Introduction: Why Institutional Analysis, Why Now

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In many ways 2022 is a momentous year. As we slowly emerge from the global Covid-19 pandemic, people the world over are rethinking institutions. From issues of policing, governance, territorial sovereignty, public health and, of course, mental health, the austere institutions that guarantee sociality and which, until recently, have been understood as ridged and inert have been called into question. This year also marks the 30th anniversary of Félix Guattari's death. Guattari's life and work constantly challenged and reinvented institutions. As a militant philosopher, psychotherapist and activist, he tirelessly sought to transform alienating institutions in order to collectively disalienate them, creating the maximum potential for freedom for the individuals who inhabit and transverse institutional arrangements. It is for this reason that there is an urgent need to revisit Guattari's work of institutional analysis.

A (very) Brief History of Institutional Psychotherapy and Institutional Analysis

There is an important and growing movement in Deleuze scholarship to acknowledge the importance of his friend and collaborator, Félix Guattari.[1] Readers of this journal will likely know much of Guattari's biography: he was, according to Deleuze, '[a] militant political activist and a psychoanalyst [who] just so happen to meet in the same person, and instead of each minding his own business, they ceaselessly communicate, interfere with one another, and get mixed up – each mistaking himself for the other' (Deleuze in Guattari 2015: 7). To engage with Guattari's legacy necessitates an explicit attention to the relationship between theory and practice, specifically institutional analysis.

Guattari's political and intellectual trajectory started in 1943 when, still in high school, he met the teacher Fernand Oury, an early follower of Célestin Freinet and pioneer of Institutional Pedagogy (Dosse 2010: 25). Although their initial time together was brief (Fernand was imprisoned by the Germans three weeks later), it left a lasting impression on Guattari. So much so that following the war in 1945 Guattari, fifteen years old at the time, joined the political Student Hostel organisation (Ibid.). Through Fernand Oury, Guattari met Jean Oury, Fernand's younger brother and

founder of La Borde Clinic, who introduced Guattari to François Tosquelles and Jacques Lacan. This ‘line of flight’ took Guattari to Saint-Alban Hospital – where the ‘red psychiatrist’ and mentor to Jean Oury and Frantz Fanon, Tosquelles was director –, to La Borde Clinic, to a close association with Lacan and the *Ecole freudienne*, to his eventual break with Lacan and to his collaborative work with Deleuze.

At the heart of this historiography is institutional analysis, a theory and practice of reshaping institutions, which are broadly understood as anything that *institutes* sociality. Institutional analysis is an expanded application of Institutional Psychotherapy, a movement which Guattari was also part of and has its origins in Saint-Alban Hospital’s experience of the French Résistance during World War II. The hospital was managed by a small but militant group of anti-fascist psychiatrists including Tosquelles, Lucien Bonnafé, and linked with other resistant psychiatrist like Georges Daumézon in Orleans. Food administration in occupied France infamously resulted in the deaths of 40,000 patients (Robcis 2016: 212; Robcis 2022: 1) due to the Vichy government restricting patients to only half the food they needed to survive. However, determined to resist this programme of starvation, the doctors at Saint-Alban radically opened the hospital up and integrated it into the life of the local village, a practice which they referred to as ‘social therapy’ (cf. Robcis 2022: Ch. 1). This resulted in Saint-Alban enduring Occupation without a single patient death (Robcis 2016: 212). The hospital was also an important space for political resistance. During the war Saint-Alban was also a staging area for Résistance fighters, published a clandestine Résistance newsletter and gave refuge to political dissidents and artists such as Paul Eluard and Tristan Tzara. (Ibid.).

Following the war, two young psychiatrists joined the hospital: Jean Oury and Frantz Fanon. Building on the hospital’s experience of the Résistance, they formed a movement that proposed new ways of psychiatric management, which Daumézon named *Psychothérapie institutionelle* or Institutional Psychotherapy. At its core, Institutional Psychotherapy maintains that an institution cannot be therapeutic without first having a practical critique of itself as an institution, giving some power to the patients in the form of patient clubs and allowing for organisational change when necessary. Their key formulation is that the hospital is a microcosm of society and the hospital is ill (Oury 2007: 36). Institutional Psychotherapy set out to ‘treat’ the

hospital –and the psychiatric sector more generally – so that therapeutic interventions can become possible. What sets Institutional Psychotherapy apart from the anti-psychiatry movements in Britain and Italy is that, while anti-psychiatry wants to destroy the institution, Institutional Psychotherapy views institutions as necessary and seeks to transform them from within as a 'permanent revolution.' That is to say, the project is to create an institution that is able to continuously reorganise itself – to 'disalienate' itself – so that it fosters the greatest degree of freedom.

Key to understanding this approach is an awareness of what the term *institution* means. As Valentin Schaepelynck's contribution to this collection demonstrates,[2] the French understanding of 'institution' deviates from the English insofar as it is not solely understood as a rigid bureaucratic establishment. Institutions in this sense are any material or immaterial arrangements that allow forms of sociability. As such, they cannot, or at least should not, be destroyed because to do so would foreclose the possibility of social interaction. The project, therefore, is to analyse and re-work the collective set of arrangements which sociability is contextualised within.

This approach necessitates collective work and to that end they established the GTPsi (*Groupe de travail de psychothérapie et de sociothérapie institutionnelles* or the Working Group on Institutional Psychotherapy and Socio-therapy in English). Started by Jean Oury and François Tosquelles in 1960, the GTPsi drew heavily on the work of Freud and Marx in order to formulate a theory of double alienation: social (Marx) and psychological (Freud). The objective of the group was nothing sort of a full revolution in psychotherapeutic services, instituting that they referred to as a politics of the sector (*politique de secteur*). [3] In their work, the GTPsi cast their theoretical net wide, also drawing from sociology, anthropology, structural linguistics, and philosophy (cf. Apprill 2013: 27-30). However, Guattari was not satisfied with their work being solely confined within the boundaries of psychotherapy. Shifting the project from psychotherapy to a broader form of institutional analysis, in 1965 (with, among others, Anne Querrien who has also contributed to this collection) Guattari founded FGERI (Federation of Groups for Institutional Study and Research), which functioned as an umbrella for a collection of various research groups called CERFI (Centre for Institutional Study, Research and Training) (Dosse 2010: 76). CERFI

brought together sociologists, urban planners, psychotherapists, economists, pedagogues and activists with the aim to,

> [T]ransform intellectual work into a non- academic research program by bringing together specific competencies from the independent groups composing the federation and organizing things such that individual contributions circulated as much as possible. All of this was done out of a desire to shake up entrenched habits of mind and received ideas in each established discipline (Ibid.)

What set the work done by CERFI (as well as GTPsi and FGERI) apart from the mainstream was their focus on the 'life of the group' rather than the individual (Boundas and Querrien 2016: 407). In other words, their focus was on group-subjects, which are, following Deleuze, defined by 'coefficients of *transversality* that ward off totalities and hierarchies. They are agents of enunciation, environments of desire, elements of institutional creation. Through their very practice, they ceaselessly conform to the limit of their own non-sense, their own death or rupture' (Deleuze in Guattari 2015: 14 emphasis in original). In practice, CERFI was a loose network of working groups that were thematically grouped together. Importantly, these groups were user-led, rather than led by academic 'experts.' FGERI-CERFI also published a journal titled *Recherches*. However, due to a changing economic environment, FGERI-CERFI came to an end in 1976 and *Recherches* shut down in 1984.

The ripples created by Institutional Psychotherapy / institutional analysis continue to inform academics around the world. Through their contact with key British psychotherapists such as Rümke, Winnicott and Bion, Institutional Psychotherapy also had a lasting impact on British mental health practices (Oury 2007: 42). Additionally, the role of Saint-Alban in the Résistance and the example it provided of a new relationship between psychiatric and institutional practices on the one hand and political activism on the other formed the basis for Fanon's therapeutic practice (cf. Tosquelles 2007: 10). As such, they are the bedrock of much of postcolonial theory. Through Fanon, Institutional Psychotherapy's influence can also be seen in political movements such as the Black Panthers.[4] However, Institutional Psychotherapy and institutional analysis have been largely overshadowed by Guattari's philosophic writings with Deleuze and all but written out of Fanon's historiography. This means

that, despite the movements' interdisciplinary and historical importance, very few publications have examined the concepts and practices that comprise Institutional Psychotherapy and institutional analysis. This gap in our knowledge is especially troubling given the current political and psychosocial landscape. Following years of austerity politics, a nuanced and rich understanding of the process of double alienation is needed in order to critically engage with and resist the general decline in mental health,[5] the rise of nationalisms and the growing strength of the reactionary right.

Institutional Analysis Today

The past few years have been marked by a renewed interest in institutional analysis. This year Camille Robcis published her much anticipated book, *Disalienation: Politics, Philosophy, and Radical Psychiatry in France*. In Canada, Gary Genosko and Benjamin Bandosz have recently launched the Guattari Research Group, Toronto (GRG-T), a transdisciplinary group of scholars, artists, writers, ecologists, mental health professionals and community members devoted to the investigation of topics inspired by the life and work of Félix Guattari. Robcis' research has done much to illuminate the historic intellectual connections formed by and through Institutional Psychotherapy and Genosko has been instrumental in articulating the need to seriously examine Guattari's work, effectively pulling him out from Deleuze's shadow. Editorially, Jean Khalfa and Robert Young's important work gathering Fanon's clinical writings has done more for Fanonian scholarship than can be put into words. Fanon's clinical work, in tandem with Khalfa's introductory essay, demonstrate the important contributions Fanon made to Institutional Psychotherapy, marking him as an important, if often overlooked, figure in the movement. Similarly, the French publisher *Editions d'une* publish important archival material relating to GTPsi as well as keys texts by Oury and Tosquelles.

However, it is the work done by the Network for Institutional Analysis that most directly informs this collection. Much like CERFI, the Network for Institutional Analysis is a rhizomatic association of academics, philosophers, psychoanalysts/group analysts/mental health professionals, architects, sociologists, urbanists, artists, curators, teachers, and activists. The group formed in November

2016 during *Radical Psychiatry and the Arts: Legacies and Actualisations*, a two-day meeting held at Nottingham Contemporary organised by Janna Graham, Alba Colomo, Merce Santos Mir, and Andrew Goffey. The intention was to aid in developing a strand of programmes around the legacies of anti-psychiatry, Institutional Psychotherapy/pedagogy, democratic psychiatry and their relationship with the arts. Starting from the position that these legacies could play a significant role in fighting the micro- and macro-fascisms of the present, and therefore need to be explored in practice-based approaches, the meeting focused on forming new collaborations, research projects and theoretically informed practices. The Network is radically heterogeneous and spans across Europe and South America. To date, the Network has organised multiple public events, bringing together theorists and practitioners to critically assess the theories and practices of institutional transformation. The articles collected in this journal are informed by these collective encounters. In that spirit, the important role Janna Graham and Andrew Goffey played in developing the Network for Institutional Analysis and their contributions to our understanding of institutional analysis cannot be overstated. The influence of their thought and the impact of their organising efforts haunt every contribution in this collection.

Overview of this collection

The locus of the Network for Institutional Analysis' work, and, by extension, this collection, is an explicit focus on concept formation and how theory translates into practice. This collection comes out of the first public event organised by the Network for Institutional Analysis, *Sur Analysis*, one of the first in-depth events on Institutional Psychotherapy and institutional analysis in the Anglophone world. It included a day-long symposium with papers from Jean-Claude Polack, Anne Querrien, Olivier Apprill, Valentin Schaepelynck, Susana Caló, Anthony Faramelli, Edward Thornton, Howard Caygill, and Andrew Goffey.[6] The second day of the event was experiential and consisted of an arrangement of workshops, groups and discussions.

The prefix *sur* has a particular meaning in French, which does not easily translate into English. It is usually translated simply as 'on,' but it also means 'about' and 'beyond.'

In other words, this collection is ‘on’ the subject of analysis as much as it is ‘about’ Institutional Psychotherapy and institutional analysis. However, it is also looking to go ‘beyond’ the history of institutional analysis. To that end, the articles in this collection transversally cross histories, concepts and practices.

Paying careful attention to the multiple meanings the word ‘institution’ has in French, Olivier Apprill’s article argues that Institutional Psychotherapy’s specificity is in the way in which the clinical and the political are able to connect their praxis. Building on Apprill’s article, Valentin Schaepelynch looks the way in which Institutional Psychotherapy traverses the works of Deleuze and Guattari in order to offer some ways the concept of ‘institution’ can be put to work. Writing from the position of someone who was active in the clinical work done at La Borde as well as instrumental in establishing CERFI, Anne Querrien’s article explores the concept ‘analyser’ and its importance for the practice of institutional analysis. Anthony Faramelli’s article continues this conceptual focus in an exploration of how the twin notions of crisis and resistance inform the practice of Institutional Psychotherapy. Patrick French’s article dives deeper into Guattari’s therapeutic practice at La Borde. Edward Thornton then moves the focus from psychotherapy to education and pedagogy in his article exploring Institutional Pedagogy and collaborative writing. Gary Genosko then turns the focus to politics and the events of May ’68 in his article “Félix Guattari and the 22nd of March Movement: For a Molecular Revolution of Institutions.” Concluding this collection, Susana Caló’s contribution explores issues of collective militant analysis by examining what is at stake in the collectivisaton of analysis beyond the group as a social-environmental process and according to a collective machinic perspective of enunciative processes.

Finally, institutional analysis is still an on-going and unfinished process. As such, no collection of essays and no single book (nor even a series of books) could possibly claim to be the definitive account of these diverse theories and practices. Therefore, this collection is intended to be a mere starting point in never-ending exploration of radical institutional practice. It is the hope of the authors here, as well as the many theorists and practitioners who comprise the Network for Institutional Analysis, that this will help start many more productive and joyous collaborative discussions.

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[1] The renaming of this very journal is perhaps the most visible and important indicator of this movement.

[2] See also Andrew Goffey (2016) "Guattari and transversality: Institutions, analysis and experimentation," *Radical Philosophy*, 195, pp. 38-47; Valentin Schaepelynck (2018) *L'Institution renversée: Folie, analyse institutionallelle et champ social*

[3] For a full elaboration of the GTPsi see Olivier Apprill (2013) *Une avant-garde psychiatrique: Le moment GTPSI (1960 – 1966)*

[4] In his book on Huey P. Newton and the Black Panthers, *Seize the Time*, Bobby Seal states that the Black Panthers were born out of a Fanon reading group that him and Newton were part of and that Fanonian theory was the foundation of the Panthers' political praxis.

[5] There is a direct correlation between income inequality, austerity and poor mental wellbeing. For a recent study in the UK see Cummins, I. (2018) "The Impact of Austerity on Mental Health Service Provision: A UK Perspective," in *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15, 1145, pp. 1-11.

[6] Audio recordings of the papers, with the exception of Howard Caygill's, can be found online at https://backdoorbroadcasting.net/2017/04/sur-analysis-institutional-psychotherapy-and-analysis/