I. The structural problem of Fate analysis

Szondi’s theory in the original version provokes scepticism on several points, especially his thesis that psychic heredity is determined by 8 pairs of allelic genes, raises problems. Nowadays it is quite clear how improbable his theory shows in the perspective of modern genetics.

If Szondi’s theory is still worthwhile it is because we look at it in a new light and recognise its value by choosing a different approach.

This is exactly what Jacques Schotte has done. His first attempt to explore the ‘Schiksalsanalyse’ is described in his article “Notice pour introduire le problème structural de la Schiksalsanalyse” published in 1963. (1)

Schotte puts aside the gaps, contradictions and improbabilities in Szondi’s basic assumptions and looks at the drive system (‘Trieb system’) as a structure. In doing this he reverses the terms of the problem. When he asks “Of what is the drive system an expression?”, the answer should not be given in terms of genes, but in terms of existential categories. Let us first go through the Notice and start to discover it.

a) We look briefly at how Schotte approaches and describes the structural characteristics of the drive system. He draws attention on the fact that Szondi has - throughout his whole work - registered and enumerated drives, needs, layers of consciousness, and so on.

The essential problem of the Schiksalsanalyse is the presentation of these enumerations as finite series. The character of total accomplishment and of internal perfection of these series raises questions. (2)

The enumerations are related to the basic elements of the ‘Trieb system’: The drive factors and the drive vectors.

The finite characteristics of these enumerations of drive factors and vectors and their presentation within the framework of the test protocol give the drive system its structural character. Every factor, every vector, every element of the framework is defined by its relationship to the other elements:

“Nothing any longer has an autonomous existence, everything is reconstituted within and through networks of significant relationships: we have definitely left the framework in which mental illnesses are considered to be ‘partes extra
partes’, and we have entered a unified structure of articulation which crosses them and no longer regroups them." (3)

When put together in a table, all constituent parts get, apart from their own meaning, a value which springs from their position in the structure.

b) Schotte even goes further by putting forward the idea that placing the mental disorders in a table by means of such a scheme produces a transition from classes into categories.

Each vector should be understood not as a class but as a category of thinking and being, with an existential meaning.

These categories are transcendental concepts just like the existentials of the mediaeval logic.

What arguments can we put forward to support the statement that what is really involved here are categories in the sense described above?

How can we talk about a category if it is not precisely and extensively defined?

The first indication in favour of a reflexive principle, or the ‘auto-applicability’ of categories to themselves, is provided by the very way the test functions. The test is constructed with the raw material of psychiatry itself and the subject will apply it to himself.

This has an extremely important correlation on the clinical level: to present the Szondi test to a subject is like offering the subject the possibility to be himself the criterion for the validity of his own answers. That is the very meaning of the concept of choice in the theory of Szondi. This is also what Schotte wants to emphasise when showing how the characteristic of reflexivity first applies to the test material itself. The subject chooses himself through the proposed categories. Theoretically speaking even the subjects whose photographs were used to make the test, could have been tested with it.

II. An ordered version of the vectors and the genetic dimension

When we consider the temporal modes we will encounter a presentation of the order of vectors which does not correspond with the scheme as developed by Szondi. Indeed, Schotte introduces a version in which the vectors are arranged according to the formula: C, S, P, Sch.

This new order generates the possibility of a genetic reading of the scheme. Schotte borrowed the most significant elements for this genetic reading from psychoanalytic theory.

The phases of development of the Libido according to Freud offered the first version: orality and factor m, anality and factor d, anal sadistic and motor stage for factor s, phallic and urethral stage and vector P.
A second version consists of questioning the fundamental modes of relationships with others. This perspective is no longer exclusively genetic anymore. One can speak of a maternal type of relationship for vector C, a siblings’ type of relationship for S and a paternal type of relationship for P.

And finally the fundamental complexes as they were formulated by Jacques Lacan allow an even more systematic genetic approach of the vectors: weaning and C, intrusion and S, Oedipus and P. With vector Sch then corresponds the castration complex which “engages the identity and the integrity itself of the individual in his incarnation”. (4)

III. Pathoanalysis

Schotte named his 1977-1978 course about deeper questions in clinical psychology “The psychiatric nosography as pathoanalysis of our condition”. The aim of the present chapter is to make a short analysis of this formula, showing the place the drive scheme occupies in this project.

In the Freudian perspective mental illnesses can be considered as revelations of the structure of the human condition. Freud has used the metaphor of the breaking crystal to visualise this principle:

*Where it points to a breach or a rent, there may normally be an articulation present. If we throw a crystal to the floor it breaks; but not in haphazard pieces. It comes apart along its lines of cleavage into fragments whose boundaries, though they were invisible, were predetermined by the crystal’s structure.* (5)

According to this principle pathology thus reveals the structure of normality. Schotte called it pathoanalysis.

Having discovered the pathoanalytical principle in Freud’s own work we have to examine Szondi’s specific contributions to this problem.

In his genealogical research Szondi has studied a field which by far surpasses the psychiatric domain since it includes all the other diseases plus choices in profession and in love.

When Szondi constructed his test, destined to replace genealogical inquiries that take up too much time, he worked out a sort of sample of physiognomies shown by mentally ill.

Although Szondi said that he did not know whether his samples were comprehensive for all possible mental diseases, he has always presented the results of these samplings as a drive system in the sense that every nosographic entity is integrated in a set of relationships with all the others.

This was Szondi’s specific contribution to Freud’s crystal principle: mental disorders which are apt to reveal the structure of the human condition, are
presented as a **system**, possessing characteristics as a system. To illustrate this view Szondi uses the image of the **spectre of light**:

“A drive system must provide us with a synthetic view of the whole of instinctual life, comparable to the global view we get with white light. However it should also allow to expose the drive ‘spectre’, just as light can be decomposed into its colours.” (6)

To prove that this is also an analysis of the constitutive dimensions of human existence we must now make clear how the drive scheme can be related to an analytical way of working which is more anthropological. This is shown by a **triadic reading** of the drive scheme.

**IV. A triadic reading of the drive scheme**

The idea of a triadic reading of the scheme appears already in the “Notice”, complementary to the idea of an ordered reading of the vectors. It was obtained by coupling vectors S and P [C-(S-P)-Sch] to form the second period in the triad.

Schotte borrowed the triad concept from Deese’s phenomenology (7). This phenomenology tried in different directions to get a hold of what constitutes the movement of human existence itself. One example of such a triad is walking, throwing and jumping (throwing oneself). Or saying, telling, talking. Or force (*Kraft*), violence (*Gewalt*) and power (*Macht*).

Some other particularly significant triads have been developed by Schotte in the context of the scheme. The triad “basis-foundation-origin” recalls respectively: the basis is the mother’s world and the relationship everyone has with this register. The foundation corresponds to the father’s world or the point of view of conflictual confrontation with the father or the brothers. The origin is the subject’s own wish to live, that cannot be given by either the father or the mother.

The origin already comes really before the basis and the foundation. If one compares it to the construction of a building the basis is what we find at ground level, the foundation indicates the hidden fundamental and the origin refers to the architect’s or builder’s project itself. One can easily understand the paradoxical status of the triad’s third term in this example. It reveals itself to become the first when the investigation proceeds from one term to the next.

But what is the general significance of the three terms that appear in each of these triads? One may try to grasp it by turning to the idea of intentionality, a key concept from Husserlian phenomenology, almost a synonym of *transcendence or being in the world*. As Schotte says:
“Intentional life is a notion from Husserl that corresponds with what Freud calls the drive life and Heidegger the being for the world or in the world. It can be lived in three ways, according to three possible accentuations.” (8)

The first accentuation corresponding to the first part of the triad makes the intentional (or existential or “instinctual”) movement reach out towards the world itself. It is the noematic accentuation.

The next accentuation refers to the actor's pole, or to the subject as it is actively distinguishing itself from the world and opposing itself to the world. This is the noetic accentuation.

The third accentuation is does not refer to the noema nor to the noesis but at their mutual relationship. It refers to being in the world as such.

When transferred to the level of the drive scheme this ternary structure raises the distinction between two ways of reading. One way goes from C to Sch and represents the ontic or genetic point of view. The other starts from Sch. It represents the ontological point of view and puts forward the question of one’s origin and of the relationship with oneself.

Schotte proposed the following graph to represent this intertwining of both points of view in their relationship to the drive scheme.

![Graph]

Schizophrenia (origin)  
Sexual-Paroxystic (foundation)  
Contact (basis)

Within the frame of a triadic lecture of the scheme the genetic perspective is always implied in a non-genetic, that is an ontological perspective.

V. The drive circuits

In '75-'78 Schotte proposed to extend the notion of drive circuits to the four vectors of the scheme Szondi had introduced exclusively for the vector Sch.

The circuit notion, according to Szondi himself, refers to two ideas. On the one hand there is the idea that normality or mental health is connected to a certain mobility of drive life, in contrast to the petrifaction present in some cleavages or in some rigid structures. On the other hand the circuit concept evokes the idea of an order of increasing complexity between the different ego functions.
The ego circuit as proposed by Szondi is:

This circuit is given concrete form by the progress of an analytic of a psychotherapeutic treatment and it supposes that every psychic content is "successively treated in the life of the ego according to the order of the so-called defence functions". (9) The content would appear first in the projective form as if coming from the outside (p-). Next it becomes the object of consciousness leading towards an assimilation of this representation (p+). This awareness then generates the introjection (k+) of a part of the assimilated content of consciousness. And finally the not introjected part is repressed (k-).

Schotte remarks that this concept is not consolidated by empirical results, namely not by genetic data. Indeed, the inflation (p+) for example seems almost not to exist in childhood and appears mainly during adolescence, the period when the genetic evolution ends.

Schotte proposed a different formula for the Sch vector circuit and more so extended this idea to the four drive vectors.

a) vector circuits

Schotte’s formula is expressed by the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Sch</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>h+</td>
<td>s+</td>
<td>e-</td>
<td>hy-</td>
<td>k+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>p+</td>
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<tr>
<td>h-</td>
<td>s-</td>
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<td>hy-</td>
<td>k-</td>
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<tr>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>d-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>m-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within each vector an order of succession is introduced among the four poles constituted by the positive and negative positions of each factor.
The circuits introduce an asymmetry between both factors in each vector. Hence there exists in each vector a factor in which the internal dialectic is mediated by the other one. The passage from the first position in the circuit to the last is made possible by the second factor which acts as a mediator (s, hy, k, d).

In view of the last remark these circuits may be considered as the introduction to a triadic reading in the inside of every factor. Each circuit is thus the reflection of the whole scheme.

Finally the circuits introduce a temporal dimension in the interpretation of the scheme and the positions, while Szondi had proposed an exclusively spatial arrangement.

The genetic interpretation we advocate results from the elaboration of the latter characteristic,

b) Mendeljev’s table

If every circuit is the reflection of the whole scheme then, vice-versa, the triadic interpretation based on the order “C-S-P-Sch” is completed or made richer since the totality of the scheme can itself become the object of a reading as a circuit.

This means that the internal relationships between the vectors in the scheme are homologous to the relationships of the positions inside a vector.

The introduction of circuits makes the drive scheme a two level structure, a characteristic that will prove to be fundamental for our later developments.

The double circuit level allows us to introduce the 16 drive positions in a double sided table, presented both in series and in levels, evoking Mendeljev’s table of the elements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of de drive series</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c) Description of the four circuit levels

Let us now try to describe briefly the characteristics of the different levels that are represented in the table by the columns and that are supposed to be arranged in an order of increasing complexity.
Level I (and the Contact vector)

The first level describes a subject that is essentially dependent in every sense of the word, indebted to what is happening in his environment and consequently susceptible to being frustrated easily if the environment does not respond to his expectations.

Level II (and the Sexual vector)

The second positions of the circuits correspond with a moment of auto-erotic withdrawal in phantasms (10). It is a specular, imaginary moment. In this sense it marks a first step in autonomy in contrast to the preceding position.

While on level I the idea of environment or setting is prevalent on level II the idea of object appears and more specifically of the body perceived as an objectivated totality within the visual field. This underlines the imaginary dimensions of the category of objects.

Level III (and the Paroxysmal vector)

On level III the subject cuts himself off from the self-sufficient second position as a result of pressure from the law - privation and interdiction. The transition from II to III starts an operation of negation of the objects’ cathexes developed in level II where the phantasymatic dimension prevails. The countercathexes gives access to external objects that are now truly different. The third position is the legalistic-realistic position.

Level IV (and the Schizophrenia factor)

Level IV marks the introduction of the subject as first person: a subject as project, as desiring subject, subject of a personal speech.

This is the moment of maximal subject autonomy. This autonomy takes a pathological turn if it is accompanied by a rupture with the environment.

Level IV is also potentially the level of sublimation and creation where the subject projects to be free and responsible for his fate, conceived as a history that he has to make himself.

VI. The circuit positions and the primal phantasm

The problem posed by the primal fantasies is about the philogenetic core of the unconscious or about the equivalent of animal instinct. "This instinctual patrimonium would constitute the core of the unconscious, a type of primitive mental activity" (11). Freud calls the elements of this patrimonium "philogenetic schemes which the child brings along when he is born. These schemes are like “philosophical categories” and they have the function of “classifying” the impressions life is offering." (12)
Like Freud we think (13) that the primal fantasies are not comparable to instincts since they are not triggers of behaviour but act rather like regulators of man’s desire. Primal fantasies are like "matrices that inform certain bodily excitations so that the latter are translated into drive manifestations and from there into psychic phenomena. The primal fantasies are vectors of transformation from “Reiz” to “Trieb”. (14)

Freud has recognised four primal fantasies without closing the list explicitly. They are: seduction, primal scene, castration and intra-uterine regression.

We propose the idea according to which the genes of Szondi’s theory receive a metaphorical status. What Szondi means by the notion of gene refers in fact to these categories of the unconscious which are the primal fantasies.

From this follows a new approach to the Szondi vectors:

C : intra-uterine regression  
S : seduction  
P : primal scene  
Sch : castration

To be exhaustive we should explain how the possible positions of a subject in the fantasies are homologous to the drive positions in each vector.

We do not need to develop this exhaustively here. What is of interest to us first is to demonstrate that the process of linking them to the scheme stems from a never moving procedure. We consider the series of fantasies to be closed and these fantasies to be in a fixed order according to their affinity with each vector. This order is supposed to correspond to an increasing complexity from one vector to the next.

Philippe Lekeuche (15) has proposed the view that the question of law, which in principle characterises the paroxysmal vector, should also be approached by the totality of the scheme. Lekeuche uses the broadest possible, the least specific meaning of “law” to make this analysis possible. He gives us this formula: the law imposes limitations (16); laws structure our existence by delimitation. With this definition in mind it becomes possible to explore in each vector under which different modalities the law can impose limitations.

C:
The limit is that of vital cycles. Respect for the rhythmicity vital cycles makes the movement of life itself possible. This modality of the law applies to the domain of living beings as a whole.

S:
Limitation is no longer in the cycle but in the object. The body of the other, as an object, imposes its limit. I will have to transgress it if I want to have access to it and enjoy it. This law modality functions on the level of the species.
P: The limitation comes here from a third party in the primal scene and the subject is supposed to accept in a reflexive moment this limitation from the other. It is a law modality that finds its application in the family circle.

Sch: The point here is to become one’s own limitation or one’s own measure. It implies the introjection of the limitations coming from the Other, but it also implies the transgression of this limitation to give way to the becoming of the self.

VII. Conclusions on the theories of the Szondian school of Louvain

Among the theses and propositions Szondi has defended throughout his work, Schotte and his followers have elected the element they considered to be the most fruitful. That is the drive scheme.

This choice implies in fact a critical appraisal of other aspects of Szondi’s opus, which have neither been retained nor developed, more specifically the gene theory and the propositions deriving from it.

According to Schotte the drive scheme can be used to support the development of a systematic theoretical psychiatry, a pathoanalysis. In the “Notice” however, we find more than this project for a psychiatric theory. It is a project for a systematics of human phenomena. The idea of a genetic interpretation of the scheme derives from the “Notice” and from there springs the systematics of the different levels of development.

The circuit theory will offer our project of genetic scheme interpretation a precise base. Starting from here an order of succession between vectors and between positions is introduced.

Furthermore the circuit theory reveals the power of a systematics of the drive scheme. As we have seen in the example of the primal fantasies a systematics of the essential psychoanalytical concepts becomes possible. And conversely, this work of putting together systematically analytical concepts progressively unveils the fundaments of the scheme in a completely different place from the one in which Szondi initially located the genes.

It is he power to systematise - and not so much the introduction of original elements to a theory of genetic development - that renders the drive scheme useful for our clinical work. It is not even a genetic theory. The drive scheme is used as far as it is presumed to offer a frame for the systematics of a theory of psychic functioning, as it is presumed to offer one to psychiatry and to the major concepts of psychoanalysis.

We insist again on this essential fact that, within the frame of the circuit theory, the genetic (or ontic) perspective should never be considered in isolation. It
is always interwoven with a structural dimension (from the ontological point of view).

Hence the significant moments of a genetic reading should correspond point by point to the structure elements. Every essential genetic moment must also bear a structural significance.

This double articulation is the main point that constitutes the richness of the drive scheme reinterpreted in the light of the drive circuit theory.

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