

# The algebra of need

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**ABSTRACT:** Through stories, writers and two music bands, I have taken that all the characters I'm dealing with have maintained a close relationship that united them all with a smart form of radicalism. At the dawn of an increasingly totalitarian society, it should be reminded that certain uncomfortable and strange events, far from violence, can halt the world or provoke it panic.

**KEY WORDS:** Interzone, *détournement*, industrial music, over-identification.

It may be interesting to think of a world which, like a network connected from end to end, would be a very repetitive world, with no differences. We live in a context in which apparently the gloomy idea has returned that we are stuck, no one knows where. The predisposition to find everything bad, far from being an easy option, has persuaded many. But, nevertheless, we go on as usual: enjoying the world in its most common form – with greater or lesser relief.

We all have private fears, oppressive images that live on in a misty little nook of our memory, as if they were unable to emerge. But sometimes these fears seem more ridiculous compared to the increasing efforts made by our societies to control our appetites and passions. When there is a common imaginary in which collective fears overlap and are shared – as happens today; as it has always been –, the world seems to be intolerable.

The very thin line that separates individual servitude from control is in its heyday. And it is true that if we didn't take ourselves with some sense of humour – just enough to endure the deep boredom – we would perhaps have to accept the most stupid tautology: *everything is what it is*.

But one thing is true: there are people in this world who take comfort in the flickering light of the fireplace and who then go to bed at midnight, sleep tight, and feel safe, knowing that their anti-theft alarm protects them as if it were the Holy Spirit itself watching over them. We ask, how is that possible? How do they enjoy themselves? Of course! They enjoy having everything under control!

What an impressive effort! Not a shadow of doubt, not a single sneeze disrupting their lives! Working everything out, any lack of foresight brings along for them an opening of the present – and therefore a risk, a lightning of uncertainty.

Control and surveillance need a push. Actually, they must make sure that the present keeps its moldy and outdated shape, so they are everywhere and know everything, in order to leave people free – clapping their hands with joy. Who knows if, centuries ahead, when there will be space travels and galactic colonies, out there or beyond, that will be born

and will become thriving and prospering states, so far from us, far beyond the sky, this planet can become, purely and simply, the official prison of the Milky Way.

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What follows could be taken as a sample, a little collection of intimate whims, of people who have written or made music, or created a political guerrilla group in an suppressive world, using different ways: humour, counter-manipulation, artistic practice, or the so-called 'insurrectionary acts', which might be useless for some people but which really are a relief, a breath of fresh air – albeit short.

1

In 1970, an odd graffiti spread throughout the unhealthiest corners in the city of Heidelberg: "Aus der Krankheit eine Waffe machen!" ("Turn illness into a weapon!"). A few months earlier, Dr. Wolfgang Huber had called up forty former patients from the Heidelberg Psychiatric Hospital to rise up, like other German guerrillas had done before, and so they founded one of the most unusual collectives of the decade: the SPK, *Sozialistisches Patientkollektiv* (Collective of Socialist Patients).

The activity of this group, which broke up in 1972, was defined by a persecution complex against physicians and psychiatric institutions – government agents who would damage the mentally sick isolating them in long sessions of electroacoustic circuits, photo stimulation, and electroshock. Marvels of the modern science they had all suffered before.

Therefore, the SPK had an obvious enemy: doctors, the violence of *iatrarchy* [1], and the tyranny of health; any manoeuvre that would suppress the patient's subjectivity. Moreover, it came as no surprise that many physicians of the Nazi regime had evaded justice and that some of them were still in practice. Therefore, can we understand the SPK? If we do a careful reading of their publications and pamphlets, full of revolutionary harangues, we will find poor literature with an obsessive and terrifying language. However, there lay the group's innovation: they were a *pathopracticant* guerrilla [2] that used sickness as a vital weapon against the enemy.

Much has already been published about the implication of psychiatry in behaviour correction, so I will not insist on it. But it is not surprising that SPK members portrayed the recent phenomenon where the enemy is taken down even before it is allowed to express itself. It is a new way of oppression, usually more sophisticated than a strait jacket. And let it be said, condemning people's deviations is a very simple thing, almost stupid but deeply effective, as society loves reprimand above all things.

The 'Circles' formed the program of the group's activities, the character of their gatherings, their tools, a kind of therapy including private tutoring and a thorough agenda of political actions. The 'Circles' were made up of the 'Circle of dialectics', the 'Circle of judo and karate', the 'Circle of Marxism', the 'Circle of sexuality', and many more. The first bulletin, *Dokumentation 1, SPK Heidelberg*, issued in 1970, included a long essay by Dr. Hubert and, to our surprise, an enthusiastic prologue – perhaps too passionate – by Jean-Paul Sartre himself [3], decorating them with truly high praise. But after all, both SPK and Sartre were claiming that psychiatry, based on fictitious precepts about behaviour, was just another appendix of capitalist society – a naïve statement, but which culturally revealed a terrible form of alienation.

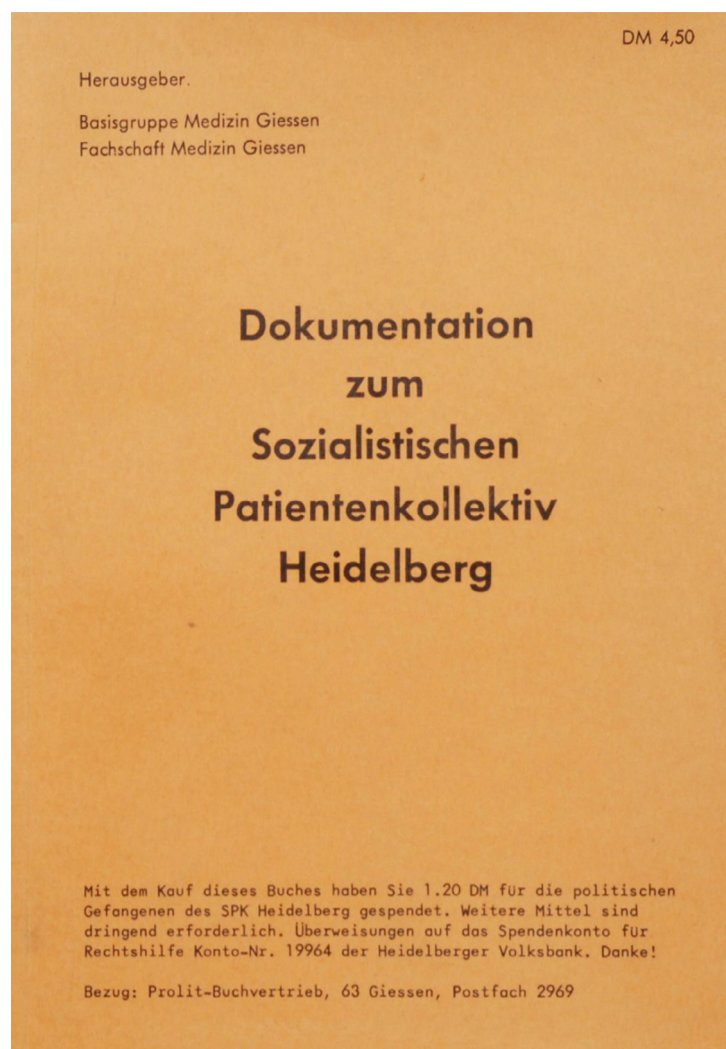


Fig. 1, Dokumentation 1, SPK Heidelberg, 1970.

What stands out by its ingenuity, stands also out by its brevity. The SPK, which lasted barely two years, dispersed in different ways after the publishing of *Dokumentation Teil 2*, in 1972.

It may sound exaggerated, but we should remember that the German generation of that decade seemed to break with the previous one, upon distancing itself from all things ideological and historical. In the same way as the Baader Meinhof proved to be a tragic and awful project, the SPK relived the memory of a past in which, for the first time, the state was the guarantor of the *health* of its citizens. No government has ever been as concerned about ensuring the health of its country as was the Third Reich. Is this morbid, tasteless? So it is, but that is the way it was. The SPK may have gone ahead in its criticism of things created by the Nazis, and which now live among us and are, in fact, quite popular.

2

In passages of *Naked Lunch* (1956), William Burroughs presented a thorough reflection on the images of control. To make it brief, the book can only be read and understood through paranoid suspension: we know that *Naked Lunch* – which was Burroughs' core work thanks to its meticulous exploration of drugs – was not a pamphlet full of rambling paragraphs and absurd ways of persecution by someone who mistrusts and is affected by everything. But the book is generally understood this way: as an unbalanced man's deliria.

The truth is that *Naked Lunch* was an organic search using the words and images coming out of the whirlwind of drug addiction. It showed, in fact, a surprising lucidity in its rendering how the subject could break through the shape of a world invisible to most people's eyes. In short: the reader goes through the pages in the same way Burroughs went through

the first grid of reality, finding the Interzone [4], the place beyond our world but within it, where we trade with desire and desire builds the maps. But that world lived a sophisticated war, with no weapons or military action needed. In fact, it was a total war where all the dwellers of the Interzone were each other's enemies and where the only thing that distinguished them was their ability to increasingly control each other's sensitivity. The Interzone was crowded with nomads, fugitives, social outcasts, secret agents, limited liability companies, enterprises and collectives; these people wandered around, plotting like the Liquefactions, the Factualists, Islam S.A., Anexia, Dr. Benway, Hassan, etc. The whole war was waged psychologically; why use a gun when they could telepathically introduce dust or smoke, the larval stage of a secret police in everyone's body!

They used well-disciplined tactics or psychical frequencies sent out to reduce targets to an all *purpose blob*, or the continuous use of images and meanings to manage their individual addiction. However, something escaped the war: the control had a limit which could overflow it and, when Interzone agents got overexcited by their beloved possessions, something would fall down, as power would collapse if no more hosts existed. That is why the inhabitants of the Interzone knew something that could not be taken lightly: if power wants to last, it must always take care of its victims.

The great sheikh of the Interzone, Dr. Benway, embodied the manifest war, the obsession of owning every single hidden corner of sensitivity in that world, programming everything, squeezing each sensitive thing and taking out its most wicked extract. Sarcastically – of course – Dr. Benway explained the following:

“I deplore brutality,’ he said. ‘It’s not efficient. On the other hand, prolonged mistreatment, short of physical violence, gives rise, when skilfully applied, to anxiety and a special feeling of guilt. A few rules or rather guiding principles are to be borne in mind. The subject must not realize that the mistreatment is a deliberate attack of an ante-human enemy on his personal identity. He must be made to feel that he deserves ANY treatment he receives because there is something (never specified) horribly wrong with him. The naked need of the control addicts must be decently covered by an arbitrary and intricate bureaucracy so that the subject cannot contact his enemy direct” (Burroughs, 1959/2009: 19).

It is said that Dr. Benway, who lives in the Interzone since bacterias were formed in the Universe, owns the most harmful and lethal of all viruses: words. The transformation that Burroughs effects of the parable of the word, of the logos as origin, is shown in Benway as the most rooted way of control... the first agent in the world!

William Burroughs was a true explorer of the word, in its organic and sensitive, chaotic and liberating aspects and, of course, in its repressive nature. Therefore, language “should be removed from the body, so as to deflate the supremacy of words through their simultaneous and overlapping diffusion” (Bonome García, 2012: 46) into a great whirl of cacophonies and hallucinations.

For example, in his dialogues, Salvador Hassan O’Leary – another key character in the book – says with a laughter: “I’m just an old blooming cancer and I gotta proliferate” (Burroughs, 1959/2009: 130). Hassan looks like a cowboy with a radiant smile, as his businessman role requires. But he is not just an individual, he is a cancer. And what we see – like in other characters – is an enormous barrier separating the different realities in the world. One, the physical space where Hassan moves about and interacts, and, at the same time, the psychic space, where Hassan is a parasite, a malignant tumour housed in the desires of the people he rules over.

Many authors have considered *Naked Lunch* a metaphor expressing the epitome of capitalist reality. To some extent, it could be seen in that light. However, in the text there is something beyond the simplicity of this comment. *Naked lunch* is not an aggressive *representation* of control systems; it is, on the contrary, the live experience of those systems, the way the harmful anesthesia they produce disarms sensitivity. Finally, a formula shows the affective state that Burroughs was so concerned about, and that he called the ‘algebra of need’, what is bearable in servitude and in the addiction to control: “The face of *evil* is always the face of total need” (Burroughs, 1959/2009: 201).

3

Sometimes history surprise us with unexpected connections. When we observe them, we can see how two unrelated spots in the world come to picture a surprising tale. In 1978, two workers from the Sydney Psychiatric Hospital made a strange discovery: among the documents and books they were leafing through, one stood out for its rarity and origin. The clever reader will suspect this unique encounter: the *Dokumentation 1* from the *Sozialistisches Patientkollektiv*, published eight years before.

Grame Revell and Neil Hill, admirers of Nietzsche, Foucault or the Situationist International, understood that the pamphlet, so unusual and resentful, expressed, however, something new, something that went beyond the literary sphere and talked about the pragmatism of political action.

But Revell and Hill understood that German tactics were inevitably doomed to fail; they were too confusing. This said, the SPK had already taken a place in their personal constellation of heroes. The reading of *Dokumentation 1* spurred them to create their own music group, called SPK – what else? So, how did Revell and Hill put all that in music? At the end of 1978, they each adopted different names, Revell EMS AKS, and Hill, Ne/H/il. SPK music was intended to become the soundtrack for the mentally ill and the eccentric and it aimed to drive them into a liberating state of catharsis.

But to take a close look at SPK music, we need to go back to England a few years, to the mid-seventies. There, a group of British youngsters established the basis of a new music movement which roots were directly connected to the German electronics avant-garde and to the literary works by William Burroughs and J.G Ballard. Let’s remember that *Dokumentation 1* was published in 1970; exactly the same year, Burroughs published *The Electronic Revolution*, a futuristic guerrilla manual, and Ballard, *The Atrocity Exhibition*, a novel containing bits, pieces, and clippings from a psychotic world, a hurricane of dreadful images where every sign of spontaneity is cut short.

These two works were extremely important for P-Orridge, Cosey Fanni Tutti, Peter Sleazy Christopherson and Chris Carter in their foundation of Throbbing Gristle [5], the spear head of what will be discussed next.

But, in order to feel Throbbing Gristle, we have to understand the circumstances. It is a unique music group that did not sing to flowers, freedom, love affairs of the hippie years, but that would sing about the ways of power and cultural control. Isn’t it weird? After all, the group was turning those books into sound with their primitive and aggressive electronic music, syncopated rhythm, feedback and mind-control speeches.

At that time, some characters of little virtue such as Mary Whitehouse or Margaret Thatcher made a huge effort to

implement a transforming policy as dramatic as was the English Reformation in the 16th century. As might be expected, Thatcher fitted perfectly into the shoes of a new papal authority.

Throbbing Gristle was born in an unpleasant and irritating context that anticipated the future of social relations because it opened a new stage, at the height of the Cold War, that brought about the psychosis of surveillance. An ideal dream of the modern state that must take care of its citizens by providing them selected rations of invisible enemies. In this sense, the group members did not see themselves as musicians, but as participants in a war for information, in which England – about to move up to the postindustrial society – which had a likeness to the secret struggles of Interzone.

The very clever tactic of Throbbing Gristle challenged the inherence of what was regarded as inherently normal in the music of the time. If popular music was, after all, sedative and did not invite the listener to anything, the goal was simply to resist this world with one of noise and discomfort, and then crush harmony, melody and conventional rhythms and structures.

This is why Throbbing Gristle would not challenge its enemy dialectically. Rather, the group would use the same tactics, true to the Situationist *détournement* [6] so it could render the opponent useless.

TG used this motto, “by omission, deception, misinformation” (Re/Search, 1982), to refer the method which supported the cultural mind-control by the media. However, instead of condemning it, they used in their own benefit, as a means for their music, their imagery and their concerts.

The group was sublime in its use of images – which were never arbitrary. The aesthetic distinction of their work was shocking because of its ingenuity and terrifying because of its deliberate ambiguity.



Fig. 2, D.o.A The Third and Final Report of Throbbing Gristle, 1978, Industrial Records.

The members of Throbbing Gristle showed a great sense of humour in their use of military uniforms, cruel imagery or explicit pictures of genocides, as was the case of their own logo, Industrial Records, *a factory of death*. Throbbing Gristle brought to collapse every scene of global and domestic totalitarianism; for example, D.o.A. *The third and final report of*

*Throbbing Gristle*, from 1978, displayed a witty cover with the pose of a sweetly naïve little girl looking straight into the camera [7]. Its repressive elements, smartly placed with subtlety, are a bit annoying because in them we can sense a kind of dark sympathy for virginity, children and such forbidden things.

Throbbing Gristle's language itself restored the way power reaches its limit, answering with the radical faculties of perception, when one is directly immersed in the images of territories one should not or would not want to see, but which *free societies* force in order to hide them. What better means to render totalitarianism harmless, than to empathize with it or, better yet, to place in it something so humiliating and, basically, so grotesque, that it prevents any arousal of affection.

This said, Throbbing Gristle used a great amount of affective elements for the listener, such as noise, subsonic frequencies, or extermination camp imagery – which appeared merely as very stimulating flickers, but which were actually a hostile spear aimed at the mechanisms of control. At the time, there was something profoundly disturbing that appealed to the body exposed to the electronic rhythms of the group. It was so connected to shock and to the individual liberation of the self, as it was to the deterritorialization of the subject (Goddard, 2008), traversing it in order that the subject would reject his/her own authoritarian tendencies'.



Fig. 3, 20 Jazz Funk Greats, 1979, Industrial Records.

The album *20 Jazz Funk Greats* (1979) worked as a tactical lure, fascinating from the perspective of counter-manipulation. At first glance, the cover provoked a very odd feeling. As the reader can observe, the image shows the four members of the group displaying an innocent smile with no undercover intentions, standing on the edge of a cliff, extremely subtle in the light of a pleasant day. Unaware listeners, ignorant of the group's career, could have bought this supposedly *easy listening* album, expecting to enjoy songs like *Hot on the heels of love*, beautiful and attractive to naïve buyers. However, on the inside the album showed a wholly different worldview. The aim of the lure was to dislocate the buyers' expectations when they purchased something unknown for no reason. Behind its delicate soft-pop mask promising an easy listening, Throbbing Gristle had got into mainstream music fantasy, the height of music for the great majority; however, the moment the music started to come out from the vinyl furrows, the listener would find – what was it?

a fake? After all, wasn't it something shocking that had got into their lives and was distorting them? If that were the case, TG broke into the world with some big questions: Beachy Head or Hot on the Heels of Love would show a place far from the advertising marvels behind their soft pop façade: *Convincing People and Persuasion*, with their distressing, uneasy, dreadful rhythm, turned out to be a jammed brothel with an alienating *muzak* and a depressing mind-controlling and coercive state.

At this point, let's recall that the members of the SPK migrated to England after their *Dokumentation 1* encounter, where they became close friends with Throbbing Gristle. In view of this relationship, we can come to understand how the SPK group, newly arrived from a distant continent, found inspiration it needed in the strength of Throbbing Gristle's music. Even though the SPK had already experimented with the same electronic concepts, it was Genesis P-Orridge who – strictly speaking – disrupted the newcomers' vocation, for the good of the group. In 1980, the SPK, under the name of Surgical Penis Klinik, published *Meat Processing Section* at Industrial Records. The album contained two of their most popular and rather distressing songs: *Retard* and *Slogun*. *Slogun* sounds as an unbreathable mechanical beat – wrapped in a white noise, vibrant like lightning – repeating in its lyrics one of the former German SPK mottos: “Kill for inner peace! / Bomb for mental health!”, with a pinch of sarcasm and cynicism, after all.

The SPK used different abbreviations thorough its works; however, as the reader will notice, System Planning Korporation, Selective Pornography Kontrol, or even Special Programming Korps would point to more or less the same kind of concern.

In one of the paragraphs in *The Electronic Revolution*, William Burroughs wrote: “[t]he control of the mass media depends on laying down lines of association. When the lines are cut the associational connections are broken” (Burroughs, 1970/2005: 13). He suggested a method that applies to our present world too, beyond ironic interpretations as it embodies outstandingly the following and last aspect.

4

Like a burst of shrapnel spreading out in different directions, Throbbing Gristle's trail went through Slovenian land, too, with a peculiar outcome.

In 1980, an electronic avant-garde collective known as Laibach – a performance group that had appeared in the time when Slovenia was still part of former Yugoslavia – was immediately met with the discredit and the rebuff of similar groups. The odd and equivocal style they displayed in their performances and their concerts were subject to disqualification.

Why were the groups of the industrial scene so worried about the use of authoritarianism symbols? Laibach – actually, this was the Nazi name for the capital city Ljubljana – began to use authoritarianism symbols of Hitler and Stalin's regimes as well as some aspects reminiscent of the Italian futurism, with the aim of creating an aesthetic refinement which would immediately separate them from an easy, correct or acceptable experience. However, this might be considered a foolish bad taste with which to quickly scandalize or make a row at first sight. Laibach realized – just like Throbbing Gristle or the SPK had realized before them – that the use of such sort of imagery and such an approach of



the world would create in people an increasing distrust on their own self-identities and would actually reel the sense of a free society.

These were Laibach's obstacles in a country that, among many political circumstances, was trapped by the experience of Nazism and by the disproportionate socialist regime – which was otherwise dying.

In this way, unlike what any goody-goody might think, Laibach endeavoured to build up a brilliant method. It employed a sense of humour, not as a flamboyant or sarcastic trick but as a mental trench. Laibach's aim was to harmonize all the ideologies that were dreadful in their high times (Owens, 2011), and the result was that the dogmas piled up on one another and the resulting body became the proof of the same apologetic crime: fear. It was the use of confusion to dislocate and cut *lines of association*.

Slavoj Žižek, another famous Slovenian, had been in touch with Laibach during the eighties through the NSK collective, *Neue Slowenische Kunst*. At the time, he had felt offended by what he had thought to be a lethargic phenomenon. However, as years went by, he began to glimpse the importance of the movement and a great idea came to his mind. His short essay *Why are Laibach and NSK not Fascists?* was an access key to organize Laibach's sinister attempt. Even more, the analysis contained a certain number of reflections attributing an importance the group that made others feel offended:

“Laibach appears in a new light: it ‘frustrates’ the system (the ruling ideology) precisely insofar as it is not its ironic imitation, but over-identification with it – by bringing to light the obscene superego underside of the system, over-identification suspends its efficiency. (In order to clarify the way this baring, this public staging of the obscene phantasmagorical kernel of an ideological edifice, suspends its normal functioning, let us recall a somehow homologous phenomenon in the sphere of individual experience: each of us has some private ritual, phrase [nicknames, etc.] or gesture, used only within the most intimate circle of closest friends or relatives; when these rituals are rendered public, their effect is necessarily one of extreme embarrassment and shame – one has a mind to sink into the earth)” (Žižek, 2007: 65).

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Over-identification seems to be the concept that brings value to everything we have seen, and, in the end, it names something that must be understood. Therefore, just as there are practices that seem harmless in the eyes of many, we are also able to distinguish in them new forms of dissent. Sometimes, absurdity and ambiguity turn into things that can be more hazardous to the stability of the world.

The SPK, for example, became the greatest discomfort for the left-wing urban guerrillas of Germany, to such a point that the Baader-Meinhof, the Rote Zora or the Revolutionäre Zellen felt certainly embarrassed by the nonsense of the group, very far from the liturgy of armed struggle.

Luckily, there is unpredictability. You can walk around any street, any establishment, school or club and you will find huge and horrible commercial signs announcing one thing, suggest another, acclaim yet another, and so on. In each case we can distinguish a very small, characteristic worldview, but all have the same nature: the inherence of normality. It is no

wonder that even those who considered themselves the guarantors of the revolution or radicalism are, in essence, no more than endearing holy men.

Finally, the nature of totalitarianism is to assure that nothing changes in this supposedly real world. Any attempt to break through the present or to introduce a discharge to favour an escape, an instability where imagination may break up the world, is a particularly difficult endeavour.

Translated by Francisco Izquierdo González and Jairo Sáez Bravo.

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### Footnotes

[1] *Iatrarchy*: of *iatr(o)*, a prefix referred to medicine. The SPK used this term repeatedly, pointing to the medical class as responsible for the repression of the sick. More broadly, their use of this concept warned against the capitalist alienation through psychiatry.

[2] *Patho practice*: from the Greek *pathos*, it is a neologism used to refer to a disease, disorders or ailments.

[3] *Dokumentation (1) zum Sozialistischen Patientkollektiv* was also published under the name SPK: *Aus der Krankheit eine Waffe machen*. While the preface written by Jean-Paul Sartre (1970/1993) has a few translation problems, it is also available in its original language. In any case, the domain <http://www.spkpfh.de/> has all relevant information about the gang and its influence in different countries. The most rigorous reference available, as far as I know, is the book by Trevor Blake (2000).

[4] Until *Naked Lunch* was published in 1959, William Burroughs had created a body of narrative work closely concerned with the interests of the Beat Generation, such as *Junkie* or *Queer* (1953), written in a conventional style, close to the pulp genre.

It is not until that year when Burroughs, who was based in Tangier since 1956, decided to drive a narrative methodology called *cut up*, inspired by James Joyce's fragmentary style, Brion Gysin's painting, and the Sufi trance experience of the Jajouka master musicians, from northern Morocco.

The writing method of *Naked Lunch* benefitted from the cut up, which was meant to build a hidden order within the story, arbitrarily formed by randomly placed texts. When the *cut up* was put into operation, the Interzone appeared: on a general level, this world flourished through the so-called 'intersections'; scenes coming and going, and new characters entering the space of action – which meant, to a certain extent, that the Interzone was a spontaneous territory, in constant flow. Although the book seemed an enigmatic puzzle, these intersections arose in the mind of the reader. The Interzone was not only a physical space, a kind of exotic anarchy, but a mental beat that had its own logic, so that the reader, given the

right circumstances, could cross the holes and slots that gave access to the other world.

Therefore, the Interzone could neither be built, nor figured. To have a vivid experience, the reader must be attentive, looking for cracks, openings, and slip through them into a place where the realities are completely arbitrary and where language mutates with a simple blinking of an eye.

[5] Before Throbbing Gristle, Genesis P-Orridge created the performance collective Coum Transmissions, active between 1969 and 1976. From this period date his relationship with the other members of TG and his close friendship with William Burroughs, Brion Gyisin and Derek Jarman. In a broad sense, Coum Transmissions drank from Dadá, Fluxus and the Viennese Actionism, as well as from British counterculture. Their memorable performance *Prostitution* was held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, in 1976. Nicholas Fairbairn, a British Tory, described the group as “the wreckers of Western civilization”. All relevant information about Coum Transmissions and Throbbing Gristle can be found in the Simon Ford (1999).

[6] Raoul Vaneigem, the enthusiastic and adventurous spirit of the International Situationist, defined *détournement* as follows: “The function of conditioning is to place and displace everyone along the length of the hierarchical ladder. The reversal of perspective entails a sort of anti-conditioning, not conditioning of a new type, but playful tactics: *détournement*, (misinterpretation, distortion)” (1967/2004: 224).

This concept came to designate the artistic practice which took a capitalist object distorting its meaning to create a reflective effect.

[7] The album cover for *D.o.A.* was immediately described as pornographic. In fact, the first thousand copies included a calendar with different pictures of the cover girl, lying on her bed. The truth is that Genesis P-Orridge took these pictures of the girl, who was the daughter of a friend of his, whom he had gone to visit on holidays a year before the album was released. P-Orridge claimed that he took those pictures in a completely innocent situation, because his friend had no camera and she wanted to have some photos of her daughter (P-Orridge, *RE/Search*, 1982/2007). Of course, Throbbing Gristle had no problem posting these pictures, because I guess that the mother shared the same sense of humour with them.

