



Project(ile)s of Hypermodern(organ)ization¹

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abstract

This article on the ephemeralization of organizations and institutions considers the meaning of ephemeral environments and, from a speculative critical and ‘hypermodern’ theoretical perspective, argues that we are currently witnessing the obliteration of the time-space of the private and the public, the peaceful and warlike, through the introduction of the concept of ‘hypermodern(organ)ization’. It suggests that the ‘project(ile)s’ of hypermodern(organ)ization, namely, ‘hypercapitalism’, ‘globalitarianism’ and ‘militarization’, are key components of an emergent ‘hypermodernity’. Focusing on hypercapitalism, the article proposes that ‘dromoeconomics’ and the ‘economies of excess’, ‘ephemeral commodities’, digital technologies and ‘chronopolitics’ in the ‘hypermodern city’ can only be understood within the context of ‘total mobilization’. Additionally, it argues that Virilio’s hypermodern conceptions of globalitarianism, together with the terminology of ‘molar’ and ‘molecular’ project(ile)s, ‘polar inertia’ and the critique of the military origins of industrialization and the events of the Kosovo war should be prominent in any contemporary socio-cultural theoretical interpretation, rather than postmodern conceptions of so-called globalization and the crisis of the nation state. Considering ‘Pentagon Capitalism’ and universal ‘human rights’ through a critical engagement with Virilio, Chomsky and Bauman, the article suggests that Lingis’ philosophical writings on ‘phallogentrism’ and those of the ‘anarchitect’ Woods on ‘everyday war’ in the hypermodern city are especially relevant to such concerns. It concludes that the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization can usefully be reconsidered within Lingis’ framework of the ‘institution of the dimension of verticality’ and Virilio’s cultural globalitarianism or ‘the face of hypermodern(organ)ization man’.

Bombs are to be placed somewhere – but, first of all, at the roots of most of our contemporary modes of thought. (Antonin Artaud, from the ‘Manifesto’ of November 13, 1926)

Introducing Hypermodern(organ)ization

We live today in an increasingly ephemeral environment. Critical dialogues on the ephemeralization of business corporations, public organizations and military institutions envelop us, from discussions of the activities of the Internet giant Microsoft to the

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digitalisation of the advanced democracies or NATO's recent prosecution of 'cyberwar' in Kosovo and beyond. What does the development of ephemeral environments mean for our everyday social and cultural life? From the suppositional explanatory standpoint of 'hypermodern' cultural and social theory founded on the appreciation of the *excesses* of modernism and modernity, in this article I want to comment upon a number of developments associated with what I call 'hypermodernism' (eg., Armitage, 2000a: 18-19) and 'hypermodernity'. However, since it is the latter term that features most prominently below, I shall only define hypermodernity here. Hypermodernity refers to any contemporary social process containing a greater than usual amount of various elements relating to the quality or state of modernity (eg., excessive speed). Indeed, I want to argue in this article that the process of ephemeralization presages profound changes. Broadly, I suggest that we are currently witnessing the effacement of the differentiation between the time-space of the private and the public, peace and war. Nevertheless, before we proceed any further, it is important to introduce a number of key concepts, most importantly the concept of the time-space of hypermodern(organ)ization.

I want to introduce the concept of hypermodern(organ)ization with a view to describing a collection of *excessive* social phenomena that are not usually described together. However, Augé's (1995) *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* is similar in inspiration if different in its objectives. Certainly, the term hypermodern(organ)ization is missing from today's analytical debates over organizational and institutional change that is the central focus of this article. Even so, as numerous authors utilise the concepts of 'modernization' and 'organization' in their writings, I shall accordingly firstly elucidate these sometimes-difficult ideas.

Employing the concepts of modernization and organization as the basis for an analysis of hypermodern(organ)ization would be straightforward if these terms had not been routinely applied in order to delineate a host of partisan, contentious and frequently irreconcilable processes that characterise the present period. For the central difficulty with these ideas is that, almost from the outset, the modern method of wielding them has been predisposed towards a 'meta-narrative' of 'progress' (Lyotard, 1984). This approach has led to a fixed way of observing varieties of business corporations, public organizations and military institutions as influenced more or less exclusively by 'development economics' and the 'rational' disposal of political and social power. Moreover, the current debates over 'post-industrial business', 'neo-disciplinary organizational studies', war and the 'new politics of conflict', with their stress on the shift from modern to 'postmodern' organizations, institutions and practices are more typical descendants of the debate over modernization and organization than is my interpretation of hypermodern(organ)ization (see, eg., Kelly, 1999; 'Editorial', 1994; and Gray, 1997).

Within the positivist social sciences, the prevalent approach to modernization and organization remains within the realm of modernity. To be sure, contemporary evaluations using these terms are for the most part focused upon the processes of business, organizations and military institutions. Yet, in this article, I want to use the ideas of modernization and organization creatively, that is, within the terms of the time-space of hypermodern(organ)ization. It is therefore helpful to begin by partly divesting

modernization of its business and corporate associations and organization of its preoccupation with, for example, the specification of institutional aims, goals and the composition, function and place of individual roles and occupations. This is because, for me, the central theme and important aim of this article is to trace the time-space continuum of organizational and institutional change through an analysis of the 'project(ile)s' of hypermodern(organ)ization.

By project(ile), I mean, first, a *project*; that is, a set of proposals or tasks requiring concerted effort, such as proposals relating to the possibilities of production or the tasks of co-ordination and strategy undertaken by the individual functionaries of business corporations, organizations and military institutions. Second, a project is also a *projection* or a prediction of future needs based on current knowledge and the assumption that it will be 'thrown' forwards to become a real manifestation in the time-space of the future and/or an imagined vision of it. Such temporal and spatial projections (eg., about 'the future of the Internet' or 'the coming of cyberwar') continually restructure the objective physical and spatial environment as well as arouse the subjective mentality and desires of individual functionaries presently predicting the future needs of organizations and institutions. Furthermore, projections are increasingly reliant on corporate, organizational and militarized knowledge being hurled forth into the future through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) such as the Internet. A *project(ile)* can therefore be defined as any project or projection that entails physical objects and environments or human subjects being thrown forwards in the manner of a self-propelling rocket, especially one that is powered by or fired from business corporations, organizations and military institutions. The time-space continuum of organizational and institutional change is thus a time-space powered by the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization. But it is also one where modern capitalism and globalization morph into a 'hypercapitalism' (Graham, 2000) of excessive speed founded on ephemeralized commodities provided by the Internet and 'globalitarianism', Virilio's critique of the development of a totalitarian 'world time' (Armitage, 2000b: 37-38). What the development of ephemeral environments appears to mean for our everyday social and cultural lives in the context of a dematerialising hypermodernity, then, is an increasing immersion in the militarized electronic landscape of the Internet and the militarization of all human social and cultural values.

Clearly, the transdisciplinary project(ile)s of hypermodernity cannot easily be incorporated into the traditional models of the political economy of corporations, organizations and the military. Ordinarily, of course, it is the explicit rules governing corporate, economic and institutional relations between roles that are of paramount interest to most political economists. In this article, therefore, I am not primarily concerned with traditional political economy but, rather, with theoretical and critical as well as social and cultural discussion, discovery and analysis. The prelude to this sort of approach must be the theoretical examination of corporations, organizations, military and institutional or bureaucratic determinants in their broadest sense, along with additional pertinent social and cultural determinants. Those that are of interest to the hypermodern theorist are characterised by, for instance, hypercapitalism and 'dromoeconomics' or the political economy of speed (Armitage and Graham, 2001), the hypermodern 'economies of excess' (Armitage, 2001a) production and consumption and, in particular, the 'ephemeral commodities' of digitised information and

communication. Such determinants are of course characteristic of the age of what Virilio (eg., 1999) calls 'chrono' or speed politics as life in the 'hypermodern city' of all encompassing social project(ile)s and the accelerated mentality of the movement of people gears up for what I label 'total mobilization' (Armitage, 2001b).

This method of procedure is therefore representative of my present-day inquiries into hypermodern(organ)ization as well as hypermodernity, if not into modernization and organization. In this article, I shall use Virilio's *The Information Bomb* (2000a), as a guidebook for an exploration of the transition from modernity to hypermodernity. My own conception of hypermodern theory is thus one of a philosophical theory founded on a synthesis of phenomenology and contemporary poststructuralist, postmodern and other cultural and political studies. It is within this theoretical framework, then, that I situate this article on the excessive social project(ile) that is hypermodern(organ)ization.

This theoretical framework and definition is important for my interpretation because I want to suggest that the current hypermodern and globalitarian project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization are not merely technological but social and cultural in character. Simultaneously, such globalitarian project(ile)s are also caught up in the often-contradictory development of 'molar-project(ile)s' such as globalitarianism in which particular events and processes are terminated and 'molecular-project(ile)s' that allow for their initiation into the time-space of terminal velocities. Virilio (Armitage, 2000b: 11), for example, refers to these project(ile)s in terms of a 'polar inertia' or 'the situation in which every city [and every person] will be in the same place – in time'. In my exposition, therefore, the logic of globalitarianism is predicated on the military origins of industrialization and international trade rivalry (Sen, 1995). This is what Virilio (2000b: 43), writing from within the circumstances of the war in Kosovo in 1999, calls 'Pentagon Capitalism', the ensnaring of one's economic rivals in unproductive military expenditure. Yet, I argue that it is important to exercise caution not only when confronted with those states promoting militarized 'human rights' but also when reading those writers like Virilio, Bauman (2001a) and Chomsky (2000) urging a critique of militarized human rights. For such critiques seem unaware of what Lingis (1984: 67-68) calls 'phallogocentric culture' and the 'institution of the dimension of verticality' regarding cultural values. Consequently, and adopting a rather different interpretation of globalitarianism to Virilio, I turn to the 'anarchitect' Woods' (2000) conception of 'everyday war' and warring identities for an explanation of what I call the 'de(con)struction' of the hypermodern city.

This concludes my compressed conceptual account and the introduction of the essential themes of my attempt to further an understanding of hypermodern(organ)ization. In the next section, I will pay attention to the core features of the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization and their importance and, in the following section, focus on the project(ile) of hypercapitalism. Globalitarianism and militarization are the concerns of the last substantial section, and, as noted, these concepts are crucial to my interpretation and particular contribution to the apprehension of the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization. The final parts of this section contain a critical assessment of Chomsky and Virilio's work on globalitarianism while Lingis' and my own evaluation of the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization are contained in the conclusion.

Project(ile)s of Hypermodern(organ)ization

I want to suggest that although the project(ile)s of modernization and organization characterised modernity, the accelerated and intensified project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization characterise hypermodernity. From this perspective, contemporary business corporations, organizations and military institutions are viewed as hypermodern(organ)izations rather than as modern on the grounds that significant transformations have taken place during the past quarter century, even though the increasing levels of acceleration and intensification belie a certain degree of continuity between modern and hypermodern(organ)izations. But what are the important transformations and how might we describe and analyse the transition from modernity to hypermodernity?

As I have indicated, I identify such transformations and transitional arrangements with a move from modern capitalism to hypercapitalism. However, the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization encompassing the dromoeconomics of ephemeral commodities and the economies of excess also include 'shopping disorders' (Lieberman, 1993) and exorbitant consumption (Bauman, 2001b), uncertainty (Armitage, 2000c) and chronopolitics as well as a consideration of the hypermodern city. Further, a second set of identifying markers concerning the present transition not only include globalitarianism and militarization but also the 'information bomb' and the 'integral accident' (Virilio, 2000b) and the critical interrogation of the intensification of ultra-modern political and economic, cultural and military values.

It is not my aim to try to synthesise all of the concepts listed above into one coherent theoretical structure. I merely wish to indicate the emerging and significant literature and debate over hypermodernity arriving at this terminological transit lounge from different points of departure and often heading for different destinations. Nor do I wish to attempt to construct what might be thought of as a generally agreed schema or give a convoluted account of the various positions adopted in this developing debate since it is far too early to do so.

What I do want to do is to convey my own perspective on hypermodernity, a perspective that is neither scientifically empiricist nor metaphysically idealist. Merleau-Ponty's (1962) efforts to overcome the distinction between extreme objectivism and extreme subjectivism, with their conception of consciousness as immutably corporeal in the world, examined in his *Phenomenology of Perception*, are productive and suggestive in terms of the fact that phenomenology finds its real vocation in a philosophy of *ambiguity*. In other words, my conception of hypermodernity is concerned with an approach to the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization that is self-consciously ambiguous. Hypermodernity therefore lies in the realm of the 'in-between', a transient realm that perhaps pre-exists the division into objects and subjects and which can only be articulated and weighed in the balance in the particular historical conditions that we are currently living through. Thus, any evaluation made of phenomenology and terms such as hypermodernity must from the beginning take into account phenomenology's intrinsic taste for and commitment to ambiguity. The question is what particular historical conditions are we currently living through?

Bauman (2000: 113-114; emphases in original) argues that the “part of history” that is “now coming to its close” is “the era of *hardware*, or *heavy* modernity”. For Bauman, heavy modernity was an era obsessed with ‘bulk’ and centred on ideas founded on a discourse conceived in terms of large is best, ‘size is power’ and that ‘volume is success’. Bauman’s description of the demise of ‘heavy modernity’ and the rise of ‘liquid modernity’ are obviously in keeping with a critical and hypermodernist disposition. Nevertheless, this is neither the time nor the place to advance into the contemporary debate over Bauman’s characterisation of modernity or postmodernity (see, eg. Smith, 1999). Rather, and in keeping with a phenomenological methodological stance befitting an archaeologist of the future, I shall underline several related features that I consider to be significant signs of an emergent and near terminal hypermodernity.

My hypermodern analysis is centred on the ‘uncertainty principle’ (Armitage, 2000c) that connects ‘dromology’ (Virilio, 1986) or the logic of speed to the intensification and complex networking of contemporary organizations and institutions with the aim of identifying and comprehending what I see as the three most important project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization.

First, and according to the uncertainty principle, hypermodernity is not governed by the business rationale of modern capitalism that ruled modernity but by hypercapitalism. Moreover, the increasing levels of uncertainty relate to the principles of present-day business corporations and organizations in the context of the appearance of dromoeconomics and the ephemeralization of commodities.

Second, military, informational and globalitarian project(ile)s are progressively moulding the development of hypermodernity around the world and, as a result, are exposing whole populations to the dangers of the information bomb – the ‘explosive’ transmission of information and interactivity from one nodal point of the planet to another. Such explosions are of course the scenes of Virilio’s (2000a: 134; original emphases) integral accident, an accident that is “no longer *local* and precisely situated, but *global* and generalized”. The scene of the integral accident can thus be witnessed in a variety of temporal and spatial sites ranging from the “collapse of the [New York] stock exchange” in 1987 to NATO’s war in Kosovo in 1999 (Armitage, 2000b: 41; Chossudovsky, 2001).

Third, we are all increasingly subject to the demands of military dominated configurations. Much of our temporal and spatial existence is now militarized rather than civilianized. It is by way of militarized ICTs such as the Internet, for instance, that we are becoming conscious of the juxtaposition and eradication of the temporal and spatial distinctions between the private and the public, the peaceful and the warlike. With the near-compulsory imposition of militarized technologies, including that ubiquitous ‘Walkie Talkie’, the cellphone, it is practically impossible to escape from ‘decontextualized’ business and corporate, organizational or militarized cultural values and contacts with others whether we are at home or abroad, at peace or at war (Richardson, 2001). Even our phallogentric and vertical bodies are now part of the militarized business and corporate sphere (Virilio, 2000c).

The hypermodern configurations and project(ile)s that prepare contemporary businesses, organizations and institutions for hypermodern(organ)ization are thus hypercapitalism, uncertainty, globalitarianism and the relentless militarization of everyday life. In short, hypermodernity is principally characterised by the acceleration and intensification of modernity, inclusive of the levelling and what I call the ‘de(con)struction’ of the distinction between the private and peaceful, public and warlike realms. What we are presently living through, then, is not merely what Deleuze and Guattari (Goodchild, 1996: 218-219) call ‘deterritorialization’ (leaving home and travelling in foreign parts) and ‘reterritorialization’ (making a new dwelling place) but the total mobilization and militarization of the economic, social, political and cultural field. Consequently, instead of conceptions of modernization, organization or heavy modernity, I prefer the terms hypermodernity and hypermodern(organ)ization because it is hypermodernity and hypermodern(organ)ization, together with the three project(ile)s of hypercapitalism, globalitarianism and militarization, that are ‘de(con)structing’ all important temporal and spatial distinctions. I discuss hypercapitalism and globalitarianism in detail in the following sections of this article. Current questions of militarization, while addressed at relevant points of the overall argument are not given a separate section for reasons of space. However, I have developed the idea of militarization in a related article (Armitage, 2001c). In the next section, then, I want to pay attention to the project(ile) and significance of hypercapitalism.

Hypercapitalism

A critical facet of the contemporary shift from modernity to hypermodernity is that business corporations and organizations are transforming themselves into ‘fast companies’ (Thrift, 2000) and ‘network enterprises’ (Castells, 2000) in the context of seemingly permanent restructuring. However, what is new in hypermodernity is that as the rate of speed accelerates it results in increasing levels of unpredictability and the rise of dromoeconomics along with the appearance of ephemeralized commodities and the economies of excess. Moreover, and precisely because they are fast companies and network enterprises restructuring themselves at speed, it becomes harder for these organizations to calculate their forthcoming production and data requirements, a phenomenon that ‘throws’ hypermodern(organ)izations forwards into a realm that is part fact, part fantasy and wholly uncertain.

Phil Graham and I have suggested that dromoeconomics is the latest historical manifestation of a successive number of forms of capitalism. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, for example, first ‘proto’ and second ‘modern’ capitalism functioned respectively on the geographical scales of the local and the national while in the twenty first century – the century of hypermodernity – hypercapitalism functions on the global scale. In our account, the “two most distinguishing differences between hypercapitalism and its previous forms is the speed at which processes of circulation and self-valorisation occur, and the ephemeral nature of hypercapitalist commodities associated with its speed-of-light infrastructure of communication technologies” (Armitage and Graham, 2001: 114-115). Given the rise of hypercapitalism and dromoeconomics at the global scale, how might we characterise the role of speed and

the ephemeral nature of hypercapitalist commodities in the context of the development and spread of ICTs and the emergence of the economies of excess?

As Smith (1985) has demonstrated, the production project(ile) underpinning proto and modern capitalism was the militarized production of *weaponry*. It was therefore weapons production that laid the foundations for the large scale manufacture of ever cheaper commodities for the consumption needs of national groups or what, after Lieberman's (1993) 'disorderly shoppers', might be termed 'orderly shoppers'. Thus, first weapons in the early nineteenth century through what Smith labels the 'American system of Manufacturing' and second commodities in the early twentieth century through 'Fordism' were homogenised while their organization was streamlined and assembly-line production introduced for the manufacture of commodities and increasingly today, consumer services.

Nevertheless, as today's project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization illustrate, disorderly shoppers reject even the *idea* of a limited variety of commodities and insist on making choices in *excess* of earlier norms and at an increasing speed. Consequently, an ever changing and ceaselessly 'exciting' product range must be delivered to disorderly shoppers in the market place of excess. As Lieberman argues, the accelerated "disordered shopper acts in the interest neither of utility nor of pleasure. The phenomenal experience of its body is always one of discontent, chronic unrest and stimulation" (1993: 246).

In addition, dromoeconomic production is no longer centred on modern capitalist commodities but on ephemeralized hypercapitalist commodities. In brief, hypercapitalist production and consumption is increasingly focused on commodities incorporating essentially circulating, sometimes self-referential and at all times fleeting, digital and easily reproducible images where material ocular persistence 'disappears' into the cognitive sphere (Virilio, 1991). Further, the economic and social value of ephemeral commodities can only become progressively uncertain as fast companies and network enterprises, the architects of digital production on the Internet, provide their clients, disorderly shoppers all, with an economy of excess. Based on the values of corporate advertizing speak and on an overabundance of social communication, disorderly Internet shoppers are seduced by the myriad possibilities and permutations for ephemeral consumption and evaluation. Of course, as Richardson argues, such 'empty babbling' includes "no restraining constituent able to provide a context that any medium of genuine communication needs in the long run" (2001: 82). The ephemeralized commodity is accordingly a commodity that has reached what Baudrillard calls the 'fractal' stage of value where "there is no point of reference at all, and value radiates in all directions ... by virtue of pure contiguity" (1993: 5).

Also, as the project(ile)s of deterritorialization, reterritorialization and the militarized logistics underpinning dromoeconomics accelerates, the contemporary strategy of deterritorialization becomes evident to all as it discards the constraints of modern capitalism and triggers the new project(ile)s of hypercapitalism, inclusive of the need to project business corporations and organizations into the fast lane of the networked enterprise. Hypercapitalism thus compels its functionaries to operate in a decision-making environment characterised by 'social overload' (Jeudy, 1994), endless

circulation, self-valorisation and the increasing ambiguity, if not the complete absence, of consumption norms under conditions of hypercapitalist commodity production conducted at the speed of light (see, eg., Fleming, 1998).

What, then, distinguishes the current hypermodern project(ile) of reterritorialization in the speeding network enterprise from the modern business corporation or organization? It is the realization that while production, knowledge and authority became increasingly deterritorialized through the temporal and spatial separation of the private, emotional and political life and responsibilities of the family from the public realm of production, knowledge and the state in modernity, in hypermodernity the project(ile) of reterritorialization is accelerating and intensifying the necessity of making new dwelling places.

The militarized logic beneath dromoeconomics, for instance, not only reveals that hypercapitalist disorderly shoppers consume at differential yet increasing speeds but also that they cannot be analysed as if they were all part of a single project(ile) of circulation and self-valorisation. Indeed, through the search, purchase and use of various ephemeralized hypercapitalist commodities, and by means of the Internet in particular, people increasingly articulate themselves in the manner of those inhabiting what Agamben (1999) terms the 'gray zone'. The gray zone is a kind of reterritorialized non-place where disorderly shoppers, perhaps 'surfing' silently through cyberspace with the mentality of the dead, are detached from the social world beyond the computer screen. Starved of genuine communication, such shoppers are often obsessed not with the search for ephemeral commodities as such but with the quest for the means of processing ever more quantities of 'information'. There is, therefore, an accelerating and intensifying 'rhythm of reterritorialization' associated with that new dwelling place, the gray zone of the Internet. The pursuit of a novel place to live is of course linked to the invention and pursuit of human 'happiness'. As Bauman (2001b: 88-90) argues, today, this pursuit is "shaped in the likeness of a road-movie", and, like a road-movie, is little more than a "picaresque string of adventures" that discard their allure the minute they have "been tried and tasted". Thus, if in modernity it was conceivable to differentiate between "the irritating length of delay" and the "dreamed of bliss a long distance away", in hypermodernity it is impossible to distinguish between "the non-dimensionality of moments" where "reward comes instantaneously". A related argument to Bauman's is advanced by Robins (1999) but with regard to the spatial dissatisfactions voiced by the advocates of 'virtual communities' and their consequent desire for the overcoming of the 'burden' of physical geography.

However, and while the increasing rhythm of hypermodern reterritorialization does indeed involve the end of a certain kind of geography, a project(ile) that Virilio (1999: 18) calls a movement from "geopolitics to chronopolitics", it also implies that the typical spaces of modernity, such as the modern city, are once and for all losing what Sennett (2001: 1), following Levinas, labels the "neighbourliness of strangers". This, together with the emergence of chronopolitics, can be witnessed in the dromoeconomic relationships between globalised hypercapitalism and the appearance of what Sennett speaks of as 'skin architecture' and the 'standardisation of the environment'. For it is in the context of present day speed capitalism and the accelerating processes of circulation that any semblance of family life or civic public space is being destroyed.

Chronopolitics is also visible in relation to those new movers and shakers of hypermodernity in the hypermodern city, the ‘global kinetic elite’ (Armitage, 2000d). Operating out of the top floors of skyscrapers in hypercapitalist New York, London and Tokyo, the global kinetic elite is the chief purveyor of the ephemeral commodities conjured up on its computer screens and launched into circulation over the Internet and over the heads of the strangers below. Although chronopolitics is obviously predicated on the avoidance of strangers, it is also crucially founded on the avoidance of the urban political realm altogether and any responsibility for the consequences wrought by fast companies and networked organizations on family relationships or public citizenship. Public servants in hypermodern cities, for example, “can’t tap into the wealth of these corporations” and the corporations themselves “take little responsibility for their own presence in the city” (Sennett, 2001: 4). It is thus ephemeralization or what Sennett (2001: 4) describes as the “threat of absence, of leaving” that allows for the “the avoidance of responsibility”. In short, for Sennett (2001: 4), no one has the “political mechanisms to make unstable, flexible institutions contribute fairly for the privileges they enjoy” in the hypermodern city.

In such circumstances, it is appropriate to end this section on the theme of total mobilization. This is because in my discussion of the accelerating and intensifying rhythm of reterritorialization across the dromoeconomic and social field I merely alluded to the making of one new dwelling place in the gray zone of the Internet. In so doing, I did not convey what I consider to be another significant aspect of today’s hypermodern(organ)izational project(ile)s. For what is characteristic about the important global project(ile)s I have been describing is that they are presently casting aside all ‘unnecessary’ connections to local or national time-space as a direct result of their abolition of the temporal and spatial distinction between the private and working lives of the population. Fast companies and network enterprises are therefore abolishing such distinctions to make way for the generalized introduction of part-time or even ‘zero-hour’ contracts of employment, supplemented by the furnishing of a cellphone. Or, as Virilio (2000a: 67; original emphasis) puts it, if “the company needs you, *it calls and you come running*”. In the next section, I shall argue that when the company does call, it does so from the accelerated time-space of globalitarianism.

Globalitarianism

The transition from modernity to hypermodernity is framed by the project(ile)s of hypercapitalism and globalitarianism. Virilio’s genealogy (Armitage, 2000b: 38) of globalitarianism begins with the critique of the totalitarian era of Stalin and Hitler and continues today with the critique of the globalitarian epoch of Bill Gates and Time-Warner-AOL. Globalitarianism thus provides those seeking a genuinely critical dialogue on organization with an important alternative conception of the present period to that of the increasingly apolitical banalities of ‘globalization’ and the ‘crisis of the nation state’.

Virilio (Armitage, 2000b: 38) speaks of globalitarianism as the “convergence of time towards...a world time...which comes to dominate local time”. Globalitarianism is

therefore a molar project(ile) – a project(ile) comprised of “rigid sedimentations which function according to laws of statistics, so that the effects, precise details, differences and singularities are cancelled out” (Goodchild, 1996: 218). Having defined globalitarianism, I now want to identify it with the molar-project(ile) of militarization that collides with what the American architect Woods (2000: 310-313) terms everyday war or the continuing de(con)struction of urban time, space and human existence. However, it is important to make clear that the molar-project(ile)s of globalitarianism and militarization do not inevitably become molecular-project(ile)s or project(ile)s based on “flexible processes, whose nature may be affected by the process or its constituents...working according to specific interactions...occurring in local or small-scale situations” (Goodchild, 1996: 218). From this standpoint, then, it is sensible to consider globalitarianism and militarization as molar-project(ile)s, and to examine the distinctions between them and molecular-project(ile)s as qualitative disparities among the project(ile)s of business corporations, organizations and military institutions.

Globalitarianism is accordingly a molar-project(ile) that, under the technological signs of ‘world citizenship’ and ‘social cybernetics’, control, surveillance, the world market and generalised political, economic and cultural transnationalisation compresses the time-space of the planet through a project(ile) that Virilio labels polar inertia. In other words, thanks to the arrival of ICTs, we are entering a situation in which “it is no longer necessary to make any journey” since “one has already arrived”. But the “consequence of staying in the same place is a sort of Foucauldian imprisonment” because “it means that the world has been reduced to nothing” (Armitage, 2000b: 39). The uncritical corporate hype (‘Where do you want to go today?’ ask the Microsoft advertisements without any hint of irony) surrounding the deployment of the Internet is an instance of how the hypermodern(organ)izational world continues to deny its militarized incarceration and ephemerization.

The project(ile)s of globalitarianism and militarized ICTs thus call for a re-consideration of the military origins of industrialization and the emergence of transnational business corporations and organizations. In particular, such a re-examination must consider the contemporary increase in international trade rivalry in the context of total mobilization, inclusive of related topics involving the increasing levels of trafficking in women, sex tourism and the repatriation of remittances by growing numbers of migrant workers (Sen, 1995; Sassen, 2001). For globalitarianism, militarization and ICTs are all enmeshed in the uncertainties associated with the integral accident and the hazards connected with the possible detonation of the information bomb. The unpredictable and perilous project(ile)s of globalitarianism and militarization were for example recently at the centre of the cybernetic cyclone during NATO’s still undeclared ‘low intensity nuclear war’ on Serbia in Kosovo in 1999. Moreover, the use of ‘anti-tank killer’ depleted uranium shells by NATO troops has now resulted in the latter’s inability to contain the radioactive dust it left behind either by ‘cordoning off’ the ‘affected areas’ or by treating its increasingly diseased troops (Chossudovsky, 2001). To live with globalitarianism, then, is to live with ‘*global systemic risk*’ (Virilio 2000a: 134; original emphases) in the context of the total mobilization of fast companies, network enterprises and the militarization of all technological and economic, social, cultural and political zones.

In an analogous approach to that of Virilio, Bauman (2001a: 11-28) has produced a critical analysis of the political economy of “wars of the globalization era”. Incorporating an examination of ‘globalizing wars’ directed at the ‘abolition of state sovereignty’ and the ‘neutralising’ of its ‘resistance potential’, Bauman highlights the contemporary significance of the avoidance of “territorial conquest and administrative responsibilities” by the advanced states when at war. Indeed, Bauman argues that globalizing wars threaten the very existence of the nation state. This is because such wars emerge in large part from the expanding number of United States and other transnational business corporations under the guise of promoting ‘universal humanitarian cultural values’ or ‘human rights’ for short. Nevertheless, today, transnational corporations are primarily concerned with the elimination of the ‘problem’ of especially weaker nation states. Accordingly, states such as Serbia and anti-war movements like Radio B92 in Belgrade became the focus of NATO’s globalitarian rage during the conflict in Kosovo. But, equally importantly, the spotlight was adjusted from the vantagepoint of a globalizing war conducted from ‘orbital space’ (Armitage, 2000e). Furthermore, the US directed the war from a position of such aerial strength that to this day it simply refuses to take any administrative responsibility for the disposal and removal of the “thousands of cluster-bombs scattered over Kosovo, anti-personnel weapons that are far more lethal than landmines” (Chomsky, 2000: 133).

Bauman and Chomsky’s perceptive descriptions and accurate critique of what Virilio (2000b: 43) calls ‘Pentagon Capitalism’ also touch on the relations between the US and its allies and involve the termination of the latter’s privileged position in the global geopolitical economy of the advanced nations. For, as never before, the project(ile) of globalitarianism has led the US to the “re-launch of the arms race” and “the pursuit of a second deterrence, capable of re-establishing, if not stability in the age of the ‘single market’, then at least American leadership” (Virilio, 2000b: 36). Triumphant over the “spatial dimensions of the old geo-strategic supremacy of the Atlantic Alliance” by means of the Pentagon’s high speed, high-tech “revolution in military affairs”, the US is currently bidding for “full spectrum dominance” (Virilio, 2000b: 37-42). There is, then, an increasing disparity between the US arms economy and that of its allies, whose only function appears to be to admit defeat in this developing economic war.

Yet the widening gap between the US arms economy and those of its partners is not merely involved with increasing international trade rivalry. It is also bound up with growing political, globalitarian and cultural imbalances founded on the US conceived and globally enforced understanding of sovereignty and its particular cultural interpretation of human rights. As Chomsky puts it: “One of the leading principles of the new era is that sovereignty may now be disregarded in the interests of defending human rights; disregarded by the ‘enlightened states’, that is, not by others” (2000: 25). Thus, for Chomsky, political and cultural globalitarianism are the products of a new strain of US imperialism that routinely tortures the concepts of sovereignty and human rights around the globe until they, and its ‘enlightened’ allies, confess military allegiance to the American flag. What is more, the risks of not professing allegiance to the US are grave. The US State Department, for example, has recently branded China its ‘No 1 enemy’. For China to even contemplate living outside of Washington’s orbit of influence is therefore to be “perceived as the principal threat to American dominance” and consequently the target of “long-range power projection” (Kettle, 2001). Such

developments have recently been amply demonstrated by the events surrounding China's dangerous confrontation with the US over the latter's 'spyplane' surveillance mission along the Chinese coastline in April 2001. For not only was the Chinese pilot who brought the US' spyplane down to earth on Hainan Island killed in the attempt to abort its mission but the spyplane's crew were detained by the Chinese authorities for several days. Meanwhile, the gutted spyplane remains grounded on Hainan's runway as a potent symbol of contemporary US-Chinese relations.

Chomsky is correct to point to the US' actual rationale for its trade in the rhetoric of human rights. For it is by means of such a trade that is indulged in by all the advanced states that the 'enlightened' sale of military weaponry, training and the inculcation of militarized cultural values can take place. In Indonesia, for instance, the US' trade in the rhetoric of human rights has always been tied to state-approved weapons sales that, according to Chomsky, have amounted to over \$1 billion since Indonesia's 1975 illegal invasion of East Timor. Indeed, in the fiscal year 1997-1998 alone, US state-approved sales of weaponry to the rest of the world soared from \$3.3 million to \$16.3 million, with the UK, France and other 'enlightened' states not far behind in terms of ambition if not in sales (Chomsky, 2000: 67).

Even so, one complication with Chomsky's critique of the US' motivation for trading in the hyperbole of human rights in the context of increased arms sales is that he does not appear to appreciate the full complexity of the 'imposition' of cultural globalitarianism on 'third world' cultures such as Indonesia. It cannot be assumed, for example, that the progressively brutalised peoples of Indonesia are either committed to some alternative model of human rights or that they automatically wish to dispense with their weaponry or the state-sponsored savagery in East Timor and the rest of the archipelago once and for all. In this respect, it is important to recognise that the present-day de(con)struction of Indonesia and other similar countries is not always only the result of Western cultural globalitarianism but can sometimes include indigenous and ancient cultures of militarization. Of course, as Lingis has suggested, the West continues to institute its phallogocentric cultural practices around the world, most notably in the form of the "institution of the dimension of verticality" (1984: 67-68). After all, says Lingis (2000: 187), how else are we to explain the West's propensity for human armies flying at stratospheric heights or the Third World War that it is currently waging on nature itself? It is important, therefore, to seek to appreciate the complex distinctions between the obvious trade in US-style cultural globalitarianism and human rights with third world countries like Indonesia and the often-ambiguous meaning, even suffering, that can arise from the self-initiated experience of militarization. Lingis is surely correct, then, when he writes that the "suffering we see may well be a suffering that does not seek to be consoled" (2000: 50). We must beware, he goes on, "of setting out to alleviate a suffering that another needs and clings to as his or her destiny – the inner torments of Beethoven, the hardships and heartaches of the youth who has gone to join the guerrillas in the mountains ..." (2000: 50).

Lingis' concerns lead us to a second and final difficulty not with Chomsky's position but with Virilio's recent and near-total fixation on the social consequences of the project(ile)s of cultural globalitarianism and militarization. Against Virilio (2000a: 1), I want to suggest that the question of the information bomb cannot be posed in the binary

terms of “The civilianization or militarization of science?”. For to pose the question in this way is to privilege the civilianization over the militarization of science and to ignore or to suppress their perpetual integration into the singularity of technoscience and the resultant and relentless contemporary transformation of everyday life into everyday war. Unlike Virilio, therefore, I argue that the project(ile)s of hypercapitalized fast companies, organizations and military institutions are truly an extraordinary and singularly *networked enterprise*. Similarly, Woods (2000: 310-313) does not differentiate between everyday life and everyday war, proclaiming that “Architecture is war. War is architecture”. Indeed, Woods contends that all identities, inclusive of corporate, organizational and military identities, are “transformational, sliding and shifting in an ongoing complex stream of becoming” (2000: 311). For Woods, then, architecture can be simultaneously construction and destruction or de(con)struction, since both are indispensable to the creation not only of buildings but also fast companies and the networked enterprise of militarization. By its very nature, hypermodern(organ)ization is founded on aggressive and warlike acts, incorporating the dynamiting of sites, an indifference to contemporary culture and the disposal of pure power. This, therefore, is the war universe of the hypermodern city. In short, as Woods writes: “the everyday is not innocent of the violence by which war is usually stigmatized, or elevated, depending on point of view; it merely conceals domestic violence and other forms of physical and emotional aggression under the label ‘abnormal’” (2000: 12). The existence of everyday violence and war therefore raises a challenge to Virilio’s binary question. For it is no longer a question of *either* the civilianization *or* the militarization of science, but rather of how we are to interpret their *fusion* into what might be termed the ‘hypermodern military-scientific complex’ of the twenty first century.

The Face of Hypermodern(organ)ization Man

In this article I have introduced, considered and examined the concepts and major project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization that frame today’s business corporations and organizations, military institutions, hypercapitalism and globalitarianism. In this conclusion, I want to emphasize some features of my previous discussion and analysis.

To reiterate, in introducing the term hypermodern(organ)ization, I have tried to enter into the time-space of ephemeral environments in order to investigate their significance for everyday social and cultural life from the perspective of hypermodern theory and with a view to developing my own approach to hypermodernity. As I have suggested, the process of ephemeralization foreshadows deep transformations because its development is also the development of configurations dominated by the equalisation and eventual annihilation of the differentiation of economic and social, military, private, public, peaceful and warlike domains. However, the concept of hypermodern(organ)ization is most useful as a way of elucidating an assemblage of *excessive* organizational, institutional and social occurrences that are generally disassociated in time-space. The present period can thus usefully be described as movement from modernity to hypermodernity or perhaps as a shift to what Augé (1995: 7-41) calls the excesses of ‘the near and the elsewhere’ of ‘supermodernity’. For me,

and for Augé, it is the overabundance of the effects of time-space, the individualization of references and uncertainty, speeding and intensifying hypercapitalism that gives rise to the present era of globalitarianism and militarization. It is an era in which what Augé terms our awareness of the 'principles of intelligibility' has disappeared into the realms of ephemeralization. It is through a reconceptualisation of modern terms of modernization and organization, then, that I have attempted to demonstrate how my own approach diverges from modern, postmodern and positivist perspectives on the political economy of fast companies and network enterprises as well as military institutions. I noted in my introduction to this article, for instance, that my purpose is to develop the concepts of modernization and organization through an imaginative and, perhaps for some, a provocative engagement with the time-space of hypermodern(organ)ization. None the less, I consider that the principal significance of this article is its discovery of the time-space continuum of the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization.

In addition, and following Merleau-Ponty, I spoke of the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization as being accelerated and intensified yet ambiguous, signifying that they are at once unequivocal and, given present historical and cultural conditions, located in the time-space of the in-between or what Bauman calls the current transition from heavy to liquid modernity. However, as noted, I characterise the significance of the current period of hypermodernity in terms of the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization and hypercapitalism, globalitarianism and militarization.

I also considered the importance of the project(ile)s of hypercapitalism and dromoeconomics for an understanding of the economies of excess, as analysed by cultural theorists such as Richardson and Bauman in relation to the violation of modern shopping norms and the genesis of novel excessive and ephemeral relationships between the project(ile)s of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. These analyses are leading to a re-conceptualisation of the function of cultural norms and values as the obvious concepts for conceiving of excess, to a re-consideration of deterritorialization and reterritorialization and their connections in a hypercapitalist environment increasingly comprised of the absence of cultural norms and the presence of excess. The project(ile)s of hypermodernity, deterritorialization and reterritorialization are therefore accelerating and intensifying the sphere of the ephemeral. Thrown by such project(ile)s into the gray zone of the Internet where the rhythm of reterritorialization quickens and its moody discontents multiply, human subjects are forced to abandon the time-space of geopolitics in the modern city and adapt to the fearful world of chronopolitics in the hypermodern city by those masters of the known universe of total mobilization, the global kinetic elite.

Moreover, and in adopting a hypermodern methodology and theoretical perspective on hypermodern(organ)ization, it soon becomes clear that the project(ile)s of globalitarianism necessitate a critical reconsideration of contemporary technological, political, economic and cultural molar and molecular project(ile)s. Philosophers as different as Virilio and Bauman, Chomsky, Lingis and Woods now question the role of the military in everyday life and war around the world. They are all searching for alternative paths to a hypermodernity that rejects the polarised inertia of militarized and industrialized political economies and the 'humanitarian' cultural values of

globalitarianism. In following such examples, we might focus on Lingis' concern with the link between the phallogocentric culture of the West, the institution of the dimension of verticality and Virilio's conception of cultural globalitarianism. Perhaps our gaze, like that of Lingis, should be turned towards what I have labelled the '(s)lower classes' (Armitage, 2000d), towards a different conception of cultural values in social thought. For Lingis rightly questions analyses that are wholly centred on examining corporate campaigns directed from the top floors of skyscrapers in the hypermodern city or the activities of military personnel soaring off into the stratospheric heights of orbital space. Instead, Lingis (2000: 41-51) makes it clear that, when considering the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization, one need not always zoom in on the negative repercussions of the Third World War on nature or the joyless reverberations of the globalitarian, hypercapitalist free-trade economy. For instance, writing of the impact that such project(ile)s have had on the sufferings of a Brazilian street kid he met in Rio, Lingis (2000: 51) nevertheless vividly illustrates how the orders of present-day business corporations, organizations and military institutions cannot dampen the resistance of this particular street kid to hypermodern(organ)ization through something as simple as his totally mobilized life on the run. Who knows, caught as he is in the dead centre of the cross hair sights of the project(ile)s of hypermodern(organ)ization, this Brazilian street kid may yet become the youth that Lingis speaks of and join the guerrillas in the mountains? In sum, it is clear that the de(con)structive work of the global kinetic elite, five star generals and even that of anarchists and social theorists does not always produce the results that they would like it to do. Any genuine critical dialogue on organization must understand not only acceptance of the contradictions of hypermodern(organ)ization but also the earthbound resistance of the Brazilian street kid. For his, like ours, is the face of hypermodern(organ)ization man.

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