, or a member of the clergy...), how they were trained to do it, and who could rightly call themselves a psychologist. As a result, those who practiced psychology were subordinated to psychiatrists and paid substantially less. Professional organization was thus a means to secure not only the legitimacy of one's discipline and define its scope against other practitioners, but also the economic worth of that discipline.

As in other Western countries, Canadian professional associations and their stated standards of practice were a means to establish psychology as a legitimate discipline with a legitimate commod-

5 For a condensed account of this history, see Dunbar (1998).

ity to offer to the public.⁶ In Canada this took the particular form of using the American Psychological Association's standards and its ethics code, in part to secure a place for Canadian researchers and practitioners at home as well as in the marketplace and psychological journals south of the border.

Other particularities of the Canadian case include elements of the British North America Act that left the regulation of professional conduct to the provinces – thereby precluding a national association from doing this – and the Canadian government's financial support of psychological research in Canadian universities. While the former made it difficult to establish nationwide standards, the latter circumstance led to the privileging of pure rather than applied research. In effect, it encouraged the development of a theoretical psychology that had little or no relation to practical psychology. This in turn led to the marginalization of practitioners within the CPA and their concerns about training standards.

Practitioners, too, had a close relationship with the state that caused problems for them: where many worked in publicly run institutions (for example hospitals and prisons) there arose a conflict between practitioners' desire to aid their patients in terms of communication with multiple stakeholders and *community* welfare, and the state's bureaucratic machinery – a machinery that demanded more immediately measurable goals and outcomes.⁷

According to Dunbar, the code of ethics devised by the CPA in 1977 addressed (though perhaps did not solve) all these problems, thereby ending the CPA's struggle to become the national representative of Canadian psychology. While provincial and territorial regulatory bodies are left to certify individual practitioners, the CPA has the role of accrediting training programs, publishing professional journals, and advocating on behalf of the discipline. The *Code* enabled this with reference to the discourse of human rights: where previous codes and of ethics were *reactive* in the sense that they outlined what not to do, this code was *productive* in that it could be used 'to actively generate new normative conceptions of what constitutes socially responsible professional practice' (Dunbar, p. 333-334). It can thus be used as a starting point from which to devise standards of practice, justify certain conceptions of psychology to both the public and the state, as well as solve particular ethical cases as they arise. What gives the Canadian *Code* this unique characteristic, according to Dunbar, is

6 The CPA recently reported that this year it has been, among other things, lobbying the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council to allow graduate students in clinical psychology to apply for funding, talking to the Federal Government about providing psychological services to its thousands of civil servants, and preparing briefs on government budgets with other national professional associations (CPA, 2010).

7 For a discussion of how public employees more generally embody the contradiction between human welfare and the economic and political needs of the state, see Stephanie Ross's history of the founding of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (Ross, 2005).

that it concerns itself with social responsibility. This is manifest in its inclusion as the last of its four principles.

A comparison with the code currently used by the APA is instructive here: the APA's code almost immediately asserts (in article 1.02) that in questions of ethics, the law and the state trump ethical considerations (APA, 2002). By contrast, the Canadian Code demands that a psychologist speak out or act against laws and policies that are unethical (article IV.29); it includes the political injunction to 'encourage others, in a manner consistent with this *Code*, to exercise responsibility to society' (article IV.30); it demands that psychologists be aware of social and political climates (article IV.25), and that all research, service development, interpretation, information gathering and teaching material be 'sensitive to the needs, current issues, and problems of society' (article IV.20) (CPA, 2000).

What begins to become clear from this is that the question of organization affects not only the economic place of the discipline in society, but also its perceived goals, its research, and its practice. The work of Bazerman (1988) is further instructive on this point: he shows that the development of both the natural and social sciences is tied to the rise of the scientific journal and the forms and standards of knowledge production that it reinforces. Beginning with the publications of the Royal Society, for example, he shows the gradual move from the simple reporting of natural phenomena to the writing of tracts on particular theoretical problems and hypotheses, attributing the change – and the development of experimental science itself – in large part to the act of debating over results. Doing so demanded more precision in the reporting of scientific activity, thereby giving experiments 'an argumentative function' in place of the past practice of giving what were thought to be 'transparent' reports of phenomena (p. 68).

This form of knowledge production was taken over by the social sciences, and in some instances rigidly codified. He argues that the extensive *Publication Manual* provided for authors who wish to write for the journals published by the American Psychological Association 'offers a programmatically correct way to discuss the phenomena under study; moreover, it stabilizes the roles, relationships, goals, and activity of individuals within the research community in ways consistent with the community's belief about human behaviour' (p. 275). As noted above, journals produced by the CPA are a means to secure its legitimacy as a profession in the eyes of the public and the state. The implication to be emphasized in this regard is that to be considered a legitimate psychologist one must follow the rules set by the professional association and produce the types of knowledge that have been deemed fit by means of it (See also Danziger, 1990, p. 179-197).

In this light it should then be considered highly significant that in 1977 the CPA took an explicit turn towards the social and political in its newly minted code of ethics. Before patting the back of the CPA for doing so, however, there are several things to be noted,

each of which point to the limits of liberal conceptions of the subject and reveal an opening that can be developed in a Marxian direction. First, there is the question how the *Code* is used. In a comparative study of psychologists' relation to professional ethics in Canada and Cuba, Rossiter et al. (2002)⁸ attempt to show that the approach to ethics in the two countries differs widely: Canadian practitioners see ethics as a set of technical procedures that are used to solve ethical problems as they arise in clinical situations, and to maintain the 'reputation or the security of the organization' in which psychology is practiced (p. 541). In this way ethics is limited to the clinical situation and separated from 'outside' politics and social problems. Cuban practitioners, by contrast, see the practice of psychology as itself an ethics, as the attempt to 'implement the values of the revolution in everyday life' (p. 543). Where in Cuba the practice of ethics as the practice of psychology is seen as a contribution to national values of solidarity and social justice, in Canada 'outcome-based ethics constructs practice as a neutral professional endeavour' (p. 542). That is, in Canada ethics are subordinated to the logic of liberal 'neutrality' and the logic of the market.

Further, as Dobson and Breault (1998) suggest in their brief review of the regulation of ethics in Canada, the *Code* is not used to the same degree by each provincial psychological association: It is often used in conjunction with other codified standards and provincial laws, and in British Columbia has not been officially adopted at all. In their view, the *Code* functions mostly as a useful educational and training tool, an 'aspirational document,' and a minimum standard to consider in the event of complaints – legal and otherwise.

This is the point at which one need be reminded that the ethics developed by the CPA is used as a means to provide the CPA with legitimacy: the *Code* is used as a means to negotiate the way psychologists deliver their services for the government; the *Code* is an ethical basis from which to lobby for research monies; the *Code* provided the means of securing the unification of the national *market* for psychological services by establishing a set of national standards that could potentially replace the myriad, conflicting training and other standards set by the provincial associations. As such it is not a neutral tool that can do no harm, but a one that is used to further goals within a capitalist society.

The second problem is that this is clearly an organization based on liberal ideals, and as a consequence suffers from liberalism's failures. The CPA's ethics code includes in writing what Badiou, in his *Ethics* (2002), argues is one of the limits of the liberal discourse of difference and human rights: it allows only differences that do not challenge the status quo, that do not really make a difference. The CPA's ethics code constantly calls for a respect of difference, including the political injunction to 'encourage others

⁸ The limitation of this study, however, is that it relies on practitioners' perceptions of their use of ethics, not their actual practice.

[...] to respect the dignity of persons and to expect respect for their own dignity' (article I.46). However, it also states that this respect need not be adhered to if doing so contravenes the *Code* (article IV.16). Where the *Code* is based on the liberal discourse of human rights, anything that is not compatible with it (i.e. different conceptions of what it means to be human in the first place; the idea of a collective or a non-liberal subject) are ruled out from the beginning.⁹

This isn't to say that the discourse of human rights is without a progressive element. For example, in his fight against the APA's position in regards to the involvement of psychologists at Guantanamo (referred to above), Summers argues that the absence of any reference to human rights in the APA's ethics code serves as a reactionary loophole. Similarly, István Mészáros (1986) argues that in capitalist society the discourse of human rights serves as a means of advocating for self-realization in opposition 'to the forces of dehumanization and increasingly more destructive material domination' and as such 'remains a concern of paramount importance for all socialists' (p. 210). This because any Marxist must acknowledge the material effects of thought, ideology, and political institutions, and not brush them off as 'mere' components of the superstructure. In part, then, the liberals have it right: the question of organization is an important one and the social needs to be included in any organizing principle. But the limits of the liberal discourse of human rights are very real, and demand a move beyond it.

There are at least three failings that can be seen in the CPA's *Code* in this regard. First is in the contradiction between reliance on the subject of science (i.e. the subject as object) and on the liberal subject of ethics (i.e. the autonomous individual). As noted above, Danziger makes much of this, showing that the move from Wundtian to Galton-stlye psychology involved the move from 'participant' to 'subject' (see also Walsh, 1985, p. 26-40; Walsh-Bowers, 1995; for a liberal attempt to overcome this division, see Martin et al, 2010). Second is the assumption that the individual is a separate, mechanical piece of a larger whole. For example, the *Code* talks about respect of other cultures and of politics, but not the social etiology of problems, and 'social responsibility' is the last in a hierarchy of four principles (i.e. it is subordinated to the individual). Lastly, it fails to account for the economic and class imperatives that undermine its ethical goals at the social level, and belie the discipline's practice itself: how can the dignity of the person be respected if they are left destitute by the society they live in? How can psychologists take into account political

⁹ John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* – considered an important benchmark of modern liberal thought – is instructive on this point: free speech and liberty hold only for those in 'civilized' countries who have reached the age of majority. Anyone else is considered a barbarian, and can thus justifiably be 'improved' by violent paternal means. It's not incidental that Mill, like his father, was an employee of the East India Company, which had a major role in colonizing India and attempts to 'liberalize' China in the Opium Wars.

climates and problems when funding structures and the imperative to ‘publish or perish’ favour quantitative, positivist research over qualitative social and political research?

Understanding the importance of professional organization in regards to the discipline of psychology as a discipline and the limits of liberal forms demands that one ask what a socialist psychology might look like at the level not only of its goals, but also at the level of its organization.

A Socialist Alternative?

A potential answer lies in another actually existing theory and practice: that which can be seen in the ideas and career of French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. Much as with the development of the professional associations of psychology, the question of the organization of psychoanalysis in France centred on the refusal to be subordinated to other disciplines and a differentiation from them. This included questions of who was allowed to practice, who was allowed to teach, and who should be doing any certifying. In France in the late forties and early fifties this revolved around the question of ‘lay analysis.’ Following in Freud’s footsteps, Lacan argued that psychoanalysis should not be reduced to a medical or neurological science, but include knowledge of the arts and humanities, and be a creative endeavour rather than simply a certified, acquired skill (Macey, 1988, p. 87-89; Turkle, 1978, p. 104-5;).

This was no mere passing fancy. Lacan had much to say on these questions, and they appear throughout his *Écrits* and elsewhere. To for a moment sing a rather familiar refrain through the chorus of Hegel and Marx, Lacan held that language stood as Moses and the Profits, the discovery that Freud had made but none of his followers (in Lacan’s view) adhered to, at the peril of both psychoanalysis and its analysands. This was a problem not just at the level of theory or practice, but also of organization. In the latter half of ‘The Situation of Psychoanalysis and the Training of Psychoanalysts in 1956’, for example, Lacan argues that in creating the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) before realizing the role of ego identification in group formations such as the army and Church (i.e. before the writing of *Group Psychology*), Freud undermined ‘the objective of tradition and discipline in psychoanalysis’, which is ‘to call into question their [i.e. tradition and discipline *per se*] very crux, along with man’s relation to speech’ (Lacan, 2006, p. 397). He goes so far as to suggest that the setting up of the structure of psychoanalytic institutions as a ‘democracy’ of masters who decided who could become members of the community is what precipitated ego psychology: ‘...let us not forget that entry into the community of analysts is subjected to the condition of undergoing a training analysis; and there surely must be some reason why the theory of the end of analysis as identification with the analyst’s ego first saw the light of day in the circle of training analysts’ (p. 398). This is to sug-

gest that it is practice and its organization that *precede* theory, or at least have a hand that reaches deep into its genesis: ‘It is not, in fact, that conceptual rigor and developments in technique are lacking in psychoanalytic works. If they remain so sporadic and even inefficient, it is because of a more profound problem that is due to a singular confusion in the precepts of practice’ (p. 386).¹⁰ That is, an organization based on identification with a master’s ego (i.e. that of Freud) perpetuated a theory consistent with that organization and the stifling of growth. It is in this light that we should read Lacan’s remarks (as in, for example, the ‘Rome Discourse’) that psychoanalysis had come to resemble a Church.

The problems did not only lie with the organization of psychoanalysis and its theories. In his *Ethics of Psychoanalysis* he takes aim at the demands of the *analysand* that they be provided with the means to properly enjoy commercial goods, that they be cured in such a way as to enjoy the fruits of capitalist society. In turn, he was critical of what he saw as American-style psychoanalysts (i.e. ‘ego psychologists’) who were willing to validate that expectation by strengthening the ego as a means to better integrate their patients into the American (or bourgeois) dream. In his view, the end of analysis was not happiness and integration, but a confrontation with truth. To push this point Lacan makes use of Marx: The ends of analysis are not ‘the good,’ nor ‘the goods’ (i.e. commodities) but instead a challenge to *jouissance* and power. Marx’s critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right, said Lacan, was of interest because it showed that there was a structural limit that prevented such a idealist state from coming to realization (Lacan, 1997, p. 208-9). This limit is *jouissance* in its double sense of both affect and access to private property: not only does capitalism prove a limit to the achievement of utilitarian fantasies of ‘happiness’ and material wealth, to mistakenly associate *jouissance* with objects rather than *relations* between ‘objects’¹¹ is to mistake the nature of human affect. It is not the object that provides enjoyment, but the processes of desire and drive that do so.

This line of thought is developed in different parts of Lacan’s career. Whereas in his *Ethics* he argued that Marx misunderstood the elements of enjoyment that made up affect, in 1968-9 he argued that, in fact, ‘surplus-value’ and his own conception of ‘surplus-enjoyment’ were homologous (Lacan, 2002).¹² It was also around this time that Lacan further elaborated his argument that the end of analysis is the end of subjection to both the master – ego psy-

10 Or, as Roudinesco (1990) puts it, in the late forties Lacan hoped “The training analyst would be a theoretician of therapy since technical training governs theoretical intelligence” (p. 225-226).

11 Working out the relation between object and drive in regards to sublimation, Lacan argues that what is at stake is not a mere replacement of one object by another, but a change in the nature of the existing object itself. I.e. ‘objects’ are not unchanging facts (Lacan, 1992, p. 293).

12 It is this link that becomes the basis of the theories developed by Slavoj Žižek. See the first two chapters of *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989) on this point.

chologist and otherwise – and mastery *per se*. That is, the end of analysis is not an egoistic self-mastery, but the end of one's belief in the big Other (institutions, assumptions, and guarantees – a list which Marxists would include capitalism in its various forms¹³) and the creation of a psychoanalyst (Lacan, 2007).

The end of analysis is, as a consequence, the creation of a new sort of subject who is a member of a new sort of community. And seminal to this is psychoanalysis as a 'discourse', a 'social link' that was different from any other to be found in society.

As noted above, this is not apparent only in Lacan's theory but also in his practice, infamous in its challenges to the organization of psychoanalysis as a discipline. This begins with a break with the IPA and the Psychoanalytic Society of Paris (SPP) in 1953 and continues with the repeated creation, transformation, and dissolution of new associations – all of which happened both for, with, and against Lacan. As Turkle points out, in this first break Lacan was not the driving force, but served as a flash-point for discontent in the French psychoanalytic movement. That is, not all those that left the SPP at this time did so because they agreed with his theories. Some did so because he represented a challenge to the medicalizing and bureaucratizing currents in the SPP, as well as its contradictions. Indeed, Roudinesco (1990) points out that a big part of the puzzle of the original break was something of a student revolt (involving Roudinesco's mother) against the way the SPP was treating its trainees (p. 244), rather than a move organized by Lacan. It was only after the break that he resigned from his position at the SPP. What all this points to is that once you conceive of analysis as a something other than a means to strengthen the ego and integrate people into the 'bourgeois dream,' once you conceive of the ends of analysis as the challenging of power and its various masters, clearly you present a problem for an organization that does neither in theory nor in practice. More importantly for socialists, you raise the question of how to collectively organize those whose primary aim is to eliminate reified social systems.

Dolar (2008) takes up this point, arguing that the end of the belief in the big Other is *the* point that psychoanalysis becomes political. Where the end of analysis is the creation of an analyst who is part of a community of analysts who all challenge the Other, the question of the form of that community becomes unavoidable. He glibly asserts that this is the same logic that inheres to the Leninist Party. Zizek, Dolar's comrade, makes a similar comment, writing that Lacan's repeated reformulation of his 'schools' were a 'Leninist move' (Zizek, 2008, p. xcvi). He goes so far as to argue that the form of the Leninist Party is homologous to the

13 Not everyone draws this conclusion, of course. French Canadian analyst Willy Apollon has what sounds like a liberal understanding of the ends of analysis. For him it is to achieve 'no other regard for the demands of the Other than the symbolic limits of social or citizen coexistence' (Apollon, 2002, p. 140). This can easily be read as liberal negative-freedom, in which one is to let well-enough alone until well-enough infringes on the rights of others.

form of the analytic relationship.¹⁴ He argues, in a similar vein that has been suggested throughout this paper, that the form of one's activity is not a neutral addition to a social and political horizon, but is instead the creation of a new kind of knowledge and interaction with the world that has transformative power (Zizek, 2002, p. 178-191).¹⁵

This suggests a way of understanding Fenichel's remarks that psychoanalysis can be used to explain 'the effectiveness of *all* psychotherapies' and 'could be considered the nucleus of a dialectical-materialist psychology,' raised above. This is so because psychoanalysis is at base the question of the relation of the individual to the social. 'From the very first,' Freud wrote in his *Group Psychology*, 'individual psychology [...] is at the same time social psychology as well' (Freud, 1959, p. 1). When placed within the context of a Marxist analysis of the social, 'social psychology' becomes the question of how to create a socialist community by creating a new relationship with the world we currently inhabit. Where conditions change, so too must organizations and ways of thinking. Here organizational means, social realities, and political ends mediate each other: a socialist organization must constantly modify its form in response to the immediate social and political contexts in which it finds itself. It must constantly ask and act on the following: what is to be the form of the organization through which we approach the world in order not only to change it, but to best understand it and ourselves in order to properly do so?

This was the question that Lacan posed in regards to psychoanalysis. Like Fenichel, he too asserted that psychoanalysis had something particular to offer the psychological disciplines: 'If psychoanalysis [...] is neither the only psychotherapy, nor applicable in all cases, it alone has brought a general theory of psychotherapies and ensures the psychotherapist satisfactory preparation whose basis is the training analysis' (Lacan in Roudinesco, 1990, p. 226). It mustn't be forgotten, however, that similar assertions were also being made in the United States. Shorter (1997) relates the following remarks made by a child psychiatrist who questioned the scientific basis of psychoanalysis at a medical educator's meeting in 1962: 'Just about every eminent figure present rose to defend the primacy of psychoanalysis as "the basic science" of psychiatry' (quoted in Shorter (1997), p. 181). It was in the U.S., from the 1940s to the late 1960s, that psychoanalysts held many of the major chairs in psychiatry, and 'took over much of the apparatus of the American Psychiatric Association' (p. 172). These were the ego-psychologists against which Lacan railed, and who

14 In contrast to the Stalinist version of the Leninist Party, or the misrepresentations that have been offered of Lenin's own efforts (see Lih 2008 on this latter point) Zizek argues that the 'form' of the Party is such that it does not operate as a new 'master' but as a means through which workers come to the truth of their class position by their own work, as does an analysand in Lacanian psychoanalysis. That is, one can not realize oneself without an 'other' with which to interact.

15 This is also, of course, the position of Lukács, with whom I opened the paper. Lukács, too, makes this argument with reference to Lenin and the Party.

dominated psychiatry not by dint of their numbers but because they ‘wrote the textbooks, staffed the university departments, and sat on the examination boards’ (p. 173). Shorter contends that this happened in no small part because of the desire to move psychiatry away from institutional settings into private, individual practice, and the popularity of psychoanalytic ideas in post-war America. He also excoriates psychoanalysis for dogmatism and an unwillingness to integrate scientific measure and discovery,¹⁶ locating the cause in European émigrés who had close ties to Freud and who were unwilling to let go of the master’s ideas – against Freud’s own theoretical words (though not organizational actions) to the contrary, which encouraged a more limited role for psychoanalysis and an openness to new discoveries. Shorter thus labels psychoanalyst’s post-war hegemony a ‘hiatus’ rather than a development (See also Engel, 2008 on this history).

Lacan was perhaps then justified in his attacks on the IPA and ego psychology. By some accounts, however, Lacan’s own organizational answer to the role of psychoanalysis was a miserable failure: what began as an attempt to create a non-hierarchical organization ended in a tacit hierarchical valuation of theory and practice, and the instatement of Lacan as the ‘absolute master.’¹⁷ Even if this is the case, one shouldn’t draw the conclusion that the question was wrongly posed. Rather, it points to the difficulties of organizing the new within the context of the old, and the weight of the struggle.

Echoes of the history of the CPA are found in the history of the psychoanalytic movement in France: in both cases there was a fight for legitimacy of the psychological professions, in both the relationship between theory over practice was an issue, and in both cases organizational questions were part of the problem and part of the result. The work of Bazerman, Danziger, Dunbar, and Walsh-Bowers *et al* shows that an important factor in the history of the psychological disciplines more generally is their organization, and the French and the Canadian cases provide two directions that history can and has taken. In the case of the CPA, a liberal approach channeled through ethics and the discourse of human rights enabled the organization to establish itself as a national body that acts as a lever to ensure access to the psychological ‘marketplace.’ The inevitable problem in a capitalist society is that a nominal political dedication to human rights is subordinated to and stymied by this marketplace, making its realization impossible. The Lacanian case points to the possibility of countering the demands of a marketplace that creates ‘consumers’ who wish to be integrated into it and an organizational structure willing to accommodate that demand. It also points to the problems in creating a non-hierarchical body adequate to the task: an

16 For an example of exactly the opposite, see Noble Prize winner Eric Kandel’s *Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis and the New Biology of Mind* (2005). See also the International Neuropsychanalysis Society at <neuropsa.org.uk>.

17 See in particular chapters four and five of Turkle’s *Psychoanalytic Politics*, as well as the final section of its second edition. Also of interest is David-Menard (1982).

organization dedicated to the destruction of organizations as we know them runs the risk of becoming its own enemy.

Marx once wrote that ‘the world has long since possessed something in the form of a dream which it need only take possession of consciously, in order to possess it in reality.’¹⁸ The bourgeois dream is impossible in that its individualism is based on collective production and the social nature of wealth, on the exploitation of communal existence. What we potentially possess are the means to human emancipation, against their domination and inequitable division: immense wealth, knowledge, and passion. To transform this reality, organization must be considered not a secondary *element*, but a primary, necessary, *mediation* – one to be fought both for and with.

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18 The above is the rendering given by the translator of Lukács’ *History and Class Consciousness* (1971, p. 2). The Padover translation gives the following: “The reform of consciousness consists only in making the world aware of its own consciousness, in awakening it out of its dream about itself, in explaining to it the meaning of its own actions” (Marx, 1979).

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