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ASSEMBLING THE MODERN SELF

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In the first volume of *The Man Without Qualities*, Robert Musil remarked upon the way in which 'experiences' seemed to have made themselves independent of individuals, to have gone on to the stage, into books, into exhibitions and the reports of scientific institutions, into communities based upon religious conviction. Once having achieved their independence, they return with a new authority. 'Who today can still say that his anger is really his own anger,' Musil wrote, 'with so many people butting in and knowing much more about it than he does?' (1979, pp. 174–5). Musil's words capture something fundamental about our contemporary experience of ourselves. Our feelings, beliefs, desires, hopes and fears are suffused with the descriptions, injunctions and evaluations of those who claim to know more about what is good for us than we do ourselves. Most of those who Musil mentions still chatter in our ears. But over the last half century, they have been overpowered by new 'experts of experience'. These experts rest their authority upon claim to truth, to science and objectivity, to facts, experiments, findings and statistics, to long hours in the consulting room and the hospital. They impress us because their advice seems to rest on evidence within reality itself, although evident only to those who know how to look. These are the specialists of psy: psychologists, psychiatrists, psychotherapists, psychiatric social workers, management consultants, market researchers, opinion-pollers, counsellors. Their murmerings into our outer and inner ears are not confined to our periods of frank madness or despair. They accompany us from the moment of our conception and birth through all the phases within which they have framed our lives: childhood, adolescence, sexual desires, relationships, mid-life crises, illnesses, old age, mourning, even death. They have shaped the vocabularies and activities of all those other authorities who now seek to manage human conduct: our judges, doctors, policemen, prison officers, managers, economists, investment consultants, politicians, pundits, talk-show hosts and soap-opera scriptwriters have come to speak in psychological dialects. These specialists of psy have enmeshed themselves inextricably with our experience of ourselves.

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Musil writes of these authorities 'butting in'. But their intrusion can take many forms. There are, indeed, many times when it is a matter of the knock at the door, the uninvited presence, the demand for admission: the social workers descending upon those suspected of abusing their children, the industrial consultant 'enriching' the working routines of labourers in factories and offices, the psychiatrist assessing the defendant before charge, verdict or sentence or running 'therapeutic groups' in prison or reformatory; the doctor evaluating a disturbed individual with a view to compelling them to receive psychiatric treatment. But, eagerly or reluctantly, we all too often ask them in, seek out their knowledge in books and magazine articles, listen to them on radio phone-in programmes and confessional television talk shows, take ourselves to counsellors, therapists and marriage guidance. And the presence of psy in our contemporary experience is not limited to our encounters with the experts. When we speak to our friends and acquaintances about the ills that trouble us or the hopes that animate us, our conversations will be studded with psychological terms – stress, anxiety, motivation, personality, self-esteem and so on. Even when we are alone, in our most intimate experiences of ourselves, psy allows us to understand the actions of those around us, to describe our personality, passions and hopes, to understand our sorrows and calibrate our disappointments, to project and embark upon a future for ourselves. In being acted upon and acting upon ourselves in these ways, modern human beings (in different ways for women and for men, for the young and the old, for the rich and the poor) have become psychological selves.

'Modernity' in 'the West' has long been credited with the 'invention of the self'. The link between 'individualization' and 'modernization' was a recurrent theme in nineteenth-century social thought, developed in various ways in the writings of Jacob Burckhardt, Karl Marx, August Comte, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. These stories of individualization in nineteenth-century social theory concerned the rise of the atomized and discrete subject of morality, politics, law and culture. More recent writers have stressed the rise of the psychological and ethical individual: the self. Thus the anthropologist Clifford Geertz has claimed that

> [t]he Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgement and action, organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively against other such wholes and against a social and natural background is, however incorrigible it may seem to us, a rather peculiar idea within the context of the world's cultures.
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> (Geertz, 1979, p. 222, quoted in Sampson, 1989, p.1; cf. Mauss, 1979)

Philosophers such as Charles Taylor have argued that our modern notion of what it is to be a human agent, a person or a self, and the issues of

morality with which this notion is inextricably intertwined, is 'a function of a historically limited mode of self-interpretation, one which has become dominant in the modern West and which may indeed spread thence to other parts of the globe, but which has a beginning in time and space and may have an end' (Taylor, 1989, p. 111). And Michel Foucault, in his 'archaeology' of the human sciences, concluded that 'man', as the subject and object of knowledge, 'is an invention of recent date' dependent upon a particular modern configuration of thought: if that were to crumble 'then one can certainly wager that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea' (Foucault, 1970, p. 387).

Of course, one finds evidence of intense concern about the kinds of people that humans are in other times and other places. There is no need to repeat the sterile debate between 'universalists' – who believe that there could never have been a culture without concern for the human individual – and 'relativists' – who believe that 'traditional' societies thought of people as a kind of undifferentiated mass. My point here is a different one. I want to suggest that the *relation* to ourselves which we can have today has been profoundly shaped by the rise of the psy disciplines, their languages, types of explanation and judgement, their techniques and their expertise. The beliefs, norms and techniques which have come into existence under the sign of psy over the last century about intelligence, personality, emotions, wishes, group relations, psychiatric distress and so forth are neither illumination nor mystification: they have profoundly shaped the kinds of persons we are able to be – the ways we think of ourselves, the ways we act upon ourselves, the kinds of persons we are presumed to be in our consuming, producing, loving, praying, sickening and dying. They have become woven into the practices that fabricate and sustain the 'psy' interior that has been hollowed out within us as our truth, this psychological being which has been placed at the origin of our passions, our speech, our ills, our wants and our conduct. We need to abandon the belief that we are 'in our very nature' discrete, bounded, self-identical creatures, inhabited and animated by an inner world whose laws and processes psychology has begun to reveal to us. On the contrary, we are 'assembled' selves, in which all the 'private' effects of psychological interiority are constituted by our linkage into 'public' languages, practices, techniques and artefacts.

ENGINEERING HUMAN RELATIONS

Reflections upon the nature of human beings occur in all cultures and all historical periods. To suggest that something profound has happened in our own recent history might seem merely fashionable historicism. But something does seem to have occurred, at least in North Western Europe and North America, in the fifty-year period from about 1875 to 1925. One

dimension was the birth of psychology as a 'discipline' – as a scientific specialism with its own subject matter, journals, courses, credentials, and as a profession with its own organizations, criteria and role as expertise (cf. for what follows Rose, 1985). When the first volume of the journal *Mind* appeared in January 1876, it proclaimed itself 'the first English journal devoted to Psychology and Philosophy' and set itself the aim 'to procure a decision as to the scientific standing of psychology'. Wilhelm Wundt is usually considered as having inaugurated modern scientific psychology when, in 1879 at the University of Leipzig, he set aside some space for conducting psychological experiments. Wundt's own methods would be rejected in the course of the scientization of psychology in subsequent decades, but 'the laboratory', with all its resonance of white coats, experiments and objectivity was to be a vital element of the scientization of psychology (Danziger, 1990; on the invention of objectivity, see Porter, 1995). William James established a 'rudimentary demonstration laboratory' at Harvard in 1876 – the same year when he 'urged young men with professorial ambitions to study recent trends in scientific psychology' and predicted that they would soon find vacant places calling for their peculiar capacities in departments of philosophy (O'Donnell, 1985, p. 2). Two years later James began work on his *Principles of Psychology* and Stanley Hall received Harvard's first Ph.D. in psychology. In 1883, after a visit to Wundt, Hall set up his own laboratory at Johns Hopkins. James Sully, who was the Grote Professor of Philosophy of mind and logic, established the first English laboratory for experimental psychology in October 1897 at University College, London, and a similar laboratory was founded in Cambridge in the same year. Psychology, in Britain as much as in the USA, would become a discipline, in part at least, by virtue of the ways in which it could mobilize laboratories, experiments and a whole rhetoric of scientificity in support of its truth claims. In this way it would gradually (and incompletely) distinguish itself from philosophy and ethics on the one hand and medicine and biology on the other, to form itself into a single, though inherently divided and fractured, discipline.

Psychology in the first half of the twentieth century would not only become a discipline; it would become a profession. America was the examplar. The American Psychological Association was founded by Stanley Hall in 1892, dedicated 'to the advancement of psychology as a science'; according to O'Donnell, by 1903 its original membership of thirty-one had quadrupled and it doubled again by 1913 (O'Donnell, 1985). By 1929, Edwin Boring, in his *History of Experimental Psychology*, claimed around 1000 psychologists in the United States alone, in over 300 academic institutions (Boring, 1929). Boring wrote his book in part to stake a claim for scientific and academic psychology in the face of the proliferation of psy a a technical and practical know-how. But psy was to blossom precisel because exceptionally productive alliances were formed between the worlu

of the academy and the requirements of practitioners (for details on the following, see Fryer and Henry, 1950). As early as 1908, Hugo Münsterberg published *On the Witness Stand*, the first book on psychology as a legal resource; he would propose a programme for an industrial psychology in 1912, in *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency*. Frank Parsons inaugurated psychology's role in vocational guidance in 1909 with *Choosing a Vocation*; by 1914 the first bureau for vocational guidance would be established in the public school system. E. L. Thorndike formalized the pedagogic calling of psychology in 1913 with the publication of *Educational Psychology*. Walter Dill Scott proselytized for the psychologization of profit in *The Psychology of Advertising* (1910) and *Influencing Men in Business* (1911): he was appointed the first university professor of 'applied psychology' in 1915 and would found the Scott Corporation, the first private business in psychology, in Philadelphia in 1919. By 1915 psychological tests were being used for selection of telephonists and telegraphists for Western Union. Since such tests were used for the selection of chauffeurs for the German army as early as 1916, it is no surprise that in 1917 the US Army created a Committee on Classification of Personnel, established a training school for military psychologists at Camp Greenleaf, Georgia and embarked upon a whole programme of psychological testing and assessment of military personnel (described in *Psychological Examining in the U. S. Army*, published in 1921). In the post-war period, dignified by its military service, psychology would flourish in public and private organizations, in academic departments and associations of applied psychology, and in private enterprises such as the Psychological Corporation, founded in 1921: from personnel departments to life insurance offices, from clinics for children to centres for the rehabilitation of the aged, psychologists would become indispensable. And while it went under the title of 'applied psychology' there was little 'application' about it – innovations did not usually flow from discoveries in the laboratory to devices in the 'real world' but in precisely the reverse direction.

Britain followed the same path, although a little further behind and on a more modest scale. The British Psychological Society was inaugurated in October 1901 and the *British Journal of Psychology* first appeared in 1904. The growth of academic psychology in Great Britain was remarkably slow: at the outbreak of the Second World War there were only six university chairs in psychology and a combined lecturing staff of about thirty. As in the United States, it was outside the academy that psychology would find its growth points in Britain. Psychologists together with doctors and philanthropists played a key role in the eugenic movement, with its concern for the identification of 'feeble-minded' schoolchildren which led to the development of the intelligence test: Charles Spearman's famous paper '"General intelligence" objectively determined and measured' was published in 1904; the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education

recommended the use of 'psychological and educational tests' for differentiating the normal from the feeble-minded child in his report of 1911; Cyril Burt was appointed as psychologist to the London County Council in 1913 and William McDougall published his article 'Psychology in the service of eugenics' in 1914 (for details of all these examples, see Rose, 1985). Burt and other psychologists were important figures in the vociferous mental hygiene movement of the 1920s and 1930s, were involved in setting up the Tavistock Clinic in 1920, the Child Guidance Council in 1927, and the first mental health course for psychiatric social workers which started at the London School of Economics in 1929. Charles Myers urged the establishment of 'institutes of applied psychology in each of our largest cities' in his 1918 lectures on 'Present Day Application of Psychology with Special Reference to Industry, Education and Nervous Breakdown' and established the National Institute of Industrial Psychology in 1921, and Edward Glover set up the Institute for the Scientific Treatment of Delinquency in 1932.

These bare facts suffice to make one central point: despite the importance of the laboratory and the whole apparatus of scientificity – experiments, proofs, statistical tests of significance, replications and so forth – the 'disciplinization' of psychology was not a matter of the discovery, in some moment of pure thought, of the laws of mental functioning. It would be around its claims as a discipline of behaviour, a knowledge of the norms of conduct and the techniques for its management, a provider of devices for diagnosing and ameliorating pathology, that psychology would coalesce. The laboratories that were crucial for the emerging expertise of human conduct in the first half of the twentieth century were not inside the academy but outside. Psychologists could find their laboratories in any organization or institution where human beings were operating according to norms that were set for them by the apparatus itself, where human conduct could be observed, judged against these norms, evaluated as normal or deviant. This ensemble of knowledge, standards and judgement ensured that the norms which were to become psychological – of intelligence, of personality, of adjustment, of development, of attitude – were inescapably institutional and regulatory: they were the norms of the classroom, the norms of the factory, the norms of the prison, the norms of the military apparatus. Each of these apparatuses could host a hundred little experiments for forcing into visibility the minutia of human conduct, its origins in individual differences, its vulnerability to the pressures, conditions and characteristics of the environment. Each classroom, each prison, each factory, each battalion could be studied, documented, the conduct of those within it classified, compared over time, analysed statistically and significant differences identified. Once identified, these differences could form the basis of new norms for maximizing workplace efficiency, school performance or military effectiveness, and for

identifying those who were potential threats or stumbling-blocks in the search for efficiency and for directing them to individual treatment. It would be these institutional and technical norms that psychologists, over the first half of the twentieth century, would attempt to regularize and ratify through theory and experiment, and then to give back to practitioners in scientific form.

Consider, for example, the psychological normalization of the intellect. The school and the army in the early decades of this century functioned as huge laboratories for the assessment, calibration and quantification of human capacities. The school had been the first site for this project, in particular the problematization of those children who were not capable of benefiting from the systems of universal education introduced in the late nineteenth century – the problem of the 'feeble-minded'. The IQ test lashed together an older endeavour to define something called 'intelligence' with a eugenic concern with the consequences of the inheritance of human abilities for the efficiency of the population. The test, in its normalized, statisticalized and standardized form, seemed to provide authorities with the ability to quantify human qualities: a practical device for differentiating human individuals in all those practices where the particular characteristics of human beings were administratively pertinent. Military life provided a further opportunity for a massive experiment in psychometrics. The US Army testing programme was under the direction of Robert Yerkes, President of the American Psychological Association at the outbreak of war and also chair of the Eugenics Research Association's Committee on Inheritance of Mental Traits. The Army Alpha group intelligence tests, specifically devised for assessment in the US Army, were administered to two million American soldiers in the First World War; the non-linguistic Army Beta tests were administered to 100,000 soldiers in 1918 alone. By 1922, following the path opened by this enormous effort at the psychologization of differences, three million school children a year in the US were being tested by group tests of intelligence (Hornstein, 1988, p. 19). For the many American eugenicist psychologists, these testing programmes confirmed their fears about the links of race and intelligence and the implications of immigration: psycho-eugenics was crucial to the malign politics of race in the first half of the twentieth century.

In his presidential address to the first meeting of the Personnel Research Foundation in 1921, established under the aegis of the US government's National Research Council, Yerkes declared that 'there is every reason to believe that human engineering will shortly take its place among the important forms of practical endeavor' (quoted in Gillespie, 1988, p. 133). Important as eugenics was, it did not define or limit psychology's practical role. On the one hand, psychology would accord a new legitimacy to teachers, managers and all the authorities of human conduct operating in the schools, the courts, the prisons, the factories and the like.

On the other hand, in demonstrating the multiple 'practical applications' of psychology, these alliances would enhance the academic significance of the discipline itself – indeed these reciprocal relations were, as Danziger and others have shown in great detail, the very conditions for psychology's disciplinization (Danziger, 1990).

The professional attention of psychologists would rapidly spread from pathology to normality. The norms and criteria established for the identification and classification of the pathological would be extended to normality itself – the normality of the normal child, the normal worker, the normal parent, the normal consumer would need to be understood, safeguarded, enhanced and acted upon in areas as diverse as child development and advertising. In countless other areas of human existence, we now learned to see and to judge ourselves and others with psychological eyes, in terms of a psychological relation between the visible, external features of conduct and its inner, invisible but none the less real psychical determinants. Take, for example, the notion of 'normal child development'. Arnold Gesell discovered normal development in his laboratory established at the Yale Psycho-Clinic, which opened in 1911 for the assessment and treatment of children having problems at school (see Rose, 1990, Chapter 12). Here, in a specially constructed dome allowing one-way vision, he would quantify children's capacity to make piles of wooden blocks, walk, run, climb small artificial sets of stairs, draw different shapes, use their own name and so forth while others filmed and took notes. Gesell had a commitment to a metaphysical idea of development, but this abstract philosophy of time and growth could now be materialized in life itself, through meticulous examination of the films, frame by frame, which enabled the identification of behaviour that was common – or 'normal' – at particular ages and its differentiation from that which was 'advanced' or 'retarded'. In this laboratory, norms were not discovered: they were forced into existence by the apparatus themselves, made visible by techniques, then written down, concretized, turned into charts and tests which could become the model for a hundred different scales of development to be utilized by childcare workers and disseminated to parents: the child was now the inevitable subject of normalizing psychological gaze and vocabulary: 'he certainly is advanced for his age'.

Relations among human beings also became psychological. The Hawthorne works of the Western Electrical Company on the outskirts of Chicago have become famous because they served as the laboratory for a series of experiments starting in 1924 and extending over fifteen years which forced these 'human relations' into the open. They appeared to reveal the effects of workplace organization upon worker productivity and job satisfaction: experimental methods in the workplace would provide a key foundation for the claim of psychology to provide a disinterested

knowledge of economic life with major practical implications (these much discussed experiments are well analysed in Gillespie, 1988). The group, the complex of psychological interpersonal relations that formed whenever individuals were gathered together for whatever common purpose, was born in a whole variety of other studies carried out in the 1930s and 1940s. These ranged from Lewin's experiments on styles of leadership among boys at the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station prior to the outbreak of war, through Leighton's studies of the Japanese relocation camp at Poston Arizona after the entry of the United States into the War, to Wilfred Bion's experiments in group treatment to resolve the problems of indiscipline in the training wing of Northfield Military Hospital in 1943. From this point on, psychologists could become specialists in the design and redesign of human collectivities. They were not only able to ameliorate problems that arose in any context where individuals were gathered together, from the hospital to the workplace, from the boardroom to the classroom. They could also advise those who would manage individuals in groups as to the best ways of achieving their objectives and harmonizing the psychological contentment of the managed with efficiency of the enterprise: a combination of neutral expertise and mutual benefits. Could anyone genuinely concerned with the improvement of human relations gainsay such an endeavour?

Of course, the birth of psychology, as a discipline and as a profession, is only one aspect of the psychologization of experience in the twentieth century. Psychology, as it disciplined itself in the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth, had no monopoly on attempts to understand the 'inner person', to render the human soul amenable to rationalized knowledge and esoteric technique. There were all those controversial endeavours dating back to at least a century earlier – such as mesmerism, hypnotism, phrenology and so forth – which claimed to understand, diagnose and act upon the troubles, ills and fates of the human being through engaging with some inner realm. There were the proliferating activities of nerve doctors whose principal remit was the minor troubles of emotion and conduct of the wealthier classes and predominantly of their women. And there were the growing claims of medical psychiatrists, who controlled the space of the public and private asylums, had made forays into the institutions of the law and courts, and increasingly claimed jurisdiction over the diagnosis and treatment of the pathologies of mind. As the twentieth century progressed, and especially during and after the Second World War, there were innumerable professional disputes between and within each branch of the burgeoning empire of the psy. In particular, doctors denied the capacity of those without medical training to practise except under the direction of medics, exponents of organic psychiatry disputed the claims made by those who sought purely psychological explanations of mental disorder, many of those who advocated psychological

treatments of minor mental troubles decried the psychoanalysts for their pan-sexualism and claimed that their therapeutic results were as often to worsen as to improve the condition of their patients. Further, the encroachment of psy specialists into the territory of other experts was not uncontested. Not for nothing is the carpenter Moosbrugger a recurrent figure in *The Man Without Qualities*: the question of his responsibility for his horrific murder of a prostitute – of psychological determinism or jurisprudential free will – was the subject of dispute between lawyers, newspaper reporters, politicians and psychiatrists. Across the past century of psy, lawyers have resisted the incursion of psy into the courts and into the prisons, military men have resisted its incursion into the armed forces, managers and factory owners have doubted its capacity to do much for labour relations or productivity, families or those who speak for them have resisted the incursion of psychologically trained health visitors and social workers into the 'private space of the family'.

Nevertheless, over the course of all these little struggles and resistances – over territory and authority, public and private, personal and political – there has none the less been a spectacular proliferation of psy experts throughout our present experience. Once more, the bare numbers are instructive. The British Psychological Society grew from 1164 members in 1945 to around 5500 in 1975: by 1994 the membership was over 18,000. There was a corresponding growth in a whole array of other practitioners of psy. Take the psychotherapies and counselling. Classical psychoanalysis grew at a sedate pace: the membership of the British Psycho-Analytical Society was around 100 at the end of the Second World War, reaching 378 in 1985 (at which date, according to Roudinesco, 1990, there were 6210 psychoanalysts world-wide) and under 500 in 1995 – only about a dozen new analysts qualify in the UK each year. But by 1995, just one other school of therapy, that committed to the use of hypnosis, could name over 300 practitioners in its National Register of Hypnotherapists and Psychotherapists, and the British Association for Counselling lists over 2000 individual counsellors and psychotherapists in over 250 counselling and psychotherapy organizations ranging from the Adlerian Counselling Centre, through Bottlefed, Therapy Services for Adult Children of Alcoholics, Oxford Male Survivors Sanctuary, to the York Centre for Gestalt Development.

Britain, of course, cannot compete with America. From 531 members in 1931 (when Fernberger was already remarking that the organization had the character of a big business) membership of the American Psychological Association grew to over 11,000 in 1964, with 1600 psychologists employed directly and fulltime by the Federal government alone. By 1973 the organization had 35,000 full members and its convention in Montreal attracted 19,000 attendees; and by 1993 there were over 76,000 members and 42,000 affiliates. The American Psychoanalytic Association

had reached a membership of over 2000 by 1985 and around 3000 in 1995, with at least thirty-five affiliated societies and twenty-seven institutes. Readers may amuse themselves by estimating the numbers of psychotherapists and counsellors in the land of the unquiet self.

These figures are not simply indicators of the spectacular growth of the business empire of the self over the last one hundred years, they are evidence of the birth of a new type of person. For human beings are the kinds of creatures who have no universal ontology, no essence whether this be spiritual or genetic. Our ontology is historical: it is both temporal and spatial. What humans are – perhaps better, what human beings are capable of, what we can do – is variable, historical, situational – not an originary 'being' but a mobile 'becoming'. The significance of the growth of psy in the twentieth century is the evidence it provides that, in all the little practices, gestures, pleasures, desires, norms, values, judgements, conflicts and sufferings of everyday life, human beings are becoming psychological selves.

IS THE HUMAN SOUL MADE OF LANGUAGE?

Language is one of the keys to our assembly as psychological beings. It is, after all, only possible for us to delineate our passions, formulate our intentions, organize our thoughts through lexicons, grammars, syntax and semantics. Our culture enjoins each of us to follow the edict 'know thyself'. But how is such knowledge to be gained? Can this be by a pure act of introspection, turning our own gaze inwards to focus on the configurations of an inner experience? How are we to see this self which we are commanded to know? What are we to look for? How are we to articulate this to ourselves, let alone to others? What consequences follow from the things we discover about ourselves when we turn our eyes to our hidden self, attune our ears to the voice within, make ourselves the object of our own gaze?

No, our reflexivity – our self-inspection, self-scrutiny, self-judgement – is not, can never be naive. When Augustine urged his contemporaries in late antiquity to 'return to yourself, it is in the inner man that truth dwells', the inner man whom he sought was a very different character from the psychological self we are urged today to discover as our truth (cf. Hadot, 1995, p.65). The gaze of our inner eye is configured by words, phrases, explanations and valuations: we can experience ourselves as certain types of creatures only because we do so under a certain description. The birth and history of psychological descriptions of individuals and their conduct hollows out a certain kind of self, locates certain zones or fields 'within' that are of significance, requires us to speak of ourselves in particular vocabularies, to evaluate ourselves in relation to certain norms. Traumas, emotional deprivation, depression, repression, projection, motivation, desire, extroverts and introverts – we have a psy vocabulary – or rather a

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family of divergent vocabularies – to describe ourselves. And whatever the origin of these languages of the self, they are indispensable to the ways in which we can make ourselves the objects of our own reflection.

The anatomy of the psychological self was put together over this century through a cluster of organizing terms: intelligence, personality, motivation, role and so forth. Take, for example, 'attitude'. From being a visible composition of the body – one could adopt a 'defiant attitude by posture, gesture, facial expression – the word moves in the early decades of this century to designate an invisible psychological state. The significance of the psychologization of attitude was the promise of a science of action itself. As Thomas and Znanieki put it, 'every manifestation of conscious life … can be treated as an attitude, because every one involves a tendency to action' in relation to 'social values' (Thomas and Znanieki, 1918, p. 27). Social psychology would be 'a general science of the subjective science of culture' (ibid., p. 31). By 1928 William Thurstone had devised the principles for the quantification of this new field of subjectivity, and could declare that 'attitudes can be measured': each attitude could be rated by giving numerical values to verbally expressed opinions and beliefs – for example, about abortion, capital punishment or Italians – along a scale ranging from positive to negative (Thurstone, 1928). By 1935, Gordon Allport could define attitude as 'the cornerstone of social psychology' which could explain such phenomena as prejudice, patriotism, loyalty, crowd behaviour, control by propaganda and much more: an attitude was a 'mental and neural state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related' (Allport, 1935). The social psychologists engaged in a multitude of investigations to chart these newly discovered 'attitudes': attitudes could account for the different propensities of women and men to favour prohibition or the tendency of Jewish students to favour birth control more than Catholics or Protestants. Industrial discontent, racial prejudice, the morale of citizens and the like could be described in terms of variations of attitudes. Organizations such as factories or armies could be managed in the light of a knowledge of the attitudes of their workers or soldiers. 'Attitude surveys' or 'morale surveys' were required if one was to ensure that problems did not arise from 'failures of communication'. But while attitude surveys revealed that consensus did not exist on basic beliefs and opinions, they also held out the hope that consensus could be engineered by attitude change. In the US during the Second World War, psychologists employed by the governments and the military engaged in a vast endeavour for the inscription, calculation and transformation of attitudes: morale surveys could be used to chart changing support for the war effort in general and for different policies; broadcasting techniques could be evaluated in terms of their success in changing attitudes. Everyday language for describing the determinants of conduct

– one's own and that of others – was reshaped. Children and workers were troublesome because they had 'attitude problems', conflicts were to be resolved by 'changing one's attitude'; one would do badly at a particular task because one did not have the right attitude. The vocabulary of attitude thus provided a new means of linking the subjective and the political: we govern our own conduct, and are governed by others, in terms of a novel psychological language of the internal dispositions which shape our actions.

Or consider the term 'trauma'. Ian Hacking has examined the psychologization of this term while studying the recent disputes in the United States over the status of 'recovered memories' of child sexual abuse (Hacking, 1995, p. 183 ff.). Trauma, Hacking reminds us, was once a surgeon's word referring to a wound on the body, most often the result of battle. Only gradually was trauma psychologized, as a result of a chain of little shifts in the late nineteenth century: the idea that head injuries without manifest external or neurological damage could cause loss of memory and paralysis gradually became linked with existing arguments which in turn linked hysteria and amnesia to lead to the notion that psychological shock could itself produce hysterical symptoms in a patient while itself being hidden to memory. The human actors in this process of psychologization were the great men in the history of the discipline: Pierre Janet, J.-M. Charcot and Sigmund Freud. But the chain of connection was established around a tangle of more mundane concerns in the 1860s and after: about the insurance costs and consequences of railway accidents which produced disability in sufferers without any visible lesion, about the possible links between the symptoms of such victims and hysteria, about the possible moral effects of physical trauma, terror or revulsion and so forth. Trauma had already become psychological when, in the 1880s, Janet argued that horrifying experiences were alone enough to produce hysterical symptoms, and that these could be removed by hypnosis which acted upon the memory of the original trauma. When Freud argued that the core of a hysterical attack was not a specific event but a memory which, most often, has the content of a psychical trauma, trauma had become fully psychological.

Once psychologized, we can think of any number of events and experiences that are traumatic – in terms of the damage they do, not to the limbs, the head or even the brain, but to the psyche, to personality, to development, to self-esteem. In early life, it now appears, traumatic events such as bereavement may cause irreversible psychological damage. In the case of adults, involvement in a road accident or witnessing of a fire, riot or crowd accident is sufficient to produce 'post-traumatic stress disorder' – according to the most recent version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* of the American Psychiatric Association, this is a disorder with a lifetime prevalence rate of up to 14 per cent and up to 58 per cent among

combat veterans and others 'at risk' (1994, p. 426). Not only is there now a whole specialist literature on the aetiology, diagnosis, treatment and prognosis of different kinds of trauma, but we can all have our own experiences of trauma – no wonder we are 'depressed' after splitting up with a partner, having a job interview, taking an exam: for of course these are 'incredibly traumatic'.

Trauma exemplifies a more general phenomenon – that the language is not a tranquil medium of description but the site, the stake and the result of conflicts, contestations and campaigns. Trauma is part of a whole politics of the psyche. A politics in the limited sense of a set of struggles around the nature, causes, reality, consequences, responsibility, funding and compensation, legislation and so forth of various forms of trauma and stress, such as childhood abuse, presence at a disaster, the emotional damage wrought by sexual harassment. But also a politics in a wider sense. For terms such as trauma – together with stress, anxiety, personality and many others – link the political and the personal. As Roger Smith has shown in his illuminating discussion of the notion of 'inhibition' in nineteenth-century political culture and psychology, such words and phrases act as translation points between rationalities of politics and ethics of conduct (Smith, 1992). How should we be required to behave? Should we exercise 'self-control over emotions' or strive for 'self-realization of our inner feelings'? Should our 'will' be disciplined by 'habits' or should we aspire to a society that accepts 'the need for each of us to enhance our self-esteem'?

The words that become powerful enable us to live particular kinds of lives. Kenneth Gergen among others argues that human beings do not just use language to recount their life to one another, they actually live out their lives as 'narratives' (Gergen, 1991). We use the stories of the self that our culture makes available to us, with their scenarios of emotions, their repertoires of motives, their cast-list of characters, to plan out our lives, to account for events and give them significance, to accord ourselves an identity as hero or victim, survivor or casualty within the plot of our own life, to shape our own conduct and understand that of others. When our culture provides us with life narratives couched in psychological terms, our lives really do become psychological in their form. Selfhood, and beliefs about the attributes of the self, feelings, intentions and the like, are properties, not of mental mechanisms but of conversations, grammars of speaking. They are both possible and intelligible only in societies where these things can properly, grammatically be said by people about people. Rules of this 'grammar' of individuals – 'language games' – produce or induce a moral repertoire of relatively enduring features of personhood in inhabitants of particular cultures, and one that has a morally constraining quality: we are obliged to be individuals of a certain sort. Talk about the self actually makes up the types of self-awareness and self-understanding

that human beings acquire and display in their own lives, *and* makes up social practices themselves, to the extent that such practices cannot be carried out without certain self-understandings (cf. Shotter, 1985; Shotter and Gergen, 1989).

Psychological language is thus one of the key components of the modern soul. Ian Hacking terms this 'the looping effects of human kinds' (1995, pp. 21 and 239). At certain historical moments, particular issues or problems are *constructed* in certain ways – as melancholia or depression, as hysteria or post-traumatic syndrome, as cowardice or shell-shock – only through the possibilities available within language: words, vocabularies, the grammars of explanation and causation, the narratives of life events that it provides. Language makes only certain ways of being human describable, and in so doing makes only certain ways of being human possible. To be human is to act, and to act is to behave under a certain description, and the possibility of description is language. This stress on language reactivates an old theme in the philosophy of the human and social sciences about the meaningful nature of human existence, which is by no means unproblematic. However, I do not want to pursue those difficulties here. I have said enough, I think, to persuade you that the availability of psy languages of description of our actions, for our passions, for our affections and our ills, makes available new ways of describing actual or possible actions, hence of thinking about them, judging them, undertaking them or refraining from them. The words for our souls enjoined upon us by psychology transform what human beings take themselves to be, and thus what they can become.

These newly invented or psychologized psy words enable human beings to classify their experiences in particular ways and to communicate them to others. But they have a more fundamental importance. They both presuppose and open out a 'psy-shaped space' within each of us, an internal zone with its own processes, laws, types of health and disease, variations, traits and so forth. Between the brain – with its nerves, its physiology, its flows, fibres, organs and tissues – and human conduct – with the dilemmas of right and wrong, and the difficult judgements of forms of life – lies an inner psy space that stands behind, originates, explains and accords meaning to any act. From now on, all our practices for the management of life, all our systems of spiritual guidance, all our cures for the anguish and the violence of the human condition and all our judgement of ourselves and others, will be obliged to make reference to this psy-shaped space that inhabits us.

MACHINATIONS OF THE SELF

But the human self is not merely a matter of the meanings of words: it is assembled through techniques, practices, 'machinated' in a hundred little

machines for living within which we are all caught up. We need to focus less on what language *means* and more upon what language *does*, what components of thinking and acting it connects up, what it enables human beings to dream into existence, to do to themselves and to others. Language has to be understood in its material aspect, as integrated into a number of technologies that make human beings capable of being and doing particular things – making lists, sending messages, accumulating information from distant locations in a single spot, individualizing and ordering one another, extending new lines of force, making possible new effects. The printing press together with practices of instruction in the techniques, gestures and habits of reading and writing make it possible for human beings to be transformed into 'literate beings', identifying themselves with their signatures, committing themselves through written contracts, moving from public religious instruction based upon memorization and catechisms to the private reading of the Bible; their conduct would be civilized by being connected to treatises of civility, new spaces of interiority would be formed through establishing bodily and ocular connections with books and by means of the complex techniques of silent reading practised in libraries and other spaces set aside for contemplation and reflection (Chartier, 1989). Techniques of numeracy and systems of number enable individuals to be transformed into 'calculating beings' with a certain way of relating to themselves and their future – enabling the cultivation and generalization of foresight and prudence, say, as one calculates one's financial future in the form of a budget. Techniques of inscription, collection, tabulation and calculation together with programmes of statistics, transform human beings into members of societies, understanding their fate as shaped by social forces, their propensities as governed by social laws, their security promoted by their incorporation into social machines of welfare and insurance. The bureaucratic procedures of record-keeping, of writing, filing, referencing, cross-checking, transform human beings into cases whose dossiers embody their nature, their biography and their fate. In these ways and others, the human soul is fabricated and capacitated as it is traced through our material forms of notation, collation, circulation and utilization of inscriptions, and the senses are amplified and machinated though their connections with artefacts and bodily techniques.

Other technical accomplishments fabricate the psychological self. Take, for example, memory. The memory of oneself as a unique and continuous individual with a biography is central to our contemporary selfhood. But such biographical memory should not be thought of as a primordial capacity of the human animal. Memory is itself a set of techniques. Friedrich Nietzsche called these 'mnemotechnics': the devices whereby one 'burns' the past into oneself and makes it available in the present as a warning, a comfort, a bargaining device, a weapon or a wound (Nietzsche,

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1956, p. 192). The classical art of memory, which was revived in the Middle Ages, was a particular set of techniques for remembering involving the invention of places or spaces in which items of knowledge or experience were 'placed' by the person wishing to later recall them: one could retrieve them merely by imagining oneself taking a walk past the landmarks on this territory (Yates, 1966; cf. Hirst and Wooley, 1982, p. 39). But even when not made into a conscious art, memory is a technical accomplishment. For something to be remembered it must first be given the status of an experience, then made available for reactivation though pledges, rituals, songs, pictures, libraries, contracts, debts, the design of buildings, the structuring of space and time and much more.

One's memory of oneself as a self with a unique character, an individual biography grounded in a family history and the like, is produced and assembled through family albums of photographs, birthday cards, portraits, the dossier of school reports, the curriculum vitae and a whole series of other practical accomplishments. Psy is important here, not only because it provides the languages in which these artefacts are written or by means of which they are read, but also because it has invented a series of technologies of memory which reactivate the past in the present as a set of feelings and needs, emotions experienced or repressed, blows to self-esteem or contributors to the stability of personality. These range from the case history to the psychotherapeutic confessional, from hypnosis to techniques of 'recovered memory'. Each produces memory in a particular codified form, a language, but also a grammar of causes and effects, a diagram of interior forces and flows of affect. Since their earliest uses, psy memory techniques have been particularly controversial: are the memories produced through these 'artificial' devices 'artefacts'? No doubt this is because what has been produced through the application of such techniques is often scandalous – memories of infantile desire or of childhood abuse. But for our present purposes, the salience of these psychological memory techniques is different. It lies in their wide dissemination in practices far removed from the analyst's couch or the doctor's consulting room – into magazines, newspapers, the ubiquitous interview of celebrities, radio recollection programmes, confessional television talk shows and so on. The impact of these new memory technologies is not merely as a pedagogy of reminiscence; our relation to them is also one of mimesis. We come to inhabit particular styles of remembering ourselves, and accounting for our present in terms of our past. Only through being assembled together with an array of non-natural, non-individualized techniques which extend far beyond the boundaries of the human skin is one capable of being a self with an autobiography.

These truths of the psychological self do not reside in a tranquil universe of meanings but in a set of conflicts and battles over truth – and there is only truth where there is authority. One can know the truth of

oneself only through the intermediary of a mediator – whether this be a spiritual guide, a priest or a scientific expert – whose pronouncements carry the effects of truth because they are spoken from a certain position. Today these may be spoken from the chair positioned just behind the therapist's couch, from the desk upon which are laid out the scores of one's personality test, or from the ward round wherein the diagnosis of the multi-disciplinary team is pronounced. Or they may be spoken by the expert on the television documentary or confessional talk show, mediated by the agony aunt in the newspaper or magazine, 'black boxed' as indisputable facts in the common sense of television soap operas or popular novels. And not all stories are equal: only some statements can be 'in the true' and only those authorized can speak with authority when it comes to the truths of the placid or troubled self.

When I speak of my trauma, my stress, my neurosis, my low self-esteem, I thus activate more than words, meanings, narratives – I engage myself with a whole regime of truth, an array of relations of authority. As Foucault put it, what are significant are 'the various statuses, the various sites, the various positions' that must be occupied in particular regimes if something is to be sayable, hearable, operable': the physician, the scientist, the therapist, the counsellor, the lover (Foucault, 1972, p. 54). These relations emplace both the object spoken about – emotions, mental pathologies, normal development and the like – and those who are the subjects of their speech – clients, patients, users, survivors, ordinary people. Relations among words are always assembled within other relations. The language of psy, even when it is spoken and dialogic rather than the written monologue of the scientific text, is manifested only within particular practices: confessing, diagnosing, sharing, interpreting, assessing, classifying, predicting, evaluating, treating, explaining. These practices do not inhabit an amorphous and functionally homogeneous domain of meaning and negotiation among individuals. They are located in particular sites and procedures which have yet to be fully investigated: the subjectifying practices of our contemporary schools and courts, of the social work interview and the consultation with the doctor, of the ward group of the psychiatric hospital, of the interview with the personnel officer, the session in the analyst's consulting room, the therapeutic group meeting, the marriage guidance encounter, the radio phone-in. Together with the psychological reconfiguring of the spaces of domesticity or erotics, and less evident spaces such as the gym, the sports field, the supermarket, the cinema, we have here a whole series of little machines for fabricating and holding in place the psychological self.

The subjectifying effects of psy are not simply a matter of the 'symbolic violence' of a particular meaning system: language is structured into variegated relations which grant powers to some and delimit the powers of others, which enable some to judge and some to be judged, some to cure and some to be cured, some to speak truth and others to acknowledge its

authority and embrace it, aspire to it or submit to it. And if, in our vernacular speech, we think of ourselves in psy terms, we do so only through the relations we have established with this truth regime: for we each play our own part, as parents, teachers, partners, lovers, consumers and sufferers, in these contemporary psychological machinations of the self.

EXERCISING THE SELF

Many have decried the influence of psy on our culture by suggesting that it has undermined and replaced theology in our moral codes. Of course, they are right that our ethical language is more likely to be psychological than spiritual. Yet the journalistic argument that psy has taken the place of religion, that psychotherapy has taken the place of confession and the psy expert has assumed the role of priest is simplistic. Regimes of ethics since the Greeks have depended in different ways upon particular and varying notions of the person who is thought to be the subject of ethics. Systems of injunction, of prescription, proscription and valuation are intrinsically bound to conceptions of what it is to be the kind of human being, man, woman, master, slave, child, freeman, serf, who is the bearer of ethics.

How should we understand the psychologization of ethics? Pierre Hadot has suggested that we approach ethics not as a set of abstract moral codes, but from the perspective of what he terms 'spiritual exercises': the instruction and practice of particular techniques for the therapeutics of the passions, of the mind, of the body, of the will (Hadot, 1995). Hadot has pointed to the ascesis, the practice of spiritual exercises in the service of the arts of living, which, albeit in different ways, lay at the heart of the teaching of the Stoics, the Epicureans, Socratic and Platonic dialogues, in Neo-platonism and in the Cynics. For Hadot, such exercises were essential to the very meaning of philosophy in antiquity. One who would lead a philosophical life must practise self-examination, cultivate attention to the present moment, devote oneself to duties, cultivate indifference to indifferent things, keep certain things 'before one's eyes'. These spiritual exercises varied widely. They variously entailed such things as practical exercises to curb anger, gossip and curiosity and to cultivate moral habits, meditation first thing in the morning and last thing at night, utilization of rhetoric and imagery to mobilize the imagination, memorization of aphorisms so as to keep the fundamental dogmas at hand, the cultivation of relaxation and serenity, the practice of dialogue with others so as to be able to undertake the internal dialogue necessary to render oneself present to oneself. But they point to a recurrent phenomenon, the utilization of practical techniques, albeit for an elite, to reshape the soul in the service of an art of living.

These practices of spiritual exercise and spiritual guidance did not die with the ancient world. They were the organizing principles of early

Christian communities, of the Christian brothers and 'friends of God' (Brown, 1978; 1989). The spiritual exercises of Ignatius Loyola and of the early Latin Christianity that preceded him were largely Christian versions of Greco-Roman practices (Hadot, 1995; Rabbow, 1954). Their attitude to experience was one of ascesis, not in our modern sense of asceticism as austerity and self-denial, but as the practice of exercises of attention to oneself, one's thoughts and intentions: the cultivation of an attention to oneself in order to achieve a transfiguration of the soul. From the twelfth century onwards, a new practice of Christian administration of 'the cure of souls' made advances across Europe, its priestly practitioners using such treatises as Abelard's *Sic et Non* (Yes and No) and *Ethica Scito te Ipsum* (Ethics or Know Thyself) as their manuals. They spelled out the obligations of conscience in the here and now, and the forms of action permitted or forbidden in all spheres of life from contracts to war. 'After 1215, when annual confession became the obligation of all Christians, these treatises became the guides to Christian souls everywhere' (Nelson, 1965, p. 64; cf. Leites, 1988). The rise of literacy, to which I have already referred, made possible the dissemination of a whole range of other spiritual exercises, from the daily reading of the Bible, through the exercises prescribed by books of manners and civility, to the nightly confession in the writing of the diary. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the generalization of practices of spiritual direction beyond a holy elite. Weber and others famously pointed to the way in which Protestantism universalized Christian asceticism and enjoined it upon each pious individual who lived in the mundane world. In the same period in Europe and the United States, elements of religious exercises for the formation and administration of an inner and personal conscience were incorporated within a whole range of secular practices – notably those of schooling – for the inculcation and administration of habits of life and modes of self-scrutiny and vigilance (Hunter, 1988; Rose, 1993).

It is in this sense that we might understand differently the tired analogy between therapy and religion. For a genealogy of the therapeutic would indeed trace a line between psy practices of the self and ancient spiritual exercises: a line drawn in order to diagnose the variety of ways in which human beings have made themselves the subject of ethical work. Freud, for example, did not just devise a whole language of description, as Benjamin Nelson has suggested; he was also central to the invention of a novel schema for the direction of souls (Nelson, 1965). Psychoanalysis here refers not to a series of texts but to an array of practical ways in which human beings could take themselves as the objects of their own thought and practice, and act upon themselves in the name of the talking cure, the couch, the case history, the free association, the interpretation, the transference and counter-transference and so on. Freud was not the first to utilize these devices, each of which had a longer history and a wider

provenance in the practice of nerve doctors at the close of the nineteenth century. But we have witnessed a proliferation of these ways of relating to ourselves over the past hundred years. The diverse techniques of psy that have been promulgated by rival schools – from rational-emotive therapy to behaviour therapy, and from humanistic counselling to family therapy – have disseminated a variety of procedures by means of which human beings either individually or in groups, using the techniques elaborated by psychological experts, can act upon their bodies, their emotions, their beliefs and their forms of conduct in order to transform themselves, in order to improve themselves and to live a better life.

These practices of self-inspection and self-problematization in terms of an inner psychological domain and its vicissitudes become the key elements in our contemporary arts of living: a style of life whose very ethos might be termed therapeutic. They make possible a number of ways for 'setting up and developing relationships with [oneself], for self-reflection, self-knowledge, self-examination, for the deciphering of the self by oneself, for the transformation one seeks to accomplish with oneself as object' (Foucault, 1988, p. 29). We can identify a number of different aspects of these psychotherapeutic techniques for the problematization of the self.

First, there are the different techniques though which one *attends to oneself*: modes of self-inspection, vocabularies for self-description, methods of self-examination. While understandably it is the confessional practices of the therapies that have attracted most attention, we should not underestimate here the role played in self-problematization and self-management by the whole panoply of psy tools for assessing, calibrating and classifying humans: tests of intelligence and personality, charts, scales and typologies. Second, they involve different modes of *engaging with the self* – an epistemological mode, for example, which searches for past determinants of present states, an interpretative mode, in which the word or act is understood in terms of its significance in relation to other parties to the interaction, a descriptive mode which seeks to fix attention on conduct dissected into micro-competencies such as grooming, bathing, eating, eye-contact, which can be recorded, normalized and made the subject of pedagogies of social skills. Third, there are the diverse *aspects of the self* accorded significance. Some have suggested that our contemporary relation to ourselves is structured by desire. But desire is only one of the aspects in which the contemporary self is grasped. Perhaps more significant, because of its dissemination through a range of professional practices from social work to nursing, has been an attention to the superficiality of 'behaviour' itself in the form of social skills and capacities to cope. Fourth, there are the variety of modes of *evaluating the self*, diagnosing its ills, calibrating its failings and its advances in terms of the norms of the intellect or the personality propagated by psychology, the repertoires of feelings and emotions disseminated by the therapies, the forms of

normality certified by the proponents of cognitive behavioural systems. Fifth, there are the various ways of *disclosing the self* – ways of speaking not only in the consulting room, but to children, bosses, employees, friends and lovers. I have already remarked on the proliferation of sites within which human beings are required to reflect upon themselves in psychological terms and render this into speech, from the doctor's surgery to the radio interview. And sixth, there are the different techniques for *the curing of the self* – the purgative effects of catharsis, the liberating effect of understanding, the restructuring effect of interpretation, the little practices for the retraining of thoughts and emotions, the techniques one should adopt to raise self-confidence and to maximize self-esteem. Of particular importance here has been the invention of new methods for the therapeutics of behaviour and cognition, versatile micro-procedures which can be taught by a variety of professionals and utilized by individuals in order to reshape their psychological self to 'take control of their lives' within an ethics of 'empowerment'.

It is through such little techniques of the self that psy permeates our modes of being at a molecular level, not merely forming a context of meaning, but structuring the very texture of our ways of acting. Our contemporary ethical regimes are psychological to the extent that the forms of personhood that underpin so many of our practices have themselves become psychological.

THE PSY EFFECT

Nothing I have said should be taken as asserting the dominance of psy in our lives – for could not the same be said of, for example, the languages, images, techniques and seductions of economics? Nor have I suggested that the activities of the psy professions are themselves the 'cause' of all the mutations involved in the birth of the psychological self. But I have tried to point to something like a 'psy effect' in our contemporary experience of ourselves. An effect in the sense in which Gilles Deleuze understands the notion of an effect, such as the Kelvin effect or the Compton effect, as deployed in scientific discourse:

> An effect of this kind is by no means an appearance or an illusion. It is a product which spreads or distends itself over a surface; it is strictly co-present to, and co-extensive with, its own cause, and determines this cause as an immanent cause, inseparable from its effects.
>
> (Deleuze, 1990, p. 70, quoted in Burchell 1991, p. ix)

The psy effect, that is to say, is not to be explained by seeking a cause, but rather delineated by diagnosing the ways in which human existence has become intelligible and practicable under a certain description. The psy effect is to be located not in the abstract space of culture and meaning, but

in a whole variety of practical 'machines' – desiring machines, labouring machines, pedagogic machines, punitive machines, curative machines, consuming machines, war machines, sporting machines, governing machines, spiritual machines, bureaucratic machines, market machines, financial machines – which engage human beings on the condition that they relate to themselves as psychological selves. Our modern self is put together out of the ways in which, in each of these assemblages, a particular psychological relation to ourselves is presupposed, administered, enjoined and assembled.

In all these diverse machinations of being, a number of themes recur: choice, fulfilment, self-discovery, self-realization. Contemporary practices of subjectification, that is to say, put into play a being that must be attached to a project of identity, and to a secular project of 'lifestyle', in which life and its contingencies become meaningful to the extent that they can be construed as the product of personal choice. We need to examine how each of our little machines of living, our assemblages of passion and of pleasure, of labour and of consumption, of war and of sport, of aesthetics and theology, have accorded a psychological form to their subjects. We need to anatomize the relations of power and subjectification brought into existence. Perhaps most fundamental to the contemporary politics of our relation to ourselves is the way in which psychological modes of explanation, claims to truth and systems of authority have participated in the elaboration of ethical regimes that stress an ideal of responsible autonomy and have become allied with programmes for regulating individuals in the name of that autonomous responsibility (cf. Rose, 1990; 1993; Rose and Miller, 1992). For these new ethical forms have become central to the government of human conduct in advanced liberal democracies, governing humans in the name of their freedom as psychological selves.

NOTE

In this chapter I have drawn directly upon arguments made in more detail in the essays collected in Rose 1996b.

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