
“JustBecause.mp3”: “Just Because...” [Nikka Costa]

“LoveIsAlive.mp3”: “Love Is Alive...” [Joe Cocker]

[“150517wemustcreateourselves.mp3”:]

Today’s show: “Establishing a ‘safe’ place to plan and express our love: places for the cultivation of soul-sufficiency... which necessarily means: helping each other get ‘big’ – the process of reclaiming... sharing... and expanding our original ‘selves’...” (Part 5)

[“150517liveourbigness.mp3”:]

May 12, 2015... Sisters and Brothers: In *Prisoners of Childhood* Alice Miller writes about “the compulsion to repeat” as stemming from the silencing of the ‘authentic voice’... with the construction... and inhabiting... of the ‘false self’. This ‘compulsion to repeat’... is called... ‘in the literature’... ‘acting out’:

Can one portray a story that one does not know? This sounds impossible – but it happens in every analysis. The patient needs the analytic situation as a framework for the development of his transference before he can stage his story and make it understood. He needs somebody who does not need him to behave in a particular manner, but can let him be as he is at the moment, and who at the same time is willing to accept any of the roles with which he may be charged for as long as the analytic process requires.

The compulsion to repeat plays a prominent role in an analysis conceived in this way. Much has been written about the negative aspect of the compulsion to repeat: the uncanny tendency to reenact a trauma, which itself is not remembered, at times has something cruel and self-destructive about it... Nevertheless, the need to repeat also has a positive side...

[Notice this means getting on the same side with your body... honoring its guidance... but also... as Walt Whitman said... probing the questions its urgings present... – P.S.]

[“150517traumaofclass.mp3”:]

...Repetition is the language used by a child who has remained dumb, his only means of expressing himself. A dumb child needs a particularly emphatic partner if he is to be understood at all. Speech, on the other hand, is often used less to express genuine feelings and thoughts than to hide, veil, or deny them, and thus to express the false self. And so there often are long periods in our work with our patients during which we are dependent on their compulsion to repeat – for this repetition is then the only manifestation of their true self. It lays the basis for the transference, and also for the whole *mise en scene* of the patient’s field of interaction, which in the literature is described as acting out and is often met with mistrust. (Alice Miller, *Prisoners of Childhood*, p. 78 - 9)

Let’s consider now whether the insights of Alice... in the case of the individual silencing... might likewise manifest societally:

“Can one portray a story that one does not know? This sounds impossible – but it happens in every analysis.”

[Consigning us to the role ‘wage labor’ is a trauma... because it requires us to cut off huge trunks of ourselves... with no one confirming that that’s what’s going on... So it is a wound that never gets defined as a wound... and leads to endless confusion – the original trauma of a coerced-work system. What if “the story that one does not know...” is “the loss of the infinite...” that we all possess: “That what they have not – that which they possess –” (Shakespeare’s *The Rape of Lucrece*, line 135)... – P.S.]

“The patient needs the analytic situation as a framework for the development of his transference before he can stage his story and make it understood.”

[How do we – as 'we-the-people'... particularly the more sensitive among us (those unwilling to revenge themselves on those who are 'weaker'... in terms of social status...) – stage that story? Might that not be what's happening in every 'protest'... might that not be its underlying motive-energy?... – P.S.]

“The compulsion to repeat plays a prominent role in an analysis conceived in this way. Much has been written about the negative aspect of the compulsion to repeat: the uncanny tendency to reenact a trauma, which itself is not remembered, at times has something cruel and self-destructive about it... Nevertheless, the need to repeat also has a positive side....”

[Notice... as we go deeper... the parallels... on the global scale... in our repeated... and continuous... expression of outrage in 'protests'... in 'revolutions'... – P.S.]

“Repetition is the language used by a child who has remained dumb, his only means of expressing himself. A dumb child needs a particularly emphatic partner if he is to be understood at all.”

[So if 'we-the-people' – the nation – are the child... who... what... might be... the “emphatic partner”?... by which word... 'emphatic'... I take it she means... strong... in possession of certainty... We're going to be thinking about that in future shows... in terms of the kinds of 'safe spaces' we want to establish... – P.S.]

[“150517weneedtheopensociety.mp3”:]

What we'll be considering today is that the 'outer world' of 'class' only exists because its mirror 'inner world' of 'class' is crafted in us... in each one of us trapped in 'the system'...

...that consigning us to the role 'wage-labor' steals our voices... after which... we've nothing else to say (by which I mean being unable to articulate our deepest feeling... and suppressed longing...) although the need to speak authentically never goes away.

De Tocqueville and Bentham saw this need of we-the-people's to speak... to break out of 'power's imposed constraints (and the French Revolution showed them this in spades [blades]...) – saw it would never cease. So the issue for both of them became... how to control it... this ceaseless attempt... Both of them... and the current crop of global-state-statesmen... are in fundamental agreement: control the thoughts we can think... to do which requires that we be tightly managed... i.e. requires 'closely-monitoring and managing' (of us...) nation-states...

...and particularly... don't give them the time... or allow them the chance to provide each other mutual assistance – the primary necessary conditions... that allow us to hear the earth speak...

'Power' can have its way with us because we're cut off from our Sisters and Brothers... and the earth...

...but cutting off other options is not 'development'... but rather 'soul-death'... the end of authentic creativity... fancy... and whimsy. 'Development' of ourselves we do unbidden... it's the earth in us. Under compulsion... driven... what we do is hemmed in by limits... sapped by the energy-sink of all our unanswered questions.

And of course this diminishment is accomplished by means of the wage-work system. Even controlling the means of thought-dissemination – by controlling the media and education – is less primary than this... because in controlling the former – what particular activities get funded – you control the latter...

Nikola Tesla... on the other hand... worked in the opposite direction... Karl Popper's and Miklos' and Du Bois' and Bob's and Alice's and Zora's and Kropotkin's direction: greater openness... the 'open society'... Nikola worked tirelessly for the day – and we are in that day – when the technology would exist to allow our thought to blossom... and we could provide each other the mutual aid needed for a world... and a global humanity... premised on Freedom.

But obviously 'power' will ever resist this – that's our 'outer' dilemma... but there's also the 'inner' one: we want to be free of 'power's Authority... but we're also full of fear... fears 'power' systematically fosters and manipulates.

As we conclude *Antisystemic Movements*... having... in our process... along the way taken in this key insight of Emily Dickinson:

The Outer – from the Inner
Derives its Magnitude –
'Tis Duke, or Dwarf, according
As is the Central Mood –

...we're going to be considering whether the story we – slowly but surely – are working our way out of... is not 'capitalism'... but 'class'...

...and that we succeed as we see it... see the story... and intervene in it consciously.

We are embarking on a process of healing 'the species' through the arts... 'the arts' in the sense of 'growing the soul'... of 'granting permission' for the 'true self'... to speak.

[Today's reading: we conclude with Chapter 5 of Giovanni Arrighi's, Terence K. Hopkins', and Immanuel Wallerstein's *Antisystemic Movements*... "1968: The Great Rehearsal"... and then begin the 'Prefaces' of... and the chapter "Poisonous Pedagogy" in... Alice Miller's *For Your Own Good*... – P.S.]

["150517borntoboss.mp3":]

[Turning to our Good Three: they are going to tell us the last two difficulties they see... for the global-state-statesmen... in their ceaseless attempt to install a totalitarianism that is permanent... – P.S.]

Third, the ability of states to control their civil societies is diminishing. Historically, it is through the constitution of civil society, and its subsequent extension – notably, through the 1848-engendered 'incorporation of the working classes into society' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – that one traces the successive transformations of the monarchies and patriciates of the nascent capitalist world-economy into its constituent and still evolving states. The organizing contradiction from the inception of stateness, state power versus civil rights and liberties, remains central to the state – civil society relation. Over time, of course, the scope of each has greatly expanded, thus sharpening the struggle, which the post-1968 world-scale 'human rights' movements profoundly reflect. The notion that ruling strata seek to legitimate their rule – so that they are as morally obligated to command as those they claim to rule are morally obligated to comply – is both very old and very widespread.

Weber's central theoretical claim – that certain beliefs in popular consciousness are an indispensable condition of routine compliance and so of the 'stability' of the relational network administering the rules – remains plausible....

[A restatement... it seems... of Bentham's point (or Plato's... for that matter... that 'the people' must be trained to obey by strictly controlling what thoughts are allowed into our consciousness... for 'governance' to occur... – P.S.]

["150517haspowertamedus.mp3":]

...However, the very increase in the efficiency of the ways in which each state controls its civil society, the expansion of an instrumental bureaucracy, itself creates the limits of its efficacy by generating an ever more widespread skepticism among those whom the bureaucracy is administering. The reach of authority has come to be more and more denied, as both the US and USSR governments, among others, have increasingly discovered. 1968 symbolized the outburst of such skepticism. For a while, the coming to state power of old social movements limited this corrosion of authority. But these new regimes were quickly swept up in the increasingly 'anti-state' consciousness of the mass of the population.

[But is this true today... we should ask ourselves. Has 'power' tamed us with its tight control rather than provoked an organized challenge to its Authority?... tamed us by means of the education... media... and technology it has systematically shaped to do just that – and along with these tactics... add its successful defining of what is 'legitimate' 'protest'. 'Power acknowledges now the need for 'protest'... anticipates it (sometimes creates it...) infiltrates it... feeds its redefined version of it... manipulates us through it... – P.S.]

This process has been spectacularly abetted by the impact of new technology on the ability of states to control their space....

["150517tochallengeauthority.mp3":]

...Electronification is physically different from electrification and does not so much abridge the space of social relations as abridge the capacity to control social relations through controlling their space. The implications for stateness remain to be explicated – and experienced. But the control of populations through controlling the space they and their relations with one another occupy – as citizenry, as communities, as individuals – is in the process of being fundamentally undermined in the two key directions formed by the modern world-system's spatial jurisdictions, within states and between states.

Fourth, the demands of the disadvantaged status-groups – of gender, of generation, of ethnicity, of race, of sexuality – will get ever stronger. We must hear Gallaudet here and add the physically handicapped, who comprise the true pariah stratum of historical capitalism. All six status-group relations are deeply different one from another, and even more so in their specificities in the world's social structures, but they share three features. Each was a ground of a new left reproach of the old left. Each in a very real sense is as much a contradiction among the people as an element of the capital – labor or state – civil society contradiction. And the oppressed of each explicitly seek not the turning of the tables but social equality, not only structurally but ideologically as well (in the sense of the elimination from social consciousness of *presumptions* of superiority / inferiority in relations of gender, generation, ethnicity, race, sexuality, able-bodiedness).

[But... it's a huge step... from challenging presumptions of superiority / inferiority in terms of one status group over another... to challenging the notion of Authority altogether... What we've learned... thanks to Alice Miller... is that to challenge 'Authority' itself... and choose Freedom... we have to go deeper... and our Good Three... in a sense made this point themselves. Recall what they said (discussed in the April 5, 2015 show – “150405denational.mp3”: “The further processes... entail the redefinition of trajectories. For the de-nationalization of domestic labor forces suggests a fundamental change, on the part of the left, as to what “national” means...” – and that 'power' can... and will... 'expand civil society'... grant formal legitimacy to former 'outsider'... even pariah... groups... if it reinforces the legitimacy of the state... and forestalls the realization of our global unity... – P.S.]

We therefore project probable realignments in the alliance systems of the interstate system along with increased sharp economic fluctuations, a sharpened (and in particular a geographically widened) class struggle, an increasing inability of states to control their civil societies, and a persistent reinforcement of the claims to equality by all the disadvantaged status-groups. It is very unclear, in the nature of things, where this will lead. After 1848, the world's old left were sure that 1917 would occur. They argued about how and where and when. But the middle-range objective of popular sovereignty was clear. After 1968, the world's antisystemic movements – the old and the new ones together – showed rather less clarity about the middle-range objective. They have tended therefore to concentrate on short-range ones. There is clearly a danger that if organizations concentrate on short-range objectives, even in the name of long-range ideals, they may sacrifice middle-range success or even middle-run survival.

We have no answer to the question: 1968, rehearsal for what? In a sense, the answers depend on the ways in which the worldwide family of antisystemic movements will rethink its middle-run strategy in the ten or twenty years to come. 1917, for good or ill, was the result of an enormous amount of collective and conscious effort by the world's old left in the years following 1848. No doubt it was also the result of structural developments in the capitalist world-economy. But it would not have happened without human organization and revolutionary programs.

The risks of drifting are very clear. The tenants of the status quo have not given up, however much their position is weakened structurally and ideologically. They still have enormous power and are using it to reconstruct a new inegalitarian world order. They could succeed. Or the world could disintegrate, from a nuclear or an ecological catastrophe. Or it could be reconstructed in the ways in which people hoped, in 1848, in 1968.

[This concludes Giovanni Arrighi's, Terence K. Hopkins', and Immanuel Wallerstein's *Antisystemic Movements*... We give thanks for their amazing heart in writing and disseminating (as best they could...) their essential analysis... We're now going to attempt a long-overdue synthesis and advancement of their gift...

...we're going to be thinking about how the wage-work – coerced-work – system itself abets the installation of totalitarianism... – that “inegalitarian world order” which is the objective of global-state-statesmen... who “have not given up...” – and how the mindset crafted to fit the wage-work system – obedience – likewise fits with... is the mindset of... totalitarianism...

...and that this mindset continuously reproduced by the wage-work system... is simultaneously reproduced – as both product and cause – in the home...

What we are considering... is what the imposed 'wage-labor-status' as Sohn-Rethel talked about last week... does to us on a 'spirit'-level...

We have the codified right... here in the U.S.... to... as a people... pursue happiness. So we need some people willing to move that thought and planning forward... people who see that word 'happiness' rooted in... and so posed as... a global convergence... a global planning focus tied to each individual... personal... process of growing beyond that 'world of class' trained in us... which so harms and limits... keeps us from claiming our 'infinite'...

...i.e... we deserve 'all'... because we are 'all'.

We turn now to the 'Prefaces' of... and then the chapter "Poisonous Pedagogy" in... Alice Miller's *For Your Own Good...* – P.S.]

"Preface to the American Edition"

This book is appearing in America some two and a half years after its first publication in Germany, and it is probably just as well that it wasn't available before now in this country. Had it appeared here earlier, American readers might well have asked: "Why should we still bother with Hitler today? That's all ancient history," and "Who is this Christiane F.?" But now, after so many young Americans have seen their own tragedies mirrored in the film and book about Christiane F., the teenage German drug addict, and after all the talk in the media the past few years about the danger of nuclear war, it should come as no surprise that I have chosen Adolf Hitler and Christiane F. as representatives, respectively, of extreme destructiveness on a world-historical scale and of extreme self-destructiveness on a personal one.

Since the end of World War II, I have been haunted by the question of what could make a person conceive the plan of gassing millions of human beings to death and of how it could then be possible for millions of others to acclaim him and assist in carrying out this plan. The solution to this enigma, which I found only a short while ago, is what I have tried to present in this book. Readers' reactions to my work convinced me how crucial others find this problem too and how the terrible stockpiling of nuclear weapons worldwide raises the same question in an even more acute form: namely what could motivate a person to misuse power in such a way as to cause, completely without scruples and with the use of beguiling ideologies, the destruction of humanity, an act that is altogether conceivable today? It can hardly be considered an idle academic exercise when somebody attempts to expose the roots of an unbounded and insatiable hatred like Hitler's; an investigation of this sort is a matter of life and death for all of us, since it is easier today than ever before for us to fall victim to such hatred.

[But with the benefit of Miklos Nyiszli's *Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account...* along with the writings of Karl Popper and Jeremy Bentham... and with our own thinking on the wage-work system... we're able to add that 'hatred' – conceived of simply – played less a role in the unfolding and carrying out of the horror than simply 'the banality of obedience'... built into the hierarchical structure of 'class' itself – fascism dressed up pretty... as 'productivity'... Recall Miklos' description of Mussfeld's pride in his efficient carrying out of his orders to kill... that eighty was no more difficult for him than one... – P.S.]

A great deal has already been written about Hitler by historians, sociologists, psychologists, and psychoanalysts. As I attempt to show in the pages that follow, all his biographers have tried to exonerate his parents (particularly his father), thus refusing to explore what really happened to this man during his childhood, what experiences he stored up within, and what ways of treating other people were available as models for him.

Once I was able to move beyond the distorting perspectives associated with the idea of a "good upbringing" (what is described in this book as "poisonous pedagogy") and show how Hitler's childhood anticipated the later concentration camps, countless readers were amazed by the convincing evidence I presented for my view. At the same time, however, their letters expressed confusion "Basically, my childhood differed little from Hitler's, I, too, had a very strict upbringing, was beaten and mistreated. Why then didn't I become a mass murderer instead of, say, a scientist, a lawyer, a politician, or a writer?"

Actually, my book provides clear answers here, although they often seem to be overlooked: e.g., Hitler never had a single other human being in whom he could confide his true feelings; he was not only mistreated but also prevented from experiencing and

expressing his pain; he didn't have any children who could have served as objects for abreacting [“‘abreaction’: the expression of a previously repressed emotion achieved through reliving the experience that caused it...”] his hatred; and, finally, his lack of education did not allow him to ward off his hatred by intellectualizing it. Had a single one of these factors been different, perhaps he would never have become the arch-criminal he did.

On the other hand, Hitler was certainly not an isolated phenomenon. He would not have had millions of followers if they had not experienced the same sort of upbringing. I anticipated a great deal of resistance on the part of the public when I advanced this thesis – which I am convinced is a correct one – so I was surprised to discover how many readers, both young and old, agreed with me. They were familiar from their own backgrounds with what I depicted. I didn't have to adduce elaborate arguments; all I needed to do was describe Hitler's childhood in such a way that it served as a mirror, and suddenly Germans caught their own reflections in it.

It was the personal nature of their responses to the three examples I present in my book that enabled many people to understand in a more than purely intellectual sense that every act of cruelty, no matter how brutal and shocking, has traceable antecedents in its perpetrator's past. The diverse reactions to my book range from unmistakable “aha” experiences to angry rejection. In the latter cases, as I have already indicated, the following comment keeps recurring like a refrain: “I am living proof that beating [or spanking] children is not necessarily harmful, for in spite of it I became a decent person.”

Although people tend to make a distinction between “spanking” and “beating” a child, considering the former a less severe measure than the latter, the line between the two is a tenuous one. I just heard a report on an American radio station about a man – a member of a Christian fundamentalist sect in West Virginia – who “spanked” his son for two hours. The little boy died as a result. But even when a spanking is a gentler form of physical violence, the psychic pain and humiliation and the need to repress these feelings are the same as in the case of more severe punishment. [What happens to our thought process when feelings are frozen?... is a question we'll be asking next week... – P.S.] It is important to point this out so that readers who receive or give what they call “spankings” will not think they or their children are exempt from the consequences of child beating discussed in this book.

Probably the majority of us belong to the category of “decent people who were once beaten,” since such treatment of children was a matter of course in past generations. Be that as it may, to some degree we can all be numbered among the survivors of “poisonous pedagogy.” Yet it would be just as false to deduce from this fact of survival that our upbringing caused us no harm as it would be to maintain that a limited nuclear war would be harmless because a part of humanity would still be alive when it was over. Quite apart from the culpably frivolous attitude toward the victims this view betrays, it also fails to take into account the question of what aftereffects the survivors of a nuclear conflict would have to face. The situation is analogous to “poisonous pedagogy,” for even if we, as survivors of severe childhood humiliations we all too readily make light of, don't kill ourselves or others, are not drug addicts or criminals, and are fortunate enough not to pass on the absurdities of our own childhood to our children so that they become psychotic, we can still function as dangerous carriers of infections. We will continue to infect the next generation with the virus of “poisonous pedagogy” as long as we claim that this kind of upbringing is harmless. It is here that we experience the harmful aftereffects of our survival, because we can protect ourselves from a poison only if it is clearly labeled as such, not if it is mixed, as it were, with ice cream advertised as being “For Your Own Good.” Our children will find themselves helpless when confronted with such labeling. When people who have been beaten or spanked as children attempt to play down the consequences by setting themselves up as examples, even claiming it was good for them, they are inevitably contributing to the continuation of cruelty in the world by this refusal to take their childhood tragedies seriously. Taking over this attitude, their children, pupils, and students will in turn beat their own children, citing their parents, teachers, and professors as authorities. Don't the consequences of having been a battered child find their most tragic expression in this type of thinking?

Although the general public is beginning to understand that this suffering is transmitted to one's children in the form of an upbringing supposedly “for their own good,” many people with whom I have spoken in the United States still believe that permissive methods of child-rearing allow children “too much freedom and that it is this permissiveness, not “poisonous pedagogy,” that is responsible for the marked increase in crime and drug addiction. Even cartoons and jokes make fun of parents who have a tolerant and supportive attitude toward their children, emphasizing the dangers if parents allow themselves to be tyrannized by their children. King Solomon's mistaken belief (if you spare the rod you will spoil the child) is still accepted today in all seriousness as great wisdom and is still being passed on to the next generation. These attitudes, although they now take a more subtle and less apparent form, are not far removed from those quoted in the following pages to illustrate the detrimental effects of child-rearing methods. Such views have not been borne out by my many years of experience. Theoretically, I can imagine that someday we will regard our children not as creatures to manipulate or to change but rather as messengers from a world we once deeply knew, but which we have long since forgotten, who can reveal to us more about the true secrets of life, and also our own lives, than our parents were ever able to. We do not need to be told whether to be strict or permissive with our children. What we do need is to have respect for their needs, their feelings, and their individuality, as well as for our own.

[And as I said last week... in bringing our focus on... and analysis of... the wage-work system (including the critical contribution – to 'power's understanding of how to manipulate us... – of Bentham's advice...) to Alice's analysis... I believe we are adding a critical missing piece... needed to complete the puzzle of how we can free ourselves from 'power'... – P.S.]

It is no mere accident that all three of the people I write about in this book had no children of their own. One of my readers wrote to me: “Who knows, perhaps the Jews would not have been sent to the gas ovens if Hitler had had five sons on whom he could have taken revenge for what his father did to him.” We punish our children for the arbitrary actions of our parents that we were not able to defend ourselves against, thanks to the Fourth Commandment. I have discovered that we are less a prey to this form of the repetition compulsion if we are willing to acknowledge what happened to us, if we do not claim that we were mistreated “for our own good,” and if we have not had to ward off completely our painful reactions to the past. The more we idealize the past, however, and refuse to acknowledge our childhood sufferings, the more we pass them on unconsciously to the next generation. For this reason, I attempt to point out in these pages some underlying connections, with the hope of breaking a vicious circle. For a decisive change could well come about in our culture if parents would only stop combating their own parents in their children, often when the latter are still infants – something they do because *their* parents were able to attain a position of guiltlessness and inviolability by forcible means, i.e., thanks to the Fourth Commandment and to the methods of child-rearing they employed.

On a recent trip to America I encountered many people, especially women, who have discovered the power of their knowledge. They do not shrink from pointing out the poisonous nature of false information, even though it has been well concealed for millennia behind sacrosanct and well-meaning pedagogical labels. The conversations I had in the United States gave support to my own experience that courage can be just as infectious as fear. And if we are courageous enough to face the truth, the world will change, for the power of that “poisonous pedagogy” which has dominated us for so long has been dependent upon our fear, our confusion, and our childish credulity; once it is exposed to the light of truth, it will inevitably disappear. (A.M., November 1982. “Preface to the American Edition,” p. vii – xii)