

## **Humpty Oedipus in SchizoLand: Deleuze and Guattari with Lewis Carroll**

*Pietro Barbetta* - Centro Milanese di Terapia della Famiglia

### **Abstract**

I consider schizophrenia, in the first part of this essay, in the light of what I consider to be a scandalous explanation given by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in their books *Anti Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaux*. I particularly stress the comparison made by the French philosophers with that of Gregory Bateson. The second part of the essay concerns a close reading of Humpty Dumpty (the sixth chapter of *Through the Looking Glass*, by Lewis Carroll) in the light of Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalysis.

### **Keywords**

Schizophrenia, Alice, Therapy, Discursive practices, Deleuze, Guattari.

### **Résumé**

Dans la première partie de cet article, je prends l'idée de schizophrénie selon ce que je considère comme étant une explication scandaleuse – celle donnée par Gilles Deleuze et Felix Guattari dans les livres *l'Anti Oedipus* et *Milles Plateaux*. Je souligne surtout la comparaison établie par les philosophes français avec celle de Gregory Bateson. Dans la deuxième partie, je fais une lecture attentive de Humpty Dumpty (le sixième chapitre de *Through the Looking Glass*, de Lewis Carroll) à la lumière de la schizoanalyse de Deleuze et Guattari.

### **Mots-clés**

Schizophrénie, Alice, thérapie, pratiques discursives, Deleuze, Guattari.

## INTRODUCTION

Let us start with a quote from Dostoevsky, in "Crime and Punishment" (1866-2015):

"...do you know that in Paris they have been conducting serious experiments as to the possibility of curing the insane, simply by logical argument? One professor there, a scientific man of standing, lately dead, believed in the possibility of such treatment. His idea was that there's nothing really wrong with the physical organism of the insane, and that insanity is, so to say, a logical mistake, an error of judgment, an incorrect view of things. He gradually showed the madman his error and, would you believe it, they say he was successful? But as he made use of douches too, how far success was due to that treatment remains uncertain... So it seems at least."

(p. 430)

Dostoevsky (*op. cit.*) refers here to Jean-Etienne Dominique Esquirol, the most important French Psychiatrist of the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. This quotation comes from one of the best modern novels ever written: "Crime and Punishment", from 1866. I introduce, briefly, the program of "making Schizophrenia" by the Psychiatric Dispositive (Foucault, 1963). *Dementia Praecox* is the term that was first used to name Schizophrenia, which is the later way used to name the illness. Both words, in a way, engendered how "Madness" became a medical issue.

My hypothesis is that "Madness" became subjected to the medical field after two episodes. The first was described in 1963 by Michel Foucault in *Madness and Civilization* (1964). I have to take for granted your knowledge of the book or invite you to read at least some chapters in order to get acquainted with Foucault's ideas on the subject.

The second episode is the invention of a particular *Specter*, term that evolved from *Dementia Praecox* (a Latin term meaning "Precocious Cognitive Impairment") to Schizophrenia (which means "split mind"). You have to think of something resembling a line that splits into two curves. In the dominion of one dimension, one divides itself in two, opening up a second dimension and, thereby, creating a bi-dimensional space. If we call the one-dimensional line (using an expression given by Marcuse (1964) "one dimensional man", then we can make a first proposition. In the dominion of linearity, any form of splitting (*Spaltung* in German) that produces a two dimensional space is schizo-phrenic (splits the mind). The same is valid for any new dimension that can be introduced.

Schizophrenia has been considered by Psychiatry as a "Thought Disorder". In order to preserve a certain amount of consistency (let's leave the question like this, without specification, because an analysis of the whole field would involve a serious and long endeavor), *logic* must introduce some axiomatic statement (axioms like: identity, non-contradiction, third excluded), together with some meta-rules (logical levels to avoid paradoxes, for instance). Here are two examples, the first concerning identity and correlates:

1 - Or I am Pietro, or I'm not Pietro, *tertium non datur*. But I am Pietro and not-Pietro because of my life script. When I was a child people called me Piergiulio, my parents and closest friends call me Piero, although I sign my name Pietro, not considering the nicknames I had and other dangerous things (I am joking here!) such as being the scum of the earth, the person who enjoys being humiliated, boss of the world, Zelig, the man who demonstrated that penis

envy is more prevalent in men than in women, etc. So in everyday language, axioms of logic are not valid at all, and we can present here many other examples.

The second example concerns logical levels, meta rules or metalanguages:

2 - When I say: "I'm a liar, believe me!" I should make a distinction between the content of the proposition and the relationship I'm going to have with the person I have to deal with when I tell "I am a liar". In the everyday life we can create a context in which the statement "I am a liar" is absolutely valid. Let us suppose you are a kind of Rodolfo Valentino who likes astonishing your possible *victime d'amour*. In the movie *Valentino*, by Ken Russel, the only woman he falls in love with is the one who says "tell me wonderful lies!".

Now, I will discuss Deleuze and Guattari *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1972, 1980), and later the relationship that Lewis Carroll built between Alice and Humpty Dumpty, the sixth chapter of *Through the Looking-Glass*.

## DELEUZE, GUATTARI AND BATESON

In 1972, Deleuze (a French Philosopher) and Guattari (a French psychologist and psychoanalyst) invented "schizoanalysis". What is schizoanalysis? The book from which I took this subject is *Anti-Oedipus*. The second chapter has the eloquent title of "Psycho-Analysis and Familialism: the Holy Family", in which one reads: "The function of Oedipus as dogma, or the "nuclear complex", is inseparable from a forcing by which the psychoanalyst as theoretician elevates himself to the conception of a generalized Oedipus" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 58). Here Oedipus is considered an authoritarian dogma. At first glance, he seems to contradict the biological conception of schizophrenia, which is mainstream in biological psychiatry: "Did the imperialism of Oedipus require only the renunciation of biological realism? Or wasn't something else sacrificed to Oedipus, something infinitely stronger? For what Freud and the first analysts discover the domain of free syntheses where everything is possible: endless connections, nonexclusive disjunctions, nonspecific conjunctions, partial objects and flow. (...) All the chains of the unconscious are biunivocalized. Linearized, suspended from a despotic signifier [that is: the Oedipus]" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 61).

Here we have to go back to Freud's "Interpretation of Dreams" (1899/2013), completely deleted from the psychoanalytic memory:

"Thus I perceive the nature of the relation between the dream-content and dream-thoughts: Not only are the elements of the dream determined several times over by the dream-thoughts, but the individual dream-thoughts are represented in the dream by several elements. Starting from a content of the dream, the path of the association leads to a number of dream-thoughts; and from a single dream-thought to several elements of the dream."  
(p. 433)

This is what Freud calls "over-determination". There is just chaos. Dreams are there to give us a glance, a frenzied look, of chaos. There is no simple linear determination. This is exactly the political agenda of Schizoanalysis. It is not by chance that the subtitle of both *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaux* (which is a "Felix" continuation of *Anti-Oedipus*) is

## Capitalism and Schizophrenia.

What does stating that the Oedipus is a despotic signifier mean? (It is not by chance that a schizophrenic poet like Hölderlin made a translation of the Sophocles tragedy *Oedipus the King as Oedipus the Tyrant*). It means that in Psychoanalysis (and in Family Therapy also) the matrix of all interpretation is the “daddy-mommy-me triangle”. It is as if everything that happens in the entire life of the subject depends on the “Holy Family”.

So, what is the main argument put forward by Deleuze/Guattari? The Ego is a product of Oedipusalization, which means submission to the mainstream of production and reproduction in a capitalist society. In order to obtain such a submission, production must be submitted to a linear logic in which the identity principle is constitutive of the subject: the proper name, the reality principle, the Law, the Mercedes Benz, the I-pad, etc.

The schizophrenic does not (or is not able to) submit to this principle, she/he can be, at the same time multiple things, persons, races, continents, nations, religions, etc., in the free flux of lines of flight. Remember the movie *The Ruling Class* by Peter Medak and Peter Barnes? It was made in 1972, the same year as *Anti-Oedipous*, thus respecting the *Zeitgeist*. Peter O'Toole is like a non Oedipalized man (a schizophrenic). He thinks to be Jesus, but at the same time he is able to see the spectral reality of the Chamber of Lords: skeletons dressed by red ermines.

From this point of view, Gregory Bateson's (2000) first formulation of “Double Bind” as a premise of schizophrenia, must be reversed in Deleuze and Guattari. The Double Bind, which is constitutive of every kind of communication, is the source of neuroticism (submission) in the very moment in which it is to be solved by separating the content (liar) from the relationship (I am). When the subject learns to distinguish the two levels of communication, she/he becomes neurotic, as we all are (including the actual writer and also Deleuze and Guattari), which is to say, all subjected to the Law of production and reproduction in capitalist society. In this context, schizophrenia is a kind of line of flight. The very expression of modern art and literature (Lewis Carroll or James Joyce come to mind) is another way of creating a line of flight from double bind.

Let us follow a quotation from the second chapter of “AntiOedipus” concerning *castration* in Psychoanalysis. With regards to “Castration”, it has to do with two different (so called) complexes: *castration anxiety* (males) and *penis envy* (females), which means the submission to a sharp differentiation of genders. About it, Deleuze and Guattari write the following in *Anti Oedipus* (1983):

“This something in common [castration] must lay the foundation for the exclusive use of the disjunctions of the unconscious – and teach us resignation. Resignation to Oedipus, to castration: for girls, renunciation for the desire of the penis; for boys, renunciation of male protest – in short, “assumption of the one sex”.”  
(p. 67)

Deleuze and Guattari thesis is so radical that any one of us (Deleuze and Guattari included) are, in some way, submitted to the *law of castration* (we like to be warm, so we buy clothes, and have heaters at home; we like to be cool, so we like to dress in a fashionable way, and we have air conditioning at home, etc.). So let us suppose we were able to maintain

the proposal of living our entire everyday life in a schizophrenic condition. Wouldn't it be a disaster?

In this sense, Gianfranco Cecchin and collaborators, who was certainly close to Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti Oedipus*, admired schizophrenia as a heroic position to be in the world (Cecchin, Barbetta & Toffanetti, 2005). We will find Cecchin's attitude in the curiosity of Alice, in the second part of this essay. In my view, Schizoanalysis is not the exaltation of a new life completely free from the Authoritarian Oedipus. On the contrary, it is simply a way of analyzing the heroic condition of the schizophrenic, who I admire because I would be unable to live that way. The radical position of *AntiOedipus* was later abandoned by Deleuze and Guattari.

In "A Thousand Plateaus", which is the second volume of "Capitalism and Schizophrenia" they constructed the idea of "Rhizome". They borrowed the idea of *plateau* from Gregory Bateson (1972, p. 121), which was significant for a book having this title because the term is a gallicism used by Bateson to define the *Balinese Character*.

What is a *rhizome*, and where is a *plateau*?

"A plateau is always in the middle, not at the beginning or the end. A rhizome is made of plateaus. Gregory Bateson uses the word 'plateau' to designate something very special: continuous, self-vibrating region of intensities whose development avoid any orientation toward a culmination point or external end. Bateson cites Balinese culture as an example: mother child sexual games, and even quarrels among men, undergo this bizarre intensive stabilization."

(Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 20)

To further clarify the terms, they quote a statement by Bateson: "Some sort of continuing plateau of intensity is substituted for [sexual] climax" (the word "sexual" is inserted into the English text by translators, actually in the French version the word is directly "*orgasme*"). Then they continue: "...war or a culmination point. It is a regrettable characteristic of the Western mind to relate expressions and actions to exterior or transcendent ends, instead of evaluating them on a plane of consistency of their intrinsic value." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 22). Furthermore, that "Gregory Bateson uses the term *plateau* for continuous regions of intensity constituted in such a way that they do not allow themselves to be interrupted by any external termination, any more than they allow themselves to build toward a climax; examples are certain sexual, or aggressive, processes in Balinese culture" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 158).

Here there is a new position regarding Bateson, due to a different observation that he made concerning a different field. The anthropologist (1972) is not considering the field of Psychiatry, given that he is observing everyday Balinese life by capturing hundreds of sequences of images with his own camera. In the book "Balinese Character", by Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead (1942), the authors show hundreds of pages with photographic sequences. Each one of them is composed of 5/6 clicks that recorded an ongoing action in which, for example, the mother begins to stimulate a baby who reacts by hugging her, and, in turn, is pushed away, making him furious. At this point, the baby throws a tantrum, while the mother appears distracted, apparently neglecting the baby's tantrum until he calms down. At this point, the mother repeats the same behavior as she was going back to the very beginning of the sequence, and so on, in an ongoing circular process. For Bateson and Mead (1942),

this system of building a relationship, by repeating behaviors over and over again, creates the Balinese character of not desiring an orgasm or a fight (or as he says more generally, the climax). He means by that that sexual relationships are not finalized towards orgasm, and that conflicts are not finalized towards a physical fight (or war) in such a world.

Since I have never had an experience of this type in Bali, I am not in a position to say if it is true or not. However, what I am focusing on here, are the kind of ideas that emerge from Deleuze and Guattari's "A Thousand Plateaus" (1983). In maintaining some presuppositions of "AntiOedipus", the philosophers change the focal point from the idea of the schizophrenic as an ideal heroic free person, notwithstanding her/his pain, to the idea of a different kind of culture, society or, at least, of a different attitude toward things. Here, the "lines of flight" are –more than a schizophrenic necessity– a possible way of life, or a possible different action.

While trying to compose an impossible synthesis, I would say that these two texts by Deleuze and Guattari suggest to me that it is all about creation. Not creativity! We can leave "creativity" to the advertisers, to media people. We, as subjects, create a world any time we enter into (or when we create) a line of flight. Hence Schizophrenia is a part of our everyday life world, particularly when we dream, but also when we are awake. We have to be particularly courageous to express it in (for example) a work of art, a piece of literature, an investigation (the sociological imagination about which Wright Mills writes, for example).

## **APPLYING ANTIOEDIPUS TO HUMPTY DUMPY**

I would like to describe a particular creation, Humpty Dumpty, briefly analyzing the sixth chapter of Lewis Carroll's (whose "real name" is Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, very difficult to be pronounced without stammering, or hesitation) *Through the Looking Glass* (1941). Immortalized by writers all over the world, most people are well acquainted of Alice's world in wonderland.

There is a verse that I like:

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall  
All the king's horses and all the king's men  
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again" (or "in his place again", a Carroll's variation) [1]

This is an exact description of the Schizophrenic in verse: a human egg sitting at the top of a wall, which easily falls down and, when it crashes, breaks into pieces. Just as Schizophrenia is, a fragmentation of the body in which pieces detach from a whole and fall apart. We may observe Alice and Humpty Dumpty's discussion as a typical dialogue between the Oedipalized Alice, representing the therapist belonging to the "correctly viewed" world, and the Schizo Humpty Dumpty, belonging to the looking-glass world. I will make some comments below, inserting square brackets and italics in some passages taken from Lewis Carroll's (1941) universal book, in the next five sub-sections.

## **THE MEANING OF THE PROPER NAME "ALICE", AND THE MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN TWO DIFFERENT KINDS OF SPEECH ACTS (CARES/ANXIETIES OR**



## RIDDLES)

[...] “but tell me your name and your business”

“My *name* is Alice, but —”

“It's a stupid name enough!” Humpty Dumpty interrupted impatiently. “What does it mean?”  
[*Pragmatic question: your name has an effect on your life*]

“*Must* a name mean something?” Alice asked doubtfully. [*Semantic question: names are rigid designators*]

“Of course it must,” Humpty Dumpty with a short laugh: “*my* name means the shape I am-and a good handsome shape it is, too. With a name like yours, you might be any shape, almost”.

“Why do you sit out here all alone?” said Alice, not wishing to begin an argument. [*Prejudice: the good therapist always avoids arguments!*]

“Why, because there's nobody with me!” cried Humpty Dumpty. “Did you think I didn't know the answer to *that*? Ask me another!” [*Pragmatic: answer/Irony*]

“Don't you think you'd be safer down on the ground?” Alice went on, not with any idea of making another riddle, but simply in her good-natured anxiety for the queer creature. “That wall is so *very* narrow!” [*Semantic question/Prejudice: good therapists are empathic*]

“What tremendously easy easy riddles you ask!” Humpty Dumpty growled out. “Of course I don't think so! Why, if ever I *did* fall off-which there's no chance of-but if I did-” Here he pursued up his lips, and looked so solemn and grand that Alice could hardly help laughing. “*If* I did fall” he went on, “*the King has promised me*-ah, you may turn pale, if you like! You didn't think I was going to say that, did you? The King has promised me —with his own mouth— to-to-—”  
[*Prejudice: typical psychotic reaction*]

“to send all his horses and all his men” Alice interrupted, rather unwisely [*Prejudice: therapists know how to deal with schizophrenic delusions*].

In the excerpts above taken from Carroll's book, Humpty Dumpty is not concerned with the risk of jumping down. He is dealing with the *assemblage of enunciation* concerning the verse of the nursery rhyme: *All the king's horses and all the king's men*. It is as if there was a misunderstanding involving Alice's prejudice of remaining in the semantic world while Humpty Dumpty lives in an aesthetic one, whose place is beyond the looking glass.

## THE MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN TWO CONTEXTS (CONVERSATION AS A GAME) AND THE MEANING OF ALICE'S AGE

“Yes, all his horses and all his men,” Humpty Dumpty went on. “they pick me up again in a minute, *they* would! However, this conversation is going on a little too fast: let's go back to last remark but one.” [*Humpty Dumpty is keeping the position of the Master of the conversation*]

“I'm afraid I can't quite remember it,” Alice said very politely.

"In that case we may start fresh," said Humpty Dumpty, "and it's my turn to chose a subject--  
\_"

("He talks about it just as it was a game!" thought Alice) *[Alice is thinking; she's making a theory about what is going on here and now, the therapeutic approach being not to get involved with the patient]*

"So here is a question for you. How old did you say you were?"

Alice made a short calculation, and said "Seven years and six months"

"Wrong!" Humpty Dumpty exclaimed triumphantly. "You never said a word like it" *[Prejudice: another psychotic game]*

"I thought you meant 'How old are you?'" Alice explained.

"If I'd meant that, I'd have said it," said Humpty Dumpty.

Alice didn't want to begin another argument, so she said nothing. *[Prejudice: the therapist should not be involved in a psychotic game]*

Alice does not want to argue with Humpty Dumpty. She's following the typical therapist approach so as not to become enmeshed. In the following examples, that involve the continuation of the conversation among Humpty Dumpty and Alice, readers see a transformation in the relationship between the two heroes of the story. It will be as if Alice, becoming more and more curious about Humpty Dumpty's way of using language, gets more and more involved in the schizophrenic language of Humpty Dumpty, dealing with him in a different way.

## THE QUESTION ABOUT THE MEANING OF "MEANING"

"And only one for birthday presents, you know. There's a glory for you!"

"I don't know what you mean by 'glory'," Alice said. *[Therapist gets confused about "meaning"]*

Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. "Of course you don't-till I tell you. I meant 'there's a nice knock-down argument for you!" *[Humpty Dumpty is going to give a strange explanation to Alice]*

"But 'glory' doesn't mean 'a nice knock-down argument'," Alice objected. *[Again the therapist tries to "lead" the patient into reasonable argumentation]*

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I chose it to mean-neither more nor less." *[As in dreams following the above quotation of Dreams Interpretation by Freud. The schizo says: I am the master of speech, I give meaning to the world!]*

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean different things". *[The*



*preoccupation of therapists: you are not oedipalized!]*

“The question is,” said Humpty Dumpty “which is to be the master-that's all”.

Alice is too puzzled to say anything, *[The therapist falls into crisis, language collapses]* so after a minute Humpty Dumpty began again. “They have a temper, some of them-particularly verbs, they're the proudest-adjective you can do anything with, but not verbs-however, *I* can manage the whole lot! Impenetrability! That's what *I* say!” *[Prejudice: delusion of being the Master of discourse]*

“Would you tell me,” said Alice “what that means?”.

For Humpty Dumpty the signifier, the Master of every meaning, is himself, like the person who attends therapy gives meaning to her/his own dreams (remember Freud's over-determination?). In schizophrenia, we face the falling apart of any possible shared meaning. The meaning falls apart.

## PORTMANTEAU WORDS

A bit further on in the novel, we have to deal with “portmanteau” words. At this point, Alice expresses curiosity about Humpty Dumpty's explanations, after the collapse of language. Alice starts to assume the attitude of the *curious* therapist. She now considers Humpty Dumpty as an expert on delusion, dreams, fantasies. This sounded very hopeful, so Alice repeated the first verse:

“’Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe”

*[Alice realizes that Humpty Dumpty could be an expert on what she is not able to grasp, on vanishing meanings]*

“That's enough to begin with”, Humpty Dumpty interrupted: “there are plenty of hard words there. ‘Brillig’ means four o'clock in the afternoon – the time when you begin *broiling* things for dinner.” *[Humpty Dumpty accepts explaining obscure meanings to her, as he is the Master of languages]*

“That'll do very well,” said Alice: “and ‘slithy’?”

“Well, ‘slithy’ means ‘lithe and slimy’. ‘Lithe’ is the same as ‘active’. You see it's like a portmanteau – there are two meanings packed up into one word”

“I see now,” Alice remarked thoughtfully: “and what are ‘toves’?”

“Well, ‘toves’ are something like badgers –they're something like lizards– and they're something like corkscrews.”

“They must be very curious creatures” *[Alice is entering the world of schizophrenia, she is fascinated by those new ways of using language to see the antioedipalized world]*

## SUSPENSION OF CLIMAX

It starts with a poem:

*"In winter, when the fields are white,  
I sing this song for your delight*

only I don't sing it", he explained  
"I see you don't," said Alice.

"If you can see whether I'm singing or not, you've sharper eyes than most," Humpty Dumpty remarked severely. Alice was silent. *[Here Humpty Dumpty stresses the irreducible differences between light and sound, language and vision]*

*"In spring, when woods are getting green,  
I'll try and tell you what I mean"*

"Thank you very much," said Alice.

*"In summer, when the days are long,  
Perhaps you'll understand the song:*

*In autumn, when the leaves are brown,  
Take pen and ink and write it down"*

"I will if I can remember it so long," said Alice.

"You needn't go on making remarks like that," Humpty Dumpty said: "they're not sensible and they put me out" *[Here we are facing a kind of reversal, while before Alice was trying to put limits on Humpty Dumpty, now it seems to be the opposite. Humpty Dumpty has assumed another position in the relationship]*

*"I sent a message to the fish:  
I told them 'This is what I wish'*

*The little fishes of the sea,  
They sent an answer back to me.*

*The little fishes' answer was  
'We cannot do it, Sir because---'"*

"I'm afraid I don't quite understand," said Alice. *[Alice seems to be impatient at not understanding, as if she were probably worried about losing her mind]*

"It gets easier further on," Humpty Dumpty replied. *[Humpty Dumpty replies, sadistically, telling her to be patient]*

*"I sent to them again to say  
'It will be better to obey'*

*The fishes answer with a grin,  
'Why, what a temper you are in!'*

*I told them once, I told them twice  
They would not listen to advice.*

*I took a kettle large and new  
Fit for the deed I had to do*

*My heart went hop, my heart went thump  
I filled the kettle at the pump*

*The someone came to me and said  
'The little fishes are in bed'.*

*I said to him, I said it plain,  
'Then you must wake them up again'*

*I said it very loud and clear;  
I went and shouted in his ear."*

Humpty Dumpty raised his voice almost to a scream as he repeated this verse, and Alice thought with a shudder, "I wouldn't have been the messenger for *anything!*" *[Delusion/poetry seems to be engaging Humpty Dumpty and the fishes in a kind of increasing schismogenesis]*

*"But he was very stiff and proud;  
He said 'You needn't shout so loud!'*

*And he was very proud and stiff  
He said 'I'd go and wake them if---'*

*I took a corkscrew from the shelf  
I went to wake them up myself.*

*And when I found the door was locked  
I pulled and pushed and kicked and knocked.*

*And when I found the door was shut  
I tried to turn the handle but---"*

There was a long pause.  
"Is that all?" Alice timidly asked.  
"That's all," said Humpty Dumpty. "Good bye".

The story ends up with a suspension of the climax. It is an example of how schizophrenia is a viable approach to life. We are face to face with a vision of how our future life would be without schizophrenia, in which we forget Humpty Dumpty and all his/her friends.

## HUMPTY OEDIPUS IN SCHIZOLAND

Alice might be seen as the therapist, coming from the neurotic world of oedipalized people, who talks to Humpty Dumpty as a “patient”. I stress the word “patient” as a desire of Alice, in the very moments in which Humpty Dumpty shows clearly his own “impatience” when faced with the semantic/Oedipal needs of Alice. Alice feels the need not to give a meaning to her name. She needs to understand whether or not the conversation is a game (which, for her, is a different logical level). Alice needs to fix the meaning of something, as she has a referential idea of language. Humpty Dumpty, like Artaud, answers that anything can be referred to anything: it depends on the Master (as with schizophrenic megalomaniac delusion).

But then Alice shifts her own position, when she starts to ask Humpty Dumpty about the meaning of the portmanteau words, she is finally dismissed from the conversation when the climax is about to be suspended. Alice is like a therapist who tries to understand what the schizophrenic Humpty Dumpty means by what he says. At the end, she recognizes that Humpty Dumpty has a kind of ability in translating *Jabberwocky*, but this ability is not useful at all, like a narrative that does not reach the climax.

Such conversation represents some of the typical misleading issues in conversations between therapists and schizophrenics, bearing in mind the reason mentioned in the first part of this article about AntiOedipus. I am not claiming that Lewis Carroll was a schizophrenic person, but his literary sensibility was capable of representing what is going on in a typical conversation like this, when an oedipalized therapist is in dialogue with a schizophrenic. In order not to be misunderstood, I am not claiming here that there is a better way of holding conversation in schizoanalysis. Alice and Humpty Dumpty's conversation is exemplary of the way I work with all ambivalences and contradictions. There is no such thing as correct methods of therapy in schizophrenia, there is just schizoanalysis.

Carroll (1941) was able to write this piece because he succeeded in keeping his own schizophrenic self alive. So, a world without schizophrenia is one in which the lines I have written do not make sense to most people. Hence, if the lines I have written have a meaning for you, as readers, it is because you are keeping alive your own precious schizophrenic part, which means that you are not completely oedipalized.

## NOTES

[1] Because of the nature of this article, we will not mention the pages of each one of the quoted phrases taken from the 1942 Lewis Carroll's book.

## LIST OF REFERENCES

- Bateson, G. (1972). *Steps to an ecology of mind*. Chicago (IL): University of Chicago Press.
- Bateson, G., & Mead, M. (1942). *Balinese character*. New York: New York Academy of Science.
- Carroll, L. (1941). *Through the looking-glass*. London (UK): MacMillian & Co.

- Cecchin, G., Barbetta, P., & Toffanetti, D. (2005). Who was von Foerster, anyway?. *Kybernetes*, 34(3/4), 330-342.
- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1972). *Anti-Oedipus*. Minneapolis (MN): The University of Minnesota Press.
- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1983). *A Thousand plateaus*. Minneapolis (MN): The University of Minnesota Press.
- Dostoevskij, F. (1866/2105). *Crime and punishment*. New York (NY): Penguin,
- Foucault, M. (1964). *Madness and civilization: A history of insanity in the age of reason*. New York: Pantheon.
- Freud, S. (1899/2013). *The Interpretation of Dreams*. London (UK): Society of Psychology.

